

MARIN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

November 2017

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Mailing Address: Post Office Box 1511, Novato, CA 94948-1511
Meetings: LDS Church, 220 North San Pedro Road, San Rafael
Email Contact: info@maringsoc.org

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR 2017

Nov. 4: MCGS Breakfast, Star Restaurant, 9 a.m.
November 8: Writing Group 10:30 a.m.
November 16: DNA Group, 7:00 p.m.
November 30: MCGS General Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Dec. 2: MCGS Breakfast, Star Restaurant, 9 a.m.
December 10: MCGS Holiday Luncheon, 1 p.m.

Writing Group Meeting Wed., Nov. 8, 2017, 10:30 a.m., FHC LDS Church, San Rafael

Our assignment: Write on how the North Bay Firestorms affected you and yours! Your children may be interested in how you felt and what your reactions were as it happened. Some people come early to work on their genealogy at the Family History Center. For details, see the website or contact [Susan Trumbull](#) or [Shirley Hudson](#).

DNA Group Meeting Thur., Nov. 16, 2017, 7:00 p.m., FHC LDS Church, San Rafael

Topic: Intro to DNA Testing for Beginners!
This will be useful for those considering buying a DNA test during the Holiday discount season. It will provide the information you need to decide what test to buy and what company to buy the test from. There are some useful links in the **Resources** section on the [DNA Group](#) page!

MCGS General Meeting Thur., Nov. 30, 2017, 7:00 p.m., FHC LDS Church, San Rafael

Topic: "Brick Walls, Success Stories, Black Sheep and Fascinating Ancestors"

We all have ancestors who fall into one or more of these categories, so bring yours! Share what you do or do not know and how you tackled problems. (Our General Meeting is on the 5th Thursday, rather than the 4th Thursday, due to the Thanksgiving holiday!) Further information will soon be available on the MCGS [General Meeting Page!](#)

"Beginning Genealogy with Jeff (Jeffrey Vaillant)" at San Rafael Public Library Meeting Room, every 2nd Tuesday, from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Please visit [SRPL Events Page](#) for details!

Saturday Breakfast, November 4th and December 2nd 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

MCGS members and all beginners are invited for breakfast at 9:00 on the first Saturday each month at **Star Restaurant**, 1700 Novato Boulevard, Novato.

MCGS Holiday Luncheon Sunday, December 10, 2017, 1:00 p.m. The Club Restaurant at McInnis Park

Save the date, and watch [this page](#) on our website for further details!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

With the upcoming Holidays fast approaching, please note the following days that the San Rafael Family History Center will be closed:

Thanksgiving Week

(November 20th through November 27th)

Christmas Week/New Years day

(December 18th through January 1st)

A sign for Thanksgiving and Christmas will be posted on the front entry door a couple weeks prior to the closures.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**MCGS Research Trip, March 11-18, 2018
to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City!**
Join Will Deady, Susan Trumbull, Jim Robinson, and other Society members on this week-long trip! Further details and registration information are forthcoming. Keep an eye on our [Field Trips](#) page, and contact [Will Deady](#) or [Susan Trumbull](#) for info.



MORE UPCOMING EVENTS

California Genealogical Society

There will be a special meeting to discuss the formation of an **Eastern European Special Interest Group** on Saturday, November 11, 2017 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the CGS Library, 2201 Broadway, Suite LL2 in Oakland. Do you have family from Eastern Europe and would like to get in on the ground floor of this group? Visit their [Event Page](#) for details and to register!

East Bay Genealogical Society will hold their next meeting on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Oakland FamilySearch Library, 4666 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland. (Note the change from their usual 2nd-Wednesday meeting time!). EBGS will be hosting Robert Jackson, Ph.D., an expert on the German Migration from 1815-1914. Dr. Jackson will discuss *techniques for using original German documents*. For further details, please visit [this page](#) of the EBGS blog!

Sonoma County Genealogical Society

All SCGS meetings are cancelled until further notice, due to the devastating fires in Sonoma County. MCGS will be awaiting news of when SCGS resumes their meetings and will joyfully make the announcement when that happens!

Marin Mystery Location: Can you identify this Marin location? **The answer is on the last page.**

(Photo courtesy of Jo Ann Rowley-Minhoto.)



CALLING ALL WRITERS!!!

Have you posted some fascinating information to your blog? Did you write a fun story for the Writing Group? Have you had some wonderful genealogical adventure that you would like to share? In the spirit of this month’s MCGS General Meeting theme, it seems a good time to introduce a new feature to our newsletter, the **MCGS Members Journal!** Unlike the articles written for scholarly Genealogy journals—with meticulous detail, citations, and references—we are looking for simple “story” narratives to delight and inspire our readers! Your submissions can be short, or as long as 750 words. Sound like fun? Your [Newsletter Editor](#) can hardly wait to open and read the emails containing your stories and then publish them on these pages!!

Meet the Member – ANNIE BRENNEIS!



About ten years ago, an aunt and cousin began involving me in their work on a family tree. At the time, I was very busy teaching high-school History and Latin, but I began toying around with FamilySearch and the library version of Ancestry in order to assist my aunt and cousin, and also a few friends, with their research. It was not until June of 2016, when I retired from teaching, that I became able to immerse myself in Genealogy.

The family of my mother, Bonnie Pryne, has deep American roots that reach back into nearly all of the original Colonies. She descended from families that moved west into Ohio and Kentucky following the Revolutionary War, where they lived until after World War II. Her father, Clarence Pryne, known as “CP,” was a gifted artist who worked for the WPA and then the Department of War as a draftsman. In 1951, Grandpa CP moved his family—his wife, Dorothy Marksberry, and my mother and her two siblings—to Southern California, where he continued to work for a

Defense contractor. Once the children were grown, Grandma took a management job for the same contractor. My mother worked for many years in management, as does one of my sisters. Clearly, they inherited my grandmother’s ability to make sure things get done!

The family of my father, Richard Schaack, immigrated much more recently. His mother, Mary Jane “Jenny” O’Brien, arrived in Philadelphia from Manchester, England with her parents and sister in 1920, when she was age 16, having already become a skilled seamstress. Dad’s grandfather had arrived in Chicago from the German Rhineland in 1880 when he was only six years old, traveling with his father not long after the death of his mother. The family of my grandfather, John Schaack, moved from Chicago to Yuma, Arizona when he was a young boy, because his father was suffering from respiratory illness—possibly tuberculosis—and was prescribed a drier climate. As a result, my grandfather learned to speak Spanish while playing with neighborhood children from Mexico. Eventually, Grandpa John found work in the garment district of Los Angeles, chiefly because he was bilingual. He also learned to be an expert garment-cutter. The O’Brien family had also moved to Los Angeles, and they were John’s neighbors, which is how he met Jenny! They married and raised four children in Los Angeles.

My two sisters and I grew up in the San Gabriel Valley of eastern Los Angeles County. Dad was, and still is, a talented mechanic who has been tinkering with motors and small machines since he was a boy. My mother, who entered her eternal rest in 2013, was not only a good manager like her mother, she was also a great art lover like her father, and she very much enjoyed music, dance, and theater.

My own interests are so broad that it took me a while to finish college because I could not zero-in on a major. The degree I ultimately obtained, from Excelsior College in New York, was in Liberal Studies, with concentrations in History, Music, and Mathematics. Most of my college studies took place at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, but I collected credits over the years from a number of schools, most notably UC Berkeley and even Brigham Young University. I also had the joy of earning a Graduate Certificate in Topographical Archaeology from the American Academy in Rome.

Taking a break from college to earn money, I served as a payroll clerk in the Navy, and for many years I worked as a medical writer and transcriptionist. When some church friends started a school in San Francisco, they asked me to help out part-time. I went on to work there for 21 years, teaching not only Latin and History, but occasionally Speech, Logic, Music, Math, and Physics. All those years of experience doing research and writing are serving me well in genealogical work!

I’ve been living in San Rafael since Marty and I married in 2002. Marty’s nickname is “The Droid,” from his days working for Industrial Light and Magic. His specialty is camera engineering, but he is a wizard at most things audio-visual. Marty’s family history is exciting to explore, especially on his mother’s side, which extends back into pre-statehood California.

This is only my second year as a member of MCGS. It was a bit daunting to take charge of the newsletter after such a short time in the Society, but I’m getting lots of help, along with the opportunity to learn more about our members and activities. Thanks to all of you for the support!

Join Our FACEBOOK Group! The Marin County Genealogical Society has created a closed Facebook group just for members of our society! This new membership benefit is to promote collaboration and discussion among members. You are welcome to post anything related to genealogy onto this group page. It is a closed group, so only members of our society are able to join. We are hoping this creates a friendly environment where you feel comfortable sharing with others. If you missed the “sign-up” email, please contact Sierra Pope, our [Registrar](#), and request your invitation to join!

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Website Update Underway! The MCGS Web Committee has started updating the website. One change made already is that there has been a re-arrangement of the banner and menu items, to allow more room for the rest of the page content.

NEW MEMBERS!

A hearty welcome to Lavinia Grace Gilbert Schwartz, Paula Clair, Judy Avery, and Anita McPherson!!

On the California Genealogical Society blog, Shannon Reese has an excellent article explaining why we should all [go to the Family History Library!](#) The article includes an invitation to join CGS on their group excursion to Salt Lake City from April 22-29, 2018, which is an option in case the March 11-18 dates for our MCGS trip do not work for you.

According to their home page, [ConferenceKeeper.org](#) “is the *most complete* calendar and collection of Genealogy events on the Internet!” You can search the site for conferences by state and by date. There are links to other useful sites, as well as contests, videos, and listings for volunteer and other opportunities, along with their own web log.

Many of our members attended David Lacey’s presentation, “Tracking a Family through a License Plate,” at last month’s general meeting. In case David’s talk piqued your interest in working with license plates, or you missed the talk but are curious about how you can use license plates for details about your family history, his daughter Erin Lacey posted an article in her blog, [Know Their Stories](#), about a case study David conducted using a California plate from 1910 that is in his collection of historic license plates.

Judy G. Russell, [The Legal Genealogist](#), posted a number of worthwhile articles to her blog during the month of October! Judy’s topics included the fight to stop newly proposed restrictions to access of vital records from New York City, and also posts about local laws in Michigan and Iowa. On October 20th, Judy wrote about the National Reporter books, which have been publishing court cases since 1879 and are easily accessible either online or at law libraries. Her October 27th post talks about educational videos from the National Archives that are of interest to genealogists and can be found on the [NARA YouTube channel!](#)

Chris Paton’s The GENES Blog, which specializes in family history in Britain and Ireland, is always worth a look, you may wish to check out his October 30th post, [Ghostbusting in Inveraray!](#) Chris tells of a “ghost-hunting vigil” in a 19th-century jail, attended by himself and his wife, and he includes a link to an episode of the television series, “Most Haunted,” from Inveraray. Spooky or just kooky? You decide!

Some upcoming [Webinars from FamilySearch](#) this month will include “Using the FamilySearch Catalog Effectively,” “England Case Study and Research Strategy,” “Lost in London! Tracing Elusive Ancestry in London and Other Big Cities,” “Getting Started in Mexico,” and “Preserving Memories Using Photos and Documents.” Find links to these Webinars and FamilySearch’s many archived class videos on [this page!](#)

Lisa Louise Cooke’s [Genealogy Gems](#) has just posted a brand-new update of “Historic U.S. Newspapers & More,” including newspapers from five U.S. states and Wales, plus records for Native Americans, England, Canada, and Austria!

Solution to the November 2017 Mystery

Location: Hopefully, most of you were able to get this one easily—it is our own MCGS Library at the Family History Center in San Rafael! For essential information about our library, including its holdings and hours, please visit the [Library Page](#) on our website!

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