Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, Inc.
Monthly Newsletter

# PastTimes

Volume 17 Issue 9 May 2026

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### Writing Special Interest Group

Interested in joining? Login to the Members Only section of the Website. Go to Event Registration

### Genealogy Discussion Group

**Topic: AI**
Thursday April 30
7 pm Zoom
Click below to register
MSOG Events

### 2026 Writing Contest

submission deadline is August 2, 2026

# MSOG News

## MASSOG is looking for your contributions!

The next issue of the MASSOG journal will be hitting your inbox (or mailbox) soon - but just as genealogical research never stops, neither does the opportunity to publish your articles, ancestor profiles, and other manuscripts of interest to genealogists.

Do you have private manuscripts, old records, bibles, or documents you've found in your research that others would benefit from? We want to help you transcript and publish them - email us at massog@msoginc.org with your submissions and ideas.

In addition, we want to celebrate the nation's 250th by celebrating the ancestors who fought for what they believed in. We are looking for profiles on your Revolutionary-generation ancestors to help you tell their stories!

Contact massog@msoginc.org with your ideas - we look forward to hearing from you!

## 2026 MASSOG Writing Contest

The Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, Inc., will hold its next biennial writing contest in 2026. We hope that many of you will participate. The rules will be the same as for the 2024 writing contest. There will be three prizes: $100 for first, $75 for second, and $25 for third place.

What should you write about? You could describe the solution to a brick-wall mystery or provide a brief family history related to Massachusetts. You might also relate a historical story pertaining to Massachusetts. If you have another idea and are wondering whether it would be appropriate, feel free to contact us at massog@msoginc.org.

Your entry must be submitted as an electronic file and should not exceed 12 pages, including footnotes. Please submit your entry by the submission deadline, August 2, 2026, to writingcontest@msoginc.org.

**A few things to keep in mind:**

- Complete contest rules are available at the MSOG website, under Publications.
- Your entry should cover no more than three generations of a family and must not contain vital data for living persons.
- Because all MASSOG articles are indexed in PERSI, please use full names of your subjects and full town and state names in your title.
- Footnotes should follow our preferred citation formats, which are relatively brief and simple. For example, a federal census citation needs only the year, place, roll, and page. These formats have been described in recent issues of MASSOG:
  - "Formatting Footnotes" in Vol. 42 (2017–2018), No. 2
  - "Citing Massachusetts Vital Records" in Vol. 45 (2020–2021), No. 2

***Best of luck to all writers!***

# President's Message

*On March 31, 1776, Abigall Adams wrote to her husband John to "remember the ladies" as the Continental Congress was working on the Declaration of Independence.*

*As a I write this message, this year's Boston Marathon is personally special to me since my oldest daughter will be running it. As many of you know, women were not permitted to run this race until, sixty years ago, Bobbi Gibbs became the first woman to do so and made history.*

*All of us recognize the difficulties of researching our female ancestors because of the dearth of records about them. However, the stories of these women are as important, if not more so, than those of our male ancestors. I am thrilled that my daughter's participation in this race will become a footnote (pun intended) of Boston Marathon history.*

*MSOG continues to innovate to provide a better experience for our members.*

*The MSOG Writing Group SIG holds its 4th meeting this April. As a participant myself in this group, I can increasingly see the value of writing down the stories about our ancestors for the genealogy community or for just our family to preserve memories for future generations. Our website continues to provide important links about the American Revolution in the US. 250th Anniversary section.*

*Artificial Intelligence continues to dominate the news. Genealogical websites such as Ancestry, FamilySearch and GEDmatch are all incorporating AI into their sites. This April's session of the Genealogy Discussion Group's will focus on the subject of AI.*

*DNA testing also continues to be a hot topic. The thieves who robbed the Louvre in France last year were apparently captured from DNA they left behind that matched a criminal DNA database. Interestingly, commercial DNA testing is illegal in France. Many DNA testing sites in the U.S. have updated their customer agreements to prohibit law enforcement from accessing their databases without subpoenas or warrants.*

*Please join us for the May MSOG programs starting on May 2nd with the Worcester Chapter's presentation by Lisa Villa on records available in the Holy Cross Library. The MSOG Book Club members holds its online discussion on May 5th on The Book of Lost Names by Kristin Hamel. Our Middlesex Chapter hosts Melanie McComb from American Ancestors for a program titled Mapping Ancestors on the Move on May 9th. Wrapping up May will be the Bristol Chapter's field trip on the Boston Public Library on May 16th along with the May 30th Merrimack Valley in-person Genealogy Discussions meeting.*

*Thanks for being a member of the Massachusetts Society of Genealogists!*

*Terry*

# May 2026 MSOG Meetings-at-a-Glance

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

## MSOG Book Club

Tuesday, May 5
7:00 p.m.
*Virtual Only*

*The Book of Lost Names*
by
Kristin Harmel

**MSOG Members-only event**

## MSOG Webinar

Thursday, May 14
7:00 p.m.
*Virtual Only*

**Seema Kenney**
Presents

*Leaving Liverpool: Emigration from Britain in the 19th Century*

**MSOG Members-only event**

## Worcester

Saturday, May 2
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Attend in person or via Zoom

**Lisa Villa**
Presents

*Holy Cross Library / Dinand Library*

9:30 am Socializing
9:45 am Business Meeting
10:00 am Presentation

This meeting is open to the public.

## Middlesex

Saturday, May 9
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
*Virtual Only*

**Melanie McComb**
Presents

*Mapping Ancestors on the Move*

10:30 am Announcements & Socializing
11:00 am Presentation

This meeting is open to the public.

## Bristol

Saturday, May 16
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Field Trip to**
**Boston Public Library**

The tour will start from the Main Lobby beginning at 10:00 am. After the tour, time will be available for attendees to access resources through a variety of collections, services, and specialized equipment.

Boston Public Library
700 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116

This meeting is open to the public.

## Merrimack Valley

Saturday, May 30
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Attend in person only

**Genealogy Discussions**

Georgetown Peabody Library
2 Maple St
Georgetown, MA

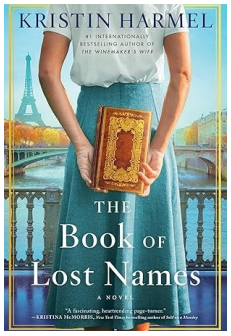
This meeting is open to the public.

## Writing - Special Interest Group

**MSOG Members Only**
Tuesday, May 19 at 7:00 p.m.

# MSOG Members-Only

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




## Members-Only Book Club

Tuesday, May 5
7:00 p.m. *Virtual Only*

*Go to msoginc.org Events to see a list of the upcoming books.*

***The Book of Lost Names***
By Kristin Harmel

Eva Traube Abrams, a semi-retired librarian in Florida, is shelving books one morning when her eyes lock on a photograph in a magazine lying open nearby. She freezes; it's an image of a book she hasn't seen in sixty-five years—a book she recognizes as The Book of Lost Names.

The accompanying article discusses the looting of libraries by the Nazis across Europe during World War II—an experience Eva remembers well—and the search to reunite people with the texts taken from them so long ago. The book in the photograph, an eighteenth-century religious text thought to have been taken from France in the waning days of the war, is one of the most fascinating cases. Now housed in Berlin's Zentral- und Landesbibliothek library, it appears to contain some sort of code, but researchers don't know where it came from—or what the code means. Only Eva holds the answer—but will she have the strength to revisit old memories and help reunite those lost during the war?

As a graduate student in 1942, Eva was forced to flee Paris after the arrest of her father, a Polish Jew. Finding refuge in a small mountain town in the Free Zone, she begins forging identity documents for Jewish children fleeing to neutral Switzerland. But erasing people comes with a price, and along with a mysterious, handsome forger named Rémy, Eva decides she must find a way to preserve the real names of the children who are too young to remember who they really are. The records they keep in The Book of Lost Names will become even more vital when the resistance cell they work for is betrayed and Rémy disappears.

An engaging and evocative novel reminiscent of The Lost Girls of Paris and The Alice Network, The Book of Lost Names is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the power of bravery and love in the face of evil. (Amazon Review)

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

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

## Members-Only Webinar



Thursday, May 14
7:00 p.m. *Virtual Only*

**Seema Kenney**
presents

***Leaving Liverpool: Emigration from Britain in the 19th Century***

This presentation follows the journey of 19th-century emigrants departing Liverpool for new lives across the seas. From medical inspections and shady brokers to sailing conditions and shipboard meals, explore the detailed logistics, official regulations, and personal stories behind mass emigration.

**Seema Kenney:** Wife, mother of 3, and entrepreneur, Seema Kenney is an experienced software instructor and a professional genealogist. Based on over 20 years of research, her known roots are deep in New England as well as England, Germany, and Sweden. Her DNA research has now added The Netherlands to that list.

Seema has a certificate in Genealogical Research from BU, completed ProGen and is an active member of several societies and part of the NERGC planning committee.

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

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

# MSOG Chapter Meeting

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



## Worcester Chapter Meeting

Saturday, May 2

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Attend in Person or via Zoom

## Lisa Villa

presents

## *Dinard Library at the College of the Holy Cross*

Dinard Library at the
College of the Holy Cross
1 College St. Worcester, MA

Meet in the Levis Browsing Room, on the basement level

Visitors should park at the Hogan Campus Center lot, then a short walk to the library

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|---|---|
| 9:30 AM EDT | Socializing |
| 9:45 AM EDT | Business meeting |
| 10:00 AM EDT | Presentation |

This program is FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

## MSOG Member asking for Local Genealogy Help

Sandra Sendtko, a Worcester member who lives in Arizona, has written and asked for someone local to help.

My aim is to mark these graves, if no marker is present. Suggestions for a monument company?

1) Lydia Morton Bradish, New Boston Cemetery, Winchendon, MA
U.S., Find a Grave® Index, 1600s-Current - Ancestry.com
Find a Grave shows fragments of a headstone, someone told me there is a new headstone.

2) Her Daughter, Sally/Sarah Bradish 1765-1833
She is buried at Elliott Hill Cemetery in Leicester.
Her profile is in the history of Leicester, MA.
I'm pretty sure there is no stone and I've heard it's tough to get to. This is NOT a priority.

3) Husband/father, Robert Braddish/Bradish
U.S., Find a Grave® Index, 1600s-Current - Ancestry.com
City of Athol insists he is not buried in the Old Pleasant Street Cemetery. (?) So where is he?
He was in French/Indian War and Selectman during the revolution.
And why did his daughter & second wife live in Leicester if he was in Athol?

Please let me know if you're available to assist, and I'll connect you with Sandra

Email me at vicepresident@msoginc.org—Diane Laferriere

# MSOG Chapter Meeting

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



## Middlesex Meeting

Saturday, May 9

10:30 am to 12:30 pm
*Virtual Only*

## Melanie McComb

presents

### *Mapping Ancestors on the Move*

From tracing ancestors on the move to understanding boundary changes to just becoming acquainted with the landscape of your ancestors' lives, maps are an incredibly important resource in your family history research. In this lecture, we will explore various ways in which maps can help broaden your genealogical horizons.

**Melanie McComb**, Senior Genealogist, assists library visitors, both on-site and online, with their family history research. She is an international lecturer who teaches on a variety of topics. Melanie holds a B.S. degree from the State University of New York at Oswego. She previously served as the social media coordinator for the NextGen Genealogy Network, a non-profit that creates a community for younger genealogists, where she managed the Facebook and Twitter accounts. She continues her interest in helping younger genealogists get involved at American Ancestors by assisting with educational programs from local schools, scout groups, and universities.

10:30 AM EST Announcements & Socializing
11:00 AM EST Presentation Begins

This program is FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

## New Members

### Middlesex Chapter

Sonja Alves

Elizabeth Norheim

# MSOG Chapter Meeting

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



## Bristol Meeting

Saturday, May 16

10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Attend in Person

## Field Trip to Boston Public Library 700 Boylston St. Boston, MA

Boston Public Library's Central Library in Copley Square is filled with history alongside a dynamic modern experience. Inside almost a million square feet, you'll find an impressive contrast of old and new. The library is shaped by its guiding principle, "Free to All," which is shown at the entrance to both the Boylston Street and McKim buildings that together compose our Central Library. Founded in 1848 on the principles of education for the people, access to knowledge, and the generosity of the people of Boston, we hope the library can serve as a waypoint on your journey of discovery.

Bristol Chapter members will travel to the Boston Public Library to meet with library staff. The tour will start from the Main Lobby beginning at 10:00 am. After the tour, time will be available for attendees to access resources through a variety of collections, services, and specialized equipment.

Transportation is the responsibility of the attendee. More information about the BPL can be found at: https://guides.bloombergconnects.org/en-US/guide/bostonPublicLibrary.

This program is FREE and OPEN TO ALL MSOG Members Only

**For more information contact: bristol@msoginc.org**
**Schedule of Events Available at: https://msoginc.org**

***To download the Tour information go to***
**https://msoginc.org/eventListings.php?nm=107**

Find this event and click on the Download link

# MSOG Chapter Meeting

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

## Merrimack Valley Meeting

Saturday, May 30

10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Attend in Person

Merrimack Valley Chapter welcomes you to a morning of genealogical discussions. Have a question about how to use Family Search? Need suggestions to help break through a brick wall? Want to share a discovery with other genealogists who appreciate your hard work and share your excitement?

Come join us at the Georgetown Peabody Library. Bring your laptop, any files, photos, or family treasures you'd like to share...we can swap stories and enjoy each others' company.

Georgetown Peabody Library
2 Maple St
Georgetown, MA

This program is FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

## *National Archives of Ireland*

***facebook post***

***https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=ireland%201926%20census***

18 April marks a major moment for Irish history!

Census 1926 will officially go live and open a window into life in the early years of the Irish Free State (Saorstát Éireann).

What did everyday life look like a century ago? The data revealed in the records offer fascinating insights into what our ancestors did for work:

- Over half the population (51%) worked in agriculture
- 0.2% worked in mining
- 6.5% were in commercial, finance, & insurance
- 4% were professionals

Each figure is part of a bigger story - one that you'll soon be able to explore for yourself through the National Archives website.

Learn more about the release of the 1926 Census and what to expect here:

https://nationalarchives.ie/.../census-1926-public.../

# Upcoming Events

MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

**An Evening with Stephen Hartwell**
*Maritime Records Lead to Genealogical Treasure*

Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 7:00 PM ET via Zoom

This presentation is free, but registration is required!
For more information, go to www.massgencouncil.org/m-o-r-e

## National Genealogical Society Conference May 27-30, 2026

in Fort Wayne, Indiana For more information, https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/

## East Coast Genetic Genealogy Conference

August 21-23, 2026
Embassy Suites at Boston Logan Airport
& virtually
For more information, go to https://ecggc.org/




***To stay updated on the latest Genealogy events check out***
ConferenceKeeper.org

## Non-Member Genealogy Help Request

Gary Porter writes "I am trying to prove a line from me to the Mayflower pilgrim John Howland. The first 7 generations have been proven. Generation 8 is my problem, Hiram Rockwell and his wife Jane Cochrane. Hiram's sister Sally/Sarah Rockwell has already been approved by the Mayflower Society. According to what I have found Sally/Sarah had at least 5 siblings. I need assistance with this generation."

Additional information:
I am a member of the Mass Mayflower Society and would like to add a supplementary membership to my list of Mayflower ancestor. But I need some help.

I believe I am related to John Howland. There is a membership on file GS# 84942 State # 3474 I share the same first 7 generations, down to Maria/Matilda/Mariah Dickinson and Joseph Rockwell. They also had a son Hiram (Gen # 8), he would be my ancestor and his sister Sarah/Sally Rockwell is #8 on the GS# 84942 lineage paperwork.

Generation 9 would be James Rockwell, generation 10 Lillian Rockwell (my great grandmother, I need help with the generation link between Gen 8 and 7.

I have everything I need for generations 13, 12, 11, 10. I would appreciate any help anyone could offer.

Please let me know if you are able to help and I will get you connected with Gary.

Email me at vicepresident@msoginc.org—Diane Laferriere

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

## Statement of Purpose

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

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

## Membership Information

Membership is from September 1 to August 31, with the membership renewal period beginning each July 1.
INDIVIDUAL dues are **$30** per year. FAMILY dues are **$40** per year
The membership application is on our website: https://msoginc.org/onlineJoin.php

**State Officers and Board Members 2025-2027**

| | |
|---|---|
| President | Terence Dugan |
| Vice President | Diane Laferriere |
| Treasurer | Paul Brueggemann |
| Corresponding Secretary | Vacant |
| Recording Secretary | Anne Borg |
| Membership Director (interim) | Diane Laferriere |
| Co-Historian/Archivists | Dick & Kathy Knowles |

For more information go to https://msoginc.org/about.php

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|---|---|
| *MASSOG* Editors | John Manning & Erik Swanson |
| *Past Times* Editor | Vacant |
| Webmaster | Deb Cardoni |
| Bristol President | Bonnie Mendes |
| Merrimack Valley President | Wendy Sheppard |
| Middlesex President | Seema Kenney |
| Worcester President | Greg Paris |

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