
Founders News

Newsletter of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford November 2017

The True Story of a Longtime Connecticut Clan

Diana Ross McCain, author of the novel *Thy Children's Children*, will be the speaker at next spring's Annual Court and Dinner of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford. The meeting will be on May 8, 2018 at the Town & County Club in Hartford.

Cocktail hour begins at 6:00 p.m. at the club, 22 Woodland St., Hartford. Dinner will be at 7:00, with Ms. McCain's talk to follow.

Her book is based on the true story of the first five generations of the Lyman family of Middlefield, Connecticut. Between 1741 and 1871, Lyman men and women established and nurtured a farm and homestead that are owned by descendants to this day. Their dreams were much the same as those of people of today: opportunity and freedom to create and support a family, a home, and a community, and to leave the legacy of a bright future for their children and grandchildren.

They pursued these goals while grappling with the harsh challenges of life in a time when every aspect of existence, from housekeeping to medicine to transportation to communication, was far different from modern circumstances – and usually more primitive. Sometimes they succeeded, sometimes they failed, but always they persevered.



Diana Ross McCain

Lyman men also took part, often at great personal peril, in political, moral, and economic movements that shaped the course of American history. One generation fought for American independence on the battlefield and the home front. Another crusaded to abolish slavery from the United States. Another pioneered manufacturing and transportation innovations. Today the eighth and ninth generations of Lyman operate Lyman Orchards, an 1,100-acre agricultural and recreational complex that includes the land first purchased in 1741.

Ms. McCain will provide an overview of the role the Lyman family played in the critical events that transformed a handful of American colonies into a young nation on the cusp of the modern industrial era. She will share how she melded

historical fact with imagination to craft a work of fiction that breathes life into the people and the events of this period, making it more accessible to readers. She will highlight examples of how information gleaned from historical records provided the framework for chapters on everything from daily life to historical milestones, as well as for shaping the personalities of characters in the novel.

“While any good novel needs to tell a compelling and entertaining story,” says Ms. McCain, “well-researched historical fiction offers

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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.

They are: No. 1915, Judith Ann Hanauer Plemel of Owatonna, Minnesota, descended from *John Hopkins*; 1916, Laura Owen Jones Shafer of West Hartford, Connecticut, descended from *Thomas Welles*; 1917, Geneva Ann Lavery of Bend, Oregon, descended from *Paul Peck*; 1918, Barbara Mae Bond Chesney of Dallas, Texas, from *Robert Day*, and 1919, Patricia Kelso Finnegan of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., from *Thomas Lord*.

Congratulations to all!

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something more. The reader knows that much of the action in the book actually happened, and that even portions that are mostly or entirely invented reflect the realities of the time period and culture in which the novel is set.”

Thy Children's Children is based on two decades of research into the Lyman family by Ms. McCain, an independent historian with more than 30 years of experience in researching and writing history.

Connecticut State Historian Dr. Walter Woodward, who has addressed the Society in the past, praised the book as “the story of a real family in the thick of Connecticut and American history for more than a century, told in a novel that accurately portrays the past and is also a great read.”

Ms. McCain holds bachelor's and master's degrees in history, and was on the staff of the Connecticut Historical Society for 25 years.

She is the author of several non-fiction works of history, including *It Happened in Connecticut*, *Mysteries and Legends of New England*, and *Connecticut Coast*. She is a partner in “Come Home to Connecticut,” an enterprise which offers historical and genealogical research services, consulting, and programming.



Another Request For Your E-Mail

Postage expenses are among the biggest annual costs of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford. In an effort to better serve our members, we are now sending this newsletter electronically instead of by postal mail.

This will allow us to provide more timely and complete news of the Society's doings, and will also save us considerable expense – funds that can go toward supporting groups that promote the history of Hartford.

Two years ago, we asked all members to send their current e-mail addresses to Bob Hall, Governor of the Society, and many did. But we still need to hear from many members, so please take this as a request to write him. Bob is at rshallct@gmail.com.

Please be assured that the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford will use your e-mail address solely for the purpose of communicating news of the Society to you.

Your address will not be shared with anyone else, nor will it be used for advertising.

If you do not presently use e-mail, send a notice to that effect to our post office box: Founders of Hartford, P. O. Box 270215, West Hartford, CT 06107-0215.

We continue to print a limited number of newsletters and send them by postal mail to the few members without e-mail.

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 the Founders post office box (see below) or by writing him at rshallct@gmail.com.



Consider Membership For Your Descendants

Looking for the perfect gift for a child, grandchild, or great-grandchild? How about lifetime membership in the Society?

If you are a member, it's easy for your descendants to join. All they, or you, need are your membership number, proof that the person is descended from you by blood, and the lifetime membership fee.

All the “heavy lifting” of proof establishing your descent from a Founder of Hartford has already been done, so all your child, grandchild, or great-grandchild need do is prove descent from you. That can be done using birth certificates, easily obtained from the town of birth. Wouldn't it be a meaningful gift to a newborn to have a lifetime link to Hartford's earliest days?

Membership information may be found on the Society's website, foundersofhartford.org (select “Membership”).