



Society News

THE PILGRIM WILLIAM WHITE SOCIETY

AN ENDORSED FAMILY SOCIETY
OF THE GENERAL SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS

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Message from the Governor

Dear Cousins,

As we continue to be impacted by the restrictions of covid-19 and the turmoil in our communities, we can still commemorate our forebears and their sacrifices to bring forth on this continent a new vision of a just society. Each Fourth of July my congregation sings *America the Beautiful*. At this time in our Nation's history, our Pilgrim forebears would agree with the line "America, America, God mend thine every flaw, confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law." The Mayflower Compact sought to establish a process to effect laws. It was signed by all the adult males: servant or master, merchant-adventurer or Separatist. They realized that they were outlining a process and not preparing a finished product. That act should move us to greater awareness and concern for our communities. that we are always in process.

I am so glad that we will still meet in September even though virtually. Will it be perfect? Is it what I had envisioned three years ago? No. It is not the dream for our triennial homecoming, but technology will



Governor Alan Smith

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allow us to meet. We may actually have more cousins present. The platform being used restricts us to 100 members. We will be able to conduct all of our business, to install the new officers, and to have an incredible program. We have been working for several months to find a way to license a video visit with Grandmother Susanna. The agreement is now signed on both sides. While we can record the **September 16th meeting**, the license requires us to remove Susanna's presentation. So, you truly do not want to miss it. There will be a registration and ensuing invitation to the meeting. We need only one registration per family. We will have door prizes although the prizes will come by mail. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the scavenger hunt.

Be on the lookout for the registration in August and don't procrastinate.

Alan

Cousins, I have collected several postcards that depict places associated with William and Susanna White will share here and in future newsletters. *Alan*



PILGRIM YEAR LEIDEN 400

by Cousin Ann Wilkerson

It's finally 2020, and the celebrations we were anticipating have been postponed, cancelled, or reimagined due to the Covid-19 pandemic. One such celebration which was reimagined to great success was the online opening of *Pilgrim Year Leiden 400*. On Saturday, May 16, I joined 30,000 others and remained glued for four hours to my iPhone and the video feed from a sunny Leiden. Experts there shared history, culture, gardens, and more on a city walk and I didn't have to worry about crowds of tourists, admission fees, or sore feet.

Leiden was a thriving university city in 1609 when it became the home to a congregation of English separatists known as the Pilgrims. In Leiden, the Pilgrims were able to live, work, and worship free from persecution. Historians are not sure whether our William and Susanna White met and married there or in Amsterdam. William Bradford's passenger list includes "Mr. William White" in the section of London merchants and not in the part of the list for the Leiden congregation. Even if William, Susanna, and Resolved did not live in Leiden, it was the home for many of their fellow Mayflower passengers for up to 11 years.

The virtual Leiden tour featured stops and commentary at these locations:

- National Museum of World Cultures, Exhibition called *First Americans: Honoring indigenous resilience and creativity*. Exhibits include artifacts and works by contemporary artists to tell the stories of indigenous North America.



- Museum of Lakenhal, Exhibition called *Pilgrims to America*. This building was used as the office for controlling and governing textile manufacturing, the main industry of Leiden. The current exhibition begins with King James insisting "I will make them conform themselves..." The Pilgrim story is told through paintings, artifacts, and even Delft tiles to show the sites and people the Pilgrims would have known before, during, and after the voyage of the *Mayflower*.



Museum De Lakenhal
Van de houthandelsfamilie Vermeulen

- Rijksmuseum Boerhaave (which was literally mentioned in passing as its

exhibition on pandemics was cancelled due to the pandemic)

- Onze Lieve Vrouekerk, the church, now an archaeological site, which was used by the Walloon community. At least one Walloon,



my ancestor Hester Mahieu, was married to a *Mayflower* passenger, Francis Cooke. Other Walloons sailed after the Pilgrims and founded Nieuw Amsterdam in 1624.

- The confluence of the New Rhine



and the Old Rhine Rivers in the real city centre of Leiden. The city actually is on an island between the

two rivers.

- Leiden American Pilgrim Museum, located in a 17th century house. While no Pilgrim actually lived here, it is the only example of what an interior of a house would have looked like. There is an important collection of books that would have appeared in Pilgrim libraries, including a Geneva Bible from 1602.

- Leiden City Hall which dates to 1595, so the building we see today is what the Pilgrims would have



known. The guides gave an interesting explanation of civil marriage which was invented here

due to the religious split with the Catholic Church. This concept of civil marriage would be brought with the Pilgrims to the New World. William Bradford and Dorothy May were married here. (Dorothy by the way is a cousin to us White descendants; She is the daughter of William White's half-brother.)

- William Brewster Alley, aka "Smelly Alley." Brewster's house was located in this row of small and crowded buildings.
- Pieterskerk, the 899-year-old former cathedral is the cultural heart of

Leiden and a National Monument. In 1574 crowds gathered here in a Thanksgiving celebration for having



survived the siege with Spain. Each year on October 3rd, this Leiden Thanksgiving tradition continues, and the Pilgrims would have known this. (In the U.S., both George Washington and Abraham Lincoln issued proclamations of Thanksgiving, Washington's on October 3, 1789, and Lincoln's on October 3, 1863. October 3rd will now be etched in my mind as a lead-up to and inspiration for our November version of offering thanks.)

- Green Gate, aka Pilgrim's Gate or English Gate is the central courtyard where Pilgrims lived in 21 small houses.
- University of Leiden which was a gift to the city by William of Orange after the Spanish siege.

- Botanical and Medicinal Garden



which dates to 1590 and was recreated in 2009 according to old maps and the plant list. Strolling through this garden now would be the exact experience of the Pilgrims in the 17th century.



- Heritage Leiden, the archives of Leiden built into the former city walls. Here you can see the actual documents of our Pilgrims' marriages, deaths, and court appearances, and even use your camera for a photo of these important records of their lives. Just outside is the place where the Pilgrims left for Delfshaven and the waiting *Speedwell*. The spot is marked with a plaque of names of Pilgrims who left for America from 1620 to 1647, so not just those who left on the *Mayflower*. There is also a small sculpture which symbolizes the uncertain step of the Pilgrim travelers to the New World.

The virtual tour then concluded with a specially commissioned art performance of dance, film, and

music in Pieterskerk. It was lovely and haunting and peaceful to watch after a tour of so many historic sites.

There is much I didn't include here, such as the windmill, prison, markets, firehouse, and interesting ties to Abigail and John Adams, John Quincy Adams and the incomparable Rembrandt. I encourage you to go to the website www.leiden400.nl and follow the link to Youtube. Each of the above landmarks is also described by text. Other sources I used for this article are *Mayflower* by Nathaniel Philbrick, *In Search of Mayflower* *Pilgrim Susanna White-Winslow* by Sue Allan, and Wikipedia.

My takeaway from this detailed visit to Leiden is that the Dutch are as proud of their part of the Pilgrim story as we are with ours. The guides mentioned that two thirds of the English separatists living in Leiden did not leave. They were assimilated into the community and their descendants live there still. If William and Susanna had not made the decision to immigrate, would you be in Leiden now?

Photos by [Erik Zachte](#)

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES

Article V: Committees

Section 10. Financial Review Committee. The Financial Review Committee shall "review" instead of "audit" the Treasurer's

books and accounts at the close of each fiscal year – the fiscal year being January 1-December 31 – and provide a report to the Board and to the Society's newsletter editor for publication in the Society's newsletter. Change the "audit" to "review."

Reason: We use a committee of TPWWS members instead of a CPA to examine the books.

Section 11. Lineage Research Committee. The purpose of the Lineage Research Committee is to provide help to anyone in the community trying to prove genealogical eligibility to Pilgrim William White and his family. Delete the rest: to expand research collaboration with the genealogical community in regard to DNA and other innovative approaches; to facilitate research into the origins of William and Susanna White.

Reason: DNA and authoritative research should be left to professionals.

Article X: Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the Society, its net assets remaining after payment of all its debts and obligations shall be gifted to The General Society of Mayflower Descendants, Plymouth, MA, to support research and publication of authoritative biographical, genealogical and historical information relating to Pilgrims William and Susanna White, their sons Resolved and Peregrine, and all their descendants. Instead of: ...shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government or to a state or local government for a public purpose, all as determined by the Board.

Reason: It is better to name someone of our choosing.

Standing Rules

5. A person joining the Society during the last quarter of the year (October, November, or December) will pay current year dues, but will not pay dues for the upcoming year.
Change from: A person joining the Society after November 1 will not pay dues for the upcoming year.

Reason: It seems greedy and is embarrassing to welcome a new member then turn around and ask them for more dues.

We will vote on these changes at our business meeting and virtual dinner via Zoom in September.

Report of Nominating Committee

The 2020 Nominating Committee is furnishing the proposed slate of officers to be voted on at the Triennial Meeting:

GOVERNOR – PATRICK WHITE

DEPUTY GOVERNOR – SUZANNE RESS

RECORDING SECRETARY – ANN WILKERSON

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY – KENNETH WHITTEMORE, JR.

TREASURER – DAVID GRINNELL

HISTORIAN – BARBARA WILLIAMS

CAPTAIN – CHARLES PROVOST

ELDER – D. ALAN SMITH

The Pilgrim William White Society 2020 Nominating Committee
 Prarie Counce, Chairperson
 Patricia Nichols
 Kenneth Whittemore, Jr.

Letter from the Governor General

What follows is a letter Governor General George P. Garmany, Jr. MD sent to the GSMD Board of Assistants and Governors. Printed here to keep you in the loop.

Announcements to all General Board members:

At the June 20 online GBOA meeting we offered to schedule informational sessions about the proposed amendments to our Bylaws, especially regarding the issues of Life Membership programs that many of the Societies have established. Here are the dates for two sessions, and I invite you to save the dates:

Sat, July 18 (4pm Eastern time) -- GG George Garmany and HG "Midge" Hurtuk will discuss proposed amendments #1 and #2, concerning applications and fees for those applications.

Sat. Aug 1 (also 4pm, Eastern time)-- GG George Garmany, TG Liz

Gaudreau and MAL (and former TG) Don Studley will discuss ways to manage Life Membership programs with the higher annual assessments proposed by GSMD.

It will be our intention to answer questions as part of those sessions as long as we stay within our bandwidth. Everyone who was invited to the GBOA meeting will receive an invitation to participate in both of these Zoom sessions.

We have also received questions about GSMD's financial situation from several Member Societies. Rather than just reply to those who asked, I'd like to take the opportunity to bring everyone up to date. Unfortunately, there has been a misunderstanding in the figures that have circulated, and I'll do my best to clarify the information that you have.

First, and most important, GSMD is not bankrupt, and not in any short-term risk of going bankrupt. GSMD owns all of our buildings in Plymouth and they are debt-free. The mortgage on the Mayflower Society House was paid off in the 1940's, and we have not placed any additional loans on the property.

The \$400,000 per year loss that is going around is incorrect, and I want you to know how that number came to be circulated. For starters, please know that GSMD is a complex business, with several different streams of revenue and expenses.

In December 2017 the Executive Committee identified a terrible

shortfall in our applications process. A comprehensive review of the Genealogy Department performed by Executive Director Belekewicz (who was hired in September, 2017) showed that the cost averaged \$150 per application, even though we were charging only \$75. The Department found and implemented efficiencies to reduce the costs by 16.7% to \$125 per application, and expenses were reduced immediately. Since January 2018 we have suffered a shortfall of over \$327,000 on our applications, but without those efficiencies we would have lost over \$490,000.

During our Board meeting on June 20, those two numbers were interpolated as a "\$400,000 loss," but only the lower number was the true shortfall. Furthermore, that occurred during an interval of 2 1/3 years. Annualized, this would be around \$140,000 per year, which is certainly a significant amount, but far less than what has been circulated.

Because we have multiple revenue streams, we have been able to make up that shortfall, primarily from our membership dues. This keeps us solvent, but it reduces the services that GSMD can provide to Member Societies and individual Members. Most importantly, it prevents us from doing the things that we need to do to keep up with industry standards, such as modernizing our software, hardware, and information technology needs.

While it is true that our House and properties are paid off, they are

by no means inexpensive to maintain. We desperately need an employee to manage the physical facilities, but with our current budget and resources, we simply cannot afford to employ such a person. Fortunately, there are endowments to cover our routine property maintenance, but it would be irresponsible for us to overspend those endowments that are intended for permanent care of the facility.

You may wonder why we didn't just adjust what we charge for our services. This answer requires you to understand the governance of GSMD. Our Bylaws put incredible limits on what we are allowed to do. Article XII specifies the assessments and spells out exactly how they are assessed. Since they are in the Bylaws, they can only be adjusted by actions of Congress, which happens only every three years. What business do you know that allows for an increase in charges only every three years and then only by a 2/3 vote of those who attend a meeting? In any "normal business" the fees for Lineage Assessment would have been adjusted upwards as soon as the shortfall was identified.

GSMD's budget is reviewed by several bodies. The Treasurer General and the Finance Committee prepare the original draft, including input from our talented staff members. The Executive Committee makes adjustments before the budget becomes effective. This means that over fifteen people see it before it is

presented to either the General Board or the Congress for their approval. Members of the GBOA are responsible for distributing this information to the officers and members of their own Member Societies. During the fiscal year, the Executive Committee reviews the performance monthly, and the Finance Committee sees it approximately once a quarter. At the end of the year, the final figures are audited and presented to the General Board, also for distribution to the Member Societies.

It has been asked why the membership has not heard about the "\$400,000 loss" before now. That happened because it was a misinterpretation that was mentioned for the first time on June 20, 2020. Nonetheless, you can see that we have been losing money, and it is vitally important that we correct the shortfall. These concerns have been expressed to the General Board of Assistants at the last two annual meetings. We simply must increase our fees so that we do not have to touch endowments and donations that are intended for specific purposes. Moreover, we need to improve our governance structure so that we can operate more like other 21st century businesses. If you review the proposed Bylaws changes, you will see that they are all intended to accomplish those goals, and I hope that you will support them.

Again, I appreciate your questions. A cardinal value of GSMD governance is to maintain

transparency with our members. I hope that these answers will help you to understand what we have been doing and how we propose to improve performance in the future.

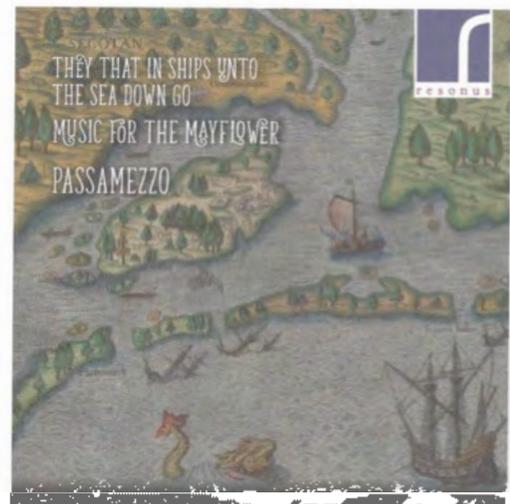
Thanks for your dedication to the Society.

George P. Garmany, Jr. MD
Governor General, GSMD

JANE E. GROVES RIDDELL HURT
Secretary General
Chairman, 2020 Meetings & Events
Committee

LASTING MEMORIALS

Below is the cover of the CD that *The Pilgrim William White Society* helped produce. This CD was one of our signature projects to commemorate 2020. The new plaque at Scrooby Manor and this CD are lasting memorials to Susanna, William, Resolved and Peregrine. We can and should celebrate our wonderful achievements. The CD *They That in Ships Down Go* is available on iTunes.



Wesley Alger, managed the Lansing, MI plant for Durant Motors.

Stay healthy. Cousin Wes Blackwell

Hello Cousin Mike,

Thank you, Mike for all the Vassall information!!! A fascinating read!

Cousin Lin

Hello Cousin Mike,

Excellent newsletter, as usual. I especially enjoyed the article by our Governor, giving Susanna White some of the credit for our existence. We couldn't have done it without her. Her husband became Governor of the colony and she raised a son who also became Governor of the colony and she raised her family while her husband was mostly in England or places in between. She deserves a lot more credit than she gets, for her accomplishments. So, shall we rename ourselves -- *The Pilgrims William and Susanna White Society?*

Your troublemaker cousin Everett from Maine

Dear Mike,

There is something very important that needs to be addressed. The Mayflower Society is at a crossroads. Ten years ago, the Society decided that it needed a manager and passed a resolution at an annual meeting. However, there was never a business plan put in place to look ahead at this change. The annual dues remained the same although the cost of running the business of the Mayflower Society increased. We are now at a crossroads of keeping our beloved Mayflower Organization, or having it taken over by the new England Historical Society who made their changes to add a business plan; i.e., increased their prices, etc. We need to take the same path.



Letters to the Editor

Hello Cousin Mike,

Had you read further into the appendix of Gary's book you would have noticed on pages 745 and 746 that two of Susanna's descendants, John Andrew Herdeg and myself, Robert Frederick Hendrickson, are active in the management of the NEHGS.

Cousin Bob

Hello Mike!

Terrific newsletter! Thanks for keeping up the fantastic content.

Cousin Robert Stevens

President,
Somerset Capital

Hi Cousin Michael,

I noticed the unexpurgated version of John Vassall may still be available. Could you advise me as to how I may get a copy?

Also, in for whatever it is worth column, William Crapo Durant is my great uncle, my grandfather, Hale

I would like your opinion on this important and dire problem.

thanks. Beverly Spooner

Former Colorado Governor

Hi Cousin Michael,

Thank you very much! This event [Leiden 400 livestream] is scheduled for the date of our cancelled Illinois Society luncheon, so I now have something fun to do!

Best, Ann

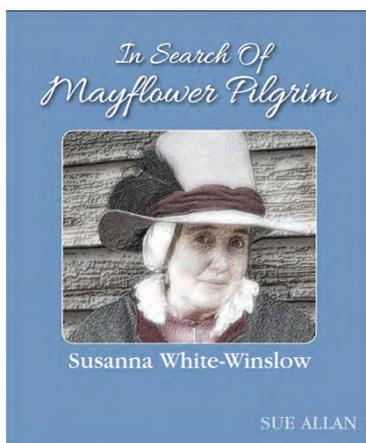
Hi Mike,

Don't know if this is anything, but I think one of the other genealogy sites had something about Mayflower people moving to the Beekman Patent area of Dutchess County, New York. Maybe more info about that. I had relatives in that area and know nothing about it.

My ancestors were, William & Susannah White and Peregrin.

Cousin Linda Smith

Your letter here – in the September newsletter!



www.mayflowermaid.com

ZOOM MEETING

ALL HANDS ON DECK!

SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

OFFICER ELECTION

DOOR PRIZES

SPECIAL APPEARANCE BY

OUR GRANDMOTHER

SUSANNA JACKSON WHITE

LOOK FOR YOUR INVITATION VIA

EMAIL

IN AUGUST