



## January 8, 2005 Annual Luncheon

Our Annual Luncheon will be on January 8, 2005. Due to the popularity of last year's program and the many requests for his return, Dr. George Schweitzer will again be presenting our all day seminar program. His new topics for this year's program will be;

- 1) Frontier Religion and its Genealogical Effects;
- 2) Scots-Irish Genealogical Research;
- 3) Kissing Cousins and Pedigree Collapse

Last year Dr. Schwietzer enthralled us with his subject expertise and clear, concise presentation style and further regaled us with his period costumes and showmanship antics. I know this year's meeting will be even better!

The registration form is included with this issue. It is also available on our web site ([www.rootsweb.com/~casdgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~casdgs)).



So, mark your calendar now for your Society's premier annual event. If you attended last year, you know what an entertaining and instructional day this will be, even for non-genealogists. So, talk it up among your family and friends. What a great way to introduce someone new to genealogy and your Society. And don't forget, among the many drawing prizes, some lucky person will win a voucher for a 6 night stay at a premium Salt Lake City hotel.

**Monthly Meeting, Nov. 13, noon  
San Carlos Methodist Church  
6554 Cowles Mtn. Blvd. (at Navajo Rd.)**

## *Breaking Through Your Brick Walls: A Panel Discussion*

This month's meeting will be an interactive panel discussion on how to approach and solve your individual research problems. A panel of experienced genealogists and fellow Society members will take your real-life research issues and explore different approaches and solutions to get you back on track.

We all have difficult problems in our research that seem insurmountable. We may have worked on them for years and gotten nowhere. Sometimes, a fresh look by different eyes is all that is needed to shed new light on possibilities you may have overlooked. But short of hiring a professional genealogist, this approach does not often avail itself. Here is your opportunity to get some expert (and free) help.

Even if you don't have a research problem (lucky you) or don't want to share, everyone is bound to learn something here just by hearing the 'case problems' of others. And we won't limit the input from just the panel. Many of our members have years of experience doing genealogical research and may have come across the same problems.....and be willing to share their knowledge. So, come prepared to talk about and solve your toughest research problems and finally break through your brick walls. Please fill out the form on page 9 and bring to the meeting. See you on the 13th!

The Newsletter is published monthly by the San Diego Genealogical Society and mailed to all current members. Submission deadline for articles and announcements is the 15th of the month for the following month. Inclusion is based solely on the discretion of the Editor and/or Board of Directors. Members are encouraged to submit materials for publication, subject to copyright provisions. Please contact the Editor for guidelines.

#### 2004 Board of Directors

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Comments and suggestions can be e-mailed to the editor at [steelquist@aol.com](mailto:steelquist@aol.com) or left on the Library answering machine, 619-588-0065.



### *Immediate Action Requested*

The U.S. House of Representatives is considering a bill, House Resolution 10 (H.R. 10), which seeks to restrict access to birth certificates. This bill, which purpose is to respond to the threat of terrorism, is on a fast track to passage and has been voted on by several committees already. Your help is needed now.

David Rencher, Chairman of the Record Access and Preservation Committee, a joint committee of the National Genealogical Society and Federation of Genealogical Societies, has sent a letter to the bill's sponsor, Congressman Dennis Hastert, recommending an amendment to the bill as follows:

"However, nothing in this Chapter 2 shall be construed to require a State to change its law with respect to public access to (A) non-certified copies of birth certificates, or to (B) birth certificates or birth records once a period of 100 years has elapsed from the date of creation of the certificate or record."

A copy of the letter is available on the FGS site at [www.fgs.org/rpa/formalactions.htm](http://www.fgs.org/rpa/formalactions.htm).

To view this bill, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

Enter HR 10 in the search box for "Bill Number."

#### **Action Is Needed Now**

Because this bill is moving toward passage so quickly, it is urged that the genealogical community take action immediately and let their representatives know that

they are in support of David Rencher's amendment and the FGS position in this important matter.

#### **How Should I Word My Letter?**

While you should word the letter in any way that is comfortable for you, it is recommended that you include the following as a portion of the letter:

"While I support the intention to increase security to protect the U.S. from terrorists and those who wish to improperly take U.S. identities, I am concerned that those researching their family's history continue to have access to non-certified birth records.

Therefore, in order to support HR-10 I ask that you amend HR-10 Section 3063(d)(2) by adding the following wording to the existing paragraph:

'However, nothing in this Chapter 2 shall be construed to require a State to change its law with respect to public access to (A) non-certified copies of birth certificates or to (B) birth certificates or birth records once a period of 100 years has elapsed from the date of creation of the certificate or record.'

I believe that this additional language is imperative so that the states do not react by restricting all certificates to comply with the law, rather than dealing with certified as opposed to non-certified birth certificates. This proposed amendatory language would remind them that they can and should be treated differently." Our San Diego County representatives in Congress are;

Duncan Hunter  
366 South Pierce Street  
El Cajon, CA 92020-4136  
(619) 579-3001  
FAX: (619) 579-2251  
[www.house.gov/hunter/](http://www.house.gov/hunter/)

Susan Davis  
4305 University Avenue, Suite 515  
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(619) 280-5353  
Fax Number: (619) 280-5311  
[www.house.gov/susandavis/](http://www.house.gov/susandavis/)

Bob Filner  
333 F Street, Suite A  
Chula Vista, CA 91910  
(619) 422-5963  
Fax: 1 (619) 422-7290  
[www.house.gov/filner/](http://www.house.gov/filner/)

Darrel Issa  
1800 Thibodo Road, #310  
Vista, CA 92083  
(760) 599-5000  
fax: 760.599.1178  
[www.issa.house.gov/](http://www.issa.house.gov/)

Thanks to member Lynne Robinson for alerting us to this important pending legislation.

# Allen County Public Library Trip Planned

Your Society is sponsoring a trip to the Allen County Public Library at Fort Wayne, Indiana. The dates are April 24 through May 1, 2005. The Society has arranged for special hotel rates and special group benefits. Registration information and form is included with this newsletter and is also available on our web site: [www.rootsweb.com/~casdgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~casdgs). For questions, please contact our Special Events Chair, Roberta Levy (858-565-0383, [rclevyca@aol.com](mailto:rclevyca@aol.com)) for more information



## Why the Allen County Public Library?

Just in case you haven't heard, the Allen County Public Library has the second largest Genealogy Department in the U.S. (1st is the Family History Library in Salt Lake City).

So, what makes this library so important? Organized in 1961, it contains more than 300,000 printed volumes and 314,000 items of microfilm and microfiche and the collections grows daily. Among the holdings are more than 50,000 volumes of compiled genealogies, representing works already done on American and European families, ranging from brief typescripts to well documented multi-volume works. Nearly 5,000 genealogies on microfiche and numerous family newsletters complement this collection. You will also find 45,300 R.L. Polk directories dated 1964 to the present, with significant earlier runs for some cities. The department also holds many directories for smaller cities and rural areas produced by other publishers and the microform collection dates from 1785-1935 for some 320 cities. In addition, there are nearly 200,000 printed volumes of U.S. genealogy and local history publications. There are also extensive holdings of Federal, state and territorial censuses, passenger lists and military records. Check out a more complete list on their web site at: [www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/index.html](http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/index.html).

Still need more reason why you should go to the Allen County Public Library? There are thousands of volumes on the British Isles, England, Scotland and Ireland. Germanic genealogy including research guides, maps, emigration records and genealogies.

But perhaps most important is PERSI, the **PER**iodical **S**ource **I**ndex. This index, compiled by the department staff, contains over 1.7 million records in nearly 6,000 different journals and other periodicals in the U. S. and

abroad. While you can access the index online, *all the articles cited can be found at the Allen County Library*. This alone could save you countless hours of research time. (See our June 2004 Newsletter for a detailed article on PERSI). It also has all the standard reference works including The American Genealogical-Biographical Index and the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections. Also available are computer databases, audio and video cassettes, governmental and legal references.

Not convinced yet? About 100,000 people visit the library every year and Fort Wayne is very genealogy friendly with many fine restaurants. But more importantly, you will be with a great group of friends from your Society who can help one another with their research and insure a successful trip. So, sign up today and don't miss this opportunity.



## Rules For Using Indexes

Here are James Hansen's 10 rules for using indexes. He is a reference librarian at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

- 1) An index is only an index. It is not a substitute for the records being indexed.
- 2) The larger the size of the index, the more easily pertinent listings are overlooked.
- 3) In a given record, any vowel may at any point be substituted for any other vowel.
- 4) Virtually every pre- WWII record, in whatever form we see it today, originated as an attempt by an individual to put on paper what he or she thought was heard.
- 5) There is no perfect indexing system.
- 6) It doesn't matter how you spell your name, it only matters how the indexer spelled it.
- 7) Just because an index is described as complete or comprehensive, doesn't mean it is complete or comprehensive.
- 8) If you haven't found it in an index, you can only conclude that you haven't found it in an index. You can not conclude that it's not in the record.
- 9) The index isn't always at the back of the book.
- 10) Sometimes it is best to ignore the index altogether.

Good reminders for all researchers. Thanks to Anna Acosta for submitting this. From the Contra Costa Genealogical Society newsletter.

## Meaning of Life.....

Old friends are best. They know everything about you but they can't remember it.

# Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System Completed



The National Park Service (NPS) recently announced the completion of the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors (CWSS) System. Started in 1993, it was recently completed with the addition of the final soldier names from Pennsylvania and Virginia. This comprehensive computerized database of Civil War veterans, North and South, holds the service records of 6.3 million soldiers. The System can be accessed through any computer with Internet access.

The CWSS System allows visitors to search for individual soldiers and their assigned regiments and subsequent battle engagements. Visitors will be able to access sufficient data that links the service personnel to several dozen Civil War-related sites within the NPS, including battlefields, monuments and military parks.

The NPS acknowledges the contributions of its many partners and volunteers in the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System project, including the Mormon Church, Federation of Genealogical Societies, Howard University, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Civil War Preservation Trust and the African American Civil War Memorial Freedom Foundation.

"The National Park Service is extremely grateful for the contributions of the Mormon Church," said John Peterson, the NPS Project Manager for the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Project. "We couldn't have even started this project without their support. The Family History Department gave us valuable technical advice and support on how to process and edit the 6.3 million names." David Rencher, who coordinated the project for the Mormons, brought in the Federation of Genealogical Societies to volunteer the massive national data-entry efforts in over thirty states. The Church provided the use of its proprietary data-entry software for the first time to a non-Church project.

The Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System is an invaluable research tool that not only benefits Civil War enthusiasts, but also school groups, historians, genealogists and people who may never have known that they had an ancestor in the Civil War. Through education and exploration, Americans have the opportunity to preserve America's legacy.

To learn more about the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System visit: [www.civilwar.nps.gov](http://www.civilwar.nps.gov).

## Meeting in Review..... Oct. 9, 2004

Penny Fiekie spellbound everyone with her superb talk on land and court records. The quality and depth of her knowledge on these subjects drove home the absolute importance and necessity of including these in all your genealogical research. This was certainly one of our 'not to be missed' meetings.

Land and deed records are sometimes the only source of proving family relationships. Quit claims deeds can often be the 'mother lode' of family information spanning many generations as land is passed from generation to generation. She emphasized the inter-relationship of land and court records as 'Siamese twins' which need to be looked at together.

She emphasized the importance of looking at Federal and state records relating to bounty lands, donation land claims, homestead, private land claims and pensions in tracing ownership and descendency. She further stressed the use of plot and surveyor's maps in tracking the division of property to heirs (and where to find them). Maps also play a critical role in determining county boundaries. If records can't be located in a particular county, be sure to check all surrounding counties.

While time consuming, deed research will pay off handsomely. Months in advance of a trip to Salt Lake City, she orders the index films at the FHC and gets all the file and page numbers of the actual deeds. Then, when at the FHL, she spends her time looking up the deeds and making copies. She figures, with the time saved, she pays for her trip to Salt Lake. Good advice.

She next went through the various types of probate records and what they indicate, including some of the latin terms. And if the court house burned or you can't find records, how to use newspaper notices, lease and rental agreements and auction records as substitutes.

This brief review can not do justice to the extensive information she presented (without notes), including citations to the major reference books on the subjects.

## Improve Your Genealogy with Study Groups

The Study Group is a 2-hour workshop in which we discuss a specific topic or area. After the discussion, we can provide mentoring should you have a "brick wall" situation in which you need help. We meet the third Tuesday of each month except July, August and December, 10 a.m to noon at the Society library.

November 16:

**Don't Lose Your Census:** All About Census Enumerations, Including Your Own

**Come and learn from experienced researchers.**

# Genealogy 'Cold Calling'

Phoning strangers can be a little intimidating. We begin to think about how much we do not like to be interrupted and bothered ourselves by phone calls from strangers. Then there is the apprehension of being treated rudely, rejected and hung up on. Plus, some people don't understand genealogy or are untrustworthy and just unwilling to share any information. It all makes it easier just to put it off or not call at all.

However, at some point we all face a research issue that can't be solved without making that dreaded 'cold call'. Here are some suggestions for making successful 'cold calls' that will pay off handsomely in your research.

*Don't Hide Your Identity* -- If at all possible, it helps to ring in under your own name and number. Many people have caller ID and will be intrigued by a call coming in from someone of their own surname or, at least, a long distance number that's not familiar to them. It's true that there are plenty of call screeners who won't pick up the phone for anyone who's unknown to them, but curiosity sometimes gets the better of these folks. After they've seen your name and number ring in several times, they will occasionally call you! This is also one compelling reason not to have an unlisted number.

*Avoid Leaving Messages* -- If you leave a message, you are asking that person to return your phone call which is most likely a long distance call. Not only is that an added expense for them (they may be on a tight budget) but it is also asking them to interrupt their busy schedule. Even people with the best intentions may not call back or the message could be deleted by mistake. You may also be dealing with a serious call screener who never answers any phone call directly. In this case, after calling numerous times, it may be worthwhile to leave a message and state why you are calling and that you will call back at a certain date and time.

*Don't Over Prepare* -- You obviously know who you are calling but they don't know you. They may become suspicious if you start out by spelling out all the family relationships, names, dates, etc. They may become overwhelmed and intimidated. You also don't want to sound too polished (like a telemarketer) or rehearsed. And avoid being pushy and assertive. Be relaxed, even halting and apologetic. Early in the conversation, ask if this is a good time to talk. They may be busy and would gladly talk to you at another time. They may also want a chance to get the family records to be better prepared.

*Explain the Connection* -- Start out simple and plain -- "You don't know me, but my name is X and I am calling from San Diego. I think we may be distant cousins. If you're the person I'm looking for, your grandparents would have been Y and Z." The key here is to immediately share some family details in order to avoid the hang-up impulse some of us have. Many people hang up without taking time to learn who you are, so you need to

get past this barrier. Fortunately, it's a little less pronounced now due to the do-not-call list (those on the list no longer expect calls from telemarketers, and if they suspect you of being one, they'll probably stay on the line long enough to find out who to be angry with!).

*Ask For a Referral* -- Once you've established that you have a legitimate reason for calling, it's a good idea to offer a graceful "out." This can be easily accomplished by asking if there's someone in the family who's into genealogy. This gives them a chance to pass you and your questions on to another relative (and you an alternative contact if they truly aren't interested), but few people will take advantage of this offer. Most will appreciate your consideration of their time and continue talking with you.

*Give Before You Get* -- To help erase any lingering concerns, it helps to share fresh details before asking for any in return. In fact, if you can discipline yourself, make the contact a three-step process: 1) call, 2) e-mail or snail mail some family charts or photos, and then 3) call again. It takes longer, but it works wonders in terms of raising their comfort level with you. If you just can't wait, at least take the time to verbally share data you have before moving on and asking for information.

*Ask For Confirmation* -- Assuming you've made it past the preliminaries, you're ready to seek information from them. To help ease into this, start by asking for confirmation of a few bits and pieces that you already have. For example, you might try, "I have that your grandmother died in 1954 and is buried in Cemetery X. Does that sound right?" This allows you to underscore the fact that the call is a genuine genealogical inquiry and not some scam (after all, how many scam artists would take the time to learn where their intended victim's grandmother is buried?) and gives you a chance to demonstrate that you already know plenty and they're not giving away family secrets by speaking with you.

*Leave Your Contact Information* -- Always leave your contact information (all of it--phone, address, and e-mail) even if you don't necessarily expect to communicate with this person again. This may sound like a blinding flash of the obvious, but, particularly when the conversation flows right from the start and you wind up chatting for an hour, it can be easy to forget this rather important step. You might change your mind, they might happen across some treasures in the attic and think of you, or someone else might contact them about genealogy. Then they're in the position to play middleman, and a surprising number will be kind enough to do so.

*Happy Dialing* -- Yes, calling strangers can be a little intimidating, but the potential rewards far outweigh the worst-case scenario of being hung up on. Here's hoping these suggestions make your next cold-calling experience a little more pleasant and successful.

*Meaning of Life.....*

Yesterday is history, Tomorrow is a mystery, Today is a gift. That's why we call it *The Present*

# Using Timelines in Genealogical Research

Genealogists are often so focused on researching individual dates, locations and events that they forget about the 'big picture'. Creating timelines reminds us of what events happened in relation to a person's life and put their life span in a broader perspective from which we can see events and trends that we may have missed before. They can help distinguish between same named individuals and events that are out of context (e.g. late births telling of another marriage). They may even lead to breaking down that brick wall. By comparing timelines of different ancestors, we can also better understand migration trends, family changes and other life events. Timelines will also point out which resources may or may not be available or pertinent for a particular ancestor. The lives of our ancestors, like our own, were controlled by many factors and influences that were all happening simultaneously and dictated the important life decisions they made. As genealogists, we need to understand these factors in their context to be able to understand and draw the correct conclusions about their lives.

So, how do you start creating a timeline? A timeline is simply a chart that graphically shows events over a period of time. In the case of an individual, you start by plotting all known life events on a timeline by date, starting with birth. You would want to include places lived, schools, marriages, births of children, etc. Just doing this by itself will show where you may have gaps in information and need additional research. The next step is to add important dates from other historical timelines. These can come from a number of sources and should be customized for the individual you are researching. What should be included?

Important events to consider are; local history (boundary changes, land grants, real estate boom/bust cycles, city developments, political changes, population, etc.), health (epidemics, pandemic), economic (recessions, depressions, inflation, unemployment, stock market, taxes), transportation (roads, bridges, waterways), weather (floods, droughts, fires), and wars (Indian attacks, raids, local militia action). It will also be meaningful for later research to include the various newspaper publication dates, availability of city directories, county histories, local and state censuses and tax lists, etc. In addition to individual timelines, you can also create them for families, specific localities and multi-generation families, depending on your needs.

So, how do you organize all this information? First, most major genealogy programs have a timeline function. They are different for each program so take the time to learn about the one included with your program. There are others available as separate or add-on programs. One, 'Chronos 2000' is available for download

(<http://cascoly.com/history.htm>) and includes several datasets. Others like, 'Genelines' ([www.progenysoftware.com](http://www.progenysoftware.com)) and 'Genealogy Timeline' (<http://pw1.net.com.com>) are available for purchase and 'TimeStripe 3.0', is available as a trial download ([www.download.com](http://www.download.com)).

A less high tech approach is to make your own timeline using clear acetate overlays. Each data source has its own acetate layer (e.g. weather, economic) which can be interchanged and combined to see different relationships.

So, where do you get all the information to include in your historical timelines? There are many sources, depending on your locality and focus. Some are software company prepared 'data sets' available to download directly into your timeline program. In addition, many compiled timelines are available on the web. Some sources are;

## **General timelines:**

[www.ourtimelines.com](http://www.ourtimelines.com), <http://timelines.ws/>

<http://www2.canisius.edu/Eemeryg/time.html>

[http://dir.yahoo.com/arts/humanities/history/by\\_time\\_period/timelines/](http://dir.yahoo.com/arts/humanities/history/by_time_period/timelines/)

## **Epidemics:**

[www.relife.com/history\\_1.html](http://www.relife.com/history_1.html)

[http://hawkshome.net/misc\\_items/events/epidemic\\_timeline.htm](http://hawkshome.net/misc_items/events/epidemic_timeline.htm)

## **Economic:**

<http://www.huppi.com/kangaroo/Timeline.htm>

## **Locality:**

There are many locality timelines available through historical society web sites. Here is one for San Diego;

[www.sandiegohistory.org/timeline/timeline.htm](http://www.sandiegohistory.org/timeline/timeline.htm)

Use your search engine to find other specific timelines suited to your individual research needs.

Other sources of timeline data are; newspapers, county histories, almanacs (historical weather information), historical societies, county historians, genealogical societies and libraries. There are also published timeline books available for purchase or at your library.

The information you include in your timelines is dependent on what you need to discover about your ancestor. It is important to ask the right question(s) first before you begin as that will determine what historical timelines to include. Creating meaningful timelines can involve considerable time, research and effort but will yield a bounty of information about your ancestor and family you may not have found otherwise. It will significantly go beyond the names, dates and places collected in your genealogy research and lead you to the reasons that influenced and changed their lives.

Try it out on one of your research 'roadblocks' and see if it doesn't open up new approaches for additional research.

# *A Palm in Your Future?*

A major problem with doing library research is not having all your genealogy information and notes at hand. After all, you can't bring your filing cabinets with you. With lap top computers, this finally was possible. You could confirm information and input your discoveries directly into your program. The only problem was what to do with your expensive lap top while you went researching in the book stacks or were mesmerized at the microfilm reader.

More recently, with the advent of PDAs - personal digital assistants - it is now possible to carry all your research information with you in a handheld device that fits in your pocket. You can even input information, make hand written notes and display images. But like most new technologies, major decision hurdles arises when you finally decide to take the plunge.

First, there are two different operating systems used on PDAs - Palm and Pocket PC - each which has its own, and distinctly different, hardware and software issues and brands names. Not only are there all those techie issues (memory, displays, input keys, battery life, etc.) but also software compatibility and product features. It can all be so bewildering you just want to give up. Here are a few suggestions on how to break down all the issues and bring some order to your decision process.

The most important issue is software compatibility with your home genealogy software program. You do need to upload and download (hot sync) your home genealogy file(s) so you want a PDA software program that works well with your PC program. Some programs will download your files directly without having to convert first to GEDCOM or other formats. This should be your first concern in the decision process. Next is product features. Some PDA software only lets you view your data but not input new or change existing information. You need to determine how you plan to use your PDA. Also, PDA software programs have different features and display formats. You need to find one that you like. Look them over carefully before you decide. Another potential decision maker here is what other software you might want to use on your PDA. There are hundreds of non-genealogy PDA applications out there and if one is particularly important for you, it may determine the operating system (OS) you choose. You may also need to consider compatibility with family and friends (i.e. sharing files).

Once you have decided on the PDA software, you need to find compatible hardware. Some of the major Palm OS PDA brands are; Palm, Sony, Handspring, IBM, while Pocket PC brands include; HP, Dell, Casio, Toshiba, ViewSonic. Be sure to look at your software requirements first as some hardware brand models may not be compatible, even when designed for that operating system. The first major decision on hardware is price. PDAs can cost from under \$100 up to \$800, depending

on features. Some of the major price issues involve display (size, color, B&W), memory, input keys and peripherals (modems, cameras, GPS, MP3). Other hardware issues to consider are size and weight, battery life and type (rechargeable, replaceable), expansion slots and memory type. Prices for the same model can vary greatly depending on where and how you shop. Be sure to compare prices, particularly on the web where no tax and free shipping can be a distinct advantage.

To counter the urge to buy the newest and best PDA out there, keep in mind that it will not replace your primary computer or genealogy program. It is just another research tool. And the flip side of being small and handheld is that it can easily be misplaced and dropped. With advancing technology, it also has a relatively short planned obsolescence. So shop smartly.

With that said, and Christmas just around the corner, you may want to clip this article and place it where it can easily be found by family and friends. Who knows, a PDA may be in your future sooner than you think.

Where to look for more information?

## **PDA software reviews;**

[http://www.moss-fritch.com/pda\\_software.htm](http://www.moss-fritch.com/pda_software.htm)

[http://www.rootsworks.com/pda2003/pda2003\\_genealogy\\_software.htm](http://www.rootsworks.com/pda2003/pda2003_genealogy_software.htm)

<http://www.palmsource.com/interests/genealogy/>

## **PDA hardware reviews;**

[http://reviews-zdnet.com.com/4520-3127\\_16-51208451.html?tag=fs](http://reviews-zdnet.com.com/4520-3127_16-51208451.html?tag=fs)

<http://www.itreviews.co.uk/hardware/hard10.htm>

[http://www.consumersearch.com/www/electronics/handheld\\_computers\\_pda/](http://www.consumersearch.com/www/electronics/handheld_computers_pda/)



## *Welcome to Our New Members*

We want to welcome the following new members to the Society (with the surnames they are researching). Please introduce yourself to them at our next meeting. Welcome to the Society!

Suzanne Bond -- Rehknopf, McGaughy, Strozier, Schade.

Carolyn Hoard -- Eckenrode, Hawley, Maydole, Wilson.

Gordon Hoard -- Dennison, Jones, Prasser, Schweyer.



## *Meaning of Life.....*

The easiest way for me to grow as a person is to surround myself with people smarter than I am.

# The Real Reason for Thanksgiving Day.....



There are many myths and misconceptions surrounding the people responsible for the American Thanksgiving tradition. Contrary to popular opinion, the Pilgrims didn't wear buckles on their shoes or hats. They weren't teetotalers, either. They smoked tobacco and drank beer. And, most importantly, their first harvest festival and subsequent "thanksgivings" weren't held to thank the local natives for saving their lives.

There is no way to divorce the spiritual from the celebration of Thanksgiving – at least not the way the Pilgrims envisioned it, a tradition dating back to the ancient Hebrews and their feasts of Succoth and Passover. The Pilgrims came to America for one reason – to form a separate community in which they could worship God as they saw fit. They had fled England because King James I was persecuting those who did not recognize the Church of England's absolute civil and spiritual authority. On the two-month journey of 1620, William Bradford and the other elders wrote an extraordinary charter – the Mayflower Compact. Why was it extraordinary? Because it established just and equal laws for all members of their new community – believers and non-believers alike. And where did they get such revolutionary ideas? From the Bible, of course.

When the Pilgrims landed in the New World, they found a cold, rocky, barren, desolate wilderness. There were no friends to greet them, Bradford wrote. No houses to shelter them. During the first winter, half the Pilgrims died of sickness or exposure – including Bradford's wife. Though life improved for the Pilgrims when spring came, they did not really prosper. Why? The textbooks don't tell the story, but Bradford's own journal does. The reason they didn't succeed initially is because they were practicing an early form of socialism.

The original contract the Pilgrims had with their merchant-sponsors in London called for everything they produced to go into a common store. Each member of the community was entitled to one common share. All of the land they cleared and the houses they built belonged to the community. Bradford, as governor, recognized the inherent problem with this collectivist system.

"The experience that was had in this common course and condition, tried sundry years ... that by taking away property, and bringing community into common wealth, would make them happy and flourishing – as if they were wiser than God," Bradford wrote. "For this community [so far as it was] was found to breed much confusion and discontent, and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort. For young men that were most able and fit for labor and service did repine that they should spend their time and strength to work for other men's wives and children without any recompense ... that was thought injustice."

Even back then people did not want to work without incentive. Bradford decided to assign a plot of land to each family to work and manage, thus turning loose the power of free enterprise. What was the result? "This had very good success," wrote Bradford, "for it made all hands industrious, so as much more corn was planted than otherwise would have been."

As a result, the Pilgrims soon found they had more food than they could eat themselves. They set up trading posts and exchanged goods with the Indians. The profits allowed them to pay off their debts to the merchants in London much faster than expected. The success of the Plymouth colony thus attracted more Europeans and set off what we call the "Great Puritan Migration."

But it wasn't just an economic system that allowed the Pilgrims to prosper. It was their devotion to God and His laws. And that's what Thanksgiving is really all about. The Pilgrims recognized that everything we have is a gift from God – even our sorrows. Their Thanksgiving tradition was established to honor God and thank Him for His blessings and His grace.

Our Thanksgiving Day holiday, while inseparable from the Pilgrims tradition, has its origin in the harvest festivals that are traditional in many parts of the world. One of the first general thanksgiving proclamations was made in Charlestown, Massachusetts in 1676. President George Washington, in 1789, issued the first presidential thanksgiving proclamation in honor of the new constitution. It was New York State, in 1817, that first adopted Thanksgiving Day as an annual custom. By the middle of the 19th century many other states had done the same. In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln appointed a day of thanksgiving, and since then each president has issued a Thanksgiving Day proclamation, designating the fourth Thursday of November as a holiday. However, in 1939, Franklin D. Roosevelt, appointed the third Thursday of November, primarily as a means to extend the Christmas holiday shopping period. This met with widespread disfavor and was changed back two years later by acts of both congress and the President. Incidentally, it was President Harry Truman who first 'pardoned' the White House turkey from its Thanksgiving Day death sentence... a tradition carried on by every president since.

Question or 'brick wall' problem:

What research have you done?:

## *Shop Ralphs and Food-4-Less to Help Your Society*

Have you registered your Ralph's Club Card with the Society and received your Food-4-Less Community Contributions Card? If not, please do so now. You may sign up at our monthly meetings or phone our library (619-588-0065) and leave a message on the recorder. We will need your 13 digit Ralph's Club Card number, located on the back of the card, and your name, address and phone number. For the Food-4-Less program, just your name, address and phone number and we will mail you their card.

By using the cards when you shop, your Society gets up to 5% of the purchase amount and, best of all, it doesn't cost you a penny more. What could be easier! Do so today and shop often.

## *President's Message*

Your Society was founded 57 years ago by a group of dedicated genealogists who sought to promote and strengthen family history research. Our goal remains the same today. We all joined the Society with that one common vision.

Our Society IS our members. It is not the board, the directors or the volunteers -- we are just members like you taking our turn to 'sit in the chairs' to help carry out the jobs that make this a worthwhile, viable and valuable experience for all our members and the San Diego genealogy community.

Our organization only works because these dedicated members volunteer their time and make the effort to help. For some, myself included, it is to show my gratitude and to 'pay back' the Society for the years of quality learning experiences I have had. I would have never been able to accomplish what I have in my genealogical research without the Society nor would I have enjoyed it as much. It is my appreciation to all those volunteers who, in years past, have made this all possible. I know that all our members appreciate and acknowledge the fine work of our many volunteers. I would ask that you give some thought to volunteering for your Society. Don't wait to be asked. And if you are, please consider all you have gotten from the Society and all you can offer back. It doesn't take much and the rewards are more than worth the effort.

So, please, contact me or any of the board members and find out what you can do to help your Society. Thank you for your continued membership and support.

Peter Steelquist  
President

## *Annual Membership Renewal*

Have you mailed in your annual membership renewal? If so, **THANK YOU**.

If you have not mailed in the form that was included in last month's Newsletter, please fill it out and mail today. Do you need another form? Visit the Society's web site ([www.rootsweb.com/~casdgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~casdgs)) and print a copy. And please consider renewing at a higher membership level. Your Society appreciates your membership and continued support. Thank you.



## *Forrest Williams Query*

Susan Patterson of Texas would like to find information about and photo of Forrest B. Williams, a musician who played the piano in and around La Mesa. On weekends, he played at Jane's Secret Garden Cafe.

He was born 11 Jul 1914 in Portland OR and died 26 Jan 2000 in El Cajon. He was survived by his wife Susan A. Williams. She has obituaries for both and would like to find out more about him. Mrs. Patterson can be contacted at 512-308-1977 or [dukensue@aol](mailto:dukensue@aol).

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### **SDGS Event Calender**

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings held at;  
St. Dunstan's Parish Hall, 6556 Park Ridge Blvd., San Diego

Nov 10: Board Meeting, 7:00 pm, Society Library

Nov. 13: Monthly Meeting, Panel Discussion: 'Breaking Through Brick Walls', San Carlos  
Methodist Church

Nov. 16: Study Group: Don't Lose Your Census, Society Library, 10:00am-Noon

Dec. 8: Board Meeting, 7:00 pm, Society Library

Dec. 11: No Monthly Meeting in December

Jan. 5: Board Meeting, 7:00 pm, Society Library

Jan 8: Annual Luncheon, Dr. George Schweitzer, 9:00 am - 3:30, Handlery Hotel. Reservations  
due by Jan. 3, 2005

**View All San Diego County Genealogy Events at: [www.cgssd.org/events.php3](http://www.cgssd.org/events.php3)**