



# The Journey of Our Ancestors: *Tracing Our Western Pennsylvania Roots*

1974 50th Anniversary Conference 2024

**Fri, Jun 21, 2024**

## Event Agenda

7:30 AM - 10:00 AM

**Registration**

8:00 AM - 8:15 AM

**Welcome**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream  
Speaker: Pamela Israel

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM

**How Did My Pennsylvania Ancestor Get There?: Migration Trails Through and Out of the Keystone State**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Elissa Scalise Powell

9:30 AM - 5:30 PM

**Vendor Hall Opens**

Location: Ballroom B

10:00 AM - 11:15 AM

**Moving Targets: Tangled Misfortune, Historical Events, Personality Traits, FAN Club Reveal Family Migrations**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Sharon Cook MacInnes

11:15 AM - 12:00 PM

**Break**

Visit Vendor Hall

11:20 AM - 11:50 AM

**Genealogy Escape Room Intro \*In Person Only\***

Location: Ballroom A  
Speaker: Sharon Cook MacInnes

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

**Buffet Luncheon (Meal Included for In Person Attendees)**

**The Mount Washington Transit Tunnel Disaster, a book driven by a family mystery.**

12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Mary Jane Kuffner Hirt

1:00 PM - 1:30 PM

**Break**

Visit Vendor Hall

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

**A Guide to Western Pennsylvania Court Records Research**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Kate Townsend

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM

**The Case of Pithole: Geography of a Boom Migration**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: James M. Beidler

3:45 PM - 5:00 PM

**Research/Networking**

**Research at CPL/ WPGS**

3:45 PM - 5:00 PM

**Brick Wall Table**

3:45 PM - 5:00 PM

**Themed Discussion Groups**

3:45 PM - 5:00 PM

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**Explore Pittsburgh On Your Own & Meet-Ups: Suggestions Coming Soon**

**Sat, Jun 22, 2024**

**7:30 AM - 8:30 PM**

**Registration**

**8:30 AM - 9:30 AM**

**The Bryans Brothers and the United States Colored Troops**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Leslie Anderson

**9:30 AM - 5:30 PM**

**Vendor Hall Opens**

Location: Ballroom B

**10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

**Collateral Research + DNA: Using Nine (9) Children to Develop the Story**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Emily Coffman Richardson

**11:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

**Break**

**Visit Vendor Hall**

**12:00 PM - 1:25 PM**

**Buffet Luncheon (Meal Included for In Person Attendees)**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream

**Stories Cemetery Records Do -- and Don't -- Tell**

12:30 PM - 1:00 PM  
Speaker: Jennie Benford

**1:00 PM - 1:25 PM**

**Break**

**Visit Vendor Hall**

**1:30 PM - 2:30 PM**

**Finding Female Ancestors**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Laura Cabbage-Draper

**2:45 PM - 3:45 PM**

**Men of Steel: Researching Your Steel-working Ancestor**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Elissa Scalise Powell

**4:00 PM - 5:15 PM**

**Struggling for Land against Human and Political Forces: Exploring Our Pennsylvania Frontier Ancestors and the Recorded Treasures They Left Behind**

Location: Ballroom A & Live Stream (Recording Available for 30 Days)  
Speaker: Sharon Cook MacInnes

**7:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**WPGS 50th Anniversary Celebration Dinner (Wyndham Hotel)**

Location: Wyndham (Courtyard Marriott)  
100 Lytton Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Celebrate five decades and the future of WPGS! We will recognize our Legacy Members and First Families of Western Pennsylvania lineage society members. Sharon Cook MacInnes will reveal the solution to the Genealogy Escape Room, and prizes will be awarded to top-scoring participants (must be present to win).

\$50.00 (Conference Registration Not Required to Attend)

**Records & Repositories**

**On Demand Presentations (Available for 90 Days)**

**Pittsburgh Genealogy 101 - A Guide to Researching in the Steel City**  
Speaker: Kate Townsend

**An Archivist's Guide to Genealogical Research at the Heinz History Center**  
Speaker: Sierra Green

**Researching Your Blue-Collar Ancestors at the Heinz History Center**  
Speaker: Sierra Green

**Pennsylvania's State Archives and State Library from the Inside Out**  
Speaker: James M. Beidler

**Finding Buried Treasure in the Published Pennsylvania Archives**  
Speaker: Elissa Scalise Powell

**Using Historical Newspapers in Genealogical Research**  
Speaker: Laura Cabbage-Draper

**Hitting Pay Dirt**  
Speaker: Sharon Cook MacInnes

**Mixers and Shakers - Tracing your Saloon, Tavern, and Bar Keeping Ancestors Before Prohibition**  
Speaker: Debra M. Dudek

**Our Black Sheep and Their Prison Records**  
Speaker: Eleanor Brinsko

**Can You Dig It?: Upper Midwest mining records and employment**  
Speaker: Eleanor Brinsko

**Discovering the Richness of Your Ancestor's Life in End-of-Life Records**  
Speaker: Pam Vestal

**Diaries, Journals and Calendars: Documenting Your Pennsylvania Ancestor's Day-to-Day Life**  
Speaker: Melissa Barker

**Ethnic & Religious Groups/  
Migration**

**Deitsch, Deutsch, Dutch: Key Sources for Germans in Pennsylvania**  
Speaker: James M. Beidler

**From Ulster to the Alleghenies: Uncover Your Scot-Irish Roots**  
Speaker: Megan Clark Young

**Interweaving History and Heritage: Native American Genealogical Research in Western Pennsylvania**  
Speaker: Kaitlyn Pauley

**Finding my great-grandfather, an immigrant from Poland, and descendants of his relatives using Pittsburgh and Polish resources and DNA**  
Speaker: Grażyna Rychlik

**West from Pennsylvania: Migration to the Great Lakes Region**  
Speaker: Kris W. Rzepczynski

**DNA**

**DNA Case Study: An Unknown Grandfather in Washington County, PA**  
Speaker: Kelli Jo Bergheimer

**The ATGCs of DNA Analysis: Assumptions, Thinking Analytically, Guesses, and Conclusions**  
Speaker: Kelli Jo Bergheimer

**Methodology**

**Practical Use of the Mighty FAN Club: Case Study of a Shadowy Washington County Mother and Her Wide Net**  
Speaker: Sharon Cook MacInnes

**Genealogical Pits I Have Fallen Into and How to Avoid Them**  
Speaker: Pam Vestal

**Writing Your Family Story: Learning to Assess and Compile Your Research**  
Speaker: Emily Coffman Richardson