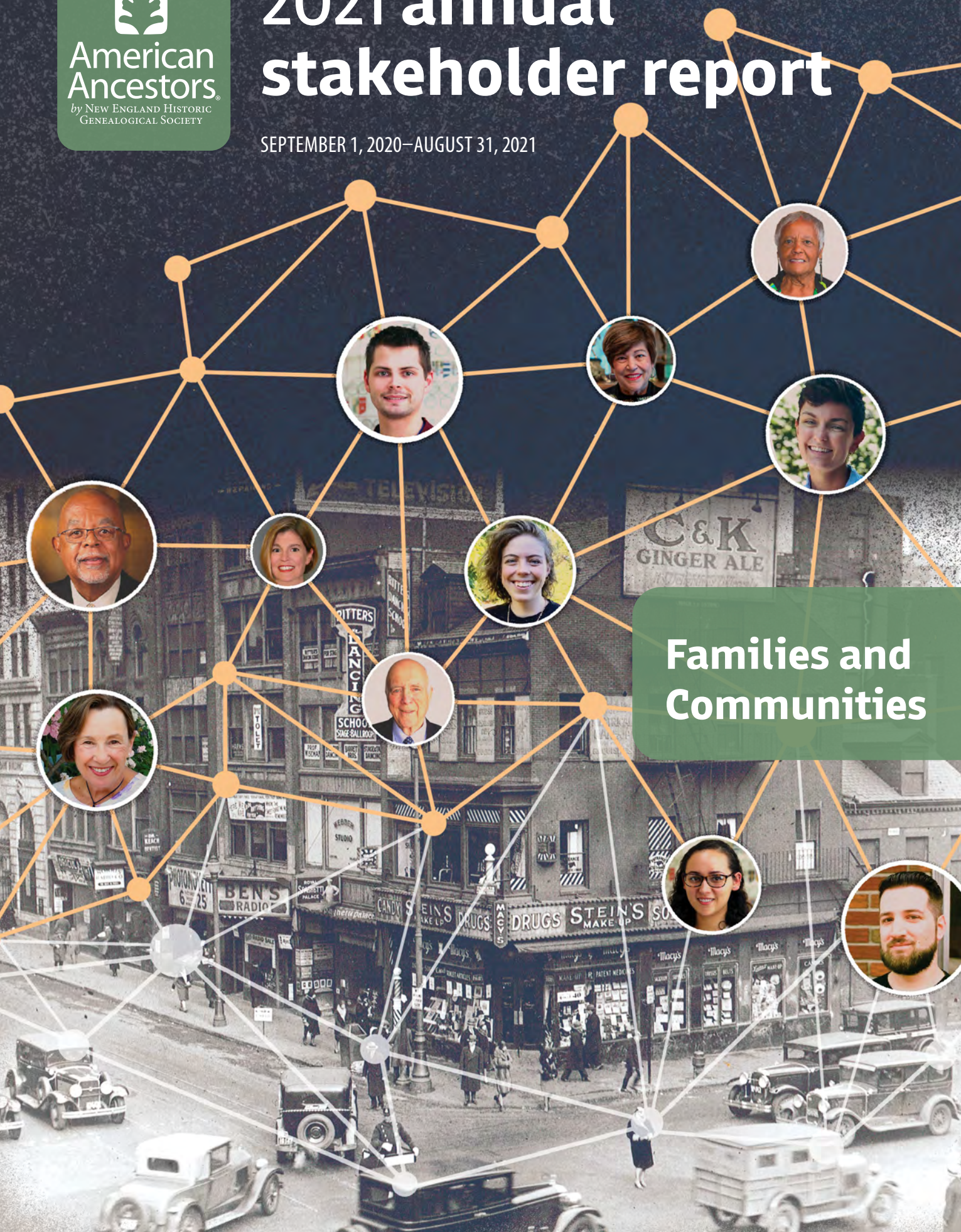




American  
Ancestors<sup>®</sup>  
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC  
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

# 2021 annual stakeholder report

SEPTEMBER 1, 2020–AUGUST 31, 2021



Families and  
Communities



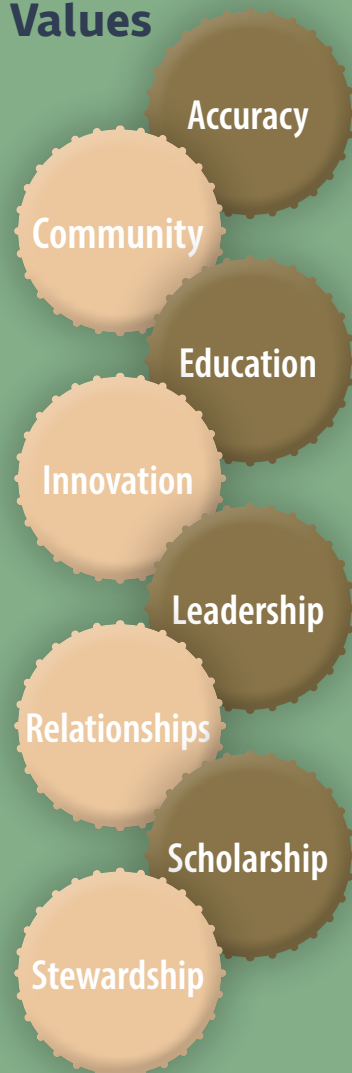
# American Ancestors®

by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC  
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

## Mission

To advance the study of family history in America and beyond, we educate, inspire, and connect people through our scholarship, collections, and expertise.

## Values



American Ancestors, also known as New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS), is a national center for family history, heritage, and culture and the oldest and largest genealogical society in America, founded in 1845. It serves 391,000 members and subscribers, and reaches millions more through its award-winning website [AmericanAncestors.org](http://AmericanAncestors.org), which features 1.4 billion searchable family names. Located in Boston's Back Bay, NEHGS is home to a world-class research library and archive, an expert staff, a publishing division, and the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center.

## A Look at Fiscal Year 2021

Total revenue  
**\$14,187,238**

Total membership  
and subscribers  
**391,000**

Members and  
subscribers across  
the world  
**All 50 states and  
138 countries**

**American Ancestors  
Research Center**  
**28 million** items in our  
world-renowned library and  
collection  
Ask-A-Genealogist  
Live Chat Sessions: **1,238**

**Brue Family  
Learning Center**

**205**  
programs  
**39,835**  
attendees

**Vita Brevis blog**  
**3,000,000**  
views since 2014

**Social media**  
Over **2 million**  
Facebook impressions  
Almost **190,000**  
YouTube video views

**Wyner Family  
Jewish Heritage  
Center**

**2 million** records  
and **700,000**  
searchable  
documents

### Published scholarship

**11** new NEHGS and Newbury  
Street Press books

**4** *American Ancestors*  
magazines, **4** issues of the  
*Register*, and **2** issues of  
*Mayflower Descendant*

**52** issues of *The Weekly  
Genealogist*

### AmericanAncestors.org databases

**481** unique searchable  
databases

**1.42 billion** searchable names

**Over 8 million** new  
searchable names



# 2021 annual stakeholder report

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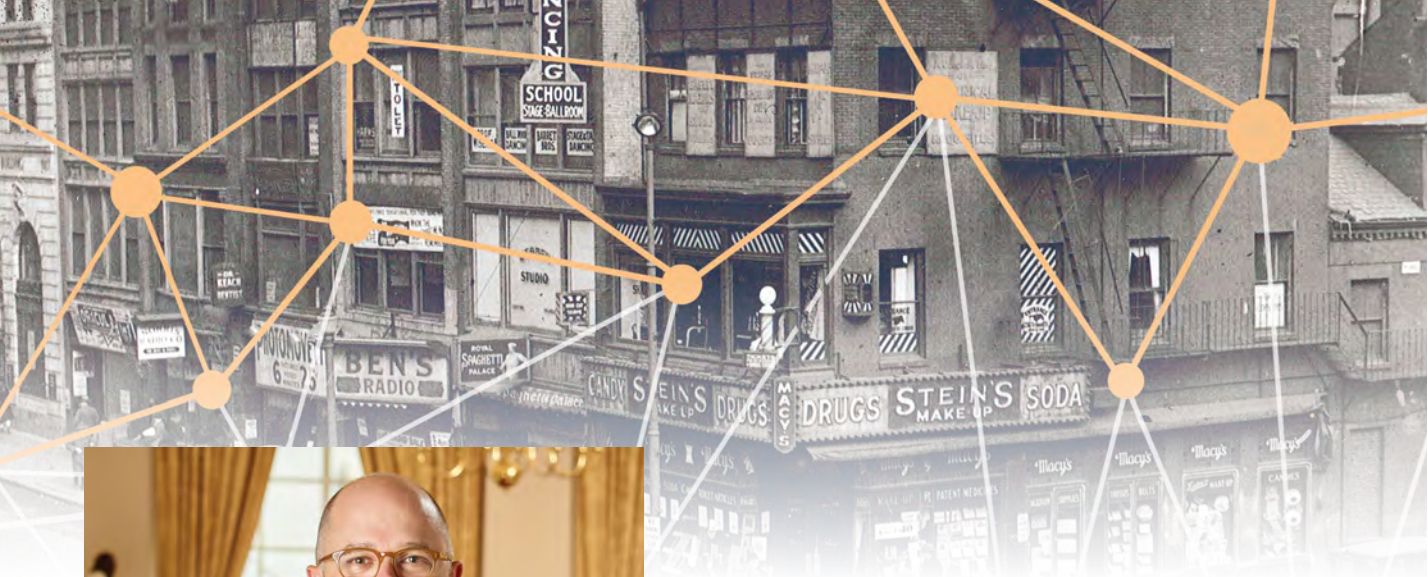
## Connecting Families.

The desire to understand and connect to our family history is universal. This understanding represents who we are and how we came to live the lives we each have. Whether we are fully aware of it or not, the journeys our ancestors took and the choices they made have a profound effect on who we are today. Good fortune and bad, triumph and tragedy, prosperity and opportunity all comprise the incredible, winding path that leads from our ancestors to each of us. And while our stories may seem unique to us, we learn that they are also shared by many.

At American Ancestors/New England Historic Genealogical Society, we understand that as we uncover our families, we learn about history too. The records we use, the sources we uncover, the information we gather, all need to be maintained and preserved. It is our mission to make sure everyone, everywhere, has access to their family's story for generations to come.

## Advancing History.





## Report of the President and CEO

After many external crises in 2020 involving the COVID-19 pandemic, shutdown, and other major social and political issues, our organization dramatically rebounded in fiscal year 2021 with its most impressive performance results in 176 years.

In sum, we dramatically strengthened our position as the nation's premier center for family history, heritage, and culture. We met or exceeded our goals across all our major benchmarks—we grew our constituency to an all-time high, served more people than ever through the highest quality family history services and experiences, and we enhanced our financial position to its strongest point ever.

Among our accomplishments, we provided exceptional genealogical, historical, and cultural programming that attracted nearly 40,000 live attendees with almost 200,000 subsequent views of these recordings. Our expanded offerings included family history research training seminars, illustrated fine art and architectural history lectures, and book talks from distinguished scholars and prize-winning authors. Our program topics ranged from slavery to Revolutionary War research, from tips for using Christian church records in genealogy to Hispanic culture, and adoption research, to name just a few.

We advanced our role as the scholarly leader in family history by publishing the field's foremost periodicals and books. Our four issues of the *Register*, the flagship journal of American genealogy, included groundbreaking articles for New York and New England family history, our four issues of *American Ancestors* magazine featured articles on Maine genealogy, advances in DNA for family and health history, and getting the most from our digitized manuscript

collection. We also published two issues of *Mayflower Descendant* with a panoply of new *Mayflower* and Pilgrim history scholarship.

We published an array of new books including Scott Andrew Bartley's *Early Vermont Settlers to 1771: Volume 2—Northern Windsor County; A New England Native American Reader: Volume 1*, edited by Henry B. Hoff and R. Andrew Pierce; *Family Tales and Trials: Settling the American South*, the ancestry of Richard and Virginia (Speed) Condon, by Christopher C. Child and Meaghan E. H. Siekman; *Descendants of John Lippitt of Providence and Warwick, Rhode Island* by Christopher C. Child and Maureen A. Taylor; and the late Helen Ullmann's *Descendants of David Melvill of Boston, Massachusetts and Newport, Rhode Island—Including Notes on the Vinson Families of Newport*. Another recent title from our Newbury Street Press, *Ancestors and Descendants of Charles Le Caron and Victoire Sprague*, by Kyle Hurst, won the National Genealogical Society Award for Excellence in Genealogy and Family History.

Our ongoing efforts to provide incomparable online research materials continued unabated. During the year, we added more than 8 million new searchable names to AmericanAncestors.org, with significant additions to our pioneering Historic Catholic Records

project. Through a partnership with the General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD) and FamilySearch, we launched the GSMD membership application database with more than three million searchable names for the period beginning before 1620 and up to 1920. We created online family trees through our AmericanAnceSTREES product for each *Mayflower* passenger, thereby providing a new, dynamic way to research and view all three million names in the database.

With more than \$8.9 million in philanthropic support, including an unprecedented \$2.5 million foundation gift for our Cornerstone Project, and better than budgeted performance in operational support and earned income activities, we concluded the year with almost a \$1 million surplus and net assets of more than \$63 million, the strongest position in our institution's 176-year history.

The following are only a few of the many ways we advanced our mission during fiscal year 2021 to create a sustainable future, build relationships to ensure our constituents identify as members of the American Ancestors/New England Historic Genealogical Society family, affirm our position as a center of scholarly excellence, and maximize the use of technology to connect with constituents.



## EXPANSION AND SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal:** Expand headquarters and grow operations with scalable business and philanthropic models to ensure financial sustainability

We made significant strides towards our goal of expanding our headquarters—namely, the Cornerstone Project—since taking over occupancy of the adjoining townhouse at 97 Newbury Street. Our timeline for the building work anticipates that we are shovel-ready to proceed with demolition and construction during fiscal year 2023.

In December 2020, we received notification of a \$2,500,000 anonymous challenge grant for our Cornerstone Project. This represented an important national foundation's tremendous affirmation of our governance, strategic vision, planning, and financial stability. This support is a credit to the participation in the wellbeing and advancement of our great institution by all our members. The



anonymous challenge grant was met by the generosity of 24 donors who contributed \$2.6 million, meeting the challenge six months ahead of schedule.

The Cornerstone Project has the overall goal of raising \$26 million in gifts and pledges related to our programmatic expansions and the renovation of 97 Newbury Street to leverage our continuing national and international growth. As of January 1, 2022, we have secured gifts and pledges of \$15,887,378 toward this goal. We are moving significantly toward achieving our overall goal, which will enable us to begin construction at 97 Newbury once the permitting and civic review and approvals are completed.

Most importantly, the expansion of our physical space will allow us to create a lively and popular destination for anyone interested in the pursuit of family history. By establishing our headquarters as a national visitor destination, we will cultivate interest in family history among new audiences who we will increasingly serve in future years. We will double our capacity for educational programs and leverage state-of-the-art digital technology throughout the facility to engage and mentor future generations of genealogists and historians.

As the country's founding and leading center for family history, heritage, and culture with a firm belief that every person and every family has a story worth telling, we are uniquely positioned to help people of all backgrounds explore and discover their family history. Whether one's family was native to this land or arrived at any time between the seventeenth century to today, we strive to be the best resource available in genealogy and adjacent disciplines. We announced our American Stories.American Lives initiative, through which we will develop and perpetuate genealogical scholarship of permanent value. It will be multifaceted and broadly inclusive. By studying the many different types of family histories in America, we advance our work to educate, inspire, and connect people through history and genealogy.

As a measure of our strong financial results in fiscal year 2021, our net income was \$8,916,123 on a consolidated basis, an increase of \$6,257,197, year over year. Prudent management of our expenses allowed us to generate a strong cash position by the end of the year.

## ENGAGEMENT

**Goal:** Develop and implement enriching opportunities for members and the public to engage in inspirational experiences

Our hugely popular program of virtual offerings expanded with a 30% increase in participation this year. We had almost 40,000 live attendees at programs with nearly 45,000 hours of on-demand video time banked for user enjoyment. Our American Inspiration author series expanded awareness of American Ancestors/NEHGS through collaborations with partners such as the Boston Public Library, WGBH (the Boston-based PBS affiliate), The Huntington, the Japan Society of Boston, the Museum of African American History, the Peabody Essex Museum, The Trustees (formerly The Trustees of Reservations), and the State Library of Massachusetts.

We introduced Heritage Tour Day Trips and Walking Tours, allowing members and friends of American Ancestors/NEHGS to experience Greater Boston locales, all close to home and conducted in person. On one of the tours, City of Boston Archaeologist Joe Bagley led a walking tour of the oldest surviving buildings featured in his recent book, *Boston's Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them*. Through a series of online offerings, including monthly webinars, online courses, and other special virtual events, audiences worldwide enjoyed a look into the American Ancestors Heritage Tour educational experience without leaving home.

The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center (JHC) continued to engage the community and grow our audience through a wide array of online programs about Jewish history and culture. The JHC offered a host of online programs throughout the year that provided a multifaceted lens on Jewish history and drew audiences from across the country with diverse backgrounds

and interests. These programs ranged from a study of Jewish and African American cemeteries to a demonstration of traditional recipes from the JHC's archives. We held programs with external partners such as the Jewish Arts Collaborative and Vilna Shul, and we presented *Plunder: A Story of Family Property and Nazi Treasure* as well as "The Story of Jewish Families and Their British Country Homes" webinar.

We expanded our research support service and general customer service as an online chat feature available through AmericanAncestors.org to accommodate high demand.

While staff continued to offer reference assistance by telephone and through email, our most popular offering continued to be our Ask-A-Genealogist Live Chat service. By the end of the year, the Live Chat service converted 27% of participants to membership. Our American Ancestors Research Center and the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center resumed normal business hours and over the year, we were proud to welcome back visitors to the building—a testament to the dedication of our members and staff—who endeavored to resume normalcy during the continued COVID-19 pandemic.





## RELATIONSHIPS

**Goal:** Ensure that our members and the public identify with and connect to the American Ancestors/NEHGS community

We connect with our members and the public in personally meaningful ways as professionals who care deeply about helping people of all ages and backgrounds. Through our activities, we grew our overall constituency by 10% to more than 391,000 individuals, including welcoming 5,432 new dues-paying members and 26,602 guest members. A high overall renewal rate of 71% across all memberships was achieved, and members who have been active for three or more years produced an 86% renewal rate.

Our digital service offerings and increased use of social media platforms, including Twitter chat, resulted in substantial new engagement with family historians around the country, and indeed, around the world. An analysis of our expanded constituency shows that our members span the country and globe; they reside in all 50 states and 138 countries. The far-flung geographic distribution of our members is a testament to our institution's broad reach and the importance of our mission; it also emphasizes the ever-increasing importance of prioritizing technology to serve our members wherever in the world they may live.

We began a new phase in our partnership with Ancestry.com to collaborate on the digitization of 10,000 family history books from our library, totaling approximately three million pages. We are using

Ancestry.com's excellent artificial intelligence technology to capture names, locations, and life events so the rendered data will be searchable in a database as well as configured into family trees. This unique effort substantially enhances the usability of digital books and brings an important collection of genealogical scholarship to users anywhere in the world.

During the fiscal year, we strengthened and built relationships as we gathered virtually and in person with hundreds of friends to celebrate and honor leading figures preserving our nation's treasures, chronicling the story of America, and documenting history.

In April 2021, nearly 400 guests from around the world participated in our Virtual Family History Benefit Gala, which honored former UK Prime Minister Sir John Major with our Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Public Service. The evening also commemorated the 175th anniversary of NEHGS (founded in 1845) as well as the 400th anniversary of the 1620 *Mayflower* landing in New England. The program included Sir John in conversation with Her Majesty's Consul General to New England, Dr. Peter Abbott OBE, with special greetings from Dame Karen Pierce, British Ambassador to the United States, and Governor of Massachusetts Charles D. Baker.

Our Winter Family History Benefit event featured author Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, the Victor S. Thomas Professor of History and African and African American Studies at Harvard University. Professor Higginbotham received our History and Preservation Award in Historical Research and Preservation.

At our Summer Family History Benefit, our special guest was Anthony M. Amore, author and lead investigator into the infamous Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum theft. Amore's discussion of his most recent book, *The Woman Who Stole Vermeer* (2020), was followed by a conversation with Curt DiCamillo, American Ancestors/NEHGS Curator of Special Collections. Our Fall Family History Benefit featured the eminent historian and best-selling author Mary Beth Norton, who received our Lifetime Achievement Award in History.

The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center observed its tenth anniversary at NEHGS with a celebration honoring Margot Stern Strom, founder of the non-profit educational organization Facing History and Ourselves, with the Tzedakah Lifetime Achievement Award and Herbert Selesnick with the Volunteer Leadership Award for guiding the JHC and its Advisory Council to develop a five-year strategic plan.

In this period, our EVP and COO Ryan J. Woods and I worked closely with public policy officials and our elected representatives in the Massachusetts Legislature to advance our mission and generate support for our important and unique work. Our work with legislative officials helped to advance support for the Cornerstone Project, securing state funding for operations. I was honored to designate Ryan to serve on the 250th anniversary commission to commemorate the American Revolution.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Goal:** Maximize advancement in DNA and technology to connect with our members and the public

AmericanAncestors.org continues to be our most-used resource, by volume and frequency of all our service offerings, and it experienced substantial growth in this period. It is the primary channel through which members conduct research, purchase memberships, and buy books and other services.

Web traffic continued to climb throughout the year due to our new webinars, education resources, and an emphasis on online research support. Total website usage was up, and new user visitation increased. Promoting content on the website, social media, through emails, and in our newsletter *The Weekly*



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*Genealogist* helped to drive new members, marketing leads, and increased donor engagement.

*Family Tree Magazine*, a publication of Yankee Publishing, named AmericanAncestors.org one of the “Best Genealogy Websites for 2021.” In November, we launched a new website format at AmericanAncestors.org, which featured a new design, consolidated several websites in one comprehensive platform, and integration with several key business-critical applications. Some of the new features include a filterable event calendar, a library of archived programming, and federated search, which will allow users to search for content by keyword across the vast universe of American Ancestors resources and collections, including magazine issues and articles, website pages, and digital archives.

We continued to provide online research materials of the highest quality with 8 million new searchable names added to AmericanAncestors.org. Of special

note, we expanded the Historic Catholic Records project, 1789–1920, with a new set of Catholic sacramental records for the period 1901 to 1920. We added almost 100,000 records for the Massachusetts Catholic Cemetery Records, 1833–1940. By the end of the fiscal year, we offered 481 unique searchable databases, 979 million records, and 1.42 billion searchable names.

Our new Digital Library & Archives (DLA), features an updated layout and additional options for browsing, searching, and saving digitized material from the R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, the Research Library, and the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center. The DLA includes materials with browsable images as well as some resources with searchable full-text transcriptions. Over the course of the year, we added almost 40,000 items for use by over 200,000 researchers.

## SCHOLARSHIP

**Goal:** Advance our position as the leader in scholarly excellence in family history

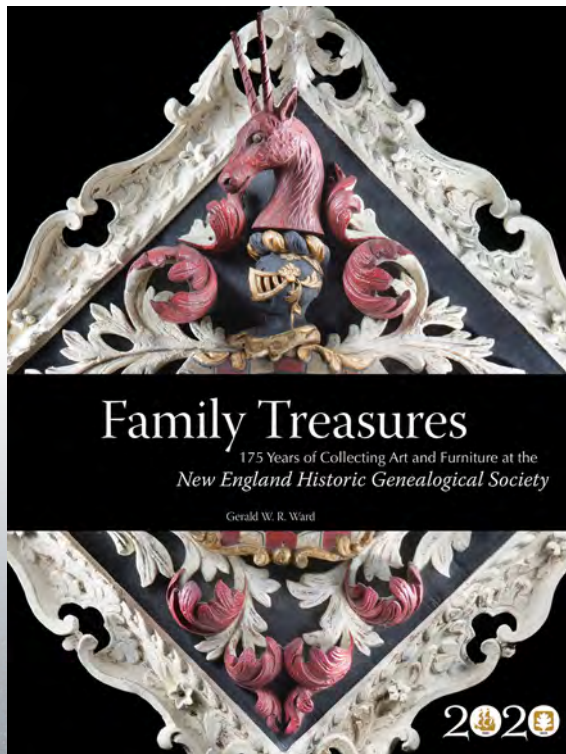
During the year, we published eleven books and four periodicals. We published several Newbury Street Press books: *The Stories they Tell . . . from the Herdeg Collection* by John A. Herdeg and Judith C. Herdeg; *Family Tales and Trials: Settling the American South*, the ancestry of Richard and Virginia (Speed) Condon,

by Christopher C. Child and Meaghan E. H. Siekman with Victor S. Dunn and Helen Condon Powell; *Ancestors of Albert James Zdenek, Sr. and Rose Marie Mildred Prince* by Kyle Hurst and Albert J. Zdenek, Jr.; and *The Ancestry of Thomas Martin Lynch Jr. & Esther Agnes Griffin of Ireland and Canada* by Jerald Dupree

with Scott C. Steward and Lindsay Fulton, with a special foreword by Cardinal Seán O'Malley.

Two new titles won prestigious awards in 2021. *Family Treasures: 175 Years of Collecting Art and Furniture at the New England Historic Genealogical Society*, by Gerald W. R. Ward with a foreword by D. Brenton Simons and preface by Curt DiCamillo, won the 2021 New England Society in the City of New York Book Award in Art & Photography. Newbury Street Press Senior Genealogist Kyle Hurst's *Ancestors and Descendants of Charles Le Caron and Victoire Sprague* won the 2020 National Genealogical Society Award for Excellence in the Genealogy and Family History category. The award recognizes a family history book that fosters scholarship and promotes excellence in genealogy.

Our Wyner Family Jewish History Center received the lead 2021 Massachusetts Humanities Foundation grant to fund *Jewish Neighborhood Voices: Using Oral History to Link Massachusetts' Past and Present Communities*, a project that will conduct interviews in four Massachusetts municipalities that had thriving Jewish communities in the first half of the 20th century. The recordings and related materials will become part of our archives and we will create a new online exhibition.



## CONCLUSION

These achievements represent a fraction of the work we completed in fiscal year 2021. All told, the culmination of our collective efforts and our members' and donors ongoing support allowed us to not only survive troubled times but emerge as a thriving and vibrant institution.

We are grateful for our staff and their extraordinary performance, resiliency, and adaptivity in response to the continued impact of COVID-19-related challenges and other societal issues. Every year, we honor staff excellence in three categories at our Annual Meeting. The categories are outstanding service to members, beyond the call of duty, and best contribution to the field of genealogy. In fiscal year 2021 for extraordinary service, we recognized Tricia Labbe for "Outstanding Service to Constituents," Sarah Dery for efforts "Beyond the Call of Duty," and Sally Benny for "Best Contribution to the Field of Genealogy."

With the support of our loyal Board and Council, esteemed partners and collaborators, hundreds of thousands of friends and volunteers, and the continued exemplary work of our staff and affiliated experts, we have a truly bright future. We dramatically rebounded from historically difficult times, but we also know that more challenges and opportunities will always present themselves as we move forward with ambitious plans in fulfillment of noble work.

More than ever, thank you for your support, wise counsel, and friendship.

Respectfully submitted,  
D. Brenton Simons  
President and CEO

# Brenton Simons: Recipient of Three Distinguished Awards

In the autumn of 2021, longtime President and CEO D. Brenton Simons was honored by three organizations for outstanding achievements in history, genealogy, and for his work in planning international collaborations, publications, online content, events, and other commemorations of the 400th anniversary in 2020 of the *Mayflower* landing. "I am deeply honored by the awards, and I am proud to share them with my colleagues," said Simons. "They indicate the respect held for the deep commitment of the entire NEHGS family of scholars and educators in documenting the lives and lineages—and telling the stories—of those of all backgrounds who came before us."



## The John Adams Medal

On October 2, 2021, at the Triennial Gala Dinner of the General Society of the Sons of the Revolution in Boston, members of NEHGS and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Society Brent J. Andersen and Shervin Hawley conferred a new award upon Simons for "Outstanding Merit in the Study of History and Lifetime Achievement in Institutional Leadership." Simons, the medal's first recipient, was selected because he "has set the stage for a new generation to immerse themselves in family history with publications, social media, online research, and public TV programing," Massachusetts Sons of the Revolution President Brent J. Andersen explained. "He's reached millions of people all over the world and stimulated a love of history and research."

## The History Award Medal

Laura McCrillis Kessler, Historian General of The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, presented Simons with the organization's History Award Medal and certificate at the Fall Family History Benefit Dinner with guest of honor historian Mary Beth Norton at the Chilton Club in Boston on October 28, 2021. Simons was nominated for the award by the Hannah Winthrop Chapter of the DAR, and Regent Mary Tedesco aided Kessler in its presentation. Simons was recognized for contributions that "significantly advance the understanding of our nation's past through the study and promotion of . . . American history."



Top: The inaugural John Adams Medal awarded to D. Brenton Simons. Bottom: History Award Medal presented to Simons by Laura McCrillis Kessler and Mary Tedesco (Photo ©Pierce Harman 2021). Opposite page: Pilgrim Hall Museum.



## The Bradford Award

On December 21, 2021, at its 202nd Forefathers Celebration Dr. Donna Curtin—Executive Director of the Pilgrim Society and Pilgrim Hall Museum in Plymouth, Mass.—presented Simons with the prestigious Bradford Award. Fellow 2021 Bradford Award recipients included NEHGS Honorary Trustee Bruce Bartlett, past Council member and former Plymouth 400 Executive Director Michelle Pecoraro, the late Barry Young of Pilgrim Hall Museum, and, with a New Horizons Award, Aquinnah tribal historian Linda Coombs. Previous Bradford Award recipients include author David McCullough, Justice Stephen Breyer, and Harvard professor and *Finding Your Roots* host Henry Louis Gates, Jr. At the event, Simons was introduced by *Mayflower* genealogical scholars Caleb Johnson and UK-based author Sue Allan. The award—named after America's first historian, Governor William Bradford, from who Simons descends in three lineages—was presented to Simons for his work in the United States, United Kingdom, and elsewhere. In honoring Simons, the Pilgrim Society stated:

[Brenton Simons] is a nationally significant leader in fostering scholarship and engagement in American history and genealogy, especially the study of historic New England. As Vice Chair of the 400th Anniversary State Commission appointed by Gov. Charlie Baker, Simons helped oversee the

quadricentennial commemoration of Plymouth Colony during a global crisis. In extraordinary circumstances, he produced a host of crafted historical and genealogical programs, including an online gala with former UK Prime Minister John Major, publications and searchable content through [AmericanAncestors.org](https://www.americanancestors.org), and inspired the Plymouth 400 multi-cultural Remembrance Ceremony held live in Plymouth in July 2021.



## Massachusetts Commission on the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution



Ryan J. Woods has been appointed to serve on the Massachusetts Commission on the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution, a state commission created by The Hon. Charles D. Baker, Governor of Massachusetts, and The General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to investigate, study, promote, and celebrate the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the American Revolution.

# American Stories. American Lives.

## Chronicling Our Nation Through Family History

### INCLUSIVE

Every person, every family has a story worth telling.

### INSPIRING

We inspire people to explore family history.

### SUPPORTIVE

We support the discovery and stewardship of family history.

### IDENTITY-BUILDING

Learning about our family and community history helps us understand that our identities are formed from a complex web of truth, lore, history, and culture.

### CONNECTED

Understanding family history connects everyone to a shared human experience.



## Cornerstone Project

As the country's founding and leading center for family history, heritage, and culture, where we are dedicated to the belief that every person and every family has a story worth telling, we are uniquely positioned to help people of all backgrounds explore and discover their family history.

By collecting, preserving, and interpreting historical and genealogical materials that reflect the varied stories of America, we enrich lives, preserve legacies, and more fully communicate the power and importance of the past and its influence on the future—understanding family history connects everyone to shared human experiences.

Whether one's family was native to this land or arrived between the seventeenth century to today, as an institution, and specifically through our American Stories.American Lives initiative, we will perpetuate genealogical scholarship of permanent value that is multifaceted and broadly inclusive. By studying the many family histories in America with historical narrative and cultural context, we advance our work to educate, inspire, and connect people through history and genealogy.

### Expanding A National Treasure

Our historic headquarters expansion—the Cornerstone Project—is a momentous occasion in the history of our institution. It will span five floors and elevate our institution to a position we have earned over 176 years as a world-recognized destination for all people inspired by the power and importance of genealogy and history, and, most recently, the burgeoning field of DNA technologies.

Through the Cornerstone Project, we will engage the members and the public with unparalleled learning experiences, serving both American and international audiences by making available the finest work of

our expert genealogists, historians, educators, curators, and museum professionals both in person and through virtual, portable, web-based extension, accessible to millions of online users.

Our Cornerstone Project design features a large, open, and welcoming entrance for thousands of visitors, dynamic visitor spaces, new offices for our staff and operations, and state-of-the-art safety technologies to protect people, collections, and facilities.

## Expanding our reach

Visitors will be drawn to a new, modern facility on Newbury Street, featuring a stunning glass façade and outdoor café-style seating. After being warmly greeted, visitors will enter an expanded **Visitor Complex**, home to a technology-rich, multi-generation friendly **Discovery Center** featuring computer kiosks, visitor recording booths, multi-media presentations, visiting exhibitions, and museum installations that explore themes of heritage, freedom, and immigration. The Discovery Center will connect to several other spaces that support innovative family history experiences, including a **Learning Center** and **Lecture Hall** offering programming aimed at new and existing audiences. Visitors will also enjoy a **Museum Store** with merchandise relating to family and local history, as well as convenient food and beverage services.

Spaces on the remaining floors will include new homes for our **Scholarly Publishing Center**, expanding the footprint for the team that produces the world's leading genealogical publications; the **Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center's** staff, collections, and archives (including new exhibition space); and a **Business Management Center** supporting internal operations.

A first-floor **Gateway** will link the two buildings, creating an expanded campus network, and a new elevator and staircase will connect all floors of both buildings. Advanced **Fire Protection**, updated **Mechanical Systems**, and **Accessibility Upgrades** will be made to the integrated buildings. Large energy-efficient windows will be added on Newbury Street, and glass paneling will direct light to offices on the rear side of the building. Two new roof decks will enhance the visitor experience.

This new wing and the expanded first floor **Visitor Complex** will attract thousands of members, families, and tourists visiting Boston. By supporting this initiative, donors will help preserve the great American story for present and future generations—as told through the lives and legacies of countless millions of people who came before us.

## International Content

Through collaboration with partners across the field, we will augment our collections with new international materials to support present and future visitor demographics:

Brazil	India
China	Italy
France	Japan
Germany	Mexico

## The Cornerstone Society

### Founders' Circle

#### (\$1 million or more)

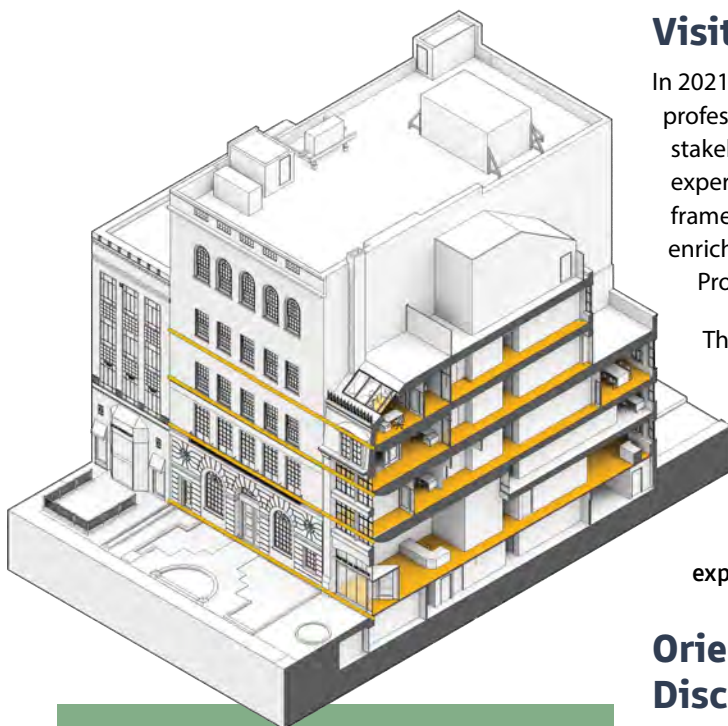
Nordahl and Suzanne Brue  
Thomas Bailey Hagen  
Tabitha King  
Anonymous (2)

### Associates' Circle

#### (\$100,000 or more)

Robb Aley Allan  
Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund  
Judith Avery  
Helen H. Berkeley  
John G. L. Cabot  
Stephen H. Case  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Mark Thomas Cox IV  
Judith W. and Louis M. Freeman  
Leigh Maxwell Gelser\*  
James and Susan Hunnewell  
Brenda L. Johnson  
John F. Keane  
David W. Kruger  
Andrew P. Langlois  
Jo Anne Makely  
William R. Marsh, M.D.\*  
Nancy S. Maulsby  
Carol R. McGee  
Bonnie A. Reilly  
Kristin and Roger Servison  
L. Ted Sloane\*  
Diana and David Smith  
Peck Stacpoole Foundation  
Jonathan Buck Treat  
The Arnold Garrison Foundation  
Nancy Clay Webster  
Wallace S. and Isabel B.\* Wilson  
Justin and Genevieve\* Wyner  
Gwill York  
Anonymous (4)

\*Deceased



## Ways to give

By supporting the Cornerstone Campaign now, we will continue to provide comprehensive expert family history services with historical narrative and cultural context for generations to come.

Your participation will help ensure the success of this campaign.

Gifts of any amount will help to complete this important project and will be acknowledged in the Annual Report following the successful conclusion of the Cornerstone Campaign.

Campaign gifts can be made in a single payment or pledged and paid over a three-to-five-year period with:

- Cash
- Gifts of appreciated securities
- Planned gifts, including IRA distributions and life income arrangements

Please contact our Advancement team for more information at 617-226-1217 or [Advancement@nehgs.org](mailto:Advancement@nehgs.org).

## Visitor experience planning

In 2021, we resumed working with museum professionals, staff, members, and community stakeholders to begin designing exhibitions and experiences based on our “interpretive plan” framework for how we will engage audiences with enriching experiences through the Cornerstone Project.

The foundational concept for our experiences is that everyone has a **story worth telling and worth hearing**; when inspired and supported to explore and share their family history, people gain a better understanding of themselves, of others, and of the shared human experience.

## Orientation and Inspiration: Discovery Center

Inspiration is at the core of our personal interactions with members and the public, and it will be a hallmark of our new Discovery Center. Through a state-of-the-art museum space using smart technology platforms and interactive design, we will provide exciting and powerful personal experiences to people of all ages and backgrounds.

We will feature several multi-generational activity areas, with touch screens where families and children can learn more about themselves, family history, and how tools such as DNA can be used to deepen an understanding of family origins. From these same screens, more seasoned family historians can search for original records and groundbreaking scholarship. Visitors will also be invited to record family memories in a Story Lab, creating new and important material for their own personal family history archive.

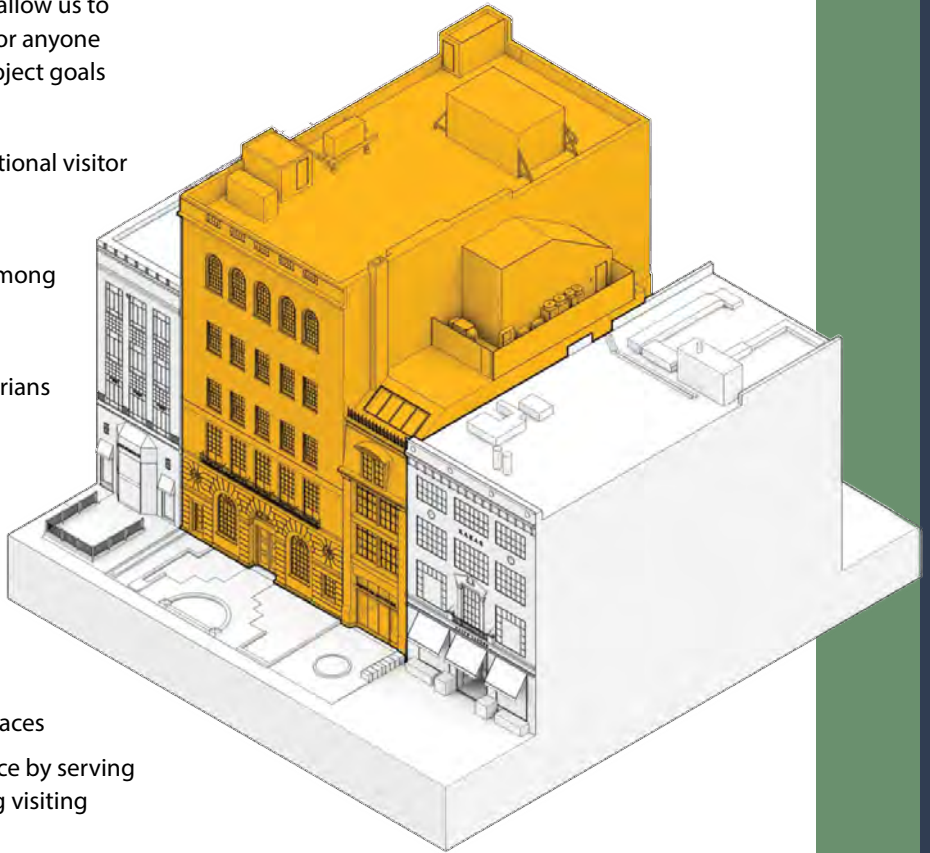
The Discovery Center will feature immersive exhibits and online extensions that tell stories of the American experience—from immigration to westward expansion and beyond, and exploration of varied nationalities and ethnicities. School groups, families, and scholars alike will benefit from experiences and content we are uniquely qualified to provide.

Each of our interactive exhibits will transport visitors, deepen their sense of identity and belonging, and provide a greater understanding of each visitor’s place in human history.

## Outcomes

An expansion of our physical space will allow us to create a lively and popular destination for anyone interested in pursuing family history. Project goals include:

- Establishing our headquarters as a national visitor destination
- Increasing visitor attendance and cultivating interest in family history among new audiences
- Engaging and mentoring future generations of genealogists and historians
- Doubling capacity for educational programs through expanded, more welcoming onsite spaces
- Leveraging state-of-the-art digital technology throughout the facility, in keeping with a modern learning experience
- Enlarging space for internal staff use, including meeting rooms and workspaces
- Growing the family history marketplace by serving new and existing audiences, including visiting populations
- Implementing urgently needed safety systems





## Get Connected. Be Inspired.

To advance the study of family history in America and beyond, we educate, inspire, and connect **people** through our scholarship, collections, and expertise.

We strive to connect with our members and the public in personally meaningful ways, serving as respected expert genealogists and historians who care deeply about helping people.

We embrace an innovative spirit and vibrant energy to be helpful, engaging, and inspiring to people everywhere who seek to connect with their past.

For over 176 years, we have been guided by a passion and a purpose that places people at the center of our work to advance history and connect families. We continue to cultivate relationships to reflect excellence and diversity in family history, while helping, engaging, and inspiring people everywhere who want to advance the understanding of these precious components of life: family and community.

As the nation's leading resource for genealogical research and the most respected name in family history, we provide comprehensive family history services to help family historians of all levels explore their past and make connections across generations.

### Expert staff

Our professional genealogists are among the most respected and advanced in the profession. With research specialties including DNA and genetics, early American, New England, New York, Irish, English, Italian, Scottish, Atlantic and French Canadian, African American, Native American, Chinese, and Jewish genealogy, our expert staff can assist family historians by providing research advice in person, over the phone, or in writing. Our expert staff can also conduct research on behalf of family historians, providing authoritative, documented research reports and family tree charts.

## Award-winning website

Bringing accuracy and integrity to your family history research endeavors wherever in the world you might be, we offer family history researchers the most-used genealogical society website in the world—AmericanAncestors.org. Providing access to more than 1.4 billion records spanning twenty-two countries, covering the United States, the British Isles, continental Europe, and beyond, our award-winning website includes one of the most extensive online collections of early American genealogical records, the largest searchable collection of published genealogical research journals and magazines, and the largest collection of U.S. Catholic records online, amongst many other unique resources.

## Original scholarship

To support the research of family historians around the world, we produce the most significant original research and important publications in genealogy, including, since 1847, the longest continually published academic journal in the field, the *Register*. In addition to the quarterly journal, we publish a quarterly magazine, the biannual *Mayflower Descendant* journal, twenty to thirty books per year, and an electronic newsletter, *The Weekly Genealogist*. As the leader in genealogical scholarship, we also produce important study projects such as The Great Migration Study Project, an endeavor to create genealogical and biographical sketches of the some 20,000 individuals who arrived in New England between 1620 and 1640; the Early New England Families Study Project, 1641–1700, a successor study project to the Great Migration period; Western Massachusetts Families in 1790 Study Project, which captures families heading west at the time of the 1790 census; and the Early Vermont Settlers to 1784 Study Project, which covers families that settled Vermont, the last frontier of New England.

## World-class research center

Twice named by *USA Today* as a top 10 world destination for family history, we invite everyone to visit our eight-story library and archive where we offer the largest collection of original family history research materials in the country. Our collection, which continues to grow through acquisition and preservation activities, dates from the fourteenth century to the present and spans North America, Europe, and

beyond. It includes more than 28 million diaries, letters, photographs, and other manuscripts, and more than 200,000 books and microforms.

## Education opportunities

Family history research is, at its core, a pursuit of endless learning—encountering unfamiliar places, languages, and times; uncovering long forgotten family stories; and meeting the thousands of ancestors who came before you. Through guided research tours to repositories around the world, more than 200 annual lectures, seminars, intensive research programs, Heritage Tours, online courses, webinars, and special events, we help you maximize your results and take your family tree to new heights.





## D. BRENTON SIMONS President and CEO

D. Brenton Simons has changed the face of nonprofit-based genealogy in America and beyond by bringing the best scholarship to millions of users for more than fifteen years as President and CEO of American Ancestors/New England Historic Genealogical Society. He has overseen a historic expansion of the organization—the founding genealogical institution in America—which now serves more than 391,000 members in 138 countries, and millions of online users, with more than one billion records at [AmericanAncestors.org](http://AmericanAncestors.org).

Brenton is the Vice Chair of the Plymouth 400th Anniversary State Commission, by appointment of His Excellency, The Hon. Charles D. Baker, Governor of Massachusetts. He is a recipient of the Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History and the Spirit of 1812 Award from the National Society United States Daughters of 1812.

An award-winning author, he has been featured by CNN, FOX, BBC, PBS-TV, the *New York Times*, *Boston Business Journal*, and elsewhere. His most recent book, *Boston Beheld: Antique Town and Country Views*, was hailed by the late historian Douglass Shand-Tucci as “the book Jane Austen might have written had she run into Charles Dickens after his return from his Boston visit of 1842,” and an earlier work, *Witches, Rakes, and Rogues*, has been a popular book for many years.

Brenton is the Secretary of the Board of the *New England Quarterly*, the premier journal of New England’s cultural, literary, political, and social history; a Board member of Plymouth 400; a member of the American Antiquarian Society, the Society of the Cincinnati, and the Society of Colonial Wars (in Massachusetts and Florida); a Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society; and a Proprietor of the Boston Athenæum.

### Chairs of the Board, 1845–present\*

2021–	David Martin Trebing	1942–1948	Frederic Alonzo Turner
2017–2021	Nancy Sands Maulsby	1936–1941	Frederick Silsbee Whitwell
2012–2017	David Henderson Burnham	1922–1936	John Carroll Chase
2008–2012	Eric Baker Schultz	1901–1921	James Phinney Baxter
2002–2008	David Watson Kruger	1899–1900	Edward Griffin Porter
1996–2002	John Godfrey Lowell Cabot	1892–1898	William Claflin
1991–1996	William Morgan Fowler, Jr.	1887–1892	Abner Cheney Goodell
1987–1991	Theodore Chase	1868–1886	Marshall Pinckney Wilder
1982–1987	Arthur A. Dunn	1866–1867	John Albion Andrew
1977–1982	Rodney Armstrong	1861–1866	Winslow Lewis
1974–1977	Richard Brigham Johnson	1859–1861	Almon Danforth Hodges
1971–1974	Robert Churchill Vose, Jr.	1858–1859	Samuel Gardner Drake
1963–1971	Walter Muir Whitehill	1853–1858	William Whiting
1961–1963	Charles Moorfield Storey	1850–1853	Joseph Barlow Felt
1954–1961	Thomas Temple Pond	1845–1850	Charles Ewer
1948–1954	Walter Merriam Pratt		

\*Prior to 2006, the Chair of the Board was titled “President.”



## RYAN J. WOODS Executive Vice President and COO

Ryan J. Woods has served in key management positions at American Ancestors/NEHGS for more than fifteen years. Currently, he is Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer and he is Clerk of the Council of the Corporation. In his roles, he provides executive oversight for the day-to-day operations, including content and collection development, web services, publishing activities, research services, educational programming, financial operations, facilities management, marketing strategies, and business planning. Ryan also leads our headquarters expansion activities and our development of a national visitor destination experience.

He has played a vital role in designing services to meet twenty-first-century research and information access requirements, such as leading the creation of AmericanAncestors.org, our award-winning website and the most-used genealogical society website in the world. He has fostered and managed important collaborations with commercial and nonprofit partners, including overseeing the recruitment of more than one billion searchable records to AmericanAncestors.org, and he was a lead staff member in the establishment of our Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center.

Ryan serves on several nonprofit boards and committees, including the Committee on Heraldry, the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Connecticut, the Society of Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Mayor of Boston's Green Ribbon Commission, and the Boston University School of Education Alumni Association. He is also an active member of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants, the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Florida, the Sons of the Revolution in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Saint Nicholas Society of the City of New York.

## Senior Staff Management Team

### Advancement

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Vice President for Advancement

Beth A. Brown  
Assistant Vice President for Advancement

Edward G. MacMahon  
Assistant Vice President for Advancement

Steven L. Solomon  
Assistant Vice President for Advancement

### Books and Journals

Sharon Buzzell Inglis  
Publishing Director

### Business Development

Donald C. Reagan  
Vice President for Business Development and Revenue Growth

### Digital Strategy and Communications

Claire Vail  
Vice President for Digital Strategy and Communications

### Education and Programming

Ginevra Morse  
Vice President for Education and Programming

### Finance and Operations

Bruce Bernier  
Vice President and CFO

### Human Resources

Michelle Major  
Director of Human Resources

### Research and Library Services

Lindsay Fulton  
Vice President for Research and Library Services

### Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center

Rachel C. King  
Executive Director of the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center



## DAVID MARTIN TREBING CHAIR

David Martin Trebing is the General Manager of External Affairs for the global automaker Daimler, having previously served in a variety of finance-related executive positions for Chrysler Corporation and DaimlerChrysler Corporation for more than 30 years. Currently, David is serving as 37th Governor General of the General Society of Colonial Wars and holds memberships in the state societies of New York, Michigan, Maryland, South Carolina, Delaware, and District of Columbia. Other lineage society memberships include Sons of the American Revolution; Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York and District of Columbia; Society of the War of 1812 in Michigan, Maryland, and District of Columbia; Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants; and the Saint Nicholas Society of the City of New York. He is also a member of the Pilgrims of the United States, the Church Club of New York, and is a Commander in the Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem. David held nonprofit board roles at Detroit Historical Society; Historical Society of Michigan; Cultural Development Corporation, Washington, D.C.; Michigan State University Development Fund; and Meadow Brook Theater and Festival. David is a shareholder of the Philadelphia Athenæum and a member of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations. David attended Wake Forest and Michigan State Universities. He has been a member of NEHGS since 2016 as a Benefactor Member and a member of the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving.



## THOMAS BAILEY HAGEN VICE CHAIR

Tom Hagen is Chairman of the Board of Erie Insurance Group, an Erie, Pennsylvania, based Fortune 500® business with which he has been associated for more than six decades, including service as CEO. Tom is currently Founder/Chair of Historic Erie Preservation Trust, and Chairman of Custom Group Industries in Erie. Throughout his career, Tom has served on several business boards and in leadership positions in a number of business and civic organizations including Chairman of Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry. Additionally, he served as Pennsylvania Secretary of Commerce and Secretary of Community and Economic Development, and is a retired U.S. Navy Reserve Captain. Among Tom's honors are Distinguished Citizen of the Commonwealth Award (2018) from the Pennsylvania Society and Pennsylvania's highest award for historic preservation, the Otto Haas Award (2015), from Preservation Pennsylvania. The Thomas B. Hagen History Center in Erie was named in his honor in 2015. He is the award-winning author of *The Historic Tibbals House, 1842*. Through his ancestor Gen. Jacob Bayley, Tom is a member of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, the Society of the Cincinnati (NH), and the Society of the Colonial Wars. Tom has been a member of NEHGS since 1993, holding the roles of Councilor, Trustee, and Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He is a member of the Founder's Society for Lifetime Giving, the Cornerstone Society for Giving, and is a Life Benefactor.



### **BONNIE A. REILLY** SECOND VICE CHAIR

Bonnie A. Reilly of Indianapolis, Indiana, is a board member of the Collections Council and Governance Committee at the Eiteljorg Museum and the Jordan YMCA. She was President of the Harvard Club of Indiana, President and honorary board member of the Indianapolis Opera, and a Trustee of the Indianapolis Museum of Art and the Indiana Historical Society. Bonnie is a member of several lineage societies, including National Society of Colonial Dames of Indiana and the Cornelia Cole Fairbanks DAR. Bonnie has an AB from Radcliffe College. Bonnie joined NEHGS in 1977 and has served as a Trustee and Councilor, Chair of the Development Committee, and member of the Nominating Committee. She is a member of the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving and a Life Member.



### **JOHN E. CORCORAN** TREASURER

John E. Corcoran is the Founder and President of Trinity Partners, LLC, a leading life sciences advisory firm. Previously, he was the Founder and a Board Member of Shyft Analytics, a provider of cloud-based analytics solutions for the pharmaceutical industry. John was also Co-founder and Chairman of Riffle Books, a social media platform company serving the publishing industry, and was Founder and Chairman of Akuta Corp., a pharma- and biotech-focused software developer. John's board memberships include Brookwood School, Catholic Leadership Institute, Concussion Legacy Foundation, and iCatholic Media (Chairman). John received an AB from Harvard College, an MA from Northeastern University, and an MCRP from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. He has been an Individual Member of NEHGS since 1995 and is a member of the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving.



### **NANCY S. MAULSBY** SECRETARY

Nancy S. Maulsby is former Vice President of Corporate Communications and Protocol at Chase Manhattan Bank and co-founder of Development Unlimited, Inc., a provider of management services for not-for-profits. She has served on several boards of not-for-profits and educational organizations, including the Historical Society of the Town of Greenwich, the Buckley School, Grosvenor Neighborhood House, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, and Hartwick College. She is a member of the Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem. Nancy is the past Chairman of NEHGS, a past Trustee and past Councilor, served on the Strategic Planning Committee, and is the past Chair of the Development Committee. She has been a member of NEHGS since 2002, a Life Member since 2009, and is a member of the Founders' Society for Lifetime Giving and the Cornerstone Society for Giving.



### **MARK KIMBALL NICHOLS** CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Mark Kimball Nichols is managing director and principal of Global Capital Advisors, LLC. He was previously managing director at Banc of America Securities. Mark is a proprietor and life member of the Boston Athenæum and sits on their budget committee. He is also a life member of the Bostonian Society, and a council member at Mount Auburn Cemetery. He serves on the board of advisors of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. He has a BA from Dickinson College and an MA and MALD from the Fletcher School. Mark joined NEHGS in 2008. He is a former Councilor, member of the Investment Committee, member of the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving, and a Life Member.

## OFFICERS

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**Vice Chair**

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**Second Vice Chair**

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**Treasurer**

Nancy S. Maulsby  
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**Corresponding Secretary**

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Bill Griffeth

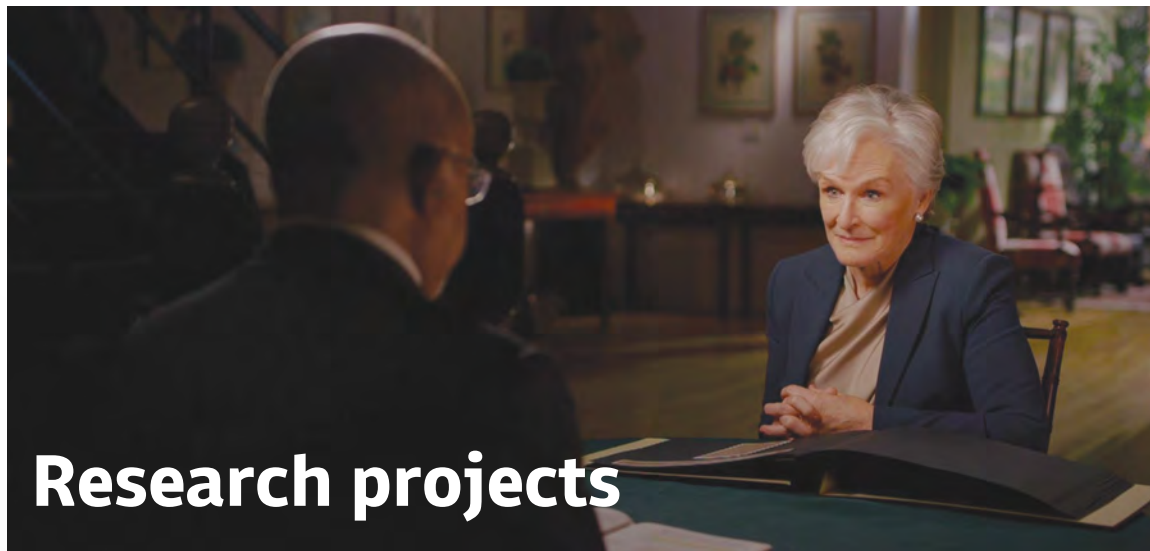
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Sally A. MacKenzie  
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Hans F. Olsen  
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Diana M. Smith  
Tracy E. Smith  
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Thomas R. Wilcox, Jr.

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Lynn Trowbridge  
Justin L. Wyner



## Research projects

### Expanded hours for Ask A Genealogist-Live Chat!

The Research and Library Services team was proud to offer an expanded chat service, shifting from the limited one-hour service to Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (EST). This service continues to be available to both members and non-members and is a vast improvement on our previous chat service. In fiscal year 2021, 1,238 unique chats were recorded, 26.96% of participants were converted to membership, 319 contacts and 86 customers were created, and \$6,346 in revenue was produced. Most importantly, users raved about the service!

*"This chat feature is great, especially since I live in Tucson."*

*"Oh my gosh! Bless you! I couldn't find that in Ancestry, but I think I was narrowing the search too much."*

*"Thank you. You've been very helpful . . . I am amazed how quickly you were able to research my ancestors!"*

*"Thank you so much for all of your help here today. It helped me. I'm sort of at a roadblock and this session really helped me. Wish me luck!"*

*"Great! Thank you for all the guidance. This gives me a lot to work on. Thanks again for all your help."*

### Continuing our work with *Finding Your Roots*

Research Services continued its work with the popular PBS program *Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* for the seventh season. The season featured exciting new guests with family histories that illustrated the power and diversity of the human experience. Among them were actors John Lithgow, Mandy Patinkin, Tony Shalhoub, Christopher Meloni, Glenn Close, and Kasi Lemmons; acclaimed musicians Clint Black and Pharrell Williams; groundbreaking director John Waters; renowned journalists Don Lemon, Nina Totenberg, Gretchen Carlson, and Maria Hinojosa; and hilarious comedians Roy Wood, Jr., Lewis Black, Jane Lynch, and Jim Gaffigan.

Of note was the story of Glenn Close who, among other things, is a direct descendant of John Strong, an immigrant of the Great Migration. The episode highlighted the Great Migration Study Project, the landmark work of Robert Charles Anderson and American Ancestors/NEHGS, to create comprehensive genealogical and biographical accounts of the twenty thousand English men, women, and children who settled in New England between 1620 and 1640. In the episode, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. explained, "This is an excerpt from a book entitled *Great Migrations: Immigrants to New England*. The book documents the lives of early American immigrants—and this passage concerns your ninth great-grandfather, John Strong. Would you read the highlighted lines?" Ms. Close read directly from the page, "MIGRATION: . . . on 8 May 1635, Jon. Stronge and family were passengers on the *Hopewell*, sailing from Weymouth for New England . . ." A thrill to see an NEHGS publication on the big screen!

Above: Seven-time Academy Award-nominated actress Glenn Close learned about her ancestors on Season 7, Episode 1 of *Finding Your Roots*. Image courtesy of WETA-TV.

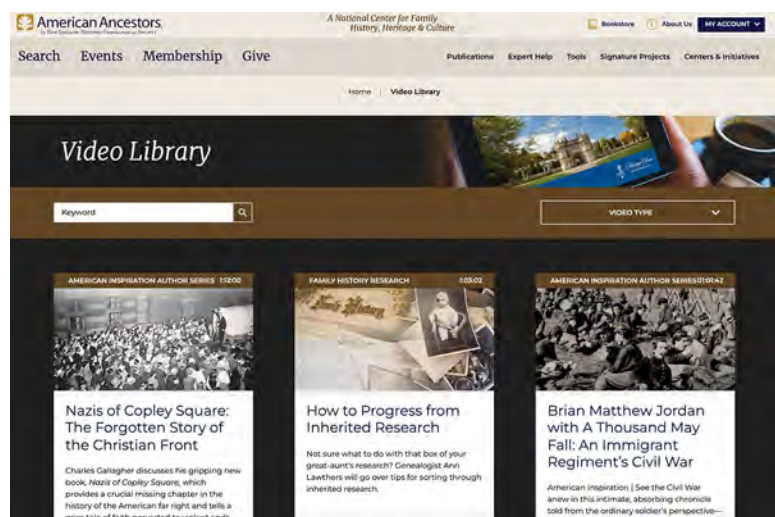
# New AmericanAncestors.org Website

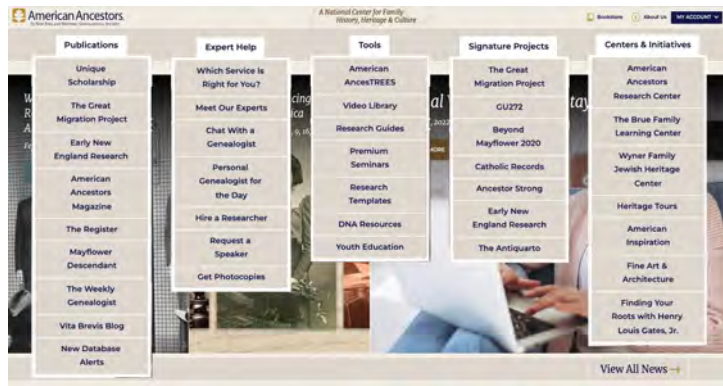
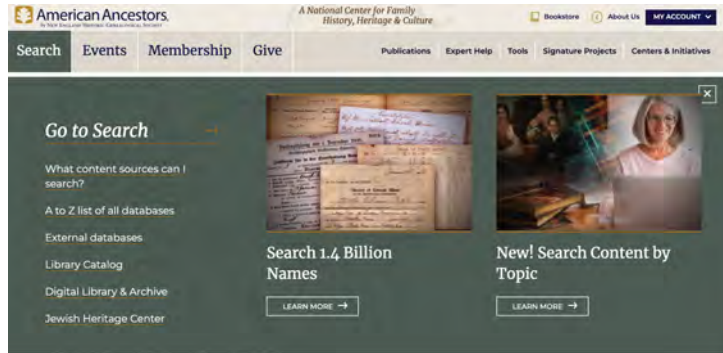
On November 16, 2021, after a year of careful research, planning, and testing, the web team launched a new AmericanAncestors.org website, as well as a new website for the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at JewishHeritageCenter.org. Both sites feature new, streamlined designs, and offer enhanced features that make it easier for visitors to find important information. On the back end, both sites—and other American Ancestors digital properties—have been consolidated into a state-of-the-art platform, a massive technical upgrade from the old site. The new platform automatically integrates content from several systems, including our e-commerce and marketing applications. This integration allows website users to experience relevant content as “one website,” rather than having to visit multiple sites, designs, and applications to find an item.

We integrated the open-source Drupal platform with several key business-critical applications, including Shopify, Hubspot, Content DM (our Digital Collections software), and Tessitura, our customer retention management system.

Some of the improved features include a filterable event calendar, which allows users to search for an event by keyword, select from a dropdown menu of event types, or to select a specific date from a graphic calendar filter, making it easier to locate events that are of interest.

The new site features a library of archived programming, and federated search, which will allow users to search for content by keyword across the vast universe of American Ancestors resources and collections, including magazine issues and articles, website pages, and digital collections.





The site also allows dynamic (auto-matic) grouping of content by theme.

These changes not only make the site easier to use on the front end, they make it simpler and faster for website staff to create and upload content on the back end. These significant all-around improvements make AmericanAncestors.org more competitive with other major cultural nonprofit sites in every aspect—design, content, and infrastructure—and position our organization to grow its online presence and new constituents exponentially over the coming years.

## Database additions and updates

The following databases were updated in fiscal year 2021 with a total of 3,817,579 records and 8,055,217 names.

### New databases

Boscawen, NH: Records of the First Congregational Church, 1790-1970  
 Boston, MA: Provident Institution for Savings, 1817-1882  
 General Society of Mayflower Descendants Membership Applications, 1620-1920  
 Massachusetts: Catholic Cemetery Association Records, 1833-1940  
 Newton, MA: St. Mary Episcopal Church Cemetery, 1815-1999  
 Portsmouth, NH: High School Students, 1846-1902  
 Salem, MA: United States 1810 Census  
 The LeRoy Family in America, 1753-2003  
 The Narragansett Historical Register  
 Watertown, MA: Catholic Mount Auburn Cemetery Burials, 1854-1980  
 Worcester, MA: Scots-Irish Settlers, 1700-1850

### New volumes

American Ancestors Magazine  
 American Genealogist, The  
 Connecticut Nutmegger  
 Essex Genealogist, The  
 Maine Genealogist, The  
 Mayflower Descendant  
 New England Historical and Genealogical Register  
 Rhode Island Roots  
 Boston, MA: Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society Immigration Records, 1904-1929  
 Early New England Families, 1641-1700  
 Early Vermont Settlers, 1700-1784  
 Massachusetts: (Image Only) Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789-1920  
 Massachusetts: Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789-1920  
 Vital Records from the NEHGS Register  
 Western Massachusetts Families in 1790  
 Attleboro, MA: Church Records of Old Town Church, Attleboro First Church, 1740-1856

### Updated databases

Attleboro, MA: Church Records of the Second Congregational Church, 1748-1851  
 Hinsdale, MA: Records of the Congregational Church, 1797-1848  
 Maine: Marriages Performed by Rev. Enoch M. Fowler, 1840-1875  
 Morgan, VT: Early Records, 1780-1932  
 Newport, RI: Members of the Artillery Company of Newport, 1741-1854  
 Newtown, CT: Vital Records, 1704-1850  
 Nottingham West (Hudson), NH: Records of First Church of Christ, 1737-1795  
 Pembroke, MA: Baptisms in the Second Religious Society, 1749-1825  
 Rutland, VT: Records of the Congregational Church (East Parish), 1788-1842  
 Salem, MA: Members of the East India Marine Society, 1799-1870  
 Skowhegan, ME: Marriages Performed by Eleazer Coburn, 1810-1844  
 Springfield, VT: Records of the Rev. George W. Bailey, 1840-1902

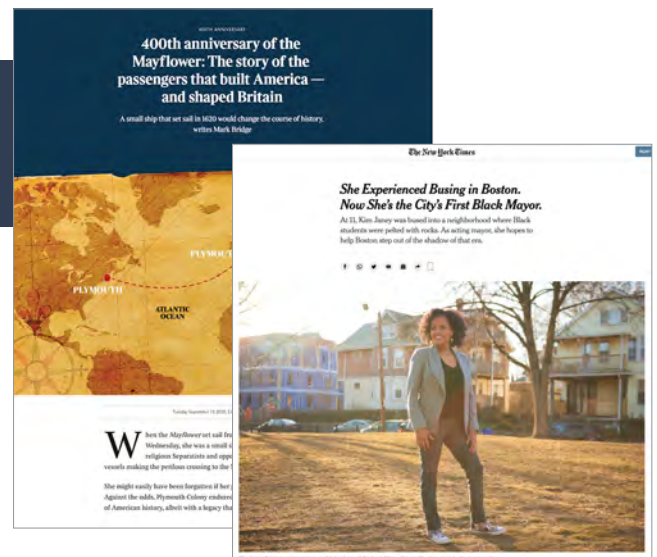
## In the news

News about American Ancestors/New England Historic Genealogical Society appeared in local, national, and international media outlets throughout the year. This has further established our organization's reputation as an industry leader not only in family history but as an innovative cultural nonprofit with a wealth of programming. This past year, multiple news outlets featured interviews with President and CEO Brenton Simons, who spoke about a range of subjects, from the *Mayflower* anniversary to our arts and antiques collection.

The explosion of our online programming led to increased media visibility, which helped to build an increased national audience for our American Inspiration author series, our art and architecture offerings, and our genealogy content, thanks to a growing number of industry publications, podcasters, and digital media. Newbury Street Press Genealogist Meaghan E. H. Siekman, PhD, was interviewed by a Florida TV outlet on African American genealogical research, our American Inspiration author series was mentioned in the *Boston Globe* and Boston University's *Daily Free Press*, two book reviews were published for *Family Treasures*, and two stories were in the *Boston Sun* about the Cornerstone Project.

As the world belatedly noted the 400th anniversary of the departure and the arrival of the *Mayflower* in November 2021 due to the global pandemic, media climbed aboard the vessel's historic voyage and sought our expertise for a better understanding of the lives and heritage of the Pilgrims, and the native Americans they encountered. Brenton Simons, as President and CEO of American Ancestors/NEHGS and as a descendant of William Bradford, was invited to comment on the growing popularity of researching one's ancestral connections to the Pilgrims. He appeared on BBC Radio and ITV-TV in the UK and on CBS in Boston.

Two of our genealogists were invited to author magazine articles on key resources available for researching *Mayflower* ancestry. Chris Child, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press and Editor of *Mayflower Descendant*, wrote "Pilgrims' Pride" for *Family Tree Magazine*, a publication of Yankee



Publishing and the leading consumer print and online medium in the genealogy segment. David Allen Lambert, Chief Genealogist, was a guest author for *NGS Magazine* with "Resources for Researching *Mayflower* Descendants." And, an engaging piece researched by Mark Bridge, history correspondent of *The Times* of London, focused upon "the story of the passengers that built America—and shaped Britain," and featured several leading voices of NEHGS, including *Mayflower* descendants Ryan Woods and his young son, Nathaniel.

Other media attention included *New York Times* bureau chief Ellen Barry and *Guardian* writer Sarah Betancourt both interviewing Chris Child regarding the ancestry of former Acting Mayor of Boston Kim Janey and other former Boston mayors; a full-page article in *Antiques & The Arts Weekly* on *Family Treasures*; a few news items on "Ancestor Strong"; and a nationwide pickup of an Associated Press article that included us and one of our archival objects (the diary of Rev. Ebenezer Storer).

This global news media exposure contributed enormously to our marketing efforts and simultaneously to fulfilling our mission by educating, inspiring, and connecting people from all walks of life to the discovery of their family's unique place in history.

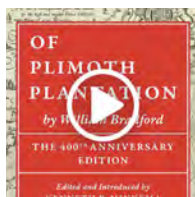
A 40-minute video entitled "Uncovering Your Family History: From DNA Testing to In-depth Research" was produced by Fiduciary Trust and NEHGS, featuring a dialog between Brenton Simons and NEHGS Councilor Hans Olsen, the Chief Investment Officer at Fiduciary Trust. It can be viewed on the Fiduciary Trust website and on [AmericanAncestors.org/fiduciary](https://AmericanAncestors.org/fiduciary).



## The Antiquarto is now an interview series!



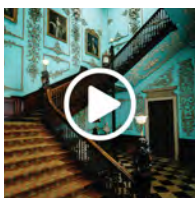
American Ancestors/New England Historic Genealogical Society President and CEO D. Brenton Simons began *The Antiquarto* blog in January 2018 to explore topics relating to history, genealogy, collecting, and the arts. Now *The Antiquarto* is a dynamic interview series with expert guests, available on our YouTube channel, [YouTube.com/user/AmericanAncestors](https://www.youtube.com/user/AmericanAncestors), and website, [AmericanAncestors.org/watch](https://AmericanAncestors.org/watch).



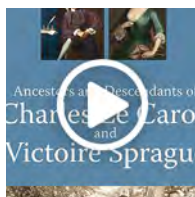
**Episode 4:** Brenton Simons meets with Michele Pecoraro of Plymouth 400, Inc. to discuss the newly annotated edition of *Of Plimoth Plantation*, the personal journal of Governor William Bradford. (*Of Plimoth Plantation* by William Bradford: *The 400th Anniversary Edition* was published in 2020 by the Colonial Society of Massachusetts and NEHGS.)



**Episode 7:** Brenton Simons speaks with Julian Radcliffe, founder of the Art Loss Register about his work as featured in the new book *Lost Art: The Art Loss Register Casebook Volume One* by Anja Shortland. This lively conversation explores Radcliffe's work with art crimes, theft, fakes, and forgeries.



**Episode 5:** Brenton Simons and Curator of Special Collections Curt DiCamillo chat with Charles Courtenay, 19th Earl of Devon, about Powderham Castle, family treasures, and his role in the 400th anniversary of the *Mayflower* landing.



**Episode 8:** Brenton Simons interviews Kyle Hurst, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press at American Ancestors/NEHGS. Hear about Kyle's work at the Newbury Street Press, researching and writing family histories; how she got started in genealogy; and her award-winning genealogy *Ancestors and Descendants of Charles Le Caron and Victoire Sprague*.



**Episode 6:** Brenton Simons chats with Assistant Publishing Director Cécile Engeln about the creation of *The Family Album: A Visual History of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1845-2020*.

Watch for more episodes of *The Antiquarto* in the coming months.

[YouTube.com/user/AmericanAncestors](https://www.youtube.com/user/AmericanAncestors)  
[AmericanAncestors.org/watch](https://AmericanAncestors.org/watch)

# New Publications

In addition to four issues of *American Ancestors* magazine, four issues of the *Register*, and two issues of *Mayflower Descendant*, NEHGS published eleven new titles during fiscal year 2021.

## 2021 NEHGS Books

**Early Vermont Settlers to 1771: Volume 2—Northern Windsor County**  
by Scott Andrew Bartley

**A New England Native American Reader**  
edited by Henry B. Hoff and R. Andrew Pierce

E-book Edition of **A Guide to Massachusetts Cemeteries, 3rd edition**  
by David Allen Lambert

**Ancestry of Jill Lepore**  
(October 2020 dinner honoree) by Kyle Hurst

**Ancestry of Sir John Major** by Chris Child  
(April 2021 dinner honoree)

## 2021 Newbury Street Press Books

**Family Tales and Trials: Settling the American South — Condon, Speed, Wathen, Perrin**  
by Christopher C. Child and Meaghan E. H. Siekman  
with Victor S. Dunn and Helen Condon Powell

**Descendants of David Melvill of Boston, Massachusetts and Newport, Rhode Island — Including Notes on the Vinson Families of Newport**  
by Helen Schatvet Ullmann

**Descendants of John Lippitt of Providence and Warwick, Rhode Island**  
by Christopher C. Child and Maureen A. Taylor with Andrew Krea  
and Jenifer Kahn Bakkala, foreword by D. Brenton Simons

**The Stories They Tell . . . from the Herdeg Collection**  
by John A. Herdeg and Judith C. Herdeg, foreword by Brock Jobe

**Ancestors of Albert James Zdenek, Sr. and Rose Marie Mildred Prince**  
by Kyle Hurst and Albert J. Zdenek, Jr.

**The Ancestry of Thomas Martin Lynch Jr. and Esther Agnes Griffin of Ireland and Canada**  
by Jerald Dupree with Scott C. Steward and Lindsay Fulton,  
foreword by Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley

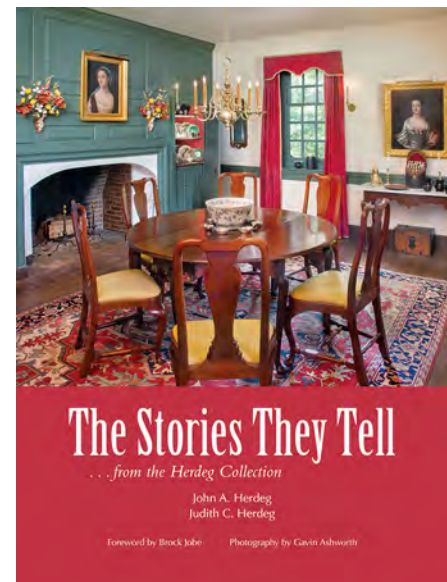
## Newbury Street Press Projects Undertaken in 2021

**Ancestors of David Barker Ford**

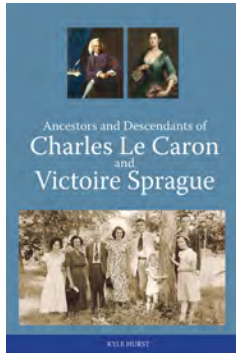
**An Armorial Roll: Heraldry in the Ancestry of Howard Ellis Cox and Anne Delafield Finch**

**Tabor, Dow, MacClary, Brown, and Allied Families (in the Ancestry of John Stephen Rando, Jr.)**

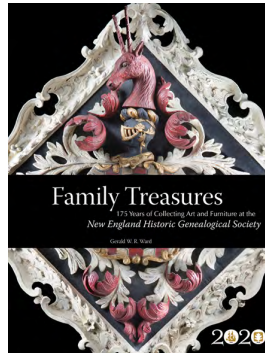
**Ancestry of DuWayne Sayles**



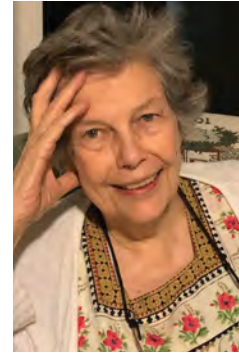
## Award-winning Books



Newbury Street Press Senior Genealogist Kyle Hurst's *Ancestors and Descendants of Charles Le Caron and Victoire Sprague* won the 2020 National Genealogical Society Award for Excellence in the Genealogy and Family History category. The award recognizes a family history book that fosters scholarship and promotes excellence in genealogy.

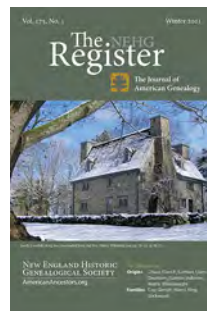
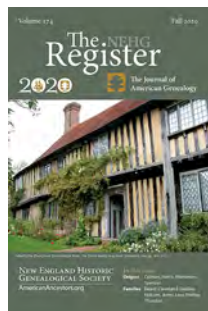


The New England Society in the City of New York awarded its Art and Photography Book Award for 2021 to *Family Treasures: 175 Years of Collecting Art and Furniture at the New England Historic Genealogical Society* by Gerald W. R. Ward with photography by Gavin Ashworth. The awards recognize books of merit that celebrate New England and its culture.



Our dear friend, the late Helen Schatvet Ullmann, FASG, was awarded First Prize in the Genealogy/Family History Category of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists 2021 Literary Awards Contest for *Descendants of David Melvill of Boston, Massachusetts and Newport, Rhode Island — Including Notes on the Vinson Families of Newport*.

## Periodicals





## Newbury Street Press Celebration

Newbury Street Press staff and members of the Lippitt family gathered at the Governor Henry Lippitt House in Providence on November 3, 2021, to celebrate the publication of their family history volume, *Descendants of John Lippitt of Providence and Warwick, Rhode Island*. Pictured left to right are Kent Barwick, Newbury Street Press Senior Genealogist Chris Child, June Barwick, Suzanne Ward, Harry Beckwith (partially hidden), Charley Steedman, Jim Joslin, Sally Joslin, Julie Steedman, and Frank Mauran IV.

## Vita Brevis

In January 2022, the *Vita Brevis* blog marked 3,000,000 page views. Breaking that statistic down—1,774 posts were published between January 2014 and January 2022, created by 151 bloggers—means that the guidance the blog offers on approaches to and resources for genealogical research has reached millions of readers. Back when the blog launched, one of our aims was to create a new online resource for NEHGS members and guests: the image used was a mosaic, one made up of individual pieces that, collected, formed a larger whole.

One of the categories into which the blog's posts are organized is "serendipity," and serendipity—random chance that may resolve into a pattern—is central to genealogical research. It is often through serendipity that meaning is found for a variety of attributes that have never been brought together in quite this way, forming a new, complete portrait of a person, family, or place. *Vita Brevis* bloggers sometimes report on results; more often, it seems, they write about the process, still unfolding, that will lead to the results they seek.



# THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER

This past fiscal year represents a resounding success for the Education & Programming team—one that was accomplished primarily through online programming, with little overhead and by a small but dedicated team. We produced **205 programs**—many “programs” representing multiple days, multiple presentations, multiple hours’ worth of content, and engaged **39,835 LIVE attendees**. Below is a listing of online education programs. *For a full picture of our offerings, review the sections on Heritage Tours, American Inspiration, Youth Education, and Special Events in this report.*

**CONFERENCE** Federation of Genealogical Societies, September 2–September 5, 2020

**CONFERENCE** New York State Family History Conference, September 10–September 11, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** The Great Migration (presented to the Cape Cod Genealogical Society), September 15, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** Northern New England Resources at America Ancestors, September 17, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Researching Revolutionary War Ancestors (presented to Louisa St. Clair Chapter NSDAR), September 17, 2020

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Checking for Vitals, three weeks starting September 23, 2020

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Caribbean Ancestry, September 26, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** The Hero of Dear Old Halifax (presented to the Stoughton Jewish Community Center), October 6, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** What’s New at AmericanAncestors.org?, October 8, 2020

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Researching Adoption in Your Family History, three weeks starting October 14, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** The First American Jewish Woman Novelist: Uncovering the Story of Cora Wilburn, October 14, 2020

**CONFERENCE** Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society Conference, October 14–October 17, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** Using Bank Records in Your Family History Research, October 15, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Migrations Into and Through New York (presented to the Capital District Genealogical Society), October 24, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Using AmericanAncestors.org (presented to the Digital Commonwealth), October 26, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Mining Newspapers for Genealogical Treasure (presented to the Portsmouth Free Library), October 26, 2020

**ONLINE SEMINAR** 17th-Century English Research, four weeks starting October 28, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** GU272 (presented to Greenwich Library), November 2, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** Stories from the Archives, Objects of Mourning, November 5, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Immigration and Naturalization (presented to the JP Historical Society), November 7, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Post-Revolutionary War Migration in the United States (presented to Louisa St. Clair Chapter NSDAR), November 12, 2020

**ONLINE RESEARCH PROGRAM** Fall Stay-at-home, November 11–November 14, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** 17th-Century New England Research (presented to Northland Genealogical Society), November 14, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Massachusetts Research (presented to Falmouth Genealogical Society), November 16, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** Jewish Immigrants in the American Antiques Trade, November 17, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** Navigating the Digital Library & Archives at AmericanAncestors.org, November 19, 2020

**ONLINE SEMINAR** 20th-Century Immigration to America, November 21, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** Jewish and African American Cemeteries as Borders Uncrossed, December 1, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Using DNA in Your Family History Research (presented to Plainfield Public Library), December 5, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Creating a Research Plan for Cluster Research (presented to Plainfield Public Library), December 5, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** The Great Migration (presented to Society of Colonial Wars, Georgia), December 8, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** Finding the Living: Doing Descendancy Research, December 10, 2020

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Researching American Revolutionary War Patriots, December 12, 2020

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Italian Family History (presented to Appleton Public Library), December 12, 2020

**ONLINE LECTURE** Interviewing Relatives, December 17, 2020

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Writing and Publishing Your Family History, five weeks starting January 6, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Follow the Money (presented to North Suburban Genealogical Society), January 9, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** What’s New at AmericanAncestors.org?, January 14, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Virtual Preservation Roadshow, January 23, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Using DNA in Your Family History Research (presented to Merrimack Valley Genealogical Society), January 23, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** The Federal Census: Moving Beyond the Population Schedule, January 28, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Building Your Genealogical Skills, three weeks starting February 10, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Stories from the Archives: Samplers, February 11, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** African American Research (presented to Greenwich Library), February 18, 2021

**ONLINE RESEARCH PROGRAM** Winter Stay-at-home, February 18–20, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** 17th-Century Boston Research and Records (presented to Indian River Genealogy Society), February 20, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Bernice Lerner with All the Horrors of War: A Jewish Girl, a British Doctor, and the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen, February 22, 2021

**CONFERENCE** RootsTech, February 25–February 27, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Black Families of Revolutionary-Era Plymouth, MA, February 25, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Christian Church Records & Research, February 27, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Mining Newspapers for Genealogical Treasure (presented to Greenwich Library), March 2, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** The History of Jews in Colonial New England and New York, four weeks starting March 2, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** History for Genealogists, five weeks starting March 3, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Researching Women in the Archives (presented to the Cambridge Public Library), March 11, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Urban Research in the 19th and 20th Centuries, March 18, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Researching Northern Irish Ancestors, March 20, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** 17th-Century New England Resources (presented to Duxbury Senior Center), March 23, 2021

**ONLINE RESEARCH PROGRAM** Virtual Research Tour to Washington, DC, March 24 – March 27, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Boston's Jewish Family Businesses: The Colonial Era to the Present, April 6, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** What's New at AmericanAncestors.org?, April 8, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Genealogical Skills Bootcamp, April 8–April 10, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** 17th-Century New England Research (presented to NSDAR), April 9, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Researching New Netherland Ancestors, three weeks starting April 14, 2021

**CONFERENCE** New England Regional Genealogical Consortium Conference, April 15 – April 17, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Making Your Case and Drawing Conclusions (presented to Bristol Chapter of Massachusetts Society of Genealogists), April 17, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Polish Genealogy (presented to Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan), April 17, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Out to Sea: Researching Mariner Ancestors in New England, April 22, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Using External Databases on AmericanAncestors.org, April 23, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Getting Started in Genealogy (presented to Maynard Public Library), April 26, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Shalom Salem: Jewish Experience in Salem, MA, May 3, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Massachusetts Research, four weeks starting May 5, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Stories from the Archives: Diaries, May 6, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Raising the Dead (presented to Peabody Institute), May 6, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Mining Newspapers for Genealogical Treasure (presented to Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan), May 15, 2021

**CONFERENCE** National Genealogical Society Conference, May 19–May 22, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** The Beggar's Songbook: Music of the Dutch Revolt, May 20, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Military Research: Civil War to WWII (presented to Genealogical Society of Rockland County), May 25, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Using the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center for Family History Research, May 27, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Getting Started in Irish Genealogy (presented to Cambridge Public Library), June 3, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Getting the Lay of the Land: Using Land Records in Your Family History Research, June 5, 2021

**ONLINE RESEARCH PROGRAM** Spring Stay-at-home, June 10–June 12, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Researching the Deep South, June 10, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Polish Genealogy, three weeks starting June 16, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Building Your Genealogical Skills, three weeks starting June 22, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Raising the Dead (presented to Tewksbury Library), June 22, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Raising the Dead (presented to Greenwich Library), June 23, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** The College of Arms in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, June 24, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Researching Acadian Ancestors, three weeks starting July 7, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** What's New at AmericanAncestors.org?, July 8, 2021

**PRIVATE ONLINE LECTURE** Irish Immigration to Canada (presented to Irish Genealogical Society International), July 10, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** The Great Migration to New England: Conventicles to Companies to Congregations, July 22, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** 17<sup>th</sup>-Century New England Research, July 24, 2021

**ONLINE RESEARCH PROGRAM** Summer Stay-at-home, August 12–August 14, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Researching Colonial War Ancestors, three weeks starting August 11, 2021

**ONLINE LECTURE** Stories from the Archives: Bible Records, August 19, 2021

**ONLINE SEMINAR** Researching German Ancestors, August 28, 2021

These programs were generously funded by Nordahl and Suzanne Brue.



## THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER

# Youth Education

### American Ancestors is developing a national family history curriculum

Youth Education entered a new phase in January 2021. Our Youth Education Curriculum Coordinator Dustin Axe began developing and writing content, strategies, and lessons for a family history curriculum for students in grades 4 to 6. The curriculum is being built on a foundation of accessibility.

The curriculum will have three sets of lessons that concentrate on skill development and historical thinking. The sets of lessons involve students' personal family history, case studies, and community genealogy. Teachers will be able to customize each lesson to meet the needs of their class, and students will be given choices to personalize their research based on their unique histories. Each student, regardless of their background and family configuration, will be given an equal opportunity to conduct authentic research on their own.

Each lesson has been developed from our year-long research process that took place in 2020. This involved assessing students' perceptions and misconceptions of genealogy, identifying challenges and needs teachers have in the classroom, benchmarking other successful programs, and reviewing state and national standards. The curriculum will provide effective teaching strategies that address common misconceptions that students have, which affect their basic beliefs and attitudes about genealogy and history in general.

A key component of the curriculum is the Genealogy Research Process. This is an accessible process for students to follow when conducting basic family history research. It emphasizes the role of formal procedures, as well as creativity in genealogical research. Students will understand that there are rules and norms for citing sources, collecting data, and verifying sources, but because each step offers choices, students will also understand that it takes creativity to *ask* questions, gather evidence, and construct a personal family history. The Genealogy Research Process gives teachers a tool to assess each student's research, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.

While the development process is ongoing and will continue well into the future, Youth Education has also entered a piloting phase that is taking place during the 2021–2022 school year. Dustin has met with teachers via Zoom in states including Hawaii, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Maine, and Massachusetts for remote orientations. Each teacher has received a preliminary draft of our curriculum, and they are free to implement it with their students in a way that works best for them. The teachers will provide feedback throughout the school year on what worked well and what needs improvement.

In addition to the progress being made with the curriculum, American Ancestors welcomed intrepid Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops both online and in person at the American Ancestors Research Center, offering yet another opportunity to pilot lessons from the curriculum and engage with the youth community.

# American Inspiration

We hosted 31 free American Inspiration virtual events in fiscal year 2021, featuring celebrated authors and guest moderators. Their rich insights and the diversity of topics were greatly appreciated by our virtual audience of nearly 15,000 participants, many of them new to our organization. All were introduced to the relevance of family history to the narrative of our country and its people and to our research offerings and resources.

We launched two new derivative paid programs featuring American Inspiration authors. The conversation series presents authors alongside genealogists and other experts from American Ancestors. These sessions focused on hot topics in family research, including how best to make use of advances in DNA research, tools and tricks for gaining insight into historical places to advance your family knowledge, and successful strategies for executing adoption research. The Writing History series features celebrated historians discussing their latest book and the craft of researching and writing about the past, including Nathaniel Philbrick and H. W. Brands.

Our cultural partners in the American Inspiration series include Boston Public Library, GBH Forum Network, The Huntington, the Japan Society of Boston, the Massachusetts Historical Society, Museum of African American History, Peabody Essex Museum, Porter Square Books, State Library of Massachusetts, The Trustees, WBUR, and the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center.

Pam Fessler with *Carville's Cure: Leprosy, Stigma, and the Fight for Justice*, September 10, 2021

David Hill with *The Vapors: A Southern Family, the New York Mob, and the Rise and Fall of Hot Springs, America's Forgotten Capital of Vice*, October 1, 2021

David Michaelis with *Eleanor*, October 8, 2021

Claire Messud with *Kant's Little Prussian Head and Other Reasons Why I Write: An Autobiography in Essays*, October 20, 2021

Tamara Payne with *The Dead are Arising: The Life of Malcolm*, November 5, 2021

Nathaniel Philbrick with *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War*, November 12, 2021

David S. Reynolds with *Abe: Abraham Lincoln in His Times*, December 3, 2021

Nicholas A. Basbanes with *Cross of Snow: A Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*, December 7, 2021

Christina Schwarz with *Bonnie: A Novel*, December 16, 2021

Eric Jay Dolin with *A Furious Sky: The Five-Hundred-Year History of America's Hurricanes*, January 13, 2021

Nadia Owusu with *Aftershocks: A Memoir*, January 19, 2021

Janice Nimura with *The Doctors Blackwell: How Two Pioneering Sisters Brought Medicine to Women—and Women to Medicine*, February 4, 2021

Richard Thompson Ford with *Dress Codes: How the Laws of Fashion Made History*  
Moderator: Petra Slinkard, February 18, 2021

Anna Malaika Tubbs with *The Three Mothers: How the Mothers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and James Baldwin Shaped a Nation*, February 23, 2021

Russell Shorto with *Smalltime: A Story of My Family and the Mob*, March 2, 2021

John Matteson with *A Worse Place Than Hell: How the Civil War Battle of Fredericksburg Changed a Nation*, March 23, 2021

Recreating Place: A Conversation about Uncovering, Interpreting, and Presenting the Past, featuring Dr. Elliot Bostwick Davis, former museum director; Christina Schwarz, best-selling novelist, and Kyle Hurst, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press (NEHGS), Tuesday, March 16



**AMERICAN  
INSPIRATION**  
A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR SERIES  
BY AMERICAN ANCESTORS®

Stellene Volandes with *Jewels that Made History: 100 Stones, Myths, and Legends*, April 8, 2021

Tobey Peal with *Terror to the Wicked: America's First Trial by Jury That Ended a War and Helped Form a Nation*, April 13, 2021

Quiara Alegria Hudes with *My Broken Language: A Memoir*, April 29, 2021

Joshua Jelly-Schapiro with *Names of New York: Discovering the City's Past, Present, and Future through its Place Names*, May 6, 2021

Daniel James Brown with *Facing the Mountain: A True Story of Japanese American Heroes in World War*, May 12, 2021

Skip Finley with *Whaling Captains of Color: America's First Meritocracy*, May 25, 2021

Joseph M. Bagley with *Boston's Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them*, June 3, 2021

Gabrielle Glaser with *American Baby: A Mother, A Child, and the Shadow History of Adoption*, June 15, 2021

Stephen Bown with *The Company: The Rise and Fall of the Hudson's Bay Empire*, June 28, 2021

Peter S. Canellos with *The Great Dissenter: The Story of John Marshall Harlan, America's Judicial Hero*, July 8, 2021

Menachem Kaiser with *Plunder: A Memoir of Family Property and Nazi Treasure*, July 20, 2021

Dorothy Wickenden with *The Agitators: Three Friends Who Fought for Abolition and Women's Rights*, July 27, 2021

Siân Evans with *Maiden Voyages: Magnificent Ocean Liners and the Women Who Traveled and Worked Aboard Them*, August 5, 2021

Scott Borchert with *the Republic of Detours: How the New Deal Paid Broke Writers to Rediscover America*, August 17, 2021

John Maclean with *Home Waters: A Chronicle of Family and a River*, August 26, 2021

# Heritage Tours

American Ancestors Heritage Tours provide our constituents and their friends and families exclusive opportunities to explore areas of the world rich in history and culture. Led by our experts as well as other specialists along the way, each tour explores the art, architecture, history, and landscape of our forebears.

## In-Person American Ancestors Heritage Tours

In 2021, we introduced Heritage Tour day trips and walking tours, allowing members and friends of American Ancestors to experience three locales, all close to home and conducted in person. In the first of several collaborations with Historic New England, American Ancestors Curator of Special Collections Curt DiCamillo accompanied a tour of the Eustis Estate and exhibition, "Artful Stories," with co-curator Nancy Carlisle, HNE's Senior Curator of Collections. Next, City of Boston Archaeologist Joe Bagley led a walking tour of downtown Boston's oldest surviving buildings featured in his recent book, *Boston's Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them*. Curt added commentary on this evocative journey into Boston's past. Finally, genealogist, historian, and author David Allen Lambert led a walking tour through the tombstones of Boston's oldest burying grounds including Granary and King's Chapel Burying Grounds. The group learned about Bostonians' contributions to American history, their continued influence on today's society, and about the stones and carved symbols that adorn their eternal homes. With the success of these programs, we will continue offering day trips in 2022, venturing to private homes and gardens, museums, and historic sites across New England.



## Heritage Tour Day Trips and Walking Tours

**Boston Oldest Buildings: A Walking Tour of Boston** led by Joe Bagley and Curt DiCamillo, September 9, 2021

**Day Trip to Eustis Estate** led by Nancy Carlisle, accompanied by Curt DiCamillo, September 25, 2021

**The Stones Speak: A Walking Tour of Granary and King's Chapel Burying Grounds** led by David Allen Lambert, October 29, 2021

## Ultimate Bling: Britain's Royal Collection, Annual DiCamillo Companion Rendezvous

Presented by Curt DiCamillo, Hosted by D. Brenton Simons, January 20, 2022

Our second virtual DiCamillo Companion Rendezvous and illuminating lecture welcoming 150 fellow travelers and fine art enthusiasts was held in January 2022. Curator of Special Collections Curt DiCamillo explored the awe-inspiring art, storied history, and exquisite palaces associated with the Royal Collection, one of the world's largest and most important collections of art.

*"A fascinating romp through British history and the royal collection. Bravo!!!"*

*"I have been to many of the galleries and castles in England which were featured in this presentation, but I think Mr. DiCamillo gave the best presentation of any I have heard. Thoroughly enjoyable and very informative."*

## Online American Ancestors Heritage Tours

### Expanding horizons without leaving home

Through a series of online offerings, including monthly webinars, online courses, and other special virtual events, audiences worldwide enjoyed a look into the American Ancestors Heritage Tour educational experience without leaving home.

Curt DiCamillo and other renowned experts continued to bring superlative collections, magnificent interiors, and breathtaking landscapes into the homes of members and beyond with an illustrated talk on tips for approaching common projects in older homes, virtual tours of the luscious interiors of Tissington Hall and the remarkable Palace of the Lobkowicz, the exploration of the story of Jewish families and their country houses, and the study of art at country houses of Ireland, Scotland, and Shropshire. These live broadcasts—many free and open to the general public—attracted almost 2,000 registrants and, once recorded, add to the expanding library of enriching educational videos.



**All Roads Lead to London: Supreme 19th-Century World City** presented by Curt DiCamillo, September 11, 2020

**An Explosion of Beauty: The Art, Architecture, and Collections of British Country Houses, Part 1** presented by Curt DiCamillo, October 2021

**The Great Houses of Yorkshire** presented by Curt DiCamillo, November 20, 2020

**Winter and Christmas at Castle Howard** presented by Chris Ridgeway, December 11, 2020

**New York and London in the Gilded Age, DiCamillo Rendezvous** presented by Curt DiCamillo and Carl Raymond, January 21, 2021

**An Explosion of Beauty: The Art, Architecture, and Collections of British Country Houses, Part 2** presented by Curt DiCamillo, February 2021

**Old House Do's and Don'ts** presented by Carissa Demore, moderated by Curt DiCamillo, March 26, 2021

**A Virtual Tour of England's Most Historic Houses** presented by Oliver Gerrish, moderated by Curt DiCamillo, March 12, 2021

**Tartan Tales: Stories from Historic Scottish Houses** presented by Curt DiCamillo, April 16, 2021

**The Story of Jewish Families and Their English Country Houses** presented by Curt DiCamillo in partnership with the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center, May 13, 2021

**Artful Stories: Paintings from Historic New England** presented by Nancy Carlisle and Peter Trippi, moderated by Curt DiCamillo, May 21, 2021

**Boston's Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them** presented by Joe Bagley, moderated by Curt DiCamillo, June 3, 2021

**The Country Houses of Shropshire** presented by Gareth Williams, moderated by Curt DiCamillo, June 18, 2021

**Reimagining Historic House Museums** presented by Ken Turino, moderated by Curt DiCamillo, July 9, 2021

**Weston Park** presented by Gareth Williams, moderated by Curt DiCamillo, August 27, 2021

## 2022 American Ancestors Heritage Tours



### **Villas and Gardens of Rome**

March 21–27, 2022



### **Hidden Philadelphia**

May 12–17, 2022



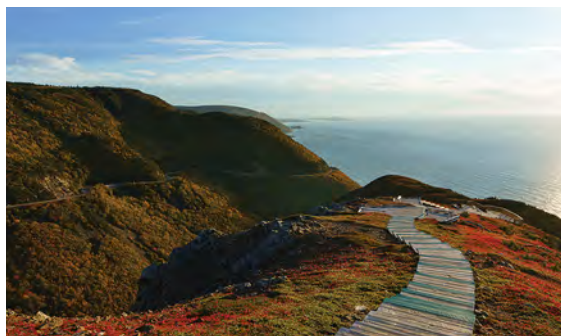
### **A New England Sojourn**

June 15–19, 2022



### **A Slice of Heaven: Country Houses of Norfolk**

September 11–17, 2022



### **Nova Scotia: Celtic Connections in the New World**

September 19–23, 2022



### **Pilgrims in England: The Southeast Contingent**

October 18–24, 2022



### **An English Country Christmas**

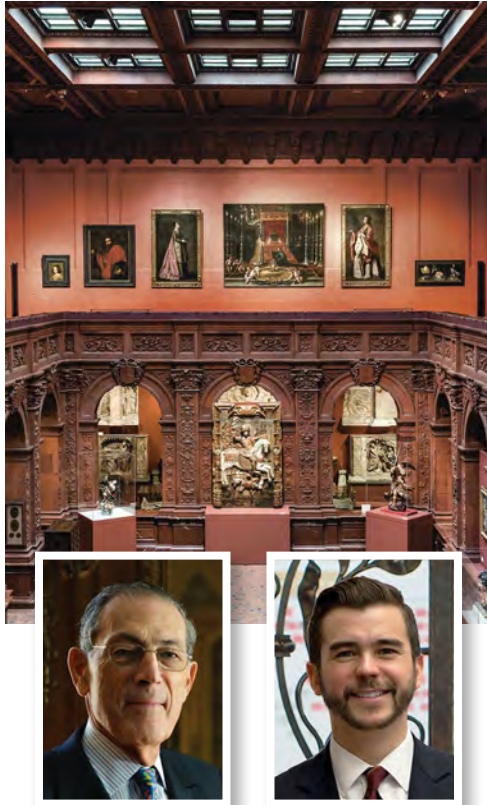
November 29–December 4, 2022

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For more information on Heritage Tours, please contact us at [heritagetours@nehgs.org](mailto:heritagetours@nehgs.org) or 617-226-1267.

# Special Events 2021

Despite the global pandemic, we were able to come together many times over the past year to celebrate American Ancestors both virtually and in person when it was safe.



## Former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art receives our History & Preservation Award

On Thursday, February 11, 2021, more than 250 guests joined us virtually over Zoom for “A Special Evening with Philippe de Montebello” featuring the distinguished curator, scholar, and arts administrator Philippe de Montebello, whom we honored with a Preservation and History Award in Artistic and Historic Preservation. Philippe was in conversation with Executive Vice President and COO Ryan J. Woods.

Phillipe gave an illustrated presentation entitled “Celebrating the American Tradition of Art Collecting.” Phillipe spoke about the history of the Hispanic Society Museum & Library, for which he is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Following the presentation, he was joined by Ryan J. Woods for a scintillating conversation about art and the art of collecting.

This program was presented in partnership with the Hispanic Society Museum & Library.

## In-person events return

In the fall of 2021, after over a year of only virtual events, we were able to host in-person gatherings at our headquarters at 99-101 Newbury Street. On October 2, 2021, we welcomed the Sons of the Revolution for an intimate open house which included a curated exhibit and tour of our facilities. On November 4, 2021, we were honored to host the Society of Colonial Wars’ annual David Eugene Burr Punch Bowl Party. The lively group was thrilled to celebrate and socialize in our historic rotunda after many months of virtual gatherings.



## RootsTech Connect 2021



In 2021, RootsTech made the decision to hold their ever-popular family history conference online for the first time in its history. With live dates from February 24 to 28, 2021, millions of people from around the world logged in to enjoy keynote speakers, view 1,500+ lectures and sessions, visit the virtual expo hall, and more. The content of RootsTech Connect was made available to participants for an entire calendar year,

allowing American Ancestors to reach new participants throughout this period. With this newly accessible platform and expanded audience, American Ancestors was proud to participate as a sponsor and exhibitor. Some of the highlights from the live conference dates include:

Through our virtual exhibitor booth, we reached over **3,800 people** worldwide. Participants visited our booth from the following countries: **United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, Sweden, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Mexico, and Chile.**

We offered exciting membership and book discounts throughout the conference, gaining **84 new members**—our highest year yet for new memberships!

Our experts submitted several pre-recorded lectures, adding to the RootsTech Connect session library. These videos reached **6,702 total views** during the live conference.

With the booth chat feature, our staff was able to **interact directly with booth visitors in real time** answering questions about our products, videos, and services.



### Writing History and Travels with George

Noted historian and *Mayflower* author, Nathaniel Philbrick, discussed his book, *Travels with George*, in an American Inspiration talk. The book chronicles President George Washington's journeys in the fall of 1789 when, only six months into his presidency, Washington set out on the first of four road trips as he attempted to unite into a single nation what were, in essence, thirteen independent states. In the fall of 2018, Nathaniel Philbrick, his wife, and dog set out to retrace Washington's route. In *Travels with George*, Philbrick recounts their adventure at historic houses and landmarks from Savannah, Georgia, to Kittery Point, Maine, and highlights the reenactors, tour guides, and other keepers of history's flame they met along their journey.

After the free event, the author was joined by moderator Ryan J. Woods, EVP and COO of American Ancestors/NEHGS, and Catherine Allgor, President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, to facilitate an enlightening and interactive conversation about Nathaniel Philbrick's approach to "Writing History"—the inspirations, research methods, and writing process that have brought him success.

More than 2,300 registered for this event and one attendee said:

"Nathaniel Philbrick's talk was wonderful. Ryan Woods did a great job of facilitating the discussion. This was an excellent program: enticing topic, erudite speaker, insightful interviewer, interesting sponsors—very impressive! What a great opportunity to join this event from Alaska."



## The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center™ at NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center (JHC) had a successful year in fiscal year 2021: we continued to engage the community and grow our audience through a wide array of online programs about Jewish history and culture, expanded our scholarly impact, led a collaboration of New England Jewish history organizations and created new community resources, and concluded our observance of the tenth anniversary of our collaboration with NEHGS with a celebratory event and a successful fundraising campaign.

### Collections and Scholarship

While it has been more difficult to accession collections during the pandemic, we did bring in new collections during the fiscal year that enhanced our holdings significantly. Some of these bore out our updated collecting policy of widening the type of Jewish history and heritage represented in the archives; the addition of the Dnipro Kehillah (Ukraine) Project Records, addendum to Jewish Community Relations Council Records (Ethiopian Jewry materials), and a Yemeni Jewry Collection expanded the ethnic and geographical representation in our archives.

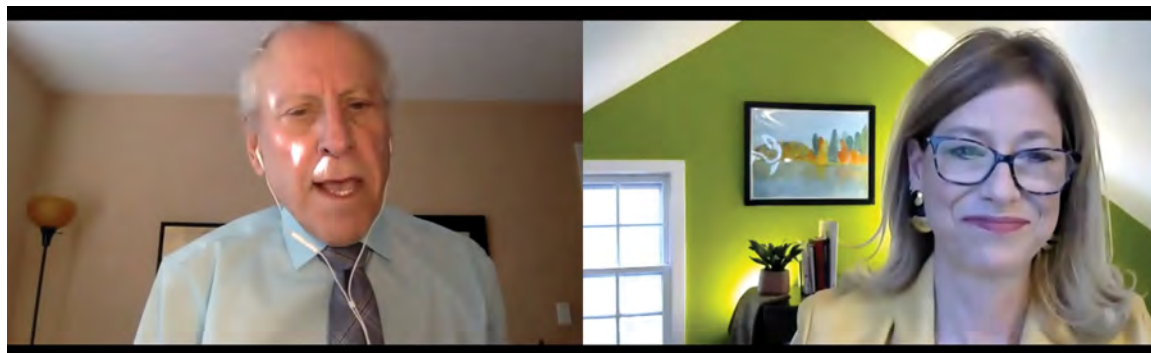
The JHC entered a new chapter and raised our profile as a center for scholarship by launching the Genevieve Geller Wyner Research Fellowship, made possible by a gift from Justin L. "Jerry" Wyner. An academic Fellowship Review Committee selected Dr. Melissa R. Klapper as the inaugural Research Fellow. Dr. Klapper, Professor of History and Director of Women's & Gender Studies at Rowan

University in New Jersey, came to Boston to conduct research in the JHC archives for her research subject, "At Home in the World: American Jewish Women Abroad, 1865–1940." She culminated her fellowship in October by giving the Genevieve Geller Wyner Annual Lecture on this subject.

We secured the second largest philanthropic gift ever to the JHC when supporter Richard Schilder committed multiyear funding to establish a Historian in Residence position at the JHC. This extraordinary gift significantly enhances the JHC's capacity to draw on its collections to develop original articles, talks, and educational content about Boston, New England, and American Jewish history. With this expanded capacity, the JHC will not only be a destination for scholarship but a creator of it as well.

### Programming and Partnerships

The JHC offered a host of online programs throughout the year that provided a multifaceted lens on Jewish history, and drew audiences from across the country with diverse backgrounds and interests. These programs ranged from a study of Jewish and African American cemeteries to a demonstration of traditional recipes from the JHC's archives. We held programs with external partners such as the Jewish Arts Collaborative and Vilna Shul, and we also partnered with American Inspiration (with whom we co-presented *Plunder: A Story of Family Property and Nazi Treasure* in July), and the Art & Architecture series, for which Curt DiCamillo presented a lively program, "The Story of Jewish Families and Their British Country Homes."



Historian Michael Feldberg speaks with JHC Executive Director Rachel King during the JHC's "Jewish Family Businesses" webinar in March 2021.



JHC Associate Director Stephanie Call shows JHC collections to descendants of Abraham C. Ratshesky, whose papers are preserved in the JHC archives.

Other programs of note included an event in February with author Bernice Lerner discussing her new book, *All the Horrors of War: A Jewish Girl, A British Doctor, and the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen*. NEHGS EVP and COO Ryan Woods moderated the program and engaged in conversation with Dr. Lerner, a former professor of his, about the role of character in biography and history. In April, the JHC hosted “Boston Jewish Family Businesses,” presented by historian Dr. Michael Feldberg, a sweeping examination of the many Boston-based, multigenerational Jewish family businesses that have had significant regional and national impact, including several whose records are in the JHC’s collections. This program was made possible by a special gift from Sumner and Edie Milender.

We offered a four-week online course about early Jewish settlement in the United States, taught by Ellen Smith, professor emerita at Brandeis University: “Freedoms and Challenges: America’s Earliest Jewish Communities, 1650–1840.” This was the first in a three-part chronological survey of American Jewish history that the JHC is presenting over two years. As well, JHC staff participated in several NEHGS education programs, including the Fall Research Getaway, “Tips for Interviewing Your Relatives” webinar, the Virtual Preservation Roadshow, “Stories from the Archives: Diaries” webinar, and the Spring Stay at Home. JHC staff also developed collections-specific webinars, including “Shalom/Salem: Archival Stories from Salem’s Jewish Community,” and “Using the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center Archives for Family History Research.”

Collaboration is important to the JHC’s work; we believe that working with other Jewish and historical organizations strengthens our field and “lifts all boats.” In January, the JHC hosted an online conference entitled “What is the New England Jewish Experience?,” which publicly launched the New England Jewish History Collaborative. The

Collaborative is a consortium of Jewish history and genealogy organizations from all six New England states whose goal is to raise awareness of the specific history of Jewish New England and the resources available to study it. The conference included a keynote talk by Michael Hoberman, PhD, followed by a lively panel discussion about the similarities and differences in the historical Jewish experience among the six New England states, and between the region and the rest of the country. The program concluded with the introduction of two new resources created by the Collaborative: a resource guide for New England Jewish history and a related website, [nejhc.org](http://nejhc.org). The JHC’s leadership role in the Collaborative fulfills our strategic goal to raise our visibility both within the field of Jewish history and with regional and national audiences.

## Tenth Anniversary Celebration

The JHC observed its tenth anniversary at New England Historic Genealogical Society throughout fiscal year 2021, celebrating a decade of collaboration and growth. The Tenth Anniversary Campaign met its fundraising goal of \$400,000 to support three priorities: expanding online content and access to JHC’s resources, fostering new research and scholarship, and securing and preserving new family and institutional collections for the JHC’s permanent archives. In June, the JHC held an anniversary event online, a public celebration of the original, farsighted collaboration that created the JHC, and its many advances while at NEHGS. The event also honored Margot Stern Strom, founder of the educational nonprofit Facing History and Ourselves, and presented her with the Tzedakah Lifetime Achievement Award for her work to innovate approaches to the study of history and to inspire young people to be upstanding citizens. The program featured her in conversation with her son, Adam Strom, about their family’s Jewish heritage and their commitment to social justice through the generations.

By preserving, providing access to, and shedding light on Jewish history and heritage, the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center has made great strides in engaging a diverse community of researchers, genealogists, fellow institutions, and the general public. We are grateful for this community’s support and look forward to continued growth and engagement in the year ahead.

## Recent Keynote Speakers and Honorees

- 2022 David M. Rubenstein
- 2021 Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham  
The Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH  
Anthony Amore  
Mary Beth Norton
- 2020 Jill Lepore  
Scott Simon
- 2019 Joseph J. Ellis  
Douglas Brinkley  
Dan Rather
- 2018 David Hackett Fischer  
David McCullough  
William M. Fowler, Jr.
- 2017 Winston Groom  
Stacy Schiff
- 2016 Cokie Roberts  
Bob Schieffer  
David Hartman
- 2015 Nathaniel Philbrick  
James Carville and Mary Matalin  
HRH Princess Michael of Kent
- 2014 Dame Angela Lansbury  
Doris Kearns Goodwin
- 2013 David Gergen
- 2012 Michael and Kitty Dukakis  
Bryan Sykes



### Thank you to our event's sponsors

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Helen E. R. and DuWayne Sayles  
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## Renowned African American history expert honored at our Winter Family History Benefit

On Thursday, January 28, 2021, more than 150 guests joined us over Zoom for our Winter Family History Benefit event featuring author Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, the Victor S. Thomas Professor of History and of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. President and CEO D. Brenton Simons honored Professor Higginbotham with our History and Preservation Award in Historical Research and Preservation.

Through family photographs, mementos, and personal recollections, Professor Higginbotham shared the story of several generations of her

family in a presentation entitled "History in the Face of Slavery: A Family Portrait." Professor Higginbotham was then joined in conversation by her colleague, collaborator, and good friend Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (host of PBS's *Finding Your Roots* and NEHGS Honorary Trustee). This special event raised funds in support of our mission to educate, inspire, and connect people through our scholarship, collections, and expertise.

Above, top to bottom: A slide from the presentation; Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham; Henry Louis Gates, Jr.



### Thank you to our event's sponsors

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#### SPEAKERS

Sir John Major

Gov. Charles D. Baker

Ambassador Dame Karen Pierce

Consul General Dr. Peter Abbott

D. Brenton Simons

Ryan J. Woods

David M. Trebing

Above: Former UK Prime Minister  
The Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH  
(courtesy Sir John Major's office).

## Former UK Prime Minister Sir John Major honored at our annual gala

On April 22, 2021, nearly 400 guests from around the world participated in our Virtual Family History Benefit Gala, which honored Former UK Prime Minister Sir John Major with our Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Public Service. The evening also commemorated the 175th anniversary of NEHGS (founded in 1845) as well as the 400th anniversary of the 1620 *Mayflower* landing in New England. The program included Sir John in conversation with Her Majesty's Consul General to New England Dr. Peter Abbott OBE, with special greetings from Dame Karen Pierce, British Ambassador to the United States, and Governor of Massachusetts Charles D. Baker, as well as presentations by hosts D. Brenton Simons and Ryan J. Woods.

Sir John's genealogy—presented by Brenton Simons and compiled by Christopher C. Child, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press and Editor of *Mayflower Descendant*, and Scott C. Steward, American Ancestors/NEHGS Editor-in-Chief—revealed Sir John's relationship to Margaret Thatcher as fifth cousins once removed. In addition, our experts were able to trace nine generations from Sir John to Lincolnshire in the late 17th century. Several of his ancestors lived in Boston, Lincolnshire—the namesake for Boston, Massachusetts. Brenton Simons recounted the American odyssey of Sir John's grandparents who, along with Sir John's young father, lived and worked for a time in the foothills of the Allegheny range in Pennsylvania, and ultimately returned to England in 1895. Simons noted that under other circumstances, Sir John might have been born an American.

Sir John has had an illustrious career. In 1990, he succeeded Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and served in that capacity until 1997. He worked to secure peace in Northern Ireland and oversaw Britain's longest period of continuous economic growth. Prior to becoming Prime Minister, Sir John served in the Thatcher Government as Foreign Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 2005, he was made a Knight Companion of the Most Noble Order of The Garter by The Queen.

"It is one hundred and seventy-five years since the founding of the New England Historic Genealogical Society. It's the oldest, the largest, and I think the most respected society of its kind to be found anywhere in the world. I think you, Brenton, and your colleagues, can be immensely proud of what you've built at the Society. Over its long life, it has gathered together the largest collection of original materials about the British people of North America. Its Great Migration study, a continuing

study, has also published the most authoritative record of, quite literally, the tens of thousands of British subjects who helped found New England. So, your contributions are unique. And something of which everyone who is a part of it can, legitimately, be very proud of. Human stories of our collective past are at the heart of your work, and I'd like to thank you for helping to keep those stories alive. It is our emotional DNA. And immensely valuable for this generation and our successors."

—Sir John Major, KG CH, April 22, 2021



### Thank you to our event's sponsors

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## Art theft and intrigue: Our Summer Family History Benefit

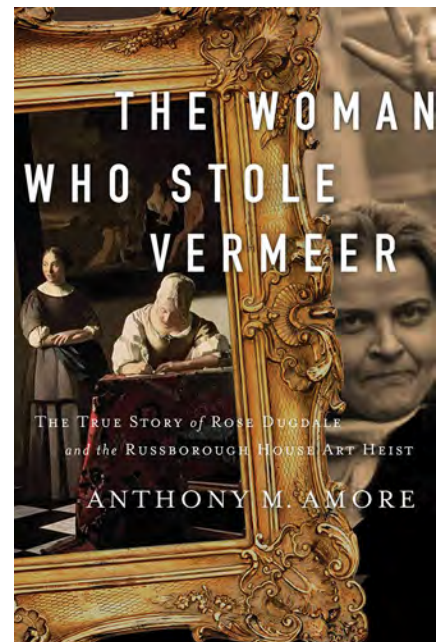
On July 29, 2021, approximately 150 attendees participated in our Summer Family History Benefit with special guest Anthony M. Amore, Director of Security at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Amore's discussion of his most recent book, *The Woman Who Stole Vermeer* (2020), was followed by a conversation with Curt DiCamillo, American Ancestors/NEHGS Curator of Special Collections, and a Q&A session with the audience.

*The Woman Who Stole Vermeer* profiles Rose Dugdale, the 33-year-old British heiress who in 1974 orchestrated the largest art heist of her time: the theft of 19 works from Russborough House in Ireland. During his presentation, Amore recalled the process of getting to know Dugdale as he researched and wrote the book over a three-year period. He touched upon several key points of her life and background as she transformed from debutante to activist and art thief, including Dugdale's time at the University of Oxford and Mount Holyoke College; her early career and travels, particularly a trip to Cuba to see Fidel Castro, which she described as a turning point in her life; her relationships, activism, and crimes with Walter Heaton and Eddie Gallagher; and finally the motivation for the theft at Russborough House and details about the heist.

Amore is an author and expert in security matters, especially those related to art and homeland security. As Director of Security and Chief Investigator at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, he is charged with the ongoing efforts to recover 13 works of art stolen from the museum in 1990. He also co-authored, with reporter Tom Mashberg, *Stealing Rembrandts: The Untold Stories of Notorious Art Heists* (2011) and is the author of *The Art of the Con: The Most Notorious Fakes, Frauds, and Forgeries in the Art World* (2015).

Above: Author and security expert  
Anthony M. Amore.

Right: *The Woman Who Stole Vermeer: The True Story of Rose Dugdale and the Russborough House Art Heist* (Pegasus Crime, 2020).



## Best-selling author and noted historian Mary Beth Norton honored at our Fall Family History Benefit

### Thank you to our event's sponsors

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On Thursday, October 28, 2021, American Ancestors welcomed more than 60 guests to Boston's Chilton Club for our Fall Family History Benefit featuring Mary Beth Norton. At this long-awaited in-person event, Norton was presented with our Lifetime Achievement Award for History.

Professor Norton discussed her latest work, *1774: The Long Year of Revolution*—a *Wall Street Journal* Best Book of the Year—and shared her insights on the intersections and synergies between the study of history and genealogy. Following a lively Q&A, President and CEO Brenton Simons presented Professor Norton with a compiled family history researched and written by experts at American Ancestors. The genealogy detailed Professor Norton's ties to early New England and connected her to some notable women such as Susan B. Anthony, Clara Barton, and Dorothea Dix.

Mary Beth Norton is the Mary Donlon Alger Professor of American History Emerita at Cornell University, where she taught from 1971 to 2018. Her published works include *The British-Americans* (1972), *Liberty's Daughters*

(1980, 1996), *Founding Mothers & Fathers* (1996), *In the Devil's Snare* (2002), and *Separated by Their Sex* (2011). She is a co-author of *A People and A Nation*, a leading U.S. history textbook since its initial publication in 1982. She has received four honorary degrees and has held fellowships from the Rockefeller, Guggenheim, Mellon, and Starr Foundations, as well as the National Endowment for the Humanities, Princeton University, and the Huntington Library. She served as president of the American Historical Association in 2018.

Left: President and CEO Brenton Simons, Mary Beth Norton, Board of Trustees Vice Chair Thomas Bailey Hagen, and Board of Trustees Chair David M. Trebing.  
©Pierce Harman 2021



## Summary Balance Sheet and Consolidated Income Statement as of fiscal year-end August 31, 2021

BALANCE SHEET	FY21	FY20	Increase (Decrease)	% Increase (Decrease)
Total Assets	\$68,046,034	\$59,308,788	\$8,737,246	15%
Liabilities	\$4,512,828	\$4,691,705	(\$178,877)	-4%
Net Assets	\$63,533,206	\$54,617,083	\$8,916,123	16%
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$68,046,034	\$59,308,788	\$8,737,246	15%

### Consolidated Income Statement September 1, 2020–August 31, 2021

REVENUE	FY21	FY20	% Increase (Decrease)	% of total
Earned Revenue	\$4,387,382	\$4,490,962	-2%	31%
Contributed Revenue	\$8,719,340	\$6,440,161	35%	61%
Investment Return Designated for Current Operations <sup>a</sup>	\$1,080,516	\$1,111,944	-3%	8%
Total Revenue	\$14,187,238	\$12,043,067	18%	100%

EXPENSES	FY21	FY20	% Increase (Decrease)	% of total
Member Services	\$907,634	\$1,081,780	-16%	8%
Research Library	\$2,452,611	\$3,123,693	-21%	21%
Tours and Seminars	\$761,389	\$829,705	-8%	6%
Retail Store	\$163,488	\$248,187	-34%	1%
Publications	\$2,317,431	\$1,980,741	17%	19%
Website	\$1,902,900	\$1,551,431	23%	16%
General and Administrative	\$1,821,140	\$2,100,138	-13%	15%
Fundraising	\$1,614,935	\$1,822,732	-11%	14%
Total Expenses	\$11,941,528	\$12,738,407	-6%	100%

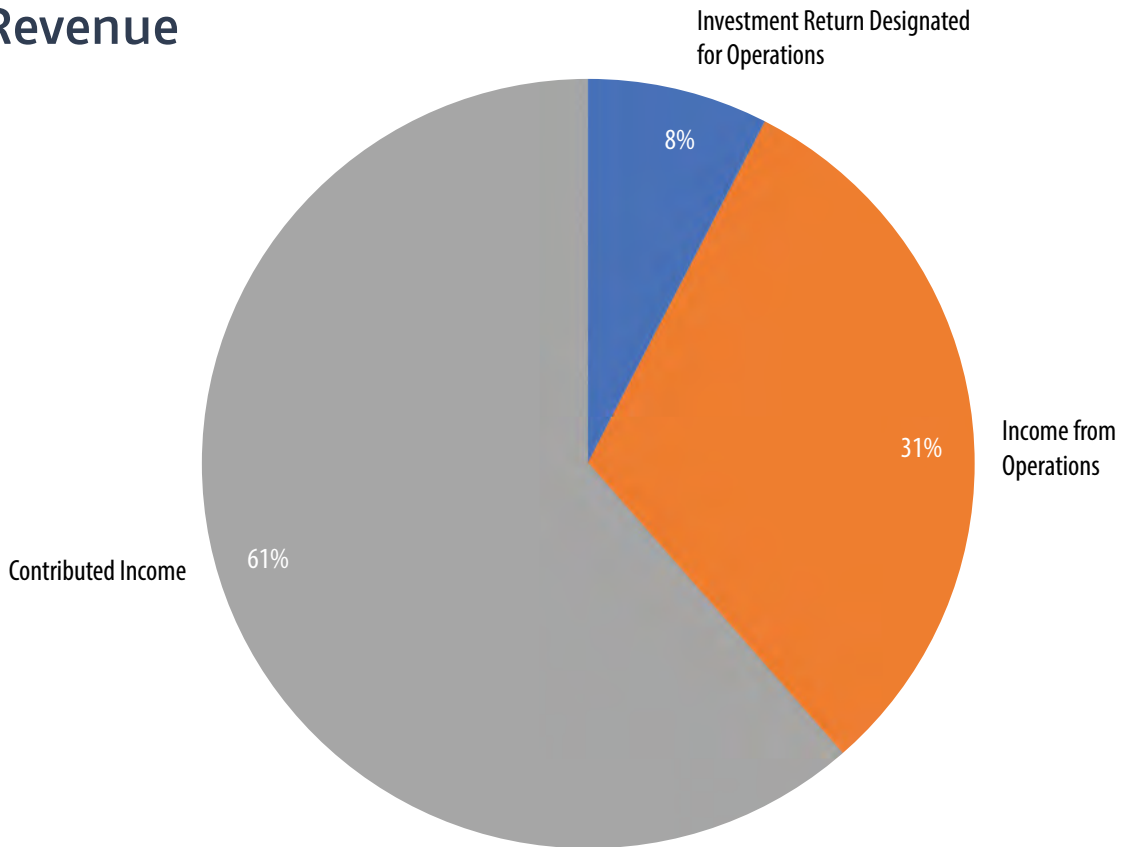
Consolidated Net Income from Operations	\$2,245,710	\$(695,340)
Non-Operating Revenue, including Investment Return <sup>b</sup>	\$6,670,413	\$3,354,266
Consolidated Net Income	\$8,916,123	\$2,658,926
Endowment Net Assets <sup>c</sup>	\$29,778,954	\$24,734,983

a. Investment Return Designated for Current Operations represents the release of the annual draw, which is based on appropriating 4% of the average of the prior twelve quarters of fair market value of the investments.

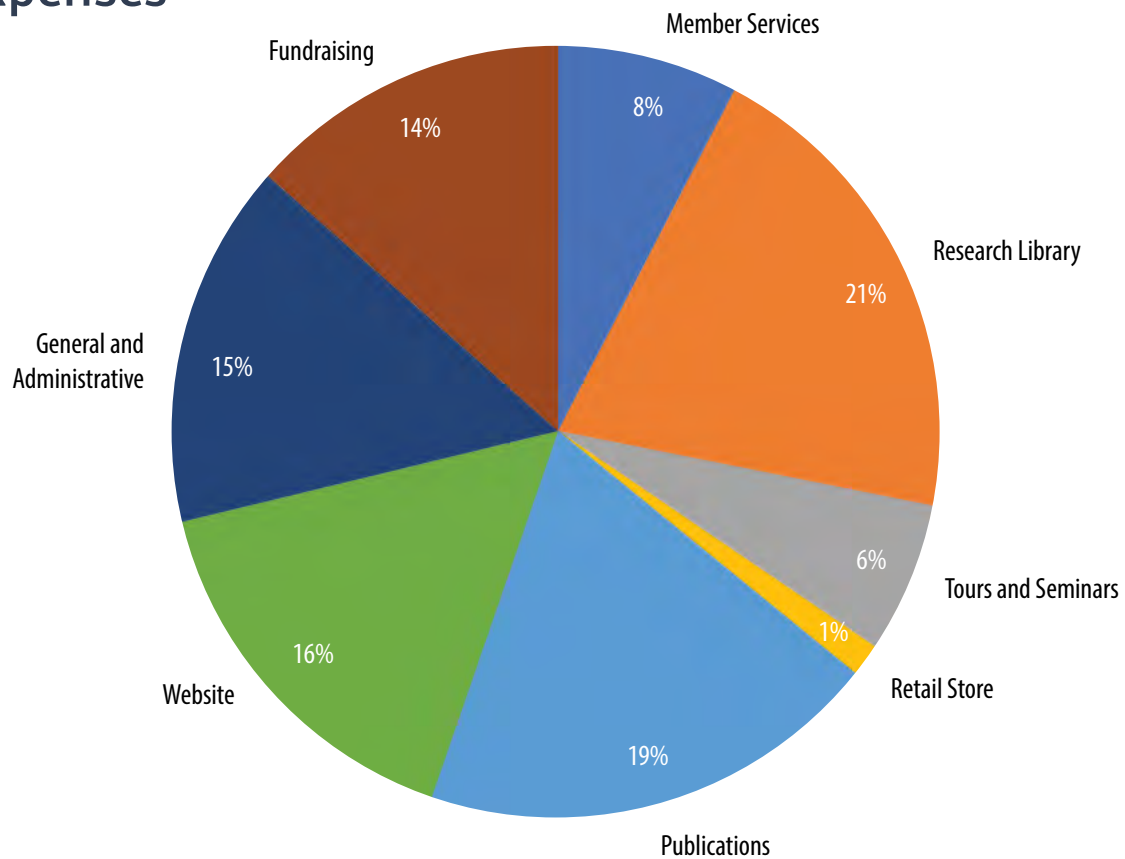
b. Includes: (1) Interest and Dividends, Realized and Unrealized Gains, net of Investment Management Fees; and (2) Appropriation of Investment Return Designated for Operations.

c. Includes: (1) Board Designated Endowment, (2) Appreciation on Endowment and (3) Permanently Restricted Endowment.

## Revenue



## Expenses



We gratefully acknowledge the following members and donors for making it possible for us to advance the study of family history in America and beyond.

## The Founders' Society

The Founders' Society recognizes the generosity of individuals who have given \$1,000,000 or more to the New England Historic Genealogical Society in their lifetimes.

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### Anonymous

**Bold** indicates new members to the Founders' Society.

\*Deceased

## The John Quincy Adams Society

This society is named in honor of John Quincy Adams, a member of the New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1845. It recognizes the generosity of individuals who have made cumulative gifts of \$500,000 to \$999,999 in their lifetimes.

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Anonymous (2)

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\*Deceased

## The Charles Ewer Society

The Charles Ewer Society is named in honor of our founding president, Charles Ewer, and recognizes the generosity of individuals who have made cumulative gifts of \$100,000 to \$499,999 in their lifetimes.

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 Dr. Kathleen A. Van Demark and  
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**Bold** indicates new members of the Charles  
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 \*Deceased

## The Daniel Webster Society

The Daniel Webster Society, named after a prominent New England statesman and senator, and early member of NEHGS, recognizes the generosity of corporations and institutions that support the New England Historic Genealogical Society with cumulative gifts of \$100,000 to \$999,999.

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## The Benjamin Franklin Society

The Benjamin Franklin Society recognizes the generosity of individuals who donated materials to our archives, including the R. Stanton Avery Collection, and made a gift of \$10,000 or more to support its long-term care. In 1856, NEHGS participated in the construction of a statue in Boston commemorating Benjamin Franklin, who recounted his family history in his famous autobiography.

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## The Henry Bond Society

The Henry Bond Society recognizes those donors who have invested in the future of NEHGS through their estate plans. It is named for Dr. Henry Bond, a preeminent genealogist known for his work on the history of Watertown, Massachusetts, and who left NEHGS its first bequest in 1859.

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**Bold** indicates new members of the Henry Bond Society.

*Italics* indicate members of the Ashburton Circle, named for the site of NEHGS's first permanent home, who have given irrevocable gifts to NEHGS.

\*Deceased

## The Legacy Society

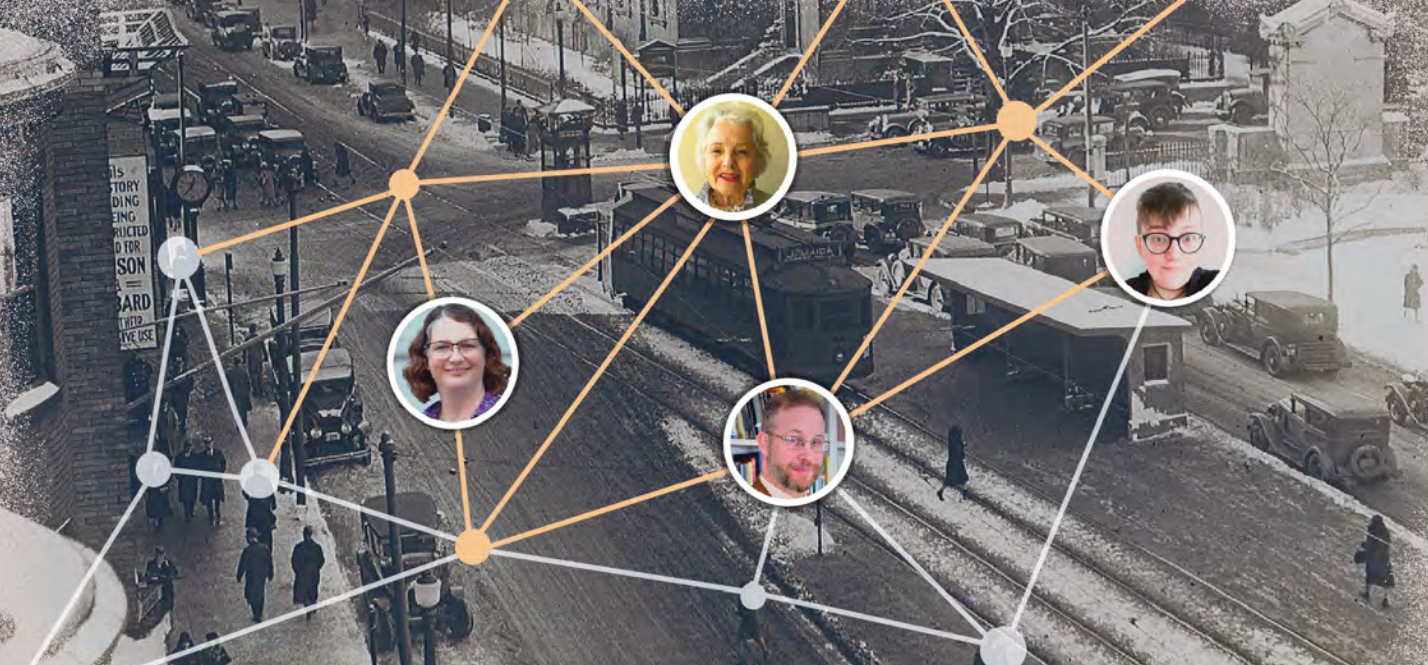
Dr. Henry Bond led the way for hundreds of estate gifts since his bequest was received in 1859. The Legacy Society memorializes the past members of the Henry Bond Society whose thoughtful estate planning has resulted in generous contributions. NEHGS continues to grow and thrive as it has since 1845 thanks in large part to those who ultimately made their final and most significant act of generosity. These investments into our future will ensure that family history is preserved, advanced, and made accessible for future generations of genealogists.

We are humbled and honored to recognize the following individuals whose estates contributed \$957,718 since September 1, 2020.

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During Fiscal Year 2021, NEHGS received 8,228 gifts totaling \$5,351,598 to support current operations.



## William Howard Taft Circle, \$25,000+

The 27th President of the United States and the 10th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, William Howard Taft was, like many other presidents before and after, a member of the New England Historic Genealogical Society. For his keen interest in genealogy, William Howard Taft is commemorated with an oak table in our Reading Room.

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*Italic indicates members who made*  
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*\*Deceased*



## Grace Goodhue Coolidge Circle, \$10,000 to \$24,999

First Lady of the United States from 1923 to 1929 and a champion of the deaf, Grace Goodhue Coolidge was elected a member of the New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1935, the first of many American First Ladies to be so honored.

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*Italic indicates members who made contributions to NEHGS's Special Projects or Family History Fund.*

\*Deceased



## William E. Gladstone Circle, \$5,000 to \$9,999

Consistently ranked as one of Britain's greatest Prime Ministers, William E. Gladstone served in the office four times, the most of any person. He was elected a member of the New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1884.

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*Italic indicates members who made contributions to NEHGS's Special Projects or Family History Fund.*

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## Henry Clay Circle, \$2,500 to \$4,999

One of the great figures of 19th-century American politics, Henry Clay was a member of the United States Senate, a three-time Speaker of the House of Representatives, Secretary of State, and a presidential candidate in 1824, 1832, and 1844. He was elected a member of the New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1847.

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Anonymous

*Italic indicates members who made  
contributions to NEHGS's Special Projects  
or Family History Fund.*

\*Deceased



## Washington Irving Circle, \$1,000 to \$2,499

The prolific American author and Minister to Spain, who is best known for *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, Irving was elected to membership in the New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1847.

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## Why I Give

My maternal grandmother was orphaned at a young age. She passed when I was too young to ask questions; as I grew older, I wanted to know more but no one had answers. That led me to a fascination with family history research. I have come to believe that understanding one's own history is as important as understanding history in general.

A member of American Ancestors/NEHGS since 2010, I started out as a basic member, fitting in genealogy when I could between balancing career and life. Since then, I became more involved with NEHGS, joining the Council in 2019, and slowly chipping away on research for my family tree. I have learned my maternal ancestors have deep roots in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania.

What has remained constant is my belief and dedication that what I am doing is for greater good. I truly believe in the mission at NEHGS to educate, inspire, and connect people through scholarship, collections, and expertise. Furthermore, I believe that by supporting this organization through philanthropic donations, I help foster a community that is accessible for everyone. I believe that at any contribution level, everyone can help make a difference.

I have recently joined the Board of Trustees and am currently helping to implement a new and exciting program which you will hear more about soon. The purpose of this new program is to broaden our accessibility to even more people, and I am thrilled to be part of the launch.



Brenda Johnson currently resides in Minnesota and Arizona. She is the Chairman of the Board of Charter Bankshares, an independently owned community bank. She was educated at Drake University and at the University of Hartford. She has been a member of NEHGS since 2010 and is currently a Patron Member. She is a member of the John Quincy Adams Society for Lifetime Giving.

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Automated gifts on established intervals to the Family History Sustainer Circle ensure a steady source of funding for our mission throughout the year.

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## Council Member Spotlight: Beverly Hector-Smith

After working for more than 50 years in a career that I never really wanted, I finally had a chance to engage in something that I always wanted to do. Research. Especially on my family history.

I periodically engaged in investigating one ancestor or another. For example, my paternal second great grandfather, Charles Henry Tyler, who fought in the Civil War in the 5th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Cavalry, was the only ancestor that my family discussed. I traced that family tree branch to him and beyond. I attended a state archivist presentation about the Regiment and found out why no one had heard of the only Black cavalry formed in the North. Reading his book, I discovered the injustices they faced in the year-and-a-half they existed, with unjustly tainted misdeeds.

By studying the times when my ancestors lived, joined by members of history groups, helped me round out their lives, place them in a proper context, and have their stories come alive. Following my paternal line led to the discovery of an African ancestor who kept his original name and served in the Revolutionary War with George Washington.

From his military record, we retrieved his birthdate, June 2, 1756. DNA results revealed that we are of Ga-Adangbe heritage, a large ethnic group in Ghana. With that information, my sister visited Ghana, and with the assistance of educators, scholars, and interested parties, she found his family.

Among our ancestors, first class citizenship and recognition were foundational. It was the reason given by our family's soldiers for serving their country honorably. They thought that by putting their lives on the line, status granted to all citizens could no longer be denied to them.

I eventually found my 8th great grandmother. She was born in Scituate, Mass., in 1668, as a member of the Mattakeeset tribe. In doing so, I discovered the source of my Native American heritage. All of these revelations were made possible by the discovery of NEHGS Chief Genealogist David Allen Lambert's research about African Americans who lived in Stoughton, Mass. With the help of David and the NEHGS staff, I found 12 Revolutionary War ancestors.

From a surprise gift of a cousin's memorabilia about our New Bedford ancestors, I found my great grandmother's third husband, Thomas Jones, who authored *43 years as a Slave*. We arranged a trip to his home in Florence, Mass., where he lived for a few years as an escaped slave. Sojourner Truth lived nearby, and on many occasions, they would travel the Southern New England Anti-Slavery circuit.

Moving from Cambridge to Natick, I wrongly assumed that my husband and I were the first family members to live there. Researching my mother's aunt's history, I found that she married a man from a well-respected family who was born and lived in Natick. As I said, the only ancestor that I knew about growing up was my Civil War ancestor. All else I discovered after retiring. So many more stories are waiting to be discovered.

Beverly Hector-Smith has been a member of American Ancestors/NEHGS since 1998 and a Councilor since 2016.



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During the year, 16,972 volunteer hours were generously donated, the equivalent of 8 full-time staff. Over 290 volunteers assisted with patron research, processed manuscripts, edited publications, repaired books, created content for education programs, and worked on database projects. The NEHGS Board of Trustees and Councilors, volunteers who normally meet at Newbury Street, maintained their governance role through regular telephone calls and videoconferences. We were fortunate that most volunteers could pivot their work to home, continuing to contribute their skills largely unaffected by the global pandemic. We are grateful to Thomas O. Carlson for helping underwrite our volunteer program.

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 Michael M. Wood  
 Richard Wood  
 Mary Alice Yost

\* Deceased

Trustees and Councilors are listed on page 22.

# Staff

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Assistant to the President

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Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press

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Eileen Curley Pironti  
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Database Projects Coordinator

Amy Joyce  
Graphic Designer

Carolyn Sheppard Oakley  
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Digitization Assistant

Hailey Philbin  
Marketing and Communications Specialist

Jean Powers  
Senior Editor

Molly Rogers  
Associate Director of Database Content

Alicia Crane Williams, FASG  
Genealogist

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Vice President for Education and Programming

Dustin Axe  
Youth Genealogy Curriculum Coordinator

Cy Britt  
Director of Heritage Tours

Tricia Labbe  
Events Manager

Courtney Reardon  
Events Manager

Margaret M. Talcott  
Director of Literary Programs and Partnerships

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Vice President and CFO

Emma Brightbill  
Accounts Receivable Associate

Michael Forbes  
Accounting Manager

Wes Matthews  
Database Manager

Matt Ottinger  
Director of Facilities  
Steven Shilcusk  
Director of Information  
Technology

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Director of Human Resources

## Member Services and Book Sales

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Manager of Member Services  
Wren Rodziewicz  
Member Services Associate  
Shannon Westlund  
Member Services Specialist  
Renise Wheaton  
Member Services Associate

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Vice President for Research  
and Library Services  
Richard J. Cellini  
Executive Director,  
10 Million Names Project  
Raymond Addison  
Researcher  
Sally Benny  
Digital Archivist  
Hallie Borstel  
Genealogist  
Kiera Breitenbach  
Researcher  
Peggy Sue Carpenter  
Researcher  
Rebecca Carpenter  
Researcher  
Danielle Cournoyer  
Senior Researcher  
Sarah Dery  
Manager of Research and Library  
Services

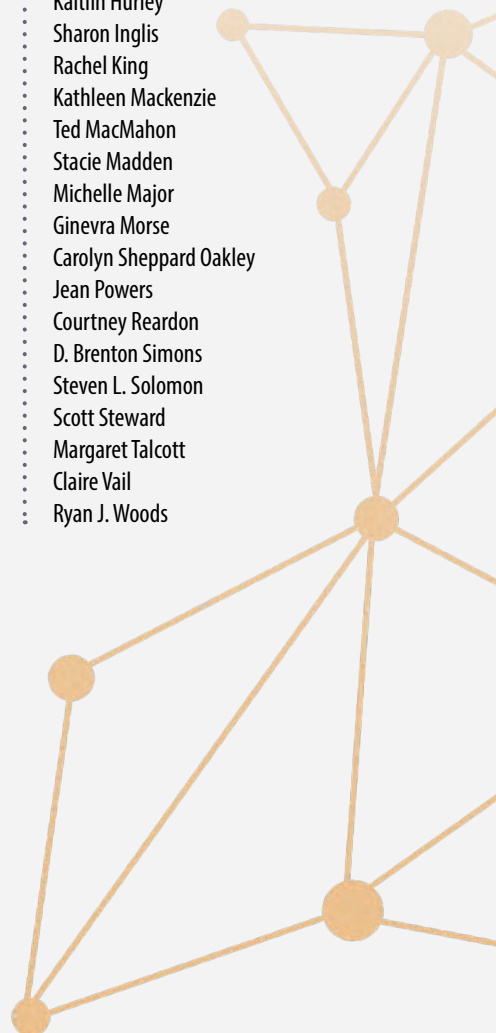
Curt DiCamillo  
Curator of Special Collections  
Sheilagh Doerfler  
Genealogist  
Katrina Fahy  
Genealogist  
Zachary Garceau  
Researcher  
Helen Herzer  
Volunteer Coordinator  
Pam Guye Holland  
Researcher  
J. Kelsey Jones  
Researcher  
David Allen Lambert  
Chief Genealogist  
Judith Lucey  
Senior Archivist  
Rhonda McClure  
Senior Genealogist  
Melanie McComb  
Genealogist  
Kimberly Mannisto  
Researcher  
Angela Napolitano  
Researcher  
Michelle Norris  
Senior Researcher  
Todd Pattison  
Conservator  
Jennifer Shakshober  
Senior Researcher  
Aidan Walsh  
Researcher

## Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center

Rachel C. King  
Executive Director  
Stephanie Call  
Associate Director of Archives  
and Education

## Contributors

Bruce Bernier  
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Cécile Engeln  
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Helen Herzer  
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Sharon Inglis  
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Ted MacMahon  
Stacie Madden  
Michelle Major  
Ginevra Morse  
Carolyn Sheppard Oakley  
Jean Powers  
Courtney Reardon  
D. Brenton Simons  
Steven L. Solomon  
Scott Steward  
Margaret Talcott  
Claire Vail  
Ryan J. Woods



## Milestone Tenures

20 years Jean Powers  
Steven Shilcusk  
15 years Helen Herzer  
Michelle Major  
Ryan J. Woods  
10 years Lindsay Fulton  
Andrew Hanson-Dvoracek  
5 years Cécile Engeln  
Danielle Cournoyer  
Sarah Dery



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