

**WE HAVE A NEW, ALL-TIME
HFA LONGEVITY CHAMPION**



104th birthday-L-R: Charles & Sharon Sipos;
Bruce & Lisa Coffey, Holly & Avery Craddock
with Sarah and Kaylee

Up to now our oldest member ever was Brigadier General Sherman V. Hasbrouck, who was also for a time West Point's oldest living graduate. He lasted for 103 years + almost 9 months. But we now have a new title holder: May Kerwan, a 9th-generation descendant of Abraham Hasbrouck, was 104 on July 15, which makes her our oldest member ever. She now lives close to daughter Sharon Sipos in Chesterfield, VA. May has had a very interesting life, as reported here by Sharon:

May Viola Fairchild was born in Walden, NY on July 15, 1915 to William D. Fairchild and Grace Hasbrouck Masten Fairchild. In 1918 the Spanish flu struck the nation and many died. May contracted, it along with pneumonia. Her grandmother, Rachel Ann Hasbrouck Masten, and her mother nursed her back to health. Seven years later (1925) her only brother, William DeWitt Fairchild, was born. May lived through some hard times when her parents' marriage tragically ended and her mother had to provide for the household. For a few years life was a struggle. May's mother sold cosmetics to help them get by. When she visited businesses in Newburgh, NY, she met Leo Ducharme, a French Canadian, widower and manager of Mack Trucking there. They married around 1928; he adopted "Billy" as his own son, and May also took his last name. Life was good again. They had a cottage at Lake Osiris, a stone house in Newburgh, NY and a prosperous lifestyle. May was an accomplished swimmer, canoer and ice skater.

In 1934 May graduated from Newburgh Free Academy and attended nursing school in Mt. Vernon, NY. After receiving her "cap", she returned

to Newburgh and became an assistant to a Newburgh dentist. It was there she met an old friend from her childhood in Walden, Herbert Royce Youngblood. The Youngbloods were another prominent family that settled in Montgomery, NY in the late 1600's. They married on April 23, 1939. Herbert had polio as a young child and wore a brace on his left leg for his entire life but was a very educated and resourceful man. He graduated from RCA Institute in New York City and joined the Merchant Marine. He was the chief radio officer on several freighters going to South America and then on the SS President Roosevelt until WW II broke out in Europe in September 1939. As U.S. entry into the war loomed, the War Department converted cruise ships to troopships, including the Roosevelt in 1940. Herbert could not serve on active duty with a disability, so he obtained a civil service job in Lewistown, Montana. May and Herbert drove west with only their clothing and a coffeepot in the car. They lived a year in Lewistown, where Herbert manned the radio at the airport and military training base while also reporting the weather.



L-R: May, Grace and May's husband,
Herbert Youngblood in 1945

The day Pearl Harbor occurred, May and Herbert decided to head back east, and they drove back to Newburgh, NY. Before they left Montana, May's stepfather died tragically at age 49 from an overdose of anesthesia during a routine dental operation. Her mother, Grace, sold the stone house in Newburgh and moved with Herbert and May to a new concept in housing, now known as a subdivision. It was and is still called Lacey Field, in

New Windsor, NY. May, Herbert, Grace and Billy all lived together in the new house.

On September 13, 1944 May gave birth to Sharon Ann Youngblood (now Sharon Sipos). May's mother, Grace, enlarged the house by "raising the roof" and making the attic an apartment. All lived together with Grace living upstairs. Billy became a navy pilot but was killed in June 1945 when his plane crashed on a training mission in Pensacola, FL.

May became literally a life saver in a 1945 incident there at Lacey Field. May and some neighbors were walking around the neighborhood after a major storm when they heard women screaming. A foundation for a house had filled with six feet of water; and when May approached it, all she saw was a shirt and a hand sticking out from the water. While everyone else stood by, she plunged into the hole and was able to pull up 4-year-old Bobby Reineke and push him to the side where his mother and other neighbors pulled him out of the water. The story appeared in the *Newburgh News*, providing May with some momentary fame.

In 1972 Herbert Youngblood died from a heart attack at age 57, leaving May a widow. Grace died the following spring, and May was alone in the house in Lacey Field. She never drove, but volunteered in many ways, including St. George's Episcopal Church, a neighborhood association, PTA, and Scouts, and was able to take care of neighbors in many different ways. In 1985 at age 70 May married John Kerwan; and after he died 9 years later, she continued to live in Lacey Field and had many friends and companions. When her long-time friend there, Ralph Stukey, died, she was 95 years old. By then she knew it was time to sell the house and move to Virginia to be with her family. She lived in the same house for seventy years. In Virginia she now lives at Lucy Corr Nursing, just 5 minutes away from daughter Sharon. Her mind remains extremely sharp, though her eyesight, hearing and body are failing. She had a wonderful 104th birthday with family and the entire staff at Lucy Corr and looks forward to being 105. She attributes her longevity both to her genes and to the active, healthy lifestyle she pursued over many years.

Sharon believes her mother's greatest accomplishment is overcoming a tumultuous childhood (she lived in 13 different houses before the age of 20), knowing poverty and loss but yet being able to create a home full of love and stability. May was always a wonderful wife, daughter, mother, grandmother and friend to all. Known for her immaculate housekeeping, homemade meals and

beauty, she has always been kind and caring to everyone she knows. With a keen mind, love for reading, learning and crossword puzzles, May was and is full of joie de vivre. Her greatest legacy is her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Thankfully, all are upstanding citizens who love God and country. Educators, nurses and musicians, they continue the family tradition. May epitomizes the same drive as her great grandfather, the pioneer David Worry Hasbrouck, who left New Hurley, NY to go west and settle in Three Rivers, Michigan. Rachael Ann, May's grandmother, grew up in a 'soddy' hut there but eventually traveled back to New Paltz.



L-R: Grace, Sharon holding Lisa, Holly and May in 1974

One great granddaughter, Kaylee Hasbrouck Craddock, carries on the family name, and May's daughter Sharon and granddaughters proudly wear the Huguenot Cross. And May is thankful to her Aunt Cornelia Watkins Baerthlein Meyers, who kept the family history alive and made sure old pictures and the Hasbrouck Family Bible were passed down.

HFA congratulates May Kerwan on her new longevity title and hope she has an extended reign!

A SERENDIPITOUS DISCOVERY OF A HASBROUCK-RELATED WINERY IN CALIFORNIA

In 2012 HFA member Catherine Hasbrook, a viticulturist, signed on as assistant winemaker at Saucelito Canyon Vineyards in in the Upper Arroyo Grande Valley, southeast of San Luis Obispo, CA. When the owner's wife saw her name, she brought out an old journal/notebook from an earlier vineyard/winery in the same area called St. Remy and started by Abram Bruyn Hasbrouck! What an

unexpected discovery, by a current family member, of a previously unknown (to us) ancestor in the same area and both far from our New Paltz roots! When HFA President Bob Hasbrouck learned of it, he recognized that the names Bruyn and St. Remy almost certainly connected the winery founder with Abraham Bruyn Hasbrouck, the prominent lawyer from Kingston, NY (close to New Paltz) who won a precedent-setting court decision to recover the son of civil rights pioneer Sojourner Truth after he had been sold illegally into slavery in the South. In addition he served terms as a U.S. congressman and president of Rutgers University as well as holding other important posts. (See article covering all this in the September '11 newsletter). And he named an outlying hamlet of Kingston St. Remy (for reasons no one now knows for sure – see further below). So we burrowed into our genealogy database and confirmed that Abram Bruyn in California was the grandson of Abraham Bruyn in Kingston. (He was identified as Abraham in the database but adopted several variations over the year, including Byron Hasbrook – presumably to simplify the name for others).

Next we wanted to find out how the grandson wound up so far from his home base, especially considering that his father, Jonathan Howard Bruyn Hasbrouck (a bank president, U.S. attorney and law firm partner), never seems to have left the area. Thanks to a search on omniscient Google, we found out! It led us to the founder of The Wine History Project of San Luis Obispo (SLO) County, Libbie Agran, who by serendipitous coincidence, had already done the research for us and created an article last November covering his interesting life and the evolution of the winery. She graciously gave us permission to use it in the newsletter, and what follows is an edited version of her article plus a little additional information from other sources.

The first winery in the Upper Arroyo Grande Valley of California was built by a man who grew up in a wealthy family in upstate New York but who longed for adventure. He had a style and grace that made him a legend in hospitality on the Central Coast and a beautiful English wife who owned her own cattle brand and was famous for her roses and love of English gardens.

Abram Bruyn Hasbrouck was born into a wealthy family of Huguenot ancestry in Kingston, New York on January 15, 1845. His grandfather was a college president and his father a successful businessman. However, A.B. dreamed of sailing around the world as an explorer or moving west to become a cowboy. Perhaps his dreams were fueled

by his parents' friendship with the aunt and uncle of Richard Henry Dana, author of *Two Years Before the Mast*, who sailed on a merchant vessel as a youth of 20 and later wrote his masterpiece. A.B. decided to leave home and join a crew at sea. His father reacted by apprenticing teenage A.B. to a severe disciplinarian sea captain, sailing out of Philadelphia. A.B. learned a great deal from his voyages and traced his journeys on old maps which are still in his family's possession. When he returned from the sea, he tried to please his father by entering medical school. He dropped out after the first dissection. The Civil War had begun, and A.B. found a civilian job checking the freight on the Boston wharves. He was restless and unhappy with the pressures of social life in New York and Boston; he dreamed of traveling west. As the war ended, his father died, and his uncle gave him \$10,000 to pursue his dreams. A.B. traveled to Colorado and quickly lost his fortune after investing in a silver mine in Central City, Colorado. He pondered his next adventure and contacted old friends of his father, brothers George and Edward Steele, owners of the Corral de Piedra and Bolsa de Chemisal Ranchos in the Arroyo Grande Valley of California. They ran a profitable cattle and dairy business and offered him a job. He learned quickly and loved the land. By 1869 he was sent to the Ranchita Arroyo Grande as major domo of the Steele dairy and cattle ranch. By 1873 A.B. decided to become his own boss. He convinced the Steeles to lease the Ranchita to him for ten years and formed a partnership with N. Palmer. The Hasbrouck-Palmer brand was recorded on May 26th, 1873 and assigned to A.B. Hasbrouck in 1876. He raised cattle and developed his dairy and cheese businesses. At the end of his lease in 1883, A.B. purchased the Ranchita Arroyo Grande from the Steeles for \$27,000. He named it St. Remy, reportedly in honor of an estate in the Netherlands related to the family's Bruyn connection (his great-great grandmother was Catherine Bruyn). But that seems odd because the name is French, (most famously connected with the resort town in Provence), leaving the background unsure. He acquired a total of 9,000 acres with additional purchases of private and government lands. The cattle and dairy operations thrived; the dairy was mainly devoted to cheese making. (A.B. was the founder of the first cheese cooperative in SLO County). And he planned his next entrepreneurial adventure.

A.B. built a home, planted lawns, hedges, rose and flower gardens on the upper rancho in 1884. He also built a summer house, later known as

the tea room, with furnishings made of native woods growing on the rancho. It took six months for pieces of white, red, and iron oak, manzanita, lilac, sycamore, laurel, and willow woods to be gathered for it from the canyons and hills. When the summer house was completed, A.B. Hasbrouck became famous for his invitations and hospitality. Many folks from San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties had luncheons and picnics at the ranch after they made the four-hour carriage trip up the mountains to the upper Arroyo Grande Valley. His next project was to prepare 30 acres for vineyards surrounding his gardens on two sides. He planted Ro e of Peru in 1885, Muscat in 1886 and 1887, and Zinfandel, Chardonnay and Malaga in 1889. He had made the acquaintance of his neighbor, Henry Ditmas, who planted the first Zinfandel grapes in the Upper Arroyo Grande on land in Saucelito Canyon in 1878, and they shared information and rootstock. According to his granddaughter, Hasbrouck experimented with many types of grapes, including Mission grapes. He purchased mission rootstocks and grafted cuttings of Muscat and Zinfandel.

In 1886, A.B. built St. Remy winery to make wine with Rancho Saucelito grapes grown by Henry Ditmas. The stones of the foundation are still visible on the land at St. Remy. However, as the marriage of Henry and Rosa Ditmas soured, so did the friendship of A.B. and Henry. Henry divorced Rosa, transferring his land holdings in Arroyo Grande and Avila to her. He moved to San Francisco and later to Boston and died in 1892. A. B. married Rosa on July 24, 1887. She and her son, Cecil, moved to St. Remy Ranch. Rosa continued to manage the vineyards in Rancho Saucelito to produce grapes for the St. Remy winery.

According to the *SLO Tribune* and *The Daily Republic* on October 16, 1889, "the indications are that within a very short period importations of wine to this country, at least for ordinary table use, will practically cease. Most of our vineyardists in this vicinity and Hasbrouck and others further south of us will make their own wine in large quantities, making large exportations probably in the near future." By 1889 Hasbrouck had expanded his vineyards to include land in the valleys of the Santa Lucia. Much of his grape crop was destroyed in the fall of 1889, but *The Herald* reported on November 30 of that year that "A.B Hasbrouck had made 3,000 gallons of wine this fall".

A.B. continued to be active in the agricultural community of South San Luis Obispo County, entering his produce in local fairs, mentoring others and hosting visitors with Rosa from all over the



A.B. & Rosa Hasbrouck around 1888

world. According to *The Herald* of October 14, 1893 "a five-pound bunch of grapes found its way to our office from Mr. Hasbrouck's vineyard, and it has been the object lesson on the fertility of the upper Arroyo Grande ever since. A section that can grow such products is bound to come to the front." The years 1895 to 1919 were the peak years of winemaking in SLO County. In 1896, St. Remy wines took first place in the California State Fair. By 1906, over 15,000 gallons of wine were made from grapes grown on the Saucelito and St. Remy Rancho vineyards.

But A.B. lost his ranch to foreclosure; the mortgage with a high rate of interest was held by the Associated Oil Company. One of his loyal friends who was an executive at the oil company purchased and deeded back 80 acres of land with the vineyards surrounding their home, barns and other ranch buildings to A.B. and Rosa. Although the water rights were lost, the use of the water and pipeline right of way was deeded to A.B. Hasbrouck and his heirs and assignees forever. In 1913 A.B. imported varietals from France to replace old vines; however, they were not grafted to mature stock. During the subsequent drought, the vines began to die from phylloxera. Sadly, A. B. died in 1915 at age 70 at his summer camp at Avila within sight of the sea as his grape vines died in the vineyards. He is celebrated as a legendary winemaker in the Arroyo Grande Valley and remembered for his adventurous spirit, generosity and hospitality.

Rosa closed the winery just before Prohibition became law and leased Rancho Saucelito to various tenants, who tended the vineyards throughout the Prohibition years and into the 1940s, after which they were abandoned. Rosa died in 1927, leaving St. Remy Ranch and Rancho Saucelito to her son, Cecil. He lost St. Remy due to financial difficulties.



Hasbrouck grave monument in San Luis Obispo

He retained Rancho Saucelito and willed it to his two daughters, who sold the property to Bill Greenough, a Santa Barbara native, in 1974. Bill learned that the property had Zinfandel vines dating back to the 1880s and spent several years reviving the vineyard. In 1978 grapes were harvested from the original Ditmas vines used by A.B. (in addition to his own), and Bill started making award-winning wines from them, thus maintaining the historic association with A. B. and his winery revealed to Catherine Hasbrook when she went to work there. She writes, "Saucelito Canyon is the winery that came into being after Rosa's granddaughters sold that property. I was the assistant winemaker there from 2012 to 2015. I majored in wine and viticulture at Cal Poly SLO and worked in the industry for about 8 years in California and Australia but had to stop doing production because of a back injury. I'm now the assistant director of a home healthcare/caregiving company, which I love! Still using my degree to help my family make wines in their small vineyard in Winters, CA though!"

We're fortunate that Catherine made this serendipitous discovery and grateful that she and her father brought it to our attention – a valuable

new piece of Hasbrouck family history! And many thanks to Libbie Agran for her permission to make use of her comprehensive research, which provides most of the details in this article.

COAT OF ARMS ITEMS AND OTHERS AVAILABLE ONLINE – EXCELLENT FOR GIFTS AT CHRISTMAS AND ANY OTHER TIME

Our internet users can now obtain a number of attractive items decorated with the Hasbrouck coat of arms. Items currently available include tiles, mugs, magnets, badges, note/greeting cards, a keepsake box, a golf shirt, several types of tee shirts, a tote bag and several jewelry items. See and order these items online at www.cafepress.com/hasbrouckfamily. You can also see the full line of CafePress products at www.cafepress.com. If you see another item there that you'd like to have decorated with our coat of arms, let us know, and we can probably arrange it. Other items (including an 11"x17" coat of arms print and various Huguenot crosses) are available at the HHS Museum Shop and can also be ordered by phone (845-255-1889) or online at (www.huguenotstreet.org, click on Shop at the bottom of the page). See also publications available directly from HFA on our website (click on HFA Store).



Sample items available from CafePress

WE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

- Jim Considine, MD, Laguna, CA
- Patricia Finco, Alva, FL
- Sarah Gonnella, Oakland, ME
- Jodi Hasbrouck, Fredericksburg, PA
- Jon Kindel, Thornton, CO
- Margery Parker, Thompson, PA
- Michael Squillo, Glen Ellyn, IL
- Joan Vand