



LINKS



The Monthly Newsletter of South Bay Genealogical Society



MARCH 2026

SBGS News & Information

Vol 32 No 3

Next meeting March 17, The Elks Lodge, 1630 S US Hwy 41, Ruskin, Lunch 12 noon/Program 1pm



Guest Speaker ~ March 17 April Min

The Hunt for Heirs and Unknowns: Inside Forensic Genealogy

Genealogist and attorney April Min will explore the inner workings of forensic genealogy, a unique and fascinating subfield of genealogical practice. Using real cases for illustration, she will survey the various techniques used to navigate the search for heirs and beneficiaries – from traditional genealogy to the forward-facing investigative techniques needed for forensic inquiries. The discussion will also touch briefly on genetic genealogy, its use in different forensic circumstances, and the current state of affairs of the use of genealogical resources by law enforcement.



March Menu

Shepherd's Pie

or

Vegetarian:

Baked Stuffed Shells

Meals include:

Salad, Rolls, Coffee, Iced Tea, & Dessert

Any questions, call Vicki:
864-608-1330

DON'T DELAY!

Mail in your Reservation Today!

Reservations for the SBGS luncheon meetings must be in **9 DAYS** prior to the luncheon. March reservations must be received in the PO Box by

Sunday - March 8th!



Allow 4-5 days for mailing!



Genealogy Tech Forum

Monday ~ March 2nd ~ via Zoom

10:30am to 12:00 noon

To join in, use this link:



<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89121558159?pwd=zJCev8yFkdMO3DrmImM3Hd3TaDKub1.1>

Meeting ID: 891 2155 8159

Passcode: 402463

Topic:

Working with FamilySearch

Please log in a few minutes before start time

Introducing our Guest Speaker



April Min is a professional genealogist, cultural anthropologist, and lawyer with 25 years' experience as a researcher. She currently owns and operates Heritage Discoveries, where she provides family history and forensic genealogy services. April is also a content writer for Ancestry, where she develops stories for the company's StoryScout® product.

Her passion for history, genealogy, and anthropology started as a child, visiting historical and archaeological sites on family vacations.

April holds a master's degree in Applied Anthropology/Heritage Studies from the University of South Florida and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from the West Virginia University College of Law.

April is an alumnus of ProGen 54, and is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and the National Genealogical Society.



SHADES OF HISTORY

The Luckiest Man Alive!



One man survived both the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and then later Nagasaki. Tsutomu Yamaguchi was a 29-year-old Naval Engineer on a three-month business trip to Hiroshima. He survived the atomic bomb on August 6th, 1945, despite being less than 2 miles away from ground zero. On August 7th, he boarded a train back to his hometown of Nagasaki. On August 9th, while being with colleagues at an office building, another boom split the sound barrier. A flash of white light filled the sky. Yamaguchi emerged from the wreckage with only minor injuries on top of his current injuries. He had survived two nuclear blasts in two days.

source: *parade.com Maryn Liles*



Come to the luncheon meeting a bit early and enjoy the

Round Table Discussion

It convenes at 10:30am.

Bring your questions and the “group” may be able to help you find the answers. If you have not attended this SBGS “EXTRA” give it a try and join the group.



PAY IN ADVANCE

Sign Up for Next Month’s Reservation



You may want to try our “Pay in Advance” plan so you won’t miss the next luncheon meeting because you forgot to mail in your reservation. We hope this will help and you won’t miss any of the luncheon meetings. So don’t forget your check book!



When you arrive for the current month’s luncheon meeting, you can pay for the next month’s luncheon and select your meal. This will alleviate these problems:

- Forgetting to mail your check in time
- Being too late to mail your check and reservation
- Missing the luncheon because the deadline has passed
- Plus you’ll save an envelope and stamp (now 78¢)

Make your Reservation

Reminder: Checks for the current luncheon are not deposited upon receipt. Sometimes it may be a couple of weeks or more until they are deposited.

April 21 Luncheon

Pork Chop OR Vegetarian Quiche

Guest Speaker – Karen Fortin

presents

Bringing Your Ancestors to Life:
Going Beyond the Facts



GENEALOGY FUNNIES



“According to this genealogy website, I’m 60,765,228th in line to the throne!”

Research Tip



Don’t forget! Document Your Research Findings! Did you forget where you found that record? Be sure to cite all your sources. It may come back to “haunt you” if you don’t!



Murphy’s Law of Genealogy

The correctly shelved books and correctly filed forms are never the ones you need.



GRANDMA'S TIPS

Wrap celery in aluminum foil and it will last twice as long.



UNUSUAL TOMBSTONE



Tips to Identify Women in Historical Records



Phonetic Spelling Was Common

Documents with phonetic spellings were something commonly seen leading up to the mid-20th century. Most generations had no extensive formal education (rural schools on average only had 5-6 months a year due to crop harvests), and many children were considered graduated if they had an eighth-grade education. The lack of educational opportunities, especially in rural areas, led to countless misspellings due to the pronunciation of names.

mispellin

Jessica Howe, LegacyTree Genealogists Newsletter, 13 Aug 2021



Genealogical Research

Common Mistakes with Identity

The first is **merging identities** with sources that actually describe different people are believed to describe one person. For example, two males named Levi Prather lived in the first district of Montgomery County, Maryland, in 1870. One was a 3-year-old living with his presumed parents, and one was a 30-year-old man living with his presumed wife. The two Levis had different ages and living arrangements, but could be mistaken for one man.

In a similar way, the other major identity mistake is **splitting identities** when sources seem to refer to several different people but actually refer instead to one. For example, a man named Joe Doran appeared in several Hardin County, Tennessee, sources. A man named Felix Doran appeared in other sources. For many years, I believed they were two different men when in fact they were one man.



Both types of issues stem from a lack of thorough research and analysis. Certain assumptions – such as the belief that an ancestral couple were married – are always operating in the background, torpedoing our research by giving us blind spots.

In other cases, our research is simply too shallow. Perhaps we've overly relied on records that are available online, missing out on other resources. (There are still many records that haven't been digitized.) Online databases also operate via name-search, making identity mistakes easier to commit.



And, of course, individual records can contain incorrect or conflicting information, or details that are too ambiguous to understand without the right context. In the earlier Joe/Felix Doran example, I didn't have one single piece of evidence that suggested the names both referred to him. I only came to that conclusion by looking at all the evidence at once.



(continued on page 4)



CONTACTS

SBGS: southbaygs@gmail.com

SBGS website: <https://southbaygenealogy.org/>

Roots Magic Help – Beth Clarke: beth7938@gmail.com

Luncheon Reservations – Vicki McDonnell: (360) 608-1647

Membership – Cathy Rebhun: cathy33596@yahoo.com

Programs/Newsletter – Dru Thomas: sbgdruthomas@gmail.com



GENEALOGY BUMPER STICKER

I'M A

GENEALOGIST

I Hunt Dead People!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

SouthShore Regional Library



If you plan to use the computers in the **Genealogy Center**, you are no longer able to use your library card. You need to stop at the information desk in the center of the library and get a sign-on to access the databases on the computers. However, you are still able to use your library card from home to access the databases, with the exception of Ancestry and JSTOR.



Genealogical Research

(continued from page 3)



6 Ways to Accurately Prove Identity

It's important to recognize and work against these pitfalls. When we don't prove identity sufficiently, we will inaccurately attach our ancestors to other families. None of us want to do that!



Create a Research Plan

The research question we discussed earlier should result in a dedicated research plan. Determine what and where you are going to research ahead of time, and consider seeking records that haven't yet come online.



Track Progress and Identity Markers

Whether you use an Excel spreadsheet, a Microsoft Word table, or a genealogy software program, document what you've done. Make special notes about any identity markers you come across - for example, a middle initial in a census or tax record, or a "mark" instead of a signature in a deed or marriage record.



Pay Attention to Chronology

Finding new records can be a rush, so many genealogists spend most of their time looking for them. But pause to consider whether it's plausible for one person to appear in various documents you're finding. For example, it's unlikely one person would be listed multiple times in the same source. Therefore, multiple listings of similar names likely refer to different people.

Also consider life context when analyzing records. Most people didn't marry for the first time or have their first child at age 50, so a record suggesting they did might well refer to someone else.



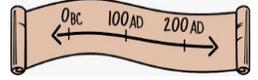
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Place Individuals in the Correct Family



Think of your ancestor as a part of a family unit, which can help you distinguish them from others of the same name. Note their parents, spouse(s), children and siblings, and use those facts to eliminate candidates who have the same name but different relatives.

Use Tables and Timelines



Extract details from records and organize them in a new way to look for patterns. Compare details about two same-named people in a table to reveal whether it's likely they're the same person, or build a timeline to keep tabs on multiple sources and events.



Find and Utilize Maps



Sometimes we can discern different individuals by visualizing where they lived. Many of the maps we need are not available from websites such as Ancestry.com and FamilySearch. Look for them instead at state or university archives, historical societies, the Library of Congress, <http://loc.gov/> or resources like David Rumsey Map Collection, <http://davidrumsey.com/>. In addition to censuses and maps, deeds and tax records can help pinpoint our ancestor's location.



Robin Smith, Family Tree Magazine Newsletter 9 Jan 2024

did you know?

Tomato ketchup was once sold as a medicine!

Tomato ketchup was in the 1830s sold as a medicine, following extraordinary claims the condiment could cure everything from diarrhea, indigestion and even jaundice.



The idea was proposed by Dr John Cook Bennett, who eventually sold his own brand of tomato pills.

Source: newsweek.com



Addicted to Genealogy

You know you're addicted to genealogy when you research someone because they had an interesting name.



Newsletter

If the hyperlinks to websites in the newsletters do not work, copy & paste the link into your browser.



ON THE BOOKSHELF

A Storm of Witchcraft: The Salem Trials and the American Experience

by Emerson W. Baker



Among the many books written about the Salem Witchcraft Trials of 1692-93, *A Storm of Witchcraft: The Salem Trials and the American Experience* by Emerson W. Baker stand out as one of the best and most comprehensive overviews on this topic. Professor Baker does an excellent job of summarizing the events, analyzing the key players, reviewing the theories on this topic made by previous historians, and looking at how and why Salem left its lasting imprint on the history of the United States.

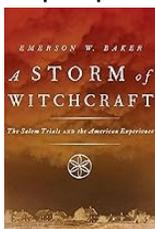


The mere mention of Salem instantly brings to mind deeply imbedded images of intolerance, persecution, and injustice that have been used by people ever since for a wide variety of purposes, from legal reform and anti-McCarthyism to tourism. But how much do most of us really know about the Salem trials? What pressures and personalities led to the hanging of 19 people and the imprisonment of nearly 200 others?



From our modern perspective, we look back at these events and label the judges and accusers as ignorant, superstitious, and cruel. While we certainly cannot condone the outcome, it is important to look beyond this and try to view things from their perspective and the historical context in which they lived if we are ever to truly understand them.

Although your ancestors may not have been in Salem or New England during this time period, approximately 100,000 people were tried as witches in Europe and North America over several hundred years. When you add in the number of people who were accusers, court officials, judges, jury members, witch-hunters, and spectators, millions of people today had ancestors who participated in these events. Chances are good that if you are able to search back far enough you will find that you also are one of those descendants.

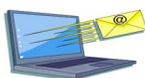


Courtesy of Karen Fortin



Whenever you change your address, phone, or e-mail, please notify SBGS at:

southbaygs@gmail.com



Genealogy Quip

I'm going to be very busy in the afterlife. The list of ancestors I have to meet grows longer every day.



IMMIGRATION Q & A

Do passenger lists name people who were born and died on board?

You may find notations near the name of the passenger who died or gave birth, and/or at the end of the passenger list.

Diane Haddad Family Tree Magazine Nov/Dec 2025



Unexpected Pictures for Family History

Skim digitized deed books and court records from your home counties for useful maps and illustrations. A quick search of hundreds of pages is possible by looking at the thumbnail images of the files. There's no need to read them; just skim until you see something unusual, such as a hand-drawn map in a deed book. The map might not be useful, but on the other hand, you might find a map of a long-ago family farm, or part of an ancestral hometown.

Estate files and lawsuit papers might contain billheads or checks from local merchants, with engravings of stores, factories, banks, or town scenes unavailable elsewhere.



Illustrations were very rare in newspapers before the late 1800s. When glancing at page image thumbnails, any pictures will be readily apparent. You might find ads with engravings of local stores or hotels, made from long-lost photographs. Occasionally, one finds a map hastily made by the newspaper after a fire or other disaster in the town.

David A. Norris, Internet Genealogy/Your Genealogy Today Newsletter - Research Tips & More! Vol 8 #24 - 28 Oct 2021

THE SWAP TABLE



Members can donate, share & Swap genealogy materials. It's free! If you have books, magazines or newsletters you no longer want, bring them to the next meeting for the swap table.



Genealogy Organization Tips to Whip Your Research into Shape



Set yourself up for genealogy research success in 2026 by spending this month organizing your entire process. These tips will get you started.



Genealogy Organization Tips You Can Use

Did you know that your chance at reaching your goal is higher if you set a new year's resolution? Here's one that you can accomplish in the first month: organize your genealogy research process from start to finish. Check out the 4 genealogy organization tips below to help you accomplish your goals.

Set yourself up for success. As you stand or sit among the chaos of your genealogy research, the first step is to make the commitment to yourself. You CAN do this! Start by taking a deep breath. It may seem overwhelming right now, but you can conquer the chaos. Do you have trouble knowing what to keep and what to toss? Make good decisions as you sort through those piles. Decision-making is the thing

Set a strong research goal. The next step to organizing your genealogy is to establish some goals. What is it that you want to accomplish? Organizing your genealogy isn't just about the stuff you've accumulated; it's about organizing your research process and making sense of the results.

Set up a research log. If there is one genealogy organization tip that stands out from every expert we've talked to, it's that a research log is a genealogist's best friend. Your log will help you plan your research and formulate a strategy. You'll be able to see at a glance what you've already searched, plus what you need to do next.

Set a timer. This is a tried-and-true method for anyone who struggles with procrastination. You may not have several hours to devote every day, but you can accomplish a lot even in 15 minutes! Plus, taking frequent breaks helps you clear your head as you take a step back and observe your progress. There are small tasks you can finish in as little as 5 minutes.

Vanessa Wieland, Family Tree Magazine Newsletter, 3 Jan 2019

Important Notice!

SBGS elections for the 2026-2027 term will be coming up soon. We are always looking for volunteers to serve on the Board and every member is eligible. If you're interested in helping, please contact any Board member. We also need a VP for the upcoming term.

I Suffer from ADGD!

Attention Deficit Genealogy Disorder

It's when you start researching one ancestor, and get distracted by another ancestor, which causes you to bounce around to different ancestors only to end up doing a lot of work with very little to show for it!



Search Hints & Tips

FamilySearch.org



Look for Multiple Kinds of Records

Censuses and vital records make up the bedrock of genealogy research, but they shouldn't be the only resources you look for. FamilySearch.org's database holds all kinds of genealogy records, from tax records to probates to passenger lists. From the main search form, you can filter by record type. Also remember to browse for records collections by location, so you can see what FamilySearch.org has in your area.

Andrew Koch, Family Tree Magazine Newsletter, 15 Jul 2019



South Bay Genealogical Society
PO Box 5202
Sun City Center FL 33571

ATTN: IRISH RESERACHERS

Free Irish Genealogy Websites

National Archives of Ireland

<https://nationalarchives.ie/>



Explore your Irish ancestry in this collection that includes 1901 and 1911 census records, census survivals (1821-1851), census search forms (1841-1851), Tithe Applotment Books (1823-1837), Soldiers' Wills (1914-1918), and the Calendars of Wills and Administrations (1858-1922).



National Library of Ireland

<https://www.nli.ie/>

The pot of gold here is the free collection of images of birth, marriage and burial registers from the majority of Catholic parishes in Ireland and Northern Ireland, dating from the 1700s to about 1880. You can browse them by parish; click on the map at registers.nli.ie to get started



David Fryxell, Family Tree Magazine Newsletter, 9 Jan 2024

===== CUT ✂ HERE =====

Reservation for March 17, 2026, SBGS Luncheon at the Elks Lodge in Ruskin

Lunch starts at 12 noon followed by Speaker's Program at 1pm

Please reserve luncheon(s) for: _____

Meal choice: Shepherd's Pie _____ Stuffed Shells _____

_____ A check for **\$18.00** per meal is enclosed. Please note lunch choice on your check memo space.

Mail this reservation slip, along with your check payable to South Bay Genealogical Society, to:
South Bay Genealogical Society - PO Box 5202 - Sun City Center FL 33571

Reservations must be RECEIVED in PO BOX by March 8th