

Middlesex Genealogical Society

Vol. XXIV, No. 2

Darien, Fairfield County, CT

May 2008

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Warm weather is finally at our doorsteps, which will again aid some of us in the exciting pastime of family research. We will not hesitate now to drive to far-off locations or find and explore those goldmines called cemeteries.

There are also genealogical conferences that will expose us to new research strategies and new information being made available. One will be the FGS Conference in Philadelphia in September, "Footprints of Family History," and of course the many seminars that we here at MGS offer at Darien Library on Saturdays. Our own board member Virginia Banerjee will be presenting a program on 17 May 2008 entitled "Right Under Your Noses—Uncommon Sources in Common Places." Our sister society Connecticut Ancestry is having an interesting program on 18 May 2008 at Keeler Tavern, Ridgefield, Conn., on "The Settlement of the Oblong" (see page 6). This is an area that I have had some research fun with as my wife's ancestors are found in that oblong.

There are also many online happenings that will not only help us research but may even give us some exciting boosts as we travel cyber space. Ancestry.com has added US Passport Applications, 1795 through 1995, to its database. Scotland Censuses 1841, 1851, 1861, 1881 and 1901 are now available at Ancestry.com, too. There is also a site for complete indexes for birth, marriage and death for England and Wales at www.findmypast.com

In addition, we here at MGS are getting more opportunities to help people in our communities get started in searching for their ancestors. The good news is that in the new Darien Library building MGS will be in an area where we will be able to talk with patrons of the library and the community.

The future looks bright and our ancestors are waiting for us to learn more about them.

Lloyd Sturges Jr. ■

LIBRARY REPORT

by C. Scribner

The inventory of our filing cabinet has been completed. It is not perfect, but is the best I could do. The top drawer will be the Research File with forms and information pertaining to genealogical research. It will contain audiotapes of general meetings and disks of genealogical interest. The bottom drawer is the Archives File. Here, Board of Directors and General Meeting minutes will be filed, as well as Treasurer's Reports. Also in this drawer is one copy of each MGS Newsletter from the first issue to the latest. One is currently missing and will be replaced: Vol. XIX, No. 2.

On 18 April 2008 at 10:30 AM, I met with Darien Library staff to discuss the MGS location in the new library. (Lloyd Sturges missed the meeting due an auto accident while on his way to Darien.) Representing the library were Director Louise Berry, her assistant Alan Gray, and Technology Manager Judy Sgammato. We met for half an hour in the downstairs conference room, and they were very informative.

Plans for the new building were laid out on the table for me to see. We will be located on the second floor. There will be windows on the outside wall and a long table in the middle that will accommodate two computers. One will be ours, and one will belong to the library. Our books and periodicals will be on shelves along the other walls. There may be people in there using the other computer from time to time, but there will be no restrictions on talking in this area. A reference librarian will be located in the room next door to us where a few filing cabinets will be located, including ours. I was informed that all furniture and cabinets will be new and, while on the subject, requested a 3-drawer filing cabinet to replace our current 2-drawer cabinet.

All things considered, I think we will be pleased with our new location. ■

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2007-2008 OFFICERS

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

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Carolyn Barfuss
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Marianne Sheldon

Donna Moughty	Past President
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 \$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!**

17 MAY 2008. RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSES—UNCOMMON SOURCES IN COMMON PLACES will be presented by **VIRGINIA BANERJEE**. Common places can yield uncommon sources and records often missed. This program focuses on the "rest of the material" in repositories that we use all the time and is illustrated with finds from Virginia's own research.

Virginia is a professional family historian with 40 years experience. She is a member of the MGS board and a member of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council. Virginia is also a member of the board of the Frisbie/Frisbee Family Association. She has documented ancestry on both sides of her family. Virginia recently completed a major archival project at the Connecticut State Library and Archives. She teaches and lectures frequently at local, regional and national levels, and has been published by several genealogical societies.

FALL MEETING DATES AND PROGRAMS will be announced in September. ■

RICHARD SARR

The MGS board has learned that Dick Sarr passed away 12 April. Dick had been a member of MGS since 1987 and served on the board of directors until he moved to Pennsylvania in 2005. He also served as our publications chairman for many years, but his contributions to MGS were many and varied. Whatever the task that needed to be done, whether it was making the coffee or mailing the newsletter, Dick was always willing to pitch in—and he did so cheerfully. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family on their great loss. ■



MGS NEWSLETTER

by Dorothy Shillinglaw

While I have enjoyed putting together your newsletter over the past dozen years, it is now time for someone else to take on that role. Whatever help I can give will always be available to whoever that person is, but the transition should be made soon. Anyone interested should make that interest known to any MGS officer or member of the board. If you want to talk to me about it, I am available at dhshills@gmail.com or 655-8350. ■

MEMORIES AND KEEPSAKES

by Virginia Banerjee

Virginia Banerjee is a member of the board of MGS and is a professional genealogist. A version of this material was presented at the 15 March 2008 MGS meeting. Virginia was costumed and showed a number of the items discussed herein.

Family treasures enrich our genealogy and bring our ancestors to life. Genealogy is more than names and dates, critical as they are. Family history includes the “rest” that enriches the fabric of our lives. What did our ancestors do and why, the times they lived and how they felt about them should be part of our genealogy efforts. Some of this can be found by researching their times and places in history books, etc. Much of the rest is up to us. Perhaps some of my projects will give you ideas about ways you can preserve memories and keepsakes.

We are a very special and unique repository of our memories and may be the “keeper of things.” How we “package” these will vary with each of us—and with what we have. Memory is very fragile and our memories are ours alone. But we can record them so they may be kept and shared with family and descendants. I have started *Memory Books*. These are still just family stories, sayings, recollection of incidents as they pop into my head. I jot these down without concern for “nice writing.” Whether they will ever become more than this I do not know, but they are recorded for future attention. Jog your own memory by thinking about your experiences, your childhood birthdays, vacations, school. Some will make you laugh, others bring tears. All are part of the fabric of our lives and the lives of those around us. My memory books have expanded to record a photo tour to the ancestral home in Ireland and a fishing trip to Alaska with a ten-year-old grandson. All the family Christmas letters and photos stretching back to my grandfather in 1906 have been brought together in an album which is enjoyed each holiday season by family and guests.

My *Document Books* have reached a great number, representing each surname branch of my family. These contain the original or best copy of the “proof” documents. This is the material that supports the conclusions I have reached about how my lineage fits together. My hope is that these binders will survive me and avoid the proverbial garage sale, even if extensive files and notes from decades of genealogy research do not. Databases created by genealogy software that contains your data, notes and source citations are valuable and useful in ways we could not have imagined when I began genealogy research. But they are no substitute for the real documents, properly

preserved.

Keepsakes, the *things* that we have from family, be they big or small, many or precious few, deserve special attention. These items can speak to us of lives now gone. How we “package” these and preserve them will depend on the “what.”

Perhaps photographs are the most common keepsake that most of us have. Are yours all identified? If not, do it now! In many cases, you may be the only one that can identify an image. If you are going to write on the back of a photograph, use only soft pencil or special pen designed for photos. A better solution is to place the photo (and its negative if there is one, which may outlast the positive print), in an envelope and write the identification on the envelope. If you plan to mount photos, use photo “corners” and place in an archival quality album. Do not use tape, “sticky page” albums or paste to mount your photos. These popular items can result in the second death of your ancestors!

What about the rest of the things? Fabric items, such as clothing, quilts, and handwork; letters, journals, furniture, toys, household items, books, and on and on. Each of us has different things. Memorabilia can take many shapes. I prefer to use things I have (at least occasionally) even though there is some risk of damage. I enjoy living among and using my keepsakes. They enrich my life. I decorate at Christmas with a collection of old toys that includes a few things that are more than a century old. Folks of all ages seem to enjoy and look forward to seeing them each year. I hope this familiarity will nurture family appreciation and a commitment to care for these things.

How you protect and store keepsakes will depend on what they are. Archival-quality page protectors can be used for photos, clippings, and documents. There are boxes, tubes, and tissue for every size and shape of keepsake. They are available from archival suppliers. Your reference librarian or an Internet search will identify these companies. There are articles about preservation available from your library or the Internet to help you learn how to protect valuable papers and objects.

For genealogists, the responsibility to care for and protect these memories and the things we have is especially important. It is part of our role as family historians. If you have few (or no) keepsakes and family stories to preserve, it is time to make some of your own!

Start a notebook of your own memories. Engage a child, grandchild (or even great-grandchild) in recording them. Help them to interview you: what do they want to



Virginia Banerjee in a hat that dates from about 1860.

know about your life? Keep a journal. What things of yours will your descendants have? What have you kept throughout your life? Why? What is it? Be sure that these things are identified.

Today's memorabilia is something someone else kept. And what you keep will be a keepsake to someone else some day. I have been asked "what should we keep?" I think that is such an individual matter. Perhaps the answer is "whatever is meaningful to you." I would add that, if space is an issue and you can't "keep everything," keep items that are unique, give family history, or that document some aspect of your life.

Enjoy and take care of the memories and things that you have. ■

AMERICANS LACK FAMILY HISTORY KNOWLEDGE

by Richard W. Eastman

The following article is from *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter* and is copyright 2008 by Richard W. Eastman. It is republished here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>

A survey conducted a few months ago by The Generations Network reports that few Americans know very much about their family trees. Among other facts, the survey discovered that:

- One-third of Americans cannot name any of their great-grandparents.
- Half of Americans know the name of only one or none of their great-grandparents.
- Six out of ten Americans do not know both of their grandmothers' maiden names
- Twenty-two percent of Americans don't know what either of their grandfathers do or did for a living.
- Although America is known as a nation of immigrants, 27 percent don't know where their family lived before they came to America.

Is this a problem or an opportunity?

Commissioned by Ancestry.com and conducted by zOmnibus Survey, the survey does make some positive statements. For one, the survey reports that 83 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds are interested in learning their family history. Following closely are

the 35- to 54-year-olds at 77 percent and Americans aged 55+ at 73 percent.

It strikes me that there are millions of Americans who have at least a casual interest in their family trees but have no idea how to get started. I am particularly impressed that younger Americans reportedly are more likely to be interested in their ancestry than are senior citizens. That is the reverse of what I would have expected.

This is an opportunity for commercial companies and non-profit societies alike. A potential marketplace exists. The biggest difficulty is in identifying that audience and reaching them. Traditional advertising methods are prohibitively expensive. What we need is "grass roots" advertising. That's where you come in.

In your casual conversations with non-genealogists, you might ask a few questions:

- Where does your family come from?
- What did your grandparents do for a living? How about your great-grandparents?
- Are there any physical characteristics that run in your family?
- Can you remember any family stories that were told to you as a child? Do you believe those stories are accurate?
- Did your family have any memorable holiday or other traditions that were passed down from previous generations?

Of course, when the other person says, "I don't know," you should be ready to step in with a few suggestions of good books for beginners, the address and meeting dates of a local genealogy society, and perhaps a few Websites of genealogy interest. Hey, send them to THIS Website!

If you and every other genealogist in this country can start "spreading the word," we can greatly increase the percentage of Americans who do know about their roots.

You can read more about the survey at <http://tgn.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=43&item=115> ■

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

PASSENGER ARRIVAL RECORDS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT NARA's AAD

A recent addition to NARA's online Access to Archival Databases (AAD) makes available over 5.2 million records of passengers who arrived during the latter part of the 19th century, primarily at the port of New York, but also at the ports of Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, and Philadelphia. Although there are data files for Irish, Italian, and Russian immigrants, the greatest number, over four million records, are for German immigrants. The available data files are:

- Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Russians to the United States, 1834-1897, 566,865 passengers. (Note: The Russian files include passengers whose country of origin was identified as Armenia, Finland, Galicia, Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine, as well as Russia.)
- Records for Passengers Who Arrived at the Port of New York During the Irish Famine, 12 January 1846 to 31 December 1851, 604,596 passengers.
- Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Germans to the United States, 1850-1897, 4,068,907 passengers.
- Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Italians to the United States, 1855-1900, 845,368 passengers.

Each passenger record has space for name, age, town of last residence, destination, and codes for passenger's sex, occupation, literacy, country of origin, transit and/or travel compartment, and the identification number for the ship manifest (leads to ship information in the Manifest Header File). Ship information found in the Manifest Header File includes the ship manifest identification number (clue to port of arrival), ship's name, code for port of departure, and date of arrival.



These databases are available at: <http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=GP44>

Steve Morse has once again performed his magic and simplified the whole process. Instead of giving the identification number for the ship manifest, Steve has a link that says "get ship." Using this link will take you directly to the ship's information. (Note: Steve does not have the Irish famine immigrants to New York, 1846-1851, listed at his site, but the other three databases named above are all there.) To use Steve's labor-saver, visit the "Other Ports" section of his "One-Step Portal for Online Genealogy" at: <http://stevemorse.org> ■

GENEALOGISTS PUSH FOR OPEN RECORDS: Formation of the Keeping Genealogical Records Open Workgroup (KGROW)

What follows is a press release from the Association of Professional Genealogists, P.O. Box 350998, Westminster, CO 80035-0998:

WESTMINSTER, Colo., March 21 – The Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) contends that there is no proof that open records significantly contribute to ID theft or terrorism. In a position paper that outlines the case for open public records, APG asserts that open records are rarely used by identification thieves and maintains that the benefit of open access to records far outweighs any potential abuse.

APG has joined forces with other genealogical organizations including the National Genealogical Society (NGS), The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) in endorsing the position paper and calling on legislators to keep records open.

"Public records allow genealogists and other professionals such as medical researchers, journalists, historians and academic researchers to do their jobs," explains APG President, Jake Gehring. He urges that "concerned citizens tell their representatives that they want to keep public records open."

A group of professional genealogists within APG formed the Keeping Genealogical Records Open Workgroup (KGROW) in 2007 and prepared the position paper. Melinde Lutz Sanborn, FASG (Fellow, American Society of Genealogists) and member of the committee, says, "Open records and transparency in government are the best protections we have against twenty-first century fraud."

The KGROW committee recommends in their paper that "lawmakers respond to the ID theft problem, not try to prevent a nonexistent problem." Further, they encourage "private companies and government to improve their protection of personal data." The Case for Open Public Records position paper is available on the APG website at <http://apgen.org/publications/press>

The Association of Professional Genealogists is an independent organization whose worldwide members number over 1,800. The group's principal purpose is to support professional genealogists in all phases of their work: from the amateur genealogist wishing to

turn knowledge and skill into a vocation, to the experienced professional seeking to exchange ideas with colleagues and to upgrade the profession as a whole. ■

UPCOMING SEMINARS

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

New York City, 12th floor, 201 Varick St. Programs at this location run from 12:30 to 1:30 on Tuesday afternoons.

- Using Military Records Online, 13 May.
 - Hidden Treasures in New York Repositories, 10 June.
- For more information, visit their website at: <http://www.archives.gov/northeast/nyc/> To register, e-mail newyorkarchives@nara.gov or telephone toll-free (866) 840-1752.

Waltham, Mass., 380 Trapelo Rd. Programs at this location run from 2 to 3:30 PM on Tuesdays. Behind-the-scenes tours of the archives precede the programs and run from 1:30 to 2 PM.

- Records Related to Military Service in the 18th, 19th, and 20th Centuries, 3 June.
- Census, Passenger Lists, and Naturalization Records, 8 July.
- Introduction to Genealogy, 5 Aug.

For more information and to register, e-mail waltham.archives@nara.gov or call (866) 406-2379.

National Genealogical Society, 3108 Columbia Pike, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22204-4304, (800) 473-0060. 2008 NGS Conference in the States and Family History Fair, Wed., 14 May to Sat., 17 May, which will be held in Kansas City MO. Registration is still possible. For 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 AM. (Premeeting networking starts at 9:30 AM.) 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>

- The Story of Sybil Ludington—American Revolutionary Teen War Hero—the Female Paul Revere, by Vincent D'Aquino. 10 May.
- An Object of Great Importance: the Hudson River

During the American War for Independence, by Christopher DiPasquale. 14 June.

Connecticut Ancestry, P.O. Box 249, Stamford, CT 06904-0249, is presenting "The Settlement of the Oblong" (how the boundary between New York and Connecticut was determined and who settled this narrow strip of "equivalent lands") by Harlan Jessup on Sun., 18 May, 2:00 to 4:00 PM at the Keeler Tavern, 132 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT. This seminar is co-sponsored by Connecticut Ancestry Society, the Ridgefield Historical Society and the Keeler Tavern. Admission is free.

New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, 122-126 E.58th St., New York, NY 10022; telephone 212-755-8532, Website <http://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/> is offering two Manhattan walking tours:

- Seneca Village—Central Park, Tues., 20 May, 5:30 to 7:00 PM. The rocky, swampy land that became Central Park was home to the first significant community of African-American property owners in Manhattan, as well as other groups such as Native Americans, and Irish, German, and Polish immigrants. Walk the footprint of Seneca Village (roughly, 81st–89th Streets and between Seventh-Eighth Avenues) and hear about the lives of its residents.
- Gramercy Park and the Civil War, Thurs., 12 June, 5:30-7:00 PM. Although no major Civil War battles were fought in Manhattan, it was deeply affected by the war. The draft riots of 1863 brought to a boil the racial and economic tensions that simmered beneath the city's surface, and troops were billeted in Gramercy Park itself.

For more information, visit NYG&B's Website at <http://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/> and click on Upcoming Programs. You can also contact Lauren Maehrlein at 212-755-8532, ext. 36, or e-mail education@nygbs.org to register.

New England Historic Genealogical Society, 101 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116, is offering several educational opportunities:

- **National Archives Research Day**, Thurs., 22 May, 9 AM to 4:30 PM, at 380 Trapelo Rd. in Waltham. (Note: Closing time is 9 PM on this day.) The Waltham facility holds records of the federal government produced in the region since 1790, including census records, Revolutionary War records for the entire U.S., passenger arrival records for the 19th and 20th centuries, including Canadian border crossings after 1895, and records of the field offices of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1872. Among the many original records held here are naturalization records of the federal courts in New England, 1790-

1991; and all such records of Connecticut state courts, 1790-1974. Surviving records of the Collectors of Customs, including crew lists and vessel documentation papers, are available, as are the records of the federal courts, 1790-ca. 1970, including federal bankruptcy case files. There will be time for personal research and consultation.

- **Quebec Research Tour**, Sun., 15 June to Sun., 22 June. Celebrate the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec in Montreal, spending time at two unique Quebec repositories, the Société Généalogique Canadienne-Française (SGCF) and the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ). These collections include Dictionaries of French Canadian marriages, 1760-1935; print volumes of Quebec baptism, marriage and burial records, 1621-1799, index of Catholic and non-Catholic marriages, 1731-1825; Quebec notarial records, 1608-1906; Montreal directories, 1842-1999; non-Catholic vital records, 1766-1899; land grant applications, 1890-1905; Quebec court records, 1897-1927; and parish census records, 1792-1850. There will be a cultural group field trip to Village Québécois d'Antan, a living history site recreating 18th century provincial life. Each participant will receive tutorials and one-on-one consultations. *Note:* NEHGS leaders of the tour are fluent in French.

Salt Lake City Research Tour, Sun., 2 Nov. to Sun., 9 Nov. 2008. This is NEHGS's 30th annual Research Tour to Salt Lake City. Included are NEHGS and Family History Library orientations, a computer lab, one-on-one research consultations, lectures, and group meals. NEHGS tour staff will be stationed on each floor of the Family History Library for scheduled personal research consultations, and there will be time throughout the week to consult with the tour staff about research questions and concerns.

For more information on any of these NEHGS programs, telephone (888) 286-3447, e-mail tours@nehgs.org or visit www.newenglandancestors.org

Federation of Genealogical Societies, P.O. Box 200940, Austin, TX 78720-0940; telephone (888) FGS-1500.

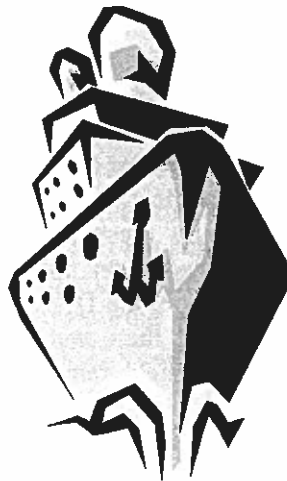
The 2008 FGS Conference will take place in Philadelphia Wed., 3 Sept. to Sat., 6 Sept., and is entitled "Footprints of Family History." A dizzying number of subjects will be covered by nationally known, highly respected speakers.

For more information visit the conference Website at <http://www.fgsconference.org> where a registration form and conference brochure are available. Those who register by 2 June will receive a significant discount.

RootsMagic Family History Cruise 2008, Sun., 28

Sept. to Sun., 5 Oct. 2008, will leave Los Angeles, Cal., and sail to Cabo San Lucas, then on to Mazatlan and Puerto Vallarta in Mexico. Speakers include Dick Eastman, Elizabeth Shown Mills, George G. Morgan, Diana Crisman Smith, and Gary M. Smith. For more information, visit the Website at <http://www.rootsmagic.com/cruise>

Genealogy Seminar at Sea, Sat., 25 Oct. to Sat., 1 Nov. 2008. Royal Caribbean's newest ship, *Liberty of the Seas*, will sail from Miami to San Juan, Puerto Rico; Philipsburg, St. Maarten; Labadee, Haiti (private site maintained by cruise line); then back to Miami. While at sea there will be three days of genealogy presentations on a wide variety of subjects. Speakers include John Philip Colletta, Stephen J. Danko, Michael J. Leclerc, Paul Milner, George G. Morgan, MGS past president **Donna M. Moughty**, Laura G. Prescott, and Paula Stuart-Warren. For more information visit the Website at <http://www.genealogycruises.com/>



[index.htm](http://www.genealogycruises.com/index.htm) or contact Cindy at Fly Away Travel: telephone (800) 837-0295; e-mail flyawayinc@aol.com

Irish Genealogy Cruise, Sat., 10 Jan. to Sun., 18 Jan. 2009, is being offered by **The Irish Ancestral Research Association (TIARA)**, 2120 Commonwealth Ave., Auburndale, MA 02466-1909. Royal Caribbean's *Independence of the Seas* will sail from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., through the Eastern Caribbean and back to Fort Lauderdale. Presenters will include: Valerie Adams, from the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast; Mary Ellen Grogan, TIARA, Boston; George Handran, Boston (expert on Griffith's Valuation); Michael J. Leclerc, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston; Gregory O'Connor, from the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin; and Eileen and Sean O'Duill, from Dublin. There will be two simultaneous tracks: Track 1, lectures on basic resources and techniques for Irish research; Track 2, more advanced topics for those with experience in using Irish records.

For more information, visit the TIARA web site at <http://www.tiara.ie> and click on "Trips." ■

DID YOU KNOW? Thirty-four million U.S. residents claim Irish ancestry.

Information from U.S. Census Bureau.

AN INTRIGUING BOOK

THE GENETIC STRAND: Exploring a Family History Through DNA by Edward Ball (929.2097) is another book on Darien Library's shelves that you might well find interesting.

The author had recently moved to Charleston, S.C., where his father's family had lived for a very long time. He bought a house, which needed more furniture than he owned, so he bought a number of old family pieces from a cousin who did not need them. Among the pieces was a desk in which he found a secret compartment that contained nine locks of family members' hair clipped in the early 19th century. Each lock was wrapped in folded paper. In careful script on the paper, the contributor of the hair and the date the sample was taken were identified.

On the whole, the hair was beautifully preserved. Because these were locks of hair that had been cut, however, there were no roots so only mitochondrial DNA could be extracted and tested. Nevertheless, there were some puzzling findings that shook solidly held family beliefs of long standing.

It is an interesting book—part science text and part detective novel. And you will certainly learn a great deal about DNA by reading it. ■

NGS CONFERENCE IN THE STATES LECTURES ON CD

A substantial number of lectures will be recorded at the 2008 NGS Conference in the States, "Show Me the Nation's Records," which will run from 14 May to 17 May. If you will miss this year's NGS Conference in the States, over 120 of the lectures will be recorded and available for purchase as CD-ROMs from JAMB Tapes, Inc., beginning in June 2008.

Many lectures from the Richmond 2007 NGS Conference in the States are available now at <http://www.JAMB-Inc.com> You can also access the JAMB-Inc. Website via a link on NGS's Website, <http://ngsgenealogy.org> Individual CD-ROM's cost \$12.00; a package of 10 or more may be purchased for \$11 each. ■

**Deadline for next newsletter
September 2008**



MEETING
17 MAY 2008
DARIEN LIBRARY

Middlesex Genealogical Society
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Darien CT 06820-1111

