

# THE BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORIAN

Berkshire family history association, inc.

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

Spring 2019



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Happy Spring 2019!

To the BFHA Community,

As we begin the Spring season, which includes flowers beginning to bloom, gardens being planted, and baseball starting back up, time for genealogical and local history hunting to begin too! This issue will cover the local and not so local genealogical societies in Massachusetts, how to access their information for your research, and what to expect next if you join each organization.

Best Wishes ,  
Michael Collins, Editor

## Membership Reminder

**Membership Fees:** Individual \$12 or Family \$14

**Check Address Label for Expiration Date**

**Form:** [www.berkshirefamilyhistory.org/membership](http://www.berkshirefamilyhistory.org/membership)

Your membership entitles you to **2** hours of free research by a BFHA volunteer at the Berkshire Athenaeum. Some of the sources used are:

- Vital records-MA, CT, RI, VT, NY
- Knurow Collection
- Berkshire Histories
- Probate Records and Court of Common Pleas
- Berkshire Family History Index (specialty in-house index) and much more!

## NEWS & NOTES

**Friends of the Berkshire Athenaeum Book Sale:**  
July 11, 12, & 13, 2019

## NOTICE

### **BFHA Annual Meeting**

**When:** May 10, 2019 at 6pm

**Where:** Zucco's Restaurant, 451 Dalton Avenue  
Pittsfield, MA (those attending will select from Zucco's menu and self-pay)

**What:** Brief business meeting held to elect officers for 2019-2020 and speaker James Loughman will discuss "*Daniel Read: Revolutionary War Soldier, Shay's rebel, and Susan B. Anthony's Grandpa.*"

**Contact:** Reservations must be received by May 5th, reply by email at [bfhainc@gmail.com](mailto:bfhainc@gmail.com) or call Jan Rogge at 413-743-2732 and leave a message.

**HELLO FROM THE BFHA PRESIDENT**

Greetings,

As the cold northeast begins to thaw, BFHA continues its work to support the Local History and Genealogy Dept. of the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield, MA. For those members who are within visiting distance of Pittsfield, plan to attend the free "Informational Talk and Tour" program on Saturday, May 18, from 1:00 - 3:00, in the auditorium of the library. The program is open to the public, so bring a friend or two who might be considering researching their family history. It is an opportunity to learn about BFHA and the benefits of membership. Our guest speaker will be Peter White speaking on "Berkshire County Historical Research and Where it Leads." A tour of the library's Local History and Genealogy department will follow. (Even regular patrons of the library can learn something new!) Light refreshments will be served and no registration is required.

This year's annual meeting, open to all member of the Berkshire Family History Association, will be held at 6 PM, Friday, May 10, 2019, at Zucco's Restaurant, 451 Dalton Avenue, Pittsfield. A brief business meeting will be held to elect officers for 2019 -2020. Those attending will select from Zucco's menu and self-pay, so no money needs to be sent in ahead of time. Our after dinner speaker will be James Loughman. His topic will be "Daniel Read: Revolutionary War soldier, Shays' rebel, and Susan B. Anthony's Grandpa." Reservations must be received by May 5th. Reply by email at [bfhainc@gmail.com](mailto:bfhainc@gmail.com) or phone Jan Rogge at 413-743-2732 and leave a message.

In this issue we are introducing a query section that might provide a way for you to connect with a "cousin!" Also, we invite our members to share interesting stories with us. Did a BFHA researcher discover a gem or two for you? Did you find inspiration and assistance through membership in BFHA or other organization? Do you have any unique artifacts or documents in your possession? We'd love to write about you in future newsletters. It would be great if this newsletter could become a communication vehicle that runs in both directions.

Happy Hunting,

Jan Rogge, BFHA President

**BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY ASSOCIATION OFFICERS**

Established 1975, Pittsfield, Massachusetts

**PRESIDENT**

Janet M. Rogge

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Angela Rifkin

**SECRETARY**

Margaret Rotti

**TREASURER**

Lauren Miller

**DIRECTORS**

Veronica Silvia    Clark W. Nicholls    Philip Collins  
Brenda Struthers    Arthur F. Young, Jr.    Norma Zullo  
Michael Collins    Betty Ann Hamm

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

Programs- Janet Rogge    Membership- Meryl Delasco  
Website- Clark W. Nicholls    Newsletter Editor- Michael Collins

**PAST PRESIDENTS**

Ronald A. Stratton, 1975-1977    Denis J. Leisieur, 1978-1982  
Mary H. DeGiorgis, 1977-1978    Joseph G. Guertin, 1982-1985  
Donald L. Lutes, Jr., 1985-2017



*In Memoriam*

Judith Rupinski  
1941 - 2019

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of  
BFHA Board of Directors member, Judy Rupinski.

Judy's strong interest in the history of the Berkshires  
was inspirational.  
She will be missed.

**Questions? Comments?  
For more information please email :**

[bfhainc@gmail.com](mailto:bfhainc@gmail.com)

or visit our Website:

<http://www.berkshirefamilyhistory.org>

Write to us:

BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY  
ASSOCIATION  
P.O. Box 1437  
Pittsfield, MA 01202-1437

## Regional Genealogical Societies & How to Utilize Them

### **By Michael Collins**

As a member of BFHA, you know that the Berkshire Athenaeum is one of the best resources for genealogical services in Berkshire County and some say in New England. Sometimes though you may need to consult a different organization to find what you are looking for. There are two organizations that are not very far from the Berkshires being featured in this issue, one in Boston, Massachusetts and one in West Springfield. These are two different organizations in size, resources, and outreach. This article will help compare and contrast both of them so that you can get an idea of what the offer and how to access each organization.

### ***The New England Historic Genealogical Society***

The New England Historic Genealogical Society based in Boston is one of the premiere genealogical societies in New England.

### **General Information**

Housed in a seven story building on Newbury Street in Boston the Society has been collecting genealogical information since 1845 and has thousands of published genealogies, local histories and rare books as well. A day pass for the research library is \$20 and \$10 on Tuesdays. The hours of the New England Genealogical Society are from Tuesday-Saturday and hours vary depending on holidays too. Photocopies are 25 cents per page.

### **Research Consultation**

For expert consultation regarding your genealogy you should contact the Society and book a session but they note that you want to give them a month or so to get the best review.

### **Contact Information**

[www.americanancestors.org](http://www.americanancestors.org)  
1-888-296-3447  
*99-101 Newbury St.  
Boston, MA 02116*

### ***Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc***

The Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society (WMGS) is another great resource for your genealogy research needs. Established in 1972, the WMGS serves the four Western Massachusetts counties and three Northern-Connecticut counties( Litchfield, Tolland, & Hartford).

### **Cost and Memberships**

The membership dues are \$30 for individual, \$45 for a couple, \$15 for students and \$500 for lifetime. The membership includes free genealogy research clinics twice a month, access to *Members Only* section of their website, and field trips too. You can pay by check or online via Paypal as well.

### **Website/Contact**

WMGS has an easy to navigate website with links for queries, links, and news. To find out more see their site at <http://westmagenealogy.com>

## Free Informational Talk and Tour

**Date:** May 18, 2019, 1:00-3:00pm

**Location:** Berkshire Athenaeum Auditorium

**What:** Learn about BFHA's activities, services, and membership benefits along with guest speaker Peter White. Includes exclusive tour of the Local History Department including the map collections, city directories, Berkshire Authors Room, the Melville Room and much more!

**GUEST SPEAKER-** Peter White

*"Berkshire County Historical Research and Where it Leads"*

No Registration Required. Light Refreshments served. Join us and bring a friend! Questions? Call Jan at 413-743-2732. Leave a message.

## Genealogy Query Submissions

Beginning with the Fall issue of *The Berkshire Family Historian* we will be including queries submitted by our members. Below is a sample of a well-written query. Using it as a model will increase your chances of a reply. Key information includes names, dates and places. Put surnames in all capital letters. Write full dates in the format of day/month/year, as 16 March 1950. Send your query to [bfhainc@gmail.com](mailto:bfhainc@gmail.com) with "Query" in the subject line.

I am looking for information about my great-grandfather, William JONES and his wife Sarah BROWN JONES. They lived in Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts from about 1880 - 1910. He died in Albany, New York in the 1930's. Sarah died a few years later. I am interested in finding the parents of both William and Sarah.

Contact me at (here provide your mailing address or email address.)

## Books For Sale to Benefit BFHA

**PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE SHIPPING. DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY WITH YOUR ORDER. WE WILL BILL YOU FOR THE BOOK PLUS POSTAGE WHEN THE ITEMS ARE SHIPPED.**

<u>A SELECTION OF BOOKS FOR SALE</u>				
TITLE	AUTHOR	COPYRIGHT	# PAGES	COST
Hispanic Surnames and Family History	Lyman D. Platt	1996	349	\$5.00
Berkshire County- A Cultural History	Richard D. Birdsall	1959	401	\$5.00
Sheffield-Frontier Town	Lillian E. Preiss	1976	188	\$5.00
Houses of the Berkshires 1870-1930	Richard S. Jackson, Jr. and Cornelia B. Gilder	2006	312	\$35.00 (large bound book)
Master Index of Persons in Genealogical and Family History of the State of CT Vol. 1-4	William Cutter BFHA Publication (spiral bound)	1911	335	\$45.00
Index to Revolutionary Ancestors in the National Register of the Society Sons of the American Rev-	Louis H. Cornish BFHA Publication, (spiral bound)	1902	49	\$15.00

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**BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**BOOK ORDER FORM**

**Please enter my request for the following books/maps. (DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY WITH YOUR ORDER. WE WILL BILL YOU WHEN THE ITEMS ARE SHIPPED.)**

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**Send books to:**      Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN THIS FORM to:**

**Berkshire Family History Association, PO Box 1437, Pittsfield, MA 01202-1437**

**Coming in the Future Issues:**

**-Genealogy 101: Navigating Research in 2019**

**-Genealogy DNA Tests Comparison**

**-Local History Stories and News**

**-GE News Digitized**

**BFHA Contact Information**

For more information write to us:

**BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY  
ASSOCIATION  
P.O. Box 1437  
Pittsfield, MA 01202-1437**

Or Via Email :

[bfhainc@gmail.com](mailto:bfhainc@gmail.com)

***Annual Memberships:***

Individual \$12 or Family \$14

For Membership Form visit our Website:

[www.berkshirefamilyhistory.org/membership](http://www.berkshirefamilyhistory.org/membership)

