

THE PENNSYLVANIA MAYFLOWER

www.sail1620.org

Spring/Summer 2025

VOLUME XXXVIII ISSUE NO 1

**SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER
DESCENDANTS IN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF
PENNSYLVANIA (SMDPA)**

Find us on Facebook



Sharyn Davis, Co-Editor
smdpa-newsletter@sail1620.org

Pam Palchowski, Co-Editor and Chair
smdpa-newsletter@sail1620.org

Governor's Message

**By: Governor James Reed
Campbell Jr.**



*Dear James, here we are 13 months later, and I wanted to update you on my own Mayflower adventure. Thus far, I have verified three passengers on my mother's side, William and Mary Brewster and Issac Allerton, and have received certificates from the Mayflower Society. I also just received the certificate for Stephen Hopkins on my dad's side and am submitting another supplemental application for his daughter Constance. **I never dreamed of having Mayflower ancestors and it is all due to the information you had on Ancestry that caught my attention.** I wanted to thank you for that, and I am wishing you a belated Happy New Year. Kind regards, Pat*

I have had nothing but excellent experiences since joining SMDNJ in 2014 and then SMDDE and SMDPA in 2019. I have made lasting friendships in all three Member Societies, working with great people. I have attended countless events in good company with prominent speakers at interesting locations. (Along the way, I may have gained a few pounds from the many three-course lunches!) I have enjoyed genealogical travels to place my feet in the footsteps of my "Mayflower" ancestors, which always feels profound. And I have sparked a new love of colonial history with shelves of engaging nonfiction books that I am slowly working my way through.

Given such richness, I always thought, "Why not share these experiences with others?" My first targets were direct family: parents, siblings, and their children, as well as first cousins and their children. Yet through Ancestry.com, I have also sought out distant cousins I never knew to spread the good news.

Searching on almost any ancestor Profile on Ancestry.com and viewing the results of family trees will yield pages of possible cousins. For example, a remarkable 3,031 family trees contain my maternal fourth great-grandmother on my "Mayflower" line, an ancestor I normally would have considered obscure.

To help attract and educate these possible cousins, I began laying down electronic "breadcrumbs" by setting up the ancestor Profiles on my "Mayflower" line. First, I uploaded to my ancestor's Gallery an image of an SMD medal, titling it

"Society of Mayflower Descendants" (Upload media). I also captioned this image with the name of my "Mayflower" ancestor and details of my SMD membership. Next, I uploaded this medal as my ancestor's Profile Image (Choose profile image). Thus, any search result that yields this "Mayflower" ancestor of mine, including pictures, family trees, and DNA matches, will prominently display this SMD medal.

Optionally, I took things a bit further. Adding to the Galleries of my deceased "Mayflower" ancestors, I uploaded MS Word files of the relevant references that SMD applicants may need for their submissions. So whenever possible cousins message me directly through Ancestry.com, I can simply direct them to these Galleries and invite them to download whatever they may need.

Of course, this evangelization method is largely passive, relying on the search results of others to prompt inquiries. For a more active method, you could click on the individual family trees appearing in your search results to view how far back their lines extended – perhaps all the way to your "Mayflower" ancestor in common. Then, you could use Ancestry.com's messaging function to alert them to this potential "Mayflower" connection that could qualify them for SMD membership. But I caution that there are dos and don'ts to this active approach, which I will detail in a later Governor's Message.

In the 10 years I have been leaving SMD-oriented hints on Ancestry.com, I have heard back from quite a few distant cousins who successfully applied for SMD membership, including "Pat" above. These acceptances have been very rewarding for me and, in several cases, created new friendships. I am pleased to have made this meaningful difference in people's lives, and I invite you to consider doing a similar promotion on Ancestry.com and elsewhere online.

The Pennsylvania Mayflower - Photo Spotlight SMDMD's COMPACT DAY 2024



Held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Annapolis, Annapolis, MD, Nov. 24, 2025.

Governor James Campbell, SMDPA

Governor Suzy T. Mulligan, SMDDC

Governor General Lisa H. Pennington, Esq., GSMD

Governor Daniel J. Earnshaw, SMDMD

SMDPA – Spring and Summer Events 2025 **All Members, Family, and Friends are Invited**

To kick off an exceptionally active year for social events, we are pleased to announce that registrations are now open for SMDPA's popular offerings: our Annual Spring meeting and summer events! To view details and to register conveniently online, please visit SMDPA's website, www.sail1620.org, and click on "Future Meetings/Events" for more information.

SMDPA Spring BOA/Member Meeting and Luncheon in Eastern PA



Cameron Estate Inn & Restaurant in Mount Joy

SMDPA MEMBERS AND GUESTS: Please join us on April 12th for SMDPA's Annual Members Meeting at the Cameron Inn Estate & Restaurant (circa 1805), located in pastoral Lancaster County at 1855 Mansion Ln., Mount Joy, PA 17552. Our venue is handicapped accessible, and parking is free onsite.

A cash bar is available starting at noon. The Luncheon will be served at 12:30 p.m., followed by a prominent national speaker! Our menu will consist of bread and homemade butters, beverages, and:

Spring mix greens with balsamic vinaigrette, almonds, and mandarin oranges

Your choice of entrée:

- Pesto-crusted chicken with apricot-granola brie gratin
- Caramelized onion-crusted salmon filet with smoked tomato quiche
- Pasta Primavera: Cavatappi pasta, asparagus, tomatoes, broccoli, parmesan cheese, pesto cream sauce

Optional children's menu: chicken tenders and French fries

Limoncello raspberry cake

Pricing is \$45 per adult, \$20 for Juniors, \$10 per child (up to 10 years).

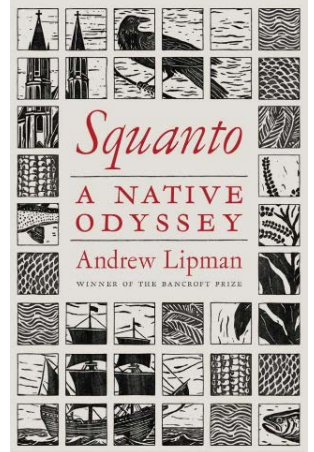
The registration deadline is Friday, April 4. For questions, please contact SMDPA Governor James Campbell at smdpa-governor@sail1620.org.

OUR SPEAKER: Andrew C. Lipman is a historian of Early America. His research interests include the Atlantic World, early America, Native Americans, violence, technology, and the environment. Lipman's current book, *Squanto: A Native Odyssey* (Yale University Press), was released last year to wide acclaim, including the *Wall Street Journal's* "12 Books to Read: The Best Reviews of September."



WEEKEND TRAVEL: For those interested, the Cameron Inn Estate & Restaurant offers deluxe lodging, making it an excellent base for a weekend trip for the whole family. Alternative lodgings in Mount Joy, Manheim, and Elizabeth include affordable chain hotels plus local bed-and-breakfasts. The closest attractions include

the Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre, Nissley Vineyards, National Watch and Clock Museum, Turkey Hill Experience, Mount Hope Estate & Winery, Wolf Sanctuary of Pennsylvania, plus all that Lancaster and Amish country have to offer. For tourism information, visit Discover Lancaster (links to <https://www.discoverlancaster.com/things-to-do>)



Slate of Officers and BOA

By: Lois Revenaugh, SMDPA Nominating Committee

The following SMDPA members comprise the slate proposed by the Nominating Committee for our 2025/26 term. This slate will be presented at SMDPA's Annual Members Meeting, to be held at the Cameron Estate Inn & Restaurant in Mount Joy on Saturday, April 12, 2025. A special session of SMDPA's Board of Assistants (BOA) for this purpose is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. EDT, and all SMDPA members are invited to vote in person.



Officers

Governor	OPEN (James Campbell, Acting Governor)
Deputy Governor	Michael Saunders, Deputy Governor
Treasurer	OPEN (Scott Bond, Acting Treasurer)
Assistant Treasurer	Emilio Siguenza
Secretary	OPEN (James Campbell, Acting Secretary)
Assistant Secretary	OPEN
Historian	Virginia Fossa
Registrar	Althea Fejes
Assistant Registrar	Susan Henning
Deputy Governor General	Michael Saunders
Assistant Governor General	Sharon Saunders
Captain	Keith Kammenzind
Elder	James Buckner
Counselor	OPEN
Membership	Lois Revenaugh
Surgeon	Dr. Ronald Simonsen

Assistants

BOA at large 2023-2026	Laura Tyndall
BOA at large 2023-2026	Scott Bond
BOA at large 2023-2026	Peter Bort
BOA at large 2024-2027	Bradford Ridgeway
BOA at large 2024-2027	Lois Lang
BOA at large 2024-2027	Sharyn Davis
BOA at large 2025-2028	Pamela Palchowski
BOA at large 2025-2028	Brian Atwood
BOA at large 2025-2028	Margaret Barnette

Colony Governors

Susquehanna Colony	Michael Saunders
Western Colony	Keith Kammenzind

Historians

Historian	Virginia Fossa
Co-Historians	Sharyn Davis, Lois Howanec
Assistant Historians	Susan Makosy, Linda Pepper, Charlene Servian, Kevin Smith
Researchers	Brenda Weaver, Nan Ball

Ad hoc Committee Positions, Non-voting

Auditor	OPEN
Education/Scholarships	Alexa Kelly, Chair (James Buckner, Dr. Heather Horton, Susan Makosy, Linda Molitoris)

Finance	Scott Bond, Chair (Jonathan Hunt, Melanie Lynagh, Emilio Siguenza)
Juniors	Margaret Barnette, Joseph Gifford, Co-Chairs (James Buckner)
Marketing Communications Newsletter	James Campbell, Chair Pamela Palchowski, Chair; Sharyn Davis, Co-Editor
Nominating	OPEN (Lois Revenaugh, Acting Chair)
Parliamentarian	Joseph Gifford, Chair
Sales/Store	OPEN (Dr. Heather Horton, Acting Chair)
Social Events, SMDPA	James Campbell, Chair (James Buckner, Pamela Palchowski)
Social Events, Susquehanna	OPEN (Michael Saunders, Acting Chair)
Social Events, Western Colony	OPEN (Keith Kammenzind, Acting Chair; Pamela Palchowski)
Social Media	Emilio Siguenza, Chair
Society Liaison	James Campbell, Chair
Website	Laura Tyndall, Scott Bond, Co-Webmasters

Per SMDPA Bylaws, Article IV (B), Section 2: “Any member of the Society who has not been nominated by the Nominating Committee may become a nominee for any office by having five or more members of the Society nominate such member as a candidate for office. All such nominations must be in writing, stating the name of the member and the office for which he or she is nominated, must be signed by the members making the nomination, and delivered to the Secretary at least one week prior to the meeting at which the election is to be held.”

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Requested by James Campbell, Governor

I am always proud to report that SMDPA has been pacesetter among all 54 Member Societies worldwide. For 10 years, from 2013 through 2022, we were number one in membership growth, achieving 43% versus the Society average of 10%. This is a two-part accomplishment: one part member acquisition, the other part member retention. The former certainly owes to our dedicated team of Historians, led by the award-winning Ginny Fossa. However, the latter derives from all other SMDPA officers, assistants, and committee members who create such excellent value for membership, motivating us to renew year after year.



However, they can't do it alone indefinitely! An organization like ours constantly needs new volunteers to contribute their time and talents and help grow and maintain our high service standards. Please consider joining our successful team. You will work alongside great people, making generational differences in people's lives.

Below are our more pressing opportunities ... although all Committees welcome your participation! SMDPA job descriptions are posted here: https://sail1620.org/SMDPA_Roles_and_Job_Descriptions. At your earliest convenience, **please email me to learn more:** smdpa-governor@sail1620.org.

TREASURER:

Financial asset management and payment processing are among the areas where SMDPA has been pacesetter, thanks to the exceptional efforts of Scott Bond and his Finance Committee. We now enjoy a healthy balance sheet and online payments for membership dues, event registrations, and store purchases. After nearly a decade as Treasurer, Scott wishes to step down, but he welcomes interested and qualified candidates to join his Finance Committee and share in its roles.

The Treasurer is a member of SMDPA's Executive Committee and BOA, overseeing all payments, financial reporting, and establishing budget and dues recommendations. He/she works closely with the Assistant Treasurer, Historian, Registrar, and others. Our primary application systems are StarChapter and QuickBooks Online, both cloud-based, and we utilize Wells Fargo and Vanguard to manage our checking and investment assets. We also employ a CPA firm when needed for tax filing and support. Moreover, we are establishing relationships with regional SMD peers and GSMD Treasurers to share advice and best practices.

Experience with online banking, plus investment and accounting applications like QuickBooks Online, are bonuses but not a requirement. The Treasurer fully participates in the management and direction of the organization and has wonderful interpersonal interaction throughout.

SECRETARY/ASSISTANT SECRETARY:

SMDPA has enjoyed a robust cadence of communication to its members, thanks to the extraordinary efforts of Laura Tyndall. After nearly a decade as Secretary, Laura wishes to release this role to retain her other role as Co-Webmaster with Scott Bond. She will continue to post events and set up registrations on SMDPA's website through the StarChapter

system. That means that Laura's replacement (plus an Assistant Secretary serving as backup) can focus exclusively on member emails and managing SMDPA's virtual BOA meetings on Zoom. Organization, communication abilities, and comfort with system platforms and general software are all helpful.

SOCIAL EVENTS:

SMDPA's social events have been another pacesetter activity. Between our State and Colonies, we had averaged about seven events per year. Yet in 2024, SMDPA upped its game to promote 22 in-person events throughout the Eastern U.S., with 15 of these events developed and hosted within Pennsylvania by our three Governors. Several of these events set SMDPA attendance records, speaking to the eagerness of our membership. Our two Colony Governors especially would welcome volunteers to take over conceiving and executing their social events. If you enjoy planning, educating, and entertaining, these could be fun opportunities for you. No software experience is necessary, but organizational abilities are helpful.

SALES/STORE:

SMDPA's store has been another pacesetter activity. Several members have written and published "Mayflower"-oriented books and pamphlets, which have been sold online to grateful purchasers nationwide. However, Dr. Heather Horton is looking to step down from a shared role with Laura Tyndall. There remains extraordinary potential to source new "Mayflower"-themed offerings, conduct online auctions, etc... Still, it requires two volunteers to ensure timely order fulfillment (with one volunteer serving as a backup). These roles include sales projecting and pricing new products, creating promotional plans, and preparing sales reports. If you have a talent for merchandising, organizational abilities, and some available space to store inventory, these could be fun opportunities for you. Comfort with system platforms and general software is helpful.

SMDPA's Thanksgiving Events 2024

By: James Campbell, Governor

Whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.

-- President George Washington, 3 Oct 1789



It was fitting that SMDPA featured a thanksgiving proclamation from our nation’s first president in a chapel dedicated to his memory. Our annual Thanksgiving celebrations are held in two parts. We begin with a Worship Service in a historic church or chapel, followed by a traditional Thanksgiving dinner at a nearby restaurant. This year, our Worship Service took place in the Washington Memorial Chapel, a beautiful Gothic Revival-style structure constructed between 1903 and 1923 to honor President Washington. It is located within the Valley Forge National Historical Park and managed by the National Park Service for a resident parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania.

The Chapel’s Rector, the Rev. Tommy A. Thompson, collaborated with SMDPA Elder James Buckner to develop and conduct a “Mayflower”-specific liturgy. This elegant and reverent service contained hymns, psalms, prayers, and responses sung by the parish choir, along with scripture readings, prayers, graces, and a sermon delivered by the Rector. SMDPA presented its colors while leading 65 participants in the Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem. Membership Director Lois Revenaugh read the Pilgrim’s Pledge, Governor James Campbell read excerpts from President Washington’s 1789 Proclamation (above), Susquehanna Colony Governor Michael Saunders read the Mayflower Compact, Deputy Governor Dr. Heather Horton called the roll of Pilgrim’s Ancestors, and Elder Buckner read the Necrology. We sang “The Mayflower Hymn” before closing with President Washington’s 1783 Prayer for the Nation.

Afterward, we drove to the historic Kimberton Inn circa 1787 for a traditional Thanksgiving feast. There, we announced two significant SMDPA awards: a Distinguished Pilgrim Award for meritorious service to Susquehanna Colony Governor Saunders, plus the Elizabeth Tilley Howland Scholarship award to Renee Jonsson, a mechanical engineering student at Purdue University. Historian Virginia Fossa was presented with two GSMD awards: the Governor General’s Commendation Award for her dedicated efforts on the Historian SWAT Team and the Member Society’s Commendation Award. The evening concluded with raffles from among SMDPA’s collection of “Mayflower” publications.

One week prior, SMDPA’s Western Colony held its own Thanksgiving Event at the historic Oakmont Country Club, which has hosted 20 national golf championships throughout its 120-year tenure. Western Colony Governor Keith Kammenzind led his 50 participants through a “Mayflower”-themed program. This warm and folksy gathering featured speaker Adam Shefts, “The Victorian Historian,” who explored the strange, unusual, shocking, and comical history of America’s Victorian and Edwardian eras. Governor Campbell presented a Distinguished Pilgrim Award for meritorious service to Governor Kammenzind.

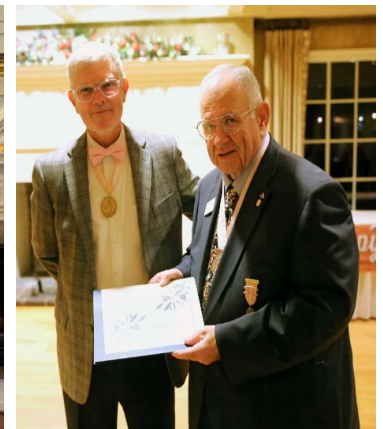
After enjoying a traditional Thanksgiving feast, the afternoon concluded with raffles of “Mayflower” premiums.

2024 SMDPA DISTINGUISHED PILGRIM AWARDS

This year’s SMDPA awards for meritorious service “above and beyond” went to our two hard-working Colony Governors: Michael Saunders, Susquehanna Colony, and Keith Kammenzind, Western Colony. Both Governors enjoyed notable success in planning and executing events of educational and social importance for their members. Michael pioneered three new geographies within his extensive territory – Lehigh (11 attendees), Lackawanna (25 attendees), and Bucks (18 attendees) Counties – while Keith revisited Erie County (35 attendees) for the first time in many years. Among their other events, Michael hosted a very informative presentation at Camp Hill (15 attendees) from Amy Woytovich, Pennsylvania State Librarian, while Keith did likewise in the historic Oakmont Country Club (50 attendees) with Adam Shefts, the Victorian Historian. Both Governors also served on the SMDPA Executive Committee while doing their usual conscientious jobs in collecting dues and maintaining member communications throughout the year.



Governor James Campbell presents Governor Keith Kammenzind 2024 Distinguished Pilgrim Award



Governor James Campbell presents Governor Michael Saunders 2024 Distinguished Pilgrim Award

2024 GSMD GOVERNOR GENERAL’S COMMENDATION AWARD & 2024 GSMD MEMBER SOCIETY’S COMMENDATION AWARD

Our beloved Historian Virginia “Ginny” Fossa received two distinguished awards from GSMD for shepherding member applicants at National and State levels. The first award owed to Ginny for serving on the elite GSMD Historian’s SWAT Team for “when an unexpected vacancy occurs in the office of the Member Society Historian, or [as-

sisting] a Member Society Historian get caught up when there is a backlog of membership application or supplements, and also [assisting] with the training of Member Society Historians when needed.” Ginny was nominated for the second award by our SMDPA Executive Committee for her exceptional work within her home Mayflower Society. She worked on many individual applications while managing her

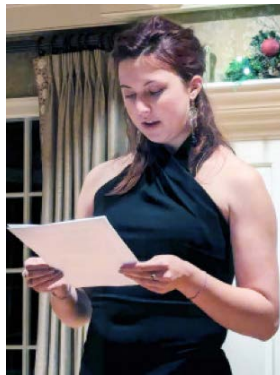


Assistant Governor General/Susquehanna Colony Governor, Michael Saunders presenting the National Award to Historian Ginny Fossa.

dedicated team of eight Historians and Researchers. Their combined efforts are a primary reason why SMDPA’s membership growth over the past 10 years has been four times higher than the GSMD average.

2024 SMDPA ELIZABETH TILLEY HOWLAND SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

This year’s Elizabeth Tilley Howland Scholarship Award went to SMDPA Junior member Renee Jonsson. Proud parents Lars and Adrienne Jonsson were on hand to watch Renee read to our 64 guests dining at the historic Kimberton Inn her winning essay on how “the values of perseverance, self-governance, community, and a quest for new opportunities that they all shared can be seen within my 21st-century life and my ambition to attend Purdue University and become a rocket scientist.” Renee is attending Purdue in West Lafayette, IN, studying mechanical engineering with an emphasis on aerospace. We wish her all success in her challenging pursuits. Renee’s essay may be read here: https://sail1620.org/images/downloads/2024_Scholarship



Renee Jonsson presented her award-winning essay to the SMDPA audience.



[Winning_Essay/renee_johnson_mayflower_essay_2024.pdf](#).

Western Colony News

By: Governor Keith R. Kammenzind

It’s hard to believe that Thanksgiving and Christmas came and went in the blink of an eye! Another holiday season is in the books, and the Western Colony kicked it off wonderfully at our Thanksgiving luncheon, which was held at Oakmont Country Club. A special thank you to Eileen Koppelman for being our sponsor at Oakmont and enabling us to continue our Thanksgiving tradition. It is a wonderful venue!



We enjoyed a delicious traditional Thanksgiving meal. The entertaining Victorian Historian Adam Shefts had everyone laughing as he regaled us with the strange, unusual, shocking, and comical history of life in the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Attendees had a chance to win numerous door prizes, and everyone had a great time catching up and socializing. Mayflower State Governor Jim Campbell and his wife attended - Western Colony appreciated that they drove all the way in from outside Harrisburg to attend!

Western Colony is looking forward to 2025, which promises to be another busy year. Plans are being made for several outings. Watch for upcoming information for those who missed last year’s sail on Lake Erie. Our tentative date for the Lettie G. Howard sail is July 12th!

On Saturday, May 17th, we will meet at The Edgeworth Club in Sewickley, PA, to conduct our Spring meeting. The Edgeworth Club was founded in 1893 and has hosted the Western Colony for several years. Afterward, we will enjoy a luncheon, and our guest speaker will be Brady Crytzer. The registration deadline is Saturday, May 9th.

Please visit the SMPDA website for more information about this and all events: www.sail1620.org, and click “Future Meetings/Events.”

Susquehanna Colony Governor Michael Saunders

Hello, Mayflower Cousins. It’s January, and I have noticed it is much colder this year than last, at least for the first two-thirds of the month. I want to start by apologizing to our members in the state’s northern section. I had hoped to get a meeting together for the Scranton area in December 2024, but as I quickly found out, the venues were booked on the days I was available. That said, our state Governor, Jim Campbell, and I discussed another gathering in the state’s northern tier for this Spring, so I am happy to say we will be returning to the Alter House in Clarks Summit on March 15th.



Some of you know last October 15th, I had my right

knee replaced by a doctor using a robot. It was tough to get around even into part of November, but the new shiny titanium and plastic joint will last a while. I am preparing for the replacement surgery on my left knee on January 28th as my joints are all starting to wear out at the same time. When Sharon had her second shoulder joint replaced, I bought her a t-shirt with a picture of Jeff Dunham's ventriloquist dummy Walter, the grumpy old man with arms always crossed in discontent. The comment line read, "Retired and Rebuilt; non-OEM parts used." I guess that will be me before long. After that, I'll have some work done on my back, and I should be good as new or at least as refurbished for a while.

I am looking for a venue for another colony meeting planned for May 3rd in Central Pennsylvania. Hopefully, it will be easier to secure a place. I had forgotten how booked up any place that serves food and has a decent-sized meeting room gets around the holidays. I will not let that happen again.

Sharon and I attended the Mayflower GBOA meeting in Asheville, NC, just a couple weeks before September 27th, when the rain from tropical storm Helene pushed an already flooded western North Carolina to its worst and deadliest flood event in state history. Asheville was such a beautiful place before the storm. Please continue to pray for those affected. Many lost their lives, and many more lost everything. I cannot believe the devastation the storm brought to western North Carolina.

Next year, the Mayflower GBOA meeting will be in San Antonio, TX. While in the Navy, I made numerous trips to San Antonio for business and found it a delightful city. I am looking forward to revisiting historic San Antonio. I wonder if it is anything like I remember from my previous journeys there. We shall see.

Finally, your Susquehanna Colony is looking for some volunteers. My wife, Sharon, the Colony Secretary, has been in her job for over 10 years. She is looking for her replacement. The job is not too difficult and requires only a few hours a month of your time. We are also looking for a Colony Treasurer. Dottie Lees has also held that position for a decade and finds it difficult to attend our meetings. The Archivist job is also open, as is the Meeting Planner. Please let me know if any of these positions interest you or if you have experience. We would love it if you would share your talents with the Susquehanna Colony.

With that, remember, Spring is only a few weeks away. See you down the road!

Treasurer's Report

By: Scott Bond (Acting Treasurer)



Hello Cousins,
I opened the expected e-mail from GSMD this morning and noted the invoice total: \$27,825, due April 1st. OK, I'm used to the pressure of collecting enough dues to cover that invoice each year, but it's always interesting to watch the bank ac-

count slowly increase day by day.

Our GSMD member headcount dropped slightly from 818 at the end of 2023 to 795 at the end of 2024. Our Historians added 33 new members, and I enjoy receiving their e-mails throughout the year announcing each new member. On the other hand, it pains me to see that we lost 48 members to resignations or being dropped for not paying their dues. We also experienced 15 deaths and a fair number of transfer-ins and transfer-outs that go into our ultimate total.

Thank you to our Historians and Registrar for keeping all this straight. If you have ideas for increasing our member retention rate, please email info@sail1620.org.

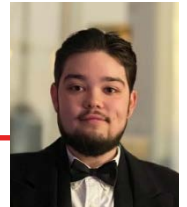
We kept our dues the same for 2025, at \$70. Fifty percent of our SMDPA dues are paid to GSMD as per capita dues. That is \$35 per GSMD member, everyone but our Juniors. The remaining \$35 funds the lion's share of our SMDPA annual budget, which hasn't changed much year-to-year. The balance of our budget is funded from investment income.

We are financially stable. As of December 31, 2024, our total cash and investments amount to \$670,690.62, not including Susquehanna and Western Colony balances.

Quick question: Would you be interested if we were to begin accepting new Life Members in 2025? Please respond to this and any other questions or concerns to Scott Bond at Treasurer@sail1620.org.

Assistant Treasurer's Report

By: Emilio Sigüenza



Join Us for Another Year with SMDPA in 2025!

As of late January or early February, dues notices have been sent to all active regular members via mail and email. Our 2025 dues remain \$70 if paid by March 31st. After this date, a \$10 late fee will be applied.

Junior members pay a \$15 initiation fee upon joining SMDPA but are not required to pay annual dues thereafter.

Currently, we are still unable to offer new Life Memberships. However, we are actively researching solutions and hope to reinstate this option in the future. Please note that all existing life memberships remain valid.

When paying your dues, I encourage you to consider donating to SMDPA. Donations are tax-deductible and directly support our educational initiatives and scholarship programs. You may specify how you would like your donation to be allocated:

- Unrestricted Funds
- Educational Programs
- Katherine F. Little Distinguished Achievement Award
- Elizabeth Tilley Howland Scholarship Award

Donations without specific instructions will be allocated to Unrestricted Funds to address areas of greatest need.

If you haven't paid your 2025 dues, I encourage you to do so promptly to avoid the \$10 late fee, which will be applied

to all unpaid dues as of April 1st.

To pay by check, please make it payable to “SMDPA” and mail it to SMDPA P.O. Box 780923 Philadelphia, PA 19178-0923.

To pay by credit card, an electronic invoice will be sent to all members with an email address. Follow the instructions on the invoice to pay securely online. If you have not received the invoice or have questions, please contact me at asst-treasurer@sail1620.org.

Thank you for your continued support!

Providence - Faith Answered **By: Deputy Governor General Reed Kneale**

PROVIDENCE - FAITH ANSWERED
“Divine guidance or care.”--Merriam-Webster

America celebrates our thankfulness every year in November as a tribute to our family ancestors and the many blessings we have received as a country and culture. Any 3rd grade history student can tell you it was the Pilgrims. Throw in a mouth-watering turkey dinner; what could be more American?

The deeply religious Pilgrims attributed much of what they were thankful for to something else. It was as fundamental as sunrise and sunset to them. How else can you explain the faith they exhibited in losing the first ship, starting months too late for weather, changing course from Virginia to Plymouth, and finding (probably) the only native-speaking English in North America as a guide?

The original charter called for two ships and a mix of settlers and religious pilgrims. The Speedwell was intended to stay in the New World for fishing and revenue. Two times out, the leaky vessel was left in England, forcing some of the settlers to miss the journey. After unloading cargo and paying more than expected, they soldiered on. Their faith did not waver.

Sixty-plus days aboard a wine ship with 5-foot headroom, seasickness, crowded-in private quarters, low on vittles, a taunting ship crew, and an uncertain landing in a new land describe the next test of faith.

The final days aboard the Mayflower were choppy due to shoals, which caused the Pilgrims and ship crew to reevaluate going another 250 miles south to the Virginia area (actually Manhattan).

The decision to arrive in Cape Cod proved a splendid reward, with 20 acres of clear land and deep and abundant drinking water. Was their decision to alter course by an unseen hand? That is the core of their beliefs, as stated in so many surviving documents. PROVIDENCE!

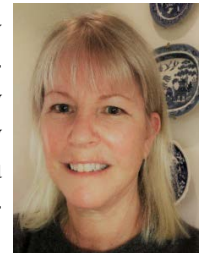
The final care of God came in the form of a native named Squanto who spoke proficient English. How many more could there have been on the North American shore who were able to teach eel fishing, planting corn, and many sur-

vival skills to the half-dying settlers? This heavily contributed to the first harvest in 1621, shared with 100 Braves, and the rest, they say, is history!

So, when you bless your food next, remember your Mayflower ancestors AND include Providence in your prayers. A spiritual power has always guided and empowered our shared history.

In Memoriam **By: Althea Fejes, Registrar**

The Board of Assistants of the Society of Mayflower Descendants of Pennsylvania would like to express their sympathy to the family and friends of our currently known departed members. We thank you for your service and dedication to SMDPA.



Alice Boucher was born on May 26, 1931, and passed on July 11, 2024. She fostered a life-long love of education, learning, and serving others. Alice loved spending time with her family and celebrating the success and achievements of her grandchildren. Alice researched and authored a family genealogy history, with some branches stretching back to the 1500s. She was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Mayflower Society. Alice was a 13th-generation descendant of Richard Warren.

In September 2024, SMDPA was notified that Christopher Finch had passed away. The SMDPA Registrar Althea also spoke to his sister, Mary Ann Finch, who verified his passing. His sister assisted Chris in obtaining his membership in our society.

Ruth Ann Gregori was born in 1948 and passed away in 2024. After Ruth retired, she began researching her Mayflower family lineage. After five years of compiling the documents required for acceptance, her Mayflower Society membership application was approved in 2023.

Glenda Mae Shores enjoyed every aspect of life: family, work, and hobbies. She loved gardening and was known for growing beautiful flowers. Glenda also loved to travel and went on many trips with her husband of 60 years, Norm, after they both retired. She took a trip to London with her sister, Betsy, as a celebration of Glenda turning 80. Glenda was intentional and genuine: two words to summarize a well-lived life. She was known to the community simply as “Grammie,” not only to her grandchildren and 40 great-grandchildren whose names and birthdates she had memorized but also to anyone else she met. She enjoyed researching the genealogy of her Alden family back to the Mayflower. She became a member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants through the Alden family.



Our sympathies are extended to the friends and family of our deceased members. May the calm waters of Cape Cod Bay provide peace

and love for all. Priscilla Beach is a village in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and a tranquil private beach on Cape Cod Bay. Photo Credit - Governor Keith Kammenzind

SMDPA Historian Update

By: Ginny Fossa, Lead Co-Historian

The SMDPA community would like to welcome our newest cousins. We are glad you have arrived and hope to see you at the upcoming events.



New Member	Ancestor	Generation
Christison, Wendy	Bradford	11
Keck, Robert	Warren	12
Burghardt, Shannon	Hopkins	14
Hrycaj, Lee Ann	Doty	10
Jackson, Linda	Brewster	13
Shilling, Tina	Resolved White	10
O'Day, Tracey	Billington	14
Emberg, Barbara	Mary Allerton	12

New Junior Members

- Williamson, Nicholas
- Williamson, Geoffrey
- Shapiro, Veronica
- Reemtsen, Luke
- Embercott, Elliott
- Embercott, Linda
- Emberger, Ainsley
- Emberger, Corinne
- Emberger, Morgan
- Emberger, Penny
- Rasmuson, Benjamin
- Rasmuson, Levi
- Rasmuson, Lily
- Fossa, Ava
- Fossa, Jack
- Reemtsen, Gwenivere
- Reemtsen, Zackary
- Jackson, Rachel



Surgeon Report – Resilience and Laughter

By: Dr. Ronald Simonsen, MD



What do we mean when we use the noun resilience to describe a person? My 2019 Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines resilience as “an ability to recover or adjust easily to change or misfortune.”

Over my 50 years in active medical practice, the countless patients whom I attended caused me to wonder. History allows a record of progress in our understanding of how it all works, and even in my own lifetime, the search has continued in unbroken pursuit of universal truth, giving me optimism and confidence that humanity will find a way to continue the journey.

A life casually observed by another often shows up free and easy, but a capricious instinct still separates us. Our lives are suspended on a fragile thread, and when forced to face disease or trauma, it may surprisingly let go quietly or hold on stubbornly, and...the mind and body are always intimately entwined. It is the goal of the physician to intervene in the best interest of the patient. Anyone, when the need for help is acknowledged, would wish for a provider who with knowledge, empathy, honesty, consideration for our loved ones, and skillful guidance, will help us navigate the choices, keep us on course and see us into a safe place. In most of the world, this is a basic human right and much of what we do as a nation goes into providing this service. As I grew older, along with many of my patients, I studied, took exams, and became certified in Geriatrics and Hospice and Palliative Care. Both are medical specialties now, and it has helped me to be better.

From 1965 to 1966, I cared for the Vietnamese in Binh-Long Province. It was rural, far from Saigon, and shut off except by air. Services were primitive, and control was highly contested. I studied War there, and it exacted a price. The mind does not treat with horror unless it is pushed. War is arbitrary, and humanity can exert a choice if only most have the will to see the threat. Now we continue to face the existential threat of a nuclear war, the execution of which may last only minutes. None will say, “I won,” and no help will come.

In December 2024, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Nihon Hidankyo. It is an organization representing the survivors of the world’s only premeditated use of nuclear bombs on a population. These survivors, the Hibakusha, the few who are left, were interviewed. Some cried gentle tears of gratitude for the recognition that could allow humanity a moment to look at their horror--when a piece of the sun burst onto the earth. Their witness is remembered.

Norman Cousins, a professor at UCLA, wrote a book about the health benefits of laughter. He was also a faithful advocate for nuclear disarmament and, in the early 1950s, organized a means to bring some of the Hibakusha to the U.S. to receive medical care. I believe he would be over-

joyed today to know that the honor went to them.

Studies have shown that laughter can cause cortisol levels to drop and Oxytocin levels to rise due to a reduction of stress. So, take a deep breath, let it out slowly, and think of the Hibakusha, guardians of our humanity. Share a smile with someone, and maybe it will lead to a little laugh. Enjoy, for it is a gift!

Education Committee Report

By: Heather Horton



Greetings, Junior members! The 2025 Scholarship Application Process is Open!

Mayflower Prizes for Pennsylvania National History Day Competition 2025

SMDPA awards four \$1000 National History Day (NHD) prizes—two at the junior level and two at the senior level. The theme for NHD for 2025 is Rights and Responsibilities in History. More detailed information is at the NHD website—nhd.org under 2025 contest. The contest is open to students in grades 6-12. You enter at your local level and check with your history or civics teacher. The SMDPA prizes are awarded at the state level, so you must advance from the local level to the state level to be eligible for a Mayflower Prize. The state final is always held at the University of Scranton in the Spring. There are many categories: papers, exhibits, performances, documentaries and websites, individuals, and groups. These are open to all Pennsylvania students—there is no Mayflower descent requirement.



The entries are fantastic, and NHD is always looking for judges. To become more involved, check with your local historical society or NHD.org.

SMDPA Elizabeth Tilley Howland Scholarship 2025

A \$1000 educational scholarship will be awarded this year to a student entering his or her 1st through 6th year (through a master's degree) of post-high school education at an accredited college, university, or trade school. The student must be a member of or directly related (child or grandchild) to an active member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The scholarship award, which is to be used only for education-related needs, will be paid to the educational institution.

To be considered for this scholarship, the applicant must provide the following:

The applicant must completely fill out the application form and provide the required documents. The application can be found below.

1. Verification of acceptance by an accredited college, university, or trade program.
2. The decision of the judges is final.

Essay Rules and Guidelines

1. A minimum 750-word essay on the topic “How do the values of the Mayflower Pilgrims relate to your 21st-century life and plans?”

2. Essays must be postmarked by July 1, 2025. Essays will be judged on the following criteria: adherence to the topic, historical accuracy, reasoning, correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Plagiarism of any kind will result in disqualification.

3. The essay of the winning applicant becomes the property of the SMDPA and may be published in the Society's newsletter. An applicant's entry with supporting documents must be mailed to the Education/Scholarship Chair at the address listed on the application.

2025 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM

https://sail1620.org/images/downloads/2025_Scholarship_Application_Form/2025_scholarship_application_etilley.doc



Susanna White Winslow Visits Scranton, PA

By: Lexie Kelly

Each year, SMDPA sponsors a re-enactor from Plimoth-Patuxet Museum to share the Pilgrim experience with schoolchildren in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This year, Susanna White Winslow visited Scranton in Lackawanna County, where she performed several school programs, including an after-school program and two evening community programs. Hallyann Gifford, a museum educator with Plimoth-Patuxet Museums and a former teacher in Massachusetts, portrayed her.



Plimoth-Patuxet Museums is a complex of living history museums replicating the original settlement of the Plymouth Colony. Founded in 1947, it presents an immersive experience allowing guests to explore life in the 17th century and meet and talk with Pilgrims and Native Americans. Imagine bumping into Myles Standish and asking him about arriving in the “new world” and his first encounter with Massasoit or asking Squanto his opinion of the colonists.

Members of SMDPA gathered Wednesday, October 30th, at Stirna's Restaurant in Scranton for a pre-performance meal before proceeding to the Tripp House for a presentation presented by the Lackawanna Historical Society, the Society for the Preservation of the Tripp Family Homestead, and SMDPA. Mistress Winslow told stories of the Mayflower crossing, the first winter in Plymouth when so many died, the arrival of the Fortune with more men to house and feed in an already hungry community, as well as personal anecd-

dots about the joys and sorrows experienced by the colonists.

Stirna's Restaurant was the setting for some members, who enjoyed dinner and fellowship before the event.

Shown are members of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who attended the reenactor event at the Tripp House in Scranton, PA.



Front Row: Lexie Kelly, Marleta Shaddock, Bonnie Yuscavage, Sarah Davis, Hallyann Gifford as Susanna White Winslow, Lois Lang, Back Row: Craig Dowd, Daniel Keisling, Cynthia Brenner, Sharyn Davis, Jyl Reeves, Laura Tyndall, Nan Ball, Suzanne Gorman

The Pennsylvania Mayflower Series Part Four Spring/Summer DNA Surprises: Who's Your Daddy (or Cousin)? By: Lois Revenaugh, Membership Director

For anyone exploring their DNA match list, surprises are almost inevitable. I've personally encountered unexpected connections in my own DNA research, from distant cousins I never knew existed to close relatives whose presence reshaped my understanding of family. Whether you've already faced a similar revelation or anticipate the possibility, these discoveries can range from thrilling to deeply emotional—especially when they reveal Non-Paternity Events (NPEs) or unexpected parentage.



What is an NPE?

An NPE, or Non-Paternity Event, occurs when someone's biological parent is not the person they believed it to be. This discovery often comes as a shock to you and the person on the other side of the match. Understanding the emotional weight of these revelations is crucial to handling them with care.

How to Approach DNA Surprises

Finding an unexpected close relative in your DNA match

list can be an emotional journey for everyone involved. If this happens, it is important to take thoughtful, deliberate steps:

Pause Before Reaching Out: Contacting your DNA match immediately can be tempting, but it is wise to take a step back. Give yourself time to process the discovery and reflect on how to proceed.

Do Your Homework: Gather as much information as possible before making contact. Use your DNA matches and any available records to build a private and unsearchable family tree that helps identify potential connections.

Compose a Thoughtful Message: When you're ready to reach out, keep your message simple and considerate. Introduce yourself without overwhelming your match with too much family history or speculation.

Be Patient: Don't be discouraged if you don't receive a response right away. Allow three to four weeks before following up, as your match may need time to process their emotions or decide how to respond.

Remember You Are Not Alone

Several books have been written about people who have discovered secrets in their families through DNA testing. Here is a short list of some I have read and enjoyed:

- *"The Stranger in My Genes: A Memoir"* by Bill Griffith and the follow-up book *"Strangers No More"*
- *"The Lost Family"* by Libby Copeland
- *"I Know Who You Are"* by Barbara Rae-Venter
- *"Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity, and Love"* by Dani Shapiro

Discovering an unexpected DNA match can lead to meaningful new connections and insights into your family history. However, to navigate the emotional complexities involved, it's essential to approach these situations with care, respect, and patience. By taking thoughtful steps, you'll be better prepared to handle surprises in your DNA journey with grace and understanding.

The 2024 Plimoth Patuxet Trip By: Western Colony Governor Keith Kammenzind

For those who don't know, my sister, Jeanne Nikolaison, and I enjoyed a wonderful trip to Plymouth in September. We stayed at an Airbnb at Priscilla Beach, about an 8-minute drive from downtown Plymouth. Our stay was just three days, but we packed a lot into it, hitting every site on our list.



Plimoth Patuxet, Pilgrim Hall, the Rock, the Jabez Howland House, National Monument to the Forefathers, Mayflower II - you name it, we saw it. We drove up to our ancestor John Howland's homesite in Kingston and, later, enjoyed a wonderful lunch with my Warren cousin, Marti Bobertz. (For those of you who don't know Marti, she was the genealogist for the GSMD for several years. She now has her own genealogy business, so if anyone needs help

with research, I highly recommend her!) She served us an excellent pumpkin goulash, which was out of this world.

If you haven't been to Plymouth in a while, I highly recommend staying at any local Airbnb. They have all the amenities of home, and are much better than a hotel! Overall, it was the most enjoyable trip!



Our Anniversary Trip

By: SMDPA Member Karen Lynn McCullough Burbidge

My husband and I planned a trip to Plymouth to celebrate our 40th anniversary in June 2019—the arrival of our Mayflower Descendant Pennsylvania license plate the day before our departure was a bonus. Plymouth is a quaint and lovely town, and Plymouth Harbor is one



of the most beautiful and picturesque harbors we've ever seen. We'd gotten up at 3:00 a.m., and after a nine-and-a-half-hour drive and check-in at our hotel, we decided to walk into town to spend a couple of hours exploring; there was so much to take in; it was over six hours later when we returned to the hotel. We visited every historical site, at least those available at the time. Unfortunately, we could not tour the Mayflower Society House due to the days of operation - we arrived on a Monday and departed early-morning Thursday. Additionally, the Mayflower II was not in the harbor as it was being refurbished before the 400th anniversary, and the Mayflower Meeting House was closed for renovation and restoration. The Jabez Howland House (one of my seven Mayflower ancestors is John Howland) was not yet open for the season. We thoroughly enjoyed the sites we visited, and walking the streets of Plymouth provided a sense of a stronger connection to my Mayflower ancestors. The weather was perfect, and we enjoyed terrific seafood dinners at local restaurants. My husband's birthday occurred during the trip, so we celebrated that and our anniversary. I don't know if we'll be able to visit again, but I am thankful for the blessing of such a wonderful and memorable trip.

Memories - My Trip to Plymouth

By: SMDPA Member Valerie J. Bieber

I wish my first trip to Plymouth contained more actual memories, but as I was only 10 then, I'm afraid it's the tangibles I still have from that trip that carry on my so-called memories. That trip was in 1972, long before anyone in my family or I ever dreamed I would find I descend from three Mayflower passengers (The Billingtons) on my paternal side.

My maternal grandmother, born in 1906 and surviving the Great Depression and personal tragedy, and who never had much extra of anything, loved to travel; as long as she had the money for gas in her tank, she took her children on countless day trips and road trips within a few hours. And for whatever reason, she and her slightly older (childless) sister decided to make what I assume was a major trip for them – a Continental Trailways bus tour trip to Plymouth – and took me along. I still have my (slightly chipped) enamel Mayflower ship charm purchased there, as well as a few blurry photos. But the fascinating artifact I recently found while cleaning out some of my grandmother's boxes as I cleared out some of my mother's things was the tour packet, still in the original envelope. Postage was 8 cents, by the way. And that three-night "Thanksgiving at Plymouth" tour from November 22-25, which left from Williamsport, PA, cost \$121.30 per person and included some of the meals and "excellent overnight accommodations!" I'm sure that was SO much money for them then, and we can spend that dining out on a meal for three now... It included stops at Sturbridge Village, Plymouth Plantation, the Mayflower, Cole's Hill, and a 3-hour guided tour of Boston – all places I have traveled to again as an adult, but this time with an appreciation and a reverence for all of those who have gone before me - including that grandmother who found a way to always make something out of nothing.

How I would love to share all my genealogical finds with her now – that my dad's lines went to the Mayflower, and her own lines went to the first families to New Netherland on the Eendracht (Unity) in 1624. She would fully appreciate, as I do, that sense of strength and resilience that flows through us.



"The Charm"



Valerie's Scrapbook Memories

The Path of My Ancestry

By: SMDPA Assistant Historian Kevin P. Smith

I started my genealogy research in the Spring of 2022. The discovery of my Mayflower ancestor was purely accidental and an incredible surprise. I have always been an American history enthusiast, particularly with the American Civil War. At that time, I knew one ancestor who served in the Civil War. I wanted to see if I had any other ancestors who served in the Civil War, and what about uncles or cousins, even distant cousins? This was my primary focus.



Of course, with this type of research, you will need to build back your family tree to find these individuals. Along the way, I discovered many notable individuals from history to whom I was related. This was something that never crossed my mind when I started my research. I still remember how thrilled I was to discover that the author Emily Dickinson was a sixth cousin and that Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of State William Seward was a third cousin.

A few months into my research, I was conversing with my nephew about my overall progress. At that point, my focus shifted to identifying the first immigrant ancestor in all my lines who came to America. Josh asked me if I had found an ancestor who was on the Mayflower. No, I had not, and I told him I was not expecting to find one because there was not even a rumor anywhere in my family that we had such a connection.

Fast forward months later to October 2022, and I was researching a paternal line of mine that settled in Allegany County, New York, and migrated from Upstate New York via Rhode Island. In Ancestry, I was given a hint about a potential ninth great-grandmother named Dinah Barber Wilcox. What excited me was that her profile picture was a Mayflower Descendant grave marker. Now, even though I was reasonably sure that I was not a descendant of a Mayflower Passenger, once or twice during my general research, I did look at the Mayflower Passenger list to maybe familiarize myself with some of the surnames just in case one came up in my research. The surnames Barber or Wilcox did not ring a bell. With my heart rate elevated with excitement and a few more hints for potential ancestors, I came to the name George Soule. My first thought was - who the heck is George Soule? This name did not stick with me when reviewing the Passenger list. But I really couldn't fault myself because there are 101 names, and to be honest, I probably could have named only a few Mayflower Passengers before my discovery.

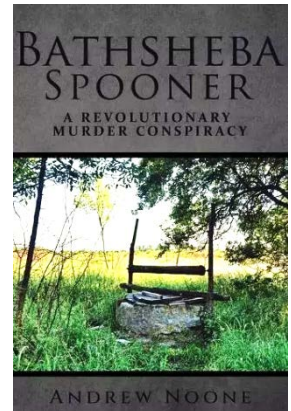
After a few hours of intensely studying this possible Mayflower line, a line that I never even dreamed could have existed, I came away knowing it was correct. But

knowing it was accurate wasn't good enough; I wanted to try and prove it and be accepted into the Mayflower Society. I received the results of my Mayflower Lineage Match before Christmas. I spent the whole of 2023 researching and gathering documents, which led me to my acceptance into the Mayflower Society in March 2024. I am now volunteering as an Assistant Historian.

SMDPA Book Review

By: Heather Horton, Deputy Governor, Education and Scholarship Chair

Book Title: *Bathsheba Spooner: A Revolutionary Murder Conspiracy*



Andrew Noone has penned a fascinating account of the early capital murder case of Bathsheba Spooner (a descendant of John Howland and Elizabeth Tilley), whose final resting place is thought to be adjacent to his home in Green Hill Park in Worcester, Massachusetts. In 1778, Bathsheba, a Tory sympathizer, enlisted the help of 2 British deserters and a wounded 17-year-old American soldier to kill her Patriot husband, Joshua Spooner. She was the first woman executed in America. Using primary source documents of the time, Noone lays out the sequence of events. While the events are of historical interest, the supplementary material woven into the narrative provides a unique perspective. It is clear that Noone has done extensive research and reading about early New England. Historical context is given to the places and regiments involved in the case. There is a discussion of legal procedures in 18th-century Colonial America. The writings of John Adams are introduced in this context. The 18th-century autopsy and forensic analysis are discussed. Social customs, agricultural practices, and household work are all discussed in context.

This is not a book one races through to discover the ending- the conspirators are convicted and hanged. It is easy to pick up and put down, learning something new about Colonial and Revolutionary New England on nearly every page. It is available in Paperback from Amazon and for Kindle and Audible. Given the frequent insertion of supplemental historical material into the storyline, it is better appreciated in written form than as an audiobook.

Named #1 new release, US Revolution, Jonathan Cohn of the Huffington Post calls the book "...meticulously researched, elegantly told..."; professor emeritus Alan Rogers (Boston College) writes, "...a provocatively and deeply researched volume...a powerful, well-told story."

Spring Member Question

By: Co-Editors Sharyn and Pam

The Member Question: You are walking along a Cape Cod beach, and you come across a magic lamp. You rub it, and a genie appears, granting you the wish to trade places with the Pilgrim of your choice for a few days. Whom would you choose, and why? What do you think would be your biggest adjustment from modern life?



SMDPA Governor James Campbell: I would trade places with my Pilgrim ancestor, Stephen Hopkins. While shipwrecked in Bermuda in 1609, did he write down his manifesto on self-governance, per William Strachey's account? Did it inform the "Mayflower Compact" in 1620? Did Hopkins squirrel away a copy?

Perhaps the biggest adjustment would be sacrificing modern hygiene. But if I recall backpacking trips from my youth, you get used to not showering, changing your clothes, brushing your teeth, and other sundries. Wampanoags bathed regularly in streams, and Squanto tried unsuccessfully to get his Pilgrim allies to follow suit.

Peggy Shaver: On the beach in Cape Cod, I would wish to speak to my ancestor, Susanna Fuller White Winslow. I would ask her how the hell she stays warm. I am freezing in current-day Pennsylvania and always try to 'channel' her and her experience to tell myself it's not so bad. I have North Face, L.L.Bean, etc., and central heating; she did not! Susanna Fuller White Winslow was a brave woman. I would not want to trade places with her, but sending love to her.

Western Colony Governor Keith Kammenzind: I would trade places with my 10x great-grandfather, James Chilton. This would allow him to see the New World, which he had never been a part of since he died before being able to set foot on American soil. I would definitely miss all the modern conveniences we have today, i.e., electricity, plumbing, central heating and cooling, and modern medicine. If they had the medicines we have today, they probably would have all survived!

Susquehanna Colony Governor Michael Saunders: This is such a fun scenario to imagine! I was thinking about selecting my 13th great-grandfather, **Edward Fuller**. He's not as well-known as some other Pilgrims, like Bradford or Miles Standish, but that makes him intriguing. Fuller came over on the Mayflower with his wife (we still to this day do not know her name) and their son Samuel, and while both Edward and his wife tragically died during that first brutal winter, their son survived and went on to help shape Plymouth Colony. If I were

to choose Edward Fuller, I would experience what it was like to be part of the lesser-documented members of the group, living through the day-to-day struggles and contributing to the colony's survival in quieter but still significant ways.

It might also be compelling to understand the Fuller family's personal story—how they handled the voyage and adjusted to the harsh conditions of the New World. I'd be in the thick of history but without the heavy leadership responsibilities of someone like Bradford. The biggest adjustment for me would be the heartbreak of watching loved ones fall ill, as well as navigating the relentless uncertainty of colonial life. His life in the colony was short. I might learn a lot more from someone else.

In that case, I'd probably choose **William Bradford**, the second governor of Plymouth Colony and one of the most influential figures among the Pilgrims. His perspective would be fascinating because he played a significant role in the colony's survival and documented the early struggles and triumphs in his journal, *Of Plymouth Plantation*. Trading places with Bradford would offer a front-row seat to one of the most pivotal moments in American history—negotiating with Indigenous peoples, managing the colony's survival through harsh winters, and witnessing the first Thanksgiving.

The biggest adjustment from modern life would be the sheer lack of conveniences we take for granted—no electricity, running water, or healthcare. Life was grueling, and survival depended on physical labor, community cooperation, and sheer grit. Beyond the physical adjustments, it would also be challenging to navigate the cultural and religious mindset of the time. The Pilgrims lived with a strict sense of faith and purpose, which would likely feel intense compared to today's more individualistic and secular worldview.

Peter Bort: From an early age, I was extremely careful around bodies of water. My reticence to immerse myself in water found me on the sidelines of the community swimming pool and rarely immersed in water. I simply never learned to swim.

Somewhere in my mid-20s, I realized that not knowing how to swim might be a social handicap and perhaps even a safety issue. So, at the ripe age of 28, I decided to learn how to swim. The class I took was called Terrified of Water, or TOW for short. It was actually character-building for me to essentially overcome something on the level of a phobia. Since this class, I have enjoyed swimming in lakes, oceans, and pools.

In my 60s, I was able to prove my descent from John Howland. There's a great story told about his experience falling overboard into the Atlantic Ocean in the middle of a storm where he found himself almost drowned, but, fortunately for my sake, he was saved by a rope trailing behind the Mayflower, which he was able to grab onto.

In the world of epigenetics, there is a phenomenon that involves the environmental stress of one generation being impressed onto the genetics of their descendants. My mind connected my ancestor's terrifying experience of falling overboard with my early reticence to swim.

Life is full of surprises!

SMDPA Member Spotlight

Pilgrim Pioneers

By: Co-Editor Pam Palchowski

The Pennsylvania Mayflower editors are honored to highlight two outstanding members of our Society. Joan Miller and her daughter Deb Georgantis-Miller have been influential in promoting the SMDPA and molding it into what it is today.



Past SMDPA Gov. Joan Miller Joan Miller, GSMD Focus on Education

Joan Miller started her membership journey with the SMDMD, where she served on many committees and later served as governor. Joan and her family moved to Pennsylvania and joined SMDPA. She always shared her love for the Pilgrim's history with new members and the public. Joan enjoyed social engagement and speaking about her passion for genealogy. Joan was the SMDPA Educational Chair and loved visiting fairs; the Haverford Festival was a favorite. Joan served as Deputy Governor General for the General Society of Mayflower Descendants in 2017. She was also the GSMD Representative for SMDPA.

Joan's resume includes past SMDPA Education Chair and Governor of the Susquehanna Colony. She was always available to answer any Mayflower question, and she did! Joan was Governor of SMDPA 2011-2012, Governor of the Pilgrim Henry Samson Kindred, and author of numerous articles. Her smile and positive attitude were infectious at meetings and area events. Many remember Joan for her role as the SMDPA Nominating Committee Chair. How many of us did Joan recruit as an Officer, BOA, or Committee Member? Joan remains an SMDPA member but is unable to attend due to illness. Please keep Governor Miller in your prayers.

Deb has followed her mom's path and has a strong leadership presence in SMDPA. Deb has held many positions in the SMDPA, including a Nominations Committee member, and later headed the committee as the Chair. She has an impressive "Pilgrim" resume,



Debera Georgantis-Miller

including History Advisor and Speaker, Education Chair of the Pilgrim Henry Samson Kindred, Education Chair of the SMDPA-actively involved with the Plimoth Plantation visits to Pennsylvania schools, Past Susquehanna Assistant Governor, Past Susquehanna Secretary, Archivist, and the

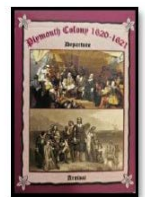
Juniors Chair for GSMD. Deb has written and edited several articles for *The Pennsylvania Mayflower*, *PHSK Spirit*, and the General Society *Mayflower Quarterly*. She is also the author of 22 GSMD Mayflower Compact Signers booklets and the "Mayflower Compact Signers, 1620-2020 – 400th Anniversary Edition". She is the author of the Time-Line book, "From the Seeds of Cambridge, England to the Planting of a Colony." Her work ethic is impressive, and her love for anything pilgrim-related is unsurpassed.

When the current SMDPA Board of Directors learned that we would recognize Deb in this edition, we heard stories of how she recruited our Secretary, Laura Tyndall, and told Laura, "All she needed to do was take minutes and send emails." Treasurer Scott Bond was recruited for the job right after submitting his application. Deb also gently recruited Mike and Sharon Saunders, as Mike reported with a smile. As for my role as Newsletter-editor, yes, she convinced me that I would be perfect even though I was not familiar with computers; Deb said it was easy, "everyone will send you information, and all you have to do is cut and paste, I will help you." Co-editor Sharyn Davis relayed a similar story of how she became involved with the newsletter after her first phone call from Deb in early 2016. Who could say no to Deb? She is a fantastic recruiter and an even better Pilgrim!

Deb and Joan are passionate about the entire Mayflower Society. The primary goal of the Society is to educate the public about the role of the Pilgrims in the early history of what would later become the United States. They have designed and produced Mayflower playing cards to continue supporting the Mayflower mission. The playing cards give facts and pictures about the *Mayflower* passengers, their families, and other vital groups such as the ship crew members, servants and wards, sponsors-investors, and Native Americans. They also included the two dogs that made the voyage to the New World.

Decks of these Mayflower cards were given as door prizes at the SMDPA Thanksgiving Celebration in November. If you didn't get a set, contact Deb Georgantis-Miller to purchase your deck of fun and educational playing cards. There are two decks – one is blue, and one is red. Every card has a Mayflower fact of history. What a fun way to learn!

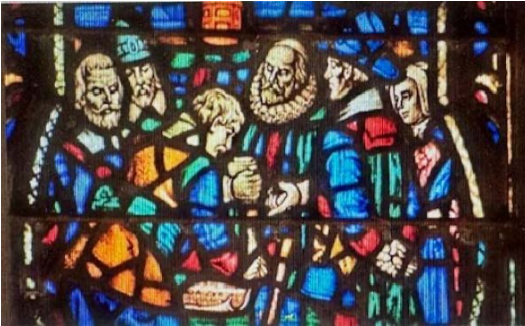
If you are interested in purchasing the "Mayflower 1620-1621 playing cards" that Deb and her mom, Governor Miller, produced, contact her via email at [educator-](mailto:educator-mayflower@gmail.com)



[mayflower@gmail.com](mailto:educator-mayflower@gmail.com) or send regular mail to **Deb Miller 2224 Eastern Blvd Ste B York, PA 17402.**

Thank you, Deb and Joan, for all you have done for SMDPA and for promoting the history of our Pilgrim ancestors. We appreciate your passion for history and educating the SMDPA and the public.

Society of Mayflower Descendants of Pennsylvania
SMDPA
929 S. High Street, Suite 135
West Chester, PA 19382



Mayflower Compact Stain Glass Window
Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge

SAVE THE DATE

April 12, 2025	Member and BOA Meeting	Mount Joy, PA
May 3, 2025	Susquehanna Colony Meeting	Lancaster, PA
May 17, 2025	Western Colony Meeting	Sewickley, PA
June 28, 2025	BOA Meeting	Virtual
September 27, 2025	BOA Meeting	Virtual
November 22, 2025	Thanksgiving /Worship	TBA

All meeting times and events are subject to change. Please check our website regularly for the latest details. All members will be able to conveniently register and pay online for all SMDPA events.

www.sail1620.org