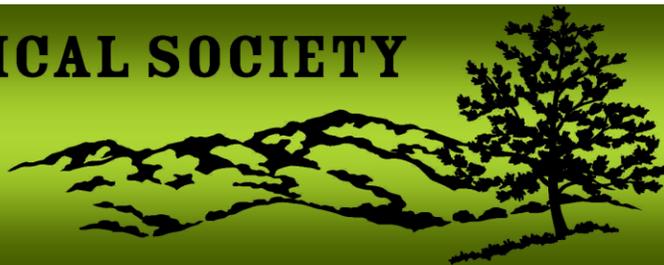


MT. DIABLO GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

The Digger



May/June 2015

2014/15 MDGS BOARD MEMBERS



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From the Digger Editor

Unfortunately, the production of the Digger newsletter each month has become more than your current editor can handle. But, we think it's important for our club to have a newsletter. So, starting with this month's issue, The Digger newsletter will be published bi-monthly (every other month). Your next Digger will arrive in July. Any questions or comments, contact caroljwegener@gmail.com.



The NEW MDGS Website is here!

Mt. Diablo Genealogical Society has a website! It's brand spanking new and more information will be added in the days to come. Members can register to view the Members Section which will give you access to the Member Directory and Digger Newsletter Archives. Check it out and let us know what you think: <http://mdgs.webs.com/>.

Mt. Diablo Genealogy Society Workshop Big Success

Attendees at our first Beginners Workshop on March 24 were guided through the steps of establishing their genealogical research with the help of five experienced board members.

The program included a review of the research process itself, as well as a detailed explanation of the various sources used to collect and prove information and data. Board members worked directly with the attendees to explain how to locate source documents and methods for gathering and organizing their materials. In addition, many were able to get "hands-on" support in exploring various computer programs through live "on-line" activity.

Additional workshops will be planned for upcoming months if there is sufficient interest. If you would like to register for a future workshop or would like more information, please call Laura Sanchez at 925-946-1620.

For questions or information about MDGS, please contact Stan Wells at stanwells@sbcglobal.net.

MDGS

May and June Speaker Presentations

Our speakers in May will be **Karla Henderlong & Madeline Yanov**, on the topic **“The Taxman Found Your Ancestor - Can You?”** Not many genealogists talk about or use tax records, but they can be vital to the search for your ancestor. Unlike Censuses, which are often taken every ten years, tax records are created every year, and can often be used to fill some of the gaps between censuses, or even replace a missing census. When a Courthouse burns down, tax records are among the first records recreated. The government does not want to lose the list of who owes it money! Join us and learn more about what can be found in Tax Records, what types of Tax Records are available, and how to use this valuable resource in your own search.



In June we welcome back popular speaker **Janice Sellers** with a new topic we haven't presented to our membership before: **“What Is Forensic Genealogy Really?”** The term “forensic genealogy” is used by many people, but what does it actually mean? Learn the definition of forensic, how it applies to genealogy, and who is using (and misusing) the term.

Janice M. Sellers is a professional genealogist who is passionate about her work. She loves to research her own family and everyone else's and will talk your ear off about genealogy given the chance. She specializes in Jewish, forensic, and newspaper research, edits three genealogy journals, and serves on the boards of three genealogy societies. Visit her website blog at Ancestral Discoveries.

Humor in an Obituary?

Contributed by Gayle Schiller

We must start right off by saying this is NOT an MDGS member or anyone we know. We're sharing it because it may seem like a traditional obituary – and it is – except for one particular phrase in the last line.

Dorothy A. "Stella" Scrobola



Dorothy A. "Stella" Scrobola was called home to our Lord on Friday, April 24, 2015.

Born July 14, 1930, to Joseph and Anne Foley, Stella, to all who knew her, was a unique and caring individual who touched the lives of all who knew her.

She married Charles C. Scrobola in 1957 and raised six loving children. She was totally dedicated to her children in all aspects of their lives. She was a permanent fixture at the Wyoming Valley Airport where she would always have a hug and kiss for everyone traveling through.

She was a graduate of Hanover High School and the Nesbitt School of Nursing. She married her husband, Charles C. Scrobola, M.D., and worked in Philadelphia as a personal care nurse while starting her family of six children. Stella devoted her entire life to her children and continues to influence their lives.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Joe and Anne Foley; sister, Marianne; brothers, Joe, Bill and Robert; her son, John; and her husband.

She is survived by her children, Charles J. and his wife, Lisa, James and his wife, Joyce, Michael and his wife, Carol, Bridget, Joseph and his wife, Sheryl; a shitload of grandchildren; and one big great-grandson.

Contributions

Tips from John (Bedecarre)

Curt Witcher's article below on photos and photo albums is particularly good. It really hits home in my own family's case. Somewhere along the line we came into possession of two large photo albums, primarily of my wife's family going back into the early 1900's. Virtually none of the photos are identified. Fortunately, my two daughters have taken an interest in the project of identifying the hundreds of photos contained in the albums. In addition they have scanned most of the photos and preserved them on CD's. They are creating Flash Drives to send to various living cousins to see if they can add to the identification process. While my family is playing catch-up with our old time albums, we have a great deal of catch-up to do on our more current photos. My wife Catherine loved taking family photos and filed them by year in albums, however, there are many that are not ID'd. Again my daughters have come to the rescue and are in the process of going over a trunk full of family photos and albums. The real lesson to be learned is to get in the habit of identifying your photos when they are taken or developed.



A Picture . . . and a Thousand Words

by Curt B. Witcher, Excerpt from *Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library*

The waning days of April and the first couple of days of May have been designated by the American Library Association as "Preservation Week--Pass It On." This year, The Genealogy Center highlighted the preservation of photographs. We tend to focus a lot of attention on preserving actual photographic entities, whether paper or digital, when we highlight preservation--and that's appropriate. However, equally of consequence is identifying the people in the photographs and the events captured in the images.

We are placing the photographic and image histories of our families in great jeopardy if we don't make the effort to organize and identify them. Take a quick look at the photographs you have taken in the last ten years. Can you write meaningful, complete captions for them with confidence? How many generations of descendants will be able to identify people, places, and events on your photos without the accurate and complete captions and notes perhaps only you can create?

I can appreciate that going through boxes and gigabytes of unidentified data can be a daunting task. Tackling a large project is most successfully done by breaking it into smaller, more manageable pieces. If there are many albums of unidentified pictures, pick your favorite one (or smallest one!) to work on first. Or pick the smallest box, the grubbiest box, the cleanest box, the box you recognize or that brings you memories--whichever one piques your interest. Then stop looking at what remains to be done and focus on all the great progress you're making.

As summers are typically the times for family reunions, use these opportunities to solicit assistance from family members who may know more about a particular family grouping or family story than you do.

Some of us are faced with the challenge of having large collections of images about which we truly know nothing. Don't despair. There are still ways to add some metadata to the images.

- ▶ See if the content or subjects of the unidentified photographs match one that is identified. You can then group all those photographs together as potentially coming from the same person, family, or location.
- ▶ If you have a number of unidentified photographs but you know they were from your Uncle Marvin, you can group them together as your "Uncle Marvin Collection." Perhaps there will be an opportunity in the future to converse with an Uncle Marvin family member about the images and obtain more detail at that time.
- ▶ If a group of unidentified photographs is in a particular album or other container, attempt to determine if there was a collecting theme for the album, e.g. was it a personal album, a church or family reunion album, a special ceremony album (graduation, birthday, wedding, retirement, etc.), a military scrapbook, a work-related album, and the like. Often times discerning and understanding the collecting context can help us look for opportunities for providing even more context for, and definition to, the images.

In The News

Clues in a Civil War Era Photo

By Maureen A. Taylor, photodetective, *Family Tree Magazine*, Jan 18, 2015

Winston Cochrane sent in this adorable photo of a mother and daughter. Mary Meaux and her daughter Nannie M. Cochrane posed for this image, which shows the close connection between the two. Winston would like to know if the daughter is wearing a wedding dress. She married in Louiseville, Ky., in July 1870, at age 21. At the time her mother was 51.

Here are a few things I immediately saw when looking at the picture for the first time.

- They both have slight smiles on their faces.
- They are holding hands!
- On the mother's dress, you can see the hoop line on her skirt.

Clues to Date the Image

- The size and shape of the card photograph identifies it as a carte de visite, a type of photograph first introduced to the United States in 1859.
- The double blue line on the card was popular throughout the 1860s.
- By the 1860s to early 1870s, round, cornered cards on thick cardstock were common.
- In the mid-1860s, fanciful trim appeared on dresses. I love how the zigzag stitch on the mother's skirt appears in a tighter pattern on the daughter's bodice. The daughter's dress features plackets of different colored fabric at the shoulder seam and along the bottom of the dress. It's more than an everyday dress. The mother's sleeves feature ruffled trim at the wrists, a common trim in the mid to late 1860s.
- How old are they? This is the big question. Does the daughter look 21? What do you think?
- One detail I don't have is the back of the card. A [revenue stamp](#) on the back would narrow the time frame, as would the design of the photographer's imprint.

So when was it taken? I'll rule out the early 1860s. The daughter wears a lovely dress with plenty of details that suggest it's worn for a special occasion. It's a light colored dress in an indeterminate color. Wedding dresses ranged from white to darker colors. Most brides in this period wore a very nice dress, not necessary white.

Her hat dates from the mid-late 1860s, when narrow-brimmed hats with trim became commonplace.

Until I see the back, I'll place this image in the circa 1868 time frame. Dating clothing is not always an exact science. Sometimes people wore older clothing styles, comfortable with what they've been wearing, rather than newer styles.

Identify your old mystery family photos with these guides by Maureen A. Taylor:

- *Family Photo Detective: Learn How to Find Genealogy Clues in Old Photos and Solve Family Photo Mysteries*
- *Fashionable Folks: Bonnets and Hats 1840-1900*
- *Finding the Civil War in Your Family Album*
- *Hairstyles 1840-1900*
- *Photo-Organizing Practices*
- *Preserving Your Family Photographs*
- *Searching for Family History Photos: How to Get Them Now*



In The News

8 Hints and Hacks for Searching [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)

By Tyler Moss, Online Editor, Family Tree University



Because it's not as ubiquitous as Ancestry.com, the general public is often less familiar with this awesome resource. But genealogists know that FamilySearch.org is the first place to begin building your family history- a giant, free database filled with digitized family records, documents, images and more. For many family historians, this website is among the online tools we revisit most, where our family tree slowly grows leaves and branches, ancestors and relatives.

However, because FamilySearch is such a rich, deep database, there are many layers of which you likely aren't even aware. For instance, how much time have you spent searching the International Genealogical Index (IGI), a collection of vital and church records that contains more than 460 million names? Do you know the difference between FamilySearch Family Trees and FamilySearch Genealogies?

1. You can **use wildcards** when searching Historical Records and Family Trees. An asterisk stands for any number of letters and a question mark stands for one letter.
2. The old version of FamilySearch let you narrow your search to a country, US state or a region of a foreign country. The new version of the website lets you **search on any word** in a place name, including counties, cities, towns, townships and parishes.
3. Historical Records matches automatically include similar name spellings. Click **Advanced Search** to search on exact name spellings, to search on a specific event (birth, marriage, residence, death) and to add a spouse's name or parents' names to your target person.
4. **Use the filters** (located on the left side of your screen) to narrow your Historical Records search results by category, such as Census & Lists, place or date.
5. If a book or record collection is online, the **library catalog now has links to the digital materials**.
6. Because FamilySearch catalogs records by the locality that kept them, your best bet for finding relevant microfilmed records is often **a place search** (select "place-names" from the drop-down menu). Type in your ancestor's county and state or parish and country to see what's available.
7. **An author search** turns up records created by a particular government agency as well as books by a specific person. Enter immigration naturalization service into the Last or Corporate Name field to see the FHL's holdings of US passenger list microfilm.
8. Use the **keyword search** as a catch-all option, especially when other searches strike out. This type of search finds a term anywhere in the catalog listing, not just the author, title or other specific field.

1950 Census Substitute: What to Use Until its Release Date

By Lisa Louise Cooke

The 1950 federal U.S. census will not be released to the public until April 2022. Here are two common questions we hear about the 1950 census:

Can I request individual census entry look-ups?

Yes, you may apply to receive copies of individual census entries from 1950-2010 for yourself or immediate relatives. It's not cheap—it's \$65 per person, per census year. But if you're having research trouble you think would be answered by a census entry, it might be worth it. [Click here](#) to learn more about the "Age Search Service" offered through the Census Bureau.

Is there a 1950 census substitute database?

Yes, [Ancestry has one](#). You might find it a little gimmicky, because it's just taken from their city directory collection from the mid-1940s to the mid-1950s. But it's a good starting point to target your U.S. ancestors living during that time period. The annual listings in city directories can help you track families from year to year.

For Your Information



Concord Family History Center "HOW TO CLASSES"

FREE classes are held on the **3rd Saturday** of each month, January - May at 10 am. The **May 16th** class will be ***Family History is not a Dead Subject*** presented by Jan Siddoway.

Concord Family History Center
3700 Concord Blvd, Concord.
Questions – call Jackie Hein at 827-4729

A Second Final Rest: The History of San Francisco's Lost Cemeteries

A film by [Trina Lopez](#) exhumes the hidden history of how this modern metropolis managed to systematically relocate nearly all of its burial grounds to make room for the living. Trina Lopez will be discussing the film at this private screening.

Oakland Family Search Library,
4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland
May 16, 2015 10 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.



A discussion will follow the screening on 'where are the records of the dead?'

[Register for this Event.](#) Members are Free, Non-Members \$20

National Genealogical Society Conference Online



May also brings the [National Genealogical Society's](#) conference entitled [Crossroads of America](#). If you have not made plans to travel to St. Charles, Missouri, on **May 13 - 16** then you can also enjoy the [On-Line program](#) and the Live Streaming of the event.

[Genealogy Tip of the Day:](#) Every genealogist should subscribe to this blog. Its bite-sized tips are practical and universal, and the daily pace keeps family history on your mind. Many of author Michael John Neill's tips come from his own mistakes -- you'll occasionally see a "don't do this!" He also authors Casefile Clues, a weekly subscription newsletter on serious methodology.

Ever wished you had a picture of the ship your ancestor boarded when he/she emigrated from the Old Country? by Donna Potter Phillips, *Family Chronicle* and *Internet Genealogy* author

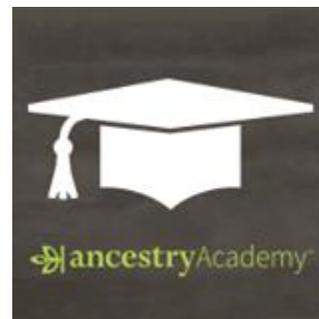
[ShiplIndex.org](#) might well answer that question. This website/database has "over 140,000 entries that are freely accessible, without subscribing. For \$8.00 per month you'll soon have access to well over 2,000,000 additional citations!" The website also carries this explanation: *To begin your research of a vessel, type its name into the search box above, and we will show you a variety of resources, including books, journals, websites, and more, that mention the ship you're looking for! If you're a historian, a model maker, a genealogist, a fact-checker, or anyone else who needs information about vessels, we'll get you where you need to go, and fast.* Just for fun, I typed in the name of the Italian passenger ship Andrea Doria, which I remember capsized and went down in the 1950s. There were pages and pages of citations for ships of this name! Wouldn't having an image of the ship upon which your ancestor sailed be a great addition to your family history?

For Your Information

Introducing Ancestry Academy, a New Way to Learn About Family History

Posted by [Ancestry Team](#) on April 16, 2015 in [Ancestry.com Site](#)

We are excited to announce the launch of [Ancestry Academy](#), a new educational website that offers exclusive, high-quality video courses taught by genealogy and family history experts. Ancestry Academy courses cover a wide range of relevant family history topics and offer something for genealogists of all levels. Here are a few things we think you'll love about Ancestry Academy:



Learn at your own pace – In-depth courses are broken into a series of short lessons that let you learn when you want and how you want. Watch a course all the way through or pick and choose the lessons most interesting to you.

Test your know-how – Try out your skills and take optional tests to make sure you're getting the most out of every course.

Learn on-the-go (coming soon!) – Learn at home or on-the-go with the free Ancestry Academy app, available for iOS and Android devices later this spring.

New courses added monthly – Continue strengthening your family history expertise with new courses added every month.

Free courses – Courses about Ancestry products and websites (AncestryDNA, Fold3, Family Tree Maker, etc.) are offered for free. Simply log in with your Ancestry account or create a new account to start learning.

Get unlimited access to all Ancestry Academy courses for just \$11.99 a month, \$99.99 a year, or as part of your World Explorer Plus subscription. [Click here to see all the courses you can take today.](#)

Did You Know?

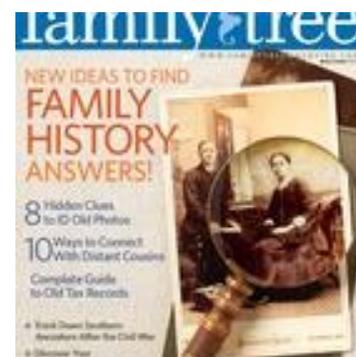
Many immigrants to Canada came from the United States or sailed from Europe to American ports on their way to Canada. Before April 1908, people were able to move freely across the border from the United States into Canada; no record of immigration exists for those individuals.

Free Genealogy Forms

Peruse our [Free Genealogy Forms board on Pinterest](#) to pick out the best free forms and e-books for your research needs.

Family Tree Magazine on Pinterest

They're a how-to genealogy magazine and online education program. And on their [Pinterest site](#) you can browse information on Maps & Family History, Genealogy Books, Genealogy Tips and Tricks, and many more subjects.



MDGS Calendar

Friday, May 15, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Creekside Clubhouse, Rossmoor

Speaker: Karla Henderlong & Madeline Yanov

Topic: "The Taxman Found Your Ancestor, Can You?"



2015 MDGS Speaker Schedule

Jun 19: Janice Sellers, "What is Forensic Genealogy Really?"

Jul 17: Francine Lloyd, "DAR Resources"

August No Meeting

Sep 18: To Be Announced

Oct 16: Susan Goss Johnston, topic to be announced

Nov 20: Lisa Gorrell, "City Directories"

Lunch with our Speakers

Each month (except August and December), members and guests are invited to attend lunch with that month's speaker, held at 11:30 a.m. at the Rossmoor Diner, located at 1908 Tice Valley Blvd., in the Rossmoor Shopping Center. Lunch reservations need to be made by the Thursday before the meeting. Contact Susan Rush at 925-674-0929 or e-mail her at gen4you@astound.net.



MDGS

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