



Summer 2023

# Pilgrim News

*Society of Mayflower Descendants in the District of Columbia*



## Calendar

### Membership Meetings

Sunday, 21 May 2023

Sunday, 24 Sept 2023

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**43rd GSMD Congress**

**Sept 8-13 2023**

Plymouth, MA

Registration Opens

March 1 2023

**Saturday, 18 Nov 2023**

**Compact Day Dinner**

**Army Navy Country Club**

**Arlington VA**

### SCHEDULED BY GSMD

**Heritage Fortnight Week**

**Breakfast**

**Wednesday, 12 Apr 2023**

**7:30am-10am**

Army and Navy Club

Washington, DC

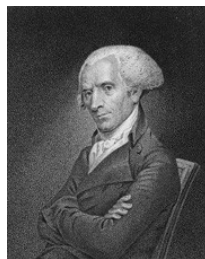
**Board of Assistants**

**Saturday, 22 April 2023**

**Saturday, 22 July 2023**

## **70<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of Elbridge Gerry and Signers of the Declaration of Independence**

On July 4th, 2023 at 10am at the historic Congressional Cemetery, 1801 E Street, SE, Washington, DC, as has been the tradition since 1953, the DC Sons of the American Revolution will gather to honor Elbridge Gerry and Signers of the Declaration of Independence. Lineage, patriotic, fraternal and service organizations, as well as unaffiliated individuals, are invited, bringing together friends who belong to one or more of these organizations. Our current Treasurer, Kent Boese, is a descendant of Gerry as well as a member of the DCSAR. DC Mayflower Society members are welcome to attend.



Elbridge Gerry was born in Marblehead, MA, to Thomas Gerry and Elizabeth Greenleaf. Elbridge was one of eleven children, and one of five who survived to adulthood. Educated in his early years by tutor, he entered Harvard University just shy of his fourteenth birthday. He completed his Harvard education with a Master in Arts degree in 1765, at the age of twenty-one. Interestingly, his masters dissertation argued that the colonies should stand up to and resist the passed Stamp Act of 1765. After graduation he followed in his father's footsteps, running a highly successful merchant and shipping business. (cont. pp. 6 and 7)

## FROM THE GOVERNOR



Thank you for directing your attention to this quarter's newsletter. I'm really pleased with how hard our Board of Assistants (BOA) has been working, mostly behind the scenes, for the benefit of all of us in the DC Mayflower Society.

In the last quarter, we have increased our networking with other Mayflower state societies and are seeing immediate results. From how to address increasing information privacy issues, format of Compact Day celebrations, to modernization of our databases, your BOA is taking advantage of the experiences of other societies.

After a thorough study of what other societies are doing with their Compact Day celebrations and a survey of our members, along with visiting many venues, I'm very pleased to announce that we are moving the Compact Day Dinner to the **Army Navy Country Club** in Arlington, VA. This move will maintain a level of elegance our membership has become accustomed to *and* reduce the price.

I encourage you to check out [www.dcmayflower.org](http://www.dcmayflower.org), our new webpage and spread the word about the Friends of the Pilgrims Membership, which is a way to become involved without proving lineage.

Finally, we welcome your ideas and involvement! Please contact me directly or any member of the BOA if you have ideas or want to get more involved.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bruce D. Babcock*  
*Governor*

## DEPUTY GOVERNOR'S REPORT



Thank you to all who attended our May 21, 2023, Spring Membership Meeting Tea Luncheon held at the Army and Navy Club in Washington, D.C. Thank you to member Melissa Fischer for being our sponsor.

Our guest speaker was Peter Ansoff whose topic was “Mayflower: Historical Sources and Reconstructions.” Peter is retired after a career as support contractor for the US Navy. He is an amateur historian, with particular interests in maritime history, lighter-than-air aviation history, and historic flags. He has taught courses on these and other subjects at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University, and serves on the Institute’s board of directors. He is also past president of the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA), an international organization dedicated to study of flags, and has published several papers in NAVA’s journal on various aspects of Revolutionary War-era flags. His presentation slides can be found at this link: [https://1drv.ms/b/s!AuTNbSY8h9\\_o6CX7BpZ4\\_h2UdTvu?e=t7DpW7](https://1drv.ms/b/s!AuTNbSY8h9_o6CX7BpZ4_h2UdTvu?e=t7DpW7) and his full OLLI presentation titled “The Mayflower: An American Icon” can be found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q78OdePqhp8>

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

#### **Board of Assistants:**

Saturday, July 22, 2023

Location TBD

#### **Annual Membership Meeting:**

Sunday, September 24, 2023

Maggiano’s Little Italy

5333 Wisconsin Avenue, Washington, DC 20015

#### **Compact Day Dinner:**

Saturday, November 18, 2023

The Army Navy Country Club

1700 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA 22202

Respectfully submitted,

*Suzy T Mulligan*

*Deputy Governor*

## EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT

### **Sunday, 24 September 2023** **Annual Membership Meeting**

**Maggiano's Little Italy  
5333 Wisconsin Avenue.  
Washington , DC 20015**

**Guest Speaker: Dr. William Paquette, PhD**

**Genealogy: A Siren's Call to Commune with the Dead,  
Fuller Line Research, My Publications and The Pink House**

### **Saturday, 18 November 2023**

#### **Compact Day Dinner**

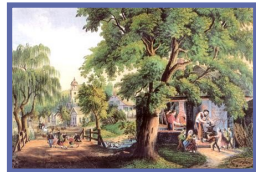
**The Army Navy Country Club 1700 Army Navy Drive  
Arlington, VA 22202**

**Guest Speaker: Sheila Slocum Hollis**

**The Mayflower Compact  
in Development of an American Legal System**

## FRIENDS OF THE PILGRIMS MEMBERSHIP

The DC Mayflower Society is now offering a Friends of the Pilgrims Membership. This membership is open to anyone who loves history and the Pilgrims. This may include spouses, half-brothers/sisters, family members of current or deceased members, adopted children/grandchildren of members, those who may become Mayflower members but have yet to prove their lineage. To join, you must be sponsored by a current GSMD or DC Mayflower Society member. You can send your Membership Inquiry/Request to [membership@dcmayflower.org](mailto:membership@dcmayflower.org) for further information and an application.



## HISTORIAN'S REPORT

### WELCOME ABOARD TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

**James Carl Gerber**  
*Stephen Hopkins*

**Jane Bowyer Stewart**  
*William Brewster*

**Mary Marshall Stewart**  
*William Brewster*

**Michaela Jean Todd**  
*John Howland*

### HELP WANTED

Our Society is looking for your help as we continue to improve our involvement in the community and membership experience. If you have skills and experience in the following areas please contact our governor, Bruce Babcock at [governor@dcmayflower.org](mailto:governor@dcmayflower.org).

**Technology/Social Media**

**Research/Genealogy**

**Education/Teaching**

**Event Planning**

**Writing, Newsletters**

## EXCITING NEWS!!!

We are more than pleased to announce the launch of our updated DC Mayflower Society website!

[www.dcmayflower.org](http://www.dcmayflower.org)

Here you will find information about our upcoming 2023 meetings, the Friends of the Pilgrims membership and more!



**How to get in touch with:**

**GOVERNOR**

**Bruce D. Babcock**

[governor@dcmayflower.org](mailto:governor@dcmayflower.org)

**DEPUTY GOVERNOR**

**Suzy T. Mulligan**

[deputygovernor@dcmayflower.org](mailto:deputygovernor@dcmayflower.org)

**HISTORIAN**

**Glenn Williams**

[historian@dcmayflower.org](mailto:historian@dcmayflower.org)

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Kelly Keegan**

[membership@dcmayflower.org](mailto:membership@dcmayflower.org)

**JUNIORS**

**Julie Stuft**

[Julie@dcmayflower.org](mailto:Julie@dcmayflower.org)

## Elbridge Gerry (cont.)

Gerry was very outspoken about his opposition of the imposition of taxes on the colonies by the British Parliament. He worked with several other like-minded patriots to build resistance to the taxations. With British troops occupying Boston to enforce the Townshend duties, leading to what would be called the Boston Massacre in 1770, Gerry was serving on a committee supporting the ban on the sale and consumption of tea.

Shortly afterward, he joined his father in creating the Committee of Correspondence, a crucial system of communications between political leaders of the resistance, such as Sons of Liberty. In 1772, at the age of twenty-eight, he was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representative where he served until 1775. During this time Gerry was instrumental in establishing Marblehead as a port for relief supplies when the Boston Port Act closed that city's port. In that same year he was elected to the First Continental Congress, which he declined due to the recent death of his father.

Elbridge was also a member of the Committee of Safety in which he was responsible for the stores of ammunition and weapons in Concord, which were targets of the British. On the night of Paul Revere's run, 18 April 1775, Gerry, along with two other members of the committee, were asleep in a hotel on the route that the British used on their march to Lexington. Fortunately, they were able to escape before the redcoats entered and searched the hotel.

On 9 February 1776, Gerry was elected to the Second Continental Congress, where he advocated for delegates to sign the Declaration of Independence. His efforts were so convincing that James Adams said of him: "if every man were a Gerry, the Liberties of America would be safe from the Gates of Hell." On 2 July 1776, Gerry voted for America's independence; he signed the Declaration of Independence on September 3 1776. In 1777, he was re-elected to the Congress, where he was one of fifteen who signed both the Articles of Confederation and the Declaration of Independence. He continued to serve the Congress until 1785, with a brief departure due to what he felt were impingements on States rights. Gerry's political philosophy favored the rights of States and a limited central government; he supported a civilian military as opposed to a government-controlled military.

In 1786, Gerry became a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, which led to his attendance at the 1787 Federal Convention in Philadelphia, where our Constitution of the United States was formed. He felt strongly, making his opinions known, that several of the proposed Amendments did not go far enough to ensure the liberties of individuals, such as the Freedom to Assemble in the First Amendment.

## Elbridge Gerry (cont.)

Many historians believe we have Elbridge Gerry to thank for our constitutional Bill of Rights due to his 78 speeches reflecting his position during the debates on State versus Federal power. He did not sign the Constitution but did eventually stand behind it.

Unmarried up to this point in his career, in 1786 he married Ann Thompson of NYC, daughter of James Thompson and Catharine Walton. Ann gave birth to ten children between 1787 and 1801. God Bless her! Gerry “retired” from politics for awhile to settle and raise his family.



*From left to right: Rachael Buchholz, Richard Patten, Ann Campbell, Annie John, Kent Boese, Beth Hicks and Frederick Humphreys.*

In 1796, shortly after the narrow election of John Adams, Elbridge was asked to be a diplomat commission to represent Adams in France in what became famously known as the XY Z Affair. Soon afterward Gerry embarked on his vie for the Massachusetts governorship with several losses until 1810, when he became the eighth governor of Massachusetts. It is during his term as Governor that legislation was presented and voted in favor of the Democrat-Republicans Bill to re-district the state-senate districts which resulted in the loss of the Federalist senate for the first time in five years. This bill became known as “gerrymandering,” a term still used today for the re-districting actions.

During the years that Gerry sought the governorship, he bailed his brother, Samuel Russell Gerry, out of failed business ventures becoming a guarantor for his brothers’ debts, damaging his own finances for the rest of his life. In an effort to seek some financial stability, in 1812, Gerry reached out to President James Madison about a federal position, thus securing a source of income. Later that year Gerry was nominated to be the vice-presidential running mate with President James Madison, who won re-election by a narrow margin. Being sworn in March 1813, Elbridge became the youngest Vice President to serve (until 1929). His vice presidency was ended by his death on November 23 1814. Elbridge Gerry is the only Signer of the Declaration of Independence to be buried in Washington, DC. He was survived by his wife, who was left his residence and relatively financially solvent, due to the income Gerry earned while serving as vice-president. She died on March 17th 1849 at the age of 85 in New Haven, CT, where she is buried.

**Officers**

**Governor**

*Bruce D. Babcock*

**Deputy Governor**

*Suzy T Mulligan*

**Recording/**

**Corresponding**

**Secretary**

*Shelley Rodgers*

**Membership Secretary**

*Kelly Keegan*

**Treasurer**

*Kent C. Boese*

**Historian**

*Glenn S. K. Williams*

**Counselor**

*John Kropf*

**Captain**

*David Gallalee*

**Elder**

*Sarah S. Seemann*

**Surgeon**

*Eleanor Richards*

**Jr. Membership Chair**

*Julie Stuftt*

**Assistants**

*Grace Fischetti*

*Chris Westcott*

*Shirley Wilcox, C.G.*

**Past Governors**

*Ann Campbell*

*Barbara Carpenter*

*Janet Downing*

*Timothy Finton*

*Glennon Harrison*

*Beth Gable Hicks*

*Annie John*

*Donald Lamson*

*David Stringfellow*

*J. Tom Tanner*

*Nicholas Ward*

**Society of Mayflower Descendants  
District of Columbia  
c/o Shelley Rodgers  
1509 Oakcrest Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22302**



**TO:**