

Middlesex

Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

October 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is my hope that you all have enjoyed the summer and the opportunities that you had to do research on your ancestors. I have had this privilege for the last 50 years and can say that the excitement comes when you have found a relative in your family tree. I know for sure that the real gold out there is found most of the time from direct, on-site research, where you get to see and touch the real record, the real document, the real stone, see the house that your ancestors lived in, the letters they wrote, the schools they went to, etc.

Yes there is more and more being put on-line, but it is a known fact that there is more genealogical information that is still not available on-line. It will take some ingenuity on each of our parts to seek out these areas. We are not left without help, there are genealogical experts who have solved some of these problems.

That brings me to what sources are available to you. One source of help is MGS members who will make themselves available to meet you at the Darien Library to talk with you and give you some direction. Another is to watch for seminars or programs that MGS provides during the year, or programs presented by other societies. For example, on 7 November 2010 The Connecticut Ancestry Society will be presenting such a program at Danbury Museum on Main Street in Danbury, Conn., from 2:00 to 4:00 PM entitled "Your Local Repositories" (see page 4).

On 20 November, we at MGS will have Toni McKeen present a program: "Research That Makes Your Eyes Cross—Difficult Problems and How to Solve Them" from 2:00 to 4:00 PM at Darien Library.

Ancestry.com has added the 1940 and 1950 Census substitutes that were compiled from city directories, and also US public record indexes from 1950 to 1990.

There are many ways to get information that is not on the Internet, and our consultants are here to help you find these ways. So keep your spirit of genealogy up and lets work together.

Lloyd Sturges Jr.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES ANNOUNCES PILOT PROGRAM IN RESEARCH ROOM AT ARCHIVES II IN MARYLAND

In response to user requests, for the month of November, 2010, the National Archives at College Park, MD (Archives II) will undertake a pilot program to provide archival records retrieval service for textual records on Saturdays. This pull service is only for records that have designated retrieval information, do not require screening for personal privacy and other sensitive information, and are housed in open, unclassified stack space. This pilot program is for the Textual Research Room at Archives II only.

Records will be retrieved for use in the Textual Research Room at the following "pull" times: 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, 1:30 PM, and 2:30 PM. More information is available online:

- Details about this pilot program and specific Saturday records retrieval procedures at Archives II in November: http:// www.archives.gov/dc-metro/college-park/ saturday-pulls.pdf
- Information on research at Archives II in College

(Continued on page 2)

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2010-2011 OFFICERS

Lloyd Sturges Jr. Robert E. Kenyon III Dale Pollart Joan Rinaldi President Vice President Treasurer Secretary

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Jim Baker Virginia Banerjee Peter Biggins Leonard Christie Philip Morehouse

Donna Moughty Charles Scribner Dorothy Shillinglaw Past President Librarian 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, CONFERENCE ROOM (on the mezzanine, above the 2nd floor, elevator button "M"), DARIEN LIBRARY, 1441 POST ROAD. COME, AND BRING A FRIEND.

20 NOVEMBER 2010. RESEARCH THAT MAKES YOUR EYES CROSS—DIFFICULT PROBLEMS AND HOW TO SOLVE THEM" will be presented by TONI McKEEN. Toni has been passionate about genealogy for over 20 years, during which she has researched her huge Italian family, as well as her husband's Irish family. Her research has led her to the ancestral homes of her grandparents in Sicily, Calabria, and the Amalfi Coast of Italy, where she made several trips in search of documents. For more than five years Toni has taught several levels of genealogy at Founders Hall in Ridgefield, Conn. She has also given numerous lectures on genealogy in New York and Connecticut.

29 JANUARY 2011: to be announced.

19 MARCH 2011: to be announced.

15 MAY 2011: to be announced.



PILOT PROGRAM IN RESEARCH

(Continued from page 1)

Park, MD, specifically: http://www.archives.gov/dc-metro/college-park/researcher-info.html

Information on general research at National Archives facilities nationwide http://www.archives.gov/research/start/plan-visit.html

The National Archives at College Park, MD, houses textual, microfilm, and special media records. Textual materials relate to military agencies from roughly the WWI and/or WWII periods and after, and a wide range of civilian agencies, including agriculture, commerce, education, the environment, foreign affairs, health and human services, housing, interior, law enforcement, labor, science and technology, transportation, and finance.

For more information, contact the National Archives Public Affairs staff at 202-357-5300.

HOW TO TEST YOUR DNA AND WHY 2 OCTOBER 2010

At the 2 October meeting of the Middlesex Genealogical Society at the Darien Library, 20 people gathered to discuss a relatively new topic for genealogists—deoxyribonucleic acid, or DNA. Some had had their DNA tested; some were thinking about it; and others were just wondering about it. The focus was on how to test your DNA and why. Leading the discussion was Peter Biggins, a board member of the society. Peter had his Ychromosome DNA tested two years ago and learned he was descended from the Three Collas, brothers who lived in 4th century Ireland. He became co-administrator of the Clan Colla DNA project. At the meeting, he discussed basic concepts of Y-chromosome DNA testing, using his own personal experience with DNA testing as an illustration.

In the last few years, genetics and ethnic history have been combined with genealogy to offer a new source for understanding family history.

Subjects included: what is Y-chromosome DNA, joining a project, getting tested, test results, researching the results, and weighing the pluses and minuses of getting your DNA tested.

To begin with he pointed out that there are basic types of DNA testing for genealogy: (1) Y-chromosome DNA testing, which is only for males and identifies DNA inherited from male ancestors, and (2) mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) testing, which is for both males and females and identifies DNA inherited from female ancestors. The Y-chromosome testing is the most popular because it is inherited like surnames. That is the type of testing Peter had done on himself, and that is what he talked about.

Y-chromosome DNA testing for genealogy does not include portions of DNA that may identify diseases or risks.

Because only males have a Y-chromosome, which is passed down from father to son like a surname, there are limitations to its usefulness. Obviously, only males can be tested. And only one line of ancestors can be studied. Peter pointed out, however, that many women are active in Y-chromosome testing. To study a male line, they simply find a male to test from that line. Likewise, a male can study another male line by searching out another male to test from that line.

Peter also talked about how he is using Ychromosome DNA testing to learn about people other than himself—by getting relatives to test and by accessing publicly-available DNA data. For example, Peter found a descendant of the Biggins family that had the farm across the road from his great-great-grandfather, asked him to test, and found out they were distantly related. And, he is looking for a 2nd cousin of his wife's, a Carroll, in order to test the DNA of his wife's long-deceased father and find out whether they might be Carrolls from Clan Colla or Ely Carrolls like the Carrolls of Carrollton. Also, knowing his wife's great-greatgrandfather is a Flannery from County Mayo, he was able to look at the the DNA of the Flannerys tested from County Mayo and found that they were all descended from Niall of the Nine Hostages.

Some simple DNA testing terms were presented. The DNA that results from a test identifies a person's values for a standard set of markers, typically 12, 25, 37, or 67 markers. For example, the 50th marker in the 67-marker set is named 413b. Peter's 413b marker has a value of 24. The 413b marker name does not mean much, but the value of 24 does. So far, all the people who have been tested with the name Biggins, or variants thereof, have the same unusual value of 24 for marker 413b.

A haplogroup is a group of people with similar sets of 67-marker DNA. Peter's haplogroup is R1b1b2a1b5. This is quite a mouthful, so it is often referred to as L21. Haplo- comes from the Greek word for single. Many people with Celtic ethnicity fall in this haplogroup. There were several people at the meeting who had had their DNA tested. All were in that same haplogroup.

Within a haplogroup, clusters of people with similar sets of DNA can sometimes be found with surnames that historically are supposed to be descended from the same sept or clan. Peter found himself matching up not only with others named Biggins, or variants thereof, but also with people named McGuire, McDonald, Carroll, McKenna, McMahon, Boylan, and Duffy. It did not take long for these people to realize that these are names that ancient genealogies say are descended from Clan Colla, three brothers who lived in 4th century Ireland.

Before you do any Y-chromosome DNA testing, you need to decide who is to be tested. This could

be yourself if you are a male or any male in an ancestry line that you want to test who agrees to be tested. Peter picked himself. Next, you need to pick a testing organization. There are a number of organizations that do DNA testing: Family Tree DNA, DNA Heritage, Oxford Ancestors, EthnoAncestry, 23andMe, Ancestry.com. Family Tree DNA is the best known and is the one Peter used. Started in April 2000, it has by far the largest database and is good at sharing information. Next, you need to decide how many markers to test: 12, 25, 37, or 67 markers. More markers give more accurate results, but cost more. Peter picked 67. Six steps were outlined for the actual DNA testing.

Step 1. Select a Surname Project. Research your surname for variants. Go to FTDNA at: familytreedna.com and search for a surname project. There are thousands of surname projects at FTDNA. If there is no project for your surname, you can start a new project or join a geographic project. After you get results, other projects can be joined at no extra cost.

Step 2. Enroll and Pay Online. Go to your surname or geographic project at FTDNA. Order selected test: 12, 25, 37, or 67 markers. Provide contact information, shipping address, phone and email, payment information (credit card or request an invoice).

Step 3. Swab Your Cheek. Get your swab kit in the mail, do the test, and return the swabs in the envelope provided. The swab kit consists of: 3 scrapers with cotton "toothed" tips and 3 tubes for 3 tips. Swab the inside of your cheek 3 times, 60 seconds each, 4 hours apart.

Step 4. Get Results Online. Use your kit number and password to get to your own Webpage, "My FTDNA Home," at familytreedna.com. You get results on your page in about 6 weeks. Included are your haplotree, a history of your Y-chromosome; recent ancestral origins by country; your marker values; and a list of matches with other people and their email addresses.

Step 5. Add Genealogical Data. To the record of your DNA, you can provide a family tree and information about your most distant known ancestor. This information is helpful to your project administrator.

Step 6. Do Some Research. There are a number of things you can do to add value to the DNA testing process. E-mail people you match up with

to see if you can come up with a rationale for the match. Compare your results with others in your surname or geographical project. Join additional DNA projects: name variants, geographic projects, haplogroup projects. Do "deep clade" testing to refine your haplogroup. Upload your results to Ysearch.com, where you can search for more matches with people and search for matches with clans. Study the historical origin of your ancestors. Visit the area your ancestors came from. Recruit new project members. Incorporate the results in your family history.

The pluses of DNA testing are finding the names and origin of people who match up with you, discovering who doesn't match, learning variants of your surname, possibly learning that you are descended from an ancient clan, understanding the migration of your ancestors over tens of thousands of years, and generally feeling more connected with humanity. The major minus is the cost—about \$250 for 67 markers. Another minus—you may be disappointed and find that you are not descended from the ancient clan from which you thought were descended.

CONNECTICUT ANCESTRY SOCIETY

On 16 October Connecticut Ancestry announced plans to establish three homes within Fairfield County in conjunction with an eastern, western and northern partner. Each of these homes will host two free genealogical events each year, for a total of six regularly scheduled events, sponsored by Connecticut Ancestry Society, servicing the communities of southwestern Connecticut.

The society has always sponsored lectures, roundtables and other educational events year-round at numerous libraries and historical societies throughout Fairfield County, constantly moving throughout the region. By establishing these three homes, the society hopes to better serve the community with a more regular schedule and set of locations. The society does plan to continue to hold up to three additional events at other non-home facilities each year, including the society's annual meeting and full day genealogical program in May. Nora Galvin expressed many thanks to Richard Roof and Nicole Cignoli, program director of the Trumbull Library, for becoming the first of the society's new homes. A roundtable event is already

being planned for the spring of 2011 and another lecture in the fall.

Connecticut Ancestry Society, Inc. (http:// www.connecticutancestry.org) was founded in 1954 by a small group of genealogists in southwestern Connecticut. The Society's mission is to promote genealogical scholarship, preserve source material, and exchange family histories. Connecticut Ancestry Society members are responsible, ethical genealogists and family historians who share a special interest in southwestern Connecticut and its neighborhood, either by living there, or by having ancestry there, or both; who pursue genealogical scholarship through networking, educational programs, and publication of reference materials and research results; and who extend full cooperation to other genealogical organizations, record repositories, and public record custodians. The Society's growing membership now extends across the continent with only about half living in Connecticut.

The society's next program, entitled "Your Local Repositaries," will take place on Sunday, 7 November, 2 PM to 4 PM at the Danbury Museum, 43 Main Street, Danbury, Conn. The program will be followed by a genealogy roundtable of participants sharing their successes, current projects and brick walls. Each participant will be given five minutes to tell his or her story, followed by feedback and suggestions from other participants (including experienced members of the society). There will also be an opportunity to use the museum's resources for research.

CENSUS RECORDS— FOR DEMOGRAPHICS OR GENEALOGY?

by Mary Harrell-Sesniak

"Genealogy is not just a pastime, it's a passion."

Don't be fooled by thinking U.S. federal census records were created for family historians; their original purpose was for demographics. Genealogists use them now, but knowing their original purpose and knowing the questions asked and notations used can keep you from being misled.

For instance, what does "UN" or "UA" indicate regarding military service? Unknown or Unavailable? No, they indicate service with the Union Navy or Army, and that can make a world of

difference.

Questions changed from decade to decade. Some items were dropped and others manipulated to unearth new details. Here is some guidance to get you started.

Marital Status or Civil Condition

Early on, newlyweds were the only ones whose length of marriage was recorded, and the only year the month of marriage was asked was 1870. By 1880, divorces, widowhood, and single status were included.

From 1900–1910, the number of years a couple had been married was enumerated, but in 1920 this was eliminated. Strangely, in 1930, the enumerator determined the age when a person had first married.

That's quite a different issue, and it didn't matter if one was on a second or third marriage—the enumerator just recorded the age at first marriage. So what was the point? From a demographic standpoint, as more women worked or attended college, they were less likely to marry high school sweethearts! Luckily some records show M1 or M2, indicating first or second marriage.

Information enumerated, by census year and column number:

- 1850 and 1860. Columns 10 and 11, respectively: Whether married within the year.
- 1870. Column14: If married within the year, the month (Jan., etc.).
- 1880. Column 9: Civil Condition Single. Column 10: Civil Condition Married. Column 11: Civil Condition Widowed, Divorced. Column 12: Whether married during the census year.
- 1890. Column 7: Whether single, married, widowed, or divorced. Column 8: Whether married during the census year (June 1, 1889, to May 31, 1890).
- 1900. Column 9: Whether single, married, widowed, or divorced. Column 10: Number of years of present marriage.
- 1910. Column 8: Whether single, married, widowed, or divorced. Column 9: Number of years of present marriage.
- 1920. Column 12: Whether single, married, widowed, or divorced.
- 1930. Column 14: Marital condition. Column 15: Age at first marriage.

Military

Some abbreviations you will see relating to military information include "UN" for Union Navy; "UA" for Union Army; "CA" for Confederate Army; "CN" for Confederate Navy; "CW" for Civil War; "SP" for Spanish American War; and "WW" for World War I.

In 1910, column 30 recorded whether someone was a survivor of the Union or Confederate Army or Navy. In 1920, the question wasn't posed, but in 1930, column 30 noted veterans of the U.S. military or naval forces mobilized for any war or expedition (with a Y or N), and column 31 indicated the war/expedition. Interestingly, a number of Civil War veterans survived, along with veterans of the Spanish-American War and the Great War.

In addition, in 1890 a special census was enumerated to assist with pension requests granted to veterans or widows. Only those with disabilities were eligible, and it didn't include confederates. Much of this special census schedule is missing—only records from Kentucky and Wyoming remain. However, if you are lucky enough to have an ancestor recorded, there are a number of important items included.

Information enumerated, by column number:

- Columns 1 and 2: The house and family number.
- Column 3: Name of surviving soldiers, marines, and widows.
- Columns 4 and 5: Rank and Company.
- Column 6: Name of regiment or vessel.
- Columns 7 and 8: Date of enlistment and discharge.
- Column 9: Length of service.
- Column 10: Post office address.
- Column 11: Disability incurred.

Citizenship and Naturalization

Over the decades, questions were expanded from place of birth to information about parents and native languages.

Information enumerated, by census year and column number:

- 1850. Column 9: Place of birth, naming the state, territory, or country.
- 1860. Column 10: Place of birth, naming the state, territory, or country.
- 1870. Column 10: Place of birth, naming the state, territory, or country. Columns 11 and 12: Parentage of father and mother of the foreign

born. Column 19: Constitutional Relations—Male citizens of U.S. of 21 years of age and upwards. Column 20: Male citizens of U.S. of 21 years of age and upwards where right to vote is denied on other grounds than rebellion or other crimes.

- 1880. No related information enumerated.
- 1890. Column 33: Number of years in the U.S. Column 14: Whether naturalized. Column 15: Whether naturalization papers have been taken out.
- 1900. Column 13: Place of birth of this person. Column 14: Father. Column 15: Mother. Column 16: Year of immigration to the U.S. Column 17: Number of years in the U.S. Column 18: Naturalization.
- 1910. Same as 1900, but recorded on columns 12 through 14. Column 15: Year of immigration to the U.S. Column 16: Whether naturalized or alien.
- 1920. Column 13: Year of immigration to the United States. Column 14: Naturalized or alien. Column 15: If naturalized, year of naturalization. Columns 19 and 20: Place of birth/mother tongue of person. Columns 21 through 24: Father and mother.
- 1930. Columns 18 through 20: Place of birth of person, father, and mother. Column 21: Language spoken in home before coming to the United States. Column 22: Year of immigration to the U.S. Column 23: Naturalized or alien. Column 24: Whether able to speak English.

In addition, census records often report addresses, literacy, occupations, and property values. Each decade was different, so do your research carefully.

I recommend RootsWeb's Guide to Tracing Family Trees Number 9, which details the index system, official dates of enumeration, and pitfalls in interpreting and locating data.

Previously published in *RootsWeb Review*, 8 October 2008, Vol. 11, No. 2.

NEEDED: NEW EDITOR FOR MGS NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING SEMINARS

Connecticut Ancestry: See Page 4.

National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region:

New York City, 201 Varick St., 12th fl. (entrance on Houston St, between Varick and Hudson). Programs run from 12:30 to 1:30 PM on Tuesdays and are free, but space is limited. Register by calling toll-free: 1-866-840-1752, fax: 212-401-1638; e-mail: newyork.archives@nara.gov.

- 9 Nov. 2010: "Finding Family—Using Military Records."
- 14 Dec.—"NARA's Microfilm Holdings Online."

Waltham, Mass., 380 Trapelo Rd. Lectures are on Tuesdays at 2 PM, except for "Genealogy for Kids" lectures, which are on Wednesdays at 10:30 AM. All are free, but space is limited. Register by calling 866-406-2379 or e-mailing waltham.archives@nara.gov. *Please note:* The schedule may be affected by upcoming renovations, so be sure to call ahead.

- 7 Dec.: "A Date Which Will Live in Infamy— NARA's World War II Resources."
- 4 Jan. 2011: "Census, Passenger Lists, and Naturalization Records."
- 1 Feb., "Researching African-American and Under-Documented Populations."
- Wed. 23 Feb., 10 AM: "Genealogy for Kids" (Gr. 3-8 and chaperones).
- 1 Mar.: "Genealogy Research—What's Online; What's Not Online."
- 5 Apr.: "Introduction to Genealogy."
- Wed. 20 Apr., 10 AM: "Genealogy for Kids" (Gr. 3-8 and chaperones).
- 3 May: "Genealogy Online: Using the Online Resources of the National Archives."
- 7 June: "Finding Your Ancestors in Maritime Records."
- 12 July: "Introduction to Genealogy."
- 2 Aug.: "Census, Passenger Lists and Naturalization Records."

Pittsfield, MA 01201-8230, 10 Conte Drive. Lectures are free and last about an hour, but space is limited. Register by calling 413-236-3600, or email pittsfield.archives@nara.gov

- Mon., 8 Nov., 2 PM: "Using Federal Census Records."
- Tues., 9 Nov., "Researching French Canadian

- Ancestors, Part I at 10 AM, and Part II at 1:30 PM.
- Mon., 15 Nov., 2 PM: "Using Military Records at the National Archives."
- Mon., 22 Nov., 2 PM: "Finding Your Immigrant Ancestors at the National Archives."
- Tues., 7 Dec., 2 PM: "Beginning Your Genealogy Research at the National Archives."
- Tues., 14 Dec., 2 PM: "Using Federal Census Records."
- Tues., 28 Dec., 2 PM: "Finding Your Immigrant Ancestors at the National Archives."

New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, 36 W. 44th Street, 7th fl., New York, NY 10036-8105; telephone 212-755-8532; FAX 212-754-4218. NYG&B will present "Brights Lights—Urban Research" on Tues., 30 Nov., at 5:30 PM. Tracing your city ancestors can be a daunting task because of the many people with the same name living in cities and creating different kinds of records.

New England Regional Genealogical Conference: "Exploring New Paths to Your Roots," to be held 6-10 April 2011 in Springfield, Mass., is the 11th New England Regional Genealogical Conference and will build on NERGC's tradition in providing genealogical lectures, seminars and workshops; the Ancestors Road Show; a Society Fair; and banquet luncheons and dinners for new and established genealogists alike at minimal cost. Do think about attending. Read the E-zine and watch the Website at www.NERGC.org for developing information. Subscribe to the E-zine by sending an email to rootsearcher@email.com and typing "subscribe" in the subject line.

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 AM. (Premeeting networking starts at 9:30 AM.) Meetings are at Aldersgate Memorial United Methodist Church, 600 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY (across from Mercy College on Route 9). A \$3 donation is asked of nonmembers. You can visit the society's website at: http://www.rootsweb.com/~nywcgs

• 13 Nov.: "The Old Put: History of the Putnam Division of the New York Central" will be presented by Joe Schiavone, railroad historian and author of two books: *The Old Put* and *More of*

the Old Put. Once known as the North Country Trailway, the Putnam Division Railroad wended its way from the Bronx to Putnam County. During part of the program, two vintage motion pictures depicting the trains and the picturesque stations that once were dotted along the tracks will be shown.

 11 Dec.: "Finding People, Living or Dead, on the Internet" will be presented by Dr. Nathan Reiss.

 8 Jan.: "The New York Catholic Protectory" will be presented by Janet Butler Munch.

 12 Feb.: "Navigating Key Genealogy Websites" will be presented by Tony Lauriano.

National Genealogical Society, 3108 Columbia Pike, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22204-4304; telephone 800-473-0060. The 2011 Conference in the States theme is Where the Past is Still Present. Online registration for the conference will open 1 December 2010. The conference will be held 11-14 May at the North Charleston Convention Center in Charleston, SC.

Charleston is one of the most charming cities in the country with historic buildings, churches, homes, many museums, and with several plantations and forts nearby. Because Charleston played a major role in both the Revolutionary War and the Civil War, the conference will include a military records track. April 2011 will mark the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War at nearby Ft. Sumter. A highlight of the conference program will be a general session on Saturday morning, when State Senator Glenn McConnell will talk about the history of the Confederate submarine, the H. L. Hunley, and its rescue from the Atlantic Ocean in 2000.

Deadline for next newsletter Dec. 20, 2010

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Peter Biggins 230 Old King's Highway North Darien, CT 06820 MEETING 20 NOV. 2010, 2 PM DARIEN LIBRARY

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