



The Newsletter of

Middlesex Genealogical Society

Vol. XXXV, No. 3

Darien, Fairfield County, CT

September 2019

President's Message

Welcome back from summer and to a new MGS season. While I tend to take a break from my research in the summer to spend more time outdoors, I did take my first trip to St. Louis to meet a family of second cousins. My mom only met her first cousin Skip when she was 16 while his family visited them in NYC back in the 1950s. A few years ago when I was filling out her family tree, I located Skip and he was able to fill in critical gaps for me. Skip and his children have been so appreciative of my years of family research that they invited me out as Skip recently turned 80. The whole family was so welcoming that it felt as if I had grown up with them all my life. My passion for genealogy continues to reward me in so many wonderful ways.

While MGS didn't hold any meetings or presentations during the summer, the board was active on updating the bylaws, finding new speakers and exploring future field trips. Our VP of Programs, Mary Lavins, has been creating an exciting line up of speakers and topics. We will kick off our speaker series on October 5th with a presentation by Laura Congleton on Civil War Pensions.

Lastly, Peter Biggins, MGS Webmaster, is always eager to expand our Member Pages, where we offer members a page to display information about their families. As the result of

my own page, I was contacted by a gentleman after my family vaudeville photos turned up in his online search. After digging deeper for about a year and with the help of cousin Skip, a DNA test later confirmed a match to my new second cousin, Bob. Bob's grandfather turned out to be my long lost Great Uncle Lionel, who disappeared during his vaudeville days in the 1920s. It was revealed that Uncle Lionel abruptly hung up his tap shoes, moved to Chicago and became a union boss while keeping his stage surname whereas the other siblings reverted back to their birth surname. Trying to locate family back in those days was incredibly difficult compared to the resources we have today. So, consider creating your own page on our site as you never know who may be looking for your family.

Tara Finn Forschino

In this Issue

- Presidents message pg.1
- Chick Scribner pg.2
- Book Suggestions pg. 3
- MGS Presentations pg. 4
- Tips pg. 4
- Misspelled Words pg. 5
- Welcome New Members pg. 5
- MGS Social pg. 6
- Regional Events pg. 7
- Leave Them Smiling pg. 8

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2018-2019

OFFICERS &

BOARD MEMBERS

Tara Finn Forschino	Co-Pres., Social Director & Facebook Administrator
Pamela Shea	Co-President
Mary Lavins	Vice-Pres. Programs & Email Communications
John Driscoll	Treasurer & Newsletter Ed.
Steve Haywood	Secretary
Rob Martinelli	Membership Director
Robert E. "Pete" Kenyon	Past VP Programs
Sara Zagrodzky	

PAST DIRECTORS

Peter Biggins	Past President
Leonard Christie	Past VP Programs
Lloyd Sturges Jr.	Past President

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 vary from \$25 for 1 yr or \$45 for 2 yrs. per individual and \$30 for 1 yr. or \$55 for 2 yrs. per couple or family, as well as a lifetime option at \$300. Original notices of genealogical interest and queries are welcomed for publication in the newsletter.

Middlesex Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 9
Darien, Fairfield County, CT 06820

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

Congratulations Chick Scribner!

Charles (Chick) Scribner, was honored as the first veteran to have a Darien Street named after him. On May 26th, The Wartime Veteran Street Sign Program, started by eighth grade history teacher at Middlesex Middle School, Lucy Berry, added two street signs bearing his name on Fairfield Ave. The ceremony took place in front of the house that Chick was born in 95 years ago and was attended by a large crowd of locals and town officials.

After serving in Burma during World War Two as a staff sergeant in Company C 558th Signal Air Warning Battalion, Chick went on to have a career as a glassblower at Machett Laboratories in Stamford. He has been a Scoutmaster for Boy Scout Troops 53 and 35, as well as a member of the Darien VFW, Noroton Heights Fire Department, Darien Historical Society, Darien Monuments and Ceremonies Commission and the Darien Community Association

He was also a member of our own Middlesex Genealogical Society. He joined the MGS in 1990 and served for many years as Director and Librarian writing many articles for this newsletter and maintaining an inventory of our holdings at the Darien Library.

Our congratulations and thanks go out to him for his contributions to our town and country.



**WE HAVE A
 NEW MAILING ADDRESS!**

Please update your records

Middlesex Genealogical Society Inc.
 PO Box 9 Darien, CT 06820

MGS Members' Suggested Books

In the June 2019 edition of the newsletter, we highlighted three books recommended by our members. Here is a summary of three more member recommendations. If you have any books that have helped you please email pamelashea2@aol.com



The Boy Who Fell Off the Mayflower, or John Howland's Good Fortune

by P.J. Lynch

At a young age, John Howland learned what it meant to take advantage of an opportunity. Leaving the docks of London on the Mayflower as an indentured servant to Pilgrim John Carver, John Howland little knew that he was embarking on the adventure of a lifetime.

By his great good fortune, John survived falling overboard on the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, and he earned his keep ashore by helping to scout a safe harbor and landing site for his bedraggled and ill shipmates. Would his luck continue to hold amid the dangers and adversity of the Pilgrims' lives in New England?

John Howland's tale is masterfully told in his own voice, bringing an immediacy and young perspective to the oft-told Pilgrims' story. P.J. Lynch captures this pivotal moment in American history in precise and exquisite detail, from the light on the froth of a breaking wave to the questioning voice of a teen in a new world.

Angela's Ashes

by Frank McCourt

Imbued on every page with Frank McCourt's astounding humor and compassion. This is a glorious book that bears all the marks of a classic.

"When I look back on my childhood, I wonder how I managed to survive at all. It was, of course, a miserable childhood: the happy childhood is hardly worth your while. Worse than the ordinary miserable childhood is the miserable Irish childhood, and worse yet is the miserable

Irish Catholic childhood."

So begins the Pulitzer Prize winning memoir of Frank McCourt, born in Depression-era Brooklyn to recent Irish immigrants and raised in the slums of Limerick, Ireland. Frank's mother, Angela, has no money to feed the children since Frank's father, Malachy, rarely works, and when he does he drinks his wages. Yet Malachy-- exasperating, irresponsible and beguiling-- does nurture in Frank an appetite for the one thing he can provide: a story. Frank lives for his father's tales of Cuchulain, who saved Ireland, and of the Angel on the Seventh Step, who brings his mother babies.

Perhaps it is his story that accounts for Frank's survival. Wearing rags for diapers, begging a pig's head for Christmas dinner and gathering coal from the roadside to light a fire, Frank endures poverty, near-starvation and the casual cruelty of relatives and neighbors--yet lives to tell his tale with eloquence, exuberance and remarkable forgiveness.

The Winthrop Woman

by Anya Seton

First published in 1958 and set in the early 17th century, this bestselling novel—and follow-up to *Katherine*—follows Elizabeth Winthrop, a courageous Puritan woman who finds herself at odds with her heritage and surroundings. A real historical figure, Elizabeth married into the family of Governor John Winthrop of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In those times of hardship, famine, and Indian attacks, many believed that the only way to prosper was through the strong, bigoted, and theocratic government that John Winthrop favored. Defying the government and her family, Elizabeth befriends famous heretic Anne Hutchinson, challenges an army captain, and dares to love as her heart commanded. Through Elizabeth's three marriages, struggles with her passionate beliefs, and countless rebellions, a powerful tale of fortitude, humiliation, and ultimate triumph shines through.

Upcoming MGS Presentations

Saturday, October 5, 2019 1:00 pm. Social Hour, Come Talk About Your Work.

This is an informal social hour with others who are interested in genealogy. The goal is to share experiences with fellow genealogists and hopefully gain new insights. Think of the most important question or issue that you have about your genealogy. It may be a brick wall that you are facing with one of your ancestors, a question of wanting to know where to find a particular resource, or a success that you are dying to share with the rest of us.

Book Exchange. This is also a good time to bring in genealogy books and periodicals that you are no longer using and make them available to people who can make use of them.

Saturday, October 5, 2:00 pm. Civil War Pensions: A Closer Look A Talk by Laura H. Congleton. nygenealogist@gmail.com



Why was one widow of a Union veteran eligible for a Civil War pension and another widow not? Why would someone with a Civil War pension suddenly lose it? And why is there so much seemingly identical paperwork in some of the pension files?

Changing federal and state laws meant pension applicants had to constantly verify and re-verify their claims. The result is that some pension files can contain more than 100 pages. How can we better understand why those documents were created and what that meant about the applicant's life?

Join Laura Congleton for a closer look at Civil War pensions, as she walks you through the

application process and the changing pension laws to help put the pension documents into better perspective.

Laura Congleton is a Brooklyn-based professional genealogist with more than 30 years experience in family history research. She specializes in NYC and military records, and is a contributing author of the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*, published by the NY Genealogical & Biographical Society. Her writing has also appeared in the *APG Quarterly*, and in the Expert Series on Archives.com.

Laura is a graduate of NIGR in Washington, DC, and of Boston University's Genealogical Research program. She is also the recipient of a *Larry J. Hackman Research Residency Award* from the New York State Archives in Albany for research she has been conducting on Civil War veterans from the town of Owego in Tioga County, NY.

Saturday, November 9, 2019 2:00 pm To Be Announced. Look for email updates and check our website often <http://mgs.darien.org/>

Tips

Surname Sources - Knowing the naming patterns of the ethnic area you are researching is an invaluable resource in recognizing family names. Surnames began in Europe about the 11th century. They developed as trade increased. The four basic groups of surnames are the patronymic (based on the father's name), landscape features or place names, action or nicknames, and occupational or office names.

Funeral Directors Have extensive records with valuable information. Many are not scanned into computer files, but can be located through old file cards and paper records.

Genealogy's Often-Misspelled Words

The following article is from *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter* and is copyright 2017 by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com/>.

You might want to save this article someplace.



I have no idea why, but many of the words used in re-searching your family tree are difficult to spell. I constantly see spelling errors

in messages posted on various genealogy web sites. When someone misspells a word, it feels like they are shouting, "I don't know what I'm doing!"

Here are a few words to memorize:

Genealogy – No, it is not spelled "geneology" nor is it spelled in the manner I often see: "geneaology." That last word looks to me as if someone thought, "Just throw all the letters in there and hope that something sticks." For some reason, many newspaper reporters and their editors do not know how to spell this word. Don't they have spell checkers?

Cemetery – The letter "a" does not appear anywhere in the word "cemetery." You can remember the spelling by an old saying, "We go to the cemetery with E's." (ease)

Ancestor – This simple word is often spelled "ancester," "ansester," or "ansestor."

Ancestry – This word is often misspelled "ancestory." I often see errors when someone is referring to the ancestry.com online web site as "ancestory.com."

History – More than once I have seen someone refer to their "family histroy" or "family histry."

Descent – Perhaps not as common, but I have seen this spelled as "decent," which sounds almost the same.

Descendant – it often appears as descendent, descentent and many others.

Grantor versus Grantee – In land records, the grantor is the one who sells or gives (grants) the land while the grantee is the one who receives.

Copyright – Then there is Copyright versus Copywrite. Just remember that it is always **right** to copy, not write to copy.

Progenitor – I can never remember how to spell this word. I simply try to avoid it when I am writing!

Two other words often are confused: **immigrant** and **emigrant**. Another variation is immigration versus emigration. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary at <http://www.merriam-webster.com>, an emigrant is "a person who leaves a country or region to live in another one" while an immigrant is "a person who comes to a country to live there." To repeat, an **emigrant leaves** while an **immigrant arrives**.

The late Dick Pence was quite a storyteller, and once he told of an online genealogy article he wrote in which he poked fun at common spelling errors by genealogists. He deliberately misspelled **ten** different words in the article, including most of the words I listed above. In the text of the article, he never mentioned that the article was a tongue-in-cheek attempt at humor.

Dick soon received an email message from an irate lady who apparently didn't realize it was a deliberate attempt at humor. She scolded him for his spelling errors, writing, "Mr. Pence, you should be ashamed of yourself. I am an English teacher and I want to tell you that I found **seven** spelling errors in your article!"

Welcome New Members

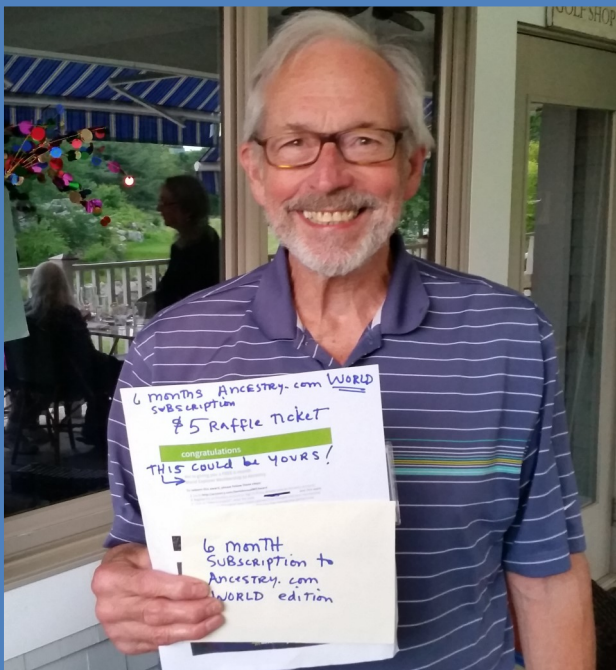
Patricia D. Clements

Claire E. Falkner

Lynn T. Sadlon

3rd Annual MGS Social

The third annual MGS Social was held on June 12th on the veranda of the Clubhouse Grille at the Oak Hills Golf Club. Once again, due to Tara's tireless efforts, it was a great success with perfect weather. It was attended by 30 guests who mingled and enjoyed a light fare and drinks. Conversation ranged from genealogy to general chit chat as well as making and renewing friendships. This year there were two prizes. Ancestry.com donated a six-month World Explorer subscription, which was raffled off and won by Steve Haywood and raised much needed funds to help us continue our presentations. The other prize was a DNA test, donated by Family Tree DNA. It was open to all paid members at the time of the drawing and was won by longtime member, Marilyn VanSciver. We also had two new members attend, Claire Falkner and Lynn Sadlon.



Bottom Left, Steve Haywood, raffle winner, Top, guests enjoying the Social and Bottom Right, flanking Janine Bjork, two new members, Lynn Sadlon and Claire Falkner

Genealogy

**Where you confuse the
dead and annoy
the living!**

Upcoming Regional Events

Thursday, September 19, 2019, 1:00p.m. - 3:00 p.m., social time 1:00p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Norwalk Senior Center Genealogy Club, "DNA - New features, findings and caveats."

This session will focus on how to synergistically use your trees and test results to find lost or unknown relatives or facts about them. (The Scanning Workshop, originally scheduled for this date, will take place on October 17th.)

The meeting is free and open to the public. Please RSVP either to jonathanbrown20@aol.com, or call the reception desk at NSC, 203-847-3115.

Saturday, September 28, 2019, 10:30 a.m. - noon, The Connecticut Ancestry Society and Cos Cob Library, 5 Sinawoy Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807 - "Genealogy and Technology: Problems, Pitfalls, and Lots of Promise" Presented by Rob Locke

The interactive session will begin with several slides and demonstrations by Rob Locke, and continue with audience participation. Attendees are encouraged to bring any technology and genealogy questions they would like to have answered. Information about Rob can be found at <http://www.ralii.com>

All Friends and all CAS programs are free and open to the public. Genealogists of all levels are welcome. Light refreshments will be served.

Four Tuesdays, October 15, 22 and 29 and November 12, 2019, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Greenwich High School, 10 Hillside Ave, Greenwich, CT 06830 Room 112 "A hands-on genealogy course, taught in a computer lab." \$99 fee to Greenwich Adult & Continuing Education. <https://www.greenwichace.com/> See page 11 of the interactive GACE catalog. [Click Here](#)

Thursday, October 17, 2019, 1:00 p.m. -3:00 p.m., social time 1:00p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Norwalk Senior Center Genealogy Club, "Scanning Workshop"

How to get your old photos digitized, stored, labeled and organized with your family history collections. The meeting is free and open to the public. Please RSVP either to jonathanbrown20@aol.com, or call the reception desk at NSC, 203-847-3115.

Saturday, October 19, 2019, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the Four Points Sheraton, 275 Research Parkway, Meriden, CT 06040 Connecticut Society of Genealogists' Annual Family History Seminar

A full day of programming including:
9:00 - 10:00: "Sources around the House" with Pauline Merrick
10:30 - 11:30: "Mapping Your Sources" with D. Joshua Taylor
Noon - 1:00: Luncheon
1:45 - 2:45: "Evaluating and Documenting Online Sources" with D. Joshua Taylor
3:00 - 4:00: "Eight Steps to Preserving Family Photographs" with Maureen Taylor
Plus, exhibitors and presentation of CSG's 2019 Literary Awards.

Register before September 30: \$49
Registrations postmarked after September 30: \$59

Deadline to register: October 11, 2019
To register or for more information visit www.csqinc.org or call 860-569-0002

Saturday, October 26, 2019, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Danbury Public Library, 170 Main Street, Danbury, CT "Let's Write a Sketch (About Anybody You Like)" Writing Workshop co-sponsored by the Connecticut

Ancestry Society and the Danbury Public Library

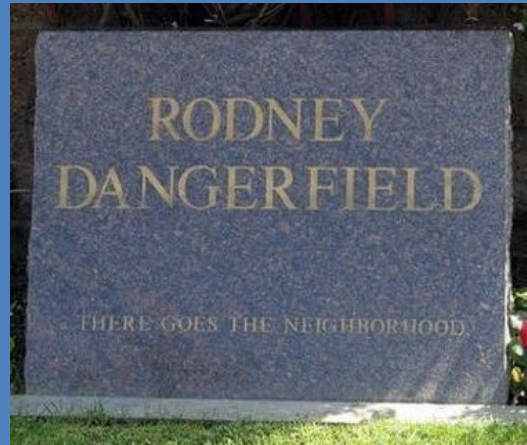
Join Certified Genealogist Nora Galvin for instruction and support as you write a Genealogical Sketch. Bring samples of your work and whatever you write with (a tablet, a laptop, or pencil and paper) with you. All CAS programs are free and open to the public. Genealogists of all levels are welcome. For more information about CT Ancestry Society: <http://www.connecticutancestry.org>.

Saturday, November 16, 2019, 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. "Researching Italian American Families: All Roads DO NOT Lead to Rome"
Sponsored by the Friends of the Cos Cob Library, 5 Sinaway Rd., Cos Cob, CT 06807

The search for Italian-American and Italian relatives, begins with yourself and with census data, as it does for families of any ethnicity. Both Connecticut and Italian vital records are

stored in the town where the event took place. This program begins with what for many is the greatest challenge, finding the town or towns. Free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

LEAVE THEM SMILING



**2019
 OCTOBER 5,
 NEXT MEETING**

**Middlesex Genealogical Society
 P.O. Box 9
 Darien, CT 06820**