



Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

June 2023

Volume 45 Number 6

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June 15, 2023

6:00 P.M. Ice Cream Social

7:00 P.M. Diego Gallardo, a talented Patterson high school student, will speak on his Scouting Project of cataloging the Paterson cemetery headstones.

Presidents Message

By Vicky Wolff

Good Day! Our next genealogy meeting will be held on June 15th and will be our ICE CREAM SOCIAL!!! Yummy for the tummy! I look forward to seeing you there. Don't forget we will be dark in the month of July with no meeting but will see you back in August. I hope you are all finding those elusive ancestors and writing their stories, to preserve your family history. I am having a family reunion here at our home on June 10th through 11th. So far, over twenty people have responded to the invitation. I am looking forward to seeing and spending time with my family. This family is on my maternal side (Hamilton, England and Hilden) from Scotland, Ireland and Finland/Sweden. I have written all their stories from our immigrant ancestors to present day. Each family will go home with this information, hopefully keeping them interested in their other genealogy endeavors. Have a wonderful summer and stay cool as the hot weather is approaching us.

June Program

By Karen Souza



Diego Gallardo will be relating the work he did for his Eagle Scout project, which “was to digitally archive loved ones’ gravestones at the Patterson Cemetery. . .” according to the PattersonIrrigator.com dated September 16 2021. “In February [2021], Diego, a Patterson high school student, led volunteers to digitally archive over seven-thousand headstones from the Patterson Cemetery and uploaded their information to Billiongraves.com.” He has continued to do this throughout his busy high school year. Please join us on Thursday, June 15, 2023, to hear about this amazing accomplishment.

Photos from the May Meeting

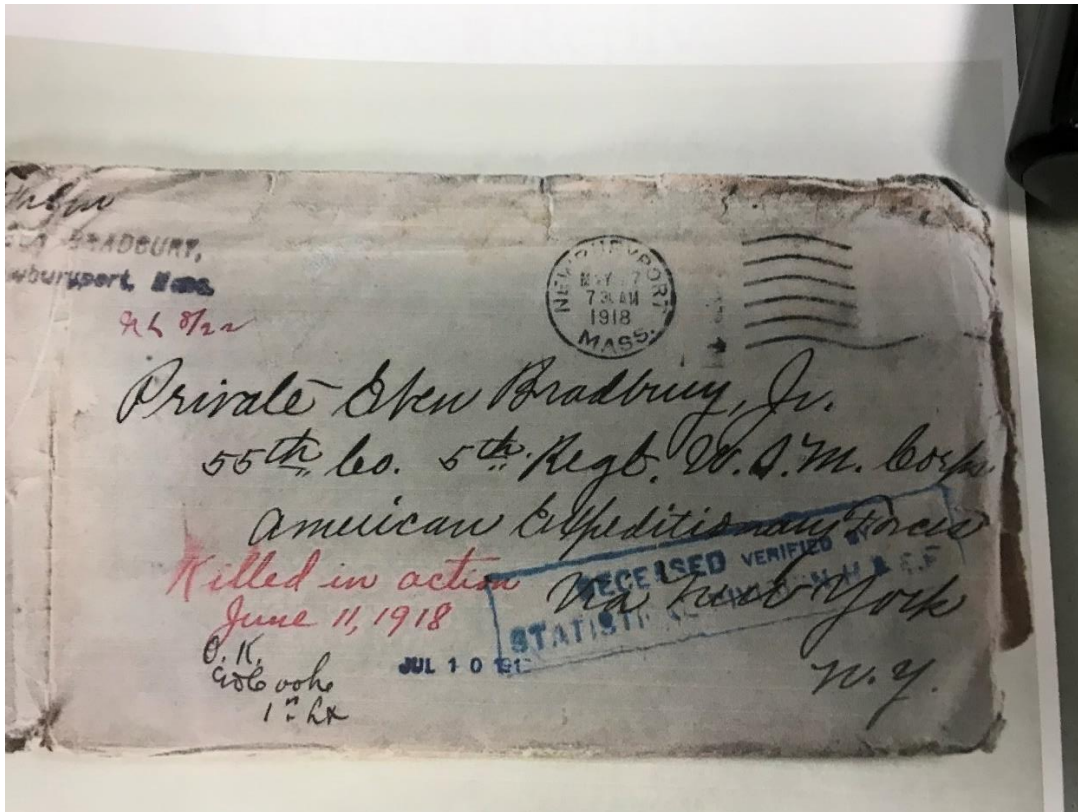
By Heidi Armo



Our Speaker George Kapor



Author of the letters



One of the "Discovered" envelopes



Snacks



Come Join Us We Miss You



We do provide resources

**Remember Normandy
June 6, 1942**



INTO THE MOUTH

OMAHA BEACH

OF HELL



Photo by Robert F Sargent/Getty Images

On this day Allied Forces went ashore on the coast of France to counter the German occupation. 133,000 troops from the United States, the British Commonwealth, and their allies, landed on D-Day. The United States contribution included 54,000 infantry troops and had 2,700 casualties. The majority of our losses were 20 years of age or younger. Great Britain contributed 54,000 infantry troops and had 1,030 casualties. Canada provided 21,400 infantry troops and had 1,200 casualties. From the air came airborne troops, including 4,000 glider troops, totaling 23,400 troops and they suffered 3,999 casualties. Few of us in the United States do not have a family member who was lost during this invasion or the drive into Germany resulting in the defeat of Germany on May 8, 1945. All of us need to remember the importance of this date and its meaning to the United States and western Europe. These young men and women were our Greatest Generation.

Washington Memorial Chapel and The National Patriots Bell Tower at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

Martha Carter-Bhatti

Valley Forge, named for its iron forge, is located about 20 miles northwest of Philadelphia where Valley Creek meets the Schuylkill River. It was a storage site for the Continental Army during the American Revolution. In September 1777 the British raided Valley Forge, stole the supplies, and burned the buildings. Although no major battles were fought at this location the skirmish became known as the Battle of Valley Forge.

A number of losing battles followed for the Continental Army. The British captured the patriot capital, Philadelphia, at the Battle of Brandywine. In late December 1777 George Washington led the Continental Army to Valley Forge for a winter encampment. It was a defensible location close enough to keep watch on the British in Philadelphia but far enough away to minimize a surprise attack.

Approximately 12,000 patriot soldiers and 500 camp followers and new recruits endured the winter at Valley Forge. Living conditions were harsh. There was not enough shelter, food, or shoes and clothing; more than 2000 died of disease. In February 1778 former Prussian military officer, Friedrich von Steuben, came to Valley Forge. He worked with Washington and the Continental Army generals to improve living conditions and drill the patriot soldiers in discipline and military strategy. In May 1778 Washington received word that the Continental Congress ratified a Treaty of Alliance and a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with France. Benjamin Franklin had spent a year in Paris facilitating this alliance to provide support for the American colonies during the American Revolution.

To show gratitude for support from France, Washington declared one day each year should be set aside to celebrate the alliance. Washington and his men left Valley Forge in June 1778 as a well-trained, confident fighting force. The encampment at Valley Forge was the turning point of the Revolutionary War.

In 1893 Valley Forge landowners memorialized the turning point of the war by donating the land used for the encampment (approximately 3500 acres) to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It became the first state park and was gifted to the National Park System in 1976. For the Bicentennial on July 4, 1976, the area became Valley Forge National Historical Park.



The Washington Memorial Chapel complex overlooks the park but has never been part of the state or federal park systems. Inspiration for the church came from sermons and historical work by Episcopalian minister W. Herbert Burk, founder and first rector of the parish. The Gothic Revival building was designed by Philadelphia architect Milton B. Medary. It was constructed over many years by the Episcopal Church as a memorial to George Washington and his troops and a wayside chapel open to all who visit Valley Forge National Historical Park. It continues to be an active Episcopal parish. Every year, on

the first Sunday in May, Washington Memorial Chapel celebrates French Alliance Day in recognition of George Washington's wishes in May 1778.

Building of the church began in 1885 as a small wood frame building. Following President Theodore Roosevelt's visit to the site and address in 1904, the building was named "Theodore Roosevelt Chapel." It was demolished after completion of the present chapel.

On June 19, 1903, the cornerstone for the present chapel sanctuary was laid on property donated by the Todd family. This was the 125th anniversary of the Continental Army leaving

the winter encampment at Valley Forge. The stone walls of the chapel and exterior were completed in 1917. The interior with leaded glass windows and elegant woodwork was completed in 1922. The Memorial Chapel and a modest wooden bell tower were dedicated in 1926 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the American Revolution. The first bell tower housed the “Star Spangled Banner National Peace Chime” of 13 bells representing each of the original 13 colonies. It was expanded over time to add more bells but the structure became unstable and was demolished in 1953.



The National Patriots Bell Tower which houses the Washington Memorial National Carillon was a later addition to the Chapel. It was built over more than a decade with funds raised by members of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR). Construction began in 1941 but was stopped due to World War II. The cornerstone was laid in 1944. Construction was re-started in 1949 and completed in 1953.

The Tower is 114 feet high and 24 feet wide at its base. Built of native stone, it contains

58 tuned bronze bells that have been installed incrementally and include those from the original wooden bell tower. There is a bell for each of the fifty states, each territory, Washington DC, and the national birthday bell. The bells weigh a total of 26 tons and cover a range of nearly five octaves. The bells are stationary in a steel framework and do not swing. A mechanical system connects keys and pedals to the clapper of each bell. The carillon is played entirely by hand from a keyboard located near the bells. The first musical composition played on the carillon was the national anthem at the dedication on April 18, 1953. Bell concerts are played regularly today for the public by resident carillonneur, Doug Gefvert.

In 2003 a bell tower atrium was completed. It overlooks the Grand Parade area where General Washington trained his army. The atrium houses the Veterans Wall of Honor, a tribute to all veterans of the United States Armed Services from the Revolution to present day.

After more than a century of daily use Washington Memorial Chapel is undergoing restoration. The National Patriots Bell Tower will also begin restoration. The Washington Memorial Chapel and the National Patriots Bell Tower continue to instill the spirit of Valley Forge. They are a legacy to the history and culture of our country.

References

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www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/valley-forge

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Washington Memorial Chapel

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<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=50911831>

National Patriots Bell Tower

By Jerrye & Roy Klotz, Own work, CC By-SA 4.0,

commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=59078364

Writing Group

Submitted by Joann McDonald

The next meeting of the writing group will be held at Joann MacDonald’s home at 10:00 on June 8th. Please E-mail her at JMastergardener@aol.com to confirm you are coming.

FHC on El Vista is open by appointment only.

Marian Sanderson is the contact person. She can be reached at 209-968-4796 to make an appointment.

Due to the disruption caused by Covid-19 that is still lingering there will be no GSSC activities at the Scenic Drive Cemetery complex in Modesto this year. The Society will resume our traditional service to the cemeteries visitors in 2024.

Free Materials Available

Rick Albright of Merced County has the following publications he would like to donate to anyone. Please contact Jackie Niemeyer jackie.niemeyer@prodigy.net and she will connect you.

Here is a partial list of the printed items offered for donation:

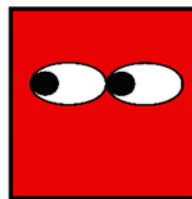
Augusta Co., VA Historical Bulletin, Stanislaus Co., CA Researcher; Northeastern Nevada Quarterly, New England Gen.

Register, Laurel Messenger of Somerset Co., PA; Timelines of Jackson Co., IA; DuBois Family News of Ulster Co., NY.

A list of additional items will follow. Rick Albright



The Cooking Gene



We still have copies of the GSSC Cookbook: **The Cooking Gene**. Judy and Joyce would be more than happy to fill your order. We are now down to a limited number of our popular cookbook. The Board has set the price for the remaining copies at **\$20 plus \$5 for shipping and handling**. See our website stanislausgenealogy.org/Publications to order your copy.

The following is a handout from Jackie Niemeyer’s Saturday Genealogical Class This should be useful to new and seasoned genealogists alike:

Simply Google in the web site name as shown and you will be in Genealogy Heaven! 😊

GENEALOGICAL WEB SITES

FREE WEB SITES

Stanislausgenealogy.org our society site for upcoming events, the Special Collections catalog and some Stanislaus county records.

Familysearch.org has family trees, a catalog of their holdings and a research wiki, a lot of original records. You do have to get a username and password to do searches but it is a free site.

Findagrave.com has burial and cemetery searches.

Usgenweb.org has state and county resources and records, can do queries.

Cyndislist.com has hundreds of links to other genealogy sites on line

Archives.gov the National Archives site, can order military and land records for a fee.

Census.gov/history has the list of census questions Through the Decades and blank forms.

Stevemorse.org has finding aids to search passenger lists and census.

Glorerecords.blm.gov has land sales and patents from the federal government

Chroniclingamerica.loc.gov has some newspapers 1770-1963

PAY WEB SITES

Ancestry.com has records, DNA and trees

Myheritage.com has records, DNA and trees

Newspapers.com has newspapers, owned by ancestry.

Newspaperarchive.com has newspapers

Fold3.com has military records

Findmypast.com has mainly British and Irish Records

Familytreedna.com does all 3 types of DNA testing, Y-DNA, mt-DNA and autosomal

Membership Information Dues: Single membership, \$25.00 per year Family membership, \$35.00 per year Stanislaus Researcher Published 10 times per year by Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County, P. O. Box 1352, Modesto, CA 95353-1352. Delivered via email.

Submit articles for publication to the editor via email: lruddick@ix.netcom.com by the 15th of each month.

Address changes: Send address, email and phone number changes to Joyce Hickman at: c/o GSSC, P. O. Box 1352, Modesto, CA 95353-1352

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
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Recording Secretary	Pam Atherstone	Historian	Heidi Arno
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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 Condrin	Planning	Officers & Board
Past President	David Wolff	Programs	Karen Souza
		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

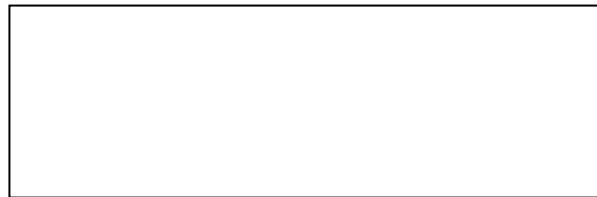
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We have 66 members for 2023

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



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Remember D-Day June 6, 1944