



LINKS



The Monthly Newsletter of South Bay Genealogical Society



MAY 2026

SBGS News & Information

Vol 32 No 5

Next meeting May 19, The Elks Lodge, 1630 S US Hwy 41, Ruskin, Lunch 12 noon/Program 1pm

Guest Speaker – May 19th



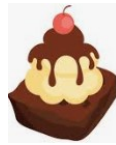
Debbie Wilson Smyth

presents

Probate Records: Looking Beyond the Will



A Last Will and Testament offers a rich resource of information for genealogical purposes. But the will is only the beginning of the records that may be available and of value to the genealogist. Even if the decedent left no will, there may be other estate records to assist in your research. This presentation provides an overview of the probate process and the records that may be created after a person's death.



May Menu

Meat Lasagna

& Veggie

OR

Vegetarian Lasagna

& Veggie

Dessert

Brownie Ice Cream Sundae

Meals include:

Salad, Rolls, Coffee & Iced Tea

Any questions, call Vicki:
360-608-1647



Introducing Our Guest Speaker

Our guest speaker this month is Debbie Wilson Smyth. She has been researching her family since 1993 and holds a Certificate in the Genealogical Research program from Boston University.

As the owner of Oak Trails Genealogy Services, LLC, Debbie provides professional genealogical services in research, education, consultation, and speaking. Her research focuses on midwestern and southern states, methodology, lineage society applications, and DNA.

Debbie is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and the Genealogy Speakers Guild, as well as a number of national, state, and local societies.

Upcoming Election



At the April meeting, the following slate was presented to lead the Society in 2026-2027. There were no nominations from the floor and the nominations were closed. We will vote on this slate at the May 19th luncheon meeting.



President – Dru Thomas
Vice Pres –
Secretary – Lynn Freeland
Treasurer – Glenda Hall
Director – Beth Clarke
Director – Mary Ann Davis



Director Vicki McDonnell
Director Scott Niblick
Director Sheila O'Halloran
Director Nancy Shrom
Director Linda Vitale
Past Pres Cathy Rebhun



Collateral Relatives Research Tips

(continued from April LINKS)



Search for Their Records, too!

Seek out records of your collateral kin with the same urgency as you would for your ancestors. As previously stated, they may even contain details that are directly relevant to your ancestor. Start with your ancestors' siblings, then work out to more-distant relatives like cousins.



Document the Whole Family

Some sources document whole families, in which collateral relatives appear in the same record as your ancestors: censuses, obituaries and more. So it may just take one extra step to record a collateral relative's entry, in addition to your ancestor's. You can log details about a couple and all of their children using a family group sheet.



COUSINS

Collaborate

Lean on cousins, DNA matches and other relatives in your extended family. You never know what family treasures are hidden in someone else's attic. Sunny Jane Morton and Lisa Louise Cooke teamed up to write an article on working with other genealogists, and our social media editor shared her tips for using social media to connect with relatives.



(conclusion on page 3)

REMINDER: BACK UP YOUR FILES!

Is it time to back up your genealogy files?
If so, then test your backups!



Actually, you can make backups at any time. However, it is easier and safer if you have a specific schedule. The first day of the month is easy to remember, so I would suggest you back up your genealogy files at least on the first day of every month, if not more often.



Of course, you might want to back up more than your genealogy files. Family photographs, your checkbook register, all sorts of word processing documents, email messages, and much more need to be backed up regularly. Why not do that on the first day of each month?



Eastman's Genealogy Newsletter 2 Feb 2020

Mail Your Reservation Today!

Reservations for the SBGS luncheon meetings need to be received 9 DAYS prior to the luncheon. MAY 19th reservations must be



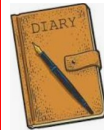
received in our PO Box by

Sunday, May 10th!

Allow 4-5 days for mailing!



Vacation, All She Ever Wanted: Women's Travel Diaries



When the weather turns warm, wanderlust seems to magically kick in. Our thoughts turn away from responsibilities and drift toward new adventures. Once an unavoidable necessity, travel for pleasure became popular in the 1800s with Victorian high society. Recording the intimate details of one's excursions was a popular past time, especially among ladies. If you're fortunate enough to have your ancestor's travel diary or journal, be sure to properly care for and archive it. If not, don't lament. Thanks to Duke University's Digital Repository, you can explore their collection of digitized women's travel diaries from 1827–1991 anytime you want.



<https://repository.duke.edu/dc/womenstraveldiaries>

According to the site, "The diaries in this digital collection were written by British and American women who documented their travels to places around the globe, including India, the West Indies, countries in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, as well as around the United States." Selected from the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Duke University



<https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein>

as part of the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture,

<https://library.duke.edu/rutenstein/binham>

these 165 travel diaries are beautifully digitized for online browsing and research.

(conclusion on page 3)



Collateral Relatives Tips

(continued from page 2)



Remember Genealogy Best Practices

The fundamentals of good research apply to any historical person that you're studying—ancestors or not:

- Work backward in time
- Document your findings
- Consult a wide variety of records
- Cite your sources
- Avoid making hasty assumptions
- Collateral relatives have the potential to break down your genealogical brick walls. With sound research methods and that broader pool of family members, you'll set yourself up for success



Andrew Koch, Family Tree Magazine
Newsletter - 7 Feb 2026

GENEALOGY FUNNIES



"Some family actually laid out their plot like this?!"

Women's Travel Diaries

(continued from page 2)

travel
diary



Please note: These women's travel diaries are original scans of rare books. Transcriptions are not available, aside from one. From the old-fashioned cursive to the ravages of time, the text can be difficult to decipher. Still, the descriptions of the diaries alone are enough to send your mind wandering to far-off places and yearning to discover more about the women who made these journeys. Many of the journals also include ephemera such as photographs, maps, and sketches by the authors.

Now that you're inspired by these women's travel diaries of the past, it's time to think about the future. Consider recording your own experiences during your next special vacation or annual family trip. Not only will you have a cherished keepsake, your travel diary will be available for future generations to enjoy. Bon voyage!

Courtney Henderson, Family Tree Magazine
Newsletter - 8 Mar 2025



REMINDER

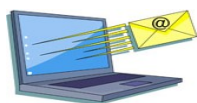
Unfortunately we cannot offer the **Pay in Advance** option for the September luncheon since we will be on summer hiatus June thru August. However, when you arrive for the September 15th meeting, we will continue with this option to pay for the next month's luncheon.

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



southbaygs@gmail.com

C O N T A C T S



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: sbgsdruthomas@gmail.com



technology

There is **NO Genealogy Tech Forum** in May.

It will be on summer hiatus and will resume in **October**. See ya then!

Corporate Genealogy

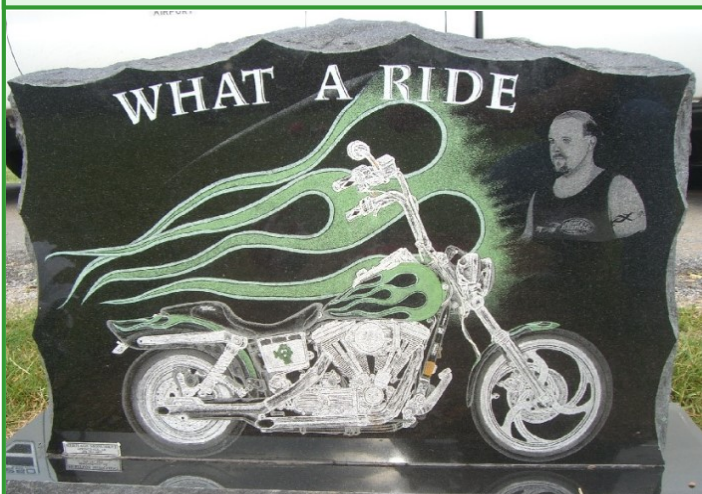


Have you ever considered researching the companies where some of your ancestors or relatives worked? This can be especially interesting if a number of them worked for the same firm. Even if the company is no longer in existence, the company may have been taken over by another that is still around today. Many businesses keep records and photos related to the current company as well as to any businesses they may have acquired. Information like this may be found on a company's website or in a corporate museum the company has established. You might even find your ancestor mentioned in such a context.

Ancestor

Sue Lisk, Internet Genealogy Magazine Newsletter, Research Tips & More! Vol 9 #20 – 7 Oct 2022

Amusing Tombstone



Doug Ehardt
2 May 1970 ~ 2 Jul 2006
Bluff Cemetery ~ Springdale, Arkansas

GOODBYE...but just for awhile!

Ciao

After the May 19^h membership meeting, SBGS begins its summer hiatus - June thru August. So take this time to check off some things on your genealogy "to-do" list. Try organizing your records; break through that "brick wall"; or find some new "lost" cousins. Whatever your task, enjoy the summer! We will resume this fall with our September 16th luncheon membership meeting. Hope to see you there!

Happy Heritage Hunting!



ON THE BOOKSHELF



Jacksonland: President Andrew Jackson, Cherokee Chief John Ross, and a Great American Land Grab
by Steve Inskeep

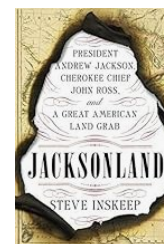
Jacksonland: President Andrew Jackson, Cherokee Chief John Ross, and a Great American Land Grab by Steve Inskeep tells the story of two very strong-willed men. Both were leaders and both firmly believed that they were carrying out the wills of the people they represented. Unfortunately, those beliefs were diametrically opposed to each other and ultimately led to the tragedy of the Trail of Tears.



The early 1800s was a period when the young United States' population was growing exponentially and the desire for more land increased efforts to acquire Native American territory by any means necessary. Since the first British colonies began in North America, Indians had been steadily pushed further and further west and south. As those lands became part of the United States, this policy only increased as our pioneer ancestors sought to own their own homesteads, and the federal and state governments sought to secure and control the land and people within their borders.



Many books have been written about Jackson and Ross, but few if any have looked at them in tandem; seeking to understand the achievements and faults of both men; how their lives intersected; and, how their contest of wills significantly altered the future of their nations.



Courtesy of Karen Fortin

September's Program

Our guest speaker for the September 15th luncheon membership meeting is



Drew Smith
presenting

guest speaker

**Artificial Intelligence (AI)
and Genealogy**

Ancestry Has WWI Transport Troop Ships



A new record on Ancestry.com has amazing photos of WWI troop transport ships. A great-great uncle served in the Navy during the Great War and exploring the site adds detail to his service. To start, sign into Ancestry.com, then select the link below to arrive at the 'U.S., World War I Troop Transport Ships, 1918-1919.' Use the drop down arrow in the 'Browse This Collection' box to pick ship names from A-Z, H-N, O-T or U-Z. www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61464/

A related link found on the transport ship page includes lists of passengers entering the U.S. on Army ships which includes military support personnel, family members and others. www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61174/

Lynn Cassity, *Internet Genealogy Newsletter Research Tips & More, Vol 10 #7, 13 Apr 2023*



War of 1812 Pensions

Work continues on the impressive War of 1812 Pensions Project. Available for free at <https://www.Fold3.com>, the collection will eventually comprise 180,000 pension files and 7.2 million page images. If you haven't checked in on this project for a while, the available files begin with surnames starting with "A" and are now up to the "S" surnames, which are partly complete.

SURNAMES

While military service files have relatively little family information, pension files may contain extensive family data to prove that a widow or dependent child of a veteran was entitled to a pension. Relatives and acquaintances often supplied affidavits regarding weddings, sometimes giving not only the date but the location, and even the names of guests. Even if your ancestors were not directly involved with a pension file, relatives who were local doctors, lawyers, and justices of the peace might have written testimony or signed witness statements.



David A. Norris, *Internet Genealogy Magazine Newsletter, Research Tips & More! Vol 10 #2, 26 Jan 2023*



Qualitative versus Quantitative Genealogy



Beware of reckless family tree building. On some of the powerhouse websites, folks tend to hastily append assumed ancestors, and larger swaths of branches, to their pedigrees without verifiable documented evidence. Acting on hunches of found names/dates/places leads to frenzied online clicks, creating another inaccurate tree. Search with integrity. It's essential to work backwards and sideways, using corroborative inter-related resources...vital records, censuses, parochial documents, etc. Remember also that it should be more than just charting "who" and "when." Consider the "why" and "how" - study your ancestors' circumstances and perspectives in their relative times and places. Find stories of their migrations, occupations, military service, and so on. Context is equally as important as content.



Joseph Grandinetti, *Internet Genealogy Newsletter. Genealogy Research Tips & More, Vol 10 #10, 25 May 2023*



GRANDMA'S TIPS

When boiling corn on the cob, add a pinch of sugar to help bring out the corn's natural sweetness.



Don't forget!

The Swap Table



Members can donate, share & swap genealogy materials. If you have books, magazines or newsletters you no longer want, bring them to the next meeting and place them on the swap table. Once you are finished with books you found on the Swap Table, if you no longer want them, please consider returning them for others to enjoy.



R E S E A R C H T I P



Ask for help

You certainly don't have all the answers to your most pressing questions, and you're no less of a genealogist for asking others for assistance. By tapping into a network of family members and other genealogists, you can start to uncover new information and resources that you'd never have access to alone.

This can take many forms. Perhaps you reach out to relatives on Facebook, or set up an in-depth interview with a member of your family. Even distant relatives can have information on your ancestors, so don't be afraid to connect with even second and third cousins. *Vanessa Wieland, Family Tree e-newsletter*

===== CUT ✂ HERE =====

Reservation for MAY 19, 2026, SBGS Luncheon The Elks Lodge in Ruskin

Lunch starts at 12 noon followed by Speaker's Program at 1:00 pm

Please reserve luncheon(s) for: _____

Meal choice: Meat Lasagna _____ Vegetarian Lasagna _____

_____ 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 the PO Box by May 10th