

**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS  
MINUTES OF THE 30th SPRING MEETING AND COMPACT LUNCHEON  
1 MAY 2010 AT THE TORONTO CRICKET, CURLING AND SKATING CLUB**

Governor Joyce Cutler welcomed both guests and members to the Thirtieth Spring Meeting and Compact Luncheon. She introduced our Guest Speaker, Judy Swan of San Diego, Governor General of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants. Judy is a member of our Society. Joyce then greeted George and Elaine Nye of Red Deer, Alberta who, as we were to learn later, had come to our luncheon all the way from Croatia.

Next Joyce asked each member to stand, introduce themselves and state the name of their ancestor.

MINUTES. The minutes of November 14 2009 were approved with the following amendment. It should read 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Compact Luncheon instead of 28<sup>th</sup>.

THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT. The Captain (Dale Lahey) could not come to this meeting. Marion Tait read the Mayflower Compact.

ANCESTORS' ROLL CALL Read by Debbie Clarke.

This year we have representatives from 21 Mayflower families with us. The descendants of John Billington were in first place with seven present. William Brewster's family followed as a close second with six members present. .

NECROLOGY. Myrna Geldart. There have been five deaths in our Society: Anna Rogers, Mary Reed, (d. 2009-03-24), Jeffrey Lang, (d. 2009-09-09) and Kate Berscht (d. 2010-10-22.) Kate served as both Historian from 1986-1989 and Captain from 1989-1992 on the Board of Assistants of our Society. Bill Brown former Regent of the BC Colony also died 2010-03-15

GOVERNOR'S REPORT Joyce Cutler

i. Susan Roser as DGG and Joyce as AG will be attending the General Board of Assistants Meeting in San Diego, California on Sept 11 2010.

ii. NOMINATING COMMITTEE. Joyce asked for volunteers to serve on our 2010 Nominating Committee. They will contact members for the positions open for nomination on the Board of Assistants in 2010 (three year term). Joyce asked anyone who would like to be on this Committee, to let her know as soon as possible.

iii. LIBRARIAN'S REPORT. Myrna Geldart has volunteered to take over the position of Librarian for our Society. Our ever growing Library can be found in the Canadiana Room of the North York Public Library.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR/HISTORIAN - Susan Roser

On Friday Joyce and Susan took Judy to Niagara Falls and Niagara on the Lake. They had a very nice time.

With Judy's help, Susan presented membership certificates to new members Andrea Cormier, Donna Denison and Brent Rutherford, along with a new supplemental certificate to Connie Bryce.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT** Lynne Webb.

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Members 2009 - 272, as compiled by Debbie and Lynne. This number was used to calculate our Society dues to Plymouth in the amount of \$4,424. Members 2010 – 210, of which 60 were life members. Renewals are coming in slowly. A reminder was written in the most recent newsletter to remind members.

Cash balances:

As of March 31, 2010:

American \$ - \$9565.01

Canadian \$ - \$24152.27

The cheque to GSMD of \$4,424 mentioned previously is still included in the American cash balance since the cheque has not yet been cashed. However, the Treasurer confirmed with GSMD that they have in fact received the cheque. Because of the good exchange rate, \$5,000 + Cdn was converted into \$5,000 American.

The business part of the meeting concluded Joyce asked Judith MacKay-Kowalski to lead us in saying Grace.

Joyce then asked Keith Bain to start off our luncheon with a toast to the Queen, and the President of the United States.

We enjoyed an excellent meal.

At the conclusion of our meal we held a Raffle.

Lynne introduced our guest speaker, Judy Haddock Swan. She is a descendant of John Howland/John Tilly, William Bradford, William Brewster, Francis Cooke, John Alden, William Mullins and Richard Warren, as well as being Governor General of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants and a member of the Canadian Society. When Judy was asked why she joined the Canadian Society, she said it was her way of honouring her two Canadian ancestors.

### **Women on the Mayflower**

Judy began her talk by asking us to consider what life must have been like in 1608. As we all know the Separatists escaped to Holland to avoid religious persecution. The Dutch were tolerant of religious differences. After 20 years living in Holland they became concerned because they were starting to lose control of their English culture. Their children were being more and more assimilated into Dutch culture, language and religion. They decided to build their own colony in the new world. Because of the hardships they would face there was much debate as to whether

wives and children should accompany them. It might be better for them to follow afterwards. Bradford expressed uncertainty as to whether the “weak bodies of women” would be able to withstand a long voyage and the building of a colony. Some did leave their wives behind. Francis Cooke, Thomas Rogers, Samuel Fuller and Richard Warren felt it was better that their wives come over later. Robert Tilly son of Edward Tilly was apprenticed in Holland until he was 16 so he could not go. He was not to know that he would never see his parents again. They died during the first winter. In the end 102 passengers 56 men, 18 wives (three of them pregnant) and 28 children set forth. No single women went.

The women on the Mayflower spent the voyage looking after the children, preparing the food such as it was, (rice, cheese oatmeal, bacon, beef in vinegar, mutton) and sewing. The women would end up spending a total of six months on board the ship; ten weeks at sea, sick, living in cramped quarters with no extra water to wash; two more months while the men explored looking for a place to build their colony and another two months waiting for the men to finish building homes for them. They were permitted off the boat briefly after their arrival to wash the clothes. Having been confined in cramped quarters for such a length of time on the Mayflower, it is no wonder they got sick.

Mary (Norris) Allerton wife of Isaac Allerton delivered a stillborn son shortly on board the Mayflower in Plymouth Harbour. She died during the first winter. Of those 18 women who sailed thirteen died during the first winter. One more died the following May.

There were in all four survivors.

Susanna White lost her husband William as well as 2 small children during the first year. She married Edward Winslow whose wife had also died during the first winter. Susanna White was one of the pregnant women on the board the Mayflower. She gave birth to the first English child born in the New Colony. She and her husband William White named him Peregrine.

Mary Brewster the matriarch of the colony and the wife of William Brewster survived.

Elizabeth Hopkins had a child at sea, Oceanus. She would have 5 more. The Hopkins family prospered. All survived.

Eleanor Billington whose children nearly blew up the Mayflower and whose husband was hanged for the murder of John Newcomen, was also a survivor. She would remarry after her husband’s execution. However, she continued to have problems in court. In 1636, Eleanor was fined 5 pounds and sentenced to sit in the stocks and be whipped for slandering John Doane.

At the first Thanksgiving, it was these four women aided by five teenage girls, who prepared all food necessary to feed 140 people over a course of three days.

Of the next generation Priscilla Mullins lost both her parents and married John Alden. Elizabeth Tilly married John Howland.

Descendants of these Mayflower women have continued to make their mark. Martha Graham was a descendant of Myles Standish.

Clara Barton founder of the Red Cross was also a descendant of the Mayflower. Judy listed many more.

Judy closed her speech by thanking Susan and Joyce for looking after her so well. She also expressed her thanks to Gary and Lynne who would be her host for the next few days. Judy said it was an honour to serve the Society and expressed her appreciation to us for inviting her.

Elizabeth presented her with a gift of cranberry glass made in Canada.

The meeting was adjourned after the singing of the Mayflower Song.