

California Genealogical Society

CaliforniaAncestors.org

eNews

Since 1898

May, Vol. 17, No. 5

Message from the President

CGS is a whirlwind of activity. It's exciting. I want to share the news about three projects. One of the things I learned as a business owner is that change is essential to thrive. Businesses that keep doing the same thing the same ol' way wither. The same is true for our society. We need to continually reinvent ourselves to stay aligned with what is current in genealogy and technology. We didn't used to offer classes on DNA but we do now. We didn't used to offer classes online but today it is expected. Change is good.

Focus 2025 is an effort to understand where we are today and where we need to go. We have a great team of members being led by board member Roger Prince and Vice President, Joanna Shear. We are planning to conduct two surveys to learn about what other societies are doing to retain and attract members, and to better understand what our members want from CGS. The list of ideas is long and exciting.

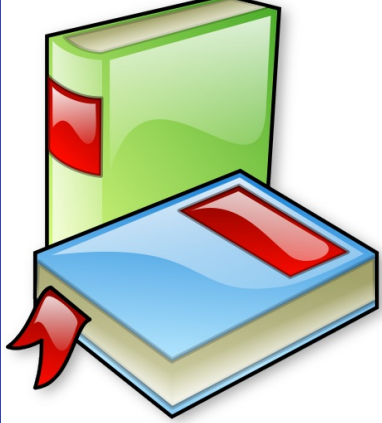
Our focus on **digitizing documents** continues. We are doing this both to preserve the rare and one-of-a-kind documents we hold and to make them available to our members. The Digital Archive Committee, led by Ron Madson is digitizing our rare books, vertical files as well as old business records. The later has enabled us to discard the hard copy and thereby make space for our expanding manuscripts collection.

The other big push has been to **upgrade our hybrid capabilities**. Next time you are in the library check out our new 75" television screen that is now enhancing our visual and audio capabilities during hybrid meetings and classes. The library committee used it during our meeting and it's great. We are also planning to upgrade our internet connection equipment that will further enhance hybrid meetings and classes.

Finally, the library is fully open now with no reservations required. We'd love to see you in the library so make a plan to come in and do some research. Here is a link to some of the [new books](#) that have been added to the library. Check the list for your research topics.

Tips and Talk

Tips and Talk classes at the Oakland Family Search Center are catching on!



Tips and Talk classes at the Oakland Family Search Center are catching on! We hope to see you there in May! I have been attending the classes and I have picked up many great tips to help me in my research.

These discussions are free to all! They are one hour long and are given at 11:00am and repeated at 7:00 pm. Each Wednesday will have a different focus.

We hope you will come early and stay after the group to have additional hands on assistance to take advantage of the amazing resources at OFSC.

- **May 3rd - "Got Questions?"** - Questions welcomed to help you with your genealogy projects. Bring lunch and join us in the break room!
- **May 10th - FamilySearch.org topics** - *How do you do that in FamilySearch? Some questions and answers.*
- **May 17th - Free subscription databases at OFSC**- *Tips for using MyHeritage*
- **May 24th - General Genealogy Topics**- *Ways to find living descendants to advance your research*
- **May 31st - Bonus Wednesday!** - *Paleography: How to read handwritten records*

Please look for Tips and Talks on [Eventbrite](#) and on [the OFSC webpage](#).



CGS Moves Into the Future

Look at what we've got!

In an effort to improve our hybrid meetings and classes, our Remote Communications Team (headed by Adelle Treakle) purchased a 75" television monitor for the library. You wouldn't believe the difference - now it's like our virtual members are right here with us!

Wendy Polivka attending the April Library committee meeting via Google Meet.

The team also bought a rolling cart that enables us to easily move the monitor between our classroom and lunchroom as needed. This new technology has already greatly enhanced the recent library committee meeting and Family Tree Maker SIG meeting.

We're not stopping there!

CGS might be turning 125 this year, but we're looking to the future. The CGS board recently approved having John Ralls, chair of the Technology Committee, upgrade our wifi to further improve our hybrid capabilities (i.e. prevent us from losing our internet connection mid-session). We want to make sure we stay as connected with our community as possible so we are not cutting corners with this one. The total anticipated cost is about \$4000, but it's going to be worth it!

Will you help by donating to support these state-of-the-art improvements?



Research Trip - EARLY BIRD PRICING

SALT LAKE CITY

Research Trip

6 Days
For Just
\$1050 /Person
\$1500 for single occupancy
Airfare not included

More Information at
CaliforniaAncestors.org

We are happy to announce the revival of [our annual society research trip to the FamilySearch Library](#) (formerly called the Family History Library) in Salt Lake City.

Join us on May 21st for [an info session and virtual meetup](#) to get all your trip questions answered.

Early bird pricing: if you register for the trip before July 1st, you'll save \$100 with early bird pricing (that's

just \$950 for single-occupancy!).

The trip includes:

- five-night stay at the Radisson Hotel
- five days of uninterrupted research at the largest genealogical library in the world
- pre-trip meeting and consultation
- guided tour of the library
- research assistance by [Evan Wilson](#) and [Stewart Traiman](#)
- daily hotel breakfast
- two group dinners at local restaurants

Classes and SIGs

We are pleased to continue to offer our [classes](#) and [special interest groups](#). We have online classes available as well as some opportunities to meet in-person. [Please visit our Events and Education page to learn more.](#)

All remote classes will now have live closed captioning. If you feel you need a bit of extra help in either of these areas to have a successful experience with our Zoom events, email events@californiaancestors.org and we will be in touch.



2023 Intro to Genealogy - 1st Saturday Free! Overview and Focused Topics

Not sure how to get started with your family research? Interested in refreshing your skills? Join us for a FREE Introduction to Genealogy class on the FIRST SATURDAY of every month.

[Saturday, 6 May from 10 am to noon](#)



Round Table

Facilitated by Jacqueline Henderson and Lisa Gorrell, CG

This group is for CGS Members to connect. It is a venue where attendees can share things they've learned or found. Often this sparks ideas for others on their own research. It is also a great way to brainstorm ideas for new avenues of research when you get stumped.

2nd Wednesday of each month, next on **10 May from 6:30 - 8 pm**
Email [Jacqueline](#) or [Lisa](#) for a link to the Zoom meeting.



Family Tree Maker Special Interest Group Hosted by Ron Madson and Karen Halfon

This Family Tree Maker Special Interest Group is perfect for new FTM users, people who are just FTM curious, and experienced FTM veterans. All Welcome!

[Saturday, 20 May from 1 to 3 pm](#)



RootsMagic Users Group - SIG

Users of Roots Magic will meet to discuss helpful hints for using the software.

Wednesday, 26 Apr from 6:30 pm

We meet on the 4th Wednesdays



Excel for Genealogy Workshop

Led by Stewart Traiman

Laying out genealogy facts in Excel can help researchers see gaps in knowledge or correlations between data points. Breakthroughs can easily happen by visualizing data in spreadsheets. Stewart shows many examples of his use of spreadsheets to track newspaper clippings, a vital records catalog, tracking ancestor addresses over time, and tracking whole families over many censuses. Stewart will teach how to use Excel filter, sort, color code, calculations, and many other functions. Spreadsheets are fun!

Saturday, 13 May from 1 to 4 pm



Mayflower Descendants Special Interest Group

Hosted by Robert Trapp

The Mayflower Descendants SIG focuses initially on Mayflower ancestry and how to join The Society of California Mayflower Descendants. The group discusses research in New England, parts of Canada and the upper Atlantic seaboard states.

Friday, 19 May from 10:30 am to 11:30 am



Info Session and Virtual Meetup for the 2023 CGS Salt Lake City Research Trip

Hosted by Stewart Traiman and Evan Wilson

Come to learn more about the SLC FamilySearch Library Trip from the leaders, Stewart Traiman and Evan Wilson.

Sunday, 21 May from 2 pm to 3 pm

Eastern European Special Interest Group

Hosted by Craig Siulinski

Come to a Special Interest Group (SIG) discussion focused on Eastern





European Genealogy. Our group is open to all.

Saturday, 17 Jun from 10 am to Noon



Tax Records: More Exciting Than You Might Think Presented by Annette Burke Lyttle

Tax records can help us locate our ancestors in place and time. They can tie our ancestors to land or confirm for us that an ancestor did not own land. They can help us follow ancestral migrations and separate same-named persons. Sometimes they can help us pinpoint a death date or timeframe. Tax records can act as censuses between the censuses. The variety of taxes levied by governments at all levels has left a rich record of our ancestors' lives and their sometimes-changing fortunes.

Saturday, 24 Jun from 10 to 11:30 am



DNA Skills - SIG

The DNA Skills Special Interest Group will continue to develop their understanding of DNA techniques, review new developments in DNA testing and tools, and discuss member's research problems and case studies.

Prerequisite: Completion of CGS DNA Series or equivalent DNA class / experience. Must have uploaded DNA test results at one of the common DNA websites.

Please contact Mark McLaren at greatscot@earthlink.net.

San Francisco SIG

The California Genealogical Society is reconstituting the San Francisco SIG monthly meetings and the **first meeting will be held on June 17 at 10 am!**

If you are interested in participating in this group meeting, please email the host at sfsig@californiaancestors.org.

SF-SIG Meeting Description: Whether you're just starting out researching your family history or have been searching for years and need ideas on how to get past brick walls or are interested in finding your ancestors' records pre and post-1906, including those gold rush pioneers, and ancestors in and around the San Francisco Bay Area, join the conversation with us at the CGS library hybrid meetings where you will be guided in building skills to uncover information that leads to creating a more complete family story.



Lead: Sandra Huber

Contact: sfsig@californiaancestors.org for more information.

Swedish SIG

Do you know how to start researching your Swedish ancestors? Do you know how to access Swedish archives? Have you hit a brick wall with your research? Would you like to help others with their research? How about joining a Special Interest Group (SIG) and working with like-minded people researching their Swedish ancestors?

If you are interested in joining a group to help you with your Swedish research, contact Sven-Ovo Westberg at sow@grels.net and let him know of your interest. He has some great ideas and would love to lead a group interested in Swedish genealogy.

Lead: Sven-Ove Westberg

Format: Hybrid (online and in-person)

Meeting Time: To be determined based on interest

Contact: sow@grels.net for more information.

Volunteers



If you have been thinking about contributing some of your time and talent to our 125-year-old organization, take a look at our list of **Volunteer Opportunities**.

We are in need of Desk Duty volunteers! Our wonderful Desk Duty helpers let us keep the library open for visitors and are an important part of what we do here at CGS. Don't worry, we give you all of the training and information you need, so if you'd like to spend a little more time in the library, we'd love to have you!

See something else that looks interesting? Want more information about a particular volunteer position? Contact [Sheri Fenley](#) if you have any questions about CGS volunteer opportunities.

Remember - CGS has been around since 1898 and is operated solely by volunteers. We couldn't do it without you!

CGS Genie Awards

Mark your calendars! The annual CGS Genie Awards will be presented on Saturday, June 10, celebrating the outstanding work of our volunteers during the 2022 National Genealogical Society Conference in Sacramento. Our volunteers will be recognized following the monthly 10 a.m. CGS Board Meeting. On the agenda is a potluck lunch (bring a favorite dish!) and a short presentation by Maureen Hanlon about 1898 Spanish American war records. The festivities will take place at the **PGAdesign** building, 444 17th Street, Oakland (about three blocks from the CGS Library). Parking is available on Webster Street just below 17th Street, and PGAdesign is easily accessible from the 19th Street BART station. All CGS members are welcome! Questions? Contact **Kathleen Beitiks** or **Sheri Fenley**.

Meetings & More

[CGS Monthly Board Meeting - 13 May](#)

The CGS Board will meet online via Zoom and in-person at the PGA Design Building in Downtown Oakland. Members are welcome to attend. Please register in advance and sign in early to make sure you are able to see the program. We will send joining instructions the night before which will give you access to the online meeting.

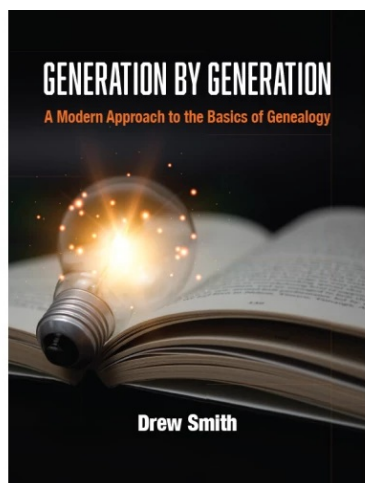


In-person location: the Offices of PGAdesign at 444 17th Street, just off Broadway and at the 19th Street BART exit

If you would like to host a Special Interest Group, please contact [Jacqueline Henderson](#).

New Books in the CGS Library

Here are reviews of some of the recent additions to our library!



Generation by Generation: A Modern Approach to the Basics of Genealogy by Drew Smith

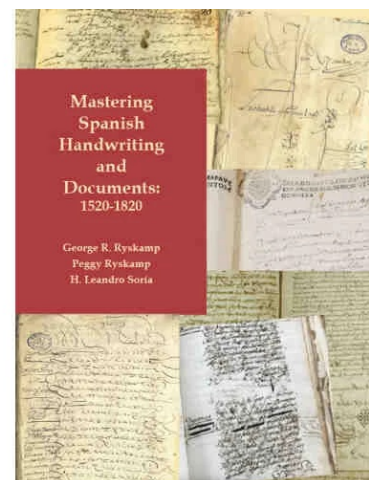
This is a great book for beginner-level family historians or anyone who is interested in reading about the new features offered by different genealogy services, programs, and websites. The book is full of large screenshots so you can see exactly what the author is talking about and it's very easy to skim the book and find what you're looking for.

One of the best parts of the book is toward the end. Don't miss the section on "Generations after 1950 in the U.S." if you've been a little unsure about how to research a family without available census data!

Mastering Spanish Handwriting and Documents, 1520-1820 by George Ryskamp, Peggy Ryskamp, and H. Leandro Soria

This book dives deep into a very focused topic but manages to never drown the reader with too much information. There are plenty of samples and transcription charts so anyone seeking help with handwritten documents written in Spanish.

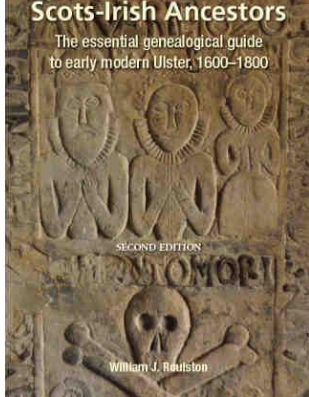
The truly impressive thing is that this book simultaneously tackles Spanish-to-English translation, handwriting-to-print transcription, and a wide spectrum of record types that you're likely to be researching if you're facing this particular challenge. All in all, this book is well done and would be a great help to anyone who finds themselves working with these documents.



Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors: The Essential Genealogical Guide to Early Modern Ulster, 2nd Edition

Scots-Irish Ancestors

The essential genealogical guide
to early modern Ulster, 1600-1800



by William J. Roulston

We love a comprehensive text!

This book has been around for a bit, with the first (shorter) version coming out in 2005 and the more expanded textbook coming out in 2018. Now, with this 2nd edition, we have even more information and updates about the easiest way to gain access to different types of records if you're digging into your Scots-Irish genealogy.

Fair warning - this book is thick and positively stuffed with information, so don't think you'll flip through it quickly. That being said, the index is broken up nicely so if you're looking for a very specific record type of geographic area, you can jump right to that part of the book.

Blogs and Videos

Please subscribe to the [CGS Blog](#). If you haven't been receiving our blog posts on a regular basis, be sure to re-subscribe. It is a great source of information about classes, events, volunteers, and members.

We welcome your stories! If you have an idea for a blog post, a family history story you want to share, or would like to be an occasional or even regular guest contributor, please contact Blog Editor [Jennifer Dix](#).

SUBSCRIBE



From the California Genealogical Society

- [Update: Salt Lake City trip early-bird discount and info session](#)
- [CGS Committees: Facilities](#)
- [Mayflower Descendants SIG](#)

Events & Conferences

There are always many other events happening in the Bay Area and across the nation.

For the latest events, check [Conference Keeper.org](#).

Local Events

[Family History Library Webinar Series](#)

[Bay Area Genealogy Calendar](#)
maintained by the Sutro Library

National & International Conference Schedule

[National Genealogical Society](#)

May 31 - June 3

[Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh \(GRIP\)](#)

June 18 - 23 (virtual) and July 19 - 24

[Midwest African American Genealogy Institute \(MAAGI\)](#)

[Genealogical Institute on Federal Records \(Gen-Fed\)](#)

All events are subject
to cancellation

to cancellation.

Please check with each event's website prior to making plans to attend.

[The Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research \(IGHR\)](#)

[42nd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy](#)

[Salt Lake Genealogical Institute \(SLIG\)](#)

[RootsTech 2024](#)

February 29 - March 2

[Ohio Genealogical Society Conference](#)

California Genealogical Society

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(510) 663-1358

Contact Us Via
Email



Our library is open by appointment, **Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10 am to 2 pm** and on the **third Saturday of the month from 10 am to 4 pm**

To make this work for our dedicated volunteers who come in just for you, please let us know you'll be coming to the library by sending an email to visit@californiaancestors.org no later than 7 pm the night before your visit.

Visits are free for members and non-members can pay the \$5 fee at time of the visit or join and have the fee applied to membership cost.

Join The
Society

Renew Your Membership