

New York Mayflower

Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New York Vol. 25, No. 7 Summer 2023

A Message from the Executive Director

We have a busy and exciting calendar this fall!

On September 28, we'll be hosting a screening of the recently released documentary on our 30th President, **Calvin Coolidge**. Coolidge, a Mayflower descendant, is probably best known as a man of few words, "Silent Cal." But after watching this documentary, you'll realize his presidency was hardly silent in terms of accomplishments. We are honored to have best-selling author **Amity Shlaes**, Chair of the Coolidge Foundation, introduce the film.

On October 24, we'll be holding our Fall reception with author, **Rebecca Fraser**. Rebecca, who lives in London, spent months in Massachusetts researching the Mayflower passengers and their story. Her presentation will have a special focus on the women of the Mayflower. See details on both events on page 15.

And speaking of the women on the Mayflower, read our story about **Mary Brewster** on page 6.

On Saturday, November 4, we'll hold our 69th Annual Mayflower Ball at the Union Club. We have three impressive young women being presented. See **Steve Madsen's** piece on the Ball plans on page 2.

Aside from event news, this issue includes an interview with Board of Assistants Secretary, **Jennifer Wallace Dobbs**. In addition to her busy day job as a money manager, Jennifer finds time to read some thought-provoking books – consideration for your summer reading!

We want to congratulate our three new Board of Assistants members: **Susan Abanor**, **Erika Billick** and **Anna Rich**. See page 3.

And what better way to share the Mayflower story than by sharing your news. Our member news is a great way to communicate with one another on important life events and travels. **Deborah Sampson** penned an article on her family's recent visit to Plymouth. Her husband, Bill, is a descendant of Miles Standish. Read her story and other member news on page 8.

Our governor, **Justin Abelow**, wants to ensure our new members have a great Mayflower experience. To enhance that experience, seasoned members have volunteered to serve as "Ambassadors" who will mentor new members with the goal of increasing member engagement and participation with our society.

On our last pages we have a fun photo gallery of this year's winter/spring/summer events – ranging from the Young Members' Mid-Winter Soiree in February to our recent summer solstice party.



I hope you have a great summer and discover a good book to read and some fun places to travel!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robin D. Weaver".

Robin D. Weaver
Executive Director

What does it mean when we say we are “having a ball”?

Steve Madsen

Well, many people take it to mean something like “we are having a very nice time”. Others may think it means “well, this is fun!” What it really means, though, is something along these lines: “Holy mackerel, I have not had so much fun in a very long time! What a blast!”

You see, a “ball”, properly understood, is the very apex and pinnacle of happy, exciting conviviality, enjoyed with friends and family, with music, dancing, fabulous food and drink, and wonderful, glittering and glamorous people. And guess what: your Society will be having a ball, for the 69th time, this fall, on Saturday, November 4, 2023. Yes, it will be the 2023 Mayflower Ball.

Now, some may think of a debutante ball as a dreary snooze, where elderly relatives parade around young ladies who do not really want to be there. Well, anyone who thinks that has never been to the Mayflower Ball. Our Ball will be held in one of New York City’s most fabulous venues: the West Room at the Union Club. It features a Thanksgiving-style menu of great deliciousness, and a renowned orchestra playing the most engaging and energizing dance music. The company consists of members and friends of our New York Mayflower Society and the families and friends of our debutantes – in other words, it is a room full of people who are probably remote cousins, who will be discovering delightful connections all evening long. And then there are the debutantes! A group of attractive and highly accomplished young ladies, from all parts of the country, indeed the world (this year, they come from Florida, Minnesota and the U.K.), who are escorted by handsome young fellows in evening clothes, and who will dance the night away with joyful enthusiasm.

For young people, particularly, the Ball gives new meaning to the term “having a ball”. The Ball itself is wonderful fun – but it is neither the beginning nor the end of the fun that is the Mayflower Ball weekend. The Ball itself is preceded by a cocktail gathering on Friday night at the 3 West Club, where the debutantes and their families and escorts have an opportunity to meet the leaders of the New York Mayflower Society and get a preview of the festivities to come. Then, the night of the Ball, the fun does not stop simply because the orchestra stops playing and packs up to go home. There are after parties where the debutantes and the other young people, possessed of youthful elan (and stamina), continue to revel well into the wee hours.

So, how could you miss it? How could you decide not to have a [Mayflower] Ball? We hope to see you there! It will be the highlight of the season, and we guarantee that you will have a Ball!

New Board of Assistants Members

Please join us in welcoming three new members to the Board of Assistants

Susan Abanor – Historian

Susan Abanor, a long-standing member of the Society, joins the Board as Historian. She's worn many hats for the Society serving as the AG for New York State, member of the Board of Assistants from 1998-2004 and historian in 2002. She is also a member of the European and Australian Society of Mayflower Descendants.

Susan and her family have hosted the Plimoth Patuxet educators for the New York State Mayflower Society for more than 20 years, usually twice a year in the spring and fall.

For the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, she is a member of the DNA committee and was the Chairperson on the Women of the Mayflower Committee.

In her spare time, she is an Administrator for the Family Tree DNA Mayflower Project and does research on the MtDNA of the Mayflower mothers.

Susan lives in Manhattan with her husband Harold Wooley. Her two children, Sarah and Evan, and her son-in-law, Ephraim Lazar, are all life members of the New York Society.

Susan descends from many Mayflower passengers: William Brewster, Stephen Hopkins, William Mullins, Peter Brown, Myles Standish, Mary Norris, John Alden, Isaac Allerton, Henry Samson, Francis Cooke, Elizabeth Fisher, Edward Doty, and Degory Priest.

Erika Billick – Surgeon

Erika Billick, our new surgeon, grew up in Los Angeles, but has been living in New York City for over 20 years. She holds both an MD and PhD. Erika is a graduate of UCLA and later received her PhD in biology from Rockefeller University. She has an MD from Weill Cornell Medical College. Erika was a debutante at the Mayflower ball in 1999. She worked as a medical scientist for 15 years before turning to medical editing, while raising two young children. She has served as secretary of the board of ShareLove.Fund since 2020.

Erika descends from Francis Cooke.

Anna Rich

Anna Rich is a native of Marianna, Florida and a graduate of Florida State University and the University of Richmond T.C. Williams School of Law. In addition to the Mayflower Society, where Anna serves on the Ball and Education Outreach committees, Anna is a member of the Colonial Dames of America, where she serves on the Board of Managers, and National Society of Colonial Dames in the State of New York. She is a volunteer for the New York Junior League and a member of the Scholarship Grading Committee for the Kappa Delta Foundation.

Anna lives in Manhattan and is married to David Rich. They have two sons, William and Henry.

Anna descends from John Howland.

Meet our Secretary – Jennifer Wallace Dobbs



Jennifer Wallace has more than 25 years of investment experience and is a Co-Founding Partner, the Chief Investment Officer and the Portfolio Manager of Summit Street Capital Management, LLC. Prior to co-founding Summit Street, Jenny worked with the Robert M. Bass investment groups, was a consultant with McKinsey & Company, and an investment banker. Jenny earned a BA from Columbia College and an MBA from the Columbia University Graduate School of Business, where she received Beta Gamma Sigma honors as well as other awards and prizes. In addition, Jenny serves on the Advisory Board of The Heilbrunn Center for Graham & Dodd Investing at the Columbia Business School, serves on the Board and as the Secretary of the NY Society of Mayflower Descendants, serves on the Board and Co-Chairs the Finance Committee of The Colonial Dames of America, and is a former President of the Garden Club of Lawrence.

Why do you think it's so important to honor the Mayflower landing at Plymouth Rock and our Pilgrim ancestors?

I believe it is important to honor our Pilgrim ancestors because they were a group of ambitious and courageous people who were persecuted for their religious beliefs and sought a life in which they could live and worship freely. Our ancestors authored the Mayflower Compact, which introduced the principles of religious freedom, the rule of law and economic liberty that have shaped the United States since its signing. These values are particularly important to remember in a society where many lessons in basic civics go untaught.

What does being a member of the New York Mayflower Society mean to you?

Being a member of the NYSOMD provides an opportunity to affiliate with a proximate group of individuals with a common appreciation of and respect for the tremendous achievements of our shared ancestors. Being a member of the NYSOMD also comes with a responsibility to preserve our shared heritage through educational outreach in order to ensure that the values of the early Pilgrims are remembered.

You have been very instrumental in the development of the Society's Investment Policy. What do you think members need to understand about the fiduciary responsibilities of the Board of Assistants and specifically the Investment Committee?

Because of the generosity of members over the years, the NYSOMD has a modest endowment that provides the financial resources to support the educational and other outreach of the society. Among other responsibilities, the Board of Assistants has a fiduciary duty to preserve and grow this endowment. To do this, it is important to have an investment policy that is consistent with and likely to be supportive of the work of the Society.

How does your background and professional career help in your roles with Society?

My background in finance and strategy provides a perspective on both leadership and investment for our Society. As a value-minded and long-term focused investor, my professional career is aligned with the long-term investment horizon that our society has the benefit to enjoy with its endowment. Our society undertakes an unlevered investment strategy, and we aim to structure the finances of the society to reap the beneficial power of compounding over time. As Leo Tolstoy wrote, “the two most powerful warriors are patience and time.” I hope I can help the Society benefit from these advantages.

What do you like to do for fun? Tell us about your hobbies.

When I am not working, I enjoy travel, spending time with my husband and grown children, playing tennis, golf, and recently pickle ball, gardening, and cooking with fresh produce grown at home.

What's the last great book you've read?

I would highlight four books that I have recently read: *The Righteous Mind*, by Jonathan Haidt; *The Strategy of Denial*, by Elbridge Colby; *Madison Park: A Place of Hope*, by Eric Motley; and *The Power of Habit*, by Charles Duhigg.

Mary Brewster: “Matriarch” of the Pilgrims

While there's not as much known about Mary Brewster as we would like, we do have some established facts about her life and family.

According to records, Mary was born in about 1569 in either Yorkshire or Nottinghamshire in England. She married Elder William Brewster and lived with him and their children for a time in a place called “Scrooby Manor.” See the photos of Scrooby Manor below, courtesy of our historian, Susan Abanor. The Brewsters were heavily involved in the “Separatist” movement in England and held clandestine meetings in their home. The Separatists were a group of English Protestants that wanted to “separate” from the Church of England, which they viewed, among other things, as corrupt. The 16th and 17th centuries were a period of great conflict and religious wars in England. Think of Mary Queen of Scots and Elizabeth the First. We all know how that ended!



Eventually Mary and William, along with their children, left England for Leiden in the Netherlands. Holland had long been a place of refuge for religious dissidents. The Brewsters left for Leiden in about 1608. They remained in the Netherlands with their children until 1620, before setting sail for America on the Mayflower. Not all of their children took the voyage with them. Only their youngest, Love and Wrestling, accompanied them. Their son Jonathan came to America in 1621, with Patience and Fear joining the rest of their family in 1623.

Mary was one of only five women to survive the first winter in Plymouth, and one of only four women to survive past the first Thanksgiving in 1621.

Given Mary's age, longevity and likely leadership skills, some historians have referred to her as the “matriarch.” She lived until about age 60 (dying in 1627), and she mothered not only her own children but also the orphaned children of other Mayflower passengers and pilgrims.

Mary's progeny did quite well. One particularly notable descendant of her son Jonathan is Kingman Brewster Jr., the late president of Yale University and Ambassador to the United Kingdom. Interestingly enough, Kingman died in Oxford, England – the long ago home of his ancestors, William, and Mary Brewster.

Note: According to our historian, Susan Abanor, one possible way to find out who Mary's birth family is is through her mitochondrial DNA, which is passed down from mothers and constitutes a connection on all the female lineage. On the Family Tree MtDNA Project you can find results of a woman with a GSMD approved all female lineage to Mary Brewster.



Photo credits to Susan Abanor

Exploring Plymouth's Rich History

Deborah Sampson

We recently embarked on a captivating journey to Plymouth, Massachusetts, after discovering that my husband, Willard ("Bill") Sampson, is a descendant of two notable figures from American history—Myles Standish and John Alden. Eager to delve into our ancestral roots, we set off for a memorable visit to this historic town.

In May, Bill, our son Brian, and I had the pleasure of staying in a charming two-bedroom Airbnb located at 16 Franklin Street. Dating back to 1850, the accommodation offered a perfect blend of comfort and proximity to the area's key attractions. From our convenient base, we set out on foot to explore the fascinating sites that Plymouth had to offer.



Our journey began along Leyden Street, formerly known as First Street during the 1600s. This historic street is recognized as the original location of the Plymouth Colony and stands as the oldest continually occupied street in North America. We continued our stroll, visiting notable landmarks such as the Howland House, Brewster Garden, Billington and Bradford house markers, the First Church, and the serene Burial Hill. Our exploration also led us to the waterfront, where we indulged in some souvenir shopping. Additionally, we made our way to the impressive Forefather's Monument, the largest solid granite monument in the world.

The following day, we had the opportunity to visit the Grist Mill, which pleasantly surprised us with its engaging exhibits. We couldn't resist purchasing some blue grits to commemorate our visit. The Pilgrim Museum captivated us with its display of "Gideon," a historical artifact believed to have belonged to Myles Standish, although its backstory remains a subject of debate. Another highlight was boarding the Mayflower II, where Brian struck up an intriguing conversation with one of the "crew members" regarding the constant influx of distant relatives.

For those considering a visit to Duxbury, we highly recommend making a stop at the Chestnut Street Café during lunchtime. We enjoyed a delightful meal there, savoring the local flavors. Another immersive experience awaited us at the Plimoth Patuxet Village, where individuals don period costumes and assume the roles of the Mayflower historical figures. We had the pleasure of meeting Edward "Ned" Doty, Ms. Soule, and William Bradford, the latter of whom engaged Bill and Brian in some woodcutting activities. The visit to Myles Standish's grave left us in awe, with the resting places of John and Priscilla

Alden situated nearby. Among the other Sampson family graves, we encountered those of Lucy and Redekah Sampson, the wife of John Sampson. We also took the opportunity to explore the picturesque Standish State Forest, where Bill and Brian ascended a hill to catch a glimpse of the monument. To conclude our trip, we visited Myles Standish's former homestead site in Duxbury—a location that unquestionably showcased the beauty that captivated him.

As our weekend drew to a close, we couldn't help but feel that there were still many treasures left to uncover in Plymouth. One of our regrets was missing the opportunity to visit The Mayflower Society, which happened to be closed during our stay from Friday to Sunday—the very days we were in town. Nonetheless, our journey through Plymouth left an indelible mark, deepening our appreciation for the history that unfolded in this remarkable place.

If you find yourself yearning for an enriching historical experience, we wholeheartedly recommend a trip to Plymouth. Immerse yourself in the stories of the Pilgrims, walk the streets they once trod upon, and uncover the profound connections that lie within our shared heritage.

[I highly recommend watching *Saints and Strangers* before going, as it provides excellent background for a visit to Plymouth. It is very well done and has excellent acting.]



Member News

Births

Madeline Heinbockel reports that she gave birth to a baby girl named Brooke Patton Heinbockel – a new Edward Doty descendant.

Virginia Jacobsen sends word that she is expecting three more great-grandchildren this summer. Her granddaughter, Elizabeth Alden Patterson Point, had a baby girl on June 1.

Adam Yaari reports that he and his wife Amanda welcomed a son, Avery Ulysses Palmer Yaari on May 21. Avery is named after colonial military leader, James Avery, his 11x great grandfather.

Graduations

Bob Cowdery reports that son Trenner Cowdery will be graduating from high school on June 25 and will be attending the University of Vermont in the fall with a focus on Environmental Science.

Anna Rich reports that her son William graduated with distinction from the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia on May 16 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and French. William has commissioned in the U.S. Army as an Infantry Second Lieutenant.

Lesley Tilghman graduated from Smith College in three and a half years, hiked the entire 2,193 mile Appalachian Trail and became a Mayflower deb all in one year!

Mary Zupa reports that her granddaughter, Whitney Grace Shyposh, graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University on May 17. The graduation ceremony was held at MetLife Stadium.

Weddings

Albeit a “tardy” update, Alexandra Barter-Carse reports that she married Kevin Barter in December 2020. They welcomed their first child, Fredrik Tex Barter-Carse, in April 2022. They continue to live in London.

Robyn Hosley reports that her son, Christopher, got married on June 15 to Taylor Nicole Teal at St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Delmar, New York. The reception was held at the Saratoga National Golf Course. Christopher is a descendant of William Bradford and John Billington.

Retirements

CDR Walter J. Zapf III, 10th great-grandson of John Howland and sister of Mayflower member, Vicky Zapf Stefanik, will retire at a ceremony to be conducted on July 14 at Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base, Georgia. Ms. Stefanik will give the keynote address. CDR Zapf has served thirty-three years in the United States Navy, and has been stationed at bases including Pearl Harbor; Rota, Spain; Naples, Italy; at the Naval Yard in Washington D.C.; and on the USS George H.W. Bush.

Travels

Jody Watkins reports that as much as she loves NYC, she has found a second life on Laxnes Farm in Iceland where she keeps her favorite horse, galloping through fields of purple flowers and riding to spectacular waterfalls.

News from the Colonies

Albany

Albany Colony Compact Day Meeting is on November 4 at the Albany Country Club from noon to 3pm.

Buffalo

The Buffalo Colony is offering a Mayflower Ship Wooden kit in 1:65 scale. The ship costs \$100.00. If interested, please contact Christine Berg, the Buffalo Colony Governor at carlnchris67@gmail.com.



Photo Gallery

Mid-Winter Soiree



(Front left to right)

Lara Mizrack, Jennifer Truman, Erik Jacobsen, Euphemia Kilmer, CDA guest, Jonathan Doucette, Erica Zick, Charles Mackenzie, Margaret Gaby, Kate Brady, Amelia Huster, Christine Brown, Reid Brawer

(Back left to right)

Brian Sampson, Scott Dwyer, Thomas Boyle, Paul Stankus, Brandon Sokol, Adrian Burke, William Burke, David Disi, Camilla Bowden, Tom Abel

Cousin's Dinner



Governor Justin Abelow and Governor General Jane Hurt

Annual Meeting with Kate LaPrad



From left to right:
Friend, Erica Zick, Christine Brown, Erika Billick, Jennifer Rolfe, Speaker Kate LaPrad, Jonathan Doucette, Charles MacKenzie, and friends

Summer Solstice Party – Cedarhurst Yacht Club



CDA President General and Vocalist Rebecca Madsen



Friends and Judith Underword



William and Henry Rich and Charles Dorkey III

Upcoming Events

Thursday, September 28, 2023

Coolidge Screening

3 West Club

Formal invitations to be sent

Tuesday, October 24, 2023

Fall Reception

The Colony Club

Guest Speaker: Author Rebecca Fraser

Formal invitations to be sent

Saturday, November 4, 2023

Albany Colony Compact Day Meeting

Albany Country Club

Saturday, November 4, 2023

69th Annual Debutante Ball

Union Club

COOLIDGE

REDISCOVERING AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT

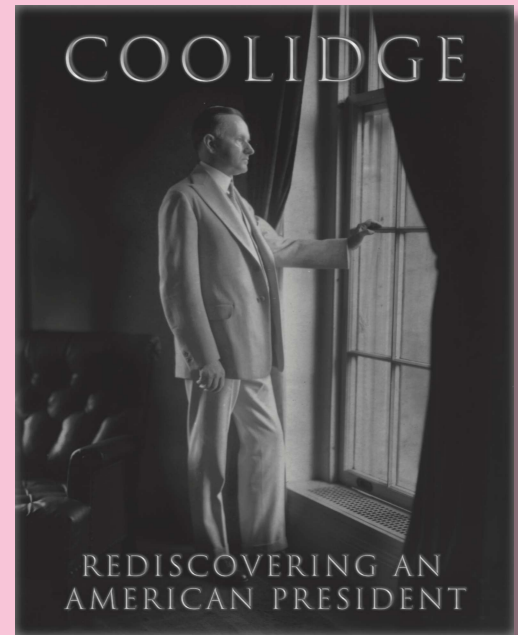
Marking the 100th Anniversary of a Misunderstood Presidency

Screening to be held on:

Thursday, September 28, 2023 • 6:30-8:30pm
3 West Club (Pratt Lounge)
3 West 51st Street New York, NY

Coolidge: Rediscovering an American President reveals a leader who offers urgent lessons for our age of inflation, exploding debt, and partisan rancor.

This documentary, directed by award-winning filmmaker Paul Sanderson, features interviews with Steve Forbes, Amity Shlaes, Jon Meacham, Gov. Michael Dukakis, Judge Edith Jones, George Nash, and many others!



The New York Mayflower Society is pleased to present at this year's fall reception,
Author Rebecca Fraser

Rebecca Fraser Speaks on *The Women of the Mayflower*

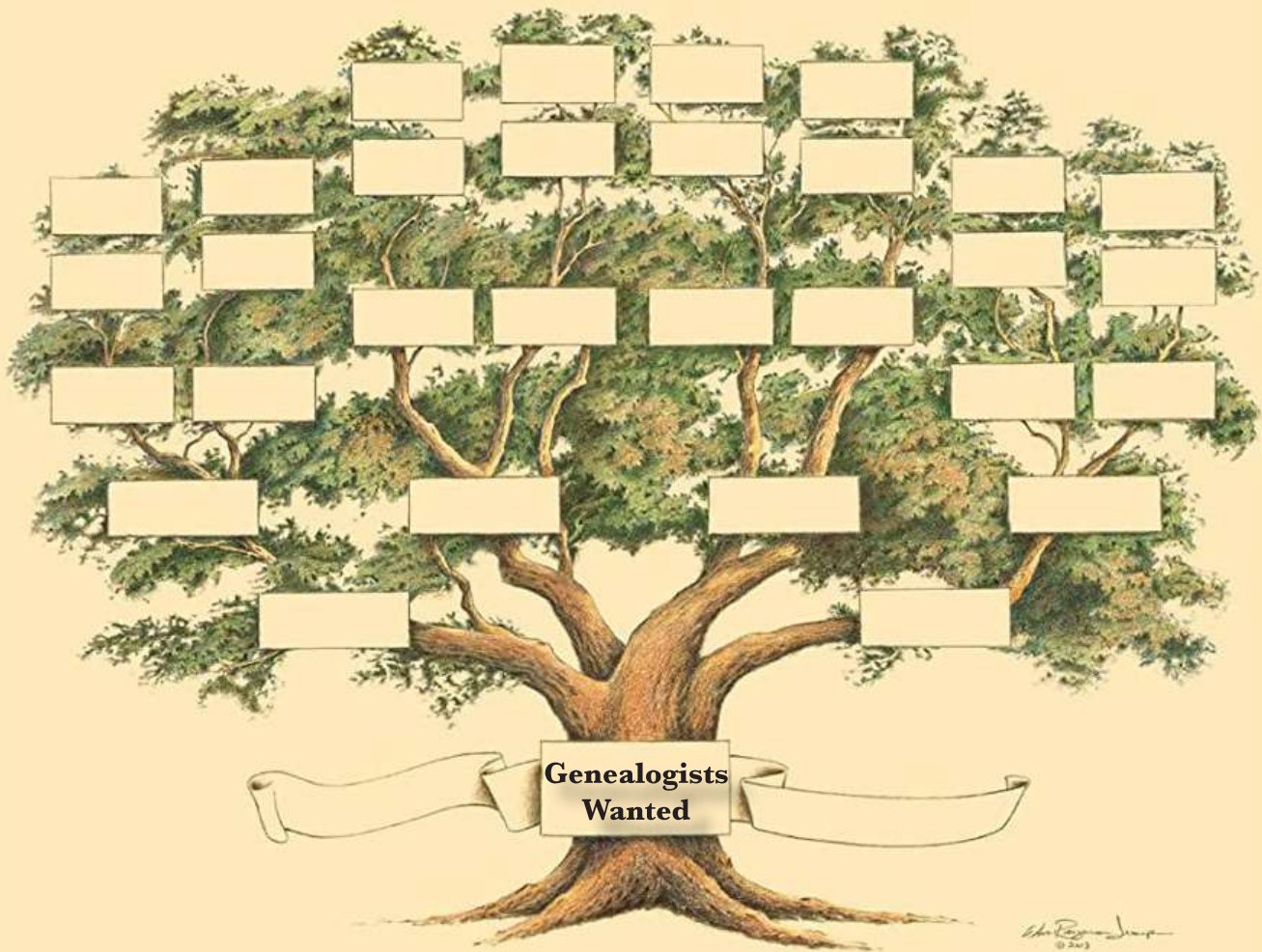
Tuesday, October 24, 2023 // 6:30-8:30 p.m.

The Colony Club
564 Park Avenue New York, NY



The English historian Rebecca Fraser will be speaking about the courageous women who sailed on the Mayflower. She will be contextualising them in their English background and drawing on the many discoveries she made in London while researching her acclaimed book *The Mayflower: The Families, the Voyage, and the Founding of America*.

Rebecca Fraser's previous work include a biography of Charlotte Bronte and *The Story of Britain*. She reviews for the *Times Literary Supplement* and *The Oldie* and appears on radio and television. Rebecca is the daughter of acclaimed biographer, Lady Antonia Fraser.



Do you have an interest in historical research?

Have you already explored your ancestry?

Would you like to help prospective members discover and confirm their Mayflower ancestry?

The New York Society is looking for individuals who would like to help our historians with their research.

Please contact Executive Director Robin Weaver if you are interested at rweaver@mayflowernewyork.org.