



NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS

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10 Issues – August – June

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This month's newsletter includes our proposed updated bylaws. Our current bylaws are dated October, 1993 and our consensus was that they were outdated. They wrongly combined both bylaws with policy and procedures. Tom Wiley volunteered to review and propose changes to them. We have been going over the proposed new bylaws with a fine toothed comb and now propose them to you for your approval. They take up four pages of this newsletter. I urge you all to read them as they direct how this organization will be operated. In all cases they really don't change the way North Hills Genealogists is run, but merely codify our current operation. Under the current bylaws, the proposed new bylaws have to be published a month prior to approval by you, the members. We will vote on the changes during our November meeting. We all owe Tom Wiley a great deal of thanks for the work he has done in this endeavor. Well done, Tom.

As Pennsylvanians, we are now all eligible to receive, under US law, a free yearly online copy of our credit report from the three credit bureaus, Equifax, TransUnion and Experian. To obtain your free credit report, go to www.annualcreditreport.com. You can also obtain your credit report via phone or mail. Instructions are available on the website. You can print the online credit report for later review. I recommend you get the Equifax report first, then in four months, TransUnion, then four months later, Experian and repeat. I also recommend that you get your spouse's report, too, just in case. Mine came up clean, except I need to re-cancel my Sears credit card. Each credit bureau will try to entice you to sign up for expensive extras, like continual monitoring of your credit report. Don't bother since you can monitor it yourself every four months.

With all the recent news about the devastation by the hurricanes down south, I thought it best to think about "in case I get hit by a bus." Not that you or I plan to, but consider the folks who left their houses in New Orleans. You should have a list of vital information and account numbers along with the locations of important documents. Information like credit cards (and toll-free numbers), bank accounts, investment accounts, family social security numbers and insurance policies. The location of wills, living wills, power of attorney, deeds, insurance policies, company benefits, safe deposit box key and household inventory. While this is not a complete list, it should start you thinking about important information that needs to be kept in a secure and separate location.

Steph

WHERE GENEALOGISTS MEET

Tuesday, November 8, 2005 – 7:00 pm – NHG Board Meeting – UPMC Passavant Hospital Cafeteria.
Everyone welcome.

Tuesday, November 21, 2005 – 7:00 pm – Regular NHG Meeting – Roundtable Discussion

Saturday, December 3, 2005 - Annual NHG Christmas Social – Visit to Historic Saxonburg, PA and lunch at Hotel Saxonburg. (see pages 28 & 29)

OTHER PROGRAMS

Monday, October 24, 2005 – 7:00 pm – Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Roundtable – Lincoln and His Generals – Woody Cunningham Sieb's Pub – Babcock Meeting Room (this used to be called The Babcock and has changed to Sieb's Pub – same address)

Saturday, November 12, 2005 – 10:00 am – 12 Noon – Reception in the Relocated Pennsylvania Department and WPGS Library – Carnegie Library Oakland. – Third Floor Light refreshments will be provided courtesy of the Pennsylvania Department.

Sunday, November 13, 2005 – 1 to 4 pm – Open House at Woodville Plantation/Neville House. See www.woodvilleplantation.org.

Thursday, November 17, 2005 – 7:00 pm – Lawrenceville Historical Society – The Strip District – Lauren Uhl of the Senator John Heinz Regional History Center. Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk Avenue, Lawrenceville

Saturday, November 19, 2005 – Society of Mayflower Descendants in Pennsylvania – Sheraton Station Square – Information and reservations: bgailey@sail11620.org or 412-323-8945

2006

September 29-30, 2006 – All Pennsylvania Conference – Sheraton Station Square – sponsored by WPGS and the Genealogical Society of PA. Watch for more details.

Are you a taphophile? (see answer on Page 30)

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Wendy Bebout Elliott, CG, FGS President

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Life was different a few decades ago. But have you ever tried to explain this to your children or grandchildren? Do they understand or even appreciate the changes? Most of us joke about the old story of trudging uphill, "both ways" in two-foot snow drifts to get to school. We smile at the reluctance of an individual who experienced the Great Depression to throw away items no longer needed. Yet these scenarios represent tiny aspects of the past in which today's generation cannot relate. We take for granted changes from our not-too-distance past because we witnessed them. But do we consider differences in time and place as we perform our genealogical endeavors?

Most genealogists, whether by avocation or profession, enthusiastically and passionately conduct research to discover names, dates and places. We use this information to identify individuals and connect them with the right families. Although we realize the necessity of gathering general background information, we may forget to place these individuals and families into their own historical and geographical context.

As an instructor of budding historians and beginning genealogists, one of my goals is to teach them to understand appropriate context. This is one of the most important aspects to research. Genealogists who move beyond the novice stage know how to check reference works to find parent counties and boundary change dates. Most conduct general searches when their objective does not appear in the expected locality records. And some use a variety of primary and secondary resources for locating information about their research objectives. These approaches are commendable, and often required for success. However, one must also take that final step and place individuals and families in context in time and place to understand their actions and movements.

Historical timelines clarify circumstances and provide a framework for our research. For example, if sons and/or fathers disappear from the records during wars, research in military records is suggested. When a government opens a newly acquired territory or signs a new treaty with Native Americans, settlers already established on that frontier may file pre-emption land claims. Timelines offer an approach to problem-solving and their use can suggest sources not otherwise considered.

Timelines work best when targeted to the appropriate place of research. An historical list of dates, places and events for one territory or nation rarely reflects local situations of another. The best historical timeline focuses on the particular regions and periods of the search in progress.

Is striving for context boring? Hardly. Research for historical background often provides as much excitement as a typical genealogical pursuit. In addition, the endeavor contributes to a far better understanding of the era and places in which our ancestors lived. Often, one's exploration of history suggests actual records or more references to research. So adding context to our genealogical pursuits makes good sense – indeed, it is imperative that we do so. Just as most of us want our descendants to be aware of our backgrounds, we need to be aware of the events which affected our ancestor's lives.

So the next time you try to explain changes in your own lifetime to the younger generation, step back. Reflect upon whether or not you have used context when looking back further in time to the generations that you research.

Bylaws of the North Hills Genealogists

Article I. Name

1.1 The name of this organization is the North Hills Genealogists.

Article II. Purposes

2.1 The purposes of this organization are:

- a. To provide instruction and education for its members and the general public in accepted methods of genealogy,
- b. To develop family researchers through the encouragement of beginners,
- c. To promote the preservation of genealogical records and resources of the North Hills of Pittsburgh, PA, and,
- d. To support the genealogical interests of the Northland Public Library.

Article III. Membership

3.1 Any person interested in genealogy and the purposes of this organization may become a member.

3.2 Membership is for the program year as established by the board of directors.

3.3 Annual dues shall be set by the Board of Directors prior to the beginning of the program year.

Article IV. Officers

4.1 Elected Officers

- a. The elected officers shall be president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer and shall be members of the organization.
- b. The term of office is for the program year following their election.
- c. The officers shall be elected in the manner and according to the schedule published in the Policies and Procedures of the North Hills Genealogists.
- d. A vacancy in an elected office may be filled by appointment by the Board of Directors and shall be effective until the next annual election.

4.2 All elected officers and committees shall turn over all records pertaining to their duties to the Board of Directors upon completion of their tenure.

4.3 Any officer may be removed from office for just cause at any regular meeting of the Board of Directors, provided that charges shall have been preferred against such officer at a previous regular meeting of the board and a copy of such charges have been sent by mail to said officer.

4.4 Nominations and Elections

- a. The Board of Directors shall appoint a Nominating Committee whose purpose shall be to obtain nominations of members to stand for election to the elected offices.
- b. The elections shall be held and conducted in the manner indicated in the Policies and Procedures of the North Hills Genealogists.
- c. For the purpose of electing officers, a quorum shall consist of those members casting a ballot.
- d. The nominated member that receives the largest number of ballots cast for each office shall be declared elected to that office.

Article V. Duties of Elected Officers

5.1 President shall:

- a. Preside at all general monthly meetings of the membership and at any duly called special meeting of the membership.
- b. Preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors.
- c. Appoint, with approval of the Board of Directors, the Chair and members of all Standing and special committees and, with the directors, define the duties of any special committees.
- d. Be available to sign checks written on the NHG bank account.
- e. Be available to other organizations to assist with projects and activities.
- f. Answer letters written to the Society that need a response but do not fall into a particular officer's or committee's area.
- g. Perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may direct.

5.2 Vice-President shall:

- a. In the absence, or unavailability, of the President, perform the duties of

the office of the President.

- b. Be available to sign checks written on the NHG bank account.
- c. In the absence of the President and the Vice-President, the office of the President shall be performed by a President pro tempore appointed by the Board of Directors.
- d. Represent the Society to other groups and individuals and report their news to the Board.
- e. Perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may direct.

5.3 Secretary shall:

- a. Prepare the minutes of each board meeting, distribute them to the board members prior to the next board meeting, and maintain a file of all board meeting minutes.
- b. Have available at each board meeting a copy of the current bylaws and Policies and Procedures. These copies are to contain the date of adoption and date of latest amendment. Also, have available the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.
- c. Be available to sign checks written on the NHG bank account.
- d. Retain for safe keeping any of the organization's papers, documents, correspondence, etc. as may be entrusted to the secretary, including a dated record of all proposed and approved changes to the bylaws and Policies and Procedures.
- e. Perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may direct.
- f. In the absence of the Secretary, a Secretary pro tempore may be appointed by the President to discharge the duties of the Secretary.

5.4 Treasurer shall:

- a. Under the direction of the Board of Directors, have general charge of the funds of the organization and maintain an accurate and detailed accounting of the receipts and disbursements of all funds.
- b. Maintain a checking account in the name of the North Hills Genealogists at a financial institution approved by the Board of Directors.
- c. Disburse funds.
- d. Distribute a financial report at each board meeting in a manner and form as requested by the board.
- e. Make financial records available to the Audit Committee as requested.

Article VI. Meetings

- 6.1 The membership shall meet at a time and place determined by the Board of Directors.
- 6.2 Meetings of the membership are free and open to the public.
- 6.3 For the purpose of transacting official business at any membership meeting, a quorum shall consist of those members present.
- 6.4 A majority of members voting on a motion is required for approval.
- 6.5 Special meetings of the membership may be called by three or more members of the Board of Directors upon notice being given to the membership at least two weeks prior to the special meeting and, where possible, by prior notice in the newsletter. Such notice must specify the business to be discussed and voted upon.

Article VII. Board of Directors

- 7.1 The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers, all committee chairs, and the past president.
- 7.2 Under the direction of the president, the board shall meet regularly to manage the affairs of the organization. For the conduct of business, a quorum shall consist of a presiding officer and five members.
- 7.3 The board shall oversee and give guidance to the organization's general program and financial affairs through receiving and responding to reports by the officers and committee chairs. This shall include the receiving and disbursing of funds, reviewing and modifying the membership dues structure, establishing and monitoring needed budgets and long range plans. This shall also include the establishment of needed committees.
- 7.4 The Board of Directors, by majority vote, may establish, monitor and amend Policies and Procedures to be used for the general guidance of the daily operation of the organization.
- 7.5 Board meetings are open to all members and to non-members by invitation.

Article VIII. Committees

SECTION 1. Standing Committees. The Standing Committees of the Society shall be: Audit, Cemetery, Donation, Membership, Newsletter, Nominating, Program, Publications, Publicity and Public Relations, and Website Manager.

SECTION 2. Term of Office. Standing Committee Chairs shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

SECTION 3. Duties:

8.1 Audit Committee, with the cooperation of the Treasurer, shall:

- a. Perform an annual audit of the organization's financial affairs and whenever there is a change in the office of the Treasurer or at such other times as the board shall request.

8.2 Cemetery Committee shall:

- a. Supervise the reading and recording of information on tombstones in cemeteries approved by the Board.
- b. Prepare information and associated material for publication and arrange for printing.
- c. Be responsible for marketing, distributing, and accounting for inventory of cemetery publications.
- d. Bring public awareness to the plight of abandoned cemeteries.
- e. Work with outside volunteer groups, such as the Boy Scouts, in the preservation and cleanup of local cemeteries.

8.3 Donation Committee shall:

- a. Consult with the Northland Public Library genealogical librarian for the Library's needs.
- b. Keep a list of requested materials from the Society membership.
- c. Make recommendations to the board for the purpose of purchasing materials or making cash donations to the Northland Public Library.
- d. Make recommendations to the board relative to memorial donations.

8.4 Membership committee shall:

- a. Maintain a list of members and provide address labels for mailings.
- b. Include libraries and genealogy groups that exchange newsletters.
- c. Give a status report to the Board of the number of members.
- d. Prepare renewal notices to be sent to members in a timely manner.

8.5 Newsletter committee shall:

- a. Produce a newsletter periodically which includes Society news, genealogical tips, instructional articles and announcements concerning genealogy.
- b. Print queries from members and non-members.
- c. Solicit articles of interest and accumulate materials to be considered for publication.
- d. Keep past copies of the newsletter.
- e. Distribute the newsletter.

8.6 Nominating committee shall:

- a. Consist of three members.
- b. Nominate candidates for offices to be filled at the Annual Meeting. Candidates for offices must be members in the Society.
- c. Report the list of candidates to the Board of Directors by April and report at the regular meeting in May. Additional nominations from the floor shall be permitted provided the candidate agrees and meets the membership requirement.
- d. Provide a biography of each candidate to be published in the May newsletter and a ballot to be placed in the June newsletter.

8.7 Program committee shall:

- a. Arrange for programs of genealogical educational interest to be presented at the regular meetings.
- b. Arrange for the annual December Social.
- c. Arrange for field trips.
- d. Interact with Northland Library regarding our usage of their building, advertising our meetings, and being available for Library functions.

8.8 Publicity and Public Relations shall:

- a. Be responsible for publicity on behalf of the Society, including announcements of events.
- b. Inform interested parties of upcoming meetings by maintaining an email list for distribution of society news.
- c. Maintain a public email address and cause inquiries to be answered.

8.9 Website Manager shall:

- a. Create and maintain the official website of the Society.
- b. Serve as consultant to the Board of Directors for the purchase or operation of Society computer hardware or software or for any electronically-created databases.

SECTION 4. Special Committees. Special Committees of the Society shall be appointed at the request of the Board of Directors.

Article IX. Dissolution and Distribution of Assets

- 9.1 If the Board of Directors determines by majority vote that the North Hills Genealogists is unable to continue with its purposes as described in Article II, it shall call a special membership meeting at which to consider dissolution.
- 9.2 In the absence of the elected officers any five current members may call a special meeting for the sole purpose of dissolving the society.
- 9.3 If, after two attempts within six months of the board's determination, a special membership meeting has not been held, a majority vote by the Board of Directors shall be sufficient action to dissolve the organization.
- 9.4 Upon dissolution of the North Hills Genealogists, the assets will be offered first to the Northland Public Library then to any other library or any other organization that has an interest in genealogy.

Article X. Parliamentary Authority

- 10.1 The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, shall govern this organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order or procedure that this organization may adapt.

Article XI. Amendment of Bylaws

- 11.1 These bylaws can be amended at any membership meeting of the organization by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that the amendment(s) have been submitted in writing at the two previous membership meetings, or that they have been published in the newsletter prior to the meeting where they are to be considered. Unless otherwise provided, the amendment(s) shall become effective upon adjournment of the meeting at which they are adopted.

Adopted ____ date ____ . Amended ____ date ____ .

**NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS
CHRISTMAS SOCIAL
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2005 – 10:00 AM
CHRISTMAS IN SAXONBURG**

\$16.00 per person

HISTORIC SAXONBURG

German immigrant, engineer and surveyor John Augustus Roebling and a small group traveled 15 weeks to reach the Saxonburg area where he then purchased 1600 acres and laid out on about 400 of these acres the future village of Saxonburg in the year 1832. He worked for the Pennsylvania Canal Company designing and building bridges and aqueducts. He was responsible for inventing and patenting the wire rope cable which he successfully used in numerous suspension bridges. His development and manufacturing of wire rope in Saxonburg climaxed with his design of the now famous Brooklyn Bridge which as built by his son, Colonel Washington Roebling.

The park in Saxonburg sits on the site of the inventor's 1840 workshop which is now the home of the Saxonburg Museum. On Main Street alone, portions of which are listed on the National Registry of Historic Places, there are 32 buildings over 100 years old and ten of those have been around for more than 150 years.

After lunch you can check out parts of Main Street and visit antique stores.

Tour the Saxonburg Museum (Rebecca Street) at 10:00 am
(there is plenty of parking)

12:30 Lunch at the Hotel Saxonburg

Lunch Choices

Cod Fish Sandwich – Icelandic cod filet broiled, breaded or beer battered and deep fried.
Served on a Toasted Roll

Chicken Club Sandwich – Grilled breast of chicken & crisp bacon on quartered toast with
lettuce and tomato

Certified Angus Beef Burger – Bacon Cheesburger – 6 oz. of beef cooked to order and
served on a toasted Kaiser roll with lettuce & tomato

Soft drink, tea or coffee
Ice Cream

Complete reservation form on page 29. Deadline is November 21, 2005

**RESERVATION FORM
NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS
CHRISTMAS SOCIAL
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2005**

NAME: _____

NAME: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

LUNCHEON SELECTION:

_____ **Cod Fish Sandwich** _____ **Chicken Club Sandwich**

_____ **Certified Angus Beef Burger**

_____ **Soft Drink** _____ **Tea** _____ **Coffee**

**Send your check in the amount of \$16.00 per person to North Hills Genealogists, P. O. Box 304,
Ingomar, PA 15127**

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS NOVEMBER 21, 2005

**NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS
P. O. Box 304
Ingomar, PA 15127**

FIRST CLASS MAIL

DATED MATERIAL

NOVEMBER 21, 2005 – 7:00 PM
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION Bring your questions and answers to our annual
roundtable discussion. Get help from other members of NHG and help them with
their research problems.
Approval of revised Bylaws

North Hills Genealogists is a group of people who share an interest in genealogy and meet to share their knowledge. NHG does NOT maintain a library and does NOT do research for others. An individual member may choose to handle research requests, but NHG will not be responsible for the quality of the work performed or any fees charged.

Next month is the last issue of the newsletter for 2005. If you have an article on your research activities, please submit them by the first of November. There will be NO newsletter in December, nor will there be a regular monthly meeting. We hope to see you at our annual Christmas Social on December 3, 2005.

Taphophile – lover of tombstones, cemeteries and funerals.

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