



California Mayflower Quarterly

Published by the Society of Mayflower Descendants
in the State of California
Winter 2016, Volume XL Number 1



Photo courtesy of San Diego Union Tribune

Governor's Message

By the time you read this, the holiday season will be over and it will be 2016. Where does the time go? I finished up my own holiday season relaxing in Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii – a much needed vacation. My goal as governor is to spend one-on-one time with as many members of our Board of Assistants as possible during my term. I do some traveling for bridge, my other hobby, and was able to have dinner with Robert Dempster and Scott Miller while in Ventura. They are on the 2020 committee and will probably have a report elsewhere in this issue. Thanksgiving found me in Palm Springs celebrating with family and I spent a couple of hours with our treasurer, David Grinnell, at his home. Our board meetings get busy and not everyone comes to every meeting. I'm hoping this will give me a chance to get to know everyone a little more. I also want to try to visit as many colony meetings as I can manage.



I hope you all had a successful Compact Day. I was able to join the Sequoia Colony for their celebration and installed their new Colony Governor, Dawn Newman. Peggy Reid will be moving out of the area so will no longer be serving. I was impressed with the handouts Peggy placed at each plate: the agenda, a copy of the Co-Historian duties, the letter suggested by the General Society regarding the proposed coin for 2020, a copy of the Sequoia Charter and By-Laws, and more. Peggy likes keeping her members informed of the workings of the Colony, State and General Society. We should all try to follow her example.

Each year the San Francisco Colony, Alameda Colony and Redwood-Empire Colony join together for Compact Day and take turns as host. The San Francisco Colony was the host this year at the Marines' Memorial Club in San Francisco. The speaker was Gary Kamiya, the author of "Cool Gray City of Love: 49 Views of San Francisco", and was very entertaining. The day was well attended with a record number of members and guests.

Our office in Oakland has been running out of space for file cabinets for a long time. Larry Youngman is our Data Processing Manager, North, and has purchased a high-speed scanner so our member files could be digitized thus freeing up file cabinet space. A Berkeley student has been hired and trained to take care of this task. We have 9000 files approximately so it won't happen overnight but we are making progress.

Welcome to 2016 and I look forward to spending this year getting better acquainted with all of you. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or advice.

*Patricia M. Friesen
California State Governor*

Deputy Governor South

I hope you all had great Compact Day meetings and a wonderful holiday season.



I enjoyed my home colony's Compact Day here in Orange County. Many of us like dressing in our pilgrim clothing in order to get into the pilgrim spirit.

I plan on attending as many colony meetings as time permits this year, so I particularly appreciate being included in notices of your events.

Hopefully some of you will be able to join us on January 16th in Oakland for our first Board of Assistants' meeting of the year.

*Marcia Huntley Maloney
Deputy Governor South*

Deputy Governor North

A special thank-you to all the members of the State Board of Assistance for their dedicated service to the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of California.



*Jane Ordway Carman
Deputy Governor North*

Positive Publicity for the Mayflower Society

It has been requested that articles about Mayflower that were published on the front page of the *San Diego Union Tribune* Nov. 26, 2015, the *LA Times* Community News Edition, Nov. 20, 2015 and the Valley Community Newspaper be shared.

Board of Assistants – Officers and Committee Chairs

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Dep. Governor S.	Marcia Maloney	torriecat@cox.net
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Edu./Scholarship	Sally Johnson	skj1707@gmail.com
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	Donna Cole	donnacole03@aol.com
Gene Fortine Trophy & Manual/By Law/Roster	June Lazich	juniemin9@gmail.com

2020 Committee**Books Secretary**

Robert Dempster	redempster@icloud.com
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Board of Assistants – Former State Governors

2011-2015	Kenneth Whitemore	kenwhitemore@gmail.com
2009-2011	J. Michael Phelps, Esq.	phelps@alumni.princeton.edu
2007-2009	June Brainard Lazich	juniemin9@aol.com
2003-2007	Donald Dickenson	ddickenson@aol.com
2000-2003	Donna Bennet Cole	donnacole03@aol.com

Board of Assistants – Colony Governors

Alameda	Larry Youngman	lyoungman@volcano.net
Inland Empire	Rick Clark	rick_clark1@verizon.net
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San Joaquin Valley	Judith Weaver	mayflower@ourfolks.com
Santa Barbara	Ruth Jackson	jxruth@hotmail.com
Sequoia	Dawn Newman	dnewman651@aol.com

Are You Moving?

Be sure to notify our State Membership Chairperson: Judy Weaver at: mayflower@ourfolks.com. She will notify your governor and everyone else who needs to know. This will enable you to receive your California Mayflower, Mayflower Quarterly and other mailings in a timely fashion.

California Mayflower

Next deadline: April 1st, 2016. Send all text and photo submissions to Ray and Gail at: camayflowereditor@gmail.com

Submissions to the California Mayflower Quarterly must be in digital format, either in the body of an email or as a Microsoft Word document attachment. Queries relevant to Mayflower families will be published pending space availability. PLEASE limit them to 75 words. Include your membership number and contact information.

NOTE the new deadlines: They will remain the same year after year. Submissions prior to the deadlines are always appreciated.

Spring issue	April 1st 2016
Summer issue	July 1st 2016
Fall issue	October 1st 2016
Winter issue	January 2nd 2017

Visit the California Society of Mayflower Descendants on the web at:
www.MayflowerSociety.com

Visit the General Society of Mayflower Descendants at:
www.themayflowersociety.com

CA Mayflower Board of Assistants 2016-17 Meeting Schedule

16 January 2016: North
19 March 2016: South
18 June 2016: North
20 August 2016: Email to accept new members
15 October 2016: South
17 December 2016: Email to accept new members
21 January 2017: North
18 March 2017: South
16,17 June 2017: Board of Assistants & Membership Meeting - South

All dates are subject to change if necessary

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The Board of Assistants of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of California, wish to thank all those whose names appear below, for their generous and tax-deductible donations received during the year 2015.

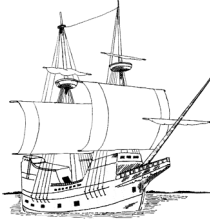
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Albert A Aievoli	Christina C. Schroeter	Gene W. Grice
Alice M Dekker	Christine Louise Stringfield	Genevieve Johnson
Alice Reiley	Christopher Davidson	Gerald Puchlik
Allan V. Campbell	Cindy L. Easton	Gerald W Martin
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Allen Welbourn	Cynthia Pensinger	Guy F. Welch
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Anita Guenin	Dale Evans Fruechtenicht	Harley Leo Caskey
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Arthur J. Woods	David Peterson	Helen J Meyer
Barbara Ann Warren	David Reid	Helen Mathilda Geof
Barbara de Cius	Dayna Marie Hydrick	Henry Francis Russell
Barbara Ide	Deanna H. Kitson	Ian Alexander Edwards
Barbara J. Hastain	Deborah T. Pash	Inland Empire Colony
Barbara Jean Diekmann	Debra Keller	J. Victor Nalley
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Bonnie J. Swingle	Donald Carl St. John	James Boyce
Bonnie Norris	Donald Merle Hoyt	James E. Halbert
Bonnie Ryder Bliss	Donald R Bradbury	James J. Achenbach
Brian Drew Cornish	Donald R. Dickenson	James V. Sterling
C. H. Reynales	Donald Taylor	Jane M Knopf
Candice A. Sawusch-Pytlik	Donna Lenzinger	Jane Wong
Carlisle Percival	Donna Lewis	Janet Feil
Carol Gibbons	Dorothy P. Demange	Janet Lynn Eklund
Carol Jane Friesen	Dorothy S. McFarland	Janice Doty Word
Carol M Dettoni	Dorothy Wilson	Jayne Scardell
Carol McGraw	Duella Farmer	Jean Rene Norris
Carol Rogers	Edward L Rudisill	Jessica Asay
Carolee Hansen	Eileen M. Denham	Joan E Dickinson
Carolee Peterson	Eleanor R. Eckert	Joan S. Petty
Caroline E. Broomand	Elizabeth Horne	Joel W. McDaniel
Carolyn Witt	Elizabeth Oltmann	John B. Schlaerth
Carrie L. Carpenter	Elizabeth Valentine	John G. (Mary E.) Mohler
Catherine Sinai	Erin Lynn Bentham	John N. Riise
Ceci Morgan	Esther Rognlien	John Souza
Charles E. Murphy	Evelyn Hall Zuercher	Jonathan Rhoades
Charles W. Webster	Florence Leef	Joseph Davis Moorehead

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Joyce Shiloff	Mary K. Christie	Ruth E Russell
Judith A Weaver	Mary K. Threadgill	Ruth Jackson
Judith Ann Hughes	Mary Mitchell	Sally K Johnson
Judith Ann Kimball	Matt Close	San Diego Colony
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June Epperly	Melissa Adams Kurtz	Sandra P. Callaway
June M Lazich	Marlene J. Ryndfleisz	Sara Linton Strickland
Karen Friedman	Meryl R. Robertson	Sarah K. Wulfeck
Katherine L. Anderson	Michael Crowder	Sarah L Swafford
Katherine Roseland	Milton E. Ross	Sharon L Martin
Kathryn H Tyson	Monterey Bay Colony	Sonja Dupourque
Kathryn Mason	Nancy K Hobert	Sonja P. Itson (Geraldine & Emory Ford Foundation)
Kay Bennett	Nancy S. Guent	Stephen Jones
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Kenneth David Martin	Pam Henke	Sue Patterson Butler
L. Norris	Pam Marks	Susan B. Cairns
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Lyda Reeve	Rebecca Clapper	Virginia Hoelte
Lynne A. Registro	Regina A. Burhenn	Wallace B. Chipman
M. Jane Early	Rich Clark	Wanda Porter
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Madeline M. Allen	Robert Christopher	Ward C. White
Madeline Mallen	Robert Dempsey	Wayne P. Springsteen
Madeline Noak	Robert E Burt	Wendy Plank Davis
Malena Hansen	Robert James Good	William Abbott
Marilyn A Cutting	Robert L Nash	William E Lewis
Marilyn R. Toy	Robert L. Hughes	William E. Leaf
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Marjorie Jean Kane	Robertta Scherbarth	William R. Tatomer
Mark Rowland	Robin Karnousky	William Woolman
Marsha L. Davis	Roderick A. Mc Lendon	Wilma I. Sinclair
Martha Duboce	Rodney R. Beveridge	Wray Featherstone
Mary E. McDowell	Ronald A. Vallez	
Mary Elizabeth Reeve	Ronald Herren	

State News

Junior Membership

I have now started the mailing of letters to aged out juniors, those who turned 18 in 2015. So far sent 36 letters, 4 returned as undeliverable. Designed a letter for newly enrolled juniors.



So far, 5 new juniors enrolled. Sent out packets to them. The packet includes the letter, a certificate, a membership card. Sent a picture book for younger enrollees and copies of "If you came on the Mayflower" to older new enrollees.

Sent 432 thanksgiving postcards to the juniors and the junior life members. Lacked addresses for another 30. Working on a proposed revision of the junior membership page on our website. I need your help. As you can see, I do a lot of mailings but juniors move. If you are a sponsor of a junior, be sure to send address changes to me. Erica Hahn at ericalishahn@yahoo.com

Erica Hahn

Mayflower Scholarship Awards Alert

Deadline March 1, 2016

California Mayflower Scholarships (multiple \$1000 awards)

Application materials and instructions online at

<http://www.mayflowersociety.com/Scholarships.html>

or google search *CA mayflower scholarship*

Deadline March 15, 2016

GSMD national scholarships (4 awards: \$6000, \$4000, \$3000, \$2000)

Application materials and instructions online at

<https://www.themayflowersociety.org/pilgrim-news/108-gsmd-scholarship-information>

or google search *GSMD mayflower scholarship*

Contact Sally Johnson (skj1707@gmail.com) for more information

Sally Johnson

2020 Committee

The General Society's 2020 committee continues to encourage every Society member to contract their representative in Congress as well as their Senators to solicit their support for legislation that would authorize the U.S. Treasurer to mint commemorative coins in celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrim's landing in 2020. If you have not already done so, please make your voice heard in Washington. The process of minting a new coin takes considerable time, so it is imperative that you act now.

We have also submitted an application, on behalf of the General Society, to the Tournament of Roses for a float in the 2020 Rose Parade in Pasadena in 2020. It is worth noting that the parade is on January 1, 2020, nearly a year before the actual arrival of Mayflower off Cape Cod in November of 1620.

Robert Dempster

Data Processing South

Last month I was hit by the Crowti ransom virus and it was on an infected website I had been to before when it was uninfected. It trashed one of my computers, but I had backed up my files previously. I managed to stop the virus by disconnecting the internet, running a full virus scan, and monitoring processor activity while transferring uninfected files. This still means I had to load all my programs on other computers that had not been fully setup. For further information on the Crowti virus just do a Google search.

Franklin Smith

State Treasurer Note

Since the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of California is a non-profit 501(c)(3), we highly encourage your tax deductible donations mailed to our state office. Our tax number is EIN: 9400878460. Thank you, in advance, for your gracious contributions to benefit our society.
Society of Mayflower Descendants, CA
405 Fourteenth Street (Terrace Level)
Oakland, CA 94612-2701



Membership Eligibility

Any man or woman, of 18 years of age or older, of good moral character is eligible for membership in this Order who lineally descends from the Founders of North America, including the Caribbean and offshore North Atlantic Islands during the period of 1492 to 1692. Members may descend from Spanish, English, French, Dutch, Scottish, Swedish, German, Danish, and Italian royalty, explorers, settlers, and seamen transporting and supplying these colonists.

Those interested in a membership should contact the Order using this form: Membership Inquiry. After your Membership Inquiry has been processed and approved, you will be contacted by the Secretary General and provided additional membership details including an application form.

When you complete the application, mail it to the Genealogist General. You may also contact him for information about the Order, the application process, or other questions.

Invitation to Join

Order of the Founders of North America, 1492 to 1692

A Lineage Society whose purpose is to memorialize the individuals who founded North America through Colonialization. Website: o-f-n-a.org

For further information contact society state secretary, James Blauer, jblauer@pacbell.net.

**New Members Elected
August 15, 2015**

Alameda Colony

James Stanley Pfiffner CA 8936
12th from Stephen Hopkins

Jeffrey Allen Pfiffner CA 8935
12th from Stephen Hopkins

Inland Empire Colony

Frank Robert Stratton CA 8948
10th from Francis Cooke

Ruth Louise Moore CA 8945
11th from Edward Fuller

Los Angeles Colony

Debra Lewis CA 8951
14th from Richard Warren

Glenn David Reasoner CA 8955
11th from John Alden

Patricia (Alden) Brubaker CA 8938
10th from John Alden

Mother Lode Colony

John A. Westbie CA 8953
12th from William Brewster

Ronald Allen Biocic CA 8941
12th from William Bradford

Orange County Colony

Eric James John CA 8957
13th from Richard Warren

Jessica Lynne Simester CA 8934
13th from Samuel Fuller

Joshua Lee Garrett CA 8939
12th from Edward Fuller

Paul Arthur Villa CA 8940
12th from Edward Doty

Sean Mitchel Simester CA 8933
13th from Samuel Fuller

Theresa Lucille (Hanssen) John CA 8944
13th from William Brewster

San Diego Colony

Beverly (Smith) Willey CA 894
11th from William Bradford

Carol Ann (Boughton) Netterblad CA 8954
12th from William Brewster

Katharine Sandra Ross (Suarez) Badgley
CA 8952 13th from William Brewster

Peggy Louise Daugherty-Mattson CA 8956
12th from George Soule

Krysten Elizabeth Maracle CA 8958
11th from William White

William Dean Smith CA 8946
11th from William Bradford

Santa Barbara Colony

Nancy Lou (Sparks) Jacobson CA 8937
11th from Stephen Hopkins

Sharon (Brown) Bevan CA 8950
11th from James Chilton

Sequoia Colony

Jeffrey Allen Spicker CA 8943
14th from William Brewster

Jonathan Cobb Dickey CA 8942
12th from John Alden

San Joaquin Colony

James Edward Hodges
CA 8949
12th from Francis Cooke



**New Members Elected
December 19, 2015**

Alameda Colony

Edward James Eldridge CA 8977
13th from William Mullins

Howard F. Nemir CA 8999
10th from Edward Doty

Jamison Andrew Sedar CA 8984
Junior Life (X)
14th from Francis Cooke

Melinda Louise (Colchico) Wroblewski
CA 8993 12th from William Brewster

Susan L. (Dunham) Mc Gill CA 8975
13th from Isaac Allerton

Stacia Joyce (Robinson) Schroeder
CA9001 13th from John Alden

Inland Empire Colony

Dana Jean (Williams-Hutley) Miles
CA 8996 12th from George Soule

James Edward Hansen CA8980
13th from Stephen Hopkins

Jeffrey William Dooley CA 8983
12th from George Soule

Julie Marie (Hyde) Young CA 8974
14th from James Chilton

Los Angeles Colony

Lawrence Newton Ford
CA 8990 Jr. Life
14th from Richard Warren

Sharyn Evelyn (King) (Roberts) Hughes
CA 8982
11th from John Howland

Mother Lode Colony

Carolyn Esther (Morris) Woods CA 8976
11th from John Alden

Gwen Darlene Harper CA 8991
12th from Edward Fuller

Sharon Sweet Francis CA 9000
12th from William Bradford

Orange County Colony

Donald Frederick Karol CA 8988
13th from Stephen Hopkins

Laquita Joy Kendrick McGuire
CA 8997 11th from John Howland

Noel Marie Selna Bacchetti CA 8994
12th from Stephen Hopkins

Muriel Fitzsimmons CA 8989
10th from George Soule

Paul Sheldon Foote CA # 8981 Transfer
12th from Richard Warren

Redwood Empire Colony

Nikki May (Wales) Derr CA8992
12th from William Brewster

Philip Frere Smith CA 8987
11th from Francis Cooke

San Diego Colony

Frederick S Hillhouse CA 8995
10th from William Bradford

Patricia Adele (Good) Dyar CA8986
11th from John Alden

Robert Eric Holcomb CA 8998
13th from John Tilley

San Joaquin Valley Colony

Anne Brolyer Lieb Cotter CA 8973
11th from John Alden

Santa Barbara Colony

Jennifer Lynn Madland-Behunin CA8985
13th from William Brewster

Sequoia Colony

Robert Norman Schwartz CA 8978
13th from John Howland

Colleen Gilligan CA 8979
13th from John Alden



**Supplementals Approved
August 15, 2015**

Alameda Colony

Jean Allen Edwards
12th from Stephen Hopkins

Inland Empire Colony

Wayne Eagen Staples
10th from Giles Hopkins

Mother Lode Colony

James Alan Sundquist
13th from William Brewster

Sequoia Colony

Mary Whitney Weisiger
10th from Priscilla Mullins

San Diego Colony

Jan Lyn (Brooks) Quigley
14th from Richard Warren

**Supplementals Approved
December 19, 2015**

Alameda Colony

Lucy Lang Day
11th from Peter Brown

San Diego Colony

Robin Elaine Karnousky
13th From Richard Warren

San Francisco-Alameda Colony

Claire Suzanne Yeaton-Risley
12th From Priscilla Mullins

Sequoia Colony

Mary Whitney Weisiger Andeen
10th From Myles Standish



In Memoriam

Los Angeles Colony

Marie Lucille Hedges Rourke – December 8, 2015

Mother Lode Colony

Marjorie Helen Gordon Swickard – October 5, 2013
Dawn Baker – April 1, 2015

Redwood Empire Colony

Jean Robbins McClane Kahler (Mrs. George W., Jr.)
February 23, 2015

San Joaquin Colony

Judy Ellen Sarber – August 20, 2015

Santa Barbara Colony

Dorothy Edith Vincent Sylvester – October 7, 2015

Crisis at Watford Village Northamptonshire UK

Submitted by Jim Blauer

Dear all,

As you know, for many months now we have been sending-out the updates about the Watford Village History Website in England UK, and this is received by over 100 people, some in the UK but many who live as far away as the USA, Canada and Australia. However, rather than send you a list of updates this month, there is a far more pressing issue happening at Watford Village, something which is much more important to tell you about.....Its something we hope you will feel just as passionate about as we do.

A few days ago every address in the village received a letter from the Reverend Collingridge about the financial state of affairs at the Church of St Peter & St Paul. The church has now reached a crisis-point where unless sufficient funds are raised for its upkeep it will be forced to close - probably within the next 12 months. Now, you might not be religious, or you might be of a different faith, but can you imagine the picturesque Watford Village without this beautiful and historic building?



If you've been following our website you will have seen the incredible history that is connected with this 14th century church, from the Pilgrim Father; Thomas Rogers who sailed on the Mayflower to the new world in 1620 , the Lords and Ladies of the Burnaby, Clarke and the Henley/Eden dynasties, to the many villagers who lived, loved and died here, and whose descendants are now stretched-out across the globe.

As previously mentioned, our most famous resident was the Pilgrim Father Thomas Rogers. It is known that Thomas married Alice Cosford at St Peter & St Paul's Church probably on the 24th of October 1597, and that all of Thomas and Alice's children were baptized here. - In fact the original font used at their baptism still exists within the church even today. It is also known that many members of the Rogers and Cosford families have their final resting place within the churchyard. So how is it that a church with such a unique and important history be at risk of closure? It would be an absolute disaster for everyone!

Please help us to keep this wonderful old church in existence rather than see it disappear forever. If you would like to help there is a new page of the website at the following link: [SAVE ST PETER & ST PAUL'S CHURCH](#) which explains how you can donate or get involved in some other way. Please pass this information onto as many people as possible.

God Bless,

Dan & Dee Solomon

(ambtransambulance@yahoo.com)

Colony News

Alameda Colony

Our meeting was called to order by Bob Tripp, who was filling in while our Colony Governor, Larry Youngman was at an alternate luncheon where he was the guest of honor and receiving an award from another genealogical organization. Maggie Kane provided the colony prayer. Wendy Davis led us in the pledge of alliance and also provided the treasures report. Bob Tripp read the Mayflower Compact and Myrtle Savage conducted the Count of Ancestors. Richard Warren was the most represented ancestor at this meeting. The luncheon consisted of a choice of grilled Atlantic salmon with Lemon Butter Sauce or Dijon Panko Crusted Chicken Breast, oven roasted potatoes, fresh seasonal vegetables, with Raspberry Jack for dessert, a confection of Dreyer's Grand Vanilla Ice Cream, Raspberries and Whipped Cream. Coffee and water were served, wine was available for purchase. The program was presented by Janice M. Sellers, a professional genealogist specializing in Jewish, black, forensic, and newspaper research. Janice is the vice president of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society, serves on the boards of two other societies, and is the editor of four genealogy publications. She has been on the staff of the Oakland FamilySearch Library since 2000.

The Program: A Tale of Two Brothers: The Patriot and the Outlaw One brother volunteered and served as a drummer for the colonies. The other was a Loyalist who did not flee to Canada but stayed in New Jersey and became an outlaw. A family split by the American Revolution. Moses Mullenman was a farmer who lived in Egg Harbor, N.J. during the revolution. He served the American cause 1775-1776 as a drummer, honoring both his Quaker beliefs and serving his country. He enlisted as a substitute and served his full term of enlistment. He applied for his soldier's pension which was finally granted in 1820, his 80th year. Moses' brother, Joseph was a loyalist during the war and caused no end of trouble for the American patriots. At one point, he burnt down his brother's house while his brother was on patrol looking for him. Joseph Mullenman was eventually caught, tried and executed for treason in 1781. Ms. Sellers answered a number of questions posed by the audience and the conclusion of her talk. Her presentation was well received. It was announced that Compact Day would be celebrated at the Marine Memorial, 609 Sutter Street, cross street Mason, in San Francisco on Saturday, November 21, 2015. It will be hosted by the San Francisco Colony. The next meeting of the Alameda Colony will be held on February 20, 2016.

*Larry Youngman
Alameda Colony, Governor*

Los Angeles Colony

We had an excellent meeting at the Tam O'Shanter featuring President James Madison (writer of the Constitution) as portrayed by Dana Parker. A full Thanksgiving Turkey dinner was available, but the ever popular Tam O'Shanter Prime Rib continues to be the most ordered. Donna Cole spoke on the Five Kernels of Corn, and Erica Hahn spoke on Junior Member matters. Our next meeting will be at the West Los Angeles Family History Center, and it will be catered as usual. We will be donating more books at that time. Our speaker will be Dr. Walter Powell who is the Executive Director of the Mayflower Society, and he will be Skyped in from Plymouth February 27th 2016. The Los Angeles Colony is in the planning stage for our hundredth anniversary this year.

*Franklin Smith
Los Angeles Colony Governor*

Inland Empire Colony

The meeting was called to order at Bob's Big Boy restaurant in Calimesa at 11:45 A.M. November 14, 2015 by Governor, Rick Clark, who welcomed members and guests. He had all attendees stand, introduce themselves and state their Mayflower ancestor's name/names. We then recited the Mayflower Compact in unison. Pat Rainier recited "Five Kernels of Corn" and displayed the Indian corn like the pilgrims learned to grow at Plymouth.



David Grinnell gave the Mayflower Moment about the first Thanksgiving read from the entry of the winner of an Ohio Mayflower Society contest. There were two people who answered the Question of the Day, and Carol Barr's name was drawn for the prize of a book about the pilgrims. There were 53 pilgrims and 90 Indians who attended the first "Harvest Thanksgiving". We have four Junior Mayflower Society members and three were present and introduced. Our attendance was 31 plus the 3 Jr. members.



The program was presented by member, Richard Roberts, titled "Family Ties." He quoted from an article in "Southshore Living," a Boston magazine, that his twin sister had written about the Winslow House and the museum at Plymouth. He said there are over 28,000 descendants of Mayflower passengers, and he named some of the more famous ones, and reported that he is a descendant of Richard Warren.

*Rick Clark,
Inland Empire Colony, Governor*

Monterey Bay Colony

We had a good turnout for our Thanksgiving/Compact Day meeting and luncheon at the MPPC Beach house on Nov. 14. It was a beautiful day and the food was excellent. Bill Hannah from the Monterey County Genealogical Society was the speaker and he provided insights into new developments with technology and genealogy research. Questionnaires were given out, asking for input regarding future directions for our colony. We are hoping that many members will take a few moments to return them with thoughtful suggestions.

The meeting dates for our colony in 2016 are to be February 27, May 14, and November 5. All will be at the scenic Monterey Peninsula Country Club Beach House in Pebble Beach. Best wishes to all for the New Year!

*Cynthia Colby
Monterey Bay Colony, Governor*

Mother Lode Colony

The Mother Lode Colony celebrated Compact Day on November 21 at Sudwerk Grille in Folsom. Our speaker had a conflict and rescheduled, so the 40 of us devoted our time to the discussion of some new policies including raising dues and other issues or confusions. We asked for volunteers



Wilma & Gordon Spice.

for the position of treasurer to replace Dave Black who has served us well for almost five years and is retiring. We had several volunteers and subsequently settled upon June Epperly, a highly qualified member who does books for other lineage societies and will be taking over as treasurer in January. We have also named a new member to the Board of Assistants for our colony. She is Helen MacLaren, formerly on the Board of the dissolved Colony, Sierra Cascade. We welcomed her to the Mother Lode Colony several years ago when she moved to Lincoln Hills. We thank Dave Black and Jane Clayson who served out colony well for years.

Mother Lode is particularly proud to be the home colony for Wilma and C. Gordon Spice of Lodi, California. The Spices, who are very active seniors, seldom miss a colony meeting even though they have quite a drive each time. They attended the State meeting on the Queen Mary a couple of summers ago, and usually take long cruises to interesting places. Wilma has been a Mother Lode member for quite a while, and she also has proved 23 patriots in another lineage group. This year, Wilma began working on Gordon's line, and in November, she was able to introduce her husband of many years as a certified member of our colony descended from William Brewster, as she is. Wilma claims that her computer declared them 7th cousins, once removed. We salute her success in research after all these years. Gordon is presently translating old German folk tales into English for research.

Our next meeting will be January 23, again at Sudwerk in Folsom, and Steve Beck, the walking encyclopedia of Sacramento area history, will return and pick up his talk taking us back to the colorful days of the Gold Rush. Mr. Beck is the historical director for Sutter's Fort. He is back by popular demand, and we are delighted he will return.

Wishing us all a Happy and Healthy New Year!

*Kathy Gire,
Mother Lode Colony, Governor*

San Joaquin Colony

San Joaquin Colony held a combined meeting with the DAR. Our speaker was Miles Standish. His talk was "Miles on Myles". We all enjoyed his talk. The DAR held opening ceremonies and our Colony did the ancestor roll call so the DAR ladies could see part of our meeting ritual. Our Colony shared a copy of the Mayflower Compact. We elected a nomination committee and will hold officer elections at our next meeting on Feb 6th.

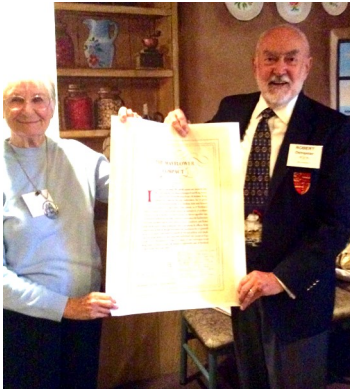


Former San Joaquin Governor Corky Peterson
and Mr. Miles Standish, descendant of
Myles Standish.

*Judy Weaver
Membership Secretary*

Rancho Conejo Colony

The Fall meeting of the Rancho Conejo Colony was held on November 7th, at Octavio's Italian Restaurant in Camarillo. It was a spirited group of 32 who gathered to observe "Compact Day", and prepare for the coming Thanksgiving holiday with a talk about the first Thanksgiving. At the November meeting, we had created a handsome facsimile copy of the Mayflower Compact, and all of our members and guests in turn, signed the document as one of the original signers. This will be framed and displayed at our regular meetings. We welcomed our newest member Nancy Wood, and presented her with a certificate of membership in our colony. Every member was encouraged to write or email their representative in Congress, and our Senators, to support bills authorizing the



Gov. Robert Dempster and Assistant Gov Helen Wyers, holding the compact.

treasury to strike a commemorative coin to honor the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower's arrival. We have been active in speaking before other organizations

about the Mayflower story and the Pilgrims, sharing our heritage with those who are not part of the GSMD and in many cases unfamiliar with the struggles of our ancestors in the new world. We have delivered lectures at the Channel Island Maritime Museum, several Rotary Clubs, and the Huguenot Society. We participated in the lecture series at the Thousand Oaks Library with the "Myths and Leg-



Robert Dempster & new member Nancy Wood



Octavio's Italian Restaurant

ends of Thanksgiving" talk, which was also the program at our meeting. Our report for the Spring meeting was tardy in arriving at the editor's desk, so I might highlight our meeting of August 15th, in Thousand Oaks, where we held a brief memorial for our departed member Rod Beverage, welcomed new member Patricia Alden Brubaker, and our program appropriately, featured a Pricilla Alden enactor. Our next meeting will be held at the Wood Ranch Country Club in Simi Valley. This will be a joint meeting with the Jamestown Society and the Daughters of the Indian Wars. The meeting will be

February 13, 2016 and the program will be about the history of the Valentine, especially as it relates to Es-

ther Howland, considered by many to be the "Mother" of the American valentine industry. Esther is a descendant of Pilgrim John Howland.

*Robert Dempster
Rancho Conejo Colony, Governor*

San Francisco-Peninsula Colony

Our last meeting was held on Saturday, November 21. We continued the tradition of meeting jointly with Alameda and Redwood Empire colonies to recognize Mayflower Compact Day. The location was the Marines' Memorial Club near Union Square in San Francisco, and the total attendance was 97. Our guest speaker was local author and Chronicle columnist Gary Kamiya. He related the history (including early legends) of California and the discovery and settlement by Europeans. The next meeting of San Francisco-Peninsula Colony will be Saturday, January 23, 2016, at Delancey Street Restaurant on the Embarcadero in San Francisco. Our speaker will be colony member Jane Ordway Carman, State Deputy Governor North.



Compact Day, Nov 21,2015



Table set for Compact Day

James A. Ingvalson
San Francisco-Peninsula Colony, Governor

Sequoia Colony

The Sequoia Colony held its Compact Day meeting on November 14, at the Menlo Circus Club. For a meeting of just our colony alone, it was a record crowd of 56 attending! Several members spoke and contributed greatly to the event. Our delightful program was Master Chef Roy Salazar, speaking on Pilgrim Foods; Roy brought with him Wendy Plank, Treasurer of Alameda Colony, acting as his "assistant"! His talk included a fun and also instructive surprise!

Since I will be moving away early next year, member Dawn Newman was voted in as our new Governor. State Governor Pat Friesen attended our meeting, and also installed Dawn to her new



Master Chef Roy Salazar, Dawn Newman,
Peggy Reid & Pat Friesen

post! During my three years as Governor, I have really enjoyed getting to know our wonderful members. And, I have been truly grateful for the terrific support received from not only the members, but also and especially from our current and former officers and past Governors. I will miss everyone, very much.

Under the fresh leadership our new Governor Dawn Newman, our next meeting will be March 12, 2015, also at the Menlo Circus Club. This will be a joint meeting with the San Francisco Colony.

Peggy Reid
Sequoia Colony, Outgoing Governor

San Diego Colony

The San Diego Colony celebrated Compact Day on Saturday, November 21, 2015 at MCAS Miramar, San Diego. Some members came in pilgrim attire to add to the festivities. Our member, Wayne Rogers, presented a program on the Mayflower Compact and Democracy. The Colony was honored to welcome Jan Quigley as our new colony treasure as our former treasurer, Sue Johnson, moved to Utah in the middle of her term. We are please Jan accepted the board



L-R: Ray Raser, Gail Raser, Wayne Rogers in uniform for presentation; Sonja & Joe Itson, Laura Chandler-Johnson, Jim Jacobson, and Robert Holcomb.

appointment as she has had lots of experience through DAR. A number of our Colony members were interviewed and quoted in a front-page article in the San Diego Union Tribune on Thanksgiving morning. The article has been printed with permission, in another section of this publication. It was an honor to share this information with the general public in this manner.

Our upcoming meeting will be a joint meeting with San Diego Sons of the American Revolution honoring George Washington. Roger Cooper will be featured as George Washington. The

luncheon will be held at the Green Dragon Tavern and Museum in Carlsbad on February 20 at 11:00 am .



Marvin Johnson, Frederic Marr,
Nancy Johnson, Belle Bohn



Robert & Anette Storer,
Richard & Sarah Swafford,
Anita & Bruce Guenin

*Gail Raser,
San Diego Colony, Governor*

Santa Barbara Colony

Santa Barbara Colony will meet April 2nd, 2016 at Mulligans Cafe & Bar 3500 McCaw Ave. Santa Barbara, CA 93105. Dr. Danielle Kurin will be speaking to us on DNA and bioarcheology and the challenges and bio-cultural impacts of America's first settlers/settlements. Members of the Society are also welcome to visit her lab at UCSB for a guided "behind the scenes" tour. For further details contact Governor Ruth Jackson at jxn Ruth@hotmail.com or (805) 451-1313.

*Ruth Jackson
Santa Barbara Colony, Governor*

Orange County Colony

In November we had a well-attended Compact Day at a new venue for us, the Courtyard by Marriott in Santa Ana. Our dear Susan Astarita, (our Corresponding Secretary and the State Society's Recording Secretary) did a bang up summary right afterwards which I will pass along. "The annual Compact Day celebration was outstanding! I think I can say we all enjoyed the camaraderie and friendship! Many thanks to Janet Watts for making the arrangements for a new venue, the Courtyard Marriott! The room was wonderful and very comfortably accommodated our group of 55 or more Colony members, family and friends. Our Captain, Scott Miller, prepared a wonderful presentation on "The Embarkation of the Pilgrims" by Robert Weir.



Scott Miller

dear to many of us.

We all learned so much! Thanks to you both! The Los Angeles Times wrote a wonderful article about our OC Colony. I will add that Scott came in appropriate pilgrim attire and looked wonderful. and we have now again launched our annual scholarship essay contest. This year's essay topic is *Compare and Contrast the Pilgrims with the Puritans of New England*, a subject

*Erica Hahn,
Orange County Colony, Governor*

Redwood Empire Colony

The winter meeting of our colony will be held on February 27, 2016 at McInnis Park Club Restaurant in San Rafael. Redwood Empire colony member Gregory Smith will explore the American ancestry of Winston Churchill, who believed that he was descended from a Mayflower passenger. Was Churchill our Mayflower cousin? Find out at our next meeting.

All colony members should have received their updated roster book by mail. If you have not received your copy, let me know immediately. I suggest that you dispose of your old roster book and by all means check your entry to make sure it is correct. If your entry does not include your phone number or email, please share them with me. You may get corrections or additions to me by phone, email or mail.

Sally Johnson
1707 Pauline Way
Petaluma CA 94954
707-763-6907
skj1707@gmail.com

I will send out a list of new members and corrections via email and mail after the summer 2016 BOA meeting. Thanks in advance for your help.

*Sally Johnson,
Redwood Empire Colony, Governor*

Descendants give thanks for the pilgrims

LA Times Community News Edition

By Debbie Zucco

November 20, 2015

They set out from Southampton, England, in two ships that soon became one as the Speedwell began to spring leaks and its passengers had to be transferred to the other vessel. The Mayflower then continued on to the New World with its 102 passengers, landing 65 days later in what is now known as Cape Cod, Mass. The area was not hospitable for farming, and so the pilgrims would soon make their way to the place that would become their home, present-day

Plymouth, Mass.

Nearly 400 years later, their struggles to escape religious intolerance and create their own colony are being kept alive by a group of people who couldn't be prouder of these adventurous souls, about half of whom died in the first year.

They are descendants of the travelers, a fact proven through painstaking documentation and final approval by the historian general of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants — based in Plymouth, Mass.

While Erica Hahn is quite enthusiastic about her lineage now, her genealogical journey got off to a slow start. Hahn is the governor of the Orange County Mayflower Colony, which was



L-R: Orange County Mayflower Colony members Dotty Wilson, Erica Hahn, Marcia Maloney at the Southern California Genealogical Society conference in Burbank four years ago

founded in 1974 as part of the 108-year-old California Society of Mayflower Descendants. The local group has 300 members, though only a few dozen are active participants.

"I think I was about 12 at the time and living in Cincinnati, Ohio, and used to go to my grandmother's and had been assigned to read 'The Courtship of Miles Standish,'" she said, referring to the narrative poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. "And I am finding this so ridiculous that I said I don't believe that these people even existed. And grandma looked down her aquiline nose at me and said, 'Not only was Miles Standish real, he was your direct ancestor.'"

For many years, Hahn, who lives in Monrovia but joined the society while a resident of Huntington Beach, still wasn't inspired to pursue her heritage. But, as so often happens, the older people get, the more they want to know where they came from.

In her search, Hahn originally "piggybacked" onto the 1913 membership of her grandfather's mother, Clara Cole, who was a descendant of Mayflower passenger Richard Warren. That application was full of affidavits, including one written in 1892 by Clara's uncle based on a letter he had from his 85-year-old aunt describing the 1832 wedding of his parents. No other record of this wedding exists anywhere, Hahn said.

Early New England is easy to research, Hahn said, because the towns "dutifully kept records of births, deaths, marriages." But, she added, by the 19th century, records are sparse, and most Mayflower applications are pieced together with a variety of documents, such as the affidavits in Clara's case.

It turns out that Hahn's maternal grandmother, Helen Holmes, was also a Mayflower descendant through Helen's great grandfather Southworth Holmes, who was born in Barnstable, Mass., in 1799 but immigrated to Cincinnati and is buried at Spring Grove Cemetery.

Spring Grove put all of its burial records online several years ago, allowing Hahn to trace her grandmother to Southworth and bridge the 19th century. To establish Southworth's parentage, she was aided by a CD of vital records in Barnstable from the New England Historic Genealogical Society. His baptismal record and the Barnstable vital records confirmed that both of his parents were descended from the Mayflower.

In particular, his mother, Martha Samson, was listed in Barnstable vital records as the daughter of Southworth Samson and Jedida Paine, both of whom are in the society's "silver books," which represent the first five generations descended from the Mayflower. "Once you get your line into a silver book, you are home free," said Hahn, 69, who after spending a couple years on research was allowed to join the society in 2004. Early New England is easy to research because, she said, all of the towns "dutifully kept records of births, deaths, marriages," including affidavits — one written in 1892 quoting from a letter written to Southworth Holmes in 1892 by his 85-year-old aunt, who had been an eyewitness to the 1832 marriage of his parents. No other record of this marriage exists anywhere, she said. But by about 1750 to 1775 that ease comes to an end, she said.

Through her work she found that she was also descended from Mayflower passenger Richard Warren. Multiple connections are not uncommon. June Brainard Lazich, a society member who lives in Mission Viejo, said she has verified links to nine people who were on the historic vessel.

Tale of 'strangers' and 'saints'

Aboard the Mayflower were two groups — the strangers and the saints, also known as separatists. The separatists had spent 11 years in Holland, where they fled first after illegally breaking from the Church of England. The blending with the strangers occurred when additional passengers were added in England by London investors for financial reasons. The strangers may have had other motivations, but like the separatists they wanted a better life. If the colony was to survive, everyone would need to work together. So before anyone aboard the Mayflower departed the ship in Plymouth, it was decided that a governing document would be written.

On Nov. 11, 1620, the Mayflower Compact was signed. Many people believe it formed the basis for the U.S. Constitution. What connects many members of the Orange County Mayflower Colony is their pride in what the pilgrims did to set the country on its path.

"These people are fundamental to who we are as Americans," Hahn said.

Brainard Lazich likes to educate people who talk with particular reverence of Jamestown — America's first permanent English colony, established 13 years before the pilgrims arrived. The people of Jamestown had come to the New World seeking riches, while the founders of Plymouth had sought freedom from religious persecution and had intended to stay, not simply make their fortunes and leave.

"They came here to find gold," Brainard Lazich said of the Jamestown founders. "The Mayflower came here to establish a place to live. That is a big difference. They started this country, so we are very proud to be in the Mayflower Society because of that."

For member Marcia Maloney, the pilgrims played a key role in U.S. history.

"It was the starting of this country, the very beginning, and to think of the hardships they suffered to get here," said Maloney, of Laguna Woods. "How scary is that? You want religious tolerance so much that you leave the security of the family nest and embark in this voyage to who knows where."

Echoes of the first Thanksgiving

The pilgrims soon ran short of fresh food on their voyage, leading to cases of scurvy. But within a year after their landing, they would be celebrating what is thought of as the nation's first Thanksgiving. Having developed a relationship with the Wampanoag Indians, who taught the newcomers how to plant corn, the pilgrims joined the native people in a days-long feast of, say historians, fowl, fish, corn and venison.

This past Saturday, the Orange County colony was to have held its annual Compact Day celebration, with the more lavish traditional turkey dinner of today. Its setting was also an upgrade from the first Thanksgiving — the Courtyard by Marriott in Santa Ana.

While its gatherings offer camaraderie and guests who might speak about relevant topics like colonial history or genealogy, the society is primarily interested in promoting education.

"One of my passions is how do we get young people involved, interested in history," said Scott Miller, a Westminster resident who, at 52, is among the youngest of the society members, locally and nationally. "Frankly, Massachusetts is far away, like "Star Wars," a galaxy far, far away. So how do you make them interested? Because history is taught almost as dates and places, but it is about people."

Walter Powell, the executive director of the national General Society of Mayflower Descendants, shares the same concern. It can be hard to get the younger generations interested in heritage, he said.

The national group was founded in 1897 and has 52 member societies — in 50 states as well as the District of Columbia and Canada. All are independent with their own officers.

Arlene Leedy, 78, of Dana Point, says part of the fun of being a member is going to schools and sharing with students "exactly what a pilgrim is, what it means."

"It's not just a celebration with the Indians," said Leedy, who heads the group's scholarship committee.

Brainard Lazich, 84, also liked to visit schools — dressed up as Priscilla Mullens, who married fellow colonist John Alden in Plymouth in 1621.

"Kids would say, 'Here's the pilgrim lady,'" she recalled.



This "Mayflower Compact" is a piece of calligraphy done by Orange County Mayflower Colony member Jim Blauer of Costa Mesa. The signatures were recreated by other society members to make the document look authentic.

Atrium resident shows proof of her Mayflower lineage

November 11, 2012

By Monica Stark

Valley Community Newspaper

Shirley Ruth Payne is proud of her heritage. Tracing back her ancestry, the 86-year-old Atrium resident has come to find out she is a descendant of Mayflower boarders. After many trips to the San Francisco Genealogy Family History Library, Payne said she found seven ancestors, some on double genealogy lines tracing back to the 1620 Mayflower voyage to the New World. An up-to-date member of the Mother Lode Colony of the Society of Mayflower Descendants, Payne said she hasn't gone to many of the Folsom-based meetings, but she is proud.



Hanging on her wall, are a few framed certifications verifying her lineage: one from The General Society of Mayflower Descendants and another from the Alden Kindred of America.

Payne has even been to Plymouth a few times to visit relatives who live in nearby Carver. Excited as she was to tell them about their heritage, she said not many were interested. She said her son is not too impressed either, but she's hoping to encourage her granddaughter to take some interest.

"I wish I would have known in school, because I was interested anyhow. I like to read. I used to go to the library and check out as many as they would allow," she said.

Dressed as a Pilgrim and holding a model of the Mayflower during the photo shoot, Payne described her outfit as a "big long-sleeve Moo Moo" with a bonnet and cuffs. Born in

Somerville, Mass., Payne had a troubling childhood. Her mother died when she was 2 years old and later the impressionable girl ran away from home to live with her father's relative. Intent on earning her high school diploma, she arranged with the superintendent of schools to work half a day and go to school the other half.

Those survival skills Payne learned as a young child arguably have helped her today. She now spends her day taking care of herself – mending clothes she once sewed herself, reading magazines, keeping her apartment tidy and keeping in touch with her only living son who lives in Las Vegas.



San Diego Colony Mayflower

The San Diego Union Tribune

Front Page- Thursday - November 26, 2015

Descendants Thankful for Mayflower Ties

San Diego County is home to hundreds with Pilgrim roots

By John Wilkens

For most of us, the Pilgrims are figures of legend and lore, vaguely remembered from elementary school lessons as those people who arrived from England on the Mayflower almost 400 years ago and had something to do with Thanksgiving. To hundreds of San Diego County residents, though, ties to the Pilgrims run deeper. They're family. "It makes Thanksgiving more than just a



Gail Raser, left, and her husband, Ray Raser, trace their lineage to the Mayflower. Both are active in the San Diego colony of Mayflower descendants. — *Howard Lipin*

fancy turkey dinner," said Ray Raser, an officer with the San Diego Colony of the Society of Mayflower Descendants. "It becomes a history that you feel a part of."

Genealogists believe there may be 30 million people worldwide descended from the Mayflower passengers, but only 29,000 are society members. That's because to join, you have to prove your lineage. It's not enough for claims of Pilgrim blood to be passed along in table talk by Aunt Maude or Uncle Harry. There have to be records: birth certificates, marriage licenses, wills, land deeds. It's easier than it used to be, thanks to various Internet search services, but it still takes time and persistence to trace back through a dozen or more ancestors — to get past parents and grandparents and great-grandparents, past both world wars, past the Civil War, past even the Revolu-

tionary War. Often that means visits to church basements and cemeteries, to county clerks' offices and courthouses.

Every Mayflower searcher has stories of disappointing dead-ends and exhilarating Eureka's.

Those who have been able to connect the dots to Plymouth Rock come from a variety of livelihoods and backgrounds. "It's not just a club of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants anymore," said Walter Powell, executive director of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, the national organization founded in 1897 that oversees all the local colonies. The ranks through the years have included the famous (Julia Child, Clint Eastwood, Marilyn Monroe, Hugh Hefner) and the powerful (Presidents Adams, Bush, Grant, Roosevelt). These days, members typically are in their 60s or older, the age at which many begin to have the inclination (and the time) to research their roots. With more than 300 members, San Diego County is home to one of the largest and most active Mayflower groups in California, which in turn has the second largest state society in the country. The largest is in Massachusetts, where the Pilgrims landed and where the national organization is headquartered.

This is a particularly busy (and proud) time of the year for members because of Thanksgiving. Saturday, they gathered at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar for an annual meeting celebrating the anniversary of the Mayflower Compact, the document that framed how the fledgling settlement (and eventually the United States) would be governed. Some of the members dressed in period costumes. They stood when the names of their Mayflower kin were read out loud. They passed around five kernels of corn, a reminder of the daily rations the Pilgrims received during what's remembered as "The Starving Time."

Saints and Strangers

When the roughly 100-foot-long Mayflower anchored near the northern tip of Cape Cod in November of 1620, its 102 passengers had been sailing for about two months. They were sick



Mayflower descendants often decorate their homes with memorabilia, and not just at Thanksgiving. —

Howard Lipin

and tired and they were in the wrong place, well north of the Virginia Company they had hoped to join. Most had come to America as Separatists to escape religious persecution in England and Holland, but some had other reasons, chiefly financial, for starting over. Saints and Strangers, these two groups of people came to be known.

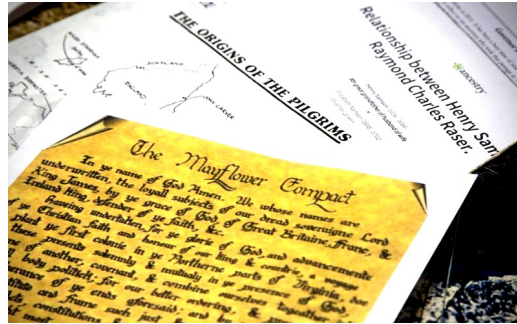
Almost 50 people died that first winter, victims of disease, malnutrition and the elements, and by the next fall, the survivors felt a need to count their blessings. They shared a three-day festival of food with the Wampanoag Indians who had helped them gain a foothold there. It was

the first Thanksgiving in Plymouth, although nobody called it that then, and over time it's been mythologized as the first Thanksgiving ever, which it wasn't. Both the Native Americans and the English had traditions of celebrating successful harvests.

It took about 240 years — Abraham Lincoln was president and the Civil War was raging — for Thanksgiving to become a national holiday, and now it's embedded in our cultural identity and on our calendar. On the fourth Thursday of every November, families gather for food and fellowship, and in countless households, a familiar boast is made: We had relatives who were on the Mayflower.

Joyce Shiloff heard her father say that many times when she was growing up. She always rolled her eyes, because he never had any proof. "I didn't believe it for a second," the University City resident said. "It just didn't seem possible given our family background." As far as she knew, the ancestors on her mother's side came from Italy, her father's from Ireland. But then she took a trip with her father and her sister to Massachusetts in the 1990s, to visit places he knew growing up, and they came across family names in museums and genealogy books. She started to think maybe her father's claim was true. After he died, she dug some more and found the link: her grandfather was married to a woman whose lineage stretched back to the Pilgrims. "I've always regretted that my dad never found out for sure that we were Mayflower people," Shiloff said.

Eventually, she unearthed ties to several other Mayflower passengers, including William Brewster, the religious leader of the Plymouth Colony. That's not uncommon, to have multiple connections. Several of the passengers got married after they came to America. Some of those getting married were the sons or daughters of other passengers, and then their kids married the kids of other passengers, and so on. Among the descendants, some Mayflower passengers are more interesting than others, and more coveted. There's frequent pride in being related to Brewster or to Miles Standish, the colony's military leader.



Gail and Ray Raser have a copy of the Mayflower Compact at their home. — *Howard Lipin*

And some get a kick out of being kin to John Billington, the black sheep of the Pilgrim family. Billington feuded with other settlers. He insulted Standish. He was implicated in a failed revolt. Then he shot and killed a neighbor, was convicted of murder, and hanged. Shiloff has been trying to find links to another prized Mayflower ancestor, Stephen Hopkins, who is believed to have been at Jamestown before he was at Plymouth — a New World two-fer. “I would love,” Shiloff said, “to have my Hopkins.”

Going Home

Many of the Mayflower descendants have Pilgrim-related house decorations that stay up year-round, not just at Thanksgiving. They have replicas of the ship, portraits of their ancestors, certificates documenting their ties. But this is still a special time of the year for them, and some make a point during their family feasts to acknowledge the early days of the tradition they are enjoying. “All these years we’ve been celebrating Thanksgiving in this country and in our family, and to learn we have a personal connection to it — that’s still amazing to me,” said Budd Leef, who lives in Rancho Peñasquitos. He came to his Mayflower roots in a roundabout way. He spent a couple of decades doing the genealogy on his father’s side, looking for (and eventually finding) relatives in Sweden. When he was finished, his mother said, “Do mine now.”

Leef wasn’t thrilled about another long slog through official records, but the family already had paperwork going back five generations. He went on the Internet and in less than two days found a Pilgrim connection. “I was so excited I woke my wife up at 1 in the morning to tell her,” he said.

That was five years ago, and like a lot of the descendants, his discovery launched a journey into all things Mayflower. Books. Movies. And of course membership in the local colony. Leef is now the group’s historian. Some get so fascinated with it all that they take trips to Plymouth or go to England and Holland to see where the Pilgrims started. “It gives you an appreciation for the price they paid and the harrowing journey across the ocean,” said Raser, the colony’s corresponding secretary and former governor. His wife, Gail, is the current governor. They live in San Pasqual Valley. He remembers walking the places where Brewster was born and lived and visiting the cell where he was imprisoned for his religious beliefs. “It was a very unique feeling,” Raser said. “I felt like I belonged on that ground.”

“It felt, he said, like home.”

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