

# THE PENNSYLVANIA MAYFLOWER

www.sail1620.org

Spring/Summer 2026

VOLUME XXXIX ISSUE NO 1

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

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## **Mike Saunders**

### **Inaugural Address**

**By: Mike Saunders, Governor**

To all my Mayflower Cousins,

Greetings from your new Governor. When your SMDPA Newsletter Editor, Pam Palchowski, asked me to say a few words about my goals and aspirations for my term as your Governor, it made me think: what exactly are my priorities for my time in office? Today, I'll share one of my goals for my term in office. I plan to share my other goals in future newsletters.

One of our top priorities as a Society is rebuilding a full and active corps of volunteers. I have mentioned to several of our officers that restoring a complete team in the roles that keep this organization functioning is, in my view, our most immediate and necessary goal. Seeing so many positions marked "Open" can be discouraging. Yet I also recognize this is not due to a lack of effort on the part of those who care deeply about our work. It is a challenge faced by organizations everywhere.

In addition to serving as your Governor, I am also the Scoutmaster of a Boy Scout troop here in Gettysburg and a member of our local District Committee. Even in Scouting, an organization long sustained by volunteer leadership, we have encountered the same difficulties. A few years ago, my troop had several key positions unfilled. It took persistence, encouragement, and many personal conversations to build the strong team we have today. At the district and council levels, however, recruiting volunteers for essential support roles remains a continuing struggle. This is not simply a Mayflower Society issue; it reflects a broader national trend.

In looking more closely at the issue, I found that volunteer participation in civic and social organizations have declined significantly since 2020, reaching levels not seen in nearly two decades. Researchers point to a complex combination of factors: economic pressures, changing social patterns, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Rising living costs and inflation have forced many people to devote more time to paid work, sometimes balancing



multiple jobs or "gig" assignments. The boundaries between work and personal life have blurred, especially with remote work, leaving less discretionary time for service. The pandemic disrupted long-standing in-person volunteering habits, and many organizations are still rebuilding. At the same time, generational changes have influenced how people choose to serve. Many younger volunteers prefer shorter, purpose-driven projects to long-term commitments with traditional organizations. These realities present challenges, but they also offer guidance.

Studies of volunteer engagement suggest several practical approaches that organizations like ours can adopt. First, we may need to think in terms of flexibility. Breaking larger responsibilities into smaller, clearly defined tasks—or offering short-term or even virtual opportunities—can make it easier for members with busy schedules to contribute meaningfully. Second, it is important to demonstrate impact. People are inspired when they can clearly see how their efforts preserve history, support our mission, and strengthen the Society for future generations. Sharing stories and tangible outcomes helps to connect individual services to a larger purpose. Third, thoughtful recruitment and matching can make a difference. When volunteers are invited to serve in roles that align with their interests, skills, and experience, their time feels both productive and rewarding. Finally, recognition and appreciation matter. A sincere thank-you, a handwritten note, public acknowledgment, or a small token of appreciation can affirm that each contribution is valued. This is an area where I am personally committed to doing more, because no one who gives their time and talent should feel unnoticed.

Although the nationwide decline in volunteerism is concerning, there is every reason for optimism. Our Society is built on a shared heritage and a common bond that has endured for generations. By adapting to present realities while holding fast to our purpose, we can encourage more of our cousins to step forward, lend their talents, and help guide the Mayflower Society in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania into a strong and vibrant future.

Sincerely,  
Mike Saunders, Governor

## Past Governor's Address

**By: James Campbell,  
Deputy Governor**



I greatly enjoyed my three-year term as your Governor, during which we achieved many accomplishments to everybody's credit. Wonderful relationships abounded. Now, I am exceptionally pleased to step down and hand over the reins to Michael A. "Mike" Saunders to serve as your new Governor!

Mike and I are switching roles: I will take his place as Deputy Governor for SMDPA and as Governor of our Susquehanna Colony. However, Mike and his lovely wife, Sharon, also an SMDPA member, will retain their respective titles as Deputy Governor General and Assistant Governor General, representing SMDPA's interests at the General Society of Mayflower Descendants' annual meetings.

Mike brings an extraordinary professional and volunteer background to our 130-year-old Society. For 25 years before retiring the first time, he served as an Officer in the U.S. Navy. His responsibilities included overseeing the Operations Division of the Medical Data Center and supervising 150 employees worldwide. Next, Mike spent five more years in the public sector as the Chief Engineer of the White House Computer Center. Mike then took a management position at Planning Research Corporation (which was acquired by Northrop Grumman), where he became Vice President and General Manager of Communications for the Network Solutions Division, successfully growing the operation from \$50 million to \$100 million in just over four years. After retiring from Northrop Grumman, Mike was recruited again as Senior Vice President of Corporate Administration at DreamHammer, Inc., a private-sector software developer and military supplier.

Since retiring for the third and final time in 2013, after a nearly 50-year career, Mike has been enjoying life in Gettysburg with his family. His volunteer activities include:

- Maryland Society, Sons of the American Revolution (Chapter President & Registrar)
- Order of the Founders and Patriots of America
- Boy Scouts of America: National Capital Area Council (Scoutmaster, Eagle Scout Board of Review Chairman, District Commissioner); New Birth of Freedom Council (Scoutmaster of Troop 73 in Gettysburg)

Mike has also been providing sage counsel as a member of my Executive Committee. Please join me in congratulating Mike at [smdpa-governor@sail1620.org](mailto:smdpa-governor@sail1620.org) and wishing him success in this important leadership role!

Best regards! –

James Campbell, SMDPA Deputy Governor,  
[smdpa-deputygovernor@sail1620.org](mailto:smdpa-deputygovernor@sail1620.org)

## SMDPA Annual Meeting – 2026 Spring Meeting Corinthian Yacht Club – Saturday, April 11, 2026 All SMDPA Members and Guests are Invited

**BOARD OF ASSISTANTS:** Please join your fellow Board of Assistants and Committee Officers at this shortened, in-person meeting. We will start promptly at 11:00 a.m. Please RSVP to our Secretary ([smdpa-secretary@sail1620.org](mailto:smdpa-secretary@sail1620.org)) to confirm quorum.



**SMDPA MEMBERS AND GUESTS:** Please join your SMDPA cousins on April 11, 2026, for a gourmet luncheon at the historic **Corinthian Yacht Club**, 300 W 2nd St., Essington, PA 19029. It is located along the Delaware River, adjacent to Governor Printz Park. This park is the site of New Sweden (ca 1643), the first European settlement in Pennsylvania. There, you will see several log cabins re-created, which these Swedish immigrants introduced to America.

Our venue is just one mile east of I-95, Exit 9. It is wheelchair-accessible and has ample parking.

Starting at 12:00 p.m., a cash bar will be available for soft drinks and alcoholic beverages. At 12:30 p.m., we will enjoy a house salad with balsamic vinaigrette, and then your choice of:

- Grilled flank steak with mushroom gravy
- Blackened tilapia with *vin blanc*

*Entrées will be served with roasted potatoes and seasonal mixed vegetables. Chocolate layer cake will follow for dessert. Included are coffee, hot tea, lemonade, and iced tea.*

Pricing is \$50 per adult and \$25 per Junior member or child. All are welcome!

### ABOUT OUR SPEAKER:

**Rod Gragg** is the award-winning author of more than 20 books for major American publishers. A former journalist, Mr. Gragg is the Director of the Center for Military and Veterans Studies at Coastal Carolina University, where he serves as adjunct professor of history. His works have earned the Fletcher Pratt Award, the James I. Robertson Award, and other honors, and have been selected for the Book-of-the-Month Club, the History Book Club, and the Military History Book Club.



Gragg will be speaking on his book, *The Pilgrim Chronicles: An Eyewitness History of the Pilgrims and the Founding of Plymouth Colony* (Regnery History, Reissue Edition 2023). He brings the Pilgrims to life in this lavishly illustrated guide, filled with moving, eyewitness narratives. From their persecution in England and painful exile in Holland to their voyage across the Atlantic and their struggle to survive among the Indians in an untamed wilderness, Mr. Gragg takes you on the harrowing and inspiring journey of a people seeking religious freedom, and in the process, founding a great nation.

For your convenience, you can register and pay online at [www.sail1620.org](http://www.sail1620.org). **Registration deadline is Friday, March 27.** This is a beautiful facility with breathtaking views; all SMDPA members and guests are invited. For questions, please contact James Campbell, SMDPA Deputy Governor, at [smdpa-deputy\\_governor@sail1620.org](mailto:smdpa-deputy_governor@sail1620.org).

\$50.00 Adult Member Luncheon Ticket  
 \$50.00 Non SMDPA Member or Guest Luncheon Ticket  
 \$25.00 Junior or Child of SMDPA Member Ticket  
**ABOUT THE CORINTHIAN YACHT CLUB:**  
 For a full history: "<https://www.cycop.com/club-history>"  
**ABOUT GOVERNOR PRINTZ PARK AND NEW SWEDEN:**

For a full history: "<https://explorepahistory.com/hmarker.php%3FmarkerId=1-A-1F.html>"  
 RSVP Form SMDPA Annual Meeting 2026 Essington, PA

The Organization Structure of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is based on that found in the Plymouth Colony. It is headed by a Governor, with an Assistant Governor (now called Deputy Governor), and a board comprising Officers and a Board of Assistants.



The 2026-2027 State Officers, Board of Assistants, Committees, and Colony Governors are as follows:

**Officers**

Governor: Michael Saunders\*  
 Deputy Governor: James Campbell\*  
 Secretary: open\* James Campbell, Acting  
 Assistant Secretary: open\*  
 Treasurer: open\* Scott Bond, Acting  
 Assistant Treasurer: open\*  
 Lead State Historian: Ginny Fossa\*  
 Co-Historians: Sharyn Davis, Ginny Fossa, Lois Howanec;  
 Western Colony Historian: Kevin Smith  
 Assistant Historians: Sue Makosy, Peggy Shaffer, Nan Ball  
 Research Assistant: Brenda Weaver  
 Registrar: Althea Fejes\*  
 Assistant Registrar: Sue Henning\*

Elder/Thanksgiving Service: James Buckner\*  
 Captain: Keith Kammenzind\*  
 Counselor: open\*  
 Membership Officer: Lois Revenaugh\*  
 GSMD DGG: Michael Saunders

<u>2024-2027</u>	<u>2025-2028</u>	<u>2026-2029</u>
Sharyn Davis	Brian Atwood	Thomas Ahern
Lois Lang	Margaret Barnette	Lois Revenaugh
Bradford Ridgeway	Pam Palchowski	Kevin Smith

Surgeon: Ronald Simonsen, MD\*  
 GSMD AG: Sharon Saunders

**The Board of Assistants - (BOA at Large Dates)**

**Colony Governors**

Western (Pittsburgh Area) Colony Governor: Keith Kammenzind  
 Susquehanna Colony Governor: James Campbell

**Committee Chairpersons\*\***

Audit: open  
 Nominating: Chair: open  
 Archivist: open  
 Parliamentarian (ad Hoc) Chair: open  
 Bylaws Committee (ad hoc): open  
 Photographer: James Buckner  
 Education and Scholarship: Lexie Kelly (Chair), James Buckner, Sue Makosy, Linda Molitaris, Christine Krem  
 Membership Officer/Chair: Lois Revenaugh  
 Finance Committee: Scott Bond (Chair), James Campbell, Melanie Lynagh, Jonathan Hunt  
 Publicity/Community/Marketing  
 Relations: Chair: open  
 Junior Membership Co-Chairs: open  
 Elder Thanksgiving Service: James Buckner  
 Society Liaison: James Campbell (Chair)  
 Newsletter: Pam Palchowski, Co-Editor (Chair)  
 Newsletter Co-Editor: Sharyn Davis  
 Social Media: open  
 Sales (ad hoc)\*\*: open (Chair); Associate: open  
 Virtual Events (ad hoc): open  
 Social Events: James Campbell (Chair), Pam Palchowski  
 Web Committee: Laura Tyndall (Co-Chair)  
 Scott Bond (Co-Chair)  
 \*\*No voting rights

Note - Any SMDPA member with an interest in open positions may contact the Deputy Governor at [smdpa-deputy\\_governor@sail1620.org](mailto:smdpa-deputy_governor@sail1620.org)

## Western Colony Update

**By: Keith Kammenzind, Governor**

To all members of the Western Colony, it has been my great pleasure serving as your elected Governor these past three years. During that time, we have seen our membership grow, become more active, and participate in our yearly events. Our Spring and Summer outings have been great successes, and our luncheon turnout has been exceptional. My personal favorite over the past two years has been our Lettie G. Howard sail on Lake Erie, which highlighted our northernmost membership area. I would especially like to thank Mary Jane Koenig for her exceptional work in organizing this event. Well done - we couldn't have done it without you!



I am not going to say that everything has been easy, but with the support and genuine camaraderie of our Colony, the hard work has been most enjoyable and well worth the effort.

This is going to sound a bit like an awards show acceptance speech, but here it goes...

I would like to thank Pam Palchowski for her unwavering support and assistance with our Daniel South event, and for creating our centerpieces for several of our luncheons. My sister Jeanne Nikolaison, for her hard work on centerpieces and for being my sounding board for some of my crazy ideas for events; Marcia Coleman for her dedication to the colony and her hard work as Treasurer; Eileen Kopelman for being our sponsor at Oakmont and Duquesne Club (much appreciated); and Lois Lang for being a good friend and a source of guidance. The late Brewster Cockrell for being our Edgeworth Club sponsor, and Billie Gailey for her support and friendship. Jim Campbell and Reed Kneale, what can I say other than THANK YOU both for being a friend and a mentor! And of course, my Assistant Governor Erin Windhorst and her husband Rob, for being such great table companions and cohorts, not only with Mayflower but at Woodville as well. If I missed anyone, my apologies; the list is so long.

I have no doubt that our incoming Governor will have all the support of our membership and the willingness to get involved that I have experienced. It has truly been an honor to serve these past three years!

## Western Colony Spring Meeting and Luncheon Oakmont Country Club



On Saturday, May 16th, we will meet at the Oakmont Country Club to conduct our Spring Meeting. The Oakmont Country Club was founded in 1903. Mostly known for its Historic Golf Course, Oakmont is also known for hosting major golf tournaments starting in 1919. It is a beautiful Country Club located at 1233 Hulton Road, Oakmont, PA 15139.

Oakmont has hosted the Western Colony for several years. If you haven't been to one of the Western Colony meetings at Oakmont, please come and bring a guest. We will have a brief check-in and cash bar prior to our mem-

bers' meeting and election at 12:30 p.m. We will enjoy a luncheon, and our guest speaker will be Mr. Rob Windhorst, from Woodville Plantation.

The registration deadline is Saturday, May 8. Please visit the SMPDA website for more information about this event and all events: [www.sail1620.org](http://www.sail1620.org), and click "Future Meetings/Events."

*Rob Windhorst, speaker  
Woodville Plantation.*



## Western Colony Slate of Officers

**By: Erin Windhorst, Nominating Chair**

**SMDPA Western Colony Officer  
and Assistant Slate for 2026-2027**

The Nominating Committee Chair: Erin Windhorst and Committee members, Linda Pepper, Harry Ridgeway, Sandra McKissock, and Brad Ridgeway, submit the following Slate of Officers and Assistants to be considered for election at our Society's Annual Meeting on May 16, 2026.

### Slate of Officers

Governor - Pamela Palchowski  
Past Governor - Keith Kammenzind  
Deputy Governor - Erin Windhorst  
Secretary - Linda Pepper  
Treasurer - Marcia Coleman  
Assistant Treasurer - VACANT  
Historian - Kevin Smith  
Membership - VACANT Pam Palchowski - Acting  
Registrar - VACANT  
Elder - Bette Ruh  
Counselor - Franklin Reed  
Social Events - Pam Palchowski - Acting  
Captain - Keith Kammenzind

### Board of Assistants

Linda Pepper  
Sandra McKissock  
Mary Jane Koenig



## Western Colony Interpreter from Plimoth Patuxet By: Lexie Kelly, Education and Scholarship

Western Colony hosted an Interpreter from Plimoth Patuxet during the week of October 27, 2025. Multiple stops and sessions were arranged. Our Interpreter's name was McKensie. She portrayed Elizabeth Tilley and Mary Brewster. McKensie was flawless in both roles.

Her audience was highly engaged with her presentation and stories. After each presentation, there were many curious and thoughtful questions. Questions of daily life, friends, school, medicine, and what she did for fun.

The interpreter presented Elizabeth Tilley and Mary Brewster at various locations. Visits were held at Mt. Lebanon Library, Chartiers Valley School, Old St. Luke's Church, Riverside School, and Fox Chapel Country Day



School. McKensie visited with 600 children in grades 2 through 5. This included homeschoolers and a family night where other children came to meet Elizabeth Tilley or Mary Brewster. The interpreter program at Plimoth Patuxet offers intensive training. Every presentation was excellent.

Thank you to Governor Keith Kammenzind and Sue Makosy of the Education and Scholarship Committee for organizing all McKensie's visits. Communication with the schools and Plimoth Patuxet was excellent, and the entire week was amazing. Feedback from all audiences was A+.



Governor Kammenzind introducing Mary Brewster.



Center – Mary Brewster (McKensie)  
L to R – Sue Stokes, prospective SMDPA Member; Gov. Keith Kammenzind; Pam Palchowski, Social Events; Erin Windhorst, Deputy Governor.



Plimoth Patuxet Interpreter talking with elementary school children about the Mayflower and Pilgrim life.



**Western Colony Thanksgiving  
Duquesne Club, Pittsburgh  
By: Pam Palchowski, Social Events**



Western Colony held its fall member meeting and Thanksgiving luncheon at the elegant Duquesne Club in Downtown Pittsburgh on Saturday, November 15, 2025. The Duquesne Club was founded in 1873 and has hosted notable historic guests. Thank you to Western Colony member Eileen Kopelman, who was our sponsor. It was greatly appreciated.

We had 54 members and guests, and everyone enjoyed an amazing Thanksgiving feast. The dining room was grand, and the service was excellent.

Our distinguished guest speaker was Mr. Andrew Masich, Ph.D., President and CEO of the Senator John Heinz History Center. His presentation, *Gateway to the West*, was enlightening. Dr. Marsich incorporated many historical facts from the Pittsburgh area, including an impressive slideshow.

Thank you to everyone who attended the celebration. It was wonderful.



Duquesne Club Dining Room



Governor Keith Kammenzind



Dr. Andrew Masich  
Guest Speaker

**Western Colony Summer Event  
Meadowcroft Rock Shelter and Villages  
By: Pam Palchowski, Social Events**

On June 13th, Western Colony and guests will be stepping back in time... and into the footsteps of the very first North Americans. A hidden gem in Western Pennsylvania, Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village is the oldest site of human habitation in North America.



**MEADOWCROFT ROCKSHELTER:** The region's earliest inhabitants took shelter under the massive rock overhang known as Meadowcroft Rockshelter at least 19,000 years ago. Discover how a groundhog led to the discovery and archaeological excavation of this National Historic Landmark.

**HISTORIC VILLAGES:** Three interpretive villages bring 500 years of history to life for visitors of all ages. Explore American Indian culture in a 16th-century Monongahela Indian Village, learn about European settlers at an 18th-century Frontier Trading Post, and experience daily life in the 19th-century Meadowcroft Village.

**TRAILS TO TRAINS:** Explore the evolution of transportation in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Trailblaze 19,000 years of transportation history, beginning with our prehistoric predecessors, to the early days of the National Road, to the use of the stagecoach, and finally to the development of the railroad.

Our tour begins at the Welcome Center at 9:30 a.m. We will drive 2 min to the Rockshelter for a private tour and exploration. This tour involves 65 stairs. If you are unable to complete 65 gradual stairs with landings, we will meet you back at the Welcome Center at 10:50 a.m. for a group photo, then explore the villages. Our group will have the opportunity to learn how to "dip candles," which we can keep.

The cost for the day will be \$12.00 for adults, \$11.00 for seniors, and \$5.00 for children. There is an additional \$3.00 charge for candle dipping.

For more information and for reservations, please go to the SMDPA – [www.sail1620.org](http://www.sail1620.org)

Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village 401 Meadowcroft Road Avella, PA 15312 [heinzhistorycenter.org/Meadowcroft](http://heinzhistorycenter.org/Meadowcroft).

**Susquehanna Colony Brunch Event**  
**Clarks Summit, PA**  
**By: James Campbell, Colony Governor**



**SMDPA MEMBERS AND GUESTS:**  
 Please join us on May 9, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. for a delicious brunch at the **Alter House Restaurant & Bar**, 926 Lackawanna Trail, Clarks Summit, PA 18411, followed by a presentation from author **Richard A. Stone**.

The restaurant is centrally located in Lackawanna County off major highways, Route 11 and Route 6. It is wheelchair-accessible and has ample parking.

We will enjoy a “farm-to-table” brunch buffet consisting of: breakfast items -- bacon & sausage, seasonal quiche, Belgian waffles with seasonal berries and local maple syrup, and assorted house pastries – plus roasted pork tenderloin with seasonal herb jus, penne pasta with house marinara, local harvest salad with seasonal vegetables & house balsamic, herb-roasted potatoes, locally baked artisanal rolls, and house brewed coffee service. There will also be a cash bar and options to order from the restaurant’s regular menu. Pricing is \$50 per adult and \$25 per Junior member or child. All are welcome!

**Richard Stone** is a graduate of Harvard University (BA in economics) and the University of California, Los Angeles (MA in Journalism). He will speak on his recent book, Project Mayflower: Building and Sailing a Seventeenth-Century Replica (Lyons Press, 2024). If you have ever stepped aboard the cozy confines of the “Mayflower II” docked in Plymouth, MA, you will find this fascinating story of particular interest!

For your convenience, registration and payment are available online at [www.sail1620.org](http://www.sail1620.org). We are limited to 30 guests; seating is first-come, first-served. **Registration deadline is Friday, May 1.** For questions, please contact James Campbell, SMDPA Deputy Governor, [smdpa-deputy\\_governor@sail1620.org](mailto:smdpa-deputy_governor@sail1620.org).

**SMDPA Annual Thanksgiving Worship Service and Dinner**  
**By: James Buckner, Elder**

The Thanksgiving Service for 2025 was held on November 22 at Great Valley Presbyterian Church in Malvern, PA. The church began in 1720 as a log building; the current building was built in 1889. The day’s service began with Brian Atwood leading the congregation in singing “We Gather Together”, followed by my offering a “Call to Worship”. We were welcomed to the church by Pastor Keith Fink. Our Governor, James Campbell, read portions of Presidential Proclamations. My sister, Dianne, read selections from the Psalms, showing us how much we should be thankful to God for His many blessings. Lois Revenaugh then led us in the Pilgrim Pledge, and Virginia Fossa read a list of Mayflower passengers, with members standing when their ancestor’s name was read. I then read a list of members who are no longer with us. A wonderful message was then given by Rev Fink. The service ended with Brian leading us in the Mayflower Hymn. Everyone I talked to said they enjoyed the service.

We then proceeded to the General Warren Inn for a time of the 2 “F”s, food and fellowship. Everyone had a great time talking with friends and enjoying a delicious meal. Our special guest was the Governor of the Maryland Society, Daniel Earnshaw. Several donated items were raffled off to grateful winning members. Another highlight of the evening was the passing of the torch to our new governor, Mike Saunders. I believe the day was a huge success. Now onto preparing for next year.



*Inside the Great Valley Presbyterian Sanctuary*



*Reverend Keith Fink delivers a message of Thanksgiving*



*Governor Jim Campbell*



*Dianne Buckner*



*Brian Atwood*



*Lois Revenaugh*



*Historian, Ginny Fossa*



*Elder, Jim Buckner*



*Gov. Mike Saunders, Gov. Jim Campbell, Gov. Daniel Earnshaw, SMDMD*



*Outgoing Governor Campbell congratulates the new SMDPA Governor, Mike Saunders*

## SMDPA Awards FALL AWARDS

**By: James Campbell, Past Governor**

One of the main highlights of our two Thanksgiving dinners – SMDPA’s and Western Colony’s – has been the presentation of annual awards. We are always pleased to publicly recognize the meritorious service of our dedicated volunteers. But this year’s awards threw us a curveball, as our award-winners had not planned to attend their respective Thanksgiving dinners. What to do?

Fortunately, we were able to present these awards individually in casual settings beforehand. We had a bit of fun catching both award winners off guard, as neither anticipated their well-deserved recognition.

### **GSMD COMMENDATION & APPRECIATION AWARD: LAURA TYNDALL**

The GSMD affords its Member Society Governors the honor of bestowing “Commendation & Appreciation Awards” for those members who have “gone above and beyond” in their volunteer service. This year, the obvious choice was our longtime Secretary and Co-Webmaster Laura Tyndall.

*Past Governor Jim Campbell & Laura Tyndell*

This Coopersburg resident has maintained an active program of communication with our 800+ members – typically several emails and website postings per week, throughout the year. With our Treasurer and Co-Webmaster Scott Bond, Laura was instrumental in upgrading our various systems to the StarChapter platform. This has brought SMDPA’s management of its members, accounts, billing, meetings, events, communications, and related matters to the forefront of Member Societies. The net result is that an all-volunteer organization operates effectively as a business, providing its Officers with data-driven reporting, analysis, and decision-making.

In addition to managing all aspects of both roles, Laura deserves special credit for two of her initiatives. First, over the past two years, she has reached out to GSMD directly to obtain a full calendar of its virtual Lecture Series and then programmed StarChapter to send promotional emails to our members for each webinar. Second, Laura programmed StarChapter to recognize each member’s birth month and to send timed, personalized recognition emails. Certainly, it required technical expertise to implement such programming. But more importantly, these initiatives demonstrate Laura’s compassion for our members and help ensure they gain full value and appreciation from their membership.

### **DISTINGUISHED PILGRIM AWARD: ALTHEA FEJES**

Another honor the SMDPA Governor can bestow is an annual “Distinguished Pilgrim Award” for meritorious service. Over the past two years, this \$500 honorarium has been split between pairs of deserving volunteers, with each member sharing a particular role with the other. This year’s award went to a solo practitioner who has been performing



critical functions independently.

Althea Fejes has been serving as SMDPA’s Registrar for many years. This modest, self-effacing Yardley resident has helped maintain SMDPA’s database of 800+ members, while



*Past Governor Jim Campbell, Althea Fejes, Registrar, Judith Biederman, former Asst. Treasurer*

sending out as many annual dues notices as it takes to elicit responses – often several per recalcitrant. Althea also keeps track of members whom she learns or intuits have passed away. She reaches out to family members who are known and/or researches any published obituaries to include in our Necrology remembrances. Althea’s steady presence lends a professional and personal touch, helping keep SMDPA’s income “incoming” and our operations humming.

Please join me in congratulating both award winners, Laura and Althea, and in thanking them for their invaluable contributions to our 129-year-old Society! Without their ongoing dedicated efforts, it is safe to say that things simply would not function smoothly, if at all!

### **Treasurer’s Report**

**By: Scott Bond (Acting Treasurer)**

Hello Cousins,

\$27,230.00 is due to the General Society of Mayflower Descendants on April 1st. This is the amount we owe in 2026 for 778 PA GSMD members. Our membership dropped slightly from 795 at the beginning of 2025. This is the largest single budget item and is funded by dues and transfers from our life membership account.

Our dues for 2026 will stand at \$70 per member. Where does it go? \$35 will be applied to the GSMD invoice. \$10 is allocated to our SMDPA Colonies as a stipend. \$25 is retained by SMDPA to cover speakers, our website, insurance, CPA expenses, and programs.

We currently have 514 regular members, 18 emeritus members, and 246 life members. As of December 31, 2025, SMDPA had \$734,023.68, not including Susquehanna and Western Colony account balances.

Dues Invoices are in the works. We have almost 70 members who have taken advantage of our 3-year pay-in-advance at the current rate program (i.e., if you pay \$210 now, you will be paid through 2028). Enabling new Life Memberships is a topic of discussion with many of our state societies, but there is no consensus. A proposal was submitted for review here at SMDPA and will be discussed further at our next BOA meeting.

We now have the potential to enable “auto-renewal,” in which dues are automatically debited from your bank account at the start of the year. Would you be interested? I’d like to hear from you. Please respond with any questions or comments to Scott Bond at [treasurer@sail1620.org](mailto:treasurer@sail1620.org).



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, Elizabeth Tilley Howland Scholarship Award. Donations not specified will be allocated to Unrestricted Funds to address areas of greatest need.

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 [treasurer@sail1620.org](mailto:treasurer@sail1620.org). Thank you for your continued support!

**SMDPA Welcomes New Members**  
**By: Ginny Fossa, Lead Historian**

Our Historians continue to work very hard to assist SMDPA's prospective members in gathering the documentation for their applications. Our team consists of Co-Historians: Sharyn Davis, Ginny Fossa, Lois Howanec; Western Colony Historian: Kevin Smith. Assistant Historians: Sue Makosy, Peggy Shaffer, and Nan Ball; and Research Assistant: Brenda Weaver.



Thank you to all the Historians for their hard work, dedication, and passion for SMDPA.

**YOU ARE APPRECIATED!**

**Welcome to our newest SMDPA members:**

**New Members:**

Henning, Michael	Howland 12th
Moon, Christina	Warren 14th
Crocker, Joanne	Alden 12th
Winslow, John	Winslow 10th
Francis, Joseph	Warren 13th
Weingartner, Alice Kay	Warren 14th
Burguess, Alvin	Alden 11th
Boyd, Donna	Alden 12th
Klingensmith, Merlon	Fuller 14th
Shutter, Susan	Allerton 11th
Huston, Daneen	Brewster 12th
Devendorf, Barbara	Brewster 12th
Ahern, Thomas	Howland 11th
Jager, Molly	Howland 12th
Stayton, Sheri	Bradford 13th
Woolam, Jennifer	Hopkins 12th

**Supplements:**

Burghardt, Shannon	Hopkins
Chapin-Lunz, Pam	Allerton
Chapin-Lunz, Pam	Warren

Chapin-Lunz, Pam  
 Glover, Susan  
 Tyndall, Laura  
 Ridgeway, Harry

Bradford  
 Chilton, Mary  
 Bradford  
 Brewster

**Juniors:**

Harvey, Kiera  
 Simpson, Francis  
 Nabors, Ramsey  
 Paull, Gavin  
 Paull, Mason  
 O'Connor, Annie

**2026 Scholarship Opportunities**

**By: Lexie Kelly, Education Chair**



**Elizabeth Tilly Howland Scholarship 2026**

A \$3000 educational scholarship will be awarded this year to a student entering his or her 1st through 6th year (through 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, to be used only for education-related expenses, will be paid to the educational institution.

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

1. The applicant must completely fill out the application form and provide the required documents. The application can be found below.
2. Verification of acceptance by an accredited college, university, or trade program.
3. 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, 2026**. 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, along with supporting documents, must be mailed to the Education/Scholarship Chair at the address listed on the application.

Please view more information on the SMDPA website – [www.sail1620.org](http://www.sail1620.org). There, you will find the complete information for the Elizabeth Tilly Howland Scholarship 2026, as well as History Day Scholarship opportunities.

**Elizabeth Tilly Howland Scholarship Winner 2025**

Congratulations to Merin Hausmann, who is the SMDPA Elizabeth Tilly Howland Scholarship for 2025. She was honored at the Susquehanna Genealogy, Fellowship, and the Mayflower Luncheon. Accompanied by her Grandparents. Congratulations from the SMDPA. (photo on page 9)



*Celebration Photo – L to R – Ulla Dunkle, Grandparent, Merin Hausmann, Honoree, Plummer Dunkle, Grandparent, and Past Governor James Campbell, award presenter.*

## **My Thoughtful Perspective Tell of Truth and the Life it Saved**

**By: Ronald Simonsen, MD, Surgeon**



### Tell of Truth and the Life It Saved

Some say that it will never change, that this ancient land has always excited a supernatural feeling, even as the earliest humans entered. In a place like this that reeked of prior doings, a flicker of light in a forest gloaming or a soft babbling voice on the wind could startle a person, and a cut-off yelp down a rocky gulch would freeze them. It was a stead where most who started returned to the locus where they were born or go on to a land they had never known. It was a place forged in tectonic shifting that shoved large plates of the Earth's crust grinding against each other until they eventually arrived at a berth where Africa, Europe, and Asia would anchor. Welded in a deep rift by this crush of continents and covered in a haphazard keloid burnished by fire, flood, and wind, it has since become the scene of epic struggles. Some have stayed, and many have perished.

Here, where the scorching wind sighs of doom and the parched and crumbled earth tangles of ruin, remains of an early human species were recently unearthed from deep caves. Analyzed and identified, these Homo Sapiens had found their endurance growing unbearable and reaching the finale, their lines turned forever extinct. Is it meant to be that this fractious breed can be so fragile? Facing an existential threat, especially if new to us, is challenging, but the tools we have acquired along the way can help if we let them. Honesty, empathy, and courage are our lodestones.

In 1973, during the constant bustle of the Cold War, an act occurred in this place, so dishonorable, that its principals, in a mad rush to avoid judgment, succeeded in weaving a cloak of lies that covered it completely, such that it remarkably appears to have been erased. If this is true, can there be any respectable justification for condoning the neglect of such an act and their scheme to conceal it? This dark secret has now accrued more than 52 years of assault on humanity through the confusion and peril that it has sown on the conduct of international affairs, thereby taunting the extinction forever of all. Must this be?

Springing from the birth of the Atomic Bomb in 1945, most nations of the earth saw a need to align with either the United States or the Soviets. The two Big Dogs were conspicuous with their steadily expanding nuclear arsenals and their zealous efforts to distinguish themselves. Both antagonists also flooded their affiliates with conventional weapons. This encouraged ideological differences, whether local or regional, to escalate quickly in the messy world of post-World War II. Proxy armies with their champions at their side, met in competition to match demolition and butchery until exhausted. Those

successive Hot Wars ended with drawn-out, divisive settlements as the Cold War continued to simmer. Life went on, and it was assumed that war must be necessary but always remain limited- a pipe dream. We became accustomed to the rhythm and numb to the cost. The presence of giant nuclear arsenals was accepted on the premise that the MAD theory would prevent their ever being used.

It happened on the crest of a momentous battle. It is here that my story begins.

At 11:00 PM on the 24th of October 1973, I sat in my family room calmly watching the news. It satisfied me to put things in order, and I fell asleep that night with visions of Israeli tanks streaming down dimly lit residential streets, racing toward the center of Egypt's capital- Cairo. Meeting no resistance, victory was inevitable. Relief from warring was important for me. I wasn't an innocent since Vietnam, but even there life often took pleasing twists and turns. I fondly remember driving the perimeter of An Loc after dinner with a couple of friends, and we'd say we were "putting the village to bed." The beauty of it all began to soak in, and it muted our own primal awe of the foreboding darkness.

I anxiously returned to the TV in the morning, and there were the tanks sitting idle in the same neighborhoods! I couldn't believe it! I had anticipated a triumphal celebration, not an eerie, dead silence! Where were the jubilant soldiers, the flags, the public buildings surrounded by Sharon's massive, armored force? How could it just come to a sudden halt- this massive pincer arm? Was the needle stuck? Weird!

Military historians would agree. Weird! I decided at that moment that I would hunt for the reason. I knew there had to be a lunker, deep down and dangerous. I trolled every publication I could get my hands on- papers, books, biographies, radio, TV, conversations, and overheard snatches- everything! It was vulnerable! I waited unwavering for the rise from the tug of the slightest clue. Boldly confident that I was on to a big one, I kept going, restless to snatch it. Then, out of the blue, a year later, it was handed to me. A rush of relief told me that the chase was over, and it was now in my hands. I didn't let on to him. He was innocent. He was only the messenger.

Composed and dignified, he said, "The Israelis exploded a nuclear weapon. Our satellites and those of the Soviets recognized the flash immediately, and the two leaders were on the Red Phone."

It was a perfect fit! As if finished in a single brushstroke by an Old Master, it was made clear, and the central subject emerged to take my breath away. Later that evening, I concluded that time would also provide answers to the encompassing questions. Why would anyone risk the Bomb? I thought of the pincer maneuver, but where would I look for hard evidence- the desert west of the Nile? Suez City? The Sinai? And what about the frantic political machinations between all the parties to the conflict that came up with a workable settlement during those hours that I had slept? I continued to hunt and found only silence. What wasn't said was the most revealing. I'd been saddled with the epilogue of a very disturbing performance that was never going to show and a burden I couldn't discard- the jolt from the nightmare click of a hammer falling.

Finally, in this year, 2025, after decades of sensing the waning odds, I've come across, to my surprise, the crowning clue. Serendipity has been my forte, and anticipation my

style. Just as penicillin came to us from a failed Petri culture, I was prepared, and when the report grabbed my attention, I was astounded and filled with hope. Scientists of the European Union reported their analysis of material that had come from North Africa. Their samples were taken from an accumulation of dust that had settled on Europe, blown there on the wind of an unusually violent storm earlier in the year. From this sediment, they extracted all the elements of the fingerprint pattern for fallout from a US nuclear bomb. They ponder how this can be. It is hard evidence, but who shall get to say if only a handful of Bedouins, their camels, and our moral authority were utterly cremated in this act of 1973?

The lapping current of neglect that carries my gnawing nightmare sloshes against me as I wait. I have found that truth will never fail me until trust dies, and then everything flounders. Many children growing up in rural America when I did were taught, "Don't play with fire." We got it, and we were proud. We explored a fresh and exciting world, and risk-management became second nature. Just as my elders entreated me to be good, I hope this story of a place at a time with a message and the scientists who found fallout in the dust will resonate with you, and some will say, "Yes, I see it." With luck, it could lead to a chance to return to Reykjavik and finish what was started there. Defying all the crashing waves of doubt and abandoning wayward arrogance, we will correct the fatal flaw and chart a new course. Trust will be restored in the world, and power will be returned to the people.

Our president, in October 1973, mired beyond hope in Watergate, may have delegated his control for the use of the Bomb, and we need to find out. If this frenzied act occurred in a startling moment when it appeared to be imminent that a reversal in the 'fortunes of war' was about to be sprung, then this act must be identified as a betrayal of all humanity, much as a shameful game of chicken.

The Atomic Bomb, destroyer of life and tiller of darkness, chaos, and fear in its shadow, has risen to be humanity's nemesis. If ever unleashed by its hovering camp of handlers, it will consume all manners of humanity and leave words dead in accordance with the erasure. Should we talk about this now and call for the courage to resist this malignant spiral that imprisons our instinct to live? Should we declaim this malignant cabal as the inappropriate custodians of the Bomb and arrange a safer harbor like the world has done with poison gas?

Sustained now by our history and comforted in good stead with my ancestors, I dream of a day that is plausible if we are dedicated to the ideas that our forefathers set forth for us.

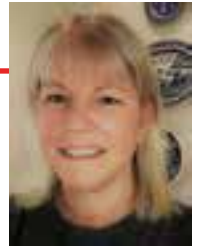
Will reconciliation ever be found in this diabolical place? Only truth can set us free. Shall they tell a story a thousand years hence with all the young gathered around, of how a star fell and how it led them to understanding- how they had narrowly escaped, but came to learn and grow and how it guided them to look at each other anew and see the worth of them all- the veteran who still 'saw the s\*\*\*' from their waste-land, the partisan who imagined they saw and ranted of greatness, and everyone else for they all bore the weight of it! How the World Court heard witnesses who found courage and remembered the star, and before the crackling cinder disappeared, knowledgeable ones came and helped to lay this burden down because they could, and they all breathed a sigh of relief in the welcome light of a new day!

## In Memoriam

**By: Althea Fejes, Registrar**

The members of the Board of Assistants of the SMDPA extend their sympathy to the families and friends of our recently departed members. We thank you for your service and dedication to the Society of Mayflower Descendants of Pennsylvania.

Dana Boyd  
Lora H. Lavin  
Charles A. Maxfield  
Christopher Rowland  
Farleigh Rozier  
Margaret Wolcott



*Brewster Cockrell  
Western Colony Spring  
Meeting 2025*

**William Brewster Cockrell** was an active member of the Western Colony. He was born on November 19, 1945, and passed on November 19, 2025, on his 80th birthday. Brewster was passionate about his extensive family tree. He was proud to assist any new SMDPA member with their applications and genealogy issues. Brewster enjoyed historic research! He was a friend to many and always a source of support for our

Western Colony. He served as Treasurer for many years and regularly sponsored colony dinners at the Edgeworth Club.

**Nancy Murray Lacy** recently passed and is remembered by the SMDPA for a special Thanksgivng surprise that happened in November of 2022. Ginny Fossa, Lead SMDPA



Historian, was contacted by Nancy's daughter, Tricia. Tricia had submitted SMDPA applications for her mother, four sons, and a grandson. Ginny processed all applications in time for Thanksgiving. Althea Fejes printed all the certificates and mailed them to Tricia. On Thanksgiving, her 95th birthday, Nancy was surprised with her approved application and certificate for her and her family. It was very special, especially when her daughter, Tricia, and the grandchildren dressed as pilgrims. A cherished memory for all. Rest in Peace.



**Linda Ruhe** was born February 24, 1949, and passed on October 21, 2024. Linda was active as a member of SMDPA, as well as the DAR, and Lebanon Woman's Club.

*Linda Ruhe*

## Genealogy, Fellowship, and the Mayflower One Lunch at a Time

By: Lois Revenaugh, Membership

Have you ever wished you could get together with other Mayflower members to talk about your two favorite things—genealogy and the Mayflower Society?

A few years ago, at our annual meeting, I met a woman who asked if I knew of any local genealogy groups she could join. That simple question sparked an idea. Pennsylvania is a very large state, and while statewide meetings are wonderful, they aren't always easy for everyone to attend. Why not create something smaller, local, and informal?

That's how our monthly lunch group began—a small gathering designed to bring Mayflower members together in a relaxed setting to share ideas, ask questions, and learn from one another. The meetings are intentionally low-key. There are no formal agendas or guest speakers. Instead, we use the time to help each other tackle genealogical challenges, explore new research techniques, discuss DNA discoveries, troubleshoot tree problems, and even consider potential supplemental Mayflower applications.

To make participation easy, we anchor our lunches to the same day each month so members can “save the date.” While the restaurant changes from month to month, we stay within the same central community. Most gatherings last about 90 to 120 minutes—long enough for meaningful conversation, but still manageable for busy schedules.

Starting this group has been incredibly rewarding, and it has shown me that meaningful connections don't require large meetings or formal programming. Sometimes, all it takes is a table, a shared interest, and a willingness to begin. I hope this might inspire others to consider starting a similar small group in their part of the state—bringing Mayflower members together, one lunch at a time.



## Celebrating 1776-2026 Be Involved ~ Reflection Project Mayflower 250

The incredible story of Mayflower II is told in Richard Stone's critically acclaimed book *“PROJECT MAYFLOWER”* Available wherever books are sold in the USA and UK. Hardback, e-Book, and Audio.

\*Richard Stone will be the Guest Speaker at the Susquehanna Colony Brunch Event on May 9th, in Clarks Summit, PA. *MAYFLOWER II* will sail in Boston in July 2026 to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

### Reflection:

\*1620: Mayflower Compact

*“Just and equal laws for the general good...”*

41 Englishmen signed.

and

\*1776: Declaration of Independence

*“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal ...”*

56 Americans signed.



## SMDPA Member Robert Keck Shares his Plan for America250

I am a member of our SMDPA and of the Sons of the American Revolution, and I am the President of my chapter, the Continental Congress Chapter.

We will be celebrating in several ways, honoring the people from Marsh Creek Cemetery who served in the Revolution. We will be celebrating with the DAR, CAR, SR, and, of course, the SAR, at various locations. One of which is in Lancaster in September to recognize Capital Day, since Lancaster served as Pennsylvania's capital for one day. We will be celebrating with the same groups in April.

There are other Chapters in the State of Pennsylvania, throughout all 67 Counties, that will be planning America250 events.

\*Robert is a 20-year Veteran of the United States Navy and retired on 1 November 1982. He spent 39 months at sea and the rest of the time ashore around the world, including in Vietnam, Thailand, and other countries. SMDPA thanks Robert for his service.

## George Soule Descendant, Cindy Holdridge Prepares for America250PA

I have been an official member of SMDPA for 3 1/2 years. I was born in Susquehanna County, PA, where I joined DAR in 1993. I've lived in Wyoming County, and for the past 10 years, in Bradford County.

Bradford County was among the first to join the planning of America250PA semi-quincentennial events. We quickly organized to have monthly meetings. Our chairperson is Henry Farley, formerly the founder of the Bradford County Historical Society Museum. As a member of DAR, I was asked to be on the committee.

Over a year ago, I suggested to the committee that we place a plaque in the county courthouse listing the names of Revolutionary War patriots buried in our county. I asked this because neighboring counties of Susquehanna and Wyoming have such plaques.

The committee approved the project. I have been working for the past 15 months to research and compile a list, supported by the best available documentation. The list has 303 patriots!

As a fundraiser, I also suggested holding a quilt raffle. Two other quilters and I have completed it, and we are ready to sell tickets and display the quilt at as many venues as possible.

I urged the Endless Mountains Heritage Region to conduct cemetery workshops in Wyoming and Bradford Counties, as they did previously in Susquehanna County, with the 25-member limit quickly filled with a waiting list. EMHR held two more workshops, which received a similar public response.

I am involved in a historic reenactment of local citizens at our local Sayre Historical Society Museum. Historical citizens who have made significant contributions to our county's early history are portrayed to the public.

As part of our 2026 celebration, I have started posting about the contributions of our patriots during the Revolutionary War on Bradford County's America250PA Facebook site.

I realized I did not know the Revolutionary War in chronological order. I have since read a book by Joseph Ellis. It is called "The Cause". This book took me through the major course of the war.

### SMDPA Member Question

**By: Sharyn Davis and Pam Palchowski, Co-Editors**

**Member Question: What historical site have you visited that was so impactful that you would like to share the site and one fact about how it impacted you?**



**Scott Bond:** I was born in Buffalo, raised in southern Delaware, South Jersey, and Pennsylvania. I was a meat-and-potatoes kid who vacationed at the Jersey and Delaware beaches and the family cottage at Silver Bay, Ontario.

Starting in 1975, I began traveling overseas on business and for pleasure; ultimately visiting 48 countries and all but two continents - Antarctica and South America. Globally, I've visited the pyramids in Egypt, the Terracotta Soldiers in China (3rd Century BCE), Rome - enough said, St. Petersburg Museum, and Red Square, Moscow, Russia. Ephesus and the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey. Uluru, also known as Ayers Rock, a massive, sacred sandstone monolith in Australia, is impressive, but climbing the Sydney Harbour Bridge and having dinner at the Sydney Opera House was more fun. I have worked for short periods in South Korea, Belgium, the Philippines, Singapore, and Mexico.

While all these places have interesting sites, it is the people who make them even more compelling. At the end of my trips, it always came down to, "there's no place like home, there's no place like home."

Mayflower history is still relatively new to me, and I still haven't visited Plimoth. But, when I return home, to our very young, at 250 years, and imperfect society, the Mayflower Compact is a source of pride for me. The Mayflower Compact (1620) made a lasting contribution to the United States by planting an early seed of self-government based on consent of the governed. We are fortunate.

**Jim Campbell:** Stephen Hopkins first came to American shores in 1610. At Historic Jamestowne, I planted my feet where he stood, starved, struggled, and survived. I felt a profound sense of gratitude.

**Elaine Chilcote:** Visiting the Coliseum in Rome, standing high up in the seats, I was suddenly overcome by a sensation of horror, perhaps a lingering aura from the atrocities committed there.

**Althea Fejes:** One hot summer afternoon, some friends and I crossed the bridge over to Trenton to view a 17ft by 12ft painting of George Washington. This painting hangs inside a building at Thomas Edison State University. We had our picture taken, standing below the painting. This moment reminds me that there are countless such places within our reach. Visiting them can transport our



*From L to R  
Shari Vetter,  
Johanna Troy,  
Althea Fejes,  
Sandy Billington*

thoughts to those events and people, evoking both admiration and thankfulness.

**Kevin Smith:** I grew up in a small hamlet called Mumford, NY. There is nothing historic about Mumford itself, but it is home to the Genesee Country Museum, located about 25 minutes southwest of Rochester. The Genesee Country Museum is the largest living history museum in New York and the third largest in the United States. I suspect some of our members have visited this living history museum. The village within the museum consists of nearly 70 original buildings dating from the late 1700's to the late 1800's. All these original structures were relocated from the Genesee Valley region to the museum. They host many themed events throughout the year that depict life in the 1800s. Having always been a lover of history, I was fortunate to have this place literally in my backyard.

**Lois Revenaugh:** Would one consider cemeteries a historic site? For me, absolutely. After discovering that my sixth great-grandfather was the first white settler in Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, arriving in 1727, I felt compelled to visit the place where he lived. That journey led me to a nearby cemetery where many members of his family are buried.

What began as a single visit turned into many trips from my home in Michigan to document local cemeteries and walk the same ground as my ancestors. Those visits had such a profound impact that my husband and I ultimately decided to move to the area. Since my husband had never lived outside of Michigan, it was a very big decision for him.

Nine years later, we are still here - and I have discovered countless cousins I never knew I had. What started as a visit to a historic site quite literally reshaped our lives.

**Pam Palchowski:** My favorite historical site is Plimoth Patuxet. Plimoth is a place that is powerful. The energy you feel while visiting is special. The reenactors are amazing. Exploring the entire village and surroundings is worth the trip.

**Cindy Holdridge:** I have visited many historic sites. In Bradford County alone, there are approximately 325 cemeteries. Revolutionary War Patriots are buried in ninety-one of them. Seventy patriots do not have monuments. I am in the process of documenting what these monuments look like now; that is, after I have cleaned them!

### Cole Family Connections Genealogy

**By: Carol Hodes, SMDPA Member**

Searching my Mayflower roots led to several ancestors with the last name Cole. My curiosity about the Coles was piqued, realizing that Burial Hill behind Plymouth Rock, the burial ground for those who died in the early years of Plymouth Colony, was also called Cole's Hill. I wanted to learn how I was connected to them and share some of these connections, since they might help your search for additional Mayflower ancestry.

The first inhabitant of the hill was James Cole (1600-78), who arrived in Plymouth in 1633 (Jacobs and Kent 2012), hence the name. Pilgrim Society Note, Series One, Number One (Belcher 1954), quotes the memorial plaque for James Cole, which is mounted at the top of the steps on Cole's Hill. Descendants of James Cole and his wife, Mary Tibbes (1598-1660), married into several Mayflower

families, including many branches of my family, indicated below. The couple had four children: James Jr. (1626-1709), Sgt. Hugh (1628-49), John (1630-77), and Mary (1632-1680).

Sources say that James Cole was a shoemaker and inn-keeper of Cole's Inn. Joanna Cole, who married Thomas Howland (grandson of John Howland), and their son, Consider Howland eventually inherited Cole's Inn (Cole 1908).

**Allerton:** Mary Allerton's son, Elkanah Cushman, Sr, married Elizabeth Cole (1657-81), sister of John Cole, Jr. (1660-1724), Hannah Cole Bradford (1666-1718), Joan Cole Howland (1668-1747), and Martha Cole Howland (1672-1703), all children of James Cole, Jr (1626-1709) and Mary Tilson Cole (1627-1703).

**Alden and Mullins, Standish:** the great-great-great-granddaughter of John Alden, Priscilla Mullins and Myles Standish, Celea Samson (1764-1845), married Seth Cole (1756-1810), with whom I share DNA. Celea Samson Cole's great-grandparents were Lorah Standish (1658/60-1725) and Abraham Samson (1658-1725) (Samson 2026). Seth is the son of Ruth Churchill Cole (1716-1806), my 5th great-grandmother. The 4th son of John Cole, Jr. and Patience Barber (1689-1735), Ebenezer Cole (1711-1791), was Ruth Churchill Cole's husband; their daughter Ruth (1744-93) married Hezekiah Weeks.

**Bradford:** Hannah Cole Bradford (1666-1718), daughter of James Cole, Jr. and Mary Tilson (1627-1678), married Elisha Bradford (1669-1747), son of Joseph Bradford (1630-1715) and grandson of William Bradford.

**Howland:** Joan (Joanna) Cole Howland (1668-1747), daughter of James Cole, Jr. and Mary Tilson, married Thomas Howland (1665-1739), grandson of John Howland (1599-1673) and Elizabeth Tilley Howland (1607-1687).

**Fuller:** James Cole Sr.'s daughter Mary Cole (1653-95) married John Lothrop (1645-1727) (Arden 1920). Their son, Barnabas Lothrop (1686-1756), married Bethiah Fuller (1687-1714).

**Soule:** George Soule, Sr.'s (1601-1680) second wife was Mary Bucket (1605-76). The grandson of their son, John (1632-1707) and wife Rebecca, Isaac Wright (1686-1766), married Mary Cole (1696-1759), my 6th great aunt.

**Additional connections:** John Cole Sr. (1660-1724), grandson of James Cole Sr., married Susannah Gray (1688-1727), daughter of Edward Gray (my 8th great-grandfather) and his second wife, Dorothy Lettice.

Ephriam Cole Sr. (1660-1731), constable of Plymouth and son of James Cole Jr. and Mary Tilson, married Rebecca Gray (1660-1742) in Plymouth County, MA. Rebecca was another daughter of Edward Gray and Dorothy Lettice. Ephriam and Rebecca had seven children: Ephriam Jr. (who died in 1730, age 7), Samuel, Rebecca, Mary, Dorothy, James, and Samuel Cole (Cole 1908).

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Also, Geni, FamilySearch, and WikiTree were used to verify ancestry.

## Member Spotlight Laura Tyndall, SMDPA Web Committee Co-Chair By: The Pennsylvania Mayflower



The Pennsylvania Mayflower Editors asked, how many years ago did you become an official member of the SMDPA? This is Laura Tyndall's story.

Laura Tyndall's first application to the Society of Mayflower Descendants was approved in July 2018, establishing her descent from Pilgrim Richard Warren. Her second application—proving her lineage to William Bradford—was approved in 2026, further deepening her Mayflower roots.

The genealogy “bug,” however, was planted much earlier. As a teenager, Laura had the privilege of knowing and spending time with her maternal great-grandmother, who was born and raised in Lynn, Massachusetts (founded in 1629). Her beloved “Nana” often spoke of the family's “deep” New England roots, offering Laura her first fascinating glimpse into family history and lineage.

Years later, a discovery on Ancestry.com tracing her maternal great-grandfather's line revealed the Mayflower connections—and unexpected Pennsylvania roots as well. While documenting and proving those connections took several years, Laura relished the journey, gaining not only evidence but a richer appreciation for history and the events that shaped it.

In retirement, the genealogy bug has truly taken hold. Along the way, Laura has uncovered kinships to historical figures such as John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, other New England pilgrims, and Revolutionary War patriots. Even closer to home, she discovered that her seventh great-grandfather, John Key, was recorded as the first European child born in Philadelphia in 1682. Early Quaker settlers initially lived in caves along the west side of the Delaware River (while permanent shelter was being built), and William Penn himself deeded land to the family in honor of Key's birth.

And there's more: she discovered she is the 11th cousin of one of the SMDPA Board members she's worked closely with over the past 7 years! While we jokingly call other

SMDPA members “cousin”, we really are! Genealogy, as Laura has happily discovered, really *can* be fun.

Editors also asked Laura, *if you are currently in the service or are a Veteran, what was your experience and how did it help to make our country safer or better?*”

Laura reported that she has not served in the military, but military service deeply shaped her family and their lives. My father was a U.S. Coast Guard officer, so we lived in many places. In the 1960s, we were stationed on Governors Island—just a ferry ride from the tip of Manhattan—where early, room-sized “computers” filled entire barrack-style buildings. These pioneering systems were used to track Atlantic shipping and support search-and-rescue operations, laying early groundwork for information technology that greatly improved safety.

My father’s service also inspired my brother to serve 20 years in the U.S. Navy, followed by another 20 years as an IT contractor.

Lastly, when I was born, my father was stationed overseas in the Marshall Islands, and my first name was inspired by nearby Laura Atoll (Yes – I am named after rocks!) In my own way, I like to think I’ve carried that legacy forward, helping make patients safer through a dual career in health-care as a pharmacist and in health information technology.

*Thank you, Laura, for sharing part of your world and being in the “Member Spotlight”.*

## The Royal Connection for the Winslows By: John “Ned” Winslow, SMDPA Member

This story is about my grandfather, Douglas Winslow, and his trip to Queen Elizabeth II’s Coronation. He met two other Winslows while at the Coronation, and all were descendants of Edward Winslow and two of his brothers. One of them was Kenelm Winslow, who captured the story in his book “Mayflower Heritage”. I have shared the book cover (it is very tattered) and a PDF of the lineage for each of the 3, tracing them back to their ancestor. What interested me was the footnote on the lineage line, “this is the first meeting of men of their lines on English soil in over 300 years.”

### The Meeting of Three Winslows (1953)



To end this book, I have an anecdote that summarizes what I have written very well. The incident happened in 1953, a few days after the Coronation of our young Queen, Elizabeth II.

London in those days was crowded with visitors from every country. Though some were ready to make fun of archaic ceremonial in an Atomic Age, it was curious to see how the deep, underlying significance of the occasion caught the imagination of the world. People realized that the actions and words that together comprised our Coronation symbolized a history that went far beyond the shores of England. Kings and queens had been anointed with oil since the time of King David, father of Solomon. Men and women paused and thought seriously about the respective merits of different forms of

government.

In London, in those colourful and eventful days, I was going about my usual business of editing in my office above Trafalgar Square when the telephone rang. Someone called Douglas Winslow wanted to speak to me. He was, he explained, a Canadian. I would not know him, but he had heard of me from Miss Charlotte Winslow, his sister, who was a correspondent of mine in New Brunswick. To a family archivist like me, his explanation that he came from Pilgrim Edward was quite sufficient. I could have given Douglas his own lineage back to 1620 and beyond.

He had, he explained, been present in the Abbey during the Coronation as one of the representatives of New Brunswick. I immediately invited this fortunate and honoured kinsman to meet me in a nearby Strand hotel.

I was just going out to join him when the phone rang again. A Mr. Graham Winslow was on the line. “You won’t know me. I am an American,” announced Graham. He added that he belonged to a “fine Kenelm lot.” In other words, he was descended from Kenelm Winslow, the cabinetmaker, another of the Five Brothers. He had heard about me, he said, from one of the family over the other side, and would like to meet me. I named the Strand Hotel. Three completely strange Windows of the same root stock in Worcestershire, England, had made a somewhat unusual “blind date. We were all around about the fifties. We met and talked merrily about the Coronation, on which Douglas was the obvious expert. Then our conversation turned to “the family’s” discussion that made our attendant wives look a little reproachful. Douglas, we discovered, had been with the Canadian forces in the First World War. Graham had then been a dashing young fellow in the United States Cavalry. Winslows of two nations, they had fought for the same dashing young fellow in the United States Cavalry. Winslows of two nations, they had fought for the same liberties. We all had our more sober story to tell of the Second World War, when we had all been engaged in such jobs as befitted our years, in preserving the same liberties.

We suddenly realized that we, direct descendants of the Five Brothers, were meeting and drinking a toast on English soil for the first time in over three centuries. This, we decided, was a great and good coincidence. One of us—I think it was Graham—said in the course of the conversation, “I wonder what happened to old Gilbert?”

As an editor and journalist, it struck me as the strangest thing of all about our meeting that three men of the same blood but of three different nations should pause to consider, without surprise, Gilbert—singularly inquisitive, the most mysterious of the five—who had unaccountably left his kinsmen in New England. The thought of him appeared under my eyes on a bench. The inevitable link between once-separated generations of our family in personal friendship and transatlantic ties was made that much stronger. The end of my anecdote seems the most appropriate end to my story. It has been much more than a family story. It has been seen through the eyes of the people who actually lived that old history, the story of the development of a great brotherhood of peoples, which today protects the most precious freedoms of mankind.



## Genealogy Toolbox By: Lois Revenaugh, SMDPA Membership

### Family Tree Cleanup

Did you set New Year’s resolutions or goals this year? Why not set one for your family tree—and make it the most accurate and complete tree possible?

Ancestry.com’s Pro Tools subscription provides features that make this goal easier to achieve.

When you log in to your Ancestry account, you’ll see a Tree Rating displayed on your landing page. Clicking on the Tree Check-

er option opens a drop-down menu with several ways to evaluate and improve your tree. These tools identify:

- Possible errors
- Possible duplicate individuals
- People with no sources
- People with only tree-based sources
- Other potential issues
- Where to Start

A great first step is to identify and address potential duplicates. Resolving these can immediately eliminate unnecessary or duplicate individuals and significantly clean up your tree.

Once duplicates are resolved, move on to “Other Possible Errors.” This category often uncovers some very interesting—and sometimes surprising—issues.

#### Common Errors You May Find

Some of the issues the Tree Checker may flag include:

A person having children with multiple spouses during overlapping time periods This often happens when a parent remarries, and census records list children as dependents of the new spouse. In most cases, simply removing the child from the incorrect spouse resolves the issue.

A person born before their mother or father was eleven years old. This is often caused by a simple typing error, such as an incorrect or transposed birth year. Reviewing dates usually makes the mistake easy to spot and correct.

Residence facts listed more than ten years after a person’s death, or more than one year before their birth.

Individuals with no defined relationships

Death dates that span more than ten years

Most of these errors occur when two people with the same (or very similar) names have been mistakenly merged into one. Correcting them can take a bit of time and careful thought, but the result is a much more accurate and reliable family tree.

#### Final Thoughts

Pro Tools comes with an additional cost to your Ancestry membership, billed monthly and cancelable at any time. For many researchers, the improvements in accuracy and confidence are well worth it.

This year, consider making your family tree resolution one that will benefit generations to come.

## **My Centre County, PA Cemetery Project** **By: Etta Lyons Buchwald, SMDPA Member**

In 2019, I began a project that would take me six years. I decided to buy all the cemetery books for Centre County, PA, and review all 162 cemeteries against the names in the books. I began with Schenck Cemetery in Howard Township, where many of my relatives are buried, including my parents. My parents were both born and raised in Howard, Centre County. Even though these books were officially over 20 years old, there were still many names to add.

At first, I had these grandiose plans to enter the names in each cemetery, then go to that cemetery and take pictures. Then I found out that some of the cemeteries were on private land, and one you had to go by boat to the island to take pictures. But the one that really put me off was the cemetery, where it was recommended you go in winter to take pictures when the rattlesnakes were hibernating! Another time, someone asked me if I had seen the bear that sometimes roamed that cemetery in Clarence. Fortunately, I did not!

I live 100 miles away from Centre County, but my sister lived in Bellefonte. Many times, I visited her over those six years and then left to take pictures of tombstones. I went in the summer heat so hot that I was a puddle of sweat. In winter, I froze because I couldn’t wear gloves and take pictures. Rain was another issue. Although I

tried to plan all my trips in good weather, it did not always cooperate. I learned to take pictures without my foot appearing in the photo or my shadow looming over the stone. All pictures were taken with my iPhone, not a special camera.

One interesting cemetery was Centre County Memorial Park outside of State College. It is one of the pricier ones, as plots cost \$5,000+. (Mine cost \$200.00 at Schenck Cemetery.) It spans 35 acres and holds the remains of almost 11,000 people. I have never seen a cemetery with so many PhD’s. It seems that if you worked at Penn State University, that was the place to be buried.

During the project, I added 9,000+ names to Centre County Cemeteries and 1,600 images (including death certificates and obituaries, which were considered images). I ended up managing 20,000+ graves. I also added three cemeteries that were mass graves with no stones. One was from an Indian Massacre.

Death certificates were the responsibility of the counties in PA and started appearing around 1900. In 1908, the State of Pennsylvania said that counties were not doing a good enough job, and it became a state requirement. The death certificates from 1908 to 1966 were released online a few years ago. Then they added more years. Some people object to the death certificates being posted with the gravestones; they provide a wealth of information, so I add them.

I belong to Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com (that is where I get most of my obituaries). I make sure to include the notes when I add an obit —the date, page number, and name of the newspaper. So many times, an obit will say “Jane Doe died on Tuesday,” and if you don’t have the date of the newspaper, you will never be able to fill in the information correctly. Obituaries do not need to be hand-typed in the bio section. My daughter taught me how to transfer the whole newspaper article to the website. When you add pictures to the site, be sure to check the right box. It will automatically say “grave picture” unless you check “person,” “family photo,” or “other.” That will save you a lot of corrections, like I had to do later when other people discovered my mistakes.

The first cemetery that I did was close to home. It was the Masonic Village Cemetery in Elizabethtown. Find-a-Grave (FAG) reported 300 stones, and 96% were photographed. The cemetery was sort of hidden behind fruit orchards on the property’s 2600 acres. When I went to view the cemetery, I realized there were far more than 300 stones. There were 1,875 stones, and all were identical in setup and very readable. Since I did not know which stones had been photographed, I took pictures of them all. The pictures were of older people who had died while living at the retirement village.

The first time I went to a public cemetery, I was appalled by all the babies and children who had died. I found those difficult to do. I have grown used to it, but there remains a sadness for me to those additions. I connected lots of families with their children, parents, and spouses.

The oldest graves were those of people born in the 1700s. There were jobs that aren’t around much anymore, like a teacher in a singing school (the first kind of school we had in America) or a blacksmith, a stagecoach driver, or an ice deliveryman. There were soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War right up to the wars in the Middle East.

One of the most interesting things was reading the obituaries and newspaper articles on the grave sites. One family went to visit relatives in Altoona, who had recently recovered from diphtheria. After Christmas, they came back to Centre County, and the whole family died within one month of the holiday (of diphtheria). A five-year-old child was swept down the sewer while walking to school in heavy rain. A teen boy was killed with a pitchfork. In 1907, a newlywed couple was found dead in a garage after being married for five days.

The husband had car trouble and took it to the garage to have it fixed. His wife sat in the car, waiting for him to finish.

I had one death certificate that had me puzzled for a few minutes. The young man died in the 1930s and was cremated. That was long before cremation became popular like it is today. Then I saw the cause of death as judicial execution. The article attached to his grave said that he had raped and killed his cousin. Centre County has the only prison in Pennsylvania where executions were carried out. They used the electric chair. Although our family home was about 15 miles from the prison, when there was an execution, the lights in the house would dim. About 250 inmates are buried in the prison cemetery; only two have gravestones.

Another interesting but sad story was about a married woman from Bellefonte who worked the night shift. She went to work and left her three small children to sleep. When she came home, all of them were dead from a gas leak. This article was buried on about page 11 and was in the early 1940s. Nothing was mentioned about where the husband was, or any prosecution for child neglect or any other reason. Today, that would have been front-page news, and the mother would have gone to jail. She ended up marrying again and never having any other children.

Not every story was sad. One man delivered mail for a living and figured he had walked 85,000 miles during his lifetime. In the 1940s, I got a laugh out of the family that had a daughter who wanted to run away with a traveling salesman. Despite her parents locking her in her bedroom and her aunt guarding the door, she escaped and left with the salesman. She was home within a year. She ended up marrying three times, and the third one was also a traveling salesman. I bet she was someone the town gossips enjoyed!

One man (who was buried here in Elizabethtown) was buried with his doxy. Since that is an English slang word for a lady of the evening, I was kind of surprised. Then I found out that it was also a shortened name for a type of dog.

I debated what to do when I found a tombstone that looked current and had no death dates. I finally decided to add them. I even have my own stone up and a biography of my life. Only occasionally would I get a message asking me to remove the information because the person was not deceased, which I did. It amazes me how many people do this preplanning.

99% of the people who approved of my additions and corrections were pleasant people. Two people were not. I used the numbering from the books and added it to the gravesites. Those two refused to accept them because they were not the official numbering from the official graveyards. The return messages could be quite unpleasant. I ended up always checking at the bottom of the memorial to see who the manager was and avoiding them. One of them would not accept any information in the inscribed line unless the grave photo was there to prove it and was legible. She rejected many of my additions. On the other hand, I met some nice people on the website, gladly corrected any mistakes I made, and turned over any people they requested be managed (as the website required).

There is so much more work to be done. Each cemetery includes a description, directions to the location, and a map. I have put in a few of those, but with 162 cemeteries, there are lots more to do. So, if anyone has some time on their hands, is so inclined, and has a cemetery book from Centre County...

You might want to add some virtual cemeteries. Some suggestions would be - family, a similar name to yours. Odd jobs, unusual deaths, or soldiers from a war. I started doing this too late and would have loved a place to return to and research the stories I remembered.

I want to mention how this work affected my application for the Mayflower Society. My grandmother died in 1903. There was no

death certificate, and the short newspaper article about her death said "Mrs. Harry Lyons died"—no maiden or first name for her. That and her difficult-to-read tombstone were the only pieces of proof I had. I received a phone call saying I would not be admitted because there was no direct proof. I called a cousin who was a Mayflower member and asked if she had ideas. Our grandmothers had been sisters. She did, she said that her grandmother died in the 1940s and had a death certificate that listed parents and other vital information. We would use that certificate and census records to prove they were sisters. It worked, and that was how I was finally admitted to the society.

All in all, it was a very worthwhile project, which I hope people will use and expand. Since I belong to the CCGS but live 100 miles away, I rarely attend meetings, but it's my way of contributing to the group. I always started my day by eating breakfast and heading to the computer to work on FAG. I guess I will have to start on directions and history of each cemetery, or try to do some more local cemeteries, since I am programmed to start each day the same way.

One last thing. I found a product that cleans graves. You buy it on Amazon, and it is a concentrate. The only thing that you must do is spray it all over the grave. Time and weather will take care of the rest. The cleaning product is called "Wet and Forget."

## Hereditary Fort Night Hosted by GSMD

For many members, SMDPA is not their only hereditary (or lineage) society. Some of the more popular options are Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), Colonial Dames of America (CDA), Society of Colonial Wars (SCW), Jamestowne Society, Order of the Founders and Patriots of America (OFPA), and many others. Indeed, there are an estimated 800 hereditary societies in America, with approximately 300 of the more prominent societies listed on the Hereditary Society Community website. A sampling of these societies – large and small – have been gathering in early-to-mid-April at various posh venues throughout the Washington, DC area in what has become known as "Hereditary Fortnight." You may view the full event schedule here: <https://hereditary.us/calendar>.

Our General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD) recently began participating. This year, on Wed., Apr. 15, from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., they will host their own "Hereditary Fortnight Breakfast" in the Ballroom of the Army Navy Club, 901 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20006. GSMD Governor General Lisa Pennington will present guest speaker Richard Pickering, Deputy Executive Director & Chief Historian of Plimoth-Patuxet Museums in Plymouth, MA. There will be a full breakfast menu for \$50 per guest.

For more information and to register, please visit GSMD's website: <https://generalsocietyofmayflowerdesce.regfox.com/hereditary-fortnight-breakfast-2026>. Registration deadline is Tue., Apr. 1, and seating is limited, so act promptly. If you attend, please take a few photos for our next SMDPA Newsletter!



## **SMDPA/SC/WC/GSMD 2026 Events – “Save the Dates!”**

Compiled By: Social Event Committee – Governor James Campbell, Chair; and Pam Palchowski

For more information and to register for all SMDPA events, please visit: [https://sail1620.starchapter.com/meetinginfo.php?p\\_or\\_f=f](https://sail1620.starchapter.com/meetinginfo.php?p_or_f=f)  
For more information and to register for GSMD events, please visit: <https://themayflowersociety.org/members/members-only-events/>

- **Sat., Apr. 11: SMDPA Members’ Meeting, Philadelphia area**
  - o Restaurant: Corinthian Yacht Club of Philadelphia, Essington, PA
  - o Speaker: Rod Gragg, *The Pilgrim Chronicles: An Eyewitness History of the Pilgrims and the Founding of Plymouth Colony* (Regnery History, 2014)
  - o Includes SMDPA Board of Assistants Meeting, in-person
  
- **Wed., Apr. 15: GSMD Hereditary Fortnight Breakfast, Washington area**
  - o Restaurant: Army Navy Club Ballroom, Washington, DC
  - o Speaker: Richard Pickering, Deputy Executive Director and Chief Historian, Plimoth Patuxet Museums
  
- **Sat., May 9: Susquehanna Colony Social Brunch Event, Scranton area**
  - o Restaurant: Alter House Restaurant, Clarks Summit, PA
  - o Speaker: Richard A. “Dick” Stone, *Project Mayflower: Building and Sailing a Seventeenth-Century Replica* (Lyons Press, 2024)
  
- **Sat., May 16: Western Colony Spring Meeting, Oakmont area**
  - o Oakmont Country Club, Oakmont, PA
  - o Speaker: Rob Windhorst, Woodville Plantation
  
- **Sat., Jun. 13: Susquehanna Colony Spring Meeting, Harrisburg area**
  - o Restaurant: Greystone Public House, Harrisburg, PA
  - o Tour: Fort Hunter Mansion & Park, Harrisburg
  
- **Sat., Jun. 13: Western Colony Summer Event, Washington, PA area**
  - o Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Villages
  - o Private Tour of Rockshelter at 9:45 a.m.
  - o The restaurant will be determined.
  
- **Sat., Aug. 15: SMDPA Social Brunch Event, Philadelphia area**
  - o Restaurant: Valley Green Inn, Philadelphia
  - o Speaker: Michael Carver, “The Importance of Taverns in Colonial America.”
  
- **Fri.-Tue., Sep. 11-15: GSMD General Board of Assistants and Congress Meetings, Plymouth, MA area**
  - o Meetings: Hotel 1620 at Plymouth Harbor, Plymouth, MA
  - o Restaurants, Tours, Speakers: Various TBD
  
- **Sat., Sep. 26: SMDPA Board of Assistants Meeting, virtual**
  
- **Sat., Oct. 17: Susquehanna Colony Fall Meeting, Reading area**
  - o Restaurant: Stouch Tavern, Womelsdorf, PA
  - o Tour: Conrad Weiser Homestead, Womelsdorf, PA
  
- **Sat., Nov. 21: SMDPA Thanksgiving 2026, Norristown, PA**
  - o Norristown Presbyterian Church
  - o The restaurant to be determined

For more information and to register for all SMDPA events, please visit: [https://sail1620.starchapter.com/meetinginfo.php?p\\_or\\_f=f](https://sail1620.starchapter.com/meetinginfo.php?p_or_f=f)  
For more information and to register for GSMD events, please visit: <https://themayflowersociety.org/members/members-only-events/>



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

**Did You Know? The General Society of Mayflower Descendants has a YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@mayflowersociety/videos>. WOW!**



### **Save the Date Thanksgiving 2026 By: James Buckner, Elder**

This year's annual Thanksgiving Service will be held at the historic Norriton Presbyterian Church located at 608 N Trooper Rd in Norristown, PA, on Saturday, November 21, at 3 p.m.

Church History: Norristown Presbyterian Church was founded in 1678. Originally founded as a Dutch Reformed Church (1674), the congregation soon became English with the influx of British settlers. The stone structure was built in 1698. This building still stands, and along with its graveyard, is one of the oldest Presbyterian Church buildings in the country.

Ben Franklin and David Rittenhouse are said to have worshiped here while visiting Rittenhouse's parents, whose farmhouse stands across from the church. The Rittenhouse family deeded the property to the church.

The building was used as a hospital during the Battle of Germantown. George Washington visited the wounded troops here. Revolutionary War troops are buried in the graveyard.

