



QUESTING HEIRS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 37 ♦ Number 8 ♦ August 2004

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS ♦ 1969-2004

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



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



SUNDAY, AUGUST 15, 2004

1:15	Class Time	Genealogical Resources in New York State: Nearly Inexhaustible presented by John McCoy
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2:15	Break	Time for chatting, browsing, and refreshments
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2:30	General Meeting	SPEAKER TED GOSTIN: <i>What To Do When There Aren't Any Vital Records</i>
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~ AUGUST MEETING ~

SPEAKER: TED GOSTIN

Mr. Ted Gostin has been conducting genealogical research since 1980, and has worked as a full-time professional genealogist since 1994. He has twice been President of the Jewish Genealogical Society, Los Angeles, and has taught genealogy for several adult school and university extension programs. Mr. Gostin has helped plan and organize three national genealogical seminars, and has been a featured speaker at a half-dozen such conferences. He lectures widely on Jewish genealogy, Southern California resources, and naturalization and immigration records. Mr. Gostin is the owner of Generations Press publishing company. He is very active in the international Jewish genealogical community, and maintains contact with genealogists throughout the world. Mr. Gostin is also an active member of the Association of Professional Genealogists.

Ted Gostin is the author of "Southern California Vital Statistics: Volume 1, Los Angeles County 1850-1859," which will be available for purchase at the meeting. This volume presents something never before available -- a detailed index to births, marriages and deaths in Los Angeles and Orange counties at a time when there were no public birth or death records. Data on almost eight thousand events has been compiled from twenty-six different public and private sources in seven different repositories. These sources can be grouped into nine basic record types.

Mr. Gostin's presentation for our August meeting is entitled "What To Do When There Aren't Any Vital Records."

~ REFRESHMENTS ~

Georgie (Peterson) LYONS (562) 432-4908

Thanks to everyone
who made our July meeting
such a great success!

Our hosts for the August meeting will be:

George & Polly JOHNSON
Jeanette JONES
Connie (Little) WILLIAMS
Tina YANIS

~ MEMBERSHIP REPORT ~

Jeanette (Marcus) JONES (562) 421-5610

JULY MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members: 32 Guests: 8

**YEARLY DUES TIME AGAIN SOON --
LOOK ON YOUR NEWSLETTER LABEL**

If it says 9/04, it means that your yearly dues are due on September 1. (However, you can pay anytime during the month of September.) If it has a date before 9/04, it means you are behind and need to catch up to September 2004, as well as pay the amount for the year from September 2004 to September 2005.

~ FINANCIAL REPORT ~

David WERTS (562) 431-7790

The Questing Heirs financial condition for the first six months of 2004 is complete. Here is where we stand:

Expense Budget	\$1,655.00
Actual Expenses	1,849.04
Income Budget	\$217.00
Actual Income	365.25

Note that the income so far is very small, because most of the dues, our primary source of funds, come in the second half of the year. Unfortunately, like the federal government, we have a budget for this year with deficit spending, based on what we felt in January we could expect in membership, and what we wanted to do this year. The following shows our status:

Budgeted Deficit	\$506.00
Current Deficit	529.00
Account Balance	\$1,873.34
Designated for Special Projects	944.50
Available for Operations	928.84

So, relative to our budget, we are not in bad shape. Regarding what we need to do if we don't want to go out of business in a couple of years, we are going to need 29 new members at the \$18 rate. Talk to your friends who do genealogy!

~PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE~

OFF-SEASON GENEALOGY

My email inbox is nearly empty at this time of year, except for the inevitable spam. Not a word from France: the whole nation is on vacation in August. Most of my European correspondents seem to have joined them. On this side of the Atlantic, genealogists are criss-crossing the country in gigantic motor homes, or entertaining visiting relatives, or trying to keep the kids busy until they go back to school in the fall.

With fewer queries to attend to, I find I have time for other projects. Here are some of my favorite summer genealogy chores: First on my list is to make an inventory of the records I'm still missing. Why couldn't I find that family on the census? Where is the missing marriage record? Where is that missing tombstone?

Once I have a better idea what I'm missing, I begin to work out new strategies. Is there some other kind of

record I need to track down? A clue I missed? A source not studied in enough detail? Maybe I simply failed to follow through; my notes are full of ideas I never found time for.

Or, maybe I'm on the wrong track. Perhaps the family did not even exist in that census year. Perhaps I misread a name, or a date, or a place. Did I read the place name correctly, but fail to notice that there was more than one town with the same name? Maybe the fact that I can't find a record that should be there, is actually trying to tell me something important.

Slightly farther down the list, there might even be enough time to undertake one of those tedious and often unrewarding tasks, such as trying to get even one word in response from a town historian in upstate New York, or convincing a distant relative of the merits of submitting a DNA sample. If such

long shots are ever to pay off, one has to make the initial investment.

Not on the list at all, but always staring me in the face, is an inescapable fact of nature: genealogical information has the property that it spontaneously reverts to a less ordered state. In college, I learned that this phenomenon is an example of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. No matter how hard we try, our documents and research notes always need reorganizing. Frequently, insight comes to us while trying to impose some order on the chaos.

Finally, summer is a good time to ponder. Family history tends to be complicated. If you can keep the wheels turning, and the little gray cells active, the problems may become clearer. That puzzle may yet have a solution!

--John McCoy



~SOCIETY NEWS~

MARY ALICE CRIPPEN CLAYPOOL 1919-2004

Mary Claypool, a beloved member of Questing Heirs, passed away suddenly on Sunday, July 25, 2004. Her obituary in the Long Beach Press-Telegram noted her goodness, her kindness, her selflessness, and her love of genealogy.

The obituary will be online for thirty days at:

<<http://www.legacy.com/CommonCobrand/PrintNotice.asp?Cobrand=LBpresstelegram&PersonID=2458110>>.

There is also an online guest book for Mary at:

<<http://www.legacy.com/LBpresstelegram/Guestbook.asp?Page=Guestbook&PersonID=2458110>>.

As we received this sad news just before this issue was going to press, we will feature a tribute to Mary Claypool in next month's newsletter.

~PHOTO GALLERY~



Dedication of the new
Genealogy Department at
Long Beach Public Library,
June 28, 2004.



Left:
Charlotte Llewellyn
and Jeanette Jones
greet attendees.

Right:
The ribbon cutting.



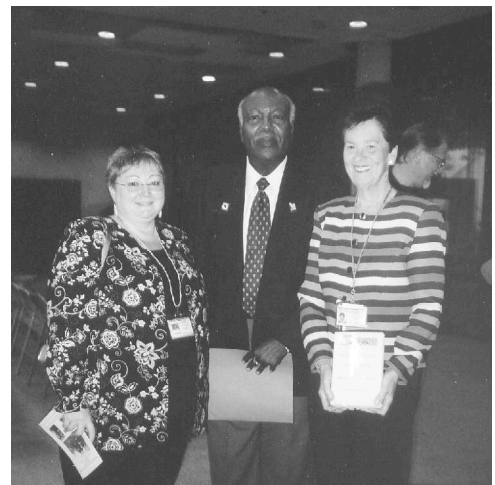
Above:
Questing Heirs
group photo.

Left:
Robert Brasher
and Tina Yanis.

Right:
After the event.



*All photos courtesy
of Tina Yanis.*



~ O F I N T E R E S T ~

EXAMINING FAMILY HEALTH TREES

by **Kaye Powell**

Previously published in RootsWeb Review: Vol. 7, No. 17, 28 April 2004. Reprinted with permission.

We've all ordered death certificates on our ancestors and learned causes of death, which may have been inheritable conditions, and other useful information. However, they do not always provide information about certain family diseases and health problems.

Of my three children, my son has been diagnosed as paranoid schizophrenic. I've learned that some 10 to 25 percent of the time the condition may have been inherited but knew of no instances in the family. Today's understanding of the illness is nothing like what people knew even a few decades ago, and today's modern medications are excellent, and getting better every year.

However, I wasn't looking for mental illness. My research problem was that my mother's father abandoned his young family in the 1920s in Alberta, Canada. My grandmother, from Michigan, got her family back to the United States and raised her children by herself. My mother, the youngest that survived, had no memory of ever having laid eyes on her father although the older ones did. Nobody even knew when or where he died or if he had another family. Grandmother never divorced him or remarried.

I knew little of grandfather's family, only that he had a brother in Michigan and that my grandparents met and married at Grand Rapids. With the advent of genealogical resources online I took a stab at it. Last year I found he'd died in his 50s in Idaho, but nothing more about him. But by that time I'd also learned who his parents were, and that he was one of not two, but seven, children. His paternal line goes back to 1640s in the Massachusetts Colony, but that tells me little about family who might be around today that we never knew.

I expanded my research on this family in Michigan and learned who five of his six siblings married and their families via marriage indices, cemeteries and census images online. I visited the main family cemeteries and learned more when I read the (surname) headstones.

One generation back there were six siblings. All six died

young, from age 19 to 52, in a line that generally lived into its 70s, 80s or even 90s. Great-grandfather died "by drowning in a fit of depression" per accounts. One sister was located on census 1920 at Kalamazoo State Hospital, the asylum for insane. Another tantalizing, but yet undocumented account, has another sister in an asylum in Pennsylvania. The third sister also died in her early 40s in Pennsylvania. The 19-year-old brother (I'd heard this story from my aunt but hadn't known who it was) had warts on his hands. Somebody told him he could get rid of them with carbolic acid so he put his hands in that -- and died of infection. Another brother died at age 52.

I occasionally correspond with a relative of a (surname) in-law who has been very circumspect about her relative who married (surname) -- the only son of the remaining brother who died age 52. I get scant info, but she's "local" to that family and otherwise willingly helps me with local document information on the family while preserving the living 85-year-old relative's privacy. Recently I laid out the above information about mental illness in that generation, possibly all six, in e-mail; didn't ask her to research, just a heads-up to keep an eye out for mentions of mental illness, especially schizophrenia or bipolar illness.

Hours later I had a response. She told me that her relative had three daughters diagnosed with schizophrenia and that the husband/father had not been quite right, either. (Recall that times were different, but this would all be in the past 50-some years and less.) That poor mother must have lived a hellish tragic life given the differences in understanding of the illness and old-generation medications.

I have run across few historical mentions identifying mental illnesses in my genealogy research, but never possibly an entire generation and documentation of successive generations. One wouldn't likely find this on death certificates describing physical causes of death.

RootsWeb Review Editor's note: See the article by the Mayo Clinic staff, "Compiling Your Family Medical History: Using the Past to Prepare for Your Future" at <<http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?id=HQ01707>>.

*Blessed are those who are flexible
for they shall not be bent out of shape.*

~OF INTEREST, continued~

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES TO PRESERVE
OFFICIAL MILITARY PERSONNEL FILES**

On July 8, 2004, during a ceremony in the Jefferson Room of the National Archives Building, Under Secretary of Defense David S. C. Chu, and John W. Carlin, Archivist of the United States, signed an important agreement under which the National Archives will preserve the Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) of 56 million veterans who served the nation since the late 1800's. This milestone event ensures that the records of our military service veterans will be protected and ultimately enshrined in our nation's archives.

The modern military personnel files occupy over 1.5 million feet of shelf space at a federal storage facility in St. Louis. The earliest files date back to 1885, when the Department of the Navy and the United States Marine Corps were the first to create individual personnel files to chronicle in one place all aspects of a service member's military career. The War Department followed this model early in the twentieth century with the development of the "201 File." Today in St. Louis, there are 56 million files, over 5 billion pages, for Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard veterans.

As a result of the Records Schedule signed on July 8, all OMPFs will be designated as permanent and will be transferred from the Military Services to the National Archives 62 years after separation or discharge from service. Pre-1960 records are arranged alphabetically and will be accessioned in groups based on filing dates.

Protecting the files is important because they contain essential evidence needed by veterans and their families to claim life-long rights and entitlements that accrue from military service. Preserving the files for future generations is equally important so that family members, genealogists, biographers, and historians can research the history of those who served and often sacrificed for our country.

Reprinted with permission from UpFront, Vol. 3 No. 14, 15 July 2004. Subscription information for this electronic newsletter of the National Genealogical Society is available at <<http://www.ngsgenealogy.com>>.

**PROPOSED CALIFORNIA
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
REGARDING PUBLIC RECORDS**

The California State Senate, with the Assembly concurring, has proposed an amendment to the state constitution relating to access to government information. This amendment was filed with the Secretary of State on January 14, 2004, and will be submitted to the people of California for approval on the November ballot.

This amendment would provide that the people have the right of access to information concerning the conduct of the people's business. This measure also would provide that any statute, court rule, or other authority, including those in effect on the effective date of the measure, shall be broadly construed if it effectuates the people's right of access, and narrowly construed if it limits the right of access. A statute, court rule, or other authority adopted after the effective date of this measure that limits the right of access shall be adopted with findings demonstrating the interest protected by the limitation and the need for protecting that interest. This measure also would provide that nothing in its provisions supersedes or modifies the right to privacy guaranteed by the California Constitution.

Due to the current debate over the right of access to information versus the right to privacy, it is important that we genealogists inform ourselves about this amendment and be aware of its ramifications. The text of the amendment, along with the Legislative Counsel's digest, can be found online at <<http://www.ss.ca.gov>>.



~GENE THE GENEALOGICAL
CHURCH MOUSE~

Quite a crowd at the July meeting! I was afraid of getting stepped on, as there were so many feet walking around. It was good to hear success stories -- it gives me inspiration to keep working. Nancy Carlberg also reminded me to keep good notes and always be aware of background material when I do my final writing.

~ON THE WEB~

NEW OBITUARY SEARCH OPTION

<<http://obitcentral.com/htdig/common/search.html>>

The following was posted by Bill Cribbs on 7 April 2004 on the Obituary Central mailing list at <obitcentral@yabooGroups.com>, and was submitted by Liz Myers:

Obituary Links Page <<http://www.obitlinkspage.com>> and Obituary Central <<http://www.obitcentral.com>> have created a new search engine that will allow a search through all of the obits that have been archived on these sites.

The old search is still there on the main pages and on <<http://www.obitcentral.com/obitsearch/obit-grabbag.htm>>, but requires separate searches.

I like the search results format on the old search engine better but I've noticed that I've been able to find other things using the new search engine format.



**PROQUEST TO DISTRIBUTE
ANCESTRY LIBRARY EDITION**

<www.proquest.com>

ProQuest Information and Learning has announced exclusive rights to distribute a new product, Ancestry Library Edition, an enhanced edition of Ancestry.com. Ancestry Library Edition will replace the Ancestry Plus database for current subscribers. The new agreement gives ProQuest the two premier genealogy resources: HeritageQuest Online™ and Ancestry Library Edition.

Key collections in Ancestry Library Edition include:

- ◆ New York Passenger Lists, San Francisco Passenger Lists, and New York Petitions for Naturalization.
- ◆ U. S. Birth, Marriage and Death Collection, World War I Draft Registration Cards, and Social Security Death Index.
- ◆ U. S. Census 1790-1930 images and indexes.
- ◆ England and Wales Census Images and Indexes, England and Wales Civil Registration Index 1837-present, and England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales Parish and probate record 1500s-1837.

ProQuest will continue to distribute Heritage Quest and all its component data sets of the U. S. Census, the

Periodical Source Index, and Genealogical and Local History Collection. Freedman's Bank Records and the Revolutionary War Pension Records are also slated to be added to HeritageQuest Online.

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ORDER UK CERTIFICATES ONLINE

<www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificate/>

The Office for National Statistics has made the following announcement:

Following the successful launch of the on-line ordering site for residents of the United Kingdom we are now ready to offer this service to customers residing outside of the UK. This will, initially, be on a trial basis, allowing us to test and monitor the success of this expansion to our current service.



**ANCESTRY.COM
IMMIGRATION COLLECTION UPDATE**

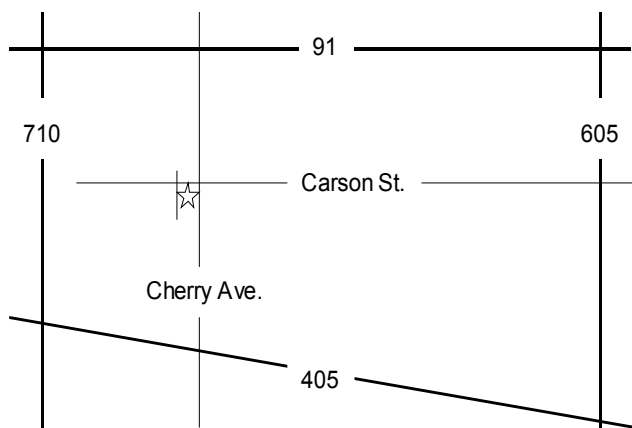
<www.ancestry.com>

Ancestry has added 150,000 names to its New York Petitions for Naturalization 1792-1929 database. This database contains an index to the petitions for naturalization from 1792 to 1929 filed at the New York County Supreme Court, with links to the original images of the index cards to the petitions. Fields on the index cards include name, date of naturalization, former nationality, arrival port, arrival date, birth date, address of the petitioner, occupation, witnesses with addresses and sometimes occupation, and reference information for requesting the full petition. Please note that for the most recently added years (1907-29), all of the cards appear under "Unknown date" when searching by date, because dates were not noted during this time period.

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~ CALENDAR ~

- ♦ Saturday, August 7, 9:00am – 1:30pm. Orange County, California Genealogical Society monthly meeting. Huntington Beach Central Library, 7111 Talbert Avenue, Huntington Beach. Several classes, interest groups, and presentations, including Beth McCarty speaking on “Finding and Using English Probate Records.”
- ♦ Saturday, August 14, 1:00 pm. Southern California Genealogical Society meeting. SCGS Library, 417 Irving Drive, Burbank. Jan Jennings will talk about genealogical research in New York. Sometimes called “the Black Hole of genealogy,” the state of New York poses special challenges to the genealogist. Open to the public. Phone (818) 843-7247 or email <scgs@earthlink.net> for more information.
- ♦ **Sunday, August 15, 1:15pm. 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 program information, please see page 58.
- ♦ Wednesday, August 18, 6:30pm. Genealogy Society of North Orange County California monthly meeting. Yorba Linda Community Center, corner of Imperial Highway and Casa Loma, Yorba Linda.
- ♦ Wednesday, August 18, 7:00pm. South Bay Cities Genealogical Society monthly meeting. Torrance Civic Center Library, 3301 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance. Speaker: Connie Moretti. Topic: "Estate Inventories: What We Can Learn from What They Left Behind."
- ♦ Thursday, August 19 – Sunday, August 22, British Isles Family History Society presents British & Irish Days at the Los Angeles FHC.* Several workshops featuring noted speakers covering many different research topics. All classes are free; donations are accepted. Any donations received towards British Isles films and fiche will be gratefully accepted, and BIFHS-USA will match the first \$500 of donations. For more information, phone (310) 474-9990 or visit <http://www.rootsweb.com/~bifhsusa>.
- ♦ Saturday, August 21, 1:00pm. Whittier Area Genealogical Society monthly meeting, Masonic Lodge, 7604 Greenleaf Avenue, Whittier.
- ♦ Wednesday, September 8 – Saturday, September 11. Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference. Austin Convention Center, Austin, Texas. Theme: Legends Live Forever: Researching the Past for Future Generations. This genealogical extravaganza will be co-hosted by the Federation of Genealogical Societies, the Texas State Genealogical Society, and the Austin Genealogical Society. For more information, write to Federation of Genealogical Societies, P. O. Box 200940, Austin TX 78720-0940, <www.fgs.org>, phone 888-FGS-1500, email <fgs-office@fgs.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 FHC are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10 am to 7 pm, and Friday and Saturday 9 am to 5 pm. The LA FHC is located on the grounds of the Los Angeles Temple, 10741 Santa Monica Blvd. in West Los Angeles; their phone number is (310) 474-9990. Their web page at <http://www.lafhc.org> provides details of their extensive collection. There are smaller FHCs locally, in Long Beach at 3701 Elm Avenue in Bixby Knolls, phone (562) 988-0509, in Los Alamitos, phone (714) 821-6914, and in Cerritos, phone (562) 924-3676. It is advisable to call ahead to the local centers, as their hours may change from time to time.