



# GENEALOGY

Relatively Speaking

April 2024

## SPRING AHEAD IN YOUR GENEALOGY RESEARCH



**For this year's Money Goals Month (April 2024), we will be exhibiting a local collection of coins from around the world. The exhibit is located on the 2nd floor from April 1-April 30.**

### MAPS TO THE RESCUE

*By Shannan Evanson*

Running into brick walls in research is remarkably common, but unendingly frustrating. Maps and city/telephone directories can be a great resource for getting past brick walls and learning a great deal that other records cannot offer.



The New York Public Library article titled [Using Maps for Genealogy Research](#)

gives thorough examples for how helpful maps can be in your research. In large part this is due to ever changing neighborhoods, towns, street names, structures, counties and more. Essential U.S. records—birth, death, property, and other records—are categorized by county. However, counties change over time, and information about previous counties is not always readily available. Maps and directories are a fixed resource for a dynamic landscape.

Additionally, if you already have records that reference the ancestor's connections to houses of worship, schools, places of employment, hospitals, cemeteries and grocery stores, you can track where everything was located related to where they were living. It helps bring a better picture of not only their day-to-day lives, but also big events like births, marriages, funerals and more.

Maps and directories can also be a great opportunity for homeowners. Have you ever wondered what your house and neighborhood looked like years before your time? Or even the geography of an area before your house was built?

**At ITPLD, we have options available for those looking to do research specifically on maps/city directories.** For more information, please contact staff at 847-459-4100 ext. 3 or email [adult@itpld.org](mailto:adult@itpld.org).

- We have databases for online research. For example, Ancestry.com has a specific section for maps and directories.
- We have digital copies of the Wheeling Plat Maps from 1861, 1870, 1886, 1898, 1902, 1936, 1941, 1954, and 1976.
- Part of our local history collection includes telephone directories and street/crisscross directories pertaining to Wheeling, Arlington Heights and Northwest Suburbs in Illinois. Our earliest directory is from April 1911. Most of the directories fall between 1968-2018.

#### **Other resources:**

- [U.S. Census Bureau](#) has digital maps dating back to 1859.
- The Library of Congress has the largest cartographic collection in the world. [Here is a link to the digital maps that LOC has for Illinois.](#) They have similar sections for each state. They also have a section dedicated to [U.S. City and Telephone directories](#).
- The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS.org) website has a few resources. The [Geographic Names Information System \(GNIS\)](#), which is the “the official repository of domestic geographic names data” both current and historical. They also have the [National Map](#) and the [Historical Topographic Map](#).
- [National Archives](#) offers a variety of maps.
- [David Rumsey Map Collection](#) contains over 200,000 maps focused on 16th through 21st century North and South America,
- [Newberry](#) offers an atlas of historical U.S. County boundaries.

[Chicago Collections Consortium](#) is a collaboration between various local organizations to freely offer a digital collection of local history items. Their [Explore Chicago Collections](#) is a free, centralized, web-based search engine and record-finding tool where users are able to locate or access over 100,000 maps, photos and letters. Users can also explore digital material, archival

collections, and manuscript collections by topic and interact with library guides, digital exhibits and educational materials.

Back in February, a Chicago Collections staff member was kind enough to present on their collections and how it can assist you in your genealogy research. The recording is available on the ITPLD YouTube page.



[Visit our Youtube page](#)

## GAMES GALORE!

Familysearch.org and BYU Family History Technology Lab offer a variety of fun games to play and test your genealogy knowledge, including [Geneopardy](#), and [Wheel of Family Fortune](#). Free FamilySearch accounts are required to play. The games access your family tree.

[More Information](#)

### GENEALOGY INTEREST GROUP MEETING

**Monday, April 29 and  
Monday, June 24  
7-8:30 pm**

Join this informal group in a collaborative setting to explore library databases, research your family tree and connect with other enthusiasts and skilled staff. Suitable for beginners and experienced researchers alike. Registration

### BEYOND THE BASICS: HINTS TO SOLVE YOUR BRICK WALLS

**Thursday, May 16  
7-8 pm**

Steve Szabados, a genealogy lecturer and author, will review various search tips that have proven successful for finding those difficult documents. Learn techniques to solve your brick walls and overcome problems

required. Separate registration required for each Genealogy Interest Group Meeting.

Registration for April 29

Registration for June 24  
begins May 15

with the spelling of names, lost records, and unknown parents. Registration required.

Registration

Website

Events

Catalog

## CONNECT WITH US



Indian Trails Public Library District | 355 Schoenbeck Rd., Wheeling, IL 60090

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