



California Genealogical Society
CaliforniaAncestors.org

eNews

Since 1898

May 2026 Vol. 20, No. 5

The CGS Library will be closed Saturday, May 23 for Memorial Day Weekend

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Genealogy World News:

May Day is Lei Day and More

May Day is [Lei Day](#) in Hawai'i, one of many ways cultures around the world mark the arrival of spring and honor the cycles of life, renewal, survival, and hope. Across major continents, workers march for International Workers Day. Since pre-Christian times, in much of Europe, May brings the May Queen and her court, Maypoles, flower wreaths, and parades. In Japan, Children's Day is May 5, while in Southeast Asia, Buddha Day is a significant observance. In the United States, May is the month dedicated to honoring mothers and is also the home of Memorial Day—first observed in 1868 as Decoration Day to remember those who died in the Civil War. Our *Jukebox Genealogy* newsletter, arriving May 15th this month will feature stories about our military ancestors.

May is also designated as [Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#), offering many opportunities to explore family histories, learn about diverse cultures, and

Record releases

Outside Events & Calendars

- NEW! CA APG meeting

Volunteer Opportunities

CGS Publications links

support the communities whose stories enrich our shared past. CGS will be offering two classes with related content: *Once Upon a Time* and *Adventures in Filipino-American Genealogy*. See our Next Level Events and also check the related record releases in this issue.

Below and at left are selected events, classes and exhibits online and in the San Francisco Bay Area.

- Angel Island Immigration Station [Webinar](#): genealogical-focused session on the history of Chinese, Japanese, and other AAPI arrivals
- [San Mateo Central Park AAPI Celebration](#) (May 2, 2026): A community event with cultural performances, food, and arts
- ["China Roots"](#): How to Trace Your Family History" (May 23, 2026) workshop at various Bay Area libraries aimed at helping participants trace their Chinese ancestry
- RootsTech 2026 Sessions (May 2026/Post-Conference): [on-demand sessions](#) for Pacific researchers (GMT+13), featuring "Getting Started with Polynesian Genealogy Research" and "Preserving Island Legacies: An Introduction to Genealogy in Micronesia"



[KQED](#) airs the PBS documentary *A Life Reimagined: The [George Masa](#) Story*, Save the dates of May 22, 10:30 p.m. and on KQED Plus May 31 at 10:00 p.m.

Big Project Updates



Remodeling and painting are completed at **1841 Berkeley Way** and some book shelves have already been bolted to the wall. Plans are shaping up for making the outdoor patio and entrance space even more inviting.



First stage review has started with sessions looking at the wireframe (a blueprint for our web pages) set up by the vendor **Madcraft**. The layout includes promotion of our society aimed at prospective members and easier navigation

Excitement is growing as people have had informal tours. The move will take 5-7 days and has been "pencilled in" for **May 27th**. Chair **Ron Madson** has spent hours every day on assuring a smooth transition. Tables, chairs, filing cabinets, artwork, and more at the Breuner building site are available for free. Visit the library to see what's available. Contact [Bob Trapp](#) to put in a claim.

and specialized access for members and volunteers. Over 20 people called in last month to learn the ropes and begin commenting.

Are you interested in previewing and providing your feedback on the appearance and user-friendliness of the new CGS web pages? Volunteers continue to be appreciated. Please contact chairman, [Rudy Wolf](#).

May Board Meeting

Saturday, May 9 , 2026
10 a.m. via Zoom
See Eventbrite for location

[Register here](#) to attend online.



Were You There? Volunteer Potluck and Goodbye to Breuner

In spite of the April showers, current and former volunteers packed the Board meeting and enjoyed the usual overload of tasty dishes and desserts at a potluck lunch. Roger Prince greeted the group from afar with all his gratitude for the many services provided over the past year by over 80 active volunteers. Due to our upcoming move, this was likely the last gathering at the Breuner.



Aloha new members Jeff Carter, Lori Andrus, and Marylou MacIntyre

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.



Oakland FamilySearch Center

- **Wednesday, May 13**
- 1-2:30 pm
- [Oakland RSVP](#)

Sacramento

Member Home in Arden area

- **Wednesday, May 13**
- 1:30 - 3:00 pm
- [Sacramento RSVP](#)

Danville

Old Town Cafe, 105 Town and Country Shopping Center, Danville

- **Thursday, May 14**
- 10:30 am-12:00 pm
- [Danville RSVP](#)

Walnut Creek

Walnut Creek Main Library

- **Thursday, May 21**
- 10:30 a.m. -12 p.m.
- [Walnut Creek RSVP](#)

San Francisco

SF Main Library 3rd Floor Paley Room

- **Thursday, June 4**
- 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- [San Francisco RSVP](#)

Lamorinda

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

June 23 Members-Only Field Trip: Sutro Library

Visit the Sutro Library

Sutro Library (the California State Library San Francisco branch) holds the original collection of Adolph Sutro (1830–1898), California businessman and San Francisco mayor. The library has a large collection of publications and items dating from the 13th to the 21st centuries as well as one of the largest genealogy collections in the United States.

The library will be available **Tuesday, June 23** from **10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** with a CGS members-only orientation at 1100 a.m. by Steenalisa Tilcock, Reference and Outreach Librarian. Bring a lunch or



Sutro Library is located on the San Francisco State University campus, Paul Leonard Library, 5th floor 1630

purchase one at Café 101 located on the first floor or at the Student Center directly next to the library with plenty of seating.

NOTE: Visitors are requested to lock up their belongings in lockers before entering the reading room. You can bring in computers, electronics, pencils, and single sheets of paper, but everything else will need to be left in the lockers, including food and drinks.

Holloway Avenue San Francisco, CA 94132.

Parking is limited. Public transit recommended. More [here](#) on transportation.

[RSVP here](#) for limited spaces and send questions to [Jane Lindsey](#).

Pictured below: fun times from our previous visit-- Jane Lindsey and Andrea Daniels, Susan O'Brien in the stacks and with Tracy Silviera

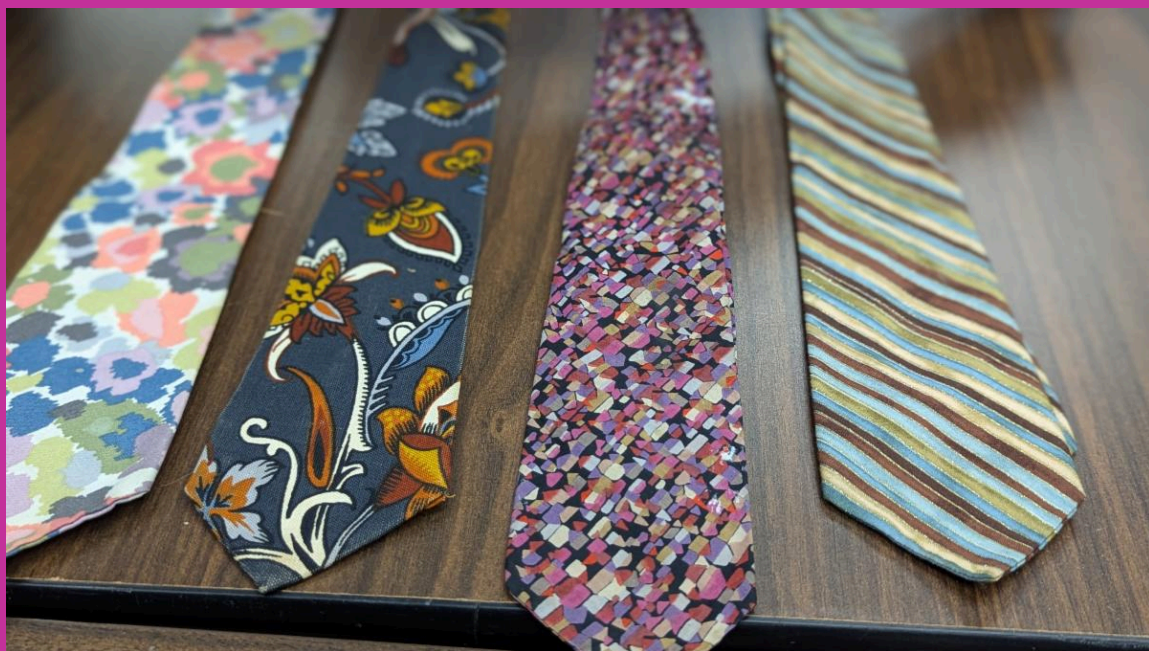


Member Focus: Tie One On with Dapper Dick Rees

Dick Rees who joined CGS in 1980, and at 90 still volunteers at the library always looks sharp. He was interviewed by Andrea Daniels April 15 and, as those who meet him know, tells a great story.



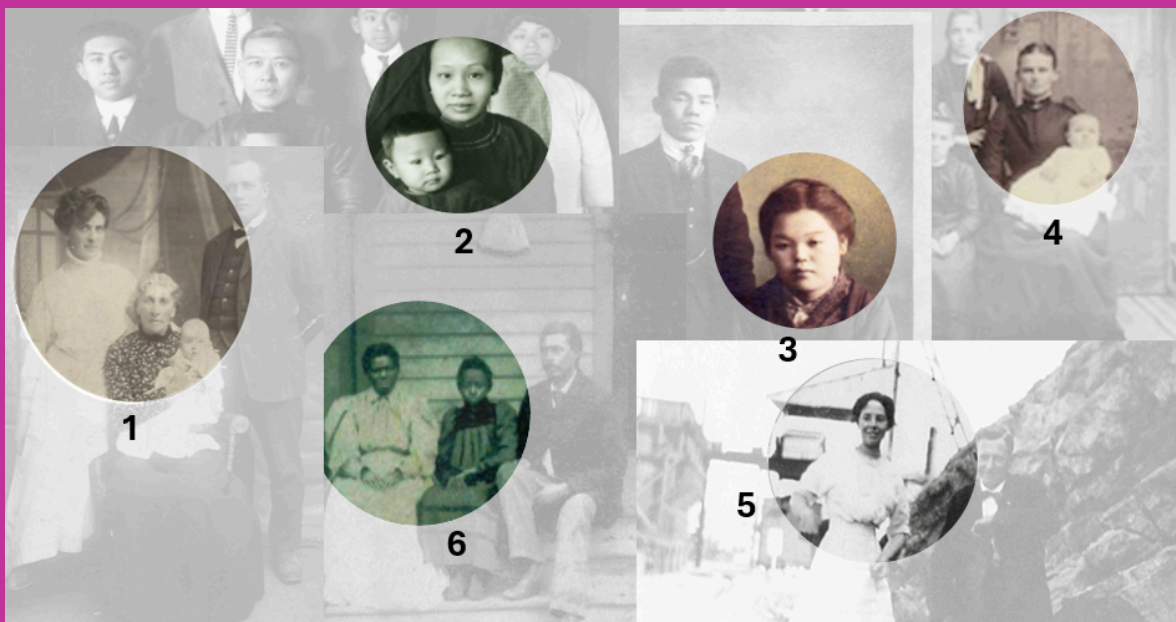
“People ask me if I have something special going on,” member Dick Rees tells me when we meet at CGS library to talk about his tie-making hobby. “I was at my doctor’s and a nurse who had not met me before asked, ‘What are you doing today that you’re so dressed up?’ And the doctor said, ‘That’ s what Dick wears all the time.’” And it is. Long-sleeved shirt (not white) and colorful tie. “Not sports jackets, so much,” he adds. Dick started dressing this way around age thirteen and he liked the look so much it became an everyday thing. When he wound up teaching at Cathedral School for Boys in San Francisco, he was in his element. At the school, ties were and are still part of the uniform. “I had to wear a tie myself, of course. I would have had maybe close to a 100 by this time.”



Eager for more choice and individuality, and a can-do kind of guy, Dick decided to make his own. Disassembling an existing tie for a pattern, he bought a bit of fabric, cut it out and sewed it together. But alas, it didn't hang properly. Undaunted, with the help of a Simplicity pattern, he learned what went wrong. "What I didn't realize was that you have to cut it on the bias" Problem solved.

That brings us to the Al Capone Tie. The name is wrapped up in a suspicion about his great-uncle Nick, a professional gambler who may have been involved in illegal activities. "Nick dressed immaculately and wore expensive ties." One was made of multi-colored silk. "After a while he got tired of wearing it or he felt people had seen him in it too often that he gave it to his nephew, my Uncle Bill, who in turn, gave it to me. The silk was so fine that it absolutely just rotted away from old age. The striped tie above was my replacement." "I hardly ever wear this one as I don't wear anything with metallic thread before 5 o'clock," he says about the striped tie. "But the other day I thought to myself if I don't wear this now I'll never wear it at all. I like the tie with an aqua shirt." Next time I see him, I sure hope he'll be wearing it.

Ancestor Tribute Redux: Mothers



For about ten years, the eNews featured a column called **Ancestor Tribute**. Lovingly curated by long-time volunteer extraordinaire **Lorna Wallace**, each installment was short and sweet: a vintage photograph paired with a brief description and the ancestor's relationship to one of our members. In honor of Mother's Day this month, we're putting a literal spotlight on the mothers in a selection of those memorable images from the eNews archives.

1. Karen Dahl Klabo, ancestor of **Karen Lemelin** (Jan 2016)
2. Chan Shee, wife of Kee Sack Sam, about 1913 ancestor of **Pamela Colville** (May 2013)
3. Hamako Maihara, who married Ichimaru Okazaki, Ancestor of **Ted Okazaki** (May 2012)
4. Sophie Anderson Branstad about 1895, great grandmother of **Gloria Hanson**
5. Blanche Wilcox Conley, abt 1912, grandmother of **Lynn Skelton** (Mar 2016)
6. Easter Parker Williams, GG grandmother of **Nikka Smith** (Feb 2016)

Are you lucky enough to have photographs of your ancestors and would like to share? Send to enewseditor@californiaancestors.org and perhaps we can revive this charming way of telling our stories.

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](#).



[Once Upon a Time...Creating Compelling Stories Out of Mundane Facts](#)

with Linda Okazaki

Hear how to create interesting narratives for your own family from the facts you have collected.

Wednesday, May 20

4:30 - 6:00 p.m. NOTE NEW EARLIER TIME

Zoom (free to members, \$5 for non-members) and in-person (free to all) at Oakland Family Search Library.



[Adventures in Filipino American Genealogy](#)

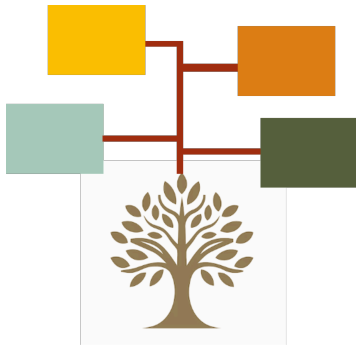
with Leo Esclamado

A CGS Outreach Event. Learn the different tools and resources available for researching family history in the Filipino American diaspora.

Thursday, May 28

4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Live online via Zoom or watch from Oakland FamilySearch Library. free to all



[Citations: Easier than You Think](#)

with Stewart Traiman

Stewart Traiman will guide you through Tom Jones' *Mastering Genealogical Documentation*.

Wednesday, June 17

4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Zoom only; free for members \$5 for non-members



[Getting Started with AI for Newspaper Research](#)

with Maureen Hanlon

Maureen shares expectations vs. realities as she is learning how AI can help with newspaper research.

Saturday, June 27

1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Zoom only; free for members \$5 for non-members

View Previous Classes: Videos for CGS Members

The recordings of April 15 *Probate More than Wills* and April 25 *Excel for Genealogists* are now available for members at [Videos for Members](#).

Ongoing Intro Series & Member Special Interest Groups



Free Intro to Genealogy

This month: Basics Overview

[Register here](#) to attend in-person or by Zoom
Saturday, May 2, 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, May 16, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.



Family Tree Maker (SIG)

Hosted by Ron Madson and Karen Halfon

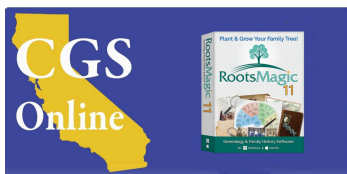
[Register here](#). Link and more at the [FTM website](#)
Saturday, May 16 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.



Eastern European SIG

Hosted by Craig Siulinski and Laura Bajuk

[Register](#) or contact [Craig Siulinski](#)
Saturday, May 23, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.



Roots Magic SIG

Hosted by Keith Montgomery and Stewart Traiman

[Register here](#)
Wednesday, May 27, 6:30 to 8:00 pm



DNA Skills (SIG)

Hosted by Mark McLaren

If you are interested in joining the DNA Skills SIG,
please send an email to [Mark McLaren](#).

NOTE: May meeting moved to **Monday, June 1**, 6:30
p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

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

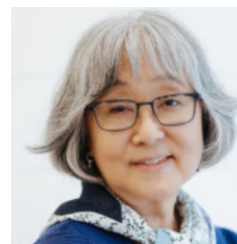
Oakland FamilySearch Center Update



Summer Closure and more

The FamilySearch Center **will be closed from June 1 through August 31** for planned HVAC, plumbing and lighting upgrades. Check the Center [Class Schedule](#) and calendar for any future online events including the CGS-collaborative *Tips and Talks* sessions on Wednesdays.

When the center reopens, look for **Cindy Kim Thomson's Hawaiian Special Interest Group**, next meeting on Tuesday, September 15, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Cindy, who has done extensive research on the ethnic groups who were sugar plantation workers, is also a CGS Board member.



Genealogy World News: Record Releases

Major sites have been busy bolstering their collections. In addition to a huge new exciting trove of **Italian** records earlier this year, **FamilySearch** added a [billion new records](#) in April from over 31 countries

Significant new **Filipino** genealogy records, including indexed church census (padrones) records and millions of updated civil/church images, have been added to FamilySearch as of late 2025/early 2026. Key releases feature indexed records from Camarines Sur, Cavite, Batangas, NCR, and Rizal, along with 144 new 23andMe genetic groups.

Ancestry's update listed mainly US records. Recent collections (as of mid-April 2026) include the Brooklyn, NY Green-Wood Cemetery Burial Index and U.S. Colonial Wars Societies records. See Ancestry's year-to-date additions [here](#). But according to the [Ancestor Hunt blog](#), additions also include English records and Australian hotel guests!

Outside Learning Opportunities

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

Grand Wayne Convention Center Fort Wayne, Indiana. With direct access to the Fort Wayne County Library



2026 Family History Conference
27-30 May • Fort Wayne, IN

In-person pre-registration is still available until **Wednesday, May 6, 2026**, at 11:59 PM Eastern, with onsite registration available afterward in Fort Wayne. [Virtual attendance registration](#) remains open through 30 May 2026 with access to sessions available until 15 July 2026.



Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh: June, July and Fall

Summer camp for genealogists! In-person at the University of Pittsburgh with access to the Heinz History Center and Barco Law Library. See the full list of courses and register for **in-person** (July 12-17) or **online** (June 22-26 and special Fall 2026) courses [here](#).

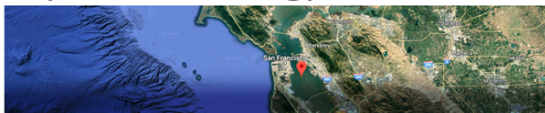


Association of Professional Genealogists California Meeting (Online May 5, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.)

Newly merged Northern and Southern California chapters will hold a joint meeting with guest speaker Darcie Posz speaking about her book, *Ancestoring: Understanding Records, Family & Ourselves*. Open to all APG members, as well as those who are considering joining APG. [Registration](#) required.

Click on graphics below to go to website calendars for more classes

Bay Area Genealogy Calendar



Volunteer Opportunities

Save the dates of **August 12-13** for a two day Genealogy Symposium with multiple speakers sponsored for the second year by the **San Francisco Public Library**. Contact Outreach Leaders [Susan Logas](#) or [Jane Lindsey](#). Read about the CGS activities at the 2025 Symposium [here](#).



San Francisco
Public Library

The annual **Nikkei Angel Island pilgrimage** will be held in **October**. Consultants are needed for this rewarding day. See pictures of the beautiful setting and activities at one of the first Angel Island events [here](#). More details to come. Contact [Grant Din](#).



The [Volunteer Opportunities page](#) on our website has more openings and needs.

New and Recent CGS Publications Online



The latest edition of the *The California Nugget* (Spring 2026) will be on its way to members' physical or digital mail boxes **this month**. Past issues can be seen on the CGS website [here](#).

On May 15th of this month, the latest *Jukebox Genealogy* will be emailed and available online for members, along with past issues, [here](#).

Blog articles keep on coming **every week**. Available to everyone on our website or by email. Recent topics covered genealogy sources, tax season and a new site for newspaper research. Read [here](#) and sign up to receive as an email by scrolling down to the Subscribe email address box.

CREDITS

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George Masa graphic from <https://www.pbs.org/show/a-life-reimagined-the-george-masa-story/>

Potluck photos from Jane Lindsey, Keith Montgomery, eNews editor

Adolph Sutro drawing from <https://sfmuseum.org/bio/adolph.html>

Dick Rees photos from Andrea Daniels

Ancestor Tribute photos from eNews archives on californiaancestors.org

Oakland FamilySearch photo from their website.

Cindy Thomson portrait from CGS archives

California Genealogical Society

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Contact Us



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

NOTE: the Library will be **closed Saturday, May 23**, in observance of Memorial Day

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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