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# Founders News

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*Newsletter of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford November 2015*

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## Solving Ancient Mysteries Using New Mapping

**H**ow do you solve some centuries-old mysteries?

One way is by combining old land records and modern mapping techniques. That's what the speaker at the 2016 Court and Dinner of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford has done – and she will explain the technique in her illustrated talk.

The dinner will be held on Tuesday, May 10, at the Town and County Club in Hartford. Cocktails are at 6:00, the dinner is at 6:45, and a brief business meeting and the talk will follow.

Our speaker will be Beth Caruso, a scholar and the author of *One of Windsor: The Untold Story of America's First Witch Hanging*.

To research the book, Ms. Caruso used mapping techniques to help uncover the story of Alice Young, who was hanged on May 26, 1647.

How can these techniques help us understand other historical events when crucial information is lacking?

That's what Ms. Caruso will explain, in a talk sure to be of interest to those involved in genealogical research.

Invitations to the annual Court and Dinner will be mailed in the spring. We cordially invite all members to attend. Guests are welcome, at the members' rate.



Author Beth Caruso

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## Future Newsletters Will Be Electronic

Starting next spring, the biannual newsletter of the Society of the Descendants of Hartford will be sent via email. If you have not sent us your preferred email address, please send it now to Bob Hall, Governor of the Society, at [rshallct@gmail.com](mailto:rshallct@gmail.com).

For those who do not use email, we are enclosing with this newsletter an envelope for you to request postal delivery. This is to be used only by those members who really cannot or do not use electronic mail. It is not to be considered an option for those who simply would prefer paper.

This change will cut our annual expenses by about \$1,500. Thanks for your cooperation.

## By-Laws Change Passes; More Founders Discovered

At last year's Court and Dinner, members approved a change to the Society's by-laws that would allow people known to be in Hartford before February 1640 to be named as Founders, even though they are not listed in the Book of Distribution of Land.

The Book of Distribution requirement made sense 80 years ago when the Society was founded. But research techniques available today allow us to authenticate the presence of other genuine early settlers. Our Genealogist, Timothy Jacobs, has uncovered reliable sources that list several other British people as having settled in Hartford before February, 1640.

Several of these have been named in previous newsletters. Those most recently discovered are the following: Thomas Bliss, Jr.; Thomas Cornwell; Blaynch Hunt; John Lee; Dr. Thomas Lord, Jr.; Priscilla Wakeman (widow of Thomas Richards); Thomas Thompson; Nathaniel Browne; John Cattel; Henry Hayward; Richard Lyman, Jr.; Isaac Moore; and Rebecca Taylor (widow of Samuel Greenhill).

The discovery of these "new" Founders will mean that their descendants will be eligible for membership in the Society. This will allow us to increase our numbers.

## Founders Council Members Sought

The Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford is always looking for members willing to serve on its Council (executive board).

Council meetings are held twice a year in Hartford, so a requirement of Council membership is that a person live close enough to Hartford to be able to attend meetings.

Anyone interested should contact Governor Bob Hall at P. O. Box 270215, West Hartford, CT 06107-0215 or by writing him at rshallct@gmail.com.

## Meet the Society's Newest Members

Thanks to the hard work of Genealogist Timothy Jacobs, we are pleased to welcome several new members to the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford. They are:

No. 1893, Christopher Lee Atkinson of Oakland Park, Fla., descended from *Edward Elmer*; No. 1894, Justin Lewis Ankerman of West Hartford, Conn., descended from *Edward Stebbins*; No. 1895, Sharon Lee Morrison Spry of Bradenton, Fla., descended from *Thomas Scott*; and No. 1896, Christopher Scott Proctor of Santa Barbara, Fla., descended from *Thomas Stanley*.

Our congratulations to all, and welcome to the Society!



## Where Are The Founders Buried?

### *Part One*

**By Raymond S. Nichols  
Council Member**

In 1636, Thomas Hooker led his congregation down the Connecticut River from Cambridge, Mass., to settle at the point where the Little River joined the Connecticut. They set up shelters, started farms, built churches and businesses, and had families. Inevitably they died. We, the descendants of these Founders, naturally ask ourselves the question "Where are our ancestors buried?"

That question is important to the descendants and to historians who study the development of Hartford and New England, but it is not easily answered. And it's not made any easier by the fact that we don't know exactly who all the founders were. As historians, genealogists and geneticists do research, they are finding more and more of them. The Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford is engaged in a current project to better document our founders, led by our able genealogist, Professor Timothy Jacobs.

One thing we do know is that early denizens of Hartford established a cemetery now known as the Ancient Burying Ground, and from this cemetery's records, we know that some of the founders are buried there. Governor John Haynes, for example, the first governor of Connecticut, and Elder John Talcott, a deacon and stalwart of Hooker's church, are there.

It is telling that we don't know whether Thomas Hooker himself is buried in the Ancient Burying Ground. Others, such as Gov. Thomas Wells (my ancestor), may or may not be buried there. Not

only were the first markers made of wood that long ago disintegrated, but also part of the space taken up by the Ground was later used for commercial development and for a new church structure. The remains of many buried there were dug up and discarded in the 19th century to make room for a growing city.

Another fact, perhaps more important to historians, is the fact that many founders moved away from Hartford. A big event in Hartford's history was a conflict in the early church. After Hooker died in 1647, a second church was established several hundred yards across the Little River from the first church, an act of separation not usually seen in churches in early New England. The division was an indication that all was not well. Besides splitting the church in two, the conflict caused some members to move away from Hartford, with one group going up the Connecticut River to towns like Northampton and Hadley, Mass., and another going down the river to towns in New Haven and Fairfield counties in Connecticut.

### *Part Two Continued In The Spring Newsletter*

**Ray Nichols is also a member of  
the Board of the Ancient  
Burying Ground.**

## **Massing of Colors Is October 2, 2016**

The annual Massing of the Colors ceremony and worship service will be held on Sunday, October 2, 2016, at the First Congregational Church in Lebanon, Conn. This brings together hereditary and patriotic organizations.

Next year's host organization is the Connecticut Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Save the date!