

Family & Local History Research Materials & Collections at Selected  
Santa Clara County, San Francisco Bay Area & Northern California  
Libraries or Archives

Compiled by Mary Hanel, Retired Librarian for SCCHGS panel presentation, *Your Society, Your Voice* -- September 20, 2016 -- 7:00 p.m. -- at Santa Clara Central Park Library

Santa Clara County Repositories

**History San Jose's Research Library & Archives:**

<http://historysanjose.org/wp/research-collection/research-library/>

History San Jose describes itself as Silicon Valley's largest and most comprehensive historical organization. Names of many people and families who made a mark on Santa Clara Valley are recorded in its collections. Link to this pdf which describes what is available at its extensive Research Library & Archives:

<http://historysanjose.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/HistorySanJoseLibraryArchivesHoldings-1.pdf>

**San Jose Public Library's California Room:**

<https://sjpl.org/caroom>

The San Jose Public Library's California Room at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library collects materials on California History with an emphasis on the history and people associated with San Jose and Santa Clara Valley. Link to this website describing its extensive collections:

<https://sjpl.org/caroomcollections>

Use its California Room Index to search for specific names and places:

<https://sjpl.org/caroomindex>

**Louis E. Stockmeir Regional History Library and Archives at DeAnza College:**

Beginning in the 1970s as a repository of the local history projects of students taking coursework at the DeAnza College California History Center its collections have expanded to collecting and accepting donations of Santa Clara Valley's and California's past, present and future. See this weblink describing its collections:

<http://www.calhistory.org/library.html>

**San Jose State History Department's Sourisseau Academy of State and Local History:**

<http://www.sourisseauacademy.org/>

The Academy's mission is to promote the study of local history by sponsoring research, educational programs, and publications. See this weblink describing their extensive personal and family collections, photographs and other collections:

[http://www.sourisseauacademy.org/our\\_collections.html](http://www.sourisseauacademy.org/our_collections.html)

**Santa Clara County Archives:**

<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/archives/Pages/Santa-Clara-County-Archives.aspx>

Makes available the historical records of Santa Clara County government. They have described their collections on the Online Archive of California (OAC) website:

<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/institutions/Santa+Clara+County+Archives>

and they have online databases indexing names in some of their records, see:

<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/archives/finding-aids/databases/Pages/home.aspx>

**California Western American Collection (CWA) of the Cupertino Library:**

The CWA includes materials on the American trek west to California, and on California history including the history of its cities, towns and counties. See this 2011 press release about the collection:

<http://www.cupertinolibary.org/pdf/California-Western-Americana-Collection.pdf>

The CWA was also described in an article in the January 2005 SCCHGS Newsletter.

**Orchard Families of Santa Clara Valley Files of the Sunnyvale Historical Association:**

In support of their Orchard Heritage Park Interpretive or OPHIE project:

<http://heritageparkmuseum.org/sample-page/programs-and-exhibits/orchard-heritage-park-interpretive-exhibit/> -- the Sunnyvale Historical Association: <http://heritageparkmuseum.org/>

collected files on the major Orchard families of Santa Clara Valley. The list of names, arranged alphabetically by surname, was published in the SCCHGS Journal *Santa Clara County Connections* in the Spring 2014 issue, pages 11-22.

**San Francisco Bay Area Repositories****Pacific Sierra Branch of the National Archives in San Bruno:**

<http://www.archives.gov/san-francisco/>

Has extensive holdings of value for genealogy research including Federal population censuses, the Dawes Rolls, Passenger arrival records for the port of San Francisco, indexes to naturalization records from Federal courts in Honolulu, Reno and San Francisco, Maritime records for San Francisco and other ports, and naturalization records. See this link specifically about their public genealogy research services:

<http://www.archives.gov/san-francisco/genealogy.html>

**J. Porter Shaw Library & Maritime Research Center in San Francisco:**

<https://www.nps.gov/safr/learn/historyculture/library-collections.htm>

Encourages research in maritime history. If your relative was the captain or master of a vessel or had a connection to Bay Area maritime activities, there may be material here to help you. See this weblink with advice for genealogists:

<https://www.nps.gov/safr/learn/historyculture/genealogy-research-at-sf-maritime-nhp.htm>

**Sutro Library Branch of the California State Library in San Francisco:**

[http://www.library.ca.gov/about/sutro\\_main.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/about/sutro_main.html)

The California State Library's genealogy research center covering all states except California. See their description of the Genealogy Collection:

[http://www.library.ca.gov/about/sutro\\_genealogy.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/about/sutro_genealogy.html)

**California Genealogical Society & Library in Oakland:**

<http://www.californiaancestors.org/>

Whether you have ancestors from the South, Mid-Atlantic, New England, Midwest, the West or California, there are books, periodicals and resources to support your family history research here. See their Research tips webpage:

<http://www.californiaancestors.org/research-services/ca-research-tips>

**Oakland (California) Regional LDS Family History Center:**

[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland\\_California\\_FamilySearch\\_Library](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland_California_FamilySearch_Library)

The Oakland Regional Family History Center is one of the largest and most accessible centers for genealogical research in California. Has material from all over the world.

**Bancroft Library:**

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/libraries/bancroft-library>

The Bancroft Library is the primary special collections library on the UC Berkeley Campus. Its largest resource is its Western Americana collection. Lots of material pertaining to Mexico, Central America and also to the Chinese in California. Lots of material on the Jewish Community in California. Has records of the Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life:

<http://magnes.org/>

Finding aids to its extensive collections can be found on the Online Archive of California:

<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/search?query=bancroft+library&x=0&y=0>

**African American Museum & Library at Oakland:**

<http://www.oaklandlibrary.org/locations/african-american-museum-library-oakland>

Dedicated to the discovery, preservation, interpretation and sharing of historical and cultural experiences of African Americans in California and the West. Archives of over 160 collections documenting prominent families, pioneers, churches, social and political organizations. Finding aids for its collections on Online Archive of California:

<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/search?query=African+American+Museum+and+Library&x=0&y=0>

**San Francisco History Center of the San Francisco Public Library:**

<http://sfpl.org/index.php?pg=0200002501>

The Center is the Archives for the City and County of San Francisco. Extensive records and documentation on all aspects of San Francisco life and history. Finding aids for many of its collections are on the Online Archive of California:

<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/search?query=%22San+Francisco+History+Center%22&x=14&y=9>

**J.A. Freitas Library of the Portuguese Society of America (PFSA) in San Leandro:**

<http://www.mypfsa.org/library/>

Founded in 1964, the library collection consists of almost 12,000 works dealing with the Portuguese throughout the world. Has a particularly strong collection on the Azores.

**Alice Phelan Sullivan Library of Society of California Pioneers of San Francisco:**

<http://www.californiapioneers.org/library/>

One of the first libraries established in the City of San Francisco. Rich in books and documents that chronicle the Spanish and Mexican eras, pioneer travel overland and around the Horn, and the Gold Rush. Many manuscripts, diaries, business ledgers and scrapbooks. Finding aids for its collections on the Online Archive of California:

<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/search?query=%22Society+of+California+Pioneers%22&x=20&y=14>

**California Historical Society North Baker Research Library:**

<http://californiahistoricalsociety.org/research/about.html>

Collection strengths include Early Exploration and Occupation of California, diaries, journals and letters of the Gold Rush, Immigration and Migration to California. Includes family papers, sea diaries, journals, letters and business records. See Collections webpage:

<http://californiahistoricalsociety.org/research/>

**United Irish Cultural Center Library in San Francisco:**

<http://www.irishcentersf.org/library/>

Contains over 3000 titles on various subjects regarding Ireland and Irish America including Biography, Genealogy, and History.

**Napa Valley Genealogical Society Library in Napa:**

<http://www.napavalleygenealogy.org/holdings.html>

Collection covers United States and many foreign countries. Many Napa County records, pioneer files and manuscript collections.

California State Repositories in Sacramento

California State Library California History Room:

<http://www.library.ca.gov/calhist/index1.html>

Serves as the State Library repository for California genealogy and history. Its resources are indexed by its California Information File and its online databases:

<http://www.library.ca.gov/calhist/databases.html>

Here is weblink to its guide to its California genealogy resources:

<http://www.library.ca.gov/calhist/pdf/genealogyguide.pdf>

**California State Archives:**

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/collections/>

Archive of California State government records. Here is its weblink regarding its Family History Resources:

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/collections/family-history-resources/>

**California State Railroad Museum Library:**

<https://www.californiarailroad.museum/visit/library>

The Library has several types of documents which may provide biographical information about railroad employees and officials including manuscript sources. Click on the Genealogy tab on the ...visit/library webpage.