

2024 VIRTUAL FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE



EXPANDING POSSIBILITIES



NATIONAL
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY®

16-18 MAY

Preliminary Program



conference.ngsgenealogy.org



FOCUS on Genealogy Organizations Schedule

Thursday 2:00 p.m. ET | 1:00 p.m. CT | 12:00 p.m. MT | 11:00 a.m. PT

FOCUS Plenary Session

Outreach and Engagement Lessons from Bringing the New International African American Museum to Life

Tonya M. Matthews, PhD

Find inspiration; a renewed sense of mission and purpose for your genealogy organization; and motivation to expand public outreach, engage volunteers, and grow your community. Dr. Tonya Matthews, president, and CEO of the International African American Museum, shares lessons from the launch of one of the country's newest and most compelling museums.

Thursday 3:15 p.m. ET | 2:15 p.m. CT | 1:15 p.m. MT | 12:15 p.m. PT

FOCUS101

Fabric of the Past: Teaching Local and Family History Research to School Teachers

Charity C. Rouse, MLS

Find out how Spartanburg County Public Libraries worked with the University of South Carolina-Upstate on a workshop with a National Endowment for the Humanities grant.

FOCUS102

Street Genealogy: Family History in a Parking Space PopUp

Shamele Jordon

Take to the streets to share the fun of family history. Learn from the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania and their partnership with other organizations and a TV show.

FOCUS103

Using Multimedia Approaches for Public Family History Outreach to Include Diverse and Marginalized Populations

Marcia Johnson, MBA, MPA, RHIA

The National Grigsby Family Society shows how to plan, fund, and implement innovative multimedia to reach audiences, including diverse and marginalized populations in family history.

Thursday 4:30 p.m. ET | 3:30 p.m. CT | 2:30 p.m. MT | 1:30 p.m. PT

FOCUS201

Branch Out: How to Partner Societies with State or Local Libraries

Korina Tueller, MLIS, and Linda Caldwell McCleary, MLS

Learn the ins and outs of the Arizona State Library, Archives, and Public Records and Arizona Genealogical Advisory Board partnership for Genealogy Day and how to launch a successful event.





FOCUS202

Cemetery Digitization Project: Engaging Volunteers and the Community to Save History

Lynne Deese

From digitization to online publication, the story of this project will share how Wake County Genealogy Society engaged volunteers and worked with partners to create a valuable community resource.

FOCUS203

We Are Three Lakes: Genealogy + History = Community

Marie E. Byatt

The Three Lakes Genealogical Society explains how the We Are Three Lakes website engages their community and brings people together by showcasing genealogy and history.

Thursday 5:45 p.m. ET | 4:45 p.m. CT | 3:45 p.m. MT | 2:45 p.m. PT

FOCUS301

Creating an Exhibit and Celebration that Captures Hearts and Gets Attention

Marcia Fraser

Learn how the Williamson County Public Library Special Collections Department's Black History Month program engages the community and gets television and online promotion.

FOCUS302

Growing Membership and Increasing Value with a PBS Affiliate Partnership

Heather O'Hara

Find out details of the Maryland Genealogical Society's collaboration with Maryland Public Television to provide virtual events on genealogy and cultivate a mutually beneficial and ongoing relationship.

FOCUS303

Densho's Story: Preserving and Sharing History by Leveraging Technology

Caitlin Oiye Coon

Densho preserves and shares the history of Japanese American incarceration during World War II. Discover how they leverage digitized collections and educational tools to connect communities with the past.





Thursday Workshop and Seminars Schedule

Thursday 2:00 p.m. ET | 1:00 p.m. CT | 12:00 p.m. MT | 11:00 a.m. PT

WORKSHOP | ALL | T101

What the Heck Does That Say? Overcoming Difficult Handwriting

Pam Vestal

One of the biggest hurdles we face in genealogy is the seemingly illegible handwriting in our ancestors' records. Whether you wrestle with colonial penmanship or with hard-to-read contemporary documents, we'll explore twenty techniques that can help!

Thursday 4:30 p.m. ET | 3:30 p.m. CT | 2:30 p.m. MT | 1:30 p.m. PT

SEMINAR | ALL | T201 | Sponsored by ICAPGen

All About the Accredited Genealogist® Credential

Jenny Hansen, AG, AGL, and Lisa Stokes, AG

Do you have what it takes to become an Accredited Genealogist? AG professionals will present preparation tips to successfully complete the accreditation process.

Thursday 5:45 p.m. ET | 4:45 p.m. CT | 3:45 p.m. MT | 2:45 p.m. PT

SEMINAR | ALL | T301 | Sponsored by Board for Certification of Genealogists

BCG Certification Seminar

Shannon Green, CG, and Darcie Posz, CG, FASG

In this interactive forum, current associates share various pathways to certification and how to begin.

Thursday 7:00 p.m. ET | 6:00 p.m. CT | 5:00 p.m. MT | 4:00 p.m. PT

SLAM! Idea Showcase

Hosted by TBD

The 2024 SLAM! Idea Showcase highlights outstanding projects and programs by societies, libraries, archives, museums, and other institutions (SLAM). This annual event began in 2021 to share creative and innovative projects, programs, resources, and practices with others; promote collaboration, networking, and collegiality among information providers; and provide a format in which individuals and organizations can learn from one another to strengthen the genealogy and family history community.

Thursday 7:15 p.m. ET | 6:15 p.m. CT | 5:15 p.m. MT | 4:15 p.m. PT

Virtual Expo Hall Opening





Main Session Schedule

Friday 11:00 a.m. ET | 10:00 a.m. CT | 9:00 a.m. MT | 8:00 a.m. PT

Plenary Session

Artificial Intelligence and Genealogy: The First Year and Onward!

Steve Little

Uncover the power of AI in genealogy from the perspective of individual researchers. Learn about practical AI tools and methods that can revolutionize personal genealogical investigations, paving the way for understanding AI's broader impact in the field.

Friday 12:30 p.m. ET | 11:30 a.m. CT | 10:30 a.m. MT | 9:30 a.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | INT-ADV | F101

Four Farms, Four Names: From Research Report to Award-Winning NGSQ Article

Yvette Hoitink, CG, QG

Research reports helped solve a question of identity and parentage in the Netherlands. The author shares her process for researching and writing an NGSQ case study.

RECORDS | ALL | F102

Courting America: Using Court Records for Genealogy

Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL

In this overview from jury lists to filed papers, learn how to use court records to document family relationships, life events, community happenings and more.

LAND AND MAPS | ADV | F103

The Impact of Bounty Land on Migration

Craig R. Scott, CG, FUGA

Military bounty land grants employed in four historical periods will be examined: the colonial period, the Revolution, the War of 1812, and pre-1858 Indian wars.

IRISH AMERICAN | INT | F104

Irish Immigration-Digging Deeper

David E. Rencher, AG, CG, FUGA, FIGSRS

Are your Irish ancestors not appearing in the usual sources? New strategies and sources to use when standard records have failed to identify their origins.

DNA | INT-ADV | F105 | Sponsored by MyHeritage

Using Advanced DNA Tools to Understand Your DNA Matches on MyHeritage

Daniel Horowitz

MyHeritage's revolutionary DNA technologies Theory of Family Relativity™, Chromosome Browser, AutoClusters, and cM Explainer™ reveal valuable information helping you understand your relationships to DNA matches.





Main Session Schedule

Friday 2:30 p.m. ET | 1:30 p.m. CT | 12:30 p.m. MT | 11:30 a.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | INT-ADV | F201

Flip It!—A Case Study—Negative Chromosome Painting Reveals Misattributed Parentage

Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG

Negative inference, atDNA chromosome mapping, and a deep dive into documentary records achieves a defensible conclusion of misattributed parentage.

TECHNOLOGY/AI | ALL | F202

Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools for Land Records Analysis

David M. McCorkle

Use AI tools to quickly extract and organize information from multiple land records simultaneously, including metes and bounds, public land descriptions, geographic features, and neighbors.

LAND AND MAPS | INT-ADV | F203

Territorial Papers of the US (1787–1912) – a Treasure Often Overlooked

Rick Sayre, CG, CGL, FUGA

Find information on individuals and families who lived in US territories. Kinship and migration patterns are often revealed in these records.

GERMAN | ALL | F204

My Church Records Aren't Digitized: Now What?

Katherine Schober

While many German church records are available online, there are still countless others that have not yet been digitized. Learn how to access them here.

TBA | ALL | F205 | Sponsored by Ancestry

Title to be Announced

Speaker to be Announced

Friday 4:00 p.m. ET | 3:00 p.m. CT | 2:00 p.m. MT | 1:00 p.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | INT-ADV | F301

Formerly Known As: Proving Identity with Indirect Evidence

Stephanie O'Connell, CG

Prior to 1935, a person could simply use a name of their choice. In this case study, cluster research and analysis provided indirect evidence to prove identity.

WOMEN | ALL | F302

In Their Own Words: Women and the War of 1812

Julia A. Anderson, MA, AG

The War of 1812 changed American lives for generations. Explore its effects on women and families as revealed in War of 1812 pension files.





Main Session Schedule

WRITING | ALL | F303

Illuminating Ancestors' Lives in Small Bites through Focused Themes and Engaging Narratives

Diana Elder, AG

Learn how to craft compelling ancestor stories to share: Spotlight captivating aspects of their lives through themed sketches, organized timelines, citations, and engaging narratives.

LGBTQ+ FAMILIES | ALL | F304

LGBTQ+ Family History

Stewart Blandón Traiman

Using genealogy skills within the context of LGBTQ+ history we will address hints for family members who may have been LGBTQ+.

APG | ALL | F305 | Sponsored by Association of Professional Genealogists

Becoming a Professional Genealogist

Annette Burke Lyttle and others

Eight members of APG explain the variety of career options, relevant experience, educational plans, and business skills necessary to become a successful professional genealogist.

Friday 5:15 p.m. ET | 4:15 p.m. CT | 3:15 p.m. MT | 2:15 p.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | ALL | F401

Using Social and Historical Context to Support Indirect Evidence

LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson, JD, LLM, CG, CGL, FASG

Indirect evidence may be sufficient to support a genealogical conclusion, when informed by social, economic, and historical context.

METHODOLOGY | INT | F402

John C. McDaniel, Mexican War Soldier: Two Men in a Single Pension Record?

Rebecca Whitman Koford, CG, CGL

The case: a Mexican War soldier's pension record showed conflicts. Evidence mining, source evaluation, and reasonably exhaustive research explain how two separate men were confused.

WOMEN | ALL | F403

Lunacy and Asylums: Exploring Mental Health Treatment in 19th Century for Women

Janice Lovelace, PhD

Did your female ancestors struggle with mental health issues? Were they committed to an asylum in the 1800s? What records can you access?





Main Session Schedule

JEWISH | ALL | F404

It's What They Answered To: Understanding Ashkenazic Jewish Names

Emily H. Garber, MA

Determining Jewish ancestors' names is critical to following people back to the old country. Clues may come from a variety of records and contexts.

Technology | ALL | F405 | Sponsored by VividPix

Don't Let Your Memories Fade!

Rick Voight

Simple, affordable, groundbreaking integrated solutions provide features and functions for consumer and community use.

Friday 7:15 p.m. ET | 6:15 p.m. CT | 5:15 p.m. MT | 4:15 p.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | ADV | F501

Using Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) to Solve a Misattributed-Parentage Case in America's Colonial Era

Thomas W. Jones, PhD, CG, FASG, FUGA, FNGS

A case study shows mtDNA solving an unknown parentage problem more than two centuries old. It also demonstrates the overturning of a seemingly proved conclusion.

DNA | ALL | F502

It's Not What You Know, but Who You Know - Even in DNA

Diahan Southard

You don't need to identify all your DNA matches. Learn to target the best ones on your list to address the question on your mind.

METHODOLOGY | ALL | F503

Rapid Roots: Seven Share their Secrets in in Seven Minutes

Jill Morelli, CG, CGL, Shamele Jordon, Angela Packer McGhie, CG, FUGA, Mahina Oshie, Robert Raymond, Lori Samuelson, MA, MEd, Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG, Evan Wilson

Using PechaKucha format, seven genealogists will share their best tips. This rapid-fire presentation maximizes the number of suggestions in a minimum amount of time.

NATIVE AMERICAN | ALL | F504

The Five Largest: Researching the Biggest Indigenous Tribes of the US

Judy Nimer Muhn

What should be researched first regardless of tribe, and then what records are unique to the five largest tribes: Cherokee, Chippewa, Choctaw, Navaho, and Sioux.





Main Session Schedule

TECHNOLOGY/AI | ALL | F505 | Sponsored by *American Ancestors*

Virtual Family Reunions: Using Technology to Host and Plan Your Event and Conduct Interviews

David Allen Lambert

Learn about available technology to plan, host, and broadcast your family reunion. Using tech learn how to conduct interviews of family in person or remotely.

Saturday 11:00 a.m. ET | 10:00 a.m. CT | 9:00 a.m. MT | 8:00 a.m. PT

Plenary Session

Artificial Intelligence and Genealogy: A Discussion of Issues and Concerns

Blaine T. Bettinger, PhD, JD, and others

Generative artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT, Bard, and DALL-E show great potential as tools for genealogists. But what are the challenges and limitations of generative AI, and how will it affect both the researcher and genealogy companies? Join Blaine Bettinger and a group of experts in the nascent field of generative AI and genealogy as they discuss and debate some of the issues associated with this topic. They will discuss issues such as copyright, plagiarism, attribution, big data, and more!

Saturday 12:30 p.m. ET | 11:30 a.m. CT | 10:30 a.m. MT | 9:30 a.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | INT-ADV | S101

Writing is Researching: How Narrative & Report Writing Improves Analysis

Rebecca Whitman Koford, CG, CGL

“Stop and think” in genealogy analysis is the practice of stopping to write. This workshop-style presentation exemplifies the power of writing while actively researching.

AFRICAN AMERICAN | ALL | S102 | James Dent Walker Memorial Series Lecture

Sources for Researching Rural Ancestors

Ari Wilkins

“If you blink, you’ll miss it!” Did your ancestor come from a one-horse town or an unincorporated community? Learn about researching country ancestors!

RECORDS | ALL | S103

Method to the Madness: Investigating Every Possible Newspaper for Your Ancestors

James M. Beidler

It's tempting to go straight to historical newspaper databases when starting a search. But savvy researchers march to the beat of a different flowchart.





Main Session Schedule

MEXICAN AMERICAN | INT-ADV | S104

Civil Registrations: Digging Deeper into the Lives of Your Mexican Ancestors

Colleen Robledo Greene, MLIS

Understanding relevant federal and state laws, cultural conventions, and terminology will help you conduct deeper analysis using Mexico's federal vital record system.

DNA | ALL | S105 | Sponsored by BCG Education Fund

Assembling Cryptic Bits of Documentary Evidence and DNA to Answer Major Genealogical Questions

Thomas W. Jones, PhD, CG, FASG, FUGA, FNGS

A case with audience participation demonstrates using at-home research to follow trails of clues from one country to another and assembling the clues into conclusions.

Saturday 2:30 p.m. ET | 1:30 p.m. CT | 12:30 p.m. MT | 11:30 a.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | INT-ADV | S201

"A Matrimonial Advertiser:" Tracing the Treacherous Trail of an early 20th-Century Romance Scammer

Sharon Hoyt, MLIS, CG

Reasonably exhaustive research and evidence correlation overcame falsified records, frequent moves, and multiple marriages to reveal a woman's criminal past.

AFRICAN AMERICAN | ALL | S202 | James Dent Walker Memorial Series Lecture

Researching African American Ancestors in Equity Court Files

LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson, JD, LLM, CG, CGL, FASG

In the antebellum period equity courts had a specialized jurisdiction that lent itself to controversies involving enslaved people.

TECHNOLOGY/AI | ALL | S203

Hand-written Text Recognition: Harnessing the Power of Artificial Intelligence to Transcribe and Search Documents

Yvette Hoitink, CG, QG

Hand-written text recognition software can turn manuscripts into searchable transcriptions. Learn how to use these tools and what they can (and cannot) do for you.

ASIAN AMERICAN | ALL | S204

How Established and More Recently Arrived Asian American Researchers Can Learn from Each Other

Grant Din, MA

Most documents for Asian immigrants are pre-1965. Most Asian Americans today are from families that immigrated after 1965. Learn how they can help each other.





Main Session Schedule

TBA | ALL | S205 | Sponsored by *Ancestry*

Title to be Announced

Speaker to be Announced

Saturday 4:00 p.m. ET | 3:00 p.m. CT | 2:00 p.m. MT | 1:00 p.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | INT-ADV | S301

Using Cluster Research to Prove Kinship

Dana Palmer, CG, CGL

Kinship can be proven in a variety of ways. Learn how cluster research and a Civil War pension file overcame this Ohio family's lack of records.

AFRICAN AMERICAN | ALL | S302 | James Dent Walker Memorial Series Lecture

From Heroes to Fathers: Unveiling the Stories of Black Military Soldiers and the Generations They Fathered

Dr. Shelley Viola Murphy

Exploring African American contributions from the Revolutionary War to WWII, this presentation uncovers the intimate narratives of German and Japanese "Brown Babies."

RECORDS | ALL | S303

In That Case: Using the Caselaw Access Project

Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL

Published court opinions help trace families, document events, and tell stories. Learn how to use a free entry portal—Case.law—to find your ancestor.

METHODOLOGY | ALL | S304

Research Planning: The First Step to Solving Tough Problems

Jill Morelli, CG, CGL

Thoughtful planning initiates all new ancestral research and continues throughout the process. Perhaps thinking about research planning differently will help solve your genealogical problem.

DNA | ALL | S305 | Sponsored by *Family Tree DNA*

Discover Your Paternal Heritage and Expand Your Family Tree with Y-DNA

Katy Rowe-Schurwanz

Reach back further with Y-DNA! Learn how to use Y-DNA results to discover more about your father's heritage and break brick walls.





Main Session Schedule

Saturday 5:15 p.m. ET | 4:15 p.m. CT | 3:15 p.m. MT | 2:15 p.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | ADV | S401

Finding Frances: A German American Case Study in Community, Illegitimacy, Immigration, and Interstate Migration

Nancy A. Peters, CG, CGL

The decades-old mystery surrounding a nineteenth-century immigrant's Bavarian origin is solved through understanding community context and casting a wide net for clues beyond immediate family.

AFRICAN AMERICAN | ALL | S402 | James Dent Walker Memorial Series Lecture

"Freedom in my Bones": The Genealogy of Black Civil War Soldiers and Sailors

Leslie Anderson, MSLS

Reconstruct a community by applying best practices to an exploration of the lives of Black Civil War soldiers and sailors.

RECORDS | ALL | S403

Complete Census Research: Evaluating the Whole Schedule

C. Ann Staley, CG, CGL

Focuses on available state and federal population schedules which names everyone living in the household and shows the benefits of analyzing the neighbors.

DNA | ALL | S404

DNA's FAN Club: Using Shared Matches to Solve Genealogical Mysteries

Paula Williams

Friends, Associates, and Neighbors help with our paper trail research, and shared DNA matching is just as critical. We'll explore this powerful DNA tool.

Technology/AI | ALL | S405 | Sponsored by FamilySearch

AI Innovations at FamilySearch

Robert Raymond

From image innovations in 2020 to record innovations in 2022 and every word indexes in 2024, FamilySearch is radically transforming the rapid publication of online records.

Saturday 7:15 p.m. ET | 6:15 p.m. CT | 5:15 p.m. MT | 4:15 p.m. PT

BCG SKILLBUILDING | INT-ADV | S501

Submitting a Successful Certification Portfolio

David Ouimette, CG, CGL

This presentation demystifies the certification process by showing how judges evaluate portfolios. Learn how to use rubrics to evaluate your work and avoid common pitfalls.





Main Session Schedule

TECHNOLOGY | ALL | S502

Organizing FAN Club Research with Airtable: Who was John West?

Nicole Elder Dyer

Airtable is valuable for organizing complicated research. To identify John West, information about his friends, potential family, associates, and neighbors was gathered and analyzed.

LAND AND MAPS | INT-ADV | S503

Using Land Records to Prove Ancestral Connections

Barbara Vines Little, CG, FNGS, FUGA, FVGS

Learn to use tract and other land ownership maps, land platting, and/or title searching to identify an earlier landowner and prove that ancestral connection.

RECORDS | ALL | S504

Discovering Buried Treasure: Miscellaneous Papers and Mixed Provenance Records

Cheri Hudson Passey

Repositories have unsorted and uncategorized records that often contain information answering genealogy questions. Learn to dig for buried treasure in “Miscellaneous” and “Unknown Provenance” files.

TECHNOLOGY | ALL | S505 | Sponsored

Title to be Announced

Speaker to be Announced

