

Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Jersey

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

Adopted November 21, 1931
including amendments made to November 18, 2006

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this Society shall be the
Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Jersey.

ARTICLE II – OBJECTS

The objects of this Society shall be:

Section 1. To perpetuate to a remote posterity the memory of our Pilgrim Fathers. To maintain and defend the principle of civil and religious liberty as set forth in the Compact of the Mayflower, “for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith and honor of our Country.”

Section 2. To cherish and maintain the ideals and institutions of American freedom, and to oppose any theories or actions that threaten their continuity. To transmit the spirit, the purity of purpose and steadfastness of will of the Pilgrim Fathers to those who shall come after us, an undiminished heritage of liberty and law.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Qualifications

Section 1. All persons over eighteen years of age who are descended from a passenger on the Mayflower on the voyage terminated at Plymouth, New England, in December 1620, shall be eligible for membership; and all persons, so descended, who are less than eighteen years of age, shall be eligible for junior membership; provided, however, that no person shall be eligible for membership – regular, junior or life – who is pledged to or advocates, the overthrow, by force or violence, of the Government of the United States, or that of any State or Territory; or who has been guilty of other treasonable practices; or who is not of good moral character; and the Society shall have the right to expel from its membership any person for any of these causes.

Preliminary Application

Section 2. Every application for membership shall be made on a preliminary application blank provided by the Society. Such application shall bear the autograph signature of the applicant, the applicant’s address, telephone number, e-mail address, marital status, occupation, and any other information requested by the Board of Assistants including the applicant’s proposed lineage. If the applicant is a minor, the applicant’s signature may be made by the adult proposing the applicant’s membership and should include the adult’s signature under it.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Approval

Section 3. The preliminary application shall be approved by the majority vote of the Board of Assistants. If desired, the Historian may request an e-mail or postal mail vote of the Board of Assistants prior to the next meeting of the Board of Assistants. If such a vote is taken, the result must be included in the minutes of the next meeting of the Board of Assistants.

Lineage Papers

Section 4. After the preliminary application has been approved, the lineage papers shall be issued. If the lineage papers are not filled out in duplicate and filed with the Society within nine months after the approval of the preliminary application, such approval shall become void. The Board of Assistants, however, may, at its option, grant an extension of time.

Election

Section 5. On approval of lineage papers by the Historian and the Historian General, the applicant may be elected to membership by the Historian in behalf of the Board of Assistants. The Historian must report such an election at the next meeting of the Board of Assistants and be recorded in the minutes.

Junior Membership

Section 6. Any member in good standing in the Society may make application for Junior Membership in behalf of any person under eighteen (18) years of age who is related to a present or past member of the State Society by blood through the line through which such member was proved for the Society. Such application must be approved and accepted by the Board of Assistants. A junior may be elected to Life Membership subject to the submission of the usual lineage papers, executed by the member in behalf of the applicant and approved by the Historian and Historian General, and payment of the initiation and life membership fees. Other Junior Members may, between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty-five (25), transfer to Regular Membership in the Society, provided the usual lineage papers shall have been furnished and approved, either prior to or at the time of the application for transfer from Junior to Regular Membership. A State and General Number shall be assigned to each Junior Life Member, and to the other Junior Members when they become Regular Members. Junior State Numbers may be assigned to Junior Members, but no Regular State Number shall be assigned to any Junior Member other than a Junior Life Member. No Junior Member and no Life Member under the age of eighteen (18) may vote or hold office.

Resignation

Section 7. Resignations shall be presented to the Board of Assistants in writing and, if all indebtedness has been liquidated, shall take effect at once.

Remove for Cause

Section 8. The Board of Assistants may, on two-thirds vote, drop any member shown to be prejudicial to the Society.

Non-payment of Dues

Section 9. Any member whose annual dues remain unpaid for a period of ten months may be dropped from the rolls, but may be reinstated by the Board of Assistants on such terms as it may approve. Any member who has resigned in good standing may be reinstated by the Board of Assistants upon request in writing, accompanied by the dues for the current year.

Transfer

Section 10. An applicant for transfer to this Society shall fill out a preliminary application form as a new member. Lineage papers shall be accepted from the State Society from which transfer is made, copy of which shall be furnished. A letter certifying that the applicant is a member in good standing shall be required.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS AND BOARD OF ASSISTANTS

Section 1. The officers of the Society shall be a Governor, a Deputy Governor, a Secretary, a Membership Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, a Treasurer, an Historian, an Elder, a Captain, a Surgeon, a Counsellor, and Seven Assistants.

Section 2. These officers, together with former Governors of the Society and members who have served as officers or on the General Board of Assistants for a total of twenty or more years, shall constitute the Board of Assistants.

Section 3. The Deputy Governor General and Assistant General, who are nominated by the State Society and elected by the General Society, any other General Officers who are members of this Society, and the Colony Governors, shall be members of the Board of Assistants.

ARTICLE V – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nominations

Section 1. The Nominating Committee shall name the candidates for the offices to be filled at the annual meeting of the Society held during the year in which the General Congress holds its regular triennial meeting and the ticket so named shall be printed and mailed by the Secretary to each member of the Society at least three weeks before the annual meeting.

Ballots Sent

Section 2. The Secretary shall prepare a ballot that includes the recommendations of the Nominating Committee and any additional candidates recommended in writing by a member of the Board of Assistants and/or any five members of the Society and communicated to the Secretary prior to the preparation of the ballot to be sent to the members at least three weeks prior to the annual meeting.

Elections

Section 3. At the Annual Meeting of the New Jersey Society, the ballots returned by mail shall be added to the ballots of those present at the meeting who have not voted by mail and shall be tallied as directed by the Board of Assistants. The results shall be announced at that Annual Meeting. No nominations from the floor will be entertained unless there is no nominee for the office. The member must sign the ballot before it can be counted. A member may vote only once. No member may vote after the results of the election are announced. If there is no contest for an office the ballots do not have to be counted. However, the total number of ballots returned should be announced and the Secretary should be directed to cast a formal ballot of election for those so nominated.

Ballots Received

Section 4. Elections shall be by signed paper ballot, a majority of the votes cast for an office and received by the Secretary on or before the time that the vote is announced at the annual meeting shall determine the choice, except that, where there is only one candidate for an office, the ballot can be dispensed with by a unanimous vote of the members present. In the event of a tie or in the event that no one receives a majority of the votes. The Board of Assistants shall declare the winner or call for a new election among the two with the highest number of votes.

ARTICLE V – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ballots Held

Section 5. The Secretary shall hold the ballots for thirty (30) days prior to destruction. During that time any member of the New Jersey Society may examine them. If upon examination the member believes that the result of the election is in error and that the outcome would change those elected, then the ballots shall be held until the Board of Assistants has had time to consider the claim of error and then they should be destroyed at a time directed by the Board of Assistants.

Assume Office

Section 6. The persons elected shall enter upon the offices immediately after the meeting at which they were chosen, and hold the same until the election and qualification of their successors.

Prepare Officers

Section 7. The Board of Assistants shall see that the elected officers are educated in the duties of their office and prepared to assume those duties in a timely manner.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Society

Section 1. The **Society's** annual meeting shall be held in the State of New Jersey as near as possible to the twenty-first day of November, the Anniversary of the Signing of "The Compact" on the Mayflower, and a semi-annual meeting shall be held as near as possible to the twenty-first of May, both dates to be determined by the Board of Assistants. Special meetings may be held at any specified time and place at the call of the Governor, or upon the written request of ten members. The object of a special meeting must be stated in the notice.

Board of Assistants

Section 2. The **Board of Assistants** shall hold regular business meetings on the dates of the Society's annual and semi-annual meetings. Special meetings may be held at any specified time and place at the call of the Governor, or upon the written request of three members of the Board of Assistants. The object of a special meeting must be stated in the notice.

Quorum

Section 3. A **quorum** shall consist of ten members at meetings of the Society and five Board members at meetings of the Board of Assistants.

Notice of Meeting

Section 4. Three weeks' **notice** in writing shall be mailed of all meetings of the Society and the Board of Assistants, however, sufficient cause appearing, the Governor may, at his discretion, call any meeting of the Society or Board of Assistants on shorter notice.

Order of Business

Section 5. At all meetings of the Society the **order of business** shall be:

1. Prayer by the Elder
2. Presentation of Colors
3. Reading the Minutes of previous stated and intervening special meetings.
4. Communications
5. Reports from Officers
6. Reports from Committees
7. Unfinished Business
8. New Business
9. Election of Officers
10. Retirement of Colors
11. Benediction by the Elder

ARTICLE VII – SEAL

The seal of the Society shall contain a representation of a sailing vessel of the Seventeenth Century, around it the name of the Society, and the words “Plymouth 1620” and “New Jersey 1900”

ARTICLE VIII – INSIGNIA

The certificate, insignia, rosette and flag shall be those selected and approved by the General Society with the name of the State and the year of organization appearing upon them.

ARTICLE IX – COLONIES

For geographical considerations and convenience, and upon the written request of five or more members of the Society, the Board of Assistants may authorize the formation of a colony. The name of such colony shall be in the following form: “The (name to be inserted) Colony of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Jersey.” To avoid conflict with titles used by the State officers, the colony officers shall be known as Colony Governor, etc. Subject to approval by the Board of Assistants, the colony may adopt a constitution and bylaws.

ARTICLE X – FRIENDS OF MAYFLOWER

When the Board of Assistants wishes to recognize someone who supports the objects of the Mayflower Society and wishes to have an association with the New Jersey Mayflower Society but is not eligible for membership, such a person may be called a “Friend of Mayflower”. Such friends may include the spouse of a member or a member of the household of the member who is not biologically descended from the member; members of other historical or genealogical societies; those who have been unable to find the necessary proof of their lineage to a Pilgrim; and, those in the community who actively support the objectives of the Mayflower Society. The Board of Assistants shall make such rules and requirements of qualification to be known as a “Friend of Mayflower”.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution, which shall not be in any respect inconsistent with the Constitution of the General Society, may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members at any Society meeting, providing that a notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to each member at least three weeks prior to the meeting. The Secretary shall prepare a ballot to be mailed along with the proposed amendment to each member in good standing of the New Jersey Society in a manner prescribed by the Board of Assistants. The Ballots returned by mail shall be added to the ballots of those present at the meeting who have not voted by mail and shall be tallied as directed by the Board of Assistants. The results shall be announced at that meeting. The member must sign the ballot before it can be counted. A member may vote only once. Only those ballots received by the Secretary prior to the tally shall be counted. No member may vote after the results of the voting are announced

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Governor

Section 1. It shall be the duty of the **Governor** to preside at all meetings of the Society and Board of Assistants, and perform such other duties as pertain to the chief officer of an organization.

Deputy Governor

Section 2. It shall be the duty of the **Deputy Governor** to exercise all the functions of the office of Governor during his absence or disability and perform such duties as requested by the Governor and/or Board of Assistants.

Secretary

Section 3. It shall be the duty of the **Secretary** to record the proceedings of the Society and Board of Assistants; to notify members of the Society and Board of Assistants of all meetings to be held; to transmit whatever notices and communications may be required by order of the Society, Board of Assistants, or Governor; and to perform all duties usually appertaining to such office. The Secretary shall be the keeper of the Seal of the Society.

Assistant Secretary

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the **Assistant Secretary** to assist the Secretary in the performance of his or her duties when requested by the Secretary and/or Board of Assistants in a mutually agreed upon manner.

Treasurer

Section 5. It shall be the duty of the **Treasurer** to collect and take charge of all funds belonging to the Society; to keep suitable books of account; to make all necessary disbursements upon approval of the Board of Assistants; to see that all financial reports requested by the government (such as the current Federal Form 990) are prepared and properly filed; and to report the condition of the treasury at all meetings of the Society and Board of Assistants.

Historian

Section 6. The **Historian** shall examine, report upon and keep copies of lineage papers, both original and supplemental, of all applicants; shall keep a complete list of the members and all lines of descent filed by them; shall have charge of the issuing of certificates of membership and lineage papers; and shall keep a record of all celebrations of the Society and file all historical documents and papers, and do any other work assigned him by the Board of Assistants.

Elder

Section 7. It shall be the duty of the **Elder** to officiate, when called upon, at any meeting of the Society or Board of Assistants, and to express appropriate condolences in behalf of the Society to the family of a deceased member. It is preferred that this officer shall have been ordained as an elder, bishop, minister or deacon of a Christian Church. However, if no such member is willing to accept the office, the Board of Assistants may authorize an appropriate member to be nominated and/or assume the duties of Elder.

Captain

Section 8. The **Captain** shall carry out all orders of the Governor, and act as Marshal at parades and on occasion of ceremony. It shall be his duty to care for and when directed by the Governor to display the Colors, the Society Standard and other flags belonging to the Society. The Captain shall be assisted by one Color Bearer for each flag of the Society.

ARTICLE I – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Surgeon

Section 9. The **Surgeon** shall be a member committed to protecting and promoting the health and welfare of the members of the Society. It shall be the duty of the Surgeon to attend all meetings of the Society and Board of Assistants and be available to perform such duties as may be requested by the Governor and Board of Assistants.

Counselor

Section 10. The **Counsellor** shall be an Attorney at Law and shall render legal aid and opinions upon matters pertaining to the Society when requested to do so by the Governor or by the Board of Assistants and shall file any required legal or government documents pertaining to the Society including the maintenance of the non-profit corporate status of the Society.

Assistants

Section 11. The **Assistants** shall attend all meetings of the Society and Board of Assistants, give advice and render such services as they are qualified and willing to perform and be available to take charge of and/or be a member of a committee if so requested by the Governor and approved by the Board of Assistants.

Membership Secretary

Section 12. The **Membership Secretary** shall maintain the roster of current members, Junior members, and “Friends of Mayflower” in a manner determined by the Board of Assistants. He or she shall receive all address changes and promptly notify the Secretary, Treasurer, and other members of the Board of Assistants who wish to be notified. If desired by the Treasurer and/or Board of Assistants, this officer may assist the Treasurer by receiving dues payments, making deposits and keeping records in a mutually agreed upon manner.

ARTICLE II – DUTIES OF BOARD OF ASSISTANTS

Authority

Section 1. The Board of Assistants shall have general charge and direction of the affairs of the Society. It may fill vacancies among the officers for unexpired terms. It may appoint such standing and special committees as it may deem necessary or proper, or, except for nominating committee, it may delegate the duty to the Governor.

Committee Reports

Section 2. The Board of Assistants may fill vacancies occurring in committees, or it may delegate the duty to the Governor. All committees appointed shall make reports through their chairman to each meeting of the Board of Assistants.

Appoint an Assistant Officer

Section 3. The Board of Assistants may appoint an Assistant Officer to assist any elected officer in the performance of his duties, if deemed necessary for the good of the Society. Such Assistant Officer shall serve until a date determined by the Board of Assistants or until the triennial meeting of the Society when officers are elected.

ARTICLE II – DUTIES OF BOARD OF ASSISTANTS

Appoint an Acting Officer

Section 4. The Board of Assistants may, by a 2/3 vote of the members present at any meeting of the Board of Assistants, appoint an Acting Officer to perform the duties of any Elected Officer (except the Governor) who is unable or unwilling to perform the duties of his elected Office. Such Acting Officer shall serve until a 2/3 vote of the Board of Assistants determines that the Elected Officer is willing and able to continue the performance of the duties of his office, or a new Officer is elected. If the Elected Officer is the Governor, the Deputy Governor shall assume the duties of that office as Acting Governor. If the Governor dies, resigns, or is removed from office, the Deputy Governor shall become the Governor and shall serve until the next triennial meeting of the Society.

Remove an Officer

Section 5. The Board of Assistants may, by a 2/3 vote of the members present at any meeting of the Board of Assistants, remove any elected or appointed officer from his or her office if the said officer fails to satisfactorily perform the duties of the office he holds. The said officer may appeal the decision of the Board of Assistants to a vote at the next meeting of the Board of Assistants and/or a vote of the members in attendance at the next meeting of the Society. A 2/3 vote of the members present at that meeting of the Society shall be final.

ARTICLE III – DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

Standing Committees

Section 1. The Standing Committees and their duties shall be as follows:

- (a) The **Arrangements Committee** shall provide for meeting places and refreshments for all Society meetings and also for suitable decoration. This committee shall also advise and assist the Governor in providing suitable entertainment at the meeting.
- (b) The **Auditing Committee** shall examine the Treasurer's books immediately prior to the Annual Meeting and shall submit a report at that meeting. It shall make audits at such other times as the Board of Assistants may direct.
- (c) The **Education Committee** shall have as its special concern the "Objects" of the Society which are "To perpetuate to a remote posterity the memory of our Pilgrim Fathers" and "To cherish and maintain the ideals and institutions of American freedom, and to oppose any theories or actions that threaten their continuity." The committee shall endeavor to distribute copies of the Mayflower Compact through schools or by other means and shall recommend to the Board of Assistants other means by which the "Objects" of the Society may be accomplished.
- (d) The **Finance Committee** shall advise the Board of Assistants on all matters pertaining to the financial affairs of the Society, including recommendations as to investments and as to availability of funds for specific purposes being considered by the Board of Assistants.
- (e) The **Membership Committee** shall devise measures to increase the number of members in the Society. Upon request, committee members shall contact or make inquiry concerning applicants, for the purpose of making a determination as to their acceptability and report thereon to the Board of Assistants.

ARTICLE III – DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

- (f) The **Nominating Committee**, consisting of five members of the Society, shall name the candidates for the offices to be filled at the Annual Meeting of the Society held during the year in which the General Congress holds its regular triennial meeting. The ticket named by the committee shall be printed and mailed by the Secretary to each member of the Society at least three weeks before the Annual Meeting.
- (g) The **Publicity Committee** shall seek to advance the interests of the Society through the use of news releases to newspapers and radio stations and by such other means of publicity as may be available. News releases should be distributed by members residing in the areas serviced by the newspaper and reference should be made in the releases to members of the Society residing locally.

Special Committees

Section 2. The special Committees shall receive and act upon all matters assigned to them.

ARTICLE IV – FEES AND DUES

Initiation fee

Section 1. An initiation fee shall be established by the Board of Assistants not to exceed 150% of the fee charged by the General Society to be payable by regular and life members upon submission of lineage papers. An initiation fee shall be established by the Board of Assistants to be payable by Junior members, other than life members, upon election to membership. An examination fee shall be established by the Board of Assistants not to exceed 150% of the fee charged by the General Society to be payable by members upon submission of each supplemental ancestral line.

Annual Dues

Section 2. Annual dues of **twenty five dollars** shall be due and payable on the first day of January of each year. Members elected during the year shall pay dues as of the first day of January of the year following the year in which elected. These dues shall be in effect for the year 2007. The Board of Assistants shall have the authority to increase these dues in subsequent years by no more than five percent per annum without amending these bylaws, provided that it is deemed necessary by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Assistants.

Life Membership fee

Section 3. Any member of this Society may at any time, upon the payment of the sum of **five hundred dollars**, become a life member with all the rights and privileges of life membership, and shall be exempt thereafter from the payment of dues.

Transfer fee

Section 4. If any applicant for membership in this Society has heretofore paid an initiation fee in any State Society of Mayflower Descendants, the amount so paid shall be credited in full or on account of the initiation fee required herein.

ARTICLE V – STATIONERY

Stationery of the Society shall be used only by officers, or duly appointed committees of the Society, and only for the transaction of official business, nor shall the name of the Society or any part of its official die, or device, be used other than for official business. No advertising other than that relating to activities of the Society shall appear on official stationery.

ARTICLE VI – RULES OF ORDER

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Society and the Board of Assistants in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution or Bylaws of the Society.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended only by a two-thirds vote of the members at any Society meeting, providing that a notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to each member at least three weeks prior to the meeting. The Secretary shall prepare a ballot to be mailed along with the proposed amendment to each member in good standing of the New Jersey Society in a manner prescribed by the Board of Assistants. The Ballots returned by mail shall be added to the ballots of those present at the meeting who have not voted by mail and shall be tallied as directed by the Board of Assistants. The results shall be announced at that meeting. The member must sign the ballot before it can be counted. A member may vote only once. Only those ballots received by the Secretary prior to the tally shall be counted. No member may vote after the results of the voting are announced.