

Middlesex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

September 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope all of you had a very prosperous and exciting summer, found lots of your family members on your travels, and increased your knowledge of the history of your families. Maybe you had some time to relax and take in the sun or catch a fish. I did a lot to find family both alive and dead, and it was a great summer. Now, it's time for us all to get back to work. MGS has planned some exciting programs for you and the inquiring public. Check the calendar in this issue for details.

There have also been some additions to our library collection here at the Darien Library.

We still have openings for members of the society to help get library patrons started on their family history research. To get your name on this list please send your name, telephone number, and e-mail address to me at lrskeeter@optonline.net

Great news: As we have reported before, the genealogical information highway is becoming better and faster each day, which will aid all of us researchers to get more accurate information quicker and easier.

The largest archives of information can be found in the mountains of Salt Lake Valley, stored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The church is in the process of digitizing these records to make them available more quickly, as well as easier to read. This project is going faster than expected due to new equipment and generous volunteers and will now probably be completed within 10 years. Also, all filming is now being done using digital equipment.

That's not all: All these new digitized records need to be indexed to be of greater value to users. If you would you like to help with this project, take a

few moments of your time and volunteer. Just log on to www.familysearchindexing.org Indexing tasks are assigned in small segments that can be completed quickly, but every volunteer brings the completion date closer.

There are lots of opportunities for you to share your talents and knowledge and be part of this great MGS team.

Lloyd Sturges Jr. ■

SOCIETY NAME CHANGE

To Middlesex Genealogical Society Members:

The Board of Directors is considering changing the name of our organization. Unfortunately, our current name implies that: (1) we are located in Middlesex County in either Massachusetts or Connecticut, and (2) our research materials and assistance are limited to a relatively small geographic area.

These problems became quite apparent when we participated in the Society Fair at last spring's New England Regional Genealogical Conference in Hartford. Almost all of the attendees who visited our booth were expecting us to be from one of the Middlesex counties and were very surprised to find we were located in southwestern Connecticut.

The board has proposed that the name of Middlesex Genealogical Society be changed to "Fairfield County Genealogical Society." Please e-mail me at lrskeeter@optonline.com with any comments or suggestions. The board would like to vote on this proposed name change at their 23 October 2007 meeting.

Lloyd Sturges Jr.
President

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2007-2008 OFFICERS

Lloyd Sturges Jr.	President
Robert E. Kenyon III	Vice President
Dale Pollart	Treasurer
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Donna Moughty	Past President
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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 \$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>

UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

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

6 OCTOBER 2007. WELCOME ABOARD: PASSENGER LISTS AND 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, 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 19th and early 20th 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.

(Continued on page 8)

USING ROOTSWEB NEW ARCHIVES SEARCH ENGINE

by Joan Young
joan@volunteer.rootsweb.com

Previously printed in *RootsWeb Review*, 25 April 2007,
Vol. 10, No. 17.

Until recently, if you wanted to search the archives of a RootsWeb mailing list from within RootsWeb, you had to search one list at a time and search year by year for keywords or surnames of interest. This worked just fine if you knew you were looking for ROBINSONs on the ROBINSON mailing list, for example, although searching year by year could become cumbersome at times, especially if you were not sure which list you wanted to search—or if you preferred to search all lists. RootsWeb has retired the veteran ISearch or Interactive Search engine and unveiled a spiffy new search engine. It is able to search the nearly 31,000,000 messages posted to all RootsWeb mailing lists over their entire history—all at one time. An easy and convenient way to access the new Archives search engine is to click on the Mailing List tab in the RootsWeb masthead on any RootsWeb page (you will be taken to a page with a search box labeled "Search the mailing list archives") or go directly to: <http://lists.rootsweb.com/> The new Archives search engine can also be accessed by clicking the "Archives Search" link under the Mailing List heading on the RootsWeb home page, <http://www.rootsweb.com/> And finally, the new search feature is linked from the main Archiver page under the link "Search all of the archiver listings." This search engine uses the same Archiver database that has been used for quite some time to browse through the list messages subject by subject and month by month, <http://archiver.rootsweb.com/>

To perform a simple search of the full text of all lists for all time periods, enter keywords or surnames in the Keywords field on the search page. Matches to your search criteria are returned in order of relevancy.

And, Not, and Exact Phrase Searches

Archives searches understand the commands AND and NOT. For example, you can search for John AND ROBINSON or ROBINSON NOT John. The former would be a search for a complete match of the words

John and ROBINSON within the message, and the latter would be a search for messages that include ROBINSON but exclude the word John in the text. The searches are not case sensitive. Archives searches also understand exact phrase matches, which are shown within quotation marks, such as "John ROBINSON." The difference between using an exact phrase search with quotes and using the command AND is that with an exact phrase search only exact matches to John ROBINSON are returned. If you enter John AND ROBINSON, the search engine will return hits where both words appear somewhere in the text being searched, but not necessarily together as part of the same name.

Wildcard Searches

Wildcard searches always require a bit of practice and experimentation when first using a new search engine. The "*" and "?" wildcards may be used with the Archives search engine with the * (asterisk) representing zero or more missing or unknown characters and the ? (question mark) representing a single missing or unknown character. The wildcards are intended for use anywhere within the keywords or surnames, but the catch is that they will only work in situations where there are not too many possibilities to be searched. For instance, if you are looking for a surname that ends in "ONES" but you don't know how many leading characters are missing or unknown, you will find that searching for "*ONES" results in an error message because there are too many possibilities for the search engine to check. However, searching for "?ONES" does yield results for surnames where one leading character is followed by "ONES." Trial and error is the best method of finding what works and what doesn't. The question mark symbol can be used more than once in a keyword or surname, but in each case it only represents one missing character. For instance, a search for ROB??SON produces hits for ROBERSON, ROBINSON, and ROBARSON, but will not find ROBERTSON since there are three missing characters in that name. A search for ROB*SON will find all spellings where any number of missing characters are matched.

Advanced Searches

In addition to the simple searches in Archives search, there is an Advanced tab with more refined search options. Specific fields may be searched using the Advanced capabilities. Searching with the BODY

field will return matches from both the message body and the subject line. Searching with the SUBJECT field will return results that match the subject line of the original message. The FROM field may be used to search for posts made from a specific e-mail address. For example, you may wish to search for all posts you have made to the lists. Or you may wish to search for messages posted by a cousin who has listed information on various lists pertaining to your mutual family history. The LIST field is for narrowing down your searches to posts made to a specific list, and the DATE field is for limiting the results to posts made within a specific date range, in the format dd mmm yyyy or: 10 Jan 2006. By using the LIST and DATE fields together you can duplicate the old listsearch functionality; that is, you can search a single list and a single year. Just enter a list name into the LIST field and a year into the DATE field. Or, if you want, narrow your search further by entering a specific month and year in the DATE field: Jan 2006, or even a specific day by entering: 10 Jan 2006. You can use one or more of the fields in combination when entering search terms in the Advanced search feature. For instance, if you want to search for posts you made to the SMITH surname list in January 2006, enter your e-mail address in the FROM field, SMITH in the LIST field, and Jan 2006 in the DATE field. RootsWeb mailing lists have always provided a huge amount of information, but in the past the trick was locating the information you needed. Now, through proper use of the new Archives search engine, the information is easily accessible and at your fingertips. ■

UPCOMING SEMINARS

Cos Cob Library, 5 Sinaway Rd., Cos Cob, CT 06807; telephone: (203) 622-6883. MGS president Lloyd Sturges will present a workshop entitled "Getting Started With Your Family History" at 10:30 a.m. on 29 Sept. The workshop will focus on accessing and obtaining records throughout the world by using the resources of LDS Family History Centers, as well as other sources, including the Internet. There is no charge, and reservations are not required.

National Archives and Records Administration Northeast Region is offering free programs in their New

York City facility, 12th floor, 201 Varick St. Programs at this location run from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. For more information visit NARA's website at: <http://www.archives.gov/northeast/nyc/> To register telephone toll-free (866) 840-1752 or e-mail newyorkarchives@nara.gov

- 9 Oct. 2007, Archives Open House. (The Open House runs an extra hour, 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.)
- 13 Nov. 2007, Finding Family: State and Nonpopulation Census Schedules.
- 11 December 2007: Finding Family: Using Naturalization Records.

National Genealogical Society, 3108 Columbia Pike, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22204-4304, (800) 473-0060. Reservations are already being taken for the 2008 NGS Conference and Family History Fair, 14-17 May 2008 in Kansas City MO. For registration and more information, visit <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>

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.). Unless otherwise noted, meetings are at Aldersgate Memorial United Methodist Church, 600 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY (across from Mercy College on Route 9). A \$3 donation is asked of nonmembers. You can visit the society's website at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~nywcgs>

- 13 Oct.: Researching Family Roots and DNA, by Elizabeth M. MacFarlane.
- 10 Nov.: Crossing the Ocean with the Internet, by Leslie Huber.
- 8 Dec.: Holiday Party, Special Interest Groups/Study Group Meeting.
- 12 Jan. 2008: Women of the House (cosponsored by Friends of Philipse Manor Hall), by Jean Zimmerman. This meeting will take place at Philipse Manor Hall, 29 Warburton Ave., Yonkers, NY.
- 9 Feb.: Identifying Photos from Costumes, by Laura Lee Keating. This meeting will take place at Yorktown Community & Cultural Center, 1974 Commerce Street, Yorktown Heights, NY, 914-962-2970.
- 8 March: The Trail Our Ancestors Followed in Becoming Citizens, by Joseph Lieby.
- 12 April: Every Age has a Story to Tell, by Peter Savigny from Heirloom Biography.
- 10 May: The Story of Sybil Ludington—American Revolutionary War Hero—the Female Paul Revere, by Vincent D'Aquino.
- 14 June: An Object of Great Importance: the Hudson River During the American War for Independence, by Christopher DiPasquale.

Genealogical Society of Bergen County on 22 Oct. at 7 p.m. hosts Dorothy Dougherty who will discuss Various Customs Records: New York's Maritime History at Ridgewood Public Library, 125 North Maple Ave., Ridgewood, NJ.

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

- **Writing Your Family History**, Sat. and Sun. 27 and 28 Oct. You will be taken through the process and actually begin writing your story. Guiding you will be Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, author of the course text *You Can Write Your Family History*, as well as 13 other books, and James Warren, author of *Getting the Most Miles from Genealogical Research Trips* and other books.

- **Research in Albany**, Wed., 7 Nov., through Fri., 9 Nov. During these three days, you will do your own research, assisted by the New York State Library and New York State Archives staffs, volunteers from the Capital District Genealogical Society, and NYG&B experts from their staff and Education Committee. The holdings of the library (<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/>) and archives (<http://www.archives.nysed.gov/>) are vast.

NYG&B is also hosting at their headquarters (address above) an **Elderhostel Program** (No. 15873) entitled "A Day of Discovery, Your Family History: A Beginner's Workshop." Provided by the National Genealogical Society, this is a one-day program that will be offered on both Tues., 11 Dec., and Wed., 12 Dec. To enroll visit <http://www.elderhostel.org/> or call (800) 454-5768.

New England Historic Genealogical Society, 101 Newberry St., Boston, MA 02116 (toll-free 888-286-3447) is offering **Research Tour to Salt Lake City**, Sun.-Sun., 28 Oct.-4 Nov. 2007. For more information, visit www.newenglandancestors.org/education/main/ or e-mail tours@nehgs.org or telephone (888) 286-3447. ■

NARA NORTHEAST REGION FAMILY HISTORY SOURCE LEAFLETS

The National Archives and Records Administration is offering a new series of General Information Leaflets (GILs) for its regional archives. The first three leaflets describe family history resources at the three archival research facilities in NARA's Northeast Region. To obtain a free copy, contact the specific regional archive:

- New York City: call (866) 840-1752, or e-mail newyork.archives@nara.gov
- Pittsfield: Call (413) 236-3600, or e-mail pittsfield.archives@nara.gov
- Boston: call (866) 406-2379, or e-mail waltham.archives@nara.gov ■

HIDDEN IN VAULTS: LESSER-KNOWN TREASURES FOUND IN TOWN HALLS 12 May 2007

Tom Howard gave an excellent presentation on this subject at our May meeting. Tom considers these records "hidden" because most researchers have not used them before.

Town Reports started around 1850. These may include:

- School.
- Health.
- Meeting minutes.
- Birth.
- Death.
- Marriage.
- Burial permissions (including people from out of town).
- Cemetery sexton's report (reporting who was buried, and sometimes reporting cause of death).
- Veterans' discharge certificates (may include physical description and a brief history of service).

Town Clerk's Records will include:

- Grantor and Grantee land indexes.
- Trade names certificates (Doing Business As).
- Boards and commission minutes.
- Town meeting minutes
- Dog licenses
- Fishing and hunting licenses (include physical description).

Historic Town Meeting Records are sometimes in print. Check PERSI to find them.

Assessor's Records will include:

- Street and building cards.
- Property owners by surname.
- Grand Lists: real estate, personal property, motor vehicles.
- Maps: area and plot maps with current names and

bounders.

Tax Collector's Records: Remember that everything gets taxed.

Registrar of Voters' Records will include:

- Voter registration cards.
- Election history—alphabetical list of who voted in each election.
- Voter canvas lists.
- Deceased voters.

Building Department Records will include:

- Building permits issued or rejected.
- Maps of areas and individual plots.

Board of Education Records will include:

- Personnel.
- Attendance.
- Graduation.
- Minutes of Board of Education meetings.

Individual schools will, of course, have their own records, such as year books.

Sadly, 20th Century records are being destroyed at a rapid rate because of lack of storage space and lack of centralized guidance to aid retention. It would be wise to look for these records sooner rather than later. ■



CHICAGO: OLD COUNTY RECORDS TO BE PUT ONLINE

Newly digitized copies of Cook County records, such as birth and death certificates and marriage licenses, that until this year were stacked in the basement of Cook County's Administration Building, will be available in January on a searchable Website. Scanning and indexing of the approximately 24 million records that date back to 1871 were completed in June, and the county is now uploading them into a computer server.

The Website will offer a tutorial to help people search for names of family members. If a name of interest is found, users can then pay a fee to download the records, which can be printed at home. ■

LIBRARY NEWS

by C. Scribner

In our March and May 2007 issues we reported donation to the society of four books. They were missing for several months, but have been located recently. The books and their current locations are:

- *The Dictionary of Irish Family Names* by Ida Grehan, MGS 929.42Grehan, Row 5, Shelf 6. Donated by Donna Moughty.
- *Tracing Your Irish Ancestry* by John Grenham, 929.1Grenham. (Although this book was donated to MGS by Donna Moughty, Darien Library has placed it in the general collection.)
- *The Quarter Centenary Celebration of the Promulgation of the Edict of Nantes, April 1598*, MGS 284.537, Row 4, Shelf 1. Donated by the Huguenot Society of America.
- *New England Court Records* by Diane Rapaport, MGS 929.374 Rapaport, Row 5, Shelf 3. Donated by the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council. ■

1798 FEDERAL DIRECT TAX RECORDS FOR CONNECTICUT

An excellent article on this subject appeared in the Spring 2007, Vol. 39, No. 1, issue of *Prologue*. More than 1,100 "Particular List" valuation slips for the towns of Kent and Warren in Litchfield County have recently been discovered. The slips describe dwelling houses and other real property owned as of 1 October 1798 in this assessment district. The tax collection list, which identifies how much tax each person owed, separately for dwelling house and land, was also found. The only other valuation and enumeration lists from the 1798 federal direct tax known to exist at NARA are in its holdings for Pennsylvania. Even if your ancestors were not living in Kent or Warren, the slips offer an intriguing glimpse of life in Connecticut in 1798. ■

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

WEBSITES AVAILABLE AT FAMILY HISTORY CENTERS

Although Ancestry.com has withdrawn its service from Family History Centers, the LDS Church announced in May the addition of several other popular online genealogy services:

- Footnote (www.footnote.com) is a subscription-based website that features searchable, original documents (over 25 million by the end of 2007). Footnote is currently working with FamilySearch to index the American Revolutionary War Pension files.
- Godfrey Memorial Library (www.godfrey.org) has an extensive collection that includes newspapers, city and business directories, vital records, printed census records, state, county, and local histories, as well as numerous family histories, family bible records, and service and pension records.
- HeritageQuest / ProQuest (www.heritagequestonline.com). Access to this service will be limited to 1,400 Family History Centers in North America. HeritageQuest includes the complete set of U.S. Federal Census images from 1790 to 1930, including names and indexes for many of the sets. Users will be able to find people and places located in over 20,000 published family and local histories and in PERSI. Other online databases include Revolutionary War Pension, Bounty-Land Warrant Application files and the Freedman Bank Records.
- Kindred Konnections (www.kindredkonnections.com) has over 230 million pedigree linked names with submitter information. Online pedigrees are not merged, but maintained by individual patrons. Additional databases include birth, marriage, death, and census records that are automatically searched with the pedigree-linked data. Segments of pedigrees can be downloaded.
- World Vital Records (www.worldvitalrecords.com) provides access to research helps and has a wide variety of international records, including more than 60 parish registers, Scottish death records, UK marriages, and Irish prisoner records. There are more than 300 newspapers with 100,000 pages added a month, and over 500 online databases, including vital, military, land, pension

records, reference materials, family histories, maps, gazetteers, and international coops. With the recent Quintin Publications partnership, World Vital Records will soon have more than 10,000 databases online. ■

NEW NARA COPYING FEES

NARA has announced new copying fees for fixed-fee reproductions of commonly requested genealogical records to take effect 1 October 2007:

Type of Record	NATF	
	Form	Fee
Passenger Arrival Lists	81	\$25
Federal Census Requests	82	\$25
Eastern Cherokee Applications to the Court of Claims	83	\$25
Land Entry Records	84	\$40
Full Pension File more than 75 years old (Civil War and after), up to 100 pages	85	\$75
Full Pension File (pre-Civil War)	85	\$50
Pension Documents Packet (selected records)	85	\$25
Bounty Land Warrant Application Files	85	\$25
Military service files more than 75 years old	86	\$25

Self-service copies will be 25¢ per page in the Washington, D.C., area, and 20¢ per page at regional archives and presidential libraries. NARA-made copies will be 75¢ per page. ■

WANTED: A NEW NEWSLETTER EDITOR

by Dorothy Shillinglaw

I have enjoyed being your editor for the last 11 years, but have felt for some time that someone else should now take on this task.

It's not terribly difficult. It involves soliciting and collecting articles of interest, being alert to genealogical news items, and keeping in touch with other board

26 JANUARY 2008. COLONIAL SHIPS' LISTS—DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE THROUGH NARA will be presented by **CASEY ZAHN**.

15 MARCH 2008. RESEARCHING YOUR SCOTTISH ROOTS WITHOUT EVER LEAVING HOME will be presented by **DIANE RAPAPORT**.

17 MAY 2008. RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSES—UNCOMMON SOURCES IN COMMON PLACES will be presented by **VIRGINIA BANERJEE**.

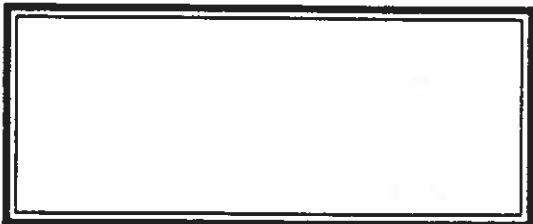
Virginia is a member of the MGS board with over 25 years of research experience. She has presented programs and taught courses in genealogy for a number of years and has been published by several genealogical organizations. She has also completed research and private publication of a book on Indian history, genealogy of her husband's family, and memoirs of their life in India in the early 1950s. ■

members to insure that MGS activities and concerns are reported to the membership. Then, of course, grammar and spelling must be checked and the copy fitted within the seven and a half pages available.

There is no paste-up. Everything is accomplished within the software program. (I have been using a very old version of Microsoft *Publisher*, '97, but any good word processing program will serve.)

Please seriously consider becoming our next editor and contact any board member if interested. I can be reached at 655-8350 if you want to talk to me. Be assured that I will help as much as I can to get you started. ■

**Deadline for next newsletter
23 October 2007**



**MEETING
6 October 2007
DARLEN LIBRARY**

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

