



The Campaign for Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society

Santa Barbara, California

May 2009

What Makes a Good Library?

A library that adds no new materials to its collections becomes a warehouse, not an exciting research facility. And we are now OUT OF SPACE! The new addition to our library will add approximately 92% more space and allow us to expand our already very GOOD LIBRARY, enroute to making it a GREAT LIBRARY! We anticipate that this wonderful addition will take care of our space needs for the next 20 years.

But first, let's start with a "Good Library." A vast number of books does not a Good Library make! It's critical that the books, CDs, maps, microfiche and microfilm are relevant to the purpose of the library—in our case, genealogical research.

How do you go about shaping a good collection? A thoughtful collection policy is at the core of a good library. With our Sahyun Library we realize that at this stage we can't be all things to all people. However, we strive to have something to offer nearly everyone who comes to research here.

At one of our open houses a few years ago, a petite, serious lady attended and said that her grandfather had been a general in Argentina and that she wished to research his family. Well, you might guess that the

Sahyun is not heavy on Argentinian genealogical material. However, after a quick "gulp" we did find sources to help her with her research. Tracing Your Hispanic Heritage by George R. Ryskamp listed 20 entries for Argentina, while Finding Your Hispanic Roots by the same author listed an additional 22 entries. A third source on our shelves, Genealogical Historical Guide to Latin America by Lyman De Platt provided 38 pages on research in Argentina. She made photocopies of selected pages and thanked us for providing her with some tools to begin her search. Mission accomplished!

A good U.S. collection is a priority since we usually begin our research in this country. Eastern states are a focal point as that's where the bulk of our people entered the country. We also seek works on large "parent" counties that were later carved up into a number of smaller ones. Then it's important to collect sources along our major internal migration routes where people may have settled for a few years before moving further south or west. And, at least once a year, we check the number of resources we have on each state and look for more materials in states that are under represented. We also focus on

some early states (MA, VA, PA, ME, etc.) to provide substantial in-depth coverage to make them a focal point of our collection.

If we're not Native American, most of us came here from another country, so ethnic works are an interesting part of our collection. Perhaps when you have researched further (or begin your new daughter-in-law's family) you'll feel fortunate that we have books like the following in our collection: Armenian Immigrants: to Boston & New York; The Finns Among Us; Norwegian Immigrants to the United States; A Biographical Directory, 1825-1850; Luxembourgers in the New World; Greek Immigrant Passengers 1885-1902; Genocide in Ukraine; Latvian Deportations 1940-Present.

WE HAVE OVER HALF THE CONSTRUCTION BUDGET RAISED AND NOW WE NEED YOUR HELP! We are asking for pledges spread over a three year period. Please open your hearts and be as generous as you can when contacted by a Campaign Committee member.

See you in the trees,

Jan & Michol