

The Newsletter of
**Middlesex Genealogical
Society**

Vol. XXXIV, No. 2

Darien, Fairfield County, CT

June, 2018

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2018

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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 publishes a quarterly newsletter (ISSN 1936-3494) and co-sponsors, with Darien Library, at least four meetings with a program and speaker during the year. 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/>

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President's Message

Bragging rights! For those of us who dabble in genealogy, it's how far back in time you can find an ancestor. Most can go back to the 1800s. Many can go back to the 1700s. A few can go back to the 1600s.

I have traced my patrilineal line back to my great great grandfather, Patrick Biggins (or Beggan), who was born in Ulster in 1807. So, I have only gone back to the 1800s. Not much to brag about.

But there is more. You probably won't believe this, but I recently took my Biggins ancestry back to the 300s. My ancestor, Colla Uais, lived in Ulster in the 300s.

Four McDonalds, who have had their Y-

chromosome DNA tested, trace their ancestry back to Lt. Brian McDonald who was born in 1645 in Arklow, County Wicklow, and emigrated to Delaware in 1684. Ancient Irish pedigrees take Lt. Brian McDonald's ancestry back a total of 43 generations, including McDonald of Leinster, McDonald of Antrim, Alasdair Og and Somerled of Argyle, and Colla Uais of Ulster.

I am not a McDonald, but my Y-chromosome DNA matches these McDonalds from the 300s through the 900s. So, our patrilineal ancestors have to be the same. Around the year 1000, my Biggins ancestors branched off from the McDonalds, along with testers named King, McGuire, McAuley, and Boylan.

Any genealogy that goes back to the 300s is not going to be as solid as one that goes back to the 1800s, 1700s, or 1600s. The pedigree back to Somerled, which goes back to the 1100s, is pretty well documented. The pedigree for the 300s to the 1000s is not so exact. There are no written records prior to the 1400s. Nevertheless, I think the attempt is worthwhile. You can judge for yourself. Here, then are my ancestors from the 300s to the 900s:

Colla Uais - Erc - Carthend - Muredach - Amalgad - Aed Guaire - Colman Muccaid - Fergus - Conal - Niad -Fergus - Goffrad - Maine - Niallgus - Suibhne - Meargagh (or Marcus) - Solamh (or Solomon)

The source for the pedigree is "The Ancestors of the McDonalds of Somerset," by Donald M. Schlegel, 1998. Sources consulted by Schlegel include: Book of Ballymote (ca 1400), Book of Lecan (Early 1400s), National Library of Scotland MS 72.1.1 (1467), Monro (1549), Harleian MS 1425/190-191 (ca 1620), Annals of Clan Macnoise (1627), Geoffrey Keating (ca 1634), O'Clery (mid 1600s), and Book of Clanranald (ca 1715).

Seventeen ancestors over 700 years. Not quite enough. There must be some missing. But it's better than nothing!

Peter Biggins

Edward J. O'Hara

Edward J. O'Hara, age 76, of Norwalk, beloved husband of Catherine C. (Arthur) O'Hara passed away peacefully Friday, February 23, 2018 at Norwalk Hospital. Born in New York City and raised in Oradell, NJ, the son of the late Edward James O'Hara and Vendela (Hanson) O'Hara, he had been a Norwalk resident since 1979. He served on active duty in the U.S. Army from January 1964 to November 1965 in Korea. Ed received his Bachelor's degree from American University's School of International Service, a Master's degree in History from New York University, a Master's degree in Library Science from Rutgers University, and a Ph.D. in Library Science from Columbia University. He worked for three years as an Acquisitions Librarian at Boston University's Mugar Library, where he met and married his wife, Cathi. He then worked as the head of Collection Development at the University of Kentucky. He later served as the Library Director at Sacred Heart University, Manhattanville College, the College of Mount St. Vincent, and Western Connecticut State University. Ed was an avid world traveler, having visited countries as far flung as Kazakhstan and Morocco. He also loved hiking, both regionally and abroad. He and Cathi hiked the Swiss Alps during their honeymoon and he continued that passion the rest of his life. Among his many hobbies, he loved genealogy and stamp collecting. He studied several languages, which enabled him to stay in close contact with his cousins in Sweden. He is remembered as a loving husband, devoted father, proud grandfather, and loyal friend, who could always be counted on for hugs, sage advice, and great conversation. He was a docent at the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion and a long-time member of the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Connecticut St. Andrew's Society, the Middlesex Genealogical Society of Darien, and the Norwalk Stamp Club.

Getting Acquainted with the Revised Version of Find-A-Grave.com

Ted Bainbridge, Ph.D.



<https://www.findagrave.com> is a web site that collects individuals' cemetery and other information, whether a grave marker is present or not. The site's database includes over 165 million people's memorials and adds about 1 ½ million per month. It contains information from almost half a million cemeteries around the world. This free site can be searched in several ways, and its information is easy to download onto a home computer. The site is menu-driven and intuitively easy to use. Registration, which is optional and free, gives the visitor access to features that are not otherwise available. Everybody should explore the tutorials.

Think of the home page as being organized into four areas:

- the main menu, near the top of the page and filling its entire width
- the search panel for individuals' graves, which dominates the background photograph
- the link to findagrave tutorials, a blue oval button near the bottom right of the page
- other less-frequently used items, occupying the rest of the screen below the background image

To read Dr. Bainbridge's entire article, click [HERE](#) or go to the Middlesex Genealogical Society's webpage, <http://mgs.darien.org/> and click on Publications.

Welcome New Members!

Ruth S. Adelman

H. Everett Drugge

Kathleen Ruther

Pamela J. Strohm-Gorden



Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Board of Health

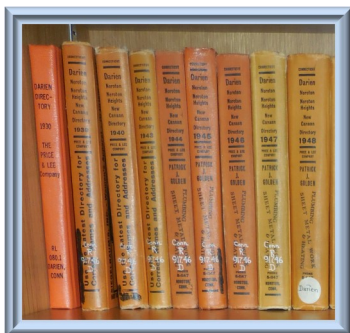
Notice of Adoption of Amendment to Article 207 of the New York City Health Code

In compliance with section 1043(b) of the New York City Charter ("the Charter") and pursuant to the authority granted to the Board of Health by section 558 of said Charter, a notice of intention ("NOI") to amend Article 207 of the New York City Health Code ("the Health Code") was published in the New York City Record on September 20, 2017, and a public hearing was held on October 24, 2017. At the hearing, 31 people testified, 18 of whom also submitted written comments. In all, 5,028 written comments were received, 3,884 of which were signatures to a petition and many of these signatories also submitted their own written comments. No changes have been made to the proposed amendment to Article 207 based on the comments received, as discussed below. The Department is, however, separately proposing to the Board, in response to comments received, amendments to the Health Code to expand the categories of qualified applicants who may access birth and death records before the records are transferred to the Department of Records and Information Services ("DORIS") and become public. At its meeting on XXX XX, 2018, the Board of Health adopted the following resolution

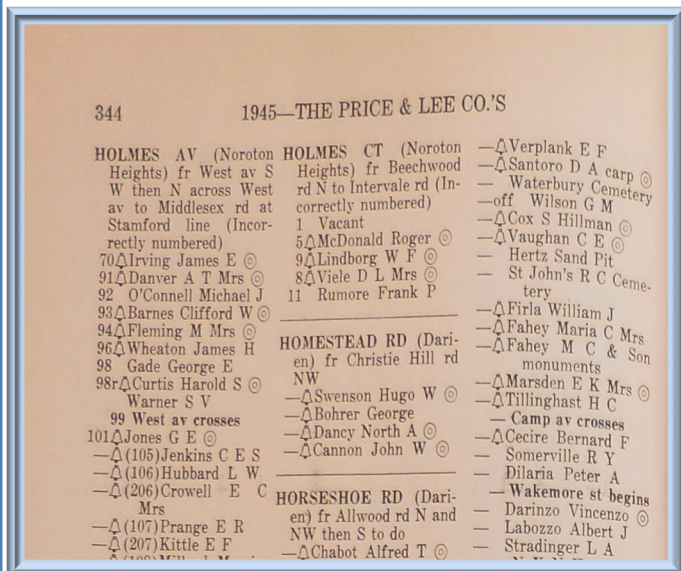
To read the entire article, please click [HERE](#)

Directories

Have you ever wondered who called your house “Home” before you? Like people, houses have a history to be revealed. Some have had only one family living in them since they were built, others, many. If you live locally, you can learn the names of those families by viewing the directories available on the second floor of the Darien Library. They are located on the shelves adjacent to the Middlesex Genealogical Society’s area. With a few exceptions, the directories date from 1930 to present. They are



Directories on shelves



Page from the 1945 directory

reverse directories, so you can look up the street name and see who was living in the house. You can then look up the resident’s name where in most cases an occupation will be noted. Of the few missing directories, most can be found at the Darien Town Hall which houses directories that go back as far as 1928.

See related article *Houses Have Stories to Tell* in the MGS newsletter May 2015. Click [HERE](#)

Upcoming MGS Presentation

The next presentation of the Middlesex Genealogical Society is October 6, 2018. Subject to be announced.

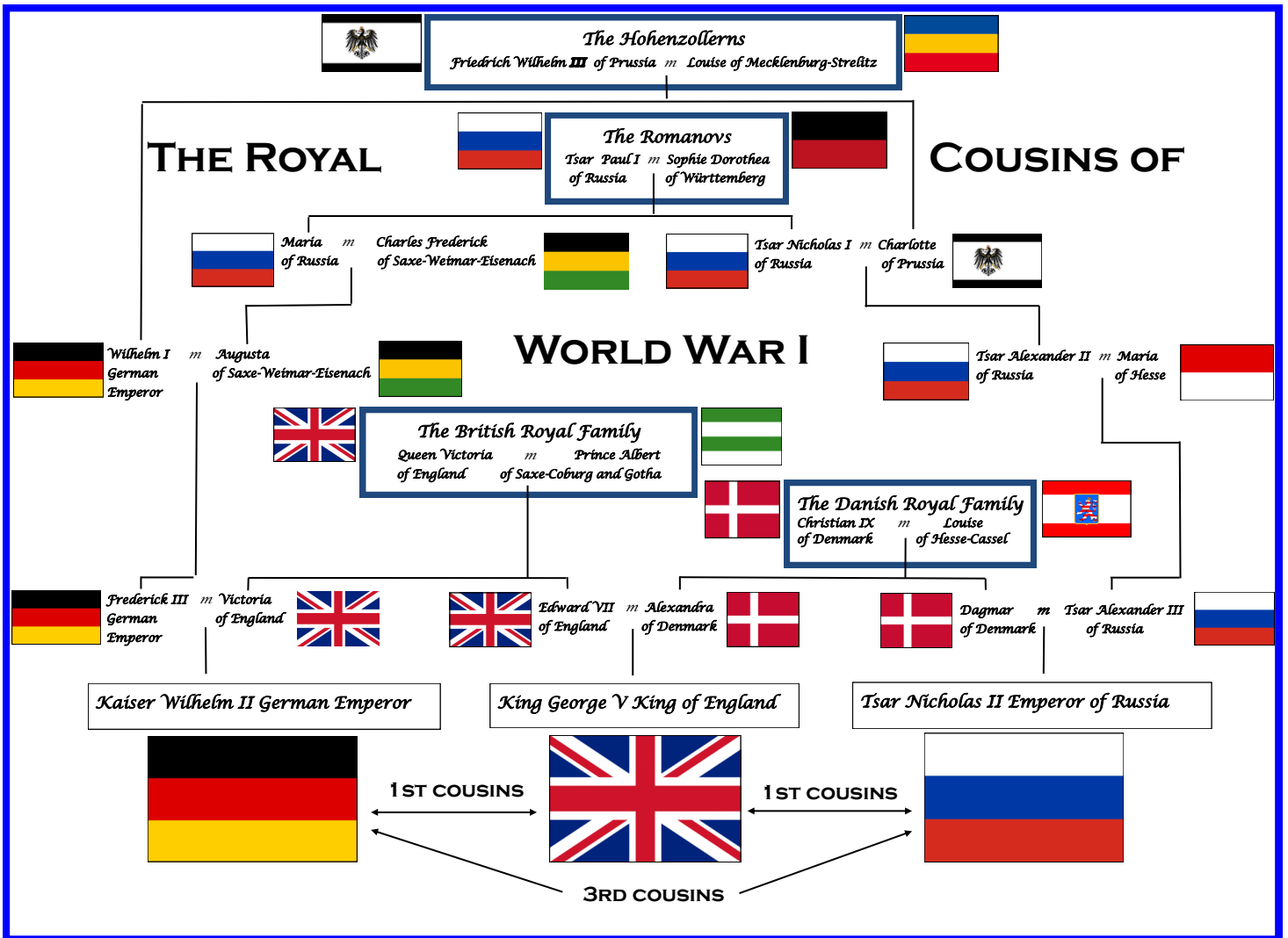
Enjoy the Summer!

Upcoming Regional Presentations

Saturday, June 23, 2018 at 3:00pm, New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, and The Virginia Museum of History & Culture, “Tracing World War I Relatives” presented by D. Joshua Taylor

Please join the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (NYG&B) and the Virginia Museum of History and Culture for a joint program that celebrates genealogy, discusses research methods, and commemorates World War I, June 23, 2018 at 3pm in the Robins Family Forum. D. Joshua Taylor, NYG&B President and professional genealogist, will present *Tracing World War I Relatives*. Beginning in 1917, millions of American men and women played important roles during the first World War. Mr. Taylor will discuss a variety of sources and tools to tracing family members who served during the conflict, including draft registrations, surviving service records, unit histories, and other materials. Tickets are \$10 for NYG&B and VMHC members and \$15 for the general public, which includes suggested admission to the museum. Tickets also include a post-program reception from 4-5pm. [Click here to register.](#)

Please go to “Events” on page 8



**MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US AT OUR
2ND ANNUAL SOCIAL EVENT**

**WHERE: Clubhouse Grille at Oak Hills Golf Course
165 Fillow Street, West Norwalk, CT**

WHEN: Wednesday, June 27th 6:00-8:30 p.m.

This event is open to all friends of MGS as well as your guests.
Drinks and food are available for purchase at reasonable prices.
Kindly RSVP to Tara Forschino at taragenealogy@gmail.com.

There's a Facebook Group for That

by Tara Finn Forschino



Despite the security concerns regarding Facebook (FB) lately in the news, I have no intention of deleting my account. Ever since I set up my account years ago, I knew I wanted to keep connected to a very small group of family and friends from

around the world. Therefore, before requesting “friends” and adding all sorts of personal data about myself to my profile page, I secured my FB settings so that I had full control of what others could see on my page. This security topic alone is worthy of an entire other article, yet I wanted to point out that there are ways to remain fairly private on FB while using it for genealogy. Love it, hate it, or don't know much about it, genealogists are on FB and it's a powerful social media platform to incorporate into your research.

There are thousands of FB groups appealing to those researching an ethnic group (German Genealogy Group), specific location (Early New London County Genealogy), special interest (Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness) and surname groups, to name a few. You'll be surprised how specific some of these groups are including haplogroups (DNA Haplogroup I1) and specialty groups for transcribing or deciphering records either in English or any other language. In fact, two of the most popular types of groups lately are those involving adoption and DNA. My favorite DNA groups are DNA Newbie, DNA Detectives, and Genetic Genealogy Tips & Techniques. I have learned a tremendous amount about DNA by following these pages. As fellow MGS board member

and active FB user Pamela Shea states “of course the best groups are the ones that address your area of interest, have active members and the more members the more activity.”

One important privacy concern that is easily addressed with using private FB groups is that a message board is public and can be accessed and located through Google searches (one pops up with my name from years ago and the site isn't even operational anymore). However, with private groups your posts can only be accessed and viewed by members within the group.

Middlesex Genealogical Society maintains a FB page that is closed to the public so you'll need to ask permission to join and answer three basic questions to help us rule out fake accounts and spammers. In fact, most groups require this type of gatekeeping before granting access to new members. Once accepted into a group you'll be able to post your own questions or enjoy scrolling through the numerous posts of interesting and touching success stories with the breaking down of brick-walls along with disheartening posts from those rejected by their new found biological families.

In an effort to collaborate with family members on FB in a secure manner, I created a private family page for my mother's parent's lines. I then invited all the related family members that are on FB as members to this group. This private page allows us to share our photos, stories, research, trees, etc. It truly encourages other family members to begin scanning their documents & photos once they recognize the benefit of how easy it is for all of us to share these treasure troves of family history that most of us didn't know existed. It also keeps us all on the right track with the correct family tree information posted by all of us. Lastly, private family pages are also an excellent way to plan for fami-

ly reunions.

Compiled and regularly updated by Professional Genealogist and Speaker, Katherine R. Willson, the *Genealogy on Facebook List* is an extensive and resourceful list over 10,000 FB links, pages, and groups relating to genealogy and family history. It's a clickable table of contents organized by country and subject. Katherine confirmed to me that the MGS page will be added to her list at the next update. You can access this amazing compilation from Katherine's website via this link: <https://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list/>

If you would like to explore setting up a Facebook page, adding a private family page to your existing FB account or assistance in maneuvering through the vast genealogy groups that exist, feel free to contact MGS board members Tara Forschino at taragenealogy@gmail.com or Pamela Shea at pamelashea2@aol.com.

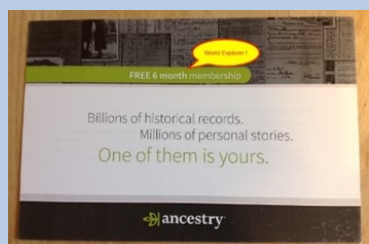
Tara Finn Forschino has been an MGS board member since 2013. She currently serves as Social Director and Facebook Administrator.

Congratulations to

Pamela Strohm-Gorden

Winner of a six month subscription to Ancestry.com

World Explorer edition!



Tips

- Record interviews with your elders! Maybe around the dinner table after a Thanksgiving meal when they are in a talkative mood? Memories fade, but these stories can provide a wealth of genealogical information. When correlated with others, unknown relatives may be discovered.
- When recording events, sources closest to the date of the event are usually more accurate than ones further away. An immigration date of 1892, for instance, given on the 1900 census is more likely to be correct than a 1930 census.
- When reading a family bible, there are a few things to note. When did the family get the bible? Did they have it before all recorded events? Were the events listed as they happened or at a later date and by whom? Events listed as they occurred are going to be more accurate than ones listed all at one time. The handwriting may change from event to event indicating a different person entering the data. (See [TIPS](#) on page three in the June 2016 issue of the MGS newsletter on how to collect signatures to recognize handwriting).
- Recheck NYC cemeteries. Go to the New York City Cemetery Project, <https://nycemetery.wordpress.com/about/> for a list of websites. Some of them are now searchable online. For the Catholic cemeteries in the Brooklyn Diocese, for example, click on <http://www.ccbklyn.org/information-news/locate-a-loved-one/> The Green Wood Cemetery is also searchable https://www.green-wood.com/burial_search/ as is Mount Carmel <http://www.mountcarmelcemetery.com/>.

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Saturday, July 7, 10:30 a.m. – noon, Co-sponsored by the Connecticut Ancestry Society and the Danbury Public Library, 170 Main Street Danbury, CT 06810 “Discover FamilySearch.org,”

Looking for free access to genealogy webinars, free how-to guides for local research, free original records and more? FamilySearch.org is a valuable resource for genealogical research that can be challenging to use. Join us at Danbury Public Library and learn how to navigate FamilySearch and get the most out of your research. The program will be presented by Connecticut genealogical researcher, teacher, and French-to-English translator Bryna O’Sullivan. The program is free and open to the public. All are welcome. For more information about CT Ancestry Society: <http://www.connecticutancestry.org>

The end of the 100th anniversary of the first World War is fast approaching. Send in a story about your relative in the *War to End all Wars* and have it published in the September issue of the newsletter.

LEAVE THEM SMILING



**2018
OCTOBER 6,
NEXT MEETING**

**Middlesex Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1111
Darien, CT 06820-1111**