

Two Free Genealogical Workshops Offered

Two genealogical workshops will be offered on Saturday November 1, 2014, at the Cultural Heritage Center. Professional genealogist Paula Stuart-Warren will present on how to find and use county records and church records for family history research.

Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. The session on county courthouse records will run from 9:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and the session on church records will run from 1:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

9:00 a.m. Registration

9:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Workshop

“Research Rewards in County Courthouse and Town Hall Records”

It’s more than looking for land, probate, birth, death, and marriage records. The records found in courthouses and related repositories fill in many details about the lives of our ancestral families and the communities and time periods in which they lived.

Courthouses, town halls, and other repositories of local and county records all across the U. S. are treasure troves of records for family history research. Learn about tax, divorce, naturalization, deeds, criminal and civil court records, vital records, and even the scallywags in the family. Today the records might have been transferred to an archive, historical society, may be on microfilm via the Family History Library, or even online. Learn what these records hold, and how to find and access them and indexes. The examples used in the lecture span a wide variety of localities. Part of the presentation covers readily available finding aids that determine the existence of specific records, help locate some of these records no longer in the courthouse, and that open a whole new world of research materials. This lecture focuses on historical rather than current records and on the county and town level records but not state and federal records.

1:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. Workshop

“Lord Preserve Us! Church Records for Family History Research”

From the beginning of our country, many of our ancestors belonged to an organized or semi-organized religion. For those who did, the records which have survived until today can often be a goldmine of details. Names, dates, relationships, places of new and former residences, burial location, entire family listings, and other details may be learned. With some background knowledge of your family, and of the area in which they lived, it may be possible to find church records for your ancestor. Churches were often the stronghold of a community. Church related records are important for ancestors and siblings who were

involved in the ministry. Often a biography or specialized obituary can be found for these individuals. Churches related to specific ethnic groups may give us clues to the old country. More and more southern church records are surfacing and serve to replace many burned civil records. Church records may predate the civil recordings of births, deaths, and marriages. This presentation explores records, record differences, access issues, and specialized repositories and finding aids.

Ms. Stuart-Warren works full-time in the area of genealogical and historical research, lecturing, consulting, and writing. She has been a Board-certified genealogist since 1988. She currently serves on the Federation of Genealogical Societies Board of Directors and is Chair of the FGS Awards Committee and has lectured at NGS and FGS national level conferences since the early 1990s.

The workshops are free and sponsored by the Pierre/Fort Pierre Genealogical Society and the South Dakota State Historical Records Advisory Board, with funding provided by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.