MSL Certification Committee

November 17, 2026
1:00 – 2:30pm
Online via Zoom

Agenda

- Welcome and introductions

Business items

- September 30, 2026 Certification Committee minutes – **Action Item**
  - Public comment
  - Possible language for motion
    - I move to accept the September 30, 2026 Certification Committee minutes.
- Commissioner Burnett's suggestion for new course content – **Tentative Action**
  - Public comment
- Review proposals – **Action Item**
  - Course proposal tracking sheet – meets policy criteria
  - Course proposal tracking sheet – may not meet policy criteria
  - Public comment
  - Possible language for motion
    - I move to recommend the course catalog updates as presented in the course proposal tracking sheet.
- Follow-up on items discussed at September meeting – additional course suggestions, suggested readings, and in-person sessions – **Tentative Action**
  - Memo regarding Ryan Dowd and Library Juice
  - Public comment

Discussion items

- Any other questions, comments, concerns regarding certification and continuing educations
- Public Comment on any matter not included in this agenda and that is within the jurisdiction of the Certification Committee.
- Review of action items and next steps

Zoom meeting information

Join Zoom Meeting
https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/87991198411?pwd=K682ZHrns4dQ267GqvrQc1iGbNF1Rf.1

Meeting ID: 879 9119 8411
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Montana State Library Commission
Certification Committee Meeting
Wednesday, September 30, 2026
Zoom

MINUTES

Date: September 30, 2026

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Place: Zoom

Attendance

- **Certification Committee Members:** Carmen Cuthbertson, Tamara Hall, McKenna Gregg.
- **Staff:** Tracy Cook and Lesley Miller (Montana State Library).

Opening and Agenda

Timestamp: 00:00:12 - 00:00:40

- **Discussion:** Tracy Cook opened the meeting and reviewed an agenda modeled on the Commission's previous discussion. Topics included LIFT courses, the proposed meeting schedule, continuing education course proposals, and Commissioner Tom Burnett's proposed courses.

LIFT Courses and Certification Catalog

Timestamp: 00:00:40 - 00:16:18

- **Discussion:** Tracy Cook clarified that LIFT courses provide foundational library training for small libraries and staff new to library work. The content was developed primarily by the Idaho Commission for Libraries with support from an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant. Web Junction provides an online platform and instructional design; approved courses are accessed through MSL Learn.
- **Catalog scope:** Tamara Hall questioned the number of courses proposed for certification and suggested a smaller core catalog. Tracy explained that the initial workload reflects a backlog of approximately 300 proposals and that future submissions should be fewer. Carmen Cuthbertson noted the need to serve both new and experienced staff, as well as libraries of different sizes.

- **Policy considerations:** Tracy explained that limiting submissions to a set catalog or course of study would require discussion of a policy change on a future agenda. Staff clarified that initial certification requires 20 credits within five years, and renewal requires 60 credits within five years, with one hour equal to one credit. No policy change was recommended.

Proposed Meeting Schedule

Timestamp: 00:16:18 - 00:19:56

- **Discussion:** The proposed schedule called for monthly meetings through January 12 to address the backlog, followed by meetings every other month, with quarterly meetings possible later. A March discussion of the course of study would allow time for Commission feedback before a recommendation is adopted in June. Members agreed to move the December meeting from December 8 to Monday, December 7, 2026, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
- **Motion:** Carmen Cuthbertson moved to accept the recommended calendar with the December date change. Tamara Hall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Next steps:** Tracy will distribute the revised schedule and meeting invitations.

Continuing Education Course Proposals

Timestamp: 00:19:57 - 01:06:56

- **Discussion:** Members reviewed proposals using the course catalog tracking sheet and identified courses to recommend, courses not to recommend, and courses requiring further review. Members expressed support for foundational library skills, MSL staff training, library governance, facilities, planning, and staff development.
- **Further review:** Members deferred proposal 233, Connecting with Local Government Officials: How Libraries Add Value; proposal 277, Hiring Well and Getting Your New Employee Off to a Good Start; and proposal 278, Providing Constructive Employee Feedback. Members requested closer review of content, presenters, and relevance to Montana libraries. Carmen agreed to review proposal 277. Tracy will send links for the deferred courses to all three members and obtain more information about the presenters for proposal 278.
- **Courses not recommended:** Members did not recommend proposal 236, Do Public Libraries Help Mitigate Crime, or proposals 299 through 306. For the Ryan Dowd courses in proposals 299 through 306, members raised concerns about access through the Montana Library Association, the scheduled expiration of access, and the scope of some content.
- **Alternative access:** Members requested that staff explore purchasing direct, ongoing access to selected Ryan Dowd courses, particularly proposals 299, 300, 304, and 305. Members supported introductory training on de-escalation, safety, and responding to

patrons experiencing mental health or related difficulties. McKenna Gregg offered to investigate relevant in-state training options.

- **Catalog presentation:** Members suggested clearer visual distinctions between webinars and in-person training and clearer instructions for arranging live sessions. Tracy clarified that the green graphics in the proposal materials identify MSL offerings for committee review and do not appear in the MSL Learn catalog used by librarians. Staff will consider visual improvements and seek feedback from new library directors.
- **Motion:** Carmen Cuthbertson moved to approve the courses presented except proposal 236 and proposals 299 through 306, which would not be included in the catalog, and proposals 233, 277, and 278, which would return for further review. McKenna Gregg seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Next steps:** Tracy will prepare the committee's recommendations for the October Commission meeting, including the courses recommended for addition, courses not recommended, and courses requiring further review.

Commissioner Burnett Proposed Courses

Timestamp: 01:07:00 - 01:19:21

- **Discussion:** Members discussed readings and proposed topics from Heterodoxy in the Stacks. They found the ideas relevant to collection development, programming, community room use, children's collections, library neutrality, and viewpoint diversity, but noted that the material was broad, overlapping, and often too theoretical to use directly as a course. Members requested defined learning outcomes, a course outline, and an identified instructor before moving forward.
- **Suggested readings:** Carmen identified articles on the controversy over gender identity ideology in children's picture books; librarianship and political philosophy; unconscious bias or deliberate censorship; the culture war, the Library Bill of Rights, and the protection of minors; and library neutrality and pluralism. Members supported sharing selected articles as suggested readings while course options are explored.
- **Motion:** Carmen Cuthbertson moved to have Tracy contact contributors to Heterodoxy in the Stacks to determine whether courses already exist or whether contributors would be willing to work with MSL to develop a course. Tamara Hall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Next steps:** Tracy will invite Tom Burnett to the November meeting, ask him to narrow the proposed topics and identify intended learning outcomes, contact potential course developers, and share the suggested readings. Tamara and McKenna may suggest additional readings.

Additional Discussion

Timestamp: 01:19:23 - 01:24:20

- **Training resources:** Carmen suggested Library Juice as another potential source of training. Tracy agreed to explore its offerings.
- **Book purchasing:** Members discussed book vendors and the concern that reliance on a vendor's preprocessed materials could limit collection choices. Tracy described purchasing approaches used by small and larger libraries, including processing materials locally when needed.
- **Library budgets:** Tamara asked about reports of local library budget reductions. Tracy reported hearing that property tax changes and inflation were tightening some county budgets. Carmen discussed limitations on county revenue increases. No action was taken.

Public Comment

- **Record:** No public comment.

Closing and Follow Up

Timestamp: 01:24:24 - 01:26:04

- **Discussion:** Tracy summarized the revised meeting schedule, Commission recommendations, deferred course review links, follow-up with Tom Burnett and Heterodoxy in the Stacks, suggested readings, and exploration of Library Juice. Members confirmed the follow-up items and thanked participants. Meeting was adjourned.

Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Certification Committee Review

November 17, 2026

The proposals in this batch of 12 were submitted after the September 30, 2026 Certification Committee Meeting.

Board, Government, and Community Relations

Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
The Partnership Playbook for Small Libraries	329		
The Power of Narrative – Storytelling for Library Leaders	337		

Library Services

Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
America 250	328		
America's Presidential Libraries and Archives	330		
Literacy: Beyond Books	331		
Commemorating America's History: 2026 and Beyond	332		

Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Certification Committee Review

November 17, 2026

Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Viewfinder: A Toolkit for Values-Driven AI in Libraries and Archives	333		
Teaching Adults 50+ How to Spot Misinformation Online/Senior Planet: Senior Adult Computer Program	334		
What's Up from Around Montana	335		
Montana Ghost Towns	336		
Beyond the Dewey: Nonfiction Readers' Advisory for Library Staff	338		
The Potential and Peril of Generative AI	339		

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 329

The Partnership Playbook for Small Libraries

Course Description

This session addresses developing and maintaining partnerships that help small and rural libraries expand services, reach new audiences, and use limited resources effectively. It examines how community organizations, local government, businesses, and other institutions can support library programs and initiatives, with practical strategies for limited staffing and budgets.

Topic

Board, Government, and Community Relations: Work with boards, local government officials, community members, and the Montana State Library

Presenter Name

Rob Cullin

Presenter Credentials

Rob Cullin is associated with Rethinking Libraries and works in library planning, consulting, and organizational development, with an emphasis on changing community needs.

Presenter Association

ReThinking Libraries

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 337

The Power of Narrative – Storytelling for Library Leaders

Course Description

In an increasingly competitive landscape for resources and attention, the ability to effectively communicate the unique contributions of public libraries is paramount. This workshop addresses a critical need: to instill in library leaders the confidence and practical skills to share powerful stories about: ●How their libraries tangibly improve lives, foster literacy, and provide essential services. ●How libraries truly understand and respond to the specific needs and values of their local communities. By honing their storytelling abilities, librarians can transform abstract concepts of "public service" into relatable, impactful human experiences, demonstrating the indispensable role their institutions play in Montana's communities.

Topic

Board, Government, and Community Relations: Work with boards, local government officials, community members, and the Montana State Library

Presenter Name

Marc Moss

Presenter Credentials

Marc Moss is a seasoned storyteller and community builder. As the driving force behind "Tell Us Something," a popular live storytelling event and podcast based in Missoula, Montana, Marc has coached hundreds of individuals to find, craft, and share their personal narratives. His expertise lies in helping people connect with their authentic voice and communicate with impact.

Presenter Association

Tell Us Something

Cost

2000

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 328

America 250

Course Description

This session explores American history through personal stories reflecting the character, achievements, challenges, and experiences of the American people. It highlights storytelling to preserve national and local heritage, build historical understanding, and connect people with the individuals and events that shaped the United States. Public libraries can apply this approach through historical storytelling, educational programs, and community participation.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Lee Habeeb

Presenter Credentials

Lee Habeeb created and hosts Our American Stories, a nationally syndicated radio program and podcast featuring stories about American history, culture, and everyday Americans. His experience includes broadcasting, storytelling, and media production.

Presenter Association

Our American Stories

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 330

America's Presidential Libraries and Archives

Course Description

This session examines how presidential libraries and archives preserve historical records, provide public access to primary sources, and support education about the presidency and American government. It introduces archival collections, documents, exhibitions, and educational programs, and includes time for questions about these resources.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Tamara Martin

Presenter Credentials

Tamara Martin is the Acting Executive for Presidential Libraries at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

Presenter Association

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 331

Literacy: Beyond Books

Course Description

This session examines the broader role of literacy in public libraries beyond traditional reading and book-based services. It examines how libraries support learning, access to information, civic understanding, and the practical skills needed to participate in modern society. The topic is especially relevant to educational opportunities in small and rural communities.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Erica Jaros

Presenter Credentials

Erica Jaros, IMLS

Presenter Association

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 332

Commemorating America's History: 2026 and Beyond

Course Description

This panel discussion addresses the role of libraries and cultural institutions in commemorating American history during the nation’s 250th anniversary and beyond. It considers how historical collections, community stories, educational programs, and partnerships can encourage public participation and sustain historical education after 2026.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Panelists, IMLS Library Convening 250

Presenter Credentials

Library Directors from small and rural libraries throughout western region of The United States of America.

Presenter Association

IMLS

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 333

Viewfinder: A Toolkit for Values-Driven AI in Libraries and Archives

Course Description

Introduces the Viewfinder toolkit for deciding whether, when, and how libraries and archives should use artificial intelligence. Through hands-on activity, participants examine AI decisions against professional values, including privacy and consent, trust, transparency, literacy, service quality, and access, to reduce potential harms to communities.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Sara Mannheimer and Scott W. H. Young

Presenter Credentials

Sara Mannheimer is a Data Librarian and professor at Montana State University, author of a 2024 book on data curation, and project director of the IMLS-funded Responsible AI in Libraries & Archives project. Scott W. H. Young is a User Experience Librarian and professor at Montana State University; his work addresses user research, participatory design, and ethics, and he is editor-in-chief of Weave: Journal of Library User Experience.

Presenter Association

Montana State University Library

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 334

Teaching Adults 50+ How to Spot Misinformation Online/ Senior Planet: Senior Adult Computer Program

Course Description

The first reviews an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) workshop series at Montana State University that taught adults aged 50 and older how to identify fake news and misinformation and assess online information. The second introduces Senior Planet and its technology classes, lectures, and workshops for adults aged 60 and older, including ways libraries can connect with the organization.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Star Bradley and Jeannie Ferriss

Presenter Credentials

Star Bradley is an Instruction Librarian and Assistant Professor at the Montana State University Library, with research interests in information literacy, intellectual freedom, and citation management. Jeannie Ferriss is a librarian at Whitehall Community Library; she holds an undergraduate degree in history from Colorado State University and an MLIS from the University of Southern Mississippi, and teaches digital skills to older adults.

Presenter Association

Montana State University Library; Whitehall Community Library

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 335

What's Up from Around Montana

Course Description

Five short presentations share practical library initiatives: Kids' Clothing Cleanouts, a low-cost community clothing-sharing program; Level All, a Montana State Library resource for educational and career planning; Decks, Dice, and Dragon Ball Z, on creating welcoming library spaces through gaming and niche interests; Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID), a structured method of collecting useful qualitative feedback; and Creative Aging, a library arts program for older adults.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Katie Morrison; Bobbi deMontigny; Nicole Bernard; Morgan Ray; Karen Ketchu

Presenter Credentials

Katie Morrison, Montana State University Library, previous youth services programming at Belgrade Community Library; Bobbi deMontigny, Montana State Library's Lifelong Learning Librarian (MLIS); Nicole Bernard with MSU Billings; Morgan Ray, Flathead Valley Community College's Director of Library Services (MSLS, RP); and Karen Ketchu, Director of Madison Valley Public Library

Presenter Association

Montana State University Library; Montana State Library; MSU Billings; Flathead Valley Community College; Madison Valley Public Library

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 336

Montana Ghost Towns

Course Description

Historical presentation exploring Montana boom towns that disappeared, remain as ghost towns, or later resurged. Historical images show communities in their heyday and support discussion of the state's local history and the importance of preserving and providing access to historical materials. Also encouraging familiarity with the Montana History Portal.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jennifer Birnel

Presenter Credentials

Jennifer Birnel has served as Montana History Portal Director at the Montana State Library since 2013. She oversees portal implementation, collection contributions, and website design; recruits and trains contributors; and researches and presents on Montana history.

Presenter Association

Montana History Portal; Montana State Library

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 338

Beyond the Dewey: Nonfiction Readers' Advisory for Library Staff

Course Description

This webinar introduces practical nonfiction readers' advisory skills, including how to conduct an effective readers' advisory interview. We'll explore strategies for recommending nonfiction titles and learn how to translate fiction reader preferences—such as genre, tone, pacing, and themes—into engaging nonfiction suggestions. Ideal for staff who want to feel more confident helping readers cross the fiction–nonfiction divide.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jessica Curtis

Presenter Credentials

SearchOhio Coordinator, Adult Services, Westerville Public Library

Presenter Association

WebJunction

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 339

The Potential and Peril of Generative AI

Course Description

Generative AI continues to integrate into our daily lives, and public libraries can play an important role in helping their communities understand these technologies. Everyone needs to understand GenAI's potential and limitations - regardless of whether someone uses a particular tool. Through their daily interactions with the public, librarians see how using these powerful tools can produce intentional and unintentional harm. This session will give an overview of how to work, live, and thrive in a world with GenAI. Panelists will share resources librarians can use to continue their own professional development and support their communities.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Stacey Wedlake, Carl Bergstrom, Jevin West

Presenter Credentials

Jevin West, Professor and the Associate Dean for Research, University of Washington Information School Carl Bergstrom, Professor, University of Washington Department of Biology Stacey Wedlake, Senior Research Scientist, University of Washington Information School

Presenter Association

WebJunction

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Certification Committee Review

November 17, 2026

The proposals in this batch of 181 may not meet the policy criteria approval.

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Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Certification Committee Review

November 17, 2026

Board, Government, and Community Relations

Board, Government, and Community Relations: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Graduate Certificate in Public History from the University of Montana	11		
Montana Federation of Public Employees Annual Conference	13		
HSTA 575 – Public History	114		
HSTA 598 - Internship	115		

Facility Management

Facility Management: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Hands-on Fire Extinguisher	219		
Reflex Protect	221		

Course Catalog

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Library Services Proposals

Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
National Genealogical Society annual conference	5		
Montana State Genealogical Society annual conference	6		
Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy	7		
Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research	8		
GRIP Genealogy Institute (formerly Genealogy Research Institute of Pittsburgh)	9		
Genealogical Institute on Federal Records (GenFed)	10		
Montana History Conference	12		
Starting Smart with AI: Hands-On Tools for Family Historians	14		
Bloodlines and Breakthroughs: Inside Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy	15		
Unlocking African American Genealogy: Records, Methods, and Practice	16		
Genealogy Standards in Context: A Practical Approach - BCG Education Fund Session 1	17		
America's Story: Opportunity, Diversity, and Belonging Across 250 Years	18		
From Researcher to Writer: Narrating Ancestors' Place in History	19		
Coming to America: Immigration & Naturalization in the 19th and 20th Centuries	20		
Hands-On Mapping & Geospatial Analysis with Google Earth Pro for Genealogical Research	21		

Course Catalog

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Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Your Story, Your Book: Hands-On Self-Publishing	22		
BCG Education Fund "Putting Skills to Work" Session 2	23		
How Learning about the Past Can Change the Future: Family Stories and Intergenerational Identity	24		
Why We Remember: The Psychology of Commemoration and the 250th Anniversary of America	25		
Historical Storytelling: Bring Family Stories to Life with (Im)Migration Community Context	26		
Scruples, Hogsheads, Farthings, Grains? 1745/6? February 30? Measurements and Dates Our Ancestors Used in Their Daily Lives	27		
Positively Negative: Using A Super-Trio to Meet the Genealogical Proof Standard	28		
Beneath the Stone: Genealogical Strategies for Documenting Veterans in National Cemeteries	29		
Researching Women During the American Revolution	30		
When AI Becomes a Genealogist's Collaborator: Tracing a 1917 Refugee Escape	31		
From Revolution to Reunion: Using DNA to Reconnect a German Family in America	32		
Impact of the 2024 Model Vital Statistics Act on Genealogists' Access to Vital Records	33		
Claiming America: Federal Land Records and the Nation's Growth	34		

Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Certification Committee Review

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Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Understanding and Acknowledging the Lives of Ancestors in State Hospitals and Asylums	35		
Records in Motion: Tracing Mid-Atlantic Migration Through the American Story	36		
How the Scots-Irish Influenced the Founding of a Nation	37		
The Evolution of Standards for Genealogists	38		
A Case Study in Land, Migration, and Family Connections: Section 18 of Jackson Township, Fayette County, Indiana	39		

Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Hidden Histories: Extraordinary Insights from Ordinary Records	40		
Sacred Records, Civic Legacies: Genealogy and the African Methodist Episcopal Church African AmericanReligion	41		
DNA Standards: Establishing Revolutionary War Ancestry	42		
Day in the Life of A Professional Genealogist	43		
FOIA and Find Out: Fun with Federal Records	44		
America 250 Series: Historical and Genealogical Importance of America's Forgotten Patriots	45		
Your Path to Accreditation: Becoming an Accredited Genealogist Professional	46		
Decoding America's Past: Using AI to Understand 250 Years of Historical Terminology	47		

Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Certification Committee Review

November 17, 2026

Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Architectural Ancestry: A Course in House History	48		
Visual Sources and Digital Tools for Telling Your U.S. Veteran's Military Story	49		
Documenting LGBTQIA+ Parenting in Genealogy: Law, Love, and Legacy	50		
From Colonial Virginia to Tennessee: DNA Reveals Barsheba Tharp's Ancestry in America's Westward Migration	51		
Lessons from Documenting Misattributed Parentage by "Proving a Negative"	52		
Threads of a Nation: Genealogy Quilts Commemorating 250 Years of American Stories	53		
I Was Not A Slave So Why Are You Denying My Pension	54		
Free The Records: Learn how to be an advocate for access to records and convince lawmakers that the records belong to the people	55		
Lives in the Listings: Unlocking Family Stories in City Directories	56		
Twenty-Eight Volumes of Gold: U.S. Territorial Papers	57		
African Americans in Indiana Before the Civil War: Peter Ladd of Cabin Creek in Randolph County, and the Story of Free Black Settlements	58		
Deciphering Script & Scrawl: A Practical Workshop for Early Handwriting	59		
Drawing Out Ancestors from the "Huddled Masses": How to Use a New NARA Database to Research 20th Century Immigrants	60		

Course Catalog

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Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Spot the Impossible Ancestor: Red Flags in Genealogy	61		
We Are Still Here: Great Lakes Indigenous Peoples Then & Now	62		
Reconstructing Female Networks Through Antebellum Court Records and Property Transfers	63		
BCG Certification Seminar: Guidance on Preparing a Portfolio	64		
The Use of Oral History Techniques and Protocols for Recording and Archiving Family History Stories	65		
Connections Cross Caste: My Grandfather and His Jewish Mentor	66		
The General Welfare: Beneficial Societies and Their Records Immigration	67		
Efficient Genealogy: What You Can Do with the Time You Have	68		
Catholic Funeral Cards as Genealogical Evidence	69		
Sacred Threads: The Warp and Weft of Religious Records for Telling America's Family Stories	70		
Postcards and Plants: Finding and Preserving These Heirlooms	71		
Contextualizing Migration: Integrating Social, Economic, and Historical Factors Into America's 250-Year Narrative	72		
An Unrevolutionary Life: Reconstructing the Lives of the Overlooked	73		
Long Strange (German) Mapping Trips	74		
From Contraband to Soldiers: African-Americans in the Civil War	75		
Day in the Life of A Professional Genealogist	76		

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Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
The Genealogist as Expert Witness: A Live Mock Unknown Heirs Trial	77		
We're All In This Together: Exploring the Interconnectivity of Black and White Ancestors in Pre-Gilded Age Records	78		
Acknowledging and Healing Intergenerational Trauma through Genealogy	79		
American Ingenuity: Gadgets and Inventions That Reshaped American Homes, Health, and History	80		
Breaking it Down: Achieve Competency Writing Proofs Using DNA and Documentary Evidence	81		
The Much Married Mary: Linking Records to Identify Women	82		
Navigating the AI Frontier: Paired Team Field Reports	83		
Elevate Your Research by Finding Your Family's Footprint in Property Documents RecordsLand	84		
Questions within Questions – Implementing a Dynamic Research Plan	85		
Unlocking the Past: A Genealogy Escape Room Experience Skills	86		
Pioneering Women: Homesteading the American West	87		
AI in America: Illuminating 250 Years of Social, Cultural, Political, Economic, and Familial Contexts	88		
The Reconstruction Generation: Tracking Americans Born 1850-1880	89		
Capital Campaign: Military Veteran Bounty Land Digitization Project	90		

Course Catalog

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Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Ordinary Women Live Extraordinary Lives: A Deep Dive into the Records Reveal Tales of Resiliency	91		
Thinking Like a Genealogist	92		
Time & Place: A Genealogist's Cross-Hairs	93		
The Other Census: Five Things Tax Records Can Tell You	94		
Pension Fraud: Thieves, Scoundrels, Impostors, and the Lure of Free Money RecordsMilitary	95		
Hidden Valor: Researching the Black Men and Women of the American Revolution	96		
From Pioneer Pedigrees to Proof Standards: Reassessing Early Genealogical Works	97		
Occupants, Owners or Nations: Native Rights to Land	98		
Hands-on Practice: Analyzing Genealogical Documents Skills	99		
From Broken to Belonging: How Replacing Victor's Headstone Reconnected My Family Connecting	100		
Bound by Law, Freed by Law: Women and Our Legislative History	101		
Signed, Sealed, and Marked: Clues in Ancestors' Signatures	102		
Y-DNA Helps Reveal Forgotten and Unrecorded Mixed-Race Parentage from the Reconstruction Era	103		
Indian Traders, Founding Fathers, and Indigenous Girl Heroes. Fighting for Freedom.	104		
From 1776 to TikTok: How DNA Reveals 250 Years of Hidden American Stories	105		

Course Catalog

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Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
Heirloom Preservation for the Average Joe: How to preserve your families' precious heirlooms	106		
Sorting Out the Stevens…and Stephens: a 19th-Century Migration Puzzle	107		
Day in the Life of A Professional Genealogist	108		
Uncovering Family Stories Through American Court Records: Research Strategies	109		
"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" - The Underground Railroad	110		
The Latest in Ethical Issues Associated with Generative Artificial Intelligence	111		
From Unknown to Ancestral: DNA Clusters Reveal the Father My Family Never Knew	112		
America at 250: Celebrating With Intergenerational Family Stories and Community History Projects	113		
HSTA 577: Law, Capitalism, & Democracy in U.S. History	116		
HSTA 566 - The American West	117		
Independence and Identity: 250 Years of Opportunity, Diversity, and Belonging in America	118		
Advanced Evidence Analysis Practicum	119		
Adoption in Genealogy: Research and Recording	120		
Assemblage: Preparing, Writing, and Revising Case Studies	121		
Bring 'Em Back to Life: Writing Our Ancestors' Stories	122		
DNA Dreamers in Action Workshops	123		
Foundations: The Research Process	124		

Course Catalog

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Library Services: Course Title	Proposal Number	Yes/No	Notes
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Genetic Networks: Start at the Beginning	149		
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Proposals for MSL Commission Approval

Board, Government, and Community Relations

- Graduate Certificate in Public History from the University of Montana (11)
- Montana Federation of Public Employees annual conference (13)
- HSTA 575 - Public History (114)
- HSTA 598 - Internship (115)

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 11

Graduate Certificate in Public History from the University of Montana

Course Description

The Graduate Certificate in Public History trains graduate students to work in the field of public history. The program includes instruction on how to plan and administer public history projects; how to work with community and organizational partners; how to interpret history for the public; and how to deploy historical methods in a wide variety of settings and for a wide variety of organizations, agencies, and clients. It requires twelve graduate-level college credits, including an internship. https://www.umt.edu/history/publichistory/curriculum-publichistory1.php

Topic

Board, Government, and Community Relations: Work with boards, local government officials, community members, and the Montana State Library

Presenter Name

Leif Fredrickson is the program chair; there are many other faculty in UM's History Department.

Presenter Credentials

Professor Fredrickson has a PhD in History, as do most of the other UM History Department faculty.

Presenter Association

University of Montana

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 13

Montana Federation of Public Employees annual conference

Course Description

The Montana Federation of Public Employees annual conference provides an important professional development opportunity for members of Montana's many unionized libraries.

Topic

Board, Government, and Community Relations: Work with boards, local government officials, community members, and the Montana State Library

Presenter Name

numerous

Presenter Credentials

elected officials from public employers across the state

Presenter Association

Montana Federation of Public Employees

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 114

HSTA 575 - Public History

Course Description

Restricted to students in graduate History programs. This graduate colloquium introduces students to the wide-ranging field of public history. Examines the methods, theories, and ethics that guide how public historians exhibit history in museums, engage the public with digital projects, provide historical context in public places, work with local communities, and use historical expertise in law and policy. Discusses current and past controversies in public history and surveys how the digital age has transformed aspects of public history. May include field trips. Level: Graduate (3 graduate-level college credits equates to 12 MSL CE credits under the previous Certification Manual)

Topic

Board, Government, and Community Relations: Work with boards, local government officials, community members, and the Montana State Library

Presenter Name

Leif Fredrickson

Presenter Credentials

Visiting Assistant Professor of History; Director of the Public History Program. Education PhD, University of Virginia; BA, Vassar College. Courses Taught Environmental History; Hunting in America; History of Pandemics; Making History Public; Doing Local History/History of Missoula; Modern U.S. History; Historical Methods; 20th Century American West; Montana History. Research Interests History of environment, cities, technology, capitalism. Public history, digital humanities. Projects The Age of Lead: Metropolitan Change, Environmental Health, and Inner-City Underdevelopment in Baltimore. (Dissertation, University of Virginia, Department of History, May 2017). Winner of Council of Graduate Schools/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award in Humanities and Fine Arts for the past two years. Winner of Michael Katz Award for Best Dissertation in Urban History, Urban History Association. Death in the West: The Murder of Frank Little. Podcast about the unsolved lynching of union organizer Frank Little in Butte, Montana in 1917 -- and the broader historical context of his time. A People's EPA. Public history website about the Environmental Protection Agency. Enviro-History Website about environmental history and humanities, geared toward the public. Selected Publications "Healthy Housing and the Health of the State," in Douglas Appler, ed., The Many Geographis of Urban Renewal: New Perspectives on the Housing Act of 1949 (Temple University Press, 2023). “The

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 114

Riot Environment: Sanitation, Recreation, and Pacification in the Wake of Baltimore's 1968 Uprising," in Nicole King and Kate Drabinski, eds., Baltimore Revisited: Rethinking and Remaking a Right to the City (Rutgers University Press, 2019). "A Sheep in the Closet: The Erosion of Enforcement at the EPA," (Environmental Data & Governance Initiative, May 2019). "Paving the Way for Trump: Past Presidential Assaults on Environmental Health Protection," American Journal of Public Health 108, no. S2 (April 1, 2018). "The Rise and Fall of an Ecostar: Green Technology Innovation and Marketing as Regulatory Obstruction," in Hartmut Berghoff and Adam Rome, eds., Green Capitalism? Business and Environment in the Twentieth Century (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017). "Bio-Invasions and Bio-Fixes: Mysid Shrimp Introductions in the Twentieth Century," Environment and History vol. 23, no.2, 2017. "From Ecocide to Eco-ally: Picloram, Herbicidal Warfare, and Invasive Species, 1963-2005," in Global Environment: A Journal of Transdisciplinary History (Rachel Carson Center Special Issue on Hazardous Substances), vol. 7, no. 1, 2014. Editorials and analysis inThe Guardian, Washington Post, The Hill, American Historical Association Today, The Conversation and other publications. Professional Experience Coordinator and Oral Historian, Missoula County COVID-19 Documentation Project. Oral History Interview Curator, Environmental Data & Governance Initiative. Member, Missoula Historic Preservation Commission. Board Member, Heritage Missoula Committee. Board Member, Friends of the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula.

Presenter Association

University of Montana

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 115

HSTA 598 - Internship

Course Description

Restricted to students in graduate History programs. Extended classroom experience that provides practical application of classroom learning during placements off campus. Prior approval must be obtained from the faculty supervisor. Level: Graduate (3 graduate-level college credits equates to 12 MSL CE credits under the previous Certification Manual)

Topic

Board, Government, and Community Relations: Work with boards, local government officials, community members, and the Montana State Library

Presenter Name

Leif Fredrickson

Presenter Credentials

Visiting Assistant Professor of History; Director of the Public History Program Education PhD, University of Virginia; BA, Vassar College. Courses Taught Environmental History; Hunting in America; History of Pandemics; Making History Public; Doing Local History/History of Missoula; Modern U.S. History; Historical Methods; 20th Century American West; Montana History. Research Interests History of environment, cities, technology, capitalism. Public history, digital humanities. Projects The Age of Lead: Metropolitan Change, Environmental Health, and Inner-City Underdevelopment in Baltimore. (Dissertation, University of Virginia, Department of History, May 2017). Winner of Council of Graduate Schools/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award in Humanities and Fine Arts for the past two years. Winner of Michael Katz Award for Best Dissertation in Urban History, Urban History Association. Death in the West: The Murder of Frank Little. Podcast about the unsolved lynching of union organizer Frank Little in Butte, Montana in 1917 -- and the broader historical context of his time. A People's EPA. Public history website about the Environmental Protection Agency. Enviro-History Website about environmental history and humanities, geared toward the public. Selected Publications "Healthy Housing and the Health of the State," in Douglas Appler, ed., The Many Geographis of Urban Renewal: New Perspectives on the Housing Act of 1949 (Temple University Press, 2023). “The Riot Environment: Sanitation, Recreation, and Pacification in the Wake of Baltimore’s 1968 Uprising,” in Nicole King and Kate Drabinski, eds., Baltimore Revisited: Rethinking and Remaking a Right to the City (Rutgers University Press, 2019). “A Sheep in the Closet: The Erosion of Enforcement at the EPA," (Environmental Data & Governance Initiative, May 2019).

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 115

“Paving the Way for Trump: Past Presidential Assaults on Environmental Health Protection,” American Journal of Public Health 108, no. S2 (April 1, 2018). “The Rise and Fall of an Ecostar: Green Technology Innovation and Marketing as Regulatory Obstruction,” in Hartmut Berghoff and Adam Rome, eds., Green Capitalism? Business and Environment in the Twentieth Century (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017). “Bio-Invasions and Bio-Fixes: Mysid Shrimp Introductions in the Twentieth Century,” Environment and History vol. 23, no.2, 2017. “From Ecocide to Eco-ally: Picloram, Herbicidal Warfare, and Invasive Species, 1963-2005,” in Global Environment: A Journal of Transdisciplinary History (Rachel Carson Center Special Issue on Hazardous Substances), vol. 7, no. 1, 2014. Editorials and analysis inThe Guardian, Washington Post, The Hill, American Historical Association Today, The Conversation and other publications. Professional Experience Coordinator and Oral Historian, Missoula County COVID-19 Documentation Project. Oral History Interview Curator, Environmental Data & Governance Initiative. Member, Missoula Historic Preservation Commission. Board Member, Heritage Missoula Committee. Board Member, Friends of the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula.

Presenter Association

University of Montana

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Commission Approval

Facility Management

- Hands-on Fire Extinguisher (219)
- Reflex Protect (221)

Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Certification Committee Review

November 17, 2026

The proposals in this batch of 181 may not meet the policy criteria approval.

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Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 219

Hands-on Fire Extinguisher

Course Description

Learn how to use a fire extinguisher

Topic

Facility Management: Manage the library facility and ensure community members can safely access and use the building

Presenter Name

Missoula County Safety Committee

Presenter Credentials

no bio available

Presenter Association

Missoula county

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 221

Reflex Protect

Course Description

Learn how to use Reflex Protect (alternative to mace/pepper spray)

Topic

Facility Management: Manage the library facility and ensure community members can safely access and use the building

Presenter Name

Missoula County Safety Committee

Presenter Credentials

no bio available

Presenter Association

Missoula Public Library

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposals for MSL Commission Approval

Library Services

• National Genealogical Society annual conference (5)

• Montana State Genealogical Society annual conference (6)

• Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (7)

• Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (8)

• GRIP Genealogy Institute (formerly Genealogy Research Institute of Pittsburgh) (9)

• Genealogical Institute on Federal Records (GenFed) (10)

• Montana History Conference (12)

• Starting Smart with AI: Hands-On Tools for Family Historians (14)

• Bloodlines and Breakthroughs: Inside Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy (15)

• Unlocking African American Genealogy: Records, Methods, and Practice (16)

• Genealogy Standards in Context: A Practical Approach - BCG Education Fund Session 1 (17)

• America's Story: Opportunity, Diversity, and Belonging Across 250 Years (18)

• From Researcher to Writer: Narrating Ancestors' Place in History (19)

• Coming to America: Immigration & Naturalization in the 19th and 20th Centuries (20)

• Hands-On Mapping & Geospatial Analysis with Google Earth Pro for Genealogical Research (21)

• Your Story, Your Book: Hands-On Self-Publishing (22)

• BCG Education Fund "Putting Skills to Work" Session 2 (23)

• How Learning about the Past Can Change the Future: Family Stories and Intergenerational

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Proposals for MSL Commission Approval

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• Historical Storytelling: Bring Family Stories to Life with (Im)Migration Community Context (26)

• Scruples, Hogsheads, Farthings, Grains? 1745/6? February 30? Measurements and Dates Our Ancestors Used in Their Daily Lives (27)

• Positively Negative: Using A Super-Trio to Meet the Genealogical Proof Standard (28)

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• Records in Motion: Tracing Mid-Atlantic Migration Through the American Story (36)

• How the Scots-Irish Influenced the Founding of a Nation (37)

• The Evolution of Standards for Genealogists (38)

• A Case Study in Land, Migration, and Family Connections: Section 18 of Jackson Township, Fayette County, Indiana (39)

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• Sacred Records, Civic Legacies: Genealogy and the African Methodist Episcopal Church African AmericanReligion (41)

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• America 250 Series: Historical and Genealogical Importance of America’s Forgotten Patriots (45)

• Your Path to Accreditation: Becoming an Accredited Genealogist Professional (46)

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• Visual Sources and Digital Tools for Telling Your U.S. Veteran’s Military Story (49)

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• From Colonial Virginia to Tennessee: DNA Reveals Barsheba Tharp's Ancestry in America's Westward Migration (51)

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• Threads of a Nation: Genealogy Quilts Commemorating 250 Years of American Stories (53)

• I Was Not A Slave So Why Are You Denying My Pension (54)

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• Lives in the Listings: Unlocking Family Stories in City Directories (56)

• Twenty-Eight Volumes of Gold: U.S. Territorial Papers (57)

• African Americans in Indiana Before the Civil War: Peter Ladd of Cabin Creek in Randolph County, and the Story of Free Black Settlements (58)

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• Reconstructing Female Networks Through Antebellum Court Records and Property Transfers (63)

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• Efficient Genealogy: What You Can Do with the Time You Have (68)

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• Navigating the AI Frontier: Paired Team Field Reports (83)

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• The Reconstruction Generation: Tracking Americans Born 1850-1880 (89)

• Capital Campaign: Military Veteran Bounty Land Digitization Project (90)

• Ordinary Women Live Extraordinary Lives: A Deep Dive into the Records Reveal Tales of Resiliency (91)

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Proposals for MSL Commission Approval

MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
MSL LEARN

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• From Pioneer Pedigrees to Proof Standards: Reassessing Early Genealogical Works (97)

• Occupants, Owners or Nations: Native Rights to Land (98)

• Hands-on Practice: Analyzing Genealogical Documents Skills (99)

• From Broken to Belonging: How Replacing Victor's Headstone Reconnected My Family Connecting (100)

• Bound by Law, Freed by Law: Women and Our Legislative History (101)

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• Indian Traders, Founding Fathers, and Indigenous Girl Heroes. Fighting for Freedom. (104)

• From 1776 to TikTok: How DNA Reveals 250 Years of Hidden American Stories (105)

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- Not “Just” Farmers: Records, Relationships, and the Reality of Their Lives (143)
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- Genetic Networks: Start at the Beginning (149)
- Interdisciplinary Civil War Research: The Road to Disunion and Reconstruction, 1820–1877 (150)
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MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
MSL LEARN

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Proposals for MSL Commission Approval

- Proving What You Know: Documentation for Lineage Society Applications (176)
- AI & Ancestry: Navigating the Future for Family Historians (177)
- Human Trafficking (218)
- Narcan Administration (220)
- Communication Skills for Difficult Moments (222)
- CPR/AED (223)
- Stop the Bleed (224)
- Telescopes in Libraries (315)

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 5

National Genealogical Society annual conference

Course Description

This is three day (plus two pre-conference days) annual conference focused on genealogy research methods, records, technology and writing. https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

There are 79 speakers scheduled for the 2026 conference.

Presenter Credentials

Speaker credentials include Certified Genealogist, Certified Genealogy Lecturer, Accredited Genealogist, Accredited Genealogist Lecturer, Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association, and many others. https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/our-speakers/

Presenter Association

various

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 6

Montana State Genealogical Society annual conference

Course Description

Each year, the Montana State Genealogical Society brings in speakers to present about genealogy research competencies, resources, and methodologies.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

There are two to four presenters every year

Presenter Credentials

Some speakers hold the Certified Genealogist credential, the Certified Genealogy Lecturer credential, the Accredited Genealogist credential, the Accredited Genealogist Lecturer credential, the Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association credential, various BA, MA, PhD degrees, etc.

Presenter Association

various

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 7

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Course Description

https://slig.ugagenealogy.org/courses/

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Each course has from four to ten presenters, and there are multiple learning opportunities throughout the year.

Presenter Credentials

Many and various, including Certified Genealogist, Certified Genealogy Lecturer, Accredited Genealogist, Accredited Genealogist Lecturer, Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association, and many bachelor's, master's, PhD, and JD degrees.

Presenter Association

various

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 8

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Course Description

https://ighr.gagensociety.org/ighr-courses/

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Each institute course has four to ten presenters

Presenter Credentials

Various credentials including Certified Genealogist, Certified Genealogy Lecturer, Accredited Genealogist, Accredited Genealogist Lecturer, Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association, as well as numerous bachelor's, master's, PhD, and JD degrees

Presenter Association

various

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 9

GRIP Genealogy Institute (formerly Genealogy Research Institute of Pittsburgh)

Course Description

https://grip.ngsgenealogy.org/#1#schedule

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

various

Presenter Credentials

As with other genealogy institutes and conferences, GRIP presenters hold a variety of credentials including Certified Genealogist, Certified Genealogy Lecturer, Accredited Genealogist, Accredited Genealogist Lecturer, Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association, as well as many different bachelor's, master's, PhD, and JD degrees.

Presenter Association

various

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 10

Genealogical Institute on Federal Records (GenFed)

Course Description

GenFed is a week-long program for the in-depth study of federal records held by the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and College Park, Maryland. https://www.gen-fed.org/

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

various

Presenter Credentials

Experienced instructors from the fields of professional genealogy and archives; National Archives employees.

Presenter Association

National Archives, et al

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 12

Montana History Conference

Course Description

The Montana Historical Society's annual conference brings together dozens of presenters who speak on a variety of Montana history topics.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

various

Presenter Credentials

academic historians, public historians, history buffs, etc.

Presenter Association

Montana Historical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 14

Starting Smart with AI: Hands-On Tools for Family Historians

Course Description

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming how genealogists work, speeding up tasks, expanding creativity, and reshaping research strategies. But many genealogists remain unsure: Which tools can be trusted? How do you use AI without losing accuracy? In this 3-hour hands-on workshop, you'll explore practical ways to use AI for transcription, translation, research planning, and writing support while learning how to check its work and apply it responsibly. You'll experiment with real examples, compare results, and walk away with prompts, worksheets, and an AI toolkit you can immediately put to use in your own research and writing.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Lori Samuelson

Presenter Credentials

Lori Samuelson is an educator, researcher, writer & lecturer. She blogs weekly at GenealogyAtHeart.com focusing on sensitive subjects and heartwarming genealogical finds. Lori has written five family genealogies and for numerous journals and magazines.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 15

Bloodlines and Breakthroughs: Inside Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy

Course Description

This workshop follows a Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy case from laboratory processing of a crime scene sample through genealogical reconstruction, investigative lead development, arrest, and prosecution. The full progression of the case is presented, with particular focus on the genealogical analysis that drives the investigation forward. Participants will actively work through the stages of the case as it unfolds, engaging with the genealogical methods used to interpret DNA match lists, identify potential common ancestors, and reconstruct family lines using historical records. Emphasis will be placed on identity and kinship analysis, evidence correlation, hypothesis development, and careful documentation within a forensic context. By tracing the case from laboratory results to courtroom resolution, attendees will see how disciplined genealogical methodology underpins responsible FIGG practice.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Allison Ryall

Presenter Credentials

Allison Ryall, AIGG, is a Forensic Genetic Genealogist with Bode Technology, where she applies advanced genetic genealogy methods to support law enforcement and forensic investigations. Her casework includes the identification of unknown individuals, the resolution of cold cases, and investigative support in active criminal matters, translating DNA results into actionable leads through disciplined genealogical research and analysis. Allison also spent 17 years as a faculty member in Boston University's Genealogy Studies Program, teaching research methodology and genetic genealogy. With a foundation in traditional genealogy and evidence-based research, she is passionate about elevating professional standards, documentation, and analytical rigor in both genealogical and forensic contexts. Prior to working full time in FIGG, Allison spent ten years as the genealogy specialist for the Orange County Library System in Florida, managing a wide range of patron research questions and developing practical strategies that blended documentary research with DNA evidence. She holds a Master's Certificate in Crime Analysis from the University of Central Florida, degrees in U.S.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 15

History and Russian Studies, and a Master's degree in American and New England Studies from the University of Southern Maine.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 16

Unlocking African American Genealogy: Records, Methods, and Practice

Course Description

Reconstruct African American family histories through guided, hands-on exercises with census, court, Freedmen's Bureau, land, tax, and church records. Learn practical methods to navigate fragmented sources, connect generations, and tell fuller family stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Sarah Day

Presenter Credentials

Sarah Day, AG is a Professional Genealogist specializing in United States research, with a particular love and interest in African American Family History. She received a Bachelors degree from Brigham Young University (BYU) in Genealogy-Family History in 2025. Additionally she is accredited in the United States Southwest region. She is a APG Board of Director and founder of the Young Professionals Special Interest Group at APG. Sarah loves researching, helping others find family and making genealogy fun and engaging for those of all ages.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 17

Genealogy Standards in Context: A Practical Approach - BCG Education Fund Session 1

Course Description

With a combination of classroom-style instruction, hands-on activities, and group discussions, you will learn practical application of the standards to answer your genealogy questions and reach accurate conclusions. The session will help you: To assess when you have done enough to meet the requirement for reasonably exhaustive research To engage in analysis and correlation to test the evidence To resolve conflicts with confidence

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Angela McGhie

Presenter Credentials

Angela Packer McGhie, CG®, FUGA, is the president of the Board for Certification of Genealogists and specializes in genealogical education.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 18

America's Story: Opportunity, Diversity, and Belonging Across 250 Years

Course Description

The story of America is one of families pursuing opportunity while confronting exclusion and hardship. This interactive workshop follows that story across diverse communities, from early settlers to immigrants, African Americans, Native peoples, and others, highlighting how opportunity was pursued, exclusion was contested, and identity was remembered. Through short presentations, guided reflections, group discussions, and an accompanying workbook, we will explore how opportunity and identity took shape across different communities and how our ancestors' experiences formed a larger story of resilience and hope. We will also consider how preserving these stories today honors our shared history. Part 1, Chasing Opportunity: Migrations in the Early Republic, examines how people moved through a rapidly changing country, sometimes by choice and sometimes under pressure. Part 2, Opportunity and Exclusion: Migration, Immigration, and Citizenship, focuses on how immigrants and marginalized populations navigated contested ideas of rights and belonging. Part 3, Stories That Last: Preserving Family and Community Memory, considers how these experiences endure in family and community memory and how preserving them today helps create a fuller, more connected national story.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Katherine R Willson

Presenter Credentials

Katherine R. Willson (Dexter, Michigan) discovered her passion for family history at age eight while earning the "My Heritage" Girl Scout badge, and that early spark has grown into a lifelong pursuit. Today, she is a dynamic genealogy educator who presents at regional, national, and international events and is widely regarded for her engaging presentations. Katherine has held leadership positions in numerous local, national, and professional genealogical organizations. Her courses for the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy and the GRIP Genealogy Institute explore the social, cultural, political, and economic forces that shaped the lives and decisions of past generations. As a full-time researcher for private clients, she specializes in Michigan's pre-

statehood families, the early pioneers of the Northwest Territory, and those who journeyed west during America's expansion from 1787 to 1890. Through her website, SocialMediaGenealogy.com, Katherine shares free resources for family historians, including genealogy forms, oral history interview questions, and curated directories of genealogy-focused Facebook groups, YouTube channels, and podcasts.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 19

From Researcher to Writer: Narrating Ancestors' Place in History

Course Description

Turn your research into writing that connects. In this hands-on workshop, learn how to transform genealogical facts into stories that give voice to your ancestors, placing their lives within the broader sweep of American history. You'll practice building context, crafting narrative hooks, and writing with emotional and historical depth.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Laura Hedgecock

Presenter Credentials

Published author, genealogy lecturer

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 20

Coming to America: Immigration & Naturalization in the 19th and 20th Centuries

Course Description

This hands-on workshop dives into 20th-century immigration and naturalization records to show how your ancestors navigated the laws, forms, and borders that defined their journey and how (and if) they became citizens. Learn which records may exist for your ancestors, where to find them, and how to navigate common research obstacles. Special attention will be given to lesser-known sources, such as correspondence files and land border entries, as well as strategies for resolving tricky citizenship cases.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Alec Ferretti

Presenter Credentials

Director, Association of Professional Genealogists

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 21

Hands-On Mapping & Geospatial Analysis with Google Earth Pro for Genealogical Research

Course Description

In this hands-on Google Earth Pro workshop, you'll learn to overlay historical maps, plot addresses, and explore how families and communities changed over time. This workshop will benefit those who are brand new to the software while experienced users will learn new techniques and best practices.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Colleen Robledo Greene

Presenter Credentials

Colleen Robledo Greene, MLIS, is an academic librarian, college educator, and tech nerd who has been researching her family history since 1997. She is the Digital Scholarship Librarian at California State University, Fullerton, and teaches an online graduate-level genealogical research methods course for San Jose State University. Colleen is a nationally recognized genealogy speaker and educator specializing in methodology, Mexican & Hispanic research, libraries and archives, and technology.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 22

Your Story, Your Book: Hands-On Self-Publishing

Course Description

Write, design, and publish your story! Bring your manuscript—or start fresh with a provided journal—and learn how to turn your writing into a professional-quality, fully-revisable draft. In this hands-on workshop, you'll draft, design, and self-publish using Lulu.com, mastering layout, cover design, and publishing essentials to confidently share your story with family or the world.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jill Morelli

Presenter Credentials

Jill Morelli, CG, CGL, is a writer, lecturer and founder of the Certification Discussion Group, an online series which demystifies the journey to certification managed by the Board for Certification of Genealogists. She lectures nationally and has written articles for National Genealogical Society Quarterly, Swedish American Genealogist, and many others. She publishes regularly and is working on her second book—a compilation of all the articles she has written about her family. Jill is a past president of the Seattle Genealogical Society, program chair of the Puget Sound-Association of Professional Genealogists and a member of many local genealogical societies.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 23

BCG Education Fund "Putting Skills to Work" Session 2

Course Description

With a combination of classroom-style instruction, hands-on activities, and group discussions, you will learn practical application of the standards related to DNA to answer your genealogy questions and reach accurate conclusions. The session will help you To assess when you have enough DNA test takers to meet the requirement for reasonably exhaustive research To engage in correlation to test hypothesized biological relationships with documented relationships To resolve conflicts in documented relationships using genetic evidence

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Karen Stanbary, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Karen Stanbary, CG®, CGG® holds the Certified Genealogist credential. She lectures nationally on the use of DNA test results in genealogical problem-solving, always within the framework of the Genealogical Proof Standard. She is a Trustee and Vice President for the Board for Certification of Genealogists and chairs that organization’s DNA Committee.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 24

How Learning about the Past Can Change the Future: Family Stories and Intergenerational Identity

Course Description

As we commemorate America at 250, our gaze swings from the past to the future....and passes squarely through the present. Our own stories which are now unfolding are influenced by our inner narrative about who we are, which itself is influenced by our sense of intergenerational identity. While we can't change the past, we can reshape our sense of intergenerational identity to more constructively serve our futures and that of rising generations. Sunny illustrates these principles by sharing powerful family stories from the Great Johnstown Flood of 1889, the Spanish flu pandemic, and the polio crisis of the mid-1900s that helped her reframe her inner narrative and identity in empowering ways. Attendees will see how they can also shape a more intentional, constructive sense of intergenerational identity from their own family stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Sunny Jane Morton

Presenter Credentials

Sunny Jane Morton is Editor of NGS Magazine; Contributing Editor of Family Tree Magazine; Content Director of Your DNA Guide.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 25

Why We Remember: The Psychology of Commemoration and the 250th Anniversary of America

Course Description

Summary What makes us pause to celebrate big milestones like America's 250th? This session explores the psychology behind commemoration - why we mark the past, how those moments shape identity and memory, and how bringing your ancestors' stories into the picture helps build a richer, more inclusive national story. Overview As America approaches its 250th anniversary in 2026, communities, families, and institutions are planning events, memorials, and projects to honour this milestone. But why do people feel compelled to mark anniversaries, especially those tied to national identity? This presentation will explore the psychology behind commemoration. The presentation will examine how anniversaries shape our understanding of the past, influence collective memory, and connect personal family histories to larger national narratives. Using examples from genealogical research, participants will discover how exploring our ancestors' experiences: whether as immigrants, indigenous peoples, enslaved people, settlers, or citizens, deepens our connection to commemorative events and helps us tell fuller, more inclusive stories. Audience key takeaways understand the psychological mechanisms; nostalgia, identity reinforcement, and shared meaning, that drive the desire to commemorate historical milestones learn how to connect national anniversaries to personal genealogical narratives to create more engaging family histories gain practical ideas for incorporating the America at 250 theme into research projects, community programs, and family storytelling reflect on how commemoration can both unite and divide, and strategies for promoting inclusive, respectful remembrance

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Dr Penny Walters

Presenter Credentials

Dr. Penny Walters has been a University lecturer for 35 years, currently teaching at Bath Spa University Business School, England. Penny's interest in genealogy started after having her first baby and then wondering about her own biological parents, as she was adopted. Penny has six

mixed race children, who have all enjoyed discovering their roots through DNA ethnicity results. Penny lectures internationally in-person, including throughout America, Australia, Ireland, and the UK. Penny has authored the books: 'Ethical Dilemmas in Genealogy' (2019) and ‘The Psychology of Searching’ (2020)

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 26

Historical Storytelling: Bring Family Stories to Life with (Im)Migration Community Context

Course Description

Behind every (im)migration story is a community story. Discover how exploring the networks, traditions, and challenges your ancestors encountered in a new place can turn research into powerful, human-centered narratives with both historical and emotional depth.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Laura Hedgecock

Presenter Credentials

published author, genealogy lecturer

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 27

Scruples, Hogsheads, Farthings, Grains? 1745/6? February 30? Measurements and Dates Our Ancestors Used in Their Daily Lives

Course Description

How far is 43 perches? How big is a hogshead? Was a price of .12.7 the same in every colony—and did 11 days really disappear in 1752? This session connects the dots between old money, measurements, and calendars so those puzzling numbers in your ancestors' records finally make sense. OVERVIEW: Genealogical researchers are always coming across numbers when researching their ancestors, but often don't know what they mean. This lecture will discuss the history and meaning of different measurements like lengths, weights, distances, and volume, as well as money and calendars to give understanding of those numbers. Currency is one of the most common numbers encountered, and before dollars researchers will encounter values like 4.14.11 or .12.7. There are methods of determining monetary value in today's terms, but one complication is in Colonial times the different colonies independently controlled their own currencies. Many are aware of the calendar changes in England and its colonies in 1752, but it's more complicated than many realize and has direct genealogical research implications concerning dates prior to then. It gets especially tricky when researching European ancestors since similar calendar changes happened at different times in different countries, some as late as 1918. There were even several instances of February 30th! And then there are all the different measurements – primarily distance, length, volume, and weight. How far is a distance of 43 perches? Is a foot really defined by the King's foot? Is hogshead a real term or something the Beatles made up? These were important in areas such as commerce and land surveying, and the same terms could have different meanings in England and the Colonies/States. Students will learn the meaning and history behind these terms to get a better understanding of an ancestor's records such as financial transactions, business ledgers, medical information, distances travelled, land surveys, and much more. They will also learn about the various calendar changes and how they impact records as well as calculating ages. This information is also helpful in military research.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 27

Presenter Name

David M. McCorkle

Presenter Credentials

David M. McCorkle is a land records expert with research experience in a wide variety of other records used by genealogists including court records, probate, colonial records, and governmental records. He has an extensive background in computer software, and has been working on using Artificial Intelligence tools to help researchers process evidence from these records in a more comprehensive and less time consuming manner. He has given in-person, online, and hybrid lectures and workshops to national, state, and local genealogical and historical organizations, and well as corporate and government audiences. His topics include land grants, court records, digitization, maps, mapping tools, Artificial Intelligence, land records in general, DNA, land platting workshops, and introduction to genealogy. David is the sole creator and ongoing administrator of the free website NC Land Grant Images and Data http://nclandgrants.com . This website contains searchable records for all 200,000+ land grants issued by North Carolina since 1663, along with over a million high quality images of original records. Many of these records cannot be viewed anywhere else outside of the State Archives of NC. He is President and founder of NC Historical Records Online (NCHRO), a 501(c)(3) non-profit with a mission to provide public online access to images of original records and other relevant information useful to researching North Carolina history and genealogy. He is President of the North Carolina Genealogical Society (NCGS) and the Durham-Orange Genealogical Society (D-OGS), Vice President of the Friends of the (NC) Archives, Treasurer of the Genealogical Speaker's Guild and of the Historic Mapping Congress, and on the board of the Mecklenburg Genealogical Society. All of these projects along with his work with genealogical societies resulted in David receiving an award of merit in 2023 from the National Genealogical Society, as well as awards from the NC Genealogical Society and from local societies. David is a native of North Carolina with deep roots on many lines dating back to the 1700s, primarily in the Mecklenburg County area. He wrote his first computer program in 1973, and has been working in the software industry for over 40 years. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 28

Positively Negative: Using A Super-Trio to Meet the Genealogical Proof Standard

Course Description

This session focuses on a “super-trio of negatives”—negative findings, negative searches, and negative evidence—used to meet the Genealogical Proof Standard. When working in time periods or places where records are scant or destroyed, negative findings and searches become essential tools. Together, these “negatives” play a positive role in resolving questions of identity, relationships, and events. The search for the correct father of Jane Beckett of Putnam County, West Virginia, required all three negatives to demonstrate the scope of research and support a reliably reasoned conclusion when records were lacking. Takeaways include understanding the role of negative findings and searches, the importance of thoroughly evaluating evidence and resolving conflicts, why a search for all potentially relevant sources matters, and what it takes to reach a sound genealogical conclusion. Examples from the Beckett case study illustrate how negative evidence, paired with indirect and direct evidence, can assist in building a case study that meets the Genealogical Proof Standard. The Becketts are just one example of how documenting the stories of even the most humble ancestors contributes to a fuller, more accurate picture of our country’s 250-year history.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kelley Lear

Presenter Credentials

President , Virginia Genealogical Society

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 29

Beneath the Stone: Genealogical Strategies for Documenting Veterans in National Cemeteries

Course Description

Behind every military headstone lies a story. Learn strategies to uncover, document, and share the lives of veterans interred in U.S. National Cemeteries—using records, context, and ethical storytelling to honor their service and preserve their legacy.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Bonnie Wade Mucia

Presenter Credentials

Bonnie Wade Mucia, AG® an Accredited Genealogist in the New England region and is the owner of Keeper of the Past Genealogy, LLC. She serves as the Director of the Mayflower Families Silver Books Project for the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, where she concentrates on the descendants of Mayflower passengers. In addition, Bonnie is a volunteer docent at both Beaufort National Cemetery and the Parris Island Museum at the U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot. She has published numerous articles in respected genealogical journals and delivered lectures on various topics. Originally from Rhode Island, Bonnie now resides in South Carolina.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 30

Researching Women During the American Revolution

Course Description

Women's contributions to the American Revolution were far-reaching yet often undocumented in published histories. Women boycotted British goods, produced home-spun cloth and supplies for soldiers, and some even took to the battlefield.This session shows how to find evidence of their participation, patriot and loyalist, and uncover the records that bring their experiences to light.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Melanie McComb

Presenter Credentials

Melanie McComb is a Senior Genealogist at American Ancestors. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the State University of New York at Oswego. She is an international lecturer who teaches on various topics including colonial through twentieth-century American military research, genetic genealogy, Atlantic Canadian, African American, Jewish, and Irish genealogy. She is an Honorary Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society. She is a contributing author of Genealogica & Heraldica XXXVI. She has had articles published in American Ancestors Magazine and Fifty Plus Advocate. She is a blogger, known as The Shamrock Genealogist.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 31

When AI Becomes a Genealogist's Collaborator: Tracing a 1917 Refugee Escape

Course Description

What happens when a genealogist invites storytelling—and AI—as collaborators? Through the 1917 refugee journey of Gittle Bardiga and her son Meyer, this session shows how combining narrative reconstruction with AI tools can lead to discoveries missed in years of record-focused research and offer new strategies for genealogical best practice.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Gil Bardige

Presenter Credentials

Gil Bardige was born and raised in Chicago and currently lives in the Columbus, Ohio, area. A graduate of the New York Institute of Technology, Gil retired in 2019 after a long career in air conditioning and refrigeration, most recently as a National Business Development Leader for Trane Technologies. At the "instruction" of his mother, Gil began his genealogy adventure in 1979 with 54 people in his tree. Today, his family tree includes over 3,200 people on four branches, going back to his fifth-great-grandfathers, born in about 1740. His family arrived in Chicago in the early 1900s. For over seventeen years, Gil has expanded his knowledge base to genetic genealogy, testing at each of the four major DNA companies, and he currently manages three Y-DNA projects at Family Tree DNA as a Volunteer Administrator. He loves to help people manage their expectations and begin to remove confusion from their DNA results whether it's Y-DNA, mtDNA, or Autosomal DNA. He has spoken at dozens of local events and international conferences, including at IAJGS in Orlando, Cleveland, Virtual San Diego, Virtual Philadelphia, London, and most recently in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Gil is the Chair of the Genealogy Committee of the Columbus Jewish Historical Society (JGS). He co-hosts live Genetic Genealogy Q&A sessions at JGS Illinois and JGS Toronto. Gil developed and hosts the monthly Kvel & Kvetch genealogy Q&A in Columbus. Gil has managed the Mentoring Program for IAJGS and co-hosts the Apple Users and Jewish Genealogy Facebook page and monthly virtual BOF (Birds of a Feather) meeting. Gil is a firm believer that you can use DNA results as a tool in your genealogical research as it generates clues that can help people confirm/deny

relationships. His speaking style is high energy (you won't be bored) and he loves to take questions.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 32

From Revolution to Reunion: Using DNA to Reconnect a German Family in America

Course Description

A German family split after immigrating in 1849—one branch to New York, the other to Illinois. Generations later, DNA evidence and documentary research reunited their descendants across America and Germany, revealing how genetic tools can restore connections lost through migration and the passage of time.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Mary Kircher Roddy

Presenter Credentials

Mary Kircher Roddy, CG CGG, lectures at regional and national events on methodology and unique ways to search. She has written for national journals and magazines. She is co-editor of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly and a trustee of the Board for Certification of Genealogists.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 33

Impact of the 2024 Model Vital Statistics Act on Genealogists' Access to Vital Records

Course Description

Proposed changes to the NAPHSIS Model Act could close access to vital records for generations—125 years for births, 100 for marriages, and 75 for deaths. This panel explains what's at stake and what genealogists can do to help preserve access to vital records.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jan Alpert; Suzanne Hoffman; Jennifer Zinck

Presenter Credentials

Jan Alpert - FNGS, serves as RPAC chair, previous NGS president, board member, and conference chair; Suzanne Hoffman - Suzanne Hoffman is the Immediate Past President of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the President of the APG Forensic Special Interest Group, the current President of the Illinois State Genealogical Society, an NGS Delegate, the Parlamentarian for the Chicago Genealogical Society, and a volunteer at the Wilmette FamilySearch Center. She has participated in the past two Family History Hill Days in Washington, DC, and she is an advocate for Record Preservation and Access globally. Her regional specialties are Illinois, Massachusetts, and Eastern Europe; Jennifer Zinck - Jennifer Zinck is a professional genealogist, writer, editor, and educator who unites skilled research with genuine enthusiasm for uncovering the past. She holds the Certified Genealogist® credential from the Board for Certification of Genealogists and the Accredited Genealogist® credential from ICAPGen. Her work focuses on New England research—particularly Connecticut—and the interpretation of DNA evidence. Jennifer is dedicated to helping others build sound, well-documented genealogies, making complex ideas clear, and fostering a community that values historical accuracy and encourages the thoughtful, ethical use of both genetic information and artificial intelligence. Jennifer is passionate about preservation and access to the records that are the foundation of our endeavors as family historians.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 33

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 34

Claiming America: Federal Land Records and the Nation’s Growth

Course Description

Federal land records track Western migration from Revolutionary War bounty lands to the last homestead in 1986. Learn how to find and use these sources to uncover your ancestors' settlement stories—the opportunities they chased, the land they worked, and the communities they built across America's expanding frontier.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Angela McGhie

Presenter Credentials

Angela Packer McGhie, CG®, FUGA, is the president of the Board for Certification of Genealogists and specializes in genealogical education.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 35

Understanding and Acknowledging the Lives of Ancestors in State Hospitals and Asylums

Course Description

Behind every state hospital record is a human story. Learn how to uncover and understand the lives of ancestors who lived in state hospitals and asylums, and how to acknowledge their experiences with honesty, empathy, and respect.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kate Townsend

Presenter Credentials

Kate is a former professional investigator turned genealogist, specializing in Pennsylvania genealogical research. She also has experience with records from Ohio, West Virginia, and New York City, as well as expertise in immigration, naturalization, and court records. She holds the Certified Genealogist® credential as of February 2024. Kate owns Family History Investigations LLC. Kate has spoken at national and local genealogical societies, libraries, and conferences, including the National Genealogical Society Family History Conference, New England Regional Genealogical Consortium, Ohio Genealogical Society Conference, and RootsTech. She has served on the faculty at the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh. Although Kate has been working on her own family history since she was sixteen, her interest in investigating and researching on a professional level was piqued when she served as an Archives Technician at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) while completing her undergraduate studies. She worked as a resource for both amateur and professional genealogical researchers, assisting them in conducting archival records research. Additionally, she gained experience with primary source documents in her first position with NARA, where she worked in the holdings maintenance department, preserving and cataloging records dating back to the 1800s.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 35

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 36

Records in Motion: Tracing Mid-Atlantic Migration Through the American Story

Course Description

Trace your ancestors' journeys south and west from the Mid-Atlantic region. Learn what motivated migration, which routes families likely traveled, what records survived the moves, and how to follow them across changing jurisdictions to uncover the migration stories that built America.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Alice Childs

Presenter Credentials

Alice Childs is an Accredited Genealogist® professional specializing in U.S. Mid-Atlantic states research. She worked for several years as an independent contractor for client research. Alice has presented at RootsTech, the APG PMC, the New York State Family History Conference, the UGA Summit of Excellence, and various local conferences. Alice has also volunteered as a mentor for aspiring professionals in the ICAPGen and ProGen study groups and served as the Communications Manager for the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. Currently, she is the Assistant Director at the Brigham Young University Center for Family History and Genealogy, where she mentors students in genealogy research and facilitates the creation of quality online family history resources available to the public at no cost.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 37

How the Scots-Irish Influenced the Founding of a Nation

Course Description

Few groups who defined the revolutionary generation left as distinctive a mark as the Scots-Irish. This session identifies a people who helped shape the nation.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Megan Clark Young

Presenter Credentials

Megan Clark Young is the owner of MACY's Genealogical Research and is also employed as a forensic genealogist. She is the past president of the Wester Pennsylvania Genealogical Society, where she chairs the First Families of Western Pennsylvania lineage society. She holds a Certificate of Genealogy Research from Boston University and is a ProGen(48) alumna.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 38

The Evolution of Standards for Genealogists

Course Description

Published standards for genealogists first appeared in 2000, but their roots extend to the early 1900s. How and why did genealogical standards arise? And how did they evolve into the standards that guide serious genealogists today? Join the Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG) for learning about the history of genealogy standards.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Thomas W. Jones, PhD, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Tom Jones is an award-winning genealogical researcher, writer, editor, and educator. He co-edited the National Genealogical Society Quarterly in 2003 through 2018, and he is the author of the textbooks Mastering Genealogical Proof and Mastering Genealogical Documentation. He has been certified by the Board for Certification of Genealogists since 1994. A professor emeritus at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., Tom teaches genealogical research methods at week-long genealogy institutes. He also speaks at national, regional, and local seminars in the United States and internationally, and he writes frequently on genealogical evidence, proof, and problem solving.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 39

A Case Study in Land, Migration, and Family Connections: Section 18 of Jackson Township, Fayette County, Indiana

Course Description

What can a micro-study of original land purchasers reveal? Using Section 18 of Jackson Township, Fayette County, as a case study, this session demonstrates how land records uncover kinship networks, migration patterns, and investor relationships.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Carolyn Ladd

Presenter Credentials

Carolyn Ladd holds a Certified Genealogist® credential from the Board for Certification of Genealogists® and is accredited in African American genealogy by the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGen). She also received a Certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University. She published a book about a German-American branch of her father's family entitled The Marker Family of Maryland, Ohio, Iowa, and California. She is passionate about identifying ancestors, learning their stories, and preserving them for future generations.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 40

Hidden Histories: Extraordinary Insights from Ordinary Records

Course Description

Take a fresh look at familiar records through a different lens to uncover the stories history overlooked. Learn how reading between the lines can reveal details about the lives of women, immigrants, the poor, and others marginalized in the past.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jennifer Zinck

Presenter Credentials

Jennifer Zinck is a professional genealogist, writer, editor, and educator who unites skilled research with genuine enthusiasm for uncovering the past. She holds the Certified Genealogist® credential from the Board for Certification of Genealogists and the Accredited Genealogist® credential from ICAPGen. Her work focuses on New England research—particularly Connecticut—and the interpretation of DNA evidence. Jennifer is dedicated to helping others build sound, well-documented genealogies, making complex ideas clear, and fostering a community that values historical accuracy and encourages the thoughtful, ethical use of both genetic information and artificial intelligence. Jennifer is passionate about preservation and access to the records that are the foundation of our endeavors as family historians.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 41

Sacred Records, Civic Legacies: Genealogy and the African Methodist Episcopal Church African AmericanReligion

Course Description

For more than 250 years, records of the AME church—baptisms, marriages, funerals, and membership rolls—have documented Black family history and community life. Learn how to find and interpret these powerful sources to tell fuller, more inclusive stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Cecelia McFadden

Presenter Credentials

Cecelia is a family legacy coach, researcher and technology professional who's been working on client and personal ancestral legacy topics for over a decade. As demand for her services grew, she launched her genealogy entrepreneur journey in 2020 with her firm, Genealogy Technologies, LLC. She currently serves on the Board of the Franklin County, Ohio Genealogical and Historical Society. Her love for genealogy and family history creates opportunities to travel, create and serve the discipline via consulting, volunteerism, lecturing, and teaching. Her presentations, workshops, courses and webinars have been conducted on behalf of RootsTech, GRIP, NGS, OGS, AAGHS, the Ohio History Connection and other organizations. She's an avid reader and jazz aficionado in her spare time.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 42

DNA Standards: Establishing Revolutionary War Ancestry

Course Description

Applying DNA standards to prove genetic descent from an eighteenth-century ancestor provides challenges. See how DNA evidence—combined with indirect documentary evidence—can meet standards to support a seven-generation descent from a Pennsylvania Revolutionary War militiaman.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Catherine Desmarais

Presenter Credentials

Catherine B.W. Desmarais CG, CGG, holds the credentials of Certified Genealogist and Certified Genetic Genealogist, awarded by the Board for Certification of Genealogists. She and her forensic genealogy team at Stone House Historical Research specialize in genealogical research for military repatriation cases and to resolve estate and real estate cases for the legal community. She's the co-lead author, with Michael Ramage, of the book _Forensic Genealogy: Theory and Practice_, published by NGS in 2025.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 43

Day in the Life of A Professional Genealogist

Course Description

Three mini-sessions and a panel discussion. Family History Researcher: When professional genealogists research for a client, instead of for themselves, what do they do differently? How do they structure their day? Hear from a research expert who has solved many complex client cases. Genealogy and Local History Librarian: Librarians who specialize in local history and genealogy put their skills to use supporting patron requests in a variety of ways. Get a deeper understanding of this position, and what skills are needed. Dual Citizenship: Requirements and documentation for clients seeking dual citizenship is a constantly moving target. Learn how specialists in the field manage the process.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Peggy Lauritzen

Presenter Credentials

Peggy Lauritzen - Peggy Clemens Lauritzen, AG, AGL, FOGS, was involved in genealogy before she was even born. The daughter of avid genealogists was spending time in courthouses and cemeteries while other children were playing on swings and going to the beach. The love of her family's history has never left her. With her experience serving as a former and current FamilySearch Center Coordinator, she frequently speaks at genealogical societies, workshops, seminars, and webinars where she loves bringing genealogy to life. Some of those would include The Ohio Genealogical Society, The Ohio State University, Brigham Young University, and many other state and local genealogy societies. She has recently completed several Legacy QuickGuides on Appalachia and is a well-known webinar presenter. In 2018, she was awarded the title of Fellow of the Ohio Genealogical Society and received the Laura G. Prescott Award for Exemplary Service in Genealogy. Peggy is an instructor at Ancestry Academy, Family Tree University, a former columnist for Reminisce magazine, and a former researcher for Ancestry ProGenealogists. She and her husband Kerry are FamilySearch Center Directors in Mansfield, Ohio. EvaAnne Johnson - EvaAnne Johnson is a Genealogy and Local History Librarian with a passion for connecting people with their roots. She has been researching her own family history since 1998. EvaAnne earned a Master of Library and

Information Science (MS/LIS) degree from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and a Bachelor of Arts from Illinois College. She is the Chair of the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board, and a Consultant at the Wilmette FamilySearch Center. EvaAnne has presented at Wilmette Public Library, DeKalb County History Center, Glidden Homestead, Allen County Public Library, Dallas Genealogical Society and at other organizations. She also contributes to DeKalb County's Cornsilk magazine and has written two locality guides. Alec Ferretti - Director, Association of Professional Genealogists.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 44

FOIA and Find Out: Fun with Federal Records

Course Description

Unlock hidden federal records with the Freedom of Information Act! Learn how to request case files from agencies like USCIS, State, VA, FBI, and SSA, navigate backlogs and exemptions, and use this powerful law to uncover family stories—and advocate for greater public access.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Alec Ferretti

Presenter Credentials

Director, Association of Professional Genealogists

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 45

America 250 Series: Historical and Genealogical Importance of America's Forgotten Patriots

Course Description

Americans of African and Indigenous descent played vital but often forgotten roles in the Revolution. Learn how genealogical research can help recover their stories, restore family connections, and recognize their contributions to the nation's founding history.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Ric Murphy

Presenter Credentials

National Vice President for History (former), Afro - American Historical and Genealogical Society

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 46

Your Path to Accreditation: Becoming an Accredited Genealogist Professional

Course Description

Learn what accreditation is, why it matters, and how to prepare for success in earning the Accredited Genealogist® credential. This session walks you through the ICAPGen process, highlights its benefits for your research and career, and offers practical next steps for building toward this professional milestone.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Lisa Stokes, AG; Karen Kowallis

Presenter Credentials

Lisa Stokes, AG - Lisa Stokes is an Accredited Genealogist® professional specializing in the U.S. Mid-South region. She currently serves as President of the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGen). Previously, she chaired the Education Committee and co-led the ICAPGen Study Groups, mentoring aspiring genealogists through the accreditation process. Lisa holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Brigham Young University and brings her love of teaching to every aspect of her work. She coordinated Becoming an Accredited Genealogist at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy in 2022, 2023, and 2025, and has presented at RootsTech, the National Genealogical Society Conference, and the BYU Conference on Family History and Genealogy. She also teaches the online course Genealogy Source Citations Simplified, helping genealogists master clear, consistent, and professional source citations. Karen Kowallis - Mathematics Teacher, Provo City School District

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 47

Decoding America's Past: Using AI to Understand 250 Years of Historical Terminology

Course Description

Learn how artificial intelligence can help interpret archaic language in genealogical documents from colonial times through the 20th century.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Nicole Dyer

Presenter Credentials

Nicole Dyer is a professional genealogist specializing in Southern United States research and genetic genealogy. She is the creator of FamilyLocket.com and the Research Like a Pro Genealogy Podcast. She co-authored Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist's Guide and Research Like a Pro with DNA and is an instructor for the study groups of the same name. She lectures at national conferences and institutes, with a particular focus on technology applications in genealogical research. Her presentations cover innovative approaches such as using Airtable for research logs to track documents, FANs, and DNA matches, as well as essential software tools for genealogists and emerging artificial intelligence technologies. Nicole holds a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University in History Teaching. At Family Locket Genealogists, Nicole is a project manager, editor, and researcher.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 48

Architectural Ancestry: A Course in House History

Course Description

Every home holds a story. Learn how to research a building—its architecture, site, and neighborhood—to trace its evolution and the lives lived there. Blending architectural analysis with genealogical research, this session introduces records, maps, and visual methods for uncovering how homes and communities developed across time.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jill Morelli

Presenter Credentials

Jill Morelli, CG, CGL, is a writer, lecturer and founder of the Certification Discussion Group, an online series which demystifies the journey to certification managed by the Board for Certification of Genealogists. She lectures nationally and has written articles for National Genealogical Society Quarterly, Swedish American Genealogist, and many others. She publishes regularly and is working on her second book—a compilation of all the articles she has written about her family. Jill is a past president of the Seattle Genealogical Society, program chair of the Puget Sound-Association of Professional Genealogists and a member of many local genealogical societies.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 49

Visual Sources and Digital Tools for Telling Your U.S. Veteran's Military Story

Course Description

After years of research reconstructing the World War I U.S. Army military service of Private Patrick Flanagan, whose Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) was destroyed by a 1973 fire at the National Personnel Records Center, his great-granddaughter set out to write and share his WWI story in an engaging visual manner. A burned file meant his great-granddaughter did not have the wealth of files normally found in an OMPF that pertain specifically to an individual soldier or sailor, like she could for Patrick's WWII U.S. Navy son. A disheartening added challenge is that no known photo of Patrick exists. Yet his great-granddaughter has created visually engaging stories that bring Private Flanagan's WWI story to life. Learn how to find visual digital media that does not infringe upon copyright and how to weave in unit-based records and histories. See examples of digital multimedia storytelling platforms that lend themselves well to military history stories and walk away with resources for learning how to use these tools. Although this case study focuses on a U.S. WWI Army soldier, the types of sources and methods covered can be applied as storytelling tools about any veteran ancestor of any war, and to family history storytelling in general.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Colleen Robledo Greene

Presenter Credentials

Colleen Robledo Greene, MLIS, is an academic librarian, college educator, and tech nerd who has been researching her family history since 1997. She is the Digital Scholarship Librarian at California State University, Fullerton, and teaches an online graduate-level genealogical research methods course for San Jose State University. Colleen is a nationally recognized genealogy speaker and educator specializing in methodology, Mexican & Hispanic research, libraries and archives, and technology.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 49

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 50

Documenting LGBTQIA+ Parenting in Genealogy: Law, Love, and Legacy

Course Description

Explore how LGBTQIA+ families built through adoption, fostering, surrogacy, and co-parenting can be documented and preserved in genealogical research. Learn the history, laws, and record types that help genealogists honor these families and accurately represent their stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Stewart Traiman

Presenter Credentials

Stewart Blandón Traiman, MD, is a genealogy blogger, lecturer, and volunteer raising awareness that everyone has LGBTQ folk in their family trees and how to document them honestly.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 51

From Colonial Virginia to Tennessee: DNA Reveals Barsheba Tharp's Ancestry in America's Westward Migration

Course Description

DNA evidence solved the mystery of Barsheba Tharp’s unknown mother, linking her to colonial Virginia families and tracing her maternal line from Fauquier County through Tennessee to Colorado—revealing how one family’s journey mirrored America’s westward migration.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Nicole Dyer

Presenter Credentials

Nicole Dyer is a professional genealogist specializing in Southern United States research and genetic genealogy. She is the creator of FamilyLocket.com and the Research Like a Pro Genealogy Podcast. She co-authored Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist's Guide and Research Like a Pro with DNA and is an instructor for the study groups of the same name. She lectures at national conferences and institutes, with a particular focus on technology applications in genealogical research. Her presentations cover innovative approaches such as using Airtable for research logs to track documents, FANs, and DNA matches, as well as essential software tools for genealogists and emerging artificial intelligence technologies. Nicole holds a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University in History Teaching. At Family Locket Genealogists, Nicole is a project manager, editor, and researcher.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 52

Lessons from Documenting Misattributed Parentage by “Proving a Negative”

Course Description

A case study explains the origin and widespread acceptance of an egregious genealogical error that arose in 1887—showing how one researcher's theory of a Revolutionary War soldier and his spouse became "fact," fooled lineage societies for over a century, and spread like wildfire online.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Thomas W. Jones, PhD, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Tom Jones is an award-winning genealogical researcher, writer, editor, and educator. He co-edited the National Genealogical Society Quarterly in 2003 through 2018, and he is the author of the textbooks Mastering Genealogical Proof and Mastering Genealogical Documentation. He has been certified by the Board for Certification of Genealogists since 1994. A professor emeritus at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., Tom teaches genealogical research methods at week-long genealogy institutes. He also speaks at national, regional, and local seminars in the United States and internationally, and he writes frequently on genealogical evidence, proof, and problem solving.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 53

Threads of a Nation: Genealogy Quilts Commemorating 250 Years of American Stories

Course Description

Celebrate America at 250 with quilts that turn research into art and memory into something you can touch. Learn how quilting traditions have recorded names, migrations, and community ties for over two centuries—and explore ways to transform ancestors' maps, signatures, and stories into fabric keepsakes that get everyone—from cousins to grandkids—talking about family history.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Mary Kircher Roddy

Presenter Credentials

Mary Kircher Roddy, CG CGG, lectures at regional and national events on methodology and unique ways to search. She has written for national journals and magazines. She is co-editor of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly and a trustee of the Board for Certification of Genealogists.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 54

I Was Not A Slave So Why Are You Denying My Pension

Course Description

Step into the role of researcher as you examine Revolutionary War pension records, weigh fragments of truth and deception, and uncover whether a forgotten Patriot—possibly enslaved—was denied the recognition he earned.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Ric Murphy

Presenter Credentials

National Vice President for History (former), Afro - American Historical and Genealogical Society

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 55

Free The Records: Learn how to be an advocate for access to records and convince lawmakers that the records belong to the people

Course Description

When record access is threatened or denied, grass-roots action can make the difference. Learn how to identify who controls access, understand the laws that govern it, and organize effectively to advocate for change at state and local levels.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Suzanne Hoffman

Presenter Credentials

Suzanne Hoffman is the Immediate Past President of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the President of the APG Forensic Special Interest Group, the current President of the Illinois State Genealogical Society, an NGS Delegate, the Parlamentarian for the Chicago Genealogical Society, and a volunteer at the Wilmette FamilySearch Center. She has participated in the past two Family History Hill Days in Washington, DC, and she is an advocate for Record Preservation and Access globally. Her regional specialties are Illinois, Massachusetts, and Eastern Europe.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 56

Lives in the Listings: Unlocking Family Stories in City Directories

Course Description

Gain practical skills for finding, analyzing, and interpreting city directory entries. Learn how to use search strategies, spreadsheets, and contextual clues to track residences, occupations, and family networks—and turn brief listings into meaningful stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Lisa Stokes, AG

Presenter Credentials

Lisa Stokes is an Accredited Genealogist® professional specializing in the U.S. Mid-South region. She currently serves as President of the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGen). Previously, she chaired the Education Committee and co-led the ICAPGen Study Groups, mentoring aspiring genealogists through the accreditation process. Lisa holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Brigham Young University and brings her love of teaching to every aspect of her work. She coordinated Becoming an Accredited Genealogist at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy in 2022, 2023, and 2025, and has presented at RootsTech, the National Genealogical Society Conference, and the BYU Conference on Family History and Genealogy. She also teaches the online course Genealogy Source Citations Simplified, helping genealogists master clear, consistent, and professional source citations.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 57

Twenty-Eight Volumes of Gold: U.S. Territorial Papers

Course Description

From the Northwest Territory to Alaska, much of America's story unfolds in the Territorial Papers of the United States—28 volumes rich with names, petitions, disputes, and daily life. Learn how to access, search, and use these invaluable records to uncover the people who built the nation from the ground up.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

Judy G. Russell, The Legal Genealogist®, is a genealogist with a law degree who provides expert guidance through the murky territory where law and family history intersect. An internationally-known lecturer and award-winning writer, she holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and Certified Genealogical Lecturer® from the Board for Certification of Genealogists® and is a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association. Her blog is at https://www.legalgenealogist.com.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 58

African Americans in Indiana Before the Civil War: Peter Ladd of Cabin Creek in Randolph County, and the Story of Free Black Settlements

Course Description

Before the Civil War, free African Americans established strong, self-sustaining communities in Indiana. Learn how Peter Ladd of Cabin Creek and others left behind land, census, and local records that tell their remarkable stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Carolyn Ladd

Presenter Credentials

Carolyn Ladd holds a Certified Genealogist® credential from the Board for Certification of Genealogists® and is accredited in African American genealogy by the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGen). She also received a Certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University. She published a book about a German-American branch of her father's family entitled The Marker Family of Maryland, Ohio, Iowa, and California. She is passionate about identifying ancestors, learning their stories, and preserving them for future generations.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 59

Deciphering Script & Scrawl: A Practical Workshop for Early Handwriting

Course Description

Old handwriting doesn’t have to be intimidating. In this interactive session, you’ll practice reading real documents, learn to recognize tricky letter forms, and pick up strategies for making sense of early American deeds, wills, and letters.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Nicole Dyer

Presenter Credentials

Nicole Dyer is a professional genealogist specializing in Southern United States research and genetic genealogy. She is the creator of FamilyLocket.com and the Research Like a Pro Genealogy Podcast. She co-authored Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist's Guide and Research Like a Pro with DNA and is an instructor for the study groups of the same name. She lectures at national conferences and institutes, with a particular focus on technology applications in genealogical research. Her presentations cover innovative approaches such as using Airtable for research logs to track documents, FANs, and DNA matches, as well as essential software tools for genealogists and emerging artificial intelligence technologies. Nicole holds a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University in History Teaching. At Family Locket Genealogists, Nicole is a project manager, editor, and researcher.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 60

Drawing Out Ancestors from the "Huddled Masses": How to Use a New NARA Database to Research 20th Century Immigrants

Course Description

Discover how NARA's Flexoline database opens doors to 20th-century immigrant stories and makes once-hidden federal records easier to access. Learn how to locate alien registration forms and case files, understand what they reveal about your ancestors' journeys, and start using these resources to build richer, more personal immigration narratives.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Ryan Johnson

Presenter Credentials

Ryan James Johnson, MAT began researching family history in 2012 and completed the NGS Advanced Skills in Genealogy course in 2024. He is the great grandchild of eight 20th century immigrants to the U.S. from Québec, Italy, Sweden, and Lithuania. After working in education and immigration, he now researches for clients while raising a family in Indianapolis.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 61

Spot the Impossible Ancestor: Red Flags in Genealogy

Course Description

Learn to spot impossible ancestors—babies born before their parents, marriages after death, and people in two places at once. In this quick, practical session, you'll pick up simple techniques to catch red flags and keep your family tree rooted in reality.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jennifer Zinck

Presenter Credentials

Jennifer Zinck is a professional genealogist, writer, editor, and educator who unites skilled research with genuine enthusiasm for uncovering the past. She holds the Certified Genealogist® credential from the Board for Certification of Genealogists and the Accredited Genealogist® credential from ICAPGen. Her work focuses on New England research—particularly Connecticut—and the interpretation of DNA evidence. Jennifer is dedicated to helping others build sound, well-documented genealogies, making complex ideas clear, and fostering a community that values historical accuracy and encourages the thoughtful, ethical use of both genetic information and artificial intelligence. Jennifer is passionate about preservation and access to the records that are the foundation of our endeavors as family historians.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 62

We Are Still Here: Great Lakes Indigenous Peoples Then & Now

Course Description

Trace four centuries of Indigenous and European interaction in the Great Lakes region. Through case examples and key record types—parish registers, treaty files, censuses, and oral traditions—you'll learn methods to research Native and colonial families with historical accuracy and cultural respect. The session also highlights the ethical responsibilities of genealogists: engaging with sensitivity, honoring sovereignty, and including Indigenous perspectives in family narratives.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Judy Nimer Muhn

Presenter Credentials

Judy Nimer Muhn is a professional genealogist, researcher, presenter, writer, and owner of Lineage Journeys. She is a traveler, blogger, and society leader.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 63

Reconstructing Female Networks Through Antebellum Court Records and Property Transfers

Course Description

Step into the courtroom and onto the land to discover how women's relationships and rights were recorded—and often obscured—in antebellum America. Learn correlation and legal analysis techniques to uncover hidden family relationships and document women's property rights.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Diana Elder

Presenter Credentials

Diana Elder is a professional genealogist accredited in the Gulf South region of the United States. Diana authored Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist's Guide and co-authored the companion volume, Research Like a Pro with DNA: A Genealogist's Guide to Finding and Confirming Ancestors with DNA Evidence. Diana and her daughter, Nicole Dyer, host the Research Like a Pro Genealogy Podcast and share research tips on their website, FamilyLocket.com.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 64

BCG Certification Seminar: Guidance on Preparing a Portfolio

Course Description

Learn about the steps to BCG certification and prepare to assemble a portfolio of work samples that meet Genealogy Standards. We'll cover the six required work samples, plus essential resources like the Application Guide and evaluation rubrics.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Angela McGhie; Karen Stanbary, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Angela McGhie - Angela Packer McGhie, CG®, FUGA, is the president of the Board for Certification of Genealogists and specializes in genealogical education. Karen Stanbary, CG, CGG - Karen Stanbary, CG®, CGG® holds the Certified Genealogist credential. She lectures nationally on the use of DNA test results in genealogical problem-solving, always within the framework of the Genealogical Proof Standard. She is a Trustee and Vice President for the Board for Certification of Genealogists and chairs that organization’s DNA Committee.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 65

The Use of Oral History Techniques and Protocols for Recording and Archiving Family History Stories

Course Description

Family stories don't preserve themselves! In this interactive session, you'll try out proven oral history techniques, experiment with interview questions, and learn how to record and archive your results with professional care.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Shannon Combs-Bennett

Presenter Credentials

Shannon Combs-Bennett, QG, FSAScot, is an award-winning author who resides in Northern Virginia. From there, she writes and presents various topics across the US and internationally, from genetic genealogy to methodology techniques. Shannon is on the board of directors of the Association for Professional Genealogists and the Guild of Genealogy Speakers in addition to serving as a Trustee for the International Society for British Genealogy and Family History. She earned her Bachelor of Science in biology with an emphasis in genetics from Indiana University and her Master of Science from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland. Shannon is researching the correlations between genealogy and lineage societies in the United States for her doctoral thesis.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 66

Connections Cross Caste: My Grandfather and His Jewish Mentor

Course Description

A Black WWII veteran and a Jewish immigrant pharmacist formed a bond in 1950s Virginia that transcended race. This is their story of friendship and legacy.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Andre Kearns

Presenter Credentials

Andre Kearns is the Founder & CEO of Black Ancestries, a genealogy research firm helping people of African descent uncover, celebrate, and preserve their family history. A respected genealogist and national speaker, he specializes in tracing African American lineages through slavery and beyond and is the author of the forthcoming book Finding Cornerstone Stories: Uncovering Inspiration in Your Family's History.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 67

The General Welfare: Beneficial Societies and Their Records Immigration

Course Description

Beneficial societies kept struggling families afloat—especially recent immigrants—and kept detailed records while doing it. Discover how these organizations supported 19th- and 20th-century ancestors through poverty, immigration, temperance, and social challenges and learn where to find their rich, story-filled records (hint: they're rarely online).

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Katy Bodenhorn

Presenter Credentials

aty Bodenhorn is a freelance professional genealogist for hire and the Manager of Academic Programs at Historic Trappe in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. She is the former Director of Genealogical Programs and Services for the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and holds a B.A. in genealogy & family history from Brigham Young University. She has been a client researcher and editor for over ten years, both freelance and for such well-regarded companies as Legacy Tree and Price Genealogists. In addition to her research, Katy is a national speaker, writer, and editor.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 68

Efficient Genealogy: What You Can Do with the Time You Have

Course Description

Make the most of your limited research time. Daniel demonstrates how to use MyHeritage tools to tackle meaningful genealogy tasks—five minutes at a time or in focused bursts that fit your day.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Daniel Horowitz

Presenter Credentials

Dedicated to Genealogy since 1986, Daniel was the teacher and the study guide editor of the family history project "Searching for My Roots" in Venezuela for 15 years. He is involved in several crowdsource digitization and transcription projects, and holds a board-level position at The Israel Genealogy Research Association (IGRA). Since 2006 Daniel has been working at MyHeritage liaising with genealogy societies, bloggers, and media, as well as lecturing, and attending conferences around the world.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 69

Catholic Funeral Cards as Genealogical Evidence

Course Description

What can a box of funeral cards tell you? More than you might expect! Discover how these small memorials—saved in Bibles, drawers, and shoeboxes—preserve networks of kinship, faith, and community that enrich family history research.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Bonnie Wade Mucia

Presenter Credentials

Bonnie Wade Mucia, AG® an Accredited Genealogist in the New England region and is the owner of Keeper of the Past Genealogy, LLC. She serves as the Director of the Mayflower Families Silver Books Project for the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, where she concentrates on the descendants of Mayflower passengers. In addition, Bonnie is a volunteer docent at both Beaufort National Cemetery and the Parris Island Museum at the U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot. She has published numerous articles in respected genealogical journals and delivered lectures on various topics. Originally from Rhode Island, Bonnie now resides in South Carolina.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 70

Sacred Threads: The Warp and Weft of Religious Records for Telling America's Family Stories

Course Description

Religious records can fill gaps, confirm identities, and bring family stories to life. Learn effective ways to find and use them across denominations and historical periods.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Gary Ball-Kilbourne

Presenter Credentials

Gary Ball-Kilbourne, PhD, CG®, is a trustee of the Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG) and editor of BCG's publication, OnBoard. Gary is a faculty member for Boston University's Genealogy Principles and Research courses. In his spare time, he is a researcher, writer, and educator.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 71

Postcards and Plants: Finding and Preserving These Heirlooms

Course Description

Discover how postcards and heirloom plants preserve family stories, enriching genealogical research with memories that are both written and living. Learn how these overlooked heirlooms can bring the past to life and keep family traditions flourishing.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Blaine Bettinger

Presenter Credentials

Blaine Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D., is a professional genealogist specializing in DNA evidence. In 2007 he started The Genetic Genealogist (www.thegeneticgenealogist.com), one of the earliest blogs on the topic. Blaine is the author of The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy, and co-author with Debbie Parker Wayne of the award-winning Genetic Genealogy in Practice, the world's first genetic genealogy workbook. He also co-authored "Genetics for Genealogy" with Judy Russell in 2018's Professional Genealogy: Preparation, Practice & Standards (ProGen PPS) (Elizabeth Shown Mills, Author and Editor). Blaine is or has been an instructor for genetic genealogy courses at every major institute. He is a graduate of ProGen Study Group 21, a trustee for the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, and a member of the DNAngels Board of Directors since 2022 (President since January 2023). In 2017 he founded the Facebook group Genetic Genealogy Tips & Techniques (90,000+ members) and in 2023 he founded the Genealogy and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Facebook group (20,000+ members).

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 72

Contextualizing Migration: Integrating Social, Economic, and Historical Factors Into America's 250-Year Narrative

Course Description

Summary Go beyond names and dates to explore why your ancestors moved—linking family immigration stories to larger forces like industrialization, westward expansion, and religious movements. Learn to identify key push–pull factors, use contextual evidence alongside records, and connect individual migrations to America's 250-year national narrative. Overview Genealogical research often focuses on documenting vital records and constructing pedigrees, yet the interpretive power of family history emerges when those individual lives are situated within a broader historical framework of wider social, economic, religious, and historical contexts. As the US marks its 250th anniversary, genealogists are uniquely positioned to contribute to national reflection by exploring how migration stories intersect with broader themes of American history. This presentation examines emigration from the United Kingdom to the United States through the interplay of push factors—industrial change, agricultural decline, unemployment, famine, and religious tension—and pull factors such as the promise of affordable land, labour demand, westward expansion, and religious freedom. advances in transatlantic transportation played a transformative role which democratized mobility of and facilitated chain migration. However, slavery shaped both migration and settlement patterns, highlighting how economic dependence on enslaved labour drew migrants into contested moral, political, and social landscapes. The religious migration of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) illustrates how belief systems created distinct migration streams, communal identities, and settlement practices in the American West. By situating family migration stories within these broader narratives, including Revolution and Independence (1776), Westward Expansion (1800s), Industrialization and Urbanization (late 19th century), slavery, and religious movements, this presentation demonstrates how family histories intersect with national narratives, and genealogists can potentially bridge private family memory with public history. Contextualization enriches genealogical interpretation and positions genealogy as an essential lens for understanding America's evolving identity over 250 years. Audience key takeaways 1. Context enriches genealogy: Situating ancestors within social, economic, religious, and historical forces transforms family history into meaningful interpretation. 2. Migration reflects larger structural forces: UK–U.S. migration was shaped by interconnected push–pull factors, technological change, slavery, and religious movements such as LDS migration. 3. Family stories illuminate national history: Individual migration narratives intersect with major themes in America's 250-year story—Revolution, Westward Expansion,

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 72

Industrialization, and evolving social landscapes. 4. Genealogists bridge private and public history: By integrating context, genealogists contribute to national understanding and strengthen genealogy as a historical discipline.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Dr Penny Walters

Presenter Credentials

Dr. Penny Walters has been a University lecturer for 35 years, currently teaching at Bath Spa University Business School, England. Penny's interest in genealogy started after having her first baby and then wondering about her own biological parents, as she was adopted. Penny has six mixed race children, who have all enjoyed discovering their roots through DNA ethnicity results. Penny lectures internationally in-person, including throughout America, Australia, Ireland, and the UK. Penny has authored the books: 'Ethical Dilemmas in Genealogy' (2019) and ‘The Psychology of Searching’ (2020).

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 73

An Unrevolutionary Life: Reconstructing the Lives of the Overlooked

Course Description

Many who served in the Revolution were of modest means, sometimes leaving little more than a name on a muster list or a brief pension application. How can we recover and tell the stories of these “forgotten farmers,” whose lives are rarely recognized elsewhere? This session explores methods and record sets that illuminate their experiences, filling in gaps to build full and accurate narratives of our most humble ancestors. Case studies demonstrate how piecing together fragmentary evidence, combined with social and historical context, can restore dimension to the lives of these often-overlooked patriots. The session focuses on researching and writing the stories of those Revolutionary-era individuals who left little. It will cover how to identify, and analyze sometimes underutilized sources—such as manuscript collections, laws, chancery suits, tax records, and maps—and how to layer historical and social context with fragmentary genealogical evidence. Attendees will learn how to transform seemingly sparse findings into meaningful, accurate narratives that meet the Genealogical Proof Standard. An Unrevolutionary Life will offer ways to delve into the contributions of the thousands of ordinary citizens who served the cause of the Revolution but are often lost in the shadows of their commanding officers. By recovering and retelling their stories, we can honor the everyday patriots who made independence possible and ensure their legacies endure.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kelley Lear

Presenter Credentials

President , Virginia Genealogical Society

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 73

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 74

Long Strange (German) Mapping Trips

Course Description

Germany's historical geography can be confusing, but it doesn't have to stop your research. In this interactive session, participants will work hands-on with maps and gazetteers to untangle shifting boundaries and identify which archives and repositories hold records for their ancestors' villages.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

James Beidler

Presenter Credentials

James M. Beidler is the author of four commercially published books. Beidler writes "Roots & Branches," a weekly newspaper column and blog (at www.roots-branches.com), is a German Life magazine columnist and a former research-reports editor for Legacy Tree Genealogists.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 75

From Contraband to Soldiers: African-Americans in the Civil War

Course Description

From “contraband” to combatants, African Americans transformed the course of the Civil War. This session explores their fight for freedom, their vital role in Union victory, and the records that preserve their stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Michael Strauss, MA, AG, AGL

Presenter Credentials

Michael L. Strauss, AG® is a professional Accredited Genealogist and a nationally recognized genealogical speaker. He has been employed as a forensic genealogist for 25 years and is a United States Coast Guard veteran. Michael is also a qualified expert witness in the courts in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Strauss has been a faculty member of IGHR, SLIG, and GRIP and has been involved in Civil War reenacting for more than 25 years.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 76

Day in the Life of A Professional Genealogist

Course Description

Three mini-sessions and a panel discussion: Locating Next of Kin for the Unclaimed - What happens when a person's remains go unclaimed? Learn what genealogists do to help, and where this work is most needed. Solving Unknown Parentage Cases - Getting a DNA surprise after testing is not uncommon; hear from a genealogist who supports and advocates for those impacted. Investigative Genetic Genealogy - Learn what skills and credentials are needed to work with law enforcement, and what challenges these genealogists face in their day-to-day work.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Hope Glidden; Lorie Cousin; Chelsea Hanrahan

Presenter Credentials

Hope Glidden - Hope Glidden was born and raised in Pennsylvania and has deep ancestral roots in northeast Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and northeast North Carolina. After a long career as a probate and real estate paralegal, she transitioned into professional genealogy in 2022. Her background in law naturally complements her genealogical work, leading to a focus on forensic genealogy, documentary research, and DNA analysis. Like most genealogists, Hope continually enhances her education through courses, webinars, and institutes. She has completed coursework through NGS, SLIG, and GRIP, and earned a postgraduate certificate in genealogical, palaeographic, and heraldic studies from the University of Strathclyde. This formal education builds upon more than 30 years of hands-on genealogical research experience. Hope is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, past secretary of the Mid-Atlantic APG Chapter, and current president of the Southeast APG Chapter. She volunteers weekly with her local historical society and is an active volunteer researcher with NOKfinders, where she also serves on the organization’s agency development team. Hope is deeply committed to NOKfinders’ mission of reconnecting unclaimed deceased individuals with their families. Lorie Cousin - Lorie Cousin brings more than three decades of experience in forensic science, leadership, and organizational management to her roles as Secretary of the DNAngels Board of Directors, Director of Operations, and Executive Assistant to the Founder. A retired

Course Catalog

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Proposal #: 76

Forensic Examiner and Supervisory Document Examiner with the FBI Laboratory, she spent over 30 years overseeing case documentation, report preparation, and compliance with federal standards—skills that now support the precision, transparency, and efficiency of DNAngels operations. Chelsea Hanrahan - Chelsea Hanrahan is a faculty member and the Director of the H. Raymond Danforth Library/Professor at New England College. She has a Masters Degree in Library Science from Indiana University and a BA in History from the University of New Hampshire. She primarily volunteers for the DNA Doe Project, where she is a volunteer IGG, working to restore the names of the unidentified. In addition to IGG work, Chelsea is a researcher for the New England based true crime podcast "Murder, She Told," does independent research and advocacy work for New England cases, and regularly lectures to interested groups about the use of genealogy, both traditionally and in law enforcement work.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 77

The Genealogist as Expert Witness: A Live Mock Unknown Heirs Trial

Course Description

Experience a live mock trial for an unknown heirs' case as Mr. Ramage, a 25-year trial attorney veteran, questions expert forensic genealogist Ms. Desmarais on the stand. Watch how genealogical evidence is presented and challenged in court, and gain practical insight into the genealogist's role as an expert witness.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Catherine Desmarais; Michael Ramage

Presenter Credentials

Catherine Desmarais - Catherine B.W. Desmarais CG, CGG, holds the credentials of Certified Genealogist and Certified Genetic Genealogist, awarded by the Board for Certification of Genealogists. She and her forensic genealogy team at Stone House Historical Research specialize in genealogical research for military repatriation cases and to resolve estate and real estate cases for the legal community. She's the co-lead author, with Michael Ramage, of the book _Forensic Genealogy: Theory and Practice_, published by NGS in 2025. Michael Ramage - Michael S. Ramage, JD, CG, is a full-time professional genealogist, author and lecturer. Mr. Ramage has served as a Trustee, officer and currently General Counsel of BCG, and he was the 2020-2022 President of the APG Forensic Genealogy Special Interest Group. His 25-year law practice included contracts, real estate and estate law and litigation. He has taught numerous genealogy courses at genealogy conferences and institutes around the country. His related publications include: (1) Michael S. Ramage, J.D., CG and Catherine B. W. Desmarais, CG, Forensic Genealogy: Theory and Practice (National Genealogical Society, Falls Church, VA: 2025); and (2) the "Forensic Specialization" and "Ethical Considerations" chapters in Professional Genealogy: Preparation, Practice & Standards, Elizabeth Shown Mills, editor (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2018).

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 77

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 78

We're All In This Together: Exploring the Interconnectivity of Black and White Ancestors in Pre-Gilded Age Records

Course Description

Records created by and for White ancestors often hold crucial clues about Black family members. Learn how to mine probate files, court records, and Reconstruction documents where overlapping paper trails reveal shared histories, break down brick walls, and illuminate ancestors' intertwined lives.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Renate Yarborough-Sanders

Presenter Credentials

Renate Yarborough Sanders is the descendant of formerly enslaved ancestors, enslavers, and free people of color. She authors two blogs: “Into the LIGHT” and “Genea-Related;” and produces a “(Mostly) African-American Funeral Programs” online database. Renate is a member of the National Genealogical Society, the North Carolina Genealogical Society (Publicity Director), the Afro-American Genealogical and Historical Society (member of National Editorial Board and Vice-President and Newsletter Editor for the Hampton Roads Chapter), the Wake County Genealogical Society, and the Tyrrell County Genealogical and Historical Society. She is also a member of the lineage society, “Sons and Daughters of the United States Middle Passage.” Renate cohosts “Let’s Talk North Carolina Genealogy,” an online platform and YouTube show, presenting genealogy programing and virtual events for North Carolina researchers; and she has served as panelist and guest on numerous web shows and podcasts. Renate has provided genealogy education for George Washington’s Mount Vernon, Norfolk State University, The College of William and Mary and for NASA. Her research has been featured on PBS Radio and in a National Geographic cover story and podcast. Renate has contributed to genealogical publications, and she volunteers as an indexer, transcriptionist, and photographer in the genealogy community. She provides coaching and consultation services for clients seeking assistance with genealogical research and continues to engage in project work

for various organizations and institutions. Renate lectures on a variety of genealogy topics but specializes in teaching beginning to intermediate research methodology and sharing specific techniques for researching ancestors of color – both pre- and post-Emancipation. She is a retired elementary school educator, mother of two daughters, and grandmother of three beautiful granddaughters (and a grand dog).

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 79

Acknowledging and Healing Intergenerational Trauma through Genealogy

Course Description

Join a panel of genealogists and a trauma therapist for a candid discussion on how exploring family history can help acknowledge and heal intergenerational trauma. Learn how uncovering, understanding, and sharing ancestors' stories—both painful and redemptive—can promote empathy, connection, and resilience across generations.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kate Townsend; Angelica Singh; Cecelia McFadden

Presenter Credentials

Kate Townsend - Kate is a former professional investigator turned genealogist, specializing in Pennsylvania genealogical research. She also has experience with records from Ohio, West Virginia, and New York City, as well as expertise in immigration, naturalization, and court records. She holds the Certified Genealogist® credential as of February 2024. Kate owns Family History Investigations LLC. Kate has spoken at national and local genealogical societies, libraries, and conferences, including the National Genealogical Society Family History Conference, New England Regional Genealogical Consortium, Ohio Genealogical Society Conference, and RootsTech. She has served on the faculty at the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh. Angelica Singh - Angelica Singh is a somatic educator, trauma therapist, and thought leader whose pioneering healing paradigm, The Embodiment Process™, has been featured in O, The Oprah Magazine and offered at UCLA Medical Center and the Integrative Medical Center at UPMC in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Cecelia McFadden - Cecelia is a family legacy coach, researcher and technology professional who's been working on client and personal ancestral legacy topics for over a decade. As demand for her services grew, she launched her genealogy entrepreneur journey in 2020 with her firm, Genealogy Technologies, LLC. She currently serves on the Board of the Franklin County, Ohio Genealogical and Historical Society. Her love for genealogy and family history creates opportunities to travel, create and serve the discipline via consulting, volunteerism, lecturing, and teaching. Her presentations, workshops, courses and webinars have been conducted on behalf of RootsTech,

GRIP, NGS, OGS, AAGHS, the Ohio History Connection and other organizations. She's an avid reader and jazz aficionado in her spare time.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 80

American Ingenuity: Gadgets and Inventions That Reshaped American Homes, Health, and History

Course Description

What do Frisbees, vaccines, typewriters, and the cotton gin have in common? Explore the quirky and groundbreaking inventions that transformed how our ancestors lived, worked, and played—and left their mark on generations of American families.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

C. Ann Staley

Presenter Credentials

C. Ann Staley, CG®, CGL®, holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and as a Certified Genealogical Lecturer®. She is the Membership Chair for the Genealogical Speakers Guild; a volunteer of the Florida State Genealogical Society and the National Genealogical Society; and is on the faculty of The International Institute for Genealogical Studies. Ann is the compiler of the Jacksonville Genealogical Society, Inc. Quarterly Full Name Index, Volumes 1 through 4, 1973 through 1976, author of several articles for the NGS Magazine, and the co-author of the NGS Research in the States Series-Florida. Her specialties are methodology, vital records and their sources, computer research resources, and conference planning.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 81

Breaking it Down: Achieve Competency Writing Proofs Using DNA and Documentary Evidence

Course Description

Turn proof writing from intimidating to achievable. Using highlighters and hands-on exercises, you'll learn how to connect DNA and documentary evidence into well-reasoned, standards-based conclusions you can be proud of.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Karen Stanbary, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Karen Stanbary, CG®, CGG® holds the Certified Genealogist credential. She lectures nationally on the use of DNA test results in genealogical problem-solving, always within the framework of the Genealogical Proof Standard. She is a Trustee and Vice President for the Board for Certification of Genealogists and chairs that organization's DNA Committee.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 82

The Much Married Mary: Linking Records to Identify Women

Course Description

Identifying women in records isn't easy—especially when they marry (and remarry). By focusing on events, the records they create, and the laws behind them, you'll learn how to uncover those unknown women hiding in the margins of history.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Barbara Vines Little, CG, FNGS, FUGA, FVGS

Presenter Credentials

Barbara Vines Little, CG, FNGS, FUGA, FVGS, a professional genealogist, has lectured over the past thirty-plus years at conferences in thirty-two states on research methodology, Virginia and West Virginia resources and writing and publishing. Author of A Researcher's Guide to Virginia's Historical Records, editor of the quarterly Magazine of Virginia Genealogy since 1996 and winner of the NGS Quarterly Award of excellence in 2001 and 2022, she has also written articles for the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, the National Genealogical Society Newsletter, and the Board for Certification of Genealogists' newsletter, OnBoard. The current editor of National Genealogical Society's Research in the States series, she served as coordinator and instructor for VIGR (Virginia Institute of Genealogical Research) Track II, 1996–2004 and as the coordinator and instructor of the Virginia track for Samford University's Institute for Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR) from 2007–2012, the 2017, 2020, and 2023 Virginia track at SLIG (Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy) and the 2024 Virginia track at GRIP. She is a former member of the board of the Library of Virginia, the Board for Certification of Genealogists, and a former board member and president of both the National Genealogical Society and the Virginia Genealogical Society.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 82

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 83

Navigating the AI Frontier: Paired Team Field Reports

Course Description

AI capabilities in genealogy form an uneven frontier—remarkably capable at some tasks while frustratingly limited at others. But where exactly are those boundaries? They shift constantly, and generic claims about "AI in genealogy" mask dramatic variation across specialties. This session brings together genealogical subject matter experts (SME) and experienced AI practitioners who have collaborated on real research projects in the months leading up to this conference. Each SME–AI team reports what they discovered: what worked, what failed, and what surprised them. Fast presentations are followed by cross-team panel discussion and audience Q&A. Unlike traditional presentations where a single speaker describes AI capabilities in the abstract, this format produces authentic findings. The SME brings deep domain knowledge and knows what "good" looks like. The AI practitioner knows how to prompt, which models to use, and how to work around limitations. Together, they mapped the actual frontier through real work—not marketing claims, not fears, but current reality grounded in evidence. Attendees leave with: • Specialty-specific understanding of current AI boundaries • Practical frameworks for evaluating AI tools in their own research • Realistic expectations calibrated by real project outcomes • Connection to the ongoing "Navigating the AI Frontier" community dialogue

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Steve Little

Presenter Credentials

Steve Little is a genealogist and AI educator who helps family historians use artificial intelligence without abandoning genealogical standards. He is founder of the research firm AI Genealogy Insights, co-host of The Family History AI Show podcast, co-founder of Family History AI Show Academy, and AI Program Director for the National Genealogical Society. Steve completed graduate-level work in applied linguistics, specializing in natural language processing and computational linguistics—two pillars of today's large language models. His first career was spent in law, local, university, and state archives, where he built and managed

information systems. He traces deep roots to a single Appalachian county: by 1820, all 32 of his 3rd-great-grandparents had settled in Ashe County, North Carolina, and 60 of his most recent ancestors were born, lived, and died there. Steve's current work focuses on AI and genetic genealogy, especially endogamy, pedigree collapse, and complex relationships. He writes at AIGenealogyInsights.com, teaches courses including Introduction to Family History AI, and leads Navigating the AI Frontier—his standards-first symposium series examining AI's uneven impact across genealogical specialties. Beyond genealogy, he is a Methodist pastor, husband, dad, birder, sky-gazer, chess and film enthusiast, avid reader and writer, and regex script hacker (fancy search-and-replace).

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 84

Elevate Your Research by Finding Your Family's Footprint in Property Documents RecordsLand

Course Description

Explore the powerful connection between family history and property ownership. Learn how deeds, probate files, and tax records can reveal ancestral stories, confirm relationships, and help solve long-standing research puzzles.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Renate Yarborough-Sanders

Presenter Credentials

Renate Yarborough Sanders is the descendant of formerly enslaved ancestors, enslavers, and free people of color. She authors two blogs: “Into the LIGHT” and “Genea-Related;” and produces a “(Mostly) African-American Funeral Programs” online database. Renate is a member of the National Genealogical Society, the North Carolina Genealogical Society (Publicity Director), the Afro-American Genealogical and Historical Society (member of National Editorial Board and Vice-President and Newsletter Editor for the Hampton Roads Chapter), the Wake County Genealogical Society, and the Tyrrell County Genealogical and Historical Society. She is also a member of the lineage society, “Sons and Daughters of the United States Middle Passage.” Renate cohosts “Let’s Talk North Carolina Genealogy,” an online platform and YouTube show, presenting genealogy programing and virtual events for North Carolina researchers; and she has served as panelist and guest on numerous web shows and podcasts. Renate has provided genealogy education for George Washington’s Mount Vernon, Norfolk State University, The College of William and Mary and for NASA. Her research has been featured on PBS Radio and in a National Geographic cover story and podcast. Renate has contributed to genealogical publications, and she volunteers as an indexer, transcriptionist, and photographer in the genealogy community. She provides coaching and consultation services for clients seeking assistance with genealogical research and continues to engage in project work for various organizations and institutions. Renate lectures on a variety of genealogy topics but specializes in teaching beginning to intermediate research methodology and sharing specific techniques for researching ancestors of color – both pre- and post-Emancipation. She is a

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 84

retired elementary school educator, mother of two daughters, and grandmother of three beautiful granddaughters (and a grand dog).

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 85

Questions within Questions – Implementing a Dynamic Research Plan

Course Description

The best way to answer a tough research question is with a dynamic plan. See how a flexible, evolving strategy proved the parentage of a Revolutionary War soldier—and how you can apply the same approach to your own challenging cases.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

David Ouimette

Presenter Credentials

David Ouimette, CG, CGL, senior program manager at FamilySearch, leads content strategy for Asia-Pacific, establishing record priorities including the preservation and publication of historical documents and oral genealogy. He has researched in several hundred archives in seventy countries spanning all continents. He also provides genealogical guidance for software innovations at FamilySearch. Previously, David was lead developer and product manager at Ancestry.com, responsible for family trees, United States records, the search experience, and the initial DNA products developed with Sorenson Molecular. David serves as Vice President of the Board for Certification of Genealogists and previously served as Vice President of the Utah Genealogical Association and on the board of directors of the National Genealogical Society. A Certified Genealogist, Certified Genealogical Lecturer, and author, David resides in Highland, Utah.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 86

Unlocking the Past: A Genealogy Escape Room Experience Skills

Course Description

Step into 250 years of American family history! Work in teams to solve puzzles, analyze records, and uncover ancestral stories in this interactive genealogy escape room that tests your research and problem-solving skills.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Sarah Day

Presenter Credentials

Sarah Day, AG is a Professional Genealogist specializing in United States research, with a particular love and interest in African American Family History. She received a Bachelors degree from Brigham Young University (BYU) in Genealogy-Family History in 2025. Additionally she is accredited in the United States Southwest region. She is a APG Board of Director and founder of the Young Professionals Special Interest Group at APG. Sarah loves researching, helping others find family and making genealogy fun and engaging for those of all ages.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 87

Pioneering Women: Homesteading the American West

Course Description

Discover the untold stories of women who claimed land under the Homestead Act, showing that independence on the frontier wasn't just a man's pursuit. Learn how to locate and interpret land entry files, affidavits, and patents to bring these women's experiences to life.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Amber Oldenburg

Presenter Credentials

Amber Oldenburg is a researcher, lecturer, and social media marketer with a degree in family history research from BYU-Idaho, where she currently an adjunct professor in their family history program and social media manager for Your DNA Guide. She specializes in Midwest and Great Lakes states research.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 88

AI in America: Illuminating 250 Years of Social, Cultural, Political, Economic, and Familial Contexts

Course Description

Explore how AI tools can help genealogists reconstruct the everyday lives of ancestors within the context of America's social, cultural, political, and economic history. Learn how to use AI to connect records, reveal context, and bring 250 years of family stories to life.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Edward Swierczewski

Presenter Credentials

Ed has been a genealogist for almost 30 years, and a professional educator for over 30 years, researching and lecturing in Psychology and Human Services at several major universities and government agencies in New York City. He considers empathy an essential quality for genealogists. He has completed multiple courses from GRIP and SLIG, and is a ProGen alum. He founded Integrative Genealogy LLC and serves as the Chief Genealogical Officer. He is an award-winning genealogical writer and a Laura G. Prescott SLIG Scholarship recipient, and has presented genealogy webinars locally and nationally, at venues both live and virtual, including in-person at RootsTech 2023 in Salt Lake City; recently he has been focusing on the intersection of AI and genealogy. He possesses a deep passion for sharing his knowledge with others, and a commitment to life-long learning.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 89

The Reconstruction Generation: Tracking Americans Born 1850-1880

Course Description

Connect enslaved individuals to property-owning descendants. Learn techniques for navigating name changes, leveraging new records like pensions and voter rolls, tracking migration patterns, and building narratives that bridge slavery and freedom across America's most transformative era.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Leslie Anderson

Presenter Credentials

Leslie Anderson, MSLS, former Local History/Special Collections librarian; Virginia Humanities Scholar; winner, NGS Family History Writing Contest; Project Editor, Virginia Slave Births Index, 1853-1865

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 90

Capital Campaign: Military Veteran Bounty Land Digitization Project

Course Description

Join NGS leaders for an update on the Veteran Bounty Land Records Project, a national campaign to digitize bounty land files at NARA through the Mexican War. Learn about project progress, genealogical discoveries, society partnerships, and how individuals and organizations can get involved.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

David E Rencher; Jan Alpert; Matt Menashes

Presenter Credentials

David E Rencher - David E. Rencher, AG®, CG®, FUGA, FIGRS, FNGS, is employed as the Chief Genealogical Officer for FamilySearch. A professional genealogist since 1977, he is one of the rare few who have earned both credentials: Accredited Genealogist® with ICAPGen in Ireland research (1981) and Certified Genealogist® with the Board for Certification of Genealogists (2006). He is the Irish course coordinator and instructor for the GRIP Genealogy Institute and the Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research. He graduated from Brigham Young University in 1980 with a BA in Family and Local History. He is president of the National Genealogical Society and past president of the Federation of Genealogical Societies and the Utah Genealogical Association. He is a fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association, the Irish Genealogical Research Society, London and the National Genealogical Society. He is the past chair of the joint National Genealogical Society and International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies committee for the Record Preservation and Access Coalition; he serves as a counselor for the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Jan Alpert - FNGS, serves as RPAC chair, previous NGS president, board member, and conference chair. Matt Menashes - Matt Menashes, CAE, is the Executive Director of the National Genealogical Society.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 90

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 91

Ordinary Women Live Extraordinary Lives: A Deep Dive into the Records Reveal Tales of Resiliency

Course Description

Four ordinary pioneer women lived extraordinary lives. Through their stories, you'll learn how to use advanced research strategies and historical context to uncover, untangle, and document women across generations.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Karen Stanbary, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Karen Stanbary, CG®, CGG® holds the Certified Genealogist credential. She lectures nationally on the use of DNA test results in genealogical problem-solving, always within the framework of the Genealogical Proof Standard. She is a Trustee and Vice President for the Board for Certification of Genealogists and chairs that organization's DNA Committee.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 92

Thinking Like a Genealogist

Course Description

Learn the habits of an intermediate researcher. Practice using negative evidence, the FAN Club, and weighing conflicting records in this interactive, hands-on session.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Cheri Hudson Passey

Presenter Credentials

Cheri Hudson Passey is a Professional Genealogist, Instructor, Writer, Speaker, hosts the YouTube chat show GenFriends and is a researcher for the US Army Repatriations Project. She currently serves on the National Genealogical Society board. Cheri writes the blog “Carolina Girl Genealogy” where she has shared genealogy tips, methodologies, and family stories for over 10 years.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 93

Time & Place: A Genealogist's Cross-Hairs

Course Description

Every record search begins with two coordinates: time and place. Learn how to use this “cross-hairs” approach to pinpoint what records exist for your ancestor—and how shifting boundaries and start dates can change the approach.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

James Beidler

Presenter Credentials

James M. Beidler is the author of four commercially published books. Beidler writes “Roots & Branches,” a weekly newspaper column and blog (at www.roots-branches.com), is a German Life magazine columnist and a former research-reports editor for Legacy Tree Genealogists.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 94

The Other Census: Five Things Tax Records Can Tell You

Course Description

Think tax records are just dull lists of names and numbers? Think again. Discover five surprising ways these overlooked records uncover family connections, migrations, and stories that don’t appear anywhere else.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jennifer Dunn

Presenter Credentials

Jennifer Dunn is a Georgia-based genealogist and family historian specializing in poor and hard-to-find Southern US ancestors. She holds a B.A. in US History with an emphasis on the American South, and she's especially interested in how social, economic, and labor trends influenced our ancestors' lives. Jennifer uses strategies such as social history, little-known records, and cluster research in her work. Her presentations have been featured at the Georgia Genealogical Society, Allen County Public Library, and local societies throughout Georgia, where she works to get other family historians as excited about tax and economic records as she is. An active volunteer, Jennifer serves as Co-Chair of the Cherokee County Georgia Oral History Committee and Vice President of the Southeast Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG). She has filled various roles at the Georgia Genealogical Society (GGS) including Chair of the Nominating Committee and Webinar Moderator and worked with the Cherokee County, Georgia government and history center on local projects such as identifying unknown burials. Jennifer has also contributed research to multiple episodes of PBS's "Finding Your Roots." She has lectured on AI and land records at the Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research (IGHR) and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG).

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 94

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 95

Pension Fraud: Thieves, Scoundrels, Impostors, and the Lure of Free Money RecordsMilitary

Course Description

Civil War pension laws helped countless veterans and families—but they also attracted thieves, scoundrels, and impostors looking for easy money. Discover how the government fought back, and how the 31,500-plus case files kept by the Law Division of the Bureau of Pensions on fraud and other matters reveal untold stories hiding in the archives.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Claire Kluskens

Presenter Credentials

Claire Kluskens, JD, FNGS, retired in 2025 from the National Archives and Records Administration after almost 33 years of service to the American people. Most recently, she served as a digital projects archivist and NARA's designated Genealogy/Census-Related Records Subject Matter Expert specializing in records of high genealogical value. Previously, she spearheaded the completion of more than 330 National Archives microfilm publications. She has published extensively in national, state, and local genealogical publications, and has spoken at many genealogical society meetings and conferences. She blogs at The Twelve Key, https://twelvekey.com, and is a birder.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 96

Hidden Valor: Researching the Black Men and Women of the American Revolution

Course Description

Discover untold stories of African Americans in the American Revolution. Learn where to find their stories in military, pension, and local records—and how to document their contributions for lineage societies that honor their service.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Shelley Murphy

Presenter Credentials

• An avid genealogist for over 30 years, Dr. Shelley Viola Murphy, aka "familytreegirl," was born and raised in Michigan, now living in central Virginia. She conducts genealogy workshops at local, state and national conferences. Murphy is known for her inspiring & interactive "SO WHAT" with genealogical research, along with interesting problem-solving methodology lectures such as the use of Timelines. • Murphy serves on the Boards of the Library of Virginia and the Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Societies. • She is a Coordinator and Instructor at the Midwest African American Genealogy Institute (MAAGI) and develops staff and public genealogy educational programs for the Center for Family History at the International African American Museum (IAAM). • Serves as the Genealogist General for the Society of the First African Families of English America and Trustee for the International Society for British Genealogy and Family History. Also serves on the Genealogists Council for the 10 million names project. She holds membership in AAHGS NGS, DAR, and local genealogy groups. • Currently working for the University of Virginia as the Descendant Project Researcher-seeking descendants the enslaved laborers who helped build the university. Host of “Freedmen’s Bureau Friday’s. An Adjunct Professor at Averett University since 2009. Dr. Murphy’s personal research focuses on Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Virginia/West Virginia, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 96

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 97

From Pioneer Pedigrees to Proof Standards: Reassessing Early Genealogical Works

Course Description

Genealogy as a discipline has transformed dramatically over the past 150 years. This session will explore how to critically evaluate genealogical research from the 19th and early 20th centuries using today's standards and resources.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

D. Joshua Taylor

Presenter Credentials

D. Joshua Taylor, MLS, is a professional genealogist specializing in New England and New York families, president, NYG&B, and host of Genealogy Roadshow (PBS).

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 98

Occupants, Owners or Nations: Native Rights to Land

Course Description

From King Philip's War to the Trail of Tears, conflicts between settlers and the rights of those already on the land transformed the legal landscape. Learn how each shift in policy—from treaties to allotments—left a paper trail that family historians can use today.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

Judy G. Russell, The Legal Genealogist®, is a genealogist with a law degree who provides expert guidance through the murky territory where law and family history intersect. An internationally-known lecturer and award-winning writer, she holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and Certified Genealogical Lecturer® from the Board for Certification of Genealogists® and is a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 99

Hands-on Practice: Analyzing Genealogical Documents Skills

Course Description

Put your analytical skills to the test in this hands-on session. Practice analyzing sources, information, and evidence while discussing physical characteristics, record reliability, related records, and evidence quality in an interactive group setting.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Angela McGhie

Presenter Credentials

Board of Directors, Board for Certification of Genealogists

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 100

From Broken to Belonging: How Replacing Victor's Headstone Reconnected My Family Connecting

Course Description

What began as a simple cemetery visit became a project of restoration and rediscovery. See how replacing one broken headstone led to new research, new relatives, and renewed family connections.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

April Earle

Presenter Credentials

April Lynne Earle is a member of the Library Faculty at Farmingdale State College, a College of Technology within the State University of New York (SUNY) system. She holds both a Master of Library Science and a Master of Arts in Public History from St. John's University, where she now serves as an adjunct instructor teaching the Library Science course Genealogical Sources & Services. In this role, she is dedicated to teaching the next generation of librarians the specialized skills essential for supporting genealogical research. A passionate genealogist with over 40 years of research experience, April finds her greatest joy in helping others uncover and preserve their family stories.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 101

Bound by Law, Freed by Law: Women and Our Legislative History

Course Description

From property laws to suffrage and civil rights, women's stories are written in the law. Discover how changing legislation limited, liberated, and documented women's lives, and left records for future genealogists.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Sylvia Tracy Doolos

Presenter Credentials

Genealogist / Consultant, New Leaf Genealogy

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 102

Signed, Sealed, and Marked: Clues in Ancestors' Signatures

Course Description

Sometimes the smallest details make the biggest discoveries. See how ancestors' signatures and marks can reveal identity, kinship, literacy, and even health—and why a simple "X" might hold the key to your next breakthrough.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Cheri Hudson Passey

Presenter Credentials

Cheri Hudson Passey is a Professional Genealogist, Instructor, Writer, Speaker, hosts the YouTube chat show GenFriends and is a researcher for the US Army Repatriations Project. She currently serves on the National Genealogical Society board. Cheri writes the blog "Carolina Girl Genealogy" where she has shared genealogy tips, methodologies, and family stories for over 10 years.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 103

Y-DNA Helps Reveal Forgotten and Unrecorded Mixed-Race Parentage from the Reconstruction Era

Course Description

Autosomal DNA, Y-DNA, ethnicity results, and much hypothesis testing leads to a grandfather's unknown parents and ancestors of African and European descent. Learn how genealogical reasoning, conflicting evidence resolution, and testing multiple theories identified which of four sisters was the mother and which of twenty-four men with the same Y-DNA was the father.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Thomas W. Jones, PhD, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Tom Jones is an award-winning genealogical researcher, writer, editor, and educator. He co-edited the National Genealogical Society Quarterly in 2003 through 2018, and he is the author of the textbooks Mastering Genealogical Proof and Mastering Genealogical Documentation. He has been certified by the Board for Certification of Genealogists since 1994. A professor emeritus at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., Tom teaches genealogical research methods at week-long genealogy institutes. He also speaks at national, regional, and local seminars in the United States and internationally, and he writes frequently on genealogical evidence, proof, and problem solving.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 104

Indian Traders, Founding Fathers, and Indigenous Girl Heroes. Fighting for Freedom.

Course Description

Enslaved Virginians of matrilineal Indian descent fought for freedom in courts from 1767 through the 1820s—and won. Discover how descendants of five trafficked indigenous girls proved Native ancestry to gain freedom, and learn research strategies using court records, Free Negro Registers, and FAN trees to untangle similar stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Tyrone S. Goodwyn

Presenter Credentials

Tyrone Goodwyn is a full-time detective and front man for his ancestors. Circa 1740+ free people of color in southeast NC. 1600s & 1700s Eastern Shore VA. Persons enslaved by the Custis/Washington family 1655-1865. Dinwiddie County VA, head of the Indian trading path. He is Vice-President of North Carolina Genealogical Society, and is a member of NGS, VGS, AAHGS, League of the Descendants of the Enslaved at Mt Vernon, and other organizations.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 105

From 1776 to TikTok: How DNA Reveals 250 Years of Hidden American Stories

Course Description

Your DNA holds 250 years of American stories that official records forgot to write down. Learn practical genetic genealogy techniques to uncover hidden narratives—from Revolutionary War refugees to modern immigrants—and break through documentation gaps across every era.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kate Penney Howard

Presenter Credentials

Kate Penney Howard is a genetic genealogist, specializing in brick wall work, HighRoH, and endogamy. During a bout with cancer, she discovered that she loves sharing her knowledge with other genealogists. She has presented at National and international conferences as well as local library and genealogical society gatherings. Kate studied vocal music and earned a Master of Divinity from Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis in 2011, and has been a pastor in Fort Wayne, Indiana since her ordination in 2012.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 106

Heirloom Preservation for the Average Joe: How to preserve your families' precious heirlooms

Course Description

Learn hands-on techniques for preserving family heirlooms and protecting them for future generations. With live demonstrations and practical tips, you'll leave confident in how to care for your treasures at home.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Angela Knutson

Presenter Credentials

I have been in the genealogy field for forty years and doing presentations and lectures for the past ten years. Currently, I am studying for my professional genealogy certificate. It has been my goal for many years. Some people see doing genealogy as work and tedious. I am not one of those people. Genealogy is a passion for me. The time flies by when I'm researching, lecturing or helping others discover their past. My outlook is "Why wouldn't someone want to know where and who they've come from?', because the key to our future often lies in our past. It is my pleasure and privilege to be able to share this passion with others.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 107

Sorting Out the Stevens...and Stephens: a 19th-Century Migration Puzzle

Course Description

Stephens or Stevens? From where? Discover how clues hidden in Missouri land records revealed the Kentucky and Virginia roots of two 18th-century cousins—an advanced case study in migration and identity research.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

J.H. Fonkert

Presenter Credentials

Better known as "Jay," J. H. Fonkert, CG, FMGS, specializes in 19th-century Kentucky and Midwest family history research. His passions are family migrations and historical geography. He was Coordinator for the 2024 NGS GRIP Midwest course, and he has taught in the Practicum and the Great Plains courses at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG). Jay served fifteen years as Editor of Generations (formerly Minnesota Genealogist) and he has published six articles in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 108

Day in the Life of A Professional Genealogist

Course Description

Three mini-sessions and a panel discussion: Military Repatriation - Learn what skills and education are required to perform this very important work for our US armed services, and how these cases are typically processed. Probate and Heir Search - Conducting genealogical research that will be used to distribute assets from estates has both risks and benefits. Practitioners need to be fully prepared for both. Forensic Genealogy - Learn more about the day-to-day in the world of forensic genealogists.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Catherine Desmarais; Michael Ramage; Kelvin L. Meyers

Presenter Credentials

Catherine Desmarais - Catherine B.W. Desmarais CG, CGG, holds the credentials of Certified Genealogist and Certified Genetic Genealogist, awarded by the Board for Certification of Genealogists. She and her forensic genealogy team at Stone House Historical Research specialize in genealogical research for military repatriation cases and to resolve estate and real estate cases for the legal community. She's the co-lead author, with Michael Ramage, of the book _Forensic Genealogy: Theory and Practice_, published by NGS in 2025. Michael Ramage - Michael S. Ramage, JD, CG, is a full-time professional genealogist, author and lecturer. Mr. Ramage has served as a Trustee, officer and currently General Counsel of BCG, and he was the 2020-2022 President of the APG Forensic Genealogy Special Interest Group. His 25-year law practice included contracts, real estate and estate law and litigation. He has taught numerous genealogy courses at genealogy conferences and institutes around the country. His related publications include: (1) Michael S. Ramage, J.D., CG and Catherine B. W. Desmarais, CG, Forensic Genealogy: Theory and Practice (National Genealogical Society, Falls Church, VA: 2025); and (2) the “Forensic Specialization” and “Ethical Considerations” chapters in Professional Genealogy: Preparation, Practice & Standards, Elizabeth Shown Mills, editor (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2018). Kelvin L. Meyers - A fifth generation Texan and professional forensic genealogist since 1996, Kelvin is a frequent speaker to genealogical societies and family associations throughout the United States. Kelvin

works with attorneys, trust officers, and several mineral companies researching and locating heirs throughout the US and the world. He also specializes in southern brick wall problems for clients. He is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogist, a past board member, and past President of the Lone Star Chapter of APG, He is the immediate past President of Forensic special interest group of APG. In 2016 Kelvin published Research in Texas for NGS (National Genealogical Society) Research in the States series. The Dallas Genealogical Society awarded Kelvin the Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck Distinguished Service Award in December of 2018. The Texas State Genealogical Society made Kelvin a fellow of society in 2023. Kelvin is the immediate past director of the Texas Institute of Genealogical Research (TIGR) sponsored by the Texas State Genealogical Society. He recently wrote the chapter, “Mineral Interest and the Forensic Genealogist” for the recently published book Forensic Genealogy Theory and Practice. Kelvin is the historian and archivist for First United Methodist Church Dallas.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 109

Uncovering Family Stories Through American Court Records: Research Strategies

Course Description

Court records don't just document disputes—they capture family drama, social change, and everyday life. Learn systematic methods to locate, interpret, and extract genealogical data from court records, revealing family dynamics and relationships.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Diana Elder

Presenter Credentials

Diana Elder is a professional genealogist accredited in the Gulf South region of the United States. Diana authored Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist's Guide and co-authored the companion volume, Research Like a Pro with DNA: A Genealogist's Guide to Finding and Confirming Ancestors with DNA Evidence. Diana and her daughter, Nicole Dyer, host the Research Like a Pro Genealogy Podcast and share research tips on their website, FamilyLocket.com.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 110

“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” - The Underground Railroad

Course Description

Cross the Ohio River and freedom in Canada was within reach. Discover how Ohio and Indiana became critical routes for freedom seekers fleeing slavery, the people who risked everything to help them, the code words they used, and how the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 turned spontaneous assistance into organized resistance.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Peggy Lauritzen

Presenter Credentials

Peggy Clemens Lauritzen, AG, AGL, FOGS, was involved in genealogy before she was even born. The daughter of avid genealogists was spending time in courthouses and cemeteries while other children were playing on swings and going to the beach. The love of her family’s history has never left her. With her experience serving as a former and current FamilySearch Center Coordinator, she frequently speaks at genealogical societies, workshops, seminars, and webinars where she loves bringing genealogy to life. Some of those would include The Ohio Genealogical Society, The Ohio State University, Brigham Young University, and many other state and local genealogy societies. She has recently completed several Legacy QuickGuides on Appalachia and is a well-known webinar presenter. In 2018, she was awarded the title of Fellow of the Ohio Genealogical Society and received the Laura G. Prescott Award for Exemplary Service in Genealogy. Peggy is an instructor at Ancestry Academy, Family Tree University, a former columnist for Reminisce magazine, and a former researcher for Ancestry ProGenealogists. She and her husband Kerry are FamilySearch Center Directors in Mansfield, Ohio.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 110

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 111

The Latest in Ethical Issues Associated with Generative Artificial Intelligence

Course Description

Generative AI can be a powerful partner in genealogical research—but it also raises new ethical questions. This session unpacks issues like plagiarism, copyright, and accuracy so you can use AI confidently, responsibly, and with integrity.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Blaine Bettinger

Presenter Credentials

Blaine Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D., is a professional genealogist specializing in DNA evidence. In 2007 he started The Genetic Genealogist (www.thegeneticgenealogist.com), one of the earliest blogs on the topic. Blaine is the author of The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy, and co-author with Debbie Parker Wayne of the award-winning Genetic Genealogy in Practice, the world's first genetic genealogy workbook. He also co-authored "Genetics for Genealogy" with Judy Russell in 2018's Professional Genealogy: Preparation, Practice & Standards (ProGen PPS) (Elizabeth Shown Mills, Author and Editor). Blaine is or has been an instructor for genetic genealogy courses at every major institute. He is a graduate of ProGen Study Group 21, a trustee for the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, and a member of the DNAngels Board of Directors since 2022 (President since January 2023). In 2017 he founded the Facebook group Genetic Genealogy Tips & Techniques (90,000+ members) and in 2023 he founded the Genealogy and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Facebook group (20,000+ members).

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 112

From Unknown to Ancestral: DNA Clusters Reveal the Father My Family Never Knew

Course Description

For genealogists with DNA experience ready to deepen their skills, this case study demonstrates how clustering, triangulation, and record synthesis revealed the identity of a father lost to history—and how these same tools can solve longstanding family mysteries.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Andre Kearns

Presenter Credentials

Andre Kearns is the Founder & CEO of Black Ancestries, a genealogy research firm helping people of African descent uncover, celebrate, and preserve their family history. A respected genealogist and national speaker, he specializes in tracing African American lineages through slavery and beyond and is the author of the forthcoming book Finding Cornerstone Stories: Uncovering Inspiration in Your Family's History.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 113

America at 250: Celebrating With Intergenerational Family Stories and Community History Projects

Course Description

Celebrate America at 250 by connecting generations through storytelling and shared history. In this interactive session with a teacher and oral historian, you'll practice interviewing techniques, experiment with story prompts and 3-D timelines, and explore ways to preserve memorabilia and memories. Leave inspired—and equipped—to help your family or community bring history to life through personal stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Gail Hickey

Presenter Credentials

Gail is a veteran educator with over 30 years of experience training teachers. She is Professor Emerita at Purdue University Fort Wayne in Indiana and a trained oral historian. Gail has written widely on topics related to social studies education and contemporary migration. Her textbook publications include Digging deeper: Activities for enriching and expanding social studies instruction K-12 (Co-editor, 2017, Information Age Publishing); Service-learning in higher education: Research and perspectives (Editor, 2016, Lexington Books); 'Even the janitor is white': Educating for cultural diversity in small colleges and universities (Co-editor, 2012, Peter Lang Publishing); and Bringing history home: Local and family history projects for grades K-6 (1999, Allyn & Bacon). Gail served as Contributing Author for a K-6 Social Studies textbook series (Scott Foresman, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2011). She is the author of more than 300 combined journal articles, textbook chapters, and conference presentations.

Presenter Association

National Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 116

HSTA 577: Law, Capitalism, & Democracy in U.S. History

Course Description

Restricted to students in graduate History programs. This graduate colloquium introduces students to the scholarly literatures of three broad and overlapping fields: U.S. legal history and the history of the American state; the history of American capitalism; and the history of American democracy. Students will interrogate classic scholarship and gain a strong understanding of the current state of scholarly conversations in these fields. Level: Graduate. (3 graduate-level college credits equates to 12 MSL CE credits under the previous Certification Manual)

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kyle G. Volk

Presenter Credentials

Professor of History; Co-Director, Democracy Studies Program Education PhD, University of Chicago MA, University of Chicago BA, Boston College Current Position Co-Director, Democracy Studies Program; Professor of History Courses Taught HSTA 101: American History I - Gen Ed: Historical Studies (H); Democracy & Citizenship (Y) HSTA 103: Honors American History I - Gen Ed: Historical Studies (H); Democracy & Citizenship (Y) HSTR 200: Introduction to Historical Methods HSTA 201: History of American Democracy - Gen Ed: Ethics (E); Democracy & Citizenship (Y) HSTA 315: Early American Republic (Intermediate Writing Course) HSTA 316: American Civil War Era HSTA 377: Intoxication Nation: Alcohol in American History HSTA 380: American Constitutional History HSTA 382: United States Legal History HSTA 391: Dissent, Disobedience, & U.S. Democracy HSTR 400: Historical Research Seminar: Law & Society in Nineteenth-Century America (Advanced Writing Course) HSTA 405: Public Problems & U.S. Democracy (Advanced Writing Course) HSTR 500: History Pedagogy (Graduate Course) HSTA 501: Readings in Early American History (Graduate Course) HSTA 577: Law, Capitalism, & Democracy in U.S. History (Graduate Course) HSTA 591: United States Legal History (Graduate Course) HSTA 594: Graduate Research Seminar (Graduate Course) Field of Study United States Political, Intellectual, and Legal History Democracy,

Capitalism, & the American State Civil Rights & Civil Liberties Law, Public Policy, & Political Economy Selected Publications Moral Minorities and the Making of American Democracy Oxford University Press, 2014; paperback, 2017. Merle Curti Prize, 2015. (For the best book in American Intellectual History, awarded by the Organization of American Historians.) Frederick Jackson Turner Prize, 2015, honorable mention. (For the best first book in U.S. History, awarded by the Organization of American Historians.) Empire, Capitalism, and Democracy: The Early American Experience. Cognella, Preliminary Edition, 2019; First Edition, 2020; Second Edition 2022. (co-authored with Patrick Mulford O'Connor) "The Politics of Political Economy in the Industrial Age," Law and History Review 43, 1 (February 2025), 181-187. "Personal Liberty," in Democracies in America, eds., D. Berton Emerson and Greg Laski (Oxford, 2023) "Advancing Equity in the Promise of Pharmacogenomics," in Clinical Decision Support for Pharmacogenomic Precision Medicine. Elsevier, 2022. (co-authored with Alison E. Fohner, Shayna Killam, and Erica L. Woodahl) "Democratizing Precision Medicine Through Community Engagement," Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics 106, 3 (September 2019), 488-490. (co-authored with Alison E. Fohner and Erica L. Woodahl) "Beyond Reciprocity: Democracies of Vigilance and Empire." Journal of Politics, Religion, and Ideology 19 (2018), 392-394. "The Consequential State: Public Law and the Release of Energy in Nineteenth-Century America." American Journal of Legal History 57 (June 2017), 232-237. "Apply Liberalism Liberally: Incest and the Troubled American State." Reviews in American History 45 (March 2017), 50-56. "The Perils of 'Pure Democracy': Minority Rights, Liquor Politics, & Popular Sovereignty in Antebellum America." Journal of the Early Republic 29 (Winter 2009), 641-679. Publications "The Maine Law and Rum Riot," Mainely History Podcast, February 21, 2022. "Prohibition in the 1850s," Unsung History Podcast, Aug. 16, 2021. "What Will Future Historians Say About President Trump's First 100 Days?" Time.com, April 27, 2017. "25 Moments That Changed America: The Volstead Act Takes Effect (Jan. 17, 1920)," Time.com, June 28, 2016. "Reflecting on Notable Female Historians, in Celebration of Mother's Day," OUPblog, May 5, 2016. "Fighting for the Right to Party on Sundays: How the Struggle over Blue Laws Changed American Politics," Humanities: The Magazine of the National Endowment for the Humanities 36 (July/August 2015). "All Wet: Drink and the Fortification

Presenter Association

University of Montana

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 117

HSTA 566 - The American West

Course Description

Restricted to students in graduate History programs or by consent of instructor. Intensive reading in the history of the American West. Level: Graduate (3 graduate-level college credits equates to 12 MSL CE credits under the previous Certification Manual)

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Eric Zimmer

Presenter Credentials

Personal Summary Dr. Eric Zimmer was the 2022-2023 A.B. Hammond Visiting Assistant Professor of Western United States History at the University of Montana. He is currently the Vice President of Philanthropy & Special Projects at the Black Hills Area Community Foundation and is pursuing a certificate in nonprofit leadership through the Harvard Kennedy School's executive education program. Prior to joining the faculty in Missoula, he spent six years as a senior historian at the consulting firm Vantage Point Historical Services, Inc. There, he worked on a variety of narrative, digital, oral, and exhibit-based projects for clients across the United States. From 2015 to 2023, Zimmer was a volunteer historian for the Rapid City Indian Boarding School Lands Project, an Indigenous-led community research project in his home town of Rapid City, South Dakota. His most recent book, Red Earth Nation: A History of the Meskwaki Settlement will be available from the Environment in Modern North American series at the University of Oklahoma Press in August 2024. That project explores the remarkable story of the Meskwaki Nation, a Native American tribe in Iowa that bought back some of its homeland in 1857. The Meskwaki story offers context and insight for anyone interested in the modern movement to reclaim Indigenous lands in the US and elsewhere. Zimmer's scholarship and the collaborative projects with which he is affiliated have received high honors from the Western History Association, the Midwestern History Association, the National Council on Public History, the American Society for Environmental History, and more. He has served as the primary grant author or co-PI on several projects, securing funding support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Windrose Fund, Monument Lab, the American Philosophical Society, the American Historical Association, the State Historical Society of Iowa, and the Center for Global

and Regional Environmental Research at the University of Iowa. Although he no longer teaches at UM, Zimmer remains a resource for students and colleagues and encourages anyone to reach out. Education 2016 - PhD, University of Iowa 2016 - Graduate Certificate in American Indian and Native Studies, University of Iowa 2012 - MA, University of Iowa 2010 - BS (Honors) Black Hills State University Projects Rapid City Indian Boarding School Lands Project Field of Study American West Indigenous History Environmental History Public History Selected Publications Red Earth Nation: A History of the Meskwaki Settlement ("Environment in Modern North America" series, University of Oklahoma Press, 2024). "Reclaiming Land and Memory," in Re:Generation, ed. Paul Farber and Sue Mobley (forthcoming, Temple University Press, 2024). "At the Vertex of Water and Stone: Preserving Landscape and Memory in Rapid City," South Dakota History 51, no. 4 (Winter 2021): 319–49. "Fewer Rabbis Than U.S. Senators: Jewish Political Activism in Twentieth Century South Dakota," co-authored with Art Marmorstein and Matthew Remmich, in The Plains Political Tradition: Essays on South Dakota Political Culture, Vol. III, ed. Jon K. Lauck, John E. Miller, and Donald C. Simmons, Jr. (Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2018): 112–39. "A President in Indian Country: Calvin Coolidge and Lakota Diplomacy in the Summer of 1927," Great Plains Quarterly 37, no. 3 (Summer 2017): 215–234. "Building the Red Earth Nation: The Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division on the Meskwaki Settlement," Native American and Indigenous Studies 2, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 106–133. "Settlement Sovereignty: The Meskwaki Fight for Self-Governance, 1856 to 1937," Annals of Iowa 73, no. 4 (Fall 2014): 311–347. Honors / Awards 2021 Autry Public History Prize, Western History Association (with the Project Team for the Rapid City Indian Boarding School Lands Project) 2021 Alice Smith Prize in Public History, Midwestern History Association (with the Project Team for the Rapid

Presenter Association

University of Montana

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 118

Independence and Identity: 250 Years of Opportunity, Diversity, and Belonging in America

Course Description

For 250 years, Americans have sought independence, opportunity, and belonging—while also facing hardship, exclusion, and change. This course looks at the nation's history through the everyday lives of families and communities, showing how their choices were shaped by shifting social, political, cultural, and economic forces. From the Revolution to today, we'll follow people on the move—seeking land, work, and new futures. We'll hear the voices of women, workers, immigrants, and others too often left out of the story, and see how reform, war, innovation, and recovery reshaped family life and community ties. Together we'll uncover how ordinary people created, endured, and redefined what it means to belong in America.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Katherine R. Willson

Presenter Credentials

Katherine R. Willson of Dexter, Michigan is an engaging & dynamic genealogy lecturer at local, regional, and national conferences; an educator teaching beginning, intermediate, and advanced genealogy classes in Michigan since 2001; the author of The Genealogist's Guide to Grand Rapids, Michigan (published in 2018 by The In-Depth Genealogist), and a professional researcher for private clients. Her research specialties include solving difficult genealogical problems in the Great Lakes region (including Michigan Territory's pre-statehood settlers), 19th century social reform movements, and America's westward expansion in the 18th and 19th centuries. Her genealogy interests began as an 8-year-old Junior Girl Scout working towards the now-retired "My Heritage" badge, and her passion was fueled when, after college, both her mother's and father's relatives gave her binders containing generations' worth of family information. (Katherine is a 7th generation Michigander with pre-statehood ancestors arriving from New York in the early 1830s, with the Sample/Moore line settling in Oakland County and the Havens/Arnold line settling in Lenawee County.) Her success in using Facebook to break down genealogical brick walls both personally and in her classroom inspired her to catalog 16,700+ Facebook genealogy links (updated January 2021). Additionally, she has compiled

190+ instructional genealogical channels on YouTube (updated April 2025), and 76 genealogy-related podcasts (updated February 2022). Her passion for genealogy combined with practical and creative strategies keeps Katherine's audience fully engaged and actively participating in her energetic and entertaining presentations. Participants leave with the tools necessary to do their own research, as well as the inspiration to do it! Katherine's former genealogy positions have included: Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh – Course coordinator and instructor (2024, 2025) Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy – Course coordinator and instructor (2021, 2022, 2025) Virtual Genealogical Association – Founder/President (2018-2020) Michigan Genealogical Council – Vice-President (2016-2017) & President (2018-2019) Federation of Genealogical Societies – Conference Publicity Chair (2019) Association of Professional Genealogists – Board of Directors (2018-2019) Genealogical Speakers Guild – Secretary (2018-2019) Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh – Social Media Chair (2018-2019) As an Army Reserve wife of almost 30 years, Katherine has assisted military families as a Family Readiness Group Leader, an Army Family Programs volunteer, and a member of the Department of Defense's Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) Cadre of Speakers. In those positions, she has traveled to events around the country, providing resources and support to military members and their loved ones in various stages of deployment (pre-deployment, during deployment, and post-deployment). In addition to her passion for genealogy and assisting military families, she enjoys creating mixed-media art and served for 10 years as a board member for the Ann Arbor Women Artists (dissolved in 2024), serving as President from 2009-2013; Vice-President & Chair of Juried Exhibits Committee, 2007-2009; and Treasurer, 2003-2007.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 119

Advanced Evidence Analysis Practicum

Course Description

his course provides an opportunity for advanced genealogists to gain hands-on experience solving tough cases. They challenge themselves as they put their research skills into practice. Participants work on five complex genealogical research problems — a new one each week. The objective is to give students experience in conducting research on complex problems, analyzing and correlating information, and writing conclusions. Participants will practice using indirect evidence, broadening research to include the FAN club, resolving conflicts, and organizing evidence into a written summary. The research problems are varied, offering students the challenge of stretching their minds and skills in directions that their research may not have taken them. Participants will work individually on each of the cases and then gather to discuss their progress with classmates and the instructor. They will compare sources, strategies, and methodologies, discuss difficulties encountered, and receive guidance from the case study author. This course is designed for advanced genealogists who have sufficient experience and education to work on complex genealogical problems. Most students plan 15-20 hours per week to work on the cases and write up a summary of their findings.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Angela Packer McGhie, CG, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

Angela Packer McGhie, CG®, FUGA, is a respected genealogy educator who serves as president of the Board for Certification of Genealogists. She coordinates multiple courses at genealogical institutes and speaks at national conferences. Angela has previously served as the Education Director for the National Genealogical Society, trustee of the BCG Education Fund, and administrator of the ProGen Study Program. Her articles have appeared in NGS Magazine, APG Quarterly, and Crossroads Magazine, and in 2021, she was honored as a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 119

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 120

Adoption in Genealogy: Research and Recording

Course Description

There's no doubt that researching female ancestors can be difficult. The records genealogist's use doesn't always include women by name. Women's marital name changes coupled with the fact that women's historical legal rights precluded them from activities that leave a record trail, make finding her story seem impossible. Adoption is a vital and intricate part of many family histories, presenting unique challenges for genealogical research. This course is designed to equip genealogists with the knowledge and tools to approach adoption cases with sensitivity, accuracy, and ethical responsibility. We will introduce the history and impact of US adoption practices on family history research. We will explore the differences between open and closed adoptions and discuss some historical events that drove many families to adopt. We will also discuss legal and ethical considerations, including privacy laws, the rights of adoptees and birth parents, and the complexities of contacting biological relatives. We will uncover and access various records, helping the student understand where to find them and how to record them properly. Ethical considerations surrounding contact in adoption cases will be thoroughly examined, ensuring that genealogists understand the potential emotional impacts and respect the boundaries of all parties involved; case studies will be used to illustrate the success and challenges of adoption research, offering examples of how to integrate biological and adoptive families into a coherent family tree. Finally, we will address some psychological and emotional aspects of adoption, emphasizing the importance of empathy and ethical storytelling in sharing these stories with family.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kristi Sexton

Presenter Credentials

Professional genealogist, owner of One Leaf Genealogy

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 120

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 121

Assemblage: Preparing, Writing, and Revising Case Studies

Course Description

You're a good writer and a great researcher—but sometimes your work doesn't land the way you hoped. "Assemblage" helps you refine your writing skills and master the craft of editing. This course focuses on shaping, splicing, dicing and piecing together your writing—whether it's constructing a meticulous case study, fine-tuning an article for submission to a journal, refining a client report, or assembling family tales into an inspiring narrative. Learn to refine your voice, structure your ideas, and transform drafts into compelling, polished pieces.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jan Joyce, DBA, CG, CGL, AG

Presenter Credentials

Dr. Joyce is a genealogy researcher whose personal work has focused on her Iowa, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Wisconsin ancestors who immigrated from England, Germany, Ireland, and Norway. In 1998, she began managing the marketing initiatives at Genealogy.com which prompted researching her own family. She has been hooked ever since . Jan holds the CG® and CGL(SM) credentials from the Board of Certification for Genealogists. She also earned the AG® accreditation from The International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists with a Great Lakes geographic speciality encompassing Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. Her genealogy career is focused on teaching research methodology, writing, and researching her own family. She enjoys speaking and teaching at regional and national venues and is known for her interactive and engaging presentation style. Before beginning her genealogy career, Jan earned a B.S. in Business, Marketing from Miami University; an MBA, Marketing from The Ohio State University, and a Doctor of Business Administration from Golden Gate University. She worked in marketing for many years and also taught a variety of marketing courses as an adjunct professor of marketing. --- CERTIFICATIONS & ACCREDITATIONS --- Board for Certification of Genealogists - Certifications Certified Genealogist.....2018 Certified Genealogical Lecturer.....2019 The

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 121

International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists Accredited Genealogist, Great Lakes Regional Specialty.....2020

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 122

Bring 'Em Back to Life: Writing Our Ancestors' Stories

Course Description

Stories that are not shared become lost. As family historians we have an obligation to share our research in forms that will endure. We also have an obligation to share our family stories in forms that will appeal to our non-genealogist family members, so they understand the remarkable heritage our ancestors have left us. Writing these stories can seem like a daunting task, but with instruction and coaching, researchers can learn to be not just guardians of the family history, but tellers of those family stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jenifer Kahn Bakkala

Presenter Credentials

Jenifer Kahn Bakkala began her career editing newspaper obituaries and has been telling the story of people's lives ever since. A professional genealogist and a freelance writer, she is a graduate of Connecticut College. Jenifer is the author of The Maynard, North, and DeForest Families: A Story of Immigration, Industry, and Community, which won the National Genealogical Society's Award for Excellence in 2023, and the co-author of Ancestral Lines of Iain W. F. Shepherd and Helen Waugh (Gray) Shepherd, which won the same award in 2025. Jenifer sits on the Board of Directors of the Association of Professional Genealogists and is past-president of its New England Chapter. She is also a member of the New England Historic and Genealogical Society, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, the National Genealogical Society, and the Genealogical Society of New Jersey.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 123

DNA Dreamers in Action Workshops

Course Description

Every research project is unique—challenging us with its own twists and turns. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. The genealogist relies on tried-and-true genealogy principles to inform an efficient research process. Disciplined genealogists avoid time-sucking rabbit holes that rarely lead to credible conclusions. They are wary of AI-produced hints and resist rapid and frenzied short-cut clicking. Rather, disciplined researchers recognize decision-making junctures and carefully consider the various options before choosing the next best steps. These hands-on workshops will provide the opportunity to participate in real-time problem solving for a variety of common research scenarios that benefit from genetic evidence. Each workshop will teach the principles that inform decision-making under uncertainty, before a solution emerges. The emphasis is on the reasoning process that leads to credible outcomes. Day one of the two-day workshop encourages participants to engage in live-action research on a typical research problem using DNA. Day two will reinforce the principles from the previous session as the class collaborates on working through a dynamic research plan on two selected student-submitted problems.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Karen Stanbary, LCSW, AM, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG®, CGG®, BCG Trustee, is an author and national lecturer focusing on topics related to using genetic evidence correlated with documentary evidence to solve genealogical brick walls. A Chicago local, she holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Social Work from the University of Chicago and has completed advanced graduate study in Social Anthropology at the Colegio de Michoacán, Mexico. Her genealogical practice specializes in Midwestern U.S., Chicago, and Mexican research as well as complex problem-solving, unknown parentage, and DNA analysis. She is a coordinator and faculty member at IGHR, and SLIG. She received the NGSQ Award for Excellence for two complex evidence case studies incorporating traditional documentary research and autosomal DNA analysis in the June 2016 and June 2023 issues of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. She published "Drowning in DNA? The

Genealogical Proof Standard Tosses a Lifeline" in Debbie Parker Wayne's book Advanced Genetic Genealogy: Techniques and Case Studies. She holds the credentials Certified Genealogist and Certified Genetic Genealogist from the Board for Certification of Genealogists where she serves as a Trustee and is chair of the DNA Committee.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 124

Foundations: The Research Process

Course Description

The goal of this course is to help students understand the genealogical research process in order to be able to research efficiently and effectively to produce reliable answers to research questions. Students choose a research project of their own to work on throughout the course, and weekly homework assignments allow students to immediately practice skills they are learning. Every step of the research process is covered: formulating a useful research question, assembling and analyzing starting point information, researching the locality of the target ancestor, constructing a research plan, understanding source citations, logging and organizing research, analysis and correlation, and writing up results. The course also includes mind mapping to visualize information, how to know when the question has been answered reliably, and what to do if the research plan doesn't provide an answer. A session on AI tools for genealogy provides a glimpse into the future. Two workshops and the opportunity for one-on-one consultations with instructors provide students with the chance to engage with the faculty and each other about the research process.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Annette Burke Lyttle, MA, CG

Presenter Credentials

Annette Burke Lyttle holds the Certified Genealogist® credential and owns Heritage Detective, LLC, providing professional genealogical services in research, education, and writing. She loves helping people uncover and share their family stories. Annette speaks on a variety of genealogical topics at the national, state, and local levels. She has a master's degree in English and a bachelor's degree in journalism. Annette has been researching her family on and off since high school, and she has been a full-time genealogist since 2012. Her genealogical education has included the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, the British Institute, the ProGen Study Group, and the National Genealogical Society Quarterly Study Group. She is a course coordinator for the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG). She is past president of the Association of Professional Genealogists and is editor of The Florida Genealogist.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 124

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 125

German Phase 2: Research the Hometown Online

Course Description

Church and civil records are the primary resources used to trace one's ancestry. Many of these records are available online. This course teaches how to find available church/civil records for their German hometown and use them to their fullest. If the records are not available online, students will receive guidance on hiring someone to do that research. The course will introduce other resources available online. Some basic handwriting and language skills will be taught. Students will be given resources for expanding their knowledge.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Debra A. Hoffman, PLCGS; Teresa Steinkamp McMillin, CG

Presenter Credentials

Debra A. Hoffman, professional genealogist, author, and lecturer, specializes in Maryland and German research. She has a certificate in Family History from Brigham Young University and a Professional Learning Certificate in Genealogical Studies (PLCGS)-German Records from the National Institute of Genealogical Studies. She coordinated "Maryland: Researching in the Old Line State" at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG) and co-authored NGS' Research in the States Series: Maryland. She currently serves as an At-Large Board Member and is the Secretary for the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society. She is the principal of Hoffman Genealogical Services. Teresa Steinkamp McMillin, Certified Genealogist®, author of the Guide to Hanover Military Records, 1514-1866 on Microfilm at the Family History Library, is the owner of Lind Street Research, a company dedicated to helping people discover their German ancestry. Teresa conducts research on behalf of the U.S. Army to aid in repatriating soldiers missing from the nation's past conflicts. She has taught at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR) and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG) Academy for Professionals. She created and recorded courses for Ancestry Academy and Legacy Family Tree Webinars. She is a popular speaker for national, regional, and local genealogical societies. Reading German Gothic script found in German records prior to the mid-1900s is second nature to her. Researching ancestors in Chicago and other areas of the Midwest is another of Teresa's specialty areas. She is a multi-year attendee of the Institute of Genealogy and Historical

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 125

Research (IGHR) and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG). Teresa is a member of the National Genealogical Society, the Association of Professional Genealogists, as well as many German and local genealogical societies. She is a genealogy volunteer at the Arlington Heights Memorial Library in Illinois.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 126

Advanced Genealogical Methods

Course Description

Students in Advanced Genealogical Methods will learn how to assemble and use evidence to rediscover ancestral origins, identities, and relationships that have been forgotten over the passage of time. The course will address advanced use of evidence derived from a variety of genealogical sources and will explore research techniques for populations for which the usual records are in short supply. Students will also learn how to document their research and develop written proof summaries to reach accurate conclusions and create a credible record of their findings for present and future generations of family historians.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Paul K. Graham, CG, AG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Paul K. Graham, CG®, CGG®, AG®, is a professional genealogist specializing in genealogical problem solving in the United States. He works as a research manager at AncestryProGenealogists, the research division of Ancestry. His work has been recognized with multiple awards, including first place in the National Genealogical Society's Family History Writing Contest in 2013, the ASG Scholar Award for 2012, and the NGS Award for Excellence: Genealogical Methods and Sources, also in 2012. Paul is the author of multiple books related to Georgia genealogical research, most notably Georgia Land Lottery Research and Research in Georgia (part of the National Genealogical Society's "Research in the States" series). His articles have appeared in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, The Genealogist, the Georgia Historical Quarterly, the Georgia Genealogical Society Quarterly, and the APG Quarterly. In December 2005, the Georgia Genealogical Society presenting Paul an award for "Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Genealogy" for his 1805 land lottery publications. Paul's television credits include research for NBC's Who Do You Think You Are? from 2012 to 2022 and the PBS television series African American Lives in 2006. In 2007 he researched the childhood history and family secrets of Marine Corps Lieutenant General Victor Krulak (dec.) for the biography Brute: The Life of Victor Krulak, U.S. Marine, by author Robert Coram. He moved to Salt Lake City in 2011 after calling Georgia his home since 1989. His childhood was spent in

western North Carolina. He is a graduate of the George Washington University and began his career as a title examiner in Georgia, gaining valuable knowledge of property and probate law and records. He has performed genealogical and historical research for clients since 2004. He graduated with a master's degree in Heritage Preservation from Georgia State University and holds a professional certificate in geographic information systems. Paul's personal research interests include historic surveys and land use, and the post-Civil War history of southern cities and their people.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 127

Advanced Research Tools: Land Records

Course Description

“The major fortunes in America have been made in land,” is a quote attributed to John D. Rockefeller. The major economy of the nation from the colonial period through the 1860s was agriculture. The acquisition of land was a promise of a better life, and a major draw to immigrants from other nations. In this course, we explore land development, law, and acquisition across the nation’s history. State and federal land records are discussed as well as maps and land platting. Genealogically-rich, deeds and other types of land records are full of relationships, community, and context for the savvy researcher.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Rebecca Whitman Koford, CG, CGL

Presenter Credentials

Rebecca Whitman Koford holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and as a Certified Genealogical Lecturer®. She focuses on research in Maryland, Upstate New York, Virginia, the District of Columbia, colonial records, military records from the Revolution through the Civil War, federal records at the National Archives (D.C.), and land records of all types. She has published articles in the NGS Magazine, APG Magazine, SAR Magazine, and the Maryland Genealogical Society Journal and is co-author of the NGS Research in the States series book on Maryland. She is a graduate and former mentor of the ProGen Study Group and served as its Administrator from 2015–2020. She speaks at national conferences and regularly teaches at institutes, most recently the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG), the Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research (IGHR). She served as Executive Director of the Board for Certification of Genealogists® from 2018–2024. In 2021, she was named as Director of the Genealogical Institute on Federal Records (Gen-Fed) in Washington, D.C. She was elected Vice President of the National Genealogical Society in October 2024. She takes clients and runs her business under the name Rebecca Whitman Koford Genealogical Research, LLC.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 127

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 128

African-American Research

Course Description

This course is designed to be a skill building experience that includes both methodology and strategies for meeting the Genealogical Proof Standard when researching ancestors of African descent. In addition to foundational lectures such as the law and history of American slavery, case studies will arm students with the conceptual tools needed to overcome the challenges of researching during the antebellum period. Students will also learn about unique record sets for ancestors with roots in the Louisiana Creole, Native American Freedmen, and West Indian communities.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

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

Presenter Credentials

LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson, JD, LLM, CG, FASG, earned a BA from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York, and both a Law degree and a Master of Laws degree from New York University. In 2021, LaBrenda was elected as the 170th Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists (ASG), the field's honorary scholarly society. As declared by ASG: "Her educational publications include a guide to researching African-American family history in Laurens County, South Carolina, where she has roots—a primer with important methodological lessons applicable nationally—and an authoritative guide to genealogical research in the state of Alabama." She currently serves on the editorial board of both the National Genealogical Society Quarterly and the Journal of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society. LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson, JD, LLM, CG, CGL, FASG In addition to coordinating the African American Track at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, she teaches various subjects on the faculty of the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, the Genealogical Institute on Federal Records, and the Institute of Genealogy & Historical Research.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 128

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 129

Corpus Juris: Advanced Legal Concepts for Genealogy

Course Description

This advanced course challenges genealogists to engage deeply with the law as both context and tool for genealogical problem-solving. Students will have access to sophisticated legal resources typically available only at law libraries or by subscription to understand how the law shaped the records we analyze. The course emphasizes finding and applying the law to resolve complex research questions involving identity, kinship, and more. Individual sessions will focus on specific legal disciplines (criminal, civil, probate and the like), giving students the tools to problem-solve across legal and historical boundaries.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

The Legal Genealogist Judy G. Russell is a genealogist with a law degree. She writes, teaches and lectures on a wide variety of genealogical topics, providing expert guidance through the murky territory where law and family history intersect. A Colorado native with roots deep in the American south on her mother's side and entirely in Germany on her father's side, she holds a bachelor's degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and a law degree from Rutgers School of Law-Newark. Before she retired, she worked as a newspaper reporter, trade association writer, legal investigator, defense attorney, federal prosecutor, law editor and, for more than 20 years, as an adjunct member of the faculty at Rutgers Law School. She is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the National Genealogical Society and numerous state and regional genealogical societies. Named a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association in 2025, she received the 2015 UGA Silver Tray Award and the 2017 Award of Excellence from the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, where she now serves as a member of the NGSQ editorial board. An internationally-known lecturer and course coordinator and faculty member at numerous genealogical institutes, she holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and Certified Genealogical Lecturer® from the Board for Certification of

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 129

Genealogists®. Her award-winning blog appears at The Legal Genealogist® website (https://www.legalgenealogist.com).

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 130

DNA Dreamers: Integrating DNA Evidence to Resolve Complex Cases

Course Description

We are passionate about using DNA test results to establish proof and expand documentary research. This course focuses on case studies. Different from most case study presentations, we concentrate on the decision-making during the research process rather than the conclusion. The instructors will take you on a journey of a complex case integrating and correlating evidence from both documentary and genetic sources. They will highlight the various options at selected crossroads and identify their own reasoning and decision making as the research process continues to unfold. The reasoning is informed by the guidance provided in Genealogy Standards. You will experience DNA-related Standards in action. While some tools will be covered in selected lectures, this is NOT a tools-based course. We focus on the best tool of all—the BRAIN!

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Karen Stanbary, LCSW, AM, CG, CGG

Presenter Credentials

Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG®, CGG®, BCG Trustee, is an author and national lecturer focusing on topics related to using genetic evidence correlated with documentary evidence to solve genealogical brick walls. A Chicago local, she holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Social Work from the University of Chicago and has completed advanced graduate study in Social Anthropology at the Colegio de Michoacán, Mexico. Her genealogical practice specializes in Midwestern U.S., Chicago, and Mexican research as well as complex problem-solving, unknown parentage, and DNA analysis. She is a coordinator and faculty member at IGHR, and SLIG. She received the NGSQ Award for Excellence for two complex evidence case studies incorporating traditional documentary research and autosomal DNA analysis in the June 2016 and June 2023 issues of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. She published "Drowning in DNA? The Genealogical Proof Standard Tosses a Lifeline" in Debbie Parker Wayne's book Advanced Genetic Genealogy: Techniques and Case Studies. She holds the credentials Certified

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 130

Genealogist and Certified Genetic Genealogist from the Board for Certification of Genealogists where she serves as a Trustee and is chair of the DNA Committee.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 131

Research in New England

Course Description

This course is designed for experienced genealogists tracing New England ancestors who want to strengthen their skills in using the region's records. Building on a solid foundation, the course focuses on practical approaches to town records, land and probate records, compiled and published sources, and lesser-known or overlooked New England materials. Through lectures, examples, and guided exercises, the course emphasizes strategies for identifying and interpreting both compiled and original records. Attention is also given to the historical and regional factors that shaped New England record-keeping from the colonial period through the nineteenth century, along with tips for locating less-obvious sources and making the most of available records. This course is best suited for genealogists ready to move beyond basic searches and work more deeply within New England records to resolve long-standing research questions.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

D. Joshua Taylor, MA, MLS, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

D. Joshua Taylor, MA, MLS, FUGA, is a nationally recognized speaker and author specializing in genealogy and family history. With a profound passion for the diverse and dynamic field of genealogy, Joshua serves as the President of the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society (NYG&B). His contributions to the field have been acknowledged through numerous awards, including RootsTech's Distinguished Presenter Award, the Federation of Genealogical Societies Award of Merit, the Award of Merit and the Rubincam Youth Award from the National Genealogical Society, and recognition as one of Library Journal's Movers and Shakers in 2017. Joshua's leadership in the genealogical community includes his tenure as President of the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) from 2013-2016 and his service on the FGS Board of Directors from 2007-2019. As a writer, Joshua has authored numerous articles for publications such as American Ancestors, UGA Crossroads, FGS Forum, Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly, and New England Ancestors. His 2013 publication, The Keane and Sheahan Families of Bridgeport, Connecticut, delves into the experiences of a

family's immigration and life in New England after the Irish famine. He also coordinates courses at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. In recognition of his distinguished contributions and ongoing commitment to the field, Joshua was named a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association in 2022. Joshua holds an MLS in Archival Management and an MA in History from Simmons College. His expertise has been featured on the television show Who Do You Think You Are?, working with celebrities such as Sarah Jessica Parker, Kelly Clarkson, Ashley Judd, Reba McEntire, and Rob Lowe. Additionally, he guides audiences through America's past as a host on the popular PBS series Genealogy Roadshow.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 132

Guided Research and Consultation

Course Description

Experience the power of having your own personal guide for an entire week as you research both online and in the Family History Library. Students will review progress and findings in regular group meetings and one-on-one consultations throughout the week as they work on their own personal research projects. Assistance will be available as needed during specific research hours.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Craig Roberts Scott, MA, CG, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

Craig Roberts Scott, MA, CG, FUGA is the author of The 'Lost Pensions': Settled Accounts of the Act of 6 April 1838 (Revised) and Records of the Accounting Officers of the Department of the Treasury, Inventory 14 (Revised). His most recent work is Understanding Revolutionary War and Invalid Pension Ledgers, 1818 – 1872, and the Payment Vouchers They Represent. He has authored seventeen books and several articles in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, the Magazine of Virginia Genealogy, and other genealogical publications. He is the President and CEO of Heritage Books, Inc., a genealogical publishing firm with over 10,000 titles in print. A professional genealogical and historical researcher for more than forty years, he specializes in military records, problem-solving, Quakers, and publishing. He is a Company of Military Historians member and on the National Genealogical Society Quarterly editorial board. He is a former Director of the Association of Professional Genealogists. He is the Vice-President of the APG Writer's SIG. He has coordinated research tracks at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research, Samford University, the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, and the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh. He is currently the SLIG Guided Research and Consultation Track Coordinator, helping students solve brickwall problems. He is the host of the YouTube @Just Genealogy channel. He is a recipient of the Grahame T. Smallwood, Jr. Award and the UGA Silver Tray Award. He became a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association in 2014.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 132

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 133

The Art of Writing Research Reports

Course Description

Want to effectively capture your research no matter the audience? Writing effective research reports can be a challenge. This course will provide instruction and hands-on experience creating an efficient and effective report. A team of professional genealogists will share their expertise in technical writing, evidence analysis, incorporating visual elements, organizing material, time-saving strategies, and documentation. Examples of a variety of reporting formats covering simple to complex research problems from a variety of professional perspectives will be shared and available to review during the course. Participants will learn both by evaluating provided reports and writing a research report during the week. Students will work on practice exercises in class and complete writing assignments.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Debra A. Hoffman, PLCGS

Presenter Credentials

Debra A. Hoffman, professional genealogist, author, and lecturer, specializes in Maryland and German research. She has a certificate in Family History from Brigham Young University and a Professional Learning Certificate in Genealogical Studies (PLCGS)-German Records from the National Institute of Genealogical Studies. She coordinated “Maryland: Researching in the Old Line State” at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG) and co-authored NGS’ Research in the States Series: Maryland. She currently serves as an At-Large Board Member and is the Secretary for the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society. She is the principal of Hoffman Genealogical Services.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 134

Becoming an Accredited Genealogist® Professional: Why, What, and How

Course Description

Earning the Accredited Genealogist® credential with the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGen) provides opportunities to demonstrate research proficiency in a chosen region. Benefits include strengthened research skills, confidence in performing client work, and respect in the genealogy community. This interactive, hands-on course will cover the requirements for each ICAPGen accreditation step and give valuable information needed for successful testing. Homework assignments will provide essential skill-building activities. Peer review using ICAPGen rubrics will provide students with vital feedback. A four-hour practice Final Project and a personalized meeting with an AG mentor knowledgeable in the chosen region of accreditation will cap off the course. Discover your accreditation readiness as you learn more about the testing process and receive peer and mentor feedback on your work.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Lisa Stokes, AG

Presenter Credentials

Lisa Stokes is an Accredited Genealogist® specializing in the U.S. Mid-South. She has a B.S. in Education from Brigham Young University and loves to teach, lecture, and coach other genealogists. As a study group leader and presentation committee member at ICAPGenSM, she helps aspiring genealogists learn about accreditation.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 135

Bring 'Em Back Again! Advanced Workshop for Writing Our Ancestors' Stories

Course Description

This online workshop-style course is intended for those who already have experience with writing a genealogical narrative. Based on the concepts of "Bring 'Em Back to Life: Writing the Stories of Our Ancestors," this interactive follow-on class will feature advanced instruction, discussion, and planned writing time. The focus will be on writing ancestors' stories in narrative style, rather than in journal or report style. Students will work on one piece of their own writing during the course, whether it be a stand-alone story or a portion of a larger story. Students will submit up to five pages of writing to the instructors during the process and will receive detailed feedback. In Weeks 1–9, the class will be composed of two parts. The first part will focus on instruction in advanced skills in genealogical story writing in an interactive format. The second part will offer students the chance for dedicated writing time as a group. During the second part, an instructor will be available in a breakout room for any students who have questions or are seeking individual support. In Week 10, students will have the chance to share a portion of their writing with the group.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Annette Burke Lyttle, MA, CG; Jenifer Kahn Bakkala

Presenter Credentials

Annette Burke Lyttle holds the Certified Genealogist® credential. She provides professional genealogical services in research, education, and writing. She speaks on a variety of genealogical topics at the national, state, and local levels and loves helping people uncover and share their family stories. Annette is a course coordinator for the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy and the British Institute. She is a published writer whose research interests include Quaker ancestors and ancestral migrations in the US. She is past president of the Association of Professional Genealogists and editor of The Florida Genealogist. Jenifer Kahn Bakkala began her career editing newspaper obituaries and has been telling the story of people's lives ever since. A professional genealogist and a freelance writer, she is a graduate of Connecticut College. Jenifer is the author of The Maynard, North, and DeForest Families: A Story of

Immigration, Industry, and Community, which won the National Genealogical Society's Award for Excellence in 2023, and the co-author of Ancestral Lines of Iain W. F. Shepherd and Helen Waugh (Gray) Shepherd, which won the same award in 2025. Jenifer sits on the Board of Directors of the Association of Professional Genealogists and is past-president of its New England Chapter. She is also a member of the New England Historic and Genealogical Society, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, the National Genealogical Society, and the Genealogical Society of New Jersey.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 136

Income Streams in Genealogy: Diversified Strategies

Course Description

Genealogy work is more diversified than ever, and today's professionals earn income through a wide mix of services, platforms, and audiences. Genealogy has many markets, not one, and this course looks at how those segments operate and how they can be combined into sustainable income. Most sessions will be Q&A with working professionals about how the work functions, how fees are set, and where new opportunities are emerging. We'll also cover the business side, including contracts, communication, marketing, management, and money, and how to align strengths, audiences, and offerings into a solid revenue mix. Professional considerations such as ethics, copyright, privacy, confidentiality, and how to communicate sensitive or unexpected findings will be woven throughout, since reputation and client trust are central to this work.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Katherine R. Willson

Presenter Credentials

Katherine R. Willson of Dexter, Michigan, discovered her passion for genealogy at just eight years old as a Junior Girl Scout and has been researching ever since. Today, she is a dynamic and engaging presenter at regional, national, and international events, and has held leadership roles in local, national, and professional genealogical organizations. Katherine serves as a course coordinator and instructor for the National Genealogical Society's Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. She is also a full-time professional researcher, specializing in Michigan's pre-statehood settlers, Midwestern families who migrated west during the 18th and 19th centuries, and European immigrants arriving in America in the 19th and 20th centuries. Her website, SocialMediaGenealogy.com, offers free resources for family historians, including genealogy forms, interviewing questions for capturing oral histories, and extensive curated catalogs of genealogy and history Facebook groups, YouTube channels, and podcasts

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 136

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 137

Proving Your Pedigree with DNA

Course Description

This hands-on course provides the opportunity for students to apply DNA analysis skills to document one ancestral line back to a second great-grandparent couple. The faculty offers practical step-by-step case examples. The schedule includes ample opportunity for the students to practice and apply the skills to their own research. Private, one-on-one consultation time with faculty is available. At course completion, students will leave with: • A source-cited lineage, including proof of biological parentage that meets Genealogy Standards • A graphic descendant tree • A unique, student-generated "Golden Nuggets" Quicksheet The course teaches integration of documentary and genetic evidence to achieve proof. It is best to learn the methodology on an easier case. Students select one ancestral line in advance. A good choice would be a well-documented line from a DNA test taker to a second great-grandparent couple that is free of unknown parentage and pedigree collapse. Optimally, the student will use autosomal test results from second and third cousins on each of the great-grandparents lines to filter and sort DNA match lists. The cousins can be serendipitous matches or those that result from targeted testing.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG®, CGG®

Presenter Credentials

Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG®, CGG ®, BCG Trustee and Vice President, is an author and national lecturer focusing on topics related to using genetic evidence correlated with documentary evidence to solve genealogical brick walls. A Chicago local, she holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Social Work from the University of Chicago and has completed advanced graduate study in Social Anthropology at the Colegio de Michoacán, Mexico. Her genealogical practice specializes in Midwestern U.S., Chicago, and Mexican research as well as complex problem-solving, unknown parentage, and DNA analysis. She is a coordinator and faculty member at IGHR, and SLIG. She received the NGSQ Award for Excellence for two complex evidence case studies incorporating traditional documentary research and autosomal DNA analysis in the June 2016 and June 2023 issues of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly.

She published “Drowning in DNA? The Genealogical Proof Standard Tosses a Lifeline” in Debbie Parker Wayne’s book Advanced Genetic Genealogy: Techniques and Case Studies. She holds the credentials Certified Genealogist and Certified Genetic Genealogist from the Board for Certification of Genealogists where she serves as a Trustee and Vice-President and chairs the DNA Committee.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 138

Reconstructing Ancestral Neighborhoods & Networks

Course Description

Understanding the physical and social landscapes where our ancestors lived can be crucial to solving problems of identity, kinship, and origin. This hands-on, advanced course, for students with experience in land records and platting, offers critical skills and practical strategies for constructing community networks around elusive ancestors. We'll explore the integration of advanced land platting techniques with modern mapping technologies and historical maps to place ancestors in a specific location, trace the development of the neighborhoods in which they lived, and uncover insights into historical relationships and migration patterns. In-class examples and exercises will also demonstrate triangulation techniques for determining approximate location from partial data and the use of reconstructed ancestral networks to identify key associates, disambiguate same-name people, and locate "missing" individuals.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kimberly T. Powell, AG

Presenter Credentials

Kimberly Powell is especially passionate about researching hard-to-find families in the Carolinas and Virginia and sharing her love of genealogy with others through teaching. She is the Director of Education for the National Genealogical Society and a past president of the Association for Professional Genealogists. She served as the Genealogy Expert for About.com for sixteen years and is the author of several books, including most recently "The Challenge of Endogamy and Pedigree Collapse" in Advanced Genetic Genealogy: Techniques and Case Studies and The Everything Guide to Online Genealogy, 3rd edition. She has also contributed to several popular genealogy magazines, including BBC's Who Do You Think You Are?, Family Tree Magazine, and the Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly. Kimberly enjoys teaching in courses at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR), the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG), and the GRIP Genealogy Institute, as well as for the online genealogy programs offered through Boston University. She also loves researching land records, reconstructing neighborhoods, and using genetic evidence to help solve complex

genealogical problems. You can find her online at Level Up Genealogy, https://www.levelupgenealogy.com.

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 139

Tracing French-Canadian Ancestors and Telling their Stories

Course Description

In this course, you will learn how to trace your French-Canadian family history back to your pioneer ancestors and their origins in France. You do not need to know French to have amazing success discovering your French-Canadian ancestry. The rich historical records from the colony of New France to modern-day Quebec are the envy of the genealogical world, and the most valuable records are already digitized, indexed, and available online. You will find your ancestors' stories in Catholic parish registers, notarial acts, census population schedules, and other lesser- known records. You will envision your French-Canadian ancestors in their everyday life within the social, religious, economic, political, and cultural contexts of their time. You might even discover that you have a fur trader, Daughter of the King, or First Nations ancestor in your family tree. Join us to accelerate the discovery of your French-Canadian heritage!

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

David Ouimette, CG, CGL

Presenter Credentials

David Ouimette, CG®, CGL℠, is the Senior Program Manager at FamilySearch, where he leads content strategy for the Asia-Pacific region. His work includes establishing record priorities and overseeing the preservation and publication of historical documents and oral genealogies. David Ouimette, CG, CGL David has conducted research in several hundred archives across seventy countries on every continent. Prior to his role at FamilySearch, he was a lead developer and product manager at Ancestry.com, where he oversaw key initiatives including family trees, U.S. records, the search experience, and the original DNA products developed in collaboration with Sorenson Molecular. David currently serves as Vice President of the Board for Certification of Genealogists and has previously held leadership roles with the Utah Genealogical Association and the National Genealogical Society.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 139

Presenter Association

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 140

Advanced DNA Evidence

Course Description

This course will examine advanced applications of atDNA, mtDNA, X-DNA, and Y-DNA, including diving deep into the science of genetic genealogy. We'll also review new third-party tools, methodologies, and company tools, and discuss the privacy and ethical issues related to DNA.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Blaine Bettinger, PhD, JD

Presenter Credentials

Blaine is an intellectual property attorney by day and a genetic genealogist by night. In 2007, he started The Genetic Genealogist (www.thegeneticgenealogist.com), one of the earliest blogs on the topic. Dr. Bettinger has been interviewed and quoted on personal genomics topics in Newsweek, New Scientist, Wired, and others. He authored I Have the Results of My Genetic Genealogy Test, Now What? in 2008, which is distributed by Family Tree DNA to all of their new customers. Blaine frequently authors articles and gives presentations to educate others about using DNA to explore their ancestry. He is an instructor for genetic genealogy courses at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR), Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG), Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh (GRIP), Virtual Institute of Genealogical Research, and Family Tree University. Blaine was recently elected to the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society's Board of Trustees and graduated from ProGen Study Group 21 in 2015.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 141

Practical AI For Genealogists: Foundations and First Steps

Course Description

Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers genealogists practical and powerful tools to make family history research faster, clearer, and more productive. This course introduces genealogists to straightforward, easy-to-use AI skills, helping researchers enhance their work immediately. Students will learn foundational techniques such as crafting clear prompts, summarizing records, and extracting data from complex documents, all while emphasizing ethical use and privacy. We will also explore AI features built into major genealogy platforms and create engaging family history outputs.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Steve J. Little, Jr.

Presenter Credentials

Steve Little is the AI Program Director for the National Genealogical Society and has lifelong passions for language, technology, and genealogy. He completed graduate-level courses in applied linguistics, specializing in natural language processing and computational linguistics, two pillars of today's large language models of AI; his first career was spent in and around libraries (law, local, university, and state archives) building information systems. Steve traces his deep roots to one Appalachian County, where, by 1820, all 32 of his 3rd-great-grandparents had settled—many even earlier than that. 60 of his most recent ancestors were born, lived, and died there in Ashe County, North Carolina. His passion lies in AI & genetic genealogy, with a keen interest in endogamy, pedigree collapse, and the art of deciphering multiple relationships through DNA segment triangulation, and an insatiable curiosity to explore beneficial uses and current limits of artificial intelligence in genealogy. Beyond genealogy, Steve wears many hats: he's a husband and a dad, a Methodist pastor, and a Virginian. His hobbies span from bird watching and sky gazing to chess and film. Additionally, he's an avid reader, writer, photographer, and regex script hacker.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 141

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 142

Navigating Independence: Researching the Lives of Revolutionary War Ancestors

Course Description

In this course, students will: Gain an understanding of the complex groups, communities, governments, and cultures that contributed to the colonial conditions that led to a war for independence from British rule. Learn about the structures and inner workings of the military forces involved: Continental, British/Loyalist, Indigenous, Spanish, Hessians, French, etc. Learn about the complications of life on the home front, and the shifting nature of governmental powers. Explore the religious groups that influenced the trajectory of the fighting, and become inspired by some of the philosophical writings of the time, such as Phillis Wheatley, and Joseph Warren, among others. Gain an understanding of the Indigenous groups and governments that supported war efforts on both sides. Learn about the precarious years of the early republic and how the war experience continued to shape our ancestors lives for several decades – including infrastructure, settlement, pensions, construction of American identities, and legal developments. All sessions will provide information regarding access and use of resources not commonly known and which are specific to the timeframe and regions being covered.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Cheri Daniels, MSLS

Presenter Credentials

Cheri Daniels, MSLS: Author, speaker, librarian, archivist, genealogist, historian, educator, and host of the BloodRoot Podcast. Daniels is the current Local History and Genealogy Librarian for the Woodford County Public Library in Central Kentucky where she manages a collection of original and published material dating from the late 18th century to the present day, including over 5,000 subject files. In her role as genealogist and archivist, she is also a regular writer for the Woodford Sun newspaper where she features genealogy and local history stories uncovered in the onsite collections. Spanning a career of over 30 years, Daniels has worked in various types of repositories – including local, state, and national libraries and archives. Among her previous roles she has served as Head of Library and Archives for the Kentucky Historical Society for over a decade, and three years as the Director of Library and Archives for the

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 142

National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution at their national headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky. While at the Kentucky Historical Society, she was also the Editor of their genealogy publication, Kentucky Ancestors Online (2013-2022), and a Producer/Research Coordinator for Kentucky Ancestors, the award-winning state-wide television program devoted to helping families break down their brick walls. Daniels is also Chair of the APG Southeastern Chapter's Kentucky Committee, a TIGR Instructor (2025) and a contributing author to the book Genealogy and the Librarian (2018, McFarland). She has been speaking to various national genealogy/history audiences since 2012 (NGS, FGS, RootsTech, etc.) and was a guest expert on the TV show, Mysteries at the Museum. When she is not writing, researching, and speaking, she is producing and hosting her own podcast, to share stories from her own genealogy journey. You can learn more about her personal projects and upcoming speaking engagements at genealogyliteracy.com.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 143

Not “Just” Farmers: Records, Relationships, and the Reality of Their Lives

Course Description

The focus is on North American farming and agricultural ancestors and their families. The course will dispel the myth that our ancestors are “just farmers” without a rich and documented life. Farmers have often been dismissed by the assumption that there is not much to find or to learn about their lives and the issues they faced. The variety of records–often underused or undiscovered–give depth and breadth to the lives of our ancestors. Understanding the history of farming and learning about the unique records of the people, products, and land, will give a deeper picture of what hearty families we descend from.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Cari Taplin, CG

Presenter Credentials

Cari A. Taplin is related to Roy Rogers. Or at least that’s what her family told her. As a result, finding her true heritage has been her focus since the year 2000. She is a native of Wood County, Ohio but now lives in Longmont, Colorado. Cari holds the Certified Genealogist® credential and has served in a wide variety of volunteer and leadership positions for state, local, and national societies. As the owner of GenealogyPANTS, she provides speaking services. She also lends help and shares her expertise as an administrator on the highly popular Facebook Group “The Genealogy Squad.” Cari currently works for Ancestry ProGenealogists. Cari’s research focuses on midwestern and Great Lakes states. When she’s not working on her genealogy, she is a wife and a mother of two young adults.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 144

Digging Deeper: Records, Tools, and Skills

Course Description

This may be your course! It covers 19th through 21st century US records, online resources, “hidden” records, analysis, and methodology. This course often serves as preparation for other GRIP courses. It is a separate, but complementary, course to BEYOND Digging Deeper: Sources, Methods, and Practices, which debuted in 2025. If you answer yes to any of the following questions, this course is for you. Are you past the beginning stages of researching your family history? Have you researched online but know there is more elsewhere or that you have missed some resources? Do you need a stronger foundation before taking advanced or specialized courses? Are you not yet comfortable with in-depth evaluation of documents, deciding what to do next, and delving into less commonly used collections? When we have checked basic records and done online searches but still have missing details, we need more leads and to do a better job of analyzing records. We will dig deeper into a variety of records, some you may have never heard about, and where they are found. There will be hands-on and interactive activities, small group discussions, and full class interaction.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Paula Stuart-Warren, CG®, FMGS, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

Paula specializes in individual client consultations, Midwestern research, unique resources, central United States repositories, Native American, and heavily on Midwestern and Plains American Indians. She has worked with individuals, tribes, and law firms across the U.S. She provides individual consultations to those wanting to do their own research but who need advice to overcome stumbling blocks or where to go next. Presents webinars on various genealogy topics. APG Smallwood Award of Merit; past officer of APG, first president of the Northland Chapter of APG. Lectures nationally and coordinates courses at the annual GRIP Genealogy Institute. Served six years on the Minnesota Genealogical Society Board and the Board of Directors of the Federation of Genealogical Societies. Author Your Guide to the Family History Library, Minnesota Genealogical Reference Guide, and numerous articles on various research facilities and types of records.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 144

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 145

Women and Children First!: Research Methods for the Hidden Half of the Family

Course Description

The women of our families—mothers, sisters, wives—and the children they bore and raised comprise far more than just a hidden half of our families: women and children greatly outnumbered the menfolk. Yet they left fewer traces in the records and researching these family members effectively poses challenges for any genealogist. From the obvious topics of school and work records to the way these family members were disguised behind tick marks in the census, from clues hidden away in manuscript collections to the clues hidden away in our very genetic code, the resources and skills highlighted by this course will answer the question of why we should—and how we can—research women and children first and help us recreate our family trees far beyond the father-to-son-to-son bloodlines of genealogy past.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Judy G. Russell, JD, CG®, CGL®, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

udy G. Russell, The Legal Genealogist®, is a genealogist with a law degree. She writes, teaches, and lectures on a wide variety of genealogical topics, providing expert guidance through the murky territory where law and family history intersect. A Colorado native with roots deep in the American South on her mother's side and entirely in Germany on her father's side, she holds a bachelor's degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and a law degree from Rutgers School of Law-Newark. Before she retired, she worked as a newspaper reporter, trade association writer, legal investigator, defense attorney, federal prosecutor, law editor, and, for more than 20 years, as an adjunct faculty member at Rutgers Law School. She is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the National Genealogical Society, and numerous state and regional genealogical societies. A recipient of the Silver Tray Award from the Utah Genealogical Association and the 2017 Award of Excellence from the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, she now serves on the NGSQ editorial board. An internationally-known lecturer, course coordinator, and faculty member at numerous genealogical institutes, she holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 145

Certified Genealogical Lecturer℠ from the Board for Certification of Genealogists®. Her award-winning blog appears on The Legal Genealogist website (https://www.legalgenealogist.com).

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 146

Marching Toward Change: Reformers, Crises, and Movements that Transformed the 19th and 20th Century America

Course Description

From parlor meetings to picket lines, this course explores the reform movements of the 19th and 20th centuries that reshaped the nation in times of crisis and change. We'll examine how ordinary people fought for a better world—and how others pushed back—through sessions focused on the social, political, and religious forces behind these movements. By understanding why reform took hold, how it spread, and who it touched, genealogists will gain new tools for finding and interpreting the stories of those who led reform—and those whose lives were transformed.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Katherine R. Willson

Presenter Credentials

Katherine R. Willson of Dexter, Michigan, discovered her passion for genealogy at just eight years old as a Junior Girl Scout and has been researching ever since. Today, she is a dynamic and engaging presenter at regional, national, and international events, and has held leadership roles in local, national, and professional genealogical organizations. Katherine serves as a course coordinator and instructor for the National Genealogical Society's Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. She is also a full-time professional researcher, specializing in Michigan's pre-statehood settlers, Midwestern families who migrated west during the 18th and 19th centuries, and European immigrants arriving in America in the 19th and 20th centuries. Her website, SocialMediaGenealogy.com, offers free resources for family historians, including genealogy forms, interviewing questions for capturing oral histories, and extensive curated catalogs of genealogy and history Facebook groups, YouTube channels, and podcasts

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 146

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 147

The Intentional Genealogist: From Chaos to Clarity

Course Description

One of the most overwhelming tasks in the pursuit of genealogy is to get organized and stay organized. This course will take attendees through organization methods for their own personal knowledge management, tasks, and developing systems for ascendancy and descendancy research, research trips, and time management.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kelli Jo Bergheimer, MSM

Presenter Credentials

Kelli Jo Bergheimer is a writer, teacher, editor, and international genealogical speaker. Kelli holds a Bachelor's Degree in biology, a Master's in Education Curriculum and Instruction, and a Master's in Business Management. Kelli is the Director of Curriculum and Assessments for Blue Kayak, a K-12 textbook company. She also works as the Director of Education for Your DNA Guide. Kelli runs a small business—Mess on the Desk, a genealogical organization company with a YouTube channel. Kelli is the facilitator for Genetics, Genealogy, and You, an online DNA Interest Group. Kelli is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and the Genealogical Speaker's Guild member. Kelli presents one-hour programs, workshops, half-day and full-day events, and webinars. Her specialties are DNA analysis and genealogical organization.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 148

Land, Faith and Family: Navigating Early Ontario and Quebec Research

Course Description

Ontario and Québec are home to most of Canada's population, past and present. Take a deep dive into the early English and French records of these foundational provinces and learn how to navigate challenges unique to First Nations, Jewish and early colonial research. From civil and religious records to land and estate files, students will learn to access, interpret, and apply research techniques through hands-on activities and case studies to trace their ancestors in Ontario and Québec.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kathryn Lake Hogan, BA, PLCGS, UE

Presenter Credentials

Kathryn Lake Hogan, BA, PLCGS, UE, is a professional genealogist and educator from Southwestern Ontario, Canada, specializing in Canadian genealogy. As the founder off Looking4Ancestors, she has been helping researchers uncover their Canadian roots since 2007. Kathryn has contributed articles to leading genealogy publications. She has served as a director with Ontario Ancestors and the Association of Professional Genealogists as well as the past Dominion Genealogist for the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada. As a highly sought-after speaker, Kathryn enthusiastically inspires family history researchers to discover their ancestors in Canada.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 149

Genetic Networks: Start at the Beginning

Course Description

Calling all DNA beginners who want to learn more! Understanding DNA results can be overwhelming. This step-by-step, practice-as-you-go course is for you! Understanding and using genetic networks can propel your DNA analysis forward. This course will transform your understanding of DNA shared matching and building networks of matches to make progress to answer your research questions. You will learn techniques to build networks, strategies to analyze networks, and tips to organize what you find.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kelli Jo Bergheimer, MSM

Presenter Credentials

Kelli Jo Bergheimer is a writer, teacher, editor, and international genealogical speaker. Kelli holds a Bachelor's Degree in biology, a Master's in Education Curriculum and Instruction, and a Master's in Business Management. Kelli is the Director of Curriculum and Assessments for Blue Kayak, a K-12 textbook company. She also works as the Director of Education for Your DNA Guide. Kelli runs a small business—Mess on the Desk, a genealogical organization company with a YouTube channel. Kelli is the facilitator for Genetics, Genealogy, and You, an online DNA Interest Group. Kelli is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and the Genealogical Speaker's Guild member. Kelli presents one-hour programs, workshops, half-day and full-day events, and webinars. Her specialties are DNA analysis and genealogical organization.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 150

Interdisciplinary Civil War Research: The Road to Disunion and Reconstruction, 1820–1877

Course Description

The course is designed to be highly interactive, with critical thinking practicums at the end of each of the first three days, along with a planned field trip to the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum on day four. Students will be given the opportunity for a practical approach to learning presented through the use of primary documents, research methodology, and historiography. Key terminology will enhance the student's journey, which allows for a deeper look into other lesser-used sources, leading to more advanced record applications. Instruction will also ultimately look at the FAN club for Civil War ancestors, including brothers, cousins, friends, and other familial associates. When properly analyzed, military records can be used for more profound ways to research our ancestors' lives, including details of military service and family history during the Reconstruction Era post-war period.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Michael L. Strauss, MA, AG®, AGL™

Presenter Credentials

Michael L. Strauss, MA, AG is a professional Accredited Genealogist and a nationally recognized genealogical speaker. He has been employed as a forensic genealogist for 25 years, has a BA in history, and is a United States Coast Guard veteran. Michael is also a qualified expert witness in the courts in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia and an approved genealogist with the United States Army to locate DNA-qualified persons MIA from Korea, Vietnam, and World War II. Strauss has been a faculty member of IGHR, SLIG, and GRIP, has been involved in Civil War reenacting for more than 25 years, and also reenacts the Mormon Battalion with the Utah Living History Association.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 150

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 151

Records Loss: Overcoming Destroyed, Missing, or Non-Extant Records

Course Description

This course is designed for the intermediate to advanced researcher. A solid understanding of genealogy basics will help students to make use of the materials and concepts presented. Students should have experience in using census, county records, land records and general secondary records. Concepts addressed include strategies, sources and techniques to look beyond the obvious and overcome the challenge of missing records.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kelvin L. Meyers, FTxSGS

Presenter Credentials

A fifth generation Texan and professional forensic genealogist since 1996, Kelvin is a frequent speaker to genealogical societies and family associations throughout the United States. He specializes in southern brick wall problems for clients. Kelvin is a 1989 and 1990 alumnus of the Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research at Samford University and has returned to IGHR as lecturer in the Southern Course and the Professional Courses. In 2019 Kelvin coordinated the “Burned Counties and More: Overcoming Record Loss” for the Salt Lake Institute Genealogy. Kelvin also taught in the popular Fundamentals of Forensics and Beyond Fundamentals courses. He is a course coordinator at Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research (IGHR) sponsored by the Georgia Genealogical Society and also at the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburg (GRIP). He is member and President of the Association of Professional Genealogist forensic special interest group, and a past board member of APG, a past President of the Lone Star Chapter of APG. The Dallas Genealogical Society awarded Kelvin the Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck Distinguished Service Award in December of 2018. In 2016 Kelvin published Research in Texas for NGS (National Genealogical Society) Research in the States series. Kelvin was instrumental in creating the Texas Institute of Genealogical Research (TIGR) sponsored by the Texas State Genealogical Society (TxSGS) and was the first director. Kelvin was awarded a Fellow of TxSGS in 2023. Kelvin is also the historian/archivist for First United Methodist Church, Dallas.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 151

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 152

Surrogates and Substitutes – the 1890 US Census Exemplar

Course Description

This intermediate to advanced curriculum will use the 1890 US Census as a case study for hands-on skill building to close gaps created by non-existent population schedules of ancestors expected to be enumerated during the 11th Census of the United States. Skill growth will be achieved through course instruction and exploration of surrogate records, which will provide a platform for putting learning into practice. Assignment work will involve group discussions, session exercises, and fieldwork with primary artifacts and research tools.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Cecelia McFadden, MISM, PMP; Kate Townsend, CG®

Presenter Credentials

Cecelia is a family legacy coach, researcher, and technology professional who's been working on client and personal ancestral legacy topics for over a decade. Active with the Franklin County Genealogical and Historical Society in the state of Ohio since 2016, she currently serves as President of the organization. Her love for genealogy and family history creates opportunities to travel, create, and serve the discipline via volunteerism, lecturing, teaching, and consulting. Her presentations, workshops, and webinars have been conducted on behalf of RootsTech, the Appalachian Studies Association, the Ohio Genealogical Society, other historical societies, Universities, public libraries, museums, and more. She's an avid reader and jazz enthusiast in her spare time. Kate is a former professional investigator turned genealogist who specializes in Pennsylvania research. She also has experience with records in Ohio, West Virginia, and New York City. She owns Family History Investigations LLC, where she helps clients discover their family history. As of February 2024, Kate holds the Certified Genealogist® credential. In addition, Kate is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists ("APG"), the Great Lakes Chapter of APG, the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of APG, the National Genealogical Society ("NGS"), and the Genealogical Speaker's Guild. She previously served as the Vice-Chair, Chair, and Immediate-Past Chair of the NGS Delegate Council. Kate has spoken at national and local genealogical societies, libraries, and conferences, including the NGS Family History

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 152

Conference, New England Regional Genealogical Consortium, Ohio Genealogical Society Conference, and RootsTech. Although Kate has been working on her own family history since she was sixteen, her interest in conducting professional-level research was piqued when she served as an Archives Technician at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) while completing her undergraduate studies. She served as a resource for both amateur and professional genealogists, assisting them in conducting archival research. Additionally, she gained experience with primary source documents in her first position with NARA, where she worked in the holdings maintenance department, preserving and cataloging records dating back to the 1800s.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 153

Researching Penn's Colony

Course Description

Until 1825, Philadelphia was the gateway to the colonies and the young United States. Many early Americans immigrated through the port of Philadelphia due to promises of religious freedom and opportunity for land ownership, ultimately the American Dream. The founding of the Colony was unique to William Penn; thus, life, religious diversity, the laws of Pennsylvania, attempts to outlaw slavery, the readily available land on favorable terms, and more importantly, the records left behind differ from the other British Colonies, presenting challenges to researchers. The emphasis of this course is to understand: Colonial Pennsylvania structure and religious diversity Impact Colonial Pennsylvania had on the history of the United States How to locate and research the abundant Pennsylvania records that differ from the other colonies

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Sandra Rumble

Presenter Credentials

Sandy started her career as a software developer and trainer. For over 30 years, Sandy was the go-to person to train new users in cutting-edge software, developing in-house training programs for new development tools. Expanding her interest in teaching outside the software industry, Sandy began teaching genealogy, the Constitution, Congress, and the judicial system at the Delaware Valley University Center for Learning in Retirement. Sandy speaks about military research, researching Colonial Pennsylvania, lineage research, and research planning at genealogical institutes, conferences, genealogical and historical societies, and DAR Chapters. As a course coordinator for GRIP, Sandy coordinated Documentation for Lineage Societies and co-coordinated Answering the Call of Uncle Sam, an exploration of 18th & 19th-century American military records.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 153

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 154

Skill-Building Practicum for Genealogical Research Success

Course Description

Successful genealogical research requires a range of skills that aren't always well-taught in books or conferences. From the outset of every project, you must create a workable research plan; take a historical approach to geography; navigate record collections and their descriptions; track your findings; and confidently use archives. You need targeted strategies for searching fielded and unstructured digital data and learning historical context (sometimes very specific context). Interviewing (and listening!) skills are also crucial, as is the confident navigation of archives and research libraries. Analyzing and organizing research findings, writing for discovery, building citations, researching laws, reading old handwriting, and sharing your findings…all are essential steps that require skill and finesse. At the beginning of the course, you'll be asked to consider your own overarching goals as a genealogist–and you'll return to that sense of purpose at the end of the week when it's time to consider your writing or publication plan. During the rest of the course, you'll have focused instruction from seasoned professionals who have honed specific strategies, tools and insights. You'll have hands-on practice to boost your understanding and confidence–including dedicated time in both archive and research library settings.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Sunny Jane Morton

Presenter Credentials

Sunny Jane Morton is a Contributing Editor at Family Tree Magazine and Content Director at Your DNA Guide. She is author of Story of My Life: A Workbook for Preserving Your Legacy, now in its 2nd edition, and co-author of the NGS award-winning book, How to Find Your Family History in U.S. Church Records. She is past Editor of Ohio Genealogy News. While she has built her career on teaching everyday skills for the popular genealogy market, her earliest publications were in academic journals, and her most recent is a co-authored, story-driven article about delayed birth records that appeared in NGS Magazine in early 2024. Sunny is co-author of the NGS award-winning book How to Find Your Family History in U.S. Church

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 154

Records and author of a work-in-progress on religious archives, funded in part by The University of Notre Dame. She also spent a year in an in-depth memoir writing workshop and has done additional studies on the subgenre of family history memoir. In this GRIP workshop, she looks forward to sharing unique lessons learned from years of studying and practice of the kinds of writing in which the author must navigate the integration of first-person memory-sharing and the third-person perspective common to research-based storytelling.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 155

Advanced AI Techniques for Genealogists: Expanding Your Research Skills

Course Description

Join Mark Thompson and Steve Little for a week of advanced artificial intelligence applications in genealogy. Mark and Steve are co-hosts of the Family History AI Show podcast, and Steve serves as the Artificial Intelligence Program Director for the National Genealogical Society. Through a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on workshops, you'll learn how to take advantage of AI's powerful research, reasoning and analytical capabilities. You'll also learn how to select the right AI tool for each genealogical challenge, and how to efficiently get information in and out of those tools so that you can transform raw historical data into meaningful family history insights.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Mark D. Thompson

Presenter Credentials

Mark Thompson is a professional genealogist and educator who specializes in genetic genealogy and researching personal family archives. He is the Vice President of the Victoria Genealogical Society (VGS) in Victoria, BC, and the chair of their DNA Special Interest Group. He is also a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists. Mark has decades of public speaking experience and teaches and speaks on a variety of genealogy-related topics. Prior to becoming a genealogist, Mark worked for over 20 years in leadership roles in the technology industry. He worked in small startups and large corporations, ushering in technologies to improve business operations. Mark's background in both technology and genealogy uniquely positions him to introduce genealogists to the rapidly changing field of artificial intelligence and how it can help them in their genealogy research.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 155

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 156

Metes & Bounds: Land Platting

Course Description

The course is a practicum-based approach to developing metes & bounds land platting skills and using plats to solve genealogical problems. Sessions cover reading and abstracting metes & bounds legal land descriptions; hand drawing plats; computer platting (DeedMapper software); platting over base maps; dealing with common plat problems (meanders, multiple meanders, imprecise boundary descriptions); constructing connected tract maps; and geo-locating base maps and plats. Historical surveying practices and on-line resources are also discussed. Students will spend a significant amount of the course using DeedMapper software working practicum problems that derive from real-world research. The practicum portfolio allow students to select exercises that stress specific skills, align with their own research, and cover different geographic locales. Practicum problems include dealing with errors in boundary descriptions (such as scrivener's errors and reciprocal bearings), using on-line records & resources, platting over a USGS base map, finding and using other base maps (such as historic land ownership maps), neighborhood construction, dealing with imprecise land descriptions, leveraging on-line GIS systems, urban plats, and other topics.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Gerald "Jerry" Smith

Presenter Credentials

Gerald (Jerry) Smith conducts research on Pennsylvanian families. He is the IGHR and SLIG course coordinator for the week-long land platting course. He is on faculty for IGHR, SLIG, and GRIP teaching topics in the military, maps, and land record institutes. He has published a number of books and articles, including abstracts of Bedford County, Pennsylvania, Court of Quarter Sessions records. He researches regularly at the Pennsylvania State Archives, Pennsylvania State Library & Law Library, U.S. Army Archives (Carlisle, PA), National Archives, and other repositories.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 156

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 157

Genealogical Organization Excellence: A Course for Group Leadership

Course Description

Developed in alignment with the NGS Delegate Council's Excellence Recognition Program, this course delivers in-depth education on elements vital to the organizational self-evaluation process and continuous improvement. As the first institute-level course dedicated to organizational management and development for genealogical organizations, it addresses a longstanding gap in leadership education for existing and emerging officers and leaders. The curriculum integrates established nonprofit management research and best practices, providing a well-rounded and practical experience for participants. It also addresses the unique issues confronting genealogical organizations today. By empowering leaders with the knowledge and tools needed for effective decision-making, this course supports the continued growth and vitality of genealogical organizations, which are essential to the health of the genealogical field and community.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Matt Weismantel, MA

Presenter Credentials

With over 30 years of professional experience in higher education administration, Matt Weismantel has a proven record of designing and leading educational programs, training sessions, and workshops, especially those focused on organizational management and development. Matt holds a B.A. and M.A. in Historical Geography. At Rutgers University, he oversaw major institutional initiatives and was recognized for his expertise in translating complex concepts into effective operations, strategic planning, and improving organizational quality. Since retiring from Rutgers, Matt has become an active leader in the genealogical community, currently serving as Chair of the National Genealogical Society's Delegate Council. He led the Organizational Excellence Recognition Task Force, instrumental in developing principles and best practices for genealogical organizations. He has also designed and presented a two-day strategic planning workshop for genealogical societies. Matt also

volunteers with the National Park Service at Ellis Island's American Family Immigration History Center and Research Library and with other local organizations.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 158

Genealogy Services for Librarians: Tools, Techniques, and Trends

Course Description

A full course description has not been posted yet, but other details of this institute course can be accessed here: https://grip.ngsgenealogy.org/courses/genealogy-services-for-librarians-tools-techniques-and-trends/

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kori Robbins, AG®

Presenter Credentials

Kori Robbins, AG®, manages the team that oversees FamilySearch affiliates, which include libraries, museums, and archives. She holds a BA in Family History/Genealogy from Brigham Young University and is accredited in research in England. Alongside her husband, H.J., she tag teams wrangling six kiddos. Her interests outside of family history include learning, music, personality tests, and a good night's sleep.

Presenter Association

GRIP Genealogy Institute

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 159

Methods and Sources in Practice

Course Description

This course focuses on genealogical research strategies, organization, core record groups, analysis, in order to put them into practice. It is a foundational course to give you tools to begin or re-invigorate your research with classes including early American handwriting, developing research plans, land records, behind the scenes with censuses, court records, probate, church, and military records. We utilize hands-on workshops and analytical challenges throughout the week. Classes are taught by experts in the field; no prior genealogical experience is necessary.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Rebecca Whitman Koford, CG®, CGL®

Presenter Credentials

Rebecca Whitman Koford holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and as a Certified Genealogical Lecturer®. Her research specialties focus in Maryland, Upstate New York, Virginia, the District of Columbia, military records from the Revolution through the Civil War, federal records at the National Archives (D.C.), as well as land records of all types. She has lectured at RootsTech, National Genealogical Society conferences (NGS), Legacy Family Tree Webinars, and local conferences across the states. She is co-author of the NGS Research in the States series book on Maryland. Rebecca is the Course I coordinator for Georgia's Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research (IGHR) and in Utah, the course coordinator of the Advanced Research Tools: Land Records course at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG). She is a graduate and former mentor of the ProGen Study Group and served as the ProGen Administrator from 2015–2020. Rebecca was Executive Director of the Board for Certification of Genealogists® from 2018 to 2024. She currently serves as Director of the Genealogical Institute on Federal Records (Gen-Fed) held annually at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. In October 2024, she was elected as vice-president of the National Genealogical Society.

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 159

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 160

Advanced Methodology and Evidence Analysis

Course Description

Designed to develop and foster advanced skills by concentrating on problem-solving techniques. Its focus is on the proper application of the Genealogical Proof Standard (as explicated through BCG's Genealogy Standards, 2021 second edition revised) to a wide variety of record types to solve complex research problems. Where beginning genealogy students need to learn what records exist to accurately identify their families, and intermediate genealogy students need to learn where records may be found, particularly those not readily available online, advanced genealogy students need to learn how to use records in ways that may be neither intuitive nor obvious to bridge the gaps left by time and record loss. Thus, the course has three fundamental objectives: that students develop an understanding of the elements of advanced methodology; that students develop a deeper understanding of the sources employed in advanced genealogical research; and, that students begin to understand some of the problems involved in and research techniques designed to solve problems in complex or unique research domains.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Judy G. Russell, JD, CG®, CGL®, FUGA View Larger Image

Presenter Credentials

The Legal Genealogist Judy G. Russell is a genealogist with a law degree. She writes, teaches and lectures on a wide variety of genealogical topics, providing expert guidance through the murky territory where law and family history intersect. A Colorado native with roots deep in the American south on her mother's side and entirely in Germany on her father's side, she holds a bachelor's degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and a law degree from Rutgers School of Law-Newark. Before she retired, she worked as a newspaper reporter, trade association writer, legal investigator, defense attorney, federal prosecutor, law editor and, for more than 20 years, as an adjunct member of the faculty at Rutgers Law School. She is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the National Genealogical Society and numerous state and regional genealogical societies. Named a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association in 2025, she received the 2015 UGA Silver Tray Award and the 2017 Award of

Excellence from the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, where she now serves as a member of the NGSQ editorial board. An internationally-known lecturer and course coordinator and faculty member at numerous genealogical institutes, she holds credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and Certified Genealogical Lecturer® from the Board for Certification of Genealogists®. Her award-winning blog appears at The Legal Genealogist® website (https://www.legalgenealogist.com).

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 161

Scottish Research: The Fundamentals and Beyond

Course Description

This Scottish course caters to both those just starting their Scottish research and more experienced researchers. All the foundational records will be explained but expanded upon using case studies for all researchers to be able to get the most out of the records. An extensive syllabus will provide details on the records, the laws that created them, and finding aids, online and published. Extensive bibliographic references will provide guidance for those who want to dig deeper into any particular topic.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Paul Milner, MDiv, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

Paul Milner, a native of northern England, is a professional genealogist and international lecturer. He teaches week-long English and Scottish research tracks at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR), Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG), and the British Institute. Paul is a recipient of UGA Fellow Award (2018) and the David S. Vogels Jr Award from FGS (2019). He is the author of six publications providing how-to guidance for English and Scottish researchers. Paul has specialized in British Isles genealogical research for over 35 years. Paul is currently the book review editor for the BIGWILL newsletter and retired review editor of the FGS FORUM. He is the past president of the British Interest Group of Wisconsin and Illinois (BIGWILL), and a past board member of the APG, FGS and GSG. Paul focuses on British Isles resources and methodology on his blog at www.milnergenealogy.com

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 162

Understanding Land Records

Course Description

Land was generally our ancestors' most valuable asset. Locating and using land records can provide valuable information for genealogists. This course will cover both state land and federal land distribution as well as an in-depth study of deeds. Topics include land divisions, deed indexes, maps, homesteads, bounty land, online records, surveys, patents, and grants. Hands-on exercises will provide practice locating, using, and interpreting deeds and other types of land records.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Angela Packer McGhie, CG®, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

Angela Packer McGhie, CG®, FUGA, is passionate about genealogy education. She enjoys coordinating courses at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy and teaches at various genealogy conferences and institutes. Angela is a trustee for the Board for Certification of Genealogists and the BCG Education Fund. Previously, she held roles as education director of the National Genealogical Society and administrator/curriculum designer of the ProGen Study Program. Angela is a former chapter president of the Association of Professional Genealogists. Her articles have appeared in UGA's Crossroads magazine, the APG Quarterly, and the NGS Magazine. For her significant contributions to the field, Angela was honored as a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association.

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 163

Research in the South: Cessions and Territories

Course Description

This course is designed for the intermediate to advanced researcher. To provide greater flexibility for the student, we will have pre-recorded the sessions for this course to be watched on your schedule, along with some scheduled Q&A time with the instructors, some informal times for discussion, and some related bonus video sessions. Pre-recording will allow students the ability to watch or review sessions within their own schedule. Students will have an extended time to watch the sessions beyond the week. A solid understanding of genealogy basics will help students to make use of the materials and concepts presented. Students should have experience in using census, county records, land records and general secondary records. Concepts addressed include migration, settlement patterns, religion, land, and geography. States covered: Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Kelvin L. Meyers, FTxSGS

Presenter Credentials

A fifth generation Texan and professional forensic genealogist since 1996, Kelvin Meyers is a frequent speaker to genealogical societies and family associations throughout the United States. After being employed for ten years in the Genealogy Department of the Dallas Public Library, Kelvin now has a solo practice as a forensic genealogist serving clients that include probate attorneys, trust department of banks, the US Immigration Service and energy companies. He also specializes in southern brick wall problems for clients. Kelvin is a 1989 and 1990 alumnus of the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research at Samford University and has returned to IGHR as lecturer. In 2016 he co-coordinated with J. Mark Lowe, “A Swing Through the South” at SLIG (Salt Lake Institute of Genealogical Research). He is a past board member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and a past President of the Lone Star Chapter of APG. Kelvin has recently published Research in Texas for NGS (National Genealogical Society) Research in the States series. Kelvin also currently serves as the chairman of the history and archives committee for First United Methodist Church in Dallas.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 163

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 164

Building African American Families: Records, Resources & Documentation

Course Description

Students will learn resources and methods necessary to research African American families. They will become familiar with records and strategies that enhance research success. Each session will provide opportunity for students to work in class on their own family histories or research projects on a family of interest. Students will be provided with time to ask questions and interact with course faculty throughout the week. This format will help students better understand how to apply what is being taught with the ability to receive additional guidance from instructors. In addition, instructors will also be available during the optional 30-minute office hours at the end of the day.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Deborah A. Abbott, PhD

Presenter Credentials

Deborah A. Abbott, PhD, Deborah A. Abbott, PhD, is a professional genealogist specializing in genealogical methodology, manuscript collections, and African American family research. She is a member of the Cuyahoga County (OH) Archives Commission, the Lakeview Cemetery Community Outreach Committee (Cleveland, OH), past president of the African American Genealogical Society, Cleveland, Ohio, and a retired professor of Counseling from Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland. She holds both the BS and MEd degrees from Tuskegee University and the PhD degree from Kent State University. Dr. Abbott is coordinator of the African American Track at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR) in Athens, Georgia, and the GRIP Genealogy Institute of the National Genealogical Society. She teaches at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG) and the Texas Institute of Genealogical Research (TIGR). Dr. Abbott has articles published in the Ohio Genealogy News and FamilyTree magazines. She can be found teaching African American genealogy in a segment entitled “Needles & Threads” on Ancestry Academy, an educational video course for Ancestry.com. Dr. Abbott also coordinates the “Genealogy and Family History Clinic” for the Cleveland Public Library. She is a member of the National Genealogical Society (NGS), the Association of

Professional Genealogist (APG) and the Genealogical Speakers Guild (GSG). A Cleveland, Ohio native, Dr. Abbott is a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the Tuskegee University National Alumni Association, and Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland.

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 165

Genetics for Genealogists: Fundamentals of DNA

Course Description

Discover the potential of using DNA testing in genealogy. This course explores all four DNA types essential for enhancing genealogical research. Structured sessions will instruct about Y DNA, mitochondrial DNA, X DNA, and autosomal DNA; while practical exercises and case studies provide hands-on experience in integrating DNA evidence into family studies. The importance of correlating DNA with documentary evidence to reach more accurate genealogical conclusions is emphasized. Sessions incorporating the use of DNA tools will help students learn to identify, categorize, and correlate matches. The weekly class format allows for practice between sessions to solidify concepts. Office hours planned midway between regular class sessions offer assistance in practical application as well as theoretical understanding.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Patti Lee Hobbs, CG®, CGG®

Presenter Credentials

Patti Lee Hobbs, Certified Genealogist®, Certified Genetic Genealogist®, resides in Clever, Missouri. She considers herself blessed to have ancestors from many geographical locations leading to research in varied repositories. Patti holds a bachelor's degree in biology which incorporated genetics coursework. She serves on the editorial board for the National Genealogical Society Quarterly and is former trustee for both the Board for Certification of Genealogists and the BCG Education Fund. Patti's two articles "DNA Identifies a Father for Rachel Lee of Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania," in March 2017 and "DNA Merges the Families of Stephen Stilwell of Dutchess County, New York; Cornwall, Upper Canada; and Coshocton County, Ohio," in March 2024 were published in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. She is a contributing author of Advanced Genetic Genealogy: Techniques and Case Studies.

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 165

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 166

Repository Research: From Website to Doorway

Course Description

The 21st century genealogist starts with research online, exhausting all resources available on the Internet before stepping foot in brick-and-mortar buildings. But are they truly getting everything they need in their time online when it comes to research in libraries, archives, and museum collections? The website is the virtual front door to research repositories and once through that door, researchers should eke out every detail they can to learn what is available, how to locate things, how to educate themselves about the repositories, and how to get the most from using them. From websites to catalogs to finding aids, this course will explore what it means to do truly exhaustive research in the wide array of collections available in repositories, both online and offline.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Cyndi Ingle

Presenter Credentials

Cyndi Ingle is the creator and innovator behind the award-winning and globally recognized CyndisList.com, a free categorized list of more than 320,000 links for genealogical research. In its 29 years online Cyndi's List has consistently remained in the top tiers for genealogical research tools online. It helps millions of visitors worldwide and has been featured in the media and diverse publications, including ABC News, NBC News, the BBC, National Public Radio, USA Today, Time, Newsweek, Parade, People Magazine, Wired, Ancestry Magazine, Family Tree Magazine, Family Chronicle, and Internet Genealogy magazines. Cyndi, a genealogist for more than 45 years, has an expertise in using technology for genealogy. Additionally, her many active years in genealogy have also resulted in a specialty for research in the United States and bringing together traditional methodology with organization, computers, software, and the Internet. Cyndi is the recipient of the 2018 Society of Genealogists Prince Michael of Kent Award, the 2016 National Genealogical Society President's Citation, and many other awards and honors. She has served in several capacities for genealogical organizations. Cyndi is an internationally-known guest lecturer for various genealogical meetings, seminars, and webinars (http://www.CyndisList.com/speaking-calendar/). She coordinated courses for the Genealogical

Institute of Pittsburgh (GRIP) and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG), and she has authored numerous articles and three books. Cyndi is a columnist for the Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly. She is the Executive Director for the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research. Cyndi, her mother, son, and two Boston Terriers live in Edgewood, Washington.

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 167

Writing Genealogical Proofs Using Documentary and Genetic Evidence

Course Description

This hands-on course provides the opportunity for students to practice and gain confidence in the skills needed to craft written proofs integrating evidence drawn from documentary and genetic sources. The sequenced case examples build the skills set from simple to complex. Case examples include discussions for reader-friendly tables and figures and the principles of crafting citations to document DNA sources.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG®, CGG®

Presenter Credentials

Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG®, CGG®, BCG Trustee, is an author and national lecturer focusing on topics related to using genetic evidence correlated with documentary evidence to solve genealogical brick walls. A Chicago local, she holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Social Work from the University of Chicago and has completed advanced graduate study in Social Anthropology at the Colegio de Michoacán, Mexico. Her genealogical practice specializes in Midwestern U.S., Chicago, and Mexican research as well as complex problem-solving, unknown parentage, and DNA analysis. She is a coordinator and faculty member at IGHR, and SLIG. She received the NGSQ Award for Excellence for two complex evidence case studies incorporating traditional documentary research and autosomal DNA analysis in the June 2016 and June 2023 issues of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. She published "Drowning in DNA? The Genealogical Proof Standard Tosses a Lifeline" in Debbie Parker Wayne's book Advanced Genetic Genealogy: Techniques and Case Studies. She holds the credentials Certified Genealogist and Certified Genetic Genealogist from the Board for Certification of Genealogists where she serves as a Trustee and is chair of the DNA Committee.

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 167

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 168

Researching Your South Carolina Roots: Finding Family in the Palmetto State

Course Description

Researching ancestors in South Carolina can be both rewarding and frustrating. While the state has deep roots and a long history, it also presents challenges such as record loss, shifting county boundaries, limited statewide registration, and inconsistencies in what survives from one county to the next. This course is designed for experienced genealogists who are ready to take a deeper dive into South Carolina research. Students will learn how to work with what is available, including land, probate, court, church, and census records, while exploring creative strategies for overcoming common gaps. The course also examines how migration, slavery, and shifting boundaries shaped recordkeeping and how to use historical and cultural context to strengthen research conclusions. By the end of the course, participants will have a better understanding of how to navigate South Carolina's unique research challenges and will be equipped with the tools, resources, and confidence needed to uncover and share their ancestors' stories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Cheri Hudson Passey

Presenter Credentials

Cheri Hudson Passey is a professional genealogist, instructor, writer, speaker, and owner of Carolina Girl Genealogy, LLC. She hosts the YouTube genealogy chat show GenFriends and is a genealogical researcher subcontracted by Eagle Investigative Services, Inc., for the US Army Past Conflict Repatriations Branch. She is involved in many genealogy societies and organizations and is on the National Genealogical Society board. For over ten years, Cheri has written the blog "Carolina Girl Genealogy," sharing genealogy tips, methodologies, family stories, and her research adventures in South Carolina.

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 168

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 169

Researching New York: Resources and Strategies

Course Description

Research into New York families is complicated by its urban-rural extremes and its 400-year, multi-ethnic history. Several factors combine to result in a dearth of relevant records: vital records started relatively late, most people leased land until the 1850s, tax records are sparse, the New York State Library burned in 1911, etc. This course tackles those complexities and challenges, arming the researcher with the knowledge (and the workarounds) needed for success in this difficult state. We will cover New York's history as it impacts the research process, and examine in detail the records that have been created and preserved. Broad topics include immigration/migration, laws and the legal system, military records, ethnic groups, vital records, land and property, urban research, turnpikes/canals/railroads, local government/institutional records, tax records, maps, online resources, probate, newspapers, directories, censuses, and more. Case studies will illustrate the application of the research strategies.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Karen Mauer Jones, CG®, FGBS, FUGA

Presenter Credentials

Karen Mauer Jones, CG®, FGBS, FUGA, of Monroe, New York, is an editor, author, lecturer, and professional genealogist. She served as editor of The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record from 2011 until her retirement at the end of 2017. She was named a fellow of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society in November 2012, and has served on the NYG&B Family History Advisory Committee (formerly the Education Committee) since 2011. Karen was made a fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association in 2019. She has lectured at national, state, regional, and local conferences, and coordinated institute courses at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, and the Institute for Genealogical and Historical Research. She holds an MA from the Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies (State University of New York, Oneonta), and served on the boards of APG and FGS.

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 169

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 170

Intermediate Genealogy and Historical Studies

Course Description

Designed to help experienced genealogists expand their knowledge of genealogical sources and methodologies. The week begins with an in-depth study of the research process and analyzing, correlating and citing records to solve research problems. Experts provide instruction on land, military, immigration, probate, court, tax, and religious records. Class sessions highlight the use of DNA in genealogical research, an exploration of manuscript collections, and a genealogical writing workshop. Students participate in hands-on practical exercises in evaluating genealogical evidence and research. Students will have an effective working knowledge of the records needed to conduct reasonably exhaustive research and the methods needed to meet the Genealogical Proof Standard.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Debra A. Hoffman, PLCGS

Presenter Credentials

Specializing in Maryland and German research, Debra A. Hoffman is a professional genealogist and the owner of Hoffman Genealogical Services. She is a genealogical author, lecturer, and researcher. She has presented at the Genealogical Institute on Federal Records (Gen-Fed), the Institute of Genealogy & Historical Research (IGHR), the International German Genealogy Conference, and coordinated the Maryland course at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy in 2020. She is the co-author of NGS' Research in the States Series: Maryland. She has a certificate in Family History from Brigham Young University and a Professional Learning Certificate in Genealogical Studies (PLCGS)-German Records from the National Institute of Genealogical Studies. Active in the genealogical community, Debra is the past co-director of Gen-Fed and currently serves as an At-Large Board Member of the Maryland Genealogical Society, is the Secretary for the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society, and is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists.

Presenter Association

Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 170

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 171

After the Test: Exploring AncestryDNA Results

Course Description

Many genealogists have taken a DNA test but are unsure what to do after the results arrive. AncestryDNA provides a wide range of tools and information, and learning how to interpret and use those results can open new opportunities for genealogical discovery.This session explores the key features of AncestryDNA and demonstrates how genealogists can begin working effectively with their results. Participants will learn how to interpret match lists, evaluate possible relationships, and explore shared matches to identify potential family connections. The presentation will also examine how online family trees and other Ancestry tools can help researchers begin identifying common ancestors with DNA matches.The session introduces practical strategies for organizing DNA matches, identifying promising research leads, and recognizing patterns among matches that may point to shared ancestral lines. Participants will learn how to use AncestryDNA tools such as shared matches, notes, tags, and match filtering to manage growing match lists and focus research efforts. Special attention will be given to understanding the limitations of DNA evidence and the importance of combining genetic results with traditional genealogical research. By learning how to navigate and interpret AncestryDNA results, genealogists can move beyond simply viewing their results and begin using DNA as an active research tool. Whether you have recently tested or have had results for years, this session will provide practical guidance for exploring AncestryDNA results and integrating DNA evidence into genealogical research.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jennifer Zinck

Presenter Credentials

Jennifer Zinck is a Certified Genealogist®, Accredited Genealogist®, and Accredited Genealogist Lecturer™ with more than twenty years of genealogical research experience. She serves as a Trustee for the Board for Certification of Genealogists® (BCG), where she also chairs the BCG Webinar Committee and represents the organization to the Records Preservation and Access Coalition (RPAC). She is currently in her sixth term as President of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council and serves on the Board of Governors of the

Connecticut Society of Genealogists. She has also been a member of the Genetic Genealogy Standards Committee, contributing to discussions surrounding best practices for the use of DNA evidence in genealogical research. Jennifer began her genealogical journey in 2004 while helping her oldest son complete a Cub Scout project that required creating a four-generation pedigree chart. What began as a simple family history exercise quickly developed into a lifelong pursuit of research, discovery, and learning. Over time, that early curiosity grew into a professional career focused on careful research, evidence evaluation, and helping others understand their family histories. A researcher, writer, editor, and educator, Jennifer specializes in Connecticut resources and the use of DNA evidence in genealogical research. Her work frequently combines traditional documentary research with genetic genealogy to solve complex identity and kinship problems. She has particular expertise in analyzing historical records alongside modern DNA evidence to construct well-supported genealogical conclusions. Teaching and mentoring genealogists has long been an important part of Jennifer's professional work. She taught for twenty semesters at Boston University's Metropolitan College, primarily instructing the Forensic Genealogy module in the Genealogical Research Certificate Program. In that role, she helped students develop research strategies for complex genealogical investigations and learn how genealogical evidence can be applied in legal and forensic contexts. She continues to teach and mentor genealogists through lectures, workshops, conference presentations, and professional organizations. Jennifer regularly presents at conferences and professional events on topics including genealogical methodology, genetic genealogy, and the use of technology in family history research. Her presentations focus on practical strategies that help genealogists strengthen their research methods, evaluate evidence critically, and integrate DNA results with traditional sources. She is also actively involved in efforts to preserve and protect access to historical records. Through her work with the Records Preservation and Access Coalition and as a member of the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board (CT SHRAB), she advocates for policies that support the preservation of historical records and continued access for researchers. Jennifer earned a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in Project Management in 2007. She applies those skills to organizing complex research projects, evaluating evidence, and communicating genealogical conclusions clearly and effectively. Jennifer lives in North Granby, Connecticut, with her husband and is the mother of four adult children. She is also the proud grandmother of two incredible grandsons. When she is not researching or teaching genealogy, she enjoys spending time outdoors hiking, camping, and exploring nature with her family.

Presenter Association

Montana State Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 172

Unleash the Power of DNA: Testing Family Members

Course Description

Testing additional family members can dramatically improve the value of DNA results for genealogical research. While many genealogists begin by testing themselves, strategic testing of relatives can reveal information that a single test cannot provide. Parents, siblings, and other family members often inherit different pieces of DNA from shared ancestors, and testing multiple relatives can significantly expand the amount of genetic information available for analysis. This session explores how testing family members can increase genetic coverage, help assign DNA matches to specific ancestral lines, and strengthen genealogical conclusions. Participants will learn how testing parents can help separate maternal and paternal DNA matches, while testing siblings and other relatives can recover additional DNA inherited from earlier generations. The presentation will also demonstrate how testing aunts, uncles, and cousins can represent branches of the family that may not appear in a single person's results. Through clear examples and practical illustrations, this session shows how strategic testing can help genealogists identify which ancestors contributed specific DNA segments and clarify relationships among DNA matches. Participants will also learn how thoughtful testing plans can help break down research problems and open new avenues for discovery. By understanding how DNA is inherited and how different relatives contribute unique genetic information, genealogists can make informed decisions about who to test and how to use those results effectively in family history research.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jennifer Zinck

Presenter Credentials

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Presenter Association

Montana State Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 173

Expecting the Unexpected: Surprises in Our DNA

Course Description

DNA testing has transformed family history research, but genetic results do not always confirm what genealogists expect to find. Instead, DNA can reveal surprising discoveries that challenge long-held family narratives and raise new questions about family relationships. As more people test and genealogists incorporate DNA evidence into their research, unexpected results are becoming increasingly common.This session explores several types of surprising DNA discoveries that genealogists may encounter. Examples include situations where DNA evidence suggests a different parent than expected, reveals previously unknown siblings or close relatives, or identifies relationships that differ from what family stories or traditional research suggested. These discoveries can create both exciting research opportunities and challenging dilemmas for genealogists.Attendees will learn practical approaches for evaluating unexpected DNA results and integrating genetic evidence with traditional documentary research. The presentation discusses strategies for analyzing surprising matches, reconsidering earlier conclusions, and carefully reexamining the historical record when DNA evidence points in a new direction. They will also learn how genealogists can evaluate multiple forms of evidence when unexpected results arise.The session also addresses important ethical considerations when dealing with sensitive discoveries that may affect living individuals and families. Thoughtful preparation and responsible research practices can help genealogists navigate these situations with care and professionalism. By understanding the types of surprises DNA testing can reveal and how to respond to them thoughtfully, genealogists can approach unexpected discoveries with confidence and continue building well-supported family histories.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jennifer Zinck

Presenter Credentials

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Presenter Association

Montana State Genealogical Society

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 173

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 174

Connecting with Cousins: Finding Living Relatives on the Internet

Course Description

Family history research does not end with records. Often the next breakthrough comes from connecting with living relatives who may hold family knowledge, photographs, documents, or DNA results that can help answer genealogical questions. Learning how to locate and communicate with cousins can open important new paths for research and help genealogists build stronger, more complete family histories. This session explores practical strategies for finding and identifying living relatives using online tools and publicly available information. Participants will learn how genealogists can use obituaries, newspapers, online family trees, directories, yearbooks, and other digital resources to reconstruct modern family networks and identify potential cousins. The presentation also examines how search engines, social media platforms, and people-search websites can help locate individuals while highlighting the limitations and potential pitfalls of these tools. Participants will also learn techniques for tracing descendants forward in time, connecting scattered records to living individuals, and organizing information about modern family networks. Once relatives are identified, the next challenge is making contact. This session offers practical suggestions for reaching out to cousins, introducing yourself and your research, and encouraging productive collaboration. The presentation also addresses ethical considerations when contacting living people, including respecting privacy, setting appropriate expectations, and sharing genealogical information responsibly. By combining sound research techniques with respectful communication, genealogists can successfully connect with cousins, build collaborative relationships, and uncover new information that advances their family history research.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Jennifer Zinck

Presenter Credentials

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chairs the BCG Webinar Committee and represents the organization to the Records Preservation and Access Coalition (RPAC). She is currently in her sixth term as President of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council and serves on the Board of Governors of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists. She has also been a member of the Genetic Genealogy Standards Committee, contributing to discussions surrounding best practices for the use of DNA evidence in genealogical research. Jennifer began her genealogical journey in 2004 while helping her oldest son complete a Cub Scout project that required creating a four-generation pedigree chart. What began as a simple family history exercise quickly developed into a lifelong pursuit of research, discovery, and learning. Over time, that early curiosity grew into a professional career focused on careful research, evidence evaluation, and helping others understand their family histories. A researcher, writer, editor, and educator, Jennifer specializes in Connecticut resources and the use of DNA evidence in genealogical research. Her work frequently combines traditional documentary research with genetic genealogy to solve complex identity and kinship problems. She has particular expertise in analyzing historical records alongside modern DNA evidence to construct well-supported genealogical conclusions. Teaching and mentoring genealogists has long been an important part of Jennifer's professional work. She taught for twenty semesters at Boston University's Metropolitan College, primarily instructing the Forensic Genealogy module in the Genealogical Research Certificate Program. In that role, she helped students develop research strategies for complex genealogical investigations and learn how genealogical evidence can be applied in legal and forensic contexts. She continues to teach and mentor genealogists through lectures, workshops, conference presentations, and professional organizations. Jennifer regularly presents at conferences and professional events on topics including genealogical methodology, genetic genealogy, and the use of technology in family history research. Her presentations focus on practical strategies that help genealogists strengthen their research methods, evaluate evidence critically, and integrate DNA results with traditional sources. She is also actively involved in efforts to preserve and protect access to historical records. Through her work with the Records Preservation and Access Coalition and as a member of the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board (CT SHRAB), she advocates for policies that support the preservation of historical records and continued access for researchers. Jennifer earned a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in Project Management in 2007. She applies those skills to organizing complex research projects, evaluating evidence, and communicating genealogical conclusions clearly and effectively. Jennifer lives in North Granby, Connecticut, with her husband and is the mother of four adult children. She is also the proud grandmother of two incredible grandsons. When she is not researching or teaching genealogy, she enjoys spending time outdoors hiking, camping, and exploring nature with her family.

Presenter Association

Montana State Genealogical Society

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 174

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 175

The Perfect Fit: Locating and Applying to a Lineage Society

Course Description

Have you ever wondered whether you might qualify for a lineage society, but weren't sure where to start? Whether you're a seasoned researcher or just beginning to explore your family history, lineage societies offer a meaningful way to honor your ancestors and connect with others who share your heritage. The good news is that there are far more societies than most people realize, and you may already have the family connections to join one. This session takes the mystery out of finding the right organization for you and your family. We'll survey the wide landscape of lineage societies from well-known groups like the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Mayflower Society to lesser-known organizations tied to specific events, ethnicities, regions, and time periods. You'll learn how to evaluate eligibility requirements, match your proven ancestry to potential memberships, and prioritize which societies best align with your research and personal goals. We'll also walk through what the application process typically looks like, so you know what to expect before you invest your time and energy. From identifying a qualifying ancestor to understanding the role of a sponsoring member, this session gives you a practical roadmap from curiosity to membership. Along the way, you'll discover that lineage societies aren't just about the past, they're vibrant communities that celebrate family history, support research, and preserve our collective heritage for generations to come. Come find your perfect fit.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Shannon Combs-Bennett

Presenter Credentials

Shannon Combs-Bennett, QG, FSAScot, is an award-winning author who resides in Northern Virginia. From there, she writes and presents various topics across the US and internationally, from genetic genealogy to methodology techniques. Shannon is on the board of directors of the Association for Professional Genealogists and the Guild of Genealogy Speakers in addition to serving as a Trustee for the International Society for British Genealogy and Family History. She earned her Bachelor of Science in biology with an emphasis in genetics from Indiana University

and her Master of Science from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland. Shannon is researching the correlations between genealogy and lineage societies in the United States for her doctoral thesis.

Presenter Association

Montana State Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 176

Proving What You Know: Documentation for Lineage Society Applications

Course Description

You've identified a qualifying ancestor, traced the lineage, and found the society you'd love to join. Now comes the part that trips up even experienced genealogists: assembling the documentation to prove it all. Lineage society applications hold your research to a high standard, and understanding exactly what reviewers are looking for can mean the difference between a smooth approval and a frustrating round of corrections. This session breaks down the documentation process in a clear, approachable way, whether you're submitting your first or your fiftieth application. We'll explore what constitutes acceptable evidence for lineage society purposes, how to identify and locate the records most commonly required (vital records, census records, military documents, church registers, and more), and how to present your sources so they meet application standards. We'll also discuss strategies for those inevitable brick walls: what to do when the ideal record simply doesn't exist and how to build a compelling case using indirect and circumstantial evidence. Special attention will be given to common pitfalls, including over-reliance on compiled sources, undocumented family trees, and gaps in the line of descent, and how to address them before they become problems. You'll leave with a clear understanding of how to evaluate the strength of your own documentation and the confidence to submit an application you're proud of. Proving what you know has never felt more manageable.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

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Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 176

researching the correlations between genealogy and lineage societies in the United States for her doctoral thesis.

Presenter Association

Montana State Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 177

AI & Ancestry: Navigating the Future for Family Historians

Course Description

Artificial intelligence is quickly becoming part of the genealogist's research environment, yet many family historians remain unsure how these tools work or how they can be used responsibly.This beginner-friendly session introduces the major AI tools currently available to genealogists and explains what they can and cannot do. Participants will learn how artificial intelligence can assist with common tasks such as research, writing, and analysis.The session also addresses common concerns about artificial intelligence, including misinformation, privacy, bias, and the fear that technology may replace human researchers. Attendees will see why AI functions best as a tool that supports genealogical work rather than replacing it. Designed as an introduction, this presentation helps genealogists understand the capabilities and limitations of AI so they can begin experimenting with these tools confidently in their own research.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Lori Samuelson

Presenter Credentials

Lori Samuelson is a professional genealogist, lecturer, and author based in Indiana. She is the founder of Genealogy At Heart, where she provides genealogical research, coaching, and educational presentations for family historians. Specializing in historical research methods, migration patterns, and genealogical problem solving, Lori writes and lectures regularly on research strategies and the thoughtful use of emerging technologies in genealogy.

Presenter Association

Montana State Genealogical Society

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 218

Human Trafficking

Course Description

Learn to identify and assist victims of human trafficking.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Missoula County Safety Committee

Presenter Credentials

no bio available

Presenter Association

Missoula County

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 220

Narcan Administration

Course Description

Learn how to administer Narcan

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Missoula County Safety Committee

Presenter Credentials

no bio available

Presenter Association

Missoula County

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 222

Communication Skills for Difficult Moments

Course Description

Learn how to communicate effectively during difficult public service situations.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Missoula County Safety Committee

Presenter Credentials

no bio available

Presenter Association

Missoula County

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 223

CPR/AED

Course Description

Learn to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation and use an automatic external defibrillator

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Missoula County Safety Committee

Presenter Credentials

no bio available

Presenter Association

Missoula County

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 224

Stop the Bleed

Course Description

Gain the ability to recognize life-threatening bleeding and act quickly.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

Missoula County Safety Committee

Presenter Credentials

no bio available

Presenter Association

Missoula County

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 315

Telescopes in Libraries

Course Description

As part of a grant program that started in 2024 80 telescopes have been distributed to libraries through the summer of 2026. This course teaches libraries who have accepted telescopes as part of the Telescopes in Libraries grant program how to use, maintain, and catalog the library-modified telescopes they have received. It will also include a section around the types of programming that can be built around the Telescopes in Libraries program to get the best use out of the telescope for their patrons, while ensuring that circulation and programming remains streamlined for directors who are participating in this program.

Topic

Library Services: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology

Presenter Name

NICK WETHINGTON

Presenter Credentials

Nick Wethington is co-president of the Western Montana Astronomical Association, and associate director of the Library Telescope Program. Nick has been modifying telescopes for library use since 2013. When the NASA request for proposals came up in 2024, Wethington wrote and received a grant to serve all public libraries across the state. Since then he has worked to deliver telescopes, and support resources and information to libraries. Nick's work also involves creating hands-on educational experiences that engage everyone's curiosity and help them learn to innovate. He is embedded in a number of schools co-teaching activities and helps to build the capacity of teachers and staff to incorporate STEM into the curriculum. Nick also coordinates outreach efforts for the Blue Mountain Observatory, University of Montana's astronomical observatory operated by the Physics and Astronomy Department. Nick received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Iowa State University.

Presenter Association

Western Montana Astronomical Association, and Library Telescope Program

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval

Proposal #: 315

Cost

None

MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
A GREATER STATE OF KNOWLEDGE

MEMO

To: Certification Committee of the Montana State Library Commission
From: Tracy Cook, Lead Consulting and Learning Librarian
Subject: Request for Information from Library Juice Academy and Ryan Dowd Trainings
Date: October 22, 2026

This information is provided as follow up to inquiries by the Certification Committee at its September 30, 2026, meeting and in discussion with the Montana State Library (MSL) Commission on October 14, 2026. Staff researched and contacted Ryan Dowd/Homeless Training and Library Juice Academy representatives.

Access to Ryan Dowd (proposals 299, 300, 304, 305) and Library Juice Academy are not priced or available on an ala carte basis. Both organizations offer a membership subscription model that provides access to their entire catalog of online trainings. Memberships are scaled based on the number of users in an organization. Users need to either be members of a state organization or a local library system. The relationship between MSL and local libraries doesn't fit the models used by these organizations.

These subscription models do not seem to fit our needs, so we recommend not purchasing Library Juice or Ryan Dowd access. MSL staff will continue to search for mental health, de-escalation, and safety trainings and will bring proposals to the committee through the continuing education credit process.