

California Genealogical Society
CaliforniaAncestors.org

eNews

Since 1898

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Update on our Big News

As announced in an eNews special edition, the CGS board gave final approval on February 14 to move ahead on two major initiatives: **rebuild of our website** and back end digital infrastructure and **move to 1841 Berkeley Way in Berkeley**.

Feedback to date has been positive from both newer and longtime members, eleven to one, with the latter expressing regret about leaving Oakland.

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

Want more details on who, when, why and what? Two new pages, one for each major initiative, are in development on our California Ancestors website and will be ready soon with background and links to the more frequent updates in the blog.

WHAT ABOUT THE BOOKS?

The new space in Berkeley is smaller than our Breuner Building digs, so we have been planning and making necessary changes for some time. The Library Committee had understandable reluctance to get rid of any of our precious volumes. But with the vast amount of information now available online, the committee took this on. The Library team loves books and worked hard not to compromise the quality of what CGS offers our members. Every book that has been deaccessioned is available online for free on one or more reputable sites including FamilySearch, HathiTrust and the Internet Archive. There's more work to be done and additional volunteers would be most appreciated. Help on Thursday for as

CGS publications links
and eNews credits

much time as you can spare between 10:00 a.m. to 2:00
p.m.
Contact [Chris Pattillo](#) to learn more.



March Board Meeting

Saturday, March 14, 2026
10 a.m.
In-person TBD or by Zoom
[Register here](#)

Remembering the Many Homes of CGS



The Fairmont



Lame Medical Building



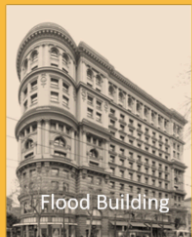
War Memorial Building



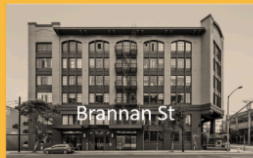
De Young Building



California Historical
Society on Pacific



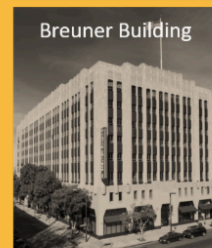
Flood Building



Brannan St



Latham Building



Breuner Building

Over the past 128 years, CGS has called many places home. Our books were housed by members before the 1906 earthquake, then at eponymous San Francisco buildings, and later at two locations in Oakland. Along the way, we've been homeless, conjoined and cohabited. Next year, we add a new chapter as we head to Berkeley (bottom row). For a deeper look at our past, read Kathryn Doyle's engaging 2010 blog post, [There's One in Every Family: The Wanderer](#).

The California Nugget Wants to Hear from You



Where Were Your Ancestors in 1776?

America celebrates its 250th birthday this year, and *The California Nugget* would like to include anecdotes from our members about what their ancestors were doing at that time. You don't have to have a Revolutionary War patriot or a Californio in your lineage— we are

interested in the diverse backgrounds of our many members! If you have an idea to submit, please email nugget@californiaancestors.org.

Above; *The Siege of Boston*, (March 1776) by Louis S. Glanzman. Source: National Park Service

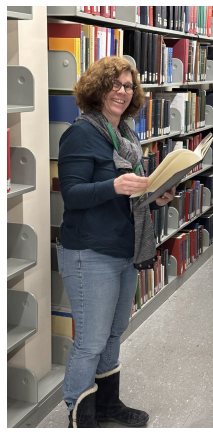
Neither snow, nor sleet...

Temperatures below 10 degrees at the beginning of the week did not deter our intrepid band of researchers, who set out to visit Boston's rich historical and genealogical archives and libraries last month. The trip coincided with the 250 year anniversary of the siege of the city that began in April of 1775 and ended in March of 1776.

Their itinerary included the Massachusetts Historical Society (group photo site shown below), the rebranded American Ancestors (formerly the New England Historical and Genealogical Society), and the Boston Public Library. Researchers could select sites to visit as well as benefit from guided assistance by trip leader, **Matt Berry**, a Certified Genealogist since 2019.



Above: the CGS Boston Research Trip group enjoying the warmth and ambience of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Front row from left: Diane Wild, Jane Lindsey, Matt Berry, Gary Knecht. Back row,: Jim Russell, Pam Brett, Amy Lennane, Thomas Mathews, Roger Prince, Kathy Javdani, Susan Logas, Karen Berry



Above: Matt and Karen Jones Berry at the Boston Symphony for Tchaikovsky.
Left: Amy Lennane in the seventh floor stacks at American Ancestors

Above: one of two group dinners, at Piattini.
Right: the partially frozen Boston Harbor from the plane. Below: Kathy Javdani at American Ancestors 5th Floor reading room. The Torah Ark Curtain and desk are part of The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center. Bottom right: Celebrating the last night with a pizza dinner at the Salty Pig.



**CGS would like to welcome new members this month:
Stacy Lane, Steven Coker, West McDonough, Kelvin Brewer,
Tom Walker, and Joan Harris
Welcome back Carol Scott and Susan Pappas**

Upcoming Member Gatherings



CGS members are getting together! Invitations are sent to the members who live in a region, but members are welcome to attend any gathering that works for their schedule. Spaces are limited. Click location below to reserve a spot. For RSVP information and location, contact kflom@californiaancestors.org

Sacramento

- Wednesday, March 11,

Walnut Creek Library

- Thursday, March 26

- 1:30-3:30 p.m.

- [Sacramento RSVP](#)

Oakland FamilySearch Center: 2 events

- Wednesday, March 11
- 1:00-2:30 p.m.
- [Oakland daytime RSVP](#)

NEW Evening gathering

- Wednesday, April 8
- 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
- [Oakland RSVP](#)

Danville

- Thursday, March 12
- 10:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m
- [Danville RSVP](#)

- 10:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m

- [Walnut Creek RSVP](#)

San Francisco Public Library

- Thursday, March 26
- 10:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m
- [San Francisco RSVP](#)

Lamorinda

- Monday, April 13
- 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- [Lamorinda RSVP](#)

Member Focus: Stomp, Step, Slide!



Clogging is an energetic, percussive folk dance originating from 18th-century Appalachian traditions with European and African influences, characterized by rhythmic, audible footwork. It's a niche hobby, and we've found not one but two CGS volunteers who are avid cloggers. Learn about clogging, its history and the **Diablo Mountain Cloggers**, led by **Lois Elling**, the Director and our member, who keep this tradition alive [here](#). And about the tradition of clog making [here](#).

Glenda Castain, who staffs our front desk at the library every first Thursday, took lessons from Lois Elling after learning line dancing at a Nevada workshop in the 1990's prompted by her mother. Her family originated from Louisiana and were not known to be dancers but Glenda admits to owning at least five pairs of cowboy boots in addition to several types of clogs. Glenda is also a lover of English mysteries and any type of crafting. She retired as a laptop, desktop and network trainer.



Lois Elling, third from right, has been clogging and teaching clogging for the past 49 and half years, and is going for 50. Lois is our current Membership Chair, keeping our rosters up to date and reminders going out. She has also taught our writing classes, been a valuable member of the publication team, heading up the newsletter and working on the Nugget. She



helped design the 2016 Capital Campaign and our logo and stationary. In addition to clogging, she is a talented photographer, posting her *Sometimes Daily Photos* (and also her Wordle scores) on her Facebook page. A recent post shows the church in Blekinge County, Sweden where her grandmother grew up.

Remembering Shirley Hoyer



Shirley at the 2022 Holiday Party

Generous Long Time Volunteer

Members of the CGS Library Committee were saddened to learn of the passing of their friend and fellow volunteer, Shirley Hoyer. Shirley and her husband Elliott Aaronson joined CGS in 2006 and Shirley immediately volunteered and became a valued member.

She was a key part of the team that conducted our periodic shelf reads—work that suited her well, given her keen eye for detail. She had an important role in pricing books for sale, helping to generate funds that support the

society. During the Covid period, when CGS received an extraordinary volume of donated materials, Shirley was part of the dedicated group that processed hundreds of books.

Everyone appreciated Shirley's wry sense of humor. Committee members recalled the stories she would tell during their lunch break, keeping the whole room laughing

at her tales – particularly those from her days as an emergency room doctor at Highland Hospital.

Despite living with Parkinson's disease, Shirley continued volunteering until early 2024, her spirit and humor undiminished. A native of El Cerrito, she also devoted time to the Alameda County Humane Society She especially enjoyed her work with cats—and her ever-present earrings. She will be missed.

Release of 1926 Irish Census

A Reason to Celebrate into April for Irish Genealogists!

On **April 18, 2026**, a month and a day after St. Patrick's feast day, the long-awaited 1926 Census, the first since 1911, will finally be released by the National Archives of Ireland.

The census covers only the Free Irish States but has added family data, compared to 1911. [See a blank census page](#) and [read more](#) on the official release NAI page here. Or better yet, attend this month's Irish SIG (link below) and learn details and how to prepare.



Education Calendar

NEXT LEVEL CLASSES

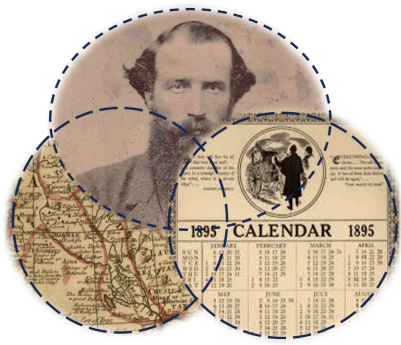
NEW EVENT ACCESS FOR MEMBERS IN 2026

Members no longer need to register for most events and Next Level classes are free for them. Log [into the CGS website](#), then go to the [Events & Education](#) and see instructions. **Non-members** register with the EventBrite link and pay \$5.

Questions? Contact [Events](#).

Continuing this Month: Part 2. Places and Part 3. Time of Precision Research Series

Cleaning out closets? Getting rid of the old? This series falls right into that frame of mind and will help clear up and validate tree entries and keep you on the right path in the future. Both these sessions will be recorded and available online.



All three sessions will be recorded and available online

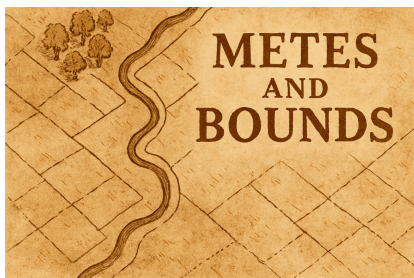
[Precision Research: Finding Your Ancestors in the Right Context](#)

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.

Saturday, March 7 and March 14
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Zoom (free to members, \$5 for non-members)

More from Lisa Gorrell, CG, on understanding early land records and probate records



[Land Records in Former Colonial States: What is Metes & Bounds](#)

Wednesday, March 18
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Zoom (free to members, \$5 for non-members) and in-person (free to all) at Oakland Family Search Library.



[Probate Records: More than Wills](#)

Understand the difference between testate and intestate estates and what that means for your research.

Wednesday, April 14
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Zoom (free to members, \$5 for non-members) and in-person (free to all) at Oakland Family Search Library.



[Excel for Genealogists](#)

with Stewart Traiman

Learn to use Excel to help organize your genealogy and reveal patterns and gaps.

Saturday, April 25
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
Zoom (free to members, \$5 for non-members)

Ongoing Intro Series & Member Special Interest Groups

Free Intro to Genealogy

This month: Vital Records (Birth, Marriage, and Death)

[Register here](#) to attend in-person or by Zoom



San Francisco SIG

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

Saturday, March 21, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.



Family Tree Maker (SIG)

Hosted by Ron Madson and Karen Halfon

[Register Here](#)

Saturday, March 21, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

For much more information please visit the FTM-SIG website, <http://ftm-sig.org>



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, March 30, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.



Irish Ancestry SIG

Hosted by Maureen Hanlon

Looking back on 10 years, Release of the 1926 Irish Census, Conferences and classes, Guest speaker from San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society's Irish SIG [Register here](#) for Zoom; meeting will be recorded Saturday, March 28, 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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



In Person and Zoom Classes at the Oakland FamilySearch Center

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

Outside Learning Opportunities

RootsTech 2026: March 5-7

Billed as the world's largest family history event and hosted by FamilySearch, RootsTech features keynote speakers, hundreds of online and in-person genealogy classes (**free online**), a virtual Expo Hall, and daily forums, covering everything from DNA to ethnic research. Visit RootsTech.org to register and build your schedule. And read this [article](#) to get the most out of this year's RootTech.



NGS 2026 Family History Conference "America at 250" (May 27-30)

Grand Wayne Convention Center In Fort Wayne, Indiana and virtually. On-line and in-person [registration here](#)

GRIP Registration Opens February 3

The Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh will be holding nine virtual courses in June, and eight in-person courses in July, with the new addition of two special courses in the fall. <https://grip.ngsgenealogy.org/>

Looking for a particular topic? Click on site icons below to search local and national listings.

Bay Area Genealogy Calendar



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 either from home or in-person at the library or events.

At right, a plea for help from the **Desk Volunteer** team. We need to staff the library on the first Friday and third Saturday of the month. It's a four hour shift, greeting and helping library visitors and you'll have time to do some of your own research. Training provided.

See more about the desk job and all the [current opportunities here](#)



CGS Publications Online



The California Genealogical Society sends our publications by email to members and subscribers. You can also visit our website to read or download a PDF. Click links below for current and past issues. Member log-in is required for *Jukebox Genealogy* and *The California Nugget*.

- CGS Blog: weekly, [read online](#)
- eNews: every month on the 1st, [PDF](#)
- *Jukebox Genealogy* newsletter: every two months on the 15th, [PDF](#)
- *The California Nugget* journal: semiannually, [read online](#)

Comments and contributions to the [eNews](#) are welcome. Tell us what you do when you're not doing genealogy and we'll share in our Member Focus feature.

CREDITS

CGS "homes" from various online historical and real estate sites

Boston Diary photos courtesy of CGS members.

Member Gathering photo from Kim Flom

Desk volunteer photos courtesy of Ron Madson's Flickr albums

2022 Cornwall daffodils, Glenda Castain photo by Maureen Hanlon

Clog danders from Lois Elling

Clog shoes: <https://tradfolk.co/art/art-interviews/clog-making-and-why-we-should-cherish-it/>

Shirley Hoye photo courtesy of Chris Pattillo

St Patrick: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki>

California Genealogical Society

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(510) 663-1358

Contact Us



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](#)

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