PastFinder

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When Goliath goes after David

Yahoo! Let's Google Bing

By Janet Brigham Rands

Everywhere we turn, we see war. Geek turned against geek, programmer against engineer, child against sibling:

"Google!"

"No, Yahoo! Yahoo! is better!"

"Bing! Yahoo! is powered by Bing now anyway, so what does it matter?"

"GOOGLE!!" Sound of furious typing. "I believe in Google! 'Don't be evil'!"

So which is best for genealogy? Even before the early days when Google's only presence was a banner flapping outside an office window, the Search Engine Wars have raged. From AltaVista.com and Lycos.com to Dogpile.com, a proliferation of companies have sought to capture the attention of the Web-browsing public.

Recently, Yahoo! searches became powered by the Bing search engine, which is in turn powered by Microsoft (in every sense of the word *powered*). This move apparently was designed to cut into Google's lead in the Search Engine Wars. Even so, Yahoo! searches are not identical to Bing searches.

With such turbulence, search engines have evolved and advanced. Search engine strategies consume entire books and seminars. Search engine companies can yield billions of dollars in ad sales.

What's a genealogy researcher to do?

For an answer, we turn to a search engine taste-tester, blindsearch.fejus.com, that compares engines by conducting the same search simultaneously with three major search engines: Yahoo!, Bing, and Google. The first few results from each search engine are presented side-by-side in three columns. Once a user chooses the best search, BlindSearch shows which result is from which search en gine. No search engine appears in the same col umn each time; also, re sults are truncated.

The results can be surprising. Some who swear by Google, for example, may be jolted when the best results for a search are from Bing. Each search engine is best some of the time, but not all of the time.

The take-home message is this: For typical searches, one search engine may be sufficient. Looking for your dentist? They'll all find her, eventually. But for an important search, don't be exclusive, and don't assume search sites are all the same.

For critical searches, try several search engines and use various search strategies, so that both Goliath and David work for *you*.

Outside and inside

- Benefit from the Search Engine Wars, above.
- Passport applications can take you places in your family history research, page 2.
- Got questions? We've got answers, page 5.
- New catalog search at FamilySearch, page 6.

U.S. Passport applications: Research those who traveled abroad

By Allin Kingsbury

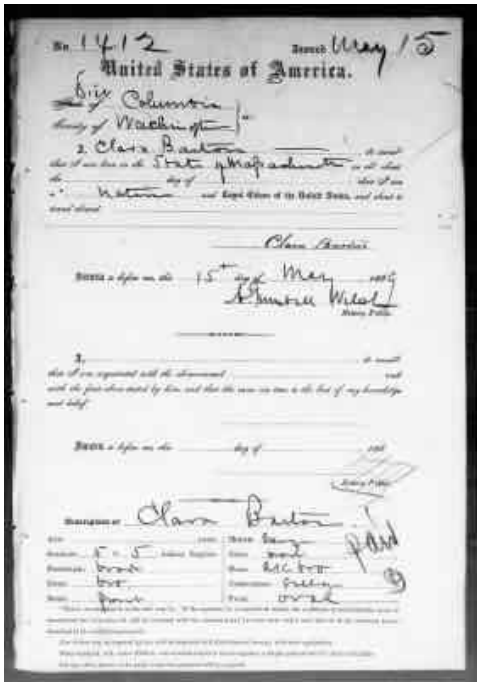
The United States passport has been used by U.S. citizens almost as long as the country has existed. Genealogists have found that the passport application, the document filled out to obtain a passport, has a wealth of information, making the application an important source of genealogical information. Applications made before 1925 are easily found. More recent applications can also be obtained, but there are restrictions.

Passport applications are particularly useful if the applicant was born outside the United States. The applicant was required to submit proof of citizenship, which in this case was naturalization documents. Often the passport application or the naturalization document stated the place of birth, the port of arrival in the United States, and other information helpful in tracing the family to the country of origin.

Passport applications

The first applications were handwritten letters, which quickly diminished in use as the government created application forms, which were changed from time to time. Information in the passport application varied year to year and may have included:

- Full name of the applicant
- Birth date or age
- Birthplace
- Residence
- Date of application or issuance of the passport
- Father's and/or husband's name
- Father's and/or husband's birth date or age
- Father's and/or husband's birthplace
- Father's and/or husband's residence
- Wife's name
- Date and place of immigration to the U.S.
- Years of residence in the U.S.
- Naturalization date and place
- Occupation
- Physical characteristics



Clara Barton's passport application

To receive a U.S. passport, a person was required to submit proof of U.S. citizenship usually in the form of a letter, affidavits of witnesses, and certificates from clerks or notaries. Sometimes these additional documents were included as part of the application. Later applications included a small photo of the applicant.

History of applications

The U.S. government has issued passports to its citizens since 1789 through several government agencies. Passports originally were not required for foreign travel but became mandatory for a short time during the Civil War (19 August 1861 to 17 March 1862). An executive order in 1915 and a later act of Congress in 1918 made passports mandatory for citizens traveling abroad during World War I. This law lapsed at the end of World War I with treaties with Germany, Austria, and Hungary in 1921. During this period, passport applications numbered 67500 to 67749 (dated 4-5 March 1919) went missing and were never found. At most, it was only 250 applications, a small quantity compared with the total.

The Congressional act of 1918 was reinstated with the outbreak of World War II, requiring U.S. citizens to carry a passport for foreign travel. This law remains in effect. The State Department issued regular passports without charge until 1 July 1862, when a $3 fee was instituted; the fee has increased over the years.

The Department of State has issued passports since 1789, but was not the only agency doing so until 23 August 1856, when Congress passed an act prohibiting other governmental entities, such as state and judicial authorities, from issuing passports.

Foreign travelers in the 19th century included businessmen, the middle class, and naturalized U.S. citizens who returned to their homelands to visit relatives. Statistics show that the State Department issued 130,360 passports from 1810 to 1873, more than 369,844 from 1877 to 1909, and more than 1,184,085 from

Passport applications *(continued)*

1912 to 1925. No records document travel by American citizens travelling without passports or with passports issued by state or judicial authorities prior to 1856.

Approximately 95 percent of mid-19th century passport applicants were men. However, if a male applicant was to be accompanied by a wife, children, servants, or other females under his protection, these persons' names, ages, and relationship to the applicant were stated on the passport application. Thus, one passport was issued to cover a group traveling together.

If children traveled abroad solely with their mother, their names and ages were indicated on the mother's passport application. Passport applications for women became more frequent during the late 19th century, and by 1923 women applied for more than 40 percent of the passports issued.

Applications 1795 to 1925

The National Archives has microfilmed passport applications made from 1795 to 1925. Recently, the subscription site Ancestry.com added the collection, with digitized images of the applications.

A variety of passport application forms were used over the years. During the 1860s, most applications were made on printed forms, although handwritten applications continued to be accepted. By 1888, separate application forms existed for native citizens, naturalized citizens, and derivative citizens (children who become citizens through their parents' naturalization). As a result, researchers need to view all the images of the applications.

By 1888, several types of passports were issued. All types are included in the passport application holdings of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). At that point, passport types included:

Regular Applications. Most of the passport applications were for regular passports. The exceptions are three other types of passports.

Emergency Applications. Emergency passports were issued abroad by diplomatic and consular officials for emergency purposes only and were valid for only six months. Issuance of emergency passports began in 1874 but was discontinued by an act of Congress of 3 July 1926.

Special Applications. Over the years, the Department of State has issued various types of special passports. Since World War I, the Passeport Diplomatique has been issued to diplomatic personnel, and other special passports have been issued to government officials traveling abroad on official business.

Insular Possessions Applications. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the United States exercised sovereign control over insular possessions or territories. The residents of these areas applied to the Department of State for a passport on an insular passport application. NARA has such applications from residents of Hawaii (1916-1924), the Philippines (1901-1924), and Puerto Rico (1915-1922).

In 1905 the application form was revised into an affidavit, which had to be notarized. In 1915, space was added to the application form for the intended date of departure, the means of travel, and the countries to be visited. Before 1918, the application was one sheet of paper, 12 x 18 inches. Space for a picture of the applicant was added to the form. In 1918, the application was reduced and folded. In 1926 the State Department adopted the pocket-size covered booklet used today.

Applications after 1925

Passport applications after 1925 are held by the United States State Department. A copy may be obtained for $14. If the applicant was born after 1900, a certified death certificate must be submitted. The application requires the name of the passport applicant and enough information to identify the individual such as date of birth, residence, and so forth. The person requesting the application must submit his or her name, birth date and place, relationship to the applicant and the reason for requesting the application. The request must be notarized and sent to—

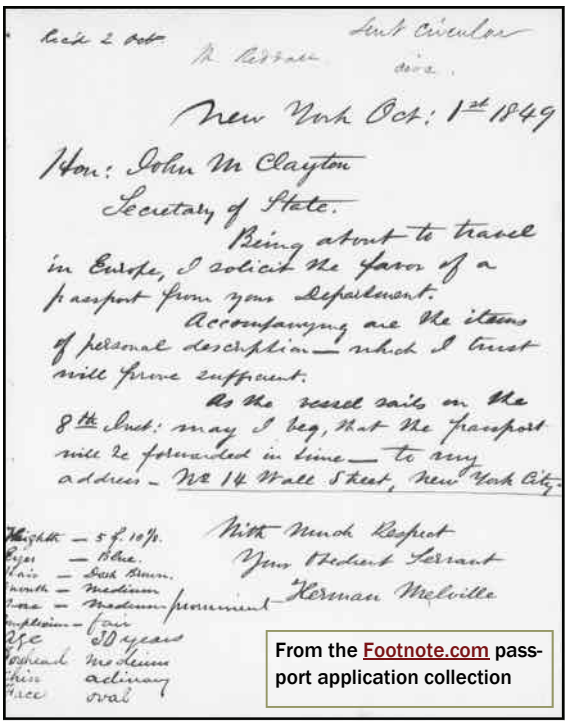
Passport Office
U.S. State Department
1425 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Finding an application

There are two sources of passport applications for the period 1790-1925. The first to be made available to the public is the microfilm series filmed from the original passport application records held by NARA. More recently, Ancestry was allowed to

(Continued on page 4)

Passport applications *(continued)*



From the Footnote.com passport application collection

Herman Melville's written application .

(Continued from page 3)

digitize the NARA collection and include the collection on its Web site. The latter is the easiest to use because a record can be found with a single search.

The microfilm is available at NARA facilities and at the Salt Lake Family History Library and their Family History Centers located throughout the United States and around the world.

The microfilm has 33 volumes of indexes and registers created by the Department of State. These cover the years of 1810 through 1906 and are microfilmed as M1371 (13 rolls of microfilm). Unfortunately the registers list applicants in chronological order or alphabetically by first letter of the surname and chronologically, so must be scanned. The indices are mixed, some being strictly alphabetical and some chronological. Others are organized chronologically in batches based on the first three letters of the surname.

There are also four 3 x 5-inch card indices to passport applications created by NARA. The latter covers 1850-1852, 1860-1880, 1881, and 1906 -1923. The cards list the name of the applicant, date and place of birth, date and place of naturalization, and the date and number of the volume containing the passport application. These indices are filmed by NARA as M1848 (61 rolls of microfilm).

Once the person is found in the index, the microfilm volume number is known and the application can be found by advancing the microfilm to the date of the application. If the application is not in an index or register, one may have a large job scanning the volumes not covered.

Summary

Family historians should be aware of the unique benefits of passport applications. They are a source of physical features of the applicant and for recent applications, a passport picture is available. They also are a source of birth date and place. Some applications have the names of parents, spouse, and children (if they were travelling with the parents). Genealogists seem to agree that the most valuable benefit coming out of passport applications is the help they give in finding naturalization records and birth places for the foreign-born. Since the foreign-born may have had more reason to travel than other citizens, considering family left behind when they emigrated to America. Thus, they may have had more need of a passport.

Resources

www.archives.gov

Images of applications

U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925 www.ancestry.com ($).

Passport Applications, 1795–1905. NARA Microfilm Publication M1372, 694 rolls. General Records Department of State, Record Group 59. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Passport Applications, January 2, 1906–March 31, 1925. NARA Microfilm Publication M1490, 2740 rolls. General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Registers and Indexes for Passport Applications, 1810–1906. NARA Microfilm Publication M1371, rolls 1–2. General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Application descriptions

Eckhoff, Mark G. *Population Data in Passport and Other Records of the Department of State*. Reference Information Paper No. 47. Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Service, 1973.

Goodman, Leonard S. "Passports in Perspective." *Texas Law Review* 45 (Dec. 1966): 221-279.

Guide to Federal Records in the National Archives of the United

(Continued on page 5)

Ask the doctor: 64-bit vs. 32-bit...Unknowns...

Q I am considering getting a new laptop, but I am not sure whether PAF is compatible with the 64-bit processor speed. I checked the old *PastFinder* issues but could not find any info re this. Could you enlighten me as to what to do? is there perhaps an upgrade for PAF 5?

PAF 5 will run on Windows 7 computers. Windows7 allows you to run both 32-bit code and 64-bit code. Most of the software on the market was written before the 64-bit processors were available, so it is necessary for the Windows 7 machines to be backward-compatible to the 32-bit programs. When you install PAF 5 on your new laptop, Windows will give you the option to specify that it is a 32-bit program. The installation process will then install PAF 5 in the appropriate program folder for 32-bit programs.

Q I have PAF version 5.2.18. The problem I have is one of my entries who was not married has an entry three times of an UNKNOWN spouse. These records cannot be accessed via the Individual Tab as they don't seem to exist anywhere other than this page of the chart. Selecting any of the UNKNOWN spouses then double-clicking displays the ADD or SELECT INDIVIDUAL Dialogue Box.

The term *UNKNOWN* is a "feature" built into PAF to deal with several different circumstances where there ought to be a spouse, but one has not been entered, or one was deleted. For example, if you enter an individual into the database and then link children to that person without having entered a spouse, PAF will automatically enter the term *UNKNOWN* in the spouse's entry, but there is no corresponding record for the unknown individual. If you delete an individual who was a spouse, the deleted record will be replaced with the term *UNKNOWN*, but again there is no record for the missing spouse. In the latter case, if no children are associated with the individual who has had his or her spouse deleted, you can remove the term *UNKNOWN* by deleting the marriage record. Double click on the marriage button between the remaining individual and the UNKNOWN entry and then click on the Delete button on the right side of the pop-up box.

Passport applications *(continued)*

(Continued from page 4)

States. 3 vols. Washington, DC: NARA. 1995. www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/

Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives. Washington, DC: NARA. Third Edition. 2001.

Inventory of the General Records of the Department of State, 1789-1949, Inventory No. 15. Washington, DC: NARA, 1992.

Microfilm Resources for Research: A Comprehensive Catalog of National Archives Microfilm Publications. Washington, DC: NARA. 1996. www.archives.gov/publications/microfilm-catalogs.html

Nicastro, Kathie O., Prechtel-Kluskens, Claire. Passport Applications: A Key to Discovering Your Immigrant Ancestor's Roots. *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives,* 25 (Winter 1993), 390-394.

Sharp, Rebecca K. They traveled abroad: Historic passport applications reveal information about U.S. citizens. *Voyage: The Official Journal of the Titanic International Society, Inc.* 64 (Summer 2008): 201-207.

U.S. Department of State. *The United States Passport: Past, Present, and Future*. Washington, DC: Department of State, 1976.

Non-federal passports

Bryan, Mary G. *Passports Issued by Governors of Georgia, 1785 to 1809*. Washington, DC: National Genealogical Society, 1959. Reprint, 1977.

Potter, Dorothy Williams. *Passports of Southeastern Pioneers, 1770-1823: Indian, Spanish, and Other Land Passports for Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Mississippi, Virginia, North and South Carolina*. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1990.

Another FamilySearch beta...or...

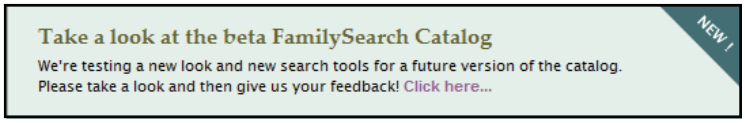
By Richard Rands

Close your eyes and let your mind wander back to the days when you first encountered the banks of little wooden drawers in your local public library and you struggled to figure out how to find an interesting book to read among what seemed like a million cards.

Because my growth spurt came late, I remember how excited I was to finally discover that it was okay to pull the entire drawer out of its slot and put it down lower so that I could see the cards. It always amazed me that someone had gone to all that work to write out a card for every book in the library, and I had visions of dozens of librarians lined up at tables in the back room tediously making out card after card for hours on end.

For sure, library catalogs have come a long way. I fact, I doubt that my local library has a card catalog. They might have such an antique back in some dark corner that can be rolled out should the computer systems fail. Indeed, if you haven't noticed that ranks of computers have replaced your library's card catalog, you qualify as a couch potato.

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City was an early adopter of a computerized catalog, and moved quickly to take advantage of providing multiple ways to search the catalog. The LDS Church, which operates the library, employed a large staff of cataloguers, who created an extensive entry for each book, map, microfiche, and microfilm. In an effort to push the ability to search their catalog and order microfilm at the many remote Family History Centers, the catalog was first published on microfiche. Then it was moved to searchable CD-ROM that used a DOS program. In 1999, a huge leap forward occurred when the catalog was made available on the Internet at the FamilySearch.org site, making it searchable to everyone with access to the Internet.



This FamilySearch notice alerts visitors to the new search tool.

Most of us have grown highly dependent on the familiar FHL catalog site and its eight blue search-type buttons on the right side of the screen. We know how to search by place name, title, author, and film number. We even try the occasional subject or surname search, hoping for a surprise match. When we encounter an entry for a film in Polish, Russian, or Portuguese, we appreciate the translated version of the title provided by the cataloguing team. In short, the FHL catalog is a fundamental tool for our research. It's hard to imagine that it can change.

But change is happening. Recently, a new box appeared on the catalog site inviting us to take a look at the beta FamilySearch Catalog. As the new FamilySearch system is drawing closer to being released to the world, the catalog is getting its upgrade as well. However, it is important to note that this is a beta site and clearly not what the final product will look like. In fact, along the right -hand edge of the screen is a brown button inviting feedback.

The link to the FHL catalog has been moved to a tab on the main FamilySearch site, alongside the links to Historical Records and Trees. The familiar eight blue search-type buttons are now built into a search box with a pull-down menu, with two more search options, Author number and Subject number. And the search criteria now can be entered along with the search type. At first glance, this may appear to be only a different look and feel for the same catalog search at the old site. But the first hint that something is new comes when you select a Place Name search or a Last Name search. For these two search types, immediately under the search criteria you will notice a box to specify an Exact search. This implies that the new system is using a more sophisticated search engine to zip through the catalog and look for matches. For example, when I did a Last Name search for the name *Randall* without the Exact option selected, the search results included 375 hits, whereas when I specified an Exact search, only 258 hits were singled out. A Place name search for *Middlesex* without the Exact option selected turned up 3,368 hits, but only 2,858 when I checked the Exact option.

Unfortunately, the detail of the catalog entries does not reveal how or why each entry was matched to the selection criteria. In fact, when I looked closely at some of the matches, I found some very puzzling entries that did not seem

New ways to search the catalog

to have anything to do with my search criteria. It would be nice if the search results always indicated how each entry was selected by the search engine.

The most significant new feature provided on the beta catalog site is a set of five filters displayed along the left edge of the screen in a light-blue column: Place, Year, Category, Availability, and Language. It appears that many of the entries in the catalog have been classified by subcategories of each of these five filters.

When the results of a search are displayed on the screen, a tally of the number of hits for each filter category is shown in parentheses with very light numbers. For example, an exact search for the surname *Harley* resulted in 47 hits. The Place filter showed four hits from Europe, and three hits from North America. If I wished to narrow the results to the four entries from Europe, a click of the digit *4* narrowed the results to the four European entries. The fact that only seven of the hits were identified in the Place filter revealed that 40 of the hits were not place-specific.

The Year filter for the Harley search listed the count of hits by centuries as follows: 1500 (1), 1600 (13), 1700 (28), 1800 (20), 1900 (11), and 2000 (1). This amounted to 76 entries, meaning that some of the hits were classified in more than one century.

When I selected one of the century filters, it broke the century into decades with a tally for each decade.

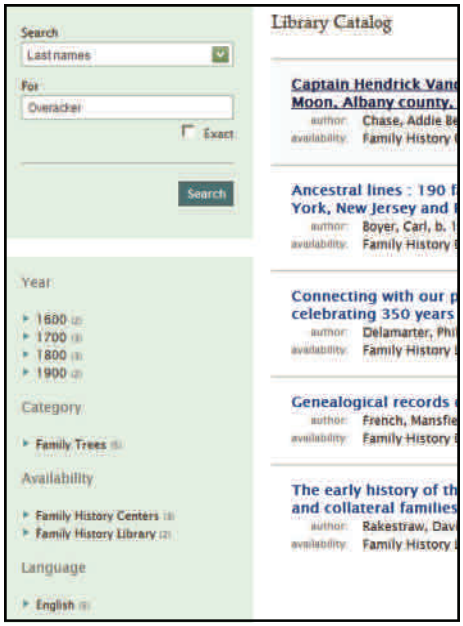
The Category filter listed the following breakdown: Family Trees (44), Stories, Memories & Histories (3), Birth, Marriage & Death (2), and Church Histories (2).

The Availability filter gave the following breakdown: Digital Images (3), Family History Centers (28), and Family History Library (16).

I presume this meant that three of the entries could be viewed online, 28 were microfilms or microfiche that could be ordered and viewed at a local Family History Center, and 16 were books that could only be accessed at the library in Salt Lake City.

The last filter was Language, which listed the subcategory of English with 46 hits, and German with one hit.

Whenever I chose to use one of the filters by clicking on the entry count, the list of results was pared down to the number of entries for that specific filter, and a tiny *x* was displayed just to the right of the filter. To cancel the filter, I clicked on the *x* and the list of results returned to the number of entries before the filter was applied. I noted that I could only apply one filter in each of the five categories at the same time.



The new search feature and its results.

One final note about navigation in the catalog. Once you click on the title of an entry to view the catalog entry, you need not use the back-arrow on your browser to return to the results list. A small blue link immediately under the entry title, labeled *Back to search results*, will take you back to the list.

I would like to see a few features in the old catalog carried over to the new catalog. Most important is the View Related Places function in the Place search. I rely heavily on this feature and would consider it a major setback if it is not implemented in the new catalog.

Another nice feature in the old catalog is the ability to sort a results list by title, author, or surname.

Clearly, the beta is not quite ready for prime time. At least the system provides a way to pass along feedback — although the catalog feedback system is bizarre. To increase the likelihood that my feedback would be considered, I had to select a facial expression icon to go with my message—and I had to log in to FamilySearch to send it (with ID and password...why?). A list of feedback from others let me know that others were aware of the concerns.

We have no hint of when the beta system will replace the old catalog. In any case, the beta features will help prepare you for the future site.

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Electronic contribution of articles is welcome. The editors reserve the right to accept, reject, and edit articles.

Upcoming SVCGG meetings, events

The group meets monthly except December, on the second Saturday of the month from 9 to 11 a.m. at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 875 Quince Ave., Santa Clara, California (see map at right).

October 9 meeting

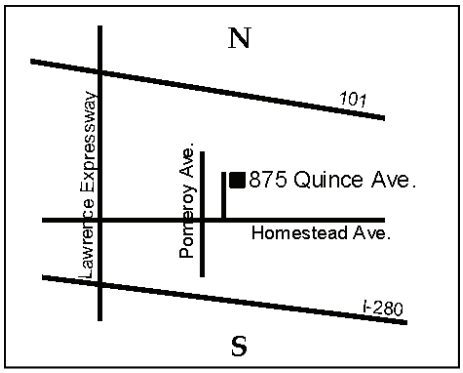
These are the October classes:

- Publishing follow-up
- English civil registration
- Using RootsMagic 4
- Reunion for the Mac
- Getting started with Reunion
- PAF and PCs for beginners

November 13 meeting

These are the November classes (tentative listing, may change):

- Finding descendants and collaterals
- Organizing your hard-drive files
- Reunion for the Mac
- Getting started with Reunion
- Beginning genealogy



See www.svcgg.org/directions.html

About the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group

SVCGG is the former Silicon Valley PAF Users Group, a nonprofit group of some 600 genealogy enthusiasts. The group is based in Silicon Valley in the Bay Area of northern California, but members live all over the world.

PastFinder is the official publication of the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group. Published monthly except December, *PastFinder* is distributed at meetings to members in attendance and mailed to others after the meetings. Members can receive the newsletter by e-mail containing a download link.

SVCGG offers research tools and materials through its Web site, www.svcgg.org.

Membership dues are US$15 per household per year, US$20 for Canada, and US$25 for other international locations.