



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, Inc.

P.O. Box 811, Westminster, MA 01473-0811

THE SEARCHERS

—Innovative—Enlightening—Enriching—Enjoyable—

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE,

by Susane Navarre

I hope you enjoy this newsletter. It is filled with a number of fascinating historical articles contributed by members and researchers we know. Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Cinco de Mayo, the origin of Chun King and Tostito's, regional news and recipes of 101 years ago, and lots more. It's a great read to enjoy while you drink your tea or coffee on a sunny day in the garden or a rainy New England day in your easy chair.

A bit of good club news: I am happy to say that my call for volunteers from the last newsletter has been answered! Board member Diane Sanabria has connected us with Sean Sweeney of Fitchburg, who is the historian for the Fitchburg High School Hall of Fame, as well as being a journalist and published author. He has been doing a lot of genealogical and historical research and exploring his own family's story, among other research topics. He has volunteered to run for election as Secretary of the organization. You may very likely meet him at the next Members' meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you all soon at a meeting, and learning of any discoveries you are making, whether it's through travel,

online research, or sleuthing in local cemeteries and archives. You are very much a member of the group, whether you attend in person, or connect with us virtually.

Yours,
Susan Navarre
snavarre@brynmawr.edu.

Volunteers who have been at the libraries are also going to be at the Fitchburg Historical Society on Main St. Fitchburg on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday from 3-6 PM for those who are interested in genealogy help beginning May 13, 2026.

Spring is here and we have begun the year with some wonderful programs thanks to our Lynn Houston. As many of you have experienced the links posted in the winter newsletter do not work, so we have gone back to sending individual invitations out for each program. If you know of someone who is not on our memberslist and would like an invitation please send a request to www.cmgsorg1@gmail.com Here is a recap so far

Previous Meetings 2026
February 24, 2026

“The Story of Ellis Island”

Presented by
Karen A. Fortin
Virtual 7PM

Karen brought the immigration experience to life with this presentation. She shared the various facilities used by the immigrants coming into New York even before castle Island and Ellis Island. The program is available on our members page at <http://cmgso.org>

March 24, 2026

Hope Lodge Gardner, MA
ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Election of Officers and BOD

In person

Speaker

Rev Timothy Crellin

Rector of St. Paul’s Church in Gardner

Author of the novel

“Land of the Living”.

Proposed changes in CMGS by laws were passed by the membership

**Newsletter quarterly vs. bi-monthly

**Annual Meeting moved to the 4th Tuesday in June vs March

**Make the quorum for a vote at the annual meeting to a 20 percent of the current membership rather than the now required 20 members be present

**Rotate the election of officers and BOD members. Currently all positions are for 1 yr, proposal is for 2 yr terms with VP and

Secretary on the odd year and the President and Treasurer on the even year

The new officers and BOD members elected are:

President -----Susan Navarre

Vice President-Lynn Houston

Treasurer -----Erica Milano

Secretary -----Open

Historian -----Dwight Fitch

Board of Directors:

Phil Johnson

Sara Campbell

Marsha White

Janet Fortunato

Diane Sanabria

John Johnson

Open position

April 28, 2026

Hope Lodge, Gardner Ma

7 PM

Hybrid

“Citations, Why Did It Have to be Citations”

Presented by

Sara Cochran, the

“Skeleton Whisper”

For those of you who waited for the zoom links to work you enjoyed a very interactive presentation on a subject most of us dread. Sara showed us the best way to do citations as well as many tricks to make them easier to do. The presentation is on our members page at <http://cmgso.org>



“UPCOMING MEETINGS”

May 26, 2026

Hope Lodge Gardner, MA

7 PM

Hybrid

Presented by

Bill Duke

**From Archives to Audiences: Engaging
Your Family through AI Generated
Videos**

Does the mention of "census schedules", "pension files", or "vital records" make your relatives' eyes glaze over? You've spent countless hours unearthing the fascinating stories of those who came before us, but sharing a stack of old records doesn't always capture the imagination of the next generation. This session explores how to use AI Applications to transform raw genealogical data into engaging, short-form videos. Learn how to bridge the gap between rigorous historical research and modern storytelling, ensuring your family's legacy is not just preserved, but watched.

***Link will be sent out to our members others may e-mail cmgsorg1@gmail.com if interested in this program

June 23, 2026

Hope Lodge, Gardner, MA

7PM

Hybrid

Sara Campbell.

Unearthing 1776 –
a deep dive into the lives of
Revolutionary Era Ancestors.

***Link will be sent out to our members others may e-mail cmgsorg1@gmail.com if interested in this program

AROUND WORCESTER

COUNTY

Gardner News

Thursday, April 2, 1925

Gardner

Obituary

Mrs. **Crestina J. Carlson**, widow of **Lars Carlson**, a resident of this city for the past 29 years, died at 10:15 o'clock yesterday morning in her home, 98 Temple street. She was 76 years, one month and nine days old. She was born in Engelholm, Sweden, the daughter of **Nels** and **Johanna Nelson**. Her husband died in 1904.

She leaves three children, Mrs. **Axel W. Erickson** of Worcester, and **David** and **Frans O. Carlson** of Gardner, and nine grandchildren.

The funeral will be in her late home at 98 Temple Street, Saturday at 2 p.m. Burial will be in the family lot in Crystal Lake cemetery.

Ashburnham

Sues for Divorce

Alma V. Richards of Winchendon has brought divorce proceedings in Probate court against **Henry D. Richards**, also of Winchendon, whom she charges with cruel and abusive treatment and having contracted gross and confirmed habits of intoxication.

The couple were married at Barre March 13, 1902. The cruelty is alleged to have been committed Feb. 15, 1924, and at other times.

Mrs. Richards seeks the custody of their nine children: **Edward H.** 18, **Josephine E.** 16, **Joseph F.** 14, **Adeline R.** 12, **Eugene A.** 11, **Freda L.** 9, **Pauline R.** 6, **Gladys E.** 3, and **Emily M.** 1. She asks for support for herself and the children. Attorney **Sidney W. Armstrong** is her counsel.

East Templeton

Mrs. **Eugene Monette** is confined to the house, suffering from Rheumatism. Her

daughter is caring for her.

Mrs. **Lura Mann** has returned to her home after an operation in the Millers River hospital and is getting along nicely.

Baldwinville

The funeral service for **George Deland**, who died of peritonitis following an appendicitis operation at Millers River hospital were held yesterday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock at the funeral parlors of H. M. White Co. Rev. **Nathan F. Tilden** officiating. Mr. Deland had been a patient at the Elliott home of Templeton State colony for the past 13 years, coming from Wolburn. He was 30 years of age. There are no known relatives. Burial was in Pine Grove cemetery, Templeton.

AROUND WORCESTER COUNTY Gardner News Monday, April 6, 1925

Conant Street Man Was Life-long Resident of City. **Thomas J. Moore**, 55 of 101 Conant street, died in the Henry Heywood Memorial hospital Saturday night at 9:30 after a brief illness. He was born in Gardner, the son of **John** and **Catherine (Mulcahy)** and had lived here all his life. He attended the public schools of the city and was employed for a time as superintendent of the municipal sewer farm on West Broadway. For the past eight years, he has been employed by the John A. Dunn Co.

Mr. Moore was a lover of horses and a member of the old Gardner Riding and Driving club and its successor the Gardner Agricultural society. He leaves his wife, **Mary E. (Conroy) Moore**, three daughters, Mrs. **Alice King, Mae**, a student nurse at the Worcester City hospital, **Anne** of this city; a son, **Henry T.**

of Somerville; two brothers, **Frank** of Gardner, and **Hugh C.** of Fitchburg; two sisters, Miss **Nellie Moore** and Mrs. **Mary Carey**, both of Gardner; and five grandchildren.

The funeral will be held in the Sacred Heart church tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock, when a requiem high mass will be celebrated. Burial will be in St. John's cemetery. Relatives and friends are invited.

John Lindahl, 59, of Gould Road died in the Henry Heywood Memorial hospital early Saturday afternoon. Mr. Lindahl was taken ill with pneumonia about two weeks ago and moved to the hospital, but his condition rapidly became worse, the end coming about 5:30 Saturday. He was born in Finland and had been employed as a fireman by the Heywood Wakefield Co., since coming to this county 15 years ago.

He leaves a son, **Toivo**, of Gardner; two daughters, Mrs. **Fannie West** of Flemington, N.J. and Miss **Annie Lindahl** of New York; and three brothers in Finland.

Funeral services will be held in the Finish Evangelical Lutheran home tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock. Rev. **Sapari Hulkola** will officiate. Burial will be in Green Bower Cemetery. Relatives and friends are invited.

June Williams #64

AROUND WORCESTER COUNTY Gardner News Monday, April 13, 1925

Driver of Springfield Car Speeds Away After Injuring Girl on West Street

Eunice Howard, 13-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. **Charles Howard**, West Street near the Templeton line, was badly hurt, Saturday evening when she was knocked down by the bumper and fender for several feet. She received lacerations and bruises on

one hip, severe cuts about the head, and was in a dazed condition for several hours. She may have internal injuries.

The accident happened shortly after 5 o'clock Saturday evening when the girl, playing on the road in front of her house, was struck. The driver, according to the girl's grandfather, **William Howard**, went on his way, without stopping to learn about the child's injuries. His number was taken and reported to the police. Mr. Howard said the car was owned by a Springfield man.

Unconscious, the girl was picked up and brought to West Gardner, where a physician gave her first aid. She was then returned home, complaining that she could not see. According to Mr. Howard she has had attacks of dizziness and also complained of severe pains in the side.

The owner of the car was not been located by the police this afternoon.

Athol

The funeral of Miss **Mary Sweeney**, 66, of 198 Crescent street, who died in Fabyan, Conn., Thursday, took place today in the Church of Our Lady Immaculate at 10 o'clock with a requiem high mass. The body was brought to Athol Saturday.

Miss Sweeney had been a resident of Athol for some 35 years, coming here from England. She had been employed in Fabyan for the past few months. She leaves a brother, **Thomas Sweeney** of Framingham, and two sisters, Misses **Ellen** and **Kataherine Sweeney**, of 198 Crescent street. Burial, in charge of Undertaker **J. F. Higgins**, was in Calvary cemetery.

Winchendon

Word was received in Winchendon Sunday of the death Saturday in Belfast, Me. of Rev. **Joseph F. Fielden**. Mr. Fielden was a resident of this town for 20 years and pastor of the First Baptist church for over 15 years. He had been in failing health for the

past three years and left here last summer to make his home with his daughter, Mrs. **Margaret Rogers** in the Maine city. The funeral will be held at the First Baptist church in this town tomorrow (Tuesday) afternoon at 2 o'clock.

Mr. and Mrs. **Joel T. Whittemore** of Stoneham were weekend guests of Mrs. Whittemore's parents, Mr. and Mrs. **John F. Folsom**, 445 Central sStreet

Westminster

Mr. and Mrs. **Walter O. Miller** and daughter of New Haven and Miss **Grace E. Miller** of Springfield spent the week-end with Mr. and Mrs. **Frank A. Miller**.

Mr. and Mrs. **James Hayton** and family of Warren and Miss **Edna Battles** of New Rochelles, N.Y. are visiting their parents, Mr. and Mrs. **George A. Battles**.

Weddings

Cote-Bragdon

Pretty Wedding Takes Place in Holy Rosary Church at 7:45

A very pretty wedding took place in the Holy Rosary church at 7:45 o'clock this morning, when Miss **Blanche Cote**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. **Joseph Cote** of 214 Baker Street became the bride of **Ernest R. Bragdon** of Boston, at a special nuptial mass celebrated by Rev. **S. J. Desaults**, Rev. Fr. Desautels also performed the ceremony. The double ring service was used.

The bride was attended by a maid-of-honor, Miss **Bernadette Sirois**, three bridesmaids, Miss **Lydia Cote**, her sister, Miss **Hazel Maillet**, and Miss **Alberta Goguen**, all of this city. The Society of the Children of Mary of which the bride was a member, was represented by Miss **Bertha Barthel** and Miss **Olive LaLiberte**.

The bride's wedding gown was fashioned

of bridal crepe, trimmed with pearls. She carried a huge bouquet of roses, lilies of the valley and sweet peas.

The maid of honor wore old rose crepe with hat to match and carried roses. Miss Cote's gown was powder blue crepe while Miss Maillet and Miss Goguen wore peach colored, and yellow crepe respectively.

Raymond Cote, brother of the bride was the best man. The ushers were Raymond Cote and **Leon Babineau**.

The bride's gift to her maid of honor was a white sapphire bracelet. The gifts to the bridesmaids were a pearl necklace, a beaded silver bag and a gold vanity case. The Children of Mary were given pink sapphire rings. The best man present was a silver cigarette case and the ushers, gold cuff links.

A wedding reception and breakfast were held in Barthel's hall after the ceremony. Nearly 150 guests, including many from Boston, Leominster, Burlington, Vt., Fitchburg, New York and Somersworth, N.H. were present. An orchestra furnished the music.

After an extended wedding trip to Boston, New York, and Toledo, O., Mr. and Mrs. Bragdon will make their home in Lynn, where Mr. Bragdon has accepted a position. He was formerly employed by Hedstrom Union Co.

Landry-Landry

Halford Street Girl Bride in Church Ceremony This Morning **Miss Viola Landry**, daughter of **Mr. and Mrs. Ulric Landry** of 44 Halford street, and **Alcide Landry**, son of **Mr. and Mrs. Francis Landry** of 77 Oak street, were married by Rev. Albert Rivest at a special nuptial mass celebrated in the Holy Rosary church at 8:30 this morning.

The bride wore a wedding gown of white georgette, trimmed with silver lace, and carried a bouquet of white roses and sweet peas. She was attended by **Miss Alberta**

Landry, a sister of the bridegroom.

The bridesmaid's dress was of tan and coral crepe. She wore a hat to match and carried pink roses. **Joseph Donahue** of this city was the best man.

The bride's gift to her bridesmaid was a silver bracelet, and the bridegrooms to the best man, a pair of gold cuff links. A wedding reception and breakfast followed in the home of the bride after the ceremony. Guests were present from Fitchburg, Lowell and Gardner. Mr. and Mrs. Landry left early this afternoon on an extended trip to Canada and upon their return, will make their home at 77 Oak street. Mr. Landry is employed by the Gardner Upholstered Furniture Co.

June Williams #64

Missing an Ancestor? Look West

By Linda McCleary

lindamcclearyvazgab@gmail.com

Many times, while researching our ancestors, they just "disappear" from where they "should be" located. Is this true with your ancestor? Perhaps the young man or woman in your lineage decided to heed Horace Greeley's quote, "Go West, young man, go West and grow up with the country."¹ Opportunities abounded with cheap land, the lure of gold / silver / precious gems, religious freedom, or just the opportunity to start a new life. Perhaps your ancestor came to Arizona for one of these reasons?

The Arizona Genealogical Advisory Board (AzGAB) is honoring those people and their descendants who lived in the geographical area of what is now Arizona prior to statehood on 14 February 1912 with an Arizona Pioneer Descendant certificate. Certificates will be awarded to a descendant who submits evidence acceptable to AzGAB

(vital records, territory or federal census, church records, brand books [livestock markings], city directory listings, etc.). Records showing relationship from the pioneer to the applicant is required for the certificate.

(<https://azgab.org/cpage.php?pt=14>).

For those ancestors / relatives who lived in Arizona from statehood until 01 April 1950, a Second Wave Certificate is available.

(<https://azgab.org/cpage.php?pt=51>). The same chain of descendancy is required.

Not sure if your ancestor “was” in Arizona on their way to California, Nevada or other points West? Please use the Arizona Pioneers Database on the AzGAB website, https://azgab.org/cstm_pioneer.php, to see if their names appear. Female names as well as male names are mentioned.

This is a meaningful way to honor your ancestors and have a preserved record of it. The approved application forms, photos and accompanying documentation are housed in the Arizona State Archives. A modest fee for the certificate is expected at the time of submission. If two certificates are requested for the **same** ancestor from different descendants, there is a reduced fee for the second certificate. Questions? Contact the Arizona Pioneer Descendant Administrator, Peggy Morphew at certificates@azgab.org.

¹ *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. Oxford University Press, TME. 1999. p. 351. [ISBN 9780198601739](https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198601739). Retrieved 12 October 2023.--

Linda McCleary
AzGAB Vice President
OLD RECIPES

Mah Jongg Suppers - from a 101 yr old

cookbook

By Kate Penney Howard -
www.katepenneyhoward.com

Source: American Cookery (the Boston Cooking School Magazine) June-July 1924

In a time when authentic global cuisines are available at our fingertips, it's easy to forget the beginnings of international food in our supermarkets.

I personally remember growing up in the country, and my mother always kept a few things in the pantry, just in case something happened and she wasn't able to make a dinner “from scratch.” Those pantry items were Chef Boyardee Pizza boxes and the doubled-up cans of La Choy Beef Chow Mein.

Long before today's wide selection of ready-to-eat ethnic dishes, one entrepreneur saw an opportunity that would forever change how we experienced Chinese food at home.

The year was 1947, and Luigino "Jeno" Paulucci, an Italian-American businessman with \$2,500 in borrowed money and an entrepreneurial spirit, launched what would become an American food empire. His first creation? Canned chow mein under the brand name "Chun King."

Paulucci's inspiration came from his military service in Asia during World War II, where he observed American soldiers' enthusiasm for chop suey and other Chinese dishes. Upon returning home to Minnesota, he began experimenting with recipes using locally-sourced ingredients—including bean sprouts grown by Japanese immigrants and leftover celery trimmings that would have otherwise been discarded.

His innovation went beyond recipes. Paulucci patented a unique two-compartment packaging system that kept the crispy noodles separate from the vegetable mixture, solving the soggy noodle problem

that had plagued previous attempts at canned Asian food.

The road to success wasn't without bumps. Former Chun King employee Robert Johnson recalls a company legend about Paulucci's pitch to Food Fair supermarkets: "The story goes that when he opened a can for the buyer, there was a grasshopper floating on top! Without missing a beat, Jeno said 'This looks so delicious I think I'll have the first bit myself' and ate the insect right there, saving the deal."

By the mid-1950s, Chun King had become America's introduction to Chinese food for many households, particularly in regions where authentic Chinese restaurants were scarce. The brand eventually captured 80% of the canned Chinese food market.

Paulucci's marketing approach was equally innovative. Working with comedian Stan Freberg, Chun King created memorable television commercials including the famous "Nine out of ten doctors recommend Chun King chow mein" ad, featuring nine Chinese doctors and one Caucasian doctor in white coats—humor that reflected the cultural sensibilities of the era.

The Chun King name itself has historical significance, likely referencing Chongqing, the wartime capital of China in the 1940s that Paulucci likely learned about during his military service.

Paulucci's culinary innovations didn't stop with Chinese food. He later invented pizza rolls and developed the Jeno's frozen pizza line and Michelina's frozen Italian foods. In 1966, he sold Chun King to R.J. Reynolds Tobacco for what would be equivalent to over \$100 million in today's dollars.

The brand changed hands several times over subsequent decades—becoming part of RJR Nabisco, then Hunt-Wesson, and eventually ConAgra, which phased out the Chun King name. However, Paulucci's pizza roll creation lives on through Totino's, which

continues to market the snack successfully today.

"While Chun King's interpretation of Chinese cuisine was far from authentic by today's standards, it represented an important cultural bridge," explains Wong. "It introduced millions of Americans to flavors they might never have experienced otherwise and paved the way for the more diverse and authentic international foods we enjoy today."

Kate Penney Howard
Genetic Genealogist & Speaker
www.katepenneyhoward.com
[Upcoming Talks](#) [Presentation Topics](#)

MAY NEWSLETTER ITEMS:

Mother's Day: Sunday, May 11, 2025 (US & Canada)

By Kate Penney Howard -

www.katepenneyhoward.com

Ann Reeves Jarvis was an Appalachian homemaker and Sunday School teacher. She was an activist, and her concern about the high infant mortality rate led her to organize "Mothers' Day Work Clubs" to teach parenting skills to mothers. She also organized "Mothers' Friendship Day" to promote reconciliation between Union and Confederate families after the Civil War. When her mother died in 1905, Ann sought to honor all mothers for their sacrifice and service. The first official Mother's Day celebration took place through a service of worship at St. Andrew's Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia, on May 10, 1908. The observation quickly gained attention: in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a measure officially establishing the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day, and Canada followed suit in 1915.

Mother's Day can also trace some of its inspiration to poet and activist Julia Ward

Howe, who wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Around 1870, Howe called for a "Mother's Day for Peace" dedicated to celebrating peace and eradicating war. Her vision emphasized mothers' unique position to understand the tragic costs of conflict. Anna Jarvis initially conceived of Mother's Day as a simple observation between mothers and families, but shopkeepers began filling their storefronts with cards, candies, flowers, and other gifts for Mother's Day. By 1920, Jarvis had become disgusted with how the holiday had been commercialized and urged people to stop buying Mother's Day flowers, cards, and candies. She even launched lawsuits against businesses using "Mother's Day" in their advertising, spending much of her fortune on legal battles and lobbying efforts.

More phone calls are made on Mother's Day than on any other day of the year. Modern celebrations increasingly recognize diverse forms of motherhood, honoring all women who take on nurturing roles.

Mother's Day can be a difficult day for those of us who are grieving the death of a mother or grandmother. No family is perfect, and no mother is perfect; Mother's Day can be complicated for those whose families struggled with dysfunction. For those of us who are mothers, it can be difficult if a child has died or is separated by distance or disagreement.

I find it healing to take the afternoon to plant my garden and write a reflection about my mother, my grandmothers, my great-grandmothers, and my great-great-grandmother.

To Test OR Not to Test?

By Beth Steury - bethsteury@gmail.com

The popularity of direct-to-consumer (DTC) DNA testing has exploded in the last decade. More than 26 million people in the United States and an estimated 40 million

worldwide have dipped their toes into the world of exploring their roots via DNA. Many folks have eagerly participated, hoping to solve a mystery, to gain assistance in filling in the branches of their family tree, or because they didn't want to be left out of the fun. But others have kept their distance. Wary of privacy concerns, they steer clear of the ever-so-simple and often-on-sale DNA testing kits advertised everywhere. Some fear that a mystery match may topple the status quo. They prefer to not know what secrets may be hidden in the branches of their extended family tree!

While safety and security are top-of-mind concerns for all of us these days, folks can participate in DNA testing without putting themselves at risk. First, let's talk about two common myths in circulation among the naysayer crowd: that testing will put their DNA "out there everywhere" or that the government will have access to their DNA. Neither is true. The major DNA testing companies—Ancestry.com, 23andMe, MyHeritage, and FamilyTree DNA—each have detailed privacy policies that clearly outline how they protect DNA samples and how they will be used. Read the fine print and be informed from a reliable source.

Do you have concerns about law enforcement's access to your DNA results? Ancestry.com requires law enforcement to secure a court order to utilize DNA information from their database. FamilyTree DNA, who voluntarily works with law enforcement officials, allows their users to opt out of this feature. Again, be informed and make the decision that's best for you. Would-be DNA testers may be surprised to learn that they can remain as private and unknown as they want to be by following a few simple steps.

1. Choose a "username" that's not connected in any way to you or your online footprint. A random word or chance series of letters

and numbers can offer the anonymity and identity protection some people crave.

2. If you choose to build a family tree on the site where you test, make the tree private and unsearchable.

3. Do not include a profile photo that could identify you.

At Ancestry.com, you must opt in “to see your matches and be listed as a match to them.” This feature can be turned on and off as often as you like. I’ve known people who opted in to seeing their matches, but after reviewing the results, immediately opted out, to give themselves time to process the answers their results revealed. Once they felt more comfortable with the results, some opted back in while others chose to remain “unseen” except for the occasional pop in to check for new matches. A tester’s DNA results can also, at their choosing, be deleted from the site at any time.

As far as the secrets that may come to light are concerned, many families do make surprise discoveries. While it may take time to digest DNA surprises, the reality is that the past cannot be changed. Whatever happened—as complicated and messy and shocking as it may be—it happened. I encourage people to be open to and compassionate toward newfound relatives and to give themselves and others grace—whether they are doing the seeking or are the ones found. Of course, each person has their own choice to make about connecting, or not, with new kin.

In our family, we’ve chosen to adopt an “it is what it is” attitude. My own discoveries left me stunned and speechless for a time, but I came to accept them and embrace the truth of my origins story. I’ve experienced the gamut of reactions from “new” relatives who were just as stunned as I was. From the warmest of welcomes to cordial greetings to minimal interest to total disengagement.

Again, it is what it is.

As more people test, ethnicity algorithms will continue to be fine-tuned. As the pool of testers increases, more people will find the answers to their genealogical questions.

As the community grows, genealogy enthusiasts the world over will enjoy expanded opportunities to make connections. These are good things! All made possible by advancing technologies that allow us to connect with our genetic past via ways not possible just ten to fifteen years ago.

To test or not to test is an individual decision. If you find yourself on the fence, seek more information from reliable sources. If you have specific questions, please contact me!



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Memorial Day: A Time for Reflection (US Specific)

By Kate Penney Howard -

www.katepenneyhoward.com

As the last Monday of May approaches, people around the United States prepare to honor the fallen heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country. The tradition began organically. Families have always gathered flowers to place on the graves of their loved ones. But in the spring following the aftermath of the Civil War, they decorated the graves of those killed in battle.

In 1868, John A. Logan, commander in chief of the Grand Army of the Republic (a fraternal organization for Union veterans), helped formalize the observance by promoting a national holiday on May 30th "for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades

who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion."

In the 19th century, cemeteries were not just places that people went to mourn. They also served as the first public parks, and it was common for families to bring baskets filled with sandwiches, fruits, and drinks to share with relatives in the healthy air of the cemetery. The "rural cemetery movement" facilitated this trend by redesigning graveyards as garden-like spaces outside city centers, replacing morbid symbols with flower motifs to create peaceful sanctuaries. Eventually, many cemetery authorities eventually prohibited such gatherings due to litter, this nearly forgotten American tradition reflected a more intimate relationship with death and remembrance than we typically maintain today.

What began as "Decoration Day" eventually evolved into Memorial Day following World War I, as the observance expanded to honor those who had fallen in all American wars, not just the Civil War.

Today, Memorial Day is marked by ceremonies across the country, with perhaps the most notable being the laying of a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery. Communities large and small hold parades, religious services, and speeches, while individuals place flags, insignia, and flowers on veterans' graves in local cemeteries. In 1971, Memorial Day was officially designated to be observed on the last Monday in May, creating the three-day weekend that many now associate with the unofficial start of summer.

While Memorial Day weekend often brings to mind parades, barbecues, sales, checkered flags and racecars, and the beginning of summer vacation season, it's important to remember the true purpose of this solemn holiday.

As an Army mom who worries about my own son, I cannot imagine what it was like

for my great-grandmother during World War II, with three sons in the service. I am so thankful that, due to medical and defensive advances, and the limiting of warfare, Gold Star Families are so much less common than they used to be.

Here are some ways you can take a few moments in your busy Memorial Day weekend to honor those who paid the ultimate price for your freedom:

- Write an article about someone in your family who died in service and share it on social media
- Observe the National Moment of Remembrance at 3:00 p.m. local time for one minute of silence
- Visit a local cemetery to place flowers or flags
- Adopt the grave of someone who died in war
- Attend a Memorial Day parade or ceremony in your community
- Display the American flag at half-staff until noon, then raise it to full-staff
- Support families of fallen service members through verified organizations

Thank you for taking the time to reflect on the profound sacrifices made by generations of American service members. Their dedication to our nation's ideals reminds us that freedom is never free.

Cinco de Mayo: May 5, 2025

By Kate Penney Howard -

www.katepenneyhoward.com

[Shortly after the beginning of the Civil War,](#)

[Napoleon III of France maneuvered to establish a French client state in Mexico, and eventually installed Maximilian of Habsburg, Archduke of Austria, as Emperor of Mexico. Of course, the Mexican people weren't happy about that.](#)

On May 5, 1862, Mexican soldiers defeated French troops at the Battle of Puebla. They were underdogs. Despite being poorly equipped, the Mexican forces managed to soundly defeat the French troops. Though the fighting continued for another five years before the French were completely driven out, the Battle of Puebla became a powerful symbol of Mexican resistance to foreign domination.

Surprisingly, Cinco de Mayo is not widely celebrated throughout Mexico. The holiday holds special significance in the state of Puebla (later renamed Puebla de Zaragoza in honor of the general who led the forces), where residents commemorate the day with parades, speeches, and battle reenactments. The battlefield itself has been preserved as a park, and a museum devoted to the battle stands in the city.

In the United States, the holiday took on new meaning in the mid-20th century as Mexican immigrants embraced it as a way to celebrate their heritage and cultural pride. Over time, the observance has expanded beyond Mexican-American communities to become a widely recognized celebration. However, our Cinco de Mayo festivities can perpetuate stereotypes, and the holiday's commercialization—particularly by alcohol companies—has sometimes overshadowed its historical significance.

For those of us whose ancestors had divided into support of the Union or Confederacy, the Mexican victory at Puebla is significant to our history as well. By preventing France from potentially supporting the Confederacy via the Gulf of Mexico, the Mexican forces at Puebla

indirectly contributed to the outcome of the US Civil War.

This is an opportunity for us to learn more about Mexican history and culture beyond the festivities. Local museums, libraries, and cultural centers often host educational events that provide context for the holiday. By understanding the historical significance of Cinco de Mayo, we can appreciate it as a commemoration of resilience, determination, and the enduring human spirit in the face of overwhelming odds.

RECIPES

We're often concerned about bringing picnic dishes that contain mayonnaise. Here's an easy recipe for a traditional Ukrainian spread that is a perfect sandwich topper for a lovely slice of home-grown heirloom tomato. Mmm!

Old-Fashioned Mayonnaise: Traditional Ukrainian Recipe

6 hard-boiled egg yolks
2 tbs dry mustard
½ tsp salt
⅛ tsp pepper
½ tsp sugar
6 tbs olive oil
2 tbs vinegar

Pass the egg yolks through a sieve or potato ricer, or mash thoroughly. Mix all ingredients together. Refrigerate.

*Adapted from: Stechishin, Savella -
Traditional Ukrainian Cookery (1959) by
Kate Penney Howard -
www.katepenneyhoward.com*

ORANGE AND LIME ICE: HELADO DE NARANJA CON LIMA

*When life hands you oranges (and limes),
why not make orange-lime ade?
This old recipe appears to create a drink.
However, "helado" means frozen, and my*

experience of Helado is similar to what we call “popsicles.” Before the age of refrigeration, I’m going to share the recipe as written and then include my own directions, below. This cookbook, and many more, have been made available by the University of Texas at San Antonio. I encourage you to get lost in the link below!

POSTRES: GUARDANDO LO MEJOR PARA EL PRINCIPIO Desserts: Saving the Best For First), published 2020, courtesy of UTSA Libraries Special Collections. <https://lib.utsa.edu/sites/default/files/UTSA-Special-Collections-Recetas-Cookbook-2020.pdf>

Adapted by Kate Penney Howard - www.katepenneyhoward.com

Ingredients:

8 cups of water

8-9 oranges

2 limes

2 ½ cups of white sugar

Original instructions:

Dissolve 2 ½ cups of white sugar in 8 cups of water.

Select 8-9 oranges and 2 limes.

Clean them with a napkin and scratch the peel of the most fragrant and least bitter oranges.

Split them in two and place the peels between your thumb and forefinger to break the vesicles containing the juice.

Placing the peels between two palms, squeeze in the opposite direction to break the cells that contain the essential oil globules, which reside in the yellow rind. Strain the liquid through a sieve and store in a cool place.

Kate’s instructions:

Take the oranges and limes and zest them.

Juice the oranges and limes.

Add water, zest, and the sweetener of your choice until it’s amazing! I encourage you to try turbinado/raw sugar.

Store in refrigerator or freeze as popsicles in freezer.

KUFTA KABOB

Whenever someone asks me what I want to eat, I often say, “Lamb!” Lamb is my favorite protein and it’s the least likely protein to be offered to me, so it is a welcome treat when it is available. In honor of Jewish American Heritage Month, I am sharing a favorite recipe. I’m so looking forward to grilling lamb and eating from the garden: chopped tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, topped with tahini, spicy harissa and schug. - Kate -

katepenneyhoward.com

1 1/2 lbs ground lamb

1 onion, chopped

1/3 cup chopped parsley

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper

1 teaspoon cumin

4 cloves garlic, crushed

Instructions: mix everything together well.

Form mixture onto skewers and grill until cooked through.

**JULIA CHILD’S STEAMED
ARTICHOKE**

By Kate Penney Howard -

katepenneyhoward.com

Artichokes are in season from March through May.

Julia Child, the iconic chef who brought French cooking techniques to American homes, dedicated an entire episode of "The French Chef" to the artichoke - a vegetable that many find intimidating despite its delicious potential. You can watch the episode here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YetP8KvSpHc&pp=0gcJCdgAo7VqN5tD>

In her characteristic enthusiastic style, Child revealed that 99% of all artichokes consumed in the United States come from California, specifically the foggy central

coast south of San Francisco where the climate is ideal for these surprisingly delicate plants. Despite their tough appearance, artichokes are quite sensitive to cold temperatures and will die if exposed to freezing conditions.

When selecting artichokes, Child recommended looking for specimens that feel heavy for their size with fresh, fat leaves that make a crackling sound when broken. To maintain freshness at home, she suggested wrapping them in damp towels inside a plastic bag and refrigerating them until ready to use.

Child demonstrated three cooking methods: boiling, steaming, and braising. For boiling, she recommended submerging trimmed artichokes in salted water and covering them with cheesecloth to ensure even cooking. Steaming requires a steamer basket with artichokes positioned bottom-down, while braising involves cooking them in a flavorful mixture of wine, stock, and mirepoix vegetables.

To eat an artichoke, Child explained that one works from the outside in, pulling off leaves one by one and scraping the tender flesh between the teeth. Once the outer leaves are gone, the delicate heart can be enjoyed after removing the fuzzy choke.

Perhaps most charmingly, Child called the artichoke "the perfect solution to the eternal first course problem," noting that it's so elegant it deserves to be served by itself. Many people are intimidated by the artichoke, but I find them to be a lovely springtime meal. I prefer to steam them for a half hour, and dip the leaves in melted butter, seasoned with salt, pepper, garlic, and whatever herbs have come up in my garden.

POEM:

To My Mother

Edgar Allan Poe (1809 –1849)

**Because I feel that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of
love,**

**None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore by that dear name I long have
called you—**

**You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death
installed you**

In setting my Virginia's spirit free.

**My mother—my own mother, who died
early,**

**Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus are dearer than the mother I
knew**

**By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.**

This poem is in the public domain.

*Summer is a great time to visit all the
places you have been putting off all winter!*



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