FOR THE RECORDS

Irish Historic Towns Atlas

Historic maps are an integral part of any genealogist's toolkit. They are a window in to the world of our ancestors, helping us imagine what life was like for the people who came before us. They can help us visualize the world in which they lived, and help us gain a deeper understanding of their lives. Until recently, however, Irish researchers were primarily reliant on the Ordnance Survey (OS) maps that are part of Griffith's Valuation. While the OS maps are a great resource, they were drawn on a scale that limits their usefulness for research in an urban environment.

In an effort to change that, The Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA) collection was born. The IHTA is the result of 40 years of work by a group of academics and researchers at the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin. Through their effort, they have collected, reproduced, and published thousands of images and maps of a variety of urban environments across Ireland. In addition, they searched the historical sources to provide data about these places that can be used by both historians and genealogists alike. The collection covers 27 cities and towns in Ireland, with atlases for 15 more in development. The towns were developed across a wide variety of historical periods, from the monastic towns of the 6th century to the beginnings of the industrial revolution in the 18th century.

The story of this collection begins in 1900, when an informal group of historians and researchers began meeting to present their research findings and methods. By 1923, the group desired to create a stable institution that would hold these gatherings at regular intervals, leading to the establishment of the International Committee of Historical Sciences (ICHS). Founded in Geneva in 1926, its goal was to bring together individuals in the historical sciences from around the world and promote contact with one another. The ICHS holds a confer-

Towns currently included in the Irish Historic Towns Atlas

IHTA 2020

● Towns published
● Towns in progress

This map from the Royal Irish Academy website <http://bit.ly/3h2Gn7F> shows the Irish Historic Towns Atlases that are currently available or in production.

ence every five years.

In 1955, when the conference met in Rome, Europe was still dealing with the destruction of many towns during World War II. In an effort to facilitate the study of urban history, and in a spirit of reconciliation, the International Commission for the History of Towns (ICHT) was established. Its goal was to encourage the production of map collections for historic towns across Europe in a way that would facilitate study and com-

parison. The goal of such a comparative study of pre-modern European towns was to encourage a better understanding of common roots. Since then, atlases of some 500 towns and cities in 18 European countries have been published.
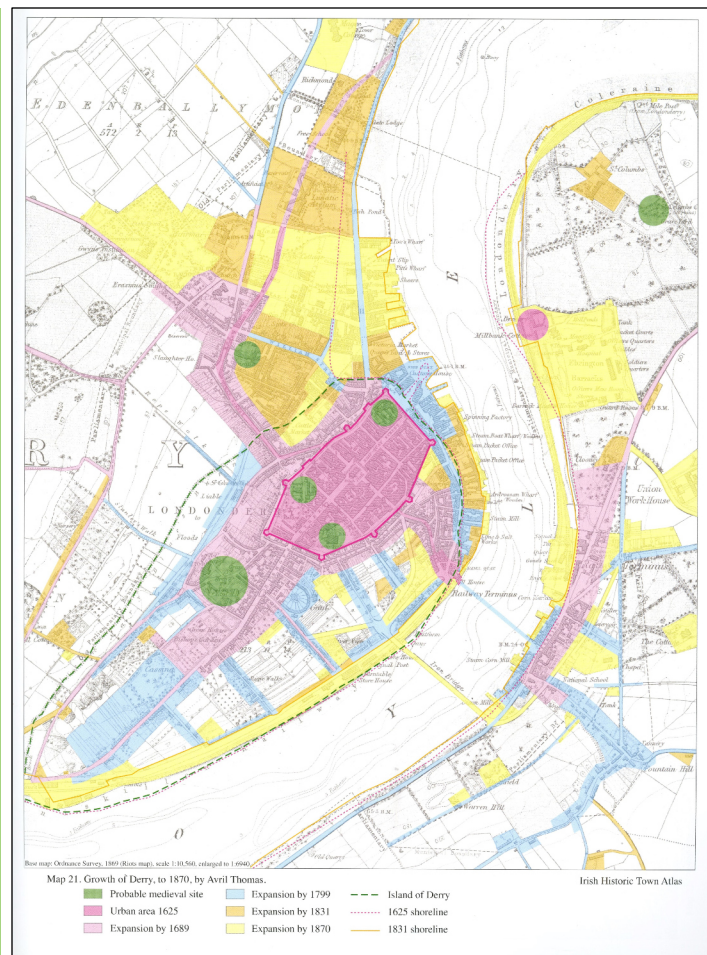
In 1981, the Royal Irish Academy established the Irish Historic Towns Atlas project, with the goal of contributing Irish towns to the overall European project. The Royal Irish Academy is an independent academic group founded in 1785 to promote the study of social sciences and humanities. One of the oldest publishers in Ireland with a long history of support for the study of Irish history, the Royal Irish Academy was the perfect fit for the project. It published the first Irish atlas for the town of Kildare in 1986.

Each atlas concerns itself mainly with a single town or city. The two exceptions are Ireland's two largest towns, Dublin and Belfast, which required multiple volumes due to their size and population. Belfast has two volumes and Dublin three, with a fourth volume in production.

The atlases in the History & Genealogy Department are presented in two bound formats. Some are bound as individual volumes with their associated maps stored in a pocket attached to the inside back cover. The rest of the town atlases are bound together in a three-volume set titled Irish Historic Towns Atlas. These three volumes include the text and maps for 17 of the 27 towns published to date. The volumes measure 17" tall by 13" wide, allowing the publisher to print the maps at a size that makes them useful to researchers. Because of their large size, they are shelved with H&G's oversize books on Tier 4 of the library.

Each volume has two parts: narrative text and town data, and a collection of maps and images of the town. The text of the atlas begins with a brief history of the town discussing evidence of the first human habitation and the desirable attributes of the site. Since these towns were typically planned communities, often designed with defense in mind, the text includes information about who commissioned the town, when they arrived, and what their primary motivations were. The text then outlines the development of the town through time, usually finishing around 1900.

The rest of the text consists of data about the town listed un-

"Growth of Derry, to 1870," Map 21 in *Irish Historic Towns Atlas,* Vols. 1–3

der the heading "Topographical Information." The information is dense, with each piece of information cited and dated. It begins with information about the town, including early spellings of the town name, its legal status, and historical population data extracted from census records. The next section is a comprehensive list of street names for the town, including name changes through time and with dates and source citations. The next section reads like a business directory for the town, although not just for a single year, but throughout the town's written history. Items are sorted under categories. For instance, the religion category lists every local church that ever existed in that town. Following this is a list of references in historical literature, including dates and quotes from the sources, creating a brief history of each church. Other subject headings include "Defence" for military installations, "Ad-

Plate 4, "Londonderry, 1800" (top) and Plate 4, "Londonderry, 1863," in *Irish Historic Towns Atlas,* Vols. 1–3.

ministration" for public buildings and works, "Education" for schools, and many other categories. The same detail given to the streets is also provided for buildings. The date of construction, location of the building, and date of destruction, if applicable, are provided. Maps in the atlas that include the building will be noted, as well. The final section of the text is a bibliography listing sources used in the text. Text and data for all 30 volumes, as well as some maps, are available online as PDFs <https://bit.ly/3nxLQWw>.

The second part of each volume features a collection of maps and images of the town and its surrounding areas. The ICHT

required that three maps be included in each volume. The first is a map of the town at a scale of one inch to 2500 feet (1:2500) dating as close to 1840 as possible. This provides a view of the town before the Industrial Revolution and is usually based on the Ordnance Survey from 1832–1842. The second map in each volume dates typically from the second half of the 19th century and is set to a much larger scale (1:50000). This provides a much broader view of the town as it sits in relation to the surrounding countryside and terrain. The third required map is a modern Ordnance Survey map at a scale of 1:5000 providing a view of what the town looks like today.

Together, the three maps provide an overview the development and growth of the town over the last two centuries. These three maps by themselves are a rich source of information about the town. However, each atlas typically includes other supplementary maps and images.

One example of a supplementary map is "The Growth of Derry to 1870" (Fig. 1 Map 21, [vol]). This map, based on an Ordnance Survey map from 1869, was designed to show the growth of a town over time. Derry was a colonial town built by the English between 1613 and 1618 and therefore required defenses.
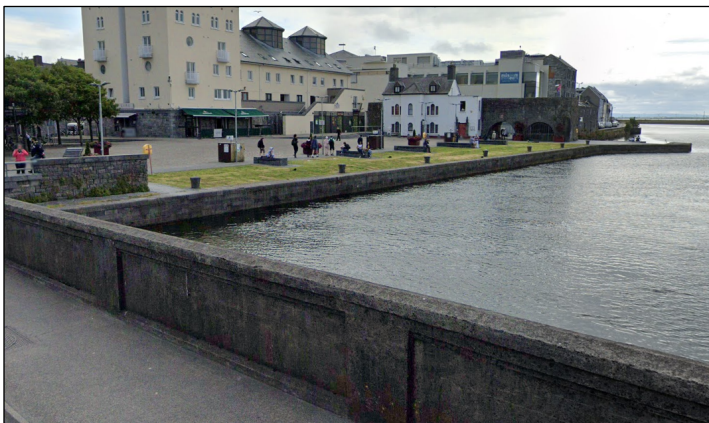
The city walls and the original urban area as it was in the year 1625 are shown in dark pink. Of course, these weren't the first inhabitants of the area of land that became Londonderry. The northern coast of Ireland was settled very soon after the last ice age, and much evidence of pre-historic habitation is evident. The green dots on the map denote likely medieval sites, including a monastery from the sixth century. With the passage of time, the city grew and expanded outside the original city walls and along the banks of the River Foyle.

The volumes includes other images that are not limited to overhead maps, such as pictorials of the town, or beautiful paintings and drawings. The volume for Derry includes multiple landscape drawings from different eras that illustrate the development of the town over time. These two images, depict Londonderry as it was in 1800 and 1863. Although not depicted strictly from the same point of view, they are both images of the city from across the river Foyle, and the development that occurred in those 63 years is easy to detect.

Plate 5. Claddagh Bridge and the Fish Market, looking south-east, *c.* 1885 (Lawrence Collection, National Library of Ireland).   Irish Historic Towns Atlas 2016

Above: "Claddaugh Bridge and Fish Market, looking south-east, c. 1885," Plate 5, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas,* No. 28: Galway. Below: the location as seen on the current street-level view on Google Maps <http://bit.ly/3mtpC6N>.

The volumes also include many photographs of the towns. Primarily taken in the 19th century, they provide a view of the towns as immigrant ancestors would have seen them. The photo titled "Claddagh Bridge and the Fish Market," taken about 1885, shows a foot bridge over the River Carrib connecting the city of Galway with its historical suburban neighborhood called "The Claddagh." The second image is a street view from Google Maps from a similar vantage point. Much has changed in 135 years, but part of the city's old stone walls can be seen in both images.

In addition to the atlases themselves, the Royal Irish Academy published a guide to aid researchers in understanding and using the collection. *Reading the Maps: A Guide to the*

Irish Historic Towns Atlas, tells the stories of these atlases as a group. Designed as a tool for educators, it can be used by all readers to develop a deeper understanding of the individual atlases.

The Royal Irish Academy published two additional resources that researchers may find useful. *Maps and Texts: Exploring the Irish Historic Towns Atlas,* is a collection of essays by scholars and experts, many of whom were involved in the development of the atlases. Some essays compare two towns from the collection. In this way, the author uses both the differences and the similarities between the towns as a vehicle for understanding. The second set of essays focuses on the topographical information found in the text. Topics, such as religion, defense, and education, are each the focus of individual essays written by individuals involved in the atlas project. Examples are drawn from the entire collection, rather than just two towns.

More Maps and Texts: Sources and the Irish Historic Towns Atlas is an additional collection of essays written by experts. This guide categorizes the towns by the era of history in which the towns were built. For example, Part II of this guide discusses the earliest towns in Ireland. These typically developed organically in and around monasteries, or were settled by Vikings. Part III focuses on the towns created by the Anglo-Normans around the 12th century and the plantation towns founded in the 1600's. These distinctions are not perfect, as the example of Londonderry shows. While founded during the plantation period by the English, humans had lived on the land which became Londonderry long before the English arrived. However, it's a useful tool to explore the similarities and differences between towns.

Researching immigrant ancestors in their country of origin can be a challenging endeavor. Descendants of the Irish know

LIBRARY HOLIDAY CLOSING

- **Thursday, Dec. 24** | Christmas Eve
- **Friday, Dec. 25** | Christmas Day
- **Saturday, Dec. 26**
- **Thursday, Dec. 31** | New Year's Eve — No service after 5:00 p.m..
- **Friday, Jan. 1** | New Year's Day

that as well as anyone. But the Irish Historic Towns Atlas project has given researchers a tool that few others can match. They can see how the places their ancestors lived and worked appeared at the time their ancestors were living. If your ancestor came from a town in this collection, these books are a fantastic resource for your research. Even if your ancestors lived in the countryside, they almost certainly traveled to nearby towns at some point in their lives. Anyone researching their Irish history can use this collection to further their understanding of their ancestors' lives.

Bibliography

Atlases

Andrews, J.H. et al., eds. *Irish Historic Towns Atlas,* Vol. 1–3. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1986–2019. R 941.5 I68 (oversize). Individual atlases bound separately:

> No. 11: Dublin, Pt. I
> No. 12: Belfast, Pt. I
> No. 17: Belfast, Pt. II
> No. 19: Dublin, Pt. II
> No. 22: Longford
> No. 23: Carlingford
> No. 24: Sligo
> No. 25: Ennis
> No. 26: Dublin, Part III, 1756–1847
> No. 27: Youghal
> No. 28: Galway / Gaillimh
> No. 29: Drogheda / Droichead Átha

Simms, Anngret, et al., eds. *Irish Historic Towns Atlas*. Dublin: Irish Royal Academy, 1996–2012. R 941.5 I68 (oversize). Atlases bound in three volumes:

> Vol. 1
> > No. 1: Kildare
> > No. 2: Carrickfergus
> > No. 3: Bandon
> > No. 4: Kells
> > No. 5: Mullingar
> > No. 6: Athlone
> Vol. 2
> > No. 7: Maynooth
> > No. 8: Downpatrick
> > No. 9: Bray
> > No. 10: Kilkenny
> > No. 13: Fethard
> > No. 14: Trim
> Vol. 3
> > No. 15: Maps and Views of Derry, 1600–1914
> > No. 16: Dundalk
> > No. 18: Armagh
> > No. 20: Tuam
> > No. 21: Limerick

Guides / supplementary texts

Prunty, Jacinta and H.B. Clark. *Reading the Maps: A Guide to the Irish Historic Towns Atlas.* Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2011. R 941.5 P972R

Clark, H. B. and Sarah Gearty. *Maps and Texts: Exploring the Irish Historic Towns Atlas.* Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2013. R 941. 5 M297

Clark, Howard B. and Sarah Gearty. *More Maps and Texts: Sources and the Irish Historic Towns Atlas.* Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2018. R 941.5 M

Researching St. Louis City and County property from home

If you've thought about beginning a house history or are simply interested in finding out more about your home and neighborhood, resources are available to help you begin your research at home.

St. Louis City

St. Louis City Assessor's website
https://bit.ly/3avjvMZ

The St. Louis City Assessor's website offers a search feature that provides details regarding a property's description and its boundaries and geography. After entering the address or parcel number—the unique identifier assigned to an individual property—the designated property profile will appear with several rubrics. Under "Basic Info" you can select the neighborhood and read a description and history of the area. Other rubrics furnish useful information such as the year the structure was built and its sales history. Maps are available by clicking on the parcel in the zoning map. The "geo map" option provides an aerial view. The website does not list previous owners, but building permit application information can provide clues.

St. Louis City deed records

* History & Genealogy has microfilm copies of deeds for St. Louis City dating from before the Louisiana Purchase to 1871. Submit a lookup request using the online form <https://www.slcl.org/content/lookup-request>..

* The Archives Department for the Recorder of Deeds will perform deed research up to the present for a fee. More information about this service is online <http://bit.ly/3h49TKm>

St. Louis County

St. Louis County Department of Revenue website
https://revenue.stlouisco.com/IAS/

The St. Louis County Department of Revue website allows searching by locator number (the unique

identifying number for the property), address, name or subdivision. A search will return property information, such as ownership, assessment and building information. The first screen offers assessment information: taxing address, subdivision name, school district, and appraisal values. A "Property Sketch" link on the left-hand side of the page provides an outline of the house's footprint with a description of the building materials. A link to an aerial photo is also provided. The year the house was build will be listed. The "Deed Index List" provides the chain of ownership back to approximately 1980.

St. Louis County deed records

* History & Genealogy has St. Louis County deed records,1877–1931, and an index covering property ownership, 1974–1992. Submit a lookup request using the online form <https://www.slcl.org/content/lookup-request>.

* The St. Louis County Recorder of Deeds lists third-party electronic services providing deed research. More information is on the Recorder of Deeds website <http://bit.ly/3h2y8IL>. The Recorder of Deeds office is not currently allowing in-person research.

Deed records available on FamilySearch

* FamilySearch <https://bit.ly/3myXTRW> offers access to digitized St. Louis City deeds, 1804–1901. This collection also includes those deeds originating in St. Louis County before the city-county split in 1876.

* St. Louis County deeds, 1877–1886, are also available <https://bit.ly/3myXTRW>.

FamilySearch requires an account. Accounts are free, and no payment information is collected. On the FamilySearch website <http://familysearch.org>, click "Create an Account" in the upper right-hand corner to get started.

History & Genealogy classes via Zoom

Classes are free and open to the public. Registration is required. Register online <https://www.slcl.org/events> or call 314-994-3300. Classes will be conducted by Zoom. Times listed are Central Standard Time.

Thursday, Jan. 7, 6:30 p.m.
Finding Immigrant European Ancestors

Discover print and online resources for researching immigrant ancestors. This class will include an overview of information available on Ancestry Library Edition and other electronic databases. Prerequisite: Finding Ancestors in U.S. Census Records class or comparable research experience. **Click tor register.**

Tuesday, Jan. 12, 6:30 p.m.
Discover History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library

With research materials covering the St. Louis metropolitan area, Missouri, migration trails into Missouri, and European homelands, the History & Genealogy Department's vast resources provide a wealth of possibilities for discovering your family's history and that of your local community. **Click to register.**

Thursday, Jan. 21, 6:30 p.m.
FamilySearch Basics

FamilySearch.org is a free website offering access to millions of records for genealogical research. This class will provide an overview of the kinds of records available and how to find them. **Click to register.**

Monday, Jan. 25, 6:30 p.m.
Researching Church Records Online

Church records are an important source for learning about ancestors, and online sources, such as FamilySearch, Ancestry, and FindMyPast offer unprecedented access. This class will cover the uses of church records and how to find them online. **Click to register.**

Monday, Feb. 1, 6:30 p.m.
Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Getting Started in Genealogical Research

Do you want to research your African American family but don't know where to start? This class will teach you the basics of genealogical research including resources available in History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library. In Celebration of Black History Month. **Click tor register.**

Wednesday, Feb. 3, 6:30 p.m.
Interviewing Family Members: Oral History Basics

Discover helpful resources for recording family stories, practice your interview skills, and learn about new digital tools for creating and preserving your family's oral history. **Click to register.**

Thursday, Feb. 4, 6:30 p.m.
Getting More out of FamilySearch

Basic search techniques will miss most records in FamilySearch. Learn to navigate unindexed image collections, search the FamilySearch catalog effectively, and use advanced search features to tap into hard-to-find records.Prerequisite: FamilySearch Basics or equivalent research experience. **Click to register.**

Monday, Feb. 8, 6:30 p.m.
Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Digging Deeper

Learn about additional sources and techniques to deepen your research and overcome roadblocks. This course will use specific examples of records available and show you how to use them. Prerequisite: "Tracing your African American Ancestors: Getting Started in Genealogical Research" or comparable research experience. In Celebration of Black History Month. **Click to register.**

Tuesday, Feb. 9, 6:30 p.m.
When is a Lutheran not a Lutheran? A Brief History of the Evangelical Synod of North America

The Evangelical Synod of North America, a German-speaking predecessor of the United Church of Christ, had congregations in most 19th-century German immigrant communities. Although it was Lutheran in character, it was not a Lutheran denomination. This lecture will review the denomination's history and character and offer tips for finding records of congregations. **Click to register.**

Tuesday, Feb. 16, 6:30 p.m.
Deutsches Geschlechterbuch as a German Genealogical Source

Deutsches Geschlechterbuch is a series of books offering genealogical information for thousands of non-noble German families. Their standardized format makes using them possible for the non-German speaker. **Click to register.**

Saturday, Feb. 20, 10:30 p.m.
History & Genealogy in Newspapers

Newspapers are excellent sources of historical and genealogical information, and digitization has made them more widely available. The class will cover 19th-Century U. S. Newspapers, NewspaperArchive, Newspapers.com and St. Louis Post-Dispatch databases. **Click to register.**

Monday, Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m.
Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Advanced Techniques

The usual techniques can often lead to roadblocks in African American research. The instructor will use case studies to demonstrate how researchers can fill gaps in missing information. Prerequisite: "Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Digging Deeper" or comparable research experience. In Celebration of Black History Month. **Click to register.**

History & Genealogy Virtual Classroom

View the following genealogy classes online and on demand in History & Genealogy's Virtual Classroom <https://www.slcl.org/genealogy/virtual-classroom>.

Who Were My Ancestors? Beginning Genealogical Research

If you have little or no research experience, this is the class for you. Learn about the genealogical research process and the many resources available in History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library. **Click to view**

Library Skills for Genealogical Research

Libraries offer essential tools for researching your ancestry. Learn how to search online library catalogs, obtain materials from distant libraries, locate periodical articles, and use the library's in-house guides. **Click to view.**

History & Genealogy services

St. Louis County Library buildings are currently closed to the public because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following H&G services are available.:

Photocopies
H&G can provide photocopies, prints, or digital scans of many library materials, including:

- Books and periodicals—up to 30 pages from one book or one article from a single journal issue. Staff can also photocopy or scan tables of contents and index pages.
- Microfilmed records—A list of microfilm available in the H&G collection can be viewed online <https://bit.ly/3jrqw3j>.
- Databases—H&G staff will print out database records if patrons cannot access the database at home.

Please use the online lookup request form <https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE> and be as specific as possible when submitting requests.

Print collection
One-third of the books in H&G's collection—more than 27,000—can be checked out. The entire collection is included in the library's online catalog <http://webpac.slcl.org>. Books with call numbers that do not begin with "R" are available to check out. Patrons can request books online or by calling 314-994-3300.

Research guidance
H&G staff members can provide research assistance over the phone or by email. Researchers whose information needs cannot be met in this way may schedule an appointment for a face-to-face meeting with an H&G librarian.

Book-a-Genealogist
Researchers who would like in-depth assistance can schedule a phone consultation with an H&G staff member. Requests can be made using the online Book-a-Genealogist form <https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r>.

Database access
Most library databases can be used at home by St. Louis County Library card holders living in the metropolitan area. The Ancestry Library Edition database, normally restricted to in-library use, can be accessed remotely on a temporary basis. View the list of genealogical databases on the library's website <https://bit.ly/37GRBtF>.

For more information, please contact the History & Genealogy Department at 314-994-3300 or genealogy@slcl.org.

Finding Ancestors in U.S. Census Records

Census records are a basic and essential source for genealogical research in the U.S. Learn how to search census records effectively in electronic databases. **Click to view.**

Exploring the Ancestry Library Edition Database

The Ancestry Library Edition Database is a powerful tool for genealogical research. Find out how to take advantage of Ancestry's capabilities in your research. **Click to view.**

FamilySearch Basics

FamilySearch.org is a free website offering access to millions of records for genealogical research. This class will provide an overview of the kinds of records available and how to find them. **Click to view.**

Getting More out of FamilySearch

Basic search techniques will miss most records in FamilySearch. Learn to navigate un-indexed image collections, search the FamilySearch catalog effectively, and use advanced search features to tap into hard-to-find records. **Click to view.**

Discovering Ancestral Military Veterans

Explore strategies for military research in the Fold3 and Ancestry Library Edition databases, as well as in print and internet sources. **Click to view.**

Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Getting Started in Genealogical Research

Do you want to research your African American family but don't know where to start? This class will teach you the basics of genealogical research including resources available in History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library. **Click to view.**

Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Digging Deeper

Learn about additional sources and techniques to deepen your research and overcome roadblocks. This course will use specific examples of records available and show you how to use them. **Click to view.**

Using German Newspapers When You Don't Know Much German

German-language newspapers are a valuable source of obituaries and other genealogical Information.This presentation offers tips for locating and deciphering obituaries in German newspapers. **Click to view.**

Using Ortssippenbücher to Research Your German Ancestors

Ortssippenbücher contain genealogical information about families within a specific town, village, or parish. Information can cover many generations of a family going back to the beginning of written records. Discover the areas of Germany where these books are available and learn how to use this resource yourself through a case study. **Click to view.**

Digital Archiving and Preservation Basics

Learn how to care for and protect digital files and photos. Library staff will share information about saving and preserving your digital memories. **Click to view.**

St. Louis Genealogical Society Programs

StLGS meetings are free and open to the public, but registration is required. Registration information follows each meeting description. All times listed are Central Standard Time. Meetings will be conducted using Zoom.

Saturday, Jan. 9, 10:00 a.m.
General Membership Meeting
Ask Louie

Our panel of genealogists will field questions and try to help break down your brick wall. Please email your questions to programs@stlgs.org by the first of January. Questions from the audience will also be addressed at the meeting. Register by Jan. 6 by sending an email to programs@stlgs.org.

Wednesday, Jan. 20, 7:00 p.m.
German Special Interest Group
What Day Is It? Interpreting Dates When the Calendar Changes

Calendar changes can present challenges to our research. Understanding when and why they happened can help us better interpret our genealogical records. Dan Lilienkamp, speaker. Send an email to germansig@stlgs.org to register.

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 7:00 p.m.
Irish Special Interest Group
Irish Catholic Parish Registers

Learn about Irish Catholic parish registers, where to find them, and how to use them for genealogical research. Robin McDonough, speaker. Send an email to irishsig@stlgs.org to register.