

Lectures by Valerie LaRobardier

845.849.6025

Adding a hands-on session at the end can lengthen most of my lectures. An hour and 15 minutes for the presentation with 15 minutes for questions is comfortable but I can shorten if need be.

All include PowerPoint presentations, are chock full of colorful graphics and all have handouts.

Regarding web links, these are only useful to those who use the web, and are usually long and complex...rather than distract during the lecture I email a set of live links to anyone who is interested.

Record Group Basics

This is a basic lecture covering the record groups, how to use each, where to find them, and how they overlap. Census, cemetery, military, court, tax and freeman lists, local and family histories, directories and newspapers, vital records—births marriages and deaths are all covered. Though web queries and Internet trees are not a reliable record group, we discuss how they might provide clues leading to proper documentation.

Genealogy 101 – Reaching Out Further

This lecture take the genealogist past the preliminary steps of collecting data from their own family's knowledge—with a little more detail on how to find and use each type of record. Record Group Basics would be a helpful prerequisite, but such is not mandatory.

Finding and Using Vital Records

While many examples in this section are from the Northeast US and nearby Canada, the lecture brings greater understanding of how to find vital records for any region and how to make best use of the findings.

Using Court House Research

Using land records, surrogate court files, wills, guardianships, maps, mortgages, civil court cases and more to fill in gaps in your ancestors' stories. Examples of indexes and actual case studies help illustrate this difficult process.

Immersion Genealogy

Seeking out illusive maiden names and breaking down brick walls can be enhanced if only we had more of the memories of those nearer the person we seek. Using research to accelerate learning the history and geography of the target area helps enhance recognition by "creating" these memories, making it easier to narrow the search and see what records deserve a closer look.

Surprises, Skeletons in the Closet and Black Sheep

What do you do when you find surprises in your ancestors' stories? How and how much should we reveal about black sheep? Acceptance and denial—how do we handle leaning one of our "ancestors" doesn't really belong in our tree?