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CONFERENCE A HUGE SUCCESS

FIRST NEW ENGLAND GENEALOGICAL CONFERENCE HELD AT STURBRIDGE



STEERING COMMITTEE

Seated from left, Roselyn Listernick (Essex County Society of Genealogists), Albert Eastwood (Rhode Island Genealogical Society), James Hoban (Plymouth County Society of Genealogists), Kay Sheldon (Mass. Society of Genealogists), William H. Schoeffler (Federation of Genealogical Societies), Paul LeBlanc (Acadian Cultural Society), and Ernest Cardoza (American Portuguese Genealogical and Historical Society, Inc.)

Standing from left, Possey Godrey (NH Society of Genealogists), Janice Burkhart (American French Genealogical Society), Lillian Leger (Acadian Cultural Society), Sheila FitzPatrick (The Irish Ancestry Research Association), Kay Gardner-Wescott (Mass. Genealogical Council), Robert Greene (Connecticut Ancestry), Robert Parquette (Canadian American Genealogy Society), Glade I. Nelson (Federation of Genealogical Societies), Denise Pellitier (Acadian Cultural Society), Mary R. Savoy (Acadian Cultural Society), John Savoy (Acadian Cultural Society), and Barbara Mathews (Connecticut Society of Genealogists).

The conference, held on September 25th and 26th, at the Host Hotel Conference Center exceeded all expectations. The planning committee had modestly forecasted an attendance of about 300 but made plans for 500, fortunately the facilities were expandable to handle the actual attendance which was 758! The program speakers and panelist were top notch specialist in their various fields who were buoyed by the large turn out and who all gave superior presentations. A plentiful number of vendor "stalls" completely encircled the large banquet hall and did a brisk busi-

ness throughout the two days. All in all it was a very well planned, very well executed conference that ran "as smooth as silk".

A first time conference like this one just doesn't happen all by itself, there was an immense amount of time and effort expended by a lot of people to make it happen. First and foremost the credit for its success rests with the steering committee composed of the presidents or representatives of the 22 sponsoring organizations.

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This committee, most ably chaired by William Schoeffler of NEHGS, put in many hours both as a committee and individually for over a year to assure its success.

The steering committee is meeting to settle some follow up questions such as, "shall we schedule this type of regional conference annually or bi-annually?", "where and for how long", "what changes should be made in either the format or schedule", etc. etc.

The sponsoring organization representatives, who are the members of the steering committee, will make these hard decisions very soon and need input from attendees to guide them.

Tentative plans have been formulated to hold the next conference during the Spring of 1994 (April - May) in Manchester, NH.

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WHAT HAPPENS TO MY RESEARCH AFTER I AM GONE?

[Condensed from an article by Jo White Linn, C.G.,C.G.L. in the NGS Newsletter Vol. 17, No. 5 (1991) and reprinted from NHSOG newsletter]

A real concern of both amateur and professional genealogists is the final disposition of their records and files. Many are uneasy that their carefully composed charts, photocopies of original documents, and manuscripts may be added to the landfill problem. Remaining family members and executors are likely to clean out all the work-in-progress and reclaim areas of your home that were filled with your searches for that allusive ancestor.

The first decision one must make is selecting the library or archive where your papers would be catalogued and made accessible to patrons. The Directory of Archives and Manuscript Collections published by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission lists repositories by state and city and includes, in most cases, an indication of the types of materials solicited.

There are several points to consider early on:

* Arrangement for the gift of materials should be made in advance to ensure that they will be accepted by the receiving institution.

* Materials must be prepared for accessioning in accordance with the guidelines set up by the receiving institution.

* All transfers of personal property to an archives or library should be documented by letter, will, or deed conveying to the institution such copyright as the donor holds in the materials. Decisions about restrictions upon the use of the materials and disposal authority must be settled in one of those instruments. One other document is common in archival circles: the deposit agreement, which is a statement of intent to transfer title at some future date, in the meantime depositing material with the archive or library for safekeeping.

After selecting a repository and consulting the wishes of that institution about the arrangement of the material, one must reduce ones "piles" to an orderly arrangement as one would do if preparing the material for publication. You will cull and remove duplicates, extraneous material, correspondence of peripheral interest and material relating to roads not followed. You should prepare a table of contents and an index to the refined collection. You should prepare an introduction that sets the parameters of the collection, defines the keys and numbering system, and explains the abbreviations. The genealogist who wishes to preserve his collection must be responsible for preparing the material, as he/she only has the expertise to make the decisions.

All repositories are grateful for a monetary donation to allay the expenses of accessioning the material.

A few suggestions are *The Family History Library*, Salt Lake City, UT. *The New England Historic and Genealogical Society*, Boston, MA. *National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Library*, Washington, DC.

This article somewhat shifts the burden of responsibility for the preservation from the heirs and places it squarely where it should be: on the shoulders of the genealogist who wishes the collection to be preserved.

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Thrift is an admirable virtue, especially in an ancestor.

