



# Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society and the Sahyun Genealogical Library

Researching the World

March 2024

Tree Tips Newsletter

Vol. 40, No.3

## “Finding Her Online: Digital Collections”

Speaker: Gena Philibert-Ortega

Saturday, March 16, 2024



Digital collections offer the researcher a variety of records and resources, often for free. In this presentation, learn about the types of websites that offer digital collections and how to find what you need for your research. Unique collections that focus on female ancestors will be explored.

### About the Speaker

**Gena Philibert-Ortega** is an author, researcher, and instructor specializing in the use of social history and material culture to tell the story of historical women's lives. She holds two Master's degrees: one in Interdisciplinary Studies (Psychology and Women's Studies) and the other in Religion. As an author, Gena has published two books, *Cemeteries of the Eastern Sierra* (Arcadia Publishing) and *From the Family Kitchen* (F+W Media), and hundreds of articles in print magazines and online publications. Her writings can also be found on her two blogs, *Gena's Genealogy* and *Food.Family.Ephemera*, as well as the GenealogyBank and Legacy Family Tree Webinars blogs.



A highly sought-after instructor, Gena has taught material culture and social history at the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy and is a frequent presenter at seminars and conferences throughout the United States and Canada. Her professional associations include the American Quilt Study Group, the Association of Gravestone Studies, and the National Genealogical Society. Gena has conducted research for PBS, HGTV, and the Travel Channel and has collaborated on research for the Genealogical Institute of America. Gena's current research projects focus on American cemeteries, cookbooks, signature quilts, and 20th-century women's lives.

### HYBRID Event!

This program will be on Zoom and in person at the First Presbyterian Church

**Only Zoom attendees are required to register.**

<https://tinyurl.com/mryyxm99>

**Saturday, March 16, 2024**

More Information:

Special Interest Groups will meet in person at the church.

9:30 - 10:25 am

Business Meeting will be in person and on Zoom.

10:30 - 11:00am

Featured Speaker (live via Zoom)

~11:00 - 12:00 Noon

## Observing Women's History Month



### March Meetings

Find links to all Zoom events here:

<https://sbgen.org/meetings-classes/calendar/>

### DNA Lunch & Learn

#### In-Person Only

Presented by George LaPlante

Thursday, March 7, 2024; 12:00pm - 1:30pm

### Tuesday Lunch and Learn

#### In-Person Only

Presented by Rosa Avolio

Tuesday, March 12, 2024; 12:00pm - 1:30pm

### Beginning Genealogy SIG Meeting

#### ZOOM ONLY

Presented by Jean Foster

Thursday, March 14, 2024; 11:00 am-12:30pm

### Jewish Genealogy SIG Meeting

#### In-Person Only

Presented by Harriette Hinderstein

Thursday, March 14, 2024; 12:00pm - 1:30pm

### Zoom Lunch and Learn

#### ZOOM Only

Presented by Rosa Avolio

Wednesday, March 20, 2024; 12:00pm - 1:30pm



## Ancestors West

The theme for the next issue of Ancestors West will focus on your favorite story or experience as a genealogist. More information is on the back page of this newsletter.

**The deadline is May 1st.**

Please send your stories to  
Charmien Carrier at  
[charmien2940@gmail.com](mailto:charmien2940@gmail.com)

## Presidents' Message

by Ted Tazer-Myers



Governance in a nonprofit organization is always important, but rarely fun. Fortunately, we have a committed board who took most of last Saturday to engage in a strategic planning retreat that turned out to be both fun and meaningful.

The retreat kicked off with an exercise intended to introduce us to just a small sample of the 180,000 records we have in our digitized database. Robin

McCarthy designed the exercise, including a videotaped introduction and instructions for accessing various types of death records. The participants broke up into five teams, with each team given a worksheet to complete regarding a specific death record that the team was tasked with accessing. Some teams quickly downloaded the record and correctly answered the test questions, while others took a little longer as they became engrossed in the fascinating details of the nature of their subject's demise (knives and fire came into play in one gruesome coroner's record!). Everyone had their eyes opened to the tremendous resources our Society has collected that are not available on genealogy subscription sites. They also lauded the records preservation team that has done such a fantastic job over the years inputting these records and making them accessible to members and the public at large.

The second half of the morning was spent with frontline leaders summarizing the successes and progress of their committees and teams, followed by a meaningful discussion of threats and opportunities facing the Society. I won't summarize the results of this discussion here; they will appear in both our forthcoming strategic plan and annual review scheduled to be published in time for the annual meeting in June.

The most challenging part of the retreat occurred following a tasty lunch donated and prepared by Marilyn Compton and Kate Lima. After considering our dual mission of providing educational services and a research library (including print and digital archival resources) to promote family history and genealogy in the community, the five retreat teams drafted strategic goals for the upcoming year. To help us get a grasp on how our strategic initiatives and actions fit into overarching goals, each strategic objective developed by a committee or team was slotted into one of four focus areas: Customers (members, friends and stakeholders); Improving Internal Business Processes; Volunteers and Learning; and Financial Stewardship. This Balanced Scorecard framework was new for almost all of the participants, so there was some struggle, but with practice, most started to understand the logic and the BSC provides in ensuring all areas are captured in a balanced way.

Karen Ramsdell, with the support of Holly Snyder, led the final exercise of the day, which was to create a master calendar for 2024 and 2025. The intention of the exercise was to visually depict all the major events for the next two years in order to ensure a balanced allocation of resources and time to each wonderful activity that doesn't unduly draining our volunteers. The exercise was a

tremendous success and the resulting product was appreciated by all participants.

Karen and I will work with our Titled Directors and Committee Chairs during the next couple of months to finalize the strategic plan. We will then enlist the support of our Communications Team to make the final product visually appealing to members, supporters, and stakeholders. The resulting roadmap will benefit everyone in knowing what we are doing, where we are going, and how we are going to get there. It may not be exciting, but it's important. I think that it will also demonstrate, again, that you have an enthusiastic and dedicated group of leaders working to continuously improve your Society on your behalf.

Ted Tazer-Myers, President

## Website Records Database Update

by Robin McCarthy

### Calendar Tips

Do you know that you can filter the Events Calendar to see only certain types of events? A list of event categories to view will appear when you click the down arrow next to Show at the top of the calendar. If you are signed onto the website, additional categories will appear in the category list: Business Meetings, for internal committee and Board meetings; Visitors, for outside groups that are touring the library; Reminders, for internal society items of interest such as the SLC trip and Ancestors West deadline; the Jackson Community Classroom and Woodward Reading Room, for non-genealogy groups using the library. The classes and internal meetings that have reserved those rooms will not be included in the latter two room filters. Their reserved rooms can be seen by looking at the calendar items.



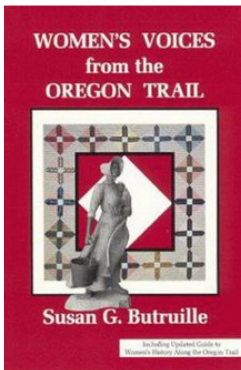
### DNA Lunch & Learn Meeting Change

Beginning in April, the **DNA Lunch & Learn** meetings will be returning to their previous schedule of the third Friday of each month. Due to low attendance in person, all meetings after March will be Zoom-only. The final in-person meeting will take place at the Sahyun Genealogical Library on Thursday, March 7th at noon. Please remember to email your DNA questions to George LaPlante before the meeting.



## Books at the Sahyun: Women's History Month

Chris Klukkert, Book Chair

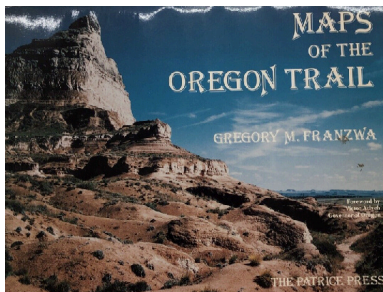


In 1861, my 9-year old great grandmother, Missouri Alice Foster, walked all the way from Missouri to northern California on the Oregon Trail next to her parents' oxen-pulled wagon. Their wagon train was twice raided by Native Americans (although the raiders only "borrowed" the family white cow and then returned her the next morning) and her father died en-route, and was hastily buried along the Trail outside Fort Laramie. This my dad casually told me once and then added he had been embarrassed by his grandmother,

Missouri. My dad said she insisted on making all her own clothes and soap and dressed as some kind of "pioneer woman," which wouldn't do in his modern 1940's Redding, California. WOW – I was hooked and I had to know more. That story was a big impetus for my digging into genealogy and Missouri was, and is, still one of my favorite relatives.

I was recently asked to write a piece on her and needed more "meat" for my story. After getting my fill of information on-line, I dug into our very own bookshelves at the Sahyun. I started with *Women's Voices from the Oregon Trail*. I also pulled off the shelf, *Tales of Pioneer Women* which gave me a guide of what to include in my own story.

What was the family's route to California? I found our *Maps of the Oregon Trail* invaluable in tracking their route and helping pinpoint where Missouri's father's grave likely was located. I remembered Missouri's daughter had joined a society of early California



pioneers, so I had to check out *Daughters of History: Centennial Memoirs of the Daughters of California Pioneers*.

Missouri had property at one time and had incurred a debt entanglement with her son-in-law, so it was helpful to peruse *Women and the Law of Property in Early America*.

Thanks to those resources, I have now put together a more complete and interesting story on Missouri and her family.

I am not alone in wanting to research those elusive women in our pedigrees. Here are some books that have been requested, donated to or mentioned to me as helping folks with their female line research: *Alaska's Dynamic Women, 200 Years of Alaskan Women, Great Jewish Women, America's Women in the Revolutionary Era: A History Through Bibliography, 1760-1790, and Mutinous Women: How French Convicts Became Founding Mothers of the Gulf Coast*.

Those are just a few of our titles in use this Women's History Month. What books on your family awaits your search? Come into

the Sahyun and see for yourself! We look forward to your library visit and we encourage and welcome suggestions for other genealogy books for our collection.

Here are the books from the **New In The Library** shelf:

*The Heritage book of Central Montana*

*Acadian Exiles in the Colonies*

*Honoring Santa Ynez Valley Veterans Buried in Valley Cemeteries*

*Acadian Families in 1686*

*Arkansas Township Atlas: A History of Minor Civil Divisions in each Arkansas county*

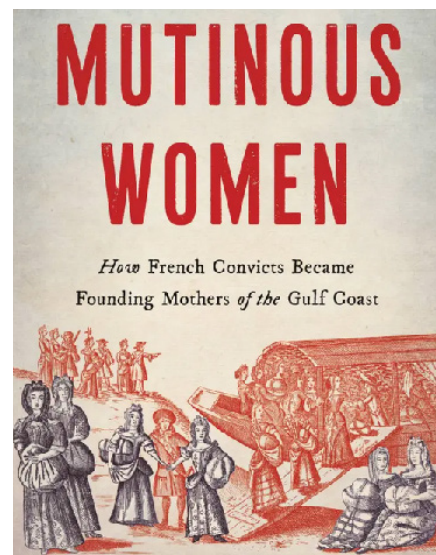
*Huguenot Genealogical Research*

*Louisiana Patriots 1776 – 1783*

Please come in and have a look at our newly-purchased books and all the other resources awaiting you at the Sahyun.

We want to thank the following generous donors:

**Cheryl Jensen   Christine Olsson   Barbara Shaffer  
Bob Goeller   Karen Harris   Janet Lunt**



### Website News by Rosa Avolio

We hope you had a chance to check our **new blog**, and then subscribe, so you can receive notification of our latest blog posts, and other news and events related to genealogy in Santa Barbara County and beyond. Our goal is to provide valuable insights, resources, and support to help you in your genealogical journey. The blog is found here:

<https://sbgen.org/start-your-search/sahyun-library-updates/>

Then, be sure to take a look at our new page for listing **volunteer opportunities**. You'll be surprised at some of the fun and interesting openings. Scroll down a bit to see new listings such as Periodicals Manager and Zoom Moderator.

<https://sbgen.org/get-involved/volunteer/#!/board/VolunteerPositions>

## Membership

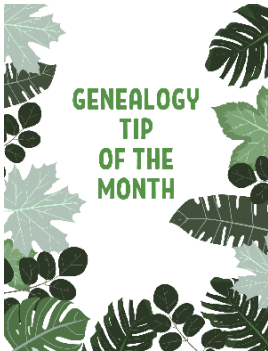
Kate Lima, Membership Chair



### Welcome to Our Newest Members

Jill Rode Judith Spada  
Elain Rudin Karen Kolarczyk  
Katharine DeWitt Valerie Rea  
Kristin Bruno Jo Ann Murray  
Leslyn Keith Virginia Sue Audino  
Anselmo Villanueva  
Mary Ann Gonzales Lespinasse

*Also, a big thank you to our continuing members who renewed in February.*



### Genealogy Tip of the Month

Instead of banging your head against the wall on the same person, pick an ancestor or relative you think you have "finished." Go back and double-check your conclusions on that person, cite sources that weren't cited, originally, look for gaps in their life chronology.

The time away from the brick wall may give you a fresh perspective on it...and save some wear and tear on your head!

(From "GenealogyTipOfTheDay.com," December 31, 2015)

### Let's Talk About the Survey!



This month we share the results of the question "the services provided by the society are always limited by the resources available. These resources include volunteers from our membership and income from donations and our proper-

ty. How do you suggest we grow? We had so many thoughtful answers, I share some of them here.

- **Market and advertise the Society better.** Point taken! We have created a new Marketing Team that is looking into various ways to better promote the society.
- **Rent the Victorian House for additional income.** We hear you! Our lovely yellow Victorian is now being rented to a wonderful young couple with three small children.
- **Have regular printed and online genealogy columns.** Thank you for the suggestion! We have created a Society Blog that updates us on happenings at the library and in the genealogy community.

Here is the blog URL:

<https://sbgen.org/start-your-search/sahyun-library-updates/>,

and you can read all sorts of genealogical information. You can subscribe to receive an email whenever a new blog post arrives. Many thanks to Rosa Avolio who got this up and running!

We have received many other suggestions and are so appreciative of them all. Thank you for your help.



### Trip to Salt Lake City

This is your last chance! SBCGS members are heading to the Family-Search Library in Salt Lake City the week of March 19-26, 2024. You can stay longer or shorter than this, depending on your schedule. The rate will be the same regardless of how many days you stay: \$108 for a standard room and \$118 for a deluxe.

Time is running out! If you're interested please contact Rich Williams at the Plaza Hotel to secure a room, 801-521-0130. And don't forget to email me at [membership@sbgen.org](mailto:membership@sbgen.org) so I can put you on our list. We'd love to have you join us.

## New Pioneer Certificate Program



The San Diego Genealogical Society presents the **California Pioneer Certificate Program** honoring early pioneers who helped shape the state of California. This program offers both lineage certification and an extensive database dedicated to eligible pioneers.

Those interested in recognizing their descendancy from early California pioneers are encouraged to complete an application. Supporting documentation submitted must show their ancestor was associated with one or more of the four following California historical events:

- Lived in California's prior to Statehood (1850)
- Lived in the historic Gold Rush county (1848-1860)
- Resided in San Francisco during the earthquake (1906)
- Were recorded in a California Mission document (before 1850)

Upon verification of submitted documentation, applicants will be issued a Certificate of Authenticity and Lineage Chart showing the pioneer's relationship to the applicant.

#### Fee schedule:

Application fee, non-refundable: \$30 for SDGS Members / \$40 for non-members

Copy of certificate, non-refundable: \$15 for SDGS Members / \$25 for non-members (Copy must be ordered at the same time as certificate)

Details and the application and instructions may be found on the San Diego Genealogy Society website at <https://casdgs.org/Ca-Pioneer-Cert-Program>.

*(This program is not sponsored by SBCGS.)*



## Outreach

by Holly Snyder, Chair

Happy March! Any special female ancestors you are remembering during National Women's History Month? I know I have so many to remember and honor this month. I like to display pictures of my favorite female ancestors and pick a female ancestor to focus my genealogical research on for the month. What do you do to celebrate your female ancestors?

### Picnic in the Cemetery 2024

**Date:** Saturday, October 26, 2024 @ 10am

**Locations:** Santa Barbara Cemetery and then lunch will be at the LDS Church/ FamilySearch Center of Santa Barbara.



**Actors:** Wilbur Hopkins Tate, Betsy Green, Mel Sahyun, Helen Wong, Heather McDaniel McDewitt and her daughter, and Jonathan Smith.

Registration information will be provided soon! We will also need volunteers for group leaders, check-ins, set up, and clean up. We will be putting out an official call out in the summer months.

### 1925 Santa Barbara Earthquake Centennial



Photo courtesy of Gledhill Library, Santa Barbara Historical Museum

Did your family live in Santa Barbara during the 1925 earthquake, or maybe you know of a family who lived here during this time? If so, we would like to hear from you! Maybe you have a diary with written accounts or remember stories your parents or other family members told. We would like to share these recollections during the centennial commemoration in 2025. Please contact Outreach@

### Speaking Engagements in the Community



Outside groups can request a visit and/or tour here: <https://sbgen.org/in-the-community/reservation-request/> Please share the link to anyone who may be interested.

Has your group already had a talk with Larry, but would be interested in a follow up talk or a workshop style activity? We can do that too!

### Santa Barbara Fair & Expo- Genealogy Entries

**April 25- May 5, 2024, Adult Exhibit**

The Santa Barbara Fair & Expo is accepting entries for genealogy! Entries are due April 15. Let's make their genealogy section huge!



**DIVISION 65 – GENEALOGY DIVISION**  
(In the Literature division)

1. Family Pedigree/Descendants Charts
2. Family Genealogy in Original Writings (family history, stories etc.)
3. California/Santa Barbara Genealogy
4. Family Heirloom 75 years or older

5. Family Portrait/Photo 75 years or older
6. Any Other Genealogy

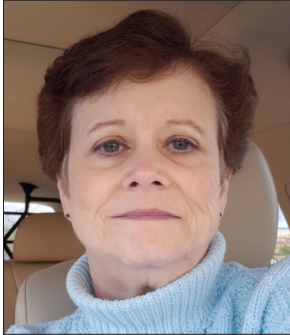
For more information, see their entry rules: <https://earlwarren.com/s/2024-Adult-Division-Cataloge-and-Information.pdf>



## Volunteer Spotlight

This month, SBCGS recognizes and thanks Robin McCarthy, a member since 2012. Robin has been working as a volunteer behind the scenes of so many projects, from the website to the different iterations of databases we've had, as a teacher, excel guru, and anything computer-related. One of our favorite field trips was to the Los Angeles Public Library that she helped organize. She's so knowledgeable and is always happy to help. Here is some of her story.

### A Longtime Local Shares Her Genealogy Journey by Robin McCarthy



I relocated to Goleta from Great Falls, Montana with my family shortly after turning 10 and have lived here ever since. After attending Fairview School, Goleta Valley Junior High, and Dos Pueblos, I majored in math at UCSB, later switching to computer science.

My first job was at Santa Barbara National Bank's accounting department. I later became a computer programmer at Applied Magnetics, fulfilling my high school dream. I also worked in data processing departments at St. Francis Hospital and Jostens, eventually spending 18 years as a software engineer at QAD near Summerland.

Upon retiring in 2012, I decided to research our family tree after hearing my mother was related to John Glenn the astronaut and senator. I took an Adult Education genealogy class from Louise Matz and then joined our genealogy society. I became a volunteer librarian and worked on indexing local records for the database on our website.

During my time with the Society I have organized research trips to the LA Public Library and FamilySearch Center, collected volunteer hours, moderated software user groups, and taught various classes during COVID, whose recordings are in the Webinar Archive. I've attended RootsTech and Jamboree several times and enjoy teaching and taking genealogy and AI classes. I continue to serve as the Calendar Coordinator, Database Administrator, Zoom Coordinator, and assist with the website.

Outside genealogy, I spend time with my sister, attend theater events, have volunteered with a dog rescue group, and served as treasurer for my homeowners' association. I am an avid fan of the Golden State Warriors and Dodgers. My goal is to someday solve the mystery of my relationship to John Glenn. Even after all these years, I'm still unraveling my own family's story.

## Board Announcement



**The Society's Nominating Committee is actively seeking dynamic and innovative individuals who possess a passion for advancing our Society's mission to join our Board of Directors.**

The following Board positions are available, each offering a two-year term starting from July 1, 2024:

- President-Elect
- Treasurer
- Director-At-Large (1)
- Development Director

As an **all-volunteer organization**, the Society's 450+ members have a wealth of life and leadership experience through service as a Society volunteer, in other nonprofits or in their current or past jobs, churches, or community volunteer work.

If you have experience in **organizational leadership** or **accounting and budgeting** or **fundraising** or **support the Society's mission** and will actively participate –

**SBCGS Needs You!**



## Ancestors West

### Ancestors West News

Our next issue's deadline for articles is May 1st. We suggest you write about your favorite story or experience as a genealogist. Of course, we welcome any other story you wish to submit. If you have suggestions for future topics, please let us know. We'd love to have your input.

As a reminder, AW writing and submission guidelines are on the inside back cover of AW. Please send your stories to Charmien Carrier: [charmien2940@gmail.com](mailto:charmien2940@gmail.com)

To see digital issues of AW,  
from 1974–Current, go to our website:  
<https://sbgen.org/society-publications/#gsc.tab=0>

### Land Acknowledgment Statement

"The land on which many of us live and where our library is located is part of the ancient homeland and traditional territory of the Chumash people. We recognize and respect the Chumash Peoples past, present, and future and their continuing presence in their homeland as we join in stewarding this land which we all cherish."