



Plunge into Genealogy!

2025 GFO OPEN HOUSE

Join us March 23-29, 2025 • All events are FREE. Come see what we offer!

EVERY DAY

- ◆ The GFO library is open for research from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with no day-use fee!
 - ◆ Library tours occur each day. Check the online schedule for times.
 - ◆ Beginning research help—Free sessions available every day for individualized help from our research assistants in the library. Sign up at the reception desk or request a session at info@gfo.org.
 - ◆ Most presentations are online via Zoom. All are free during Open House. Pre-registration is required. Get the presentation times and register at gfo.org/openhouse.
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Sunday, March 23

Introducing the GFO

Laurel Smith, Library Director

Learn about the Genealogical Forum of Oregon and the largest library devoted to genealogy in the Pacific Northwest. Spoiler: *We're not just about Oregon!*

Using Family Tree Maker

Johnna Waldon, SIG Leader

The Family Tree Maker Special Interest Group (SIG) is an online support group for using the FTM software. We will look at how to start building a tree, the People Tab, Places Tab, and the Web Search Tab.

Jewish Genealogy:

How is This Research Different?

Janice Sellers

This class provides an overview of the unique aspects of Jewish culture and history that affect family history research. Topics include history, geography, naming patterns, languages and alphabets, rabbinical genealogies, kehillah records, Yizkor books, cemeteries, and other resources.

Genealogy Quick Start

Geoff Smith

For those interested in family research but who haven't quite started. This class

shows you how to take the very first steps, including starting with free online searches.

Monday, March 24

Koffee Klatch

April Ober

Open-ended discussion to start your week! Ask for advice on your next step or just share your discoveries with a few experienced researchers.

Find a Grave: Fabulous or Frustrating?

Laurel Smith

Learn about this under-appreciated resource and join us for a live demonstration of Find a Grave. Submit your questions to findagrave@gfo.org by Wed., March 19, 2025, and Laurel will include answers in the presentation and her handout.

Tuesday, March 25

Gresham Historical Society

Silvie Andrews, Museum Director

Learn what resources may be available at your nearby historical society, and in particular about Gresham Historical Society's focus on its library.

Genealogical Gold in the GFO Catalog

Laurel Smith, Library Director

Get tips for searching the online catalog and learn what's available to you, wherever you live.

Finding Enslaved Individuals in Historic Public Records

Chris Knutson

Learn about records that may be useful to identify enslaved individuals through genealogical research. The presentation will focus on historic records that are available online and in public archives, and touch on the 10 Million Names Project to which the presenter made a modest contribution.

Wednesday, March 26

Amazing Resources

Laurel Smith, Library Director

The GFO website is filled with content that is available to everyone. Learn about the gems and how the GFO supports researchers both locally and from afar.

The Portland City Archives

Devin Busby, Outreach Archivist

Learn about the Portland City Archives and its extensive collection dating from Portland's founding.

Writing Stories Your Relatives Will Read

Pam Vestal, Generations Genealogy LLC

With good research, thoughtful planning, and a dash of ingenuity, we can create engaging stories designed to entice even the most reluctant readers. Turn fish eggs into caviar; the way you tell the story makes all the difference!

Thursday, March 27

RootsMagic, the Swiss Army Knife of Personal Genealogy Software

Barry Wolff, SIG Leader

Learn about RootsMagic and its online features, integration with all four major online sites, and other capabilities. Includes a live software demonstration and open Q&A.

Scanning Workshop

Geoff Smith, Technology Committee

ONSITE

Learn how to use the three major types of

scanners, all available at the library, and how to choose the best one for your project. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own materials to scan. Sign-up will be available for scanning later in the day or week.

Friday, March 28

GFO's MemberSpace

Laurel Smith, Library Director

Get a glimpse behind the curtain to learn what the GFO offers its members through MemberSpace, the members-only portion of the website.

Resources for Oregon Genealogy

Janet Weber, Genealogical Society of Washington County Oregon

There are many resources in Oregon that are overlooked in genealogical research. Learn about some surprising places to enhance your research.

Finding Patients:

Using Archival Research to Identify the Oregon Hospital for the Insane Burial Ground

C. Knutson, A. Donovan-Boyd, J. Olander

In 2022, three archaeologists located the long-forgotten burial grounds for the OHI at the Lone Fir Cemetery. Hear this story and a discussion of the records and methods they used to uncover a slice of 19th-century history.

Happy Hour

April Ober

Wind down from the week's presentations! Round-table discussion.

Saturday, March 29

Researching Your Virginia Roots

Judi Scott, SIG Leader

The Virginia Special Interest Group focuses on sharing tips for research on families from Virginia.

Volunteering at Home

Laurel Smith

The GFO could never offer so much if we didn't have volunteers helping us in the library and at home. Learn how you can get involved! This is also an opportunity to find out if there's a project that inspires you to lend a hand.