



THE ROGER WILLIAMS FAMILY ASSOCIATION

2000-2001 No. 87

Incorporated January 30, 1906
Providence, Rhode Island



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Cousins and Friends:

As we enter (or have just entered) the new millennium, I want to welcome our new members on behalf of the Association and wish our entire membership a healthy and productive year.

This past year has seen the addition of 64 new members and the passing of several family members and devoted friends. We regret the loss of John Prokopowicz, who served the Association for many years as Treasurer and Membership Committee Chairman. I recently viewed the pile of computer diskettes and handwritten notes John had amassed on the Daniel line of Roger Williams, and know that finding someone to continue John's valuable genealogical work will be a challenge. John will surely be missed by us all, as will the other members and friends who have passed this last year.

Walter Covell and the Program Committee have assembled an interesting variety of speakers and attractions to accompany our meetings this year, as you will see listed in this year's Calender. We look forward to seeing all of our regular attendees and hope to see many new faces from our membership at these events. As always, we are open to suggestions for meeting ideas for the future.

The Association's online presence continues at www.rogerwilliams.org. Program listings as well as other useful information is presented, and visitors can even purchase copies of the Association's books or the commemorative pin. This presence on the worldwide web has resulted in many new members for the Association, as well as over 200 visitors each week looking for information about Roger Williams and the Family Association. I see this portal as a major attraction in the future as we present more historic and genealogical information for interested people around the world to access.

I want to thank all of the officers, committee members and other volunteers who worked so diligently last year for the Association and are poised to continue to keep the legacy of Roger Williams alive through their efforts this year. As we enter this new program year, I see the need for more volunteers to help with our efforts, particularly on genealogical research and documentation. One of my goals is to see as much information as possible made available on our web site to help the thousands of descendants, not currently members of the Association, document their Williams lineage and join the Association. Growth of our Association is the only way we will assure the continuation of the memory of our ancestor.

I am again honored to have been elected President of this Association and, with the help of the other officers, directors, committee members and volunteers, I am sure that the coming year will provide interesting meeting programs and membership growth for the Association.

My best wishes to all our members and their families.

Frank Budlong Stevenson
President

August 2000

Research Volunteers Wanted!

Each month the Association receives numerous requests for genealogical research assistance. There are many correspondents who would be pleased to prove family claims of descent from Roger Williams, but are limited in their research efforts due to great distance or lack of expertise. If you can spare a few hours per week or per month to help your distant Williams cousins with their research needs, please contact Dot White at 401-246-0246.

SOME NUMISMATIC HISTORY

Janis M. Stevenson

On June 15, 2000 Lincoln Almond, Governor of the State of Rhode Island, invited the citizens of the state to vote for their choice of design for the Rhode Island commemorative quarter. Candidates for the honor were a vintage sailboat on Narragansett Bay, a likeness of artist Gilbert Stuart, and a portrayal of Roger Williams meeting a Narragansett Indian. All represented, according to Governor Almond, "the finest of our past and present." These designs had been chosen by the Rhode Island Coin Concept Selection Panel from nearly 500 designs submitted over the previous year. The panel was looking for an idea that was "unique and identifiable to Rhode Island, and that reflected the state's heritage."



Given a deadline of June 30, 2000, Rhode Islanders were instructed to cast their ballots in the State Room of the State House or at their local libraries. Citizens could also cast their votes online at the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts web site. Governor Almond would announce the winning design and submit the state's selection to the U.S. Mint by July 18, 2000. Since Rhode Island was the 13th state to enter the union, the Ocean State's quarter would be the 13th in line to be issued, in 2001, by the U.S. Mint.

This number proved unlucky for descendants of Roger Williams and proponents of the Williams coin. When all the votes were in, it was announced that the sailboat, capturing 57% of the votes, would represent the Ocean State in the commemorative collection. The Roger Williams design, although the first choice of the U.S. Fine Arts Commission, came in second with 34% of the popular vote. This declaration dashed the hopes of numerous Roger Williams' descendants who were eager to see their ancestor commemorated and his image circulated throughout the country. Some were undoubtedly hoping to witness a repeat of the historic numismatic feat brought about by their ancestor's likeness in 1936.

In 1936, as Rhode Island approached its tercentenary celebration, it was decided to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the founding of Providence, the first settlement in Rhode Island, with a special coin. The half dollar would be minted by the U.S. Treasury and distributed throughout the state and the nation.

Stonecutters John Howard Benson and Arthur Graham Carey of Newport, Rhode Island designed the coin.* An article in the February 1936 issue of *The Numismatist* described the designs as having been "worked out in the old John Stevens Shop in Newport, which has been in continuous existence as a stone cutting shop since 1705, and in the present building on Thames Street since the Revolution. It was in this shop that Benson, who is an instructor in lettering at the Rhode Island School of Design, puttered around as a youth and learned letter carving before studying in New York and abroad. It was the same shop that he purchased outright in 1927, carrying on the old traditions, established by the Stevens family, of craftsmanship and beauty in stone carving. Carey, who also comes of a family long associated with Newport, is a designer, silversmith and lecturer and since July 1935 has been in partnership with Benson."

In his book *Numismatic Art in America: Aesthetics of the United States Coinage*, Cornelius Vermuele notes that although the designs for the Rhode Island coin are "far from the sophistication of the commemorative half dollars of the 1920s, it can be admired as an amateur production which is to the series what the paintings of Grandma Moses are to the canvases of Andrew Wyeth."

Benson's design on one side of the coin shows Roger Williams standing in the bow of a small boat at Slate Rock, holding a Bible in one hand and greeting an Indian with the other.



The Indian “is holding his hand out in greeting to signify Williams’ arrival as good.” On the reverse, Carey’s design consists of the state shield - the anchor of Hope on a background of mantling.

The Philadelphia Mint struck 20,000 half dollars and the Denver and San Francisco Mints struck 15,000 each, for a total of 50,000 coins. The commemorative coins were duly delivered to the Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Tercentenary Committee, Inc. in February of 1936.

As the Tercentenary Committee related in a letter published in the April 1936 issue of *The Numismatist*, public reaction to the coin was immediate and overwhelming.

“... These coins were placed on sale in 30 banks in all of the cities and almost all of the large towns in the state of Rhode Island on March 5. Within 48 hours, almost the entire issue was sold out. Up to March 18, the committee has not sent outside of the State of Rhode Island a single one of these coins. The price of the Rhode Island Tercentenary half dollar has remained at \$1, and no attempt has been made by the committee to raise the price or commercialize this commemorative coin.

The letter continued: “The demand for these half dollars was unprecedented in its volume. Coin collectors have been unable to account for it. The committee has not stimulated the demand for it, nor advertised these coins, nor given them any publicity, and it had not solicited orders or money from anyone. Unsolicited remittances were sent in from many people throughout the country, and the committee intended to comply with as many of these requests for coins as possible, after the demand within the state of Rhode Island had been satisfied. But the people of the State of Rhode Island bought up practically the complete issue, and consequently the committee began at once to refund money to those who had remitted. The chief regret of the committee at the present time is that 100,000 coins were not minted instead of 50,000 that the desire of all coin collectors might be satisfied.”

Within just 48 hours, 50,000 coins bearing Roger Williams’ image were swept up by eager buyers. Just as no one anticipated the great popularity of the coin, no one could account for it. It makes one wonder whether Roger Williams might again make numismatic history if his likeness were cast on the Rhode Island state quarter. Would the demand for a second Williams coin again far exceed the supply? Unfortunately, we may never know. The *vox populi* has demanded that a sailboat navigating Narragansett Bay shall represent the State of Rhode Island’s “unique history, traditions, and symbols” for the foreseeable future. However, descendants of Roger Williams may gain some measure of satisfaction by suggesting that, just as throughout the long history of the state, it is Roger Williams at the helm of that boat and his steady hand on the tiller.

Works Cited: Jennifer Levitz, “Heads or Sails?” in *The Providence Journal-Bulletin*, June 16, 2000, Sec. A, pp. 1 & 14; Michele Orzano, “Rhode Island Half Dollar,” in *Coin World*, June 19, 2000, p. 98.

* In 1994 the John Stevens Shop at 29 Thames Street in Newport, RI was commissioned by the Roger Williams Family Association to restore the tombstones of Roger Williams’ daughter, Mary (Williams) Sayles, her husband John Sayles, and their son-in-law William Greene at Easton Cemetery in Middletown, Rhode Island. It is thought that this is the very same shop responsible for carving the original stones for the family.

CALENDAR

September 2000 - June 2001

Saturday - September 16, 2000 at 10:00 am

Members and guests are invited to meet at the Wilbor House at 548 West Main Road in Little Compton, RI for a tour of the house and surroundings. The building was continuously occupied by Wilbors for eight generations and is now the headquarters for the Little Compton Historical Society. The tour encompasses the house - a "must-see" gem, a museum barn filled with farm items, tools, and vehicles, a Peaked Top School, the "Peggotty," and much more. The cost of the museum tour is \$5 per person. We will meet at 1:00 for lunch at Abraham Manchester House in Adamsville. A choice from their Luncheon Party Menu of fish, veal, turkey, or a selection of sandwiches will be available in a range of \$12.75 to \$9.45, including tip. A map of the route from Little Compton to Adamsville will be available at the Wilbor House. Please call Ann Prokopowicz at 401-785-2512 or Dot White at 401-246-0246 before September 9 to make a reservation for the tour and for lunch.

Directions: From Providence, Route 195 East to Fall River; exit onto Route 24 South to Tiverton; in Tiverton, pick up Route 77 South, continuing on Route 77 to Little Compton, where Route 77 becomes West Main Road; Wilbor House (Little Compton Historical Society) is on the left side of the road.

Saturday - October 14, 2000 at 10:00 am

(Raindate: Saturday - October 21, 2000 at 10:00 am)

Members and guests are invited to meet at the Brown Street Landing in Wickford, RI for a sail on the *Brandaris*, a 63-foot sailing vessel of Dutch design. This is certain to be an enjoyable and exciting 2-hour yachting experience aboard an heirloom of yachting history: after a colorful escape from the German occupation in World War II, *Brandaris* participated in the evacuation at Dunkirk. Following our sail, we will walk about Wickford and enjoy the ambience of 18th and 19th century homes, shops, and parks that make up this charming village. Browse and eat at your leisure. The cost of the sail is \$15 per person. Please call Ann Prokopowicz at 401-785-2512 before October 8 to reserve your place on deck.

*Directions: From Providence, Route 95 South to Route 4 South; exit to Route 403 South; right onto Route 1 South to Route 1A South; in Wickford Center, turn right onto Brown Street (Route 1A) and park in the public parking area opposite Ryan's Market. The *Brandaris* is berthed to the left of this lot.*

Saturday - November 18, 2000 at 12:00 noon

Members and guests will meet at the Stagecoach Tavern Restaurant at 1157 Putnam Pike in Chepachet, RI for a self-ordered luncheon. Edna M. Kent, Gloucester's Town Historian, will speak on "Olde Gloucester" and touch on the Tavern's role in Rhode Island history. All are encouraged to arrive early and stay late to enjoy the Gloucester Heritage Society's Peddlars' Faire festivities in Chepachet. Please call Walter Covell at 401-245-6279 by November 4 to reserve your place.

Directions: From Providence, Route 44 West through Greenville and into Chepachet; the restaurant is located on the right side of the road just past CVS Pharmacy; parking is available on the main road or in the lot behind the restaurant.

Saturday - December 2, 2000 at 1:30 pm

We have been invited to enjoy a social hour of Christmas music and refreshments at the home of Clifford W. Brown at 180 Brown Street in Providence, RI. This will be a nostalgic time for our older members, who remember fondly the gatherings at Brown Street when Clifford's mother often entertained the Family Association. Marjorie Davis, accompanied by Anne Louise Goudreau, will present a musical program. Please bring a non-perishable item for a food basket to be donated to a Providence food kitchen.

Directions: From Providence, Route 195 East; take Wickenden Street exit, turning left at bottom of ramp onto Wickenden Street; left onto Hope Street; left onto Barnes Street; left onto Brown Street; the Brown house is on the right side of the road.

Saturday - March 24, 2001 at 1:30 pm

We will meet at the Auditorium in the Roger Williams Park Museum for a business meeting. Refreshments will be served and a speaker will bring us up to date on the progress of the Heritage

Harbor Museum in Providence. Please note that there is now an elevator down to the Auditorium. *Directions: From Providence, Route 95 South; exit to Elmwood Avenue and follow signs to Roger Williams Park; upon entering park, follow signs to Museum.*

Saturday - April 21, 2001 at 12:00 noon

Members and guests will meet at Cherry Valley Herb Farm at 969 Snake Hill Road in Glocester, RI. A short business meeting will follow a lovely boxed lunch, your choice of chicken salad with tarragon on whole-wheat bread, baked ham with oregano mustard on seeded hard roll, or vegetarian cucumber, sprouts, and carrots with an herb spread on a sun-dried tomato roll-up. Each meal is \$8 and includes minted fresh fruit salad, pasta salad with sun-dried tomatoes and lemon basil, and an herbal pastry. Susan Carpenter, expert herbalist, will then give us a tour of the farm's herb gardens. Please call Walter Covell at 401-245-6279 by April 7 with your choice of boxed lunch.

Directions: From Providence, Route 6 West through Johnston and into North Scituate; keep right at McDonald's and Mobil gas station, continuing onto Route 101 West; right at Countryside Restaurant onto Route 102 North; right at traffic light onto Snake Hill Road; left into drive at Cherry Valley Herb Farm sign, then left into parking lot.

Sunday - May 20, 2001 at 11:00 am

We will gather at First Baptist Church in America at 75 North Main Street in Providence, RI. There, at the church founded by Roger Williams in 1638, we will join in a special Founders' Sunday service. Following coffee at the church, we will proceed to the home of Carlo and Betty Mencucci at 1777 Victory Highway in Glendale, RI for a picnic lunch. The Mencuccis have 18 beehives on their 14-acre property, and there will be a display of beekeeping and honey processing equipment. Betty, former President of the Rhode Island Beekeepers' Association, will give a general presentation on bees and will demonstrate "how honey gets from the hive to the jar." Bring your own picnic lunch and lawn chair.

Directions: From Providence, Route 44 West to Chepachet; after passing through the village, go straight at traffic light, then bear right after Citizens Bank onto Route 102 North; right onto Route 107 (East Avenue); left onto Victory Highway. The Mencucci residence is on the ride side of the road, just before the St. Louis Catholic Chapel.

Saturday - June 9, 2001 at 9:30 am

George W. Williams has again kindly invited us to his home on Prudence Island for our Annual Meeting. We must be at the Bristol Ferry Dock by 9:30 am to board the bus for the 10:00 am ferry. Directions to the ferry dock will be available at previous meetings. Please bring a lunch and a lawn chair. Our return is on the 4:00 pm ferry. Cost for the ferry is \$5.70 per person round trip. An additional charge for the bus, which will also tour the island, will be pro-rated among the passengers. Please sign up for this cruise-tour early so George will be able to ascertain what size bus is needed. Call George Williams at 401-351-2351 or Dot White at 401-246-0246 to make your reservation.

IN MEMORIUM

Carol Ann Barney	12 April 2000		
Ardis W. Barbour	9 May 1999		Mary
Richard W. Butterfield	21 June 1999		Daniel
Francis Carroll Carter	12 June 1999		Joseph
Elizabeth Hall Clarke (Mrs. Theodore S.)	23 July 2000		Mercy Winsor
Albert Earl Davis	9 May 2000		Mercy Waterman
Susan J. Field (Mrs. Joseph E.)	29 September 1989		Mercy Winsor
Christian J. Gropel	16 March 2000		Freeborn
Kathryn K. Metcalf	-----		Joseph
Charles W. Paige	20 December 1999		Mary
Doris K. Pennell (Mrs. James E.)	13 October 1999		Mercy Waterman
Charles Edward Pray, Sr.	17 September 1999		Daniel
A. John Prokopowicz	21 January 2000		Joseph, Daniel
Dorothy T. Roffee	5 May 2000		Associate
Alcy Paine Steere (Mrs. Everett M.)	8 May 2000		Joseph
Robert E. Steere	23 November 1999		Mary, Daniel, Joseph
			Mary, Mercy Waterman/Winsor

NEW MEMBERS

1999-2000

Allen, Faith Callahan	Riverside, RI	Mary
* Bailey, Jeremy P.	Pascoag, RI	Mary
* Bailey, Jonathan M.	Pascoag, RI	Mary
* Bailey, Stephen U.	Pascoag, RI	Mary
* Brown, Caitlin Jennifer	Guilford, CT	Mercy Waterman
* Brown, Megan Patricia	Guilford, CT	Mercy Waterman
* Brown, Stephen Marvin	Manchester, CT	Mercy Winsor
Carter, Isabella N. (Mrs.)	Providence, RI	Associate
* Chase, Carl A.	Ypsilanti, MI	Mercy Winsor
* Chase, Martin S., S.J.	Bronx, NY	Mercy Winsor
* Chase, Roger William	Farwell, MI	Mercy Winsor
Clark, Robert Jordan	Rossevelt, NJ	Mary
Coe, Douglas Andrew	Chatham, MA	Mercy Winsor
* Conde, Susan L. (Partridge)	Coventry, RI	Mercy Waterman
* Davies, Dawn M. (Williams)	Chepachet, RI	Joseph
* Duryea, John Underhill	Chocowinity, NC	Daniel
* Duryea-Gaudet, Melissa	Califon, NJ	Daniel
* Fiorella, Janet (Forbes)	Huntington, CT	Daniel
* Geist, Grace Elizabeth Brown	Guilford, CT	Mercy Waterman
* Greenhalgh, John Durfee	Chepachet, RI	Joseph
* Greenhalgh, Matthew John	Chepachet, RI	Joseph
* Hart, Wendy A.	Plainfield, CT	Daniel
* Hassell, Frank Arnold	North Kingstown, RI	Freeborn
* Hunt, Gale A. (Loranger)	Hope, RI	Daniel
* Hunter, Rouette (Duryea)	Wakefield, MA	Daniel
* Ivinson, Terry Lynn (Hill)	Clinton, MI	Mary
* Jensen, Douglas Nile	East Greenwich, RI	Joseph
Johnson, Deanne (Jones)	San Pedro, CA	Joseph
* Larson, Jillianne Montgomery	Long Beach, MS	Mercy Waterman
Lipp, Janice (Hill)	College Station, TX	Mercy Waterman
Meier, Timothy John	Bethel Park, PA	Mary
* Messinger, Timothy Steele	Salisbury, NC	Mary
Meyer, Karen A. (Oswald)	Wallingford, CT	Mercy Waterman
Miller, Rodney J., Sr.	Taylorville, IL	Mary
* Montgomery, Rebecca Jane	Long Beach, MI	Mercy Waterman
* Montgomery, William Marshall, Jr.	Duluth, GA	Mercy Waterman
* Olney, Richard Hollis	Cumberland, RI	Mary
* Ouellet, Saige Amber	Plainfield, CT	Daniel
* Partridge, Scott Charles	Rumford, RI	Mercy Waterman
* Partridge, Steven Howard	Barrington, RI	Mercy Waterman
Pellegrini, Joanna (Worley)	Maryland Heights, MO	Daniel
Penniman, Bruce	Rehoboth, MA	Mercy Winsor
* Reid, Gerald Traynor	Richmond, VA	Daniel
* Sedgewick, David Wallace	Washington, DC	Daniel
* Sedgewick, Susan (Smith)	Washington, DC	Daniel
Smith, Michael N.	Bayville, NY	Joseph
* Smith, Judyth L. (Mrs. Earl R., II)	New York, NY	Daniel
* Stanley, Richard D.	Williamsburg, VA	Mercy Waterman
* Steinhour, Elizabeth Pearl	Mason, MI	Joseph
* Steinhour, Ruth Anna	Mason, MI	Joseph
Sumner, Thomas Barry	Katy, TX	Mary
Swarthout, Arthur Wellington	Bloomfield Hills, MI	Mary
Swarthout, Mark Wellington	Bloomfield Hills, MI	Mary
* Taylor, Cornelia Lippitt	Walnut Creek, CA	Mercy Waterman
Turner, Dee	Newport Beach, CA	Mary
* Wallace, Helen (McMasters)	Del Mar, CA	Daniel
* Waterman, Stuart	Slidell, TX	Mercy Waterman
* Waterman, Stuart, Jr.	Slidel, TX	Mercy Waterman
Whitehead, George Ira, Jr.	Montgomery, TX	Mary
* Whitehead, George Ira, III	Salisbury, MD	Mary
Wilkinson, Marlene (Ona)	Willington, TN	Mary
Williams, Christian P.	Derry, NH	Daniel
* Woodard, Alyssa Jane	Abington, PA	Mercy Waterman
* Woodard, Kevin Thomas	Abington, PA	Mercy Waterman
* Life Member		

BEGINNING OUR 109TH YEAR 2000-2001

OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Mr. Frank B. Stevenson
142 George Allen Rd., Glocester, RI 02814	401-568-4016, fstevenson@rogerwilliams.org
<i>1st Vice President</i>	Mr. Walter Covell
47 Bowden Avenue, Barrington, RI 02806	401-245-6279
<i>2nd Vice President</i>	Mrs. Ann (Rowley) Prokopowicz
168 Forest Avenue, Cranston, RI 02910	401-785-2512
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	Mrs. Meredith (Rowley) Smith
Wilbur Hollow Road, North Scituate, RI 02857	401-647-7204
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	Miss Gladys I. Bailey
2153 South County Trail, East Greenwich, RI 02818	401-884-4988
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mr. Steven J. Hart
13 Gilles Street, Coventry, RI 02816	401-828-4738, steverhart@rogerwilliams.org
<i>Registrar</i>	Mrs. Elsie (Bushnell) Williams
35 Hodsell Street, Cranston, RI 02910	401-467-7594
<i>Historian</i>	Mrs. Birdella (Wightman) Corbitt
15 Ivy Lane, Seekonk, MA 02771	508-336-9418

DIRECTORS

<i>Director, Past President</i>	Col. Robert Allen Greene
PO Box 137, E. Greenwich, RI 02818	401-884-5929, 401-884-7530, fax 401-885-9370
<i>Director</i>	Mr. Raymond L. Hilton Jr.
84 Alfred Drowne Road, Barrington, RI 02806	401-245-7463
<i>Director, Past President</i>	Mrs. Gussie (Randall) Lawton
1017 Great Road, Lincoln, RI 02865	401-334-2674
<i>Director</i>	Mrs. Janis (Frigault) Stevenson
142 George Allen Rd., Glocester, RI 02814	401-568-4016, jstevenson@rogerwilliams.org
<i>Director, Past President</i>	Mrs. Dorothy (Higson) White
15 Frederick Dr., Barrington, RI 02806	401-246-0246, dorothywhite@rogerwilliams.org
<i>Director, Past President</i>	Mr. George W. Williams
8 Moses Brown Street, Providence, RI 02906	401-351-2351

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

<i>Auditors</i>	Mr. Raymond L. Hilton Jr., Mr. Everett O. White
<i>Chaplain</i>	Mrs. Birdella (Wightman) Corbitt
15 Ivy Lane, Seekonk, MA 02771	508-336-9418
<i>Lineage Book</i>	Mrs. Dorothy (Higson) White
15 Frederick Dr., Barrington, RI 02806	401-246-0246, dorothywhite@rogerwilliams.org
<i>Membership</i>	Mr. Steven J. Hart
13 Gilles Street, Coventry, RI 02816	401-828-4738, steverhart@rogerwilliams.org
<i>Program</i>	Mr. Walter Covell
47 Bowden Avenue, Barrington, RI 02806	401-245-6279
<i>Publicity</i>	Mr. Robert Messinger, Mrs. Dee Dee Messinger
20 Elderberry Lane, Wakefield, RI 02879	401-782-4058
<i>Sunshine</i>	Mrs. Anne (Williams) Crocker
35 Hodsell Street, Cranston, RI 02910	401-467-7594
<i>Trust</i>	Miss Gladys I. Bailey; Mr. Elmer H. Palmer
<i>Typesetting/Web Site</i>	Mrs. Janis (Frigault) Stevenson
142 George Allen Rd., Glocester, RI 02814	401-568-4016, jstevenson@rogerwilliams.org