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# Founders News

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*Newsletter of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford April 2017*

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## On May 9, a Unique Opportunity to See History

**O**riginal documents and other artifacts vital to the founding of Hartford will, for the first time, be available for members of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford to view this spring. The event will be the 2017 Court and Dinner of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford, which will be held on Tuesday, May 9.

**Attendance at this special Court and Dinner is strictly limited to 100 people, so be sure to sign up now. A form is enclosed with this newsletter.**

Our members will have an extraordinary opportunity to preview a most special exhibit organized by our Society and the Connecticut Historical Society. It will deal with the issue, “Why Connecticut is the Constitution State.”

Founders Council Corresponding Secretary Bill Faude has located primary documents at the Connecticut Historical Society, the State Library, and the Hartford History Center. At the Court and Dinner, Bill will entertain us with his vast knowledge of these priceless documents. He will explain their importance to the history not just of Hartford, or of Connecticut, but to the United States itself, because in 1787, they were instrumental in influencing the creation of the United States Constitution.



### **The Rev. Thomas Hooker**

This is an important exhibit, featuring material not generally seen by the public, and will be of interest to anyone with links such as ours to the founding of Hartford.

Here are the details: The Dinner will be held on Tuesday, May 9, at the Connecticut Historical Society, 1 Elizabeth Street, Hartford. Early admission to the exhibit will be at 5:30 p.m.; a cash bar with wine and beer will open at 5:30, and dinner will be at 6:15, with Bill Faude’s discussion to follow. The exhibit will remain open until 9:15.

Among the documents on view will be The Fundamental Orders of 1639, said to be the first written

constitution in the Western tradition; the journal of Hartford founder Thomas Hooker, in his own hand; the first page of the “Distribution of Land, 1639” (a primary record in determining who is a Founder of Hartford); and the Great Charter of 1662, which gave Connecticut citizens rights not enjoyed by those who lived in other colonies.

Another important artifact will be Henry Wolcott’s notebook of 1638, in which he recorded Thomas Hooker’s sermon that states the essence of constitutionalism: “the foundation of authority is laid firstly in the consent of the people ... they who have power to appoint officers and magistrates ... it is their power also to set the bounds and limits of the power.”

It is believed that this will be the first time these priceless seminal documents will be presented together.

The Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford is grateful to the Connecticut State Library, the Town and City clerk of Hartford, the Hartford History Center of the Hartford Public Library, and the Connecticut Historical Society for their participation and support. Framing the exhibition is the late Ralph Elliot’s essay “Connecticut’s Constitution and the Constitution State.”

# Ancestors, Written in Stone – for You

Was your ancestor's name on the original Founders Monument? If so, would you like to have it?

Here's the background: In 1836, the bicentennial of Hartford's founding, an earlier incarnation of the Ancient Burying Ground Association erected the original Founders Monument obelisk in the Ancient Burying Ground on Hartford's Main Street.

This group also cleaned up the neglected cemetery, laid down gravel paths, and straightened and restored gravestones. In the 20th century, a few years before Hartford approached its 300th anniversary, the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford was formed. At that time, its Ancient Burying Ground Committee attempted preservation work on the brownstone monument, but was unable to arrest the weathering of the brownstone.

In 1986, the Founders replaced the obelisk with one of Connecticut pink granite, added newly discovered Founders names, and alphabetized the list. Most of the name pieces from the original monument were saved, with the hopes that they would find a home with one of their descendants.

Our Society gave the names to the newly-formed Ancient Burying Ground Association (which had been spun off from the SDFH), so they could be used as a fundraiser.

**A number of these original name pieces have been claimed, but most are available, for a donation of \$300 (or more should you be so moved!).** Funds will help with the ongoing work in

the ABG, conserving the gravestones and other historic material and educating visitors on Hartford's early history. Following is the list of available names. If you are interested, please contact the Ancient Burying Ground Association at (860) 280-4145, or by email at: [contact@theancientburyingground.org](mailto:contact@theancientburyingground.org).

Those in parentheses may have been taken already, or may be missing. Please check with the Association:

Jeremy Adams, Thomas Alcott, (Matthew Allyn), Francis Andrews, William Andrews, John Arnold, Andrew Bacon, John Barnard, Robert Bartlett, John Baysey, John Bidwell, Thomas Birchwood, Thomas Bliss, William Bloomfield, Thomas Bull, Thomas Bunce, Benjamin Burr, Richard Butler, William Butler.

Also, Clement Chaplin, John Clark, Nicholas Clark, James Cole, John Crow, Robert Day, Joseph Easton, Edward Elmer, James Ensign, Zachariah Field, William Gibbons, Richard Goodman, William Goodwin, Seth Grant, George Graves, Samuel Greenhill.

Also, Samuel Hale, Thomas Hale, (John Haynes), William Heyton, William Hill, William Holton, Edward Hopkins, John Hopkins, Thomas Hosmer, Thomas Judd, (William Kelsey), William Lewis, Richard Lord, Richard Lyman, Matthew Marven, John Maynard, John Moody.

Also, (James Olmsted), William Parker, William Pentrey, (Stephen Post), John Pratt, William Pratt, Nathaniel Richards, Thomas Root, William Rusco, Thomas Scott, Thomas Selden, (Richard Seymour), John Skinner, Arthur Smith, Thomas Spencer, William Spencer, Edward Stebbing, George Steele, John Steele.

Also, George Stocking, Samuel Stone, William Wadsworth, Samuel Wakeman, Nathaniel Ward, Andrew Warner, Richard Webb, William Westwood, John White, William Whiting, John Wilcox, and Gregory Wolterton.

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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 of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford. They are:

No. 1912, Ann Elizabeth Higgins Cox of Omaha, Nebraska, a descendant of *George Stocking*; 1913, Cynthia Marie Oliver Mitzen of Hillsborough, New Jersey, a descendent of *Edward Elmer*; and 1914, Sumner Gary Hunnewell of Arnold, Missouri, a descendant of *Thomas Hosmer*.

Our congratulations to all, and welcome to the Society!

### Show Your Pride With Our Insignia

There are several ways you may show your membership in the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford:

Rosettes are \$15 each; small medals are \$60, or \$55 if purchased at the Annual Court and Dinner; large medals are \$135, or \$125 if bought at the Court and Dinner; and a genuine full-size Founders of Hartford Flag is \$200.

Anyone interested should write to P. O. Box 270215, West Hartford, CT 06107-0215 or by emailing Governor Bob Hall at [rshallct@gmail.com](mailto:rshallct@gmail.com).