



QUESTING HEIRS
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
Newsletter
Volume 45 ✦ Number 1 ✦ January 2012

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, JANUARY 15, 2012

1:15 Class INTERMEDIATE: Using Circumstantial Evidence to Solve Genealogical Puzzles, by Penny Nugent

2:00 Business

2:15 Break Time for chatting, browsing, and refreshments

2:45 General Meeting SPEAKERS: **The RD Players**
Ho to California!

4:00 Class BEGINNING: Genealogy Adventures
by Linda Ivers

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JANUARY MEETING

INTERMEDIATE CLASS

What can a genealogist do when the brick wall around an ancestor was crafted by that very ancestor? Penny Nugent will present the story of dismantling her grandfather's carefully constructed brick wall and offer suggestions for researching problems like this by using family lore and provable information about siblings, aunts, and uncles. Frank Nugent may have wanted to disown his family and forget his heritage, but he did not reckon on having such a nosy granddaughter!

SPEAKERS:

GAIL REIFERT & GENE DERMODY

Gail began historical reenacting at Rancho Los Cerritos in Long Beach. With husband, Gene, she performs as Mary Todd Lincoln, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Rachel Larkin and various characters in a half-dozen humorous Victorian Era vignettes.

Gene taught American and California history for three decades at Cerritos College in Norwalk. He has researched and written all the RD Players' scripts, as well as a dozen humorous mini-dramas.

You can contact this couple by calling (562) 429-0053, e-mailing them at Gdermody101@aol.com, or visiting their website at: www.theRDplayers.com.

TOPIC

HO TO CALIFORNIA!

Gail and Gene "step forward" from the late 1800s as the Martins to reminisce about their 1850 wagon train adventure to join the gold rush in California. He wanted to strike it rich! She wanted to "see the elephant"!

While the Martins are fictional characters, they are composites of pioneers. Winnow away the whimsical, and their exploits mirror hundreds of diary and journal accounts. It is history flavored with warm-hearted humor as well as the reality of disease, death, tedium and terror. *And* exotic sights and joyous memories.

REFRESHMENTS

Penny NUGENT (562) 290-0416

Thanks to all of you who brought the many delicious dishes to our December potluck!

Our January hosts will be:

Terry HAMILTON Linda IVERS
Kathy LATHAM Penny NUGENT

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Terry HAMILTON (562) 596-9382

DECEMBER MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members: 31 Guests: 3

FINANCIAL REPORT

David WERTS (562) 431-7790

November Expenses:* \$ 1,025.98
November Income: \$ 400.88
F&M Bank Balance:** \$ 4,830.85

Notes:

* Includes \$619.99 for the new sound system, taken from the "Education" budget.

** Includes \$3,918.02 earmarked for "Education," provided by Priscilla Nielsen.

**Submissions for the
February Newsletter
are due January 22.**

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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.



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FamilySearch's Conversion from Microfilm to Digital Images by Dick Eastman

Dick Eastman made the following comments on his blog (<http://blog.eogn.com>) on 23 Dec 2011 when he learned of a new announcement by FamilySearch.

"...a new status announcement apparently was issued this week. Several newsletter readers have written to me about the "problem" of FamilySearch converting from microfilm to digital images. I haven't seen the original announcement, but several people have written to me, saying that their local Family History Centers have received notices that after Dec. 31, 2011, FamilySearch will no longer sell microfilm because there are so few requests. (Note the use of the word "sell," not lend. Apparently, microfilms will still be lent for a while longer to Family History Centers but sales will be halted, due to low demand.) Several of my correspondents are worried because they or someone they know 'depends' upon microfilm.

"Sorry folks, this isn't a problem. It's a solution! I am delighted to hear of this latest announcement and I would suggest that all other genealogists should also be pleased with the news.

"Let's face a few facts. First, microfilm is disappearing worldwide and for very good reasons. Few companies manufacture microfilm cameras anymore. Even new, unexposed microfilm is disappearing. Only a couple of small companies still manufacture microfilm, and they have already notified FamilySearch and their few other remaining customers that they will be shutting down their manufacturing facilities soon. Where do you expect FamilySearch or anyone else to purchase microfilm five years from now when nobody manufactures it anymore?

"Only a few companies still manufacture microfilm viewers, and they, too, are planning to shut down their facilities for lack of customers. In fact, the hottest selling microfilm viewers these days are the ones that

have built-in scanners and are used to convert microfilms to digital images.

"Microfilm is awkward to use and is hard on the eyes. I've been using microfilm for more than twenty-five years, and my eyes still water and my vision becomes blurry when I stare at microfilm readers for hours. Digital images usually are much easier on the eyes with an occasional exception. Digital images certainly are not perfect, but they are usually better than microfilm. I know I get less eyestrain when staring at a high-resolution computer screen rather than at a microfilm reader.

"At many libraries and archives I visit, the microfilm equipment is old and failing and probably will never be repaired or replaced. It is too expensive. A computer is usually cheaper than a microfilm viewer and has many, many more uses.

"Another problem is the claimed life expectancy of microfilm. In theory, microfilm can last 200 or 300 years. That's true, **IF YOU NEVER USE IT!** What good is that? Unfortunately, most of the microfilms that I use in the various libraries and archives have been badly scratched. Usually the damage isn't catastrophic, but it is bad enough to be inconvenient. In contrast, digital images never deteriorate. Patrons can view the same image tens of thousands of times with no degradation of that image.

"Finally, the life expectancy of digital images is much, much longer than microfilm as long as someone makes occasional backups, stores those backups in multiple locations, and copies the images to newer, more modern media every few years. Tens of thousands of data centers already have been preserving computer records and images for decades. A few centuries seems achievable without any special effort. Ask any data processing professional. Governmental agencies, the military, and thousands of corporations and non-profits are already planning to keep their

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

“If you look deeply into the palm of your hand, you will see your parents and all generations of your ancestors. All of them are alive in this moment. Each is present in your body. You are the continuation of each of these people.” This is a quote from a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, that has always resonated with me when I am thinking about my ancestors as I work on my genealogy.

When I look at my palm, I see my parents clearly and my grandparents less so. I was lucky to have known all four of my grandparents, including one grandfather who didn’t die until I was in my thirties. However, there is always the curiosity and longing to have known these six people better and the multitude who came before them. If they had just left me some of their writings or letters, I would know them better. I am always envious of people who have diaries and letters of their ancestors that help them when they look in their palm. I am envious of people who have pictures also because I have very few beyond my grandparents. However, pictures to me are in another category of knowledge unless the picture records some interest or focus of the person.

My point in writing the above is to remind you to start writing, or keep writing, your memoirs. I am not talking about writing down all those names and dates. My guess is that our descendants will have an enormous amount of raw data available about their ancestors as more and more items are digitized. I want to urge you to make a New Year’s Resolution to leave a legacy of who you “really are”. I know it is not easy, but I feel this other facet of genealogy deserves equal effort. Rachael Rifkin, our speaker at the September meeting, gave us some excellent tips on beginning and continuing this process. (*Review the October 2011 newsletter for a recap.*) Perhaps we should schedule another program of this type to “jump start” us on our way.

J.J.

SWEET POTATO DISH

By popular request, below is Kathy Latham’s recipe for the delicious dish she brought to our December potluck.

- 4 cups sweet potatoes—cooked, peeled and mashed
 - 1/2 cup butter, melted
 - 2 eggs
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1 tsp vanilla
 - 2 tbs flour
- Mix all together and place in a 9x13” baking dish.

- Topping:
- 2/3 cup flour
 - 1 cup brown sugar
 - 2/3 cup butter, melted
 - 2 cups chopped pecans
- Spread on top of sweet potatoes.
- Bake at 350° for 30 minutes, until golden brown.



Continued from page 3...
digital records and information available in digital formats for centuries. Almost none of them use microfilm these days...

“Finally, there is the issue of distribution. To view records of interest to you, do you want to go to a repository some distance away, perhaps hundreds of miles away, to look at a microfilm? Or would you rather stay at home, click the mouse a few times on your computer, and view the same image from the comfort of your own home? No travel expenses, no expensive gasoline, no venturing out in the weather, and probably much, much lower expenses. Even better, you will find the digital images are also much easier to share with others or to incorporate into your genealogy database or even into that book you are writing.”

Mr. Eastman notes that the conversion will take time and a few images may be of poor quality unless re-created from the originals, but he thinks genealogists will benefit from improved access and lower expenses.



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GENEALOGY: TIPS FOR FINDING FEMALES THAT MATTER TO YOU by Julie Miller

Identifying females is one of the hardest challenges genealogists face.

It might be that only the first name and married surname are known. Or perhaps a daughter disappears from census records and it is not known whom she married. The biggest obstacle when researching women is that their name changed when they married. This is compounded by fewer records. Before the 20th century, women did not have the same rights as men and, therefore, they generated considerably fewer records. Although few research problems are as difficult as finding the identity of females in our family history, there are records and strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges.

Often the answer to identifying a woman can be found in the records of her husband, son or brother. Men owned the land, they ran the businesses and their lives were recorded in more detail than women's. Look for clues about women in the records of the men in their lives.

Records relating to a child's birth, marriage and death will often give the mother's maiden name. Even a child's name can be a clue about a mother's maiden name. Children are often named after grandparents, uncles and aunts. A clue to a maiden name might be in a child's unusual first or middle name when the name is typically a surname.

Women can be found as witnesses on records. Marriage, baptismal and other legal documents are all examples of the types of records a woman might have witnessed. Making a connection between the woman witnessing the event and the names in the documents can lead to finding a woman's identity.

Some records that can be useful in finding female identities are:

1. Marriage records are the most obvious place to look for a maiden name and names of parents. This could be a civil marriage license or bond, a church marriage record or marriage

announcement. If the name of parents is not included, be sure to check the marriage records for all known siblings, since they might have information not included in the record for your direct line.

2. Death records usually include the maiden name of the deceased. They also might include the mother's maiden name. Again, checking for all the siblings of your direct line will increase the odds of finding the names of parents.

3. Church records usually list the maiden name of the mother in the baptismal record and the maiden name of the woman in a marriage record. A closer examination of church records will reveal that women were often witnesses for the baptisms and marriages of close family members.

4. Land records frequently show the passing of land ownership from one generation to the next. These records provide the names of wives and married daughters and, in some cases, the names of the daughter's husband.

5. Wills and probate records are one of the most useful records when looking for a woman's identity. Parents usually named each child in their will and it is common for each child to receive a portion of the estate. A woman also could have been named in the will and probate of grandparents and other relatives. Married names are usually used, and the name of their spouse also might be listed.

6. Pension files might include the maiden name of a pensioner's wife. They also can include affidavits from close family members who might be related to the wife. Widow pension files should have the maiden name in the proof that the woman was married to the pensioner.

7. Obituaries frequently list the maiden name of females or give the names of their parents. Additionally, a married name will be given

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JAMBOREE EXTENSION SERIES

The Southern California Genealogical Society (SCGS) has announced its Extension Webinar Series for 2012. Among the numerous speakers will be Drew Smith, George G. Morgan, Jana Broglin, Kerry Bartels, Michael John Neill, Jean Wilcox Hibben, and Gena Ortega.

SCGS is the first genealogical society to offer regularly scheduled webinar sessions. They will be held on the first Saturday and third Wednesday of each month, starting on Saturday, January 7, 2012. The live webcast is offered free of charge and open to the public.

Most participants attend via computer with audio speakers or a headset. A fast Internet connection (broadband or DSL) is best. For full details and registration information for each session, go to www.scgsgenealogy.com.

ELIZABETH SHOWN MILLS' WEBSITE <http://historicpathways.com>

“A popular lecturer and past president of both the American Society of Genealogists and the Board for Certification of Genealogists, Elizabeth is the author, editor, and translator of 13 books and over 500 articles in the fields of genealogy, history, literature, and sociology. She has delivered over 1,000 lectures internationally, has appeared on radio and TV talk shows on three continents, and was featured on BBC’s 20th and 30th anniversary specials on the novel *Roots*.”

This new website includes many articles that Elizabeth Shown Mills has written over the years, as well as a section on how to cite and where to find her books, and links to other helpful sites.

NEW ENGLAND STATE GUIDES

The Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants is preparing a set of guides to research in the New England states. Currently available are guides to Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. See this website: www.massmayflower.org/research/guides/guides.htm.

HISTORYPIN

“Have you ever looked at an historic storefront flanked by modern office buildings and wondered what the streetscape might have looked like back when that first building was constructed? If so, the National Archives’ new partnership with Historypin may be right up your alley! Historypin, a project of the British non-profit We Are What We Do™, seeks to build connections between multiple generations through an appreciation of the history of their shared communities. The site enables users to overlay (or “pin”) historic images, videos and audio recordings onto the sights of today, both online at Historypin.com and on the Historypin mobile app (available in the App Store and the Android Market). This new media mashup, which runs on Google maps, encourages visitors to add their own memories to the pinned records, highlighting the personal connection to changing landscapes.”

You can visit the National Archives on Historypin at <http://www.historypin.com/profile/view/USNatArchives>.

From NARations, the blog of the U.S. National Archives, on 30 Nov 2011.

1000memories <http://1000memories.com>

This website allows you to organize, share and discover the old photos and memories of your family and friends—and it’s free.

Organizers of the website say:

- They will preserve your memories in as close to a permanent way as possible.
- They use the world’s best data centers to protect and store your data.
- They partner with Internet Archive, the non-profit dedicated to preserving digital history.
- They allow you to make unlimited copies of memory pages to store offline.

To find out exactly how 1000memories works and to sign up, just visit the website. A comprehensive FAQ section is provided.



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ANOTHER SSDI CHANGE

Last month we reported that the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) will no longer contain entries obtained from state death records. Now a further restriction has been put on the information provided when a person applies for the Social Security application of an ancestor.

In her blog of 17 November 2011, Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak noted that a few years ago the Social Security Administration (SSA) had started blocking out the names of parents on applications for someone born from about 1940—the reason given being that the parents might still be alive.

“But recently—without any announcement—the Administration extended the restriction to 100 years—that is, 100 years from the birth of the applicant, so you can now only obtain this record in an unaltered state for those born prior to 1912.” Apparently, you can only receive a full application now if you can prove that the parents are deceased.

LAST RootsWeb Review

“Times change and researchers’ needs change. How people communicate and keep informed has evolved over time. That brings us to the final chapter for *The RootsWeb Review*. I like to think of it not as an ending but rather as a passage toward newer means of communication (as one door closes another one opens).

“Have you joined our RootsWeb Genealogists group on Facebook? Are you making use of the RootsWeb mailing lists and message boards? Volunteer list and board administrators as well as a large knowledgeable group of ‘experts’ on various surnames, localities and topics (religious groups, occupations, military, ethnic groups) are out there to help you on all of RootsWeb’s resources that have continued to expand over the years. RootsWeb search engines are still there to help you find what you are seeking.”

The above is an excerpt from the last issue of the RootsWeb Review, that appeared on 14 December 2011.

MOCAVO UK

In April of this year, we reported on a new search engine at www.mocavo.com that is free and geared toward genealogy sites. Now Mocavo has created another search engine for U.K. genealogy research. You can access it at www.mocavo.co.uk.

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when a woman is listed in the obituary of her father, mother or sibling.

8. Letters and diaries can be a source of information about females and their families. These are usually found in family records, either immediate family or that of a collateral line. If you suspect letters and diaries exist for a female in your genealogy but have not located the items, perhaps they have been donated to a repository. Check for these treasures in the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC), which is available online.

9. Census records are easily accessible and are full of information on female ancestors. Although census records do not ask for a maiden name, they give many clues about a woman’s origins. It is common to find children living with parents directly after they marry and for parents to live with married children as they age.

10. Cemetery records might list maiden names and they often hold clues about a family. People often bought cemetery lots close to other family members or bought lots large enough to accommodate extended family members. Look for the relationship between the deceased and the owner of the cemetery lot, which may be listed on the cemetery record.

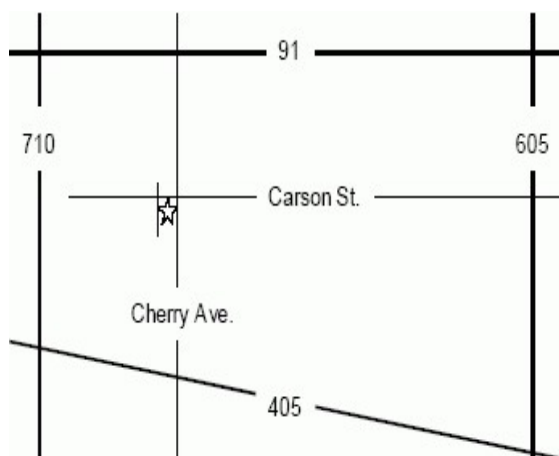
Females make up half of our ancestry, yet they are often neglected. Be sure you don’t shortchange the females in your family just because the research takes a little extra effort.

This article was posted on the Broomfield Enterprise (www.broomfieldenterprise.com) 17 Oct 2009. Julie Miller is a certified genealogist, a researcher, lecturer, and writer.



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Sunday, January 15, 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 page 2.



Sunday, January 22, 1:00-3:00 p.m. **British Isles Family History Society-USA** monthly meeting at the Los Angeles Family History Library, 10741 Santa Monica Blvd., West Los Angeles. Program: “Find A Grave: A Virtual Cemetery on the Internet,” by Cheri Mello.

Saturday, February 4, 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): “Land Ho! — Using Google Earth and the BLM Land Records to Pinpoint Ancestor Property,” by Blythe Stokes.



Upcoming Events

Genealogical Society of
North Orange County, CA, Seminar
Saturday, March 10, 2012
8:15 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Brea United Methodist Church
480 N. State College Blvd., Brea

John Philip Colletta, Ph.D., FUGA, known for his lively humor, clarity and effective presentations, will be the speaker. His topics will be:

- Naturalizations Records, 1790-1920s
- Lesser-Used Federal Records
- Federal Court Records, 1789-1920s
- Passenger Arrival Records, 1820-1957

Dr. Colletta taught workshops at the National Archives for 21 years.

Pre-register by March 3 @ \$30 for members and \$35 for non-members. A box lunch for \$9 is available for those who pre-register. Morning and afternoon snacks are included. Make checks payable to GSN OCC and mail to GSN OCC, PO Box 706, Yorba Linda, CA 92885

For more information, call 714-777-2379 or go to www.gsnocc.org.

*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. 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.