Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, Inc.
Monthly Newsletter

# Past Times

Volume 18 Issue 3

November 2026

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## New Members

**Bristol**
Susan Leavitt

**Middlesex**
Joan Hilton
Christine Ortiz

**Worcester**
Belle Croteau-Lutton

## Annual Meeting

**Saturday, November 7th**
**9:00 am to 4:00 pm**
**John Boyle O'Reilly Hall**
**17 Willow St, Westborough**

### Registration ends October 30th

Please join us at a new location for this year's Annual Meeting. Our speakers will be **Sharon Inglis,** Vice President of Publishing at NEHGS, who will be presenting *Ten Steps to Writing & Publishing Your Family History* and **Carol Ansel,** Library Director at Godfrey Memorial Library, who will be presenting *Resources of the Godfrey Memorial Library with emphasis on Massachusetts*.

We'll begin the day at 9:00 with Check in and breakfast offerings. There will be presentations throughout the day, with a break at noon for lunch. We will end the day with the Door Prize drawings.

**Directions:**

From North or South take 495 to Exit 59B, this is Route 9 West towards Worcester. In 1.9 Miles turn left at the lights on Lyman St. In .4 miles turn right on Rte 30 (Main St). In .5 miles turn right on Willow St, just before the railroad bridge.

From West take Route 9 East towards Boston. In Westborough, take a right on Route 135 in 1.9 Miles take for 4th exit off the Rotary onto East Main St. Take a left just after you go under the railroad bridge.

**If you have any questions, please email Diane Laferriere at vicepresident@msoginc.org**

# President's Message

In November the *Dia de los Mertos* (or Day of the Dead) is celebrated. This holiday originated in Mexico but is popular in many other Latin American countries. Celebrations of this holiday often involve family or friends sharing stories (sometimes humorous) about family members who have passed away. The holiday's events can also include visits to cemeteries and the building of altars to share food and drinks with the deceased.

I recently found an article on the FamilySearch Blog from 2023 which suggested activities to honor our ancestors on the Day of the Dead. Some ideas included sharing stories about our ancestors with living family members. This is, of course, something genealogists will frequently undertake even if their own family has no interest in hearing them. Other suggestions include taking pictures of tombstones and then submitting onto websites like *BillionGraves*. Still another recommended activity from the blog was to scan photographs of ancestors and add them to an online family tree.

While we may not visit a cemetery or build altars to share a meal our ancestors, genealogists often perform similar activities almost every day to those suggested above. Our ongoing efforts to preserve and share stories about our deceased relatives allow us to honor them in a similar manner to those who participate in celebrations of the Day of the Dead.

This November is also when MSOG finalizes the elections for the State Board. I want to acknowledge two individuals who are leaving the Board at the end of their terms. Anne Borg and Paul Bruggemann both made tremendous contributions as Recording Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, during the past term. Both have opted to step down but will be sorely missed. We are excited to welcome the newly elected board members replacing them.

Our November programs include:

- November 3rd has the Book Club reviewing *American Passage: The History of Ellis Island.*
- November 7th will be the Annual Meeting for MSOG.
- The MSOG webinar on the 12th, features Jennifer Zinck to discuss *Resolving Conflict: A Key to Sound Genealogical Conclusions*.
- The Middlesex Chapter hosts David Allen Lambert on November 18th to discuss *Military and Pension Files*.
- On November 21st, Merrimack Valley's own Bonnie Croteau offers a talk on the subject of the *DAR Genealogical Research System*.
- Also on the 21st, the Bristol Chapter hosts Danielle Rose on a program called *Researching Black Patriots and Loyalists*.

Hope to see everyone at the Annual Meeting and thanks again for being a member of MSOG!

Terry

# November 2026 MSOG Meetings-at-a Glance

To preregister for these events: https://msoginc.org/eventListings.php?nm=107

## MSOG Book Club

Tuesday, November 3
7:00 p.m.
*Virtual Only*
*American Passage:*
*The History of Ellis Island*
by
Vincent J. Cannato

**MSOG Members-only event**

## MSOG Webinar

Thursday, November 12
7:00 p.m.
*Virtual Only*
**Jennifer Zinck**
Presents
*Resolving Conflict: A Key to Sound Genealogical Conclusions*

**MSOG Members-only event**

## Middlesex

**Wednesday**, November 18
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
*Virtual Only*
**David Allen Lambert**
Presents
*Military and Pension Files*

**This meeting is open to the public**

## Worcester

No meeting this month due to the Annual Meeting being on November 7th

## Bristol

Saturday, November 21
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Attend in person or virtually via Zoom
**Danielle Rose**
Presents
*Researching Black Patriots and Loyalists During the Revolutionary Era*

Somerset Public Library
1464 County St, Somerset, MA

**This meeting is open to the public**.

## Merrimack Valley

Saturday, November 21
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Attend in person or virtually via Zoom
**Bonnie Croteau**
Presents
*More Than Revolutionary Ancestors: Exploring the DAR's Genealogical Research System*

Georgetown Peabody Library
2 Maple St. Georgetown, MA

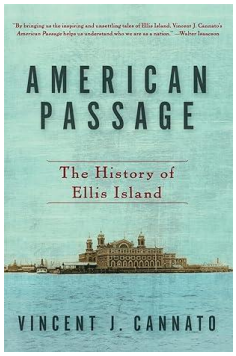
**This meeting is open to the public.**

## Genealogy Discussion Group

Monday, November 30 at 7:00 p.m.
Virtual Only
**This meeting is open to the public.**

# MSOG Members-Only

**For More Information: https://msoginc.org**




## Members-Only Book Club

Tuesday, November 3 at 7:00 p.m.

*Virtual Only*

***American Passage: The History of Ellis Island***

By Vincent J. Cannato

For most of New York's early history, Ellis Island had been an obscure little island that barely held itself above high tide. Today the small island stands alongside Plymouth Rock in our nation's founding mythology as the place where many of our ancestors first touched American soil.

American Passage captures a time and a place unparalleled in American immigration and history, and articulates the dramatic and bittersweet accounts of the immigrants, officials, interpreters, and social reformers who all played an important role in Ellis Island's chronicle. In this sweeping, often heart-wrenching epic, Vincent J. Cannato reveals that the history of Ellis Island is ultimately the story of what it means to be an American. (Amazon Review)

**You must be logged in as a Member to register for the Book Club**
**https://www.msoginc.org/members.php**

**Go to "Event Registration" to register for the book club.**

New Member Benefit

for a limited time Heritage Books, Inc is offering

MSOG Members a 15% Discount on any order placed at

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Just use code MSOG15

# MSOG Members-Only

**For More Information: https://msoginc.org**



## Members-Only Webinar

Thursday, November 12 at 7:00 p.m.
*Virtual Only*

**Jennifer Zinck**
presents

***Resolving Conflict: A Key to Sound Genealogical Conclusions***

What happens when all evidence cannot possibly be correct? The process of assembling evidence may reveal inconsistencies and the Genealogical Proof Standard emphasizes that resolving conflict is essential for credible conclusions. Through case examples, this lecture will help genealogists recognize conflicts and provide strategies to resolve them in order to build family stories that are authentic and accurate.

**Jennifer Zinck** is a professional genealogist, writer, editor, and educator who combines evidence-based research with a genuine enthusiasm for uncovering the past. She holds the Certified Genealogist® and Certified Genealogical Lecturer® credentials from the Board for Certification of Genealogists and the Accredited Genealogist® and Accredited Genealogist Lecturer™ credentials from ICAPGen. Jennifer specializes in New England research—especially Connecticut—and the analysis and interpretation of DNA evidence. She serves as president of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council; as a trustee of the Board for Certification of Genealogists and its representative to the Records Preservation and Access Coalition; and as a member of the Board of Governors of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists and editor of The Connecticut Nutmegger.

**You must be logged in as a Member to register for the Webinar**
**https://www.msoginc.org/members.php**

**Go to "Event Registration" to register for the Webinar**

# MSOG Chapter Meeting

**For More Information: https://msoginc.org**

## Middlesex Meeting



**Wednesday,** November 18
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Attend virtually via Zoom

**David Allen Lambert**
presents

### *Military and Pension Files*

The military records at the National Archives detail service given between 1775 and 1916. We will discuss how to locate, access, and utilize compiled service records, pension applications, and other resources that detail your veteran ancestor's service. We will also discuss briefly more recent records available through the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis (WWI–present).

**David Allen Lambert**, Chief Genealogist, has been on the staff of American Ancestors/NEHGS since 1993 and is an internationally recognized speaker on the topics of genealogy and history. He has authored many articles in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, the New Hampshire Genealogical Record, Rhode Island Roots, Mayflower Descendant, and American Ancestors magazine; and is the author of eleven books including A Guide to Massachusetts Cemeteries and Vital Records of Stoughton, Massachusetts, to the end of the year 1850.

David is an elected Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston, Mass., and a life member of the New Hampshire Society of the Cincinnati and the General Society of the War of 1812. David also serves as the tribal genealogist for the Massachusett Tribe at Punkapoag in Massachusetts.

His areas of expertise include New England and Atlantic Canadian records of the 17th through 21st century; American and international military records; DNA research; and Native American and African American genealogical research in New England.

**7:00-7:30 pm: Short business meeting and open discussion**
**7:30 pm: Program begins**

**Those who wish to attend virtually, should pre-register at msoginc.org—Events.**
**https://msoginc.org/eventListings.php?nm=107**

# MSOG Chapter Meeting

**For More Information: https://msoginc.org**



## Bristol Meeting

Saturday, November 21
12:00 pm to 1:00 pm
Attend in Person or virtually via Zoom

**Danielle Rose,**
**10 Million Names Volunteer Manager**
presents

***Researching Black Patriots and Loyalists During the Revolutionary Era***

The American War of Independence was not only a fight for freedom from a tyrannical world superpower. For the thousands of Black soldiers who fought for the patriot cause, and even more—tens of thousands—for the Loyalists, emancipation was on the line. In this lecture, 10 Million Names Volunteer Manager Danielle Rose will provide a brief history of Black soldiers during the Revolutionary War and their motivations for joining either side; and discuss several resources, records, and strategies for piecing together the service and stories of individuals.

**Danielle Rose** oversees the many dedicated volunteers who assist with creating database content for the 10 Million Names Project. She also collaborates with partner organizations and independent researchers who share content with the project. Danielle frequently participates in American Ancestors educational programs by providing lectures on African American genealogy. Prior to joining American Ancestors, Danielle worked with the National Parks of Boston where she researched the service and lives of Black Patriots in the Revolutionary War. She also worked as a museum educator in Miami, Florida before relocating to Boston. Danielle holds a B.A. in History from the University of Florida and M.A. in Public History from Northeastern University.

**Somerset Public Library** 1464 County St., Somerset, MA 02726
Business Meeting 11:00-11:30 am
Member Sharing 11:30-11:55 am
**Presentation Begins at Noon.**
This program is FREE and OPEN to the Public
**For more information contact: bristol@msoginc.org**
**Schedule of Events Available at: https://msoginc.org**

**Those who wish to attend virtually, should pre-register at msoginc.org—Events.**
**https://msoginc.org/eventListings.php?nm=107**

# MSOG Chapter Meeting

**For More Information: https://msoginc.org**

## Merrimack Valley Meeting



Saturday, November 21
10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Attend in Person or virtually via Zoom

**Bonnie Croteau**
presents

***More Than Revolutionary Ancestors: Exploring the DAR's Genealogical Research System***

Explore the Daughters of the American Revolution's Genealogical Research System (GRS) and discover how its many databases and resources can enhance your genealogy research. This guided tour will cover the major parts of the GRS, including the Ancestor and Descendants Searches, Genealogical Records Committee resources, and the new 250 for the 250th databases, released in 2026. Learn how to search effectively and uncover valuable clues in this often-overlooked research resource.

Bonnie Croteau is a genealogist with over thirty years of research experience, with specialties in Massachusetts and Revolutionary War Patriot research. She serves as a Chapter Registrar for the Daughters of the American Revolution and Merrimack Valley Chapter Treasurer for the Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, Inc. Additional information on genealogy research, recent projects, and family history can be found on her website, www.beyondthetreegenealogy.com.

Georgetown Peabody Library
2 Maple St
Georgetown, MA

This program is FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**Those who wish to attend virtually, should pre-register at msoginc.org—Events.**
**https://msoginc.org/eventListings.php?nm=107**

# Discounts for MSOG Members





*Explore billions of family history records not available on other sites. You'll have unlimited access to:*

- Over 16,000 newspapers from big cities and small towns across all 50 states
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MSOG members: use code **MSOG15** for 15% off, any Evidentia product, through November 30, 2026.

Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, Inc.
PO Box 215, Ashland, MA 01721-0215

**Statement of Purpose**

MSOG's mission is to promote and encourage Massachusetts genealogical research at all levels – beginner, amateur, and professional. MSOG is a Massachusetts nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. The corporation was formed for the following reasons:

- To bring together all persons interested in genealogy – beginner, amateur, and professional.
- To set standards on conduct, to ensure public access to records, to provide education in genealogical research.
- To act in whatever manner needed to promote genealogy and family history.
- To bring together families both past and present. (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 6 June 1975)

**Membership Information**

Membership is from September 1 to August 31, with the membership renewal period beginning each July 1.
INDIVIDUAL dues are $30 per year. FAMILY dues are $40 per year.

State Officers and Board Members 2025-2027 For more information go to https://msoginc.org/about.php

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|---|---|---|---|
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| *Past Times* Editor | Diane Laferriere | Worcester President | Greg Paris |

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