



Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society and the Sahyun Genealogical Library

Researching the World

September 2025

Tree Tips Newsletter

Vol. 41, No. 8

“Scanty Family History”

Saturday, September 20, 2025, 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Location: First Presbyterian Church, State & Constance, SB



The Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society invites you to its free monthly meeting on **Saturday, September 20**, featuring professional genealogist Diane Henriks who will present “Scanty Family History.”

Scanty family history? Unknown parents or other relatives? Learn how to document and follow every single clue to build your family tree, with case studies!

Diane Henriks, also known as the Descendant Detective and founder of Know Who Wears the Genes in Your Family, is a passionate and seasoned Los Angeles County-based professional genealogist,

investigator, speaker, and author who specializes in descendency and brick wall research, along with living people search and unknown parentage cases. Diane has worked closely with private investigators to find living people, while also assisting in background investigations, in both civil and criminal cases. She is a proud member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the Genealogical Speakers Guild, the Southern California Genealogical Society, and the Utah Genealogical Association and varied special interest groups. What started out as a small hobby has since become a great obsession, and she now helps others discover and preserve who they are and where they come from!

About the Event:

Doors open at 9:30 a.m. for refreshments and informal discussions with the Special Interest Groups, covering a variety of topics from getting started in genealogy to writing family histories. A short business meeting begins at 10:30 a.m., followed by Diane’s presentation at 11:00 a.m which is in person at the church and broadcast on Zoom.. The event is free and open to the public. The presentation will not be recorded.

Zoom attendees must register here in advance to receive a confirmation email containing the link to join the meeting.
<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/heXVGLI8TZqfP8LKgqFM6g>

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.”

September Calendar

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

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

First Thursday Lunch & Learn

In-Person, Sahyun Genealogical Library

Thursday, September 4, 2025, 12:00 pm

Host: Rosa Avolio

Topic: Sharing Photos and Stories with Family.

Genealogy Tech Talk

Sunday, September 7, 2025, 1:30 pm

Hybrid: in-person and on Zoom

Hosts: Robin McCarthy and Judy Thompson

Topic: Introduction to WikiTree

Writers’ Group Meeting

Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 10:00 am

Zoom Only

Host: Sharon Summer

New Member Orientation (Members Only)

Saturday, September 13, 2025

10:00 - 12:00 pm at the Sahyun

DNA Lunch & Learn

Friday, September 19, 2025, 12:00 pm

Zoom Only

Host: George LaPlante

SBCGS Monthly Meeting

Saturday, Sept 20, 2025; 9:30 - 12:00 Noon

In-Person at the Church & on Zoom

Topic: It’s All in the Clues!

Speaker: Diane Henrik

California Pioneer Certificate Program Workshop

Tuesday, September 23, 2025, 7:00 pm

Zoom Only

Top Tools for Elusive German Hometowns Webinar

On Zoom

September 28, 2025, 1:30 pm

Speaker: James M. Beidler

Finding a German Immigrant’s Village of Origin

President's Message

by Marie Sue Parsons



Whew! As I sit here wondering what to write for my first Tree Tips article in many years, I'm waiting for the temperature to drop in my kitchen. This has been a fairly long heat wave for Santa Barbara. Today recorded 82 degrees and we're expecting the same on Wednesday. Out of

curiosity, I checked the historic highs in Johnson County, Kansas, where my Erskine ancestors lived before leaving for Los Angeles in 1880. Fortunately, they were long gone in 1936 when the temp reached about 121 degrees on July 18! I could only find records back to 1895, but September that year and most other Septembers averaged 71.7 degrees. Sounds like they experienced Santa Barbara temperatures during August and September during their 25 years there, but without the ocean breeze!

Have you been to the library in the past week or two? You will be amazed at the change! With the removal of the glass house and part of one of the storerooms, the open space that will become our Memorial Garden is now in full view. And it's remarkable! As always, our wonderful members contributed hours of assistance to plan and carry out the steps needed to accomplish this change. Whenever something is needed there is always someone who steps up and says, "Oh, I can do that!" Thank you, thank you to the many who contributed, both small and large accomplishments. Great job Property Committee, led by Fred Marsh and many others. A job well done- with more to come!

Another change that you will experience will be at our September General Meeting at First Presbyterian Church. The church experienced an unfortunate accident which flooded the room we usually use for our meetings. They have been able to make available another space on the premises so head on over on September 20th as usual, but look for the signs leading to our temporary meeting room. We anticipate the need for this alternate space to last two or three months while they remove the wood floors and replace them, along with other needed repairs. Your leadership jumped right in to consider alternate sites and negotiated a temporary lease with the church until the repairs are complete. Once again, I need to say Thank you! The many volunteers who see a need and immediately respond make my job easy!

The Education committee is actively recruiting members to lead our classes during Family History Month. So plan to save some time in October to fit in some extra research and to learn some new skills—it's always a fun month of celebration! DNA used to be the hot topic, now it's AI that's the latest skill in our toolboxes. What would you like to learn more about?

If you haven't heard we recently were honored to receive a gift of \$50,000 from the estate of Emily and Duane Aasted. As specified, the gift was added to our Endowment Account. Emily was a past president and very active in all areas of our society.

And finally, on a sad note, we all lost a dear friend in July with the passing of Irene Sahyun. A wonderful Celebration in Thanksgiving for Her Life was held in August, with remembrances by Mel, and with Steven and Michael Sahyun and Veronica Saucedo. She will be missed by so many.

Website Records and Technology

by Robin McCarthy

Database News

Over 9500 Welch-Ryce Mortuary records were recently added to our local records database. This brings the total number of entries in our database to more than 204,000. If you want to search the database specifically for these new entries, use this precise link <https://tinyurl.com/Welch-Ryce>, otherwise search the entire database here: <https://sbgen.org/start-your-search/search-database/>.

Don't forget that members get a 50% discount when purchasing database image copies.

New Library Sign-in Procedure

Beginning in September, the library will transition from paper sign-in sheets to a new digital system. A laptop sign-in screen on the front desk counter will replace the current paper process at the front desk and in the office. This new system connects to a spreadsheet that will help us gather improved data on library usage patterns.

For this program to be successful, EVERYONE entering the library must use the laptop to sign in, regardless of member status or purpose. This includes board and committee members attending a meeting, visitors on a guided tour, or non-society meeting attendees. Library staff will be on hand to assist you.

Zoom Moderators Needed

Will you step out of your comfort zone, help your fellow society members, and master something new? We want to continue offering hybrid meetings and classes but need more Zoom moderators to make that possible, especially for Family History Month.

Moderating Zoom sessions can be done from home. Learn how to manage a Zoom meeting by admitting attendees, keeping them muted, and sharing handouts. Live training will be provided in addition to written and video instructions. Please contact Robin McCarthy (rpubgen04@cox.net) if you are interested.

SBCGS Leadership Board & Operations Updates

Your Society's leadership is committed to advancing our mission and serving our members. The Board of Directors provides strategic direction, while the Operations Leadership Team oversees programming, services, and daily operations.

To stay informed, visit the **Members Section** at sbgen.org. Once logged in, navigate to **Member Resources** to access the latest **Board Minutes and Operations Leadership Notes**.

Books at the Sahyun

by Chris Klukkert, Book Chair



September 15th marks the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month—a time to celebrate the rich histories, cultures, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities. You might wonder how this month connects to your own heritage, especially if your roots trace back to Europe. But you'd be surprised where your family history can lead you—I certainly was!

While researching my own background, I discovered that my biological father had spent three years working at a copper mine in Peru. During that time, he became fluent in Spanish and even picked up some regional dialects. Thanks to this language expertise, he was recruited by Naval Intelligence during World War II and stationed in Cuba. His role? To monitor foreign submarines, ships, and supply shipments. That's just what he was allowed to write about—who knows what else he might have been doing

behind the scenes!

As I dug deeper into this history, I found myself wanting to trace connections to people in Peru and Cuba—my own little group of “FANS,” you might say. Thanks to the excellent speakers and webinars hosted by SBCGS, I learned how to approach this research and where to go for the best results.

In my role as a volunteer librarian, I've also had the pleasure of helping many patrons explore their Mexican and South American roots. Our past speakers (and some exciting upcoming ones!) have offered invaluable tips on how to research in various countries and regions. Their insights have not only guided my own journey, but also helped me recommend useful additions to our library's collection.

One of the things I've learned is that every speaker—regardless of the nationality or region they focus on—shares a gem of research wisdom that can benefit anyone exploring their family history.

So, what treasures are waiting for you on our shelves? We invite you to visit the Sahyun Library and discover them for yourself. Whether you're diving into your own genealogy or simply expanding your knowledge, we're here to support you. And if you have suggestions for books or resources you'd like to see in our collection, we'd love to hear from you!

We look forward to seeing you soon. Happy reading and researching!

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

Santa Cruz Island: An Illustrated History
Books You Need to do Genealogy in Ontario (Canada)
Images of the Civil War in West Virginia
Early Pioneer Families in Decatur County, Kansas
Marriages of Union County, Illinois

We want to thank the following generous donors:

Melville Sahyun Cathy Jordan Gretchen Beckert

In Loving Memory of Irene Marie Nordquist Sahyun



September 9, 1940 — July 21, 2025

Irene's Obituary Available Here

<https://tinyurl.com/yasu8msr>

Library News

Laurie Hannah, Library Director

FIRST of the MONTH TUESDAY HOURS
The library is open Tuesday Evening, October 2,
until 8:00 pm

Beginning and seasoned writers will find many books in our library to help you with your writing projects. From books on how to get started, to suggestions for the best format for your intended audience, to ways to incorporate social history and context into your stories, we've got you covered! Come in to the library today and check out our monthly book display on writing your

Visible progress toward the construction of our much-anticipated Memorial Garden is now evident as you walk into or leave the Sahyun Library. Thanks to the efforts of generous donors and many volunteers, demolition of the greenhouse and a portion of the redwood building was completed in August. There is now a clear and level space for construction of a beautiful patio and memorial area surrounded by gardens and trees.



After Demolition

[illegible]

Our design contractors are now preparing the final design documents to submit to the city for a construction permit to build the new patio and garden. We plan to submit the permit application in October and hope to have city approval to begin construction in early 2026. However, recent estimates indicate that approximately \$100,000 in additional donations will be needed to fully complete the construction.

Please contact Mary Jacob (maryjjacob8@gmail.com) if you are able to help with donations that would allow us to quickly move into this final phase of completion of the Memorial Garden project after the city construction permit is approved.

SBCGS 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

Mary Jacob, Development Chair

Members Welcome!



Welcome, [redacted]


Membership Packet (PDF)

Society Organization Chart (PDF)

Society Bylaws (PDF)

Current Operating Budget (PDF)

Current Board Meeting Minutes (PDF)

Strategic Plan (PDF) 

California Pioneer Certificate Application (PDF download)

The Board of Directors adopted a five-year strategic plan and sharing it with members at the annual meeting on June 19. As promised, **the full Strategic Plan has been posted on the Society website.** Members can now access it by logging into the website. The link to the plan is on the Member Welcome page.

The plan is a five-year roadmap for the Society as it pursues its mission and its vision of itself as a vibrant regional hub for genealogical research and community connection. The leadership of the Society identified four high-level strategic priorities to advance that vision over the next five years:

- **Enhanced Programs:** Enhance educational programs and library services to meet the evolving needs of the genealogical community, becoming the go-to resource for genealogical research on the Central Coast.
- **Inclusive Engagement:** Reach audiences who are representative of our service region to sustain and grow the Society.
- **Growing Membership and Volunteership:** Recognizing the vital role of volunteers, reach inward as well as outward to improve member and volunteer recruitment, retention, recognition, and leadership development.
- **Strong Foundation of Support:** Strengthen the Society's financial position by increasing its endowment, growing annual and planned giving by donors, expanding fundraising capacity, and optimizing the use of the property to support its mission and enhance its presence in the community.

We invite you to read the plan and become involved in helping the Society achieve its vision.

Ancestors West

Charmien Carrier, Editor



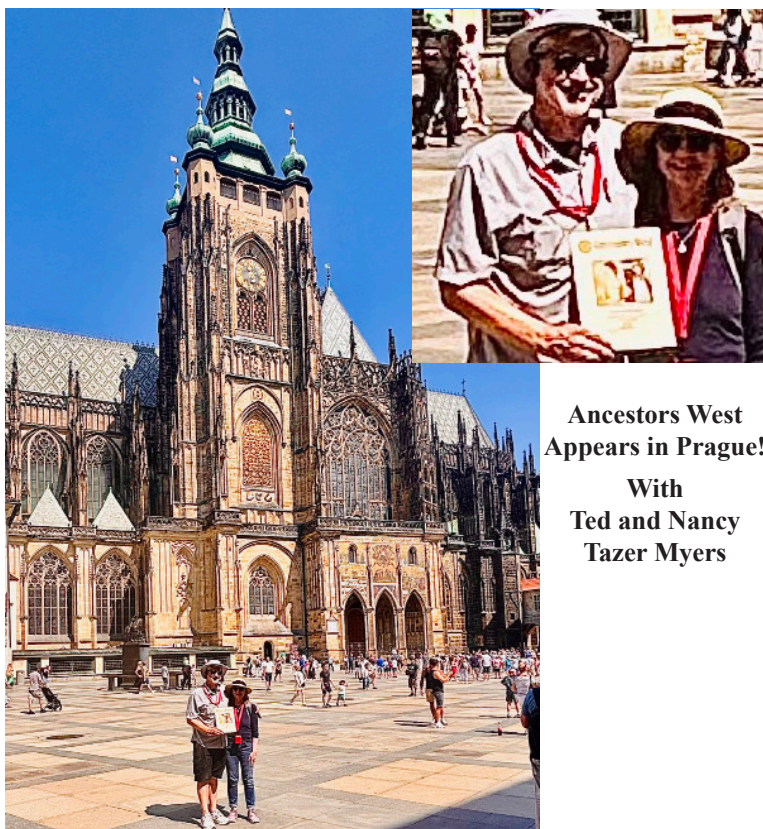
Ancestors West

Due October 15, 2025

Family Legends and Mysteries



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



Ancestors West
Appears in Prague!

With
Ted and Nancy
Tazer Myers

Outreach

by Holly Snyder, Chair

Family History Month Open House Debuting Santa Barbara Hispanic Family Histories Exhibit October 5, 1-4pm



The annual **FHM Open House** is around the corner! This year's Open House also features the opening of our brand new exhibit, *Santa Barbara Hispanic Family Histories, 1850-1970!*

This exhibit highlights the lives and cultural contributions of Santa Barbara's Hispanic families from 1850 to 1970s. Through photographs and personal stories. Some families chose to write their own histories while others were interviewed and written by Society exhibit commit-

tee volunteers with full approval from the families. There will also be histories on Hispanic businesses and organizations, military service, and cemeteries.

The Open House will feature special interest groups, lineage and military groups, and partner organizations which and will be ready to answer your research questions. The FamilySearch Center of Santa Barbara will be providing family tree fan chart services, FamilySearch help, and "Discovery Experiences," finding famous relatives, and more! (**Create a free FamilySearch account ahead of time for the best experience.*)

Volunteers Needed! Able to help us out with set up prior to the event and/or during the event? Please email outreach@sbgen.org. Opportunities include helping us prep the day before (October 4), set up the day of the event, greeters, check-in table, bring a treat, research helper, photographer, tour guide, and clean up. We appreciate your help!

*We also need plastic tables. Email outreach if you can loan us one or more tables.

Bring a nonmember friend or relative! Flyer coming soon!



This project is made possible with support from California Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Visit www.calhum.org.



This project is also made possible with the support from the Santa Barbara Foundation's Milton Brown Express Grant.

Mission Statement

The Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society helps people, wherever they come from, discover, document, share, and preserve their family histories.

Community Events

HELP NEEDED!! Outreach needs help tabling at these events. If you are willing to talk about our Society and our new Hispanic exhibit with the public, please consider tabling at one of these events! Don't worry, you will not be alone at our Society's table and we will keep setup simple. Carpinteria's Family Day event is a hands-on tabling event where we help children create family trees. Super fun and well-attended event!

October 12:

Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation's Asian American Neighborhood Festival, 11 AM – 3 PM at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park

October 15:

Santa Barbara Senior Expo, 9am-noon at Earl Warren Showgrounds

November 15:

Carpinteria Valley Historical Museum's Family Day, 9am-noon at Carpinteria Valley Historical Museum

Speaking Engagements in the Community



Outside groups can request a talk and/or tour here:

<https://sbgen.org/in-the-community/reservation-request/>

Please share the link to any groups who may be interested!

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

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>

Membership Spotlight

Kathryn Field, Membership Chair

Former Membership Director, Kate Lima, has moved up in the Society, to Vice President of Operations. No one is more grateful than I to have her experience and enthusiasm to draw on. Her organized files, encouraging words and great ideas will be a huge help as I navigate my new role in SBCGS.

NEW MEMBERS IN July and August:

Susan Schafer
Linda Trujillo
Thomas Douglas Voigt
Allison Phelps
Ann Larkin
Mary Migrant
Michele Martin
Dorothy Anne Milici
Adriana Gonzalez-Smith
Evelyn Byrd Savage
Ken Wei
Elizabeth McDonald
Katherine Wetzell
Gloria Fumiko Peyrat
Ron Burkard

Thank you, also, to our continuing members
who renewed during these past months.

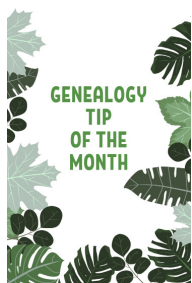
SAVE THE DATE



Society Member Orientation

Saturday, September 13, 10:00 am

A Society Member Orientation will be held 10 am – noon on Saturday, September 13, in the classroom at Sahyun Library. This session -- **for new, returning and current members** -- will include a presentation, a tour of the library, and a review of the member-only websites. **Please register early.** Those unable to attend may want to stop by Sahyun during regular hours to pick up a New Member packet; just ask at the front desk. Or simply consult it online from within the Members Area of the SBCGS website.



Genealogy Tip of the Month, from Michael John Neill's
"GenealogyTipOfTheDay.com," June 12,
2025 by Michael John Neill

One Thing

If you are looking for a genealogy activity, consider writing down the name of each family member you remember meeting, and write down the main thing you remember about them. Keep it to one sentence or memory per relative. You can always add to the list later. You may remember more people than you think and you may remember more details than you think.



**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:

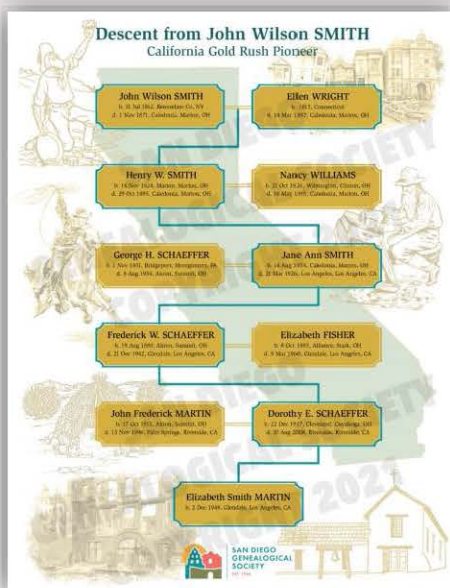
- California's Admission of Statehood (1850)
- The Gold Rush (1848-1860)
- The San Francisco earthquake (1906)
- California Mission period (before 1850)

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

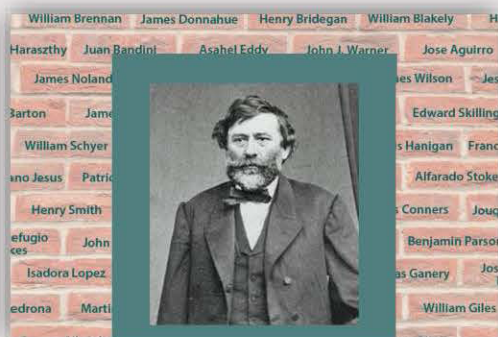
Membership to the San Diego Genealogy Society is not required to participate in this certificate program. The application and instructions are available in the Member Resources section of the SBCGS website.



California Pioneer Certificate



Lineage Chart



California Pioneer Certificate