



California Genealogical Society
CaliforniaAncestors.org

eNews

Since 1898

January 2026, Vol. 20, No. 1

The CGS Library reopens Saturday, January 3, 2026, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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*Vintage postcard (c1917) above
courtesy of CGS Member*



ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING & ELECTIONS

Join us for the annual membership meeting and election of the new Board of Directors (see slate below). A potluck lunch will follow. The agenda also includes approval of the 2026 budget and presentation of the annual report.

CGS board members and guests will meet online via Zoom and in person at the CGS Library in Downtown Oakland.

Please click here to [register in advance](#) and sign in early. We will send instructions on joining the Zoom the day before.

Saturday, January 10, 2026
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

2026 Slate of Candidates for the Board of the California Genealogical Society

Members will vote on these candidates at the Annual Member Meeting:

- Proposed for a first term: **Pat Smith**
- Proposed for a second term: **Bob Trapp**
- Proposed for a third term: **Evan Wilson, Cindy Thomson, Roger Prince**

Departing and Continuing Members:

- Individuals who have left the Board: Chris Pattillo, Carly Morgan
- Ending Term in 2026: Grant Din
- Continuing First Term: Rudiger Wolf, Susan Logas
- Continuing Second Term: Keith Montgomery
- Continuing Third Term: Ron Madson, Adelle Treakle

Logged-in Members can see [current Board member bios here](#).



About Nominee Pat Smith

Pat Smith has been a dedicated CGS volunteer for many years, serving among other roles as member and then chair of the Research Committee and contributing regularly as a Desk Duty volunteer.

Volunteering is second nature to Pat. In addition to her work with CGS, she takes regular shifts at the Children's Hospital Branches thrift shop. Known for her thoughtfulness, straightforward approach, and wry sense of humor, Pat brings deep knowledge of both the organization and its members. [Read an interview with Pat here](#).

**CGS would like to welcome six new members this month:
Pauline Murano, Ann Maris, Sarah Lin Berg-Tayloe, Linda Vida,
Danielle Clayton, and Jack Heatherly**

Upcoming Member Gatherings

CGS members are getting together! Send a note to kflom@californiaancestors.org for RSVP information and location. Invitations are sent to the members in the region, but all members are welcome to attend events based on their schedules.



Each session is limited in number. Use the appropriate link below to register for the gathering you want to attend. Additional location details will be provided two days before

the gathering.

Oakland Family Search Center

- Thursday, January 8, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
- [Oakland RSVP](#)

Lafayette Member's Home

- Monday, January 12, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- [Lamorinda RSVP](#)

Sacramento Land Park Member's Home

- Wednesday, January 14, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
- [Sacramento RSVP](#)

Walnut Creek Library

- Thursday, January 15, 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- [Walnut Creek RSVP](#)

San Francisco Member's Home

- Thursday, January 29, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- [San Francisco RSVP](#)

Oakland Family Search Center

- Wednesday, February 11, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
- [Oakland RSVP](#)

Education Calendar

NEXT LEVEL CLASSES

NEW EVENT ACCESS FOR MEMBERS IN 2026

Members no longer need to register for most events. Members will get all the information for classes by logging into the CGS website. Non-members must register on EventBrite and pay a \$5 fee.

- Members should first [log into the CGS website](#), then go to the [Events & Education](#) page and find the class you want to attend.
- The Zoom link, link to handouts, and survey will be directly beneath the title of the class.
- If members would like a reminder email, you can still register. Click on the title on the Event & Education page which will take you to EventBrite, and then click on "Reserve a Spot".
- You do not need to enter code, just click on Plus for number attending.
- Please note: speakers may not upload handouts until the evening before the event so check back on the Events and Education page on the day of event if not there before.



General Land Office: Get the Most Out of the BLM-GLO Website

Presented by Lisa Gorrell

Discover the insider tips and tricks for navigating the BLM-GLO website with Lisa Gorrell

Wednesday, 21 January
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

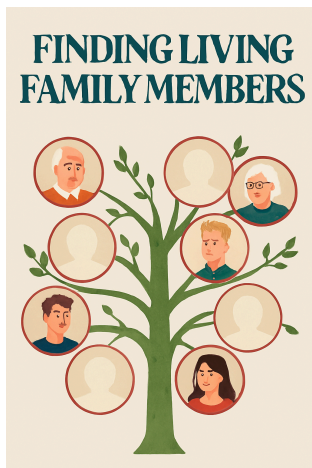


Transcription and Abstraction of Original Records

Presented by Roger Prince

Learn about using traditional techniques to interpret old records with the assist from AI with Roger Prince

Saturday, 24 January
1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.



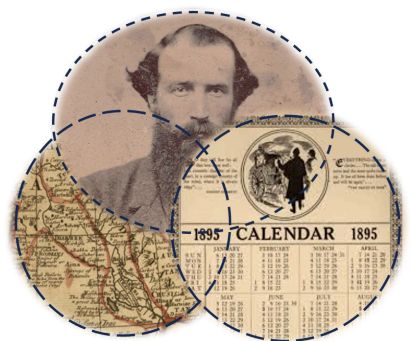
FINDING LIVING FAMILY MEMBERS

Finding Living Family Members to Advance Your Genealogical Research

Presented by Jane Lindsey

Jane Lindsey will discuss ways to find family members, provide suggestions on how to contact them.

Wednesday, 18 February
6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.



Precision Genealogy: Finding Your Ancestors in the Right Context

Three Part Series Presented by Pam Brett

Unlock the power of focused research by learning how to pinpoint the intersection of **person, place, and time**. This hands-on series will level up your research game.

Saturdays, February 28, March 7 and March 14
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Ongoing Intro Series & Member Special Interest Groups



Free Intro to Genealogy

This month (Zoom only): Genealogy Basics Overview
[Register here](#)

Saturday, Jan. 3, 10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m.



San Francisco SIG

If you are interested in joining the SF SIG, please send an email to SFSIG@californiaancestors.org.

Saturday, Jan. 17, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.



Family Tree Maker (SIG)

Hosted by Ron Madson and Karen Halfon

Check out the FTM-SIG website, <http://ftm-sig.org> to find the topics for the upcoming meetings.

Saturday, Jan. 17, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

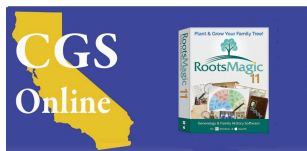


DNA Skills (SIG)

Hosted by Mark McLaren

If you are interested in joining the DNA Skills SIG, please send an email to Mark McLaren.

Monday Jan. 26, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.



RootsMagic Users Group (SIG)

Hosted by Keith Montgomery

[Register here.](#)

Wednesday Jan. 28, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.



Eastern European SIG

Hosted by Criag Siulinksi

[Register here](#)

Saturday, Feb. 28, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

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



Tips & Talk

Oakland FamilySearch Classes

In Person at Oakland FamilySearch Center or Online

CGS and Oakland FamilySearch Center volunteers collaborate to host free, fun, informal discussions on a variety of topics. Open to all. See website calendar for details and schedule at the [OFSC Website](#).

Volunteer Opportunities

Join Our Team of Dedicated Volunteers!

Looking for a way to meet more CGS members, give back to the society, and even boost your own genealogical research skills? We'd love to have you join our volunteer team! The CGS Volunteer Committee helps match members with manageable, meaningful opportunities—and it's one of the best ways to get to know fellow family history enthusiasts. See [current opportunities here](#)



URGENT Need: 2026 Zoom hosts

Are you good with operating Zoom and helping folks who are new to it? Join the existing committee to support hybrid and online zoom programs.

- Open and close Zoom sessions, monitor chat box and support speakers and participants with (minor) technical problems.
- Host from your home, or host at the occasional hybrid sessions at the library.
- Flexible commitment; sign up for the times that work for your schedule.
- Training and a script is provided.

[Contact Remote Communications Chair](#)

Blogs and Videos

Catch up on fun reads and get inspired by blog editor **Debbie Mascot**. Recent [CGS Blog](#) topics include:

- ***Jumping to Conclusions***
- ***Why Not Make a Calendar***
- ***Create a Family Atlas***
- ***New Death Index: New York***



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 us here](#).

California Genealogical Society

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Contact Us Via Email



Our library is open **Thursday, Friday, and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

See [Directions and Parking](#) for info on Saturday visits, which have different procedures than weekdays.

Visits are free for all on First Saturdays and always free for members. 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](#)

California Genealogical Society | 2201 Broadway, Suite LL2 | Oakland, CA 94612 US

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