



THE BLACK FAMILY:

United by History, Restored by Storytelling

*In collaboration with Archival Alchemy®
and sponsored by New York Life.*



TOOLKIT

Supplemental Materials
Contributed by
Workshop Facilitators



ASSOCIATION *for the STUDY of*
AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE *and* HISTORY®

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The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling



Unidentified African American family, Rondo Neighborhood Photograph Collection.
Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.



Jones family portrait in Tampa. Twentieth century.
Courtesy of State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.



A family portrait at a reunion and party to celebrate Edward's eighty-sixth birthday, in El Sereno, Los Angeles. Shades of LA Collection.
Courtesy of Los Angeles Public Library.

In 2019, after four hundred years of displacement, African Americans descended upon West Africa for the Year of Return. As Black people gathered to memorialize our coming home, just a few months later, the global Black family was disbanded yet again by COVID-19. Since then, the Black family has wrestled with grief, stemming from the loss of jobs, health, and family members due to the pandemic, compounded by the numerous deaths at the hands of police. However, we have also celebrated graduations, weddings, and births of the next generation. Through this national program, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History wants to empower individuals to reunite with their families to uncover more about themselves, and to uplift the ordinary and extraordinary folx within their unique heritage.

This toolkit for *The Black Family: United by History, Restored by Storytelling* is meant to supplement the information provided in the pre-recorded workshop series available on [ASALH's website](#) and YouTube channel [ASALH TV](#). It includes resources on oral storytelling, genealogy, and familial archiving contributed by the workshop facilitators.

This national program has been generously sponsored by New York Life.

A Selective Bibliography of African American Family History Resources Contributed by Frazine K. Taylor

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Workshop One

Writing Our Family Histories, contributed by Frazine K. Taylor

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<https://www.cyndislist.com/writing/publications/>

Workshop Two

Planning Black Family Reunions

Top Things to Do to Plan an Effective and Impactful Reunion

Contributed by Tracey Artis

- Choose a location
- Choose a venue(s)
- Choose a hotel (Note: this may or may not be separate from the venues, and all activities may be at the hotel)
- Choose a theme
- Choose activities for everyone
- Find a caterer
- Have an updated family tree
- Set a price for the reunion
- Ask a family member to be the chairperson
- Open up an account
- Create a Facebook page
- Create a website
- Create a newsletter
- Mail out the information in a letter form to all family members inclusive of the cost and a deadline date for the deposit



Top photo: Pugh family portrait in Panama City, 2009, State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.
Bottom photo: Jones family portrait in Tampa, 1986, State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.

Workshop Three

Preserving Black Family Recipes

Recipes as Heirloom: A Resource List

Contributed by Thérèse Nelson

Cookbook-Making Tools:

TheCookbookApp.com - All-digital sharable platform.

Blurb.com - Great for print-on-demand books. Pricy, but professional and great if you already have the layout and recipes done.

HeritageCookbook.com - Like Blurb but made for family books. Wonderful if you have fundraisers in mind and want lots of copies. This site also has cookbook/recipe-building software to help structure your recipes.

Non-Traditional Sources:

StoryCorps.com - Searchable audio platform powered by NPR. Wonderful for easy upload and archiving audio clips.

Facebook.com - Create family groups where you can share recipes. The bonus is that it is free, you can share multimedia content, and it is highly interactive and intergenerational.

YouTube.com - Amazing for archiving video clips. Record your family instead of sharing static recipes. You have your recipes preserved on video.

Cookbook References:

The Black Family Reunion Cookbook - The National Council of Negro Women organized nationwide celebrations and crafted this cookbook to commemorate the recipes; great resource for structure and spirit.

Spoonbread & Strawberry Wine: Recipes and Reminiscences of a Family - Norma Jean and Carole Darden wrote about their family legacy in this beautiful book. It is a wonderful example of the power of narrative cookbooks.

Cleora's Kitchens: The Memoir of a Cook & Eight Decades of Great American Food - Cleora Butler offers a wonderful example of a cookbook that's as much genealogy and family history as it is cookbook.

Taste of Country Cooking - Edna Lewis uses this book to define the tradition and foodways of her family's Freetown, VA, community, showing the expansiveness of Black culture and the hyper-specificity of each family's insular tradition.

Vibration Cooking: Or, the Travel Notes of a Geechee Girl - Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor breaks form so completely in this narrative artistic masterpiece. She proves we can reconsider recipe structure and still have an end product that communicates culture.



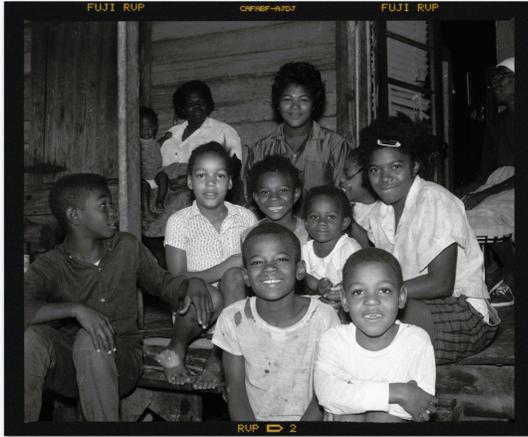
Pike Family Reunion, Katherine G. Lederer Ozarks African American History Collection. Courtesy of Department of Special Collections and Archives, Missouri State University.

Workshop Four

Recording Oral Stories (Basics)

Recording Oral Stories: Where to Begin?

Contributed by Ryan J. Heathcock



Ohmes, Dick (Gilbert Richard), 1908-2001. Group portrait of family on the porch of their home. 1960 (circa).
Courtesy of State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.



Four generations of the Collins family, Hamburg, Florida. 1950.
Courtesy of State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.

- Make it personal:
 - Understanding your role as a videographer of history, make it personal. Being personally vested in the work will help make the experience worthwhile and rewarding.
 - Consider the experience a “quest” to uncover and discover the “hidden history” of your family. Once you adopt the personal approach or “calling” of starting this journey, you may find that there is a conspiracy working on your behalf to move your project forward.
 - Take the work seriously. Understand that your part in recording this history is for future generations.
- Define personal goals:
 - What are they? What do you want to accomplish?
 - How do you start? Mentally know that with CONFIDENCE you can do this!
- Do your homework:
 - Look into what you know and do not know about the person you will be speaking to.
- Draft your questions:
 - Start with “Who are you? Where were you born? And, tell me about your parents and grandparents.” These are great starter questions to get them engaged.
 - Have a list of questions, but do not be afraid to go off script. Don’t be afraid of making discoveries with those off-script questions.

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Recording Oral Stories (Basics), contributed by Ryan J. Heathcock

- Create the space:
 - Consider the location where you will be doing your interview. You will be creating a sense of atmosphere with the location you select. I recommend filming indoors in a place where you can control the sound.
- Stay curious and attentive:
 - Know your GOAL and keep it in mind. Remain FOCUSED on the purpose for which you are in this position. What do you NEED to discuss? This is your Golden Moment to ask THOSE QUESTIONS, the questions you may have always wanted answers to. Embrace it and carpe diem.
 - Engage with interest in the person you are speaking to. BE SURE TO LISTEN to what is being said to you. PAY ATTENTION!
 - This is a SHARED experience. Remain mindful of this.
- Be mindful:
 - When scheduling, consider all the logistics: time, place, health and wellness of the person being interviewed.
 - Set a time frame, for example 45 mins to 1.5 hrs. Let others know how much time they need to block out of their day for this interview.
 - Remain sensitive to the person and their energy. DO NOT BADGER.
 - Offer times for breaks if needed.



A family portrait at a reunion and party to celebrate Edward's eighty-sixth birthday, in El Sereno, Los Angeles. Shades of LA Collection.
Courtesy of Los Angeles Public Library.

Ain't Nothing to It but to Do It: An Archivist's DIY Guide to Personal and Community Archiving **Contributed by Skyla S. Hearn**

I developed this guide with two main thoughts in mind: to “co-pilot” those who have begun the process to create an archive, and to introduce the idea of creating an archive that is supported by preservation practices in a feasible, practical, and manageable process. With this information, an archive can be maintained by anyone interested in protecting materials sacred to them and to the people who matter the most, no matter their background or exposure to the “wonderful world of archives.” My hopes are that this will be useful information to support you along your journey to preserving rich, important, and valuable historical contributions.

Establishing and Organizing Your Archive

Congratulations on taking the steps to organize your personal, community, or institutional archive. Recently the term “archive” has become popular, and immediately connects to the idea of gathering and storing objects that hold various levels of importance. Archives are comprised of materials that work together to tell a story, or to represent the interest(s) of an individual or group of people, and represent the collective action of a particular group of people.

Often unaddressed questions are related to the “how,” “why,” “for whom,” and “by whom” as archives are being developed with the intention to store, document, and share materials. If you have considered these questions, that is definitely a step in the direction to get your archive started. If not, begin to think them over. The biggest questions to think about are “What to do with all of this stuff?” and “Where should it be kept?” Before beginning, consider the scale or amount of materials you have; what capability you have to describe the materials (title, creator, dates, extent, and contents); and the tools and equipment you will need and use, such as notebooks and pencils, a computer, a phone, scanner, etc. Also consider the space where you will work (table or desk and chair), as well as temporary and permanent storage while processing materials (separating, labeling, rehousing into folders and boxes).



Figure 1: Photo Archiving (Photograph courtesy of Skyla S. Hearn)

For example, in Figure 1, photographs are being processed in a workspace away from high-traffic areas to limit damage to the items. Between work sessions, they are put away in temporary storage boxes. Upon completion, the items will be placed in permanent archival storage boxes on shelves in the designated permanent archive, which is covered in the next sections.

Workshop Five

Preserving Family History, contributed by Skyla S. Hearn

Making Space

Identify the contents and locations of the items that will become your archival collection. What is the collection made of—papers, photographs, audio and visual materials such as cassette tapes, VHS, Super 8s, DVDs, CDs, etc.? Answering these questions will help to determine the types of archival storage needed.

Where is it kept, and is it easy to get to? Are there items in multiple locations in a house, garage, or storage facility, or are there photos on your phone or computer? Gathering all of the materials in one place will help you determine the amount of storage needed and how to plan, then organize the storage unit, room, or area. In the case of electronic media, this helps to determine the USB and hard drive storage. If you consider cloud storage tools such as Google Drive or Dropbox, read the user agreements. Always, always make multiple copies of electronic files and store them in separate places. Designate a trusted person to keep a copy on a USB or hard drive, or store in a safety deposit box, in addition to cloud storage, in addition to your on-hand copy.

Whom or what does the collection represent—who created it? Is it focused on one person, a family, a community, a movement? The answers to these questions will be recorded in the labeling, which should be handwritten in pencil. Complete the W's—Who, What, Where, and When—along the outside of the envelope or folder.



Figure 3: Archival Boxes (Photograph courtesy of Chicago Public Library, Harsh Research Collection)



Figure 2: Preservation Strategies (Photograph courtesy of Skyla S. Hearn)

How do I preserve the different types of items in my collection? The best archival supplies are acid free and airtight, block light, and protect against fluctuating temperatures. Transfer items into (non- or low-archival grade) temporary or permanent archival supplies: clear plastic boxes with seal-tight lids (to be kept in a permanent dark storage space), comic book protective sleeves that fold over, acid-free folders, acid-free boxes, plastic banker-size boxes with sealed lids, or manila envelopes with closures such as a flap (not open sleeve envelopes without closures). In a pinch **ONLY**, use sandwich bags (low-grade polyethylene) with closures, but not as a permanent solution. Insects, dust, dirt, and

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Preserving Family History, contributed by Skyla S. Hearn

light can enter envelopes, boxes, and other storage supplies that lack closures and will deteriorate or destroy papers and photographs.

For long-term storage that is also affordable, the best types of plastic to store pictures in are uncoated polyethylene (high grade), polypropylene, or polyester, which can all handle varying temperatures to keep pictures safe from harmful elements. For example, in Figure 2 the archival materials have been rehoused into archival folders and plastic storage containers made from polypropylene that can be found at The Container Store for ~\$8. If you want to avoid plastics altogether, consider acid-free envelopes and file folders that will be stored in acid-free boxes.

Easy-to-access archival supplies can be found in regular neighborhood convenience stores and big box stores, as well as from specialty supply and storage companies, including Walgreens, Office Depot, The Container Store, comic book stores, and online archival supply companies such as University Products and ULINE (one of the most affordable archive supply stores). For example, at www.uline.com, one carton of 1,000 polyethylene film bags is \$25.

Terms: archives, archival collections, arrangement, description, processing



Creating the Archive Location

The best places to store physical materials to be archived are dry, temperature-controlled, dark areas of buildings, homes, offices, etc. If you are starting the archive in your home, this might be a closet that can be designated for the sole purpose of storing the collection. If you select the attic, the basement, or the garage, it should have been renovated within the last 3-5 years. If not, then steer clear, as water, heat, humidity, rodents, mold, dust, and other harmful elements will most definitely contribute to destroying the archival collection.

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Figure 4: Materials to Be Rehoused (Photograph courtesy of Skyla S. Hearn)

Once the physical storage space has been determined, remove all the contents off the floor and onto metal or particle board plastic shelves that have been fitted to the size of the storage space, which will vary. Some shelving units can be purchased as kits, others are expandable, and some are fixed. In an ideal situation, the designated archive location would have ample space to store the materials in archival storage boxes on shelves, and would allow room for a workstation to review or research the materials with easy and secure accessibility. The best way to light the archive is with LED lights. Keep in mind that natural and artificial light both cause irreversible and permanent damage, so it is best to limit exposure to light for long periods of time.

The best environments for archival materials are cold, dry, and dark. The colder the better: the recommended temperature range is 65-70 degrees Fahrenheit, with a stable relative humidity between 30% and 50% (however temperature varies based upon format). You may be able to monitor the temperature with the central air unit. Keep in mind that the best room would be one that does not encounter fluctuations in temperature, so if choosing a closet, the ones by the front door or the furnace are not the best options. Exposure to fluctuating temperatures causes quicker deterioration of materials. Most archival materials range from natural to artificial, such as paper, photographs, artworks on paper, oil paintings, cassette tapes, VHS tapes, record albums, and so on. Shelves and equipment for the archives can be found at local stores such as craft and comic book stores, Walgreens, Target, and The Container Store, and at archive supply companies. The price range begins as affordable as \$120 per shelf, with particle board shelves being the least expensive.

Terms: LED lights, relative humidity

Digitization

What exactly is digitization? Why is digitizing materials practical? And what are the benefits? In a nutshell, digitization is the process of converting a non-digital format into a digital format. For example, scanning your childhood photograph, saving the scan to your computer, then labeling the new version are all steps in the digitization process. Of course, there are more steps, such as to save the new electronic or digitized photograph to a USB or hard drive or upload it to a cloud tool (read the user agreements). Print materials (books, journals, magazines, etc.), photographs, audio, video, and various types of files can all be digitized. Digitizing allows you to access the content while preserving the original object(s), which you would return to the optimal archival environment. By making multiple copies, the digitized photograph becomes easily accessible.

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Preserving Family History, contributed by Skyla S. Hearn

Digitization makes it possible to share digital versions, thereby saving the original from deteriorating, especially when it shows signs of fragility (rips, torn edges, color loss, etc.) Think back to the childhood photograph, which serves multiple meanings—one most popular is as a keepsake. Then it would be most useful to preserve the photograph itself as an object and equally important to preserve the content within the image of the photograph.

What is the process of digitizing materials? One of the first things to consider is the amount of materials you want to digitize. Then think about how you will describe the materials, and how and where you will store them. Getting started is easy. Keeping the momentum may be more challenging, so be realistic with yourself about the size of the collection you are creating. At this point, you should have processed the photographs, which means they are in archival storage containers—envelopes, folders, boxes, or a combination. You should know exactly the content of the materials you intend to digitize, which informs how you will prioritize your order and workflow. All of these factors are extremely useful to help you remain organized. Also, if you have someone or a team of people helping with this process, it is important to guide your helpers with your workflow. Implementing structure by establishing basic rules for yourself and your team will ensure a successful digitization project.

Some basic rules to follow are:

- When you remove an item from an archival storage unit, put it back exactly where it was retrieved from. It is easy to become disorganized by making piles, etc. Resist the urge!
- Copy the information from one source to the next—the handwritten W's on the envelope should also be in the saved digitized file name. This helps with consistency and accuracy. For example, if the envelope reads “Alberta Hearn, Washington Park BBQ, June 19, 1986, Chicago, Illinois,” you can abbreviate the digitized file name to “AH_WPBBQ_6191986_ChgoIL.”

The information that is used to describe the photograph, in this case, and in archival processing in general, is known as metadata. Metadata is information about information. Metadata is represented by the W's: Who, What, Where, When. You can capture all of this information in an Excel spreadsheet, in a notebook, and/or on a “live” platform such as Google Sheets to share with others, as well as to allow others to work with you if you decide to share the work.

The process for digitizing photographs with a scanner is as follows: hand place the photograph onto the glass facedown, and select the highest DPI (the upside is the larger the file, the better the image will look if you have it enlarged; the downside is the scan will take longer). The scanner should be connected to a computer, which will allow you to input the information into software such as MS Excel, as mentioned above. Flatbed scanners work the best for digitization projects to preserve documents and objects (they also work like a camera). Note on dots per inch (DPI): 300 DPI = photographs; 600 DPI = best picture details; 1,200 DPI = enlargements. Save your copies onto a USB drive, hard drive, and/or cloud storage such as Dropbox or Google Images (read user agreements) and store in various places, such as with a trusted person, in a deposit box, and/or in the cloud. Equipment for digitization can be relatively inexpensive to start. For example, flatbed scanners are priced at less than \$100.

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Legal Ownership of Archives

Now that you have created an archive, what will you do with it? Will you continue to store the collection in the space you've created for it? Or will you donate it? What will happen to your collection after it is no longer in your hands?

For creators who may possibly become donors, the following information is key to how you need to think of yourself as a donor, how you need to think of the needs of your collection and the purpose you would like it to serve, and finally, the long-lasting care that you want it to receive. Always keep in mind that archival collections are unique. There may be a few items that overlap with other collections, but the story or representation held within each collection is what makes the collection rare. If you decide to maintain the collection in your personal care, but would like to allow access to the materials to increase public knowledge, then determine what audience you want to serve. Create user agreements so that you are fully aware of each person and their intentions for using your materials (for example, educational purposes, exhibitions, to locate a relative, etc.). Keep a record of who, when, why, and for what, if applicable, per visit and use of your collection.

If you decide to donate your collection to a repository, learn the steps to donating your archival collection. Be sure to keep in mind that repositories are governed by the mission of the institution, the head of the institution, and the board of directors. Learn all of the information about the institution prior to meeting with them in preparation to donate your collection. Per the outcome of the conversation between you and the repository, both you and the repository will sign a deed of gift, which is a legal document that outlines your legal relationship and the legal status of your materials thereafter. During this time, ask questions about how the repository intends to care for your materials and how your collection will become a part of the institution. You should already know that your collection is a good fit based on your research prior to contacting them. If you agree to the terms, you will be expected to transfer intellectual property rights and physical control of your collection, thereby “gifting” or giving your collection on a permanent basis. Repositories typically do not accept collections as a loan or on a temporary basis, primarily because long-term care for collections is expensive. The repository will expect to receive your entire collection, which would include the original objects and all of the additional versions—digitized materials—and records. Some deed of gift agreements allow the donor to maintain intellectual property rights—copyright, trademark, and/or patent rights—but most do not. You will need to discuss this in full detail with the archivist. In the case of amendments, make sure to sign and date, for accountability purposes.

What is the language in the deed of gift? The document specifies the following: donor, previous owner (if there was one), materials, transfer of ownership, terms of access and use, ownership of intellectual property rights, and disposition of unwanted materials. “Under the terms of U.S. Copyright Law, repositories may provide copies of items in their collections for scholarly research use, regardless of who owns the copyright. Under the 'fair use' exemption, the law permits that researchers may publish portions of an item under copyright. Permission to publish or quote

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extensively from the material must still be obtained from the copyright holder.”

Lastly, you may be able to obtain a tax deduction for donating your archival collection. This is a conversation for you and your attorney or tax preparer, not the archivist. Archivists cannot provide you with a monetary appraisal or tax advice.

Terms: Deed of gift, estate planning, intellectual property rights, copyrights

Archival Description

Providing archival description for your collection allows you to contextualize your materials in a way that helps your audience to understand the creator(s) and the materials. During the process of creating archival description, you will take the actions to collect, organize, analyze, and shape the information that supports the collection to identify, manage, locate, and interpret the holdings of your archives. Archival description is outlined in the finding aid.

The finding aid is a document that provides a pathway to understanding the archival collection. Specifically, it is a tool that consists of detailed, categorized, and processed information about the specific collection of records that exist within an archive. Finding aids also include description of the materials, their structure and source, and a summarized or detailed documentary inventory. If the archive holds multiple archival collections, there should be a finding aid to represent each collection; however, in larger institutions, this information may not exist due to a backlog of work. In the case of smaller repositories and community archives, with a smaller amount of materials to manage, it is much more doable to create a finding aid to represent your collection. As your holdings grow, consider your capacity to create the necessary documentation to support your collections.

Rev. Addie and Rev. Claude Wyatt Papers, Part 1

This finding aid is split into six parts. Please see [Part 2](#) and [Part 3](#) for additional information on the Rev. Addie and Rev. Claude Wyatt Papers. Photographs may be found in [Part 4](#), [Part 5](#) and [Part 6](#).

Dates:	Predominant dates, 1958-1999; Inclusive dates, 1831-2012
Size:	278 linear feet (402 archival boxes)
Repository:	Chicago Public Library, Carter G. Woodson Regional Library, Vivian G. Harsh Research collection of Afro-American History and Literature, 9525 S. Halsted St., Chicago, IL 60628
Collection Number:	2007/04
Provenance:	Donation of Rev. Addie Wyatt, April 2007.
Access:	No restrictions
Citation:	When quoting material from this collection the preferred citation is: Rev.

Figure 6: Finding Aid (Chicago Public Library, Harsh Research Collection)

Container Inventory

Super Series 1: Rev. Addie and Rev. Claude Wyatt, Predominant dates, 1958-1999; Inclusive dates, 1851-2010		
Series 1: Biography and Family Records, 1957-2010		
Box 1	Folder 1:	Biography, Wyatt, Addie, Course: Union Officers Program, University of Chicago [1957-1958]
Box 1	Folder 2:	Biography, Wyatt, Addie, Biographical Sketch [c. 1968-1973]
Box 1	Folder 3:	Biography, Wyatt, Addie, Resumes [c. 1968-1979]
Box 1	Folder 4:	Biography, Wyatt, Addie, Course: Labor Leadership in a Dynamic Society, Roosevelt University Labor Education Division [1971-1973]
Box 1	Folder 5:	Biography, Wyatt, Addie, Central YMCA Community College Enrollment [1972?]
Box 1	Folder	Biography, Wyatt, Addie, Baptismal Certificate [1974]

Figure 5: Finding Aid Contents (Web Source Image)

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Preserving Family History, contributed by Skyla S. Hearn

The Container List is the section of the finding aid that outlines the W's: Who, What, Where, When (and by Whom). The Rev. Wyatt finding aid is comprised of all the elements typically found in a finding aid, which include biographical information about the "Fonds," creators (and donors), institutional and religious affiliations, bibliography, photographs, correspondence, audiovisual materials, and so on. These categories are represented as "Series." The "File" and "Items" are represented here in the Container List.

Exhibits - Online, etc. - When you should partner with museums, create your own exhibits, loan archives to others, etc. The advantage of sharing archives on social media platforms. Creating a website for the collection.

Access to your archival collection. Outreach. Loans. Displays. Exhibitions.

How will you activate your archival collection? Provide access to the collection? Share the collection publicly? Will you develop engagements centered on your archival collection? Or will you rely on institutions to develop engagements utilizing your archival collection? The discussion surrounding access to archival collections includes serious thought, planning, and preparation if you intend to allow access beyond single-use access (for example, wanting to grow beyond just allowing patrons into the archive). If the intention is to remove items from the collection or to provide broader access to items in the collection (for example, on a digital platform), then you may want to consider the steps for fostering relationships and collaborative partnerships to build the reputation of your collection. And take the time to learn about creating and managing online exhibitions. It is extremely beneficial to incorporate as many levels of engagement and outreach as possible if you are interested in exhibiting and displaying your archival collection.

When partnering to develop collaborative relationships to produce an exhibition, for example, make sure that your ideas are aligned with the mission of the organization and that you have documentation to support the agreement, specifically outlining the respective roles and expectations of all involved partners. Ensure that you and all partners are abreast of information throughout the entire process from creation to completion. Be sure to know your rights and the responsibilities of participation in institutional exhibitions and displays. Documentation will include loan agreements, use of materials agreements, terms for payment from the institution for use of your materials (if you have established a fee schedule), and so forth.

Workshop Five

Preserving Family History, contributed by Skyla S. Hearn

Should you decide to share your archival collection content over the internet, be aware of user agreements with social media platforms. Also, seriously consider how you want to use the internet as a tool to share information about your content. Would you rather maintain a level of control over how your content is used, or are you willing to allow the public to use your content freely? There are open-access web publishing platforms such as Omeka (omeka.net; omeka.org) that support “the sharing of digital collections and creating media-rich online exhibits” and do not charge user fees, but may charge fees for server space as low as \$35 per year. The Boynton Beach City Library Local History Archives is an example of an exhibition hosted on Omeka.

BOYNTON BEACH
CITY LIBRARY LOCAL
HISTORY ARCHIVES

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BROWSE COLLECTIONS (8 TOTAL)

Sort by: Title Date Added

“Community Study, Boynton Beach, Florida” 1961
Scrapbook of Boynton Beach history created for a class (En. 405) by Patricia C. Toth 13 April 1961. Chiefly clippings (undated), and postcards, and...
Contributors: City of Boynton Beach Collection
[View the items in “Community Study, Boynton Beach, Florida” 1961](#)

Marie Shepard
Negatives and prints, probably collected in interest of Boynton Beach history. Includes some very poor copy prints of images from the early twentieth

For questions, comments, and more information, I can be contacted at activelyarchiving@gmail.com.

Thank you.

Guiding Practice for Genealogical Research

Contributed by Timothy Prolific Edwaujonte

Grounding Ritual

How are you mindfully entering and exiting your research process? For Afro-descendants, searching for and finding our ancestors is a process filled with joy, memory, complexity, and traumas. How will you care for yourself in the process? Ritual is a way to allow yourself to be held by your personal and communal knowings. What rituals will you construct to honor your ancestors and to ask them to guide you in this process? How can your spiritual or mindfulness practice aid you in your work and keep you grounded?

Ritual Prompt

What is one word that describes the feeling or information that you seek to carry you forward in this work? Meditate or concentrate on that word as you enter your research. Meditate on the same word as you conclude your research.

Purposeful Prompts

What is the purpose of your research?

What do you seek to find?

What is your research method?

Whom will you share this research with? How do you want them to experience your research?

Research Prompts and Document Analysis

- What can you extrapolate from birth certificates, death certificates, marriage certificates, and census records?
- What are your follow-up steps for research after uncovering new information? How do you extend your research?
 - When you find a birth certificate, look primarily at the parents' names, mother's maiden name, and parents' places of birth. What can you find out about the birthplaces of those parents? How can you connect those to county/province/parish/state records?
 - What can you extrapolate from a marriage certificate? Who were the witnesses? Are there documents linking your ancestor to the witnesses?
 - Slave schedules—slaveholder name and all of their enslaved people owned at the time. First name, age, height, weight, etc. (1840-1870—five-year increments). State record/census for the enslaved. Helps understand who was where. Primarily in southern state archives.

Workshop Six

African American Genealogy (Basics), contributed by Timothy Prolific Edwaujonte

Embodiment Prompts

Movement Exploration: Embody an Ancestor or Elder (practice from PURPOSE Productions)

- Take five deep breaths.
- Bring an ancestor or elder in your family (blood or chosen) to mind. Choose a vivid memory of them. How do they move in this memory?
- Explore this movement in your own body.
- Share out.

Choose an ancestor or elder from your ancestral chart, or from your oral history interview. Look over their life events/stories that you have excavated. Close your eyes. Visualize these events. Now write them as a first-person narrative. This could be a letter or a poem from their perspective. How can you embody their voice? Use your imagination, mindfulness, practice, and/or spiritual connection to this ancestor to guide you. You'll be writing for seven minutes.

Creative Writing Prompts

Prompt 1: Family Stories

Choose a story from a relative or ancestor. This could be a major event in your family's history: moving to a new location, a marriage, a divorce, a birth, a death, a choice made by an ancestor or living relative, a traumatic event, a joyous event, etc. Close your eyes. Take a few minutes and visualize these events. Even if you do not know the story well, allow your imagination to create the details. Now open your eyes. You may want to jot your initial thoughts down as a list just to get started.

Set a timer for fifteen minutes. Now, write or draw their story with as many details as you can. It might be fun to tell your story from their point of view. How can you use your words to embody this ancestor or elder or family member? As you write, do not judge your work.

Prompt 2: Voting Rights

Imagine the first time your ancestor or an elder in your family got to vote. Could they vote? What might they have endured when voting or attempting to vote? If they couldn't vote, how did they feel? Vividly detail their impressions and feelings using your imagination.

Workshop Six

African American Genealogy (Basics), contributed by Timothy Prolific Edwaujonte

Prompt 3: People

Write unencumbered (no edits or forethought) for ten minutes.

Step 1: Choose a person from your pedigree chart whose life events, experiences, or accomplishments are clear to you. It does not matter if you knew this person or not.

Step 2: List their important life events and personality traits.

Step 3: Write the story of two moments, events, or experiences from their life, in their voice (first person), for five minutes each.

Things to consider:

How old were they at the time? What specific things might they see around them? What landmarks, landscapes? Keep the senses in mind (touch, taste, smell, sight) as you write.

If/when you get stuck, begin a sentence with a sensory statement (I taste, I smell, etc.).

Prompt 4: Place

Write unencumbered (no edits or forethought) for ten minutes.

Step 1: List the locations that have been important to your family history.

Step 2: Note what they have in common and how they differ.

Step 3: Write about the similarities and differences of the places where your family has lived. Be sure to include any motivations for why they moved (voluntarily or involuntarily) that you are aware of.

Things to consider: Use as much active and descriptive language as you can. If/when you get stuck, go back to the senses. You might also try writing a simile or metaphor based on the moment you're trying to capture ("it was as if ...", "trees were tall like ...", "being forced to flee felt like ...").

Don't worry about whether it makes sense. Just write.

Prompt 5:

Draw, write, or dance the story of your family tree. What kind of tree is it? Who are the roots, branches, and leaves? How old is it? How did it grow?

Make word maps, write a script, draw sketches, write paragraphs, dance freely, write poetry, etc. Use whatever media feel natural to you. Write a reflection afterwards.

Supplementary Resources for Beginning Genealogy Contributed by Tony Burroughs

First Steps

- Write your autobiography
- Do oral history: interview all living relatives
- Search the family archives: records in your house
- Research cemetery records
- Research funeral home records
- Obtain vital records
- Birth certificates
- Death certificates
- Marriage records

Beginning Genealogy

Burroughs, Tony. *Black Roots: A Beginner's Guide to Tracing the African American Family Tree*. New York: Fireside, 2001.

Ingalls, Kay, and Christine Rose. *Complete Idiot's Guide to Genealogy*. 3rd ed. New York: Alpha Books, 2012.

Rose, Christine. *Nicknames Past and Present*. 5th ed. San Jose, CA: CR Publications, 2007.

Szucs, Loretto. *Family History Made Easy: Twelve Steps to Discovering and Preserving Your Family Heritage*. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry, 1998.

Oral History

Greene, Bob, and D. G. Fulford. *To Our Children's Children: Preserving Family Histories for Generations to Come*. New York: Doubleday, 1993.

Mason, Jeffrey. *Mom, I Want to Hear Your Story: A Mother's Guided Journal to Share Her Life & Her Love*. Independently published, 2019.

Tell Me Your Life Story, Dad: A Father's Guided Journal and Memory Keepsake Book. Questions About Me, 2021.

Scott, Paula Spencer. *An Oral History (Preserve Your Family's Story)*. Peter Pauper Press, 2018.

Zimmerman, Bill. *How to Tape Instant Oral Biographies*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

Workshop Six

African American Genealogy (Basics), contributed by Tony Burroughs

Vital Records

Kemp, Thomas J. *International Vital Records Handbook*. 7th ed. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing, 2017.

North, S. N. D. *Marriage Laws in the United States, 1887-1906*. Conway, AR: Arkansas Research, 1993.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics. *Where to Write for Vital Records*. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm>

Cemetery Research

Alabama Study Group of the Afro-American Genealogical and Historical Society of Chicago. *An Index of Headstones in Lincoln Cemetery, Chicago, Illinois*. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1999.

Carmack, Sharon Debartolo. *Your Guide to Cemetery Research*. Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books, 2002.

Nichols, Elaine. *The Last Miles of the Way: African American Homegoing Traditions—1890-Present*. Columbia, SC: South Carolina State Museum, 1989.

Szucs, Loretto Dennis, and Sandra Luebking, eds. *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*. 3rd rev. ed. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry, 2006. See "Cemeteries and Funeral Home Records," pp. 634-49.

Wright, Roberta, and Wilber Hughes. *Lay Down Body: Living History in African-American Cemeteries*. Detroit, MI: Visible Ink, 1996.

Researching Death Records

Billingsley, Carolyn Earle, and Desmond Walls Allen. *How to Get the Most Out of Death Certificates*. Bryant, AR: Research Associates, 1991.

Carter, James Byars. "Disease and Death in the Nineteenth Century: A Genealogical Perspective." *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 76 (December 1988): 290.

Jerger, Jeanette L. *A Medical Miscellany for Genealogists*. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1995.

Saxbe, William, Jr. "Notes and Documents: Nineteenth-Century Death Records: How Dependable Are They?" *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 87 (March 1999): 43-54.

Workshop Six

African American Genealogy (Basics), contributed by Tony Burroughs

Online Resources

Ancestry.com - www.ancestry.com - Paid subscription service

FamilySearch - www.familysearch.org - Free records and indexes (search catalog by state as well as county and then "Vital Records")

WorldCat - <https://www.worldcat.org/> - The world's largest library catalog

Genealogy Software

Roots Magic - \$29.95 - <https://www.rootsmagic.com/>

Family Tree Maker - \$79.95 - <https://www.mackiev.com/ftm>

Legacy Family Tree - \$34.95 - <https://legacyfamilytree.com/>

Cemetery Records Online

(Your ancestors' records might not be online, but they are worth a check.)

African American Cemeteries Online - <http://africanamericancemeteries.com/>

BillionGraves - <https://billiongraves.com/>

Find a Grave - <http://www.findagrave.com/>

Interment.net - <http://www.interment.net/>

Nationwide Gravesite Locator, Department of Veterans Affairs (veterans buried in national cemeteries) - <https://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/>

Death Certificates and Death Registers Online

(Your ancestors' records might not be online, but they are worth a check.)

Ancestry.com - Check state and county

FamilySearch.org - Check state and county

Basic Techniques for Video Recording Oral Stories

Contributed by Ryan. J. Heathcock

First Things First—the Camera

Your cell phone is your first camera. When using your cell phone, be sure you are filming HD (high definition). When filming, be sure to use the outer camera, not the front-facing camera. Be sure to always copy your video and make a backup as soon as you can. Tablets are also a device that can be used as a primary camera.

A basic digital camera is an ideal option for having a dedicated camera just for recording video outside of camera and tablet use. Eventually you can upgrade to a more expensive digital camera that utilizes external microphones (DSLR camera). Finally, you have the professional video camera. Prosumer models are sufficient.

Consider how much you intend to film and what your needs will be; that will help you decide what camera option to choose. Always count/consider the COST you will be investing in your equipment.

You will need to select the appropriate tripod for the camera that you choose to use. For beginners, embrace the auto settings on your camera.

The Secret to Audio

Hearing your subject is more important than seeing them. The quality of the SOUND is what will determine if you can hold your audience's attention. If you have poor sound, you lose your audience.

If possible, film indoors to control the sound as best you can. Close doors and turn the air conditioning off. Be mindful of ambient noises and sound sources that you do not want recorded.

Avoid going outside if you can. If you have to shoot outside, be sure to find a quiet space.

Keep in mind the proximity of the person being interviewed. Have the camera close enough so that you can get clear audio from the subject, especially if you do not have an external microphone or lavalier microphone.

Types of microphones include

- Lavalier (wireless)
- Shotgun microphone

Workshop Seven

Recording Oral Stories (Advanced), contributed by Ryan J. Heathcock

Composition and Light

Position the subject so they are clearly visible and well lit. For camera composition, place the subject in front of the camera and light them from the direction of the camera.

It is important to have adequate and balanced lighting. Natural light is good, but avoid having light behind your subject, because that creates “backlight” and will wash out the subject.

Regarding the relationship of subject and camera, LINE OF SIGHT is key. Be mindful of the eye level of your subject as it pertains to where the camera is placed.

- Eyes should be within the top third of the frame of your screen. This creates the sense of “eye to eye” contact. The audience is able to meet the subject at their level, where they are, eye to eye.
- Consider the distance of the subject from the camera. The closer your subject is, the more intimate the space, particularly as you zoom in on the eyes.

Resources for Finding African American Families with Records Created by the Federal Government Contributed by Denyce Peyton

The four federal record sets being discussed in this presentation represent sources created during a unique time in American history. The primary focus for Freedmen's Bureau, Freedman's Bank, and United States Colored Troops records was to document participants in events relevant to the established purposes of these organizations, during or post-Civil War. For formerly enslaved individuals, it may represent the first time they were documented by name and respective life events were recorded for history.

General Search Strategies

- Learn the history of period in locations being researched.
 - Relevant social situations?
 - Epidemics?
 - Economic factors?
- Recognize that sources of information on a record can represent:
 - A participant or witness of the event—firsthand.
 - A party who was informed about the event, but not in attendance—secondhand.
 - An individual gathering information from any firsthand or secondhand party—thirdhand.
- Records may be originals, photocopies or microfilms of originals, or derivatives of originals (abstracts, information compiled in a publication or database, from originals).
- Every time data from a record is “touched,” as in abstractions or transferred from original record by hand, the risk of errors or omissions increases.
- Search methods:
 - Search for variations of name spellings.
 - Consider a range of birth years for individuals.
 - Family members may be documented by different given and/or surnames from what we know.
- Follow evidence in records to determine possible/probable matches.
- Analyze Who, What, Where, and When:
 - Identify names of primary research subjects and anyone else named in a record.
 - What event is the record documenting? A marriage, military enlistment, identity verification, birth, or death? Records are created for specific reasons.
 - Note the location where the event occurred: city, county, state, and street address if listed.
 - The date(s) of documented event(s), or general period.

Workshop Eight

Finding Your Family in Governmental Records, contributed by Denyce Peyton

- Cluster/collateral research:
 - Make note of individual and family names referenced in document.
 - Investigate these individuals to determine whether a familial, close associate, or neighbor relationship exists with your research subject(s).
 - Indirect information gathered about cluster or collateral group individuals may provide evidence to fill in gaps or connect to your family member.
- Effective strategy to overcome some brick wall challenges.

Research Resources

Online access to four federal record groups—Freedmen’s Bureau, “Freedman’s Bank Records, 1865-1874,” Federal Census, and United States Colored Troops Compiled Military Service records and Pension Index cards—is available at:

- [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) (requires individuals to set up account, no payment)
- [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) (paid subscription site)
- [Fold3.com](https://www.fold3.com) (paid subscription site)

Federal Census Records

Federal census schedules, population and non-population, are accessible at:

- [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) also provides access to federal census schedules
- [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) (payment required for some records in this set)

Public library patrons may be able to access records on paid subscription sites through their library.

Name of every Person whose name and place of birth in the first day of Jan. 1850, was in this family.		Sex	Color	Age	Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Place or Birth, Territory or County.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12232	John A. Weeks	M	W	35		New York	
	James	M	W	7		do	
	Joseph	M	W	11	Teacher	New York	
	Wm. James	M	W	16		New York	
	Eliza	F	W	14		do	
	Charles	M	W	11		do	
	James	M	W	5		do	
	James	M	W	3		do	
	James	M	W	12	Carriage	New York	
	Elizabeth	F	W	10		New York	
	Joseph	M	W	11		do	
12233	Robert	M	W	12	Seaman	New York	
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Workshop Eight

Finding Your Family in Governmental Records, contributed by Denyce Peyton

Freedmen's Bureau Records

The act to establish the Bureau for the Relief of Freedmen and Refugees (Freedmen's Bureau) was passed by Congress on March 3, 1865. A history of the bill is documented on the United States Senate website:

<https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/FreedmensBureau.htm>

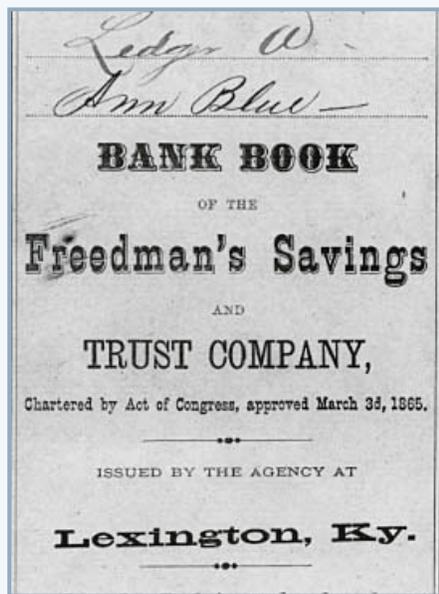
National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), "African American Records: Freedmen's Bureau," webpage at <https://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/freedmens-bureau>.

FamilySearch.org currently provides the most comprehensive online collection of Freedmen's Bureau record types, typically organized by category and branch office locations. It is possible to search "Collection Title" under search record selection by "name of state, Freedmen's Bureau" to access the database for that state's branch office database.

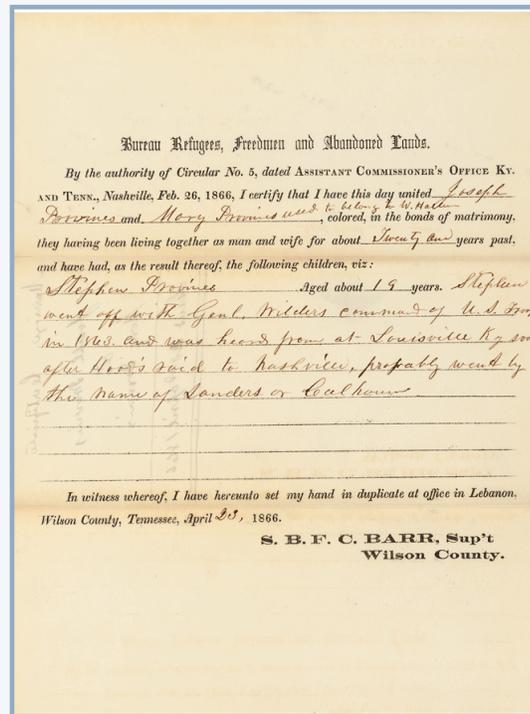
- Freedmen's Bureau record types are listed at FamilySearch.org: https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Freedmen%27s_Bureau_Record_Types

The National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC, is collaborating with the Smithsonian Transcription Center to transcribe more than 1.5 million image files from Freedmen's Bureau records:

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/freedmens-bureau-recordsc/FreedmensBureau.htm>



Freedman's Savings and Trust Company passbook
Courtesy of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration



Certificate of Matrimony for Joseph and Mary Province of Nashville, Tennessee.
Courtesy of the US National Archives and Records Administration.

The Freedman's Savings and Trust Company Records

"The Freedman's Savings and Trust Company and African American Genealogical Research," *Prologue Magazine*, National Archives website:

<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1997/summer/freedmans-savings-and-trust.html>

Freedman's Bank records are retrievable at FamilySearch.org, "United States, Freedman's Bank Records, 1865-1874," searchable by individual's name, residence, birthplace:

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1417695>

Workshop Eight

Finding Your Family in Governmental Records, contributed by Denyce Peyton

Civil War United States Colored Troops (USCT) Records

An index is available online at Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System: <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm>

- Provides information under the United States Colored Troops category, including name, battle unit, regiment, company, and alternative name if applicable.

Service records chronicled soldiers' activity from enlistment to discharge or death. Full compiled service records may be ordered from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), with some available online at Fold3.com (paid subscription site).

- Compiled Military Service records are indexed on NARA microfilm publication M589, roll 49, FHL film 1276501-1266617. Compiled service records may be ordered by completing NATF form 86 from NARA: <https://www.archives.gov/files/forms/pdf/natf-86.pdf>
- Compiled Military Service records are retrievable in digital image format at Fold3.com, a paid subscription site: <https://www.fold3.com/?group=1>

FamilySearch also offers a wealth of information on the United States Colored Troops in the Civil War: https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Colored_Troops_in_the_Civil_War

- Includes a listing of Record Group 94 records of the Adjutant General's Office, relative to USCT record groups, posted at NARA: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/602306>



Guard House and Guard, 107th U.S. Colored Infantry Fort Corcoran near Washington, D.C.
Courtesy of Library of Congress



[Unidentified African American soldier in Union uniform with wife and two daughters]
Courtesy of Library of Congress

Civil War Pension Records

Civil War Pension Index cards are retrievable at:

FamilySearch, "General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934," <https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1919699>

Ancestry.com, "United States General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934," "General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934," <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/4654/>

Fold3.com, Civil War Pension Index, [https://www.fold3.com/browse/hh_q9kMjOFSZJ3zR-?military.conflict=Civil+War+\(Union\)](https://www.fold3.com/browse/hh_q9kMjOFSZJ3zR-?military.conflict=Civil+War+(Union))

Pension Index cards have also been indexed at the National Archives on microfilm publication T288, under "General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934."

The National Archives provides copies of pension records in response to request forms. The request form for Civil War pension files is NATF form 85.

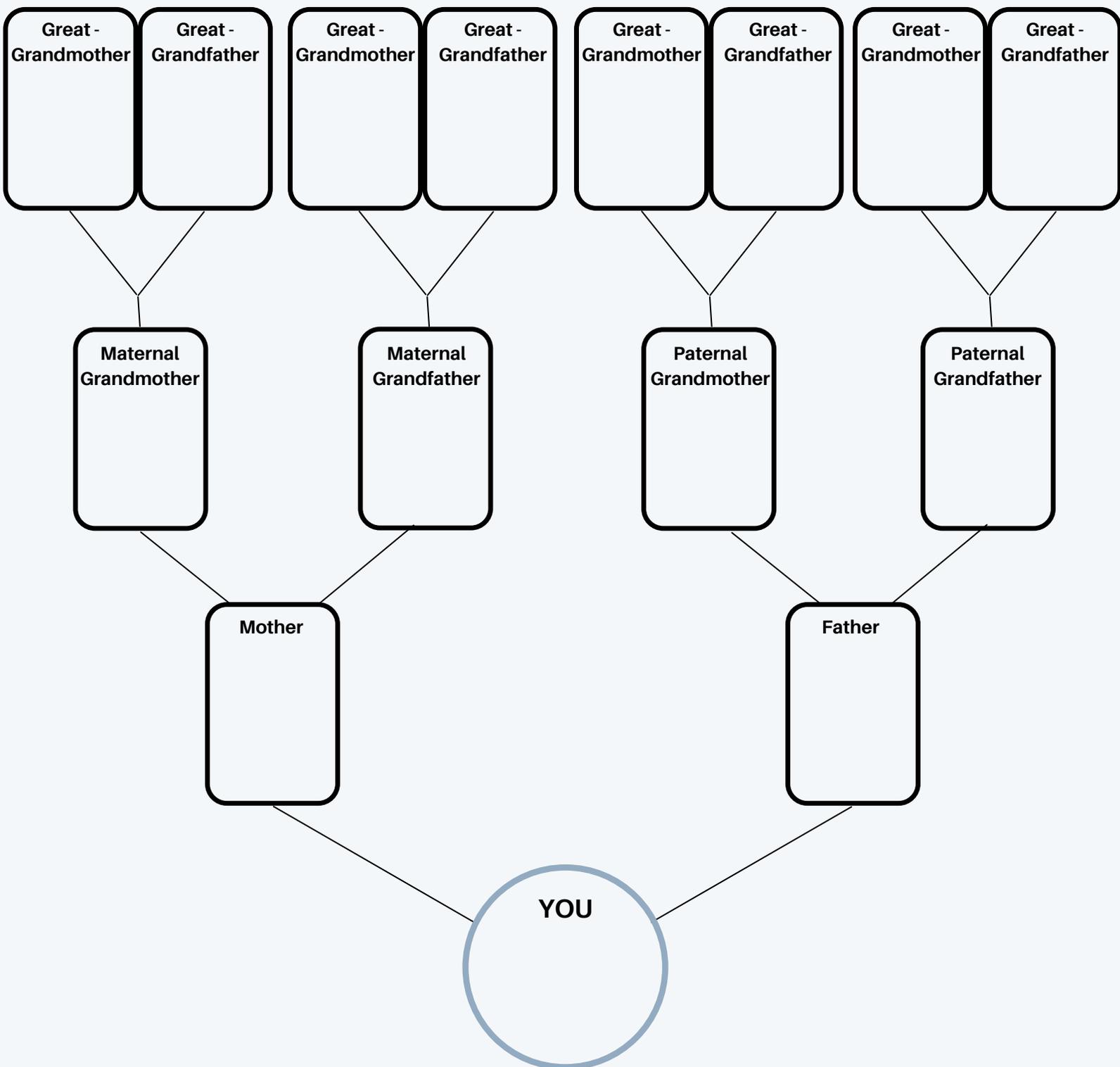
Records may be ordered online at NARA's site: <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>

Or by downloading the form and mailing to NARA: <https://www.archives.gov/files/forms/pdf/natf-85.pdf>

Workshop Nine

Using DNA Tests to Explore Ancestry, contributed by Dr. Gina Paige

Your genetic genealogy contributes to the story of you. You are made up of thousands of lineages—people that came before you on your family tree. This workshop covered two ways to research your family history: genealogy and genetic ancestry tracing. Both methods start with the family tree. How many family member names do you know?



Workshop Nine

Using DNA Tests to Explore Ancestry, contributed by Dr. Gina Paige

Genetic Ancestry Tracing

Definition: Researching the descent of a person, family, group, etc. using genetics (biology).

Benefits: Find the present-day African country and ethnic group that you share ancestry with.

See how the science works here: <https://africanancestry.com/pages/the-science>

MatriClan Test Kit
DISCOVER YOUR MOTHER'S MATERNAL ROOTS
(female and male test takers)



Includes everything you need to trace your mtDNA, submit your cheek swab and receive your digital result.

\$299.00
★★★★★ 201 Reviews

African Ancestry MatriClan Test:
Single lineage test that uses mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) to trace a maternal lineage—mother to mother to mother on back, up to 2,000 years.

African Ancestry PatriClan Test:
Single lineage test that uses the Y chromosome to trace a paternal lineage—father to father to father on back, up to 2,000 years.

PatriClan Test Kit
DISCOVER YOUR FATHER'S PATERNAL ROOTS
(male test takers only)



Includes everything you need to trace your Y-DNA, submit your cheek swab and receive your digital results.

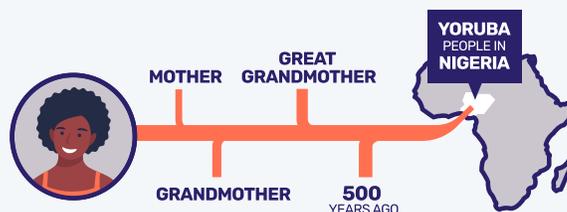
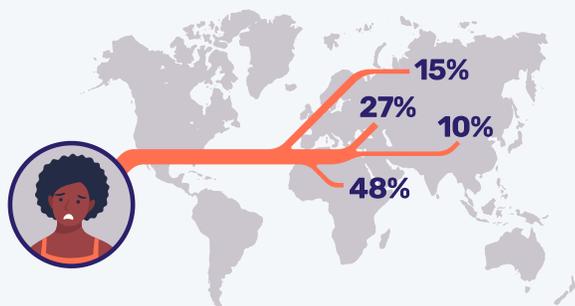
\$299.00
★★★★★ 80 Reviews

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Limited time offer

Workshop Nine

Using DNA Tests to Explore Ancestry, contributed by Dr. Gina Paige

Most of the popular genetic genealogy test kits provide you with a percentage breakdown of your ancestry.



African Ancestry is different. We provide your specific African country and tribe of origin on a single lineage.

- We have the largest collection of indigenous African lineages in the world. See our database here:

<https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/2138/0103/t/29/assets/LineageMap.pdf>



- Enjoy complete confidentiality. We treat your personal, financial, and genetic information as privately as we would treat your Social Security number. African Ancestry never sells or shares your information, and destroys your DNA.

- Create a legacy for the family. Your test results will be the same for multiple family members along your maternal or paternal line.



Contributor Bios

Frazine K. Taylor



“Family history research is rewarding: try it!”

Frazine K. Taylor is the president of the Elmore County Association of Black Heritage, chair emeritus of the Black Heritage Council of the Alabama Historical Commission, and former president of the Alabama Historical Association. Frazine is the author of *Researching African American Genealogy in Alabama: A Resource Guide*, and conducts genealogy and archival workshops throughout the state.

Tracey Artis



“It was never a question not to do it. It was how I would do it.”

Tracey Artis is the director of the Midwest Black Family Reunion (BFR), a three-day celebration that attracts over 15,000 attendees. Tracey is also the founder of I Hear Music, a Cincinnati-based marketing, promotions, and event firm representing international gospel artists. Using her gifts to glorify God, Artis has represented some of contemporary gospel music’s biggest names.

Thérèse Nelson



“We all have a verbal family history that has been passed down through great meals and stories from parents and grandparents.”

Thérèse Nelson is a chef, a writer, and the founder and culinary curator of Black Culinary History. Black Culinary History was founded in 2008 as a way to connect Black chefs, preserve Black heritage throughout the African diaspora, promote and share the work of Black food and beverage professionals, and maintain the legacy being constructed by Black chefs for the next generation.

Contributor Bios

“My life’s goal is to leave a living record of my history for my descendants and to give this same opportunity for others. To tell your own story in your own words.”

Ryan J. Heathcock, a 1993 graduate of the Howard University School of TV and Film Production, specializes in oral history preservation through video documentation. In 2015 Ryan International, Inc., began to focus on projects that are aimed at preserving the oral histories of individuals and organizations. Once Upon a Time (OUAT) was created with the intent to give individuals and historical institutions the opportunity to video document their stories to ensure that their history and legacy are preserved and passed on to the next generation “in their own words.”

Ryan J. Heathcock



Skyla S. Hearn



“It’s important for us as Black information professionals, archivists, and librarians, and records managers, to be able to provide and share this expertise, these skills, with our communities and with our people.”

Skyla S. Hearn is an archivist, special collections librarian, visual artist, and co-founder of The Blackivists—a collective of trained Black archivists who prioritize Black cultural heritage preservation and memory work. Skyla is most concerned with supporting a community’s attempt to understand, document, and share its own history, particularly those that have not been well recorded; to expand archives to include increased representation; and to diversify mainstream historical records. She is a homegrown Chicagoan by way of Mississippi.

“It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.” —Assata Shakur

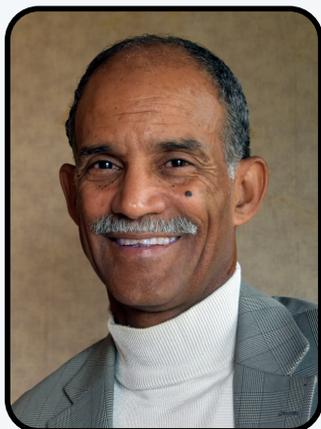
Timothy Prolific Edwaujonte is a multidisciplinary artist, educator, and organizer who fuses their creative and genealogical practices in pursuit of reparations for Afro-Indigenous peoples. Pro is the author of multiple books of poetry, including their latest, *Ofrenda para las ancestras*, which combines family stories, genealogical research, and ancestral practices into poetry. Edwaujonte is the VP for Institutional Culture at PURPOSE Productions, teaches at Ember Charter Schools, and founded the Owo Foro Adobe collaborative. Visit ProJones.com to learn more.

Timothy "Prolific" Edwaujonte



Contributor Bios

Tony Burroughs

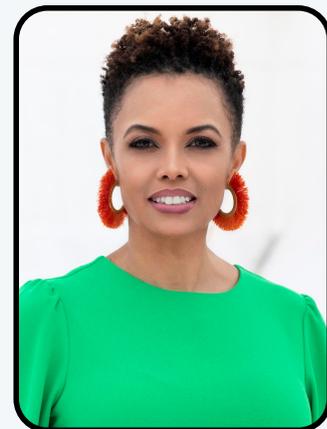


Tony Burroughs is an internationally known genealogist whose book *Black Roots* was number one on *Essence* magazine's bestseller list. He researched Olympic gold medalist Michael Johnson's family history and consulted on genealogies for Oprah Winfrey, Smokey Robinson, Reverend Al Sharpton, and Billy Porter. He has appeared as an expert on twenty-five national and international television programs, including *African American Lives* with Henry Louis Gates and *Oprah's Roots* (PBS), *Who Do You Think You Are?* (TLC), *The Real Family of Jesus* (Discovery), and the History Channel. Burroughs has traced his family back eight generations.

"We are the original victims of identity theft ... tracing our roots is an ancestral imperative."

In 2003, Dr. Gina Paige co-founded African Ancestry, Inc. (AfricanAncestry.com), and in doing so, pioneered a new way of tracing African lineages using genetics, and a new marketplace for people of African descent looking to more accurately and reliably trace their roots. Paige travels the world helping people demystify their roots and inform on identities so that they may better understand who they are by knowing where they're from.

Dr. Gina Paige



Denyce Peyton



"Remember your roots, your history, and the forebears' shoulders on which you stand. And pass these roots on to your children and to other children." —Marian Wright Edelman

Denyce Peyton is a genealogist with twenty-five years' experience, providing professional research since 2004. Her specialties are African Americans, research methodologies, evidence analysis, and nineteenth-/twentieth-century investigations. Denyce holds completion certificates in "Advanced Methodology and Evidence Analysis" from the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR), ProGen3I study group, and "Genealogy Writing from Planning to Publication" from the Midwestern African American Genealogy Institute.