



# Middlesex Genealogical Society

Vol. XX, No. 1

Darien, Fairfield County, CT

January 2004

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Where did the past year go? As I sat here on New Year's Day facing a blank screen, I decided to look back at what I had said last year. Since I committed my resolutions to paper for all to read, how did I do? The weight's been up and down, but is now down about 8 pounds (not too bad); my exercise program has gone better than expected (although I did get a little lax over the holidays), and I'm feeling pretty good. Now to those genealogy resolutions...

It's been a busy year, and I've learned a great deal. I was lucky enough to attend both the NGS Conference in Pittsburgh and the FGS Conference in Orlando (which included a Professional Management Conference), as well as the New England Regional Conference on Cape Cod. Conferences present one of the best opportunities to learn about new record types and research strategies. My focus on land records this year paid off for both my personal research as well as my clients.

I hope you also had the opportunity to learn from the varied programs offered by MGS over the past year. Our Scrapbooking Workshop last January was a great success. I know some of our members have put their knowledge to work and created wonderful family keepsakes. I spent most of December working on a scrapbook for my husband's aunt (the only one who has shown any interest in family history). Her reaction on Christmas was priceless, more than worth the investment I made. The work also gave me the opportunity to look over some of my early research and I was amazed at how much additional information was in my files that I had not understood how to interpret in the early days. Rereading all of the material gave me a number of new avenues to research. If you haven't reviewed your files in a while, I recommend pulling them out

and carefully reading all of the documents you've accumulated. I have also learned to put all of the information about an individual I'm researching into a timeline showing the date, age, and location for each event. This highlights gaps in my research (do I have a census record for every census year the person lived), shows migration patterns which might tell me where to find an elusive record, or simply focuses my thoughts prior to writing about a particular ancestor (remember, we are going to write, not just research).

Each of the programs this year, "Recognizing Errors in Primary Research," by Barbara Mathews; Helen Ullmann's thought-provoking "How do you Know you have the Right Person?" Larry Fermi's excellent presentation on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Military Records, as well as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Census Research have offered something for everyone to learn, both experienced and new researcher.

The 2004-2005 program under the able direction of Pete Kenyon will continue to offer excellence in education for our members and I hope you will attend each of the upcoming programs and bring a friend. I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming meetings.

Happy Hunting!

Donna Moughty

## 2004 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership renewal was due 1 January 2004. *This is a reminder* for those who have not yet renewed. You may use the form on the last page of this newsletter, or any piece of paper with the requested information on it. You may bring your renewal to our 31 January meeting, or drop it in the mail addressed to Middlesex Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1111, Darien, CT 06820. Annual dues are \$20 per individual, \$25 per couple or family.

## MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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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 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. 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://www.darien.org/mgs>

E-mail: [mgs2@optonline.net](mailto:mgs2@optonline.net)

## UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

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

**31 JANUARY 2004: LONG-DISTANCE GENEALOGY: WHEN YOU ARE HERE, AND YOUR ANCESTORS WERE THERE** will be presented by **CHRISTINE CRAWFORD-OPPENHEIMER**. If you are *here* and your ancestors were *there*, how do you access information about them? After first searching at home and talking to relatives, get information from pertinent documents (e.g., reproductions, transcriptions, abstracts, extracts), study published materials (e.g., genealogies, county histories), join genealogical societies, place queries, travel to the ancestral area, and perhaps hire a professional genealogist. Christine will explore the use of letters and e-mails (sometimes phone calls); books, magazines, microfilm, microfiche, CD-ROMs; interlibrary loan; queries; and the Internet.

Christine is a librarian, archivist, author, and lecturer, and has done genealogical research for over 20 years. Her books—*Long Distance Genealogy: Researching Your Ancestors from Home*, and *Lost in Pennsylvania? Try the Published Pennsylvania Archives*—have received enthusiastic reviews. Her articles have appeared in the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, the *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine*, the *Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society Quarterly*, and other publications. She writes a column for the *Armstrong County [Penn.] Genealogy Club Quarterly* and has spoken on a number of topics at national genealogical conferences and meetings of the Western Pennsylvania, Westchester County, and Central New York Genealogical Societies, and many others.

**3 APRIL 2004: UK RESEARCH** will be presented by **JOHN KONVALINKA, CGRS, CGL**. Prepared for U.S. audiences to introduce them to the wealth of genealogical information available in London, this talk discusses the nature and holdings of the principal repositories—Society of Genealogists, National Archives (formerly known as the Public Record Office), Family Records Centre, and British Library—as well as the holdings of many other important, specialized libraries and archives in London. How and in which repositories to find the various kinds of records and documents (not only for London but for many areas of the United Kingdom) that may be important to genealogical research will be discussed, as well as the type of information that may be available online (and what is NOT). Also covered (for those who plan to go to London) will be how to use Websites and other information ahead of time to get the most benefit from the trip.

A professional genealogist who has been actively involved in genealogy for 25 years, John is particularly interested in effective use of computers and the Internet in supporting (not replacing) traditional genealogical research. He has worked extensively in the British Library, the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, and other major genealogical libraries in the U.S., U.K. and other countries, as well as in the Public Record Office and Society of Genealogists (London), and the (U.S.) National Archives, New York City Archives, New Jersey State Archives, the NYG&B, and many smaller libraries, record offices, and private collections.

*(Continued on page 7)*

# RESEARCH IN LONDON TOWN

by Virginia Bannerjee

Having recently returned from a productive, independent research trip to London, I'd like to share some suggestions. First, you *can* do it on your own. No matter how long you plan to stay, however, your time is precious, so planning ahead will repay you many times over. Don't expect to "pop in" and accomplish much. The repositories are large, and their organization, vocabulary and systems differ from those used in the U.S. For example, we have records spanning several centuries, whereas records maintained in England span millennia and the world, especially those areas that comprised the British Empire.

## Plan Ahead

- Decide what your objectives are. This will enable you to figure out which repositories will best meet your needs and also help you to allocate your time.
- Do your homework. Use the Internet. Descriptions of the collections, hours, directions, restrictions are generally available on home pages. Web addresses change, but current ones can be located by using search engines, such as <www.google.com>, or by poking around <www.Cyndislist.com>.
- Use the online catalogs. Having the *shelfmark* (call number) ahead of time will facilitate ordering the materials of interest to you.
- *Reader's Cards* are required. Application forms of some repositories are available on their Websites, allowing you to request pre-approval. Others must be secured on arrival. I found completing the British Library application forced me to formulate my objectives in order to state what research I planned to do.

## Once You Arrive

- Allow time to get started. Even if you have been pre-approved for a Reader's Card, it will take some time on your first day to get your photo taken, comply with any other entry requirements, and collect your card. Be sure to have your passport with you for identification.
- Sign up for an orientation presentation, if available. Learn the system for requesting materials. For example, at the British Library most materials are requested from computers and are delivered (usually within an hour) to your choice of 13

reading rooms. Collect available brochures and flyers describing collections, etc. Familiarize yourself with the place. Examine the reference books and finding aids.

## Where to Stay and How to Get About

Some suggestions may help, particularly if you are a first-time visitor.

- Try to avoid the high tourist season. Get a good, *detailed* London street map.
- Locate the repositories that interest you and plan a tentative itinerary. Most facilities are within walking distance of the Underground, called the *tube*. Three-, five-, or seven-day passes for unlimited travel on the both tube and buses are available in the form of a *Visitor Travelcard*, which must be purchased in the U.S. from VisitBritain (previously the British Tourist Office). These are only a good deal if you plan to make more than one round trip a day on the tube. The cheapest local transportation I found was the one day bus pass, which is available at bus stops in London. You can hop on and off, and the sightseeing along the way proved to be a bonus.
- Lodging in London is expensive. However, I found dozens of small, two-star, tourist hotels in the Paddington Station area in the \$60-a-day range—about half of what four-star ones cost. These are not fancy, but I found clean, comfortable "digs" without a reservation (off-season) that served a basic hot breakfast. Nearby streets are conveniently lined with small, ethnic restaurants, pubs, fruit stands, and providers of fast foods. Paddington is a major transfer station so it is easy to get wherever you want to go. It's a straight bus or tube ride to the British Library or Family Records Centre. Also, the Express train runs between Paddington Station and Heathrow Airport.
- Take time to see some of the sights. *LondonWalks* offers dozens of walks for \$7-\$8 (less for seniors), which are a welcome break from research (brochures readily available there). Boat rides on the Thames are also a grand contrast to hours spent in repositories.

I BROUGHT BACK some brochures and lists of repositories, so if I can help you plan your trip, or if you have questions, I'll try to help. Telephone: (203) 544-9309. E-mail: vbanerjee@aol.com

Go, and have a great time. ■

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## HERITAGEQUEST ONLINE NOW AVAILABLE AT DARIEN LIBRARY

by Donna Moughty

This is *very* exciting news! MGS has been in discussions with Darien Library to fund this database, and, while we were talking, iConn (the Connecticut Library System) decided to provide this database to all libraries in Connecticut. So, even if you don't live in Darien, you can go to your local library, or even log onto your library site via the Internet and, using the bar code from your library card, access this database.

Those of you that attended the MGS meeting in October heard me talk about using online databases for census research. I don't think I was shy about saying that HeritageQuest is my favorite! As I mentioned in October, none of the three commercial, online census providers have indexed all years; the images for all years are online, however, and can be browsed. HeritageQuest currently has indexes for the following years: 1790, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1860, 1870, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920 (36 states completed), 1930 (4 states, including Connecticut, completed). Always check the "What's new" link for updates. For the 1880 Census you can use the index available through FamilySearch.org and then browse HeritageQuest to find your family.

The other feature of HeritageQuest is their digitized library of over 20,000 local and family history books. Just today I was trying to find the name of a minister in the early 1800's in New London County and was able to bring up the *The History of New London, Connecticut: from the first survey of the coast in 1612 to 1852* by Frances Manwaring Caulkins, find the individual in the index and send a copy off to my client—all in about 10 minutes. That sure beats driving to New London!

Do give this new database a try. Don't forget to follow the link to the actual image and transcribe all of the data. Use this to identify the next steps in your research. Does the birthplace give you another location to search? Does the citizenship column or year of immigration give you a hint as to when and where to search for immigration or naturalization papers?

And, finally, don't forget to cite your source for all of the information you find on the census schedule (approximate ages, marriages, places of birth, etc). Your complete census citation should read something like this:

Louis C. Eicher household, 1910 U.S. Census, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania population schedule, Mifflin Township, enumeration district 156, supervisor's district 23, sheet 2A, dwelling 24, family 25 National Archives micropublication T624, Roll 1295, Pg. 230.  
Viewed at HeritageQuest Online 27 Mar 2003.

Note that you need to cite both your immediate source (the online service and the date you viewed it) as well as the original source (the National Archives Microfilm numbers).

Now, there's no excuse for not having a census record for each year your ancestors were living.

Happy Hunting! ■

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## CONNECTICUT RECORDS ACCESS

by Donna Moughty

While many states have moved to close access to vital records, we in Connecticut have had excellent access to our state's records. For over 32 years members of incorporated or authorized genealogical societies in Connecticut have been allowed access to all vital records up to the present. Unfortunately, that may be changing.

The draft of proposed legislation for Vital Records in Connecticut from the Connecticut Department of Public Health would severely compromise access to vital records for all genealogists and historians; would make it difficult to obtain copies of certificates that are less than 100 years old and would eliminate all searches for records less than 50 years old.

Although "security" is the reason given for the proposed legislation, it is hard to believe that limiting access to genealogists or other historians will make us safer. Extracts for all Connecticut deaths from 1949 to 2001 and for marriages from 1959 to 2001 have been sold to Ancestry and are currently available on the Internet for anyone willing to pay a small fee. In addition, the Social Security Death Index is available free on the Web with a listing of almost everyone who has died since 1962. Newspapers carry local death and marriage announcements, as well as birth announcements, and back issues are available on microfilm at various libraries throughout the state.

This is an issue we all need to be aware of, and, if this legislation moves forward, your support in writ-

ing or e-mailing your legislators will be critical. Education rather than fear tactics will be necessary to defeat his proposal. We will be setting up a section of our Website at <http://mgs.darien.org/mgs> (note that our Website has a new address) to keep you informed and suggest remedies. ■

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## UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU: 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY MILITARY RECORDS 1 November 2003 Meeting

Larry Fermi gave a lively and informative talk on this subject at our last meeting. He told us that, as a general rule, less is known about military service in the 20<sup>th</sup> century than in previous centuries, even though about 16 million people have served in the U.S. military during this period. Sources for information on those that served are available, however.

Selective Service records for World War I cover the registration of about 24 million men born between 1872 and 1900. Questions asked included name, age in years, date of birth, birthplace, and citizenship. (The vast majority of those who registered for the draft were not called to serve.)

The original WW I draft cards are on microfilm, which can be viewed at a Family History Center or at the National Archives. Generally, you need to know the Draft Board of the registrant to find his card, although Ancestry.com has indexes for cards from some states.

Naturalization of aliens that served in the military during WW I was expedited, and the Index to Naturalizations of World War I Soldiers is on microfilm at NARA. If the name of interest to you is not found in the index, you may file a Freedom of Information/Privacy Act request. You may also file Form G-639 with the INS, Washington, DC 20536, providing name, and date and place of birth, to learn if the alien ever naturalized anywhere in the U.S.

World War II Selective Service started 6 October 1940 and, through five subsequent registrations, covered men born from 1877 through those that turned 18 during WW II. Only the "Old Man's" (ages 45-67, presumed dead by now) registration cards are currently available at NARA. You may, however, request from the Selective Service System a copy of a draft card for any individual that is deceased.

WW II casualties may be searched for at [http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/basic\\_search.jsp](http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/basic_search.jsp)

Korea and Vietnam casualties can be searched for at [http://www.archives.gov/research\\_room/research\\_topics/korea\\_and\\_vietnam\\_casualties.html](http://www.archives.gov/research_room/research_topics/korea_and_vietnam_casualties.html)

Some additional sources of information include

- National Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63132.
- State Adjutant General and Archives offices.
- Regional offices of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
- County courthouse in the area where the ancestor lived after serving, where his discharge papers should have been recorded. Also check the county courthouse for his former address and his spouse's address if he married while in service.
- Burial Case Files, available at NARA for those that died during a number of wars.
- Old newspapers in area of residence.
- NARA Regional Reference Branch (card files for WW I soldiers that died overseas, 1917-1922, and those missing in action, 1923-1960).
- The Cemetery Service, National Cemetery System, Veterans' Administration, 810 Vermont Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20422, has records from 1861 to present.
- Local posts of veterans' organizations.
- State archives.
- County Clerk's office.

AND MUCH MORE. Sadly, we lack space here to cover all the information that Larry Fermi provided. ■

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## UPCOMING SEMINARS

### National Genealogical Society

- **NGS GENTECH 2004**, 22-24 January 2004, St. Louis, Mo. Excellent speakers will cover a broad range of topics. For more information visit the National Genealogical Society's Website at [www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org)
- **NGS Annual Conference in the States**, 19-22 May 2004, Sacramento, Cal. The National Genealogical Society and the Genealogical & Historical Council of Sacramento Valley invite you to discover gold as you join the rush to Sacramento for "A Golden Prospect." Prospecting for ancestors is a lot like prospecting for gold. You do a

little digging, you sift through the silt, and those golden glints of information come shining through. Genealogists from around the country will gather in the Sacramento Convention Center, where they will polish their genealogical skills. Family historians who are just beginning their ancestral quest will have the opportunity to learn the basics. More seasoned pros can learn from some of the masters. All will have an opportunity to place things in perspective with presentations that will help place their ancestors into their historical context. To learn more, visit <http://www.eshow2000.com/ngs/>

**The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society** is presenting four New York City repository tours:

- **New York Public Library**, Tuesday, 27 January, 10-11:30 AM. Ruth Carr, Chief of the Milstein Division of United States History, Local History, and Genealogy will give an overview of genealogy resources in her division; orientations on the Maps and Microfilms division will also be given.
- **National Archives Northeast Region**, Thursday, 12 February, 5-7:45 PM. John Celardo, Archivist, will give a presentation on NARA's holdings, "Genealogical Records at the National Archives." Afterwards, attendees will be guided in their research by Roger Joslyn, FGBS, FASG; Leslie Corn, FGBS; and NARA staff.
- **New York City Municipal Archives**, Friday, 19 March, 1:30-4:30 PM. Ken Cobb, Director of the NYC Municipal Archives, will introduce participants to the large assortment of vital records, city directories, photographs, voters' records, etc. Participants will have the otherwise-closed archives to themselves for independent or assisted research.
- **NYG&B Library**, Wednesday, 3 March, 4-7 PM. NYG&B librarians will host a guided tour of the library, and explain the library's extensive holdings and how to access them.

The fee for each program is \$20 for members, \$30 for nonmembers. The fee for all four programs is \$60 for members; \$90 for nonmembers. You may register online at [www.nygbs.org](http://www.nygbs.org) or by telephone (212) 755-8532, ext. 36.

**The National Archives Northeast Region**, Waltham, Mass., is offering free genealogical work-

shops during the winter of 2004. at the Regional Archives building, 380 Trapelo Road in Waltham. Participants will learn what they need to know in order to locate records, as well as what one might expect to find in the records. Additionally, behind the scenes tours of the archives will be given at 1:30 before workshops marked with an asterisk (\*).

A new format for three workshops will be included this season. "Genealogical Roundtable: Open Forum for Genealogical Quandaries" will allow attendees to address their particularly difficult genealogical questions to a panel of National Archives staff. The schedule is as follows:

- 3 Feb. 1:30 p.m.\* "Beyond the Census: Local History in Federal Records."
- 12 Feb., 6:30 p.m. "Records Relating to African-American Research."
- 18 Feb., 2:00 p.m. Genealogical Roundtable: Open Forum for Genealogical Quandaries.
- 2 March, 1:30 p.m.\* "Census, Naturalization, & Passenger Lists."
- 11 March, 6:30 p.m. "Documenting Our Mothers."
- 17 March, 2:00 p.m. Genealogical Roundtable: Open Forum for Genealogical Quandaries.

Workshop and tour space is limited to twenty participants. Call 866-406-2379 to register and for more details. There is no fee. Light refreshments and coffee will be served.

**Helen Leary Seminar**, 27 March, 2004, Western Hotel, Waltham, Mass. This is an all-day event sponsored by the **Massachusetts Genealogical Council**. Helen Leary is a Certified Genealogist, Certified Genealogical Lecturer, Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists, Fellow of the National Genealogical Society—and a superb speaker. She will give four presentations throughout the day: "Is This the Same Man, or a Different One With the Same Name?" "Time-Lines and Real Lives—Using Ancestors' Life Patterns to Find Their Parents," "Our Ancestors' Voices—Getting the Records To Tell Us Everything They Know," and "The Hemings-Jefferson Connection: A Genealogical Evaluation of the Evidence." A hot buffet lunch will be served mid-day. The mailing address of the Massachusetts Genealogical Council is P.O. Box 5393, Cochituate, MA 01778-5393. Full information on the seminar, including a registration form, is available at <http://home.comcast.net/~massgencouncil/helenleary-seminar.htm>

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## SALT LAKE CITY BOUND

Without a doubt, researching at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City is the ultimate prize for genealogists and family historians. Work that can take months waiting for microfilms to arrive at the local Family History Center can be accomplished easily by moving from one film to another at the Library. There's also access to books that have never been microfilmed and don't circulate and old historical journals from the town where grandpa lived. All this is in the beautiful setting of Salt Lake City.

Interested? There's still space available on Donna Moughty's Research Trip in April, but time's running out. For more information, you can contact Donna at [Moughty@mac.com](mailto:Moughty@mac.com)

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## STORYCORPS

Having trouble getting those family interviews you want? StoryCorps may help. Modeled on the WPA's oral history interviews during the 1930s, StoryCorps is a national project to encourage people to record each other's stories. For this purpose, a network of StoryBooths is being set up around the country by Sound Portraits Productions in partnership with the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. A StoryBooth is already functioning at Grand Central Station in New York City. To reserve a one-hour block of time make an appointment online through a secure server, or call (212) 941-8553 between 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Onsite facilitators will provide advice on your question list and conducting the interview. The fee for the recording session is only \$10. (The actual cost is about \$75, and the difference is being made up through contributions. The intention is to make the process affordable to everyone.)

If getting to a StoryBooth isn't feasible, you will soon be able to get a StoryKit (containing a mini-disk recorder, microphone, headphones and user's guide) and record your session at a location that is convenient to you and your interviewee. StoryKits are not yet available, but have been promised for early 2004.

You will receive an audio disk of the your interview produced in a StoryBooth or with a StoryKit. *With your permission*, a copy of the disk will be stored at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

For more information on this program, visit <http://>

[www.storycorps.net](http://www.storycorps.net) ■

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## NEW YORK CITY BUILDING PHOTOS

As part of the real estate property appraisal process, photographs of every building in the five boroughs of New York City were taken between 1939 and 1941. Negatives of these photographs are held by the NYC Municipal Archives, and prints can be ordered. If you had parents or grandparents living in the city and know the address, you might like to obtain a photo of the building in which they lived. ■

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## QUERY

**129. SELLECK.** Seek information about Revolutionary War activities of Samuel Selleck, 1755-1836, of Stamford, Middlesex Parish. He was the son of Sands Selleck. Gorham's *Bates, Selleck* (327) says he was a sea captain, but no confirmation has been found. He may or may not have been one of the Samuel Sellecks in the Connecticut Militia. He may instead have been "neutral." Was he a merchant, sea captain or soldier? Need information on his activities and suggested sources. *Judi Watson, PvtGree-  
nie@aol.com* ■

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## MGS MEETING CALENDAR

(Continued from page 2)

**1 MAY 2004: SURNAMES—THEIR MEANINGS AND ORIGINS** will be presented by **DIANE PTAK**. Ever wish there was a quick and easy method to locate your ancestral origin? Help has arrived. Diane will review the major types of surnames and their spelling variations, look at name and emigrant lists that identify origins of a surname and examine some major indices (biographical, library databases, religious, and periodical). This wide variety of sources is sure to help you kick holes in the thickest of brick walls.

Diane has been actively engaged in professional research and lecturing since 1983 and is well known for her information-packed, entertaining, and dynamic presentations. She is a former vice president of the Capital District Genealogical Society in Albany, NY, and is a member of numerous professional and family history societies. Over the last 10 years she has published articles in *The Capital*, *HeritageQuest*, *The Loyalist*, *Genealogical Helper*, and other publications. ■

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**Deadline for next newsletter  
April 2004**

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

**2004 MEMBERSHIP**

- Renewal  
 New

**ANNUAL DUES**

- Individual (\$20)  
 Couple (\$25)

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*Please consider adding a contribution toward our genealogical resource maintenance and expansion, e.g., subscriptions, books, CDs, etc.*  \_\_\_\_\_



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

**MEETING**  
**SATURDAY, 31 JAN. 2004, 2 PM**  
**DARIEN LIBRARY**

