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CCGS NEWS

A Publication of the Cape Cod Genealogical Society

Volume 9 Issue 6 June 2022

**Please Join us at our Annual Meeting
Tuesday, June 21, 2022 at 7:00 PM, Eastern Time**

Our meeting will be brought to you via **Zoom**.

Members will receive an email one week before the meeting with an invitation and registration link.

Non-members are asked to email us at info@capecodgenealogy.org to receive a registration link.

This is our CCGS Annual Meeting.

We will have a short meeting before our speaker presentation.

This will include a vote for the 2022 – 2023 Candidates for Election.

**The slate of candidates was included in the May Newsletter and
is repeated again on page 8.**

***NARA MythBusters:
Your Family IS in the Archives
with
Judy G. Russell***



All the military records were burned in the fire.

There isn't any birth, marriage or death information in federal records.

There aren't any details about ordinary families at the National Archives.

These kinds of myth-statements stop genealogists from breaking down all kinds of brick walls. Using the wealth of information in NARA records, join the **MythBusters** with the treasures the National Archives holds for your family.

Judy G. Russell, *The Legal Genealogist*, is a genealogist with a law degree who writes and lectures on topics ranging from using court records to understanding DNA tests. On the faculty of IGHR, GRIP and SLIG, she is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Board for Certification of Genealogists, from which she holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist and Certified Genealogical Lecturer.

Message from the CCGS President, Walter Murphy

Summer is (almost) here! As I write this, it is Memorial Day, the sun is out, and I have had a great visit from my daughter and two granddaughters. Speaking of grandchildren, number six is due in July. I am looking forward to summer!



This month's Membership Meeting is CCGS's Annual Meeting where the Society's Officers, Directors-at-Large, and Nominating Committee (whose terms are expiring) shall be elected. This year's slate of nominees – with pictures and bios – were in last month's Newsletter and can be seen again elsewhere in this Newsletter. The slate will be sent to each member at least ten calendar days before the vote at the June 21 meeting. So, please put this important meeting on your calendar and plan to attend.

As an added incentive, June's speaker is Judy Russell, the well-known author of *The Legal Genealogist* blog. Her topic is "NARA MythBusters: Your Family IS in the Archives." I am looking forward to that.

One of the officer positions that will be filled by this June's election is that of CCGS President. As a result, this is my last President's Message. My three-year term has been interesting to say the least; it was understandably dominated by COVID. There has not been an "in-person" board, membership, or SIG meeting since March 2020.

Another casualty was our planned recognition of the 400th Anniversary of the Pilgrims' Landing on Cape Cod (and elsewhere 😊). Rising to the occasion, many of us are now proficient in attending remote meetings through Zoom and similar platforms. The Society's operational and membership functions have continued and we have been able to effectively recognize the 50th Anniversary of our Society's founding, albeit in a modified fashion. (The 50th Anniversary Committee continues to meet and there are still items on the agenda.)

Importantly, our bylaws were recently re-written for the first time in six years; this brings us up-to-date with, among other things, all the technology changes that have taken place. Through it all, our membership has remained strong. Three years ago, we had 286 members; today we are still 267 strong.

I would be remiss if I did not mention two other important changes. Judy Needham is stepping down as Recording Secretary after four years. (Judy's position will be filled at June's election.) In addition, Pam Eaton's last issue as editor of the Newsletter will be the summer issue. I thank both of them for their support and help. (We *really* need a volunteer or two to assume Pam's Newsletter editor role.)

I have enjoyed the last three years. I appreciate the support I received from the Board and from the membership. This is not "good bye;" I am not going away. I will remain on the Board as Immediate Past President. I also expect to continue as leader of the DNA SIG and co-chair of the 50th Anniversary Committee.



Since April 2020, I have concluded President's Messages with a reminder to please stay *Safe* and stay *Healthy*. That request, of course, remains paramount. This time, however, I will sign off by saying

Thank you!

Walter (wmgenealogy@gmail.com)

**Cape Cod Genealogical Society
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***Special Announcement
From Computer SIG Leader, Bob Oppenheim***

The *Ancestor Hunt* has, from time to time, published *QuickSheets*. Each *QuickSheet* is a one-to-five-page guide on how to best accomplish some genealogical task such as accessing Newspaper Records, using the National Archives' Numident* Computerized Files and more.

*Numident: Numerical Identification Files

Access all of the QuickSheets and download them from this site:

<https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/category/quicksheets/>

The very latest one is a list of state-level sources (mostly library collections) for Free Online Archives and Digital Collections for Historians and Genealogists. It can be found here:

<https://theancestorhunt.com/blog/free-online-archives-and-digital-collections-for-historians-and-genealogists/>

**Have you heard about the
new restaurant called Karma?**

**There is no menu.
You get what you deserve.**

Program Summary, May 17, 2022

Written by *David Martin*



Daily Life in the U.S. Lifesaving Service, Along the Coast of New England in the 19th Century

with
Dennis D. Picard

Dennis Picard began with a look at the logo of the *Lifesaving Service*, which changed its boathook symbol to oars when the Service merged with the U.S. Coast Guard.

On Cape Cod there were nine lifesaving stations in the early 1870s; unfortunately, none of these particular stations has survived to the present day.

Architectural firms were contracted by the government, which then created the specifications for each station's construction. An interesting sidenote is that Chatham's Old Harbor Lifesaving Station dated from 1897. It was removed and floated to its present location south of Provincetown, where the public in the National Seashore grounds, in the summer season, can walk to it and see the interior. It is more elaborate than the early ones from the 1870s.

Another surviving station, originally on Block Island in 1871, can be viewed at the Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut; this structure is not as plain as others, since it shows some Victorian influences in construction such as gingerbread work and Queen Anne period revival features.

Each station usually had four rooms, an eating-and-sitting area, which not only the men of the station, but also rescued survivors of wrecks could occupy; a kitchen with a wood-burning or coal-burning metal stove and iron or tin cookware; a storage area for the rescue boat and other apparatus; and a sleeping area on the second floor where both surfmen and rescued individuals could sleep. The station frequently had a watch tower, from which

men would be on the lookout for ships in distress. Tea, rather than coffee, was served to the survivors of shipwrecks.

For staffing the station, the head was the keeper, who was hired for a full year and was in charge of all activity. Six to eight men were hired as surfmen; these manned the station and were hired for an "active season" (September 1 to May 1). The keeper earned \$200 year in 1878, and the surfmen at first earned \$10 per rescue but later changed to \$50 per month, which was later raised to \$90 per month. The surfmen had to buy their uniforms out of their meager earnings as well as purchase their own toilet paper.

The keeper kept careful records of rescues and the associated supplies needed. The keeper also was responsible for hiring the surfmen, who were often middle-aged men who had had considerable marine experience, often as fishermen who were used to launching small craft into surf.

The surfmen had assigned trails that they would walk to patrol the beach in looking for vessels in distress, usually meeting surfmen from other stations at the point where the different stations' trails intersected. When a surfman came to a shack known as a Halfway House—half of the way on an assigned trail—he would insert his personal tag in a time clock to record his walk, and then leave and continue the patrol.

Flares played an important role in the rescues. What was known as a *Coston Flare* was invented by Martha Coston, the widow of a technical expert. The flares were ignited to tell the people on a ship that they had been seen; they were also used to alert men in a watch tower that a wreck had been sighted and needed rescue, upon which the watcher would then alert surfmen to suit up and launch the rescue craft. Today's flares use some of the same scientific principles as in the original *Coston Flare*.

A *Lyle Gun*, a specialized cannon, was used to send a weighted line from the beach to the mast of a

foundering ship, which then was pulled to draw a rope back to the beach for a breeches buoy to rescue people, one by one. The *Lyle Gun* was used from 1879 until the 1960s. When someone's body was found washed up and might still be alive, the surfmen would roll the body over to force water out of the lungs.

The large stout wooden dories had built-in air bubbles so that if they capsized, they would float rather than sink. While usually the surfmen had to drag the dory on wheeled rollers from the storage building to the water, some stations used horses to draw the dory on wheels if there was a long distance between the boathouse and the shore. An alternative

to the dory was the metallic life-saving "car," which was a covered craft that would hold individuals being rescued.

The *Lifesaving Service* and another service called the *Revenue Cutter Service* (which patrolled the coastline) were merged in 1915 to form today's *U.S. Coast Guard*. At the time of the merger, keepers then automatically got a pension. Some genealogies exist about those surfmen and keepers who had earned medals for bravery and rescue.

Member Thoughts Needed

As part of the *50th Anniversary Year of the Society*, a special one-time Commemorative Booklet is being prepared; it will have anecdotes, historical narratives, early members' names, some photographs, thoughts about the meaning of this anniversary, and more. It is expected to appear after the final anniversary event this year, whose date is yet to be decided.

We would now invite all members to send in their thoughts and reflections about the significance of this anniversary for the Society. One hundred words or less would be perfect.

For all who would like to contribute some thoughts, please send in care of David Martin at davidmartindr@aol.com any time before June 15, 2022.

Also, contact David if you have any questions.

Thank you for considering this invitation!

SIGs – Special Interest Groups

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs) are informal member gatherings for the purpose of sharing information, research techniques, data and references, regarding specific topics or geographical areas. For more information, please email the SIG leader or visit our website at www.capecodgenealogy.org.



Cape Cod Families

Leader **Bebe Brock** crosby1635@gmail.com advises that all are working independently, and carefully following the ongoing announcements from Sturgis Library, whether open or not (where the group meets) and adhering to any mask requirements. If all goes well, Bebe will be holding meetings, post-COVID on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 1:00 PM and will let her group know.

Computer Users

Leader **Bob Oppenheim** roppen@msn.com holds a meeting on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM (except in July and August). PRE-COVID, these meetings were held at the Dennis Public Library, 5 Hall Street, Dennis Port. We have been meeting virtually using Zoom during COVID. The library has re-opened and we will eventually return to the library, but **not for our June 2022 meeting**. When we do re-convene, meetings will be simulcast on Zoom and all of the SIG members will receive an invitation to participate virtually. Any changes to this arrangement will be emailed to the membership and published in the Newsletter.

The next Computer SIG will be held on Tuesday, June 14 at 10:00 AM. It will be a Zoom meeting. We will be looking at some big websites that perhaps get less traffic than they deserve. Join us while I try to do them justice.

DNA

Leader **Walter Murphy** wmgenealogy@gmail.com holds a Zoom meeting every other month on the first Tuesday at 1:30 PM. Prior to the Zoom meeting, he sends out both an agenda and a Zoom invitation to register. This is an active group that typically attracts participants of all levels of interest and expertise to each meeting. All sessions begin with a question-and-answer roundtable discussion, divided into two sections: DNA 101 questions/problems followed by time for “old hands.” The discussion period is followed by topics of interest.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 7 at 1:30 PM and will initially focus on Ancestry’s new ethnicity tools, specifically the “ethnicity inheritance” tool known as SideView. If time permits, the group may begin to discuss GEDmatch in greater detail.

German

Leader **Ann Croston** acroston125@comcast.net holds Zoom meetings on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM. Ann communicates via email and on our Facebook page, Cape Cod Genealogical Society - German SIG, when items of interest come up.

*The next German SIG will be held on **Tuesday, June 7 at 10:00 AM**. The group is trying to put our ancestors in a time context in Germany, discovering their lives and livelihoods before they emigrated, moving beyond names and dates. There is so much to learn about our ancestors going back a few generations. Ann has recently communicated details about the upcoming meeting with SIG members and has sent along seven handouts to be discussed.*

Irish Research

Leader **Pat Flaherty** patcarolegenealogy@gmail.com usually holds a Zoom meeting on the fourth Monday of the month at 10:00 AM, however, gatherings will now be quarterly. Anyone with an interest in Irish genealogy is most welcome. We have members with lots of experience who can help those with little experience. It is a good combination. Our sessions usually include a presentation from a member on available records (either in the United States or in Ireland). We also share strategies for finding those elusive Irish ancestors wherever they may be lurking. There is always time for good discussions during which questions are answered and experiences are shared.

*The next Irish SIG will be held on **Monday, June 27 at 10:00 AM**.*

Writers

Leader **Pippa Dodd Ryan** pippa.doddryan@gmail.com holds a Zoom meeting on the third Friday of the month at 10:00 AM. Anyone with an interest in sharing their writing with the group regarding personal genealogy or about family members (including pets), anything historical, current event topics, articles of personal satisfaction and more are most welcome. We explore many styles of writing and narrative, even poetry and discovered family letters, as well as discuss the possibilities of publication. Everyone is welcome to participate and share their work, writing tips and techniques. If you do not have anything to share, join us anyway. You may become inspired!

*The Writers SIG will be taking a break in June and July. The next meeting will be held on **Friday, August 19 at 10:00 AM**.*



June 2022 Candidates for Election



PRESIDENT (Two Years) B. Judy Fenner, or just Judy to those that know her. Judy is no newcomer to managing not-for-profits like ours. She has been an active member of our Board where she is serving on the 50th Anniversary Committee and is the Chair of the Bylaws Committee. She is a member of the NEHGS and is a Past President of the Falmouth Genealogical Society. She has also been Co-Chair of two NERGC conferences (Portland, Maine and Glastonbury, Connecticut); a speaker at several NERGC conferences; and has taught courses in beginning genealogy. Judy says that she has been researching her family for over 50 years.

Judy has been a member of the Order of the Eastern Star for 35 years where she has held several leadership positions. She was Worthy Grand Matron of Massachusetts, 2002-2003, serving as leader of 10,000 members. She was Chairman of Deputies for Brazil for the General Grand Chapter, 2009-2021, responsible for coordinating Deputies in five regions of Brazil (yes, Judy is bilingual in English and Portuguese). She is currently a member of the Registration Committee and also Chairman of Deputies for Brazil of the General Grand Chapter (the international governing body), 2021-2024. In addition, she has assisted in founding new Chapters, and in assuring compliance with rules and regulations of the Order. Besides her work for the Order of the Eastern Star, she is a member of the National Association of Parliamentarians, the New England Association of Parliamentarians and the George Demeter Unit in Massachusetts, where she is Past President and Past Secretary. And, she is clerk and member of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, on the Vestry and was Co-Warden (term expired January 2022). Breaking down brick walls giving you a pain in the neck? In addition to her other credentials, Judy is a retired physical therapist.

RECORDING SECRETARY (Two-Years) Patricia “Pat” Merriell. Pat is a Boston native and currently lives in Centerville. She spent thirty-four years in southeastern Ohio and moved back east in 2013 to care for her mother. Pat joined Ancestry.com in 2016 and has been researching off and on since then. Now that she is retired, Pat hopes to devote more time to her research and do some site visits to relatives for interviews, along with visiting archives and cemeteries. Pat is the mother of two sons and grandmother to four spectacular girls. Pat has worked as a substitute teacher, bookkeeper, real estate broker, and paralegal. She has served as a board member of Habitat for Humanity of Southeastern Ohio and the Centerville Civic Association. Pat is working hard to break through brick walls for her paternal grandfather and maternal great-grandmother.



DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE (Two-Years) Pam Eaton, along with her husband, Baird, caught the genealogical bug in 2010 while researching the history of an 1894 family wedding gown in their possession. Pam enjoys writing narrative poetry and, during the pandemic, wrote a poem about Mayflower passenger Stephen Hopkins. The poem was read by a local actor, in Pilgrim costume, filmed by Lower Cape TV and can now be found on YouTube (Search: Stephen Hopkins is my Name). Pam has been an active member of CCGS for several years, has been on the Board as a Director at Large from 2020 to 2022 and is a regular attendee at our meetings and SIGs. She has been our Newsletter Editor for the past two years.

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE (Two-Years) Brian O'Donnell has been an active member of CCGS since 2014 when he attended a genealogy class put on by the Society through the Academy for Lifelong Learning. Originally from New York he came to Cape Cod via Okinawa when his father, a career Air Force NCO, was assigned to Otis AFB in the mid-fifties. After graduating from college, he served in the Army and later transferred to the Marine Corps. After retiring from the service, he and his family returned to Cape Cod and acquired a perpetual home improvement project in West Barnstable. Since moving "back home" he has worked as an airline pilot for a regional carrier, served on the board of the Barnstable County Beekeepers Association and has done volunteer construction work with Habitat for Humanity. Having an avid interest in history, he became interested in genealogy through a cousin who was researching the maternal line of their family. Genealogy seemed like a personalized extension of learning history and a means to chronicle the family story to children and grandchildren. His main area of interest has been his paternal line which originates primarily from Ireland and the New York City area.

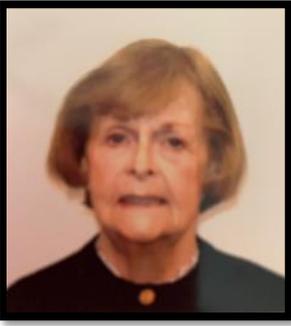


NOMINATING COMMITTEE (One-Year) Judy Jones is a retired teacher who moved to the Cape almost 15 years ago. One of the first things she did upon arrival was to dig out the research she had started with her sister many, many years ago and then look for a genealogy group that shared her interest. She found us!! Since then, she has served as a NERGC delegate, been on the Board as a Director-at-Large for three years and is now the Chair of the Membership Committee. She is also a member of the Mayflower Society, DAR, Maine Genealogical Society, some other family associations and a couple of historical associations. She reports that she is looking forward to the day that, as Hospitality Committee Chair, she gets to stop at Dunkins to pick up coffee and donuts and welcome you back to in-person meetings.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (One-Year) Pat Flaherty. Pat has been a member of the Cape Cod Genealogy Society since 2016 and currently facilitates the Irish Special Interest Group. Pat began interviewing family members about their lives close to 50 years ago, continuing, as time permitted, during her career in the financial services industry. Upon retirement in 2004, family history became front and center. She describes herself as a life-long student. She holds a B.S. in Management from the University of Massachusetts Boston and an M.B.A. from Northeastern University. She completed the Certificate in Genealogical Research at Boston University in 2010. Having spent summers in Harwich Port when growing up, Pat now splits time between West Harwich and Boston, when she and her husband are not traveling the world.



NOMINATING COMMITTEE (One Year) Jo Anne Makely. Jo Anne is a former Mayor, Township of



Mahwah, New Jersey; Presidential Appointment, Advisory Board, Federal Regional Council; Chair, Army Corps of Engineers, Ramapo River Basin Committee; Member of Board of Directors and VP, Soule Kindred in America; DAR Genealogical Records Chair for the State of New Jersey; Trustee, Bergen County Genealogical Society; awarded the Joyce Kilmer Outstanding Citizen Award. Her former volunteer experience includes: Chair, Historic Register Committee, Greene County Historical Society; and Chair, Grants Committee, Greene County Council of the Arts. She holds a B.S. from Adelphi University.

Jo Anne has been a member of the NEHGS since 1995 where her positions included: Trustee; Secretary of the Board; Councilor, and member, Nominating Committee; Chair, Human Resources Committee; member, Executive Committee; tour participant, *Great Migration By Sea & By Land* (2015), and *A Golden Land: The Country Houses and Gardens of Buckinghamshire* (2016); member, Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving; and supporter member of the Cornerstone Society for Giving. She is also chair of Genealogical Records for the Massachusetts NSDAR and Historian for the Hannah Winthrop Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.



**June Splendor:
A bench, rosa
rugosas, a sandy path,
a boat,
Cape Cod Bay.**

**Harbor Road
East Dennis, MA**

CCGS Calendar

Tuesday, June 7
German SIG, 10:00 AM

Tuesday, June 7
DNA SIG, 1:30 PM

Tuesday, June 14
Computer SIG, 10:00 AM

Tuesday, June 21
Annual Meeting, 7:00 PM
Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL
NARA MythBusters:
Your Family IS in the Archives

Monday, June 27
Irish SIG, 10:00 AM

Tuesday, July 19
Monthly Meeting 7:00 PM
Lori Berdak Miller
Military Records/Death Files

Tuesday, August 16
Monthly Meeting 7:00 PM
Michael Leclerc, CG
Tips & Strategies Using MS Word & Google Docs

Tuesday, September 20
Monthly Meeting 7:00 PM
Julie Roberts Szczepankiewicz
Finding Vital Records from Poland online

Tuesday, October 18
Monthly Meeting 7:00 PM
Kathleen Kaldis
In Peace Time and War:
The United States Merchant Marines -
We Deliver the Goods!

Do you have a comment or suggestion?
Perhaps you would like to have an article considered for submission in the Newsletter?
If so, please drop an email to info@capecodgenealogy.org and in the subject line, write:
For Newsletter Editor
Thank you,
Newsletter Editor, Pam Eaton

What's the difference between
a well-dressed man on a bicycle
and a poorly dressed man
on a unicycle?

Attire