

Q & A

MEMBERSHIP

I know I am a descendant from the Mayflower, why should I join the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the state of Ohio (SMDOH)? *There are many reasons to join the Society including honoring your ancestors, recognizing the hardships they endured to settle this nation, to learn the history of the settlement of the colonies, to meet your cousins and enjoy their fellowship.*

I live in Pennsylvania, can I join Ohio? *Yes. In fact, we have members from not only neighboring states but from Texas, California and even overseas. Some members have joined more than one state Society. Though we generally suggest that you join where you live to be better able to participate in local events, but it is always your choice.*

Why would you want to join the Ohio Society if you don't live in Ohio? *Perhaps your roots are here or you have family members in the Ohio Society, or you live near the border of Ohio and find it more convenient to join here, or you joined in Ohio and moved away and want to keep your ties to Ohio active.*

Do I have to join 3 different organizations (the Colony, SMDOH, the General Society)? *No. Membership in the Mayflower Society is at the state level and that one membership includes your Colony membership, the Ohio membership and the General Society membership. The Ohio Society handles all that for you!*

Will you do the research for me? *We can often help you or point you in certain directions but we can't do the research for you. We do have volunteers who can help guide you on request.*

My Mayflower Lineage Match found a match. Now what? *You should be hearing from our Deputy Historian or Historian shortly with instructions on how to start the application process. In the meantime, you need to start collecting your documents. We need all the applicable birth, marriage and death records as far back as you can find them. We will let you know what else you will need.*

Are specific Ohio counties assigned to one of the Ohio Colonies? *No, it is always the member's choice to select a colony. You can elect to join the colony that is geographically closer to you, or join a different one to participate in events with friends or family members.*

SUPPLEMENTALS

What are supplementals? *When you join the Society, you do so under one Mayflower ancestor, providing documentation to prove your lineage. Many members like to document as many Mayflower ancestors as they can. Each additional proven documentation is called a supplemental and requires an additional fee (to cover costs of the verifiers at the General Society reviewing proof documents, issuing "supplemental" certificate, postage, etc.).*

JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP:

Any Ohio member can sponsor a child between birth his/her 18th birthday as a junior member. After the 18th birthday, we offer discounted applications for full membership until age 25. Some Ohio colonies have Junior Membership Coordinators who do special events for juniors. They are always welcome at Mayflower events.

DUES

When are dues collected? *Dues collection begins in August of every year for the new membership year which begins on November 1st. Dues must be paid by December 31st to prevent being dropped from membership.*

Do I have to pay 3 annual memberships (the Colony, Ohio, and the General Society)? *No, you pay one fee – to SMDOH (the Ohio Society) which then pays the General Society on behalf of all the Ohio members and pays each Colony a fee based on its number of members.*

Can I use PayPal to pay my dues? *Yes, we can accept dues and donations by PayPal and plan to have a reliable credit card option in place by August 2023.*

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Does the Ohio Society offer Life Memberships? *No. We discontinued life memberships a few years ago since we have to pay the General Society each year on behalf of our membership and determined that we do not have enough money in our Life Member fund to continue enrolling new life members.. Those who already had life memberships are “grandfathered in”, but are encouraged to make voluntary donations to SMDOH to help paying the annual dues to the General Society.*

DONATIONS

Does the Ohio Society accept donations? *Absolutely! We accept donations to our general fund, scholarship fund and life member fund. We also occasionally have special projects to which members can donate and options for pass-through donations to the General Society such as the Pilgrim Meeting House. All donations are tax deductible. You can see more details on the donations page on this website.*

MEMBERSHIP PINS / PROTOCOL

Does the General Society offer pins, medallions, jewelry and the like to members? *Yes. To see what is available, go to the General Society website and you will find pictures, prices and eligibility of the jewelry the GS offers. Once you are a member, you can create a free account on the GSMD website and purchase member only insignia. You will need to know your General Society number to create that account. It is on your membership certificate or you can request the information from our membership coordinator.*

Is there a protocol as to wearing of the GS jewelry? *Yes. The general information about protocol is included in the welcome packet Ohio sends its new members and is posted in the member information on this website.*

Does the Ohio Society offer any pins? *Yes, the Ohio Society has a pin that is available for purchase. Purchase information is included in several Buckeye Mayflower newsletters each year.*

Do the Colonies offer pins? *Yes. Several of the Ohio Colonies have their own pins to give to new members. Colonies that do not give the Ohio pin.*



Are there any other pins? *From time to time Ohio offers a special pin as we did for the 400th anniversary. Other states also have items for sale. One prized pin in Ohio is the magnetic backed Ohio Guarantor Guard Pin. Remembering how the towns of our ancestors often “guaranteed” that they would provide mutual aid to other towns as needed, Ohio’s Western Reserve Colony Board was inspired to propose that Ohio “guarantee” that it would financially help support one or more Ohio members desiring to be part of The Mayflower Guard through a voluntary donor program. These pins are available for sale at the annual meetings or contact Western Reserve Colony to find out how to become a member of the Ohio Guarantor support group. (One time membership fee of \$25 gets you a pin and your name on the supporter list.)*

SPOUSES, PARTNERS, FRIENDS

Can my spouse, partner, friend participate in the Ohio Mayflower Society? My spouse/partner is a descendant of a Mayflower passenger. I would also like to become involved with the Mayflower Society, is there a way I can participate with them without being a descendant? *Family members are always welcome at any Mayflower Society event. We have had many family members participate in programs and other volunteer activities. The only thing family members cannot do is vote. The Western Reserve colony also has a Friends of WR program that you can join.*

OUTREACH

Is there someone I can get to come talk to my organization/school about the Mayflower. *Yes. Talk to the Lt. Governor of your Colony to find out about available speakers.*

TERMINOLOGY

What are the differences between Pilgrim, Puritan, Stranger, what am I, and do you capitalize them? *Pilgrim generally refers to the Mayflower passengers who had different religious beliefs from the Church of England. Most of them had been living in Leiden, Holland to escape persecution. The Strangers were the Mayflower passengers who traveled for business and other purposes that were not religious. The Puritans were the colonists who settled the Massachusetts Bay Colony and other areas outside of Plymouth county. They also had religious beliefs at odds with the Church of England, but different than the Pilgrims, The names are often capitalized, though not required.*

IS THERE ANYTHING UNIQUE ABOUT THE OHIO SOCIETY OR ANY OF ITS COLONIES?

On June 28, 1927, Western Reserve Colony became the first in the United States to organize outside a state society and is the oldest continuously active colony in existence.

The Ohio Society and the Western Reserve Historical Society are the keepers of a volume printed by William Brewster in Leiden, Holland in 1618, now known as the Great Book. Look under History in the menu of this website for the story of the book and photos of the last few signings by Governors General.