

18 Blossom Street
Lexington, MA 02173
August 1, 1993

Dear Fellow Genealogist,

Over the summer, with a small group of other genealogists, I have been discussing the possibility of putting together a roundtable of people doing professional genealogical work in Connecticut. By getting together on a regular or irregular basis, we could share information of professional concern to all of us.

Our initial plans are to set aside a regular time each month when we will have a chance to speak with each other. I am writing now to let you know about these plans. We have gotten approval from the Librarian at the Connecticut State Library to meet for lunch in the basement lunchroom on the first Thursday of each month at 1:30, after the lunch rush is over. You will be able to brown bag your lunch or order from the grill menu available in the lunchroom.

Although our first meeting will be on Thursday, August 5th, this letter may well arrive too late for you to make a change in your current plans. If you will be in Hartford, however, please look us up. If not, please plan on joining us on September 2nd, October 7th...

There are several concerns which we want to discuss very soon with other professionals relying on use of the library for the research which generates their personal income. Among these are a planned cutback in library hours by approximately 10% for a period of 13 months to cover construction cost overruns for the recent asbestos removal. While we have a lot to be thankful for in the new reading room with its excellent quality microfilm readers, this setback in access may be a heavy price to pay after so many months of complete closure.

Knowing that people have limited time to attend meetings, but wanting more than just a lunchtime gabfest, we have thought of having a formal meeting on every Fifth Saturday. This would occur only every three months and is unlikely to conflict with other regular monthly meetings. Topics that could be covered are IRS regulations on self-employment, choices in advertising, professional level genealogy software, and tours of the collections of the Connecticut State Library, the Connecticut State Historical Society, and other repositories. Perhaps over the next few months we can talk about whether this is a benefit to enough of us to justify the planning effort.

Librarians to whom we have spoken would be very happy to provide such help to professionals with whom they know they

will have a long and productive working relationship. Editors and publishers, too, have expressed interest in speaking to a group of professionals even if that group is much smaller than a general-interest genealogy group.

We can also use an organized group such as this to make both volunteer and professional services to the state as a whole. One or two hours of volunteer time contributed by each of us each month and directed at one project would produce excellent results. There are projects -- particularly for CSL -- we could initiate to help make material more readily accessible to family and amateur genealogists. With our hats on as paid professionals, we could even band together to put on a series of workshops for people starting to do genealogy in Connecticut. Together we will have a synergy that can produce great results for Connecticut genealogy and for our professional lives as well.

To create the mailing list for this letter, I used names and addresses from:

- o Connecticut residents listed in the directory of the Association of Professional Genealogists
- o approved researchers on the list used by the Connecticut State Library and the Connecticut Society of Genealogists to respond to requests
- o professional genealogists sitting on the Board of Governors of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists
- o the list of people approved for Connecticut work by the Board for Certification of Genealogists

In all, this resulted in a mailing list of only 40 people, about 20% of whom live west of the Hudson River. If you know of anyone not on these lists who would share our concerns about genealogical work in Connecticut, do let him or her know about our lunchtime roundtable.

Please feel free to give me a call at my home to let me know what you think about our plans. And come along on a Thursday!

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Mathews

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