



Oakland County Genealogical Society

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2026-2027 Program Schedule

The Oakland County Genealogical Society meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month, generally September through June (except November). The November Joint meeting with the Detroit Society for Genealogical Research is on Saturday, November 7th at 11 a.m. ONLY via Zoom. Our usual meeting place is undergoing renovations so that we will meet at the West Bloomfield Library, 4600 Walnut Lake Rd, West Bloomfield Township, MI 48323. Some meetings are hybrid; in that case, a Zoom registration link will be sent to members and posted on Facebook about a week in advance. Check individual program descriptions for alternate locations. All locations are accessible to those with disabilities.

September 1, 2026 – *He Died in Green Bay?! Why There?* with Judy Nimer Muhn. A case study on the application of GPS for “extensive research” and on little-known resources related to the fur trade and movements around the upper Great Lakes states. The presentation focuses on Jean-Baptiste Amiot, an early fur trader and blacksmith at Fort Michilimackinac who traveled extensively in the fur trade and on La Verendrye’s expedition into the Dakotas. It shares insights into little-known resources and archives in South Dakota, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

October 6, 2026 – *Oaths of Allegiance During the American Revolution* with Kathy Petlewski. During the American Revolution, the Second Continental Congress required oaths of allegiance from all personnel serving in the Continental Army and Navy. The requirement of swearing or affirming loyalty to the newly formed United States was then extended to all free men. For genealogists, locating an ancestor's oath can help provide proof of patriotic service. It also places a man in a particular geographic location, frequently lists his occupation, and provides a signature or mark. This presentation discusses the background of oaths of allegiance in America and provides hints on locating surviving oaths and lists.

November 7, 2026, 11 a.m. – *Identifying Types of Historic Photographs and the People in Them* with Christina Clary of the Allen County Public Library. Have a box of old family photos but aren’t sure when they were taken—or who’s in them? In this program, you’ll learn how to identify common 19th- and early 20th-century photograph types, from daguerreotypes to cabinet cards, and resources to help you along the way. We’ll also explore practical strategies for identifying the people in your images, using details like clothing, studio imprints, and family context. ONLY via Zoom. Joint meeting with the Detroit Society for Genealogical Research.

December 1, 2026 – *Pleased to Meet You: Introduction to the Collections of the Archives of Michigan* with Rachel Clark, Archives of Michigan. The Archives of Michigan was created as part of the Michigan Historical Commission in 1913. The role of the Archives is to collect state and local government records. The Archives is the Official Repository of State government records. State government departments have retention schedules for their records that dictate what records are transferred and when. Learn about records that can support your research!

January 5, 2027 – *Beginning Germanic Research* with Julia Hanneman-Schoenbach. Finding your German-speaking Ancestors. We will explore ways to identify the village your ancestor came from and locate civil and church records. We will tackle the language and handwriting to help you find your folks. And there will be a bit of history as boundaries shifted.

February 2, 2027 – *Cemeteries, Our "Outdoor History Museums,"* with Ruth Du Fresne. In this program, we'll share the stories of three cemeteries located in Commerce Township. All were founded between 1837 and 1848 during the Rural Cemetery Movement. We will explore evidence of that movement in the development of these local cemeteries and share some of the history of grave art and its iconography. These three cemeteries hold the stones of soldiers who died while in service. So, in the spirit of "who holds your flame, who tells your story," we will be sharing their stories along with sharing some of our nation's history.

March 9, 2027 – *Researching Immigration & Naturalization Records* with Mark Mullinax. Unless you are a Native American Indian, you are descended from immigrants. Many people have a strong desire to know why, when, and from where their ancestors emigrated. Scarcely any phase of family history research is as fascinating as tracking immigrant origins - and hardly any phase is as challenging. Learn effective strategies for locating these records and utilizing them to their full potential.

April 6, 2027 – *Time to Hit the Books – Yearbooks, Alumni Lists, and More* with Adam Oster of the Library of Michigan. Yearbooks, alumni lists, and other school-related records can be rich in details about the people in your family tree. Discover the activities and clubs that ancestors participated in during their school years. Learn to uncover details about both your family members and the communities they lived in. Explore the ways of finding these valuable resources both in print and online.

May 4, 2027 – Ask a Genealogist? And What Did We Learn: Applying AI & Writing Skills – Help Session: An open meeting with opportunities to share what you've found, learned, and how it is improving your family history. Bring your questions, partially written stories, how you've tried AI, and what it has done pro/con. Let's have social time to learn from each other!

June 12, 2027 – 12 noon to 3 p.m. – 50th Anniversary Celebration of OCGS Founding: Exhibits, history, food, and fun! Join us at the Oakland History Center in Pontiac for a remembrance, a history of the society, and a ceremony as we celebrate our anniversary. Details TBD via Facebook!