

San Francisco Genealogy

sfgenealogy.com

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1906 San Francisco Earthquake Marriage Phenomena

San Francisco, CA (19 December 2005)—On 18 April 1906, San Francisco experienced a major earthquake and the resulting fires nearly destroyed the entire city. Over the next month, among the news reports of the disaster and death, a strange phenomena was being reported: couples were getting married in record numbers. To explore this phenomena, Ron Filion and Pamela Storm Wolfskill, the creators of SFgenealogy.com, have developed the “1906 San Francisco Earthquake Project.”

The project collects, explores and presents the numerous stories and news reports that document the phenomena. These have been collected from various locations including Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco.

In addition to researching San Francisco couples that were married within the first month of the disaster, it also explores those couples who met afterwards because of it. Some of the descendants of both of these groups have been found and their family histories have been presented, showing the impact their family has had on the culture, politics and history of San Francisco and California.

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“We were looking for a project to commemorate the upcoming 1906 Earthquake Centennial. We were inspired to document this marriage phenomena from reading the reports that appeared in the newspapers following the disaster. We talked it over, and thought we would focus on love, not gloom and doom.”—Ron Filion, Project Co-Leader.

"You have done a beautiful job on your 1906 San Francisco Earthquake Project. I commend you on the extensive details and thoughtful consideration of various explanations for the possible spike in marriages following the earthquake. As you suggest, more than one explanation for the observed greater interest in marriage may be at play."—Catherine Cohan, Ph.D., Population Research Institute, Pennsylvania State University.

SFgenealogy.com is a not-for-profit internet group dedicated to providing local genealogy and historical resources and education. They are a member of the *1906 Earthquake Centennial Alliance*, a collection of museums, libraries, universities, businesses and media that have joined together to “explore the ways in which this major natural disaster affected the personal lives, culture, economy and development of Northern California.”

The project can be found on the internet at www.SFgenealogy.com/1906. Ron Filion and Pamela Storm Wolfskill may be contacted by email at 1906info@SFgenealogy.com, or at SFgenealogy.com, P.O. Box 190891, San Francisco, CA 94119.