



The Genealogical Society of New Jersey | www.gsnj.org

2025 Genealogy Conference (In-Person)

Saturday, 7 June 2025

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

303 Dunhams Corner Road, East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816

The 2025 Genealogy Conference is sponsored by GSNJ and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, East Brunswick Stake. Whether you're a seasoned researcher or just beginning your family history journey, this event will spark new ideas and open exciting paths of discovery. You'll leave this conference equipped with everything you need to supercharge your New Jersey research strategy. This year's conference promises to be a powerhouse of inspiration and information, featuring none other than Catherine Medich, Head of Reference for the New Jersey State Archives (NJSA). NJSA is a true leader in the genealogy and history world with a treasure trove of records from every county, dating all the way back to New Jersey's beginnings through the mid-1960s. But that's not all—we also have an incredible lineup of experts from across the state:

Burlington County Library Systems
Lawnside Historical Society / Peter Mott House
Morristown & Morris Township Public Library

Elizabeth Public Library
Montclair History Center
Newark Public Library

We can't wait to see you there—in person!

Schedule, A = Gymnasium, B = Room 115

Each presentation is 45 minutes followed by 15 minute Q & A, with a 20 minute break between presentations.

8:45 am	REGISTRATION
9:15 am	Opening Remarks: Mary Szaro, CG®, GSNJ President
9:30 am	Session 1 (Gymnasium, All Attendees): What is New at the New Jersey State Archives Besides WiFi
10:30 am	BREAK
10:50 am	Session 2A: Charles F. Cummings NJ Information Center, Newark Public Library
	Session 2B: Build Your Family Tree at the Elizabeth Public Library
11:50 am	LUNCH and DOOR PRIZES
12:45 pm	Session 3A: A Town Built on a Foundation of Families, Lawnside Historical Society/Peter Mott House
	Session 3B: Connecting the Past With Who We Are Today: The Collections of the Montclair History Center
1:45 pm	BREAK
2:05 pm	Session 4A: "Everyone's Got One of Those": Highlights from the New Jersey Room at the Burlington County Library
	Session 4B: Introduction to the Genealogical Collections at the North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, Morristown and Morris Township Library
3:20 pm	END

Registration deadline: Wednesday, 4 June 2025 **Questions? Email programs@gsnj.org**

Registration includes lunch, water, syllabus (digital format) & door prizes. Purchase printed syllabus when you register.

This is an in-person event. There will be no recordings.

Room Temperature: We will do our best to keep the rooms comfortable. Dress in layers to accommodate personal tastes. You could also bring a cushion for your seat.

IMPORTANT: Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints facilities are stimulant-free environments. Water will be offered throughout the day, but coffee and tea will not be available. We request attendees be respectful and avoid bringing these beverages into the facility or smoking on the premises.

The schedule and speakers are subject to change. See www.gsnj.org for updates.

Presentations and Speakers

SESSION 1: What is New at the New Jersey State Archives Besides WiFi, Catherine Medich, New Jersey State Archives

This talk will give an update on the new genealogically interesting collections at the New Jersey State Archives. The additions to our website will also be highlighted.

SESSION 2A: Charles F. Cummings NJ Information Center, Vanessa Castaldo, Newark Public Library

This presentation is a visual tour of the vast collections of the NJIC, the largest local history repository in the state of New Jersey. We will look at the varying formats of our collections, which include photographs, directories, newspapers, maps, and city and state documents. We will also discuss access to these materials, so that users can learn about how to make the most of our holdings for their own research. We will also take a sneak peek into the typical day of an archivist and what challenges can arise from Collection Development and Maintenance.

SESSION 2B: Build Your Family Tree at the Elizabeth Public Library: Local History & Special Collections Department's Genealogical Resources, Aimee Fernandez-Puente, Elizabeth Public Library

The Local History & Special Collections Department at the Elizabeth Public Library offers a rich array of genealogical resources to support individuals researching family history, particularly those with ties to Elizabeth, Union County, and the surrounding region. Through access to historical city directories, local newspapers on microfilm, census records, church and cemetery records, and unique archival materials such as family papers, photographs, and rare books, the department provides research assistance and guidance in navigating these collections. Join Local History & Special Collections Manager, Aimee Fernandez-Puente, as she takes us through a virtual tour of the genealogical resources available at the Elizabeth Public Library. Whether tracing ancestral roots or exploring local history, the department serves as a vital resource for both novice and experienced genealogists.

SESSION 3A: A Town Built on a Foundation of Families, Linda P. Shockley, Lawnside Historical Society/Peter Mott House

The Borough of Lawnside in Camden County grew from a foundation of families who purchased their freedom, were manumitted or escaped enslavement along the Underground Railroad. This presentation will detail some of their stories.

SESSION 3B: Connecting the Past With Who We Are Today: The Collections of the Montclair History Center, Erin Benz, Montclair History Center

Explore the history of Montclair's people, communities, architecture, and more through the various collections of the Montclair History Center. Stories of Montclair are preserved and shared through the digital and physical archives, library, photographs, and objects housed at MHC. Learn how genealogy and local history researchers can access these collections both virtually and in-person with Collections Manager, Erin Benz.

SESSION 4A: Everyone's Got One of Those": Highlights from the New Jersey Room at the Burlington County Library, Kyle Brinster, Burlington County Library System

This presentation features a brief jaunt through the resources available at the Burlington County Library, and features items of particular interest in our special collections including funeral home records, the N.R. Ewan scrapbooks, and the library's substantial collection of microfilmed local newspapers and corresponding volunteer-created Newspaper Notices Index.

SESSION 4B: Introduction to the Genealogical Collections at The Caroline Rose Foster, North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, Morristown and Morris Township Library, James Lewis, Morristown and Morris Township Library

James will talk about the genealogy resources and unique resources available at the Caroline Rose Foster North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, a department "known far and wide" according to an early 1940s [Morristown] *Daily Record* article.

Erin Benz began her museum career interning at the Historical Society of Kent County in Chestertown, MD while studying at Washington College. During her collegiate career, Erin also interned at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington D.C. and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in Harpers Ferry, WV. Erin graduated from Washington College with a B.A. in American Studies and a minor in Art History. She first began working with the Montclair History Center as a Collections Intern in 2017 through the Seton Hall University Museum Professions Graduate Program. She was hired as Museum Coordinator in 2018, soon rising to the role of Collections Manager in 2020. She completed her studies in May 2019 with an M.A. in Museum Professions with a concentration in Registration.

Kyle Brinster is the Local History and Genealogy Librarian with the Burlington County Library System. He oversees the New Jersey Room, the library system's space dedicated to genealogical and historical research. Prior to this role, Kyle worked as a Special Collections Assistant at Princeton University's Marquand Library, an Archives Assistant at the Mercer Museum Research Library in Doylestown, PA, and an intern with the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society and the South Street Seaport Museum. Outside the library he enjoys crossword puzzles and turn-based strategy games. He lives in Trenton, NJ with his wife and cat.

Vanessa Castaldo is the Archivist at the Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center at the Newark Public Library. She began her career in archives at the Rye Square House Museum in Rye, New York working with historical textiles and garments, and later at the Rye Historical Society Knapp House Archives, working primarily on house histories and genealogy. In 2019, she began working at the Newark Public Library's Puerto Rican Community Archives, working with digital collections and oral histories. As of 2022, Vanessa has worked with the NJIC, focusing solely on physical archives. Although her work is mostly with paper archives, she has a deep fondness for ephemera and photographic collections. Vanessa currently holds a Masters in Library and Information Science with a concentration in Archives, from Pratt Institute School of Information.

Aimee Fernandez-Puente is an experienced library professional with over two decades of service in diverse roles across public and academic libraries. Currently serving as the manager for Local History and Special Collections at the Free Public Library of Elizabeth, she oversees the management, reorganization, and preservation of the Local History Collection, while also providing in-depth genealogical and research assistance to patrons. Aimee brings a strong background in customer service, project management, and digital literacy education, having worked extensively across various departments. She holds a Bachelors in Liberal Arts from Thomas Edison State College and is currently working towards her Masters in Library and Information Science with a concentration in Library Management and Archives at Valdosta State University. She has presented on the topics of Local History Collection creation and genealogical resources at NJLA Conferences and through outreach to various organizations. Aimee is dedicated to fostering access to community heritage and enhancing the library experience through thoughtful service and innovative outreach.

James Lewis is a librarian and the Department Head of the Caroline Rose Foster, North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, at The Morristown and Morris Township Library. James has worked with New Jersey history and genealogy collections for several years. He enjoyed working at the New Jersey Historical Society and the Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center, Newark Public Library prior to taking his current position. As an undergraduate history student James enjoyed studying international history and has grown to have a greater appreciation for genealogy and local history. His maternal great aunt compiled a family history prior to the Internet.

Catherine Medich is Head of Reference at the New Jersey State Archives with over 25 years of public service. She assists users with the many, varied collections maintained at the State Archives and oversees the answering of all vital statistics requests. Ms. Medich is a frequent guest speaker at local genealogical conferences and clubs, where she reviews and explains the types of records held at the New Jersey State Archives, and how to access them. Ms. Medich is a graduate of Dickinson University with a Bachelor's Degree in History, and holds two Master's Degrees from Rutgers University in Art History and Library Service. She has been researching her family history for over 40 years.

Linda P. Shockley is president and a founding member of the Lawnside Historical Society, Lawnside, New Jersey, where she learned the unique history of the town shaped and governed by African Americans. The Society restored and owns the Peter Mott House Underground Railroad Museum, named for an agent on that clandestine network to freedom for those escaping enslavement. She served as secretary of Preservation New Jersey, a statewide historic preservation advocacy group, a commissioner of the Camden County Cultural and Heritage Commission, and a member of the New Jersey Review Board for Historic Sites. She has been honored by several organizations and agencies for her historic preservation work over the past 33 years.

GSNJ 2025 Genealogy Conference Registration

Registration deadline: Wednesday, 4 June 2025

Register online at www.gsnj.org OR mail your registration form and payment to:

GSNJ 2025 Genealogy Conference
c/o Joan E. Betancourt, GSNJ Treasurer
10 Lincoln Place, Freehold, NJ 07728

Syllabus is provided in digital format. Check box below to purchase Printed Syllabus.

Complete a separate form for each registration. Additional forms may be printed from www.gsnj.org.

Questions? Email programs@gsnj.org

Name

Street Address

City

State/Province

Zip/Postal Code

Country

Phone Number **(Required)**

E-mail **(Required for conference notices and delivery of digital syllabus)**

Registration & Lunch Choice:

- ☐ GSNJ Members: **\$50** **Circle Sub Choice:** Ham & Cheese Turkey & Cheese Veggie w/ Cheese
- ☐ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Members: **\$50** **Circle Sub Choice:** Ham & Cheese Turkey & Cheese Veggie w/ Cheese
- ☐ Non-Members: **\$65** **Circle Sub Choice:** Ham & Cheese Turkey & Cheese Veggie w/ Cheese
- ☐ Printed Syllabus **\$10 (Add to the total if paying by check)**

**** Do you have dietary restrictions?** Call Joan at (732) 409-2418 for assistance. Gluten-free option is available upon request.

Register & Join GSNJ Offer Valid for the Conference Only: Non-members receive \$15 savings to register AND join GSNJ at the same time rather than purchasing a Non-Member registration & a 1 year Membership separately. Contact sales@njgenealogy.com if interested. Do not register now - you will be registered & billed separately.

Payment (or pay online with your credit card at www.gsnj.org)

- ☐ Check—Payable to “Genealogical Society of New Jersey”
- ☐ Credit/Debit

Name of Card Holder [As it appears on card]

Credit Card Number

Expiration Date

Billing Zip Code

3-or-4-Digit Security Code

Directions & Parking

Use directions below or enter "303 Dunhams Corner Road, East Brunswick, NJ" in your GPS.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
303 Dunhams Corner Road
East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816

Enter the building in the back through the left door.

DIRECTIONS

Via New Jersey Turnpike

TAKE EXIT 9 for Route 18, New Brunswick / East Brunswick

Follow Signs for Route 18 South

Continue on Route 18 South

TURN RIGHT on Rues Lane (at Brunswick Square Mall)

(At next light, Rues Lane becomes Ryders Lane. Continue on Ryders Lane)

TURN LEFT on Dunhams Corner Road

GO THROUGH ONE TRAFFIC LIGHT, 303 Dunhams Corner Road will be on your right

Via Garden State Parkway—Northbound to Exit 105

TAKE EXIT 105 for Route 18 North towards New Brunswick

After approximately 21 miles, **USE THE JUG-HANDLE TO TURN LEFT** from Route 18 North onto Rues Lane

(At next light, Rues Lane becomes Ryders Lane. Continue on Ryders Lane)

TURN LEFT on Dunhams Corner Road

GO THROUGH ONE TRAFFIC LIGHT, 303 Dunhams Corner Road will be on your right

Via Route 287

TAKE EXIT 9 for River Road toward Bound Brook/Highland Park

TURN RIGHT onto River Road

MERGE ONTO ROUTE 18 SOUTH to New Brunswick

TURN RIGHT on Rues Lane (at Brunswick Square Mall)

(At next light, Rues Lane becomes Ryders Lane. Continue on Ryders Lane)

TURN LEFT on Dunhams Corner Road

GO THROUGH ONE TRAFFIC LIGHT, 303 Dunhams Corner Road will be on your right

PARKING

Parking is in the back of the building.

