

The McGinnis In Us

Dedicated to the research of the ancestors and descendants of James McGinnis

1st Annual Henry McGinnis Reunion

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Back Row (L-R) : Brian Dorman, Anne Sourwine-Miller, Pamela Gartley Boldt, John Barr (partially obscured), Bob Gartley, Linda Huebner Dorman, Injun McGinnis, Chris Staats, Terri Fassnacht, Jessie McGinnis Lych, Joe Lych, Paul MCGinnis
Front Row (L-R) : A.J. Dorman, Austin Dorman, Alyssa Dorman, Cynthia McGinnis, Mabel Gartley

Saturday morning, July 18th was an odd day for mid-July—it was cold—“I need a jacket” cold. The rain fell, and the outlook appeared gloomy. However, soon the guests at the 1st-ever Henry McGinnis reunion started to roll in, and the sun finally came out to greet them.

Having spent quite a bit of time planning things to keep people mingling and interested, none of it was necessary as guests, most of whom

didn't know each other, wasted no time in striking up conversations despite the fact I forgot to bring the name tags. The icebreaker “Bingo” game I had concocted was not necessary. And fortunately for everyone, the presentation I had gotten ready never quite got off the ground.

I would like to personally thank each and every one who attended. It was a great start to what hopefully becomes an annual tradition. I would also

like to thank our gracious host, Don Lockhart. Don has clearly worked hard to make McCauley Falls a beautiful place for an event, and his generosity should not go unnoticed.

Keeping with the tradition of the McGinnis-Ruffner reunions of years past, the food was both scrumptious and plentiful. (Note to self: next year, bring grills...AND lighter fluid). As people ate and mingled, conversations

Continued next page

turned to figuring out how everyone was related. There were two groups of descendants: one from James McGinnis and one from Jesse McGinnis.

The Jesse McGinnis folks were kind enough to give me copies of all kinds of photos, documents, and other goodies. And I swear—one day soon, I will get them scanned and online as promised! Linda Dorman also brought a number of photos with her. I brought a scanner, but the rainy weather and small indoor space prevented me from setting everything up.

As you look at the chart on the following page, hopefully you will be able to figure out the connection between the folks that were there. Also notice the William McGinnis, son of Henry, in the brighter blue color. I have been in contact with someone who may very well be a descendant of this William. Hopefully at some

point, we might be able to clear up some loose ends and have three of the children of Henry represented at the next reunion. This particular William (if indeed it is him) shows up in Oquaka, IL. Marilyn Oberg has found photos in with her other McGinnis photos of unknown people taken by a photographer in Oquawka.

Another interesting note: We included the photos of the wooden Indian for fun. However, for those that might be interested—there is a definite possibility that Henry’s wife, Elizabeth, is of Indian descent. I haven’t been able to confirm this story, but will continue to work on this and see what I can come up with.

It’s been a lot longer than I planned from the time I first started this issue until now—it seems like a short time, but it’s already been two months. In another ten months, the next reunion will be upon us, and I hope that you will all be able to make it to Round 2. There has been some discussion about location preferences for the next shindig. My original thought was to keep it close to the original farm—eventually moving it to the actual property if things move in that direction. However, I also want to make the reunion as accessible and enjoyable as possible for everyone. If you have any thoughts or ideas, please let us know, and we can get them on the table for next year’s planning.

Again—thank you to all who made it, and I look forward to seeing everyone again next year!



Bob Gartley, Terri Fassnacht, Brian Dorman, Pamela Gartley Boldt, Anne Sourwine-Miller



Terri Fassnacht checks out the back side of Injun McGinnis’s loin cloth.



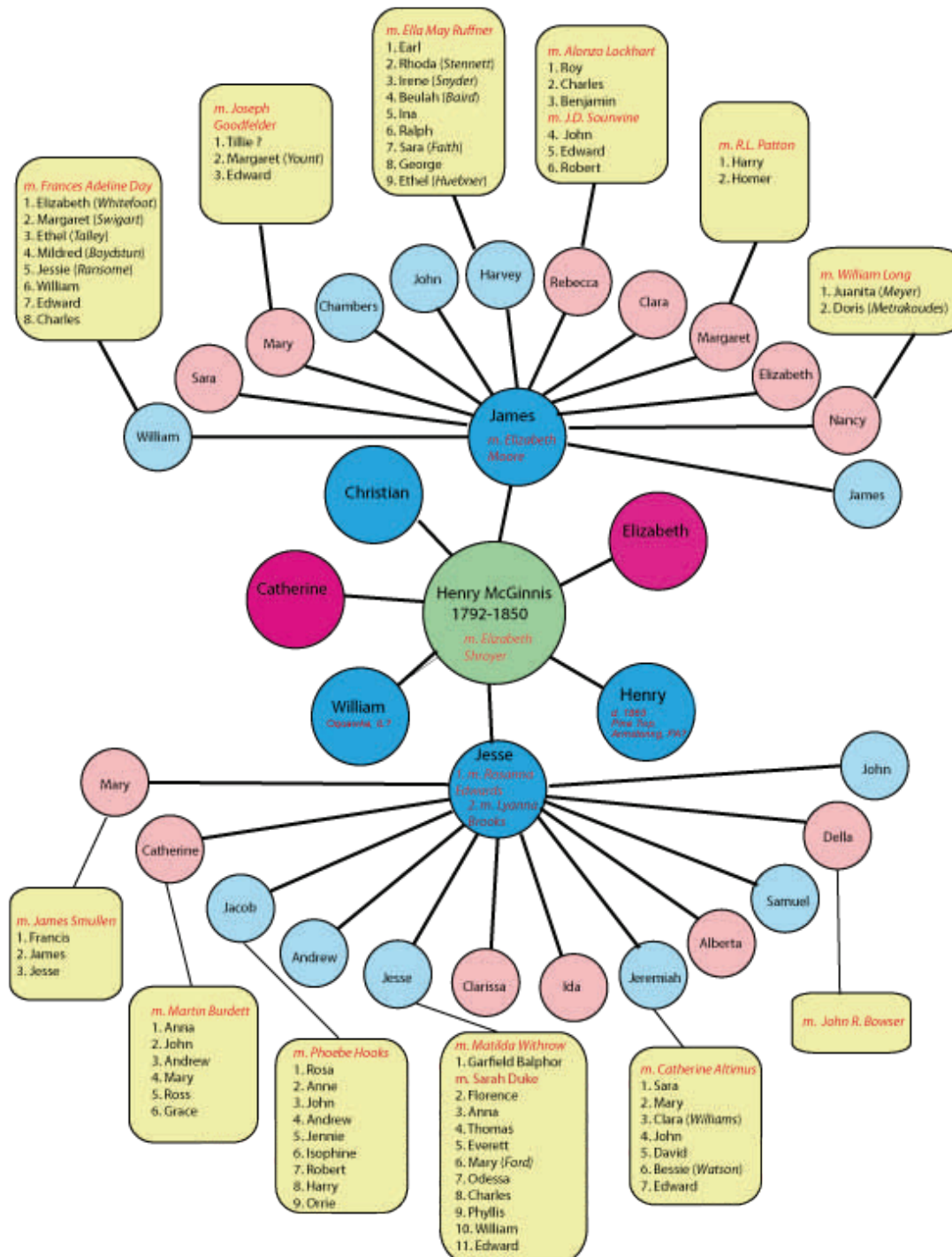
Fire! A.J. and Austin Dorman under the watchful eye of Cynthia McGinnis



McCauley Falls— Panoramic shot of pavilion side of the road. The property wraps around the hill seen here. Behind the hill, there are two stocked trout ponds, trails, and an apple orchard. The other side of the street has camp sites, volleyball, and horseshoes, as well as the picturesque stream.

Descendant Chart of Henry McGinnis: The First Three Generations

In an attempt to help clarify how attendees of the Henry McGinnis reunion are connected, I've dreamt up this "solar system" model to try and visually indicate how everyone ties together. Everyone should be able to at least find their great grandparent on this chart. If you still can't figure out where you connect, give me a shout, and I can point you in the right direction. While Jesse and James' children are in birth order, to help the chart fit on the page, Henry's are not.



Elizabeth May McGinnis Whitefoot: A wonderful remembrance by her grandniece, Marilyn Oberg

The following article was written by Marilyn Oberg. It is particularly special because of the fact that Elizabeth McGinnis Whitefoot had no children, and without Marilyn taking the time to write down some of these great memories, Elizabeth could easily just be a footnote or set of dates in a database. But this brief account breathes life into Elizabeth and helps those of us who didn't know her to picture the woman behind the dates and numbers. I would encourage any of you who have memories of older relatives to write a few of them down to help preserve them for future generations. Much thanks to Marilyn for sharing this with us.

Remembering Aunt May

My Aunt May, Elizabeth May McGinnis was the first child of William and Frances Adeline Day McGinnis born in McAlester, Indian Territory in 1881 where the family lived until 1887 when they moved to Mindenmines, MO. (Chris' note: McAlester is in present-day Oklahoma) As a young woman May, as she was



called, moved to the Bay area in Northern California where she worked as a domestic servant and as a sales woman in a dry goods store. Her younger sister Mildred and my grandmother joined her there. In 1910 both women lived with the Glen Johnson Family in Oakland where Mildred was the family housekeeper. After Mildred returned to the family in Mindenmines, Aunt May married John Robert Whitefoot of Illinois on May 20, 1917 in Sacramento CA. The marriage was brief and I don't know any of the circumstances but it ended in divorce.

While a single woman supporting herself she was attentive to her family. William Tally wrote in a letter that his move to CA was a rough one. He met Aunt May for lunch one day in San Francisco where he poured out his struggles and said he just might go home. Aunt May listened patiently to all his woes and at the end of their lunch she gave him \$20 and encouragement to stay and work things out. He did and had a very successful life. Aunt May was a woman careful with money but generous with family.

Growing up, most McGinnis/Boydston family gatherings included my great aunt Elizabeth May McGinnis Whitefoot. She was quiet, dignified and close to her younger sister Mildred McGinnis Boydston, my grandmother. My sister Melinda and I were Mildred's son Max Boydston's first two daughters and Mildred's first grandchildren. We, two, always called her Aunt May as did everyone in the family and she was indeed like an aunt to us.

My memories of her include visits staying overnight with her in her room at the Longfellow Hotel in Huntington Park, California. The hotel was quiet and most residents there seemed to be old. Lying in her bed at night I looked out the window and saw the neon sign LONGFELLOW HOTEL and secretly wished I was home



Elizabeth May McGinnis, daughter of William McGinnis. 1881-1952

in my own bed. Her room was small but contained a sink where we could wash up and make drinks which included her famous tea which was warm water, canned milk and sugar. Aunt May had a few snacks and cereal on hand, which she prepared for me. I remember having the cereal with warm canned milk. Aunt May would actually make her tea at the lunch counter in the five and dime store on Long Beach Boulevard near the hotel. She considered the drink free because she only asked for cups of hot water and she used the sugar and cream that were available on the counter. The waitress gave her a funny look but Aunt May didn't notice or ignored it, as we walked out without paying.

An overnight visit with Aunt May usually included a first run movie after a few hours at the Christian Science Reading Room. When she told me the reading room was like a library I thought oh good. I loved books & stories and knew I could be happy for a few hours just looking at books. It was utterly silent in the reading room with one or two others sitting at tables reading. Aunt May did the same. She read religious books and the Christian

Science Monitor which was her main source of news in the days before television and with no radio in her hotel room. Our visits to the reading room seemed to last an eternity, but I was a good sport knowing a movie was the reward for sitting quietly. Aunt May was very religious and devoted to her Christian faith – it was a quiet and determined faith. I can't remember her speaking much about it but my grandmother and father became members so her influence did have some impact.

A movie with Aunt May was always wonderful! The theater was beautiful with lots of velvet drapery and gold décor. Nearly always it was a musical. I remember one in particular. "Look for the Silver Lining" starring June Haver. We both loved it and when I said "Oh that was so wonderful, I wish I could see it again." She looked at



Aunt May was good with a sewing machine and made most of her own clothes. Clever with her hands she once made a doll house (actually a doll room) for my sister and me for Christmas. I remember the family party where we exchanged gifts and Aunt May took us into Grandma's bedroom to see the gift. It was terrific – windows with elegant draperies, a desk with paper and pen, bed, highboy

me and said, "Why not?" We sat in the empty theater while the usher tidied up and waited for the next showing. It was just as good the second time around.

and carpet. She made it all!

In the early 1950's my sister Melinda and I remember visiting her at the California State Mental Hospital in Camarillo, California with our family. It was very sad for all of us as she didn't know any of us and was unable to speak. I don't know how she came to be at the hospital but I suspect she may have had Alzheimer disease or dementia. Aunt May died there on November 12, 1952. My sister Melinda and I remember her as a loving great aunt and a loving member of our family.

Oh, The Places You'll Go!

Marilyn's article started me wondering whether I could figure out what theater she and her Aunt May frequented. After a number of correspondences between us, I think we were able to narrow it down to two different possibilities.

Both the Lyric Theater (top) and California Theater (bottom) were within walking distance of Randolph Street, where Aunt May lived. The California was the closer of the two, and from my research, probably the nicer of the two, which makes more sense with Marilyn's description of the ornate interior.

Both buildings are still there, although neither one appears to be still operating as a theater, and as of 2006, the California was vacant. For many years, The Lyric Theater was known for showing movies of a more "mature" nature beginning in the mid-1950's. A search for pictures of the Longfellow Hotel has thus far come up empty. Google map's street-level view at the address shows a building that could have been a hotel at one time still there, although I don't know if it is the original building or not.

It's amazing what information can be discovered about far away times and places from my living room in Cleveland, Ohio—and all with just a few presses of some buttons!

Photos and accompanying descriptions can be found in the Photo Collection section of the Los Angeles Public Library's website (<http://www.lapl.org/>)



Lyric Theater—located at 7208 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA



California Theater—located at 6528 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA

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So what does a 2007 Chevy Impala have to do with the McGinnis In Us? With the lease expiring on our Toyota Highlander, we decided to go with a late-model used vehicle rather than lease again. After visiting several dealerships, a dealer just south of Akron, OH had a couple of nice Chevy Impalas that I was interested in. The sales guy was laid back, low –pressure, and I drove all of the Impalas. I was still looking around, but asked for his card. Wouldn't you know it? His name was Brian McGuinness! I tell you—I just can't get away from this family!