

QUESTING HEIRS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 36 ♦ Number 8 ♦ August 2003

Questing Heirs Genealogical Society, Inc., P. O. Box 15102, Long Beach CA 90815-0102



MONTHLY MEETING – third Sunday of the month at 1:15 p. m.
Resurrection Lutheran Church Parish Hall, 1900 East Carson Street, Long Beach



SUNDAY, AUGUST 17, 2003



1:15 - INTERMEDIATE CLASS
Pennsylvania Resources, presented by John McCoy



2:15 - BREAK
Time for chatting, browsing and refreshments



2:30 - GENERAL MEETING
NANCY CARLBERG :
Protecting Your Genealogy



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~ MEMBERSHIP REPORT ~

Jeanette (Marcus) JONES (562) 421-5610

JULY MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members: 23 Guests: 3

RENEWALS

Yvonne F. Foster Individual to 9/04
Ruth B. Fowler Individual to 5/04



**DUES ARE DUE SOON
AT AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER MEETING
OR BY MAIL**

For most members yearly dues are due on September 1. Look on your newsletter mailing labels above your name. If it says 9/03 that means your renewal comes on September 1 for the coming year. See the back (blue) page of the newsletter for the rates. If it says a date before 9/03, please try to catch up and also renew for the coming year. If it says a date after 9/03 you are fine **for now**. However, we are going to try to put everyone on the same schedule so you will be receiving a notice **soon** on the amount you need to pay to get on the correct schedule. If you have any questions, please call me or see me at the August meeting.



Be sure to see page 61 for a special report from Jeanette on some faces we haven't seen in a while.

~ REFRESHMENTS ~

Georgie (Peterson) LYONS (562) 432-4908

Thanks to our July Hosts: Our August Hosts:
Kathryn (Finlay) Foord Aaron Day
Hazele (Thresher) Johnson Richard Hoover
Georgie (Peterson) Lyons Jeanette (Marcus) Jones
Mary (Smith) White Mike Powers



Plus a special thank you this month to two people who are always there for us: Marilyn (DeLonjay) Brasher, who brings the punch, and Hazele (Thresher) Johnson, who brings the lemon-flavored goodies.

~ FINANCIAL REPORT ~

David WERTS (562) 431-7790

JUNE 2003

June Income* \$ 0.27
June Expenses 202.50
Balance as of June 30 \$ 1981.98

* Not including \$41.60 receipts from June meeting, which were not turned in until after press time.

~ AUGUST MEETING ~

SPEAKER: NANCY CARLBERG

Nancy is a former librarian, author of numerous books, lecturer, and genealogy teacher throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties. After five years as a hobby genealogist, she became a serious professional, and has now been working in the field for over twenty-five years.

She is also currently a cataloguer at the Los Angeles Family History Library in Santa Monica and President of the British Isles Family History Society. For several years she lead the Orange County Genealogical Society research trip to Salt Lake City and has traveled extensively doing research for herself and others throughout the United States, Great Britain and Europe. She is a specialist in Scandinavian Records.

~ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ~

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citizenship. These records help to identify the villages associated with a particular surname. (The database, in French, is on the website <<http://www.cdhf.net/fr/>>, under the title "optants.") If you can pin down the ancestral village, and if you can teach yourself to read the unfamiliar script in French, German, and possibly Latin, expect to find some interesting stories. This was never a peaceful land, and the stories of its people mirror a tumultuous past.

-- John McCoy

~PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE~

Genealogy in a Perplexing Region, Alsace-Lorraine

I have a theory: we leave our most perplexing ancestors until last. Research is easier when the facts are clear. One region well known for murky facts is called Alsace-Lorraine. Most of Alsace-Lorraine is in the easternmost corner of France, bordering Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, and Switzerland. The place names in this area, and spilling into the neighboring countries, give hints of an older culture: many end in *viller*, *-willer*, or *-weiller*. The area that contains these places is approximated by a circle with a radius of sixty miles centered between Nancy and Strasbourg, an area about the size of Massachusetts. In genealogical terms, though, Alsace-Lorraine is huge. The Family History Library Catalogue identifies records from about six thousand separate villages within this circle. That's nearly ten times the number of towns and villages in Massachusetts! This fact is the first obstacle to finding your ancestors in Alsace-Lorraine.

How do you know if your German ancestor was from the Alsace-Lorraine region? One very significant clue is if the person's birthplace is listed on the census as France in one year, and German in another year. Another clue is that all the records say Germany except for the naturalization record, which says France!

Most people who left Alsace for America spoke a dialect of German, although the records were usually in French. As a result, many place names have a French and a German spelling, as do many surnames. People usually signed their names with a German spelling, assuming they knew how to spell! Many people did not, so the number of different spellings of place names and surnames is overwhelming. So, the second obstacle to genealogy is the confusion of language.

It started simply enough. After the death of Charlemagne, the Treaty of Verdun in 843 split Europe into three parts. The middle part, containing Alsace-Lorraine and other areas, went to Charlemagne's grandson Lothaire. But this kingdom in the middle seemed to get in everyone's way. Over

the years, it was occupied by the house of Burgundy, the Hapsburgs, France, Germany, and again by France. The boundaries have changed repeatedly. Waves of various armies have trashed the place every few decades. Between the wars, waves of immigrants settled there, notably from Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. Those caught in the middle often felt the urge to relocate. They went wherever the living was easier, perhaps into Belgium or Luxembourg when those countries were neutral, or into France or Germany to escape an occupying army. By the late 1700s, significant numbers were leaving Europe for American shores, lured by relative peace, prosperity, and security.

With spellings uncertain, and absent a consolidated index that can lead you to your ancestral village, it is not surprising that our ancestors from Alsace-Lorraine are poorly known. Mine arrived in the late 1700s, and while I think the surname was probably spelled Bachofen, what I really need is his exact birthplace. One approach, almost too daunting to contemplate, is to study the French civil registration records (1792-1872) to find the villages where the surname occurred after my ancestor left, then examine the earlier church records of those villages in hopes of finding his baptism. Even in the area most often called Alsace, there are at least a thousand villages to check. If your ancestor from Alsace arrived after 1820, you may have more success. Sometimes the place name is shown on the immigration passenger list. Often it is found in the records of the churches the immigrants attended in the U. S., though probably spelled wrong! Naturalization records usually contain the immigrant's signature, which is often different from the "official" name that appears in other American records.

Someday, research in Alsace-Lorraine may be easier. There is still no general index to the surnames and the places they lived, but new sources are becoming available. One that caught my attention relates to the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War of 1871. As part of the peace settlement (Germany won that round), petitions were accepted from people who wanted to leave Alsace-Lorraine and retain their French

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~SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM MEETING~

To: Questing Heirs Members and Friends
From: Liz Stookesberry Myers
Re: Southern California Consortium Meeting
Sunday, July 27, 2003, 9 am to 4 pm

I represented Questing Heirs at the Consortium Meeting at the Southern California Genealogical Society Library in Burbank. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the problems in running a genealogical society. There were fifty-four people representing eighteen societies.

Attendees were split up into groups and asked to discuss membership, volunteers, publications, major events, costs, library, meeting places, cooperation with historical societies, programs, and communication.

After listing what each group gathered, we were asked to pick three of the most important ones. The most important subjects with the most points were given and possible solutions were offered.

Declining membership has been noticed by all of the societies. Many do not have a full contingent of board members, and many are holding down responsibilities of more than one position. Many of the groups break a position into little pieces, so one person doesn't get overwhelmed. For example, Membership, a typist or computer member can maintain the membership list and updates of addresses and emails, another member sends out postcards for renewal notice reminders, and someone else greets people at the door.

Instead of telling the public about our society, we must think instead as marketing ourselves. What are our goals? Why should they attend our meetings? What other groups can we contact? Perhaps we need to contact scrapbooking groups, living history or antiquity-type groups. It was thought that genealogy members must connect with other like-minded organizations such as youth groups, cultural societies, and lineage societies. As many of these organizations have shared goals and we might gain members through those contacts. We need to sell outside of our society.

It was mentioned connecting with the schools and offering to help. In Huntington Beach, 5th & 6th

graders are asked to do family group sheet on a Mayflower family. They visit the Huntington Beach City Library and take a tour of the Orange County Genealogical Library collection located on the ground floor. It was stressed that it must be visual, and seeing the census grabs their attention. The Ventura County Genealogical Society goes into the 2nd grade classroom and makes a chart of a fictional family. Have children go into senior facilities to take an oral history. Prepare some questions, like: "When you were a kid, where did you hang out?"

South Bay Cities participates in the Redondo Beach Health Fair by helping to fill out health history forms. The Orange Family History Center and Orange County Genealogical Society have a very popular booth at the Orange County Fair in Costa Mesa.

Adding value to being a member was discussed, rather than just being a longtime visitor. Some places give member discounts on their sale tables or to seminars. Often a door prize drawing is only for the members.

Lack of volunteers is in the critical stage. Take time to estimate how much time a task will take when looking for someone to fill a job. Points are awarded for volunteer time and the ones with over a certain number of points are awarded lunch with the president of the club. Recognition and appreciation of these hard workers should be extended. The Whittier Area Genealogy Society spotlights a volunteer of the year. In the newsletter a bio and picture of board members and volunteers are featured. Maintain a list of the jobs and give a member a choice of what they are interested in and willing to help.

Board liability insurance along with liability insurance for the books and facilities are becoming a major headache. Other costs include purchasing books, paying utilities, printing, and parking, among others. Getting grants for our societies was offered as an unused resource of revenue. Discussion was given as to how to go about it. Charlotte Bocage is going to look into that for us.

It was decided to update the list of speakers that the California Alliance published a couple of years back for all of Southern California.

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~FACES WE HAVEN'T SEEN IN A WHILE~

a special report by Jeanette Jones, Membership Chair

BETTY BELL FELDMAN

Betty Bell says she is doing better every day, and hopes to be back at work and back at Questing Heirs and teaching the beginning classes soon. She has had several health problems and hospitalizations, which have forced her to take a leave of absence from her job. However, in the time she has been ill and off work she has managed to put several years of our newsletters into a three-hole binder with gold lettering on the cover, which she will be bringing for us to leaf through and use for reference.



BETTY MARR

Betty Marr has suffered two mild strokes that have left her rather weak, but she is very alert and would enjoy hearing from her Questing Heirs friends. She is moving out of her apartment and will be living at Palmcrest House, 3501 Cedar Avenue #131, Long Beach, CA 90807-3875. Betty was our Newsletter Editor and our Membership Chairman for many years, and in the process of sorting and cleaning she returned several notebooks pertaining to Questing Heirs history to our storeroom/archives.

BARBARA BROWN and MAYBELLE LITTLE

We hear good news from them, except for the fact that they are so far away they are unable to attend our regular meetings. Barbara has moved to Port Hueneme and has joined the Ventura Genealogical Society, and Maybelle has moved to Simi Valley and joined the Conejo Valley Genealogical Society. They are still busily researching their ancestors and were in Salt Lake City last April for a "good research week." We hope to see them at a meeting soon when they are in Long Beach visiting their friends and relatives. They both are missing all their Questing Heirs friends.



JANET TAYLOR

Janet says she fell several months ago and has been dealing with the result of those injuries. She is hoping to regain her mobility soon so she can resume her normal life and come back and be an active part of Questing Heirs. Janet is anxious to get back and resume her job as Publicity Chairman and hopes we are developing some ideas on some projects she can work at publicizing.

~CONSORTIUM MEETING~

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Communication between the different groups is needed and we are asked to exchange newsletters and sign up to the SOCAL mail list at RootsWeb. To subscribe, send an email to <SOCAL-L-request@rootsweb.com>, using "subscribe" as the message subject. If you would like to subscribe in digest mode, send your email to: <SOCAL-D-request@rootsweb.com> instead.

Later, a newsgroup for the consortium will be set up. It will include links to all the society web sites. It was further pointed out that we also need to contact the California Alliance with our activities.

The day ended with all of the attendees sharing what their groups are doing. Newspaper extracts, cemetery books, and directories are some of the activities mentioned.

It was an exhausting and exciting time to be together and find out that our society is not alone, that we all have some of the same concerns. This Consortium plans to meet again, and I look forward to learning and sharing more.

~ *OF INTEREST* ~

**CHANGES IN AVAILABILITY OF
LOS ANGELES COUNTY RECORDS**

From a press release issued June 26, 2003 by the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office. Full text of the press release may be found online at <<http://www.lavote.net/general/press/jun26-03.htm>>.

Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC), Conny McCormack, announced to Los Angeles County residents that, "Effective July 1, a major change will take place that will require applicants to provide proof of identity when requesting certified copies of birth and death certificates." The enactment of new legislation has significantly changed the process and specifies who can request certified copies of birth and death certificates. In the County of Los Angeles, the RR/CC processes approximately 500,000 such requests annually, including roughly 500 mail requests daily. The requests by mail will suffer the biggest impact since those requests must include a formal notarized statement of the requestor's identity and eligibility.

The California legislature identified the release of birth and death records as a vulnerable point in the rise in the occurrence of identity theft. The new legislation helps protect birth and death records from misuse by allowing only specific authorized individuals to receive a certified copy of a birth or death record. McCormack said that "while I fully support the intent of this legislation to deter the opportunity for identity fraud, I am concerned that the additional requirement for persons both in the area and out of state who need a copy of their birth certificate quickly for a passport, for example, will send in their requests without knowing they must now take the additional step of finding a notary to get a notarized statement to include with their requests prior to submittal. We anticipate having to mail back hundreds of such requests daily and a barrage of calls from frustrated customers who previously could order copies over the phone."

Under the new legislation, individuals are permitted to receive a certified copy, after having first submitted a statement sworn under penalty of perjury that the requestor is an authorized person. Authorized persons include:

- ♦The registrant or a parent or legal guardian of the registrant;
- ♦A party entitled to receive the record as a result of a court order, or an attorney or a licensed adoption agency seeking the birth record in order to comply with the requirements of Section 3140 or 7603 of the Family Code;
- ♦A member of a law enforcement agency or a representative of another governmental agency, as provided by law, who is conducting official business;
- ♦A child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse or domestic partner of the registrant;
- ♦An attorney representing the registrant or the registrant's estate, or any person or agency empowered by statute or appointed by a court to act on behalf of the registrant or the registrant's estate; and
- ♦Any funeral director that orders certified copies of a death certificate on behalf of any individual specified in paragraphs (1) to (5), inclusive, of subdivision (a) of Section 7100 of the Health and Safety Code.

A certified copy of a birth record is required to obtain a driver's license, passport, social security card and other services related to an individual's identity. A certified copy of a death record may be required to obtain death benefits, claim insurance proceeds, notify social security and obtain other services related to an individual's identity. Individuals not permitted to receive certified copies may receive an informational copy with the words "Informational, not a valid document to establish identity" imprinted across the face of the copy. The RR/CC as the custodian of vital records has the responsibility on behalf of the citizens of Los Angeles County to safeguard the records from misuse.

Requirements of the new legislation are available on the department's automated phone system by calling the RR/CC at (562) 462-2137 or at the RR/CC website www.lavote.net. Applications to request certified copies and Certificate of Identity forms are also available on the RR/CC website.



Blessed are they who can
laugh at themselves, for they shall
never cease to be amused.

~ O N T H E W E B ~

RICH AND FAMOUS

<<http://www.rootdig.com/1930census/>>

Nearly 100 1930 census images of the "rich and famous" including Lucille Ball, John Barrymore, Jack Benny, Irving Berlin, Marlon Brando, President Jimmy Carter, President Calvin Coolidge, Walter Cronkite, Katharine Hepburn, Martin Luther King Jr., Babe Ruth, Jackie Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Orville Wright.

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RESEARCHBUZZ

<<http://www.researchbuzz.com/>>

With a tagline reading: "Obsessed with search engines, databases, and etc. since 1998," this site is full of articles on search engines and databases. Here is a sampling of recent news items:

- ♦ State of Illinois Adds Global Search to its Genealogy Databases
- ♦ Google News Now Offering Advanced Search
- ♦ Florida Memory Adds WWI Service Cards
- ♦ University of Texas Puts Gutenberg Bible Online
- ♦ Canadian Genealogical Centre Offers 1915-1932 Canadian Naturalization Lists

You can browse their Archives for all their articles, and they offer a weekly newsletter by email, so you can keep up on the latest news. ResearchBuzz just might provide you with the database or research tool that could knock down that brick wall you keep bumping up against!



PROJECT GUTENBERG

<<http://www.gutenberg.net/>>

Not exactly related to genealogy, but a definite "must-visit," Project Gutenberg has the lofty goal of making 10,000 books available online for free. Founded by Michael Hart in 1971, they are rapidly approaching their 9,000th book.

**NEW JERSEY STATE ARCHIVES
CATALOG ONLINE**

<<http://www.njarchives.org/links/catalog.html>>

With over 200 brand new webpages, this expansion of the New Jersey State Archives site represents a milestone in terms of public access to the 27,000 cubic feet and 25,000 reels of historical and genealogical treasure held by the Archives. It is, in fact, comparable to the major collection management efforts associated with the relocation of the State Archives to its new facility in 2000.

The browseable catalog is accessible from the State Archives' main page at <<http://www.njarchives.org>>. You can link directly to the catalog page at <<http://www.njarchives.org/links/catalog.html>>.

From the catalog main page, select any number of pathways to find series-level listings relating to numerous topics, holdings for specific state agencies and counties, and so on. The listings also provide contact information and links for more recent records still held by the agency or by local government.

These 200+ pages provide the researching public with powerful new tools to enhance remote use of the State Archives collections and allow for considerable research planning in advance of a visit to Trenton. Moreover, the series-level catalog provides us with a framework onto which the Archives can, and will, soon link finding aids and guides, box- and reel-contents data, imaged collections, searchable databases (including key-word searching of the catalog), and so on.

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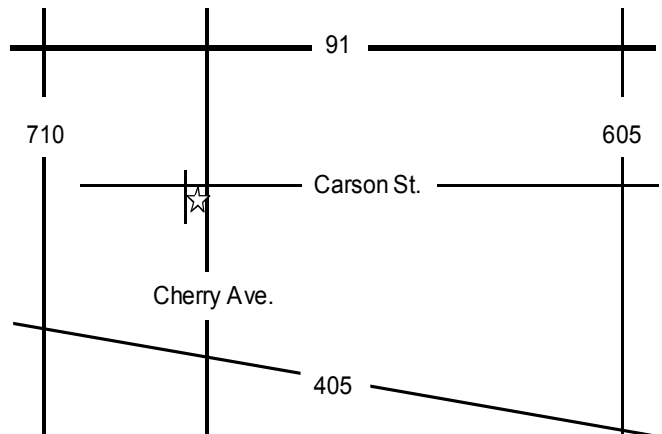


A family is a unit composed not only of children,
but of men, women, an occasional animal,
and the common cold.

Ogden Nash

~UPCOMING EVENTS~

- ♦ Saturday, August 2, 9:00 am – 1:30 pm. Orange County, California Genealogical Society monthly meeting. Huntington Beach Central Library, 7111 Talbert Avenue, Huntington Beach. Everett Ireland will give two lectures: “Why and Wherefore of Non Population Census Schedules” and “Court House Research.”
- ♦ Friday, August 15. California Polish Genealogical Society presents Stephen Barthel giving four lectures on how to find your Polish ancestors. Torrance Masonic Center, Torrance. For more information, visit <<http://www.pgscs.org/seminar.html>>.
- ♦ Saturday, August 16, 1:00 pm. Whittier Area Genealogical Society monthly meeting, Masonic Lodge, 7604 Greenleaf Avenue, Whittier. Barbara Renick will speak on “Advanced Southern Research.” Ice cream social afterward.
- ♦ **Sunday, August 17, 1:15 pm. Questing Heirs Genealogical Society monthly meeting.** Parish Hall, Resurrection Lutheran Church, 1900 East Carson Street, Long Beach. Parking and entrance on Gardenia Avenue, one block west of Cherry Avenue. See map at right. For program information, see page 58.
- ♦ Wednesday, August 20, 7:00 pm. Genealogical Society of North Orange County, California monthly meeting. Yorba Linda Community Center, Yorba Linda. Paul Wormser from the National Archives speaking on “Records Held by the National Archives.”
- ♦ Wednesday, August 20, 7:00 pm. South Bay Cities Genealogical Society monthly meeting. Torrance Civic Center Library, 3301 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance. Connie Moretti speaking on “Boston to Bataan: U. S. Military Records.”
- ♦ Sunday, August 24, 1:00 – 3:00 pm. British Isles Family History Society-USA monthly meeting at the Los Angeles FHC.* Tom Underhill: “Dead Men Tell No Tales.” More information available at <<http://www.rootsweb.com/~bifhsusa>>.
- ♦ Wednesday, September 3 – Saturday, September 6. Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference. Orlando, Florida. Theme: “A World of Hidden Treasures.” Co-hosted by the Florida State Genealogical Society.



*FHC stands for Family History Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. FHCs are open free of charge to members of the general public interested in doing genealogical research. Volunteers are on hand and will gladly give you assistance. Regular hours for the Los Angeles FHC are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 9 am to 9 pm, and Friday and Saturday 9 am to 5 pm. The LA FHC is located on the grounds of the Los Angeles Temple, 10741 Santa Monica Blvd. in West Los Angeles; their phone number is (310) 474-9990. Their web page at <<http://www.lafhc.org>> provides details of their extensive collection. There are smaller FHCs locally, in Long Beach at 3701 Elm Avenue in Bixby Knolls, phone (562) 988-0509, in Los Alamitos, phone (714) 821-6914, and in Cerritos, phone (562) 924-3676. It is advisable to call ahead to the local centers, as their hours may change from time to time.