



The Canadian Pilgrim

Fall 2020

It's been a very strange year!

That may be the understatement of all time, as 2020 with the pandemic and all the changes it has brought has upended the best laid plans and our normal ways of functioning. The Canadian Society Of Mayflower Descendants is no different. Our 2020 meeting was to have been in Nova Scotia and a combined Nova Scotia Colony/CSMD 400th anniversary bash to commemorate the landing in Plymouth of our ancestors in 1620. Covid changed all that.

The Board of the CSMD has met several times since I became Governor in January – but each time by Zoom. We are now thinking of a virtual Zoom AGM that would be held in October. We have our challenges as our valued Treasurer, Maureen McGee is stepping down, and we need a newsletter/public relations person as well. Two invaluable positions that need filling!

The triennial Compact held in Plymouth, Massachusetts was also scheduled for this fall, and as in our case, it too has been cancelled as an in-person event but will also be held virtually. One of the topics to be discussed is a raise in fees to belong to the General Society of Mayflower Descendants which would impact us as a CSMD as we pay a fee for every member we have on our rolls to Plymouth yearly. In an article in this newsletter we list out the idea of the rate change and what it is meant to cover, and we have a survey that we hope all will take the time to complete to let us know how you feel about the fee, so that we can bring our thoughts to Plymouth this fall.

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well, and that someday soon, we'll all be able to visit in person!

Cheers,
Bill

William E (Bill) Curry – Governor, Canadian Society of Mayflower Descendants
Regent, Nova Scotia Colony of Mayflower Descendants



The Flourishing Nova Scotia Colony of Mayflower Descendants

The Nova Scotia Colony of Mayflower Descendants is thriving and well- but sadly our 2020 Conference was put on hold this year! Our colony was organized in 2004 by four founding members assisted by Canadian Mayflower Society officers Joyce Cutler, Governor and Susan Roser, Deputy Governor and Historian. The first Colony meeting was held in Liverpool, NS in April 2005. We have met nineteen times since then, sometimes twice in a year and three of the original members are currently active members.

Our plans for September 2020 were well underway when the realities of the Covid-19 pandemic forced us to cancel our annual Conference. Comments and emails from disappointed members attest to the popularity of the event.

Is it the location? Perhaps, since we alternate between the popular Annapolis Valley and Yarmouth County- the valley and the seashore.

Is it the season? Maybe, fall offers the finest of Nova Scotia's weather, clear blue skies and crisp air.

Is it the entertaining MC who leads our program? Possibly, he does add humour to the event.

Is it the display of Plimoth Plantation photographs? Perhaps, they offer a step into the 17th century.

Is it the authors and historical groups with their book tables? Possibly, family histories and Mayflower research books and historical societies have a prominent place with us.

Is it the display of the annual group photos? Perhaps, we are family you know.

Is it the food? Maybe, we do have great caterers and local restaurants and dining together is always enjoyable.

Is it the program? Well, we have had captivating and educational speakers: reenactors from Plimoth and Yarmouth, a Wampanoag descendant, DNA experts, local historical writers and even local historic church and graveyard tours. Our own members take turns sharing biographical details about their Mayflower ancestor.

Is it our Friday night gathering prior to the Saturday program? Perhaps, catching up since last year is a priority.

Is it the chance to attend a Mayflower Ancestry workshop with our Historian? Well, there is always a capacity crowd of people trying to break through brick walls in their research.

Is it the Annual Business Meeting or the chance for the door prizes, functional and fanciful, that keep our attendees to the very end? Well, you would have to ask them.

Considering the scope of our Conference offerings, it should be easy to understand why our attendance has increased each year from its inception to over 70 member attendees in recent years. When we come together, it is a meeting of old friends and newly- found cousins who can pick up where we left off the previous September. If you are in the area next year, consider this an invitation to join us for our belated 400th Anniversary celebration in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia – September 2021. I hope to see you there!

In the meantime, check out our website at www.mayflownovascotia.ca or follow us on Facebook.

Cheryl Anderson
Vice Regent

Mayflower II sails from Cape Cod back to home port in Plymouth for first time since renovations



The Mayflower II returned to Plymouth Harbor on Monday, August 10, 2020

Mayflower II sails from Cape Cod back to home port in Plymouth for first time since renovations (cont'd.)

By Michael Bonner – Mass Live

The Mayflower II, the replica of the vessel that brought the pilgrims to America 400 years ago, set sail to return home Monday for the first time since undergoing renovations.

After spending the weekend at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, the Mayflower II began its voyage to return to Plymouth Harbor near Plimouth Plantation on Monday, .

The 64-year-old historic reproduction has spent the last three years in Mystic, Connecticut, getting \$11.2 million in renovations.

The vessel, which was a gift from England in 1957, began the slow journey home last month making stops at other Connecticut and Massachusetts ports.

It stopped in New London, Connecticut, but canceled a planned trip to Newport, Rhode Island. The voyage was canceled as a result coronavirus-related travel restrictions. Last week, Gov. Charle Baker added Rhode Island to a list of states where visitors must quarantine or provide a negative COVID-19 test to visit or return to Massachusetts. Instead of landing in Fort Adams State Park, the Mayflower II traveled to New Bedford to seek shelter from Tropical Storm Isaias. New Bedford Harbor has a hurricane barrier. A cruise into Boston Harbor alongside the USS Constitution was previously canceled because of the pandemic.

In returning to Plymouth, the Mayflower II had escorts from the Massachusetts State Police. The marine unit, specifically Marine 9, helped guide the vessel through the Cape Cod Canal and back to Plymouth, according to state police.

Three Sisters Garden

By Bill Curry

In all the years of gardening in Nova Scotia for me (this year is garden year 50!), I've never had success at planting a "three sisters" hill. I tried a couple of times in Shelburne County, but for whatever reason, our home in Wallbrook was not very corn-friendly.

This being 2020 and the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower, I thought I'd try again.

The Three Sister's scheme is what the native Wampanoag taught my Pilgrim ancestors to grow when they arrived and were growing gardens after that first terrible winter. The idea is to plant corn, in my case an early season Peaches and Cream type, in a small mound. When the corn is about 6 inches or so high, beans are planted at the base of each corn stalk, using pole beans (mine are scarlet runner). Then, about a week or so later, bush squash with smaller leaves (of course I chose zucchini) are planted. I made three such mounds, and in the center one I put my

Three Sister's Garden (cont'd.)

bean tower so the remaining bean seeds were planted around that, and are doing very well.



Three Sisters Garden – Corn, beans and squash planted in hills

The idea is to have corn, which the beans climb for support and help fix nutrients for the corn, with squash growing afterwards with leaves that will provide shade for the roots of all the plants for later in the summer.

It's working here because we've had some heat and the corn is growing nicely, and I'll be very interested to see what I get out of it all. So far, we've had some squash (zucchini), some green beans and the corn is just about ready to be harvested. A fun and interesting experiment, based on a 400 year old plus system of gardening!

Now, if we could only get a little rain!

Historian Team's Report

(October 1, 2019 - August 31, 2020)

Applications Approved by Plymouth: 30

Applications in Plymouth waiting Approval: 21

Applications in Queue for Completion: 10

Total Prospects/Applicants in progress in Queue: 150 approximately - according to the list we are working with now.

The wait time for Approvals from Plymouth is now 6 months. The closure of the offices in Plymouth, due to Covid, has added time to this process.

Historian Team Report (cont'd.)

The wait time for pre approved papers that we use for new applications is now 3 - 4 weeks; before Covid the wait time was 24 - 48 hours. This is causing a 'hold-up' in the movement of the newer applications, no fault of CSMD but the impact of Covid at Plymouth, and the back-log of these requests in their Library.

Potential Fee Increases for Members of the GSMD and the CSMD

As a result of motions to increase assessments and fees by the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, the Canadian Society of Mayflower Descendants will be increasing their fees for 2021. The annual dues will most likely increase from \$ 45.00 CDN to \$65.00 or \$ 75.00 CDN per year. The annual membership fees for 2021 will be payable by November 30, 2020. Note that this is NOT the CSMD randomly increasing our fees, but our needed response to the GSMD proposal to up their fees that each member society pays per person in the society.

The GSMD fee increase would allow for:

- Technology: technology needs to move into the 21st century. Most processes are still being done by paper. Some of the staff at the main office are still using Windows 7 computers. There is no master database of members. The partnership with NEHGS and Family Search has digitized our applications, but we have no technology to access or make use of those digital records.
- Staffing: More staff is needed, especially in the areas of Verification, Communication and Technology. It is difficult to attract and retain competent staff with the limited budget. There is about a six-month backlog of applications due to lack of staff and paper-based methods. Susan Roser has been doing the Mayflower Quarterly on a volunteer basis, but it is expected that they will need to hire someone to replace her.
- Pay: The average wage paid to genealogy verifiers is \$ 19.00/hour. There are no medical benefits or pensions.
- Costs exceed income generated: Despite instituting efficiencies, the Society is losing about \$ 50 for every application processed as it costs more than the revenue received.
- Maintaining Charitable Status: The organization needs to do more in terms of educating the public to maintain their charitable status. The website needs to be improved to allow interactive seminars, more access to information and virtual tours.
- Maintaining standards: We aspire to be a gold standard organization but are working on a tin-foil budget

Potential Fee Increases (cont'd.)

There has only been a \$ 9.00 increase in the assessment rate over the past 36 years. Fee increases will allow the General Society to provide more value to Members and member societies.

The GSMD is also proposing raising the fee that members pay when they send their application to Plymouth for approval, including supplemental applications, from \$75 (US) to \$ 125 (US fees) that would take effect January 1, 2021.

The Canadian Society Of Mayflower Descendants would like to hear your opinion on the fee increase proposals so we may reflect this to Plymouth at the virtual Compact later in September. We have made a survey for members to fill out and would encourage responses from as many as possible.

The link to the survey is here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VS9Z5JQ>

We will leave the link open for a couple of weeks and then we will report back to members via our Facebook and Webpage.

If members wish to see Maureen McGee's full assessment of the fee structure and proposed increases, please go to our link and read her entire submission.

It is on the website at:

<http://www.mayflownovascotia.ca/Dues.pdf>

The CSMD is also considering what to do about Life Members of our Society – they paid a one-time fee that covers their membership, but the Society is still on the hook for paying to Plymouth each year. We would like to hear from Life members as to what they might see as a fair solution to the issue of payment for their GSMD portion yearly.

Junior CSMD Program -

The Junior Program of the CSMD is going strong. We currently have 20 members and we just got new applications for 2 more Junior members! The Juniors receive membership certificates, and then get cards and other information at certain times throughout the year to keep them interested and involved in the Society and their ancestry.

The program has a very active committee, and is in touch with every other member Society in the GSMD which has a Junior program and we share information freely. It is a most encouraging thing to hear our youth talk about their Pilgrim ancestors and the importance they have in being able to personally connect with those ancestors and their stories.

If you have any ideas or information for future Canadian Pilgrim issues, please send them to us – and if you have ever wanted to be a newsletter editor, by all means let's talk!

Comment, critiques or questions can please be sent to Bill Curry at

info@csmd.org