



CCGS NEWS

A Publication of the Cape Cod Genealogical Society

Volume 7 Issue 5

May 2020

All May and June 2020 in-person gatherings are canceled,
by decision of the Board. These include
all of the Society's SIGs, Board and Committee
Meetings and the Annual Meeting.

A Message from our CCGS President Walter Murphy



HERE'S HOPING that April showers bring May flowers – in more ways than one. As I looked back over the past month, I realized that Lorraine and I have effectively been sheltering in place since March 12. Peapod and Instacart have become two of my favorite websites. Along the way, we celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary at home; fortunately, the celebration was aided greatly by a remote get-together with our kids, their spouses and the grandkids. That was followed by a fine dinner delivered to us by one of the area restaurants, courtesy of the kids.

Even so, we are a bit stir crazy, as I am sure that most of you are as well. As you know, CCGS previously canceled all its activities through May. As a result, important CCGS venues for in-person socializing are not available. However, several of our SIGs have stepped up with remote meetings and their email lists have been active. In addition, a group of CCGS members have volunteered to help anyone who has run into brick walls doing their stay-at-home research; see "Members Helping Members," on page 4. (If you are interested in taking advantage of this resource, let me know – with specifics – and I

will have one of those volunteers get in touch with you.) All told, our Society remains active, albeit at a slower pace.

Meanwhile, your Board remains active. It met remotely on April 1 and will do the same on May 6. The Board is working on a change in the by-laws regarding officers' terms (which will require approval by the membership) and has appointed a new chair of the Membership Committee.

In addition to the above, the Board has also decided to cancel all of the Society's June gatherings, including our Annual Meeting. That is a big decision; the Annual Meeting is typically well attended because it involves the election of officers and a popular speaker. This year would have been no exception. You can expect an announcement as to how we will proceed with a delayed election in due course.

I would remind our members to regularly check out the Society's website, Facebook page and blog. Links to the latter two can be found on the website's [homepage](#); a recent visit to both revealed a number of links to interesting sites and articles that might keep you busy.

Finally, if you haven't done so already, don't forget to fill out the online [2020 census](#). This will help our descendants follow our trail seventy-two years from now.

Stay home, stay healthy, stay safe.

— Walter (wmgenealogy@gmail.com)



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Mailing address:

Cape Cod Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1394
East Harwich, MA 02645
www.capecodgenealogy.org

SIGS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS are informal member gatherings for the purpose of sharing information, research techniques, data and references, regarding specific topics or geographical areas. For more information, see the Society's website.

During the current health crisis, the SIGS will not be meeting in person. However, some of them are carrying on activities online, as noted.

CAPE COD FAMILIES SIG

Leader Bebe Brock reports that "hopefully members are working on their research from

home. At this point we are canceled for April and May."

COMPUTER USERS SIG

This May, the Computer User's SIG will focus on the topic of bequeathing your genealogy. We can promise a holistic approach, nothing more. We will meet in a **Zoom** session as we did in April where we had 20+ participants.

DNA SIG

The meeting will take place, using **Zoom** at the regular time, **1:30 p.m., May 5, 2020**. Please let Walter Murphy (wmgenealogy@gmail.com) know if you are interested — even if you have done so before, so that he can create a "remote" distribution list. Please give Walter some ideas for discussion.

GERMAN SIG

There are many webinars available; below are a few coming up. Some folks have just been sharing with the group what they have been doing while isolating. We are all busy!

Follow this link below for two free webinars featuring German topics (as well as many other subjects of interest):

<https://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars.php>

Tuesday, May 12, 2 p.m., *Leveraging My Heritage's German Resources Effectively* by James M. Beidler.

Tuesday, May 19, 8 p.m., *Discover the Holdings of German Archives* by Teresa Steinkamp McMillin, CG.

Also, Katherine Schober has many webinars on translating German documents. Check out her website (<https://sktranslations.com/>).

WRITERS SIG

Some of the members have shared their writing with the rest of us in the Writers SIG. If you have Google, you can use Google docs to share with everyone with just a link. Leader Pippa Ryan encourages everyone to keep a journal of their thoughts and feelings and how you are adjusting to these strange times.

The CCGS Publicity Committee

THE PUBLICITY COMMITTEE of CCGS is responsible for promoting the Society by publicizing its programs and events through community press releases, our monthly Newsletter, and periodic email notifications to our membership.

Our Newsletter staff always welcomes volunteers willing to help with preparation of notices on CCGS activities, conducting interviews with members, and preparing summary articles of presentations from our members or invited speakers. We also welcome volunteers willing to proofread newsletter content or help with distribution of the finished product.

Our Committee members also prepare event notifications and public service messages about CCGS for publication or presentation in print and radio media throughout the Cape. If you think you might be interested in offering some of your time to these endeavors or if you have some suggestions on how we might augment our Committee's objectives, please contact our Chair: Ralph R. Ryall (ryalfrile@aol.com).

Members Helping Members

THIS WONDERFULLY DESCRIPTIVE title is borrowed, with thanks, from the Polish Genealogical Society of Connecticut and the Northeast (PGSCTNE) (info@pgsctne.org).

That Society uses the title for a series of online webinars, but it also perfectly describes CCGS's new venture whereby members help other members to knock down brick walls during this shut-in time.

Two brave members accepted the offer, which was sent out in an email blast by Walter. One search in particular turned out to be a fast-paced trip, bouncing from South Hadley, Mass., to Ireland and Scotland, and—to use an old expression—was enjoyed by all. While it concerned ancestors of CCGS member Louise Kirkpatrick, by the time it wound down, we all felt like honorary members of the family. In her own words:

TERRIFIC TEAMWORK

ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO, we received an e-mail from Walter, offering to help those of us who had reached a brick wall in our genealogy research. Since I was sitting at home, as all of us are, I decided to take advantage of his wonderful offer of assistance. I sent him an e-mail, saying that I would love some help, and I gave him a very brief idea of what my obstacles had been. The following day I heard back from Walter, and we exchanged e-mails to further clarify what information I was seeking.

I had no information on my paternal second great grandparents, and I wanted to learn more about them. I only knew the first name of my second great grandmother, and I had two possible maiden names for her, with two possible countries of origin. With that, our search began.

Walter had put together a spreadsheet of volunteer expertise, so that he could assign the most appropriate people to help uncover the mysteries I sought to solve. A team of three volunteers was put together, and they all approached the situation from different angles, with different areas of expertise. Walter served as the clarifier and lead of the team [air-controller], initially. Joan Frederici worked mainly on doing the Irish research, and Jane

Fiske explored the Scottish records. I continued to research, as well, and we all became buried in trying to find any significant information to resolve the discrepancies I had encountered. It really became a fun process, and all of us seemed to enjoy the challenge. We all shared information we learned, which helped me to discover things I had overlooked on my own. I was given suggestions of other possible avenues I might explore to further my research, as well.

A little over a week ago, I only knew that Nancy and John were my second great grandparents. She might have been a McCloy or a McLeod, born either in Ireland or in Scotland. Now I know a lot more about them: their years of birth and death, the townland where they died and were buried, the kids they had, and even a description of what he looked like. (I also gained quite a few more relatives in the process.) Research is never over, but I have learned so much in this past week, and it really was fun!

I can't think of a better time for these great team members to have offered their help than during this National Volunteers Month of April. Their help has been invaluable, and I so greatly appreciate all their time, their insight, and their expertise. (Plus, it was a great way to keep busy during this time.)

A most sincere "Thank you" goes out to Walter, Joan, and Jane for the help!

—*Louise Kirkpatrick*

Another member, who wishes to be known only by her first name, wrote this thank you for some help on a different problem:

"Do you wish other seasoned researchers could help you with your family tree? Yes! I was very grateful to have 3 sets of eyes look at my brick wall. It's most helpful to me to hear other's deductive reasoning in working on a brick wall. Many thanks to them, Pam "

We thank Louise and Pam for their testimonials, but please don't hesitate to ask for help for fear of unwanted publicity. It's always nice when everybody concerned is

willing to share their experiences, but we won't publish your name or any details of your brick wall unless you give us permission.

Let's solve some more problems!



Alice recommends . . .

Lots to Learn While We Stay Home

EVEN THOUGH THE Family History Library in Utah is closed, the Family Search Learning Center has hundreds of FREE recorded classes online. The easiest way to access them is to go to Google and search for "list of online classes at FamilySearch.org."

Follow the "How to use this page" instructions to view the list of classes the way you want.

If you don't already have one, you will be asked to open an Family Search account. It is easy to do and is free.

— *Alice Plouchard Stelzer*

Other Useful Websites

(Send us YOUR favorite ideas!)

During this trying time, we can all use ideas for online research. As Alice points out, FamilySearch is a standby free resource. There are also Virtual Libraries offering books online, many of which are out-of-print genealogies and local histories. One of these sites is Internet Archives <https://archive.org/>, which also has the Wayback Machine, where web pages of all kinds that have disappeared over the last 20-plus years are preserved. Use Google to find more.

Welcome a new member: *Susan DeGennaro*