

Serving family history of the Livermore, Pleasanton and
southeastern portion of Alameda County, in the beautiful San
Francisco Bay Area of California



Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society P.O. Box 901, Livermore, California 94551

Web: <http://www.L-AGS.org>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Livermore.Amador.Genealogical.Society/>

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1142643925760388/>

May 2026

General Meeting: Missing: Reward! Locating Widows, Spinsters, and Bachelors With: Sara Cochran

Date: Monday, May 11, 2026 7:00 p.m. (Zoom chat starts at 6:30 p.m.)

Location: via Zoom- Preregister via ZOOM below:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/t_POa5aQ2-hl2p5z2r1dQ

Chair: Program Chair, <mailto:program@L-AGS.org>

Cost: No Charge - Visitors welcome

Details: Please see page 2

Other Special Interest Groups and Meetings

~~Fourth~~ Fifth Friday Finds

Topic: *General Genealogy*

Join virtually to delve into your Canadian ancestor's stories, finds, and resources.

Date: Friday, May 29, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual via Zoom. Email Chair for Zoom invite.

Chair: Debbie Mascot,

<mailto:bulletin.manager@L-AGS.org>

Library Docents

Join L-AGS genealogy experts to begin your genealogy venture. Docents will be at the Livermore Civic Center Library on the first Wednesday of each month from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Board Meeting

Date: Tuesday, May 26, 2026
at 7:00 p.m.

Location: Contact Chair for the Link

Chair: Program Chair,

<mailto:program@L-AGS.org>



July Potluck

Save the date! Saturday, July 25, 2026 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., we will all meet in Livermore for a potluck picnic. Details to come, but SAVE THE DATE.

General Meeting: Missing: Reward! Locating Widows, Spinsters, and Bachelors With: Sara Cochran

Have some of the folks on your family tree disappeared? Pick up some new ideas on how to find widows and never-married adults and then watch these techniques in action in three short case studies.

Sara Cochran is a full-time professional genealogist with thirty years of research experience. Her research has taken her to nearly every state in the USA and Ireland. She especially enjoys breaking down brick walls, discovering the stories of black sheep ancestors, and helping individuals preserve their photographic legacy.

Sara holds a Boston University Genealogical Research Certificate, a bachelor's degree in library science, and is an alumna of the ProGen Study Group. She is a member of DAR and other lineage societies, the Association of Professional Genealogists, and the Genealogical Speakers Guild.

You can find her online at TheSkeletonWhisperer.com.

For additional information contact: Tom Mathews, Program Chairperson, email: program@L-AGS.org



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Location: via Zoom- Preregister via ZOOM below:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYsduiorjgsG9HuhQRKgpaR5Nh3fb9Y91tW](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYsduiorjgsG9HuhQRKgpaR5Nh3fb9Y91tW)

Chair: Program Chair, <mailto:program@L-AGS.org>

Cost: No Charge - Visitors welcome

Topics of Future General Meetings

<i>Month</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Presenter</i>
May 2026	Missing: Reward! Locating Widows, Spinsters, and Bachelors	Sara Cochran
June 2026	Focused Research: Using Research Plans	Lisa Gorrell
August 2026	Alienation of Affection- Divorce in the USA	Christine Cohen
September 2026	Transcription and Abstraction of Original Records	Roger Prince
October 2026	The Salem Witch Trials	Madeline Yanov

Board Meeting Summary- April 28, 2026

The Board has decided on a L-AGS members get-together (pot-luck/picnic "social") in place of a general meeting in July. The date will be Saturday, July 25, 4:00 – 7:00 at Richard and Wanda Finn's home. Stay tuned for further information as we get closer to the date.

Felicia Ziomek, Business Manager, reported that State and Federal Taxes for L-AGS have been filed.

The Drop-in Genealogy Program at the Livermore Civic Center Library has been going strong since February. It occurs on the first Wednesday of each month, from 10:30 – 12:30 for drop-ins, 10:00 – 1:00 for volunteers. We can still use volunteers to help assist individuals with beginning their family search. Contact Tom Mathews for more information (tjmathews@sbcglobe.net).

Research Locations

Livermore California FamilySearch Center

Location: 950 Mocho Street, Livermore, California

Phone: (925) 443-2750

Web: <https://locations.familysearch.org/en/us/ca/livermore/950-mocho-st?qp=Livermore%2C+California%2C+United+States&lat=37.68202&lng=-121.76837&r=50>

Special Notes: The entrance is in the front of the building on the right—there is a sign on the door. If the parking in front of the building is full, there is a large parking lot in the rear of the building.

Pleasanton Genealogy Center

Location: 400 Old Bernal Avenue, Pleasanton, California

Email: docents.chair@L-AGS.org for appointment with docent

Special Notes: The Pleasanton Genealogy Center, jointly supported by L-AGS, the Friends of the Pleasanton Library, and the Pleasanton Public Library, contains the largest collection of genealogy books, CDs and online databases in the Tri-Valley. Access to Ancestry.com (Library-edition) and Heritage Quest (also available at home with your library card)

L-AGS Membership

Thank you to our Members, Benefactors and Patrons for the continued support of L-AGS.

Patrons *(Contribute \$100 above and beyond the Household Membership Level)*

Matthew Berry
Annette Breingan
Pennie Clouser
Sue and Greg Davis
Richard and Wanda Finn
Richard and Jene Lerch
Julie Lui
Thomas and Natasha Mathews
Peggy Webber

Benefactors *(Contribute \$40 above and beyond the Household Membership Level)*

Denise Barr
Linda Driver and Walt Crawford
Linda Hoffman
Catherine Johnson
Ileen J. Peterson
Nancy Rodrigue
Felica M. Ziomek

L-AGS Members 63 active memberships

Cemetery Season Is Here: Field Tips for Spring

by Kate Penney Howard - katepenneyhoward.com

Spring is cemetery season for genealogists. Here are the field notes I wish someone had given me when I started.

Bring a kit, but keep it reasonable. You don't need a backpack full of equipment you won't use. My kit includes a wide-brim hat, water, sunscreen, and a soft natural-bristle brush. I also carry a spray bottle with distilled water, a rigid notebook, two pens, a small mirror, and a phone with a fully charged battery. I've stopped carrying chalk, shaving cream, and flour. Preservation professionals have been clear for over a decade: these substances damage stone.

Document the whole plot, not just the one stone. Family burials cluster. A single ancestor might share a plot with a sibling who died in childhood, a first wife you didn't know existed, or a cousin whose name appears on no other record. Take a wide photograph of the plot before you zoom in. Note the stones on either side. Note the section and row if the cemetery is mapped.

Read light, not stone. A weathered inscription often reads better at dawn or late afternoon, when the sun strikes the surface at a shallow angle. If you can't wait for the right time of day, bring a mirror. Stand with your back to the sun, hold the mirror at roughly 45 degrees, and bounce the light across the stone. The shadows in the carved letters will deepen. This costs nothing and harms nothing.

Photograph with care. Shoot straight on, not at an angle. Fill the frame with the stone and not much else. Take one shot for the dates and names, then take a wider shot that shows context, material, and condition. If the inscription is hard to read, take the same photo three times at different exposures. Modern phones do this automatically in HDR mode.

Record as you go. Memory is the least reliable field tool. Before you leave the cemetery, open your notebook. Write the cemetery name, the date of your visit, the weather, and the section if known. Sketch a rough map of where each photographed stone sits. Skip this step, and you'll return to your desk with thirty-seven images of granite and no idea which one is your great-grandmother.

Respect the living, too. Small rural cemeteries often sit on private land or are maintained by township trustees. Check before you visit. FindAGrave and BillionGraves both list cemetery types and sometimes contact information. A phone call ahead is rarely refused and often rewarded; the person with the key frequently knows more about the cemetery's history than anything written down.

Upload afterwards. If you photograph a stone that isn't yet on FindAGrave or BillionGraves, consider adding it. Your picture becomes a permanent record accessible to researchers who may never visit the site. Stones weather. Cemeteries are lost to neglect, development, and flooding. Your image today may be the only image in fifty years.

One last thought. Cemeteries are not laboratories. The people buried there had names and faces and people who loved them. Walk gently. Leave nothing except footprints, and take nothing except photographs and field notes.