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CCGS NEWS

A Publication of the Cape Cod Genealogical Society

Volume 11 Issue 1

February 2024

**Please Join us at our Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, February 20 at 10:00 AM, Eastern Time
Brewster Ladies' Library**

Our meeting will be brought to you via **Zoom and in-person**.
Members will receive an email in a few days with an invitation and registration link.

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

*Please Welcome Thomas MacEntee
AI and Genealogy – Trouble Ahead?*

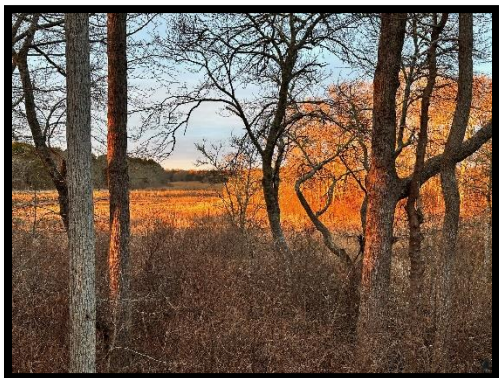


While AI (Artificial Intelligence) might be the current “hot” buzz word, the fact is that many genealogy vendors and even genealogists have already been using this technology for years. The AI industry is at a crossroads and within the next five years, it will permeate almost every aspect of business and society. Learn how AI is currently being used to improve the genealogy experience, and whether or not you should seek out other uses of artificial intelligence for your own genealogy research. Join us for this dynamic presentation. Is there trouble ahead? What can we expect now and in the future of all things genealogy?

Thomas MacEntee is an author, educator, student, advocate, marketer, storyteller, entrepreneur and that “genealogy guy” who helps you accomplish your family history goals.

Having taught over 1,000 in-person and virtual genealogy lectures since 2010, serving on the boards of many genealogical societies, organizing a group of over 1,000 genealogy bloggers, and helping researchers save money on genealogy products and services, Thomas is ready for the next chapter in his professional journey: changing the way genealogists acquire new research skills, motivating researchers to take a chance on new technologies, and improving how family stories and heirlooms are preserved and passed on to the next generations.

Message from the CCGS President Judy Fenner



February Marsh Sunset

Dear Members and Friends,

If we Cape Codders are snowed in this February, we will have a day (or two) of staying put and watching the flakes come down. It should be an interesting month with this very latest prediction of our first “real” snowstorm for the winter. Some love it. I am **not** personally fond of snow. But being snowed in is a great opportunity to do some research, as long as we have power!

Your Society has been busy with the **Probate Project**, the **Library** and other projects, all of which could use more volunteers. If you can give regular time to a project, can only volunteer short term, or can only do a onetime, you are needed! Please contact me to volunteer.

Our **Program Chair** has chosen some wonderful speakers for 2024 and we look forward to learning new things. The full calendar program schedule is listed on the last page of this newsletter.

A huge thank you is sent out to **Bob Oppenheim** for setting up the necessary equipment for our hybrid (Zoom and in-person) monthly meetings. His efforts are resulting in increased attendance and active participation. Bravo, Bob!

Keep your snow shovel handy.

Judy
president@capecodgenealogy.org



**Cape Cod Genealogical Society
Board of Directors 2023-2024**

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Jo Anne Makely
Pat Merriell
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Carolyn Weiss
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Mailing address:
Cape Cod Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1394
Harwich, MA 02645
www.capecodgenealogy.org

Board Meeting Invitation

Ever wonder what is discussed at the **Board of Directors** Meetings? Board Meetings are open to ALL members of the CCGS, excepting those instances when a motion for an executive session is approved. Usually, the Board Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 2:00 PM and meets via Zoom. President, Judy Fenner, sends out the Board Agenda with a Zoom link to join the meeting. The Board welcomes any member and at the end of the meeting, offers an “open forum” for any attending member to express a thought, an opinion, ask questions, etc. After the meeting and when the meeting minutes are approved, the minutes will be posted onto the Members Tab on the CCGS website for any member to view.

Did You Forget?

The due date for payment of your **2024 membership dues** was January 1st. Don't miss a single issue of the Newsletter or the Journal! If you haven't already done so, please send your check and completed renewal form today. (You may also pay via PayPal if you prefer.) Both the renewal form and the PayPal option may be found on the “Join CCGS” page of the CCGS website.



Announcement from the Nominating Committee

HELP WANTED

Would you like to have an influence on the directions of the Cape Cod Genealogical Society?

You may want to volunteer to become a *Director at Large*, starting July 1, this year. Directors at Large serve for a renewable two-year term and attend monthly Board Meetings via Zoom, helping to set the course for the Society on many important questions.

We also have a vacant position of *Recording Secretary*.

If you would like to know more about either Secretary or Director position, just send a message of interest to Pat Flaherty, Chair of the Nominating Committee.

patcarolegenealogy@gmail.com

Thank you for thinking about these roles.
CCGS Nominating Committee

For our May 21 Meeting



Do you have a rake, rogue, renegade, criminal, shocking, horrible, nasty and an undesirable, offensive, obnoxious SKELETON you would rather keep deep in the closet of your family tree?

The Program Committee at CCGS would like to dedicate a meeting to salute these ancestors who just cannot stay hidden. Do not be afraid to come forward to share your bad guy or moll with us. I have one who is so despicable that I have come to admire his ability to go from place to place without leaving a trace.

We would welcome a mini-presentation! Please share your ancestor with us. Let's make this a fun meeting and bring these folks alive again, at least for a few hours.

Please contact Jo Anne Makely or Dave Martin and we will add you to our list of presenters.

Jo Anne: jmakely@gmail.com David: davidchina_2000@yahoo.com

Volunteer Call-Out to All Members

CCGS needs a technical volunteer to help with our monthly hybrid meetings (Zoom and in-person). We are looking for someone with audio/visual experience, along with computer skills to monitor a remote speaker and assist with the Zoom meeting features. If you do not have full tech experience, would you be interested? You can be trained by our very own Bob Oppenheim. We welcome any interest!



**Please drop a line to Bob, at our website info line:
info@capecodgenealogy.org.**

Write “Bob O.” in the subject box.

American Ancestors recently publicized that Taylor Swift is the 11th great-granddaughter of Mayflower passenger Stephen Hopkins and descends down from his daughter, Constance Hopkins Snow, one of Eastham's Founding Family Members. Taylor is also a descendant of Mayflower passengers, the Billingtons, along with Richard Warren. Are any of these Mayflower passengers your ancestors? If so, you are a distant cousin to Taylor Swift!

CCGS Education Report

Our own David Martin has been teaching free genealogy courses for years and this winter, he can be found, once again, at various public libraries throughout Cape Cod.

Genealogy 101, a 6-session in-person class, is being offered at the *Sturgis Library* (in Barnstable) on Saturday mornings, from 10 to 11:30 AM, starting February 17. Although the course is almost at capacity, please call the Sturgis Library to find out if there are any cancellations: 508-362-6636.

The *Brewster Ladies' Library* offers a 3-week course, starting Saturday, March 16 from 2:00 to 3:30 PM. Register on the Library website. Space is available!

Last, a one-session overview Genealogy class is scheduled at the *Dennis Public Library* (in Dennis Port) on Saturday, May 11 at 11:00 AM. Full registration details will be posted at a later date on the library's website, however, if you are interested in joining this session, please contact: info@capecodgenealogy.org with *Dennis Library Course* in the Subject box.

Taking a class with David is always interesting, exciting, motivating and FUN! David makes genealogy come alive and you will come away with inspiration to continue your research with his many tips and treasures. Dr. David is a Professor/Dean Emeritus from Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. He graduated from Yale with a B.A., holds a Master's and Certificate of Advanced Study degrees from the Harvard School of Education, and a Ph.D. from Boston College.

**Have an article for our Spring Journal?
Deadline for submission is set for February 29.**

**Please Welcome New Members
Martha Boiardi
Frances Millian
Christopher “Kip” Tourtellot
Suzanne and Edmond Eaton
Betsy Cross**

Final Farewell

**Kenneth Ernest Needham
1943-2023**

**The CCGS Board Members send their sympathy to
Ken’s wife, Judy Needham, long-term member of CCGS.
Over the years, Judy has been active on committees and
miscellaneous tasks, on the board as Director-at-Large and most
recently, as an officer, Secretary (2018-2022).**

**The CCGS Genealogy Library
is located in the Dennis Public Library
5 Hall Street, Dennis Port**

Hours:

2nd and 4th Tuesdays and all Thursdays, 1 to 4 PM

Access to [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com), [AmericanAncestors.org](https://www.americanancestors.org), [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org).

Walk-ins welcome.

Reservations also welcome at:

librarian@capecodgenealogy.org

**Please note that sometimes we are closed due to an
unforeseen issue and we apologize for this.**

Newspapers.com

Maybe A Free Website Weekend

Newspapers.com is a part of *Ancestry* and can be accessed with an additional paid subscription. Here's a chance to try it out.

In the past few years, during February, over Presidents Day Weekend, *Newspapers.com* has offered free research, bypassing the "free-7-day trial." Although there is nothing publicized on their website as of the publication of this newsletter, please mark your calendars, starting Friday, February 17 through midnight, February 19, 2024 to see if *Newspapers.com* repeats this free weekend. It would be a great opportunity to type in your ancestors' names and find articles about them.

(Editor's note: Last year, I found an article about my father in the October 31, 1935 issue of *The Los Angeles Times*. He was honored at his local high school for reaching the rank of Eagle Scout.)

Happy researching!

Probate Project

Remember, we have a volunteer Probate Project going on. A group has been meeting at the Barnstable County Courthouse and scanning in old probate records (for FamilySearch). They are having a lot of fun, as they work on their tasks, chatting and laughing. It's only for a few hours here and there. Think about joining us! Contact President Judy Fenner for more information:

president@capecodgenealogy.org

Program Summary, December 19, 2023

Written by *David Martin*



Shared Genealogical Stories “Members Share”

For its December 2023 meeting, the Society continued its tradition of inviting members who have high-interest accounts from their genealogical researching, to share them at the meeting. A temporary power outage interrupted the presentations, with the result that the Zoom audience was not able to enjoy the presentation by Deb Yonker-Hecht; otherwise, both the in-person and Zoom audiences were able to enjoy the presentations.

Ray Sears led off the series of presentations with a detailed account of ancestries common to both Oklahoma and Cape Cod, including the useful methodologies of using *PressReader* to locate news articles in published form, *NewsBank* which is obtainable through the Library of Congress, and *BeenVerified* which indicates an item which has been fact-checked.

Anastasia Perrino, Head of the Probate Court Records for Barnstable County, provided details on probate records and how to obtain them. She is collaborating with the Society in the project which is scanning (for later digitization) many of the probate records of the County. These scans will be converted into digital form by the *FamilySearch* office of the Salt Lake City Library.

Debra Yonker-Hecht told a fascinating anecdote in which she, as a professional genealogist, had a meeting with a “medicine woman” from a Native American tribe in which she clearly felt the presence of an ancestor. The woman told her facts about the ancestor even though the woman had had no prior information about the ancestor—far more intriguing because these were not coincidences. Psychic experiences of this kind have been reported by some other genealogists in the past. Deb mentioned research on DNA which may indicate that a protein of DNA contains memories from the past which an individual has not experienced directly in their own lifetimes. The two books by genealogist Henry Z. Jones (*Psychic Roots* and *More Psychic Roots*) were referred to in the discussion period.

Walter Murphy described the details of his current Y-DNA project, which is tracing male lineages in his family, going back far beyond the origin of surnames. The surname Burnham is central to his tracing and he provided information on how others can carry out this kind of research.

Jeff Schiebe related how his family of German origin in the 1800s settled in Minnesota in a rural farming community and how the roads and land boundaries are still viewable in current maps of that now more developed area. He also showed how

deeds and covenants of the past, including in the 21st century, still contain restrictions for land sales based on ethnicity, religion, and national origin. Although such restrictions are now officially illegal, much prejudice still exists, and land transactions

still carry un verbalized barriers, preventing transactions from being truly open and unrestricted.

The plan is to continue these annual December sharings of anecdotes and discoveries in the years ahead.

Program Summary, January 16, 2024

Written by *David Martin*



Massachusetts Archives with Caitlin Ramos

The Society had a presentation by Caitlin Ramos, the Head of Reference at the Massachusetts Archives in Boston. She outlined the resources available and the various categories to which they belong.

Massachusetts began to collect records, other than Vital Records, in 1629, the oldest time period of any state. Many records are in digital format, while others are in paper or microfilm. They fall into the categories of:

- Colonial
- Provincial
- State
- Legislative
- Executive
- Departmental
- Court
- Military

Vital Records are in the categories of household records of births since 1692, marriages since 1786, and deaths since 1795. Records are contained from these beginning dates to 1930 at present (the

Archives advances the ending year by one more year every year). Records after 1930 are available at the **Registry of Vital Records**, which transfers them to the **Archives** after 90 years; records since 1931 are also available through Town Clerk Offices and at the State Department of Public Health. She noted that in birth records, some births are recorded both for the address of the place of birth and for the address of the mother. Indexes are done by record-type, time period, and surname. Records are also available on *FamilySearch.org* and *AmericanAncestors.org*.

Caitlin provided some suggestions for genealogists who are having a problem finding a record of an individual event: consider spelling variations; consider that some children were unnamed; broaden the time period to up to ten years; and check the “amended” and “delayed” records, which are indexed separately. She also suggested resources to consult: *Names Changed in Massachusetts*, and *Vital Records prior to 1850* (a series of books, each about a particular town). Town histories and published genealogies are also worthy of consultation.

The Census is another useful tool. Massachusetts did state censuses in 1855 and 1865; it continues to do them on the “five” years, but these are only statistical and do not have individual name information. The federal census is available from 1790 to 1950 with the exception of the 1890 Census which burned, except for its Veterans Census and Widows Census.

Passenger Lists for immigrants are available for entries into Boston 1841-1891 at the State Archives and for 1820 to 1940 at the National Archives.

For records from special institutions, records are available for 8 mental health hospitals, 4 state reform schools, 6 state hospitals, 3 state almshouses, and 5 criminal institutions. However, Archives staff will do the searches for protection of privacy of inmates. A court order is necessary in order to obtain information about an inmate from a mental health hospital, based on the researcher’s being a direct descendant of the patient or as the executor of a will.

Early colonial records, such as Land Deeds, are available from 1629-1799 except for Plymouth County.

The military collection includes data from King Philip’s War, the Seven Years War, and the Revolution. The card catalog for these data is available on *FamilySearch.org*.

The Supreme Judicial Court has Archives. Naturalizations are available from 1792 to 1854 at the local court level, 1855-1885 at the County Superior court, 1855-1906 at any court, and 1906 to present at the Superior Court in the county of residence. Other records available at the Court include probates and guardianships, adoptions, name changes, and divorces.

Land records are available at the county level. The Archives recently obtained the Massachusetts National Guard Archives, and so now records from the colonial period up to 1940 and beyond are available for such data as enlistment papers, muster rolls, and correspondence.



Snow White on White Stones

The Brewster Cemetery is also known as the “Sea Captain’s Cemetery” because of so many grave stones of Brewster’s mariners. This photo was taken in 2004 (by the editor). The grave stones in the entire cemetery had been cleaned by the “Friends of the Brewster Cemetery” and all appeared “Snow White.”

Today, twenty years later, there is an on-going pledge to again clean the stones. The cemetery has recently appealed for a grant from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to pay for the cleaning and repair of 850 gravestones. CCGS has signed a petition and written a letter of support to whole-heartedly stand by the appeal of the Brewster Cemetery.

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.

The following is general information. Please email the SIG leader for further details and/or to be added to their list to receive the email announcements for meetings and handouts.

You may also visit our website at www.capecodgenealogy.org.



Cape Cod Families

capecodfamiliesSIG@capecodgenealogy.org

Leader **Bebe Brock** advises that all are working independently. Bebe is currently holding meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 1:00 PM at Sturgis Library, Barnstable.

Computer Users

computerusersSIG@capecodgenealogy.org

Leader **Bob Oppenheim** holds a meeting on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM (except in July and August). Although the Group has started hybrid meetings (Zoom and in-person), there have been some instances that meetings are only Zoom, depending on unforeseen circumstances. We do not wish to lose any of the members that have joined the group from off-Cape locations, so our meetings will continue to be hybrid meetings or only Zoom. We gather in the meeting room at the Dennis Public Library, 5 Hall Street, Dennis Port, except when otherwise announced. We have used facilities at the Brewster Ladies' Library when the room at the Dennis Library is unavailable.

DNA

dnaSIG@capecodgenealogy.org

Leader **Walter Murphy** 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.

German

germanSIG@capecodgenealogy.org

Co-Chairs **Ann Croston** and **Bob Oppenheim** host a monthly hybrid meeting (Zoom and in-person) on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM (except in July and August). The meeting is held at the Brewster Ladies' Library in the upstairs auditorium when it is available, otherwise in the downstairs meeting room.

In addition, Ann posts notices of events and items of interest on the SIG's Facebook Group, the Cape Cod Genealogical Society German SIG <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CCGS.GermanSIG>.

Irish Research

irishresearchSIG@capecodgenealogy.org

Leader **Pat Flaherty** holds a Zoom or in-person meeting. Gatherings are held every three months and Irish SIG members are advised via email on specific dates and times. 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. Please contact Pat if you wish to be added to her email list.

Writers

writersSIG@capecodgenealogy.org

Leaders **Sherill Baldwin** and **Lee MacDonald** hold a Zoom meeting on the third Friday of the month at 10:00 AM. Anyone interested 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 is most welcome. We explore many styles of writing and narrative, even poetry, 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! For more information, contact Sherill Baldwin.



CCGS Monthly Meeting Calendar

Tuesday, February 20, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM

Thomas MacEntee

AI and Genealogy: Trouble Ahead?

Tuesday, March 19, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM

Diana Crismon Smith

Researching Sideways / Using the Fan System

Tuesday, April 16, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM

**Anastasia Welsh Perrino, Esq., Barnstable County Register of Probate
and Family Court**

Genealogical Information Found in Probate Records

Tuesday, May 21, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM

Members Share

Rakes, Rogues, and Renegades in the Family

Tuesday, June 18, Annual Meeting 10:00 AM

Thomas MacEntee

After You're Gone; Future Proofing your Genealogy

Tuesday, August 20, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM

Andrew Spooner, Author

Bathsheba Spooner: A Revolutionary Murder Conspiracy

Tuesday, September 17, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM

NEHGS, Awaiting Speaker

Using and Evaluating Mug Books (County Histories) for Family Research

Tuesday, October 15, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM

Open

Saturday, November 16, 10:00 AM

Joint Meeting with Falmouth

Speaker TBD

Tuesday, December 17, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM

Members Share