



“Let’s Do Genealogy!”

Presented by the Falmouth Genealogical Society
by Tim Martin & Ralph Wadleigh

Class 1 : “Overview of Genealogy” (Why do it?)

- Where am I from, what is my family history?
- To solve a family mystery.
- To join a lineage society: GSMD, DAR, SAR etc.
- To learn about myself and family through a DNA test.

Genealogy is one of the largest crowd-sourced enterprises ever. Millions of people are working on their family tree and history, these trees connect to the effort of others and are revealing how we are all related. Over 30 million people have taken a DNA test for genetic genealogy; actual relationships are being revealed.

Genealogy defined by the Board for Certification of Genealogists:

“Genealogy is the study of families in genetic, social, and historical context. Within that framework, it is the study of the people who compose a family and the relationships among them. At the individual level, it is biography, because we must reconstruct each individual life in order to separate each person’s identity from that of others bearing the same name. Beyond this, many researchers also find that genealogy is a study of communities because kinship networks have long been the threads that create the fabric of each community’s social life, politics, and economy.”

Generally, start with yourself instead of say an ancestor you want to learn about. You want to have proof and sources showing how you are connected to your ancestors. You may have an unexpected ancestor! Gather records from all of your relatives, connect with a local genealogical society for help. Be organized and document positive and negative results. Join several genealogical websites and special interest groups appropriate for your needs. Start a family tree – with yourself; build and prove it. Fill out the pedigree tree on the reverse side to summarize what you think you know. You will want to prove these ancestors as part of your work.

Proving your ancestors involves identifying them in various record sources: vital records (BMD), census records, obituaries, immigration & naturalization records, ship manifests, cemeteries, land records, deeds, probate records, wills, church records, military records, newspapers, published histories and biographies, city directories, school records, clubs and organizations, photographs, interviews, social media... Find out where each record type is available.

Take a DNA test(s) to help prove and identify your ancestral connections. There are different types of DNA tests for different purposes. Import your results to several DNA websites to expand your pool of matches.

Come back on the next three Thursdays to our subsequent classes:

- “Researching Sources” – online and offline resources to prove your ancestral connections.
- “Building Your Family Tree & Applying to Lineage Societies”
- “Genetic Genealogy” – consumer DNA companies for ethnicity, finding cousins, checking the truth.

NOTE : The New England Regional Genealogical Consortium (NERGC) is having its next biennial super-conference in Springfield MA from May 3-6th, 2023. Check it out here: <https://nergc.org/>

Chart #

5 Generation Pedigree Chart

Great-Grandparents
(4th Generation)



Person No. 1 on this chart is same
as Person # ___ on Chart # ___.

Grandparents
(3rd Generation)

8

B:
D:

4

B:
P:
D:
P:

9

B:
D:

Parents
(2nd Generation)

2

B:
P:
M:
P:
D:
P:

10

B:
D:

5

B:
P:
D:
P:

11

B:
D:

First Generation

1

B:
P:
M:
P:
D:
P:

Children of #1

12

B:
D:

SPOUSE

B:
P:
D:
P:

6

B:
P:
D:
P:

13

B:
D:

3

B:
P:
M:
P:
D:
P:

14

B:
D:

7

B:
P:
D:
P:

15

B:
D:

Legend
B = Birth
D = Death
M = Marriage
P = Place