

From: Howard Knickerbocker <howardk758@aol.com>

To: bryan.m.knickerbocker <bryan.m.knickerbocker@gmail.com>; knicktrainman <knicktrainman@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Next steps?

Date: Sat, Nov 2, 2019 11:19 am

Bryan & George,

I've been going to suggest this conversation for the last couple of weeks. I posted your latest "Harmon's John" yesterday morning for the monthly knic.com upgrade so was amazed at the timing of your email. We might want to document this discussion. I have no problem with a conference call but I always walk away not really knowing or remembering everything that was said or capturing all the nuances. This is a many faceted box that we are opening. The questions come ten seconds after I hang up.

Accomplished: I think we've sewn up all the dead ends & brick walls with the exception of the Vermont Baker line – who will probably never be solved in the conventional records. We tried really hard on that one.

Bryan has done more original research than has been accomplished in the last 110 years. I think we are at the point where a major initiative & re-write of the family narrative is possible. It is in bits and pieces and begs for consolidation.

The Knic Community: Genealogy is a different beast today. Most people feel research is lifting some line or pictures from an on-line genealogy. If its on the internet, it must be true. We've received very little feedback from the work to date. The question is how to engage dedicated researchers to continue the work we've started. I've always thought it was worth the effort. Dave chided me a while back and I should dig out his important comments as the 1990 collaboration methods don't resonate with today's genealogists.

The Schaghticoke Society seems to have gone cold. We might need to re-open the support mechanisms and connections with them as two-way publicity falls out to everyone's advantage.

The 1850 Foundation: I see a very minimum listing of the known connections between HJ and the 1850 families. If nothing else it is the key to (1) solving brick walls, (2) a VanAlstyne re-do road map and (3) puts the family in a position to integrate all the varied DNA studies that are ongoing. I would only include daughters that have married and their spouse. I would not try to enumerate the female lines. The researchers always find their way to the original female Knic. Color coding the individuals in the spread sheets / genealogies might be a powerful presentation tool.

I have always considered this as a foundation to the research of the early family and now possible thanks to Bryan's studies of the early family groups. New (and probably never ending) research will be suggested by trying to complete this study as there are many mysteries lurking in the 1850 listings.

Nuts and Bolts: I see only one methodology that makes the research widely available and meets your wish list. Family Tree Maker (FTM 2019 - latest edition just released) and Roots Magic (new edition 8 coming very soon) allow two-way collaboration and database syncing on an Ancestry Web Site. It really does work. PDFs and compiled genealogies fall out of a Roots Magic accessory program called Personal Historian (3). I won't get into details or rationale - but will expand on demand.

To Do: I need a backup to maintain the web site. I feel fine, I believe my brain still mostly works and no signs of an imminent departure – but be prepared. There are 3,000 files and 2.6 GB of stuff on knic.com. Much of the file structure is the old unified genealogy. I've paid to maintain the knic.com name for 10 more years and the web site is really cheap for unlimited storage. I think the site is important to keep focus on the research. Without it we are just another small family that is probably dying out and with no explicit connections. The Society hasn't done genealogy or expanded beyond their mansion mission.

Decide on the best way to present the genealogical databases. There are no perfect answers – and there are many large copycat databases on both Ancestry & My Heritage. Family Search is a nonstarter as you do not have control over the database. I can put our own (secondary) database(s) on knic.com.

How do we expand the Knic world? It took care of itself in the early days. A hundred or more Knics showed up at the first reunion. It is a different universe of non-joiners today. How do we keep our friends involved? Our plate is full and what have I missed? I am willing to post this discussion on the web site to elicit comments from interested parties? - H

-----Original Message-----

From: Bryan Knickerbocker <bryan.m.knickerbocker@gmail.com>

To: Howard Knickerbocker <HowardK758@aol.com>; George F Walker <knicktrainman@gmail.com>

Sent: Fri, Nov 1, 2019 12:20 pm

Subject: Next steps?

Howard and George:

I took the summer off from large genealogy projects. As a result, I have a few small things that are backlogged. I'll email you some of those smaller things over the next few months.

More broadly, though, I've been thinking - a dangerous thing.

I agree with something Howard said months ago: It's time to step back and look at the big picture and how to best document everything for posterity.

I have two thoughts. I'd like your views.

First:

I think it's finally time for me to focus on Howard's long-standing challenge of documenting everyone in the 1850 census. Howard and I have each taken stabs at this. I will get serious this winter.

Second:

I'd like to find a way to make a unified Knickerbocker "tree" visible to the world - free of charge. I have put the word "tree" in quotes because I don't actually think a conventional tree the best way to do this. Instead, I've been poking around at PC-based genealogy software. The PC packages are essentially free (less than \$100 each) and offer various ways to create family reports. The reports are not as nice as Howard's original listings on knic.com, but they are easy to create. My priority is to find a way to periodically download from Ancestry, either directly or via gedcom, and then create a PDF listing.

If you have favorite PC-based packages, let me know, and I'll add them to my shopping list.

Thus:

My vision for the future is that I will continue to work - in the background - on detailed reports on family lines, migrations, etc. Those are my favorite activities on cold winter days.

I will keep my membership on Ancestry, at least until they go bankrupt or get sold again. Ancestry has lots of problems, but is still a useful platform for research.

I will find a way to periodically dump my Ancestry tree into a (very long) PDF file on the entire family. This will offer newcomers a way to find an entry point into the world of the Knickerbockers. The priority will not be on the best report. Instead, the priority will be on being able to easily create an updated PDF once a year or so, from my master Ancestry tree. The file will be huge, but easily searchable.

We will also have the 1850 tabulation, which will allow entry points for intermediate level genealogists who have a rudimentary understanding of their great-grandparents, etc.

As always, my hope is that we will spark the next generation to step up and get involved (just as the two of you, and Norma Moberg, gave me the spark 20+ years ago).

I'd like to hear your thoughts and visions about useful activities over the next year or two.

Bryan

ps: also ... not to be too morbid ... but I'm also curious about how each of you are doing, health-wise. My nightmare scenario would be to have both of you fade from the scene unexpectedly. I'd be lost.