



QUESTING HEIRS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY *Newsletter* Volume 44 ✦ Number 12 ✦ December 2011

Questing Heirs Genealogical Society, Inc., P. O. Box 15102, Long Beach CA 90815-0102
<http://www.qhgs.info>

Questing Heirs is a member society of the California State Genealogical Alliance and the Federation of Genealogical Societies.

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

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2011



Annual Potluck Dinner

Theme: Explore Your Ethnicity

Installation of Officers

[Note: No Beginning Class this month.]



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This is the last paper newsletter you will receive unless you have notified our Membership Chair, Terry Hamilton, that you still require a hard copy.

All other members will be able to access the current newsletter at the *Questing Heirs* website. Be sure that Terry has your current e-mail address.

Terry may be reached at hammyt1@aol.com
or
(562) 596-9382

REFRESHMENTS

Penny NUGENT (562) 290-0416

Thanks to our November hosts:
Kathy AKAU Sandy HOLLANDSWORTH
Frances LIEBZEIT Penny NUGENT

Our December hosts will be YOU!
Surnames ending in A-F, bring a salad.
Surnames ending in G-L, bring a hot dish.
Surnames ending in M-R, bring appetizers.
Surnames ending in S-Z, bring a dessert.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Terry HAMILTON (562) 596-9382

OCTOBER MEETING ATTENDANCE
Members: 28 Guests: 2

FINANCIAL REPORT

David WERTS (562) 431-7790

October Income:	\$	386.17
October Expenses:	\$	295.99
F&M Bank Balance:	\$	5,455.95

(Includes \$5,158.00 earmarked for "Education.")

Submissions for the
January Newsletter
are due December 26.

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This newsletter is published monthly as a benefit for members of Questing Heirs; it is not meant to be sold. In order to receive the monthly newsletter, one must be enrolled as a member of the Society. To join, please use the membership application on the outer cover of this newsletter.



W E - V E R - N - I - G - N - T - E - M

**THE SWISS SETTLEMENT OF VEVAY,
SWITZERLAND COUNTY, INDIANA**

John McCoy related his progress in learning about the history and origins of the “Swiss” settlement of Vevay in southeastern Indiana in preparation for the city’s bicentennial in 2013.

It all began when Jean-Jacques Dufour, who was from Montreaux, Switzerland, came to the area looking for land on which to found a settlement. After two years of exploration, he brought seventeen people to the Indiana Territory in 1801. He was able to acquire more land from Congress and first called the settlement New Switzerland. Over the fifty or so years that followed, however, immigrants from France, Germany, Italy and England joined the original Swiss colonists. Their reasons for leaving Europe were many: revolutions, occupation by foreign troops, loss of citizenship, hard economic times, etc.

John’s job is to identify the origins of as many of the early settlers as possible. So far he has found background information on over 150 of them, finding clues in the writings of an historian (Perret Dufour), family papers, county records, old timers’ obituaries in newspapers, cemetery records, and Google.

To find information on the settlers’ origins in Europe, he has consulted church records, Swiss family name books, indexing and finding aids, and Swiss citizenship records. Even when a person moved, records should have been sent back to his original town of birth.

John shared some of the lessons he has learned during his search. Old World names are often misunderstood because of compound names, the accent marks used, spelling variations, and the use of geographical names. One needs to find multiple clues in order to be sure of an individual’s identity—full name, date of birth, name of home village, and names of associates (family members and traveling companions). Not all the settlers with French sounding names have turned out to be immigrants. And he has concluded that some people will never be identified except by accident!

**BRITISH RESEARCH—PARISH
REGISTERS & CENSUS RECORDS**

Hal Horrocks presented a very helpful program for those who are tracing their English ancestors.

Parish Registers

The practice of calling the “banns” started in 1215. For a marriage to be valid, it had to be announced during church services on three Sundays to provide an opportunity for objections. Marriage licenses were introduced in the 1300’s. They involved a fee and sworn statement that there was no legal impediment to the marriage. In 1812 an act to better regulate and preserve Parish Registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials was passed; and printed registers were provided.

Original Parish Registers are now kept in the county or the British National Archives. Copies of most have been microfilmed [and are available through the Family History Library].

Until 1837 you need to consult Parish Registers for vital information on your ancestors. In that year Civil Registration of births, marriages, and deaths was created.

Census Records

A British census has been taken every ten years since 1801, but the first four were only used for statistical data and then destroyed. From 1841 through 1911 more personal information was gathered, and these returns are now public.

“Household Schedules” were distributed to each household a few days before the census date. An Enumerator collected them after that date, and the “Census Returns” we use are the Enumerator’s interpretation of what the household wrote. For the 1911 census, the original household schedules (with your ancestor’s signature) are available.

If you can’t find your ancestor in a census, he may have been missed, or he could have been working or traveling elsewhere and recorded in that place. The person filling out the form may not have known all the facts. Mistakes could have been made by the Enumerator.



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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Christmas came early at our November meeting when John McCoy introduced us to the society’s gift of a new Sound System. We just couldn’t wait for Christmas. The money to buy the Sound System was provided from a bequest made by a former member, Priscilla Nielsen, now deceased. Everyone agreed it was something we had needed for a long time. John was the first person to use the new system when he gave his interesting lecture on Vevay, Indiana.

The program we have planned for our Christmas Party, along with our usual potluck, will be interactive, giving all the members a chance to participate. We are going to explore our ethnic heritage. An ethnic group is a group of people whose members identify with each other through a common heritage—often consisting of a common language and a common culture, perhaps including a shared religion and/or an ideology that stresses common ancestry. The group shares a specific geographical area and traditions, including food preferences. I don’t remember any program in the past being presented on this subject.

As we start our discussion, many of you will find it hard to identify with one particular ethnic group. I do know one of our members whose four grandparents were born in Ireland, but this is rather rare in a group such as ours. It will be interesting to find out just how much of a “melting pot” we are. Be thinking of what your ethnic heritage is so you can come prepared to share how you feel this has influenced you and your genealogy. I myself am a mixture: 25% French Canadian, 25% German from Russia, and 50% Colonial American/English, Irish, and Scotch. Some of you might even want to bring a food dish to the meeting that expresses your ethnicity. I am looking forward to a fun December meeting and a lively discussion.

Merry Christmas to any of you who may not be with us at our December meeting.

Jeanette Jones (J.J.)

MEMBERS PASSING

Questing Heirs has lost two members in the past month.

Terry L. Gillis, who joined our group in 2007, passed away on November 5, 2011, of natural causes. According to her obituary in the *Press-Telegram*, she was a teacher at Long Beach Poly for 30 years. She is survived by a brother, Tandy; nieces, Courtney and Bryn; their families and their mother, Trisha. Services were held at Forest Lawn, Cypress, on November 16.

Jeri Everett joined Questing Heirs in 2005 and was quite active in our group until her health worsened. She had cancer, which took her life on November 17 of this year.

The sad thing about Jeri’s early death from a genealogical viewpoint is that she had become the repository for the research of other members of her family who had pre-deceased her. When their children were not interested in the family history, they passed these accumulated findings on to Jeri because they knew she would want to carry on the work. Jeri planned to organize all the material “when she retired.” Unfortunately, that opportunity never arrived, and no one else in her family is interested in seeing the work through to completion.

This is another example of why it is essential for each of us to organize the information we have collected over the years and leave it in a form that will make sense to our descendants.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

For those of you who were unable to attend our November meeting, the following officers were elected for the 2012-2013 term and will be installed at our December meeting:

- Secretary—Penny Nugent
- Treasurer—David Werts
- Director at Large—Linda Artuso
- Director at Large—Tina Yanis

J.J. with the approval of the Board, has appointed Sandra Hollandsworth to fill the remaining year of Suzanne Boyles’ term as First Vice President.



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WorldCat for Genealogy

WorldCat is a cooperatively-created catalog of materials held in more than 10,000 libraries worldwide, including public, academic, state and national libraries; archives; and historical societies. These libraries have cataloged their regular collections as well as many special collections—including digitized materials—devoted to local history. This makes WorldCat a unique tool for your research into your heritage.

Because WorldCat is a “super” catalog of more than 1.4 billion library holdings representing more than 170 million items held in libraries, you can reduce the number of places you search to locate useful material. WorldCat complements tools such as the LDS Family History Library, Ancestry.com and ProQuest’s HeritageQuest™.

WorldCat at www.worldcat.org is useful if you’re looking for a particular title. Just type the title in the Search box and your zip code where requested, and WorldCat will list the libraries where that title can be found. If one is near where you live, you can go to the library to view it; if not, you may be able to request it via interlibrary loan.

You can also make some basic genealogy searches for your family surname, relevant locations or organizations of interest on this site. However, although WorldCat searches the entire WorldCat on FirstSearch database, it only displays holdings for libraries that subscribe to WorldCat on FirstSearch and have their holdings in WorldCat. Therefore, to view information on all holdings, you must search WorldCat via FirstSearch.

The Long Beach Public Library does not provide this service, but the Los Angeles Public Library does. You can access it from your home computer if you have a library card at the LAPL. Just go to www.lapl.org, click on “Access Databases,” then click on “W,” and then on “WorldCat1*.” Log in; your authorization will be validated and you can proceed to WorldCat FirstSearch.

Here are examples of the materials can you find on WorldCat:

- Account books
- Autobiographies
- Cemetery records
- Church histories
- Diaries and journals
- Family papers
- Historic newspapers
- Indexes to wills
- Manuscripts from archives
- Oral histories
- Pictures
- Probate records

Where available, there will be links to digitized versions of the library materials.

You can start with the Basic Search or use the Advanced Search. You can specify the type of materials you’re looking for:

- Books
- Visual Materials
- Computer Files
- Internet Resources
- Serial Publications
- Sound Recordings
- Archival Materials
- Articles
- Maps

A search results in a list of records matching your search terms. More widely available items are listed first. To get more detailed information on an item, click on its title. Then clicking on “Libraries Worldwide” will tell you where the item can be located. Libraries are listed in alphabetical order within a state, with your state listed first. A number of options are available, too. For instance, you can sort the lists you receive, print them, e-mail them, or export them.

You can find a two-page “Quick Reference Guide” to genealogy research using WorldCat.org at www.oclc.org/worldcat/genealogy. A more extensive “Tutorial: Genealogy Research via WorldCat on FirstSearch” is available at www.oclc.org/worldcat/genealogy/tutorial.htm

E-M-T-R-E-V-O-L-U-T-I-O-N-S-T-R-I-C-T

After the Revolutionary War, the citizens of the newly established United States of America rejected the English calendar and most of its holidays, called “red days”. Many Americans are descended from those who had come to the New World seeking religious freedom—Puritans escaping the decadence and corruption of the Anglican Church, whose members celebrated Christmas with raucous behavior, heavy drinking and even violence. Puritans hardly recognized December 25 as a day different from any other, rejecting the date’s roots in Saturnalia, an ancient Roman celebration of their sun god.

It was not until the 1820s with the increase of the American economy and the realization of the lack of public holidays that Americans began to crave more than just three holidays a year, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving and New Year’s. However, religion still played a major role in how Christmas was celebrated or even recognized... During this time, Christmas Day may have come and gone either ignored or completely unnoticed. A church service could have taken place in honor of Christ’s birth, but a celebration would have been avoided. At this time, a New Year’s Day celebration would have closely resembled Christmas Days of decades later. Shots from a rifle would have echoed across the valley, marking the occasion, as adults exchanged presents on New Year’s. Families of English descent...would have brought in greenery, a practice begun by Norsemen who believed that evergreens proved life existed in dark times, like the dead of winter. They may have even enjoyed a plum pudding on Christmas Day, but any outward celebration would have been avoided.

By the late 1820s, a few churches were draped with greenery, filled with glowing candles and music, inviting strangers inside. And so began the Christmas that we know so well today. The 1830s saw the government’s recognition with Alabama making Christmas a legal holiday in 1836. Walking down the street from December 24 through January 1, one might hear greetings of “Merry Christmas” and see

evergreens in shop windows. By the 1840s, the railroad system had connected Americans like never before and with that came an increase in commerce and industry, two entities which fueled the widespread popularity of Christmas.

The Victorian Era introduced perhaps the most notable of Christmas traditions into American, the Christmas tree. Decorating an evergreen tree originally began in Germany prior to 1820, and came to the New World with those immigrants who settled in Pennsylvania and continued the tree decorating tradition. Although the tradition was kept by many of the German immigrants to America, it did not become widespread until two decades later, when in 1846, *Illustrated London News* printed a depiction of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, a native German, and their children around a Christmas tree. England remained the trendsetter for American fashions, and it wasn’t long before the Christmas tree began to appear in American homes. At first, these trees were most likely small, placed atop a table and decorated with fruits, nuts and homemade items. Gift-giving was prevalent but not extravagant. The Victorian ideal of nurturing children coupled with this new holiday that encouraged gifts allowed parents to treat their children without spoiling them. Santa Claus would come later and by the late 1850s could be seen on street corners.

The 1860s saw the country once again in turmoil. Christmas had become a rather commercialized event and even then skeptics voiced concerns over the frivolity of the holiday, questioning if Santa Claus and gift exchanges were indeed the proper way to celebrate the birth of Christ. On the brink of war, Americans had graduated to larger trees set on the floor that they might have decorated patriotically, displaying their allegiances. Santa Claus was entering homes through chimneys where children had hung their stockings for filling in accordance with Clement Moore’s popular, “An Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas”. Carols were being

Continued on page 8



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SSDI CHANGE

“Effective today, 01 November 2011, the Social Security Administration (SSA) changed its policy on what records it will use as source material for adding new entries in the Public Death Master File (DMF) which, in turn, is used to create the Social Security Death Index (SSDI).

“The Agency decided that it can no longer use state death records to add new entries to the DMF. Furthermore, the SSA will remove approximately 4.2 million records currently on the SSDI because those entries were made based on information from state death records.

“...The SSA will continue to compile the DMF from a variety of sources including death reports from family members, funeral homes, hospitals, Federal agencies, postal authorities and financial institutions. However, state death certificates which currently generate about 1 million entries in the DMF and SSDI every year will no longer be used.”

This information was extracted from <http://stephendanko.com/blog/15164> dated 1 Nov 2011.

THE PEOPLING OF AMERICA

In the August 2011 issue of this newsletter, we described a new center at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum that would be opened later this year. The first phase of The Peopling of America® Center opened on 27 October.

“This 10,000 square foot experience focuses on the history of immigration from the Colonial Era to the opening of Ellis Island in 1892. Interpretative graphics and poignant audio stories tell first-hand accounts of the immigrant’s journey—from making the trip and arriving in the United States to their struggle and survival after they arrived and efforts to build communities and ultimately a nation...

“Also unveiled today was the American Flag of Faces™, a large interactive video installation filled with a montage of images submitted by individuals of their families, their ancestors, or even themselves which illustrates the ever-changing American

mosaic. A living exhibit, Flag of Faces accepts photo submissions and can also be viewed at www.FlagofFaces.org.”

Extracts from an announcement by the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation reprinted on Dick Eastman’s blog (<http://blog.eogn.com>) on 27 Oct 2011.

ARCHIVES.COM PARTNERS

www.archives.com

Archives.com is partnering with the National Archives & Records Administration (NARA) to provide free digital access to the 1940 Federal Population Census beginning on April 2, 2012. Since NARA doesn’t have enough web servers or personnel to host the census on its own website, it is contracting with this commercial company to create a new one. You can learn more about the project at: www.archives.com/1940census.

(From an announcement made by Archives.com at Redwood City, CA, on 17 Nov 2011.)

Archives.com is also partnering “with Family Tree DNA, the world leader in genetic genealogy, to enable users to purchase DNA tests through its website for the first time... [It will offer] three types of DNA tests: the Y-chromosome DNA test to trace paternal lines and surname matches; the mitochondrial DNA test to determine maternal line matches; and the Family Finder test kit, which tests autosomal DNA to reveal ethnic percentages and trace genes across maternal and paternal lines.”

(From an announcement made by Archives.com at Redwood City, CA, on 22 Nov 2011.)

USING ARCHIVES

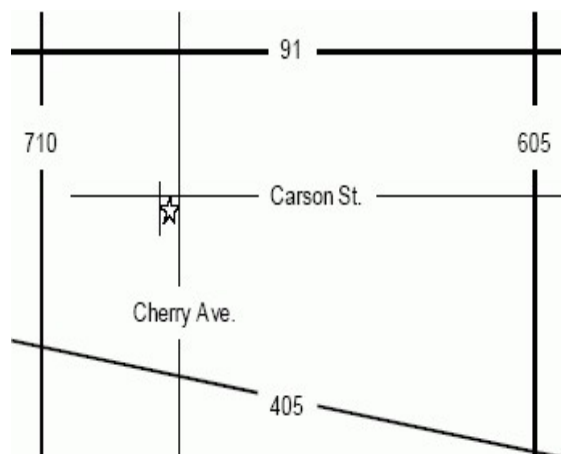
<http://www2.archivists.org/usingarchives>

Are you planning a trip to an archives or just curious about what you could expect to find if you did? An excellent guide to the functions and procedures of archives, identifying an appropriate one for your research, and how to access historical materials and do research once you are there is available at the above URL. It is titled “Using Archives: A Guide to Effective Research” by Laura Schmidt.



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Sunday, December 18, 1:15-4:00 p.m. **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 below. For meeting information, please see the newsletter cover and page 90.



Saturday, January 7, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **Orange County, California, Genealogical Society** monthly meeting at the Huntington Beach Central Library, 7111 Talbert Ave., Huntington Beach. Main speaker (Rooms C&D): “Finding More in the FamilySearch Catalog,” by Barbara Renick. This presentation will be followed by another by Barbara on “Hidden Treasures in the FamilySearch Wiki.”



Continued from page 6...
sung in churches, on lawns and in parlors, and Christmas cards were making their rounds. An American Christmas was born.

This article appeared in Appalachian Springs, the newsletter of the Greenbrier [WV] Historical Society, 4th quarter 2010.

Upcoming Events

Whittier Area Genealogical Society
29th Annual Seminar
Saturday, February 25, 2012
Masonic Lodge
7604 Greenleaf Ave., Whittier

George G. Morgan, president of Aha! Seminars, Inc., and author of a number of genealogy books, will be this year’s speaker. His topics will be:

- Bring ‘Em Back to Life: Developing an Ancestor Profile
- Sidestep Genealogy
- The Genealogist as a CSI
- Postcards, Photos & Stereographs: Another View of Our Ancestors’ Lives

Doors open at 8:00 a.m., and the presentations run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Early registration for non-members is \$37, or \$40 after Feb 13. Lunch is available for \$8 if pre-registered.

More information and a registration form is available at their website: www.cagenweb.com/kr/wags/seminar.html. The Seminar Director may be contacted at (562) 693-2674.

*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 Family History Library are Monday, Friday, and Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm, and Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 9 am to 9 pm. The LAFHL 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. The LAFHL opened, following its lengthy closure for renovation, on Monday, 25 October 2010. There are smaller FHCs nearby—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. We recommend calling the local centers before you visit, as their hours may change from time to time.