

Francis Cooke Society Newsletter
Vol. 2, #2
April 2004

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 group named in his memory. In addition to honoring Francis Cooke's contributions to Plymouth Colony, we also plan to be a forum for members to exchange information and assist descendants of Francis Cooke in acquiring acceptable proofs of eligibility for membership in the General Society of Mayflower Descendants.

Contact Information

Members of the FCS are in communication through an e-mail group at:
Francis_Cooke_Society@yahoo.com

The FCS Website: www.FrancisCookeSociety.org

President: J. Scott McKay, scottsfamilytree@aol.com

Membership Chair: Judy Hughes, judyh@dnet.net

Secretary and Genealogy Coordinator: Valeria Reckert, LadyGenes@comcast.net

Cooke Historian: Richard Worthington, rlworthi@wisc.edu

Publicity Coordinator and Newsletter Editor: Christine Chirokas, chirokas@tiac.net

President's Corner, J. Scott McKay

Dear Members:

I hope everyone had a wonderful Easter holiday and that you've all paid your taxes. Our society is steadily growing and the Yahoo e-mail list has been very active recently. It's nice to see people finding new cousins, sharing lineages and helping each other.

We're always looking for new people to help our society grow. Please contact me if you are interested in getting involved in such a worthwhile cause. I hope in the near future we as an organization can work on the 6th and 7th generations of Francis Cooke descendants, maybe the Washburn family would be a good place to start. I am always referring to NEHGS (New England Historical and Genealogical Society) and I hope someday people will be quoting the Francis Cooke Society!

We are fortunate to have Valeria Reckert help members who are looking to prove their Cooke ancestry. If you have a question, please e-mail her at: LadyGenes@comcast.net. Thank you for all the work you do, Val.

Although we do not charge a membership fee, we do have some expenses, the biggest one being the charge for our Website (\$5.95 a month). If anyone would like to help defray this cost, please contact me. It would be a great help and very much appreciated.

Our new Website address has had a whopping 11,668 hits from December through mid-March. If you haven't visited, please take a look and give us your feedback.

Scott may be contacted by e-mail at scottsfamilytree@aol.com or by mail at P.O. Box 1048, Leland, Michigan 49654.

Committee Updates

Membership: Judy Hughes, our membership chair, reports that the society is continually growing and we currently have 109 members. Judy is compiling membership information that includes e-mail and snail mail addresses. If you have not given this information to Judy, or are interested in joining, please contact her at judyh@dnet.net or 828-524-7740 and she will send you a brief membership form.

Publicity: If you have ideas on how to spread the news about FCS, please contact Chris at Chirokas@tiac.net.

John 2 Cooke's Memorial Marker

Thanks to Marion Walter, who submitted the following information to the Cooke e-mail list:

1895— John Cooke, Plaque, Fairhaven MA. John Cooke, an adventurer before he reached his teens, under the custodianship of his father, Francis, an inhabitant of Plymouth until 1659, owner of the land at Oxford and a resident here, the first white settler, a Representative to the General Court and a Baptist minister, is depicted as a genuine pioneer in the establishment of this section. He died about 1695, and is purported to be buried at Burial Hill [at Fairhaven], willed by William Wood in the Revolutionary period, in a codicil under the date of May 14, 1778. The boulder is in Cook Memorial Park, Plymouth Avenue, Oxford, Poverty Point Area, Fairhaven, and reads:

AD 1620

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
JOHN COOKE
LAST SURVIVING MALE PILGRIM
OF THOSE WHO CAME OVER IN THE
MAYFLOWER
THE FIRST WHITE SETTLER OF THIS TOWN
AND THE PIONEER IN ITS RELIGIOUS
MORAL AND BUSINESS LIFE
A MAN
OF CHARACTER AND INTEGRITY
AND THE TRUSTED AGENT FOR THIS
PART OF THE COMMONWEALTH
OF THE OLD COLONIAL
CIVIL GOVERNMENT
OF PLYMOUTH

Source: "Old-time Fairhaven" (1), by Charles A. Harris, Reynolds Printing, New Bedford, MA 1947, p. 222

Website Recommendations, from Chris Chirokas

Mayflower passenger burial locations:

<http://www.findagrave.com/php/famous.php?page=pr&FSctf=131>

Pilgrim History on the town of Plymouth's Website:

<http://pilgrims.net/plymouth/history/>

The Plymouth Colony Archive Project includes information on a vast amount of subjects including court records, biographies, culture, and architecture:

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/users/deetz/home2.html>

Dale Cook has added a downloadable table of contents for the "Mayflower Descendant" to his site: <http://freepages.misc.rootsweb.com/~oldcolony/periodicals.html>

Colonial House on PBS

If you've ever wondered if modern-day people could survive the conditions our early ancestors dealt with, tune into the PBS television series "Colonial House," coming May 17, 18, 24 and 25. The setting for this new hands-on history series is the Maine coast, and the folks at Plimoth Plantation helped create the "colony" to reflect 1628. Go to

http://www.pbs.org/previews/colonial_house/ for more information.

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