

Questing Heirs Genealogical Society

Monthly Newsletter – April 2026

Volume 59 Issue 4



“Every family tree begins with a single step into the past.”

Welcome from the Editor

Dear Questing Heirs Members,

As spring arrives, it brings with it a sense of renewal, an ideal time to revisit our research with fresh perspective and renewed energy. Genealogy often rewards patience, and sometimes a new season is all it takes to uncover details that were previously overlooked. In this issue, we highlight ways to refresh your research, explore new resources, and continue building meaningful connections with the past. As always, we are grateful for the knowledge and enthusiasm shared by our members.

Welcome Spring, Diana Transue, Editor

President’s Message

I was thinking about my Ancestry tree and some of those little-known names in the upper reaches – mostly pink or blue, and a few gray (gender uncertain). Depending on the first name, it’s *usually* possible to assign a gender, but there are some names... For example, my daughter’s name is Kimberly – but I had a male friend in college who was also a Kimberly. This is an example of the process where a name was once a male name but evolved to a more common name for women. Other examples are Ashley, Courtney, Shannon, Whitney, Shirley, Dana, Vivian, and Tracy. I have a male Ariel in my ancestry; that name comes from Hebrew for “Lion of God” and appears in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* as a male name. I doubt you’ll find a male baby with this name born after 1989 when *The Little Mermaid* hit the theaters! This means that I’d better be a little slower in assigning gender to those gray, unmarried children way up in my tree.

By the way, the photo I provided for this issue, (we’ll be using a different picture every issue until I run out!) this is one of me at Fort Gordon, Georgia in 1969.

Bob Prager **President**

Thank you for your service, Bob



Questing Heirs Genealogical Society

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Alta Mae (Buckles) McKillip

Submitted by Tina McKillip

My mother-in-law, Alta Mae (Buckles) McKillip was born June 12, 1928 in Mound City, Holt County, Missouri. She came to California in 1951 for the sunshine and adventure. She raised three sons and was blessed with eight grandchildren. At some point because of her funny and silly ways, she was affectionately given the nickname "Crazy Grandma" by her grandchildren. She loved her new nickname and it was clear what grandma we were talking about in any conversation.

She did not like to cook but ironically, collected recipes in a haphazard way as demonstrated by the photo. She could write the recipe down on a scrap piece of paper or in this case, a page from her telephone book.

Her granddaughter put these recipes into a downloadable file to share with her cousins and future relatives. Alta Mae was from Missouri so some of these recipes are typical of the Midwest culture.

Alta Mae was known to add her own "touch" to basic recipes to spice it up or for whatever reason she had going on in her thought process. She had a period where she put "Baco Bits" on everything and who puts parmesan cheese on top of green Jello? One year she put oysters into the turkey dressing because her granddaughter's husband liked oysters. Needless to say, no one ate the dressing.

Of all the oddball dishes she made, she did make a great meatloaf although it wouldn't be unusual to find one of her fake fingernails inside. She also made great green beans with bacon until she discovered "Baco Bits" which made the process simpler.

One year she watched an episode on television that talked about soaking your turkey in white wine for tenderizing and flavoring. Alta Mae only had red wine available so we had a purple turkey for Thanksgiving. Although it looked odd, it was surprisingly tasty.

I miss that "old gal", a saying she regularly used to refer to family, friends and neighbors.



April's Recipe of the Month

Better Than Sex Cake

Better Than Sex

(Do not use extra creamy cool whip)

One Cake Mix Any Kind Cook & Cool Completely & slice in 1/2 for four

Awykers

Filling

- 1 Cup Shredded Coconut
- 1 cup Walnuts
- 1/2 cup Crushed Pineapple
- 2 Ripe BANANAS Sliced
- 1 Jar Marshmallows
- chopped cherries

1 Lge Cool Whip

1 PKg instant Vanilla Puddg

2 Cup Cold Milk

Beat Pudding & milk till thick

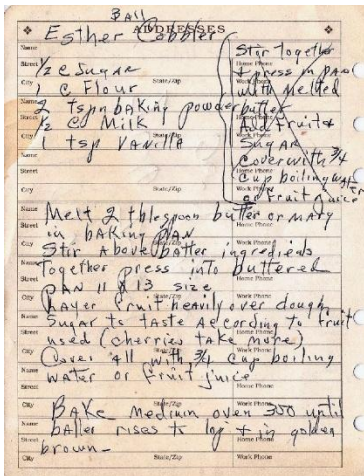
Add Cool Whip & beat

Fold in all ingredients & fill

layers Frost with large Coolwhip

chill A Few Hours then eat

Better Than Sex



Alta Mae left one very serious warning with this recipe: "do not use extra creamy Cool Whip!" No explanation was given... and honestly, we're not brave enough to find out why.

Looking Ahead: Our Next Speaker Diane Henriks

Our monthly meeting will be held on **Sunday, April 19th**, at **2:00 p.m.**, at **St. Thomas of Canterbury Episcopal Church**, 5306 E. Arbor, Long Beach, CA 90808. **Members may also attend via Zoom**

Diane Henriks, also known as the Descendant Detective and founder of Know Who Wears the Genes in Your Family, is a passionate and seasoned Los Angeles County-based professional genealogist, investigator, speaker, and author who specializes in descendancy and brick wall research, along with living people search and unknown parentage cases.

Diane has worked closely with private investigators to find living people while also assisting in background investigations, in both civil and criminal cases. She is a proud member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the Genealogical Speakers Guild, the Southern California Genealogical Society, and the Utah Genealogical Association. What started out as a small hobby well over a decade ago, when a hand-drawn family tree chart was given to her by her father, has since become a great obsession, and she now helps others discover and preserve who they are and where they come from!

Break Down Those Genealogy Brick Walls!

At some point, everyone working on their family tree will encounter a brick wall, or what they think is a brick wall, that frustrating point where their research seems to hit a dead end. These barriers can take various forms, but they all hinder progress in tracing family history. A genealogy brick wall can be frustrating and discouraging, but it does not mean that the research is impossible. Follow me and see how you can break through them to continue building up your family tree!



March Program Recap

Sara Cochran – “The Skeleton Whisperer”

From Rebellion to Records: The Irish in the American Revolution

At our March meeting, **Sara Cochran** presented an engaging program on the role of the Irish in the American Revolution. She opened with reflections on the many reasons people begin researching their family history, sharing that her own interest grew from curiosity about the people in her grandmother’s photo albums.

Sara highlighted the significant contributions of the Irish during the Revolution and offered practical guidance on how to identify and document these patriots within one’s family tree. Attendees gained both historical insight and useful research strategies. We thank Sara for an informative and inspiring presentation.

With Our Sincere Appreciation

We are honored and deeply grateful to the Daughters of the American Revolution for their generous grant to the Questing Heirs Genealogical Society. This meaningful support will help further our mission to promote genealogical research, education, and community engagement.

We sincerely appreciate their commitment to preserving history and supporting organizations like ours. Their generosity makes a lasting impact, and we are truly thankful.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the following members for their generous donations along with their membership renewals. Your kindness and support help make it possible for our society to continue offering meaningful programs, preserving resources, and sharing our love of family history with others.

Cynthia Day-Elliott, Bridget Dole, Brian & Christine Elia, Nina Gustin ,Tonya Haney, Tina McKillip ,Dagmar Muthamia, Bob & Pat Prager, Cathleen Rokicki ,Jeff & Diana Transue ,and Joann Wintenburg

Your generosity truly makes a difference, and we are so grateful to have you as part of our community. If you are considering an additional way to support our society, donations are always warmly appreciated.

Help Us Spread the Word!

Our new Questing Heirs brochure is ready, and we're excited to share it! If you'd like to help grow our society, consider taking a few copies to place in your community or sharing them with friends and family who might be interested in genealogy. Every connection helps us reach someone new. Thank you for being part of that effort! Please contact Diana Transue for copies or if you have a story to share for the newsletter to be featured in an upcoming issue.

Discover Your Family Story

No experience needed. Just curiosity

Questing Heirs Genealogical Society



About Questing Heirs Genealogical Society

Questing Heirs Genealogical Society is an IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

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