

THE LIVE OAK

EAST BAY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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September/October 2017

Oakland, California

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Wednesday, September 13, 2017 at 10.a.m. - Oakland Family History Library meeting room

SOLVING THOSE RESEARCH PROBLEMS AND LOOKING FOR BRICK WALL SOLUTIONS **Speaker - Karla Henderlong**

Our member and a research assistant at the Oakland FHC, Karla Henderlong, will lead us in an open meeting on solving research problems. She is very experienced and knowledgeable.

Bring your questions and problems and join in the discussions and share in the discoveries.

OCTOBER MEETING

Tuesday, October 10, 2017 at 10 a.m. - Oakland Family History Library meeting room

GERMAN RESEARCH: Speaker - Robert Jackson

More than twenty per cent of Americans claim primarily German descent and many more have at least one German ancestor. So, where do we begin our quest for our German ancestors? Until we know their specific village of origin, we cannot trace their roots.

In this, the first of two presentations, Mr. Jackson will discuss the challenging task of discovering the hometown of our German ancestors, even if they arrived 150 years ago and then did everything they could to conceal their origins from their descendants.

Robert Jackson is highly regarded as an experienced researcher of the "Great Migration" from Germany from 1815 to 1914. He holds a Ph.D. in history and taught for several years at the college level.

At our November meeting, Mr. Jackson will return to our podium to explore techniques for accessing and using original German documents to build our family tree.

Looking Back at July: You might have thought that a topic like *Oakland Neighborhoods* would be a little boring - quite the contrary. Kathleen DiGiovanni, Senior Librarian of Adult Reference Services at the Oakland Public Library, is never boring!

Her program dealt more with Oakland street names and how they have evolved and even disappeared over the years. She offered a wealth of information for genealogists researching their Oakland ancestors.

Kathleen mentioned a booklet available at the Oakland Library History Room that might be very helpful researching your early ancestor's addresses in Oakland. It was researched and written by a former Oakland librarian and avid genealogist - ask for Quentin's guide to the streets of Northern Alameda County: Changes of street names in Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, Piedmont, and San Leandro. The library has also prepared an addendum to Quentin's booklet covering later changes and some corrections to his research.

Looking Back at August: The society does not meet in August. We hope everyone enjoyed a delightful summer and we are looking forward to an exciting Fall Schedule of interesting topics at future meetings.

EBGS NEWS:

Please note: The October, as well as the November, meeting will be held on TUESDAYS. We are anxious to have Robert Jackson speak on German Research and he is not available on Wednesdays. Mark your calendars!

We were sorry to hear that Janice Sellers has moved to Portland, OR. We certainly wish her well - but my goodness we will miss her here in the Bay Area! She has spoken on a wide variety of topics at many of our meetings over the years, and sometimes on very short notice. She will certainly be missed in the Bay Area. Janice, we wish you much happiness and success in your new home.

IN MEMORIUM:

We are truly saddened to hear of the death of Margery "Marge" Bell. Marge had been Assistant Director of the Oakland Family History Library for quite a few years. She presented many programs for our meetings over the years and was always so enthusiastic and generous with her knowledge and time. We will miss her. She will be missed by everyone whose lives she touched.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The Oakland FHC Library offers the following on-going classes/workshops. ALL classes at the FHC are free and open to everyone interested. Sometimes there might be a small charge for handouts. You can check their website to view information on these workshops and upcoming classes. They are not always mentioned in his newsletter as they do not coincide with the mailing date.

African-American Workshop: 4th Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

MAC-GEN Genealogy meetings/workshops for Mac Users. Second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. More info at www.macgen.org

Swedish Genealogy Research Workshop: Thursdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Need some help with your Swedish research? Join our experts on Thursdays for some individual assistance. No appointment necessary, and it is free!

Hispanic Research Workshop: Wednesday evenings, 6-8 p.m. Come join the group and learn more about researching your Hispanic ancestors.

Personal/Family History: Write Your History in Stories: 2nd Thursday each month, 1-2 p.m. Instructor: Ken Miller, staff genealogist. Does writing your personal history sound intimidating? Does "I was born..." seem like a boring way to start? How about writing your memories one story at a time? Come once or come monthly or come when you can. Set aside the 2nd Thursday of each month and spend an afternoon jump starting your memory. Write one story each time you come and you could have quite a personal history recorded by the end of the year.

San Francisco Research: 10 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. on the **3rd Saturday** of each month at the California Genealogical Society - 2201 Broadway Ste LL2, at the corner of 22nd Street, Oakland, CA. This is an open forum meeting group to help each other looking for ancestors pre and post 1906 in San Francisco. Bring your questions and/or your experience and join the discussions. For more information email: **SFSIG@CALIFORNIAANCESTORS.ORG**.

2017 Fall Seminar - Finding Your Female Ancestors: Speaker: Gena Phillbert-Ortega. Saturday, October 21, 2017, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Pleasant Hill Senior Center, 233 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA

Presented by the Contra Costa County Genealogical Society. \$30 members, \$40 non-members
Four great talks on ways to help locate those lost female ancestors.
For more information Google Contra Costa County Genealogical Society.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

THE LONG LONG TRAIL: <http://www.1914-1918.net/army.htm>

This website is a place where you can learn what life was like in the British Army during WWI. You can also learn about the regiments and how to find a particular soldier's record. Hint: not everything is online - yet. (Whitman County Gen. Soc. Washington newsletter)

Family History Microfilm Discontinuation: As of September, 2017 it will no longer be possible to obtain microfilm of genealogical records at your local Family History Center. The microfilm digitization effort by the Family History Center has progressed rapidly and it is now estimated that all remaining films in the vault should become available on line by the year 2020. If you regularly use these films and you do not want to wait up to three years to see one you need soon, now is the time to act. Check with your local FHC and if possible, get your order in soon for those films.

Via Lisa Louise Cooke's *Genealogy Gems*: Findmypast has partnered with the Ontario Genealogical Society to bring six million Ontario records online. This is an ongoing project and will take time to complete. However, eventually the following records will be available online: The Ontario Name Index (TONI), The Ontario Gen. Soc Provincial Index (OGSPI), Oddfellows Life Insurance Applications (1876-1929), and Ontario Genealogical Society Bulletin/*Families and NewsLeaf*.

Atlas of Historical County Boundaries. <https://www.newberry.org/atlas-historical-county-boundaries>
The Newberry Library is pleased to announce that their interactive online maps resource is back up for use AND they're even bragging some pretty exciting new features for users.

>view a base layer ma- that allows an overlay of boundaries on top of cities, towns, and other geographic features.

- >zoom in and out of maps for the level of detail desired.
- >select a date of interest from a drop down box with all border change dates for that state
- >view information about border changes in a hover box that changes as users hover over different counties.
- >expand the map view to full screen.

(The Genealogical Forum's Wed. Eve. E-News, 12-April 2017)

The New York Public Library Digital Collections - City Directories

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/new-york-city-directories#/?tab=about>

The New York Public Library has been digitizing 137 years of New York City directories. Currently the years 1849 to 1923 have been digitized and are available for free. The next group to be digitized will be from 1876 onwards. (June 2017, Santa Clara County Historical & Genealogical Society newsletter)

Family Tree Magazine -September 2017 Issue: This issue lists what they consider to be 101 of the best free websites for genealogy. It is quite a list, but here are a few I found of interest and perhaps you will also.

Access Genealogy: www.accessgenealogy.com Search data from Southern states, military records, small town newspapers and the Guion Miller Roll index of Cherokee tribal members.

Arizona Genealogy Birth and Death Collection: genealogy.az.gov Free and downloadable birth records from 1855=1941 and death records from 1879-1966. Not searchable, but indexed by surname.

BYU Idaho: www.byui.edu/family-history: New address and new look for this Western States Marriage Index. More than 912,000 records from a dozen states - also Idaho death records.

Wisconsin Historical Society: www.wiscosinhistory.org/genealogy A simple name search quickly covers more than 3 million records including vital record indexes, newspaper clippings, images and property records.

Life In The 1500's

Not sure how factual these are, but I am sure I do not want to go back to the "good ol' days". - Editor

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and were still smelling pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the odor.

Baths were in a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually loose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

Houses had thatched roofs. Thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the pets - dogs, cats - and other small animals, mice, rats, and bugs lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying, "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a pest problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up your nice clean bed. So, they found if they made beds with big posts and hung a sheet over the top, it addressed that problem. Hence, those beautiful four-poster beds with canopies.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt, hence the saying "dirt poor". The wealthy had slate floors which would get slippery in the winter when wet. So they spread thresh on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on they kept adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed at the entry, hence a "thresh-hold".

They cooked in the kitchen in a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They mostly ate vegetables and didn't get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight, and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been in there for a month. Hence the rhyme, "peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old".

Sometimes they could obtain pork and would feel really special when that happened. When company came over they would bring out some bacon and hang it up to show it off. It was a sign of wealth and that a man "could bring home the bacon". They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat".

Those with money had plates made of pewter, but had trenchers - a piece of wood with the middle scooped out like a bowl. Trenchers were never washed and a lot of times worms got into the wood. After eating off wormy trenchers, they would get "trench mouth".

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf. The family got the middle, and guests got the top, or "the upper crust".

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait to see if they would wake up. Hence, the custom of holding a "wake".

England is old and small and they started running out of places to bury people. So they dug up coffins and took the bones to a house and reused the grave. In reopening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on their wrist and lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night to listen for the bell. Hence, on the graveyard shift they would know that someone was "saved by the bell" or "a dead ringer".

How The Dunn Boys Got Their Names

In 1936, when my mother-in-law, Clara Giesick and John Dunn, went to get their marriage license, Clara was very surprised to find out that her fiancé's name was in fact, not John, but Donald. Close questioning revealed the fascinating story behind John/Donald's two names.

The Dunns made their home in the little town of St. Francis, Kansas. Their first baby, Fred, was followed by Mildred in 1900. After Mildred came seven boys, every other year, one after the other. The streak ended with a little girl, June, in 1916.

Sometime between 1914 and 1916, the Dunns packed up and moved to a farm in Burlington, Colorado.

The story goes that a very proper aunt came to visit the family in their remote Colorado farm. This aunt was shocked to learn that seven of her nephews did not have proper names but instead were known only by colorful nicknames: Ted, Ginger, Billy, Jim, John, Hap and Mutt. The aunt devised a plan to rectify this lapse in civilized behavior. The family gathered around and made a list of their favorite boy's names, complete with middle names. Big sister had a crush on a boy down the road named Donald Denton, so she added that name to the list.

Seven of these names were written on scraps of paper and baked in a cake. The cake was divided into seven equal pieces and each boy was given a piece. The name in each boy's piece of cake became his official, legal name. Behold! Floyd Temple Dunn, George Benjamin Dunn, William W. Dunn, Stanley Stuart Dunn, Donald Denton Dunn, Kenneth Truman Dunn, and Richard Wainwright Dunn were born.

Although Donald Denton Dunn had a very proper name, he continued to use John in his everyday dealings. My mother-in-law perpetuated the story by naming her son (my husband) Donald Rodger Dunn, I was afraid to ask why she chose Rodger.



Back Row, L to R: Frederick Marvin (Fred) Dunn, George Benjamin (Ginger) Dunn, Kenneth Truman (Hap) Dunn, Donald Denton (John) Dunn.

Front Row, L to R: Richard Wainwright (Mutt) Dunn, Mildred A. Dunn Diegel, Stanley Stuart (Jim) Dunn, June Virginia Dunn Desserich, Floyd Temple (Ted) Dunn

William W. Dunn died in an accident when he was 15 years old.

By Christine Dunn reprinted from the Gen. Soc. of Vallejo & Benecia newsletter "Taproot" with permission.

Reclaiming The Records **By Brooke Schreier Ganz, Founder and President of Reclaim the Records**

Are you tired of being told by archives, libraries, and government agencies that the genealogical records you want are "unavailable" to the public, are only available behind a paywall, or are only available to view if you can visit them onsite or during limited hours? I was too, so I figured out how to do something about it.

I grew up in New York, and about 95% of mu research in the U. S. is in New York City or New York State. But shortly after college, I married a nice boy from California and moved across the country, far from the archives I needed. This wouldn't have been so bad if the various New York archives and government agencies made some of their records available online - but they didn't. There were a small number of New York City records available on FamilySearch microfilms, but the images have never been online and crucial pieces of information like New York State vital records indices were only available in a limited number of New York libraries, and even then on antiquated microfiche. Doing sustained research from the other side of the country seemed almost impossible.

So, I discovered how to use state Freedom f Information laws to force the various archives and agencies to give me a copy of the records I wanted, even if they claimed that this was impossible. I would still have to pay a fair price for copying and shipping the files - you can't get something for nothing - but then I could digitize my new copies and put them online for free, so everyone could use them. And that is exactly what I did, publishing them at the Internet Archive without any paywalls or logins.

In doing so, I inadvertently learned a lot about Freedom of Information laws, also known as Sunshine laws or Open Records laws. They're designed for regular citizens to use, but they're not that well known as a genealogical tool. If you are trying to get records from a government agency, these tools can be a godsend. Even the most recalcitrant archivist can't ignore the law.

And so I founded a non-profit organization called Reclaim The Records to help me reach out to other genealogists and historians about how to use these laws so that you, too, can make requests from archives near and far away that won't otherwise publish these crucial materials you want to use. We now have more than 3,400 people subscribed to our free newsletter, and more than 4,000 fans on Facebook.

Our work has enabled the first-ever public access to more than ten million archival records *(and counting!) ranging from marriage records to voter lists to civil service to state licensing files. We started with a first-of-its-kind lawsuit in the Supreme Court of New York in 2015, winning the first-ever public index to New York City marriage licenses. We followed it up with a second successful case against the New York City Clerk's Office in 2016, and last November we filed a third case in Missouri against their Department of Health and Senior Services. We are now spreading our legal work to other cities and states. We crowdsource ideas for new projects, and are planning to file many more requests, and possibly lawsuits if needed, in the coming years.

Check out our website at: <http://www.ReclaimTheRecords.org/>. We hope you'll join our work and reclaim some records of your own, too. (Jnne 2017, Santa Clara County Historical & Genealogical Society newsletter)

MEETINGS

2nd Wednesday each month – 10 am
Family History Center Library
4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland, CA

Visitors welcome! Typically a speaker discusses genealogical record sources, research techniques, research tips.

Occasionally, working meetings are held at sites of genealogical interest.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all...

Individual/Organization - \$18.00

Family - \$25.00

Foreign - \$20.00

Request an application by writing to: P. O. Box 1648, Alameda, CA 94501
or download from our website.

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EBGS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Mail to: EBGS, P. O. Box 1648 Alameda, CA 94501

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Amt. Enclosed _____ \$18 Individual/\$7.50 Each Additional Family Member

May we hear from you by July 1, 2017 Thank you for your support.

Office use only: Date _____ Amt _____ Ch# _____

ANNUAL ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON – MAY 10, 2017

Pier 29 Waterfront Restaurant, 1148 Ballena Blvd. Alameda, CA
Directions will be printed in May/June LIVE OAK. Time is NOON

Teriyaki Chicken _____ Shrimp Louie _____ Caesar Salad w/chicken _____

Salads served with a cup of clam chowder. Teriyaki Chicken served with choice of clam chowder or tossed green salad w/zesty Italian dressing, garlic mashed potatoes, fresh steamed vegetables. Meals include roll and butter, coffee or tea, and ice cream or sherbet for dessert.

Tax and tip are included. Cost: \$25.00 per person

Mail your check and this form to:
EBGS c/o Joyce Schleicher, 4345 Detroit Avenue, Oakland, CA 94619

Name _____ Amt. Enc _____ No. Persons _____

We look forward to seeing many of you there. Guests are certainly welcome