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List of programs available

- **Unless otherwise noted, these lectures are designed to run about 1 hour (approximately 40-50 minutes of lecture time and a 10-20 minute question-and-answer period).**
- **Requests for customized topics will be considered**
- **Honorarium and travel expenses per lecture are negotiable. Please see guidelines at end and include your normal policies for speaker compensation.**
- **Many of these lectures can be converted into "Continuing Ed"-style classes.**
- **Coordination of group trips to research sites in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Washington, and Salt Lake City is also available.**
- **If possible, please contact me well in advance to book dates.**

BEGINNERS

Tips for Beginning Genealogists
A starting-point lecture talking about: primary vs. secondary sources; family traditions; spelling variations; the importance of time and place; and the proper place for Internet genealogy.

"Time and Place" – Using Genealogy's "Cross-Hairs"
The more that beginning genealogists put themselves in the "time and place" of the ancestor for who they are searching, the better the chances that they will do the most thorough search of all available records. See how learning an area's history will help your family history.

Context as a Genealogy Problem Solver
Sometimes the key to successful genealogy is taking the blinders off and appreciating the context of a particular record or document. Broadening your search can help make up for weathered tombstones and difficult-to-decipher handwriting – as well as giving you more background data that leads to more information about your ancestors.

Opening Up Records from Closed Churches
Finding religious records of your ancestors sometimes requires a "pedigree" of the congregations to which they belonged, many of which don't exist today and require a scavenger hunt to unearth their registers! 1) Value of religious records: a. as vital records substitutes; b. social history of ancestors 2) Hierarchical and congregational models of organization 3) Examples of sleuthing for records for closed congregations

Return to Pennsylvania: Reversing Migrations Back to the Keystone State
Many Americans find they have roots in Pennsylvania, but don't know how to make the connection back to the commonwealth. Learn the techniques here!

Beginning a Search for Pennsylvania Roots
Particularly because of its Colonial-era prominence as place of entry, as many as 1 in 4 Americans has Pennsylvania roots. The "Keystone State" is chock full of records and repositories to help these genealogists. A review of the state's history; most prominent ethnic groups and religious organizations; key records; and where to find them.

Digging Pennsylvania Roots from Your Desktop
It's estimated that one in four Americans has "Keystone State" roots. Much Pennsylvania research – from church records to land documents to courthouse filings – can be done remotely.

Pennsylvania's Launching Pads into the Midwest
Many Midwestern families spent a generation or more in Pennsylvania before migrating throughout the region as it grew in the 1800s. Hear the details on major spots they came from in—and routes they took from—the Keystone State.

Exploring Pennsylvania's State Archives and State Library
The Pennsylvania State Archives and State Library of Pennsylvania are well worth a researcher's attention – catalogs and some records can be accessed online and a research trip can be worthwhile with advance planning.

Courthouse Research in Pennsylvania
Whether it's commonly known records such as wills and deeds or less-used documents such as divorces or "Miscellaneous Deeds," Pennsylvania's county courthouses hold the solutions to many genealogical problems.

Before It Was a County
A custom-designed lecture that takes the Pennsylvania county of interest and profiles what types of records exist for that county from the time period before it was erected – and where those records can be found. Good for orienting genealogists to the "time and place" concept.

Pennsylvania Taxes and Census: Keeping Track of Wealth and Population
There's a wealth of information contained in the many types of tax records that have survived about 18th and 19th century Pennsylvanians. Included is discussion of Colonial tax lists, the 1798 U.S. Direct Tax, PA Septennial Census and 1800s land, personal property and head taxes.

Taking a Peek through the "Window Tax"
Pennsylvania has the most returns from the 1798 U.S. Direct Tax, although fragments remain of other states' returns from this wonderfully detailed but much hated levy. Presentation will focus on Pennsylvania but include all remaining resources.

Deitsch, Deutsch, Dutch: Key Sources for Germans in Pennsylvania
There's no corner of Pennsylvania that Germans didn't populate, and much of the commonwealth was dominated by the so-called Pennsylvania Deitsch/Dutch, descendants of German immigrants. Learn about the details of this ethnic group.

Pennsylvania's POWER Library Turns the Lights On!
POWER Library has a lot of genealogy assets, but sometimes you need to tease them out of it. Get the background on what's at this important online resource!

The Case of Pithole: Geography of a Boom Migration
Now a Venango County ghost town, Pithole boomed in the 1860s long enough for one city directory to be produced. Learn about its people!

See also these topics under "Germans" …
- **Pennsylvania's German Waves**
- **Germany to Pennsylvania: 18th Century Odyssey**
- **Pennsylvania German Church Records**
- **Conrad Beidler's Signature**

GERMANS

Registers, Inventories, Abstracts: Using All Iterations of German Church Records
Original German church records for vital events is a goal. But how do you know what you've found is an "original?" Here's how.

Top Tools for Elusive German Hometowns
Finding a German immigrant's village of origin is essential. Learn the tools to use American data to find that place's correct name and pinpoint it on a map.

Zigzagging Through German Church Records
Explaining the methodology of using the baptismal, confirmation, marriage and burial records from German church registers most effectively. By utilizing the different bits of information found in each, researchers can zigzag their way to adding centuries to a pedigree.

Pennsylvania's German Waves
Applying genealogical basics to the peculiarity of searching for the rich records relating to America's first large ethnic minority population – especially highlighting church registers and immigration documents – as well as the Second Wave Germans who joined them in Pennsylvania.

German Immigrant Waves: Contrasts and Sources
The 1700s "Pennsylvania Germans" were a different breed than the "German Americans" who immigrated in the 1800s. This presentation shows the differences in geography, economic class, religion, and aspirations of – as well as sources about – the two great waves of German immigration as well as reviewing "the basics" of German genealogy.

Mining the 'Űber-sites' for German Ancestors
While there's a galaxy of Internet sites that can help you with your German genealogy, some stars shine brighter than others – and it's not just Ancestry and FamilySearch, although those two 500-pound canaries both have huge assets for those seeking ancestors.

All about Compgen.de
There's a great website based in Europe that offers researchers of German-speaking ancestors a bountiful menu of online resources – everything from historical background and ways to communicate with European genealogical societies to actual searchable records.

German Names and Naming Patterns
The naming patterns and quirks that are found in German names range from needing to "look in the middle" for first names … as well as dealing with families who used the identical name for surviving children. This presentation demystifies these and other potential problems.

***Zeitung* Sightings: German-Language Newspapers from Around the Globe**
Newspapers and other periodicals are likely to contain information about your German-speaking ancestors. Learn about this under-utilized record group, now coming into its own with the digitization of many historical newspapers in the language.

What's a Palatine Anyway?
So many immigrants hailed from Palatinate area of southwest Germany in the 1700s that "Palatine" became a nickname for all the Germans coming to America. Learn about the origin of this name, the history of the area, its people and records as well as why it was an emigrant hotbed for three centuries. Handout of article by the same name from *Family Chronicle* magazine included with talk.

Your First Wave Immigrants' Germany: Microstates and Microbreweries
Starting with a concise history of Germany, the geography and records landscape of some First Wave immigration hotspots is examined along with case studies of various microstates applicable to the 18th century.

Your Second Wave Immigrants' Germany: Microstates and Microbreweries
Starting with a concise history of Germany, the geography and records landscape of some Second Wave immigration hotspots is examined along with case studies of various microstates applicable to 19th century.

Germany to America: 18th Century Odyssey
There are many stereotypes about the immigrants who came from German-speaking lands to America in the 1700s. This lecture uses the personal memoirs of the immigrants themselves to dispel the myths about why they came, what the voyage was like, and how they liked America.

A la Karte: Borders, Maps and Gazetteers for German Genealogists
The borders of German-speaking lands in Europe followed a non-linear pattern that is at first difficult to unpack. Learn about the gamut of on- and off-line tools to overcome it.

Finding the Right German Place!
Researching your ancestors deep into Germany simply doesn't happen unless you know the name of the village of origin. This presentation goes over the sources to tie your immigrant to a *Heimat* and then find the village and its records!

What to Call That German Place?
Because of the non-linear history of German-speaking lands, describing to what political entities a village belonged requires two or more iterations depending on the time periods involved. Learn the best practices for recording German place names.

New York's 'Palatines': Diverse Origins, Mid-Atlantic Dispersal
The first mass migration of German-speaking people landed in upstate New York in 1710 and have been intensively studied by Hank Jones and put under the scholarly microscope of Philip Ottnerness. Where did they really come from? And where did they end up?

Pennsylvania German Church Records
An in-depth lecture talking about one of the richest ethnic record groups – the baptisms, marriages, burials, and confirmations recorded by the pastors of the Germans who came to America in Colonial times.

Pioneers and Colonists: Background of Germans in Eastern Europe
Millions of German-speaking people never spent a day in today's countries of Germany, Switzerland and Austria. For centuries, German-speaking enclaves existed in Eastern Europe. This presentation introduces and gives historical background about these "Germans outside Germany."

Conrad Beidler's Signature
As a prominent miller in Berks County, Pennsylvania, Conrad Beidler (1730-1800), came in contact with more people – and more types of people – in his lifetime than the average Pennsylvania German. The evolution of his signature helps researchers show how these contacts changed him from a youth in Montgomery County to a prosperous Berks County man in middle age.

Werner Hacker's *Welt*
The late Werner Hacker built the railway system for postwar Germany before retiring to comb through archives for records of emigration. Learn about his thousands of documents!

German Indentured Servants: The Men, the Myths, the Records
Many Pennsylvania German descendants assume a gap after arrival in America means they ancestor was an indentured servant. Learn the facts and bust the myths!

See also this topic under "Pennsylvania" …
- **Deitsch, Deutsch, Dutch: Key Sources for Germans in Pennsylvania**

See also this topic under "Specialized Topics" …
- **Beginner Workshop for German Ancestry**

Also see "German Case Studies" category

GERMAN CASE STUDIES

Case Study: Revisiting Sources to Blast a Brick Wall!
1751 German immigrant Friedrich Winter's village of origin was a mystery—until a descendant returned to sources he'd previously checked as a greenhorn genealogist and found this was a self-inflicted brick wall that only needed a proper reading of evidence to dismantle!

Success Story: Finding a European Village of Origin
The case study of Johannes Dinius, a 1765 immigrant to Pennsylvania, is used to show how scraps of evidence properly deployed can lead to the discovery of a European hometown. A rundown of methodologies and prime sources for finding German origins follows the case study.

NEWSPAPERS

Method to the Madness: Investigating Every Possible Newspaper for Your Ancestors
It's tempting to go straight only historical newspaper databases when starting a search. But savvy researchers march to the beat of a different flowchart.

Letterpress to Digital: Historical Newspapers in Print, Microfilm, Online
Everyone's talking about the huge increase in accessibility of newspapers to genealogists due to digitization. But that's not the only reason that newspapers are the hottest record group for family historians: More precise cataloging of old newspapers allows researchers to find a greater number of old newspapers in their original print form and microfilm and today's "born digital" newspaper content are also factors.

Go with the Flow: Finding All the Newspapers You Need!
There's been a huge increase in accessibility of newspapers to genealogists due to digitization but keeping up with the many services—ranging from free to paid to publisher-sponsored sites—offering content is difficult. Learn the ebb and flow of finding historical newspapers on- and offline, as well as finding and utilizing other newspaper resources such as abstracts and clipping files, and learn through a couple of case studies.

An "Average Ancestor" Seen Through Newspapers
The country song says "everyone dies famous in a small town" but you can expect to find a fair number of other references to even your most ordinary ancestors if you make your goal to use all of the potential newspapers for a particular time period.

Early Newspapers' Hidden Content
Newspapers have changed radically over time. Items that would never be published today were stapes of bygone eras … and those items may well mention your ancestors in everything from birth notices to social columns.

Headlines to Bylines: Using ALL the Newspaper in Your Genealogy
Everyone turns to newspapers to find obituaries of their ancestors but every section and column of historical newspapers can be valuable in your genealogical search. Learn how news briefs, advertisements, even editorials and "letters to the editor" might add to your store of knowledge about your ancestors and their lives in context.

Vital Records in Print: Finding Births, Marriages and Deaths in Newspapers
Looking at historical newspapers is stepping back to a time when the format of newspapers was not nearly as intentionally designed – this presentation gives you the tools to zero-in on your ancestors' vital events no matter where they might appear in the newspapers of decades past!

Also note this topic under "Germans" …
- *Zeitung* **Sightings: German-Language Newspapers from Around the Globe**

SPECIALIZED TOPICS

Hunting a Homestead Using Land Records
Two options: 1) Three-hour session in which land records are described and the method for drawing land maps for a written description is explained and practiced; 2) A lecture and deed-drawing session followed by a second day in a courthouse or Pennsylvania State Archives to put theory into practice. *(Note: **Session must be held in a classroom setting to allow participants room to draw the deeds**)*

Beginner Workshop for German Ancestry
There are many contrasts in how to research Germans from the Colonial "First Wave" vs. the "Second Wave" in the century up to World War I. Get a hands-on feel for these differences and the best resources to research each one, including checklists, flow charts and case studies. *(Note: **Designed as a 2- to 3-hour session, ideally in a classroom setting, to allow more individual attention and interaction**)*

Organizing (or Reorganizing!) That Family Reunion
There's no place as good for a family's history as a reunion, but the gatherings come and go – learn how to organize one that will last or reorganize one that's fading.

Unlocking the Door to Lineage Societies
Ever wondered how to get into Daughters of the American Revolution? Or Mayflower Society? Or more obscure groups such as the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick? This seminar goes over the qualifications for various groups and the types of documentary proof needed to complete applications.

Preparing for Salt Lake City Research
This session goes over the major resources of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), including which ones can be used at home or locally as well as those that only exist at the Family History Library in Salt Lake. *(**Note**: Available either as a standalone lecture or as an orientation for a group trip)*

Secondary Uses for Primary Sources
Learning how to use whole data sets rather than individual records can blast open genealogical roadblocks by exploring the interrelationships of a whole community. Case studies show how this works.

"Duplicate" Documents That Aren't the Same
A discussion of how multiple sources may overlap but seldom duplicate exactly the same information – making it essential that researchers check records that may at first blush seem to be the same.

MEALTIME FARE

Genealogy's Lighter Side
Anecdotes and cautionary tales of the people and situations one encounters during three decades of searching for roots on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Hints and Helps: My List of "Top Tens"
A personal list of the best: ways to start; books to get; Web sites to look at; societies to join; habits to break!

COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

Honoraria are negotiable within reason but should be reflective of contracting with a nationally known genealogy speaker.

Local in-person presentations	from catalogue	$300
(within 50 mile radius of Leesport PA)	custom topics	$500
(local groups: ask about a lower honorarium		
with **book sales guarantee**)		
In-person requiring overnight stay		$500
(beyond 50 mile radius of Leesport PA—honorarium plus		
Federal roundtrip mileage rate, tolls, hotel—no home stays)		
In-person full-day lecture series (3-5 presentations)		$1750
(beyond 50 mile radius of Leesport PA—honorarium plus		
Federal roundtrip mileage rate, tolls, hotel—no home stays)		
Webinars		$250
Legacy Family Tree Webinar rights for showing at meetings		$100
(prerecorded lectures—see https://familytreewebinars.com/speaker/james-beidler/)		