



Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

October 2023

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October Program

19 October 2023 7:00 P.M.
 Robert Givens How to Fix problems with your family tree

Presidents Message

by Vicky Wolff

Our annual Seminar was just held at Centre Plaza here in Modesto, with our speaker Katherine Borges, our DNA specialist. We had a wonderful time learning about DNA, and other aspects of DNA that I personally was unaware of. This seminar was much more informative than I have heard on DNA and I actually understood things quite a bit better. I am sorry if you missed this wonderful seminar and hope you will be able to attend another one soon. We had guests from Tuolumne Genealogy Society as well as our local DAR Society, and had lots of drinks and food items to share with our guests as well. All and all it was a great day despite the bikers and their extra loud music and their bikes parked all over the streets that made parking tough. That is another story we will share at our meeting this month. After the seminar David and I attended a mystery dinner at our Church. Much, much fun! Let's keep working on our membership and sharing our genealogy with others.

October Program

by Karen Souza

"What do you mean my tree isn't accurate?" - it explores online ways to search out your family in online sources like WikiTree, Gene.com, etc. looking for well sourced pedigrees that can guide you in finding weak and incorrect places in your tree whether it be on your computer, at FamilySearch, Ancestry, or any other site.

Robert Givens Biography

My family has been in Arizona for 5 generations since settling in the Pima Valley there in 1885. I was born in Tucson, Arizona, and was of the third generation actually born there. In 1957 my father's work transferred him to Fresno, CA, and I have resided in the Fresno/Clovis area ever since.

As far as education goes, I graduated from McLane High School in 1965 and received my BA in Social Science (emphasis in history and geography) in 1969 from Fresno State College. In 1976 I received an MA in Educational Administration also from the now named, California State University, Fresno.

I began my public-school teaching career in 1969 and retired in 2008 after 39 years of teaching and administration.

I taught from 3rd to 8th grades and also was a curriculum director and Teaching Principal in various districts. I worked in Burrel, Tranquility, Riverdale, and Fresno Unified in my career.

Genealogy began for me at my grandmother's knee when I was ten. I have been an active researcher since my high school years and have worked off and on (mostly on) in local family history centers for the past 50 years. For 8 years I was the director of the Fresno North Stake Family History Center. Currently I provide training for the 20 centers in the Fresno region.

Following retirement, I spent 2 ½ years as a product support missionary for the LDS Church supporting new.FamilySearch.org (later Family Tree) and other products that they produce. For two years my wife and I served as Data Analysts for new.FamilySearch and FamilySearch Family Tree helping patrons with their problem records in the FamilySearch data base. Upon returning to Clovis I continued to do volunteer work remotely in this department for another four years. For several years I worked with a group that launched social communities in Facebook for researchers to help them in their family history efforts and also worked on the Research Wiki on Family Search.

I have researched my mother's side of the family extensively. My area of expertise is in Pennsylvania research where my mother's family came from. I have other areas of experience as I have spent time researching in Utah, the Midwest (Illinois and Ohio) along with New England and the Southern states. I have authored 4 genealogy books: Claude Irvin Hale and his Ancestors; George Bortner of York County, PA – an index and family groups; Richard Cater-Carter of Dover, NH and Some of His Descendants; and most recently, The Descent of Detrick Mummert of York County, PA – The Male Lines.

I am a former 1st Vice President of the Fresno County Genealogical Society and I belong to the following societies – the Fresno County Genealogical Society and several other societies. I have spoken for various organizations and genealogical societies for the past 40 years especially in and around the Fresno, California area. The list includes genealogical societies in Fresno County, Kern County, Merced County, Stanislaus County, Nevada County, Los Banos, Stockton, Placerville, Tulare County, the Historical Society of the Germans from Russia in Fresno. I have presented to several Family History Centers in the Fresno area and also in Elk Grove, CA., Tooele, Utah, and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. I have spoken several times for the Mayflower Society and the DAR. I also spoke twice for the Rogue River Genealogical Society in Oregon. In 2016 I presented at the International Gathering of the Historical Society of the Germans from Russia. I have presented several times at the Ancestor Roundup of the DAR in Seaside, CA.

My wife, Barbara, and I have been married for 55 years. We have 5 children who have blessed us with 16 grandchildren and one great grandchild. When I am not researching, I love to garden, read, and watch sports on TV. We love to travel and often take vacation (genealogy) trips all over the United States and Europe.

Mark your Calendars! Sons of Norway Lutefisk Dinner, November 18, 2023 at Calvary Lutheran Church, 547 Rose Ave., Modesto. \$25 per person. Contact Linda Silva for tickets or questions at 209-300-1260.

Thomas M. Arno RIP

.... It is with heavy hearts that we announce the death of Thomas Arno, the husband of Heidi Arno. Our thoughts and prayers reach out to Heidi and her family.

2024 Proposed Officers and Directors

By Martha Carter-Bhatti

**2024 Proposed Officers and Directors
Treasurer Needed**

In accordance with the bylaws of the Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County (GSSC), President Vicky Wolff appointed a Committee at the August Board meeting. to nominate officers for next year.

The Nominating Committee for 2024 officers is Martha Carter-Bhatti, Karen Souza, and Lewis Ruddick. The Committee has nominees for all offices except treasurer.

The Nominating Committee is reaching out to the membership for someone to serve as treasurer. Roxie Ferrari, our current Treasurer, is planning to move but will be available to mentor a new treasurer. Ideally a person in this office would have some financial experience, prior experience as a treasurer, or be detail oriented and open to learning from our current treasurer.

The treasurer is responsible for keeping an accurate record of all financial matters for the Society. This includes managing all monies, depositing funds in banks, presenting a financial statement at each board and general meeting, paying bills, serving as chair of the Budget Committee, and working with an accountant for preparation and filing of federal and state taxes.

If you are interested in serving as treasurer, please contact
Vicky Wolff (vickywolff1945@gmail.com)
or
Martha Carter-Bhatti (martha.c.bhatti@gmail.com)

The following nominees for the 2024 offices were presented at the September Board meeting. They will be presented and voted upon at the October general meeting.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| President | Vicky Wolff |
| 1 st Vice President | Karen Souza |
| 2 nd Vice President | Jackie Niemeyer |
| Secretary | Pam Atherstone |
| Treasurer | Vacant |
| Directors at Large | Martha Carter-Bhatti |
| | Joyce Hickman |
| | Joann McDonald |
| | Amy Mowery |
| | Marge Scheuber |

GSSC Writing Group

October Meeting location change

The Thursday, October 12, 2023 meeting of the writing group will be held at David and Vicky Wolff's home at 2025 Vista Drive, Modesto. Ca. as Joann will be out of town. **209-529-9420** decorator4@sbcglobal.net

Genealogy: Where you confuse the dead and irritate the living. – Unknown

September 16 GSSC Fall DNA Seminar Modesto Centre Plaza

Photos by Joyce Hickman & debbie lloyd



GSSC German Group

by Fran Jackson via Tom Quayle



We look forward to seeing you at the ROOT CELLAR Genealogy Workshop this month! We will meet on Thursday, September 21 from 2 pm to 4 pm at the Sylvan Community Center, 7521 Community Drive, Citrus Heights. This month's topic will be Pull the Thread - Start Your Research at FamilySearch presented by member, Dian Price. When you are stuck on a brick wall or just starting your research, try Pulling those Threads! As always, our workshop is full of lively discussion as we help each other advance our genealogy research.

Our free workshop meets the 3rd Thursday of each month from 2:00 - 4:00 pm, except for December. All are welcome - our members and the public - from beginners to more experienced genealogists. Invite a friend!

If you are a society receiving this email, please pass along the details to your members. Help us get the word out!



Membership benefits are the perks that come with being a member of ROOT CELLAR. This fall, members can take advantage of our free, members-only lectures - a four part series of in-person classes. Instructor Glenda Lloyd will present one-hour lectures on genealogical research topics followed by Q&A sessions.

Join us Thursdays in October from 10 am to 11 am at the Sylvan Community Center, 7521 Community Drive, Citrus Heights. **See you there!**

Tom here, I asked Joyce to put in the next newsletter a thank you all of our members wishing her well.. to also thank those members that have stopped by to visit with her too. we have sent off a card to Heidi's family as well too. we are very grateful to all of our members at this time. Tom & Fran

Research Materials Available

by Jackie Niemeyer

I have some books and journals from researchers that need to find a new home. They include a box of Northeastern Nevada Historical Society Quarterlies, Michigan Heritage Quarterlies, New England Historical and Genealogical Registers and New England Magazines. I also have a big book of the History of Sandusky Co., Ohio and Representative Citizens and a big book of Huron Co., Ohio Cemeteries. There are booklets for Rensselaer Co., NY and Warren Co., NY. These and some other books I will be bringing to the next meeting.

One of our long term members has some other books that she would like to get rid of. These include a Large book of the Official Military Atlas of the Civil War with 821 maps etc., Warren Co., TN Marriage Records 1852-1900, Rolla, MO 1890-1899 Rolla Weekley Herald newspaper excerpts, Cemeteries of Phelps Co., MO Vol. II and a CD of original land entries of Phelps Co., MO. She also has a will index book for Adams Co., IL and marriages of Adams Co., IL 1825-1860. A book of Marriage Notices of the whole United States 1785-1794, New World Immigrants Vol. 1 and 2, The Civil War by NGS and the Revolutionary War by NGS and also a book about The Coquille Indians. If anyone wants these books I can get them from her for you.

Jackie Niemeyer jackie.niemeyer@prodigy.net

8 Things That Could Be Harming the Quality of Your Family Tree (and How to Fix Them)

from MyHeritage <https://education.myheritage.com/>

While this is intended for MyHeritage's product these tips apply to genealogical research and recording generally

Building a family tree can be a fascinating and rewarding process, allowing you to connect with your heritage and uncover the story of your family's history. However, despite your best intentions, there are many common pitfalls that can harm the quality of your family tree.

In this article, we'll explore 8 things that could be harming the accuracy and reliability of your genealogy research, and provide practical tips and advice on how to avoid these problems and improve the quality of your family tree. Whether you're a seasoned researcher or just starting out, read on to discover how you can build a family tree that is accurate, meaningful, and enduring.

1. Duplicates

There are a few reasons why you might end up with duplicates in your family tree. You might have accidentally entered the same information and created duplicate entries. Or maybe you used different formats for names or dates or entered information from multiple sources, and ended up entering the same information twice.

However they got there, duplicates can create confusion and complicate the research process. In the case of duplicate profiles, they may even result in the loss of information, because you may add important details to one profile and not the other.

To avoid duplicates and maintain the accuracy of your family tree, it's important to regularly review and update your research, and use a standardized format for data entry.

The best way to detect duplicate profiles in your family tree on MyHeritage is to review your tree in List view.

This view lists all the profiles in your tree by name, so you will easily be able to see when one person is listed twice. I recommend using the option to sort by last name: this makes it easier to detect duplicates. Be sure to check the duplicate profile thoroughly before you delete it and make sure any information it contains that wasn't added to the original profile is copied over.

2. Reviewing a good match only once

Got a high-quality [Smart Match™](#)? Fantastic! You confirmed the match and added any new details it contained to your own tree, and moved on to the next discovery.

But you shouldn't stop there!

You never know what you might find on second review — not just because you might have missed something the first time, but because the person whose tree you matched with may have added more information to that profile since the last time you looked. It's always a good idea to go back and re-review confirmed Smart Matches™ every now and then.

So how do you rereview your confirmed Smart Matches™?

Go to “Matches by people” under the Discoveries tab in the navigation bar and select the “Smart Matches” tab at the top of the page. Then, open the status menu that shows “Pending” by default, and select “Confirmed.” This will bring up a list of all the Smart Matches™ you've already confirmed, and you can review them to see if any new information has been added since you confirmed them.

3. Not visiting other users' family sites for notes and bios

You may be satisfied with adding the new information from a Smart Match™ to the corresponding profile on your family tree, and think that there's no reason to visit the tree owner's family site. However, there is an excellent reason: they may have added notes or bios to that person's profile, and those don't get automatically copied over when you confirm a Smart Match™. These notes might contain critical information about the relative in question or about the tree owner's research on this person that you won't find in the name, date, and place fields.

I always recommend requesting membership to the site of a tree owner with Smart Matches™ that you've found helpful. When reviewing the match, hover over the name of the family site and click “Join site” to request membership.

4. Focusing too much on one side of the family

If your goal is only to research one branch of the family, that's fine. However, focusing on only one side of the family may prevent you from seeing the larger picture and cause you to miss crucial details about the family members you're researching. For example, perhaps you're searching for an ancestor and having trouble finding her in the census of a given year because her name was misspelled in the record. Perhaps that ancestor was living with a cousin or a son-in-law at the time of the census, and is therefore listed under that person's household. Having the name of the cousin or son-in-law could be the key to finding that record.

Furthermore, ignoring certain branches of the family narrows your chances of finding other family members who may have information you don't have. There may be a second or third cousin who has crucial information on the great-great-grandparents you have in common. Building out the branches of your family tree spreads a wider net and gives you more potential sources of information.

5. Availability heuristic and availability cascade

The availability heuristic means basing your decisions on whatever information is readily accessible to you rather than on a comprehensive analysis of all the available evidence. An availability cascade is a process where the more you encounter a certain belief, the more you believe it — even if it is not supported by solid evidence.

If, for example, if you rely only on the most easily accessible information — such as family stories or legends passed down through generations — you might be tempted to overlook important historical records or documents that could provide more accurate information. Furthermore, if you come across a commonly repeated belief about a certain ancestor, you may be more likely to accept this belief without thoroughly researching it. This can lead you to include incorrect information in the family tree, potentially damaging its accuracy and reliability.

Here are some ways to avoid mistakes due to the availability heuristic and availability cascades:

- **Use multiple sources of information:** Always seek multiple sources for information you add to your tree and compare them to see if they support or contradict each other.
- **Use primary sources whenever possible:** Original records such as census records, birth and death certificates, and immigration records are often (but not always) more accurate than secondary sources, like someone else's family tree or a published family history book.
- **Keep an open mind:** Try to avoid preconceived notions or beliefs about your ancestors and be open to new information and perspectives, even if they are not consistent with what you think you know.

6. Automation bias

MyHeritage's tools and features make it so easy to build your tree quickly, and it can be tempting to let the platform do all the work for you. However, confirming matches and Instant Discoveries™ indiscriminately can introduce many errors, inaccuracies, and inconsistencies into your tree. Always review matches carefully and think critically about information you're adding before you add it.

Sometimes, single profiles on the tree can generate tens and hundreds of Smart Matches™ and will therefore take up more of your time and attention — distracting you from the people in the tree with fewer matches but who are more relevant to your research goals. I recommend turning off matches for specific people or even ignoring specific trees when you find that you're getting too distracted by them.

You can ignore a person by clicking "More actions" on the top right corner when reviewing a match:

To ignore a certain tree, go to Discoveries>Matches by source and select the tree you wish to ignore. Click "More actions" on the upper right corner and select "Ignore this tree."

Another good tip for beating automation bias is using the "Research this person" option in the person's profile panel:

Clicking this runs a historical record search using the person's details. This is a way to find information you haven't received yet via a Smart Match™ or Record Match.

7. Lack of boundaries around your research

While it may be tempting to run after every shiny object you come across in your research, it's important to stay disciplined and focused on your goals. Genealogy is a gift that never stops giving, and while getting sidetracked can sometimes result in a glorious unrelated discovery, often you'll find that it just wastes your time and contributes to a sense of burnout.

Furthermore, a lack of boundaries might lead you to rely on lower-quality sources, which can lead to incorrect or incomplete information in your tree, or result in the creation of duplicates, as mentioned above.

Boundaries help clarify your goals and priorities and provide a framework for making informed and strategic decisions about the research process. I strongly recommend defining goals and objectives for your research before you start out. For example, identifying DNA matches from your maternal grandmother's side, or expanding your tree on a specific great-great-grandmother's side. Staying focused on those goals will help you achieve more and avoid being too scattered with your research.

8. Inconsistency

As mentioned above, being inconsistent about how you add information can lead to confusion and errors. One classic example would be switching around the order of last and first names, or using a woman's married name instead of her maiden name sometimes.

In many cases, there's no one right way to enter information — but it's important to choose a method and stick to it to avoid problems down the line.

Watching out for the pitfalls outlined above will help you avoid errors and mistakes and keep your family tree as accurate as possible.



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Email: gssc-founded1968@gmail.com

Telephone: 209-529-9430 (Vicky Wolff)

GSSC web page: <https://stanislausgenealogy.org>

The newsletter is posted at this website, along with other interesting society related items.

General meeting: 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of each month, except July and December at the Trinity Presbyterian Church at 1600 Carver Rd., Modesto, CA.

Board meeting: 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of each month, The Secret Garden, 2401 E Orangeburg Ave., Modesto, CA.

2023 Officers		2023 Standing Committees	
President	Vicky Wolff	Acquisitions	Vacant
1st Vice President	Karen Souza	Audit	Board of Directors
2nd Vice President	Jackie Niemeyer	Budget	Roxanne Ferrari
Corresponding Secretary	Martha Carter Bhatti	Four Generation Charts	Julie Condryn
Recording Secretary	Pam Atherstone	Historian	Heidi Arno
Treasurer	Roxanne Ferrari	Membership	Joyce Hickman
Director at Large 1	Joyce Hickman	Memorial Day	Membership
Director at Large 2	Amy Mowery	Mentor	Joann McDonald
Director at Large 3	Joann McDonald	Newsletter & Website	Lewis & Logan Ruddick
Director at Large 4	Martha Carter-Bhatti	Nominating	Membership
Director at Large 5	Julie Condryn	Planning	Officers & Board
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		Publicity	Vicky Wolff
		Queries	Coleen Norby
		Registrar	Marge Scheuber
		Research & Publication	Vacant
		Refreshments	Joann McDonald
		Seminar	Vacant
		Special Collections Room & Workshops	Jackie Niemeyer
		Social Media	Pam Atherstone
		Sunshine	Martha Carter-Bhatti
		Trips	Heidi Arno

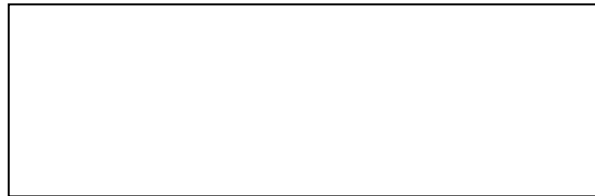
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We have 69 members for 2023

[website GSSC](https://stanislausgenealogy.org)



Genealogical Society of
Stanislaus County
P O Box 1352
Modesto, CA 95352-1352



German American Heritage Month

