



Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society and the Sahyun Genealogical Library

Researching the World

February 2025

Tree Tips Newsletter

Vol. 41, No. 2

February Meeting & Program

Saturday, February 15, 2025

Location: First Presbyterian Church, State & Constance, SB

The Great Santa Barbara Earthquake - The Disaster that Built a City



One hundred years ago, on June 29, 1925, at 6:42 AM, sleepy Santa Barbara was jolted awake by an earthquake estimated at 6.3 on the Richter scale. The next 19 seconds were to change Santa Barbara from a hodgepodge of building styles into one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Neal Graffy's talk, well-illustrated with rare photographs, brings to life the humor, heroics, and tragedy of that morning and the days that followed. And, be amazed as he reveals why the earthquake is the great foundation of Southern California architecture.

Neal Graffy is almost a Santa Barbara native, the result of a premature birth nine years too soon in Wichita, Kansas. His love for Santa Barbara History began at age 13 when he started gardening and doing odd jobs for Mrs. Leontine Phelan, a descendant of the founder of the Santa Barbara Presidio, who lived in an adobe house built from the Presidio ruins.

Neal has served as a Board Member of the Historical Museum, member (and chairman) of the Santa Barbara County Landmarks Commission, board member of the Mission Canyon Association, and president of the Santa Barbara Corral of Westerners. He is, also, a founding member of de la Guerra y Pacheco Chapter 1.5 of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus and an exNoble Grand Humbug of that esteemed organization.

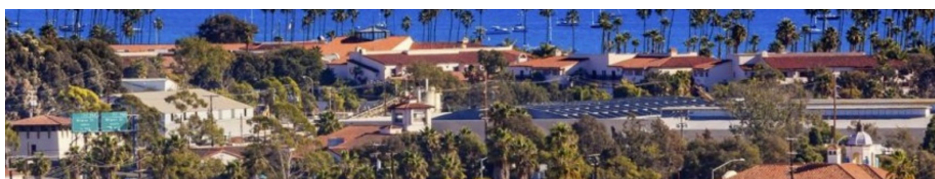
**Neal Graffy will be speaking live in-person
at the First Presbyterian Church, State & Constance,
and broadcasting on Zoom**

Special Interest Groups meet in person only at 9:30 - 10:25
Meeting and speaker will be in person and on Zoom: 10:30 - 11:00

Only Zoom attendees are required to register.

<https://tinyurl.com/4m6jpxtu>

Hope to see you on Saturday, February 15, 2025



February Calendar

Use URL to find links to
these events & REGISTER

[https://sbgen.org/meetings-classes/
calendar/#!/calendar](https://sbgen.org/meetings-classes/calendar/#!/calendar)

First Thursday Lunch & Learn IN-PERSON at Sahyun

February 6, 2025, 12:00 pm

Topics Podcasts and YouTube for Genealogy and FamilySearch Research Wiki

Genealogy 101

**Thursday, February 13, 2025, 1:00 pm
ZOOM ONLY!**

Discuss research tips, resources, and questions. Bring your questions!

February Meeting

Featuring Neal Graffy

Saturday, February 15, 2025, 10:30 am

First Presby. Church, State & Constance

Webinar Watch Party at the Sahyun Tuesday, February 18, 2025, 1:30 pm

View some of Connie Knox's Genealogy TV episodes.

Writers' Group Meeting ZOOM ONLY

Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2025, 10:00 am

Learn tips, ideas, and all things about making your work fascinating to read.

DNA Lunch & Learn ZOOM ONLY!

Friday, February 21, 2025, 12:00 pm

Discuss recent DNA news and answer DNA questions. All welcome.

Crowdsourced Brick Wall Research ZOOM ONLY

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 12:00 pm

Discuss research suggestions for brick wall research questions.

California Pioneer Certificate Program Workshop - Free ZOOM ONLY

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 7:00 pm

Focus is to assist attendees with their specific genealogical questions. An additional purpose is to provide education on early California history and its records.

President's Message

by Edward Tazer-Myers



Dear Members and Friends!

Well, the groundhog has spoken: spring will be delayed another six weeks this year. But, hey, the cool (and, hopefully wet) weather only gives Bill Murray more chances to win Andie MacDowell's heart and you more chances to focus on your favorite genealogy projects. For instance, you could be scanning old photos and documents in our computer lab, writing vignettes about Auntie Em

for your family history book, digging through the stacks at the Sahyun Library, or simply crowdsourcing your brickwalls with our expert teachers. It's amazing how many wonderful resources we have at SBCGS. We have great teachers, writers, IT experts—we even have an inhouse plumbing expert (Bob Muller, looking at you!).

Just a few days ago, I attended a memorial service for one of our longtime genealogy teachers, Norma Eggli. It was inspiring to hear how many students she touched in her thirty-plus year career at SBCC School of Extended Learning. Norma taught computer science and genealogy courses, but her favorite was the latter. Many of our members “got the bug” taking Norma's class. One major reason they were infected is that Norma had the fever herself, starting with her breakthrough research linking her maternal line to the Mayflower. Norma transmitted her enthusiasm for genealogy to her students, and like a virus, it spread.

Norma will be dearly missed, but I have to say, that there are many wonderful teachers in the Society. And, even if we aren't experts, we are certainly learners who inspire each other by sharing our trials, tribulations, and successes. It is fun to learn new techniques that lead to breakthroughs for uncovering the past—and our Society provides that with its classes, professional speakers, deep resources, and, especially, the collaborative and enthusiastic spirit of our members.

I look forward to seeing you at our next General Meeting, or at the Sahyun Library, or online, or at the coffee shop. Here's to indulging our passion for family history together!

Ted



Website Records Database Update

by Robin McCarthy

More than 6100 entries were added to our local records database this past month. These include **Naturalization Petitions** spanning June 1937 to February 1938, and 19 **Welch-Ryce Mortuary books** covering the years 1943-1951, 1958-1960, 1963, 1964, and 1966-1973. There are gaps in the mortuary book ranges. The database now contains 198,474 names of people associated with Santa Barbara County. See if one of your ancestors is listed in the database (<https://sbgen.org/start-your-search/search-database/#/search>)

Speaking of ancestors, do you have any that participated in the California gold rush, survived the San Francisco 1906 earthquake, or were here during the mission or rancho periods before statehood in 1850? If so, you might be eligible for a **California Pioneers Certificate**. This is a new lineage program in partnership with the San Diego Genealogical Society. You can learn about the program here (<https://sbgen.org/in-the-community/california-pioneer-certificate-program/>). Additional information is in the recording of the presentation that introduced the program. It is available in the Webinar Archive.

If you missed the new Genealogy Tech Talk class on Sunday the recording is available until February 9th here (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2X9KeD1QTY2y0aaTOWMg>). On February 10th it will be in the Tips & Tools (<https://sbgen.org/membership-welcome-page/webinar-archive/tips-tools/>) section of the Webinar Archive for members only.



Ancestors West

MAY WE SUGGEST
Due May 1, 2025



REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Do you have an ancestor who excelled in any of the following?
Sports, Public Service, Inventions, Medicine, Transportation, Science, Art, Music, Academia

Please send your stories to
Charmien Carrier, AW Editor
charmien2940@gmail.com

Development Committee

Mary Jacob, Development Director

The Board of Directors has launched a new strategic planning project, set to run through June, aimed at shaping the future of the Society. The initiative seeks to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that identifies critical issues, outlines long-term goals, and sets measurable objectives for the next 5 to 10 years. Our strategic plan is a requirement for submitting proposals to major grant foundations, and it will also provide a clear road map for the incoming president and board as they lead the Society into the future.

A dedicated Strategic Plan Steering Committee has been formed to oversee the process, comprising Ted Tazer-Myers, Karen Ramsdell, Chris Klukkert, and myself. We are excited to have engaged professional planning consultant Carrie Kappel, who will guide the board throughout this process. Carrie will kick off the initiative by leading a board retreat on February 22 to explore key opportunities, uncertainties, a long-term vision, and strategic priorities. Prior to the retreat, Carrie will conduct interviews with several stakeholders who bring diverse perspectives and experience with the Society.

Over the course of March and April, board members and committees will collaborate to refine the long-term goals and strate-

gic priorities. A draft strategic plan, featuring detailed goals and objectives, will be developed and presented to the membership at the May general meeting for feedback on the proposed vision and priorities.

Our Society has previously realized important strategic goals, including securing a permanent home for our library, expanding our membership, and building an extension to the library. We are fortunate to have many strengths including ownership of our property, a solid financial foundation, and a robust library collection. However, as the Santa Barbara County community and field of genealogy change, we must consider how to leverage our strengths while addressing challenges such as declining volunteerism, the growing influence of technology on genealogical research, and a membership that does not reflect the age and cultural background of our area. These are just a few of the key issues the board will address in its deliberations.

We welcome your thoughts and feedback. Please feel free to contact me directly at maryjjacob8@gmail.com if you have questions or would like to share your input.

SBCGS Needs You!

Kate Lima, Nominating Committee Member



The Nominating Committee is seeking candidates for **SBCGS President** and **Vice-President, Operations**. Before 2022, the President managed both governance and operations. The Vice-President, Operations role was created to oversee daily operations, allowing the President to focus on governance. These leaders work closely together to guide the Society.

Strong interpersonal, managerial, and leadership skills, along with a working knowledge of the Society, are desired.

President

As the Society's chief executive officer, the President:

- Leads the board and oversees governance.
- Presides over monthly board and general membership meetings.
- Works with the board to establish committees and appoint chairs.
- Guides policy, long-term planning, and the Society's overall direction.

Vice-President, Operations:

The Vice-President, Operations:

- Is responsible for the Society's administrative and operations functions.
- Oversees team directors responsible for day-to-day operations.
- Leads the Operations Leadership Team's monthly meetings.

If you are interested in serving or know a qualified member, please contact Nominating Committee member Kate Lima at limakate1@gmail.com

Books at the Sahyun by Chris Klukkert, Book Chair

Exciting New Additions to Our Genealogy Library!

Calling all Civil War enthusiasts and genealogists! We're thrilled to announce that our library has recently cataloged and shelved a complete set of The Time-Life Series on the Civil War. Generously donated by our member Norma Johnson when she moved to Orange County, this 28-book collection offers a detailed look into various aspects of the Civil War era. The series covers everything from military leaders to soldiers' experiences, and includes a comprehensive index in one of the volumes. It's beautifully illustrated with maps, photographs, and in-depth battle accounts, making it a valuable resource for anyone researching this period in history.



Personally, I've used one of these volumes—*the Bloodiest Day: The Battle of Antietam*—in my own research. My relative, George Eaglesfield, fought and died during the second day of the Battle of Antietam. He was initially buried hastily on the battlefield, but later, those remains were moved to the Antietam National Cemetery in Sharpsburg, Maryland. George was originally listed as one of the unknown soldiers of the 89th New York Regiment, but thanks to my research, including resources from this Time-Life series and archival letters from UCSB, I was able to identify him. His name will now be added to the list of identified fallen soldiers, and I've also included him on Find a Grave for anyone interested in learning more.

In honor of **Black History Month**, I'd like to share another story. One of my African American DNA matches recently asked for my help locating an ancestor from North Carolina, rumored to have served in a Union regiment. I was able to assist her using our *Guide to Tracing Your African American Civil War Ancestor*, as well as a relatively new addition to our collection, *Forgotten Black Soldiers Who Served in White Regiments During the Civil War*. While we haven't yet pinpointed her ancestor, she was overjoyed to discover her friend's 2nd great-grandfather in a regiment. We even tracked down newspaper articles from a Raleigh publication, and I think we may have just sparked a new genealogy enthusiast! What books are waiting for you in our collection? We invite you to visit the Sahyun Library and see for yourself! Whether you're researching your own family's history or looking to expand your knowledge, we're here to help. We also encourage and welcome any suggestions for new genealogy books to add to our library.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Here are the books from the New In The Library Shelf:

The Time-Life Series of The Civil War

Jefferson County, Illinois marriage record index 1819 – 1900

Oglethorpe County, Georgia Deed Books A-E, 1794 - 1809

Heartsick and Astonished: Divorce in Civil War-era West Virginia

The "Foreign French": nineteenth-century French immigration into Louisiana

Acadian to Cajun: transformation of a people, 1803-1877

Farm families of Jackson and Williamson Counties, Illinois in 1920.

The arduous road: Salt Lake to Los Angeles, the most difficult wagon road in American history

We want to thank the following generous donors:

**Cheryl Jensen , Gary Jensen, Mieke Hawner
Mary J. Jacob, Paul Eggli (Norma Eggli's collection)
Edwin Franks, Jean McKnight
Corrine Ardoin, Cathy Jordan**



The Sahyun Genealogical Library has a variety of books and resources to help with researching African American family history. Chris Klukkert mentions in Books at the Sahyun - on this page - several books that helped in her research.

In addition, Legacy Family Tree Webinars celebrate Black History Month with these 5 FREE webinars:

- African American Research 101 – Post-Civil War to the Present
- Court Records for People of Color Family History Research
- Juneteenth—How Emancipation Came to Texas and How We Celebrate
- “We Were Supposed To Be Neals:“ Reconstructing an Enslaved Family Using DNA
- Collecting and Compiling Plantation Records: Thomas Terrell Case Study
- <https://familytreewebinars.com/black-history-month-2025-at-legacy-family-tree-webinars/>

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.”

Membership Spotlight

Kate Lima, Membership Chair



New Members in December:

Marsha Barr
Stephen Barr
Kevin Halleck
Robert Gonzales Jr.
Alberto Refugio Leon
Stephen Peterson
Sylvia Zuniga Lopez
Diana Montoya
Lisa Frowiss-Mochnick
Anna Lafferty

Returning Members:

Jay Parker
Susan Katherine Lafond
Lynn Ashcraft
Martha Rairden Lannan

I'd like to extend a big, happy thank you to our continuing members who renewed in January. Thank you, we're glad you're here!



Trip to Salt Lake City

Our society will once again visit the FamilySearch Library in Salt Lake City. We'll head over for the week of April 27 – May 4, 2025. Rooms for this entire week are full, but if you're interested you can come for a shorter amount of time. Call Rich Williams at the Plaza Hotel for more information, 801-521-0130. And don't forget to email me at membership@sbgen.org so I can put you on our list. I hope you can join us!

Community Speaking Engagements

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!



Society Member Orientation

On Saturday, February 1st, we had a wonderful “New Member Orientation.” We had a number of attendees who are long time members but wanted a refresher on what the library and the society offer, and in truth the orientation is open to all. And so we have renamed it “Society Member Orientation.” We had a presentation on the history of the Society, benefits of membership, volunteer and outreach work, and the overall feeling was that we are a vibrant, exciting group. Next came a tour of the library “stacks” (our books) as well as a computer and scanning tour. I loved meeting new people and seeing old faces. (You know what I mean by that!) Our next orientation will take place in September.

Genealogy Tip of the Month:

From genealogytipoftheday.com, February 26, 2021 (Michael John Neill)



The reality is that there is no trick or instant solution to genealogical research problems. However, generally speaking, the following approaches are helpful:

- citing your sources;
- learning as much as you can about all the records in the area;
- learning the history of the area;
- having contemporary maps;
- obtaining as many records as possible;
- using compiled sources (published genealogy books, online trees, etc.) as stepping stones to original records;
- realizing assumptions may not be true;
- continuing to learn about genealogical research in general;
- proofing and double checking your work.

Not one trick and not a guarantee, but these general suggestions will go a long way.

Ralphs Community Donation Program



One of the ways in which Ralph's partners with the neighborhoods in which they serve, is through the Ralph's Community Contribution Program. Once you link your Card to an organization, all you have to do is shop at Ralphs and swipe your Shopper's Card. Details here:

<https://www.ralphs.com/i/community/community-contribution-program>

<https://sbgen.org/donate/#!/form/Development>

Volunteer Spotlight featuring Rosa Avolio

This month we recognize Rosa Avolio, a longtime volunteer at the Society. Rosa has been deeply committed to the Society, and you can see her teaching classes and helping with technology. Recently she's offered classes on our scanning machines which has proven to be quite popular. I've had the good fortune to work with her recently and I'm so happy to showcase her here.



From Rosa: I was born in Brooklyn, New York to parents born in the US but all four grandparents immigrated from Sicily, Italy between 1896 and 1912.

When Glenn and I met one of the first things he talked about was a trip to California two years prior and that he was going back someday. So two years later we married and two years later we came to Santa Barbara. That was 1973 and we've been here ever since. Glenn got into the electronics manufacturing business and I was a Registered

Nurse. We have two children and five grandchildren.

When my first child was born, Cottage Hospital gave each new mom a very pretty family tree that we could fill in. I realized then that I didn't know my grandmother's maiden name nor did I know that Italian women did not take on their husband's surname. I didn't know any of my grandparents since two died before I was born and two shortly afterward. I still have the notes I made at that time and when a cousin of mine became interested in genealogy around 1998, I pulled out that scrap of paper and began asking my mom, aunts, and uncles questions.

A cousin of mine introduced me to the then recently released Ellis Island records and when I found my grandparents on those manifests I was hooked. Shortly after that on a visit to NY, a friend and I toured the Tenement Museum in lower Manhattan and they used census records to show who lived there in 1900. Well, I thought that was even better than the manifests. When I returned I was walking with my neighbor and walking buddy Michel Nellis. She made two suggestions do a free trial of Ancestry and join the SB County Genealogical Society.

I was Michel's guest at a monthly meeting, and she introduced me to her friends. Emily Aasted very quickly recruited me to help sell books, and what a great way to meet the society's members. Art Sylvester invited me to join the Mac users group and not long afterward invited me to join the board; again I met more members. Sadly many of these people have passed on, but many are still around.

Thus began my involvement with SBCGS and I'm still hooked.

I love technology and sharing, I'm always looking for ways that technology can help with society management and our research and how I can share research tips with others.

Genealogy and technology aren't my only interests. I also love to go for walks anywhere; I play pickleball and I've recently learned to play Mah-jongg.

Outreach by Holly Snyder, Chair



In honor of Black History Month, please consider viewing (or revisiting) the incredible stories in our Santa Barbara African American virtual exhibit [<https://sbgen.org/santa-barbara-african-american-life-culture-and-contributions-1890-1990/>].



1925 Santa Barbara Earthquake Centennial Exhibit- June 2025

We are excited to be part of the centennial commemoration coming up this year in June! There will be an event put together by EQ25 end of June! SBCGS will have a table at this event plus have our own display at Sahyun Library that will be open to the public. Stay informed by visiting EQ25.org and following their social media- Facebook: EQ25 and Instagram: @EQ25_SB.



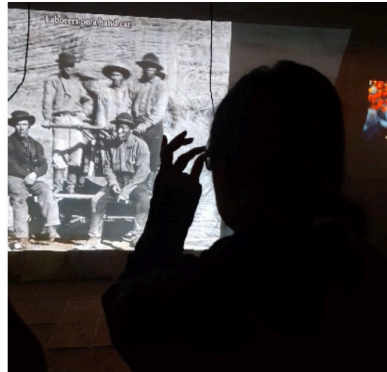
Do you have a family story to share about the 1925 earthquake? We are accepting family stories about the earthquake and/or the aftermath and high-resolution scanned photographs until April 5.

Please contact Outreach@sbgen.org if you have anything to contribute or can put us in touch with someone whose family lived in Santa Barbara in 1925. Thank you to all who have participated so far!

Outreach, con't.

by Holly Snyder, Chair

Happy February! Hope most of you were able to see the Lunar New Year celebration, “Chinatown Remembered,” at the Presidio Friday or Saturday evening. This installation was created by Karena Jew of the Asian American Pacific Islander Solidarity Network and The Environment Makers, along with partners Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, Gledhill Library/Santa Barbara Historical Museum, and help from many other community members and organizations- including us! In case you missed it, here are some photos of the amazing installation. The main projection consisted of rotating photographs while smaller projections were projected on the side walls. Among the smaller projections they included credits to all who helped.



Pictures L-R: Presidio Chapel with main projection of people living in Santa Barbara's Chinatown, 3D images that needed to be viewed through special glasses, and our logo on a thank you slide [The ultra brightness of our logo was due to my phone and not as it appeared in their show]. Photos by Holly Snyder

Santa Barbara Hispanic Family Histories Exhibit, September 2025



The exhibit steering committee is looking for participants who have ties to families, organizations, military service, and/or cultural institutions in Santa Barbara County between 1850-1970.

Outreach will also need help with interviewing families, research, assisting with writing some biographies, and editing. Interested in helping?

(Photo courtesy of Yolanda Perez)



**SAN DIEGO
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY**
EST. 1946



San Diego Genealogical Society Launches California Pioneer Certificate Program

Date: May 2023

Contact: Colin Whitney, SDGS Educational Programs,
pioneercertificateprogram@gmail.com

The San Diego Genealogical Society presents the California Pioneer Certificate Program honoring early pioneers who helped shape the state of California. The program is designed to assist those researching their California roots and issue formal acknowledgment of their ancestors to the development of California.

On the SDGS website, the California Pioneer Honor Wall was created to highlight the contribution early pioneers made to the development of California. Here, entry portals provide organized access to a searchable database containing more than 400,000 eligible California pioneers, along with biographical, genealogical, and historical information. The database consolidates pertinent records to aid research and is continually updated as new information becomes available. Additional genealogical and historical resources and finding aids are also provided. Each brick in the Honor Wall contains eligible pioneers' names and includes photos, biographies, and events.

Those interested in recognizing their descentance 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:

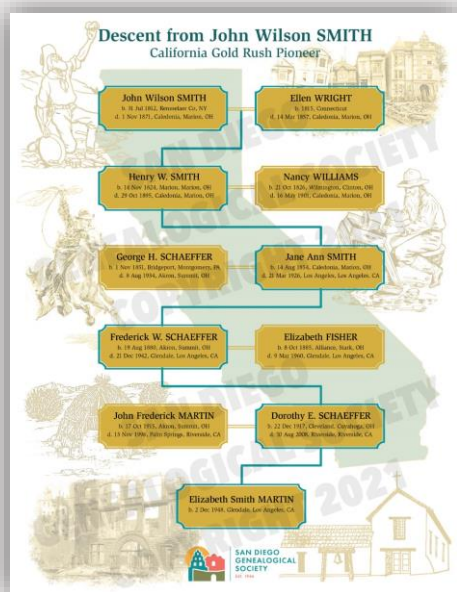
- California's Admission of Statehood (1850)
- The Gold Rush (1848-1860)
- The San Francisco earthquake (1906)
- California Mission period (before 1850)

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

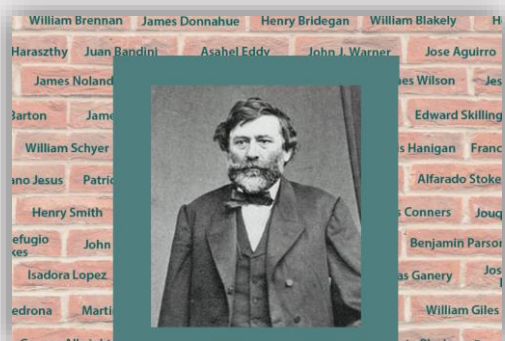
Membership to the San Diego Genealogy Society is not required to participate in this certificate program. The application and instructions are available in the Member Resources section of the SBCGS website.



California Pioneer Certificate



Lineage Chart



California Pioneer Certificate