

BelAirPatch

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Harford County Public Library Celebrates Family History Month with Genealogy Programs

Six programs, virtual and in-person, take place throughout October.



Harford County Public Library celebrates Family History Month by hosting several programs in October. (Harford County Public Library)

Harford County Public Library celebrates Family History Month by hosting several programs in October. The programs are:

Genealogy After Hours welcomes researchers to the Bel Air Library, 100 East Pennsylvania Avenue, on October 3 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Local genealogists gather to work independently on their research with input from fellow genealogists. Computers, printing, microfilm and the Maryland Room will be available for use and includes free genealogy printing. Participants must register in advance at <https://programs.hcplonline.org/event/14000942>.

They All Resided in the Same Area: Creating a Locality Guide is a virtual program on October 7 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Creating a locality guide for an area being researched can help save time by organizing data. A locality guide can also include links to collections, maps, repositories and more for easy access. The program is presented by Jeanette Sheliga of Jeanette's Genealogy. Sheliga has been researching her family tree since 2002 and

lecturing since 2011. She has spoken to societies and libraries locally and virtually all over the world. Sheliga is the president of the Virtual Genealogical Association (VGA) and holds positions in local, state and national societies. Advanced registration is required at <https://programs.hcplonline.org/event/14065583>.

Genealogy Research Workshop takes place October 14 from 2 to 3 p.m. at the Norrisville Library, 5310 Norrisville Road in White Hall. Geared toward beginners, this workshop will cover some basic genealogy research topics including how to use the U.S. Census and how to obtain vital records in Maryland. Participants should bring notes and research questions. The first half of the program will be a presentation, and the second half will allow time for individual research and one-on-one instruction. Advanced registration is required at <https://programs.hcplonline.org/event/13916019>.

Putting a Face to a Name – Finding Old Family Photos is a virtual program on October 14 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Explore online and offline resources to search for old family photographs and put a face to your ancestor's name. The program is presented by Lisa Lisson, a leading genealogy expert and the founder of Are You My Cousin?, a comprehensive online resource dedicated to empowering family history enthusiasts worldwide. Through her website, YouTube channel and speaking engagements, Lisson equips researchers with practical strategies and clear tutorials to navigate the world of genealogy and cultivate their family trees with confidence. Her latest book, "100 Questions for Grandma," published by Callisto Media, offers a valuable guide to unlocking cherished family stories. Advanced registration is required at <https://programs.hcplonline.org/event/14065075>.

A Tour of FamilySearch Labs takes place virtually on October 21 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. This program will help participants explore emerging FamilySearch features that are not yet ready for public release in "Labs." On their site, you can see what FamilySearch is working on, try the experiments, give feedback and help shape the future of the FamilySearch website. Program participants will take a look at what is currently on "Labs," including how AI can help grow your family tree. The program is facilitated by Dana Chou, who has volunteered for the past seven years as director of the FamilySearch Center in Baltimore. Her own family lines touch China, the British Isles and Sweden. Advanced registration is required at <https://programs.hcplonline.org/event/14065314>.

Genealogy Discussion Group meets at the Jarrettsville Library, 3722 Norrisville Road, on October 23 from 6:15 to 7:45 p.m. Fellow researchers are invited to share and learn about techniques, tips and resources. More information may be found at <https://programs.hcplonline.org/event/13985836>.

“Family history research is one of the most popular ways our customers use the Library’s resources. The programs being offered in October provide a wide array of tools and techniques to those just starting their search as well as to those who have devoted many years to finding out more about family history,” said Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. “We welcome everyone interested in learning more about their family’s history to visit a local branch or check out the many online resources we offer.”

Harford County Public Library offers several genealogy databases, including Ancestry Library Edition, Heritage Quest Online, ProQuest Historical U.S. Newspapers and Fold 3. The Maryland Room at the Bel Air Library houses an array of genealogy and local research materials in addition to Harford County's Living Treasures Oral History Collection. The Bel Air Library is also an affiliate library for FamilySearch, a program with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints that houses a catalog of 2.4 million rolls of microfilmed genealogical resources worldwide and access to millions of digital records. For more information, visit <https://hcplonline.org/genealogy.php>.

Harford County Public Library also offers access to the Harford Heritage Digital Archives, containing hundreds of documents, images and Harford County local history resources at <https://hcplonline.org/localhistory.php>.

Harford County Public Library operates 11 branches located throughout Harford County offering access to ideas that inform, entertain and inspire. Last year the Library interacted with its residents more than 12 million times – borrowing free materials, visiting branches and the website, using free WiFi, and attending classes and events. In 2024 Harford County Public Library received the Maryland Library Association Excellence in Marketing Award for graphic excellence for the second time. [For more information, visit HCPLonline.org](https://hcplonline.org).