



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2005

www.massgencouncil.org

MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

Established in 1980

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...

NOTE: The Annual Seminar returns to spring this year, taking place on Saturday, April 22.

Thanks to the hard work of Sharon Sergeant, Director of Programs and owner of Ancestral Manor, this year's seminar is filled with interesting lectures and programs.

Meldon J. Wolfgang, a popular speaker, will show us in two sessions how methods from other research areas can be applied to genealogy research (just might help us to break through that brick wall!).

A panel discussion on the attempts to limit vital records access and what can be done about this important tool for genealogical research will round out the morning. See details on page 4.

Additionally, during lunch (remember last year's sumptuous lunch?), we will have the pleasure of joining members of the Association of Professional Genealogists at their discussion tables for more informal contact. See details on page 5.

After lunch, there are many breakout sessions. Continuing the tradition begun at last summer's seminar, the National Archives' Horace Waters will offer serious research advice for intermediate and advanced genealogical researchers. Additional choices are described on page 5.

The most unusual of our offerings will be the 3:15 PM workshop on how to attend, select, and enjoy the upcoming national conference of the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS). FGS is honoring Boston by holding its annual conference here in Massachusetts at the beginning of September. Attendees will have a choice of over 400 sessions! Our experts will show you how to navigate through these offerings and get the most out of this spectacular conference. See details on page 6.

Looking forward to seeing you on April 22 in Marlborough!

Daphnah Sage

Federal Regulations UPDATE Regarding Access to Vital Records

Proposed federal regulations regarding access to vital records were scheduled to be released for review and comment in December 2005. The release date has been changed to this summer. We will provide additional details as during the panel discussion on April 22.

MGC BOARD MEMBERS 2005-2007

OFFICERS

Daphnah Sage, President
Mary Ellen Grogan, Vice President
Benjamin Woznick, Treasurer
Peter Viles, Secretary

DIRECTORS

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Christine Sweet-Hart, CG, Newsletter Editor
Sharon Sergeant, Programs
Michael Brophy, Publicity
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BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

The MGC Board meets on Saturdays, from 1p.m. to 4p.m., four times a year at the National Archives in Waltham, unless otherwise noted. Meetings are open to all interested genealogists. Massachusetts genealogical organizations are urged to send a representative to these meetings. Contact: info@massgencouncil.org.

HISTORY AND MISSION STATEMENT

The Massachusetts Genealogical Council was founded in 1980, and has dedicated itself to serving the interests of the state's genealogical community.

The Council's stated purposes are: to act as advocates in monitoring legislative and administrative activities of governmental agencies which affect genealogists; to sponsor and present legislation and programs designed to expand the resources and accessibility of services; to develop and promote the growth, education and exchange of ideas among persons and organizations interested in the pursuit of genealogy; and to provide other activities to advance genealogy.

CONTACTING MGC

Newsletter Contributions: If you would like to have the projects or your activities of your society included in the MGC newsletter, please send them to: Newsletter Editor, Massachusetts Genealogical Council, P. O. Box 5393, Cochrane, MA 01778, or via email at editor@massgencouncil.org.

Newsletter Options: If you would like to receive the newsletter via email, please contact the newsletter editor at editor@massgencouncil.org.

Coming in the Next Issue: Vital record access updates, news, reviews, and MGC conference recap.

Address/Email Change? Keep the MGC newsletter coming – inform us of any changes by contacting us at info@massgencouncil.org.

BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Christine L. Sweet-Hart, CG

William Dollarhide, *New York State Censuses & Substitutes, An Annotated Bibliography of State Censuses, Census Substitutes, and Selected Names Lists in Print, on Microform, or Online; with County Boundary Maps, 1683-1915; and State Census Examples and Extraction Forms, 1825-1925*, Bountiful, Utah: Heritage Creations, 2005.

This is an extraordinarily useful book for research in New York and states that border New York. The foreword includes information on the differences between the state censuses for each year, where the original manuscripts and microfilmed copies can be found, and what records have been lost.

Section one lists all county finding aids and guidebooks, publications and miscellaneous name lists for the entire state of New York. Then a county by county breakdown (including FHL call numbers) of land records with abstracts and indexes, military lists, newspaper indexes, CD ROM publications, and on-line records.

Section two contains fifteen crystal clear maps of New York from 1683 through 1915. The county boundaries for each map are overlaid with the current boundaries and under each is listed a breakdown of pertinent county and chronological historical events (such as when court records began) and notable boundary changes for that time period between New York, the surrounding states, and Canada.

Section three gives remarkably clear screen shots of census films with their corresponding extraction forms. These censuses include not only the population schedules but also agricultural schedules and statistics, additional inquiry schedules for the deaf and dumb, marriages and deaths, industry statistics, and the 1890 police census.

Truly a must-have for your reference library.

APRIL 22, 2006 MORNING PANEL DISCUSSION

FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS AFFECTING ACCESS TO RECORDS

Public Law 108-458 "Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004" includes Section 7211 "Minimum Standards for Birth Certificates".

State and local agencies generate a wide variety of birth certificate formats. Public Law 108-458 Section 7211 is intended to expedite valid birth certificate use for Federal agency purposes, such as passport, visa, military, and social security applications. Section 7211 also provides incentives to match death records to birth records, and note deaths on birth certificates with electronic databases. There are funding provisions where states would receive Federal aid for the cost of compliance. However, any state that is unable to comply would be penalized. The birth certificates of any non-complying state would not be accepted by Federal agencies. State agencies are still working on cost estimates for these changes.

Many Federal and state officials have reported proposed regulations to this Federal law, as well as state law changes, that would close vital records nationwide, require Federal government facility security measures in local town and city clerk facilities, and remove personally identifying information from other public records. In some cases, the wording of proposed state legislation would affect such publications as newspaper notices for births, marriages and deaths; gravestones or city and telephone directories. Many holdings of archives and libraries, now considered historical information, could be removed from public access.

Arguments for such measures include terrorism, ID Theft and privacy issues, even though numerous government and private studies show that these problem areas are not attributable to vital records access. Nor does Public Law 108-458 Section 7211, or any other Federal law, have the jurisdiction to force changes to state constitutions and laws.

This is clearly an issue for many normal activities, including genealogy and historical research.

The MGC will host a panel discussion at our April 22 Annual Meeting and Seminar, where legislators, vital records registrars, town and city clerks, archivists and other officials from all over New England will be invited to present their views to the genealogical community.

The MGC will also host a panel discussion of records access issues at the 2006 FGS Conference in Boston. Please contact your legislators and ask them if they are aware of this issue. Please, tell them that genealogists across the nation are questioning the validity of the proposed regulation drafts for Public Law 108-458 Section 7211, as well as any related state legislation incentives.

APRIL 22, 2006 LUNCHTIME DISCUSSIONS

Our 2006 Annual Meeting and Seminar will again provide an opportunity for the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) and other leaders to lead discussion tables in the dining room during the lunch break. Topic examples are listed below. You will be given an opportunity to select a discussion topic when you register on the morning of the seminar. We have one hour for lunch. You may want to browse the vendor area first and let the buffet line diminish a little before you go to the dining room.

Examples of previous lunchtime discussions:

- Access to Records – How to Address the Legislative Efforts to Close Records to Researchers
- Resources of the Family History Library (including the Family History Library and the IGI)
- Board for Certification of Genealogists
- Jewish Research
- English/Scots Research
- Irish Research
- French-Canadian Research
- Lineage Societies
- Federal Census Records
- Internet Research
- Colonial New England Research
- 19th Century Research
- Northern New England
- Southern New England (Rhode Island, Connecticut)

Please, contact Sharon Sergeant info@ancestralmanor.com if you would like to request a particular topic.

APRIL 22, 2006 AFTER LUNCH SPECIAL SESSIONS

The MGC is pleased to be able to provide a special bonus at our April 22, 2006 event. The after lunch breakout session will offer a choice of presentations and workshops. You will be given an opportunity to select a topic when you register on the morning of the seminar. Space will be limited for each selection, but you may wish to contact presenters before hand to for further details.

Sleuthing in the Stacks: Using Uncommon Resources to Uncover Genealogical Clues. Meldon J. Wolfgang directs the researcher to reference tools and finding aids that can be used by genealogists who have come up against a “brick wall” in their research. References used by professionals in other research disciplines are explored, and suggestions given for conducting a secondary literature search and using resources not common to genealogists. www.jonathansheppardbooks.com

Beyond the Census: Local History in Federal Records. Horace Waters, National Archives, presents information for intermediate and advanced researchers on records available on Civil War taxes, bankruptcy, Customs, Corps of Engineers, Works Progress Administration and GSA Surplus Property Disposal. <http://www.archives.gov/northeast>

When and How to Hire a Professional: The Greater Boston Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists (GBAPG) provides an overview of when a professional researcher will be most helpful. www.apgen.org/localchapters/boston/index.html

So You Think You are Ready To Go To Ireland! The Irish Ancestral Research Association recaps the experience of researchers who have been to Ireland and what you need to do before you go. www.tiara.ie

French & Native North American Marriages, 1600-1800: Paul Bunnell presents resources and opportunities for early Metis marriage to French settlers.

www.bunnellgenealogybooks.citymaker.com/page/page/1005059.htm

Heritage Scrapbooks: Debbie Morehouse presents an introduction to heritage album projects and resources. Legacy Crafts www.home.gwi.net/~legacycrafts

Publishing your Research into an Exciting Presentation using Passage Express Software:

Theresa Dewhurst. www.passageexpress.com

Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society New England Chapter: Benefits and opportunities. <http://www.aahgs-ne.org/>

The Master Genealogist (TMG): The family history software that does it all! www.whollygenes.com

IMPORTANT FGS ANNOUNCEMENT

The Federation of Genealogical Societies and the New England Historic Genealogical Society will hold the annual FGS conference at the Hynes Auditorium in Boston Wednesday, August 30, to Saturday, September 2, 2006

The 2006 FGS/NEHGS Conference will be the largest genealogical event ever held, with more than 370 educational opportunities in classes, workshops, and luncheon presentations. Enjoy rare opportunities to hear speakers from five countries (United States, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Canada). This is a not-to-be-missed opportunity!

How to learn more? Go to the MGC Annual Seminar. There will be detailed information available on the conference presentations which is not yet even available on the FGS website. We have scheduled a presentation that will help you choose lectures that fill your research needs. If you have never attended a national conference, experienced conference goers and speakers are going to fill you in on all the tricks that will make you feel "like a native": how the registration process works; how to schedule your time; how to find your way around the Exhibit Hall; how to meet new friends at luncheons, events and workshops; how to get there, where to park, and any other questions that you might have.

For complete information on the lectures, and information on other luncheons, workshops and special events, go to the conference website: <http://fgs.org/2006conf/FGS-2006.htm>

Why go to a national conference? Have you hit a brick wall and don't know where to go from here? You need a national conference. There are resources you don't know exist, and experts who are ready to help you. Do you feel lonely? Are you the only one in your family who cares about genealogy? You need a national conference. Share your research successes and failures with people who will appreciate you, understand your work and what it took to achieve. Come on join us. You will have fun!

FGS Registration Discount!

FGS has made a very special offer to TIARA (The Irish Ancestral Research Association). In return for handling paperwork for registrations, TIARA is able to offer a discount conference attendance fee. Anyone who registers for the conference through TIARA will receive the lowest possible conference fee. The regular registration fee through July 1, 2006 is \$155. Until July 1, 2006, you may register for the FGS conference with TIARA for \$135. This offer is not restricted to TIARA members. Anyone may take advantage of this special opportunity by registering through TIARA. We do request that you use this cost-savings to sign-up for a special event such as a luncheon or a workshop.

Any questions? Email Mary Ellen Grogan: megrogan@ix.netcom.com

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REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone with Area Code: _____ E-Mail address: _____

COSTS: Conference Registration: \$135. (Registrations are due by July 1, 2006.)

Luncheons (\$20 each): _____ (List: _____)

Workshops (\$25 each): _____ (List: _____)

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

Send completed form (with check payable to TIARA) to: The Irish Ancestral Research Association, Dept. C, 2120 Commonwealth Ave., Auburndale, Massachusetts 02466-1909

MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

DUES RENEWAL NOTICE FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2006

The Massachusetts Genealogical Council is dedicated to serving the interests of the state's genealogical community. Founded in 1980, the Council's stated aim is to develop and promote the study and exchange of ideas among persons and organizations interested in the pursuit of genealogy. Its programs and activities are designed to complement those of the many genealogical and hereditary societies throughout the state and to provide a statewide forum for genealogists.

The Massachusetts Genealogical Council (MGC) is composed of both individual and organizational members. Individual members receive the newsletter, participate in activities organized by the MGC, and may attend the Annual Meeting and Seminar at a discounted members-only rate. All organizational members receive the newsletter. Organizational members of groups based in Massachusetts are encouraged to send a delegate to the quarterly meetings of the Board of Directors. Delegates are voting members of the Board. Membership in the Council is open to any person or organization interested in its activities upon payment of dues. The membership year runs from 1 January through 31 December.

Note: Dues are NOT tax-deductible.

Your membership is important to us. We hope that you will decide to renew your membership and continue your participation in the work of the MGC.

NAME(S) _____

ORGANIZATION(if applicable) _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

TELEPHONE _____

Membership Status: RENEWAL or NEW (please circle correct status)

Please indicate type of membership:

_____ \$10.00 Individual _____ \$15.00 Organization _____ \$15.00 Family (same mailing address, 1 newsletter sent for both parties, both eligible for seminar discount).

Make checks payable to: Massachusetts Genealogical Council

Mail to: Massachusetts Genealogical Council, c/o Ben Woznick, Treasurer, 240 Brattle St., Cambridge, MA 02138-4628.

MGC has a number of committees that work on various projects. If you are interested in getting involved, please indicate your interest(s) and we will contact you!

_____ Monitoring legislative and access issues

_____ Preparing the newsletter

_____ Organizing and running the annual seminar

_____ Helping to maintain and update the website

MGC ANNUAL MEETING 2006

AGENDA

The 2006 Annual Meeting will be held on April 22, 2006 at the Conference Center at Marlborough, Massachusetts, from 9:00a.m. to 9:45a.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Reading and Approval of the Minutes of the 2005 Annual Meeting

III. President's/Vice-President's Report

IV. Treasurer's Report

V. Civil Records Report

VI. Other New Business

A. Announcements

This is an opportunity for members to share information that may relate to everyone.

B. Adjournment to Program:

The program features speakers and discussions about genealogy methodology, resources, records access legislation, society and vendor products benefits, and tips for attending the FGS summer conference in Boston.

THE MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

Annual Meeting and Seminar

Saturday, April 22, 2006

The Conference Center at Marlborough, Massachusetts

<http://www.massgencouncil.org>

General Information: Coffee, tea, soft drinks, and water will be available in the lobby all day at no charge. A coatroom is provided just beside the Auditorium. Vendors selling books and materials of genealogical interest will be open from about 8:00am to 3:30pm. Please visit our website (<http://www.massgencouncil.org>) for additional information on vendors. Questions: contact Sharon Sergeant, Program Chair, 781-209-8861.

8:00am to 10:30am **Registration Desk open.** Continental breakfast (coffee, tea, juice, pastries, muffins, bagels) will be served and is included in the registration fee.

9:00am to 9:45am **MGC Annual Meeting**

10:00am to 11:00am **Researching “Birds of a Feather”:** How Prosopography, Cluster Studies, and Record Linkage Techniques Can Help Put New Leaves On Your Family Tree. *Meldon J. Wolfgang* introduces genealogists and family historians to several useful techniques developed and used by researchers in other academic disciplines—medieval historians, epidemiologists and sociologists, to name a few—that may help dismantle those “brick walls”. Learn the techniques that other professionals use to reconstruct historic communities, former neighborhoods and extended families and discover how uncovering the network of relationships and patterns in your ancestors' lives can breathe new life—and real results—into your research. (<http://www.jonathansheppardbooks.com>)

[Prosopography is an independent science of social history embracing genealogy, onomastics and demography.]

11:15am to 12:15pm **Federal and State Regulations Affecting Access to Records.** Panel discussion concerning proposed federal and state laws affecting access to birth, marriage and death records. As the result of the passage of the *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004*, some state officials are under the impression that they are required to close vital records to researchers. This panel will discuss both the intent and scope of the Federal law, as well as the jurisdiction of the states. This is a very important issue and is a concern to all genealogists.

12:15pm to 1:30pm **Full Buffet Lunch** included. Vendors Open. Join invited guests (legislators, local and state records officials) and members of the Association of Professional Genealogists for discussion topic tables at lunch. [Note: please indicate on your registration form if you need a special meal.]

1:30pm to 3:00pm **Breakout Sessions.** Participants can choose between two lectures (listed below) and genealogy society and vendor presentations. Additional meeting rooms are available and MGC member societies and vendors have been invited to give presentations. See the MGC website for additional details as they develop on the breakout sessions. <http://www.massgencouncil.org>

Sleuthing in the Stacks: Using Uncommon Resources to Uncover Genealogical Clues. *Meldon J. Wolfgang* directs the researcher to reference tools and finding aids that can be used by genealogists who have come up against a “brick wall” in their research. References used by professionals in other research disciplines are explored, and suggestions given for conducting a secondary literature search and using resources not common to genealogists.

Beyond the Census: Local History in Federal Records. *Horace Waters*, National Archives, presents information for intermediate and advanced researchers on records available on Civil War taxes, bankruptcy, Customs, Corps of Engineers, Works Progress Administration and GSA Surplus Property Disposal. (<http://www.archives.gov/northeast>)

3:15pm to 4:15pm **FGS Boston 2006: Preparing for the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) Conference.** Prepare for the genealogical opportunity of a decade. The FGS Conference comes to Boston from August 30 to September 2, 2006! This is expected to be one of the largest genealogical conferences ever held. There will be nearly 400 lectures from experts, and attendees and presenters will come from all over the world. Experienced conference goers will give you advice on what to expect, tips on choosing the best lecture topics for you, rules of etiquette for a large conference, making friends, transportation information and more. At the end of the

presentation you will feel not only comfortable about the conference, but excited about it! This event must not be missed.

4:15pm to 4:30pm **Announcements, Door Prizes (ticket holder must be present to collect the item)**

LOCATION The Conference Center at Marlborough, 280 Locke Drive, Marlborough, MA 01752
Phone: 508.263.5500 (<http://www.ahl-marlborough.com/>)

DIRECTIONS

From Boston and Route 128: Take the Massachusetts Turnpike West (Rt. 90) to Route 495 North (Exit 11A). From Route 495 North, take Exit 24B onto Route 20 West. Follow directions below.

From Logan International Airport, Boston: Follow signs to the Ted Williams Tunnel to Route 90 West (Mass Turnpike). Take Mass. Pike West (Route 90) to Route 495 North (Exit 11A). From Route 495 North, take Exit 24B onto Route 20 West. Follow directions below.

From Worcester, Massachusetts: Take Route 290 East to Route 495 South. From Route 495 South, take Exit 24 B onto Route 20 West. Follow directions below.

From Springfield and Western Massachusetts: Take Mass. Pike (Route 90) to Route 495 North (Exit 11A). From Route 495 North, take Exit 24B onto Route 20 West. Follow directions below.

From Cape Cod: Take Route 495 North to Exit 24B onto Route 20 West. Follow directions below.

“DIRECTIONS BELOW”: Take your first right onto Felton Street (just before the gas station). Follow Felton Street, and go through the set of lights. At this point, Felton Street becomes Locke Drive. Continue to the end of Locke Drive. The Conference Center at Marlborough entrance will be straight ahead.

Parking: Turn left at the entrance and follow the road around the bend.

OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION: Rooms are available in the conference center hotel for \$94. For information on accommodations, see the conference center website at <http://www.ahl-marlborough.com/> Call 508-263-5700 to make a reservation. Indicate that you are attending the MGC conference.

DINNER ON FRIDAY: Please make a note on the registration form if you would like a join a group of genealogists for dinner on Friday night. We have done this before and it is very enjoyable.

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REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip_____

Home Phone with Area Code: _____ E-Mail address: _____

- Please check one: I'm a current member of MGC
 I have included an additional \$10 to renew my membership
 I have included an additional \$10 to join MGC
 I am not interested in being a member of MGC at this time

Please let us know if you need a special meal or if you would like to join the group for dinner on Friday.

COSTS: Registrations are due by April 18th in order to provide the Conference Center with meal requirements: Members \$60, Non-members \$70. **Registrations received by April 8th** are entitled to a \$10 discount: Members \$50, Non-members \$60. MGC membership is \$10 annually. You may join or renew your membership now with a single check.

Send completed form (with check payable to Massachusetts Genealogical Council) to:
MGC, c/o Benjamin Woznick, Treasurer, 240 Brattle St., Cambridge, MA 02138-4628

Massachusetts Genealogical Council
P.O. Box 5393
Cochituate, MA 01778
www.massgencouncil.org

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Have you remembered to renew your membership?

If the mailing label has "05, rather than "06, it's time to renew. Individual membership dues are \$10.

Our ability to serve as an advocate for genealogists in Massachusetts is based on the strength and size of our membership. Your membership is important to us. Thank you for your support.

BE SURE TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE MEMBER DISCOUNT TO OUR ANNUAL MEETING AND SEMINAR TO BE HELD ON **APRIL 22, 2006 AT THE MARLBOROUGH CONFERENCE CENTER.**

MGC MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- *Allen County Public Library, Indiana
- *Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society
- *Central Massachusetts Genealogical Society
- *Descendants of *Whaling Masters
- *Essex Society of Genealogists
- *Friends of the Silvio O. Conte Archives
- *Genealogical Roundtable
- *Greater Boston Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists
- *The Irish Ancestral Research Association
- *The Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston
- *The Massachusetts Society of Genealogists
- *The Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants
- *The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution
- *The Waltham Historical Society

MEMBERSHIP

(Listing current at time of printing and includes organizations whose dues are paid for the current year)

Membership in the Council is open to any person or organization interested in its activities upon payment of dues. The membership year runs from 1 January to 31 December. Dues are \$10 for individual; \$15 for family (same mailing address), and \$15 for organizations. Dues are NOT tax deductible.