

The Jersey Cape Colony Celebration of Mayflower's 400th Anniversary

Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Jersey (SMDNJ)

1620 Mayflower Timeline

- (Julian/Old Style precedes Gregorian/New Style by 10 days)

- Mid-July – Mayflower leaves London
- 6 Sept – Mayflower departs from Southampton overloaded with an additional 20 passengers from the Speedwell that had already sprung two leaks on previous attempts to embark
- 9 Nov – Sighted Cape Cod and attempted to sail south towards the Hudson River
- 10 Nov – Strong currents/winds would not let the Mayflower round Monomoy Island, so they turned around and headed north
- 11 Nov – First Landing, Provincetown, & Signing of the Compact
- 17 Nov – Exploring expedition
- 8 Dec – First Encounter with Nauset Indians
- 18 Dec – Mayflower lands in Plymouth

Cold Spring Church, Cape May, NJ

- Hannah Gorham, granddaughter of Mayflower passengers John Howland, and John & Joan Tilley, moved to Cape May with husband Joseph Whilldin before 1683 to participate in the flourishing whaling business there. They had many descendants who remained and thrived in the Cape May region such that a significant percent of today's Cape May County population are eligible for membership in the Mayflower Society.
- The first church at this site in Cape May was built in 1718 as a log building.
- According to historian Paul Howe, over 800 Mayflower descendants were thought to be buried in the Cold Spring Cemetery by 1921.



JCC Plans for Mayflower 400 Celebration Curtailed

COVID-19 destroyed many plans for 2020, and the JCC/SMDNJ event here was one of them.

In the photo, SMDNJ Governor Jack Idenden and Jim Campbell survey the colonial burial ground at the Cold Spring Cemetery in July 2018.



Documented Mayflower Lineage of Early Cape May Settlers

John Howland b. 1591 d. 1673 m. 1623 to Elizabeth Tilley b. 1607 d. 1689 (both were Mayflower passengers)

Desire Howland b. abt 1624 d. 1683 m. 1643 to John Gorham bapt 1621 d. 1676

Hannah Gorham (10th child) b. 1663 in Barnstable (on Cape Cod) d. 1728 m. abt 1683 to

Joseph Whilldin b. abt 1654 in Yarmouth (on Cape Cod) d. 1727

Hannah m. Thomas Leaming

Mary

Joseph m. 1st Mary Wilmon 2nd Abigail

Experience m. 1712 William Foster

Isaac



The Whilldin family removed to Cape May by 1690, perhaps due to witchcraft accusations, and followed the popular migration there approx. 1685-8 that supported the whaling and agriculture trades

- The Cape May winters were found to be somewhat milder than that of eastern Massachusetts, and the soil was fertile and without many rocks. Whaling and fishing were very productive. Indeed, to this day, Cape May remains as the home to a significant commercial fishing fleet.
- Many names of the early landowners in the Cape May region persist there today as folks successfully had large families and didn't leave the area due to successful farming and communities.
 - *Schallinger, Hand, Loper, Foster, Leaming, Hopkins, Matthews, Osborne, Short, Stites, Carman, Miller, Stillwell, Hughes, Mason, Richardson, Swain, Young, Eldredge, Corson, Cresse, Townsend, Golden, Houlding, Johnson, Hewit, Taylor, Curwith, Shaw, Stanfield, French, Babcock, Noble, Spicer, Godfrey, Smith, Whitlock, Lynch, Brandreth, Crawford, Russel, Crowell, Gandy, Page, Parsons...*

History of Cape May

- Dr Maurice Beesley chronicled the first history of Cape May in 1857 with his “Sketch of the Early History of Cape May”
- Louis Townsend Stevens wrote “The History of Cape May County New Jersey from Aboriginal Times to the Present Day” that he published in 1897.
- Rev Paul Sturtevant Howe, LLB, PhD completed his “Mayflower Pilgrim Descendants in Cape May County, New Jersey” in 1920 in time for the Mayflower’s 300th anniversary.
- Cape May t-shirts sold to tourists give the “1609” date referring to Sir Henry Hudson’s exploration and landing in the area on behalf of the Dutch East India Co.
- Captain Cornelius Mey, on behalf of the Dutch West India Co, explored the area and a land purchase was later recorded by the Dutch in 1630. He named the area after himself.
- Whalers from Long Island may have first settled in Cape May as early as 1638 when a land purchase from Kechemeche (tribe of Algonquin/Lenni-Lenape) Indians was recorded by Capt Nathaniel Turner. Dr Beesley writes, “About 1641, Cape May was again purchased by the Swedish agents, a short time before the arrival of the Swedish Governor, Printz Tinicum.”
- Interestingly, these local Indians appeared to sell the same land to the Swedish, Dutch, and English that arrived in the area at different times. And the Indians had mostly departed westward by 1700. Stevens writes, “It is a boast of the citizens of all of New Jersey, and especially of the land owners, that not a foot of its soil was ever taken by fraud or force from the red man.”
- Areas further up the Delaware River were established, such as Salem (1675).
- Cape May County was officially established by the British NJ colony in Nov 1685 and Caleb Carman was appointed its first constable at that time. The first CM county court was later constituted in 1693.

Jersey Cape Colony

- The Jersey Cape Colony (JCC) of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Jersey was founded in 1973, and has proven itself as a stalwart group of enthusiasts. Regular meetings and significant contributions have been reliably made locally, and at the state and national levels.
- The JCC was originally founded by Winn Weir who had hailed from Pennsylvania.
- Superstars Alice Teal and Harry Folger have made significant contributions at the national Mayflower level for many years. This tandem tirelessly edited the Mayflower Quarterly and the SMDNJ newsletter until about ten years ago, and amazed Mayflower descendants around the world with a dizzying amount of new historical and genealogical information in each issue. The Past Assistant Governor General, Mr Folger, continues to serve at the national level on the GSMD Nominating Committee. They each made contributions to SMDNJ over a long period of time and served SMDNJ & JCC as Governors and other officers/assistants.
- The present JCC Governor, Ms Phyllis Moony, is completing her second tour of duty in that position and has served on the SMDNJ Board of Assistants for many years. She's a dual member in PA, as well as a NJ Life Member.
- Other past JCC Governors include: Janet Lindsay Eldredge Vance, Mary Louise Bishop and Robert J. Williams
- The JCC enjoys a special relationship with the SMD-Delaware organization with numerous members of each organization attending each other's events.

Mayflower and JCC Traditions Continue!

24 Apr 2021 – JCC Spring Luncheon

