

GENERATIONS

The Southwest Colorado Genealogical Society Newsletter

October 2018

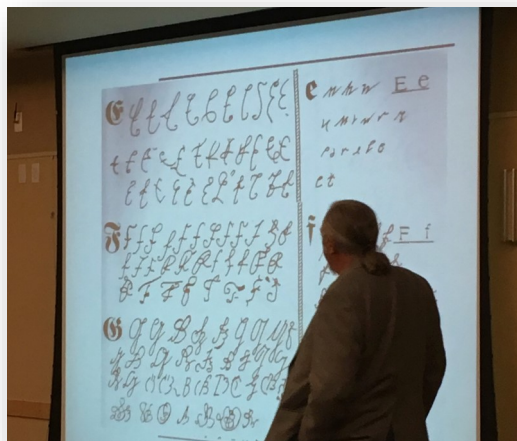
Volume 8, Issue 5



Letter from the President...

Fall seems to have come early this year. I'm thoroughly enjoying the lovely juxtaposition of orange and golden leaves in the river bottoms and white snow on the high peaks. Finally! Fall and winter seems like a good time to get back into my genealogy coursework, which has been languishing on the bookshelf over the summer.

Last month we enjoyed the presentation "Sharing our German Genealogy Gems", given to the group by John Peel,



Steve Stumpp

Lecturing at September Meeting

Photo courtesy of Wendy Allen 2018

Steve Stumpp, and Anna Hopkins-Arnold. My husband, Stephen, and I both have German ancestry. John and Steve gave a good overview of the history of Germany and Western Europe. This background information has helped me

begin to place the migration of so many of our ancestors in a historical context. Steve and Anna provided many resources for us to examine as we search for ancestral records. We have so many members with a wealth of information to share with the group. Thanks to all of you who have shared through the years. We look forward to many more presentations from our members and others.

Our November presentation will be "The Salem Witchcraft Hysteria: A Caldron of Religious, Economic, Social, and Political

Next SWCOGEN Meeting

November 10th
10:30 a.m. to Noon

Location:

Durango Community Recreation Center

Webinar

"The Salem Witchcraft Hysteria: A Caldron of Religious, Economic, Social, and Political Ingredients Gone Awry"

Presented by

John E. Putnam

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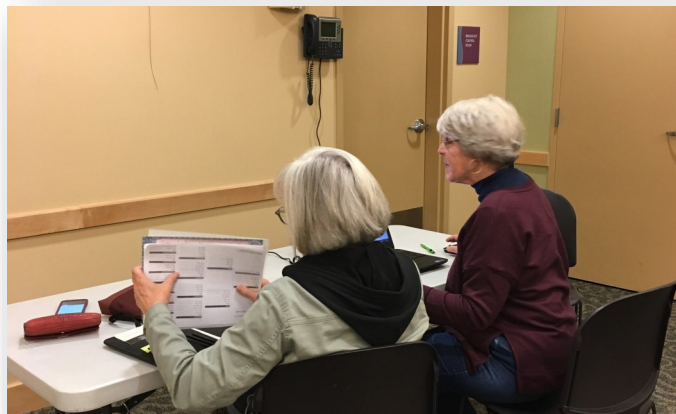
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cal Ingredients Gone Awry” by John E. Putman. Mr. Putman gave our presentation for the March meeting this year, “Untangling Your New England Roots.” Some of us might have had ancestors who were involved in this rather fascinating part of the early colony’s history. Even if you don’t, we certainly have all heard of the trials. I have a tenth great grandmother who was accused of witchcraft in Springfield, MA. We hope to see you at the Durango Community Recreation Center at 10:30 am on Saturday, November 10th.

The society provided two learning experiences this October. On October 20th, the society in conjunction with the Durango Public Library sponsored the annual “Genealogy Drop-in” where we invited community and society members to meet with members of our



October Drop-In Session at Durango Public Library

Photo courtesy of Wendy Allen 2018

group who assisted them with their research. We had a good crowd visiting with us, mostly non-members. I enjoyed seeing the delight of some the visitors upon learning something new or seeing a photograph of their ancestor.

On October 27, Anna Hopkins Arnold provided an opportunity to learn more about using Ancestry for our DNA research. This session included a lecture and hands-on workshops. Separate workshops were given for those with more basic knowledge and those with intermediate or advanced knowledge. The

board also met this month to discuss next year’s programming.

November we will be nominating and electing a new Vice-president and Treasurer for the society. Please think about whom you might nominate. You are welcome to nominate yourself. It is also time for membership renewal. Bring your checkbooks or use the PayPal button on our website. I will also be asking for the names of members who would like to share their research at our January potluck meeting at the Durango Community Recreation Center. We always look forward to this meeting. It’s a wonderful way to catch up with friends, share a meal and enjoy the research of our members.

Wendy Allen, President

About Our Speaker



Biography & photos provided by and used with permission of the presenters.

John is a native of Western Massachusetts where he grew up on a farm; attended public schools, and attended the University of Massachusetts Amherst where he earned his BA in Government/Political Science. While at college, he debated four years and married his debate partner, Sue, after his graduation. He earned a MA in Political Science at the University of Colorado.

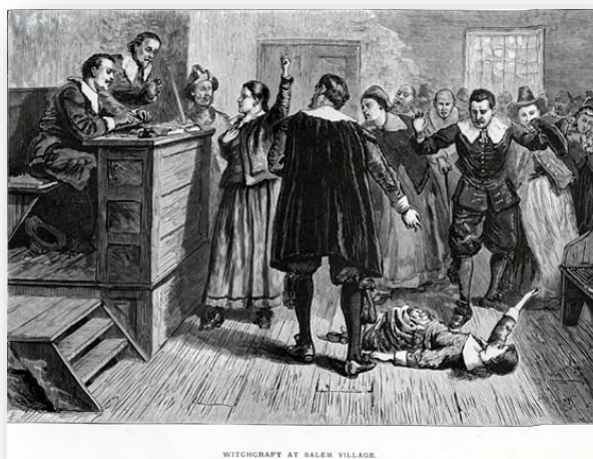
Sue and John have two sons. John II lives in Boulder and is an environmental attorney. Peter is a pediatrician in St. Louis. Both sons have two sons which keep Nana and Papa busy keeping up with their educational, sports, and cultural pursuits.

John’s interest in genealogy started at a very young age when his two grandmothers would tell stories about the family. He also attended both Putnam

and Clark family reunions. As a twelfth generation New Englander, there were many stories to be told. His Putnam ancestors lived in Salem/Danvers, MA where they were very involved in the Salem Witchcraft incident. A great uncle was a major general in the American Revolution, so he got an early indoctrination in the exploits of these historical Putnams. His Clark ancestors descend from two Mayflower Pilgrims although this history was determined later in his life. The Clark stories revolved around the hardships of farming in Western Massachusetts during the nineteenth century. Both his parents were active in their local historical society and frequently added to John's interest in Western Massachusetts local history.

John is the past President of the Pikes Peak Genealogical Society and serves as their delegate to the Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies. In December 2011, he wrote a paper telling about his Teaching Grannies for a local genealogy course taken at Pikes Peak Community College. In June 2012, he presented a paper at the Pikes Peak Regional Historical Symposium on Historical Floods in the Pikes Peak Region.

For those not having ancestors involved in this historic event, there are many other facets different folks find interesting: its history, the puritan religion, small town sociology, the occult, genealogy, and the list goes on. Besides the many books written on this topic, a very popular play, *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, was written in the 1950s and periodically there are TV shows that focus on this event. There are websites and blogs that regularly publish information which keep interested people updated on the many new and different things that are being researched. Interestingly, a discovery was made almost two years ago that confirmed the site where the hangings were conducted.



"Witchcraft at Salem Village"

Pioneers in the Settlement of America by William A. Crafts. Vol. I Boston: Samuel Walker & Company, 1876. Artists: F. O. C. Darley, Wm. L. Shepard, Granville Perkins, etc; Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive and Transcription Project; <http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/generic.html>; 10.25.2018

Why Salem Matters

By *John E. Putnam*

Why does the Salem Witchcraft incident continue to fascinate historians, genealogists, and Americans almost 330 years after it occurred? The answer likely depends on who you are. It holds a special fascination for me, because my ancestors lived in Salem Village, a small New England village, where this incident occurred, and, as such, I want to better understand this event. My ancestors were both accusers and victims in this greatly studied event in Colonial Massachusetts, so I am always seeking insight into understanding the human dynamics that led to and played out in 1692. As I will share in my presentation, there were many factors leading to this tragic event and ongoing research continues even today.

Another reason to consider this historic event is to understand the periodic episodes in our political, social, economic, and religious culture that cause disruptive things to happen. How many times have we heard the term witch hunt used in the last two years as it relates to the current political environment in which we are living? Are there parallels to the Salem incident? While my

presentation does not dissect these recent events, it is notable that many scholars think there are very real parallels ...fortunately, without public executions.

Because of its accepted name, most people think the witchcraft trials took place in the present city of Salem Massachusetts. Curiously, the present Salem has a month-long festival in October celebrating its nickname of Witch City. However, very little of the incident took place within the present boundaries of Salem...just the hangings. The actual trials took place in Salem Village which was a part of Salem in 1692 but is now Danvers, Massachusetts where my Putnam ancestors lived for 350 years before I was born in Western Massachusetts. Another fascinating aspect of this historic incident is that it involved more folks in the greater Essex County area than just Salem Village. Imagine the disruption caused by this event on a small rural area of Massachusetts and that our ancestors believed in witchcraft.

As with most historical events, there were consequences. Nineteen people were hung, one person was pressed to death, and four people died in prison awaiting their trials. Ultimately, almost two hundred people were accused of being witches but whose trials were vacated when the political and religious communities realized that the initial hysteria had gotten out of hand.

As a long-time student of the Salem Witchcraft incident, I am continually fascinated by its whole story. My presentation, *The Salem Witchcraft Hysteria: A Caldron of Religious, Economic, Social, and Political Ingredients Gone Awry*, summarizes this incident in its historical and genealogical context in hopes that the information will help others with their own genealogical research and provide an understanding of the importance of this historical event. As always, I am always interested in hearing from my readers and/or audience on their take-aways from this famous historic event. I can be reached at jeputnam@aol.com

Bibliography

“The Salem Witchcraft Hysteria: A Caldron of Religious, Economic, Social, and Political Ingredients Gone Awry”

Presentation by John E. Putnam

Books

Baker, Emerson W , *A Storm of Witchcraft: the Salem Trials and the American Experience*, Oxford, New York, 2016

Boyer, Paul S. and Nissenbaum, Stephen, *Salem Possessed: the Social Origins of Witchcraft*, Harvard, Cambridge, 1974

Norton, Mary Beth, *In the Devil's Snare: the Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*, Vintage, New York, 2010

Starkey, Marion L, *The Devil in Massachusetts*, Knopf, New York, 1949

Schiff, Stacy, *The Witches: Salem 1692*, Little Brown & Company, New York, 2015

Blogs

www.historyofmassachusetts.org

www.newenglandhistoricalsociety.com

Primary Sources

Salem Witch Trials: Documentary Archive and Transcription Project salem.lib.virginia.edu

Note: To request copies of the presentation power point slides, please email John E. Putnam: jeputnam@aol.com



Two Women

By *Wendy Allen*

Though Salem, Massachusetts is best known for its witchcraft trials, the threat of witchcraft accusations often happened much earlier, well outside of the boundaries of Salem. Many events led to these accusations including superstition, poverty, jealousy, fear and religious beliefs. Residents used witchcraft to explain deaths of family members, mystery lights, animals and humans behaving unusually, as well as financial difficulties. Many small communities in the middle 1600s heard the whispers of witchcraft. Into this equation came two women, both originally from the English mainland. Their paths collided in Springfield, Massachusetts in about 1649.



Massachusetts Pond, by Walter Rock, <https://www.freeimages.com/photo/spot-pond-1547645>

The woman, who would become known as the Widow Marshfield, was wife of Thomas Marshfield. He was a founding father of Windsor, Connecticut. He was a bricklayer and became a wealthy man, involved in many investment dealings both in England and in Windsor. His finances began to unravel as community members brought numerous court charges against him. During this period, rumors of his wife being involved in witchcraft began to circulate. Thomas disappeared, his assets were seized, and his wife and three children were left penniless. This is when they left Windsor for Springfield.

Mary Lewis was the wife of Hugh Parsons. He was a sawyer, felling trees and making timber. He was not known for being particularly well behaved and was certainly not considered genteel. Parsons often insulted and argued publicly with community members, including the town's new Reverend, George Moxon. A resident, Blanche Bedortha, complained of strange lights, and a difficult labor, pointing to Hugh as the culprit. Soon Hugh's wife Mary made what might have been her first witchcraft accusation, naming Bedortha's laying-in maid. The court forced Hugh Parson to pay a fine for his wife's false claim.

This appeared to be the start of Mary's troubles in the community. She soon lost two children, which might have been responsible for her decent into madness. Their fortune began to fail as well, as they were forced to take in boarders.

By 1649, Mary's third child died and in a time of visions of lights on the meadow and clothing reflecting flashing lights, Mary accused the Widow Marshfield of witchcraft. The widow was a midwife in the town, which may have in Mary's mind, connected her to the loss of her own three children. Two of Marshfield's children were grown and perhaps offered her support during this period. The Widow Marshfield counter sued and was vindicated in court when Mary was found guilty of slander. She would be given twenty lashes, or her husband would have to pay 3 pounds, which he did when he paid the fine to the widow in Indian corn.

The lives of the Parsons unraveled at this point. Mary now accused her husband of witchcraft. Several members of the community accused his wife Mary of witchcraft, which she admitted to. They were both arrested and taken to trial in Boston. The court wanted to complete her trial quickly because she was in poor health. She was found innocent of witchcraft but was convicted of infanticide. She appears to have died in jail shortly thereafter. Hugh was released because his main accuser, his wife, was dead and could not testify against him. He disappeared from community records.

This turns out to be more the sad story of the accuser rather than the story of the accused, the Widow Marshfield, my 9th great grandmother.



2019 Programming—Sneak Preview

Please join the Board in thanking retiring Vice-President Carole Gomez for her role in helping to create a terrific line up of programs that the Society has enjoyed this past year.

As the Society looks forward to 2019, the Board has another year of great programming tentatively planned. Mark your calendars now so you don't miss one!

- ◆ **January 12th** kicks off the new year with the Society's annual Member sharing and potluck. Always a wonderful way to begin a new season of programs.

The Board is seeking Members to share their projects at the January meeting. Please contact Wendy Allen if you are interested in sharing yours, or you can let her know at the November meeting.

- ◆ **March 9th** will be a presentation of a family case study, "My Atienza/Antencio Family," by SWCOGEN member Rebecca Atencio Hunter.
- ◆ **May 11th** will be a program on "Using the Census"
- ◆ **July 13th** will be the Society's annual summer potluck, and a program on Lineage Societies.
- ◆ **September 14th** the Society's program will focus on research in the South with a presentation by member Ruth Lambert.
- ◆ **November 9th** is the Society's annual meeting, election of Officers, and a local interest presentation, "Chivington's Daughter" by Katherine Scott Sturdevant.

The Board is always interested in hearing from the Society Members about their interests and ideas for future program topics and educational forums. Please contact any Board Member to share your thoughts. Board contact information can be found at the bottom of page 7, column 2.




Society News & Announcements

Thank you!

Retiring Board Members

Ruth Lambert & Carole Gomez

Ruth has served on the SWCOGEN Board for 8 years and Carole for 4 years!

Eilene Lyon, Ruth Lambert, Naomi Riess, & Wendy Allen

For volunteering at the October Genealogy Drop-In Session

2019 Society Dues

Dues for the calendar year 2019 will be collected at the November 10th regular meeting.

- ◆ \$20 for an individual Membership
- ◆ \$30 for a 2 person family Membership
- ◆ \$50 for a Legacy Membership

NEW *Dues may also be paid online via Pay Pal for a small processing fee. Visit the website for details & instructions*

<http://www.swcogen.org/Membership.html>

2019 Election of Officers

November 10, 2018

Please bring your nominations for the positions of Vice President & Treasurer to the November 10th meeting. Please consider nominating yourself for one of these roles for 2019. If you have any questions about the responsibilities of these positions, please contact any Board Member in advance of the meeting. Contact information is found at the bottom of the Society News & Announcements column.



Looking ahead.....

Southwest Colorado Genealogical Society

Upcoming Events:

November 10th @ 10:30 a.m.

John E. Putnam

"The Salem Witchcraft Hysteria: A Caldron of Religious, Economic, Social, and Political Ingredients Gone Awry"

Durango Community Recreation Center

January 12, 2019 @ 10:30 a.m.

Member Sharing & Potluck

Durango Community Recreation Center

Board Members

President—Wendy Allen supai1919@yahoo.com

Vice Pres. —Carole Gomez gomez.carole.j@gmail.com

Secretary—Eilene Lyon biotech46@gmail.com

Treasurer—Ruth Lambert relambert13@msn.com

Member at Large—John Peel jpeels34@gmail.com



Mark your calendars and remember to bring a dessert or side dish to the January 12th, 2019 Member Sharing & Potluck meeting.

2019 Calendar of Events

Southwest Co Genealogical Society

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|---------|---|
| Jan 12 | Monthly meeting & program Durango Community Rec. Center @ 10:30 a.m. |
| Mar 9 | Monthly meeting & program Durango Public Library @ 10:30 a.m. |
| May 11 | Monthly meeting & program Durango Public Library @ 10:30 a.m. |
| Jul 13 | Monthly meeting & program Durango Community Rec. Center @ 10:30 a.m. |
| Sep 14 | Monthly meeting & program Durango Public Library @ 10:30 a.m. |
| Oct TBD | Genealogy Drop-In Session Durango Public Library @ TBD |
| Nov 9 | Annual meeting & program Durango Public Library @ 10:30 a.m. |

Regional Events

No events known at present

National Events

2019 National Genealogy Event Calendar:

Courtesy of Castle Rock Genealogical Society website

<http://crcgs.org/resources/genealogy-events/>

Please scroll down past the 2018 calendar for 2019.



Tools & Resources

Best Salem Witch Trial Books

From the website <http://historyofmassachusetts.org/best-books-about-salem-witch-trials/>

1. The Salem Witch Trials: A Day by Day Chronicle of a Community Under Siege by Marilynne K. Roach
2. A Storm of Witchcraft: The Salem Witch Trials and the American Experience by Emerson W. Baker
3. Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft by Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum
4. Death in Salem: The Private Lives Behind the 1692 Witch Hunt by Diane Foulds
5. A Delusion of Satan: The Full Story of the Salem Witch Trials by Francis Hill
6. In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692 by Mary Beth Norton
7. The Devil in Massachusetts: A Modern Enquiry into the Salem Witch Trials by Marion L. Starkey
8. The Crucible by Arthur Miller. The Crucible is a play that first premiered on Broadway in 1953.
9. I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem by Maryse Conde
10. A Break With Charity: A Story About the Salem Witch Trials by Ann Rinaldi

For more information on these books and other additional reading, please see the website above.

The Board expresses its gratitude to those individuals contributing articles to this issue of Generations. If you have ideas for future articles or would like to share an article of your own, please contact a Board Officer at the e-mail addresses included in this issue.

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