



## Researching Family in Pennsylvania

August 1-5, 2016

Hosted at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

### Curriculum and Schedule

#### Monday 1 August 2016

8:15 – 8:30 AM **Welcome and Introductions**

- Page Talbot, President, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), and Frank Southcott, President, Greater Philadelphia Area Chapter, Association of Professional Genealogists

8:30- 10:00 AM **Overview of the Settlement of Pennsylvania: Placing Your Ancestors in Historical Context**

- Frank Southcott
- This segment will take a broad overview of the development of Pennsylvania to include Dutch and Swedish interests along the Delaware River, William Penn, Connecticut, Maryland and Virginia competing boundary claims; the formation of the 67 counties; industrialization and immigration.

10:00-10:15 AM Break

10:15-11:15 AM **Colonial Research in West Jersey**

- Joseph Klett, Executive Director, New Jersey State Archives
- West Jersey encompassed the area east of Philadelphia across the Delaware River in present day New Jersey. There was frequent interaction among the early settlers of Pennsylvania. Mr. Klett will review the State Archives' holdings of colonial records of genealogical value relating to West New Jersey, including land, probate, and proprietors' records. He will also discuss the settlement and geography of the colony during the proprietary period, 1664-1703. One or two West Jersey case studies will be included as time permits.

11:15-11:30 AM Break

- 11:30-12:30 PM **William Penn and Delaware**
- **Thomas Summers, Manager of Outreach Services, Delaware Public Archives**
  - William Penn played a major role in the development of the Delaware colony in terms of geography, culture, religion, and law. This program will focus on William Penn's life, his relationship to "The Three Lower Colonies on the Delaware River," and his interactions with the British crown and Maryland's Lord Baltimore to determine the geographic borders of Delaware. The decisions that Penn and his contemporaries made during that early colonial era have had long lasting effects that still reverberate today.
- 12:30-2:00 PM Lunch
- 2:00-3:30 PM **Pennsylvania Record Gems and Database Treasures**
- **Sydney F. Cruice Dixon**
  - The state of Pennsylvania is particularly rich with record collections and databases. From military records to ship crew lists – Pennsylvania's records can supply details about your ancestors that even the federal records cannot. However, making sure you are aware of these hidden gems and the best ways to access them can be a challenge. We will discuss the resources and websites that must be explored to incorporate these valuable records into your family research.
- 3:30-3:45 PM Break
- 3:45-5:00 PM **Pennsylvania Vital Records – The Backbone of the Keystone State**
- **Sydney F. Cruice Dixon**
  - Vital records can be the backbone of family research. In this segment we will explore the Keystone State's vital record history, where and how to access these valuable resources, and what they mean for the genealogist. We will further explore what you can substitute when the government records don't exist or are insufficient.
- 5:00-7:00 PM **Mingle with History**
- **Benjamin Franklin**
  - Pleasant interlude of wine, cheese, and history with Philadelphia's most famous citizen, Benjamin Franklin.

## Tuesday 2 August 2016

- 8:30-9:45 AM     **Courting the Keystone State: Key Court Records of Pennsylvania (Part I)**
- **Judy Russell, JD, CG<sup>®</sup>, CGL<sup>®</sup>, *The Legal Genealogist***
  - Part I will give an overview and explore the basics of the Pennsylvania court system. It will investigate how the Pennsylvania courts were (and are) organized; court jurisdiction (what court handles what case); court officers and records responsibility; and key court records including civil, criminal, and orphans/probate court.
- 9:45-9:55 AM     Break
- 9:55-10:55 AM   **Courting the Keystone State: Key Court Records of Pennsylvania (Part II)**
- **Judy Russell, JD, CG<sup>®</sup>, CGL<sup>®</sup> *The Legal Genealogist***
  - Part II will highlight the specialized records of the Pennsylvania courts including naturalizations, insolvent debtors, and slave cases. Also explored will be the specialized courts, including appeals courts, federal courts, and their records.
- 10:55-11:05 AM   Break
- 11:05-12:05 PM   **Timelines and Using Early County Tax Lists**
- **Kim Bucklaw, Chester County (PA) Archivist**
  - Analysis of early tax records can provide valuable clues when researching one's family. During this segment, those early records will be evaluated and, by knowing the meaning of the terms and information provided, it will be shown how one can supplement information on an ancestor. It will be explained how forming timelines for individual taxpayers can show residence or movement over time.
- 12:05-1:30 PM    Lunch
- 1:30-2:30 PM     **Genealogical Resources at the Pennsylvania State Archives**
- **Aaron McWilliams, Pennsylvania State Archivist**
  - This segment provides an introduction to the types of records available to genealogist at the Pennsylvania State Archives. The presentation will cover the primary types of records, what information they contain, and their accessibility.
- 2:30-2:45 PM     Break

- 2:45-3:45 PM     **Understanding the State Land Records of Pennsylvania**
- [Aaron McWilliams, Pennsylvania State Archivist](#)
  - This segment provides a detailed look at the State Land Records held at the Pennsylvania State Archives. The presentation will cover the patenting process, the documents created (application, warrant, survey, return of survey, and patent), and how to access the records. It will also touch on other sources at the Archives, such as land office maps and Board of Property records.

3:45-4:00 PM     Break

- 4:00-5:00 PM     **Delaware Valley Land Research in Genealogy**
- [Seth Hinshaw, RGA, Inc.](#)
  - This presentation will provide an introduction to land records in the Delaware Valley, primarily in the late seventeenth and in the eighteenth centuries, and indicate how these records are best interpreted for genealogical purposes. The presentation will discuss deeds, patents, warrants, surveys, and recorded lease documents as a microcosm of Pennsylvania research.

7:00 PM            **Optional Walking Tour with Ben Franklin in Old Philadelphia** (Fee TBD)

**Wednesday 3 August 2016**

- 8:30-10:10 AM    **Finding Family in the Governmental Archives in Philadelphia**
- [Jefferson Moak](#)
  - This presentation will focus on what types of records are available at the major governmental archives in Philadelphia: the City Archives, the Register of Wills Archives and the National Archives at Philadelphia. The presenter will explain what records are located in this archives and their availability both in person and online. The presentation will explain the various types of records and indicate which facility or facilities have these records available for the researcher. Birth, death, marriage, probate and naturalization records will be thoroughly discussed.

10:10-10:20 AM   Break

- 10:20-12 Noon    **Along the Three Rivers: Research in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County**
- **Amy E.K. Arner**
  - Pittsburgh was an early settlement on the frontier and later a gateway for people traveling west. Many records relevant to Pittsburgh are held by Allegheny County, so understanding Pittsburgh research means understanding Allegheny County research. Learn about the history of the area, some of the repositories that hold records of interest to genealogists, and the idiosyncrasies of researching in this county.

12:00-1:30 PM    Lunch

- 1:30-5:00 PM    **Researching Family at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania**
- **Lee Arnold, DLitt et Phil, Senior Director of the Library and Collections, COO, HSP**
  - This segment will explore the resources of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. HSP has the largest genealogical resource collection in Pennsylvania. Assets include the collection of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, the Balch collection on ethnic studies, the development of a FamilySearch Family History Center, and an extensive original and microfilm repository of newspapers, governmental records, manuscripts, and other databases.

(Break at Instructor Option)

5:00-8:30 PM    **Optional Research in HSP Collections**

**Thursday 4 August 2016**

- 8:30-10 AM    **Moravian Genealogical Customs and Research: Working with German-Language (Church) Records**
- **Tom McCullough, Moravian Church Archivist**
  - This segment will discuss the past and contemporary recordkeeping practices of the Moravian Church, which is a microcosm of German church records. Participants will learn about a variety of German-language church records available at the Moravian Archives that are essential in family research, including church registers, membership catalogs, congregational diaries, and memoirs. German paleography, German-language terminology, and Moravian specific terminology crucial for understanding genealogical sources will be discussed. Principles applicable to German-language records found in other institutions will be stressed.

10:00 – 10:30 AM Break

10:30-12 Noon **Researching African Americans in Pennsylvania**

- **Dean Henry**
- This segment will explore African American family history research, which can be particularly difficult depending on the circumstances. In Pennsylvania, many general and specific records that exist may help you in your research. The session will include not only the records available at HSP, but also records associated with the Underground Railroad, churches, cemeteries, and more.

12 Noon-1:30 PM Lunch

1:30-3:00 PM **Military Records at the Pennsylvania State Archives**

- **Aaron McWilliams, Pennsylvania State Archivist**
- This segment provides an overview of the military records available to researchers at the Pennsylvania State Archives. The presentation will cover the primary records and indexes available to researchers interested in the military service of Pennsylvanians from the French and Indian War to Vietnam.

3:00-3:30 PM Break

3:30-5:00 PM **Coal Miners and Railroadmen: keystones of Pennsylvania Labor**

- **Presenter TBA**

**Friday 5 August 2016**

8:30-10:00 AM **Pennsylvania Genealogical Potpourri**

- **Frank Southcott**
- This session will highlight some of the actual “twists and turns” of genealogical researching in Pennsylvania. With random topics covering multiple record groups, nationalities, and repositories, some of the specific knowledge, understanding and historical context will be put into perspective to gain a better understanding of researching family in Pennsylvania.

10:00-10:15 AM Break

10:15 AM –11:45

**Case Study – Thomas Holmes’ 1687 Province of Pennsylvania and Associated Families**

- **Sue Long**
- Thomas Holme’s map of 1687 Pennsylvania is a familiar sight, appearing in countless histories of the state. It shows the landowners of the time, their tracts of land neatly outlined, and each tract named. This segment will weave together an analysis of those tracts, their owners, discussion of the records utilized, and how they were applied, and selected stories about people on the map. It will highlight those people largely missing from the map and hidden in the records: servants, slaves, Native Americans, and above all, the women.

11:45 AM-12:15 **Question and Answer, Program Critique and Certificates**

Friday PM

**Optional Individual Research at HSP**

- Library open until 5:30 PM

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**Researching Family in Pennsylvania** is made possible through the collaboration of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and The Greater Philadelphia Area Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists.

Tuition for Researching Family in Pennsylvania is **\$395** for HSP members, **\$385** if you attended the fall 2015 Foundations of Genealogy course *or* enrolled in the spring [2016 Foundations of Genealogy course](#), and **\$449** for non-members.

Enrollment will be limited to 40 persons on a first come, first enrolled basis. To register, visit [hsp.org/RFIPA](http://hsp.org/RFIPA). **Registration will open** to the public on March 18, 2016, during HSP’s **Family History Days**.

Hotel accommodations and other travel information can be found in HSP's Plan Your Visit portal at [hsp.org/PlanYourVisit](http://hsp.org/PlanYourVisit)