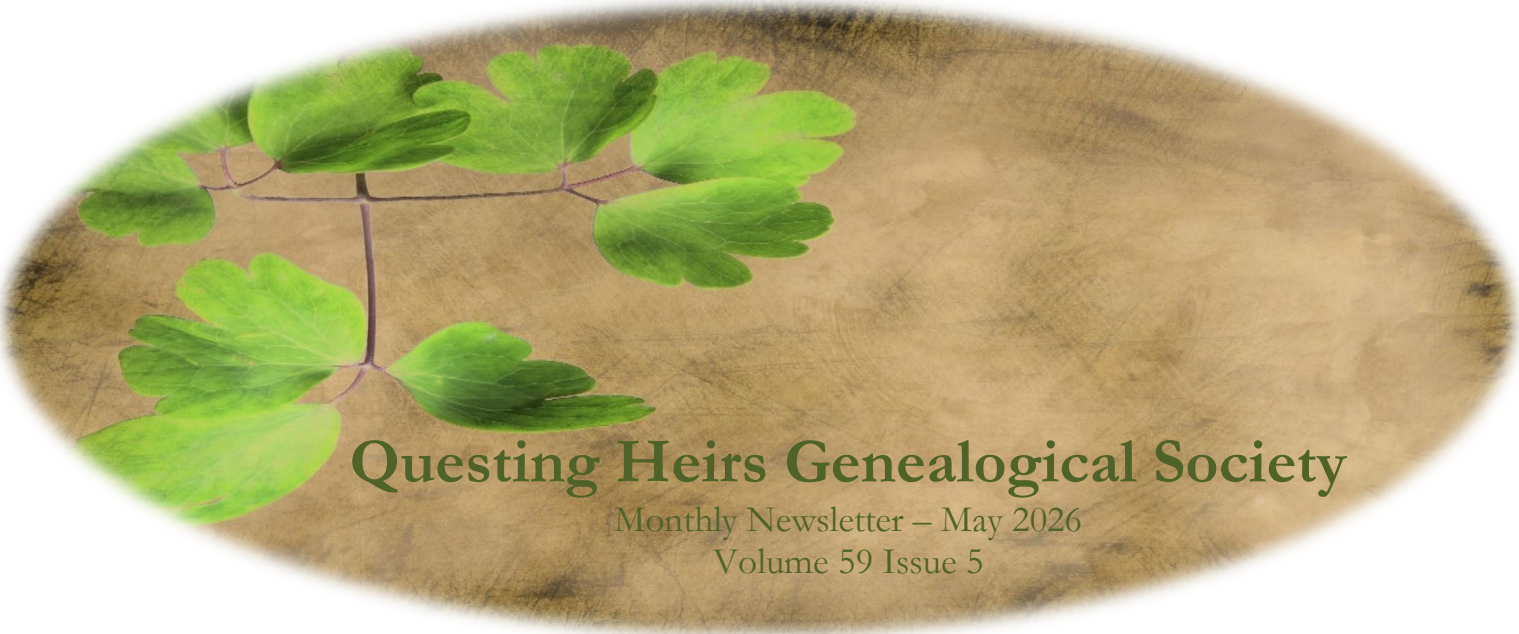




Questing Heirs Genealogical Society

Monthly Newsletter – May 2026

Volume 59 Issue 5

Our ancestors live on through the stories we tell

Welcome from the Editor

Dear Questing Heirs Members,

May is a month of reflection and remembrance, offering us a meaningful opportunity to honor those who came before us. Whether through stories, photographs, or records, genealogy allows us to preserve the lives and legacies of our ancestors in a lasting way. In this issue, we focus on honoring our ancestors, those whose lives, sacrifices, and experiences shaped the families we know today. We hope this month's articles and ideas encourage you to revisit your family stories and perhaps discover something new along the way.

Warm regards,
Diana Transue, Editor

My photo is a selfie I took after I avoided going to the barber for a while during Covid. I wasn't quite ready to try shaving my own head...

President's Message



While engaging in some genealogical musing, I thought about songs with genealogically related themes. The classic, of course, is "I'm My Own Grandpa." This describes how the singer became his own grandfather through a series of almost-believable deaths and marriages in his immediate family. The lyrics are available on the internet. The song was written in 1947, and many artists have recorded it. (I'm fond of Willie Nelson's version – you can listen to it on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1000000000000000000000).) Genealogists have analyzed the relationships described in the song and have uploaded the resulting family trees to the internet. (Looking at one of these helps a lot while listening to the song!) Can you think of any other songs which might fit this category? Let us know!

President, Bob Prager

“The Day Ronald McDonald Joined the Family Tree”

Submitted by Sandy McDonald

As a mother of three sons, I can tell you they certainly kept us on our toes. One story in particular about our youngest son, Mark McDonald, still makes me laugh.

When I was pregnant with each of our sons, people would jokingly ask if we planned to name him Ronald. It became a running family joke, and all of our boys knew about it.

This story took place when Mark was in high school. One day, he came home with a genealogy pedigree chart assignment for his history class. Since I was already involved in genealogy, helping him complete it was easy. He turned it in, and we didn't hear anything more about it, until the following week.

At open house, I visited Mark's history classroom. As soon as I walked in, the teacher and another woman approached me and said, “We've been waiting for you. We need to talk.” Naturally, I wondered what Mark had done!

They introduced themselves, and the second woman turned out to be the teacher's sister. They led me to a bulletin board displaying student assignments. Each student had been asked to write a story about a grandfather.

For a bit of background, my husband grew up on the McDonald family farm in Ammon, Idaho. We often visited the farm when the boys were young, giving them a taste of farm life with animals and equipment, and, of course, family gatherings.

The teacher handed me Mark's assignment and said his grade depended on whether the story was true. Curious, I began reading.

It started:

“My grandfather's name is Ronald McDonald. Ronald had a farm...”

And then it continued, line after line, to the tune of *Old McDonald Had a Farm*, complete with animals and “E-I-E-I-O.”

I could hardly keep from laughing. The teacher and her sister were watching closely, waiting for my reaction.

Finally, I told them, “Well, it's mostly true. We did visit the farm, and at our family reunions, we often sang *Old McDonald Had a Farm*, it was practically our family song!”

I did have to clarify one detail: his great-grandfather's name was actually Gustave, not Ronald. But I suspect Mark knew exactly what he was doing and simply used his quick wit and sense of humor.

The teacher and her sister were impressed that Mark had created such an entertaining and creative story. He received an A- for his effort.

I did ask to keep the assignment, but the teacher just couldn't part with it!

This story is a reminder. You never quite know what your children will come up with. In Mark's case, it showed he was developing not only a sense of humor, but a creative mind as well.

Mark and his brothers at the McDonald family farm no Ronald in sight!



Painting is of The McDonald family farm in Ammon, Idaho, where many family memories (and a famous story) began.

Looking Ahead: Our Next Speaker

Our monthly meeting will be held on **Sunday, May 17th, 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**

Details for our next program are currently being finalized. We will share information about our upcoming speaker and topic as soon as it becomes available. Please watch your email for an update.

We appreciate your patience and look forward to another engaging and informative presentation.

April Program Recap

Diane Henriks – “Break Down Those Genealogy Brick Walls!”

At our April meeting, members enjoyed an informative and engaging presentation by **Diane Henriks**, who shared practical strategies for overcoming common “brick walls” in genealogy research. Drawing from her experience as a professional genealogist, Diane explained how these obstacles often arise and how they can be approached with fresh perspective and new methods.

She offered useful tips on expanding research beyond familiar sources, re-evaluating existing information, and using creative problem-solving techniques to uncover new leads. Attendees came away with valuable tools and renewed confidence to continue their research. We thank Diane for an excellent and motivating program.

Diane Henriks / knowhowearsthegenesinyourfamily.com/contact

FREE CHEAT SHEET!

50+ Free Library of Congress Genealogy Resources Online

Did you know the largest library on Earth is actually a secret weapon for your family tree? 🌐 Most researchers stick to the usual subscription sites, but the Library of Congress holds over 173 million items, and a massive chunk of it is digitized, searchable, and 100% FREE. We aren't just talking about books; we're talking about 24 million pages of historic newspapers, rare maps, and personal diaries from people just like your ancestors.

If you haven't searched for the LOC yet, you're leaving your history on the table. No subscriptions, no paywalls, just pure discovery. 🔍 Source: **Thomas MacEntee**

<https://genealogybargains.com/the-library-of-congress-is.../>

The History of Mother's Day

Anna Jarvis



Mother's Day was first celebrated on May 10, 1908, by American activist Anna Jarvis, who organized a memorial to honor her mother and the contributions of mothers everywhere. Inspired by a prayer her mother had shared years earlier, Jarvis worked tirelessly to establish a national day recognizing the important role mothers play in both family life and society.

Her efforts were successful when, in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson officially declared Mother's Day a national holiday, to be observed on the second Sunday in May. Over time, the celebration spread across the United States and to many other countries.

Later in life, Jarvis became strongly opposed to the commercialization of Mother's Day, believing it had drifted away from its original purpose of sincere appreciation. She spent much of her later years trying to preserve the meaning of the holiday she had worked so hard to establish.

Source: Encyclopedia Britannica

Editor's Note: Anna Jarvis and I share roots in Harrison County, West Virginia, and are distant cousins on my paternal side, making this history especially meaningful to me.

About Questing Heirs Genealogical Society

Questing Heirs Genealogical Society is an IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible as permitted by law. Website: www.qhgs.info/ | Facebook: www.facebook.com/QuestingHeirs/ | Email: questingheirs@gmail.com

© 2026 Questing Heirs Genealogical Society, Incorporated. Permission to reprint original material from this publication is granted for non-commercial, educational purposes, provided the following notice appears at the end of the article: *Previously published in Questing Heirs Genealogical Society, Volume 59, Number 5, May 2026.* This newsletter is published monthly as a benefit for members of Questing Heirs and is not intended for sale.