



www.capecodgenealogy.org

CCGS NEWS

A Publication of the Cape Cod Genealogical Society

**Volume 12 Issue 1
February 2025**

**Please Join us at our Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, February 18, 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 with the registration link a week before the meeting.

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

*Please Welcome Melanie McComb
Federal Land Records:
Bounty Land, Land Entry Files, and
Homesteading*



Throughout its history, the United States has offered several land incentives to encourage settlement and migration westward. In this presentation, we will first discuss federal bounty land warrants for military service between 1775 and 1855 and then delve more deeply into homesteading records including land entry case files, patents, and tract books.

Melanie McComb, Senior Genealogist at NEHGS, assists library visitors, both on-site and online, with their family history research. She is an international lecturer who teaches on a variety of topics.

Melanie holds a B.S. degree from the State University of New York at Oswego. She previously served as the social media coordinator for the NextGen Genealogy Network, a non-profit that creates a community for younger genealogists, where she managed the Facebook and Twitter accounts. She continues her interest in helping younger genealogists get involved at American Ancestors by assisting with educational programs from local schools, scout groups, and universities.

Message from the CCGS President Judy Fenner

Dear Members and Friends,



I am looking out the windows onto a snow covered back yard and wishing I was seeing daffodils and tulips! Hopefully spring is not too far off.

Thanks to our Program Chair and Vice President, Jo Anne Makely, we have had some wonderful presentations and we look forward to more. Summaries of the past two programs are in this newsletter.

I am excited about learning of the value of land records at this month's meeting. Hope to see many of you in person, weather dependent, or on Zoom. If you can, please join us for a Dutch Treat lunch at Scargo Café after the meeting for great conversation and good food. (Drop me an email if you want to reserve a seat at the table.)

Are there any probate volunteers who might help out, to fill the rest of February and all of March? I will be unable to work my shifts until after my hip replacement surgery and receive permission to drive. We work Monday, Wednesday, Friday, from 9:00 AM to noon and learn a lot, while enjoying ourselves.

This Society belongs to ALL of us! Please let me know what you hope to get out of your membership and check out our website at www.capecodgenealogy.org.

Stay warm, dry, healthy and safe.

Judy
president@capecodgenealogy.org



Cape Cod Genealogical Society Board of Directors 2024-2025

OFFICERS

Judy Fenner
Jo Anne Makely
Ed Brown
Kate Peace
Bebe Brock

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Recording Secretary
Corresponding Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS

Walter Murphy Past President
Ann Croston Director at Large
Jeff Schiebe Director at Large
Judy Needham Director at Large
Lynne Zalesak Board Member
Carolyn Weiss Board Member
David Martin Board Member
Bob Oppenheim Board Member
Pat Merriell Board Member

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Walter Murphy
David Martin
TBD
Carolyn Weiss
Pat Merriell
Jo Anne Makely
TBD
Jo Anne Makely
L. Ray Sears
Bob Oppenheim

Library
Education
Membership
Publications
Communications
Program
Financial Review
Youth Services
Technology
Long Range Planning

Mailing address:
Cape Cod Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1394
Harwich, MA 02645

www.capecodgenealogy.org

info@capecodgenealogy.org





Did You Forget?

The due date for payment of your **2025 membership renewal** 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.

Please Welcome New Members

Margaret Bobertz
Bonnie Perry
Kevin and Aimee Hart
Erin Welchman
Starr Bartlett
Colleen Cunningham

INTERESTED IN STEPPING OUT TO DO GENEALOGY??

In previous years, our Society has organized genealogical field trips to such places as:

- New England Historic Genealogical Society in Boston
- Massachusetts Archives, Dorchester
- Boston Public Library
- Cape genealogical libraries such as Eldredge in Chatham, Sturgis in Barnstable Village, Nickerson Archives at CCCC, and Eastham Library
- Salt Lake City Family History Center
- Washington, D.C. (Library of Congress, National Archives, DAR Library)

We are planning to re-initiate some one-day field trips, which could be to Boston for those sites there or a new one, such as the David Lambert Library in Brockton or the Antiquarian Library in Worcester.

Watch this space for the announcement for our first trip since the COVID years, possibly as soon as Spring this year!

GENEALOGICAL COINCIDENCES

Has anything strange or unexplained happened to you when you've been doing your genealogical research? --- coincidences, serendipities, or hard-to-explain chance discoveries?

If so, the Publications Committee is collecting such anecdotes, some of which would be published in future issues of the Journal. The general length limit is one page or less.

For questions and for submitting your stories, contact David Martin at davidmartindr@aol.com.

Final & Fond Farewells

**Ann Beach
July 1, 1946 – November 23, 2024**

**Francis Dorr Robinson
1929 - November 18, 2024**

**Robert A. Paradis
August 20, 1949 – December 18, 2024**

**The Cape Cod Genealogical Society
extends their sympathy and condolences
to the family members.**



Program Summary, December 17, 2024

Written by *David Martin*



Members Share

(Annual Sharing of Genealogical Anecdotes and Discoveries by Members)

Lynne Zalesak, in a presentation entitled, “Returning to My Ancestral Home,” talked about her discovery of details on her 4th great-grandfather, Jedidiah Caswell (1752-1841). She had gone to an attic and discovered a shoebox full of papers, including a Revolutionary War service record for Caswell. (His great-grandfather, in turn, had lived in the Plimoth Colony.) He was born in Middleborough, Massachusetts. He had money-management problems and moved to Vermont in the 1790s. Indigent families in that period were “warned out” of early New England towns when the town did not want to be responsible for supporting them; a record of this warning-out was found. Being indigent was in some cases a pre-requisite for receiving a military pension for which he qualified as a Revolutionary War Veteran. Strangely, however, a record was found for his later sale of land. At another point, he had given the pension to someone in payment for a debt; the pension was to have been returned to Caswell after two years, but the debtor kept it for 20 years. He had wanted it back so that he could move back to Middleborough. Caswell is probably buried in a family plot in a Middleborough cemetery. In tracing ancestries, Lynne learned that one of the naming patterns used in her family was the naming of successive daughters for their respective grandmothers.

Kate Peace, a recently published author of a historical novel, *Green Among the Clovers*, provided a summary of the book’s background story. She had researched her great-great-grandmother, Caroline Lee, who was born in Scotland. The search for the father of Caroline’s second son was a true challenge. She used “Roots Chat Forum” to discuss the problem, and two women provided help. Kate persuaded her father to do the Y-DNA test, which tracks ancestries of males back in time for many generations, and a match was found with a McLaughlin from Northern Ireland (to which many Scottish people had migrated). She also found a marriage record for her great-great-grandmother, who did not marry until three years after the birth of her second child. The mother and children lived in a “Poor House” for a time. The 1872 Census had been mis-transcribed at first, and later analysis proved the connection to a Dominic McLaughlin, her great-great-grandfather. It is thought that when she was working in a thread mill factory, the foreman assaulted her and impregnated her with her first child. To read the full story, the book is available through Amazon.

Jeff Schiebe provided a presentation, “Returning to My Ancient Home,” about a recent visit to his home area of Plymouth, Minnesota, west of Minneapolis. Three different stops proved fruitful. First, a visit to the Hanover

Historical Museum uncovered an auction bill for the sale of the ancestral farm; he also visited a restaurant whose date of origin was in the 19th century; that was followed by a cemetery visit, near the family farm. Jeff recommended that items be donated to local historical museums for their collections, that cemetery visits should always be on the agenda for a research visit, and that one should always try driving through the ancestral town. The second stop was to the Hennepin County Pioneer Museum, which had a fine collection of news clippings among other items. The third visit was to the Plymouth (MN) museum, which contains artifacts donated by Jeff's family, as well as photographs and maps. Among the documents was a payment to his great grandfather for killing gophers (a major nuisance in a farming area), and a bill to be paid as a penalty for operating an illegal still (a "Blind Pig Fund"). Jeff emphasized the great value in visiting ancestral towns and their museums.

Bob Ward discussed the story of Elias Bland, a wealthy landowner in Pennsylvania who came from a banking family in England. The story is about a large tract of land on the New Jersey-New York border, which was divided into three parcels in 1798; one contained

a frame house which was remodeled in the 20th century. Quakers were involved in the transactions. Bob noted that business dealings in America during the period prior to and during the Revolutionary War did maintain some economic ties with England. Bob noted that Bland was also associated with a number of prominent Philadelphia families.

Dave Martin provided a brief genealogical note about the Find-A-Grave program. He recently re-found the gravestone of his 4th great grandfather in Jericho, Vermont, after an absence of 25 years since his previous visit. He thought to check the Find-A-Grave records for added photographs of the site and found that a Find-A-Grave researcher had not only taken photographs but had also provided the parents' names and dates for this 4th great-grandfather; those data conflicted with data that Dave had previously researched to find three further generations in Scotland, using the Old Parochial Registers. Contacting the Find-A-Grave researcher found the documentation used by her—a family bible kept in a local historical society, about which Dave had had no knowledge. The transcription of the lineage from that bible indicated an entirely different line of descent, which is now being verified.

Genealogy.

**In the end,
it's all relative.**

Program Summary, January 21, 2025

Written by *David Martin*



Kate Peace **Persevere! Finding the Impossible Ancestor,** **With or Without DNA**

The Society enjoyed a presentation by Society Secretary Kate Peace on the topic of her long and eventually successful search for the ancestry of her paternal great-great-grandfather. She described various methodologies used to solve this 40-year challenge, and has written a historical novel about the process.

The following sources of initial data that she had available were:

- Her grandfather was orphaned at age 4, and went to an orphanage in 1910
- Ancestors worked in thread mills in Scotland and silk mills in New Jersey
- A female ancestor was listed in the Scottish census with her married, rather than maiden name
- Spelling errors on names were found in the census
- A supposed third cousin was found to share no DNA with Kate
- No fitting name existed on the ship manifest for the ship on which an ancestor immigrated to the United States
- Multiple possible ancestors, identified through DNA, had the same surname
- Ancestors who were supposedly Scottish were living in Northern Ireland

Through careful research using a variety of sources and careful process of elimination, Kate was able to use the available data, resolve apparent contradictions, and prove the identity of her great-great-grandfather. She used the Find-a-Grave website to identify headstones in cemeteries. She used RootsChat as a forum for Great Britain (and now for many other countries) for ideas from fellow researchers, leading her to then use, among others, the site Scotland's People.

She matched an older with a younger photograph of a building that was important to the lives of the ancestors, thus proving the existence of that building at a later time. She was able to get a friend to check the Paisley (Scotland) Archives where she found ledgers related to residency in "Poor Houses." She checked "Industrial School" student lists. These schools were for boys who were displaced, or indigent without a family, or had engaged in criminal behavior. She found that orphanages gradually became foster homes, and her ancestor was found to have lived in a foster home, including the names of the foster home "parents."

In addition, she found that the missing name on a list was actually there, but had been significantly abbreviated. The ship manifest (the ship *Nebraska*) did not list the ancestor passenger by his original name because his foster mother signed him in using her surname so as not to arouse suspicion about the surname of the adult being different from that of an accompanying child. It was also found that some Northern Ireland people took jobs in the Scottish mills.

Further DNA testing indicated that there were two groups of those using the McLaughlin surname, which explained why her supposed third cousin did not share DNA with Kate.

Through all of these activities, Kate was able to establish her line to her great-great-grandfather. She has authored a book, *Green Among the Clovers*, written by the pen name of Tamsen Taylor and copies of the book are available from Kate through her email address of ladykatharine@gmail.com or through Amazon. Kate also recommended that readers listen to the song *I Will Find You*, available on YouTube. She is in the process of writing a second historical novel.

Resources used and recommended by Kate were:

- Find-a-Grave
- RootsChat (www.rootschat.com)

- Family Tree DNA (<https://www.familytreedna.com>)
- Scotland's People (<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>)
- RootsIreland (<http://www.rootsireland.ie>)
- International Society of Genetic Genealogy Wiki (https://isogg.org/wiki/Autosomal_DNA_Statistics)
- Relatedness Calculator (<http://apps.nolanlawson.com/relatedness-calculator>)
- Cousin Calculator (<http://www.cousincountry.com/site/cpa/ge.asp>)

Probate Project

Remember, we have a volunteer Probate Project going on. A group has been meeting at the Barnstable County Courthouse and preparing the 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

**Job Requirements:
the ability to fold and unfold paper.**



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. While membership in the SIGs is restricted to members of the Society, guests just wanting to see what the Society is all about or who are interested in a particular topic are always welcome. Use the email links below to request a link if you want to attend a Zoom meeting. Any meeting held at the Brewster Ladies' Library is open to the public.

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. Out of consideration for the members that have joined the group from off-Cape locations, our meetings will continue to be hybrid meetings or only on Zoom. Hybrid meetings are held 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. If it involves a computer and it can benefit your genealogy, it's a topic that we are likely to discuss. The SIG has a rich collection of meeting handouts, website listings and other resources available to its members.

In addition, items of interest are routinely posted on the Computer SIG's Facebook Group site. Find it at the Cape Cod Genealogical Society Computer SIG <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CCGS.ComputerSig>. Members of the Society are invited to join.

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

Bob Oppenheim hosts a monthly hybrid meeting (Zoom and in-person) on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM (except in July, August and September). The meeting is held at the Brewster Ladies’ Library in the upstairs auditorium when it is available, otherwise in the downstairs meeting room. Members discuss their genealogy with an emphasis on methodologies for gathering information about the life and times of their German ancestors, along with a smattering of tales about what they have learned.

In addition, items of interest are routinely posted on the German SIG’s Facebook Group site. Find it at the Cape Cod Genealogical Society German SIG <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CCGS.GermanSIG>. Members of the Society are invited to join.

Irish Research

irishresearchSIG@capecodgenealogy.org

Leader **Pat Flaherty** holds a Zoom or in-person meeting every three months. 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.

The Society has recently added two new SIG groups.



Family Tree Maker (FTM) Users Group

computerusersSIG@capecodgenealogy.org

Bob Oppenheim hosts a meeting of users of this popular genealogical software application on the fourth Tuesday of each month, from 10:00 AM to 12 Noon. At this time, it is a Zoom-only meeting. Members of the Group have the option of joining a session or not, depending on whether they have questions to ask or techniques to share. The Group also shares a growing library of FTM solutions to common problems, links to helpful videos, and videos of its past meetings.

Roots Magic Users Group

davidmartindr@aol.com

David Martin hosts the meeting toward the end of the month. This is a Zoom-only meeting. Discussion includes sharing challenges, solving problems, and discussing new developments produced by the Roots Magic company.

CCGS Calendar

Tuesday, **February 18**, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM
Melanie McComb
Federal Land Records

Wednesday, **March 12**, Board Meeting, 2:00 PM
(Note change to second Wednesday of the month)

Tuesday, **March 18**, Monthly Meeting 10:00 AM
Wampanoags and Settlers of Cape Cod
Marcus Hendricks and Bob Kelley

Wednesday, **April 2**, Board Meeting, 2:00 PM

Tuesday, **April 15**, Monthly Meeting, 10:00 AM
Volunteer Appreciation
Nickerson Family Association – Archeological Investigations
Dan Zoto

Wednesday, **May 7**, Board Meeting, 2:00 PM

Tuesday, **May 20**, Monthly Meeting, 10:00 AM
The American Revolution on the Cape
David Martin

Wednesday, **June 4**, Board Meeting, 2:00 PM

Tuesday, **June 17**, Monthly Meeting, 10:00 AM
Researching your Ancestor's Medical Records
Melanie McComb