

# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

Vol. 16, No. 1 & 2

Fall 1997 - Winter 1998

## Last Chance to Register for Annual Meeting

Join genealogists from around the region who will gather on Saturday, 21 March 1998 at the South Foxborough Community Club for the MGC's annual meeting. Featured speakers include Marie E. Daly, "Traveling Down Trapelo Road: Family and Land History from Seventeenth-Century Watertown to Twentieth-Century Waltham: A Case Study;" Ann S. Lainhart, "Rose Cottage Chronicles: Civil War Letters" (Ann will have copies of her newly-published book by the same title available for purchase); and Janis Duffy Hourigan, "Boston Passenger Lists: What the Index Cards Don't Tell You."

Marie has been active in Irish genealogy and TIARA for many years and is on the NEHGS staff. Ann is well known for her town indexes to the 1855 and 1865 Mass. state censuses and has published in the NEHGS *Register*. Janis is on the staff at the Mass. State Archives.

Doors will open at 9:30 and the program will begin at 11:00 following the MGC annual business meeting. Vendors will be on hand with the latest books, charts and software. Door prizes, donated by the vendors, will be raffled after the last lecture.

The registration fee of \$12 (if postmarked by 12 March) or \$15 at the door includes lunch catered by the women of the Union Church of South Foxborough (there are no restaurants within a short drive of the meeting place).

The South Foxborough Community Club is located at the intersection of South Street and N. Grove Street in Foxborough, a short distance from Route 1 and near the intersection of routes I-95 and I-495. Please note that the Club is NOT handicap accessible.

We're looking forward to a great meeting and we hope to see you all there!

## Plans Set for Fifth New England Regional Genealogical Conference

Once again, genealogists from all over New England and beyond will gather on 23-25 October 1998 at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland, Maine for the **Fifth New England Regional Genealogical Conference**. The conference, planned on the theme "Connecting to Your Cousins," promises to be the most exciting NERGC event yet. If you can't make the NGS or FGS 1998 national conferences in Denver or Cincinnati, this is the conference for you. If you enjoyed the previous conferences in Sturbridge, Manchester NH, Burlington VT and Cromwell CT, you'll have a ball in Portland.

Among the featured speakers will be Henry Z "Hank" Jones, author of *Psychic Roots* and *Palatine Families of New York*; Roger D. Joslyn, Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, Stephen White, noted architectural historian Abbott Lowell Cummings, and many others.

Plan to arrive early to attend the pre-conference activities beginning on 22 October as well as to enjoy the fall foliage and the beautiful Maine seacoast. Room rates at the **Holiday Inn by the Bay** are \$99 *per room* per night plus tax. Call (207) 775-2311 for reservations. Be sure to mention the N.E. Regional Genealogical Conference. These rates are available from 20 through 26 October 1998. Brochures will be mailed to all MGC members in the spring. See you in Portland!

### Check Your Mailing Label

The Mass. Genealogical Council's fiscal year runs from 1 August through 31 July. If your mailing label reads **97**, your membership has expired. Because no newsletters have been issued in nearly a year (see following item) your name won't be removed from our mailing list until August.

### Newsletter Editor Wanted!

We're desperate! Because of other commitments our newsletter editor, Vicky Ryan resigned last summer (Vicki has a good excuse--she is co-chair of the Fifth NERGC conference).

This has left us without an editor -- and your mailboxes empty.

For those of you who have dutifully sent in your renewals but have wondered if your Council had a pulse, be assured that we're alive and well, but in need of some help.

Ideally, you should be getting a newsletter four times a year, keeping you informed regarding the Council's activities, pending legislation affecting vital and public records, news of upcoming genealogical meetings, and new or unusual genealogical resources.

For the time being, the newsletter is being guest-edited by the president on an ad-hoc basis. While I will try to keep the newsletter going as long as I can, filling the roles of both president and editor call for more shoes than I have feet to fill.

If you enjoy writing, can gather news independently, have a little experience with word-processing and page layout, and (most importantly) would like to volunteer as editor, please write to MGC, P.O. Box 5393, Cochituate, MA 01778-5393, or call (evenings) at (781) 784-5664.

### MGC Plans Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting of the Mass. Genealogical Council will be held in the Community Room (basement level) of the Sharon Public Library, North Main St. (Rte. 27), Sharon, Mass. on Sunday, 31 May 1998 at 1 pm. All member organizations are entitled to send a delegate to board meetings. Here is a chance for your society to become directly involved in MGC.

Member societies -- PLEASE LET US KNOW THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF YOUR DELEGATE SO THAT WE CAN NOTIFY HIM/HER OF UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS AND SEND HIM/HER ADVANCE COPIES OF AGENDAS AND MINUTES. WE NEED YOUR INPUT!!

### MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

PO Box 5393 Cochituate, MA 01778-5393

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)

### Meeting Dates Announced

The National Genealogical Society (NGS) will hold its Annual Conference in the States in Denver, CO 6-9 May 1998; for further details call (800) 473-0600.

The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) will hold its annual conference, "Immigrant Dreams: The Settlement of America" in Cincinnati, OH 19-22 August 1998; for further information contact the FGS Business Office, P.O. Box 830220, Richardson, TX 75083-0220.

"Gaelic Roots IV" genealogical conference will be held at Boston College 21-27 June 1998; contact Seamus Connolly at (617) 552-0490.

### New Chapter Formed

The Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society has formed a New England Chapter. For more information contact Sonia Bontemps at (508) 465-5731.

### Genealogical Society Forms

A new society, tentatively called the Boston to Providence Genealogical Society, has been formed. It is open to anyone who lives in, or is interested in the families of Norfolk and Bristol Counties.

Their next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 22 April 1998 at the Boyden Library, 10 Bird St., Foxborough at 7:30 pm. Featured speaker will be MGC president David C. Dearborn who will speak on early families of the Norfolk and Bristol County area.

For further information, call Kenneth V. Graves at (508) 384-8084.

### Mark Your Calendar!

On Monday, 11 May 1998, the Massachusetts Historical Records Advisory Board (MHRAB), a group of historical organizations including the Mass. Genealogical Council, will hold a forum entitled "Advocating Massachusetts History: The First Annual Community Forum on Historical Records." The forum will be held from 9 am to 12:35 pm at the Stephen E. Smith Center at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston, and is open free of charge to the public.

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. The forum will be the springboard for a program of collaborative outreach activities. The forum speakers include Jill Lepore, Boston University history professor and author of the newly-published *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (featured in the *Boston Globe*, Thurs., 5 March 1998), and William Fowler Jr., director of the Mass. Historical Society, among others. Come join us and show your support for Massachusetts history.

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/arcaa/c/aacintro.htm> or call the project archivist, Angela Reddin at (617) 727-2816. See you there!

### Military Records to be Moved

Massachusetts military records presently stored at the State Adjutant General's Office in the Saltonstall Building in Boston (100 Cambridge Street, Government Center) are scheduled to be relocated to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Military Division History Research and Museum, located at 44 Salisbury Rd., Worcester 01609, according to a recent announcement by the State Adjutant General.

The records in question consist chiefly of state militia records dating from near the end of the Revolution to the Vietnam War. These records previously had not been open for public inspection, but interested researchers could contact the office in the Saltonstall Building to request that records be checked. These records will complement those already in Worcester, and their consolidation will make them more available for use.

The Military Museum in Worcester is open to researchers by appointment Tuesday through Friday by calling the archivist, Stephen T. Seames at (508) 797-0334 or e-mail at [MRARCHIVES@AOL.COM](mailto:MRARCHIVES@AOL.COM).

### Vital Records Legislation Update

House Bill 169 (H-169), a bill relating to birth, marriage and death records, was reported out favorably by the Committee on Government Regulations last October and sent to House Ways and Means where it remains at present. This committee is now chaired by Rep. Paul Haley, Room 243, State House, Boston, MA 02133.

A public hearing was held by the Joint Committee on Government Regulations on 16 April 1997 at the State House, was well-attended

by genealogists and all testimony was favorable, except that from new State Archivist John Warner (for Secretary of the Commonwealth William Galvin), asking that the transfer of marriage and death records up to 1950 be deleted as there was concern that too many records would come to the State Archives at one time. This concern was answered by Shirley Barnes of MGC who stated that the bill allows for orderly transfer by arrangement between the State Archives and the Registrar of Vital Records.

This bill will keep access open to birth, death and marriage records, and allow abstractions of records by a researcher; transfer death and marriage records through 1950 to the State Archives (making them truly public); provide for "Special Certified Copy" of records for non-legal purposes at a reduced price; the use of special paper; and other protections of records.

The special advisory committee to be established by this bill, overseeing the proposal of regulations, etc. by the Dept. of Public Health and the Registrar of Vital Records, is to have two genealogist representatives on it.

Massachusetts Genealogical Council  
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

The House Committee on Ways and Means needs to hear from you NOW so that H-169 will not languish and die. A letter, postcard or phone call will help. Send to Chairman Paul Haley at above address. Ask that H-169 be reported out favorably for House action.

Also, your STATE representative needs to hear from you soon, asking that he/she **support H-169** (by writing Ways and Means) and vote for passage on the house floor. If possible, meet with your Representative face to face. Address them: (name), State House, Boston, MA 02133.

The objections which we had to the originally-filed legislation in 1993 have been taken care of by this proposed bill, except that the indices to restricted records are to be closed. This should not be allowed as indices are only a path to records, according to the state supervisor of public records.

This legislation must at least pass the House this year. It will still have to pass through the process in the Senate and be signed by the Governor before it becomes law. Any questions? Call Shirley M. Barnes, Mass. Geneal. Council Director of Civil Records at (508) 358-7444.