



# Middlesex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

May 2012

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I was watching the TV screen during the last few weeks, I was impressed by the advertisements that we see on the screen. One in particular is an advertisement that tells you to go to a certain genealogy site, enter your family name and, bingo, your family's genealogy will pop right up. I guess that would be great for some if it was true. But, unfortunately, the only way it could be true is if some one had already done the research or had personal knowledge of the information and had entered it into that site.

One of the exciting parts of genealogy is the great feeling we get when we find information on our families through research. These signs of accomplishment bring us closer to knowing our ancestors and what they did in life, where they went and why. The world of the internet and computers have opened up more ways for us to do the research and find not only who begot whom but information that will help us to understand what our family heritage is all about. There is daily more and more internet availability, information opening up to help us find out what our hearts are encouraging us to learn in making our ancestors a part of our life. Using sources that can help us discover where to go to research and how to understand the information we find helps us to reduce frustration. Middlesex Genealogical Society offers free help to get you through road blocks; seminars and speakers help us with the knowledge that can get us over a

steep hill.

This month the 1940 U.S. Census was released for us to use. It has 132 million entries of more information than has ever been available to us. I encourage every one to take advantage of the great new releases of information that are being put in front of us each day. I look forward to seeing all of you at the public programs we give you at Darien Library.

Lloyd R. Sturges Jr.

## 1940 CENSUS—BREAKING NEWS— MGS TO HELP INDEX

by Lloyd Sturges Jr.

On 2 April the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) released to the public data on 132 million people in the 1940 U.S. Census. What is different from any other census release is that this one is online, free, at:

[1940census.archives.gov](http://1940census.archives.gov)

There is, however, no index for it. I am pleased to announce that Middlesex Genealogical Society will be helping the FamilySearch Indexing Project. We are looking for members that can contribute some time to help with the creation of an index for this census. Work can be done individually at home, or in groups at Darien Library. Please send your name and contact information to me at [lrskeeter@optonline.net](mailto:lrskeeter@optonline.net) if you want to be part of this exciting project.



**MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

**2011-2012  
OFFICERS**

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Lloyd Sturges Jr.    | President      |
| Robert E. Kenyon III | Vice President |
| Dale Pollart         | Treasurer      |
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Peter Biggins  
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|                     |                   |
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| 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 \$25 per individual and \$30 per couple or family.

Original notices of genealogical interest and queries are welcomed for publication in the newsletter.

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

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

**UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**ALL MEETINGS SATURDAY, 2 PM, DARIEN LIBRARY, 1441 POST ROAD. (Our 12 May meeting will take place in the Community Room on the first floor.) COME, AND BRING A FRIEND.**

**12 MAY 2012: FAMILY HISTORY FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY** will be presented by **VIRGINIA BANERJEE**. Family history research is a great hobby that can involve the whole family. Learn about a wide variety of fun activities for young folks as well as the older members of the family. Engage everyone's interest; increase and preserve your knowledge of family history and your family. Tomorrow is Mother's Day. What a wonderful time to generate enthusiasm among the very young about their family history!

Virginia Banerjee is an experienced family historian whose interest in genealogy began when she was a teenager but became more focused over the past 40 years. She has published articles, taught and lectured widely, and is a director of the Middlesex Genealogical Society and of a family association of an old Connecticut family. During many field trips, she has sought to document ancestry on both sides of her family. She completed research and private publication of a book concerning Indian history, her late husband's Indian family genealogy and memoirs of their life in India in the early 1950s.

**Please note:** Information on fall programs will be announced in September.

**LIBRARY REPORT**

by C. Scribner

The inventory of the MGS collection of books has been completed. It was a very time-consuming undertaking, but with the help of Steve Anderson I was able to get the job done. Our collection now consists of five four-shelf rows of books. Listed by Roman numerals in the inventory, Row I starts at the computer station and covers Rows I, II and III on that side of the case. On the other side we have rows IV and VI. Row V contains four rows of Local History by the Darien Library. All top shelves were inventoried, including the microfilm cabinet and the large cabinet with glass doors that contains town directories and other books. This cabinet holds two large books too big to fit anywhere else.

## MEMBER PAGES

by John Driscoll

Six months ago, at the urging of Peter Biggins, I added my Driscoll-Prendergast Family Story to the Member Pages of the Middlesex Genealogical Society Website. When I asked Pete what I should add to the site, he told me that the format was wide open and I could volunteer anything I wanted. So I wracked my brain trying to think of something to put on the pages that would be of interest to everyone, but then I came to the realization that my personal family would only be of interest to me and my relatives.

I still wasn't sure what I could add that would be of interest, so I looked at what was already on the site. Studying what and how others publish their material gave this old dog some new tricks to learn.

I went back to an old report I made in 2007. Back then I had been studying my family's history for about six or seven years and had compiled quite a few "dry" facts. Irish research is tough, but New York research is relatively easy for me because, for the most part, my family immigrated from Ireland to Brooklyn and Manhattan (the first in 1837) and lived there until my grandfather moved to Queens in 1914. The New York Municipal Archives on Chambers St. was a treasure trove for me to explore. The data mined from those archives, the New York Public Library, Family History Centers and censuses, to mention a few, allowed me to put together a narrative to share with my family—not just immediate family, but also those I found by "cold calling" prospects.

Before the narrative, when I tried to show family members what I was working on, I would pull out the old laptop and open my genealogy file, only to watch their eyes glaze over as they looked at thousands of sources. They were not familiar with the program I was using and did not care to learn the program before looking at the content. They would look at five different recorded birth dates for the same person or three different spellings of a surname and would lose interest as dinner was being served. They have not been bitten by the genealogy bug. They all care, but want to study it on their own time.

So I compiled the family narrative to the best of my ability from the file I had and sent it to my relatives. It was complete with poems relating to

my surname, histories of my two parents surnames and family crests (even if they don't actually exist). I decided to use this as my contribution to the MGS Member Pages.

Last month, I got an added bonus. A third cousin, googling her great-grandfather's name, found my story on the Member Pages. Her great grandfather was my great-grandfather's brother. She contacted Peter who in turn e-mailed me and she and I have been sharing information for a few weeks now. I think it is so special when you find a relative. Her father is still alive and in his 90s, and she will visit him in April. This spurred me on to rewrite the Driscoll-Prendergast Family Story almost doubling it in size as I added what I have discovered in the last five years and Peter updated it on the member pages this past week. Now she can take the story with her when she sees her Dad.

The Member Pages are a nice addition to the MGS Website. I am very impressed by the potential of a personal Website that family members can access. If I ever slow down in my ongoing research, I hope to learn how to create one for my own family. I would also like to read more stories about peoples experiences in their searches. I get inspiration from the work of others.

## LOCATING ANCESTORS LIVING IN NYC IN 1940

by Leonard Christie

The New York Public Library has created a census search tool for locating your ancestors living in New York City in 1940. It is not only a great tool for the 1940 U.S. Census, but also gives access to the fully digitized 1940 phone books for the Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. The website is called **Direct Me NYC 1940**. The link is <http://directme.nypl.org>. This interactive site allows a researcher to search on a name, select the address, and convert it to an Enumeration District, then connect with NARA's page for the census.

Unfortunately, the site will not work for everyone as only people who had a telephone are listed. While 7.5 million people were living in New York City at the time, only about 1.2 million households had telephones.

## 1940 U.S. CENSUS 17 MARCH 2012

I expect that you all know by now that the 1940 U.S. Census was released 2 April. (The 72-year hold on census data was imposed by law in 1952 to protect the privacy of those counted in censuses. The effective date of the census was 1 April 1940.) Those of us who attended Christopher Zarr's (education specialist at NARA's Northeast Region in New York City) presentation of 17 March on this subject were given a head start in using an important new resource.

Although several organizations are working hard to produce a name index for this census, so far only a small portion has been completed by any of them. (Please see Lloyd Sturges's story on page 1 about MGS's efforts to support this project.) Until a reliable index exists, it is necessary to know where a relative lived in 1940, and then be able to convert that location to an Enumeration District within the state and county of interest. With that information finding an individual becomes a manageable task. Without that information, you will have to wait for an index.

A national census has been taken every 10 years since 1790, but questions on censuses differ somewhat from decade to decade and some questions on this one are unique. For example:

- About the Household (columns 3-6)—was the home owned or rented; value of the home, or monthly rental; and was it a farm?
- Personal Description (columns 9-14)—includes questions on education, along with sex, color or race, age at last birthday, and marital status.
- Place of Birth and Citizenship (columns 15-16) lists the state or foreign country where born and the citizenship of the foreign-born.
- Residence (columns 17-20)—provides information on community, county and state (or territory, or foreign country), and whether or not home is on a farm.
- Employment Status of Those 14 Years and Older (columns 21-24)—asks whether or not

the individual was employed 24-30 March either in private or government emergency work (e.g., WPA, NYA, CCC, etc.). If neither, was the individual seeking work, or have a job or business?

- For Persons Answering "No" to Questions 21-24—indicate whether engaged in home housework, unable to work, or other.
- If Yes in Column 22 or 23—duration of unemployment up to 30 March 1940.
- Occupation, Industry, and Class of Worker, and number of weeks worked in 1939 (columns 28-31).
- Income in 1939, 12 months ending 31 Dec., 1939 (columns 32-34).

You can clearly see the influence that the Great Depression had on the choice of questions. Note particularly the housing questions, inquiries into internal migration, employment/unemployment, and participation in government programs. In addition, supplemental questions were asked in columns 35-50 of 5% of the population. These included questions on cradle language, war or military service, veteran status, veteran's dependents status, Social Security, deductions from 1939 wages or salary for Federal Old Age Insurance or Railroad Retirement, and portion of 1939 wages or salary deducted.

So: Discover addresses in city directories, phone books, <http://stevemorse.org/> etc., convert them to EDs, and browse the census schedules already on Websites such as NARA, FamilySearch, Ancestry, and HeritageQuest.

## UPCOMING SEMINARS

**MGS past president Donna Moughty** is leading a research trip to the major genealogical repositories in Dublin, Ireland, from Sun., 7 Oct. to Sun., 14 Oct. Professional genealogists will guide you in planning your research at the National Library of Ireland, the General Register Office, the National Archives of Ireland, the Registry of Deeds, and the Valuation Office. For more infor-

mation, please visit Donna's Website at [www.moughty.com](http://www.moughty.com), or e-mail her at [moughty@mac.com](mailto:moughty@mac.com).

**National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region, New York City**, 201 Varick St. Programs run from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and are free, but space is limited. Register by calling toll-free 866-840-1752, faxing 212-401-1638; or e-mailing [newyork.archives@nara.gov](mailto:newyork.archives@nara.gov).

- **“Using Military Records,”** 8 May. Staff will discuss what military records are available and how to research them.
- **“New York Sources: Repositories and Imagination—Where to Go for Your Records,”** 12 June. Guest lecturer Art Sniffin will provide an overview of the variety of materials found within the New York State Archives, New York State Library, probate, court, and local government records along with suggestions on the most effective way to research them.

**National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region, Boston**, Frederick C. Murphy Federal Center, 380 Trapelo Road, Waltham, MA 02452-6399, phone 781-663-0130, fax 781-663-0154, e-mail [boston.archives@nara.gov](mailto:boston.archives@nara.gov). Programs are free, but reservations are required. Telephone toll-free 866-406-2379 or e-mail the address above.

- **“Navigating the US Census, 1790-1940,”** Thurs., 17 May, 6 p.m.
- **“Searching for Seamen: 19<sup>th</sup> C. Crew Lists, Shipping Articles, Citizenship, & More,”** Tues., 5 June, 2 p.m.
- **They Came From...(to be announced): Ethnic History and Genealogy**, Thurs., June 21, 2 p.m.
- **“Introduction to Genealogy,”** Tues., 10 July, 2 p.m.
- **“They Came From...(to be announced) Ethnic History and Genealogy,”** Thurs., 6 p.m., 19 July,
- **“Census, Passenger Lists, and Naturaliza-**

**tion Records,”** Tues., 2 p.m., 16 Aug.

- **“Documenting Our Mothers: Women's History,”** Thurs., 6 p.m., 16 Aug.

**New York Genealogical & Biographical Society**, 36 W. 44<sup>th</sup> Street, 7<sup>th</sup> fl., New York, NY 10036-8105; telephone 212-755-8532; fax 212-754-4218. The NYG&B's Education Committee is cosponsoring two programs with the **New York Public Library** at 42<sup>nd</sup> St. in NYC. These programs are free to the public and registration is usually unnecessary (with the exception of the "Block & Lot" program). They take place at the Stephen Schwarzman Building, South Court Classrooms, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. and 42<sup>nd</sup> St., which is fully wheelchair accessible.

- **“Getting Ready for the 1940 Census: Searching Without a Name Index”** will be presented by “One Step” Stephen Morse on Wed., 16 May, 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.. When the 1940 census was released on 2 April, it did not have a name index. Such an index may not be available for another six months, so finding people in the census will involve searching by location instead. The location needs to be converted to an ED (enumeration district) before the census can be accessed. Steve Morse's one-step Website can be accessed at <http://stevemorse.org/> and contains numerous tools for obtaining EDs. His talk will present these tools and show circumstances in which each can be used.
- **“Block & Lot: New York City,”** Sat., 26 Nov., 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Discover how you can use NYPL resources to unlock the history of a building, a block, or an entire borough. In this class you will learn how to use antiquarian maps, fire insurance atlases ("Sanborns"), online property data, books and historic real estate photos to document the history of the city's built environment. Registration is required and is available at <http://www.nypl.org/events/classes/>.

**New England Historic Genealogical Society**, 101 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116-3007, toll-free telephone 888-286-3447, Website [www.NewEnglandAncestors.org](http://www.NewEnglandAncestors.org). Unless otherwise specified, programs are presented at 99-101 Newbury St. in Boston:

- **Insider's Tour of the USS Constitution**

**Museum**, Charlestown, MA, Thurs., 31 May, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Join the crew at the USS Constitution Museum for a private, after-hours tour of USS *Constitution*, “Old Ironsides,” the oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world. It will be led by Margherita Desy, historian with the Naval History & Heritage Command Detachment Boston, USS *Constitution*. After the tour, take a behind-the-scenes look at the museum’s collections and archives. Learn about the lives of the sailors who lived on board the ship in 1812 and experience history with hands-on exhibits. Museum president Anne Grimes Rand will share plans for the Bicentennial of the War of 1812. Guests should meet at the USS Constitution Museum and bring a valid photo ID for access to the ship. Refreshments and light appetizers will be served. This event is free for guests of the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Please e-mail [rsvp@ussconstitutionmuseum.org](mailto:rsvp@ussconstitutionmuseum.org) by Fri., 25 May, or call 617-426-1812, ext. 167, to join in this great event, which is a companion program to **Discovering American War of 1812 Veterans**, which was held at NEHGS on Wed., 21 March 2012.

- **Come Home to New England** (Mon., 11 June, 9 a.m. to Sat., 16 June, 5 p.m.) is an intensive week of family history discovery and education at the society headquarters in downtown Boston. NEHGS experts provide individual consultations and useful lectures to guide researchers of all levels. Participants also enjoy group meals and social events.
- **Nova Scotia Heritage Tour**, Mon., 2 July, 1 p.m. to Wed., 11 July, 5 p.m. Discover with expert tour guide Donald Friary the fascinating past and extraordinary natural beauty of Nova Scotia. Explore the history and culture of the Mi’kmaq, the Acadians, Loyalist refugees, Scottish Highlanders, and settlers from Great Britain, New England, and Europe. The tour will visit Acadian settlements in the Annapolis Valley, the remarkable fortress at Louisbourg and England’s first foothold in the 1710 garrison at Annapolis Royal, the 1749 establishment of Halifax, the subsequent attempts to settle “Foreign Protestants” in Lunenburg, and the influx of Loyalists following the American Revolution. Participants will see the high tides of the Bay

of Fundy—the highest in the world—the exquisite coastline of the South Shore, and the dramatic scenery along the Cabot Trail on Cape Breton Island. Download a registration form or register online.

- **Research Trip to Albany, NY**, Wed., 11 July, 2 p.m.—Sun., 15 July, 11 a.m. Featured NEHGS Experts: Christopher C. Child, Henry B. Hoff, David Dearborn. Join NEHGS as we explore the vast resources of the New York State Archives in Albany. The trip includes individual consultations, lectures, a reception, and a group dinner. Space is limited. Tuition (includes four nights’ lodging at the Albany Hotel, formerly Crowne Plaza): single, \$785; double (shared lodging with another participant), \$585 per person; double with non-researching guest, \$935; commuter (no lodging), \$185.
- **Come Home to New England**. will take place Mon., 6 Aug., 9 a.m. to Sat., 11 Aug., 5 p.m. This is a second session this summer of this very popular program. (See 11 June—16 June above.)
- **2012 Salt Lake City Research Tour**, Sun., 28 Oct., 2 p.m. to Sun., 4 Nov., 11 a.m. This is NEHGS’s 34th annual research tour to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. NEHGS experts will help you navigate the collections of the largest genealogical library in the world. This is an intensive week of research, consultations, lectures, group meals and other activities with support and guidance of NEHGS staff.

**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.) Meetings are at Aldersgate Memorial United Methodist Church, 600 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY (across from Mercy College on Route 9). There is a \$3 fee for nonmembers.

- **“One Thing Leads to Another: The Continuing Journey of Genealogical Discoveries,”** 12 May, will be presented by Maureen Wlodarczyk.
- **“Searching the 1940 U.S. Census,”** 9 June, will be presented by Dorothy Dougherty.

You can visit the society's website at: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~nywcgs>.

## **Genealogy Cruises**

**8<sup>th</sup> Annual Wholly Genes Genealogy Conference and Cruise**, Sun., 16 Sept.—Sun., 23 Sept., to Alaska's Inside Passage. This annual conference has a reputation for offering lectures by some of the most respected genealogists in the country on topics that are relevant to all researchers, including methodology, standards, repositories, record types, research aids, and technology. This year's speakers on genealogy and technology include:

- Thomas W. Jones, Ph.D., CG, CGL, FASG, FUGA, FNGS: Co-Editor of the NGS Quarterly, past President of the Genealogical Speaker's Guild (GSG), and expert on research in Ireland and East Coast States, especially Georgia and Virginia.
- J. Mark Lowe, CG: Past president of the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) and the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS), past Vice-President of the Genealogical Speaker's Guild (GSG), and expert in land records, migration, court records, and church records (Baptists, Methodists, and Moravians).
- Debra S. Mieszala, CG: Certified genealogist and expert in forensic genealogy and research in Midwest States, especially Illinois.
- Paul Milner, M.Div.: Professional genealogist and expert in British Isles research, migration, and Lutheran records.
- Craig Scott, MA, CG: Expert in military records, Federal records, Government publications, Scottish records, Quaker records, and book publishing.
- Thomas MacEntee: Expert in using technology and social media for genealogical research.

The conference will be held on the luxurious *Star Princess* traveling roundtrip from Seattle, Washington, with visits to Ketchikan, Juneau, and Skagway, Alaska, and a brief stop in Victoria, British Columbia. Presentation times do not overlap, so conference-goers won't have to miss any lectures. The schedule also avoids conflicts with "scenic cruising time."

Prices start at \$979 per person, including the cost of the cruise, food, shipboard entertainment,

and attendance at all conference events. A roommate-finding service is also available for those who need it. Complete details can be found at [www.WhollyGenes.com/cruise.htm](http://www.WhollyGenes.com/cruise.htm).

Al-though the host company, Wholly Genes, Inc., makes family history software, the 17+ hours of genealogical lectures are software-neutral and relevant to all researchers. (Noncompeting lecture time is set aside for users of their product The Master Genealogist (TMG) who want to learn how to make the best use of that software's features and companion products.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Unlock the Past History & Genealogy Cruise** is a nine-day cruise from Sun., 10 Feb., to Tue., 19 Feb. 2013 aboard Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas*—one of the largest and most exciting cruise ships to visit Australia. The *Voyager*, which is 138,000 tons and accommodates up to 3114 passengers, will sail from Sydney, Australia, to Noumea and Fiji, returning to Sydney. Conference-cruise pricing starts at \$1499 per person, twin share. all accommodation and gourmet meals included. Participants may attend up to 50 presentations for a selection of over 80 topics.

One-on-one conferences with the experts are possible. Among presenters already booked are:

- Paul Milner, a professional genealogist, lecturer and author, was born and raised in Northern England, but moved to the US in 1975. Paul has a portfolio of about 70 topics, specializing but not limited to the UK.
- Dan Lynch is a genealogist, lecturer author and technology consultant based in Connecticut. He was vice president of business development at Ancestry before founding in 2003 Mattatuck Consulting, a private firm specializing in internet and search engine marketing solutions. In addition to his talks on searches of various google entities, Dan will also host sessions on Italian family history, cemetery research and restoration, creation of your own family history Website, etc.
- Jan Gow of New Zealand, tutor, author and lecturer, owns Beehive Books and has led

Hooked on Genealogy tours each year since 1992 to the UK and Salt Lake City. She has also written a monthly column for New Zealand's *Netguide* magazine and was awarded the Queen's Service Medal in the New Zealand 2012 honors list for services to genealogical research.

- Shauna Hicks has been researching her family since 1977 and has worked for 35 years in libraries and archives in Brisbane, Canberra and Melbourne. She is a sought-after presenter who has written five *Unlock the Past* guidebooks and numerous articles and has won a number of prestigious awards.
- Rosemary Kopittke has been tracing her family since 1985. She is a consultant for Gould Genealogy and *Unlock the Past* and a fre-

quent lecturer. She is the author, compiler or editor of many publications, including *Emigrants from Hamburg to Australasia 1850-1879*.

- Helen Smith has been researching her family since 1986. She is the author of *Death certificates and archaic medical terms* and has written for various genealogy and scientific publications. A public health microbiologist by training, Helen has a strong interest in health and social history and how these affected our ancestors.

*Unlock the Past's* parent company is Gould Genealogy, P.O. Box 675, Modbury, SA 5092, Australia. They can also be reached by phone at (08) 8395 7476, (08) 8263 2455, and via e-mail at [inquiries@unlockthepast.com.au](mailto:inquiries@unlockthepast.com.au).

**Deadline for next newsletter September 2012**

DARIEN LIBRARY  
12 MAY 2012  
MEETING