

# *the colonial dames of america*

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

Save and fill out the accompanying CDA Membership Application, which is a fillable PDF.

### ABOUT FILLABLE FORMS

CDA applications are fillable forms. These are PDF files in which you can actively type the requested information directly into the blanks of the form.

**Adobe Reader:** Download the free Adobe Reader for ease of filling out the membership form; this is not to be confused with Adobe Acrobat, which requires a paid subscription.

**Mandatory for Mac Users:** Mac users must use Adobe Reader to fill out the form. Using a web browser or the 'Preview' application results in a corrupted file where the form appears blank.

**Critical Note on Using the Fillable Form:** *Save the file on your computer BEFORE you start editing it.* If you do not save the file, your information will be lost when you close it.

Save the file as "CDA Membership Application, *Chapter Number, Last Name, First Name.*"

**Note that you MUST electronically submit the completed application still in its editable form to your Chapter Registrar, so make sure that you save the file properly. Handwritten, printed, or scanned PDF copies are not accepted.**

To continue to the next line item while filling out the form, hit the 'tab' button and it will automatically advance to the next blank. Alternatively, you can use your mouse to click on the blank that you advance to fill and/or correct as needed.

To italicize text, select the text you want to italicize (by dragging your cursor over the words until they are all highlighted) and then press the "Ctrl" and "i" keys at the same time. The text should automatically convert to italics. [Note that some of these shortcuts do not seem to work on Mac computers; the text will still be accepted without italics.]

Incomplete or incorrectly submitted charts will not be accepted until corrected.

### PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGISTS

If you hire a professional genealogist, it is your responsibility to make sure that they comply with all the instructions listed in this guide. You are welcome to share this document with them.

## INSTRUCTIONS ON FILLING OUT THE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Each generation is represented by numbers.

- 1 = Information about the candidate
- 2 = Information about parents
- 3 = Information about the grandparents, etc.

### Filling out qualifying ancestor information (page 1 of application):

When filling out the first page of the form, please make sure to copy the information about the Qualifying Ancestor exactly as approved by the Registrar General via the Ancestor Approval Form. Any changes or requests made by the Registrar General from the Ancestor Approval Form should be incorporated into the information listed on the first page.

### Filling out names:

*A snapshot of the fillable form for generation 3:*

3. That the Said:			
Was the		of:	
Date of Birth:		Place:	
Date of Death:		Place:	
His ( )		Wife:	

List your lineal ancestor, male or female, in the line “That the Said:” \_\_\_\_ from the previous generation (generation 2, in this example).

Fill in either “son” or daughter” in the blank, “Was the \_\_\_\_ of,” depending on the gender of the person listed in the line “That the Said:”

It is CDA’s convention to list the male ancestor first on the final charts. Following “Was the \_\_\_\_ of:”, input the male ancestor’s name.

Where it reads “His (\_\_\_\_) Wife,” list whether the wife was the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> spouse, etc.

When listing any female ancestor, please use her maiden name as the last name.

Per standard genealogical conventions, list in all capital letters the name of the spouse through which the line continues (i.e., Ann Baker, in the snapshot below).

*A snapshot of the fillable form for generation 3 filled out:*

3. That the Said:	Jane Smith		
Was the	daughter	of:	John Smith
Date of Birth:	4 Jul 1900	Place:	New York, NY
Date of Death:	25 Dec 1964	Place:	Seattle, WA
His (2 <sup>nd</sup> )		Wife:	ANN BAKER

**Filling out locations:**

When entering geographic locations in the U.S., list the name of the town or city followed by a comma and then the state (e.g., New York, NY). Please use the state abbreviations used by the US Postal Service (e.g., FL, NY, MA). If the city is unknown but the county is known, list the county name and state (e.g., Bedford Co., VA).

If a location is not certain, please write “prob.” before the probable location (e.g., Place: prob. Southold, NY). All locations on the form must match the locations exactly as listed in proof.

If a location is completely unknown, please leave blank.

**Filling out dates:**

As you write in the dates, please use European notation: day of the month/month/year (e.g., 7 Oct 1702). Use the three-letter abbreviations for the months (e.g., Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr) for any date listed throughout the application.

If you know the year but not the month or day that an event took place, list the year (e.g., 1665). If you are uncertain about a year, please use the following abbreviations before the year in question:

ca. (circa)  
bef. (before)  
aft. (after)

For example:

- If you know that your ancestor died in 1663, but not on which day or in which month, enter “1663” in the ancestor’s “Date of Death” field.
- If you know your ancestor was born around 1599, enter “ca. 1599” in the Ancestor’s “Date of Birth” field.
- If a documented event, such as the birth of a child in 1677, implies that the marriage took place before a certain year, enter “bef. 1677” in the “Date of Marriage” field.
- Similarly, if a documented event such as a marriage in 1732 implies that a death took place afterwards, enter “aft. 1732” in the “Date of Death” field.

If a date is completely unknown, please leave blank.

**Filling out references:**

The references lines are for listing the documentation of your claim.

You can use the following abbreviations for common documents:

b/c birth certificate  
m/c marriage certificate  
d/c death certificate

You can list each source of documentation and separate them by a semi-colon (e.g., b/c John Smith; m/c Jane Doe and James Smith; d/c James Smith)

For books, articles, or other printed sources, please use standard bibliographical formats (e.g., Hening, William Waller. *The Statutes at Large: A Collection of all the Laws of Virginia, Vol I.* (1823) pg. 299).

Please do not use “op.cit.,” “ibid,,” or similar abbreviations.

*A snapshot of the fillable form for generation 3:*

Date of Marriage:  Place:

3. References:

If the information in the references section fills up more than five lines, please add the additional information to “Additional References” in the corresponding generation number on the preceding page. Otherwise, leave the “Additional References” section blank.

*A snapshot of the fillable form for generation 3:*

3. Additional References:

## ACCEPTABLE/NOT ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION FOR APPLICATIONS

Each generation on the application must prove, at a minimum, the line of descent, with satisfactory documentation that the child of one generation was born to the couple of the preceding generation, and so on to the generation of the eligible ancestor. All documentation must be gathered and submitted according to CDA guidelines below.

### ***For the first three generations:***

Photocopies (never originals) of the birth, marriage, and death certificates, for both spouses, of the first three generations are required. If these documents are not available, please show evidence of search, such as letters from county or state registries saying that the event was not recorded. In these cases, documentation from tombstones, church registers, wills, and similar primary sources will be considered. CDA does not require that parents be married at the time of a child's birth.

Proofs for the most immediate generations usually come from vital statistics. Certificates must be full ones: the birth certificate must include the names of the child's parents. The short form sometimes issued today by the Department of Health includes only the name and the date of the event and is not acceptable.

In the case of a previous marriage in the first generation, please provide the previous spouse's (spouses') name as well as the date of divorce. The final page of divorce papers which includes names of spouses and date of divorce should be submitted as genealogical proof.

### ***For generations that are further back:***

As you move back past the third generation (your grandparents), the acceptable references change. Where registration was not required by one of the states at the time the event occurred, the applicant may submit alternate records as secondary proofs.

Some of the alternate sources include:

- Wills
- Deeds
- Gravestone inscriptions (include the name of the cemetery and its location)
- Family bible entries\*
- Contemporary family letters and diaries\*
- U.S. passports
- Newspaper death and marriage notices
- Cemetery records
- Administrations
- Guardianship proceedings

*\* When sharing photocopies of family bibles or letters and journals contemporary to an event, include the name of the person making the entry and the date of the entry, if known. You should also list this information in the "references" section.*

### **Other potential secondary sources and their acceptability:**

**Papers from other lineage societies:** At this time, membership papers from other lineage societies **are not** acceptable documentation.

**Biographies/Family histories:** Well-documented biographies with valid citations **are** acceptable. In these cases, submit citations as well as text pages. Family histories that rely only on anecdotal information **are not** acceptable.

**Published genealogies:** Published genealogies that do not cite primary sources **are not** acceptable as the only proof. They must be accompanied by additional proofs strengthening the accuracy of the information taken from that genealogy.

**Local histories:** Well-documented town, state, business histories **are** accepted where primary records are not available.

**Indexes:** Indexes **are not** acceptable in place of full records. Try to obtain the corresponding record listed in the index to use as acceptable proof.

**Transcriptions:** If books (compilations) are based on accurate transcriptions of records, and there are sufficient details (dates that make sense, full names of parties involved, place of event), then the books **are** acceptable.

**Abstracts:** Official abstracts from a government entity **are** accepted. The State of Washington, for example, now issues abstracts of marriage records.

**Census records:** They **are not** acceptable as stand-alone proofs for the years 1790 and later. They may add support to other documents but an additional source will need to be supplied.

**Family trees:** Family trees downloaded from the Internet **are not** acceptable proofs.

*Note: You should regard the phrases “probable son,” “possible daughter,” “perhaps married,” in a published work as cautionary adjectives. They indicate that author was unable to prove kinship.*

### **Additional acceptable secondary sources and compilations:**

For signers of the Mayflower Compact:

- *Mayflower Families through Five Generations* – multiple volumes, by name of signer of Mayflower Compact

For early settlers of Massachusetts who were not on the Mayflower:

- *The Great Migration Begins ...*

For early Virginia settlers:

- *Adventurers of Purse and Person*
- *Cavaliers and Pioneers*
- *Virginia Genealogies* (Tyler)
- *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records*, compiled by Louis de Cagnet, Jr.

For the Northeast:

- New England Historic and Genealogical Society (NEHGS) *Register*
- New York Genealogical & Biographical Society (NYG&BS) *Record*

### **The following compilations are no longer acceptable due to proven errors:**

- Virkus/Mackenzie/Wurts lineage compilations (look for their names as editors or compilers)
- The Latter Day Saints IGI (International Genealogical Index)
- AGBI (American Genealogical and Biographical Index)
- Genealogies written by “Gustave Anjou” (not his real name). He wrote many fraudulent genealogies, but did provide a useful volume of abstracts of Ulster County, NY, wills. The latter may be cited.

**As a reference tool, the following charts summarize  
acceptable/not acceptable proofs for different life events:**

**Proof linking generations:**

<b>Preferred</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Not Acceptable</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Birth or Death certificate	www.findagrave.com photo <b>only</b> if linkage is carved on tombstone and is legible.	Census record	Documents must name at least the line-bearer
Legible bible record stating parents' names	Passenger manifests if parent/child are clearly identified	Deeds, trusts, wills that do not specify relationships between generations	
Marriage record that names parents	Deeds that specify relationships	Undocumented family history	
Probated will and other estate papers that name generational links	Documented town and civic histories with citations for information provided.  Acceptable secondary sources from page 7	Other lineage society approved charts/certificates	

**Proof of birth:**

<b>Preferred</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Not Acceptable</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Birth certificate	www.findagrave.com photo with full date legible on tombstone	Census record	
Baptismal record that names parents or at least line-bearer		Documented town and civic histories with citations for information provided.	
Death certificate with birth date	Acceptable secondary sources from page 7	Other lineage society approved charts/certificates	
Legible Bible record			
Draft card signed by enlisted party			
Passenger manifest that gives birth date			
Passport			
Naturalization record			
Military pension files; note that the oldest files are easiest to obtain. See <a href="http://www.archives.gov/research/order/order-vets-records.html">http://www.archives.gov/research/order/order-vets-records.html</a>			



**Proof of death:**

<b>Preferred</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Not Acceptable</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Death certificate	www.findagrave.com photo with legible date carved on tombstone	Undocumented family history or family tree	Revolutionary War and Civil War pension files often provide date of death.
Church register	Funeral cards that state date of death (usually distributed at funeral or memorial service)	Other lineage society approved charts/certificates	
Burial record on cemetery letterhead or form	Probated will that identifies date of probate. Death would be noted as “w.p. _____” or died before [date of probate].		
Published obituary with name of paper, page, and column numbers	Documented town and civic histories with citations for information provided.		
Legible Bible record	Social Security Death Index (SSDI) entry with full date of death. This is best for non-line bearers; make best effort to get death certificate, will or other death record instead.		
Military pension files; note that the oldest files are easiest to obtain. See <a href="http://www.archives.gov/research/order/order-vets-records.html">http://www.archives.gov/research/order/order-vets-records.html</a>	Acceptable secondary sources from page 7		

**Proof of marriage:**

<b>Preferred</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Not Acceptable</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Marriage certificate (civil or ecclesiastical)	www.findagrave.com photo <b>only</b> if marital relationship is carved on tombstone	Census record	Revolutionary War and Civil War pension files sometimes provide proof of marriage.
Church register	Passenger lists if both parties are clearly identified	Undocumented family history	
Published marriage announcement after the fact (not engagement announcement)	Documented town and civic histories with citations for information provided.	Other lineage society approved charts/certificates	
Probated will that names both parties	Acceptable secondary sources from page 7		
Published obituary of one partner that names both partners plus date of death of subject			
Military pension files; note that the oldest files are easiest to obtain. See <a href="http://www.archives.gov/research/order/order-vets-records.html">http://www.archives.gov/research/order/order-vets-records.html</a>			

## ACCOMPANYING PROOFS TO MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

In addition to filling out the Membership Application, you must gather copies of the proofs listed in the “References” sections.

Consult with your Chapter Registrar on how proofs should be submitted to them, either electronically or via hard copy form. Retain a copy of your proofs for your personal records before submitting them.

*You MUST follow these guidelines when submitting proofs:*

- When sending proofs from a book or journal, include copies of the title page and the relevant pages *only*. Do NOT send entire chapters, articles, or any irrelevant pages.
- Do not include material that does not prove information listed in the application; multiple proofs to prove the same information are not necessary.
- Within the proofs themselves, underline in red pencil the pertinent information (the information that is typed on the membership application).
- Write the relevant generation numbers in the adjacent margins in red pencil.
- Make sure to mark the number of the generation(s) the proof corresponds with in the top right corner in red pencil.
- If submitting original documents that are difficult to read, such as old wills or deeds, you must also include a typed transcription of the pertinent information from the document.
- Organize proofs by generation order (from generation 1 onwards).
- Number the proof pages in numerical order in the lower right corner for continuity.

For any additional questions you have about submitting your membership application and acceptable proofs, please reach out to your Chapter Registrar.

Missing or incorrectly submitted proofs will result in delays in your application being reviewed. Please make sure to follow all instructions from this guide.

## SUBMITTING YOUR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Once the application is complete and all the accompanying proofs are gathered:

1) You must **email** the membership application PDF to your Chapter Registrar. Remember to save the PDF file as “CDA Membership Application, *Chapter Number, Last Name, First Name*” and kindly use the same for the email subject line. The application must still be in its editable form.

2) **Submit proofs to your Chapter Registrar as she instructs.**

**Please note:** Neither signatures nor notarization are required for the membership application at this stage. More instructions on the final signature page will be communicated to you once your membership application has been approved.