



## Francis Cooke Society Newsletter

### SPECIAL Time Sensitive Issue

Spring 2012

Vol. 10, No. 1

#### **About the Francis Cooke Society (FCS)**

**The FCS was formed in 2003 when it came to the attention of several founding members that there was no existing family society named in Pilgrim Francis Cooke's memory. In addition to honoring Francis Cooke's contributions to Plymouth Colony, FCS serves as a forum for members to exchange information and assists descendants of Francis Cooke in acquiring acceptable proofs of eligibility for membership in the General Society of Mayflower Descendants.**

#### **President's Corner**

**Dear Cousins and Fellow Francis Cooke Society Members:**

**Welcome to all old and new members. In this edition we have an article about the 2011 fire at the Plimoth Plantation Francis Cooke house and a request to join with fellow FCS members in contributing to help rebuild the house.**

**We also are asking you to join with us in supporting the Mayflower Society Garden Walkway Project.**

**We wish each of you a great Spring & Summer. May you enjoy reading our Spring 2012 Newsletter. Please let Judd or I know if you have any suggestions or comments.**

**Sincerely,  
J. Scott McKay, President  
1298 SW 15th Street  
Boca Raton, Florida 33486**

### **From The Trunk**

**By Judd Taylor**

**I hope you find this Special time sensitive issue of the FCS Newsletter to be informative & an enjoyable read.**

**I have reduced the material covered in this issue due to the time sensitive requests mentioned below.**

**First, please consider making a donation to help rebuild the Francis Cooke house at Plimoth Plantation. As many of you know the house was destroyed by fire in the fall of 2011. More details can be found in an article below.**

**Our FCS is also asking for your help in purchasing a commemorative brick for the 2<sup>nd</sup> installation of the Mayflower House Garden Walkway. This brick will honor the Francis Cooke Society in the new walkway.**

**Details of each project are found in the articles below.**

### ***Research Methods & Procedures For Mayflower Applications***

**Cousins: Here are a few notes & sites you may want to review.**

**[http://genealogy.about.com/cs/free\\_genealogy/a/free\\_sites.htm](http://genealogy.about.com/cs/free_genealogy/a/free_sites.htm)**

**Middleboro Public Library is home to the Sylvia Trust Genealogy and Cranberry Collections <http://www.midlib.org/> Google books have complete copies of many vital records and New England & other town history information.**

**<http://books.google.com/>**

**A lot of this Google books information can be downloaded to a CD or a computer.**

**Check out these web sites for your genealogical research:**

**<http://www.familytreedna.com/public/cook/default.aspx?section=news>**

**[http://genealogy.about.com/od/dna\\_genetics/gr/roots.htm](http://genealogy.about.com/od/dna_genetics/gr/roots.htm)**

**You might enjoy visiting the website for the church St. Mary's Hotherhithe and read about their connection to the Pilgrims:**

**Here is the link**

**[http://www.stmaryrotherhithe.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=3](http://www.stmaryrotherhithe.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=3)**

**It also includes plaques for Mayflower Captain Christopher Jones who was a member of the church and was buried in the church yard in 1622. There other memorial plaques and a 275th anniversary print shown on this site.**

**Nearby is the Mayflower Pub--Allan Schoenberg, A FCS member who lives in London, posted its picture on our FCS Facebook site last fall?**

**It is fun to learn about the English/ Netherland background of our Mayflower ancestors.**

**Submitted by Elizabeth Werner to our Facebook page.**

**A new PBS TV program similar to "Who Do You Think You Are" - is Finding Your Roots With Henry Louis Gates. Judd recently saw the first program that featured Congressman John Lewis (D GA) in which Dr. Gates said, "You are, in part, the sum of your ancestors". Dr. Gates also said, "There is no African American we have ever tested who is 100 percent black. None," Gates said. "It deconstructs the notion of race. . . . We are a mixed people."**

**In the Fall of 2010 the Francis Cooke Society was contacted by a NY City TV documentary company who was producing a series about Condoleezza Rice. They were trying to locate a portrait of Francis Cooke. Several of us reported, as did the March 2012 Mayflower Quarterly that the only known painting from life of a Pilgrim is of Edward Winslow . This was confirmed by Jeremy Bangs, Mayflower Pilgrim author & scholar. Judd Taylor contacted Dr. Bangs & gave him a heads up on the Condoleezza Rice inquiry. If Dr. Bangs was contacted, we might find out when we see the episode of this new PBS Finding Your Roots With Henry Louis Gates that features Ms Rice. Check your local PBS stations for time & date.**

**What an honor it would be to discover that Ms. Rice is a descendant of Francis Cooke.**

**Stay tuned & watch *Finding Your Roots* to see if  
Condoleezza Rice is a descendant of Pilgrim Francis Cooke  
& his wife Hester Mahieu.**

**You can learn more about tracing your roots and even watch  
a brief video on the PBS web site at**

**<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/finding-your-roots/>**

**I want to thank Megan Smolenyak for helping to bring the  
NBC TV show, “Who Do You Think You Are” to America.  
Such a great show that tells this country (USA) & the world  
how many people’s (including our Pilgrim ancestors) came  
together to establish & build the greatest nation on planet  
earth. Google: Who Do You Think You Are?**

### ***Mayflower House Garden Brick Project***

**Francis Cooke member Betsy Samson-Andrews took the  
following picture of the Mayflower House Garden Brick  
Walkway.**



**FCS member Frank Mitchell saw the picture & asked how he could make a donation.**

**Jeff, Scott & I suggested that FCS make a donation for a brick that would commemorate the memory of Francis Cooke. If you are interested, please send your donation to Jeff with notation: "Mayflower Society House Garden Walkway, Francis Cooke Society Donation".**

**You can use the form on page 98 of the March 2012 Mayflower Quarterly for credit card payment. Please send all the donations to Jeff & indicate brick is for "The Francis Cooke Society Brick". Mark credit card at bottom of form "For Francis Cooke Society Brick" .All Donations must arrive at Jeff' Northrup's (address listed) by 30 April 2012 to insure donations be received at GSMD by 31 May 2012.**

***Francis Cooke House Fire***

## **Francis Cooke House at Plimoth Plantation** **Destroyed by Fire, Being Rebuilt**

**By Janet Kimbleton Grace**

**In December of 1620, the first homes in Plymouth Colony were being built. After a 10 week voyage on the Mayflower, its passengers were ready to leave the crowded ship and venture onto land. Arriving in what is now Massachusetts during a period of unusual cold now known as the “Little Ice Age”, they were met with temperatures well below freezing and we imagine that there was more than two feet of snow on the ground.**

**Using tools that they had brought with them, the men cut down timber with axes. The next step was to chip away at the timber to form square edges, which allow the logs to stack, forming the framework and exterior walls of the house. Reeds were gathered and tied together to form thatch for the roof. To provide for additional insulation against the cold and wind, clap boards were cut from timber were fastened with iron nails to the exterior. In the spring, supple twigs were gathered and woven together and nailed to the interior house. The voids in the woven twigs were filled with clay mud, producing a finish similar to textured plaster. These one room homes took two to 3 months to build.**

**Cooking, sleeping and socializing all occurred within the one room. Light was brought into the home by perhaps a small**

**shuttered opening during day and a fire at night. Chimneys were building of timber, clay and clapboard, the same material as the rest of the home.**

**The wood and thatch construction would season over the years and become very flammable as it aged and dried out. In the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, it was not uncommon for fire to destroy entire villages or major portions of large cities, including London, which was devastated by a fire in 1666.**

**On Saturday November 19, 2011 at 9:45 am, a fire began in the Francis Cooke House in Plymouth Colony. As they do every morning, a role player in the house started a cooking fire to begin their food ways exhibit for the day. The fire originated in the hearth, spread up the chimney and quickly engulfed the roof. Like all buildings in the 17th-Century English Village, the Cooke House was constructed with the same materials as the Pilgrims would have used. Although the fire destroyed the building, it did not diminish Plymouth Colony's vision of interpreting the living history of 17th-century America in ways that educate, inspire and enlighten. Beginning in March, they will be reconstructing the house in our 17th-Century English Village. They anticipate that it will be complete by November.**

**To learn more about the fire, view updates as they begin the rebuilding process or to make a donation, please visit <http://www.plimoth.org/rebuild>. If this E-Newsletter reaches you late you can still make donations. They may be made by**

**check (payable to Plimoth Plantation with "Cooke House by FCS " in the memo line) and send to Plimoth Plantation, ATTN: Development Office,**

**PO Box 1620, Plymouth, MA 02362. For more information on other ways to give, please call Courtney Roy-Branigan, Director of Development at (508) 746-1622 x8203.**

**For photos and periodic updates on the rebuilding visit [www.blogs.plimoth.org](http://www.blogs.plimoth.org)**

**Above information provided by Kate LaPrad Grant Writer, Plimoth Plantation**

**To submit donations as a Francis Cooke Society member send to :**

**Treasurer Jeffery Northrup**

**122 Humphery Street**

**Lowell, MA 01850**

### ***New Members***

**If you have not joined our [Yahoo.com](#) discussion group, please do so; this is our prime means of communicating with**

**each other. Directions for joining this discussion group are found on Yahoo.com . The site shows we have 351 members as of this date.**

**We are also on Facebook; see us there for additional discussions about: Francis Cooke (born abt 1583 – died April 7, 1663 Plymouth, Massachusetts) who was one of the 102 passengers on the Mayflower. This early settler is one of the twenty-six male ...See more at**

**[www.facebook.com/pages/Francis-Cooke/135162979851298](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Francis-Cooke/135162979851298)**

**- You have to join Facebook before you can view this page.**

**We now show 106 members on the Facebook page.**

### ***The Sixth and Seventh Generation Project***

**Dianna Saario has completed the sixth and seventh generations of Francis Cooke descendants. The publication of the book will continue where the current GSMD Silver Book leaves off.**

**I am Dianna Saario, the genealogist for the Francis Cooke Society. If any of you are Francis Cooke descendants and belong to the Mayflower Society, I would appreciate a copy of your approved application. The information will be inserted into the 6th & 7th Francis Cooke Society's Book/CD**

**. Contact me at:**

**franciscooke559@att.net on [Ancestorville Genealogy's timeline](#).**

**Thank you Dianna for completing this important project. Additional information will be available on this project in our Fall 2012 FCS Newsletter.**

**The FCS Website :**

**<http://www.FrancisCookeSociety.org>**

**President J. Scott McKay, [scottsfamilytree@aol.com](mailto:scottsfamilytree@aol.com)**

**Genealogist, Dianna Saario, [franciscooke559@att.net](mailto:franciscooke559@att.net)**

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**Cooke Historian, Vacant**

**Back issues of the FCS Newsletter are available for viewing at [www.franciscookesociety.org](http://www.franciscookesociety.org)**