



THE DCGS NEWSLETTER

Dutchess County Genealogical Society
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PRESIDENT'S NOTES

By Valerie LaRobardier

Best wishes to all for a warm holiday season!

Fall Seminar

Grateful thanks goes out to Christine Crawford-Oppenheimer for once again organizing the DCGS Seminar, and to all those who helped and attended. The Fall Seminar was well attended in spite of uncooperative weather—let's just say we were glad to be indoors.

Dutchess County Historical Society

We have made strides in developing our alliance with the Dutchess County Historical Society. September 17th Bernie Rudberg, Gil Leach and myself met with Steve Mann and Stephanie Mauri of the Historical Society to discuss a cooperative publication for the Quadricentennial, focusing on the historic Dutchess towns along the Hudson River. This grew into the prospect of a joint magazine to feature in turn all of the towns of Dutchess, with focus next year on those towns along the Hudson, and giving special attention to initial Dutch-Native contact, in honor of the Quad. Of course, in 1609 when Henry Hudson sailed up the river now named for him, there were no towns here, nor even a Dutchess County. The initial articles will focus instead on events that grew out of that exploration and how they shaped our heritage. Certainly one

issue per town will not be sufficient to cover all the various interesting historical sites and pioneers—in that respect the magazine should have ample material for years to come. It will also cover current events that relate to history and genealogy, such as festivals and conferences. Each historic subject covered will have a companion genealogy article, and our goal is to include here previously unpublished material. The feasibility of such a publication will depend on the probability of securing sponsorship and advertisement that will cover the costs. We are hoping that by creating a high quality venue for businesses to advertise that “shows off” the many historical assets of our county we will be able to attract sufficient advertisers. The only way to determine this feasibility is to proceed as if we are definitely going forward, estimate the costs, secure some promises for literary submissions and then use that to test the likelihood of getting sponsors. This phase is in progress now. Watch our web site and the next newsletter for further developments.

We also discussed the October 2009 Quaker Sampler Symposium, a multi-day conference the DCHS has planned. This promises to be an excellent event. The DCGS is participating by assisting in researching genealogies of the sampler makers who attended the Oakwood School. Those who help will be given credit in Kathleen Moyer's upcoming book on that topic. Anyone who is interested in taking part in this research should call me at 845.877.6255 and leave a message.

Dues Increase Vote Postponed

We had previously announced a vote to increase membership from \$20.00 annually to \$25.00, with life membership increasing to \$250 and back issues to \$7 per issue or \$28 per annual volume of 4 issues. This increase is needed to cover higher printing and postage costs. We have tabled the vote temporarily.

Watch for more news as to when, where and how the vote will take place.

DCGS Life Member and Past Treasurer dies

Gil Leach

Daniel Richard (Dan) Robinson, 44, died October 9, 2008 of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. He was a resident of Fort Plain in the Town of Minden, Montgomery County, NY, and formerly of Dutchess and Putnam Counties. Dan was an active member of DCGS, having joined in 1992; he became a life member in 1996. He was a member of the Surname Search committee, and also volunteered to fill the position of Treasurer. He relinquished these duties reluctantly when he relocated to Montgomery County, in the Mohawk Valley of New York. Dan operated his own Real Estate Appraisal Service and in 2003 was elected to the post of assessor for the Town of Minden. During his tenure at DCGS, he was very helpful to many of our members and visiting researchers. Such was his love for genealogy the family requested that in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to DCGS in his memory. Dan leaves a wide range of family and friends to mourn his passing.

MINING FOR CLUES

By Valerie LaRobardier

Recent questions concerning the advisability of posting links to gedcoms on our web site make one again consider the difference between a clue and a fact as well as evaluate the worth of both. It has been my experience that "where there is smoke there is usually fire". The variance between the truth of the smoke and the fire is sometimes great. You will find many trees on line that are poorly documented, not documented at all, or perhaps well documented—but without sources shown, making their worth impossible to evaluate. When little else can be found about the target of research it is still worth following these leads—but you must keep in mind always the distinction between a clue and a documented event.

If there are many trees to look at the first order of business will be to attempt to isolate the ones that are most likely to be reliable. Looking first at the ones with the "sources given" icon will frequently prove frustrating as another undocumented tree will frequently be given as a "source". Annotations also

frequently prove to be garbage, so you have to briefly browse each. You can save a little time frequently by checking the ones that have the most data present on the hit list. Once in the tree, check to see if dates of marriage and birth are present. Look also at the places of birth for the children. If they are born NY, NY, OH, NY, OH, NY, IN it is likely the list is either out of order or incorrect. This is not always the case with a single anomaly so care must be exercised. Sometimes there is little data for siblings of the direct line but the direct line is well fleshed out. This does not necessarily mean the other individuals are incorrect. Try to spend a little time here browsing these trees briefly before you settle on one.

Once you have chosen a few that seem likely to bear fruit, begin to attempt to document what you find. Say you are looking for your ancestor Jonathan Ring's parents, and you are fairly certain that he was born in New York. This tree claims a location in Connecticut. You should carefully look at all the Ring's in that location's vital records to see what may have made the researcher think this was the case. You may determine it is completely in error. This type of answer is still meaningful. While you are there you may also find a thread that was misinterpreted to give the other researcher their incorrect facts—this may lead you to more information. It will be necessary to bounce back and forth between what you know, what you think you know, and what the other researcher may have known. Be ready to re-evaluate any knowledge you may have that does not have adequate citations. It is worth mentioning here that published genealogies and local histories can also contain errors. These errors are less common, but similar logic prevails. The sections of these genealogies with many blanks either in dates or full names of spouses may be most likely to be in error whereas the sections well fleshed out with lots of descriptive information on the family can be more reliable. Where you have several towns close together, with a well-known family having lived in more than one town, you may find similar information in several published sources. Just as with today's on-line trees, some may have used the incorrect data found in the first genealogy, and "they all say so" may not make it correct. So care must be used with these sources as well. Check what you find against the census and

vital records wherever possible for additional corroboration.

When you do find information that checks out, make sure to show your appreciation with an email to the tree owner, as well as giving credit to another's research in your tree. If you find something to correct or add to their research include that as well. Contact with fellow researchers can greatly add to the joy of genealogy.

**DCGS meeting
September 16, 2008**
"Projects in Progress at FamilySearch.org"

By Christine Crawford-Oppenheimer

Dave Bishop, who works with the local LDS Family History Center, discussed exciting new developments at the FamilySearch Web site. He pointed out that the data available on the site always has been and will be free.

FamilySearch has a relatively new project of digitizing microfilms from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and making them available online. They have now started an indexing project to index most of these microfilms.

Volunteers do the indexing in a system that is planned specifically not to overwhelm people. They can sign up to do as little as half an hour of indexing per week. They download a simple indexing program, and then download small amounts of material to work on. They can reject a page if it gives them problems, and receive other material to work on. Volunteers work on their own time, at their own pace. They may opt out of the project at any time.

As a check, two people index each page. If any differences are found, a third person (arbitrator) examines the original document to determine the correct reading.

To learn more about the project, go to <http://www.familysearchindexing.org/en/home/home.jsf?pname=homeTab>

At this Web site, click on the "Projects" tab to see a list of the 75+ projects currently in progress, plus completed and upcoming projects, and click on the "Help" tab to look at short tutorials about the indexing process. If you want to join the project, see what interests you.

To search in the records that are already available, go to: <http://pilot.familysearch.org/>

Dave suggested that if members were interested, DCGS could choose to sponsor a Dutchess-County-related item to index. This is something our out-of-town members could do. If you're interested in working on such a project, please contact us at dcscontact@aol.com

The LDS Church hopes to finish this project within five or so years. They probably won't index the entire microfilm collection. Some have indexes already, and there are restrictions on others such that they can't be indexed.

I do find it frustrating that many of the current FamilySearch.org projects are indexing census records that Ancestry.com and Heritage Quest Online have already indexed; I'd rather see them concentrating on materials that don't yet have indexes!

Ed. note: Ancestry's indexes have a fair number of errors due to misreading the census takers' writing, while LDS has procedures that may improve accuracy, we hope.

David Bishop has been the director of three Family History Centers, (Scarsdale, Bronx, and Poughkeepsie). Currently, in the Church, he oversees the four Family History Centers in the Newburgh area, (Kingston, Poughkeepsie, Newburgh, and Middletown). He is also promoting **pilot.familysearch** and family search indexing in this area.

Fall Seminar, 25 Oct 2008

The Dutchess County Genealogical Society Fall Seminar took place on Oct. 25th at the Hyde Park United Methodist Church. Hope you were there!

DCGS meeting of 18 Nov 2008

"Opportunities to work together:
New Initiatives of the DCGS"

Steven Mann told of plans for the Dutchess County Historical Society in relation to the Quadricentennial of Hudson-Fulton-Champlain, programming efforts that have been developed for the next few years, and new work being done with the various collections within the Society. He spoke about next year's October 2009 conference focusing on the Quakers and their influence in education, business and the arts in Dutchess County and the Hudson Valley.

Mr. Mann, a native of Catskill, is president of the Dutchess County Historical Society and a trustee and former president of the Museum of Rhinebeck History.

DCGS Membership listings

*By Roland E. Ormsby, Membership VP
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New members and those submitting address corrections or a new set of surnames are listed by membership number. NOTE: E-mail addresses are updated only if a new US Postal address or surname list is change is included. Names being researched are in **bold** type.

Note: membership listings appear only in the printed version of the Newsletter, not the web version.