Welcome to NERGC 2017!

The New England Regional Genealogical Consortium, Inc. (NERGC) invites you to join us at our fourteenth conference 26-29 April 2017 at the MassMutual Convention Center in the heart of historic Springfield, Massachusetts. Between now and April, 2017, we’ll be continuing to provide updates on the Conference through periodic E-zines like this one. Continue to follow our E-zines to keep up-to-date on the planning and the excitement of this Conference, and please share them -- and the conference brochure -- with your friends, associates and anyone else you feel may be interested in attending the Conference. Of course there are other things planned that will be a secret until they happen during this wonderful event!

THE NERGC 2017 EARLY BIRD DEADLINE IS FAST APPROACHING!

To qualify for the "Early Bird" Full Conference rate of $120, your registration must be made online or postmarked by 28 February 2017. After that, the price goes up to $150. Don’t delay! Register today! A pdf version of the conference brochure is available here. The brochure contains the full conference schedule, summaries of lectures, speaker biographies and information on available luncheons, banquets, research tour and special events. Register online here. To register by postal mail, see the last page of the brochure.

CONFERENCE FACILITY

The Fourteenth New England Regional Genealogical Conference is being held at the MassMutual Center in downtown Springfield, directly off Interstate 91 and only minutes from the Massachusetts Turnpike. Springfield is approximately 18 miles north of Bradley International Airport and 93 miles from Logan Airport in Boston. The MassMutual Center is a compact, two-story facility with three ballrooms on the top floor and five rooms plus the Exhibit Hall on the lower floor, with escalator and elevator service between the two floors -- and all just three blocks from the Conference hotels.

CONFERENCE HOTELS

NERGC has special rates at two hotels about two blocks from the MassMutual Center and ½ mile from the Peter Pan bus station and the Amtrak station. The Marriott is approaching a sellout. There are still rooms available for most nights at the Sheraton, but you may encounter difficulty making a reservation that includes Tuesday night. Be sure to make your reservation soon. If you’ve booked your hotel rooms, please be sure to also register for the conference!

Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place
One Monarch Place, Springfield, MA 01144

Springfield Marriott
2 Boland Way, Springfield, MA 01115

Check here for details.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Did you know that NERGC’s conference is a totally volunteer-run event? We’re currently looking for additional volunteers to help out at the conference. Contact Mary Choppa at MChoppa@myfairpoint.net for more information. We’ll be publishing roles you can volunteer for in future E-zines and on the NERGC Web page, so keep an eye out for a way to be a major part of this great event.
DON'T MISS THE MEALS!
Attendees of past Conferences have provided feedback showing that the sharing, socializing, and networking that occurs at the meals were among the most meaningful parts of the Conference. Don’t miss the opportunity for convenient, delicious meals, socialization, and networking with other participants. Register for the meals at the time you register for the Conference, using the paper registration form or online. If you're already registered for the Conference but want to add meals, see the information below.

LUNCHEONS AND BANQUETS
All luncheons and banquets offer a choice of entrées at varying prices; see the last page of the Registration Brochure for menu options, and then register by using the paper registration form on the back page of the Brochure or online.

THURSDAY EVENING BOX SUPPER
It’s a long day and it’s going to be a busy evening – order a box supper for a quick evening meal so you can enjoy all the activities! Our dining room will be available for seating. Box suppers MUST BE Pre-Ordered by 1 April 2017. Choices: Italian Sub, Turkey Club, Chicken Caesar Wrap, or a Vegetarian Option. Includes chips, sweet treat, fruit and soft drink. Cost is $20.

CONTINENTAL BREAKFASTS
Start your day with a Continental Breakfast, served at the Mass Mutual Center Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings from 7:00-8:30 A.M. The menu includes coffee, decaf, or tea; assorted chilled juices; freshly baked breads and bagels; and fruit preserves, cream cheese, and butter. Cost is $14.

ALREADY REGISTERED FOR THE CONFERENCE?
YOU CAN STILL ADD MEALS AND WORKSHOPS
Even if you've already registered for the conference, it's not too late to add breakfasts, luncheons, banquets, and workshops. If you registered online, you can access your account and add items. If you registered by paper, you can send a copy of that registration, mark on it PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED, and indicate what you're adding. If you’re registered for the conference but have a spouse or friend who’s not registered and who just wants to join you for meals, you can add the additional meals to your account by indicating two units for identical meals, or, say, one fish and one chicken meal if your tastes diverge. That can be done either online or by paper.

Questions? Send an email to MChoppa@myfairpoint.net explaining what you would like to add to your registration. Don't miss out on something you want to do—sign up for the meals before they sell out.

KNOW A YOUNG PERSON WITH AN INTEREST IN GENEALOGY?
We're now offering a special conference rate for students aged 16 and under—half the adult rate (e.g., $60 by 28 February; $75 after 28 February. Students do, however, need to pay full price for meals, workshops, and syllabus. This special rate is not available online. For assistance in registering a student, email Pauline Cusson at pcusson@att.net or Mary Choppa at MChoppa@myfairpoint.net.

ATTENTION NERGC 2017 SPEAKERS AND EXHIBITORS
Remember to 'think like an attendee'! Even though you've been confirmed as a speaker or have purchased Exhibit Hall space, you still must register for the conference via the link from the nergc.org website. You can also go directly to registration via https://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1842529
There is a drop-down list of registration types. Just pick "Speaker" or "Exhibitor" as appropriate. From there you can go on to select meals and other extra-cost options such as workshops and Wednesday tracks.

PROGRAM UPDATES
A reminder that there are changes to the speakers and topics in Sessions F-202, F-225, and S-327 from what was shown in the printed brochure. See E-zine 6 for more information.
A REMINDER FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL MEAL REQUIREMENTS OR ADA SPECIAL NEEDS

Don't forget -- if you have needs related to meals, mobility, hearing, or vision which might affect your ability to fully participate in NERGC 2017, there's still time to make arrangements.

If you're registering by mail, note the two comment boxes where you can list your needs on the last page of the brochure. If you are registering online, use the two comment boxes in the personal information section of the registration to note your needs.

Already registered but have questions about access to area transportation, equipment, assistive hearing devices, special seating options and other accommodations you may need? Feel free to email Pamela Roberts, PT, EdD. or call her at 860-486-2406. Note: Registrants with special meal requirement and/or mobility, hearing or visual special needs as outlined in the American with Disabilities Act must detail those requirements in writing to NERGC by March 15, 2017.

ATTENTION BEGINNING GENEALOGISTS!

This special session is just for you. Please share this information with others you know who are just starting with this wonderful hobby/profession.

Getting Started on Your Family History Research, 9:30-11:30

Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, Inc.

If you’ve only been doing genealogy research for a year or less, this is the workshop for you. Friendly members of MSOG will provide helpful organizational and research tips. What resources are available? How do we find more than birth-death-marriage information? How do you keep all that information organized? How do you get your family members excited? This is a two-hour stand-alone offering -- you don't need to register for the full conference in order to attend. A workbook with forms and weblinks is included. Cost is $30.

Special Interest Groups

Plan to attend one of the informal and informative Special Interests Groups on Thursday evening at 7:15. Hosts who are experts in their areas will lead the discussions, with time to ask questions, share problems, pitfalls, resources, and successes among attendees. Popular SIGs which will be offered again this year are Blogging, DNA, Irish, Italian, French Canadian, Jewish and Scandinavian. A Polish and Eastern European SIG, which hasn’t been available in several conferences, will be offered this year, as well as a new and exciting African American SIG.

Jewish Special Interest Group

Come join us to talk about strategies and hints for researching your Jewish ancestors. We might look at how to find the records of your immigrant ancestors, both here and in the "old country;" how to find people if they've changed their names; how to find the villages that your ancestors came from; and how to locate families lost or scattered by the Holocaust. We'll look at both online and local resources that could help you in your search.

ANCESTORS ROAD SHOW

Come share the who, what, when, and where of your research problem with an expert at the NERGC Ancestors Road Show in the Exhibit Hall! We have an exciting lineup of expert volunteers in many specialties to provide more than 150 consults for attendees! Consults are limited to one per registered attendee and are available on a first-come, first-served basis until spaces fill each day.

PLEASE NOTE THIS CHANGE FROM WHAT APPEARS IN THE CONFERENCE BROCHURE:
Registration for Friday consults will be open at the Ancestor Road Show area in the Exhibit Hall from 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. on Thursday and will continue on Friday morning beginning at 9:30 a.m. Registration for Saturday consults will open on Friday from 11:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. and will continue on Saturday morning beginning at 9:30 a.m.

For questions please contact jenzinck@gmail.com.

Consultants please sign up online at http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0949a9a82aa6fd0-nergc.
EXHIBIT HALL UPDATE
The Exhibit Hall is nearly finalized, with all of the exhibit booths committed. The vendors offer a range of products and services to interest everyone. Those participating represent, in part, genealogical societies, publications, and DNA. Some of the vendors who have exhibited at past conferences, and will again this conference, include NEHGS, Moorshead Publishing, Godfrey Memorial Library and Maureen Taylor, The Photo Detective. For a complete list of vendors who will be in the Exhibit Hall, visit the Exhibit Hall section of the NERGC Website.

SOCIETY FAIR 2017
Come one, come all to the NERGC Society Fair on Thursday, April 27, 2017, from 5:30 P.M. to 7 P.M. There’s still room if your group would like to take part. Many of our prior participants are signed up and ready for 2017. Don’t be left out. We’re especially interested in Western Massachusetts, Eastern Connecticut and Southern Vermont groups that might like to join in. If any of you have a contact in family, genealogical or historical societies from that area, please invite them to take part in this great networking event. Don’t forget it’s free!! Each exhibitor receives a 6 x 2 table, two chairs and signage. You supply representatives and your handouts, etc. You can get more information or register by contacting Phyllis Day, Society Fair Chair, at phyl@meganet.net.

ATTENTION LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES and MUSEUMS
COLLECTIBLES, PHOTOS, MAPS, DIARIES, PERSONAL PAPERS, GENEALOGICAL COLLECTIONS
Help us make history. All NEW! Calling Libraries, Archives and Museums that have special collections that would be of interest to genealogists and researchers. Choose one of your treasures that you guard and protect, take them out for a drive, and join us in Springfield. Celebrating a milestone in your organization? All the better—share it with hundreds of like minded folks. Two days—pick one—Friday, April 28th, or Saturday, April 29th, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for $0. That’s right, it’s free. Each exhibitor receives a 6 x 2 table, two chairs and signage. There will also be free advertising for your collection before and during the Conference. You can get more information or register by contacting Phyllis Day, Libraries and Archives Chair, at phyl@meganet.net.

LIBRARIANS AND LOCAL HISTORIANS DAY 2017
Bring your burning questions to the panel discussion at Librarians and Local Historians Day. The expertise of our panelists reflects the program’s focus on how genealogy and local history collections can attract new visitors, bring new sources of funding, and generate renewed interest in using these collections for research.

- **Curt B. Witcher** manages the Allen County Public Library’s Genealogy Center. He is a frequent speaker at RootsTech in Salt Lake City and other national conferences. Curt is a former president of FGS and NGS, and the founding president of the Indiana Genealogical Society.
- **Dr. Rhonda L. Clark** is Associate Professor of Information and Library Science at Clarion University (PA). Dr. Clark co-authored *Fostering Family History Services* recently published by Libraries Unlimited Press in 2016.
- **Rachel Onuf** serves as the Roving Archivist for Massachusetts, a job that allows her to roam the state, assisting smaller repositories with institutional assessments and hands-on training. Rachel is an adjunct professor for the Simmons School of Library and Information Science. Before moving to Massachusetts, she was the Director of Archives at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
- **Sara Campbell** is the “local historian who took up residence at Erving Elementary School.” The school received a grant to fund Sara’s residency this winter. Students will learn to read maps old and new, examine historical documents, and hear stories of past Erving residents. Sara has been researching her own family since 1990 and, as Town Engineer in Greenfield, she has explored the Dept. of Public Works' vault finding new sources for genealogists.
- **William Forsyth** is director of product management for ProQuest. He is an experienced genealogist and a member of the member of the Association of Professional Genealogists.
PRACTICALITIES
Though you'll be in Springfield for a genealogy conference, you might also need to deal with some real life practicalities like getting gas for your car, or picking up something at the pharmacy. Or perhaps you need to know the closest ATM. We have put some helpful hints up on the Hospitality page on the NERGC website for you. Categories include: Medical Care, Dentist, ATMs, Gas Stations, Pharmacy, Wal-Mart Supercenter, Convenience Stores, Grocery Store, Beauty Services, and the nearest mall. Please understand that we haven't had time to check each and every one out, but it is a starting point for you.

IN AND AROUND SPRINGFIELD
Spring is when nature begins to awaken and a freshness fills the air. The colors, sounds, and smells of a springtime in Springfield should especially be experienced along the city and region's premier asset—the majestic CONNECTICUT RIVER. This 410-mile river, the longest in New England, flows from the U.S.-Canada border to Long Island Sound. It forms the boundary between Vermont and New Hampshire, and flows past some of the largest cities in the region along its southward route. The Connecticut River has been integral to the region's historical development, being the choice settlement location for Native Americans as well as early European settlers. It is one of only 13 rivers in the U.S. designated as “American Heritage Rivers” by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Springfield enjoys having this river as its western boundary and the many benefits this natural resource has provided. Conference attendees and guests will be able to 'take in' this most important city “gem” in numerous ways. One can simply view the river from various places in the conference facilities, while driving along either Columbus Avenue or Springfield's section of I-9 (which parallels the river) or over one of the several bridges that cross the river.

Scenic Riverfront Park, only a block from the conference hotels, provides a great opportunity for conferees to go out for a vigorous walk or simply to enjoy a nice stroll with a water view. This park connects with the Springfield's section of the Connecticut River Walk and Bikeway—a 3.7-mile stretch along the riverfront. This regional linear park features paved pathways, scenic overlooks, nature trails and an urban promenade complete with benches and picnic tables. Parking is available near the park.

More reading about the Connecticut River or the river walk and bikeway project can be found at:
http://valleyvisitor.com/
http://www.ctriver.org/our_region_and_rivers/river_facts/index.html and

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT NERGC'S SPEAKERS?
Be sure to check out the NERGC 2017 speaker interviews that have already been published online by NERGC'S Official Bloggers!

Elizabeth Pyle Hander's interview with Maureen Taylor:
https://frommainetokentucky.blogspot.com/2017/02/nergc-interview-maureen-taylor.html

Marian Wood's interview with Janeen Bjork:

Elizabeth Pyle Handler's interview with Diahan Southard:
https://frommainetokentucky.blogspot.com/2017/02/nergc-interview-diahan-southard.html

Heather Rojo's interview with Thomas MacEntee:
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Here are some of the organizations that have helped make NERGC 2017 possible:

**Association of Professional Genealogists** – sponsor of Saturday’s Luncheon, presentation "Forget Me Not: Remembering our Grandmother's Stories" with Jane Wilcox

**Board of Certified Genealogists Education Fund** – sponsoring Session F-229, "Confronting Conflicting Evidence" with Pam Stone Eagleson

**Excelsior College** – sponsor of Professional Genealogy Day on Wednesday

**Family Tree DNA** – sponsor of Beginning DNA Day on Wednesday

MyHeritage - Sponsor of the Saturday Banquet presentation "How to Deal with Other Genealogists Without Going Crazy" with Thomas MacEntee

**New England Historic Genealogical Society** – sponsor of our Opening Session on Thursday with Mary Tedesco, co-host of PBS’ Genealogy Roadshow

We offer sincere gratitude to all of our Conference sponsors and hope that our attendees and other parties interested in our Conference will support these organizations.

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**WANT TO RECEIVE THE E-ZINE?**
To sign up for the E-zine, please contact Richard Roberts: RCR1861@Gmail.com and use "Subscribe NERGC E-zine" as the subject of the message.

**VISIT US ON FACEBOOK:**
www.facebook.com/NERGC

**VISIT OUR BLOG:**
www.NERGC.blogspot.com