

Local Spotlight
Monmouth County Genealogy Society
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On October 19, 2020, members of the Special Projects Group met virtually via Zoom with Mark White, president of the Monmouth County Genealogy Society. Mark began by giving us some background on his organization, which was formed 32 years ago. They originated as part of the Monmouth County Historical Association, formed a genealogy club within MCHA and then in 1988 established themselves as the Monmouth County Genealogy Society.

The Society has about 240 members, of which 80% are residents of New Jersey. The meetings, which are held in odd-numbered months at the Eatontown Community Center, generally have between 40-70 members and guests in attendance. The meeting programs reflect MCGS's goals. The November meeting will feature Beverly Yackel speaking about "Being A Census Taker Was Not Easy"; it will be presented virtually, due to the pandemic.

The Society's newsletter *The Monmouth Connection* is published in even-numbered months. It is printed and mailed to members and features general genealogy topics, some specific to Monmouth County and transcriptions of probate records. *The Monmouth Connection* newsletters can be found on our MAGS Weebly website, they are an interesting and informative read.

First Families of Monmouth County is a special group begun by MCGS to honor the memory of the first people who settled Monmouth County by 1725. *Federal Families* had ancestors who lived in the county by 1800. Some of the founding English and Dutch families were Bowne, Stout, Throckmorton, Van Amak and Van Mater. Descendants of the early settlers can apply for membership; lineage must be proven through direct evidence following strict guidelines. Mike explained the format as a combination of the DAR, Patriot Line and the Mayflower forms and requirements. Currently, there are forty families in this group.

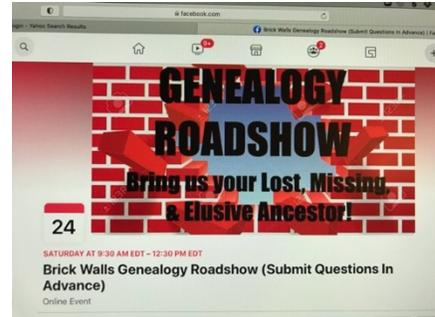
The Special Interest Groups (SIGs) cover a wide range of subjects. The SIGS are African-American, DNA, German, Irish and Scots Irish, Memoir Writing, and Monmouth Roots. The SIGs groups are beginning to meet online monthly.

The Monmouth Roots Group studies the earliest settlers and families of Monmouth County. Some of the oldest names from the area are Covenhoven, Day, Hartshorne,

Walling and Woolley. Family files and research on local families are housed in the Monmouth County Historical Association in Freehold.

Memoir Writing is an interesting group which helps members to become more proficient in recording their personal history. Each month the group decides upon a general topic, such as, "What is the most interesting object in your house?" and at the next meeting they read and share their resulting paper. The non-judgmental atmosphere encourages more reflection on your work and confidence in your abilities.

Twice a year, spring and fall, the Society holds workshops, which generally are whole day affairs in which 4 to 7 topics are covered. This autumn they decided to have a *Genealogy Roadshow*, which consisted of genealogy queries being mailed in, received by the MCGS members who then investigated and researched answers. The questions and their findings were presented virtually on Saturday, October 24th.



Family History Month, which is celebrated annually in the month of October, is a local and national observance. It was begun 30 years ago by a Monmouth County Genealogy Society member, Nancy Heydt, who wanted to encourage young people to take an interest in their personal family history. She contacted Congressmen and Senators, who facilitated the creation of Family History Month. The 5th and 6th graders in Monmouth County study Family History as part of their school curriculum, so they are encouraged to participate in an essay contest every year. The topic for this year was, "How Life Was Affected by Covid 19?" The winning articles will be published in *The Monmouth Connection* newsletter.

Monmouth County has several newspapers that go back to the 1870s, Asbury Park Press, Red Bank Register, Freehold Transfer, Matawan Journal. Some of these newspapers are on Newspapers.com and others are on GenealogyBank.com. Usually the local town library has their hometown newspaper.

Please check out their website, [NJMCCGS.org](https://www.njmccgs.org), for upcoming programs and books. The MCGS sells books of local Bible Records and local history compilations.

The Special Projects Group (SPG) members have been visiting local repositories to learn what genealogy related materials might be available for review by our members in researching their ancestors and/or gaining historical context to enhance their stories. In the series of articles, we share the main features of our interviews with repository members spotlighting the information, collections and features available for research at each location. Visit the Special Projects page at <https://mags-public.weebly.com/> to read the nineteen previous spotlight articles and to view the compiled inventories.