



Jots from Western Pennsylvania Mid-Edition Newsletter

Some genealogical news before the next bi-monthly issue.

October 1, 2025

WWW.WPGS.ORG

VOLUME 52, NUMBER 2.1

Western Pennsylvania Genealogical

Society

4400 Forbes Avenue

Third Floor, Pittsburgh, PA
15213-4007

www.wpgs.org

Rebecca Kichta Miller, Newsletter
Chairperson jots@wpgs.org

The Nov-Dec issue of the *Jots*
will be delivered to you by
USPS and email on or before
November 1, 2025.

You can change your delivery
choice(s) directly in your
Profile on the WPGS website.

**Please contact the
sponsoring
organizations
directly for any
event updates
and/or
cancellations.**

(F) Free

(L) Live/In-Person

(V) Virtual

(L/V) Live and Virtual

(\$) Registration Fee

(M) Members only.

All times are EST.

Important Upcoming Events *(All times are Eastern Time.)*

Upcoming **Free October Legacy Family Tree Webinars**, plus many more. Registration at
<https://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars/>.

- October 1, 5:00 AM: *From The Ashes: The 1922 Irish Public Record Office Fire and Irish Genealogy* with David Ryan. (Ethnicities)
- October 1, 2:00 PM: *Foundations in DNA 5 of 5: Understanding Ethnicity Estimates* with Blaine Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D. (DNA)
- October 3, 2:00 PM: *Ten Tantalizing Sources and the Lessons They Teach* by J. H. ("Jay") Fonkert, CG (Historical Records)
- October 8, 2:00 PM: *Geoff's Got ANOTHER Brick Wall! What Can DNA Do for It?* by Diahan Southard (DNA)
- October 8, 8:00 PM: *7 Essential Tips for Starting German Genealogy* by Katherine Schober, MA (Ethnicities)

(F) (L) October 3, 4, and 5: **Venango County Historical Society's AppleFest Book Sale**. Over 5,000 quality used books, including paperbacks, novels, non-fiction, rare and collectible books, and local history. Visit <https://www.venangocountyhistory.org/events> for details.

(\$) (V) October 4, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: **Maternal DNA**, presented by Kelli Jo Bergheimer for the Bucks County Genealogical Society. With maternal DNA, some think mitochondrial DNA and X DNA are the same, but they aren't. Everyone has mtDNA (only from their mother) and X DNA (from both parents for females and from their mother for males), but understanding who passes on which types and how is important. Visit https://bit.ly/bcgs_programs for more information.

(\$) (L) October 4 and 5, Noon to 9:00 PM: **11th Annual McKeesport & Versailles Cemetery Living History Tour**, 1608 Fifth Avenue, McKeesport, PA 15132, a walking tour sponsored by the McKeesport Regional History & Heritage Cemetery. An indoor encore performance will be held on **October 9** at 6:30 PM at the Heritage Center, located at 1832 Arboretum Drive, McKeesport, PA 15132.

(\$) (V) October 6-10: **British Institute. English Research: The Fundamentals and Beyond** with Paul Milner, M.Div., FUGA. There are two options: attend five daily sessions in a "live" virtual format (Live Format) or access prerecorded lessons only (Recordings Only). Visit ISBGFH.COM/BI for more details.

(F) (V) October 8, 7:00 – 8:30 PM: WPGS Virtual Research SIG Session: **Researching Your Ancestor's Education**. WPGS members only. Register at <https://wpgs.org/events/>

(F) (L/V) October 9, 1:00 PM: **Photo Research with Artificial Intelligence** by Mark D. Thompson for the Main Line Genealogy Club. Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers exciting new tools to help unravel the mysteries hidden in your cherished images. Online via Zoom and In-Person at Tredyffrin Public Library, 582 Upper Gulph Road, Strafford, PA 19087. Registration [here](#).

(\$) (V) October 12, 1:00 – 2:30 PM: **Immigration History: Laws, Documents and Stories**, a Zoom program by Susan Weinberg on how immigration laws shaped the journey of Jewish immigrants — and how those experiences are preserved in documents and stories. Register [HERE](#).

(\$) (L) October 12, 12:00 – 5:00 PM: **Polish Heritage Celebration**, St. Catherine of Siena Parish Hall, 4555 N. Haven Avenue, Toledo, OH, presented by the Toledo Polish Genealogical Society. Authentic food and music. More info [here](#).

(F) (V) October 14, 6:30 PM: **Using Free Digitized Pennsylvania Land Maps**, with Dr. Rhonda Clark presented by Erie Society of Genealogical Research. Her talk will focus on maps from around the state, including the Sandborn maps. Please refer to the events page or their Facebook page for Zoom details closer to the event. www.facebook.com/groups/ESGRPA

(F) (V) October 15, 7:00 PM: **Webinar: Understanding the State Land Records of Pennsylvania** by Aaron McWilliams presented through the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. Open to the public. Understanding the State Land Records of Pennsylvania provides a detailed look at the State Land

APPLY FOR THE WPGS SCHOLARSHIP

before the

December 31, 2025
deadline for submissions
for the 2026 Suzanne
Johnston Memorial
Scholarship. Details and
the application form can
be found [here](#).

Books for Sale

213 Used Books

20 WPGS Publications

24 Digital Books

<https://wpgs.org/product-category/book-sales/>

Library Research Services

WPGS Volunteers will search all relevant holdings of our choice in the WPGS collection for a specific individual.

- Order a minimum of 2 hours of research time.
- Service includes up to 10 pages copied. Additional copies are billed at \$.50 per page.
- Recommendations for further research will be included.
- A full report with sources will be delivered in a 2-4 week period. All requests will be worked on in the order of arrival.

To request research:

Download and complete the WPGS [Research Request Form](#) and the WPGS [Research Services Order Form](#)

Pay with PayPal through our online store, or by personal check to WPGS, mailed to: 4400 Forbes Ave. Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213

Records held at the Pennsylvania State Archives. The presentation will cover the five principal documents created during the patenting process, their indexes, and how to effectively search them. Register at <https://genpa.org/programs-and-events/>

- (F) (L) October 17, 7:00 PM: **Altoona Area Forgotten Cemeteries** presented by Jim Snyder for the Blair County Genealogical Society at the Roller Hojeth Memorial Library, 431 Scotch Valley Road, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648. <https://bcgslibrary.org/news-and-events/>
- (F) (L) October 18, 2:00 – 3:00 PM: **Genealogy Club at the New Castle Public Library**, 207 E. North St., New Castle, PA 16101. Meets the third Saturday of each month at 2:00. Each month, you'll learn about a different resource held by the Library, from microfilm to AncestryLibrary.com.
- (F) (L/V) October 20, 7:00 PM: **Mastering Digital Filing for Genealogists** with Cyndi Ingle presented by the North Hills Genealogists at Christ Episcopal Church, 5910 Babcock Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237. Register to attend Christ Episcopal Church in person [HERE](#). Register for this meeting via Zoom [HERE](#).
- (S) (V) October 22, 2:00 – 3:30 PM: **Who's Who?: Same Name, Same Place, Same Time**. You may encounter several people with the same name living in the same community at the same time. How do you know which of your ancestors is? Rhonda R. McClure will introduce you to best practices and organizational tools for untangling common names and adding people to your family tree with confidence and accuracy. Register at <https://my.americanancestors.org/2748/3086>
- (F) (L) October 23, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: **Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Family & Local History Book Club**. Join in for a lively discussion on *Thinning Blood* by Leah Myers. This book is available for checkout in the CLP [Catalog](#), and also as an [eAudio on Hoopla](#). This program takes place in the Family & Local History Department (3rd floor). Questions? Email info@carnegielibrary.org
- (F) (L) October 25, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: **Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society Pittsburgh Chapter Meeting** at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Second Floor, 7101 Hamilton Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15208. Confirm the details at <https://www.aahgs.org/pittsburgh> or [here](#)
- (F) (L) October 25, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: **Preparing for Foreign Research**, provided by the Titusville Historical Society, at 201 W. Spring Street, Titusville, PA 16354. Do you have your passport ready, but aren't quite sure what else you'll need for foreign genealogy research? Before you board the plane, let Historical Society Vice President Kathy Newson walk you through the steps you should take to fully take advantage of a research trip! All classes are free and open to the public. [Details](#).
- (S) (V) November 1, 10:00 AM: **Cool Your Jets Just Long Enough To Plan the Perfect Genealogical Trip** by Bridget M. Sunderlin, presented by the Bucks County Genealogical Society. This lecture will not only inspire you to take that first genealogical trip, but it will also prepare you before you go! Every attendee will receive free access through the lecturer's website to a downloadable and editable 22-page planner (no email address required). Details [here](#).
- (S) (L/V) November 8, 8:45 AM – 4:00 PM: **2025 North Hills Genealogists Genealogy Conference & 35th Anniversary Celebration**, Sechler Law Firm Building, Thorn Hill Industrial Park, Warrendale, PA. Featured speaker is Blaine Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D. Two morning and two afternoon lectures. For details, see northhillsgenealogists.org/cpage.php?pt=122
- (S) (L/V) November 8, 8:45 AM – 3:30 PM: **Maryland Milestones: Exploring Birth, Marriage, Divorce, and Death Records**, the 2025 Maryland Genealogical Society Fall Seminar, Maritime Conference Center, 692 Maritime Boulevard, Linthicum Heights, MD (Deck A, Building 2, South Hotel Tower) and online via Zoom. Details and registration at <https://mdgensoc.org/>
- (F) (V) November 10, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM: **Breaking a Brick Wall: From Freedom to Slavery** by Dr Deborah Abbott, PhD, presented by HeritageSeekers Genealogy Club. Check the society's website or Facebook page closer to the event date for more information. Details [here](#).
- (F) (L) November 15, 2:00 – 3:00 PM: **Genealogy Club at the New Castle Public Library**, 207 E. North St., New Castle, PA 16101. Meets the third Saturday of each month at 2:00. Each month, you'll learn about a different resource held by the Library, from microfilm to AncestryLibrary.com.
- (F) (V) November 18, 7:00 PM: **Lost in Pennsylvania - Try the Published Pennsylvania Archives** by Christine Crawford-Oppeneheimer, MLS. Presented by the Pennsylvania Chapter, Palatines to America. For details, see <https://pennpalam.org/>. Register [HERE](#).
- (S) (V) December 6, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: **From Dust to Data: How International List of Causes of Death (ILCD) and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) Codes Can Guide Genealogical Journeys**, presented by Thomas MacEntee for the Bucks County Genealogical Society. Visit [here](#) for complete information and registration.

Return all forms via email to research@wpgs.org or by USPS to the address above.

You will be contacted by our researchers to discuss any need for additional paid hours or page copy fees.

December 31, 2025: The deadline for submissions for the 2026 Suzanne Johnston Memorial Scholarship worth \$250 toward an upcoming conference of your choice.

- (\$/F) (L/V) March 5 – 7: **RootsTech 2026**, presented by FamilySearch. Online via Zoom and In-Person at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City, Utah. For details, see www.RootsTech.org
- (\$/) (L/V) April 29 – May 2: **Ohio Genealogical Society 2026 Conference, Finding Genealogy Gems**, Sharonville Convention Center, Sharonville, Ohio. Preliminary details at <https://www.ogs.org/2025-conference-2/>
- (F) (V) May 9, 2026, 10:30 AM: **World War I Research Guide: Tracing American Military and Non-Combatant Ancestors** by Deborah Dudek. Free, but registration is required at <https://wpgs.org/events/>.
- (\$/) (L/V) May 23-26: **National Genealogical Society (NGS) Family History Conference, Tales & Trails**, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. See the NGS Website at <https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/category/2026-conference/> for preliminary details. The conference compendium, a roughly 300-page document, is published just before the conference. The Whoova event app and website provide easy access to the syllabus materials for each session.
- (\$/) (L) June 21-24: **Researching Your Irish Ancestors: Three-Day Assisted Research Programme**. The expert genealogists of the Ulster Historical Foundation will be on hand during this new programme to guide you at the [Public Record Office of Northern Ireland \(PRONI\)](https://www.proni.gov.uk/) and the archives around the city of Belfast. This enhanced research programme gives you the chance to spend three days researching in the archives, being guided and supported by the UHF team of researchers each day. It is the ideal programme to complement a longer holiday or research trip that you might already have planned. Overview and registration information [here](#).
- (\$/) (L) June 25-26: **Beyond the Family Tree: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on AI, DNA, Education, and Community in Genealogy**, a two-day Conference at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland. IN-PERSON IN SCOTLAND ONLY. Details [HERE](#).
- (\$/) (L) September 2 – 9: **Tracing Your Irish Ancestors: A Week-long Family History Conference**. This classic eight-day programme includes research in the archives in Belfast, lectures on genealogical research, and tours to famous historic sites and cultural attractions. Details and registration [here](#).
- (\$/) (L) October 4-9: **Researching Your Irish Ancestors: Assisted Research Programme**. This enhanced research programme offers you the opportunity to spend a full week researching in the archives, guided and supported by our team of researchers each day. It offers you a great opportunity to break down any genealogical brick walls and unlock your family history. Details and registration [here](#).

Watch this listing for more upcoming 2026 conferences.