

QUESTING HEIRS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY *Newsletter*

Volume 45 ✦ Number 3 ✦ March 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, MARCH 18, 2012

**1:15 Class INTERMEDIATE: Creating Stories from Stats,
by Jean Wilcox Hibben**

2:00 Business

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

**2:45 General SPEAKER: Jean Wilcox Hibben, PhD, MA, CG
Meeting Researching German Records**

**4:00 Class BEGINNING: Genealogy Adventures—Military
Records, by Linda Ivers**

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Reports</i>	18
<i>Commentary: Genealogy Sites Pressured into Removing SSDI</i>	19
<i>Questing Heirs News</i>	20
<i>February Meeting in Review: The 1940 Census</i>	21
<i>On the Web</i>	22
<i>Of Interest</i>	23
<i>Calendar</i>	24



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MARCH MEETING

INTERMEDIATE CLASS

Turning Genealogy into Family History:
Creating Stories from Stats

Intergenerational stories are links to the past, but many people (especially the younger generations) become “turned off” by the lists of names, dates, and places. How can we make genealogy “come alive” for our descendants? This program explores turning statistics into stories and facts into fascination. Designed for all levels of experience.

MAIN PRESENTATION

Researching German Records When You Live in America and Don’t Speak German

Many of us trace our roots to the first immigrants to this country...then stop. This lecture will focus on the process of finding those ancestors who came from Germany and continuing the research with German records. It addresses what informative clues can be found on census records, how to use the FamilySearch Catalog to locate records filmed in Germany, using the IGI to research German records, how to LEARN to read Gothic German script, how to recognize key words (birth, death, marriage, etc.), how to document your sources, finding resources for translating documents, using the *Meyers Orts* gazetteer, and how to convert the French Republic Calendar. This is also a helpful program for those researching immigrants from other countries, as systems of research are the same or similar.

SPEAKER:

JEAN WILCOX HIBBEN

A native of the Chicago area, Jean has a PhD in folklore and MA degree in Speech Communication. A national speaker and former college professor, she is a Board-Certified genealogist; Director of the Corona, Calif., Family History Center; volunteer at NARA’s Pacific Region facility; President of the Corona Genealogical Society and the So. Calif. Chapter of the Assoc. of Professional Genealogists (as well as a Board member for

Continued on page 20

REFRESHMENTS

Penny NUGENT (562) 290-0416

Thanks to our February hosts:

Larry AKAU Marilyn BRASHER
Frances LIEBZET Liz MYERS

Our March hosts will be:

Maxine PITTS Ken SAW
Linda SIMIEN Sharon SIMMONS

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Terry HAMILTON (562) 596-9382

FEBRUARY MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members: 41 Guests: 7

FINANCIAL REPORT

David WERTS (562) 431-7790

January Income:	\$ 175.81
January Expenses:	\$ 206.21
F&M Bank balance:	\$ 4,590.14
Operations balance:	\$ 672.12
Special Projects balance:	\$ 3,918.02

**Submissions for the
April Newsletter
are due March 25.**

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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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GENEALOGY SITES PRESSURED INTO REMOVING SSDI

by Kimberly Powell of About.com

[Continued from the February newsletter, p. 11]

The authors then go on to say “*While removing the Social Security numbers is preferred, your organization could also take a common-sense measure to protect Social Security numbers by only revealing the first three digits, also known as the ‘area number.’ This portion of the number is assigned by geographic region. As a result, these three numbers could also help researchers identify an individual based on geographic location without revealing the entire Social Security number.*

How many of you have requested a copy of an ancestor’s SS-5, or Social Security Application Form, based on information found in the SSDI? How many of you found the information obtained from this form (which can include much beyond just date of birth and death including parents’ full names, current employer, etc.) *of little benefit?* You can, of course, request a copy of the SS-5 without a Social Security number, but it requires more work and time on the part of the SSA to respond to your request, and costs more to boot.

There are serious issues faced by individuals who are not dead whose information is mistakenly reported in the Death Master File. The time and paperwork to prove that you are not dead can be overwhelming. But this would still be an issue whether the database is publicly available or not. The birth date of these living individuals would also be publicly available in the SSDI, but for most people this is information that can easily be obtained from other sources as well.

As Megan Smolenyak so eloquently states in her article “Are We Going to Lose the Social Security Death Index (SSDI)?” “...removing the database won’t put a dent in the problem.” Closing the door to the SSDI won’t solve many of the problems the proposed legislation is trying to address, and there are other ramifications that perhaps the Senators and

public have not considered. This database, as Megan points out, is used to good end by many people not immediately related to the deceased; use of the SSDI has helped investigators to solve cold cases as well as help identify next-of-kin for unclaimed coroner cases and soldiers whose remains have been recovered years or even decades after their death. The National Technical Information Service points out use of the Death Master File by medical researchers, hospitals and oncology programs needing to track former patients and study subjects.

Also of note is the fact that the SSDI is not the only source of Social Security numbers available online. Ancestry.com has removed Social Security numbers from its SSDI database for deaths that have occurred within the past 10 years, but I can still access the Social Security number for my father-in-law who died in 2009 in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010, also online at Ancestry.com.

Rather than respond in panic or cave to public pressure and scrutiny, I would hope that the genealogy companies would instead focus on the needs of their customers by working with legislators to further educate them on the full range of issues involved, and perhaps find a compromise that better meets the need of both open access and privacy protection. Senator Bill Nelson, for example, is proposing stiffer penalties for those who steal identities for tax purposes as well as restricting public access to dead taxpayer’s information for at least a year after their death. That’s a far cry from removing the entire SSDI from public access, and also focuses on the problem (the illegal and immoral actions of the identity thieves themselves) rather than further restricting access to a valuable tool that was **created for the purpose of deterring fraud**. A change in IRS law, increasing the service’s legal authority to share information on identity theft cases with outside law enforcement authorities, or

Concluded on page 20

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I have an addiction! We amateur genealogists all joke about having an addiction to genealogy. However, last night I discovered and admitted to myself I have an addiction to one particular sub-set of genealogy research. One definition of addiction is “to devote or surrender oneself to something habitually or obsessively.” It happened to me last night.

I had sat down at the computer to write this article—on deadline as usual. My other “indulged inclination” is always to check my email before I get to the business at hand.

This sub-set genealogy addiction has just been “coming on me” the last three or so years since more and more whole searchable databases have become present on line. Last night I was just going to quickly read what Dick Eastman had on his free website to which I subscribe. He listed 21 databases that Family Search has just put online. The addiction’s first signs became present when I saw a listing of Colorado, Statewide Marriage Index, 1900-1939. I told myself, “maybe right now I’ll just check to see if my parents are listed.” Yes, I found my parents. I was hooked. Seven of my parents’ siblings later, I had experienced full-blown addiction.

Seeing these listings that I think might contain information of interest to me has happened to me several times in the last few years. Most often the material I have found has been what I would call “human interest” and has not extended my factual genealogy. A picture hung in my grandparents’ home of a young man in uniform who was killed in WWI. How could I resist going to a database listed as U.S. Marine Corps Muster Rolls, 1798-1940? An entry on the day of his death gave the details. For several hours longer my addiction caused me to trace him back on the muster rolls. When I find material such as this, I don’t intend to try to cure my addiction. These extremely rewarding finds of a personal nature, or corroboration of facts, are worth every downside of my addiction.

J.J

If you would like to help make the 1940 census freely searchable online, take a look at <http://the1940census.com>. There you will be able to sign up, download the necessary software, and learn how to index.

Continued from page 18...

APG); and secretary for the Genealogical Speakers Guild. Jean lives in the Lake Mathews area of Riverside County, California; maintains a regular blog at <www.circlemending.blogspot.com>; and can be reached through her website at <www.circlemending.org>.

Continued from page 19...

even with taxpayers themselves, would also better directly address the issue — a loophole closure that has been introduced in several bills since 2001 with little traction. My heart goes out to the parents of those deceased children whose identities were stolen...

SSDI UPDATE

Since Kimberly Powell wrote her article in mid-December, events relating to SSDI access have continued to unfold.

U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson (R-TX), who is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security of the House Committee on Ways and Means, called a hearing for February 2 to discuss H.R.3475 (Keeping IDs Safe Act of 2011). No one representing the genealogy community was invited to speak. Input from citizens by regular mail or e-mail to the bill’s sponsors or their own Congressional Representatives had to be received by February 16.

The Records Preservation & Access Committee (RPAC), a joint coalition of international genealogical societies, has started a Stop ID Theft NOW! campaign with a White House Petition. To sign the petition, go to <http://wh.gov/khE>. They need 25,000 signatures by **March 8**, and on February 27 only 4,633 people had signed. You can find more information at <http://www.fgs.org/rpac>.



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THE 1940 CENSUS by Joel Weintraub

Content and Controversy

Information on this census is as of April 1, 1940. It's being made available at 9:00 a.m. (EDT) on April 2 this year because April 1 falls on a Sunday.

The Enumerator's Instruction Handbook is available online at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) website. The enumerator handed in a card every day. He wasn't paid a base salary, but was paid so much per person. If no one was home, he could make inquiries of a neighbor. Whoever provided the information, if the census taker thought an answer was not correct, he could put down what he thought was correct.

Regarding place of birth, in the case of someone who was foreign born, he was to give the name of the place as of January 1, 1937, due to boundary changes resulting from WWII. Sometimes a country wasn't given; so, you might find the name of a town or province instead.

If a person lived in a different place on April 1, 1935, he was to identify that town/city, county and state of residence also.

Because many people were still unemployed as a result of the Great Depression, a number of questions regarding work had to be answered for anyone aged 14 years or older.

About 5% of the population, usually those listed on lines 14 and 29 of the form, answered 15 Supplementary Questions. They dealt with information about parents, veterans, Social Security, and for women the number of times married, age at first marriage, and number of children.

The census forms have already been digitized. The original Population Schedules were destroyed before filming and the Agricultural Schedules after filming.

It's estimated that the undercount in the 1940 census was about 5%.

Locational Search Tools

When the 1940 census becomes available online, it will not have an index! Several companies will start indexing projects right away. Ancestry.com has said it will make its indexes free until the end of 2013. Family Search will be working with Archives.com and FindMyPast to make an index available also, and it will remain free.

So, why bother to make a locational search, then?

- To find people when the index fails.
- To confirm skipped addresses.
- To search for a common name in a city.
- To locate people before the indexes have been created.

NARA's website at <http://www.archives.gov/research/census/1940/start-research.html> tells how to start your search. Once you have an address, it provide maps to help you identify the proper Enumeration District (ED), but Steve Morse's utilities at <http://stevemorse.org/census> are easier to use.

He offers three utilities to compute EDs for 1940 addresses:

1. To find EDs in major cities
2. To convert a 1930 ED to a 1940 ED
3. To identify ED descriptions for

rural areas and urban ones under 50,000 population.

To determine which utility is best for your circumstances, take the Tutorial Quiz or use the Unified ED Finder. It allows you to enter the state/county/city or town/house number/ and street you're interested in. The applicable ED list will appear. To narrow the list, choose a cross street. Clicking on the ED gives you the microfilm roll number and a list of streets. Then click to "View Microfilm."

[Editor's Note - NARA and Archives.com have announced that the website hosting the 1940 census will be found at: <http://1940.census.archives.gov>.]



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UPPER CANADA LAND PETITIONS

The Library and Archives Canada website has an online database called “Upper Canada Land Petitions (1763-1865).” An explanation of this source follows.

“Before the arrival of the Loyalists and British military settlers, the present-day Province of Ontario was an extension of the Province of Quebec. Following the *Constitutional Act of 1791*, the colony of Quebec was divided to create Upper Canada (today Ontario) and Lower Canada (today Quebec). Many early settlers, both military and civilian, submitted petitions to the Governor to obtain Crown land. Sons and daughters of Loyalists were also entitled to free lands.

“The Upper Canada Land Petitions contain petitions for grants or leases of land and other administrative records. This research tool provides access to more than 82,000 references to individuals who lived in present-day Ontario between 1783 and 1865.”

Dick Eastman pointed out on his blog of 11 Feb 2012 (<http://blog.eogn.com>) that recently two major additions have been made to this database:

- More that 5,000 references to land petitions occurring in the Upper Canada Sundries have been added, and
- All suggestions for corrections received from users since the original launch in September 2010 have been integrated.

The database is available at www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/upper-canada-land/index-e.html.

There are also digitized images of the Upper Canada land petitions from 327 microfilm reels. You can access them by going to www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/index-e.html. Then search the A-Z Index for Microform Digitization. At the resulting page, choose Browse by Title page. Next choose “Upper Canada Land Petitions (1763-1865)” and then the year you want. Since the films are not a database, they are not searchable by keyword.

YOU CAN TRANSCRIBE IT!

The National Archives has started a Transcription Pilot Project this year by which “citizen archivists” can help make historical documents more accessible. The website at: <http://archives.gov/citizen-archivist-transcribe> describes the program.

“The transcription tool will feature over 300 documents ranging from the late 18th century through the 20th century for citizen archivists to transcribe. Documents will include letters to a civil war spy, various laws and acts, Presidential records, suffrage petitions, and indictments, and fugitive slave case files. Documents will be categorized based on the level of difficulty: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced.

“In the pilot, you’ll be able to select documents based on level of difficulty, year, and status of transcription (“Not Yet Started,” “Partially Transcribed,” and “Completed”). You’ll be able to search for key words like “Civil War” and “Lincoln.” In the comments field you’ll be able to discuss difficulties with transcription, including debating individual handwritten words or letters in the document.

“When you participate in the pilot, we hope you’ll enjoy taking part in the iterative process of crowd-sourced transcription by improving on a transcript that has already been started. We also hope you’ll be spurred to look at the document in our online catalog and learn more about the context for each document.”

If you’d like to participate in this project, take a look at <http://transcribe.archives.gov> to see what documents are waiting to be transcribed at the different levels mentioned. Tabs are provided so you can Browse Documents, get Tips, and find answers to FAQ.

The National Archives has also started the WikiProject NARA. “This WikiProject aims to co-ordinate and oversee the addition of valuable works from NARA in the Wikisource corpus.” You’ll find more about this project at http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Wikisource:WikiProject_NARA.

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FILM LOAN INCREASE

Due to the increase in the price of raw microfilm stock, the decreasing availability of this product on the market, and higher costs to ship microfilm, FamilySearch increased the price of film loans to family history centers on February 15, 2012. The new prices are:

- Short-term film loan \$ 7.50
- Short-term film loan extension \$ 7.50
- Extended film loan \$18.75
- Microfiche loan \$ 4.75

FAMILY HISTORY INFORMATION STANDARDS ORGANIZATION

“FHISO (<http://fhiso.org>) is a newly-formed international organisation created to develop standards for the digital representation and sharing of family history and genealogical information. The standards will solve today’s interoperability issues independently of technology platforms, genealogy products or services. They will provide opportunities for innovation and will address robust user requirements such as search, capture and research administration. In the fall of 2010, a group of dedicated technologists and users formed the “Build a Better GEDCOM Project” to improve data exchange standards and to facilitate sharing between researchers. This grassroots effort has grown into a dynamic, open forum for the exchange of ideas, and a substantial body of work has been produced. In order to realise the project goals, a more structured, organised environment was needed. FHISO will provide this environment.

“The FHISO process will identify practices and trends that require standardisation. It will provide a transparent, collaborative environment promoting innovation and consensus-building for the development of open standards. Following publication, the organisation will provide education and other support to encourage standards adoption and use. The FHISO standards will be publicly available at zero or minimal cost on a non-discriminatory basis. Anyone will be able to implement the standards for any purpose without royalty or license fees.

“FHISO will be community-owned. Membership is available to all who participate in the global family history and genealogical community.

“The success of FHISO depends on the voluntary participation of its members representing all the global stakeholder groups. In the standards-setting process, there is no substitute for the active involvement of vendors, developers, technologists, users and family history or genealogy organisations.

“For more information, visit FHISO on the Web at <http://fhiso.org>. Follow us on twitter@fhisorg; <http://facebook.org/fhiso>; <http://goo.gl/FsYa5> on Google+.”

This announcement was made at Salt Lake City, Utah, USA—Wednesday, February 1, 2012.

P.E.I. ACADIAN ANCESTORS?

“Acadian researchers at l’Université de Moncton have discovered a list of 289 names of Acadians who were living on Prince Edward Island in 1763, but they’re still trying to reach a consensus about what exactly the rare list was for.

“Regis Brun, an archivist at the university’s centre d’études acadiennes, believes it’s a list of Acadians held prisoner by the British at Fort Amherst, now a historic site on the shores of Charlottetown Harbour...

“However, Stephen White, a genealogist at the centre, thinks the list could be a petition to the French king.

“At the end of the so-called Seven Years War, the French were inviting Acadians who had been deported to settle in French colonies, mainly in the Caribbean, Santo Domingo and Haiti, said White...

“Regardless of its origin, the document is valuable because, unlike most of the other lists of the day, it gives the names of the husbands and the wives, as well as the number of children they had.”

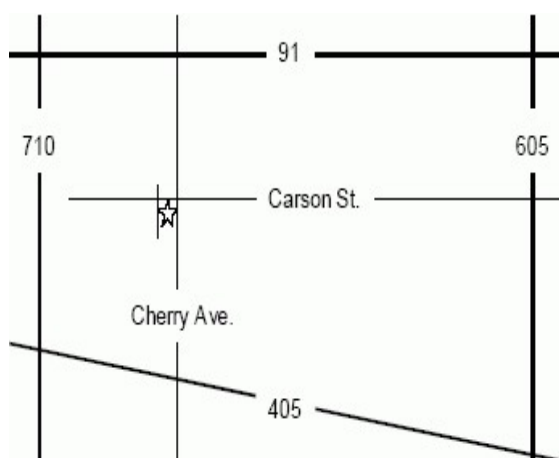
This article was published by CBC News on 31 Jan 2012 and can be viewed at <http://goo.gl/FkyhP>. Copyright 2012 by CBC Radio-Canada.



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Sunday, March 11, 2:00 p.m. Immigrant Genealogical Society monthly meeting at 1310 Magnolia Blvd., Burbank. Program: "Family Stories: Secrets, Lies and Surprises," by Donie Nelson.

Sunday, March 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 page 18.



Wednesday, March 21, 7:00 p.m. South Bay Cities Genealogical Society monthly meeting in the Meeting Room at the Torrance Civic Center Library, 3301 Torrance Blvd., Torrance. Program: "WWI Draft Registration Records," by Paul Lipinski.

Sunday, March 25, 1:00 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: "Digital Cameras for Genealogists," by Alice Colby Volkert.

Saturday, April 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 Your Elusive Ancestor: the Genealogical Proof Standard and Doing A Reasonably Exhaustive Search," by Randy Seaver.

Upcoming Events

Southern California Genealogical Society
JAMBOREE

Friday-Sunday, June 8-10, 2012
LA Marriott Burbank Airport Hotel
2500 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank

This year's theme is "Lights, Camera, ANCESTORS—Spotlight on Family History."

Jamboree will feature nearly 60 speakers and over 100 courses over the weekend. The exhibit hall, home of nearly 70 companies, societies, online data providers, software and technology companies, will be open to the public throughout the weekend.

Several free sessions are offered Friday morning for librarians, genealogical society leaders, beginners, and experienced genealogists. Kids' Family History Camp (for ages 8-16) will be held on Thursday from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.

For full details and to register, you can visit www.scgsgenealogy.com. You can also contact Paula Hinkel by phone at (818) 574-8393 or by e-mail at phinkel@scgsgenealogy.com. Early-bird registration discounts are available through April 22.

*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.