2026 NEW YORK STATE FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE

New Perspectives, Best Practices

September 9–November 16, 2026 (On-Demand Access)

September 18–19, 2026 (Livestreaming Programs from New York, NY)

NYG&B NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Join the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (NYG&B) for New York's largest statewide gathering of family history researchers, genealogists, and history enthusiasts.

Whether you are just starting to build up your genealogy skills or are ready to tackle more advanced issues in your search, you will learn from the experts and connect with others in the field. Session topics will cover crucial resources like New York records and repositories; methodology; migration and settlement; immigration and immigrant communities; New Yorkers of color and others whose stories have been historically underrepresented; and much more.

This year's conference, ***New Perspectives, Best Practices***, will feature livestreaming presentations* (subsequently made available on demand), **September 18–19, 2026**, from the NYG&B headquarters in New York City as well as additional on-demand sessions for all conference registrants, **September 9– November 16, 2026**.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- **30+ sessions and programming (13 livestreaming and 21 on demand), on a rich array of topics, including:**
  - Innovative research strategies, methodology, and analysis
  - Family history tools, trends, and technologies
  - Foundational genealogical skills and best practices
  - Migration and settlement patterns
  - Immigration and immigrant communities
  - Historically underrepresented stories
  - DNA and genetic genealogy
  - Military service and records
  - New York biographies and case studies
- **More than 20 top experts in genealogy and family history field, including Kenyatta D. Berry, Annette Burke Lyttle, Pam Ricciardi Paschke, D. Joshua Taylor, Jane E. Wilcox, and more.**
- **Sessions categorized under three separate tracks: People of New York, Methods and Tools, and Records.**
- **A downloadable conference syllabus with detailed notes and information on all sessions.**

PRICING

Early Registration (by June 15, 2026):
- NYG&B Member: $149
- General: $199

Regular Registration (after June 16, 2026):
- NYG&B Member: $189
- General: $249

* **Join Us In Person for the Livestream Experience:** While the conference is delivered via livestream (**September 18–19, 2026)**, a limited number of seats (first-come, first-served basis) will be available at the NYG&B headquarters in New York City for those who would like to experience the sessions in person alongside fellow attendees. Be sure to select the **"In-Person"** option when registering to secure your spot.

REGISTER AT newyorkfamilyhistory.org/NYSFHC2026

Livestreaming Program
September 18–19, 2026

NYG&B NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

The New York State Family History Conference helps participants learn the stories of their New York ancestors and hone their research skills.

Join Us In Person for the Livestreaming Experience: While the conference is delivered via livestream, a limited number of seats will be available at the NYG&B headquarters in New York City for those who would like to experience the sessions in person alongside fellow attendees. Space is **limited and offered on a first-come, first-served basis**. Be sure to select the **"In-Person"** option when registering to secure your spot.

Note: All the livestreaming programming is subsequently made available on demand through **November 16, 2026**.

FRIDAY, September 18, 2026

NYG&B Office, 36 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036

(Schedule subject to change)

TIME (EDT)	SESSION	PRESENTER
9:00 a.m.–9:20 a.m. (replaying at 5:40 p.m.–6:00 p.m.)	Keynote Address (Pre-recorded broadcast, livestreaming)	Jeanette Sheliga
9:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m.	New York State Censuses: Treasures to Be Unearthed	Susan R. Miller
10:45 a.m.–11:45 a.m.	Unsung Immigration Records of NARA: Contextualizing Recent Immigrant Ancestors	Rich Venezia
12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m.	Guest Books, Dairy Records, and Ice Skates: Unique Finds from Digitize New York	Anna Gardner
1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.	Break	
1:15 p.m.–1:45 p.m.	New York Stories: Pre-recorded, video clips from the genealogy and family history community sharing memorable and notable stories.	
2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.	Passports of Our Ancestors	Rich Venezia
3:15 p.m.–4:15 p.m.	Many Nations, One Story: Genealogical Pathways of New York's Hispanic Communities	Elizabeth Murray Vargas
4:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.	Manuscript Finding Aids: Locating Migrating New York Ancestral Records	Paula Stuart-Warren, CG®, FMGS, FUGA
5:40 p.m.–6:00 p.m.	Replay of Keynote Address (Virtual Only)	

Livestreaming Program
September 18–19, 2026

NYG&B NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

SATURDAY, September 19, 2026

NYG&B Office, 36 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036

(Schedule subject to change)

TIME (EDT)	SESSION	PRESENTER
9:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m.	Beyond the Empire State: Records of New Yorkers Found Elsewhere	D. Joshua Taylor MA, MLS, FUGA
10:45 a.m.–11:45 a.m.	Best Practices: The Genealogical Research Process	Annette Burke Lyttle, CG®
12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m.	Uncovering Tragedy Through Timelines and Historical Context: A New York Case Study	Kerri Tannenbaum
1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.	Break	
1:15 p.m.–1:45 p.m.	New York Stories: Pre-recorded, video clips from the genealogy and family history community sharing memorable and notable stories.	
2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.	Genealogical Map Quest of New York State	Jeanette Sheliga
3:15 p.m.–4:15 p.m.	You Be the Judge: Was Nicholas Storm Alive During the Revolutionary War?	Jane E. Wilcox, FGBS

ON-DEMAND SESSIONS

September 9–November 16, 2026

NYG&B NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Learn at your own pace and refine your skills with on-demand educational sessions, categorized under three separate tracks: **People of New York, Methods and Tools**, and **Records**.

TRACK: People of New York

SESSION	PRESENTER
From Vermont to Erie County, New York: Cluster Research Reveals a Community on the Move	Marie Mattson, CG®
Jewish New York Networks: Synagogues, Landsmanshaftn, and Burial Societies	Carol Genung
Sir William Johnson and the Loyalists of the Mohawk Valley, NY	Marie Mattson, CG®
They Were All Born in New York: Migration of New Yorkers to Michigan	Annette Burke Lyttle, CG®
Yo soy boricua, pa'que tú lo sepas: Puerto Ricans in NYC and the Homeland (English Version)	Luis Ariel Rivera
Yo soy boricua, pa'que tú lo sepas: Puertorriqueños en Nueva York y la Patria (Spanish Version)	Luis Ariel Rivera

ON-DEMAND SESSIONS

September 9–November 16, 2026

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TRACK: Methods and Tools

SESSION	PRESENTER
10 Essential Resources for Using Genetic Genealogy for Your New York Ancestors	Paula Williams
Best Practices for Using and Analyzing New York Land Records	Kaitlyn Pauley
Big Y and Discover Made Simple *Session Sponsor: FamilyTreeDNA*	Janine Cloud
City Directories: Search Tool Then and Now	Susan R. Miller
The Evidence Ladder: Reconstructing Enslaved Families When Records Don't Cooperate	Kenyatta D. Berry, JD
Legal Barriers and Pathways for Women in New York: A Genealogical Approach	Alina Khuda
The Oblong: A Brief History	Bryna O'Sullivan, PLCGS
Tracking County Lines: Researching New York County Boundary Changes	Kaitlyn Pauley

TRACK: Records

SESSION	PRESENTER
1776–1789: Exploring "American" British Loyalist Claims for New York Tories and Rebels	Pam Ricciardi Paschke
Conscription, Conflict, and Class: The Civil War Draft Riots in New York	Michael L. Strauss, MA, AG®, AGL™
More than Paperwork: Genealogical Value in New York Government Documents *Session Sponsor: Buffalo & Erie County Public Library*	Rhonda Hoffman, MLS
New York State Archives Records: A Focus on 19th- and 20th-Century Immigrants	Jane E. Wilcox, FGBS
Parsing the Ocean Voyage: Tracking Emigrants from Europe to the USA	Emily H. Garber, MA
Recovering NY Synagogue Records to Unlock Family History Mysteries	Ellen Shindelman Kowitt
Sugar Houses and the Jersey: Prisons During the American Revolution	Bryna O'Sullivan, PLCGS

FULL PROGRAM SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

NYG&B NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Session	Presenter	Description
10 Essential Resources for Using Genetic Genealogy for Your New York Ancestors *(On-demand)*	Paula Williams	Learn about essential resources for DNA analysis, education, and research to help you go from skimming match lists for hints to using DNA evidence to solve genealogical puzzles in New York and beyond!
1776–1789: Exploring "American" British Loyalist Claims for New York Tories and Rebels *(On-demand)*	Pam Ricciardi Paschke	Former New York residents filed 1,912 claims with the British American Loyalist Claims Commission in the late 1700s, asking for compensation for property and income lost in the "unhappy commotions on the continent" (John Brooks). Learn what's in these files and the best way to find those pertinent to your research on Tories, Rebel tenants, and Revolutionary War history.
Best Practices for Using and Analyzing New York Land Records *(On-demand)*	Kaitlyn Pauley	Explore New York deed research with practical strategies to determine ownership, relationships, and migration. This session will teach hands-on methods for analyzing deeds and integrating them into family histories.
Best Practices: The Genealogical Research Process *(Livestreaming)*	Annette Burke Lyttle, CG®	Genealogical success isn't about luck—it's about process. A clear, intentional workflow leads to more reliable results and less frustration. This session will cover how to form a research question, understand locality-specific records, create a research plan, keep track of searches, evaluate source quality, and analyze evidence. Participants learn practical habits that reduce errors, save time, and increase accuracy.
Big Y & Discover Made Simple *(On-demand)*	Janine Cloud	Big Y-700 and its Discover™ reports offer powerful insight into paternal ancestry—but only if you know how to use them. This session breaks down the key reports and tools that make Big Y such a valuable resource for genealogists. ***Session Sponsor: FamilyTreeDNA***
City Directories: Search Tool Then and Now *(On-demand)*	Susan R. Miller	When our ancestors and business people of the 19th- and early 20th-century wanted to find others, the published search tool often used was city directories. Learn what information these directories contained and where to access these valuable sources now.
Conscription, Conflict, and Class: The Civil War Draft Riots in New York *(On-demand)*	Michael L. Strauss, MA, AG®, AGL™	The Civil War sparked intense nationwide resistance to the draft, ending in the devastating riot in New York City in 1863. As one of the nation's worst civil insurrections, explore how the military clashed with local citizens over deeply rooted social and economic tensions. Discover records from the chaotic four-day upheaval, crucial for identifying riot participants and victims.

NOTE: All livestreaming sessions will be made available on-demand through November 16, 2026.

FULL PROGRAM SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

NYG&B NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Session	Presenter	Description
From Vermont to Erie County, New York: Cluster Research Reveals a Community on the Move *(On-demand)*	Marie Mattson, CG®	Use of cluster research, also known as FAN research, revealed Orange County, Vermont, residents who migrated to southern Erie County in New York. So many settlers in Holland, New York, were from Vermont that one of the neighborhoods was dubbed Vermont Hill. What were some of the factors that caused so many Vermonters to settle in Erie County?
Genealogical Map Quest of New York State *(Livestreaming)*	Jeanette Sheliga	Explore different websites to collect maps where your New York State ancestors lived. A variety of maps will be "surveyed," including panoramic maps, postal maps, maps recorded at county clerks' offices, and more!
Guest Books, Dairy Records, and Ice Skates: Unique Finds from Digitize New York *(Livestreaming)*	Anna Gardner	Family history is full of unexpected stories, and so are the records that we use to research it. Take a deeper look at some of the most unusual and fascinating documents and artifacts uncovered through the NYG&B's Digitize New York initiative and learn what they can teach us about the past.
Jewish New York Networks: Synagogues, Landsmanshaftn, and Burial Societies *(On-demand)*	Carol Genung	Break Jewish New York brick walls using community- based sources: synagogues, cemeteries/burial societies, landsmanshaftn, newspapers, and naturalization. You will also learn to handle multiple-name and transliteration challenges. This session also includes AI prompts for variant building and lead extraction (with verification).
Legal Barriers and Pathways for Women in New York: A Genealogical Approach *(On-demand)*	Alina Khuda	This session explains how coverture, widow's rights, separate property statutes, and guardianship laws affected the traceability of women. You will also learn techniques for discovering unindexed or indirect evidence of women's activities.
Manuscript Finding Aids: Locating Migrating New York Ancestral Records *(Livestreaming)*	Paula Stuart-Warren, CG®, FMGS, FUGA	Where are family diaries, church records, business records, old letters, or pictures found today? In a different location in New York? A state where great-grandmother's sister moved? Free guides to locations of such records are found online and in older printed guides. In this session, you will learn about access to these and to the family-connected manuscripts.
Many Nations, One Story: Genealogical Pathways of New York's Hispanic Communities *(Livestreaming)*	Elizabeth Murray Vargas	This session explores the diverse Hispanic roots of New York, highlighting research methods, key archives, and challenges in tracing families from the Caribbean, Latin America, and Spain. You will learn strategies for interpreting records and connecting cross-border histories within New York's broader story.

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Session	Presenter	Description
More than Paperwork: Genealogical Value in New York Government Documents *(On-demand)*	Rhonda Hoffman, MLS	What looks like routine paperwork can hold valuable genealogical and historical details. This session explores New York state and local government reports, how to access them, and search methodology. You will learn how they may reveal names, legal and social context, and evidence that opens new research paths. *Session Sponsor: Buffalo & Erie County Public Library*
The Evidence Ladder: Reconstructing Enslaved Families When Records Don't Cooperate *(On-demand)*	Kenyatta D. Berry, JD	Enslavement fractured families and erased names from many record systems, leaving researchers with fragments instead of clear paper trails. This session introduces The Evidence Ladder, a repeatable framework for reconstructing enslaved families using Historical Intelligence—context, geography, associational networks, and constraint-based reasoning. A brief case study demonstrates how probate, deeds, tax lists, estate papers, and Freedmen's Bureau records can be crosswalked to reveal kinship and movement.
New York State Archives Records: A Focus on 19th- and 20th-Century Immigrants *(On-demand)*	Jane E. Wilcox, FGBS	The New York State Archives holds the records of the state government. With a focus on records that contain 19th- and early 20th-century immigrants and their children, this session will discuss new as well as familiar state-level records to assist in your family history research.
New York State Censuses: Treasures to Be Unearthed *(Livestreaming)*	Susan R. Miller	New York state censuses provide information gems about New York residents. Learn what censuses exist, where to mine for the treasure within them, and how to polish the gems to further your research.
The Oblong: A Brief History *(On-demand)*	Bryna O'Sullivan, PLCGS	The Connecticut-New York border that exists today was not the one that existed in the 17th century. This session will introduce the history of the Oblong and explain its potential impact on records and migration patterns.
Parsing the Ocean Voyage: Tracking Emigrants from Europe to the USA *(On-demand)*	Emily H. Garber, MA	Building immigration stories often starts with passenger manifests. Coupling these with linked European port manifests, we can better grasp context and reconstruct overland and oversea journeys. While some records have been lost, those that remain may be gathered and analyzed as pieces of a puzzle.
Passports of Our Ancestors *(Livestreaming)*	Rich Venezia	Our ancestors—native-born or naturalized—may have applied for U.S. passports if they ever traveled abroad (a requirement after 1941). Learn about how to obtain their passport applications, and what other related records may exist.

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Session	Presenter	Description
Recovering NY Synagogue Records to Unlock Family History Mysteries *(On-demand)*	Ellen Shindelman Kowitt	Synagogue records are not held in central repositories and are difficult to find. Some remain at synagogues while others are held in private possessions, but those donated to archives, libraries, historical societies, and museums are often not consistently catalogued or itemized—making contents a mystery. A new finding aid starts the search for New York genealogists and scholars.
Sir William Johnson and the Loyalists of the Mohawk Valley, NY *(On-demand)*	Marie Mattson, CG®	William Johnson, born in Ireland, immigrated in 1738 to what is now New York. Over time he became wealthy, and his rapport with the Mohawk and other Native Peoples made him a valuable asset. Many immigrants purchased land from Johnson and remained loyal to the British Crown. Who were these loyalists, where did they come from, and what happened to them after the war?
Sugar Houses and the Jersey: Prisons During the American Revolution *(On-demand)*	Bryna O'Sullivan, PLCGS	Historian Alan Marsh argued that "an estimated 20,000 Americans were held as prisoners of war and 8,500 died in captivity." With records scattered, learning the history of your ancestors can be challenging. This session will introduce the history and records of prisons and prisoners during the American Revolution.
They Were All Born in New York: Migration of New Yorkers to Michigan *(On-demand)*	Annette Burke Lyttle, CG®	Michigan was a destination for many New Yorkers in the 19th century. Through a series of case studies we'll look at some of these New York families and how to reconstruct their stories.
Tracking County Lines: Researching New York County Boundary Changes *(On-demand)*	Kaitlyn Pauley	Tracing ancestors near shifting county lines is a common challenge in Upstate New York research. This session teaches methods for using historical boundary maps and legislative acts to identify the correct recording county. Learn systematic research to locate deeds, wills, and court records filed during periods of boundary change.
Uncovering Tragedy Through Timelines and Historical Context: A New York Case Study *(Livestreaming)*	Kerri Tannenbaum	This session explores how a carefully constructed research timeline—combined with historical context—can illuminate the hidden stories within a family's past. Focusing on a young Irish family whose journey spanned from 1860s Ulster County, Ireland, to 1890s New York City and Brooklyn, this case study demonstrates how methodical genealogical investigation revealed a series of tragic events that would otherwise have remained obscured.
Unsung Immigration Records of NARA: Contextualizing Recent Immigrant Ancestors *(Livestreaming)*	Rich Venezia	The National Archives holds various records that can provide a treasure trove of information on 20th-century immigrant ancestors who made America their home. Learn about INS Case and Correspondence Files, Bureau of Naturalization Correspondence Files, and Alien Personal History and Statement forms.

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FULL PROGRAM SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

NYG&B NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Session	Presenter	Description
Yo soy boricua, pa'que tú lo sepas: Puerto Ricans in NYC and the Homeland (English Version) *(On-demand)*	Luis Ariel Rivera	This session will highlight the presence of Puerto Ricans in New York City, while identifying strategies and repositories (both online and offline) for discovering Puerto Rican roots on the island. This will be done through various case studies of famous Boricuas with origins in Puerto Rico who also called New York City their home.
Yo soy boricua, pa'que tú lo sepas: Puertorriqueños en Nueva York y la Patria (Spanish Version) *(On-demand)*	Luis Ariel Rivera	Esta presentación resaltará la presencia de los puertorriqueños en la ciudad de Nueva York y también identificará estrategias y recursos (tanto en línea como "offline") para explorar las raíces puertorriqueñas en la isla. Esto se hará a través de diversos estudios de caso de boricuas famosos quienes nacieron en la Isla del Encanto y que también llamaron a la ciudad de Nueva York su hogar.
You Be the Judge: Was Nicholas Storm Alive During the Revolutionary War? *(Livestreaming)*	Jane E. Wilcox, FGBS	A family tradition claims that Philipsburg Manor tenant Nicholas Storm hosted Gen. Philip Schuyler at his home during the Battle of White Plains. Fact or fiction? You be the judge using typical and atypical sources for Westchester County, including manorial, court, cemetery, Loyalist confiscation, U.S. Army forage, and personal papers as well as accounts, probate, maps, laws, and more.
Beyond the Empire State: Records of New Yorkers Found Elsewhere *(Livestreaming)*	D. Joshua Taylor MA, MLS, FUGA	Records documenting the lives of New Yorkers are not always preserved within New York's borders. For many periods, other states and jurisdictions recorded vital events, legal actions, and community activities earlier or more consistently than New York. As a result, valuable evidence of New York families may appear in land records, probate files, church registers, military documents, and civil registrations created elsewhere. This session explores how and why records of New Yorkers appear outside the Empire State and demonstrates strategies for locating and using them.

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REGISTER AT newyorkfamilyhistory.org/NYSFHC2026

About Genealogical Credentials

AG is a registered trademark of the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists.
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CG is a registered trademark of the Board for Certification of Genealogists..
FGBS designates fellows of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society.
FMGS designates fellows of the Minnesota Genealogical Society.
FUGA designates fellows of the Utah Genealogical Association.
PLCGS is a certification from the International Institute of Genealogical Studies.