

Genealogy Research

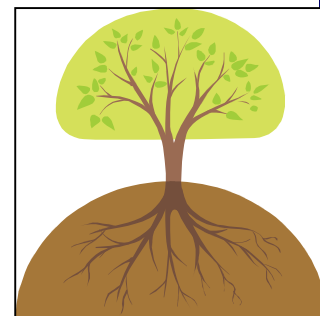
Plainfield Public Library Pathfinder

December 2009

The public library is a natural first (and enduring) step in doing genealogy and family history research.

Plainfield Public Library offers:

- Resources with advice on how to do genealogy
- Access to information about individuals and families
- Librarians who can offer direct, personal guidance



How to do Genealogy

Books

- *Black Roots: A Beginner's Guide to Tracing the African American Family Tree*, Burroughs, Tony, 929.108 BUR
- *Family Tree Problem Solver: Proven Methods for Scaling the Inevitable Brick Wall*, Rising, Marsha Hoffman, 929.107 RIS 2005
- *Genealogy Online*, Crowe, Elizabeth Powell, 929.1 CRO

Websites

- Familysearch.org offers general instruction online through their *Family History Lesson Series* and online guidance for researching specific locations through their *Research Helps*.
- *Researching Your Family Tree* is a detailed tutorial at <http://www.learnwebskills.com/family/intro.html>
- <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com> covers many categories of instruction for researchers in its *Getting Started* category.

Where to find Information about Individuals and Families

Books

Books that provide information about the people you may be researching are usually limited to specific families, geographic locations, or other categories, and can be found through library catalogs and, in some cases, digitized and made available online, through:

- Ancestry Library Edition (accessible inside the library)

Plainfield Public Library

800 Park Ave.

Plainfield, NJ 07060

908-757-1111 x112

ref@plfdpl.info

www.plainfieldlibrary.info

- Family History Archive from Brigham Young University at <http://www.lib.byu.edu/fhc/index.php>
- Google Books at <http://books.google.com>
- Internet Archive at <http://www.archive.org/details/texts>

Websites

Fee-based websites which are subscribed to by Plainfield Public Library and available at no charge to users on library computers include

- Ancestry Library Edition
- Footnote
- New England Historic Genealogical Society's American Ancestors Database

Free websites available to all

- Cyndi's List, <http://cyndislist.com/> is a collection of links to worthwhile genealogy websites, arranged by category.
- Family Search, <http://www.familysearch.org>, is an invaluable resource providing international coverage.
- RootsWeb, <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/>, is a significant and varied collection of resources with an option for interaction and assistance between users.
- *The Social Security Death Index* can be very helpful in discovering a date of death for people who have died within roughly the last fifty years. This resource is available from several different websites which have different rates for updating it.
- USGenWeb, <http://www.usgenweb.org>, presents the work of a vast network of volunteers for communities across the country. The main page can be used to locate state, county, and municipal pages which offer posted collections of information as well as the opportunity to make queries of the other users. Plus many more, with more limited scope of coverage.

Websites for Researching Plainfield Area Families

- New Jersey State Archives, at <http://www.state.nj.us/state/darm/links/archives.html> offers a growing collection of online searchable databases as well as information about obtaining older vital records for the state.
- Plainfield Public Library offers searchable digitized collections of Plainfield postcards, photographs, and blueprints, as well as a collection of digitized city directories covering the years 1870-1982 (with gaps) which can be searched and viewed on library computers. Collections of Plainfield materials are outlined on the library's Local History Collections page. Links to additional, outside websites are detailed on the library's FAQ's page.

- USGenWeb's Plainfield page, at <http://home.comcast.net/~njunior/plainfield.html>, provides an overview of resources and some valuable links to historic maps and cemetery records, in particular.

In addition, links to the vitally important *blank forms* to use to record information can be found under *Organizing Your Research*, at cyndislist.com, as well as on Ancestry Library Edition.

Blogs and Newsletters

Blogs and newsletters can be an excellent source for news in the always-changing genealogy field, updating readers on new resources, offering inspiration, and providing instruction.

- Cyndislist.com lists over 100 blogs
- Dear Myrtle, <http://blog.dearmyrtle.com/> an institution in genealogical blogging
- Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, at <http://blog.eogn.com/>, a very popular resource for news in the genealogy field.

Getting Assistance from Librarians

Plainfield Public Library's Local History Department librarians can best assist researchers who come to the library in person. However, for researchers unable to visit, the library will conduct some research by arrangement. To make an appointment or to make an initial request, contact the department by:

- Email; [localhistory\[at\]plfdpl.info](mailto:localhistory[at]plfdpl.info)
- Telephone, 908 757-1111, extension 136
- Mail: 800 Park Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060