



# Past and Present

Newsletter of The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society  
July 2025  
[sgesjax.org](http://sgesjax.org)

---

## **Upcoming Meeting Information**

### **Summer at SGES: Research and Conversation**

#### **July 12 - Open Library Month**

There is no formal program scheduled for July, but the SGES Library will be open as usual. It's a great opportunity to stop by and dive into your genealogy research at your own pace. Explore our extensive collection, get help with your family genealogy questions, or participate in a scavenger hunt! Joan and Mary Jeanette are librarians of the day.

#### **August – Informal ChatGPT Conversation**

Curious about artificial intelligence or ChatGPT? Drop by the SGES Library on Saturday August 9, anytime between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm for a casual, small-group conversation moderated by Georgia Pribanic. Whether you're new to AI or wondering how ChatGPT might help with genealogy, come learn, ask questions, and share your thoughts. Not into AI? No problem—come by anyway and continue your research.

### **Climbing that Brick Wall – need more submissions**

In preparation for our meeting in September, our President, Alana Masters, would like to know one of the “brick walls” in your US family research. Please challenge Alana and see what she can accomplish. Results will be revealed at the September meeting. Please send all requests to [sgesjax@att.net](mailto:sgesjax@att.net) with the Subject line: Brick Wall.

## **Outreach at SGES**

### **Jacksonville History Fair**

SGES participated in the second annual Jacksonville Historical Society History Fair on June 14th. This marked the first time that JHS hosted the event in the renovated casket

factory. This historic venue, with its refinished floors and expanded vendor space, provided a unique and welcoming atmosphere. Alana and Joan represented SGES.

The SGES table featured informational materials about the genealogy society, attracting a steady stream of visitors throughout the day. Many attendees stopped by to learn more about our mission, ask questions, and take-home packets of resources on how to get involved. A big thank you to Gigi for creating an eye-appealing overview of SGES activity via a trifold tabletop display.



Alana and Joan  
at History Fair



Alana at SGES  
table

**Photos courtesy of member Nancy Gandy.**

## *Genealogy Finds by Joan Hakala*

### *Did any of your ancestors fight in the Revolutionary War?*

Then check out this database.

#### ***U.S., Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1783 by Ancestry.com*** <sup>1</sup>

“This database is a collection of records kept by the National Archives listing men who fought for the colonies in the American Revolutionary War. Record types contained in this collection include muster rolls and payrolls.”

#### **How to access:**

- ◆ Log on to **Ancestry.com** with your own subscription or come to the SGES library on Wednesdays from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm to access the Library’s subscription.
- ◆ Click on **Search** from the top menu, select **Card Catalog** from the drop down menu, then type in: Revolutionary War Rolls
- ◆ Select U.S., Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1883 from the results.

***Happy Hunting!***

## *Library News by Georgia Pribanic*



### **Roof Replacement Scheduled for SGES Library**

After more than two decades of service, the SGES Library roof is scheduled for replacement. Following a recent visual inspection, several soft spots were found in the roof structure. Given the age of the roof—approximately 22 years old—the SGES Board

voted to move forward with a full replacement to protect the valuable resources and collections housed in the building.

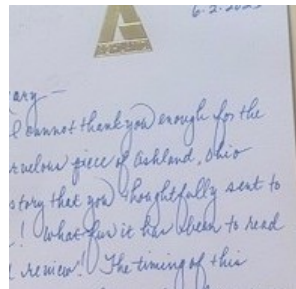
Two licensed roofing companies submitted bids for the project, and the Board selected Trinity Roofers for the job. Their proposal, totaling \$11,000, was determined to be both cost-effective and thorough in scope. Funding for the roof will be covered by a Certificate of Deposit (CD) that matures on July 3.

City permits have been requested, and Trinity Roofers expects the project to be completed in one day, pending unexpected problems and weather conditions. This proactive decision helps ensure that the SGES Library continues to be a safe, welcoming, and dry environment for members and guests for many more years to come.

## **SGES Volunteer's Thoughtful Donation Sparks Gratitude in Ohio**

**by Georgia Pribanic**

**"I can't thank you enough"**



SGES Library volunteer Mary Jeanette recently received a hand-written thank you note from the Mayor of Ashland, Ohio in appreciation of her thoughtful gesture. After several books on Ashland were donated to SGES, it was decided they weren't useful. Mary Jeanette reached out and found them a new home in Ashland. This unexpected donation sparked interest throughout the Ashland community—so much so that the Mayor got involved and personally sent a note in appreciation. Mary Jeanette's thoughtfulness not only strengthened our mission of preserving and sharing history but also of spreading goodwill across state lines. This is one example of how SGES Library volunteers make a difference!



## Collection Highlights

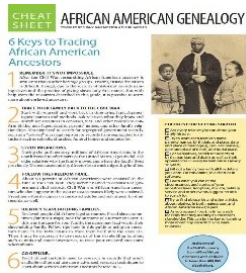


### Donated Periodical Issues:



We recently received a thoughtful donation from the Wenatchee Area Genealogical Society (Washington State)—several issues of the *Jacksonville Genealogical Society Quarterly* (JGSQ), a publication that holds historical and genealogical significance to our region. Thank you!

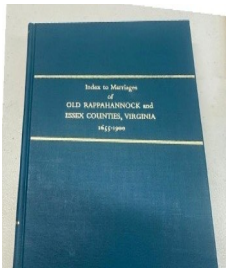
### Selection of June donated books:



**African American Genealogy cheat sheet (AAR):** This is a quick-reference with tips, charts and resources to find records of enslaved people, free black people, freedmen, us colored troops service members, 20th-century African Americans in the great migration, and other black ancestors. It includes a resource listing of 40+ black websites, books and organizations focused on black genealogy and history.



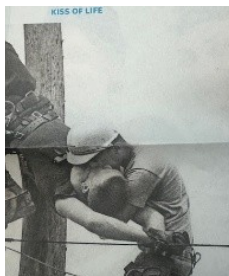
**Scottish genealogy cheat sheet (EF)** This is an easy-to-use Scottish genealogy reference. It offers eight pages of helpful tips, fast-facts, quick-reference charts, and instructions on how to trace your Scottish family tree.



**Index to marriages of old Rappahannock and Essex counties, Virginia, 1655-1900/ Eva Eubank Wilkerson (VA339)** This title abstracted information from records of deeds, wills, court orders, land trials, marriage register, and marriage bonds. Gives names of groom and bride, marriage date or date of record in which marriage was found, book and page numbers. Sometimes gives other information, such as family relationship, residence, marital status, etc.

## Highlights from the SGES Reference Desk by Georgia Pribanic

### Reference Assistance: Italian Genealogy



An in-depth genealogy request to find the great-great grandparents of the family whose son won the Pulitzer Prize for this amazing photo was a delightful challenge this month. Luckily, the requester knew the Italian village located in the province of Reggio Calabria in southern Italy where the family emigrated from. The challenge began when we entered the names which were very common in that region with sons named Rocco appearing multitude times.

### Portale Antenati

Antenati is the “gold standard” of civil records for Italian genealogy. Much of Antenati is searchable on FamilySearch, and Ancestry, but searching directly on Antenati is more comprehensive and deeper. Ancestry and FamilySearch collaborate and overlap but each contains records that the other doesn’t have, so it is good to access both.



## *From our members:*

### **Dora Malkoff Rubinstein's Story – Part 3**

By Dora Malkoff Rubinstein

#### **1929 stock market crash.**

I remember Papa sitting at his workbench in the bedroom with the newspaper spread out in front of him with the jewelers loop in his eye studying the stock market pages. "They are throwing away gold and there is no one to pick it up!" I never knew what he had in the market. I only remember the dead silence at the dinner table.

Papa had money in three banks. The Mellon bank took two years to refund his deposits - paid back in full. Another bank paid back \$.10 on the dollar. The third bank nothing. Papa never recovered financially.

We were living in Akron, Ohio, One Saturday we got a phone call, Mamma is frantic "Papa is in the hospital. They are going to amputate Papa's right leg at the thigh Monday morning."

We drove to Pittsburgh as fast as our car could take us. We went straight to the hospital. Talked to the nurses, then to the doctors.

Papa had developed diabetes, Gangrene had set in. The tip of the small toe on his right foot was black.

The doctor had scheduled him for surgery Monday morning. "It is no use amputating just a small toe. Gangrene would continue, surgery would follow. - next time the foot, then the knee, then at the thigh, so instead of three operations, they might as well get it done all at one time!

I was dumbfounded. I insisted on taking my father out of the hospital. The nurses and doctors were furious. I had to sign all kinds of papers, release, etc..

We took Papa out, straight to the Montefiore Hospital in Pittsburgh. There they checked him in for a week - finally operated. They removed the top half of his small toe.

Papa came home - went on a strict diet. Mama even baked special bread for him. His diabetes was diet controlled from that time on. He had no more surgery.

In all the stores, he kept a chair at the end of the counter. One of the children had to come down on Saturday and sit there. I would go whenever I got the chance. Max learned the jewelry business, my brother Lou just would not learn. I learned business. How to buy and sell, contract, etc. Loved it I listened, and I remembered.

His advice stood us in good stead.

While, Maxie and I were vacationing in Miami Beach, our hotel had a sales promotion. - a land sale. We went for it, we were taken for a boat ride, shown the beauty of Miami, went up to Jupiter Springs. There we were dined at a beautiful hotel and then were lectured. The presentation: selling property that they pointed out way over to the west. Maxie was always interested in an investment, would consider two commercial lots suitable for a 7-Eleven store. ((we had one in one of our stores). They had just what we wanted, wanted a deposit, wanted us to sign a contract. Then Maxie told them "not until we stand on the four corners." The salesman were frustrated, we took the description of the land with us. Told him we would check out the property, see them the following day and left.

The following day we came back to the Jupiter Springs Hotel for lunch. This time the sales people stayed away from us as if we had the plague. We wondered "why". Then left to check out the property.

We finally found it. The two lots on the platted chart were on a corner as marked. Only a stream ran over and through the end lot! The property could never be developed. This was a scam! Now we knew why the sales people avoided us.

My father was so right: "never buy anything until you stand on the four corners!"

### **Papas final heart attack**

Mama phoned: "Papa is dying!" We drove as fast as we could. Was in the hospital under an oxygen tent. He had suffered a massive heart attack, developed pneumonia. His doctor told me that pneumonia was he dying man's best friend. It shortened his suffering.

Papa called his family, his doctors, his lawyer to his bedside. Blessed us all. All his goodbyes, tore off the oxygen tent, Asked only Mama to stay at his bedside. He died at 2 AM in the morning.

They don't come braver. He was 72.



Mom was wonderful. Everyone loved her, and after Papa passed away, so many people came to visit her and they kept on visiting.

She has some beautiful things left, two exquisite figurines, 3 foot tall, stood on each side of the fireplace. They disappeared after Papa passed away.

Mama was creative. She sewed, made my costumes for the plays when I was in the "Pitt Players" (University Pittsburgh). She embroidered the beautiful tablecloths for Passover. (she never scolded when wine was spilled during the service.). She made sailboats out of wire, covered the frames with cloth, lacquered them, etc. She was written up in the "Pittsburgh Press" and pictured with two of her boats.

Mama had the most beautiful voice. Papa and Mama used to sing together on special occasions. Mama was asked to sing for the radio station KDKA. She refused. She had all she could do at home raising children.

Mama dressed the French dolls that were on our beds - they were exquisite each one a thing of beauty, and I can go on and on - she was just special!

**Story to be concluded in our next newsletter...**