

23-28 June 2024
VIRTUAL SESSION
GRIP Genealogy Institute

Courses and Coordinators

- **Advanced DNA Evidence.**
Blaine T. Bettinger, PHD, JD
- **Digging Deeper: Records, Tools and Skills.**
Paula Stuart-Warren,
CG, FMGS, FUGA
- **Ireland and Northern Ireland Research, Part II.**
David Rencher,
AG, CG, FUGA, FIGRS
- **Genealogical Organization: Increase Your Productivity.**
Kelli Jo Bergheimer
- **Mastering the Art of Genealogical Documentation.**
Thomas W. Jones, PHD,
CG, FASG, FNGS, FUGA
- **Not Just Farmers: Records, Relationships, and the Reality of Their Lives.**
Cari Taplin, CG
- **Midwest Family History Research: Migrations and Sources.** Jay Fonkert, CG
- **Tools and Strategies for Tackling Tough Research Problems.** Kimberly T. Powell
- **Women and Children First! Research Methods for the Hidden Half of the Family.** Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL
- **AI Genealogy: From Basics to Breakthroughs.**
Steve Little
- **Imaging: Its Past, Present, and Future.** Maureen A. Taylor and Rick Voight



NGS Introduces GRIP Genealogy Institute Program for 2024

Registration Opens 20 February

Terry Koch-Bostic, FNGS
and Angela Packer McGhie, CG, NGS Education Director

In 2023, the National Genealogical Society added a significant selection to its options for in-depth learning, the GRIP Genealogy Institute. GRIP was founded in 2011 as the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh by Deborah Deal and Elissa Scalise Powell, CG, to expand the availability of week-long institute courses to the genealogical community and offer new course topics. In October 2023, NGS completed the purchase of GRIP from Deal and Powell and appointed Leslie Anderson, MSLS, and Kristi L. Sexton, MS as NGS's co-managers of the GRIP Genealogy Institute. The first institute under NGS leadership will take place in the summer of 2024, in two formats:

- virtual, 23-28 June 2024, with a choice of eleven courses
- in-person, 14-19 July 2024, with a choice of nine courses, at La Roche University in Pittsburgh

Since its inception in 1903, the National Genealogical Society

TERRY KOCH-BOSTIC, FNGS, is a professional genealogist specializing in Irish, New York City/State, and Long Island research, and a frequent lecturer nationally on diverse topics such as religious records, Loyalists, Civil War, surname variations, and city directories. Terry is an author and editorial reviewer for NYG&B's award-winning book, *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*. She serves on the NGS Education Committee and led the strategy, content development, and design for the NGS website.

has continually expanded its educational options for members and non-members alike, to build their genealogical skills at all levels of experience. NGS's variety of educational methods enables family history researchers to choose the methods that best suit their preferences and needs: NGS Magazine, NGS Quarterly, audio or video recordings, books, webinars, the NGS Conference, self-guided courses on special topics, structured courses with grading and mentoring to build foundational and advanced skills, and now, the GRIP Genealogy Institute (<https://grip.ngsgenealogy.org>).

Features of genealogy institutes

Institutes differ from conference programs where attendees select sessions each hour among a variety of topics. Instead, institutes provide comprehensive instruction on one topic, with sessions building on one another over several days of instruction (usually five). For each course, up to eighteen class sessions are taught by recognized subject matter experts.

Genealogy institute courses on intermediate to advanced essential genealogical topics are designed to teach genealogists who are ready for intensive study to expand their skills. Institutes are also well suited for professional genealogists, who need to keep their skills up-to-date.

The in-depth format of institute courses offers high level training to continuously develop advanced research skills. Institutes offer courses about methodology, genealogical records, geographic regions, and ethnic groups, plus practicums for testing skills. Class sizes are limited, and some courses fill up fast.

Traditionally, participants have attended institutes in person, learning from the experts and networking with other genealogists. The knowledge gained at an institute inspires research planning and often results in new ideas to solve a long-standing problem. Connecting with hundreds of others who share a passion for family history is uplifting and downright fun.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, institutes converted to virtual learning. The instructors quickly adapted to teaching via Zoom and developed ways to provide class interaction and online exercises. Virtual institutes have become very popular since students can attend online from home, and as a result some courses sell out quickly. Many institutes including GRIP record the virtual presentations and make the recordings available for a limited time, in case students have internet connection issues or wish to watch a session a second time.

Benefits of attending institutes

From an educational standpoint, immersion for one week on an essential genealogical topic helps students absorb, process, comprehend, and retain information. A focus on understanding a new methodology or record set gives students greater confidence and helps them apply acquired knowledge to their work. Institute courses help students

- master a subject more deeply than in webinars or individual

14-19 July 2024 PITTSBURGH SESSION GRIP Genealogy Institute

Courses and Coordinators

- **Advanced DNA Evidence.** Blaine T. Bettinger, PHD, JD
- **Organizing and Analyzing Your DNA Tests: Hands-on Genetic Genealogy.** Kelli Jo Bergheimer
- **Introduction to Ashkenazic Jewish Genealogy.** Emily H. Garber
- **Marching Off to War: Advanced Military Research and Methodology.** Michael L. Strauss, AG
- **Using US Church Records for Family History.** Sunny J. Morton
- **Putting Those Records to Work.** Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL
- **Get Your Hands Dirty! A Workshop in Land and Property Records.** Kimberly T. Powell
- **Working with Virginia Records from Jamestowne to the Civil War.** Barbara Vines Little, CG, FNGS, FUGA, FVGS
- **Records Loss: Overcoming Destroyed, Missing, or Non-Extant Records.** Kelvin L. Meyers

conference presentations

- discover the full range of records that may help solve genealogical research questions
- learn from expert instructors with decades of experience in researching in a particular area or topic
- build a solid foundation for identifying and writing about ancestors

Virtual programs allow for

- greater accessibility for those with busy family or work schedules
- increased affordability with the elimination of travel expenses

Joining an in-person program allows the attendee to

- get away from daily responsibilities and become immersed in genealogy education
- receive input on personal genealogical research by collaborating with other students who have helpful research experience
- take advantage of Q&A sessions and one-on-one queries with instructors

GRIP Genealogy Institute students can stay in the dorms on campus and walk to class, or in one of several nearby hotels. Students staying on campus get all of their meals in the college cafeteria, where they can connect with classmates, friends from other states, and instructors. Students who stay off campus often purchase a pass for daily lunches in the cafeteria to enjoy this same camaraderie. Many of the instructors eat lunch on campus and enjoy visiting with those attending the institute.

Popular GRIP courses returning in 2024

Some GRIP courses that have been very popular over the years are returning in 2024, including

- Advanced DNA Evidence (featured in both the virtual and in-person programs)
- Ireland and Northern Ireland Research, Part II
- Genealogical Organization: Increase Your Productivity
- Mastering the Art of Genealogical Documentation
- Tools and Strategies for Tackling Tough Research Problems
- Women and Children First! Research Methods for the Hidden Half of the Family
- Putting Those Records to Work
- Get Your Hands Dirty! A Workshop in Land and Property Records

Unique GRIP courses

The virtual session in June will feature a brand-new course on using artificial intelligence to speed up common genealogical tasks. Coordinator Steve Little and experienced faculty members will guide students through designing prompts for ChatGPT, Claude, and other AI programs to help extract data from records, write summary reports, and many other use cases.

Cari Taplin, a veteran course coordinator and instructor, is offering a new virtual course, *Not Just Farmers: Records, Relationships, and the Reality of Their Lives*. This course promises to be an interesting look at ancestors who worked in agriculture.

New to GRIP this year, the popular Barbara Vines Little, CG, FNGS, renowned expert in Virginia research, will coordinate and instruct the in-person

What past attendees are saying about GRIP Genealogy Institute:

"The syllabus was worth the price of admission for all of the information, links, explanations etc. The coordinator and instructors were phenomenal. My mind is blown. I had dreams all week of next steps with my immigrant ancestors."

— Linda Chambliss, GRIP student

"GRIP has been described as summer camp for genealogists. It truly is! As both an attendee and instructor, I can't think of a much better place to be for new networking and learning opportunities. Many of my best collegial relationships began at GRIP!"

— Angie Bush, MA, GRIP instructor

course, Working with Virginia Records from Jamestowne to the Civil War. Kelvin L. Meyers is bringing his team of experts to Pittsburgh to help students with Records Loss: Overcoming Destroyed, Missing, or Non-Extant Records.

Preparing to register for a GRIP Genealogy Institute

- Review the course list in the sidebars.
- Visit <https://grip.ngsgenealogy.org> to see the full description of each course and details on the class sessions.
- Decide if you prefer to learn from home (virtual week), or in a classroom with like-minded individuals (in-person week).
- Select the course (or two) you want to take this summer.
- Talk with genealogists in your local society or genealogy friends across the country about taking a course together.
- Be ready to **register on 20 February** at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time as some courses sell out quickly. Mark your calendar and set your alarm

Preparing to attend a GRIP Genealogy Institute

Schedule the whole week for genealogy learning. For the virtual courses, 23-28 June, avoid scheduling any other appointments. Plan to prepare meals ahead of time, and take a walk at lunch to stretch your legs between sessions.

For the in-person week, 14-19 July, make your dorm or hotel reservation and plan to arrive by Sunday afternoon for check-in. Check out the GRIP



Zappala Campus Center, La Roche University

packing list prepared by veteran GRIP coordinator Paula Stuart-Warren at <https://genealogybypaula.com/2018/06/grip-2018-packing-list-are-you-joining-these-great-educational-weeks>.

The electronic syllabus will be sent out the week before the course begins. Take time to read it to acquire foundational knowledge, prepare for deeper learning, and develop relevant questions. If you prefer a printed syllabus, take the file to your favorite office store to have it printed and spiral bound for easy use.

Some courses require advance preparation. For example, Advanced DNA Evidence students should have a solid understanding of basic DNA tools and techniques. Spend time working with your DNA results and matches to prepare for learning about advanced topics.

Join NGS in June or July, or for both GRIP Genealogy Institutes, to challenge yourself in 2024 and power up your research skills. 🌳

"Great course! I have so much work to do! It opened new doors and beckons me to new sources, or, in some cases, to re-explore old sources armed with newly acquired search techniques, or with a now-practiced eye. A 1,000 thank yous!"

— Vikki Pauley, GRIP student

"The opportunity to go in-depth on a topic is invaluable. For this class, particularly, the hands-on experience (using either examples or our own research) is terrific! I have so many to-do items lined up, it will take me years to complete!"

— Student, GRIP Class of 2023