



THE DCGS NEWSLETTER

Dutchess County Genealogical Society
P. O. Box 708, Poughkeepsie, New York 12602-0708

<http://www.dcg-gen.org>

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PRESIDENT'S NOTES

By Valerie LaRobardier

“Historic Towns of Dutchess County” Needs Volunteers!

Preparations continue for the launch of our new magazine, “**Historic Towns of Dutchess County**,” with an updated projection to publish the first issue the end of June. This magazine will be a joint effort between the DCGS and the Dutchess County Historical Society (DCHS) that will also hopefully partner with area Chambers of Commerce, individual townships and local historical societies. Our Mission is to advance tourism in Dutchess County by publicizing the rich historical heritage of our towns, to create pride in our heritage and enhance education by providing opportunities for youth participation, and to foster love of history and genealogy by producing a quality publication appealing to scholar and lay person alike. We plan to secure enough support for this project to file a separate not for profit organization "Association of Historic Towns of Dutchess County". DCGS has already received permission to use the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Logo.



Frank Doherty will write about migration patterns of Dutchess County’s early settlers, both into and out of the area. Bernie Rudberg and Fred Shaeffer will team up to write about the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge, with permission from Carleton Mabee to use illustrations from his book Bridging the Hudson. We

are also discussing articles on Native American - early Dutch contact and the Oblong as Connecticut’s doorway to New York.

We urgently need volunteers to help contact townships, organizations and businesses for membership in the association and as advertisers in this historic launch issue. Membership and advertiser response will make or break success for the magazine. Please email Valerie LaRobardier at vl@valeconsulting.com for more information.

Farewell and Best Wishes to Past President Linda Koehler

As many of you know, Linda has relocated to Rochester, NY. Though we did have ample warning and time to prepare, this move still finds us not quite ready to say goodbye. She will be near enough to perhaps return for an occasional visit, but too far away to attend meetings or act as Librarian. We will all miss her. The following comments from Board members summarize what we all are feeling now.

Linda’s move away from Poughkeepsie is a great loss for the Society. She has served as an officer for many years—for the past several years, in two offices—and has also completed many special projects for the Society, including her history of churches in the county, a cumulated index to the Quarterly, and others. She has always been ready to pitch in and help with events like the seminars, including giving talks. Aside from missing her many contributions, we will also miss her as a friend. ~ *Christine Crawford-Oppenheimer*~

We will all miss Linda's smiling face at the library on Tuesday mornings. When anybody had a question about genealogy, Linda was the one most likely to have the answer. She leaves a big empty space in our operation. It will take us a long time to recover. Best of luck to Linda in her new home. ~ *Bernie Rudberg* ~

When I joined DCGS 17 plus years ago, Linda Koehler was the Librarian and also acted as the LDS Librarian and host of the Family History Center on

Tuesdays. After a few years, she became President and remained in that office until it was clear she was leaving the area. She also did Name Searches, especially when we had such a large backlog, and organized a Saturday work session to help reduce the backlog. In addition to many other projects, she maintained an every name Index of our Library Vertical Files. Always with a smile and congenial manner she helped visitors to both DCGS and LDS. Throughout my tenure she has been the most accomplished and productive member of the Society, and will be sorely missed! ~ *Gil Leach* ~

I will miss Linda's back-up and wisdom, always knowing best how to approach any issue. I do have access to her years of wisdom that she captured in her files and binders, but—thank goodness for email! I know I will be relying on that more now that she will not be at our meetings. ~ *Valerie LaRobardier* ~

Harlem Valley Psych Center Cemeteries To Be Restored

Valerie LaRobardier

The HVPC in Wingdale (Dover Twp.) closed its doors in 1994 after 70 years of operation. During its history the Psych center went from a combination farm-hospital—taking over the Wingdale Prison site and retaining the mentally ill prisoners who had worked on Wingdale farms, to an asylum used to train doctors in the use of insulin shock therapy, to a leader in providing community based mental health services designed to prevent unnecessary hospitalization.

The State estimates that 2,300 patients were buried over the years in the two cemeteries at the HVPC. Some had families who had abandoned them or were too poor to bury them, while others simply had outlived all their family members. The State buried these residents. Some families purchased headstones but many graves have only numbered metal or concrete markers. This was done to protect the confidentiality of the deceased and their families. The New York State Office of Mental Health recognizes that they are obligated to “[assist] the diverse communities in remembrance of these cemetery sites...[but] is yet dedicated in protecting the deceased patient rights and their survivor's rights of confidentiality even after death.” For this reason it is doubtful that the data for the numbered graves will be published, but certainly the preservation of the personalized headstones will be of benefit to the genealogical community.

The “lower” cemetery fronting onto Old Pawling Road was originally established in 1867 by local

families, and later expanded by the hospital. This is the “Gate of Heaven” Cemetery, containing also the original Hoag family cemetery, bounded by rock walls. This part is outside the current property line. An estimated 300 patients are interred on the part of the cemetery that was formerly owned by the State. The “upper” cemetery is located on the east side of the site, occupying a hillside plot bounded by private property, and contains an estimated 2,000 patient burials.

The site of the former HVPC is now owned by the Dover Knolls Development Co. whose combined residential and retail project is now before the Dover Town Board in the preliminary phases of environmental impact review. The parent company, The Benjamin Co., is well experienced in such rehabilitative projects involving massive remediation and turning blighted areas into community assets. They now seek to retain and enhance many natural and historical elements of the site. To that end Kathleen Schibanoff of the Dover Knolls Development Co. has entered into dialogue with the New York State office of Mental Health to restore these two cemeteries. The first order of business will be to accurately determine the boundaries, ensuring that construction will not encroach upon the graves. The NYSOMH has made site visits and hopes to be able to assist with the restoration financially through an endowment fund. These cemeteries have deteriorated since the State stopped using them in the 1980's and long before the sale of the property to the private sector.

What great news that the current owners are taking steps to restore and preserve these cemeteries! We do not know all who are buried there, and may never know their descendants, yet we must still honor their memory to the extent that is possible. Though their families may have neglected some in life, it will be good to see they are no longer neglected in death.

DCGS meeting

Tuesday January 20, 2009, 7:30 P.M.
LDS Church, Spackenkill Rd., Poughkeepsie, NY

“Members Sharing with Members”

Attendees discussed their research problems to see if others had suggestions to help them. Attendees were also invited to share research breakthroughs and tell how they made them. Members who have had DNA testing done were invited to share how this has helped them.

Good words from far away -*From your ed., Douglas Leith, jdleith@comcast.net*

I have a Canadian cousin out in Manitoba who emailed me about their recent genealogical trip to NY state:

"Roger and I had a most interesting trip to the area from Oct. 27 to Nov. 5, 2008. We flew to Newark, rented a car and drove to such places as Newburgh, Goshen, Poughkeepsie and Beacon. On Nov. 2 we had a private tour of Madam Brett's house. We went to the library on Spackenkill Rd. in Poughkeepsie and received much help from 'Tony' [Tony Ippolito, DCGS Name Search Committee] on the Bretts. He also took us to the Adriance Library. I look forward to going back there someday." The Brett family is among their ancestors.

Note from the Brett house web site,

<http://www.beaconny.org/html/mbhouse.html>:

"Built in 1709, Madam Brett Homestead was a stopover for General George Washington and other officers during the Revolutionary War. The oldest house in Dutchess County, it has been preserved for visitors by the Melzingah Chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution."

They felt their time was well spent!

NEWS FROM THE NYG&B - January 2009**NYG&B/NYPL CO-SPONSORED LECTURES**

April 21: Using Land Records in Genealogical Research, presented by NYG&B Education Committee member Suzanne McVetty, CG.

May 12: Using Probate Records in Genealogical Research, Suzanne McVetty, CG.

All lectures will be accompanied with PowerPoint presentations, and will run about 50 minutes with time for questions afterwards. There will be handouts for the attendees.

Lectures will be held at the NYPL, 5th Ave, between 40th & 42nd Streets, in the South Court Classrooms, First Floor (off Astor Hall).

UPDATE FROM THE NYG&B WEBSITE

Indexes for the 2007 and 2008 issues of the NYG&B Record have been loaded into the E-Library. This provides a complete set of Record indexes (1870-2008).

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT

The NYG&B is pleased to provide its members with a new resource, available to members on their home computers: **NewspaperArchive.com** "Your portal to the past." Find family information from newspapers from across the country.

It has millions of newspaper pages from 1759 to present. Every newspaper in the archive is fully searchable by keyword and date, making it easy for you to quickly explore historical content.

Over 983.88 Million Articles, search 91.1 Million Pages • 767 Cities • 240 Years • 2,949 Titles

MOVING SALE!

As we prepare to move into a new facility we are hoping to reduce inventory. For the month of March **ONLY** the NYG&B is reducing the price on **ALL** books and periodicals by 50%! Books and periodicals can be purchased via our online store or by contacting Melanie Ayala in our Publication Sales office mayala@nygbs.org or 212-755-8532, ext. 32. This offer is only valid March 1-31.

**ALL PRICES LISTED ARE
HALF OFF THE MEMBER PRICE**

Coroners' Reports, NY City 1823-1842	\$7.50
Coroners' Reports, NY City 1843-1849	\$7.50
German Churches of Metropolitan NY – A Research Guide	\$9.00
Index to Marriages and Death Notices in the New-Yorker Staats-Zeitung 1836-1870	\$17.50
Kings County, NY, Administration Proceedings 1817-1856	\$11.50
Minutes of Coroners Proceedings, City and County of NY: 1748-1758	\$9.75
Naturalizations in the Marine Court, NY City, 1827-1835	\$7.00
Naturalizations in the Marine Court, NY City, 1834-1840	\$7.00
Voices of the Irish Immigrant: NY City 1825-1844	\$11.00
The NYG&B Newsletter/The New York Researcher	\$1.25

The following items are available in limited quantities:

Calendar of New York Colonial Commissions, Book VI, 1770-1776	\$3.25
A Diary of the Dutch Reformed Church of West New Hempstead	\$10.50
Supplement to the Frost Genealogy	\$2.00
Home Kids: The Story of St. Agatha Home for Children	\$9.75
Index to DePeyster Genealogy	\$1.25
The King Family Heraldry	\$1.75
More Lasting than Brass	\$21.50
The Muse of the Revolution: Mercy Otis Warren	\$11.00
Royal Roots - Republican Inheritance: The Survival of The Office of Arms	\$19.50
Your Guide to Cemetery Research	\$10.00
Your Guide to the Family History Library	\$5.00

A \$2.00 shipping charge applies to all U.S. and Canada orders. NY State Sales tax will be applied if shipping in New York. International orders must call or email for shipping charges.

SAVE THESE DATES!

September 10 & 11: **Dutch Research** program featuring Harry Macy and Christopher Brooks. Two days of lectures, research, and social events.

November 11-13: **Research Trip to Albany**. Once again we travel to Albany for three days of orientations, research, networking, and social events. Registrations limited.

Watch for additional information on these events in the upcoming NYG&B Researcher and March E-zine.

NEWS FROM THE NYG&B WEBSITE

The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record for 1961 is now available in the eLibrary.

NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

Please join Pat Salmon this spring for The History of Staten Island, an eleven-week Personal Enrichment course being held at the beautiful campus of Wagner

College. The series will run on Saturdays from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. beginning on March 7, 2009, and ending on May 30, 2009 (excluding Saturdays, March 28 and May 23, 2009).

[Oops, they started too soon for us! --- ed]

Lively discussions will focus on such topics as:

- Staten Island's first residents the Lenape Indians
- the Revolutionary War and the Colonial Period
- Farming/Business and Industry
- the Farm Colony, Seaman's Retreat, Sailors' Snug Harbor, Children's Hospital and Nursery, Mount Loretto, Saint Michael's Home, Sea View Hospital, and Willowbrook State School
- ferries that ran to and from the island culminating in the one and only Staten Island Ferry
- Ethnicity, Race, and Gender
- Movies Made on Staten Island and Historic Movie Houses
- the Natural History of Staten Island
- cultural institutions including the Staten Island Zoo, Staten Island Museum, Historic Richmond Town, Alice Austen House, Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island Botanical Garden, and the Noble Maritime Collection
- and concluding with Houses of Worship and the ever popular Cemeteries of Staten Island

The cost for this unique series is \$199 - less than \$10 per session! To register visit www.wagner.edu/external or call Wagner College External Programs at 718-390-3221. Information can also be obtained by emailing external@wagner.edu

The course will be fun, informative, and very rewarding!

The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society
<http://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org>

