



- President  
Sandy Peterson
- Vice President  
Marilyn Riesbol
- Secretary  
Brenda Brownlee
- Treasurer  
Shirley Brady
- Membership  
Maureen Morrow
- Public Relations  
Open
- Director  
Open

- Committees
- Website  
Dan Ardoin
- Newsletter  
Mike Farris

Website  
www.smvgs.org

eMail  
Roots@smvgs.org

Contact Us at the  
SM Public Library

Member Meetings  
Jan-Jun, Sep-Nov  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday monthly  
2-4pm  
Family History Center  
908 Sierra Madre,  
Santa Maria

**NEXT MEETING**  
**2-4pm February 15**  
**Family History Center**

Next Board Meeting  
Mar. 8, 2018, 2:00pm  
FHC

Library Docent  
By appointment

## A Message from Our President

I've had a great year serving as president! The Genealogy Seminar in November was fantastic, and so well attended. We have a great plan for celebrating our 50th anniversary this year by indexing 50 names each at [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org). Plus, some exciting programs for the next few months are coming together. Don't forget to make it out to our February general meeting on Feb 15th to vote for officers and to learn how to do Web-Indexing. We'll enjoy "Chinese New Year" refreshments in room 6, afterward. Thank you for the wonderful support over the past year. I still plan to be involved with the Society, so you'll be seeing me around.

I ended up writing a story about one of my elusive ancestors to close out my year. I hope you enjoy the story and contemplate the possible "why" behind all those hours we spend researching our deceased ancestors.

Do any of you have a "Mrs. Margaret Miller," not literally, but, you know, that ancestor that you've spent uncounted hours researching, and yet you find only a thimble full of answers? Margaret's my fourth great grandmother and she's been a mystery to me for a decade. I know very little about her, except that she married a man with the surname Miller and her parents gave her the first name Margaret. Half of her name belonged to her first as a child, and yet half of the identity I associate with her wasn't given to her until her wedding day. Sometimes in my mind, I exaggerate the three "M" initials and send up a Heavenly request: "Mrs. Margaret Miller, help me find a clue!" The Miller name carried



Eliza M. Miller

on with her until her death as a widow in 1864 in Princeton, Illinois, and even through to this day, 154 years later. I continue to look for the smallest drop of information that will open up a new layer of knowledge about her life. When and where did they marry? Where was the Miller's first home? Who are her parents?

Margaret's children, the four daughters that I know of, carry the Miller surname, and that surname helped me tie the four of them together. The Millers and their girls, Eliza, Jemima, Loretta and Martha are forever tied together. I believe Mr. Miller died in Ohio before the family traveled to Illinois and settled in the Princeton area. A census taker recorded that Margaret was born about 1776 in Ireland. The daughters state that their father was born in Scotland. I wonder about their lives; what kind of work and hobbies did they have? Did they (continued on page 2)



## Cite of the Month

Remember, "We all carry, inside us, people who came before us." -Liam Callanan



## President's Message (cont.)

each have a distinct accent? Did Margaret and her husband arrive in America as children or adults?

Three of the Miller daughters are buried in Lot #9 of Section 1 in the Oakland Cemetery, in Princeton; a lot purchased by R. Waterston, the husband of Loretta. That's where Margaret rests, as well, in the large shaded cemetery, without her husband and without a grave marker. Where was Mr. Miller laid to rest? Were there other family members left behind in Ohio?

On a short trip to Princeton in 2011, I scavenged all historical venues that were open to the public: the court house, the public library, the historical society, the genealogical society, and the cemetery. One of the best finds that I made was a photo of one of Margaret's daughters, Eliza. A glass negative was located in a collection donated to the Bureau County Historical Society by the family of photographer, [H.W. Immke](#). Eliza's eyes look to be very light, perhaps blue or gray, in the crisp black and white photograph. This is the only photo I have of any of the Miller's daughters. I've had only a bit of luck locating living descendants of my Mr. & Mrs. Miller (besides my own line through Jemima), but they knew less than I do, sadly. Were Margaret's eyes blue like mine? How tall was she?

I feel a strong connection with my Margaret, and so I will keep strategizing and trying to find a new way to discover her maiden name, as well as the first name of Mr. Miller. What is it that drives me, and many of us, to continue these searches that are fruitless for years? Is it the detective work that enlivens my mind - the puzzle-solving excitement? Or is it an invisible, timeless thread strung tight between the generations; maybe the physical DNA that pushes, and pulls, us toward answers? My opinion is that, for me, it's both. Perhaps, Margaret and her Mr. Miller are indeed pulling me, one of their great granddaughters along, helping me forge my most precious commodity on this earth - my time - into an unbreakable bond with them. I think that it's quite possible, and I'm content with that.

Sandy Peterson  
SMVGS President, 2017-2018

## Heads Up Everyone

Dues are due this month. Make payments to Shirley Bradey, our Treasurer.

## Genie Says

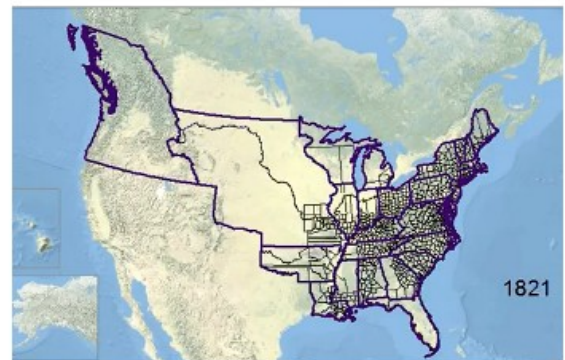
When Mike didn't ask for my help with the newsletter this month, he rubbed me the wrong way



## Site of the Month

Carrying on from last month, Marilyn has suggested another website that gives important information about state and local boundaries. These types of sites help a great deal when you are sure your ancestor lived in Kansas (or...) but you can't find him. Knowing how the state and local boundaries changed can help to explain the issues that arise. Check it out.

<http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/index.html>



US Historical County Boundaries (1629-2000), with State/Territorial boundaries (1783-2000) (0:30)

## Tip of the Month: Citations

This month Marilyn tells us: Write the full citation on the front of a document when possible. Researchers reading only the front of a document may miss a citation that is on the back.



## SANTA MARIA VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY and LIBRARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

January 18, 2018

The meeting was held at the Santa Maria LDS Family History Center. President, Sandy Peterson, called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. with the secretary, Brenda Brownlee, in attendance.

The Nominating Committee presented the slate of officers for 2018-2019:

President	Deanna Baker
Vice President	Marilyn Riesbol
Secretary	Brenda Brownlee
Treasurer	Shirley Brady
Director	Pat Park—Program/Education Committee
Director	Sandy Peterson—Membership Committee

There were no nominations from the floor. The slate was adopted as presented by the committee.

Deanna stated that she would handle the publicity for the society.

The vote will take place at the February 15 meeting.

The program for the February meeting will be an Introduction to FamilySearch indexing.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00

Submitted by Brenda Brownlee, Secretary

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## SANTA MARIA VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY and LIBRARY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

(Highlights Only: See Brenda for complete minutes)

February 7, 2018

The meeting was held at the Santa Maria Family History Center. President, Sandy Peterson, called the board meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. with the secretary, Brenda Brownlee, in attendance. Other board members present: Maureen Morrow, Marilyn Riesbol and Shirley Brady.

### REPORTS

Officer and Committee Reports:

Programs: The February program will be an introduction to FamilySearch indexing. The March program will be a Q&A session. Members will be asked to bring their research problems to the meeting.

Nominating Committee: The slate was presented at the January general membership meeting. Shirley will bring snacks to celebrate Chinese New Year.

### OLD BUSINESS

Sandy will chair the indexing committee

### NEW BUSINESS

Sandy will contact Baron Smith about presenting a program on Civil War research in April.

Marilyn made a motion to renew the FGS membership.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, March 8 at the FHC at 2:00. The March membership meeting will be held Thursday, March 15, at the FHC at 2:00.

Submitted by Brenda Brownlee, Secretary