



Middlesex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

March 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last month I talked about the frustration of reaching dead ends in our research. I found that I was not alone in that frustration. I receive many magazines on genealogy in which there are a lot of articles on the subject.

Even television has advertisements relating to the subject. Again, I can relate to that problem and tell you that it is getting less troublesome. More and more information is becoming available. We just need to be patient and think our problems through or talk to others who may be able to suggest a different approach.

I would also like to address at this time what we do when we have found new sources and new information. Do we just put the information in a box or in a pile of papers on the desk and then hope we can find it again when we need it? We do have a knack for saving any little thing we find that has or might shed a little light on our ancestors. We put it either in that "to do" pile on the corner of the desk or in that box on the floor. Have you noticed that you never get to them and that they keep on growing?

Here are some of the ideas that I picked up as I read the material each week that I receive from others:

1. Determine that it's time to organize; set a time to do it; make a plan; and then stick to it.
2. Acquire the materials that you need to implement your plan: file cabinets or file boxes, file folders, markers, pens, etc.
3. Determine the categories that will help you find the items you will not file.
4. Okay. Now look at each document or picture and put it in the right file. **DO IT NOW.**
5. After that is done, you can review all these documents and pictures and make decisions

about them. Do I need the document as is? Or can I digitize it and store it on a computer or on a disk? Today there are very many devices that allow you to scan and file your material electronically.

6. Next determine your file plan: surname, places, type of document, or any categories that make sense to you. You can even create an index. By the way, when you do your searching on line, print less and save your results to your electronic filing system. (This will also save on paper and ink.)

Let us remember that to us all this material is important and valuable, but others might not be able to see its value. If organized effectively, however, it might get others excited enough to become interested in the history and genealogy of their family.

Lloyd Sturges Jr. ■

LIBRARY NEWS

by C. Scribner

Recently the library staff informed us of their need to take over the glass-enclosed bookcase situated in our section. This bookcase has been used by the Middlesex Genealogical Society to house our collection of periodicals. There is one set of the *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* and another set of the *New England Historic Genealogical Register* (with 80 plus or minus two or three editions in each set) including indexes.

The *NYG&B Record* and *NEHG Register* are very important to persons looking into genealogy and/or family history. Since storage space is limited, the books will have to be removed. We are

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MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2010-2011 OFFICERS

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

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Charles Scribner	Librarian
Dorothy Shillinglaw	Newsletter Editor

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 (ISSN 1936-3494). Annual membership dues are \$25 per individual and \$30 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

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

UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ALL MEETINGS SATURDAY, 2 PM, CONFERENCE ROOM (on the mezzanine, above the 2nd floor, elevator button "M"), DARIEN LIBRARY, 1441 POST ROAD. COME, AND BRING A FRIEND.

19 MARCH 2011: LESLIE ALBRECHT HUBER will present **"BEYOND NAMES AND DATES: UNCOVERING YOUR ANCESTORS' STORIES."** Are your ancestors destined to live on only as names and dates on your family charts? No! Dig deeper in the records and learn to place them in their historical context, and you can gain a new and fuller understanding of their lives.

Leslie Albrecht Huber is an award-winning freelance writer and speaker who has written nearly one hundred articles that have appeared in more than 20 different magazines. Her recently published first book, *The Journey Takers*, has been a project-in-the-making for nearly ten years. Leslie has given dozens of lectures to genealogy and history groups throughout the country, including national conferences.

14 MAY 2011: NORA GALVIN will speak to us about **DNA IN GENEALOGY**, especially mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), the kind that is inherited from our mothers. Nora, the descendent of nine immigrants from eight counties in Ireland, has lived in Ohio and Virginia, but now makes her home in New England. She has been a secondary-school science teacher and a research scientist at a major pharmaceutical company where one of her roles was using DNA as a drug discovery tool. She brings a scientist's intrinsic curiosity and attention to detail to her genealogical research. ■

FRED WHITCOMB FARWELL

With sadness, we report the death of Fred Farwell on 1 February 2011, almost three months after celebrating his 100th birthday. Fred was a charter member of our society, one of the ten members of the Senior Men's Association that formed Middlesex Genealogical Society in December 1982. He contributed his time and talents to the society unstintingly.

Fred was a resident of Darien from 1951 to 1998, and was an active volunteer in many local organizations, such as Boy Scouts, Darien Auxiliary Police Force, and the Inland Wetlands and Conservation Commission. He also sang in the choir of St. Luke's Church for many years and served two years as president of the Senior Men's Association.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his family. ■

RESEARCHING WOMEN ANCESTORS

by Joan Young

March is Women's History Month making this a perfect time to take stock of the too frequently overlooked half of your heritage. It's usually easier to trace your paternal ancestry in that it follows a surname path and can be verified by participation in surname (Y-DNA) testing projects. Your maternal side usually becomes your stumbling block. When you reach the point where you do not know a female ancestor's maiden name quite often family "stories" about Indian Princesses and relationships to famous historical figures enter the picture.

How do you sort the facts from the lore and what tools are at your disposal to research your maternal ancestors when you are at a dead end? Here are a few suggestions to follow.

1. **Marriage Records:** Since most civil marriage records are held at a state or local level you can use census records and ages of children to narrow down the time frame as well as to help determine the location of the marriage.
2. Tombstone inscriptions, death records, and obituaries often list a woman's maiden name.
3. **Search online resources** to see whether another family member may have posted family Bible records for your ancestor. Don't overlook online family tree databases as well. I reached a dead end looking for the maiden name of Rebekah KIGER, wife of my great-great-great-grandfather, Matthias KIGER. The answer was found in the private family journals in the possession of two cousins I found through my research. One cousin had a copy of the couple's marriage certificate showing Rebekah's maiden name of LINMEYER. I had been unable to locate any record of this marriage through traditional searches.
4. Church records may include a wife's maiden name. If you don't find it in an index or abstract, try to obtain a more complete record from the church or religious denomination's archives. Check with the local Historical Society if you can't find records through the church.
5. Don't overlook census records for married women as there were many multi-generational households. You may find your female ancestor's parent(s) living with the family. Or you

may find them living near-by. Consider neighbors as possible family members.

6. Look at children's given names and middle names for clues. My mother was given the middle name of "Dunn" and all she knew was that she was named for her maiden aunt. My research showed that her aunt's name was Rebecca Dunn BORTON. Further research led to the fact that this aunt's maternal grandmother's maiden name is Rebecca DUNN. Family surnames often carry through the generations as given or middle names. My ancestor, Joseph ROBINSON, had a son who married a SMITH. They named a son SMITH ROBINSON.
7. Since men wrote most wills, owned most of the property, paid the taxes, became naturalized, and served in the military it can be a bit trickier finding the women. However, don't rule out any of these sources as women were often mentioned in deeds (especially if land was sold and a wife approved the sale to protect her dower rights), as an heir in a parent's will, or in pension files for a husband or father's military service. There may be clues lurking in these records.
8. Cyndi's List has links to sites that can help you find, and understand what life was like for your female ancestors.

In a small abandoned cemetery where some of my KIGER ancestors are buried is the grave of a widow of a Revolutionary War soldier: Margaret, wife of Joseph WOOD. Her tombstone, no longer readable, once bore the inscription which fortunately was transcribed at an earlier date: "She went to war, cooked and cared for him." This widow's story and her role in history may be lost to us forever, but this is just one example of a hint about female ancestors' untold stories.

Perhaps your research will yield a maternal ancestor who was ahead of her time and achieved fame or notoriety as an author, artist, educator, entertainer, or political figure. Check out the Notable Women Ancestors Website hosted by RootsWeb which was created and maintained by Suzanne "Sam" Behling. This site is a goldmine of information about notable women. There is even a place where you can submit your notable female ancestor.

GUIDELINES FOR GENEALOGICAL SELF-IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH

Recommended by the National Genealogical Society

Faced with ever-growing expectations for genealogical accuracy and reliability, family historians concerned with improving their abilities will on a regular basis:

- Study comprehensive texts and narrower-focus articles and recordings covering genealogical methods in general and the historical background and sources available for areas of particular research interest, or to which their research findings have led them.
- Interact with other genealogists and historians in person or electronically, mentoring or learning as appropriate to their relative experience levels, and through the shared experience contributing to the genealogical growth of all concerned.
- Subscribe to and read regularly at least two genealogical journals that list a number of contributing or consulting editors, or editorial board or committee members, and that require their authors to respond to a critical review of each article before it is published.
- Participate in workshops, discussion groups, institutes, conferences and other structured learning opportunities whenever possible.
- Recognize their limitations, undertaking research in new areas or using new technology only after they master any additional knowledge and skill needed and understand how to apply it to the new subject matter or technology.
- Analyze critically at least quarterly the reported research findings of another family historian, for whatever lessons may be gleaned through the process.
- Join and participate actively in genealogical societies covering countries, localities and topics where they have research interests, as well as the localities where they reside, increasing the resources available both to themselves and to future researchers.
- Review recently published basic texts to renew

their understanding of genealogical fundamentals as currently expressed and applied.

- Examine and revise their own earlier research in the light of what they have learned through self-improvement activities, as a means for applying their new-found knowledge and for improving the quality of their work-product.

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FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CLASSES AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET

Free Classes Make Genealogy Expertise Accessible Anywhere

FamilySearch now offers 81 free lessons on FamilySearch.org, enabling people anywhere in the world to access family history expertise at any time. The topics range from basic research to training on specific record types and can be beneficial to both beginners and experienced researchers. Most of the classes come from research consultants in the world-famous Family History Library in Salt Lake City, but FamilySearch is also now working with partners to broaden the pool of expertise.

For example, FamilySearch worked with the Mid-Continent Public Library in Independence, Mo., to record and post 12 classes. These classes are available on both FamilySearch.org and the Midwest Genealogy Center's site. Such collaboration benefits everyone involved, according to Darin Hakes with FamilySearch Community Services.

"We see partnering as a mutually beneficial situation for FamilySearch, our partners, and the patrons," Hakes said. "We realize that FamilySearch does not have expertise in every area, nor do we have the bandwidth to create all the training that is needed. However, there are many excellent individuals and organizations that have created training that can benefit the genealogical community. They may not have the resources to record and publish their classes, so working together is the perfect solution."

Midwest Genealogy Center librarian Janice Schultz agrees that partnering with FamilySearch increases their reach.

"The online classes allow people to attend no

matter where they live,” Schultz said. “It helps us achieve our mission of educating genealogists. We have received many positive comments about these classes.”

In addition to the Mid-Continent Public Library, FamilySearch is working with the Association of Professional Genealogists, the Board of Certified Genealogists, and the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists. Individual genealogists may also use FamilySearch’s free services to record and share their presentations. One result of an individual partnering with FamilySearch is a class called “Inferential Genealogy” by prominent researcher and teacher Tom Jones.

“Tom’s class is excellent, but may be too complex for some patrons,” Hakes said. “We tried to provide a different instructional approach, to make the presentation of the content more visual and provide opportunities for practice. We added value by presenting his content in a different way, taking something fairly complex and making it more easily digestible.”

Upcoming FamilySearch classes will focus on U.S. courthouse research and a series of courses for those just getting started in family history research. There are also more interactive classes planned on reading handwritten records in different languages, a list that now includes Dutch, French, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

All of the classes can be accessed at www.FamilySearch.org by clicking “Free Online Classes” on the home page. ■

NEW OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR REPRODUCTIONS OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES HOLDINGS

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has expanded the formats available to members of the public who wish to purchase copies of records from its holdings.

Copy options for immigration and naturalization records, land files, military service and pension records, court records, World War I draft registration cards, Native American records, census pages, and many other archival documents

now include the possibility of purchasing a digitized version. The per-image fee for digital copies is the same as the per-page fee for paper copies. In addition, NARA now offers digitized duplication of its microfilm holdings, at an increased per-roll rate. The digital copies that result from this new service are delivered via CD or DVD, depending upon file size. In most cases, the files are provided in a Portable Document Format (.pdf).

To order copies of NARA’s holdings—including copies now available in digital form—use any one of the following methods:

1. Visit the National Archives online ordering system at <https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/>.
2. Download the appropriate form at <http://www.archives.gov/contact/inquire-form.html#part-a>. For microfilm orders, researchers can use the online ordering system at <https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/> or they can download a paper form at <http://www.archives.gov/research/order/microfilm-pubs.html>.
3. Contact the National Archives through the Inquire Form at <http://www.archives.gov/contact/inquire-form.html#part-b>. ■

MYHERITAGE.COM RELEASES NEW PERSONALIZED FAMILY MEMORY GAME

MyHeritage.com, a popular family network on the web, has released a new online family memory game, which makes family history more fun and engaging for the whole family, according to Daniel Horowitz, their chief genealogist.

The game, one of the first ever online family tree games, automatically generates beautiful personalized picture cards of close relatives and ancestors based on each user’s family tree. Following the same rules as a typical memory card game, users can play in competition with another family member, or solo against the clock. With a webcam option, players can even include a live picture of themselves in one pair of the cards, providing added entertainment particularly for younger players.

The game is recommended for all users with a

family tree that features photos of relatives. Played by the young and old alike, the game is ideal for educating the younger generation about their ancestors and introducing them to genealogy as a hobby. Families who enjoy the online version of the game can order the actual printed cards from MyHeritage.com for playing on-the-go, such as on holiday travels and at family reunions. This is made possible through MyHeritage.com's new partnership with AncestryGames.com, with a deck of handmade personalized cards available for as little as \$20 plus shipping. The printed cards feature up to 30 relatives of a user's choice (totalling 60 cards), and include additional information on their respective birth/death dates and locations, if listed in the family tree. ■

UPCOMING SEMINARS

National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region:

New York City, 201 Varick St. Programs run from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and are free, but space is limited. Register by calling toll-free 1-866-840-1752, fax 212-401-1638; e-mail: newyork.archives@nara.gov.

- 12 Apr.: "Finding Family: Chinese Exclusion Act Files."
- 10 May: "Finding Family: Civil War Draft Records."
- 14 June: "Finding Family: What to Do When You Hit the Brick Wall."

Waltham, Mass., 380 Trapelo Rd. Lectures are on Tuesdays at 2 p.m., except for "Genealogy for Kids" lectures, which are on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. All are free, but space is limited. Register by calling 866-406-2379 or e-mailing waltham.archives@nara.gov. **Please note:** The schedule may be affected by upcoming renovations, so be sure to call ahead.

- 5 Apr.: "Introduction to Genealogy."
- Wed., 20 Apr., 10 a.m.: "Genealogy for Kids" (Gr. 3-8 and chaperones).
- 3 May: "Genealogy Online: Using the Online Resources of the National Archives."
- 7 June: "Finding Your Ancestors in Maritime Records."
- 12 July: "Introduction to Genealogy."

- 2 Aug.: "Census, Passenger Lists and Naturalization Records."

Pittsfield, Mass., 10 Conte Dr. Lectures are free and last about an hour, but space is limited. Register by calling 413-236-3600, or e-mail pittsfield.archives@nara.gov.

- Tues., 22 Mar., 2:30 p.m.: "Finding Your Immigrant Ancestors at the National Archives."
- Thurs., 24 Mar., 10:00 a.m.: "Researching Irish-American Ancestors."
- Tues., 29 Mar.: "Researching French-Canadian Ancestors," Part 1, 10:00 a.m.; Part 2, 1:30 p.m.
- Mon., 4 Apr., 2:00 p.m.: "Beginning Your Genealogy Research at the National Archives."
- Mon., 11 Apr., 2:00 p.m.: "Using Federal Census Records."
- Wed., 13 Apr., 2:00 p.m.: "Finding Family Information in Military Pension Files."
- Thurs., 14 Apr., 10:00 a.m.: "Researching Polish Ancestors."

New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, 36 W. 44th Street, 7th fl., New York, NY 10036-8105; telephone 212-755-8532; FAX 212-754-4218. The NYG&B's Education Committee is offering:

- **Westchester County Archives**, at 2199 Saw Mill River Rd., Elmsford, NY, Thurs., 14 April, from 1-5 p.m. Prepare yourself to conduct research at any county archive by joining NYG&B for this behind-the-scenes tour where you will experience probate, land, court, and other records hands-on. This is a valuable opportunity for all researchers to gain new skills and learn how to use county records. Westchester ancestry is not required.
- **"Researching Your British Roots From the U.S.,"** a day-long program on Sat., May 21, at NYG&B headquarters. Renowned British researchers and lecturers Paul Blake, FSG, and Maggie Loughran will present a four-lecture program geared to researchers whose ancestors came from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

NYG&B also jointly sponsors programs with the New York Public Library. Programs are free, and registration is not required. Programs are held at the New York Public Library, Fifth Ave., between 40th and 42nd Sts., in the South Court Classrooms (first floor, off Astor Hall).

- **The Last Muster: Images of the Revolu-**

tionary War Generation. Wed., 30 March, 5:30 p.m. As unbelievable as it seems, many individuals who participated in the American Revolution lived past the advent of photography in 1839. Learn about the detective work involved in uncovering these "misplaced" pictures and find out new ways to discover the Revolutionary War generation in your own family. Maureen Taylor, specialist in photo analysis and interpretation, will be the speaker.

- **The Making of the Multicultural Country: Immigration and New York,** Wed., 20 April, 5:30 p.m. Explore how and why so many millions have come to the U.S. and what challenges this tradition has posed to national identity, tolerance, and democracy. Major immigrant groups (Irish, German, Chinese, Italian, and Jewish) and the vibrant ethnic enclaves they established (e.g., Little Italy, Little Germany, Chinatown) will be discussed. Dr. Edward T. O'Donnell, a professional historian, author, and an associate professor of history at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass., will be the speaker.

For information about any of these programs, e-mail education@nygbs.org or call 212-755-8532, Ext. 211.

New England Historic Genealogical Society, 99-101 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116, 888-296-3447. Tues., July 5, to Fri., 15, the New England Historic Genealogical Society will offer a tour of Ireland led by Donald Friary, president of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, director emeritus of Historic Deerfield, and an NEHGS councilor. He will share with attendees the broad sweep of Irish history from the Bronze Age to the present. Local cuisine will be sampled. By special invitation, several great houses will be visited, and dinners will be held in two of Ireland's most beautiful and exclusive settings—Glin Castle with Desmond FitzGerald, the Knight of Glin; and Leixlip Castle with the Honorable Desmond Guinness. By private arrangement, the group will also visit the meticulously restored Georgian house and gardens belonging to a longtime friend of the New England Historic Genealogical Society. This is a trip that may never be repeated. For more information and to register, visit www.americanancestors.org.

New England Regional Genealogical Conference: "Exploring New Paths to Your Roots," to be held Wed. to Sat., 6-10 April 2011 in Springfield, Mass., is the 11th New England Regional Genealogical Conference. Read the E-zine and watch the Website at www.NERGC.org for developing information. Subscribe to the E-zine by sending an email to rootsearcher@email.com and typing "subscribe" in the subject line.

Westchester County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 518, White Plains, NY 10601, presents speakers on genealogical subjects on the **second Saturday of each month** at 10 a.m. (Premeeting networking starts at 9:30 a.m.) Meetings are at Aldersgate Memorial United Methodist Church, 600 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY (across from Mercy College on Route 9). There is a \$3 fee for nonmembers. You can visit the society's website at: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~nywcgs>

- 9 Apr.: "New York City Vital Records" will be presented by Debra Braverman.
- 14 May: "Exploring the 1940 US Census" will be presented by Christopher Zarr.
- 11 June: "Controlling Your Genealogy Computer Files" will be presented by Janice Parker.

National Genealogical Society, 3108 Columbia Pike, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22204-4304; telephone 800-473-0060. The 2011 Conference in the States theme is *Where the Past is Still Present*. The conference will be held Wed. to Sat., 11-14 May at the North Charleston Convention Center in Charleston, SC. Online registration for the conference is now open. Forms and more information can be found at: http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/conference_info.

Worldwide Cruises has two genealogy events scheduled at this time and invites you to "**Explore Your Roots**" during lectures on a broad number of subjects aboard Royal Caribbean's *Freedom of the Seas*:

- **Sun. to Sun., June 5-12,** in the Eastern Caribbean (from Port Canaveral, Fla.). Lecturers will be Shamele Jordon, Lisa Parry Arnold, DearMYRTLE, Suzanne Russo Adams, Duff Wilson, Crista Cowan and The Ancestry Insider.
- **Sat. to Thurs., Oct. 22-27,** five-night Bermuda cruise (from Cape Liberty, New

Jersey) The following will be there to lecture: Megan Smolenyak, Shamele Jordan, Lisa Parry Arnold, George G. Morgan, Lesley Anderson, Duff Wilson, Crista Cowan. Seminar Bonus: Each participant will have a private 30-minute consultation with one of the professional genealogists.

For more information contact: Lynn Polgar, Cruise Consultant, 15090 White Ave., Allen Park, MI 48101; (313) 294-2107; e-mail cruise-lynn@gmail.com. Visit the Website at http://www.wwcruisehq.com/index_files/WorldwideCruise-Headquarters_Family_History_Cruises.htm ■

LIBRARY NEWS *(Continued from page 1)*

currently looking into the feasibility of selling the books or donating them if we are unsuccessful.

For further information, you may contact us at: Middlesex Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1111, Darien, Fairfield County, CT 06820; Website <http://mgsdarien.org>. ■

NEED HELP WITH RESEARCH? E-mail mgsvolunteer@gmail.com, and an MGS volunteer will contact you to schedule a help session at Darien Library.

**Deadline for next newsletter
26 April 2011**



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Peter Biglins
230 Old King's Highway North
Darien, CT 06820

**MEETING
19 MARCH 2011, 2 PM
DARIEN LIBRARY**

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



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