



Genealogical Presentations 2023-2024

Patti Gillespie, MS
Famlstories@gmail.com

1. *The Hidden Gems Inside Privately Published Family Histories* (New)

Unpublished and privately published family histories--like county histories--are unfortunately often ignored by genealogists. However, the clues contained in undocumented family histories may provide a great jumping off platform for finding documented proof. This presentation emphasizes and demonstrates how valuable hidden gems are often discovered buried inside these types of family histories.

2. *Birth to Death and In-Between: Finding, Using, and Integrating Religious Records in the United States* (new)

So much information and so little time! Religious records are another document group that sometimes seems complicated to search out and access. This presentation includes an overview with specific examples of why we want to look for religious records, what sorts of records might be found, who might be included in them, and where to look on-line and off-line for these documents. This presentation hopes to simplify the religious records search experience.

3. *The Healing Power of Discovering Our Family History* (new)

Some among us have experienced great family trauma and bear the scars. Family history research creates miracles while contributing healing to the heart, soul, and sometimes families—but especially to the researcher. Please come and experience the hope and healing that has come to the speaker by researching her family lines. She will share family stories and healing principles that softened her heart and helped her heal.

4. *Find A Grave: Friend, Foe, or Both?* (new)

Cemetery research will never be the same because of the wealth of information on Find A Grave. The benefits and rewards of this information, however, may not outweigh the drawbacks and pitfalls found there. This presentation will evaluate the information for accuracy found on Find A Grave while telling stories concerning the spotlighted individuals.

5. *Beyond Ancestry: The Benefits of the “Other Three” DNA Sites: FamilyTree DNA, 23andMe, and HeritageQuest* (new)

While Ancestry soars in sales over the other DNA testing companies, all the DNA companies offer benefits to understanding and using the information for genealogical purposes. This presentation will demonstrate the benefits and strengths of 23andMe, FamilyTreeDNA, and HeritageQuest.

6. *I've Got—Or I'm Getting—My DNA Report: Now What Do I Do? (Beginner)*

Presented from a non-genetic genealogist point of view, this presentation explains in a fun and visual way how to choose a test, a company, what to do while waiting for the report, and how to maximize the report results. Whether deciding who to contact, how to use the research within the DNA report, or just how to link our trees to our DNA results, this session will be helpful. Besides spending time reviewing the report, the potential use of raw data is introduced with a visual step-by-step procedure for uploading raw data to other sites.

7. *I've Got My Ancestry DNA Report: Evaluating My Test Results For Connections (Intermediate)*

This presentation takes understanding the DNA report to the next level. We will touch on the Ancestry DNA Ethnicity Report, but more importantly, we will calculate found matches, evaluate the degree of relationship, and compare DNA from Matches, ThruLines, and Parent1 and Parent2. This course is geared for those who are beyond beginner level and looking to build a greater knowledge of the power of genetics in genealogy.

8. *Kilts, Celts, and Scots: Researching your Scottish Ancestors on ScotlandsPeople*

ScotlandsPeople is the surest way to trace Scottish ancestry on Scottish soil because it is Scotland's official government site with hundreds of years of documents. The site features births and baptisms, deaths and burials, banns, and marriages, wills and testaments with newly released Kirk minutes plus much, much more. This presentation demonstrates how to best use this paid site with tips and tricks to assist in searching Scottish ancestry.

9. *Finding Our Scottish Ancestor's Immigrant's Home with American Documents*

Robert Gillespie, husband, father, and miner emigrated to the United States in 1869. This presentation concentrates on looking for American sources and sites to find Robert and Robert's family's home in Scotland.

10. *Forgotten Treasures in the Texas Courthouse: Discovering the Miscellaneous Records*

Are you looking for context and documentation? Do you have an ancestor that seems to have slipped between the cracks? Then these Texas gems hidden away in our county courthouses may hold an answer for you. This presentation features 2 touching stories of Texans, and also abundant examples of useful assorted documents found within Miscellaneous records.

11. *Wise County, TX Records: Repositories, Sites, and Secrets*

Finding the original records is not always easy when storage, administrative decisions, staffing changes and courthouse fires cause the records to be scattered. This presentation graphically explains the 8 repositories with record examples that will assist in researching and proving your ancestor in Wise County.

12. *Census Sense: Clues & Conundrums for Beginners*

Using the federal censuses in researching our ancestors presents mysteries and puzzles because, there is often more to understand about the census than we know. This presentation introduces the census as a source and demonstrates how to use it more effectively in our research. The presentation will also ask and answer beginning research questions that use the census as a basis for further research.

13. *Census Sense: Clues & Conundrums for Intermediate Researchers*

Based on the federal census site, this presentation focuses on federal census headings and codes, alternate federal censuses, state censuses, and their use in our research.

14. *Census Sense: Clues & Conundrums for Advanced Researchers* (in development)

Location, location, location. This presentation demonstrates how Google Earth can be used to lay out the boundaries of earlier censuses over modern boundaries to find the ancestors' properties. This course can also be demonstrated and taught as a workshop.

15. *Hidden Stories Discovered in Just 3 Documents*

The death of a young bride, the parentless pastor, a murdered husband cut down in his prime—all are stories that come to light with just 3 original documents. This presentation encourages researching beyond just one record; haunting stories from these records demonstrate that further information and breaking down brick walls can be successful when we just keep looking for more information in other sources.

16. *Building a Life Story Beyond the Census: Edmund Marquis Ford*

Starting with the census records of Edmund M. Ford, further research reveals further documents that reveal insight into his life. By the end of the presentation a paragraph thumb nail life sketch is built using an historical outline. This hands-on class closes with a tearjerker resolution with lots of twists and turns for the interested researcher who likes a good story with many documents.

17. *Courthouse Records: One Stop Shopping for Family Secrets*

Wonderful stories of individuals and families are told in a well-paced introduction to documents found in courthouses. Birth, death and marriage certificates, probate & wills, land, court case documents and guardianship papers are part of these stories. The benefits of courthouse research become clear to the researcher not familiar with these documents.

18. *16 Death Records that Will Bring Your Research to Life!*

Knowing where to look can sometimes be the most difficult part of research. This presentation is filled with stories and examples of often unknown, unfound, and unused death documents.

19. *Searching Newspapers: Tips, Tricks, Sites and Context*

An up-to-date presentation of tips, tricks, and techniques using newspapers in our research. Several case examples are included as to the value of newspapers in our research as well as an online search of a variety of free newspaper search sites. This presentation will instruct and entertain every researcher.

20. *New Research in Old Obits: A Strategy For Finding Further Information*

Obituaries can be an amazing source of information revealing multiple leads for further genealogical research. In this presentation several obituaries are examined and analyzed for further research possibilities. An optional fun group activity concludes this presentation.

23. *Armchair Mysteries Solved at Home with Old School Communication and New School Technology*

This presentation offers abundant tips, tricks, and examples for a researcher who's looking for answers far from home and are not online. Often underused research and resource opportunities are just an email away—and sometimes still a phone call away! The techniques presented here often provide successful means to resolving the mysteries of our ancestors using both online sites and offline sources for information.

24. *Chasing the Children to Find the Father's Lineage: A Strategy with Stories*

When a straight-line pedigree is interrupted by a disappearing ancestor, there are several strategies that can help us in our search. This presentation will demonstrate these proven alternate strategies with fascinating stories and amazing information.

25. *County Histories: Lost and Found Information*

Beginning researchers are often unaware of the existence of county histories within the United States; intermediate researchers are often unaware of the process behind the submitted stories. Both groups benefit from using a county history as a jumpstart to their research. Determining which counties have histories, how to find them, and how to evaluate the details for accuracy are important steps. This presentation will demonstrate the abundant information just waiting to be found, tested, and included in our family histories.

26. *Brick Wall Busting Strategies: Hammering at the Wall*

This is a fun presentation with strategies, sources and a variety of documents that just might hammer down that frustrating brick wall. Examples of brick walls broken down are demonstrated by using vital records, military records, census, prison, land records, newspapers, passenger manifests and divorce records including a complicated story tracking a woman whose name changed 3 times in public records.

27. *Taking a Genealogy Trip: Ready, Set, Let's Go!*

Genealogy trips can be “the bomb”—or they can bomb. An unsuccessful trip can most often be prevented by following the steps, cautions, and counsel in this presentation. A fun and lively presentation with stories of personal disasters and serendipity, this is a great way to get ready for that first (or many) genealogy research trip.

28. *Researching in 3 Steps: Documents, Context, and Citation*

Combining beginning and intermediate opportunities, this presentation combines fascinating stories of humanity paired with opportunities for compassionate context and an analysis of appropriate citation for the documents utilized.

29. *Military Pensions: Vital Records in Disguise!*

Military pension records are an amazing source of information. This presentation puts “flesh on the bones” of several individuals whose military records are reviewed from various wars involving the United States. It also goes through the steps of retrieving pensions from various repositories while demonstrating how to utilize and link family lines through these documents.

30. *Proving Long-Lost Family the Indirect Way: Finding the Ancestors of F. N. Raymond*

Sometimes we must go all the way around before we can prove what is right in front of us. This is a presentation chock full of records and research with a resolution to a mystery that has been misunderstood for a century. Hold on for the ride as this presentation demonstrates use of the “long way round” research strategies while offering hope for those with direct brick walls.

31. *Headstones and Stories: The Lives Behind the Engravings*

Tombstones often say so much, but sometimes they barely say anything. This presentation shares four documented life stories of individuals only echoed on their headstones while demonstrating “putting flesh on the bones” our ancestors.

32. When Proof Isn't Really Proof After All

Several individuals whose life information is culled from newspapers, censuses and family trees are examined closely. Logical flaws are noted, further research is introduced, and entirely different conclusions may be discovered. This presentation is helpful to beginning and intermediate researchers.

33. Incorporating Multiple Sites in Our Research

While *Ancestry* and *FamilySearch* represent amazing genealogical research experiences in and of themselves, there are many, many, many other sites to turn to for information. Learn and enjoy the Triple Whammy process that has brought so much success to my own and others' research.

34. County Land Records Demystified

Walking into the county courthouse can be an intimidating experience for some, but using the actual indexes, navigating to the proper record, and understanding the vocabulary can be a real mystery. This presentation will address the mysteries of finding and understanding the county land records whether offline or online.

35. The GPS: A Genealogist's Best Friend

As much as we use the directional GPS in getting to unknown and tricky destinations, we can also learn to use the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS) to help us to get to unknown and tricky places in our research. This presentation has a fun and understandable approach to a researched story with a learning curve. Becoming comfortable with the GPS has never been easier.

36. William Eckler and Charles Arthur: One Man, Two Lives

William Eckler came to Texas to fight in the Indian Wars after the Civil War. After being honorably discharged, he disappeared. Shortly thereafter, Charles Arthur met and married his wife, started a family, and held his own as a free Black man in a largely Confederate community. Not until Charles Arthur applied for his federal military pension did the truth come out. Follow the facts, the documents, and the family truths of William Eckler and Charles Arthur in this presentation.

37. FamilySearch: Finding What You Need and What You Didn't Know You Wanted

Before *Ancestry*, there was *FamilySearch*—and *FamilySearch* continues today as a thriving and regularly updated website for researchers. While many researchers are fond of *FamilySearch* Wiki and many are fond of the main research page, this presentation focuses on the hidden gems of the wonderful research world of the *FamilySearch* unindexed but digitized records.

38. Colonial Research: Proving/Disproving an Undocumented Family Line

Many families take great pride in their colonial ancestral lines. This presentation examines the research plan and process of proving such a family line from Ohio back to the Colony of New Hampshire and the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Online research is essential, but results from offline research at archives, repositories and libraries also provide a thrill. Anyone who is interested yet reluctant about beginning colonial research, this presentation hopes to take away the worries and replace it with wonder.

39. Unpuzzling the GEDmatch Puzzle (still just a thought, advanced)