

The
Hancock Historian

Newsletter of the
Hancock County Genealogical Society

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September 2021

HANCOCK COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MINUTES
July 10, 2021

The July meeting took place at the Hancock Historical Society Museum in Hancock, Maine. This was our first in-person meeting in 16 months because of COVID. Six members were in attendance.

The minutes of the June 2021 meeting and the treasurer's report were read and accepted. The rest of the meeting was taken up brainstorming on possible topics for a 2022 conference. Among the possibilities raised were:

1. A demonstration of GIS mapping, federal, state, & county collections.
2. Having a panel discussion of Hancock County historical societies.
3. Having people from some of the following organizations present:
 - a. Machias Historical & Genealogical Society
 - b. Millinocket Historical Society
 - c. MDI Trust to talk about combining all collections. Charlene will find out details.
 - d. Sullivan-Sorrento Historical Society; Raina is involved
 - e. Castine Historical Society
 - f. Franklin Historical Society and getting children involved; Linda Dinsmore.
 - g. Homeschooling representatives.
 - h. Medical organizations; physicians could talk about diseases in the past.
 - i. Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport; Kevin Johnson could talk about glass-plate negatives.
4. Making collections more available?
5. Could we have Web presentations?
6. Have a meeting with all the historical societies. Check Cyndi's list for Hancock County.
7. Collect all Hancock County Genealogical Society papers at the Ellsworth Public Library. It would be a good resource.

A discussion was held about cancelling the September meeting since it falls on the same day as the MGS meeting.

The meeting adjourned and members had an opportunity to tour the museum that opened in June of 2021.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene Fox Clemons, Secretary

HANCOCK COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MINUTES
14 AUGUST 2021

The August 2021 meeting of Hancock Genealogical Society met via Zoom at 10 am, Saturday August 14, 2021 with 7 members attending. President Ralph Harris presided.

Minutes of the July 10th meeting were read and approved. There was no treasurer's report.

Wayne said the next newsletter would come out in September and invited submissions and queries from members.

The balance of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of the possible conference in June 2022. It was decided to put that on hold due to the resurgence of COVID and uncertainty of what the future might hold.

The discussion went on concerning our web page and being more active in updating it. Holly volunteered to work with Wayne on that. It was also suggested that we interview people involved with various historical societies and libraries in the area to find out what genealogical information they have in their collections, filming the interviews to air on the webpage or a YouTube channel.

Subjects and speakers for future programs were discussed. It was decided to have a program at least once a quarter with no business meeting held that day beginning in January 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35am.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene Clemons, Secretary

HANCOCK COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MINUTES
11 SEPTEMBER 2021

The September meeting via Zoom was called to order by President Ralph Harris at 10:08 am with 11 members and various cats (including the newest addition, Moose, a 10-week-old Maine Coon Cat with double paws belonging to Holly Hendricks) present.

Minutes of the August 2021 meeting were read and accepted.

The Treasurer reported income in July of \$30.00 in dues, \$25.00 in donations and \$.03 interest. In August, there was one expenditure of \$6.60 for stamps and income of \$.03 interest. This left a balance at the end of August of \$3,558.26. The report was accepted as read.

Wayne (wayne@mrlanguage.com) requested submissions for the newsletter by Sept. 21. Wayne is updating his email list for membership with Charlene.

Ralph reported the possibility of our web page becoming a part of the new Maine Genealogical Society web page as MGS continues working on the upgrade. Currently, two chapters have their web pages attached on the old MGS web page and they are being moved over. Holly and Wayne will continue working on updating and refreshing our web page until such time as we know what will happen with the MGS site or possibly a new host.

Patty Pinkham talked about some journals she has been transcribing. Shannon Byer explained her project identifying unclaimed persons who have died in Massachusetts that she is working on while working towards genealogical certification. Various Zoom meetings from other organizations around the state and New England were discussed. Wayne Smith spoke about the Diane Southard DNA classes he had recently taken.

Suggestions for speakers beginning with the January meeting were Bill Fogle from the Ellsworth Historical Society and Raney Bench from the MDI Trust. The goal for 2022 is to have a speaker the first meeting of each quarter with no business meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 am and members went on to discuss projects they are working on and the 1950 census to be released next April. They helped each other with various questions.

The discussion ended at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene Fox Clemons
Secretary

From the Library

October 2021

Welcome to autumn in Downeast Maine. The nights are longer and cooler, the days sunny and comfortably warm, and the trees are putting on their autumn finery. At the library we are gearing up for the winter ahead and the increase in genealogy questions and researchers.

Some folks are coming into the library in person to do research, but many others are calling or emailing for information. Remember you DO NOT need a library card to use the Whitmore Collection or computers or read a newspaper or magazine. Library cards are only necessary if you wish to check out an item. Masks are still required inside the building and are available at the door if you forget yours.

We have recently added another bookcase to alleviate some of our space issues so the collection is much neater than it has been. Recently we purchased the 12th volume of *Maine Families in 1790* and the *Lincoln County Index to Deeds*, both publications of the Maine Genealogical Society. The *Vital Records of Jefferson, Maine* will be out this month and we will purchase that also. Also in the works is a new computer for the Whitmore Collection. We will be operating with only one computer in that area for the time being, allowing for social distancing and giving us a faster more up-to-date computer. Remember: we still have Ancestry.com and New England Historic Genealogical Society's American Ancestors available for your use.

See you at the library,

Charlene

President's Corner

Welcome to fall and the snow will soon follow. It's time to round up and complete your outside genealogy information from cemeteries, etc. Start gathering up your records, pictures and get ready to complete the loose ends during the winter months. And start making a to-do list for summer that will soon be here.

Make sure you are making citations, so that you and others will be able to find the sources that you used in the future.

Webinars on GoToMeeting and Zoom are plentiful and a lot of them are free for the asking. Reach out and search. Many libraries in Maine and other states have webinars on research and history. Also, some genealogical societies have free webinars. Here are a few sites to consider: the Maine State Library, the Utah Genealogical Society, the Family History Center, Legacy (*familytreewebinars.com*), and the Lee County Library in Florida, just to name a few.

The Maine Genealogical Society has launched a refreshed website for its members. It's cleaner, faster, and updated. You can view it at *Maineroots.org*.

Ralph H.

Genealogy and Unclaimed Persons: A Story of Closure

By Shannon Byers, September 11, 2021

[Note: * indicates that names have been changed to protect identities.]

In 2014, law enforcement responded to a call from a landlord who was concerned about a tenant. Upon arrival, officers found 84-year-old Patricia Balle* deceased from natural causes. They searched the apartment for details about relatives and searched their databases. Unable to locate any next of kin, they delivered her body to the local funeral home and got busy with the next emergency call. The funeral home director did some searching too, but could not find her next of kin. Patricia was deemed an Unclaimed Person. Her identity was known, but her family could not be found.

The medical examiner uploaded her case information into NamUs, a database with information on missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons. Patricia's information is one of over 11,000 unclaimed persons currently listed on NamUs.

In 2021, I randomly selected Patricia's case to work on to develop my genealogical research skills. Her parents had immigrated from Greece to Maine and had 6 children. Patricia, known to her family as "Lola," moved to Massachusetts to live with her aunt and uncle to help them run their small candy store. Lola spoke English, and this was an asset to her Greek speaking aunt and uncle. Lola never married and did not have

children. Her siblings remained in Maine to help on the family farm. Years passed and they lost contact with Lola.

Using traditional genealogical methods, I pieced together Lola's family tree back to her grandparents and forward to her nieces and nephews. Slowly I identified who was still living and gathered their contact information. Her family was contacted, and her younger sister, now about 85 years old, was grateful to have closure and had always wondered what happened to her sister.

This is just one example of an unclaimed person and how genealogists can contribute to solving these cases. The work can be meaningful and challenging. In some cases, the family is relieved to have closure about their loved one. However, in some cases the family has reasons for not claiming the person. For example, the person may be estranged from the family for a variety of reasons, or the family may lack financial resources to deal with the body. Researchers need to be prepared to understand the sensitivity of these cases and know that may not all have happy endings.

I am developing an organization called NOKfinders (Next Of Kin finders) that will bring together students, volunteers, and experts to solve these cases. I will be sharing more information about unclaimed persons and NOKfinders at a future HCGS meeting. If you are interested in learning more or being involved, please reach out.

About the author: Shannon Byers MS, MBA holds a certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University, completed the Forensic Genealogy course at SLIG, and the Advanced Forensic Genealogy course at GRIP. Shannon can be reached at swoodbyers@gmail.com.

Unclaimed Persons Resources:

<https://namus.nij.ojp.gov/>

Education Resources:

<https://genealogyonline.bu.edu/certificate>

<https://slig.ugagenealogy.org/index.php>

<https://www.gripitt.org/>



Getting Real with Naming Patterns

I've been following some genealogy discussions on mailing lists recently and noticed that many genealogists fall into the trap of taking sides on a question - sides that are emphatically one way or another, with no middle ground or room for a "Maybe...."

One of the discussions started over a seemingly simple question -- were there naming patterns for children in the 1800s in [fill in blank with any country].

Subscribers began to jump in with their opinions - all either YES or NO with reasons or rationale or examples to support their YES or NO stance.

But no one jumped in with "MAYBE.... SOMETIMES... YES BUT...."

Let's get real! Naming patterns existed.

Were they identical in all cultures? No

Were they identical in all centuries? No.

Were they always used? No.

It's easy to forget that our ancestors were living breathing people, just as we are. They fought, they loved, they cried, they laughed, they had good days, they had bad days, and so on.

Even if there are established naming patterns that are used 99.9% of the time (as is the case with the [Dutch who settled New Netherland, now New York](#) in 1600s) --- as researchers we must keep an open mind as to whether or not the customs might not have been followed

Maybe *your* ancestor fought with his father or mother and vowed to never name a child after him or her.

Maybe *your* ancestor was a free spirit and loved the name Lancelot even though the first born male in her family had been called James for the last 10 generations

Maybe your ancestor wanted to cozy up to his rich great uncle so he named his first born son after that person instead of his father.... and gave his second born his father's name.

If you find 7 children in a family and 6 are named after known family members (paternal grandparents, maternal grandparents, aunts, uncles...) then there is a good chance that the 7th was also named after a family member - but it's not guaranteed, they might have named that child after a good friend - or an important contemporary person or a benefactor.

On the opposite side of the fence, you may be trying to find parents' names. You spot what looks like a naming pattern of children which fits with the parents you are fairly confident are the correct parents. But one parent's name is missing from the pattern... That's not the time to toss out your theory! There may be a missing child, one whose existence you aren't aware of, or who died. And that child may be the missing link, named after that one parent who is missing from the pattern.

So, use Naming Patterns as a guide. That's all it is, it is not a set of rules set in stone

Hancock County Genealogical Society 2022 Membership Application

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Families/Areas being researched: _____

Please list any queries that you have:

Dues for 2022: \$10.00 per individual or family: _____

Additional tax-deductible contribution: _____

Total enclosed: _____

Please print out this form and mail it with your payment to:

Hancock County Genealogical Society
c/o Charlene Clemons
96 Mud Creek Rd.
Hancock, ME 04604



Please check one of the following:

I give permission for my contact info to be shared with Society members.

Please do not share my contact info.

Monthly meetings are held the 2nd Saturday of each month at 10:00 A.M. except in December. Until the Covid-19 pandemic is over, all meetings are being held via Zoom. Meetings are open to all those who have paid their dues for the current year. Invitations to the Zoom sessions will be sent out a few days before each meeting.

Please remember to notify Charlene of any email or address changes at:

hcgsmembership@yahoo.com

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