

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: "A day in the life . . ."

Level: All

Duration: 60-90 minutes

Description:

Most family history researchers are interested in the daily events in the lives of their ancestors. This presentation deals with common activities of families on the farm and in the trades. The details provided represent the culmination of the presenter's reading on the topic over the last decade, from hard-to-find literature available only to the German audience.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: A Genealogist's Outline of German History since 1517

Level: All

Duration: 60-120 minutes

Description:

This presentation highlights the main events in German history since the Religious Reformation that have the greatest impact on family history documents and research.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Avoiding "Self-Defeating Behaviors" in German Family History Research

Level: All

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Description:

Novices as well as experienced family history researchers tend to commit pattern errors ("self-defeating behaviors") and thus hinder or stymie their own progress. Such errors include over-estimating one's capabilities, relying without question on research done by others, fear of or over-reliance on computer technology, and believing family legends that may well be inaccurate. This presentation features examples for each of the "self-defeating behaviors" in an attempt to assist the audience in recognizing and overcoming these problems. This presentation also lends itself as a banquet or luncheon speech.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Cemeteries in Central Europe

Level: All

Duration: 30-60 minutes

Description:

The customs associated with funerals and burials in German-speaking regions of Europe are substantially different from corresponding rituals in the United States. The layout and maintenance of cemeteries is also quite different. In this presentation, slides are used to illustrate cemetery conditions and cultural customs associated with funerals and burials. The presenter demonstrates how the individual or family grave and its appearance are of great concern to Europeans. The question of death and burial records often asked by North American researchers – is also discussed in detail.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Church & Civil Records in Germany

Level: All

Duration: 90 minutes per section/3 hours together (variable)

Description:

Section 1

This presentation constitutes an introduction to the identification and location of church and civil vital records for towns and cities in Germany (with borders as of 1871.) The emphasis is on the types of records available in specific provinces during specific periods of time. The discussion features major historical events and developments associated with the keeping of vital records in Germany. Handouts include bibliographical data on church record inventories available in the LDS Family History library.

Section 2

Generally presented as an extension to Section 1 (above,) this presentation focuses on examples of record formats of vital church and civil records. Specific regional documents are shown and analyzed, whereby members of the audience are given the opportunity to demonstrate expertise in the analysis of documents common to their research venues and experience.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Communicating With Agencies & Individuals in Europe

Level: All

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Description:

Because not all vital records are available on microfilm in North America, many researchers find it necessary to communicate with churches, civil researchers, and private individuals in Europe. There are many challenges to such communication, and this presentation will guide novices and experts alike in overcoming such problems. Emphasis is placed on the locating of names and addresses, language considerations, payment of fees, etc.

Attention is also given to telephone and telefax communications - an increasingly efficient way to obtain assistance in Europe.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Conducting Family History Research in Europe

Level: All

Duration: 90 minutes

Description:

Conducting family history research in an ancestral home town in Europe can be most satisfying, but also very challenging - even for the experienced professional. This presentation deals with the preparation and execution of a family history research excursion to Europe. The instructor uses a series of slides to describe various research locations and typical situations. The emphasis of this presentation is on avoiding and/or solving problems and increasing productivity in what can be a very expensive undertaking.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Family History Research in Hessen or "Which Hessen is Which?"

Level: All

Duration: 30-45 minutes

Description:

From their central locations among the German-speaking region, the duchies of Hessen and Hessen-Nassau were home to many emigrants to the United States. This presentation seeks to explain and resolve the confusion of the names of numerous Hessen territories, especially as they appear in documents in the United States. The discussion will include major sources of information on emigrants and the principal methodologies of identifying emigrants' home towns.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Introduction to Family History Research in Austria

Level: All

Duration: 90 minutes

Description:

Although a smaller percentage of Americans trace their ancestry back to Austria, this nation offers a wealth of family history research sources. Thanks to the Catholic Church and a government that essentially invented bureaucracy, records on individual and family history abound. However, due to the lack of centralized archives and microfilming operations, pursuing ancestors here can be challenging. This presentation centers on what the researcher can do to locate and gain access to records in Austria.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Introduction to Family History Research in the Czech Republic

Level: All

Duration: 60 minutes

Description:

An increasing number of researchers discover that their ancestors came from either Bohemia or Moravia - historically German-language provinces in the modern Czech Republic. Because few records are available on microfilm and neither German nor English is used there on a large scale today, Czechia presents specific challenges to American researchers. This presentation features a discussion of the superb records kept in that region and the most efficient methods that can be used to gain access to those records.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Introduction to German Phonetics as it Applies to the Spelling of Personal Names: "How can Tiefendörfer & Diependerper be the same family?"

Level: All

Duration: 90 minutes

Description:

Most researchers in German-language family history identify numerous variant spellings of personal names over time and in different locations. Despite the apparently helter-skelter variations, basic rules of Germanic phonetics are at work here. This presentation will offer linguistic explanations for specific spelling changes. With emphasis on problem-solving throughout, the presenter uses names supplied by the audience to illustrate the application of phonetic rules to the spelling of personal names in Germany and among German immigrants in North America.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Introduction to Linguistic Geography & its Relation to Family History Research in German Areas of Europe

Level: Advanced

Duration: 90 minutes

Description:

The history of the German language since the seventh century A.D. can be seen in surviving literary monuments. These documents allow linguists to trace patterns in consonant changes over many centuries - patterns that are closely connected to the geography of the German language territory. By studying those consonant patterns, the family history researcher can determine in which parts of Germany certain consonant changes occurred.

This knowledge can be applied in determining the origin of a specific given name or surname. Knowledge of the German language would be helpful in this presentation, but is not required. The presenter can use names supplied by the audience to illustrate the relationship between consonant patterns and geography.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: One-on-One Consultation

Level: All

Duration: Variable

Description:

Traditionally suitable to the time preceding or following the general presentations, this consultation usually takes place in any available public setting (conference room, lobby, back row of the theater etc.) Conference participants sign up for blocks of times (usually 20 minutes maximum) and the instructor deals with whatever research problems the consultee wishes to discuss. Conference hosts often request an appropriate fee from each consultee.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Surname Changes in Northwestern Germany

Level: All

Duration: 60-90 minutes

Description:

During the feudal era, hundreds of large estate farms were established in Western Hannover, Oldenburg, Westphalia, and Lippe-Detmold. On many of those estates, the surname of the owner did not change for over a thousand years, though blood lines almost always did. The conditions under which people lived on these estate farms and the patterns for surname

changes and acquisition are discussed in this presentation. The focus is the effect such a widespread complex system has on the tracing of family lines in this part of Germany.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: The Feudal Order

Level: All

Duration: 60-90 minutes

Description:

Because most inhabitants of the German-language regions of Europe since the Middle Ages have lived in a feudal relationship, the legal status is of great interest to the genealogists among their descendants. This presentation investigates the legal ramifications of the feudal system and its eventual demise. Important German terms found in vital records referring to feudal relationships are discussed in detail.

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Troubleshooting in Germanic Family History Research

Level: All

Duration: Variable

Description:

The troubleshooting session is essentially an open forum, during which members of the audience are allowed to present - in great brevity - questions and problems specific to their own research scenarios. In suggesting solutions, the instructor expands the scope of each response to fit much broader circumstances, whereby numerous members of the audience benefit. Generally, the suggested solution of one problem leads coherently to the next problem etc. and the discussion can be terminated at any appropriate moment.

