



The Searcher

Suncoast Genealogy Society Newsletter

Saturday, 18 April, 2026

at the Palm Harbor Library

1:30-4:00 pm

What's happening in April

SGS 43rd Annual Meeting

Check our website:

sgsfl.com

Email us:

info@sgsfl.com

Connect with us on

[Suncoast Genealogy Society](#)
[Facebook](#)

Suncoast Genealogy Society

c/o Palm Harbor Library

2330 Nebraska Ave.

Palm Harbor, FL 34683

Join us for our yearly gathering!
Elections of Officers for the next two years.
Bring suggestions for improvement
Awards will be given!
Prizes will be won!

Inside this issue

Field Trip.....	2
President's Message.....	3
Board of Directors.....	3
Genealogy & DNA IG.....	4
Our Genealogy Friends.....	5
SGS Officer Slate.....	6,7
2026 Upcoming Programs.....	7
SGS Minutes.....	8
Book Review.....	9
Beginner Genealogy Class	
Graduation.....	10

But also
We will be announcing two new Genealogical
programs that will advance your genealogy and
give you a lot of enjoyment!
Don't miss this presentation!



Proud Partner with



Member supported. Free and Open to the Public!
For more information about SGS visit: www.SGSFL.com



Proud Partner with **Palm Harbor**
LIBRARY.ORG

Suncoast Genealogy Society

Saturday, 23 May 2026, 10:30 am



St. Petersburg FSC, 9000 106th Ave N, Largo, FL

Since the Palm Harbor Library is not available for our May 23rd meeting, we are going on a field trip to the St. Petersburg FamilySearch Center. The Director, Jimmy White, will give us an orientation to the resources available at the FSC. There is much more than just FamilySearch!

We will meet at the FSC at 10:30 AM. After our orientation, you will have time to do your own research with the support of the FSC staff. This is a great opportunity to view those locked records that you can not see from home. More details to follow. There will also be a sign up sheet available in April.

Space is limited, sign up at the April meeting or contact Ann James, jamesamsj@aol.com, (727) 791-1983. SGS members will have preference.

President's Message



We had an interesting presentation at the March Member Meeting on New England town reports and books by Robert Cameron Weir. This was a different topic than what we are used to hearing and he gave great suggestions as to where one could look for records. Who knew that the word 'sheriff' comes from England, the reeve of the shire? And what about 'hog reeve'?

At our April Member Meeting we will elect SGS officers for the next two-year term and approve the budget for 2026-2027. The slate of candidates can be found in this issue of The Searcher. Also, nominations will be accepted from the floor.

It has been an honor and pleasure to serve as SGS President. We had excellent speakers and I think we all learned to do genealogy better with their experience. This job was made easy by the support and hard work of the other SGS officers and volunteers. They all deserve your thanks because without them, we would not have a functioning society.

I look forward to working with you all and the new officers for the next two-year term.

John Matthews

SGS Board 2024-2026

Board of Directors

President: John Matthews
Vice President: Eugene Girardi
VP/Membership: Shari Harmon
VP/Programs: Jean Van Horn
Treasurer: Joan Baptist
Secretary: Marianne Bradley
Past President: Robert Pierro
Directors: Peggy Toohey
 Ann James
 Kim Croco-Brooks

Committee Chairs & Others

Education: Ann James & Jean Van Horn
Facebook: Beth Bleich
Help Desk: Marianne Bradley
Historian: Ann James
Library Liaison: Peter Cannon
Publicity: Jenny Kidd
Newsletter: Kim Croco-Brooks
Registered Agent: Shari Harmon
Sunshine: Mary Jane Hough
Web Development: John Matthews
DNA IG: Robert Pierro & John Matthews

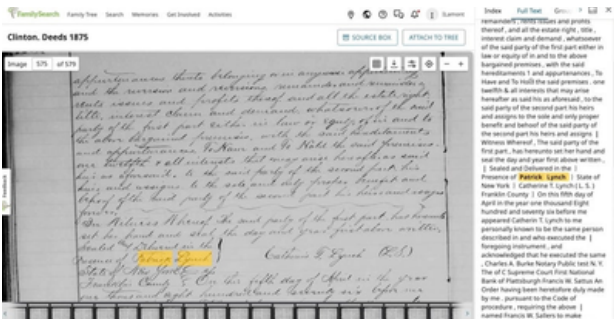
Genealogy and DNA IG



Monday, Apr 13 @
1:00-3:00 pm
PHL Conference Room
In-Person Meeting
open to everyone

Topic: Full Text Search & AI, & info on Land Records & Wills

Bring your discoveries and share.



Next Meeting: Monday, May 11

Board Meeting

All SGS Members are welcome to come to the Board meetings. They are on the first **Monday** of this month on ZOOM. The next meeting is on May 4 @ 2:30pm

Genealogy Help Desk



Tues, Wed & Thurs
1:00-4:00 pm
PHL Genealogy Section
Need help researching online, breaking down a brick wall?
Beginners and members are encouraged to stop by!

Come join us at the Help Desk!
Every 3rd Tuesday Tech with John



NEW MEMBER

- Sharon Cserep
- Vanessa Cserep
- Allan Droschak
- Jackie Droschak
- MaryAnn Housman
- Danette Kuzel
- Savilla Marshall
- Christina Mason

- sharoncserep@gmail.com
- nessacsere@gmail.com
- j.droschak@outlook.com
- j.droschak@outlook.com
- MAHousman@yahoo.com
- Dkuzel13@gmail.com
- savillamarshall@gmail.com
- christina@allhomecommunications.com

DNA Mentors Available



Are you wondering how to understand your DNA results? Do you have questions about your DNA?
Email info@sgsfl.com to connected with a Mentor.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- Bob Bryan
- John Matthews
- Linda Schneider



Our Genealogy Friends

Pinellas Genealogy Society

Saturday, Apr 18 @ 11 am- 1 pm

Zoom Only

Topic: First Steps in Hispanic Family Research

Presented by Tamara Hallo

<https://pinellsgenealogysociety.com/>

Florida Genealogical Society – Tampa

<https://fgstampa.org/>

Jewish Genealogical Society of Tampa Bay

<http://www.jgstb.org/>

Tarpon Springs Library

Genealogy Research Assistance

(727) 943-4922 ext 6010

Monday, Apr 13 @ 6:30 pm

Topic: The Bucket List:

Sorting DNA Matches

<http://tarponlibrary.org/genealogy/>

**Debbe Hagner available
on Wednesdays 1-4 pm Appt only**



East Lake Community Library

4125 E Lake Rd S, Palm Harbor, FL

Contact the library at 727-773-2665

Largo Public Library

120 Central Park Dr, Largo, FL 33771

Contact the library at 727-586-7410



Manatee Genealogical Society

First Tuesday on Zoom

<https://mgsfl.org>

SAR, Clearwater Chapter

Members meet the 3rd Wednesday of the month, Sept thru May, 11:30 am, The Regency Oaks, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 2751 Regency Oaks Blvd., Clearwater.

Will include: President Dwight McEntire will present 'Forgotten Signers of the Revolution', awards and more.

Go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/SARCclearwater/>
for more information.

DAR, Caladesi Chapter

Members meet the 3rd Monday of the month Sept thru May, 11:30 am, North Dunedin Baptist Church. Contact Debbie Smyth, dsmyth927@gmail.com for more information

Family Search Center

St Petersburg/Seminole

9000 106th Ave N

Largo, FL 33777-1147

Hours:

Tues 10 am-6 pm

Thurs 10 am-9 pm

Sat 10 am-4 pm

FL_StPetersburg@familyhistorymail.org

Services: Computers, Photo negative scanner, Photo scanner, Printer

2026-2028 SGS Officer Slate - Nominations

Also Welcome at the April Member Meeting!

President: Jean Van Horn

Jean joined the society in 2011. She has held the office of secretary, president, program chair, editor of the newsletter and was a Help Desk volunteer for many years. She worked with Ann James to create the Beginning Genealogy Course and wrote the first Policy and Procedure manual for SGS.

Vice President: Bob Pierro

Bob joined SGS in 2015 and has been on the Board since 2017. He has served as President (2022-2024), Vice President (2018-2022) and Past President (2024-2026). He has served as a DNA Interest Group Co-Chair since it was started about 2019. He is a member of SAR and Florida Pioneers. He helped develop the SGS web page and currently hosts Zoom meetings as required.

VP Programs: Ann James

Ann has been a member of SGS since 1994, and has served as Secretary, Vice President, VP Membership, VP programs, and two terms as President. She has been one of the instructors for the Beginning Genealogy Class for over 10 years. She is currently the society historian and twice headed the committee to revise our procedures and by-laws.

VP Membership: Shari Harmon

Shari has been a member of Palm Harbor Area Genealogy Society aka Suncoast Genealogy Society since 1984 and has served as vice-president in 1989, 2014-2017 and VP-Membership since 2018 to date. She has been the Registered Agent for the Society since 2014. She was also co-editor for the Searcher for a couple years in the early 1990's. She has been helping with the Genealogy Help Desk for many years.

Secretary: Marianne Bradley

Marianne has been a member of SGS since 2010, doing genealogy since 1964. She served as SGS Program Chair for six years, June 2016 - June 2022. She served as SGS Secretary from May 2024 - Present. She has been a Volunteer at our Genealogy Help Desk since 2012 and Chairman and Volunteer the past 10 years.

Continue: 2026-2028 SGS Officer Slate - Nominations

Treasurer: Joan Baptist

Joan has been a member of SGS since 2021 and has served as the society treasurer since joining, serving three consecutive two-year terms. Her professional financial experience in mortgage banking and with the FDIC/RTC make her a qualified candidate for this position. Joan has also participated in society committees, including the Bylaws and P&P committee and nominating committees, as well as being a member of our Genealogy Help Desk team for the past three years.

Director: Peggy Toohey

Peggy has been a SGS member since 2004 and has been researching on her family's history, which she is breaking down her family's brick walls.

Director: Kim Croco-Brooks

Kim has been a member of SGS since 2017. She has focused on her father's family. She has written a large book on his line. She loves to research and discover her Native American roots through her mother's line. She has been the editor of The Searcher for about 3 years and volunteers at the Genealogy Help Desk.

Director: Sue Martin

Sue is a recent member of SGS and interested in helping with her office skills.

Save the Date

2026 MEETINGS

- 18 Apr: SGS 43rd Annual Meeting-Elections & Two Fun Surprises
- 23 May: Field Trip to St. Petersburg FamilySearch Center
- 27 Jun: Tying the Knot: Locating Alternate Marriage Records
Speaker: Karen Fortin
- 25 Jul: 250th Anniversary of America's Founding
- 22 Aug: Passenger Lists
Speaker: Christine Cohen

SGS MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

GENERAL MEETING - March 28, 2026

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 1:30pm
by President John Matthews

IN ATTENDANCE: See Membership
Report

SECRETARY REPORT: Approved as
presented

TREASURER REPORT: Approved as
presented

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: 65 current
members and 8 new members from
our Beginning Genealogy Class.

PROGRAMS REPORT: Jean announced
the programs as previously, including
April meeting with bi-annually
elections.

May 23 will be our Field Trip to the
FamilySearch Center.

June 20 meeting will be Karen Fortin
and a program on "Tying the Knot" -
bring old wedding photos and more.

July 25 Membership sharing - Bring
information and histories of your
Revolutionary War Ancestors,
celebrating the 250th Anniverary of
America's founding.

August 22 is Christine Cohen and the
Passager Lists.

OLD BUSINESS: DNA interest group
for April 13, will be Full Text Search
and AI. Bring your discoveries and
share. Also info on Land Records and
Wills.

The Elections for 2026-2028 will be
held at April 18 meeting. John read
the slate of officers.

NEW BUSINESS: Joan Baptist went
over the proposed budget for 2026-
2027 and explained the variations in
it, and it will be voted on at the
April 18 meeting.

Marianne was appointed to plan the
December 2026 Christmas Party.

GOOD AND WELFARE: No report

DRAWING FOR DOOR PRIZE: Barb
Loizeaux won the Genealogy T-shirt

ADJOURNMENT: 1:55pm.

PROGRAM: by Rob Weir - Genealogy
Gold in New England Town Books
and Reports

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:
Marianne Bradley, Secretary

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE?

Do you have an idea on how to
improve our newsletter?

Do you have a story or a
breakthrough?

Is there something you would like
to share -

a genealogy tip,
a website or a an upcoming event?

Email your ideas to
Kim Croco-Brooks:

**inhislovinghands10
@yahoo.com**

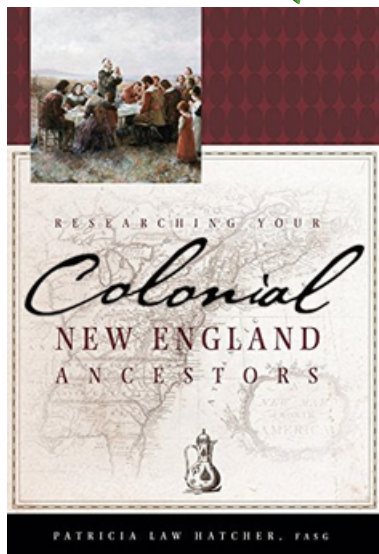


RESEARCHING YOUR COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND ANCESTORS BY PATRICIA LAW HATCHER

When the early colonists came to America, they were braving a new world, with new wonders and difficulties. Family historians beginning the search for their ancestors from this period run into a similar adventure, as research in the colonial period presents a number of exciting challenges that genealogists may not have experienced before.

This book is the key to facing those challenges. This new book, *Researching Your Colonial New England Ancestors*, leads genealogists to a time when their forebears were under the rule of the English crown, blazing their way in that uncharted territory.

Patricia Law Hatcher, FASG, provides a rich image of the world in which those ancestors lived and details the records they left behind. With this book in hand, family historians will be ready to embark on a journey of their own, into the unexplored lines of their colonial past.



Patricia Law Hatcher is a distinguished American genealogist, author, and scholar recognized for her extensive contributions to the field of family history and genealogical research. She has authored and edited numerous works that are widely used by genealogists, including *Producing a Quality Family History* (1996), *Locating Your Roots: Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records* (2003), *Researching Your Colonial New England Ancestors* (2006), and multiple volumes of *Abstract of Graves of Revolutionary Patriots*. Her publications also include *Indexing Family Histories: Simple Steps for a Quality Product* (1994) and *Barren County, Kentucky Deeds, 1798-1813* (1998).

Hatcher has been a prolific writer, producing over three hundred articles for more than a dozen genealogical publications, many focused on Pennsylvania history and genealogy. She has served as editor of the *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine* since 2001 and of the *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* since 2006 upfront.ngsgenealogy.org.

In 2000, she was elected a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists, and in 2010 she was honored as a Fellow of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania for her exemplary service to the society and scholarly achievements in genealogical editing upfront.ngsgenealogy.org. She has also been a former trustee of the Association of Professional Genealogists.

A popular lecturer and instructor, Hatcher has spoken at many national conferences and genealogical institutes, sharing her expertise in research methodology, land records, and colonial genealogy.



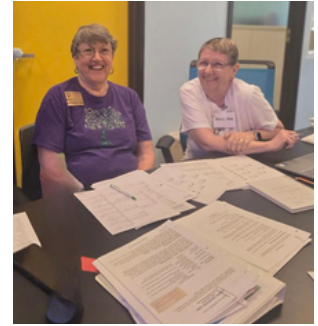
HAPPY Graduation



Joan, Vanessa, Sharon



Barrie, Lorraine, Ann



Marianne, Mary Ann



Christina, Shari, Savilla



Allan, Jackie, Jean



Seated Front Row, L to R: Ann, Jean Joan, Shari
Students, back row: Barrie, Lorraine, Vanessa,
Sharon, Danette, Christine, Mary Ann, Jackie
Allan, Savilla



2026 WINTER BEGINNER GENEALOGY CLASS

MARCH MEETING 2026

Genealogy Gold

in New England
Town Books and Reports



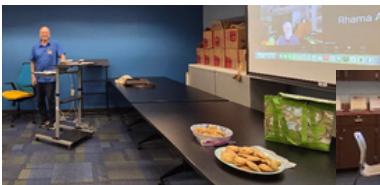
Speaker:
Robert Cameron Weir

To contact Robert Cameron Weir
www.yourigins.com/

Research Tips

- Start with the town’s name - many records are indexed by town in the State *Library’s genealogy collection.
- Check local archives - they often have original or microfilmed records not available online.
- Use online catalogs - FamilySearch, NH History Network, and local library catalogs can help locate digitized materials FamilySearch
- Look for inter-town connections - some records (like probate or land deeds) may cross town boundaries.

In short, colonial New Hampshire’s “town level” resources are the key to understanding local history, governance, and daily life. They are preserved locally and can be accessed through state, county, and municipal archives, as well as university and historical society collections.



**Barb Loizeaux
won the
Genealogy
T-shirt.**

Mary Jane Hough usually makes an appointment at the Cumberland County Archives & Family Heritage Center, Crossville TN. once a week to pick their brains and continue looking for her ancestors where she started all this madness. And she receives newsletters from them.



archives@artcirclelibrary.info

[@cumberlandcountyarchives](https://facebook.com/CumberlandCountyTNArchives)