



Finding Your Roots with WHAGS Marathon Agenda

Steve Radack Community Center

Friday, October 16th, 2026

8:45 am – 4:30 pm

8:45 am – 9:00 am **Meet and Greet**

9:00 am – 10:20 am **Unlocking Your Roots: Starting Your Genealogy Journey** Difficulty: Beginner

Barbara Coakley, Genealogy Researcher, Speaker, Author

Learn how to start your genealogy journey or update your skills using a repeatable research process. Begin with what you already know, frame your research question, explore essential records, and organize your discoveries-

10:20 am – 10:40 am **Break**

10:40 am – 11:30 pm **Cluster Research, or You're Related to the Whole Block** Difficulty: Intermediate

Jessica M. Trotter, Genealogy Researcher and Presenter

As Aristotle noted, "Man is by nature a social animal" -he has family, society, and throughout history he has moved with them. This session includes tips, tricks, and examples of how researching the neighborhood and other associates of your ancestors can further your own research.

11:30 am – 11:40 am **Break**

11:40 am – 12:30 pm **Building Your Digital Family History Archive** Difficulty: Intermediate

EvaAnne Johnson, Genealogy & Local History Librarian at Wilmette Public Library

While we are researching our family tree, we often collect a lot of digital files - from downloaded records and emailed documents to scanned photographs and mobile screenshots. What should we do with all these digital files, and how can we keep them organized? This presentation will cover the basics of digital preservation and outline practical steps for creating a well-structured Digital Family History Archive to safeguard your genealogy work.

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm **Lunch on Your Own**

1:30 pm – 2:20 pm **Beyond the Family Tree: An Introduction to Oral History for Genealogy** Difficulty: Beginner

Adrienne Cain Darough, MLS, CA, Assistant Director/Clinical Associate Professor, Institute for Oral History

Genealogy often begins with documents, but it becomes powerful through storytelling. This presentation explores the fundamentals of oral history and how intentional interviewing can uncover context, culture, and connections that traditional records may miss. Learn how to plan, conduct, and preserve meaningful family interviews.

2:20 pm – 2:30 pm **Break**

2:30 pm – 3:20 pm **Gen Z + Genealogy: Getting the Younger Generation Interested** Difficulty: Beginner

Carl Smith, MLIS, Manager of the Family History Research Center at the Clayton Library Campus

Do you have a passion for family history but are worried about who carries the genealogical torch after you? Join in for a special presentation on Gen Z + Genealogy- where we'll discuss tips and tricks on how to foster understanding, communication, and participation with the younger generations, and ideas to better market genealogy to different age groups in ways that can increase interest in the topic all around.

3:30 pm – 4:20 pm **Researching Your Revolutionary War Soldier: A Case Study** Difficulty: Intermediate

Craig Scott, CG, FUGA, President and CEO of Heritage Books, Inc.

A Revolutionary War ancestor can be a goldmine of information if you know where to look. This lecture aims to examine types of service, compiled military service records, pension applications, settled accounts, and where other documents can be found using a step-by-step methodology in a case study.

4:20 pm – 4:30 pm **Closing**

