



For Immediate Release

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The Mayflower Society Commemorates the 400th Anniversary of the Mayflower Story with 2020 and 2021 Events

Mayflower descendants will gather in Massachusetts in Plymouth, Boston, and Provincetown over ten days in September 2020

Plymouth, MA (May 16, 2019) – Plymouth-MA, Boston-MA, and Provincetown-MA will host members of the Mayflower Society as they make pilgrimages to Massachusetts for the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower voyage. In addition to [The General Society Mayflower Descendants \(GSMD\)](#) triennial Congress between September 11 and 20, 2020, other events are planned through the anniversary of the first Thanksgiving in 2021.

“Many of our 30,000 members will be visiting at various times over 2020 and 2021.” said [Governor General George Garmany](#) of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD). “We are commemorating the anniversary in a number of ways and at different times with the largest span of events occurring during our triennial Congress in September 2020.”

Activities scheduled include tours, marches in Pilgrim dress, ceremonies, dedications, galas, publications, lectures, and more.

Events scheduled, but subject to change, include:

May 2019 to December 2021 – Mayflower descendants will visit Plymouth, MA and Pilgrim sights in England, Amsterdam, and Leiden to commemorate the first Thanksgiving.

January 2020 – The Mayflower Society will be featured in the internationally televised Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year’s Day with a float commemorating the anniversary of the Mayflower voyage.

February 2020 – Descendants will present a program and booth featuring the anniversary at Rootstech in Utah, the largest genealogy conference in America.

May – October 2020 – A series of lectures about the Mayflower story will be presented at the Mayflower Society House in Plymouth, MA

July 2020 – The Mayflower Society will host a book signing and lecture about its publication *Made in America – The Pilgrim Story and How it Grew* by esteemed Pilgrim historian Jim Baker at the Mayflower Meetinghouse.

September 11 – 20, 2020 – General Society of Mayflower Descendants Triennial Congress

- Friday, 9/11 – Tours of Plymouth
- Saturday, 9/12 – Congress registration and Provincetown Black Tie event
- Sunday, 9/13 – Ferries from Boston and Plymouth meet in Provincetown harbor for a reenactment of the Mayflower Compact signing and a memorial wreath ceremony. A reception will follow at [The Pilgrim Monument and Provincetown Museum](#).
- Monday, 9/14 – Pilgrims’ Progress from Boston Common to the Massachusetts State House where a [Mass400](#) Governor’s reception will be held and Mayflower Pilgrim William Bradford’s *Of Plymouth Plantation* journal will be displayed.
- Tuesday, 9/15 – Exhibition Hall with Member Society tables, Family Society tables, DNA testing stations, and other vendors will be open throughout the day at Hotel 1620 in Plymouth.
- Wednesday, 9/16 – **Morning:** Descendants will march through Plimoth Plantation in Pilgrim dress for a church service at the [Plimoth Plantation](#) Fort. A naturalization ceremony will be held at Memorial Hall with GSMD descendants in Pilgrim dress welcoming new citizens. **Afternoon:** Pilgrim Progress ceremony from Mayflower Society House to Sarcophagus on Coles Hill, then up Leyden Street to the [Mayflower Meetinghouse](#) for a deed ceremony between the First Parish Church Plymouth and the General Society. Congress is called to order. **Evening:** Reception at Mayflower Society House with dedication of GSMD 2020 William Bradford monument.
- Thursday, 9/17 – Tricentennial Congress governance day #1 and Exhibition Hall open.
- Friday, 9/18 – Tricentennial Congress governance day #2 and Exhibition Hall open. An evening gala follows.
- Saturday, 9/19 – Descendants tour Plymouth 400 Embarkation Festival and continue sight-seeing in Boston and Provincetown.
- Sunday, 9/20 – [Pilgrim Family Societies](#) meet, and additional touring throughout the region continue on own.

November 2020 – Descendants march in the USA Thanksgiving Parade in Plymouth, MA alongside their Mayflower Society House float.

November 2020 – Annual ‘Illuminate Thanksgiving’ event sponsored by Mayflower Meetinghouse and Plymouth 400 in tandem with similar events in Plymouth UK and the Netherlands.

September 2021 – General Board of Assistants meeting, sponsored by the Massachusetts Mayflower Society, will bring Pilgrim descendants to Plymouth.

“We expect large numbers again in 2021 because it is the 400th anniversary of the first Thanksgiving,” said Susan Belekewicz, Executive Director of GSMD. “At that time, we will

also acknowledge the legacy we are leaving behind with the restoration and preservation of the Mayflower Meetinghouse.”

In addition to Mayflower Society events, many descendants who are not society members but belong to Pilgrim Family Societies, will travel to Plymouth. Room blocks for the triennial Congress, contracted by the Mayflower Society, sold out in two hours on March 1, 2019. More rooms and other options are being offered to accommodate those who plan to attend. Thousands of visitors are expected to make the pilgrimage throughout the 2020 anniversary year, as well as 2021, the year of the first Thanksgiving.

Approximately 1 in every 25 Americans are Mayflower descendants. There are over 35 million descendants worldwide.

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About the General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD)

Founded in 1897, The Mayflower Society, or General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD), is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with international headquarters in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Member Societies are located in every American state, District of Columbia, Canada, and Europe. Membership requires proof of lineage from any passenger who traveled to America in 1620 on the Mayflower. Its mission is to educate the public about the Mayflower story and its impact on Western civilization, and to uphold the highest standards of genealogy research through verification of Mayflower Pilgrim lineage. The society operates the historic Mayflower Society House, the National Pilgrim Memorial Meetinghouse, and a genealogy research library at its Plymouth headquarters. It publishes books to encourage scholarship about the Mayflower story as well as the lineage books, *Mayflower Families Through Generations*, that document five or more generations from Mayflower passengers.

Connect with us:

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Instagram.com/themayflowersociety

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About the National Pilgrim Memorial Meetinghouse (Mayflower Meetinghouse)

The Mayflower Meetinghouse is operated by the National Pilgrim Memorial Meetinghouse Charitable Trust, owned by the General Society of Mayflower Descendants (GSMD). In February of 2019, the Trust became sole owner of the historic 1897 church, built to memorialize the Mayflower Pilgrims. Its adaptive reuse includes restoring and preserving the treasured American icon. Today it operates as GSMD’s education center, offering programmatic interactive experiences, exhibits, meeting space, and a broadcast-ready facility, all to tell the world about the Mayflower story. It is also a rental venue. Located at 19 Town Square in Plymouth, MA, it is open for tours by appointment, and to the public between May 15 and October 31. Website: www.MayflowerMeetinghouse.org.