



# SCGS

## Sonoma County Genealogical Society February 2006 Newsletter

### *Presidents Letter*

By Tony Hoskins, February 2006

A year ago, the Sonoma County Genealogical Society added an attraction, which I'd like to highlight for you today. At 12:00 noon—one hour before our monthly meetings begin at Lark Hall, SRJC—we have been enjoying Genealogy Discussion sessions. We have been glad to see steadily increasing attendance, but I would like to take this opportunity to mention these sessions for those of you for whom this may be news.

The format of these informal discussions is to discuss the genealogical article(s) passed out to attendees the previous month. Points raised in the articles are used to encourage discussion of similar problems, challenges, and solutions. Allowance is made for open-ended discussion and questions.

The articles passed out for discussion at the February meeting are:

- Kelsey Williams, "The Scottish Ancestry of Patrick and William Stewart of the Carolinas," *The National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 80 (2005): 11-22.
- Anthony Hoskins, "Revolutionary War Father – Civil War Son: John and Van Rensselaer Darling of Chautauqua County," *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* 132 (2001):55-6.

I hope you will attend our next Discussion Group (preceding the Monthly Meeting) at 12:00 noon, Lark Hall, Santa Rosa Junior College, on February 25, 2006. If you would like copies of these articles beforehand, please stop by the Annex (545-0831, ext. 562) and I'll be glad to give you copies.

I look forward to seeing you February 25!

*Research Policy Statement:* SCGS will do limited research 'lookups' for a \$5.00 fee, which includes an SASE, postage & handling, and up to 5 pages copied. Additional charges will be made for research of more than one hour or more than 5 copied pages.

*February 25th  
Meeting*

*Organize Your  
Files: Take  
Control of Your  
Stuff!*

*Speaker:  
Caroline House*

*1 p.m. to 3 p.m.*

*Lark Hall  
Santa Rosa  
Junior College*

**Visit Our Web Site at <http://www.scgs.org>**

The Sonoma County Genealogical Society is a nonprofit organization which encourages interest in Genealogy and Family History

Volume 16, Number 2

# February Meeting: Organize Your Files: Take Control of Your Stuff!

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By Lorel Kapke, January 2006

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At 12 years old, Caroline House was bitten by the genealogy bug and she has been researching ever since. Caroline is now a professional genealogist who specializes in writing personal and family histories. While she enjoys research and feels it is important that we know about our family's history, she says that it is just as important that what we know about them is in a readable form, accessible to everyone. Equally valuable is making sure that our own and our parents' memories and stories are preserved for our descendants.

Caroline has a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a certificate in Family History. She has taught piano, voice, and early childhood education. Now her teaching consists of some private piano, family and personal history, as well as an occasional word processing class at a local senior center.

She has written newspaper articles and articles for The Path, the newsletter of the Kindermusik Teachers' Association, for which she was Western Regional Editor. She has also coauthored two books on teaching music to young children and numerous newspaper articles on the same subject.

Caroline's affiliations include:

Member of the Association of Personal Historians

Association of Professional Genealogists

Genealogical Speakers' Guild, National Genealogical Society

New England Historic and Genealogical Society

State Historical Society of Missouri.

## *Upcoming meetings:*

**March 25, 2006 Meeting:** Speaker Barbara Leak, *Military Pension Files, Tips From a Veteran Researcher* (see page 3 for more information).

**April 22, 2006 Meeting:** *Spring Seminar*

## *Chanate Historic Cemetery Update*

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By Jeremy Nichols, January 2006

Progress to date: Approximately 470 grave markers located. The base of the third tombstone, previously unknown, has been found. One tombstone is complete, for the second we have one piece, and for the third we have the base alone. It is hoped that the missing pieces will turn up as clearing of the cemetery proceeds.

# March Meeting: Military Pension Files, Tips From a Veteran Researcher

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By Lorel Kapke, January 2006

A fifth generation Californian with early American ancestry, Barbara E. Leak has been speaking to genealogy, local history and community organizations for more than 15 years. She was named to the Honor Roll after successfully completing the National Genealogical Society's home study course, "American Genealogy: A Basic Course." A five-term former president of the Placer County Genealogical Society, Barbara chairs the society's library and research committees and is the editor and principal author of the society's popular handbook, *Tracing Your Family Tree: How to Begin*. She currently serves as president of the Genealogical & Historical Council of Sacramento Valley, treasurer and newsletter editor of the Loomis Basin Historical Society, and is a long-time volunteer and seminar instructor for the Auburn and Sacramento Family History Centers.

## Awards:

Distinguished Service Award, California State Genealogical Alliance

## Recent Engagements:

*National Genealogical Society Conference, 2004*

*Family History Day, California State Archives, 2002-2004*

*Nevada County Genealogical Society Seminars, 2001, 2003*

*Placer Company, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Christmas Luncheon, 2003*

## Specialties:

*Land Records*

*Military Records*

*Rural American research*

## Welcome New Members



CONTRERAS, Jean: Researching BAUM, 1856-2005; HEFFELFINGER, 1870-1900

GARDNER, Nancy: Researching UNDERHILL, DUMBAR in Santa Rosa; MITCHELL in Tennessee, 1870s

McCHESNEY, Casey: Researching McCHESNEY in Missouri, 1850; CONSTANTINE in Illinois, 1885; ARROW in Missouri, 1880.

SIMONS-FERRONI, Shelley

SORENSEN, Lisa: Researching CHANEY, GREEN, and RAWSON all in Sonoma County, mid-1800s.

## Sonoma County Genealogical Society

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Made with a Mac

# *Eugene Perrot's Hospital Painting Update*

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By Jeremy Nichols, January 2006

An article from the Sonoma Democrat of July 4, 1896 was discovered by my friend and fellow researcher, Ray Owen. The article addresses several points about Eugene Perrot/Pierrot's oil painting of the Sonoma County Hospital that had been matters of contention.

1. We now know (a) how Eugene Perrot met Dr. Shearer and (b) why he painted the picture. I had previously surmised that Dr. Shearer had commissioned the painting but there was no evidence of payment and I had no clue as to how the two men met. One of my earliest theories, now confirmed, was that Perrot had been a patient in the County Hospital and had painted the picture at that time. I didn't think that the painting was a gift, however, although I thought it might have been given in lieu of cash payment for treatment.

2. The description of the painting also confirms my suspicion that it was a portrait of Dr. Shearer and not a landscape of the hospital. This fits Perrot's own description of himself as a "portrait painter." Additionally, the only other known works by Perrot are also portraits of a Mr. and Mrs. Jennings in Fort Worth.

3. The painting must have been done in June 1896. This matches the artist's date '1896' next to his signature and also confirms my opinion, based on the green lawn and trees, that it was done in the spring or early summer.

4. Ownership of the painting is now no longer in question. It is clear that Perrot gave the painting to Dr. Shearer, in his capacity as County Physician, as a thank-you for services rendered him at the County Hospital. This means that the painting was really a gift to the county. Confirming this is Dr. Shearer's probate file in Sonoma County, which listed all of Dr. Shearer's assets, including "skeleton and case," but did not list the painting.

I found the painting at the hospital in September 2004. Long-time employees have told me that it had hung in one office or another for as long as they could remember. Although the article says that Dr. Shearer put the painting in his private office in Santa Rosa, he must have moved the painting from his office to the hospital before he retired. Dr. Shearer served as County Physician from 1895 to 1904, and died in 1905.

It's interesting that Perrot and Dr. Shearer both served in the Civil War, albeit on opposite sides. They did not face each other in battle, however, as nice a legend that might be, but served in different parts of the country, Shearer in the east and Perrot in the west. Their relationship was probably best expressed by a cartoon that appeared in the Press Democrat on 4 July 1938.

Perrot, 72 years old in 1896, survived the "accident," whatever it was, and lived another 23 years. He must have done other paintings but none have been found other than the Jennings.

The painting itself is now in Dennis Calabi's workshop in Sebastopol where Mr. Calabi is applying his magic to get the cracked and flaky paint under control. Work on the painting will be completed later this year.

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# What's New at the Library

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By Maggie Andrews, January 2006

"The Images of America" series released by Arcadia Publishing has offered us all a wonderful view into a variety of local people and places. Their website lists an amazing 2,427 books, and the Sonoma County Library has at least 21, the newest being *Petaluma: A History in Architecture*. The author is Katherine J. Rinehart, "our" assistant librarian at the Sonoma County Library Local History & Genealogy Annex. So stop by the Annex to take a look at the "Images of America." Katherine's book is available for purchase directly from her, or through the publishers' website <http://www.arcadiapublishing.com/home.html>

Katherine spoke about her experiences with Katie Watts in an article printed in the September 28, 2005 *Petaluma Argus-Courier*:

"A city's character is often defined by its architecture, especially its public buildings, which reflect the values and taste of the community."

So writes Katherine Rinehart in her book, *Petaluma: A History in Architecture*, which was recently released by Arcadia Publishing as part of its Images of America series.

Rinehart's interest in Petaluma architecture began at SSU, when she was working toward her master's degree in history in 1994. "That's when I really developed my passion for historic buildings. My master's thesis was a historic resources survey of an area of Penngrove. I spent a lot of time at the museum and the library and enjoyed the surroundings."

Although architecture is a self-admitted passion for her, Rinehart hopes to focus more attention on the builders of that architecture. The two go hand in hand: "The architects get a lot of credit, but I think about what the builders did: Holly Vogensen, Walter Singleton, Morris Fredericks, Sam and George Rodd. Another passion of mine is to bring attention to these folks."

Currently Rinehart works part time for the Sonoma County Library, in its history and genealogy index. "It's a really great fit, and by working there I had access to a tremendous collection of photos."

Her research has worked both ways, she said. As part of her job, she sorts through boxes of photos, some simply labeled "unidentified building." As she's studied and learned, though, she's been able to put names to these former unidentifieds and improve the library's cataloging.

The best thing she's gotten out of the book, she said, is "the sense of taking all my materials, getting focused, and being able to share it with people."

You can view the entire article on-line at Arcadia's website

## *Also at the Library...*

*Treasures of the Sonoma County Library Photographic Collection* is a small book with only some of the many images of Sonoma County's rich history. There are over 30,000 historical pictures listed in the library catalog and about 20,000 are digitized and available for online viewing.

For more information, visit the "Sonoma County History and Genealogy Library" section of the main catalog, and click on "Historical Photographs". If you are using the catalog from home, the address is : <http://www.sonoma.lib.ca.us/history/history.html>. You can search by Title, Author, Subject or General Keyword (for example, a surname or location as Subject or General) and then Limit the search to Photographs. It is fascinating to find little slices of life from a long ago time... school children, baseball teams, businessmen, family portraits and more. If the picture is not available online, you can download the order form or visit the Library Annex to look at the original – just be sure to write down the Call Number from the Catalog listing.

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# *From the Archives of Genealogy Jack*

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By Ray Owens

Dear Jack,

In my research I discovered that an ancestor obtained a patent for some type of railroad invention in the 1870s. I have no idea what it was and apparently it didn't make him a millionaire as he died in modest financial circumstances. Nevertheless, I would like to know what he invented and when he received the patent. Any suggestions?


It's suggested that you write to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 and request a copy. Although it's best to have the patent number, it can be located through the patentee's name. An approximate date and nature of the invention is desirable.


By the way, when I lived in Brooklyn a friend and I hit upon a scheme and anticipated getting a patent. We crossed jellyfish with herring, the idea being to make a fortune selling boneless herring. Unfortunately, all we got were spiny jellyfish!


Good luck,  
Genealogy Jack


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## *Special Interest Groups*

 **British Interest Group** The next meeting will be March 7th at the home of Audrey Herman, 934 Shady Oak Dr., Santa Rosa. For information call Audrey at 539-4031.

 **German Interest Group** The next meeting will be 4 March 2006, 10 a.m. at Jim Cochran's home, 1658 Tarkenton Court., Santa Rosa. We will have a general help session and discussion on topics of interest to those present. For more information, Contact Jim Cochran at 526-7331.

 **Italian Interest Group** The next meeting will be on 15 April 2006 at 10 a.m. at the home of Ines Williams. For more information e-mail Ines Williams at inesw@comcast.net. See you all then.

 **Computer Interest Group** The next meeting will be 18 March 2006, 1 p.m. at the Sonoma County Library Annex, Third & E Streets. There is parking across the street (25 cents for 20 mins.) as well as parking on the street. This will be an Informal meeting with questions or something to share. For more information, contact Maggi Andrews at 538-1775.

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