

# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

Vol. 17, No. 1

ISSN 1041-2409

Fall 1998 - Winter 1999

## Everton's Workshop to be Feature at Annual Meeting

Plans have been finalized for MGC's annual meeting, to take place on Saturday, 10 April 1999 at the Wayland Town Building, Cochituate Road, Wayland (on Rte. 27, just south of traffic light at Rte. 20 in the center of Wayland). The featured attraction at this all-day meeting will be an "Everton's Discovering Your Heritage" Genealogical Workshop, conducted by the staff of Everton Publishers, Inc. of Logan, Utah. This meeting is being co-sponsored by the Middlesex Chapter, Massachusetts Society of Genealogists.

Everton's, publishers of *Everton's Genealogical Helper* magazine, has conducted successful one-day workshops all over the country for years, and this is definitely an opportunity not to be missed!

All members were sent a flyer and registration form in January. If you plan on attending and have not yet registered, **PLEASE DO SO IMMEDIATELY!!** We need an accurate head count so that we can order the proper number of lunches. The pre-registration fee of \$35.00 (per person) INCLUDES LUNCH and a FREE ONE YEAR SUBSCRIPTION to "*Everton's Genealogical Helper*" (a \$24.00 value). Note that couples living in the same household who both register will receive a TWO YEAR SUBSCRIPTION.

Participants will have access to Everton's databases on computer, including the COMPUTERIZED FAMILY FILE (all volumes), COMPUTERIZED "ROOTS" CELLAR (all vols.), PEDIGREE LIBRARY (all vols.) and Everton's GEDSRCH. In addition, Everton's will have items and supplies for sale. Any items ordered at the workshop will be shipped free of charge.

The workshop is designed to be of interest to the widest possible audience, from beginner to long-time genealogist. Everton's staff will present sessions on: NOTEKEEPING: Methods of collecting and organizing your data and

materials. U.S. VITAL RECORDS: Examine vital and church records from states, counties, cities and towns, as well as vital records found in newspapers. IMPORTANT U.S. GENEALOGICAL SOURCES: A look at federal census records, military, probate, tax and court records and many other types of valuable research sources. IMMIGRATION, EMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SOURCES: One of the most useful but least-understood groups of records. BRITISH RESEARCH: An in-depth discussion of records available for genealogical research in England.

The workshop will be preceded by the annual meeting and election of officers. A complete agenda will be found on the insert to this newsletter. Among the items of business are several proposed changes in the By-laws. These include making the fiscal year run from 1 January through 31 December, rather than the present 1 August – 31 July, and to make annual dues payable to the Treasurer by 1 January of each year. It is also proposed that officers newly elected at the annual meeting begin their term on 1 June rather than the present 1 August, to reduce the "lame duck" period and provide for better continuity. In addition, it is proposed that the Council's financial records be made available for audit on 1 March, the audit to be conducted by the following April or before the annual meeting. Finally, it is proposed to amend the by-laws to require that there be at least one Council meeting per year, to be held in the spring, time and place to be fixed by the Executive Board. (This has generally been the practice, though on several occasions this meeting has been held in conjunction with a spring meeting of the New England Regional Genealogical Conference, without a separate program of our own.)

Your Executive Board recommends that these changes and additions to the by-laws be enacted. Please read over the text on the insert, and bring the insert with you to the meeting.

### Vital Records Hearing Date Set

Mark your calendars! The date of the public hearing on Senate Bill 345 (S-345) has been set for Tuesday, 27 April 1999 at 1 pm in room B-2 of the State House. This bill, relating to birth, marriage and death records, is sponsored by Sen. Susan Fargo on behalf of MGC.

It is important that the genealogical community be well-represented and voice its support for this bill. A strong showing on our part will be helpful in insuring a favorable recommendation by the Joint Committee on Government Regulations.

Plan to attend this important meeting, and bring a friend with you.

### Suffolk County Records Moved

The completion of the new Suffolk County courthouse building at 24 New Chardon Street in Boston means that genealogists no longer will trudge up Beacon Hill and into the musty rabbit-warren that typified the old courthouse. Both the Registry of Probate and the Registry of Deeds have relocated to the new quarters.

For those wishing to consult the probates, the situation is much as before: the office has records and files 1895-present with indexes (earlier records are at the State Archives at Columbia Point; remember that NEHGS has book copies of the probate index only, 1636-1979). However, because of the recent well-publicised theft of files belonging to several deceased members of the Baseball Hall of Fame, security has been noticeably tightened. Researchers should be prepared to show identification when requesting files.

Unfortunately, the news regarding the Registry of Deeds, as of this writing, is not as positive. When the Registry moved in late January, it sent vols. 1-4235 (1630s-1930s) to the State Archives for storage. We have been advised that these volumes may NOT be consulted at this time. Visitors to the Registry have two options:

## MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

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President	David C. Dearborn
Vice President	James M. Holmes
Secretary	Ann L. Dzindolet
Treasurer	Maureen Markt Dearborn
Director of Civil Records	Shirley M. Barnes
Program Co-chair	Sheila E. FitzPatrick
Program Co-chair	Tillie Sweet
Newsletter Editor	VACANT

### Dues

Individual	\$7.50 (1 year); \$13.00 (2 years)
Organizations	\$10.00 (1 year); \$18.00 (2 years)
Sponsors	\$15.00 (1 year); \$27.00 (2 years)

use the microfilmed copies of the volumes (these are 16mm films housed in cartridges), or have a copy of the page(s) desired photocopied at the Archives by staff and faxed to the Registry.

Both options have their drawbacks. The films are so scratched that they are almost illegible, and the 8 ½ x 11" fax of a legal-size document not only is also virtually illegible but is expensive (75¢ as compared with 25¢ before the move, for a real photocopy) and there is no same-day service. Stay tuned for further developments.

On the plus side, the new courthouse is a very attractive and well-appointed building. It is at the corner of New Chardon and Congress Streets, just across the street from the Haymarket T Station, and a short walk from either the site of the old courthouse or from North Station.

### Middlesex Probate News

Researchers planning a visit to the Middlesex County Registry of Probate, 208 Cambridge St., Cambridge (one block from Lechmere T Station on Green Line) should be aware of the following: records 1636-1871 are at the State Archives (excellent microfilm copies are at Boston Public Library). Files with case #s 1-151446 [New Series] (1871-1925) are in storage; call (617) 494-4542 early in the day to see them that afternoon. NEHGS has copies of the index, 1636-1949.

### MHRAB Plans Meeting in Worcester

On Tuesday, 11 May 1999, the Massachusetts Historical Records Advisory Board (MHRAB), a group of historical organizations including the Mass. Genealogical Council, will hold a forum entitled "Building Alliances: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Community Forum on Massachusetts Historical Records." The forum will be held from 9:30 am to 4 pm at the Worcester CentrumCentre in Worcester and the public is invited to attend.

As many of you know, the first annual community forum, "Advocating Massachusetts History" was a huge success, with over 350 people attending.

The forum will examine the usefulness and relevance of historical records, the nature of the historical records community, its mission and the records it holds, the challenges faced by the community, and opportunities for advocacy, outreach, and constituency-building. In addition, registrants will participate in one of several group discussions aimed at exploring how to resolve current historical records issues through cooperation. The forum speakers include Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin and William Martin, author of *Back Bay, Cape Cod* and *Citizen Washington*. Come join us and show your support for Massachusetts history.

To register, make payment of a minimum \$10.00 (more accepted) to help defray costs, by check or money order payable to: MHS: Forum, and sent to: MHRAB Forum, Massachusetts Archives, 220 Morrissey Blvd., Boston, MA 02125. Further information about the forum, as well as a downloadable registration form, may be found at the web address given below.

Other local sponsoring groups include the Bay State Historical League, Boston Public Library, Bostonian Soc., Healy Library (UMass-Boston), JFK Library, Mass. State Archives, Mass. Board of Library Commissioners, Mass. Cultural Council, Mass. Historical Commission, Mass. Historical Society, Mass. Library Assn., Mass. State Library, Mass. Studies Project, New England Archivists, New England Heritage

Center, NEHGS, New England History Teachers Assn., New England Museum Assn., The New England Quarterly, and Simmons College GSLIS.

To learn more about the forum or other collaborative activities going on in New England and Massachusetts, visit the MHRAB web-site at <http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/sec/arc/arcaac/aacintro.htm> or call the project archivist, Angela Reddin at (617) 727-2816. See you there!

### NERGC Announces 2000 Conference

The New England Regional Genealogical Conference (NERGC) has announced that its Year 2000 conference, "New England: A Bridge to America," will be jointly sponsored by the National Genealogical Society (NGS). This four-day conference will be held at the Providence Convention Center in Providence, RI from 31 May to 3 June 2000. The conference's focus will be on the nature and extent of immigration into New England and the diverse culture that has resulted. Plans for this conference are well underway, and more particular details, as well as registration materials, will be mailed to all MGC members when it becomes available.

If the previous NERGC conferences are any indicator, this one should be the most successful yet. For nearly twenty years NGS has sponsored annual conferences in the states. This will be the first such conference to be held here in New England.

### Looking for Worcester County Probates?

Original dockets of Worcester County probate records, 1731-1881 (1<sup>st</sup> Series) are housed at the Newburyport District Court, 188 State St. (at the Rte. 1 rotary), Newburyport, MA 01950. The office is open on Wednesdays only, 8 am - 3 pm by appointment; call (978) 463-9517.

The NEHGS library in Boston has the probate index only for the years 1731 through 1920. Later indexes and records are at the Worcester County courthouse in Worcester.

### New Resources at NEHGS

The New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) library in Boston has begun an ambitious project to acquire microfilms and fiche of all genealogical records relating to New England and eastern Canada. Most of the materials acquired so far consists of copies of films produced originally by the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and purchased from them. The ultimate goal of the project is to make the NEHGS a "mini Salt Lake" for this part of the country, centralizing nearly all available records under one roof and providing "one-stop shopping."

A list of all the items recently acquired would be too long to present here, but the following are some of the larger items acquired within the last year:

**Massachusetts:** Hampshire Co. Probate, 1660-1916; index 1660-1971 (note: vols. 1-4, covering 1660-1780 is being used in a

publications project and is temporarily unavailable; vols. 5-20 [1729-1809] will follow.

**Connecticut:** Probate Index 1641-1948 (state-wide); Hale Collection (gravestone inscriptions and newspaper obituaries).

**Rhode Island:** town, probate and land records for the following communities (thus far): Barrington, Bristol, Burrillville, Central Falls, Cumberland, Foster, Gloucester, Hopkinton, Little Compton, Pawtucket and Warwick.

**Vermont:** Vital Records (statewide) 1909-54, 1980-87.

**Maine:** Aroostook Co. Deeds (Northern Dist.) 1846-67; Franklin Co. Probate 1838-65; Kennebec Co. Probate 1799-1920; Knox Co. Probate 1860-1920; Lincoln Co. Deeds 1760-1903; Oxford Co. Deeds (Eastern Dist.) 1806-62; Piscataquis Co. Probate 1838-76; Somerset Co. Probate 1810-61; town and vital records for dozens of towns too numerous to list; call the reference desk, (617) 536-5740 x239 for particulars.

Massachusetts Genealogical Council  
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

# Massachusetts Genealogical Council Annual Meeting, Seminar and Luncheon

Saturday, 10 April 1999  
Wayland Town Building, Wayland, MA

## AGENDA

1. Minutes of annual meeting, 21 March 1998
2. Treasurer's Report
3. President's Report
4. Election of Officers. The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of officers for 1999-2001:

President	James Holmes
Vice President	Connie Dearborn
Secretary	Mary Ellen Grogan
Treasurer	Suzanne Richardson
Archivist	David C. Dearborn
Civil Records	Shirley Barnes
Newsletter Editor	Wheaton Wilbar
Program	Tillie Sweet
Publicity	Marilyn Manzella
Ways and Means	Sheila FitzPatrick

5. Proposed By-law changes. The following amendments to the By-laws of the Massachusetts Genealogical Council are presented for consideration:

### Article III Section B 2

Dues to be paid annually to the Treasurer on or before January 1 of the fiscal year.  
The fiscal year being January 1 through December 31.

### Article IV Section C 5

Officers to take office June 1 following their election at the annual meeting.

### Article V Section A 4 i (Duties of the Treasurer)

The Treasurer shall make financial records available for audit by March 1 of each year.

### Article V Section B

Delete from last line the words Section 3 i and of 1995.

### Article VIII (Audit)

1. The audit is to be conducted by April or before the annual meeting.

### Article IX B 1

There shall be at least one Council meeting per year, to be held in the spring, time and place to be fixed by the Executive Board.