

QUESTING HEIRS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

**Our next meeting will be
December 20 on Zoom**

12:30 Social Time

1:00 Speaker Presentation

Jane Neff Rollins

'The Family Patchwork –
Stitching Families Separated by History Back Together'

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings are held on the third Sunday of the month at 1:00 p.m. at the Lakewood Masonic Center, 5918 E. Parkcrest Street, in Long Beach California. See the map on the last page.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Dues are \$30 per year for an individual or \$45 per year for a family.

Look for us on the Web:

<http://www.qhgs.info/>

or on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/QuestingHeirs/>

[QuestingHeirs/](https://www.facebook.com/QuestingHeirs/)

QHGS is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Donations are tax-deductible.

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DECEMBER QUOTE

'People are hungry for stories. It's part of our very being. Storytelling is a form of history, of immortality too. It goes from one generation to another.'

- Studs Terkel

• Our December Speaker – Jane Neff Rollins •

Jane Neff Rollins is a professional genealogist at Sherlock Combs Genealogy who works primarily with clients whose ancestors came from the Russian Empire. Jane began researching when genealogists had to scroll microfilm at the Family History Library. The first time she saw her great-grandfather on the 1900 census, she cried. Since then, she has researched in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Washington DC, and Jerusalem. She has spoken at IAJGS, NGS, Genealogy Jamboree, and other venues. Her writing has appeared in NGS Magazine, Legacies, and Crossroads. She is the recipient of the FGS 2020 FORUM Writers Award.



The Family Patchwork – Stitching Families Separated by History Back Together

One of the most enriching aspects of genealogy research is the opportunity to reconnect with family members that have long been separated, whether through world events or through family estrangement. How can the genealogist find those long-lost cousins and start to stitch the family back together? Attend this presentation to find out traditional and high-tech ways to find living relatives.

• QHGS President's Message •

Great news! We finally have a newsletter editor! Thank you, Cheryl Simmons for taking on this job. A huge thank you to Janice Miller for her fantastic newsletters over the last couple years and for being a vital member at our board meetings.

This year brought challenges that affected our genealogy meetings. After a few months of not knowing what to do, we joined the Zoom community so we could continue our meetings with speakers. It isn't the same as being together and I believe we will have to meet this way at least thru part of 2021.

This year with no holiday potluck or genealogy bingo to play, we will meet on Zoom for a presentation by Jane Neff Rollins.

I wish everyone a happy holiday season. Please stay safe!

If you have any questions, concerns, ideas or suggestions, please let me know. You can find my contact information in the member directory or contact me at: questingheirs@gmail.com

Christina "Tina" McKillip

• QHGS Meetings in 2021 •

January 17, 2021	May 16, 2021	September 19, 2021
February 21, 2021	June 20, 2021	October 17, 2021
March 21, 2021	July 18, 2021	November 21, 2021
April 18, 2021	August 15, 2021	December 17, 2021

• Thank You from the Director - Newsletter •

This will be my last QHGS newsletter and I wanted to take a moment to thank you all for your support. Many of you sent emails or came up to me in meetings to thank me for a particular article or the newsletter in general. Those words meant the world to me and encouraged me to research new articles for each edition. I hope you enjoyed reading it and maybe learned something new to further your research along the way.

I have enjoyed my three-year tenure and learned many things during those years. I'm looking forward to spending my free time next year taking online genealogy classes, watching webinars and of course, working on my own family tree. I look forward to a day soon, that we can all meet face to face in the same physical space again.

Janice Miller

• Writing Your Family History in 2021 •

An article by Janice Miller

We all have family trees and spend free time researching our ancestors. That research and those family trees have been saved to computer programs that also generate custom reports. But these facts can appear quite flat when you read through them. I'd like to encourage you to make 2021 the year you begin to write at least one story from your family's history. It will be a blessing to you and members of your family to read a beautiful story you have written based on facts from your research over the years.

As I have started to write, I have a new appreciation for all that my ancestors endured and what life was like in their generation. There is a new understanding how each choice they made shaped my own destiny. Writing a story about them is a gift I can leave to my family.

Family histories are not written overnight. Take time in your writing and think about setting up a schedule and not a deadline. Don't stress about completing your story. It is a big project and you might want to break it up into smaller pieces. Creating a small, finished history is better than a huge project that only lives in your imaginings.

Before you start, quickly look through a few family histories online. Get a feel for what you like and what you don't like. You can then make a list and write up a quick outline of what you might cover in your story.

TYPES OF FAMILY HISTORIES

There are many types of family histories. I've done the following over the last ten years for family members.

- ✓ Recipes from family and ancestors collected in a printed book
- ✓ Scrapbook of ancestor photos and other illustrations with a relationship chart for each ancestor
- ✓ Narrative family history with illustrations, facts and stories

There are many ways to honor your family. Other family histories could include a collection of genealogy reports, newspapers articles, time capsules, collections of documents or ephemera, recollections of your childhood and simple photo albums. Ask yourself what works for you and how much time you have for this project.

WHO DO I START WITH?

This is the million-dollar question. If you were to ask 50 friends, you'd probably get 50 different answers. You could start with a favorite ancestor that you knew well or who had an interesting life. Others might suggest that you pick one ancestor and document all of that person's ancestors. You could pick a couple and identify all of their descendants, telling a few stories about the family's growth and migration. Perhaps you could retell your parent's story for your children. Whew! That sounds like you won't be able to leave the house for a full year (like most of 2020).

Be thorough in your story telling but do not include everything you know about each individual. Readers of our stories not need to hear all the little details we've all dug up late at night doing research while others slept.

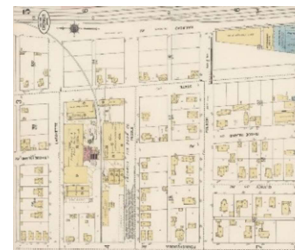
YOU'LL NEED A PLAN

First decide who your audience will be. It might be family or a professional genealogy organization. This early decision will determine many factors as you go along. Create an outline or timeline of the events you will cover. Arrange it so that it makes sense to you and flows from one section to the next. It will be easier to read if you are consistent in your writing and formatting style. Your outline will probably change throughout the project as you remember additional details.



THE STORY

How many times have you heard that a good story has a beginning, a middle and an end? Your family history will be well documented with details like names, dates and locations. You can tell the story of your ancestor's lives using these facts and adding in the background information you have collected. Your story will immerse the reader in the lives of their ancestors, feeling more connected to family and the past.



You could start at the beginning of the principal's life like 'HB was born on a farm in Texas in 1877'. Or do you start in the middle of his life with a story that grabs the reader's attention. If you start in the middle, you can always flash back to the beginning of his life.

Here are some alternative starts to this story.

- ✓ I grew up hearing that my 2X great grandfather and 3X Great grandfather married each other's daughters. How was this possible? It really didn't surprise us, as this was the scandalous branch of our family tree. But the facts told the real story. Both men had first wives who died early and lived on neighboring farms. My 2X great grandfather married the neighbor's daughter by his first wife, while my 3X great grandfather father married my 2X GG's sister. Think about the family relationships that just got a little more complicated.
- ✓ HB was a man of many talents. Before he was twenty, he found himself serving time in prison for forgery at the same time that his younger brother was in the same prison for stealing a horse. After this misstep, he went on to have successful occupations as mayor, grocery store owner, logger and farmer.
- ✓ HB deserted his first wife after 22 years of marriage. He married for a second time two years later, just months before their first child was born. He was 53 and his new bride was only 19. HB and BB were happily married until his death 37 years later. By 1947 he had nine children ranging in age from one to forty years of age. HB's first wife went on to marry five more times.

TIME TO GATHER

It is time to gather photographs and documents that will add to the story. Search for family portraits, photographs of events, announcements of weddings, pictures of churches and schools attended, and the family home.

Create an image of what their life was at the time. Images and documents add depth to a story in a way that cold facts cannot. I've included a list of documents set aside for the ancestor story I plan to write in January. You won't be able to include everything you've gathered, so try to narrow it down to the most interesting stories, important events and photos during their life. Check out these suggestions.

- ✓ Photos: homes, families, gravestones, vintage postcards
- ✓ Maps: street level maps, migration, boundary
- ✓ Legal documents: wills & probate records, orphan court records, lawsuits, prison records
- ✓ Official records: census data, immigration records, birth, death, marriage, military & draft records

- ✓ Family history: oral interviews with family members, county histories, letters, recipes
- ✓ Genealogy reports: pedigree chart, descendant report, family group sheet, Ahnentafel, timeline report
- ✓ Special events: certificates, awards, graduations (and schools attended)
- ✓ Newspaper articles: marriage, death, travel, divorce, lawsuit, jobs held

Consult your supporting documents as you write. Don't rely solely on your memory. Obituaries can be particularly useful for family relationships. I had a great grandmother who saved all the obituaries of her family and friends for future generations. She first cut them out of the newspaper and then pasted them or the funeral programs into a book. The book was a copy of the *White House Cookbook* that was originally sold in the Sears Roebuck catalog in the 1890s. This book has been passed down several generations in our family.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

As with any good story, background information is vital to describing the relevant details of your narrative and adds interest. What background information might relate to the facts that you include? Wouldn't it be wonderful to have your reader feel like he was an actual witness to your family's life?

There are many town histories on the Internet that can be accessed for free. You'll notice that they include events that influenced their community and citizens. Natural disasters, political events, photos, and a history of the town, county and state can be included. Here are only a few suggestions about background to include.

- ✓ Write about the places your family lived from and describe the times in which they lived.
- ✓ Create a map showing how their migration from one area to the next and perhaps the reasons for it.
- ✓ Describe the various occupations your ancestor had. Do you know why they changed over time?
- ✓ Include photographs or illustrations that enhance the events you include in your story.
- ✓ Disasters that affected them, their property or livelihood over time.
- ✓ Hardships, tragedies or positive events over their lifetime.
- ✓ Challenges and the choices they made over time and possible reasons.
- ✓ If they immigrated to the United States, did they speak English?
- ✓ Were there harsh conditions? Did they have to build their own roads, home or clear the land?
- ✓ What was a typical day in their lifetime?
- ✓ Were they well off financially or did they struggle?

WRITE, WRITE, WRITE - EDIT, EDIT, EDIT

When our children first started bringing assignments home from school, I recall my dear husband telling to them 'write, write, write - edit, edit, edit'. Remember this as you write your family's story. Let your ideas flow. Get those thoughts and stories down in writing and save editing until you have it all committed to paper. It is okay to get the punctuation wrong or put things out of order in your first draft.

Writing is not always easy. Give yourself breaks as you write. Breaks can be an hour between sessions or even days or weeks. Do what works best for you. The time you spend committing these stories to paper preserves them for generations after you. No matter how much you write, you'll be further ahead than if you had never started.

ORGANIZING

Once you have decided who will read your family history, decisions about the formality of the layout might become clearer. The length will also determine how detailed you will be. Some things you might include in your history are shown below. But this is your project, so you should decide what you include.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| ✓ Cover, title page, preface | ✓ Maps |
| ✓ Header, footer, page numbers | ✓ Narrative (story) |
| ✓ Index of names | ✓ Source citations |
| ✓ List of illustrations | ✓ Table of contents |

A FEW CONSIDERATIONS

Be honest in your storytelling. I'm reminded of a family story told by my grandmother that her father was mentored by a Texas Ranger after he and his siblings were left as orphans. My great Aunt delighted in telling all that he was instead a guest of Huntsville Prison for stealing to help feed his family. You can use your research skills to back up one story or another when oral interviews conflict.

Be mindful of writing something that while truthful, may hurt a family member who is still living or their memory. Is it necessary to include in your story? If you include DNA information, realize that it may expose secrets that were not known before.

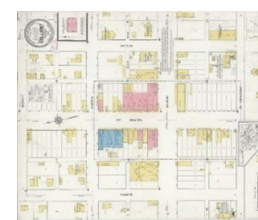
Enjoy telling your family's story. Try to leave judgments out as you write. Some might be scandalized by what they read, but most will be intrigued and impressed by what you have written.

FREE WORKSHEET

If you need help getting started on this project, download the free 'Organize Your Family History Writing Project' worksheet from Family Tree Magazine at <https://www.familytreemagazine.com/freebie/free-organize-family-history-writing-project-worksheet/> There are sections for project summary, audience, stories to include, visuals and format.

A FINAL WORD

The stories that you commit to paper might be even more important than researching one more branch of the family tree. The reality of life is that children in this generation or the next, will not hear the stories of our ancestors unless we put them to paper to ensure that they live on. I will leave you with a quote from John Bond, the author of *The Story of You: A Guide for Writing Your Personal Stories and Family History*. 'You are doing a service by leaving a legacy, no matter how small or large.'



• It is time to renew your QHGS membership •



The Questing Heirs Genealogical Society membership year runs from January 1st through December 31st. Your dues help fund speakers and other activities throughout the year. Please complete the form on page 81 when you have a moment. Because we are not meeting in person right now, please mail the completed membership renewal form and your check to our post office box at: Questing Heirs Genealogical Society, PO Box 15102, Long Beach, CA 90815-0102

Treasurer Report by Bob Prager

(July-September 2020)

Income: \$0.00

Expenses: \$154.05

F&M checking balance: \$3,650.08

Fidelity balance: \$21,489.70

Membership Report by Cynthia Day Elliott

There were 31 participants at the November Zoom meeting.

• An Unusual Lineage Society •

An article by QHGS Member Bob Prager

We've all heard of the DAR or the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, but during my genealogical research, I've come across one of the more unusual such societies – the **Flagon and Trencher Society**.

This group is open to those persons (male or female) who can prove direct descent from someone who conducted a tavern, inn, ordinary, or other type of hostelry prior to 4 July 1776 (within any of the American Colonies that existed at that time). The Society (flagonandtrencher.org) was founded as a result of a parenthetical remark in a speech at the National Genealogical Society in 1962 that there seemed to be lineage societies for all kinds of ancestors except tavern-keepers. When someone in the audience responded "Let's found one", they did, with their goal at the time being "an annual dinner at an old inn, with colonial menu (solid and liquid) spiced with learned and witty addresses on suitable topics."

They maintain an extensive list on their website of known qualifying tavernkeepers, and if you can prove descent from one of these individuals (or provide information proving another ancestor should have been listed), you qualify for membership!

• Questing Heirs Genealogical Society Board for 2021 •

According to the QHGS Bylaws (Article VII, Section I), 'The Officers of the Society shall be a President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Past President, and three (3) Directors', Article V, Section I states that 'The members shall meet annually on the third (3rd) Sunday of November for the purpose of electing Officers and transacting other business as may come before the meeting'.

The following slate of officers and were presented to QHGS members present and they were elected unanimously at the November 15, 2020 meeting.

President.....	Christina McKillip.....	(2021-2022)
1 st Vice President – Programs	Jerry Hardison	(2021)
2 nd Vice President – Membership	Melanie Heath	(2021-2022)
Secretary	Diana Transue.....	(2020-2021)
Treasurer	Bob Prager	(2020-2021)
Director – Hospitality.....	Tina Yanis.....	(2021-2022)
Director – Newsletter.....	Cheryl Simmons	(2021-2022)
Director– Publicity.....	Nina Gustin	(2021)
Past President.....	Sandy McDonald.....	(2021)

QHGS Volunteer Positions

Digital Archive Project.....	Barbara Cooper and Cynthia Day-Elliott
Research/Historian.....	Tina Yanis
Refreshments.....	Sandy Hollandsworth
Social Media/Facebook Coordinator	Laurie Angel
Webmaster	Mike Powers

QUESTING HEIRS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBER APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

I am a New member
 Current member renewing

Name _____

Spouse's Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip+4 _____

Phone () _____

E-Mail Address _____

Member Type:	Individual (\$30)	\$ _____
	Family (\$45)	\$ _____
	Donation	\$ _____
	Total Paid	\$ _____

Please return your membership form to:

Questing Heirs Genealogical Society, PO Box 15102, Long Beach, CA 90815-0102

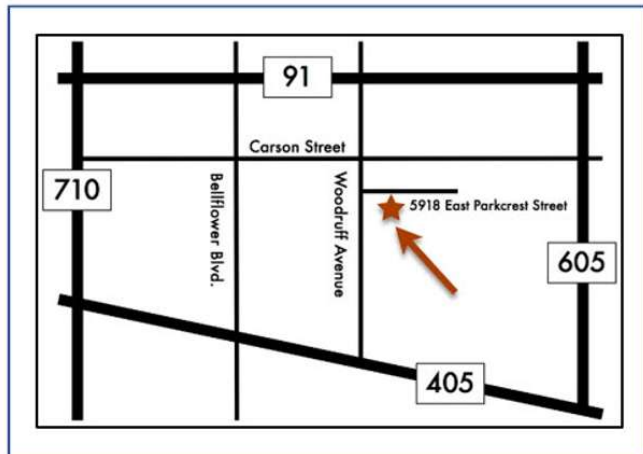
Beginning in 2021 the membership year runs from January 1 through December 31.

Please take a few minutes to list/update your surname research and location preferences so our Program Chairman can engage speakers who will interest you.

Also, the information will be printed in the directory.

Surnames you are researching: _____

Areas of your research (countries/states/counties): _____



Lakewood Masonic Center • 5918 Parkcrest Street Long Beach, CA

Questing Heirs Genealogical Society Board

- President..... Christina McKillip..... (2019-2020)
- 1st Vice President – Programs Terry Hamilton..... (2018-2020)
- 2nd Vice President – Membership Cynthia Day-Elliott..... (2019-2020)
- Secretary Diana Transue..... (2020-2021)
- Treasurer Bob Prager..... (2020-2021)
- Director – Hospitality..... Tina Yanis (2019-2020)
- Director – Newsletter..... Janice Miller (2019-2020)
- Director– Publicity Jerry Hardison..... (2020-2021)
- Past President..... Sandy McDonald..... (2019-2020)

QHGS Volunteer Positions

- Digital Archivist.....Vacant
- Research/HistorianTina Yanis
- Refreshments.....Sandy Hollandsworth
- Social Media/Facebook Coordinator.....Laurie Angel
- WebmasterMike Powers

Submissions for the January 2021 newsletter must be received by noon December 23, 2020.

The newsletter has been published since 1969 by Questing Heirs Genealogical Society, Inc. Submissions, including queries, corrections, or any questions regarding the newsletter should be sent to: Janice Miller, QHGS, P.O. Box 15102, Long Beach, CA 90815-0102, or emailed to questingheirs@gmail.com. We are not responsible for the accuracy of material published, but will gladly print corrections. Newsletter illustrations: QHGS logo designed by Mike Powers. Photographs courtesy of Jane Neff Rollins (p. 75), Janice Miller (pages 77, 79). All other illustrations are in the public domain and come from New York Public Library, Library of Congress, Wikimedia Commons, Dover Royalty Free Clip Art or as sited.

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In order to receive the monthly newsletter, one must be enrolled as a member of the Society. To join, please contact Membership Chair Cynthia Day-Elliott at (562)427-9663