



# Middlesex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all of you who have been bitten by the genealogy bug. I was recently told that with all the new technology, family history research is getting much easier. Yes, it is true there is much happening to help us to obtain and gather more information faster. But beware! There are pitfalls with all this new stuff. You can surely get more information, especially from others who are willing to share what they have found. But is their information correct? Have they done proper analysis to make sure that they picked the right person or place? Be careful not to be in such a hurry that you neglect double-checking information obtained from others and verifying the sources. Be sure that assumptions were not used instead of proven facts.

There is also much being done in the digital area, which allows us to see things more easily than ever before. Again, check to see if the material was photo digitized and you are looking at a new, modern and better copy than the old microfilm provided, or is it an extraction retyped into a computer. Retyping introduces potential errors. Be sure you know what you are looking at so that you can use proper analysis techniques.

MGS is looking at a very aggressive year ahead to help not only the members of our society in their quest for information, but also to help others in our communities seek out their ancestors.

We have a very hard-working, energetic board this year that is striving to make MGS a very productive organization. If any one would like to work with us on some of our projects, let us know.

Some of the major projects that we are working on are:

- Our society will be taking an active part in the New England Regional Genealogical Conference 26 and 27 April 2007 in Hartford, Conn.
- We are in the preliminary stages of conducting a Town Road Show in Darien. This will most likely involve the Town Clerk, the Darien Historical Society, and people who live in the communities.
- We have a new computer in the MGS section of the Darien Library with online access to some of the best genealogy sites. We are looking for members who would volunteer to help patrons of the library to get started on their family history.

If you are interested in helping, e-mail me at [lsrkeeter@snet.net](mailto:lsrkeeter@snet.net) and let me know.

Let us all have fun with genealogy and with helping others enjoy the thrill of seeking out their ancestors.

Lloyd Sturges Jr. ■

## LIBRARY NEWS

by C. Scribner

The book *New England Court Records*, by Diane Rapaport has been catalogued by the library staff and is now in our section. This book was donated by the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council. It can be found on row 5, shelf 3, call letters MGS 929.374. Also in our section is *The Dictionary of Irish Names*, by Ida Grehan. row 5, shelf 6, call letters MGS 929.42. ■

**NEED HELP WITH RESEARCH? Make an appointment through the Information Desk at Darien Library for a personalized consultation with an MGS volunteer.**

## MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

### 2006-2007 OFFICERS

Lloyd Sturges	President
Robert E. Kenyon III	Vice President
Dale Pollart	Treasurer
Joan Rinaldi	Secretary

### BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

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### TRUSTEES

Emeline Fatherley  
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Henry Hoff  
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Middlesex Genealogical Society was established for the purpose of helping those interested in genealogy to pursue the investigation of their family heritage and to provide guidance in research to that end. The society holds at least four meetings with a program and speaker during the year, has established a Genealogy Section at Darien Library and publishes a quarterly newsletter. Annual membership dues are \$20 per individual and \$25 per couple or family.

Original notices of genealogical interest and queries are welcomed for publication in the Newsletter.

Middlesex Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 1111  
Darien, Fairfield County, CT 06820

Homepage: <http://mgs.darien.org>

E-mail: [mgs3@optonline.net](mailto:mgs3@optonline.net)

## UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**ALL MEETINGS SATURDAY, 2 PM, PROGRAM ROOM AT DARIEN LIBRARY. COME, AND BRING A FRIEND!**

**17 MARCH 2007. THE IRISH COME TO NEWTOWN: A WORKFORCE FOR INDUSTRY IN A RURAL COMMUNITY.** will be presented by **HARLAN JESSUP**. This is a case study specifically about the Irish immigration to Newtown, Conn., in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it has implications for Irish immigration to other area communities. Harlan will take only a brief look at Irish immigration into Darien and perhaps surrounding towns such as Norwalk, Stamford, and New Canaan. The hope is that the Newtown study will serve as a model for others to report on similar immigration to their own towns.

Harlan is a professional genealogist whose research focuses on Connecticut, western Massachusetts, and the lower Hudson Valley. He is Editor of Connecticut Ancestry and past President of that society. He is also an accredited researcher at the Connecticut State Library, and he has published the Civil War letters and diaries of his Virginia ancestors.

**12 MAY 2007. HIDDEN IN VAULTS: LESSER KNOWN TREASURES FOUND IN TOWN HALLS** will be presented by **THOMAS HOWARD**. Local governments have for years collected and stored many diverse and valuable genealogical gems. We know about vital records and land records, but towns have touched citizens in many other ways leading to significant and sometimes illuminating paper trails.

A retired high school teacher, Tom is now a full time professional genealogist. He has taught genealogy classes and lectured at regional and national conferences, including the 2005 NERGC regional conference in North Falmouth. He has lectured on several genealogical topics to the Daughters of the American Revolution, Westchester County Genealogical Society, Descendants of the Founders of Ancient Windsor, the Connecticut Society of Genealogists, Southington Genealogical Society, Naugatuck Valley Genealogical Club, Middlesex Genealogical Society, and others. He is chairman of the Connecticut Genealogical Coalition, a founding member of the Town Clerks and Genealogists Action Group, president of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council, and is on the board of directors of NERGC and the Connecticut Society of Genealogists, and is co-chair of NERGC's 2007 Hartford conference. He is a member of APG, NEHGS, Connecticut Ancestry and numerous other genealogical or historical organizations. He is a former president of the East Granby Historical Society and currently is president of the East Granby Land Trust.

**6 OCTOBER 2007. WELCOME ABOARD: PASSENGER LISTS & THOSE ANNOTATIONS** will be presented by **LARRY S. FERMI**. Learn how to find your immigrant relatives on the manifests of the ships that brought them to America and what those scribbles next to their names mean. Larry will discuss the various types of passenger lists that have existed over the years and what might be found in them,

*(Continued on page 8)*

# THE OFFICIAL REGISTER OF THE UNITED STATES, 1816-1959\*

by John P. Deeben

In 1836, a young man named Jacob Bloom was appointed postmaster for the small rural township of Augusta, Pennsylvania. He received an annual income of \$4.32. Bloom's tenure ended eight years later when the Augusta post office temporarily closed. His final salary in 1843 was \$9.95. Employment information such as Jacob Bloom's is typical of what you can find in the *Official Register of the United States*. As a national directory of employees, agents, and officers of the federal government from 1816 to 1959, the *Official Register* provides a valuable reference tool and quite often an essential starting point for genealogy research.

## The Scope of the *Official Register*

On April 27, 1816, Congress authorized publication of the *Official Register of the United States*. Produced every two years in conjunction with the sitting of each new Congress, the *Official Register* (initially referred to as the *Biennial Register* or the *Blue Book*) contained comprehensive listings of all civilian, military, and naval employees, officers, and agents of the federal government. The lists were arranged by department and thereunder by agency, bureau, or office. Congress also required the secretary of the navy to provide the names, force, and condition of all ships and vessels belonging to the United States, including when and where they were built. The legislation approved five hundred copies of the *Register* to be printed by the last day of September during each publication year. Copies of the *Register* were supplied to members of Congress, the President, the Vice President, and the head of each executive department. Ten extra copies went to the secretary of the senate and the clerk of the house of representatives, and another twenty-five copies to the Library of Congress. The remaining volumes were left for Congress to distribute as it saw fit.

The first issue of the *Official Register* was modest in size, containing 176 pages with 6,327 names. Subsequent acts of Congress, however, expanded the scope of the *Register's* content. An act of July 14, 1832, directed the *Official Register* to include the names of all government printers, a statement of monetary allowances to mail contractors from the postmaster general, as well as correct lists of all presidents, cashiers, and directors of the Bank of the United States and its branches. Other departments, agencies, and bureaus were added to the *Register* as they

\*Reprinted from *Prologue Magazine*, Winter 2004, Vol. 36, No. 4. The author, John P. Deeben, is an archives technician in the Research Support Branch of the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

were created.

A few later congressional statutes added special stipulations to the *Official Register*. On March 3, 1893, Congress required the *Register* to include a statement of the number of officers and employees by department in the executive branch, the Government Printing Office, and the offices of the government of the District of Columbia, as well as the aggregate amount of their salaries and other compensation. A 1902 statute specifically added employees of the comptroller of the currency, including bank examiners, receivers, attorneys for receivers, and clerks.

## Organization of the *Official Register*

From 1817 to 1905 the *Official Register* was arranged in a tabular format. The chief advantage to this layout was that it provided an overall picture of the organizational structure of each department, as well as a sense of the "magnitude and importance" of each office with respect to the number of employees. The tables contained such information as the employee's name, job title, state or country of birth, location of post, and annual salary. The military lists provided the names of officers, rank, and place of birth, while the naval lists also included date of commission and current duty station. An act of Congress on March 3, 1851, ordered the insertion of an additional column to the *Register* to show the state or territory from which each employee was appointed. The early volumes of the *Official Register* from 1817 to 1875 did not contain an index but had a table of contents arranged alphabetically by department, office, or position. From 1877 to 1905, an alphabetical name index appeared at the end of each volume.

In 1907 the *Official Register's* format underwent a major change. Director of the Census S.N. Dexter North determined that the *Official Register* had become too large and costly. Over the years the *Register* had grown in size by approximately 50 percent each decade. The 1905 edition alone contained 4,219 pages with 349,075 names and cost \$70,800 to produce. North estimated the 1907 edition would include almost 4,588 pages and cost \$78,000.

Facing such mounting problems of volume and expense, North determined that the old tabular format was no longer practical. Instead, he recommended that the *Official Register* be changed to a directory format consisting of one-line entries for all federal employees arranged alphabetically by surname. The entries still contained all the pertinent information required by law but employed an extensive system of abbreviations to achieve a noticeable economy of space. Additional tabular entries identified the principal officials of each department, providing in more compact form an overall statement of departmental

organization. The Printing Commission of Congress approved the changes, and the 1907 edition of the *Official Register* was published at a modest cost of \$25,600 and contained a mere 1,504 pages. The switch to the directory format also eliminated the need for a comprehensive name index. The *Official Register* continued to use this design until the early 1920s.

The economy achieved by the director of the census caused further changes to the *Official Register* in subsequent years. As the federal government continued to expand, attempts to streamline information in the *Official Register* led to the gradual elimination of most nonadministrative federal employees. Along with the format change in 1907, the names of temporary employees with service of less than six months were immediately eliminated from the *Register*, along with all substitute mail carriers. On October 22, 1913, Congress passed the Urgent Deficiency Act, which authorized the elimination of many nonessential government publications. As part of that legislation, all information relating to the Postal Service, including the statement of allowances to mail contractors, was removed from the *Official Register*. The list of ships and vessels belonging to the United States was eliminated as well.

In 1917 all U.S. Army, Navy, and Marine Corps officers, cadets, and midshipmen were omitted from the *Official Register* because the information was already available to the public in annual registers published by the War and Navy Departments. Only military officers detailed for administrative service in the District of Columbia were listed by name and official designation. Various classes of employees not holding regular or full-time status were also eliminated. After 1921 the *Official Register* removed the all-name directory completely, reverting to lists in table format of administrators and supervisors in each executive and judicial department of the federal government and the District of Columbia, whose salaries were paid directly by the U.S. Treasury. Officials believed the format change once again would provide all the requisite information of general interest concerning government personnel. At this time the *Register* became a yearly publication as well. It remained in this format until the final volume was produced in 1959.

#### **The Postal Service**

The natural growth of the federal government, as noted above, affected the size of the *Official Register* over the years. The most noticeable departmental growth occurred within the U.S. Post Office and the Postal Service. By 1879 the Post Office Department lists included not only employees of the Office of the Postmaster General and the first, second, and third assistant postmas-

ter generals, but also the superintendent of the money-order system, the superintendent of foreign mails, the Office of Assistant Attorney General, post office inspectors, the Stamped-Envelope Agency, the Postal-Card Agency, and the Postage-Stamp Agency.

The size of the Postal Service proved even more distinctive because its vast network of post offices, services, and bureaus spanned the entire country. These included the Railway Mail Service, the Special Mail Service, the Mail Messenger Service, and the Free-Delivery System (comprising letter carriers.) The burgeoning lists of mail contractors completed the expansive nature of the Postal Service. (By 1911 mail contractors included almost every conceivable type of transportation service, including railway, electric and cable car, steamboat, stage, and wagon. The Postal Service also contracted foreign mail transfer services and pneumatic tube services.)

By 1879 the increasing size of the Postal Service finally created printing problems for the *Official Register* that required immediate attention. Officials responsible for compiling the Postal statistics realized that the mandated deadlines could no longer be met. It was therefore decided to divide the *Official Register* into two volumes and publish the employees of the Postal Service separately. By doing so, the remaining employee statistics of the federal government would still be available to Congress by the prescribed deadline. Publication of the Postal Service volume would follow as soon as practical.

The *Official Register* continued as a two-volume publication from 1879 to 1911. Each volume included a separate surname index until the directory format was introduced in 1907. By 1911, however, the director of the census determined that the Postal Service volume had become too difficult and costly to produce. The 1911 volume alone had comprised 774 pages and cost \$12,600 to print. The complex task of preparing the volume further diminished its usefulness, because the required statistics could only be obtained by corresponding directly with all 59,237 post offices across the country. The compilation of data thus became a very time-consuming process, often taking as long as six months. As a result, much of the data became obsolete by the time it was published. (The Census Bureau often detailed clerks to other offices where staffing was insufficient to prepare the required information within a reasonable amount of time, but only in 1909 did they succeed in publishing the Postal Service volume within the mandated deadline.) In many cases, the accuracy of the returns proved very doubtful as well.

For all practical purposes, the value of producing the Postal Service volume diminished considerably. As part of the 1913 Urgent Deficiency Act, therefore, the names of

all Postal Service employees were removed from the *Official Register*, reducing it once again to a single volume publication. The director of the census subsequently declared that the omission of the information appeared satisfactory to the public because no complaints had been received and few inquiries made regarding the absent data.

### Related Records

The *Official Register of the United States* offers a convenient starting point for genealogy research on civilian employees of the federal government. In the various listings of the *Register*, researchers can discover at a glance whether or not an ancestor worked for the government in a given year and also identify the department, bureau, or office they served. In many cases, the breakdown of department listings into specific jobs provides additional detail on the nature of work performed. In 1867, for example, the Office of Public Buildings, Grounds, and Works in the War Department listed personnel who worked in such obscure positions as lamplighters, draw-keepers at the Potomac and Eastern Branch bridges, and furnace keepers in the White House. Genealogists can also readily identify the place of birth for most employees, and the congressional district from which they were appointed. The lists of annual salaries and contractor allowances provide a general picture of the economic conditions under which federal employees served. In effect, the *Official Register* offers an initial snapshot of life as a federal employee from 1816 to 1959.

From the general information provided in the *Official Register*, researchers may consult other records for further detail. Appointment records of the various executive departments, for example, often provide additional information regarding federal employees. Postmaster Jacob Bloom offers an excellent illustration. The *Official Register* first listed Bloom at the Augusta, Pennsylvania, post office in the 1837 edition. A quick search of the register of appointments for the Post Office Department (Record Group 28) reveals that Bloom actually was appointed postmaster on September 17, 1836. The post office closed on January 4, 1844, and Bloom's service ended. When the office reopened two years later on February 19, 1846, a new postmaster was named.

To uncover further information about employees of other government departments, consult National Archives finding aids to determine how those agencies' appointment files are organized. Some appointment records, such as those for Jacob Bloom, are also available on microfilm (M841, *Record of Appointment of Postmasters, 1832–September 30, 1971*.)

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, Missouri, offers another source for information on

federal employees after 1907. The NPRC is particularly useful for information regarding employees who were subsequently eliminated from the listings of the *Official Register*, such as the Postal Service workers after 1911. Keep in mind, however, that records less than seventy-five years old remain closed to public examination. Of the files that are available, most provide adequate genealogy information, such as full name of the employee, position held, agency, and place and term of service. Records may also include place of birth, age, state from which appointed, and salary. The amount of material in the files often varies, but some may also include letters of application and recommendation containing a wealth of biographical information.

Published government documents provide a rich source of information regarding people who worked for the federal government. The *Official Register of the United States* clearly stands out as one of the best examples of such publications. Researchers may usually access the *Official Register* at many large universities and public libraries. Most U.S. Government Depository Libraries, as well as the Archives Library Information Center (ALIC) at the National Archives, also contain sets of the *Register*. (The National Archives' set, however, is currently incomplete; the early volumes from 1817 to 1829 are missing.) Some volumes of the *Register* (1883–1893) were also published in the U.S. Congressional Serial Set. Regardless of the type of media or format, the *Official Register of the United States* offers an easily searchable tool for genealogical research.

### Notes on Sources

- Principal analyses of the *Official Register*, including general background information and related legislative history, were derived directly from preface and appendix material in *The Official Register of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879–1959). Earlier volumes of the *Register* cited were published by various private contractors under the title *The Biennial Register of Officers and Agents in the Service of the United States*.
- Additional background information on the *Official Register*, including general descriptions of related records at the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), was found in Anne Bruner Eales and Robert M. Kvasnicka, eds., *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives of the United States*, 3rd ed. (Washington: National Archives and Records Administration, 2000).
- The example of related appointment records concerning Postmaster Jacob Bloom were part of a subseries entitled Records Relating to Appointments of Postmasters, 1815–1971, within the series Records of the Division of Postmasters in the Records of the Post Office Department (Record Group 28). These records have been microfilmed as National Archives Microfilm Publication M841, *Record of Appointment of Postmasters, 1832–September 30, 1971*, 145 rolls. ■

## UPCOMING SEMINARS

**National Archives and Records Administration Northeast Region** is offering free programs at two locations:

**New York City**, 12<sup>th</sup> floor, 201 Varick St. Programs at this location run from 12:30 PM to 1:15 PM on Tuesdays. For more information visit NARA's website at: <http://www.archives.gov/northeast/nyc/> To register for any of these free programs, telephone toll-free (866) 840-1752 or e-mail [newyorkarchives@nara.gov](mailto:newyorkarchives@nara.gov)

- **Finding Family: Using NARA's Underutilized Resources**, 13 March 2007.
- **Finding Family: Using the Archival Research Catalog (ARD)**, 10 April 2007.
- **Finding Family: Using the Access to Archival Databases (AAD) Catalog**, 8 May 2007.
- **Finding Family: Using Digitized Microfilm Holdings**, 12 June 2007.

**Waltham, Mass**, 380 Trapelo Rd., These free lectures last for approximately 90 minutes and begin at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. Behind-the-scenes tours of the archives take place a half hour before the lectures. Light refreshments will be served. For more information and to register call (866) 406-2379 or e-mail [waltham.archives@nara.gov](mailto:waltham.archives@nara.gov)

- **Introduction to Genealogy**, 3 July 2007.
- **Census, Naturalization & Passenger Lists**, 3 April and 7 Aug. 2007.
- **Introduction to Preservation**, 1 May 2007.
- **Records Related to Military Service 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries**, 5 June 2007.

*Note:* Both sites now close at 4:30 PM on Tuesdays.

The **National Genealogical Society**, the **Virginia Genealogical Society**, the **Fairfax Genealogical Society**, and the **Genealogical Research Institute of Virginia** will host the **2007 NGS Conference in the States and Family History Fair**, Wed. through Sat., May 16-19, in Richmond, VA. This event marks the 400th anniversary of the founding of America and the Jamestown settlement. Day-long tracks on DNA, the Library of Congress, National Archives records, and Virginia records and repositories will be featured. For registration and more information, visit <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>

**Westchester County Genealogical Society**, P.O. Box 518, White Plains, NY 10601, has scheduled a program at 10 AM, Sat., 14 April 2007 on **Preserving Your Family's Memories on DVD**. Speaker will be Risa Neuwirth, founder and president of LifeStory Productions. The program will be at the Yonkers Public Library, Grinton I. Wills Branch, 1500 Central Park Ave., Yonkers, NY (\$3 donation). Refreshments and networking at 9:30 AM. For

more information visit <http://www.rootsweb.com/~nywcgs>

**New York Genealogical & Biographical Society**, 122-126 E.58 St., New York, N.Y. 10022; telephone 212-755-8532. NYG&B is offering:

- **Kleindeutschland (Little Germany) Walking Tour**, Wed., 18 April 2007, through parts of the old 10th, 13th, 17th, and 11th Wards, visiting the sites of the old German theatre district, Samuel Gompers' first New York residence, the first Anshe Chesed Synagogue, and other important institutions. The tour begins at 5:30 PM and lasts about 90 minutes. It will end at one of the new biergartens in lower Manhattan where refreshments or dinner are available. Reservations required.
- **Improve Your Research Skills**, Sun., 22 April 2007, is a two-hour lecture by Patricia Law Hatcher, who will speak on "Techniques to Help Good Genealogists Become Even Better" and "They Just Showed Up: Where to Look When You Don't Know Where to Look."

For more information or to register online, visit [www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org](http://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org).

**New England Historic Genealogical Society**, 101 Newberry St., Boston, MA 02116 (toll-free 888-286-3447) is offering **Come Home to New England** programs Mon. to Sat., 18-23 June, and again Mon. to Sat., 6-11 Aug. 2007. For more information, visit [www.newenglandancestors.org/education/main/](http://www.newenglandancestors.org/education/main/)

**New England Regional Genealogical Conference, New England CONNECTIONS 2007** will be held Thurs., 26 April to Sat., 29 April 2007 in Hartford, Conn. For more information visit the conference website at [www.nergc.org](http://www.nergc.org)

**The National Institute on Genealogical Research (NIGR)**, held at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and College Park, Maryland, is an intensive program offering onsite examination of federal records. Designed for experienced researchers, the next institute will be held Sun.-Sat., 15-21 July 2007, and will focus on commonly used immigration, military, land, cartographic, African American, and nonpopulation census records. Complementing those core lectures will be presentations on lesser-known federal records useful to family historians. The program includes one day at Archives II and optional sessions at the Library of Congress and the DAR library.

Enrollment is limited, and the class fills quickly. Tuition is \$350 for applications postmarked by 15 May, or \$400 thereafter. Scholarships are available. For more information or to receive an application brochure, see the institute's Website at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~natgenin/> and add your name to the mailing list; or e-mail [NatInsGen@juno.com](mailto:NatInsGen@juno.com) or write to NIGR, P.O. Box 724, Lanham, MD 20703-0724.

**Wholly Genes 3rd Annual Genealogy Conference and Cruise** sails through the Eastern Caribbean Sun., 28 Oct. to Sun., 4 Nov. 2007 aboard the *Caribbean Princess* with stops at St. Thomas, St. Maarten and Princess Cays, Bahamas. Speakers include John Grenham (Ireland), John Titford, LHG FSG (Britain), Dick Eastman, Hank Jones, FASG, Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak, Cindi Howells, Sandra Hewlett, CG (NEHGS), Robert Charles Anderson, FASG (NEHGS, Great Migration Study Project Director), Marsha Hoffman Rising, CG, CGL, FUGA, FASG (President, American Society of Genealogists), and Tony Burroughs, FUGA. For more information, visit [www.WhollyGenes.com/cruise.htm](http://www.WhollyGenes.com/cruise.htm)

**RootsMagic Caribbean Cruise 2007** will sail Sun.-Sun., 11-18 Nov. 2007 aboard Royal Caribbean's *Mariner of the Sea*. Classes will include general genealogy subjects taught by, among others, Dick Eastman and Leland Meitzler. There will also be classes on getting the most out of your RootsMagic, Personal Historian, and Family Atlas software taught by RootsMagic experts. For more information, visit: <http://www.RootsMagicCruise.com> ■

## PROPOSED NARA PRICE INCREASES

In order to close the budget deficit at the National Archives and Records Administration, increased fees for reproduction of records and other materials in the custody of the Archivist of the United States have been proposed. (The last price increase, and it was a major one, took effect 13 November 2000.) You may read the complete notice in the *Federal Register*, Vol. 72, No. 37, Monday, 26 February 2007. Among the proposed price increases:

- Passenger Arrival Lists (NATF Form 81) would increase from \$17.25 to \$25.00.
- Federal Census requests (NATF Form 82) would increase from \$17.50 to \$25.00.
- Eastern Cherokee Applications to the Court of Claims (NATF Form 83) would increase from \$17.50 to \$25.00.
- Land entry records (NATF Form 84) would increase from \$17.75 to \$40.00!
- Full pension files more than 75 years old (Civil War period, NATF Form 85) would increase from \$37.00 to \$125.00!
- Pension documents packet (NATF Form 85, selected records) would increase from \$14.75 to \$25.00.
- Bounty land warrant application files (NATF Form 85) would increase from \$17.25 to \$25.00.
- Military service files more than 75 years old (NATF

Form 86) would increase from \$17.00 to \$25.00.

Comments, which are due *by 27 April 2007*, may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Visit the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax NARA at (301) 837-0319.
- Address mail to: Regulations Comments Desk (NPOL), Room 4100, Policy & Planning Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001. Also, copy: Dr. Allen Weinstein, Archivist of the United States National Archives & Records Administration, 700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20408.

Last November, the genealogical community responded to the notice of reduced hours at NARA by sending an electronic petition signed by 10,000 interested genealogists. Unfortunately, it was counted as one response. To be heard, you must express your concern individually. ■

## RECENT MGS PROGRAMS

When Larry Fermi became ill and was unable to speak to us on 27 January, we were fortunate, indeed, that MGS board member **Virginia Banerjee** was ready and willing to address us on the subject, "**Genealogy and History Go Together.**" Names, dates and events are the focus of both history and genealogy. Virginia pointed out that it is not possible to understand our ancestors without establishing a time line showing what was going on around them while they lived. While history tends to focus on important people and big events, social history focuses on little people and their lives. Even if our ancestors did not write autobiographies or keep journals, we can learn much about them by reading material produced by or about others living in similar circumstances with similar occupations.

**Larry Fermi's** delayed presentation, "**Crossing the Pond—Finding Your Immigrant Origins,**" took place on 17 February and was filled with useful information. He used the immigrants in his own family to illustrate what might be known to a descendant and how misinformation might seep into family stories. For example, what was thought to be a town name might actually refer to a much larger area. Decide what you want to learn and then select the records to search and determine where they can be located. Some will be in the country of origin, but many, such as arrival records, vital records, censuses, naturalization, military, pension, Social Security, obituaries, court, probate, land, property, and memberships, will be found here. Search a broad time period, and look for other family members, too. ■

**MGS CALENDAR**

*(Continued from page 2)*

including ship manifests prior to 1820, Customs Passenger Lists 1820 to ca 1891, and the Immigration Passenger Lists from ca 1891 forward. We will also look at the various annotations that were made on the passenger lists and how they can be used to determine additional information about the immigrants, including other ships they may have traveled on, nationality, medical status and even clues to U.S. Naturalization records and dates.

Larry has been performing in-depth family history research since 1989, with a focus on European immigration during the peak periods of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and is a popular speaker on basic and advanced genealogy-related subjects in the greater New York metropolitan area. He has been a member of the Monmouth County Genealogical Society's Education Committee since 2001, and is also a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the National Genealogical Society, the Genealogical Speakers Guild, and the Genealogical Society of New Jersey.

**17 NOVEMBER 2007. UNDERSTANDING YOUR WESTERN EUROPEAN ANCESTORS CAN HELP YOU TRACE THEM** will be presented by **LESLIE A. HUBER**. Learning about the lives of your Western European ancestors can not only be interesting, but it can make the task of tracing them much easier. Leslie describes peasant life and society and then shows how this information can be used to both target the search for

ancestors and get more out of the records. The lecture centers on three topics: religion, demographics, and making a living.

Leslie Albrecht Huber is a freelance writer focusing on family history topics. Her articles have appeared in a wide variety of publications, including *Heritage Quest Magazine*, *Ancestry*, *Family Chronicle*, *Everton's Genealogical Helper*, *Everton's Family History Magazine*, *Family Tree Magazine*, *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*, *History Magazine*, *Family Fun Magazine*, *Family Chronicle*, *Journal of Mormon History*, *Internet Genealogy*, and *German-American Genealogy*. She recently completed her first book, *Generations: A Journey Through History*. Leslie has also taught classes on genealogy in colleges and community classes and has trained other instructors to teach as well. She now gives lectures to genealogy and history societies on topics centering on immigration and understanding Western European, German, and Swedish ancestors. ■

**Deadline for next newsletter  
24 April 2007**

**MEETING  
17 MARCH 2007  
DARIEN LIBRARY**

*Middlesex Genealogical Society*  
PO Box 1111  
Darien CT 06820-1111

