

# Libraries can help you discover family history

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## FULL TEXT

Do you know where your ancestors came from? Come to your library to discover the stories of your family tree. This October celebrates National Family History Month, which is dedicated to commemorating each family's history, also called genealogy.

Your library has several databases to help uncover your roots, including some you can use right from home with your library card. Resources include Ancestry Library Edition (in library use only), HeritageQuest, MyHeritage Library Edition, obituary indexes to newspapers, a veterans' grave registration index, plat books, maps and more. Several newspapers are also digitized and available through your library. Check out a listing of resources at [www.infosoup.info/localhistory](http://www.infosoup.info/localhistory) or your local library's website for library specific resources.

You can also search our many city directories, high school yearbooks, newspapers, and extensive collection of local history books. Many books, photos, and resources related to local history have been digitized and are available through your library's website.

Did your ancestor have a local business? We may have a history of it in our collection or you could locate newspaper articles about the business through the Post-Crescent Index. We can also help you trace the history of your house.

Even if your ancestors didn't live in this area, we can show you our many online tools to help jump start your research. Many of our databases include information from all over the United States and the world so you can get further back in your family tree without traveling far from home.

If you're new to genealogy and not sure where to begin with using the library's resources, request a one-on-one appointment with a librarian and we'd be happy to show you around to get you started on the journey to uncovering your family history. There are also many genealogy books available to check out that will help you learn the basics of research.

Some libraries even provide genealogy-focused events. The Elisha D. Smith Public Library in Menasha hosts a regular meeting of Family Roots Wisconsin on the third Saturday of every month at 9 a.m. The meetings are open to anyone interested in genealogy, providing an opportunity to exchange research methods and help each other. A few times each year they invite a genealogy expert to speak at the meetings.

Beginners and expert genealogists alike will also enjoy the Appleton Public Library's annual Find Your Ancestors genealogy series, which brings in a speaker one Saturday a month from November to March. The first presentation will focus on using maps in your genealogy, and will be held Nov. 3 at 2 p.m. in Meeting Room C. Other topics include writing biographical sketches, census records, publishing your family history/memoir, and the basics of DNA testing and what to do with your results.

Your ancestors are out there waiting for you to find them! So what are you waiting for?

Katie Stilp is the local history librarian at the Appleton Public Library. Librarians from libraries across the Fox Cities contribute a monthly column on library trends and activities.

The Appleton Public Library offers all sorts of opportunities to research family history.

Danny Damiani/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin

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