Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society
and the Sahyun Genealogical Library
Researching the World
November 2026 *Tree Tips Newsletter* *Vol. 42, No. 10*

"Chasing Art History at the Genealogy Library: A 1930s Case Study"

Saturday, November 21, 2026
9:30 am to 12:00 Noon
Location: Trinity Lutheran Church
909 N. La Cumbre Road, Santa Barbara

The Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society invites the public to its free monthly meeting on Saturday, November 21, 2026, **featuring Rick Closson**, who will present *"Chasing Art History at the Genealogy Library: A 1930s Case Study"*

In 1917, a 23-year-old Italian sailor jumped ship in New York. He became a noted sculptor, working out of San Francisco through the 1920s before settling in Santa Barbara in 1933. He became a U.S. citizen in 1937, married a British woman in 1938, and in 1950 built a large home in Montecito. In 1957 he sculpted the 20-foot statue of St. Francis that long stood outside St. Francis Hospital — but that same year, he sold his Montecito home and left for England, never to be heard from again. He died two decades later, alone, of a heart attack in Marbella, Spain.

Who was he? Rick will reveal the sculptor's identity — and the mystery behind it — in his presentation. He owns a dozen of the sculptor's pieces, each with a story, and will bring many of them to the meeting for attendees to see and touch.

About the Event:
Doors open at 9:30 a.m. for refreshments and informal discussions with the Society's 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 the presentation at 11:00 a.m. **The event is free and open to the public**. To attend virtually, please register at SBGen.org.

About the Speaker:



Dr. Richard Closson retired in 2013 after a four-decade career in clinical pharmacy practice, management, and academia, authoring over 40 scientific articles, one book, and 5 chapters in pharmacology and therapeutics texts. In retirement he has turned to historic preservation and politics, publishing 150+ lay articles. His current research traces the life of Alden Freeman (1862–1937) and the medallions linking Santa Barbara's Franceschi House to Miami Beach's Versace Mansion. He collects obscure sculpture for its mystery subjects and sculptors.

The speaker, Rick Closson, will be in person at Trinity Lutheran Church.
Virtual attendance via Zoom is available with advance registration at
www.sbgen.org

Upcoming Monthly Program Speakers

November 21: *Chasing Art History at the Genealogy Library: A 1930s Case Study* **Presented by Richard Closson**

December 19: *Member Share: Short Presentations by Members*

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.

President's Message
by Kate Lima



Greetings Members and Friends!

What a whirlwind of activity in Family History Month? I was so impressed with all the wonderful events. We started the month with our Annual Open House which brought in dozens of members and community members. The library was packed! We put our exhibit, "Santa Barbara's Hispanic Family Heritage, 1850-1950," on full display at the Santa Barbara Public Library and received much interest and many compliments. Classes, both online and in person, filled the calendar. And we capped off the month with our pièce de résistance, our exciting Picnic in the Cemetery. That event just keeps getting better and better every time.

Thank you to everyone for the extra volunteer hours you put in, WOW.

For the past couple of weeks we had a beautiful ofrenda in the library. The space brings a quiet, reverential feel that fits well with our research. We all treat our ancestors with reverence and respect, and seeing the many parents, grandparents, etc, on our ofrenda is one more way to honor them.

We research our family history, and at this time of year we also think of our family traditions. Do you have family traditions that have withstood the test of time? It's a meeting of the old and the new, our family before us followed certain rituals, and we do, and many of us see our children continuing ever onward.
And lastly, welcome to Fall. We're all starting to hunker down, pulling out extra blankets and sweaters, and preparing for the holidays.

The writer Lauren DeStefano wrote " "Fall has always been my favorite season. The time when everything bursts with its last beauty, as if nature had been saving up all year for the grand finale."

Enjoy the month!

Kate Lima, President

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."

FOOD BANK
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

This holiday season, we, at the Sahyun Genealogical Library, will be collecting non-perishable food donations for those in our community suffering food insecurity. **Donations will be taken until November 22nd.** Cash donations are also welcome, as the Food Bank can use them to buy in bulk. Checks can be mailed to Food Bank of Santa Barbara, 82 Coromar Drive, Goleta, CA 93117. Questions? Contact Kristin Ingalls, antkap@cox.net

Foods needed

Whole Grains
- Brown or wild rice
- Whole grain cereals with less than 12g sugar per serving
- Whole grain breads
- Whole wheat or brown rice flour, quinoa, buckwheat, barley, or other whole grains
- Cornmeal
- Corn or whole wheat tor?llas

Fruits and Vegetables
- Canned fruit in 100% fruit juice or water
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- Dried fruit
- Low-sodium canned vegetables

Animal Proteins
- Canned, low-sodium soups, stews, chili
- Canned tuna or salmon

Plant-Based Proteins
- Peanuts, almonds, or any dry roasted, no salt added nuts or nut butters
- Dried len?ls, beans or peas
- Canned black beans, kidney beans, garbanzo beans
- Low-sodium vegetarian chili
- Sunflower, pumpkin, or sesame seeds, tahini

Other Needed Items
- Coffee/Tea
- Dried spices
- Olive or organic canola oils

IN MEMORY OF MARIE LOUISE HATTIER

Marie Louise Helene Nolan Hattier, a longtime member of Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society, passed away on August 16. She was born on Armistice Day, November 11, 1934, to parents James Teller Nolan and Marie Louise Grevemberg Nolan in New Orleans. She held several professions over the years, including nursing, office manager, and arts and crafts teacher. Later in life, she became an avid swimmer and genealogist. We extend our sympathy to her husband, Harold, and to her family.

More Than Just Books

by Chris Klukkert, Book Chair



What a wonderful Family History Month we just wrapped up! I hope you were able to enjoy at least some of the many classes, workshops, and special events offered throughout October. I certainly did! A big thank-you to all the committees and volunteers who worked so hard to make the month such a success.

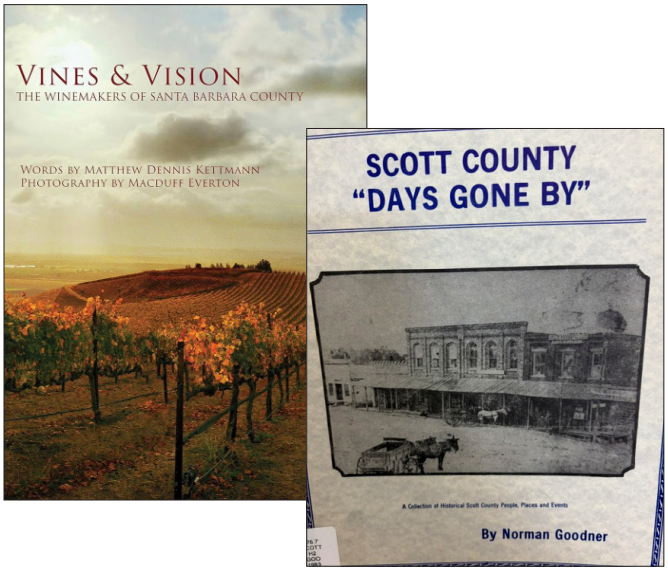
Now it's back to the books! The Book Committee has plenty to keep us busy as we continue sorting through donated books, looking for those special gems to add to our library collection and identifying others that will go to Kristin to sell online. Speaking of books, Judy Sahm and I recently finished teaching our Swedish genealogy class. Judy brought along several of her own reference books, and I realized that we didn't have some of them in the Sahyun collection. Naturally, that got my Book Committee wheels turning!

It also reminded me that many of our members probably have wonderful genealogy reference books tucked away on their own shelves, particularly for specialized subjects or geographic areas. We'd love to hear about them! If you have a favorite resource that has been especially helpful in your research, consider bringing it in to show us. Perhaps it's something we should purchase and add to our own collection so others can benefit from it, too. Meanwhile, I have my own holiday genealogy project underway. I'm writing up the stories of my Revolutionary War ancestors to share with family members at Christmas. So you'll likely find me browsing the Sahyun shelves, pulling out books, maps, and historical resources to help bring their stories to life. After all, genealogy is about more than names and dates. It's about understanding the times and places in which our ancestors lived.

And that's one of the things I love most about our library. You never know what fascinating bit of history, helpful reference, or unexpected discovery might be waiting on the next shelf.

So, whether you're working on a family history project, tackling a stubborn research problem, or simply curious about a new subject, come explore the Sahyun Library. And please keep those book suggestions coming. We're always looking for ways to make our collection even better.





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

Wines & Vision: The Winemakers of Santa Barbara County
Warren County (Missouri): Images of America
A View from the Ridge Route.
(Fort Tejon area – Kern Co., CA)
The Morton Clan
Putnam County, Tennessee Miscellaneous Records
Scott County {Arkansas}"Days Gone By": a collection of Historic Scott County,
People, Places and Events

We want to thank the following generous donors:

Leslie Fagen Bob Muller David Flint



Writers' Group
Zoom Only
Led by Sharon Summer
Wednesday,
November 18, 2026
10 am, via Zoom
sbgen.org

This group is for those who wish for targeted discussion about writing. Our purpose will be to provide an hour where participants can get a boost for their family history writing by learning tips, ideas, and all things about making your work fascinating to read,. Register in advance to receive a confirmation email containing the link to join the meeting.
https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/2DhftOY5Tre5_qDgMzk7zw

Development Report
by Mary Jacob



2026 Annual Appeal



We are excited that President Kate Lima has launched our 2026 Annual Appeal campaign. The funds raised this year will directly support the programs and services that matter most to you—our classes, library acquisitions, subscription websites, guest speakers and much more.

We're off to a great start with over a dozen people making donations that move us toward our goal of raising $25,000. We invite you to join these early donors by making a contribution that is meaningful to you. Remember, just by participating you are moving us toward that goal. Together, we can reach the goal and continue to enrich our Society for everyone. Thank you for your support!

Donations can be made online at: https://sbgen.org/donate/ or by sending a check made out to "SBCGS" with a note in the memo line, "Annual Appeal."

Tom Modugno Addresses Major Donor Luncheon

The Society's third Major Donor Luncheon was held on Tuesday, October 6, at the Santa Barbara Club, where we were honored to welcome historian and documentarian, Tom Modugno, as our keynote speaker. Tom spoke about "Saviors of History," sharing examples of how individuals and institutions have preserved our local history. He also noted some historical landmarks that are under threat of disappearing from the landscape. We encourage everyone to explore his informative website, Goleta History, at https://goletahistory.com/

President Kate Lima shared heartfelt thanks for the dedication of our volunteers, whose time and talent are at the very core of the Society's success. She also expressed deep appreciation to the generous donors in attendance—people whose financial support has helped place the Society in a strong and sustainable position.

Looking to the future, Kate Lima highlighted the Society's new Memorial Garden and Patio project, which will honor the visionaries whose leadership helped us grow and thrive. This welcoming outdoor space will also give us room to gather, learn, and celebrate together as our programs and events continue to flourish beyond the library walls.

Don't Miss These Events!
AI for Genealogy and Family Tree Maker Day

Announcing a New "AI for Genealogy" SIG

Judy Thompson and Robin McCarthy are launching a free AI for Genealogy Special Interest Group (SIG) in January 2027. Meetings will be open to the public, so you don't need to be an SBCGS member to attend. The SIG will offer two tracks:

- **The Basic Track**, led by Judy Thompson, will meet in person at the Sahyun Genealogical Library. It's ideal if you are new to AI or have only tried simple questions.
- **The Intermediate Track**, led by Robin McCarthy, will meet on Zoom. It covers more advanced features such as projects, custom instructions, and agents.

HELP US PLAN. Please take our short survey (https://forms.gle/hZ3vcwJh15jHVraq9) by December 15, 2026, to tell us your experience level and when you'd like to meet.

Family Tree Maker (FTM) Day

Mark your calendars for **February 1, 2027 at 10 a.m. PT** when FTM Executive Director Duff Wilson and Genealogy Community Ambassador Mark Olsen will be at the Santa Barbara FamilySearch Center. They will provide interactive demonstrations of the latest FTM edition, a look at what's ahead, Q&A, and individual help with FTM 2024.

Family Tree Maker®

Membership Spotlight

Kathryn Field, Membership Chair

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

NEW MEMBERS in October:

Ellen Fenger
Joyce Wieder
Gail D Hannigan
Marianne Corradi
Linda Andrews
Temmo Korisheli
Barbara Chen
Heidi Robins
Marjorie Kruvand
Meg Kroszewska
Margarita Martin del Campo
Christine Riesenfeld
Dee Carter Brown

Please help me in welcoming our newest members. As always, new members may find information packets under the Members' Area of our SBCGS website. After signing in, find Membership Packet on the Member Resources page. There are also packets at the library to pick up.

Thanks, also, to the longtime members who have upgraded their memberships to the Lifetime, Patron, Donor, or Friend level.



Between 9:30-10:30 am at each General Meeting -- before the business meeting begins -- new members can get to know each other and meet key volunteers in the Society. Those who've been in the society for less than a year are encouraged to stop by this table and learn from other members.

NAME BADGES: If you haven't already, please take your name badge home after each meeting, and wear it the next month. If you forget to bring it to the meeting, please make a temporary one so we can all get to know each other better. If you need a new badge, please email membership@sbgen,org.

CONTACT UPDATES: Please log in to your Membership Account in the Members section of our website, and check your address, email and phone numbers. Some accounts have invalid email addresses, or land line phone numbers now obsolete. To stay informed, please keep these current.

MEMBER ORIENTATION



Member orientation is scheduled for 1-3 pm on Sunday, November 8, at Sahyun Library, and only two spots remain! This is a chance for our new, returning, and current SBCGS members to become familiar with the resources of the Sahyun Genealogical Library, as well as the advantages of membership. We invite all members to join us.

We'll have a presentation, take a tour of the library, and review the member-only subscription websites. Light refreshments will be provided.

VOLUNTEERS:: As well as coordinating the helpful coaches, Kathy Cremeen is now our Volunteer Coordinator. Please contact Kathy at kajcremeen@gmail.com if you need a coach, wish to become a coach, or wish to volunteer. A recently-updated list of coaches is available.

There are volunteer opportunities in all areas of our genealogy society. At this time, we are in particular need of people with financial, A/V and technology experience.

Genealogy Tip of the Day

by Michael John Neill on November 26, 2019

GENEALOGY TIP OF THE MONTH

In some locations and time periods, there simply are no records of specific dates of vital events. This can often be the case with births and deaths even when marriage records are available. While a marriage is considered a "vital event" by many, it technically is a contract between the two individuals getting married. For that reason, there may be records of marriages when birth and death records are not extant.

The American South before the Civil War is one location and time period where it can be difficult to obtain precise dates of birth and death. The best that can be done is to have an estimate of when the person was born and when the person died. The key is to also try and establish the familial relationships that person had with their parents, their spouse(s), and their children. You may just never know what date the person was born on in 1670. Accept this and focus on what you can discover, while keeping abreast of new records that become available.

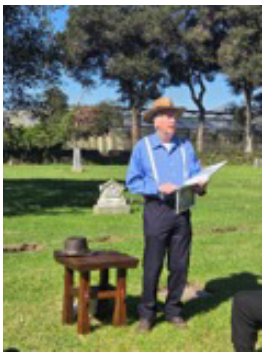
Outreach

by Holly Snyder, Chair

We thank everyone who took the time to volunteer or attend at least one of our events in October. We couldn't have done everything without you! Outreach will be taking a well-deserved break so we can have full energy for the next project and events happening in 2027.

Picnic in the Cemetery

We had a successful Picnic in the Cemetery event on Saturday, October 24th at the Carpinteria Cemetery District. Thank you all who attended! Close to 90 people came to the event! Everyone had a great time and raved about the actors' amazing performances. Did you know that most of the actors wrote their own scripts and two had to learn their scripts a few days before the event! Incredible team of actors (and most were not professional actors!) Lunch, provided by Country Catering, was held in the onsite gazebo. It was such a great spot to enjoy the lunch hour. Special shout-out to all the volunteers who helped make this event so successful- Outreach Committee, actors, tour guides, set up crew, communications, and online registration!

















Speaking Engagements in the Community



The Outreach Committee is looking for more opportunities to spread the word about SBCGS. If you belong to a club, organization, or retirement community who have program speakers, please suggest us! They can request a speaker thru our website under "In the Community" (direct link: https://sbgen.org/in-the-community/reservation-request/), or email Outreach@SBGen.org and we will send an introductory description of the program and how to request a talk. All talks can be tailored to the group's interests and skill level!

Outreach, con't.

Santa Barbara Hispanic Family Histories, 1850-1970 Exhibit



The exhibit was recently shown at the Santa Barbara Public Library for the past two months. It was a successful showing reaching more people who hadn't seen the exhibit before. While our grant-funded exhibit has ended, it is not the end for the exhibit. We will continue to add family stories to our virtual exhibit on our website under the "In the Community" tab; plus, we will continue to share the physical exhibit out in the community. Let us know if you have any leads of where the exhibit should travel to next.

Join our new Hispanic Genealogy Special Interest Group! Anyone who is researching Hispanic ancestry or who wishes to learn more about this topic is welcome to participate. Next meeting will be at Trinity Lutheran Church at 9:30 before the general meeting. Please contact Yolanda Pérez (3yperez@gmail.com) for further information.

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

Community Events

October 14: Santa Barbara Senior Expo

The annual Santa Barbara Senior Expo had another huge turnout! Thank you to Lynn Adams and Kate Lima for tabling for us; and thank you to Family Service Agency of Santa Barbara for generously providing us a free community table!





October 18: Asian American Neighborhood Festival

Thank you to Gwen Patterson for tabling at the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation's annual Asian American Neighborhood Festival! They had a great turnout on this hot day. Luckily, they moved the event indoors.





Volunteers: Ever Wonder Why It's Good to Report Your Hours?







Why Should I Report My Volunteer Hours?

Because every hour you give makes a difference!

Your volunteer work is essential to the success of the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society. We have no paid staff, so it is you—our dedicated volunteers—who make it all happen! Together, we provide services and educational programs that help people discover their family histories. You support our information technology, oversee our property, help manage our finances, and contribute in countless other ways to keep our Society running smoothly.

But there's another important reason to report your volunteer hours: your time has real value!

We need to document our volunteer efforts to show the public, foundations, grant providers, and other financial supporters how we accomplish our mission without paid staff. Your reported hours help demonstrate the tremendous impact our volunteers have on the Society and strengthen our applications for grants and other funding.

Last year, our volunteers reported an incredible 12,000 hours of service! At the current national estimated value of $36.14 per volunteer hour, that represents $433,680 in contributed service to the Society's operations.

Just think about what we can accomplish together!

Every hour counts, and every hour you report helps tell our story. Please take a moment each month to respond to the email requesting the number of hours you volunteered that month. It's a simple step that helps us demonstrate our impact, secure funding, and continue providing valuable genealogical resources and educational opportunities to our community.

Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and passion for family history—and for helping our Society thrive!













SANTA BARBARA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

EST. 1972

Are You a CALIFORNIA PIONEER Descendant?

DISCOVER YOUR ROOTS

HONOR YOUR FAMILY

BE PART OF CALIFORNIA'S HISTORY

Early People.
Extraordinary Stories.
A Remarkable State.



FOUR WAYS TO BE A CALIFORNIA PIONEER



CALIFORNIA MISSIONS
before 1850



GOLD RUSH
1848 – 1860



SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE
1906



SETTLED BEFORE STATEHOOD
prior to 1850

Explore the California Pioneer Honor Wall

Thousands of pioneers • Inspiring stories • Search the database

Apply for Certification at the SBCGS Website:

https://sbgen.org/membership-welcome-page/

Need help?
Contact us: pioneercertificateprogram@gmail.com

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

PRESERVE THE PAST • CONNECT GENERATIONS • CELEBRATE CALIFORNIA