

Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council

Thursday, 4 May 1995
The Connecticut Historical Society

Attending: Bob Bamford, Kathryn S. Black, Jean Bushey, Ron Cormier, Harlan Jessup, Judith Ellen Johnson, Jack E. Kuras, Barbara J. Mathews, Robert L. Rafford, Donna Siemiatkoski.

Business Meeting:

The business meeting was called to order by President Donna Siemiatkoski. President Siemiatkoski introduced the National Day of Prayer passed by the US Congress and led a prayer to open the meeting.

Minutes from the April meeting were distributed to attendees. On a motion by Jack Kuras, seconded by Kathryn Black, the minutes of the last meeting were accepted without change.

Barbara Mathews presented a Treasurer's Report. Twenty-four members have responded to the \$5 assessment for printing the Member List, including donations totalling \$50. Currently, the treasury stands at \$322.11, a goodly sum for continuing expenses over the rest of the year and for printing the new Member List.

President Donna Siemiatkoski and Assistant Registrar Jean Bushey discussed last week's Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Town Clerks' Association. On behalf of all genealogists, Donna Siemiatkoski told the town clerks about our desire to work together, to preserve and protect the records, and to iron out any differences amicably. Jean Bushey related that, according to John Boccacio, Registrar of Vital Records, the genealogist's presentation was very well received. CPGC members present thanked Donna for her presentation and for the time she had taken from her own work to organize the effort, and to put together and present the speech.

Town clerks are also interested in having genealogists attend the county-wide meetings which will be taking place during the year. President Siemiatkoski has agreed to this and plans to ask one or two local genealogists in each county to attend with her.

Jean Bushey announced two new programs being instituted by John Boccacio. The first of these efforts is to return to the letter of the statute regarding access to vital records. From now on, the state office will accept **any card** from any legally-incorporated genealogy society in any state when presented together with a photo ID.

The second program being instituted by Mr. Boccacio is a volunteer researcher program. Currently, staff at the counter at the state vital records office are permitted to do research over ranges of years on Fridays from 9 to 12 only. This restriction was necessary because vault access is unsafe and space limited and because the staff has many other responsibilities related to making certified copies available. Mr. Boccacio is now seeking genealogists who would be available to volunteer to work **behind the counter** performing such general research.

Jean Bushey will administer the volunteer program. She will provide each volunteer with a brief training about resources and with a parking pass for the back lot at the office building. The volunteer will then work for other genealogists for a period and will be able to perform his or her own searches as time permits. Mrs. Bushey seeks first to fill the Friday morning slot with volunteers through the month. If enough people volunteer, she will be able to expand research hours at the counter to other days of the week.

Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Mrs. Bushey by using the private line to her office: 203-566-1119. If you cannot reach her there, you may leave a message at 203-566-3149.

Jack Kuras volunteered on the spot! Members present also agreed to bring this information to their own societies for inclusion in newsletters.

We also learned that the Town Clerk in New London has made a unique interpretation of statutes 7-51 and 7-51a. This Town Clerk posts a notice of this interpretation which was provided for our files. The interpretation results in no one - not even those mandated - being able to obtain a birth certificate from this century. The State Registrar will be working with the New London Town Clerk on this matter. In the meantime, members should be aware of this anomalous policy and of the fact that it is being addressed by the state.

Donna Siemiakoski also reported the upcoming retirement of Ted Wohlson, whom many of us know well as Librarian of the History and Genealogy Reading Room at the Connecticut State Library.

Barbara Mathews asked for approval of a certificate to mark the 60th anniversary of active genealogy research by Honorary Member Barbara Ferris of Wethersfield. On a motion by Barbara Mathews seconded by Kathryn Black, we unanimously approved the following:

Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council salutes honorary member Barbara Ferris on the 60th anniversary of her genealogical work. Her published and private work on Connecticut families has enriched the lives of Connecticut descendants everywhere. Let her work stand both as a legacy and as a challenge which calls us all to contribution and service.

President Siemiakoski signed the certificate which will be presented to Barbara Ferris at a later date.

Member Bob Bamford has established a CPGC area on the Heritage Bulletin Board in Bristol. Current information in the area was uploaded by Barbara Mathews and includes a society description and a list of members.

BBS: 203-589-7141

Internet address: heritage.bbs@hartford.com

Members present also announced some upcoming genealogy courses. Robert Rafford will be teaching at Naugatuck Valley Community College and Donna Siemiakoski will be teaching at Manchester Community College. Contact them for further information.

Upcoming meeting plans were also discussed. On June 29th, Ron Cormier will present a video and discussion on Acadian roots. Bob Rafford will be organizing the fall programs. Among the topics will be Running a Genealogy Business; and Research Problems and Insights. He will have more information about the fall programs at our June meeting.

Judith Johnson reported that the volunteer effort at The Connecticut Historical Society was going quite well. Several CPGC members are participating. A great deal of progress has been made on sorting materials which have been stored in the society's basement for many years. Among the finds were notes on Barbour's cemetery indexing project and a new box of material on the Brown family which somehow had not been catalogued with other Brown family materials in the stacks.

Jack Kuras alerted members to the upcoming listing of professional genealogists to be published in *Everton's Genealogical Helper*. Jack stated that in the last listing he was the only one under Connecticut. He pointed out that the deadline to list was coming up soon and that the fee was tiny.

On a motion by Jack Kuras seconded by Harlan Jessup we voted to adjourn.

Our next meeting will be on the Fifth Thursday, June 29, 1995, at The Connecticut Historical Society. Ron Cormier will present a video and discussion on Acadian roots.