

What's A Professional Genealogist?

DO I NEED ONE?

HOW DO I FIND ONE?

HOW DO I CHOOSE ONE?

Who am I?

Christine Cochran Professional Genealogist

- Owner of Our Provenance, Ltd. Since 2016
- 20+ years of experience in genealogical research
- Vice-President of and Researcher for Colorado Genealogical Society (CGS)
- Delegate to Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies (CCGS)
 - Colorado Genealogical Society
 - Mountain Genealogy Society (MGS)
- Member of Association of Professional Genealogists (APG)
- Member of the Colorado Chapter of APG (CAPG)

More at www.OurProvenance.com

Definition of a Professional Genealogist

Someone who is paid to

- Conduct genealogical research,
- Write on genealogical related topics
- Create genealogy websites
- Produce family trees and charts
- File lineage applications,
- Others? ...

Should Genealogists Get Paid for Their Work?

Online database memberships

- Ancestry.com
- Newspapers.com
- GenealogyBank.com

Training

- Conferences (~\$2,000)
- Seminars
- Institutes

Society memberships

- \$25-\$100 per society per year
- Up to \$500/year for 4 or 5 memberships

Genealogical software

- RootsMagic
- Legacy
- Family Tree Maker

Opportunity Costs

- Investment of TIME

Types of Professional Genealogists

Generalist

- Economical way to get started
- Knows the specialists
- Finger on the pulse of the genealogical community

Specializations:

- Lineage applications: National Daughters or Sons of the American Revolution.
- DNA testing (Ancestry, 123 & Me, Living DNA, My Heritage)
- Adoption or Non-parental events
- Editors/Writers/Publishers/Bloggers/Podcasts
- Ethnic/Religious (Jewish, Catholic records, Quakers)
- Forensic (land transactions, probates, dual citizenship, repatriation, expert witness, criminal)
- Countries (USA, United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Vietnamese, etc.)
- Geographic areas (New England, Western States, Southern States, etc.)
- Historic Periods (The Civil War, Colonial America, Vietnam Era)
- Military Records
- Others ...?

Who Hires Professional Genealogists?

Other Professional Genealogists

Legal Firms, heir searchers, courts

Any individual who:

- Has hit a brick wall and needs help.
- Needs someone to access local repositories or data that is not digitized.
- Is overwhelmed by the data and doesn't know where to start.
- Doesn't have time to do the research but wants to know their family stories.
- Wants to make their family history available to others.
- Wants to join a lineage society.
- Has inherited valuable family history documents.
- Wants to apply for dual citizenship to another country.

What Distinguishes a Professional Genealogist?

Certifications/Accreditations

Training

- Boston University,
- ProGen,
- Webinars,
- Salt Lake City Institute of Genealogy (SLIG),
- Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh (GRIP)
- National Institute for Genealogical Studies (NIGS)

Technology

Experience/Expertise

Involvement

- Belongs to, supports, attends, holds offices in a variety of genealogical society meetings.

Certifications and Accreditations Required to be a Professional Genealogist?

None

Wait ... What??????

Accreditations and Affiliations and Certificates

Accredited Genealogist AG – (Accreditation)

- Regulated by ICAPGEN - International Commission for Accreditation of Professional Genealogists
<https://www.icapgen.org/>
- Demonstrates expertise in a region

Professional Affiliations (Affiliation)

- APG – Association of Professional Genealogists
- CAPG – Colorado Chapter - Association of Professional Genealogists

Certificate Programs

- PLSGC – Completion of National Institute for Genealogical Studies (NIGS)
- ProGen – Completion of Professional Genealogist program
- BU – Completion of Boston University Certificate program

Degree Programs (Arts):

Associate (AAS),
Bachelor (BA),
Post Graduate (MA)

Examples:

Brigham Young University (Provo, Utah)

- Family History/Genealogy – BA
- Genealogy, Paleographic, and Heraldic Studies - MSc.
- Family History Research – A.A.S.
- University of Strathclyde (Glasgow, Scotland)
- Genealogy, Paleographic, and Heraldic Studies - MSc.

Certifications

Having a Certificate for
completing a genealogy
curriculum

→ does not equal ←
“Certification”

CG* – Certified Genealogist (Certification)

- Demonstrates expertise in **methodology**
- ➔ Regulated by: Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG)
<https://bcgcertification.org/>
- ➔ Based on a submitted portfolio
- ➔ Judged by at least three other Certified Genealogists
- ➔ Has proved a rigorous understanding of genealogy methodologies and standards
- ➔ Is good for a five-year period, after which recertification is required
- ➔ Currently there are only about 300 in the United States

**The words Certified Genealogist and designation CG are registered certification marks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and the designations Certified Genealogical Lecturer and CGL are service marks of BCG, used under license by certificants after periodic competency evaluations (and only during the current five-year period for which they are certified.)*

International Commission for Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGEN)

<https://www.icapgen.org/>

Demonstrates expertise in a **region**

- Continental Europe
- Latin America
- Scandinavia
- British Isles
- Canada
- United States

International Commission for Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGEN)

United States

- [Great Plains Region](#) - Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas)
- [Gulf South Region](#) - Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas)
- [Mountain West Region](#) - Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
- [Mid Atlantic Region](#) – Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
- [Mid-South Region](#) – Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia
- [Midwest Region](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin
- [Mountain West Region](#) – Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
- [New England Region](#) – Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
- [Pacific Region](#) – Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington

How to Find a Professional

- Board for Certification of Genealogists
<https://bcgcertification.org/directory>
- Association of Professional Genealogists
www.apgen.org
 - Colorado Chapter – Association of Professional Genealogist
<https://www.apgen.org/chapters/colorado/index.html>
- ProGen
<https://www.progenstudy.org/directory/>
- Ancestry.com
www.progenealogists.com
- American Ancestors - New England Historical Genealogical Society (NEHGS)
<https://www.americanancestors.org/services/custom-research>

What Should I Look For When Searching for a Professional Genealogist?

- Certification/Accreditation
- Education/Experience
- Recommendations
- Examples of Work
- Reputation

\$\$\$\$\$ Large Corporations

Ancestry.com ~\$1500 package

www.progenealogists.com

New England Historical Genealogical Society (NEHGS)

~ \$110/hour (5-hour minimum \$550-\$1000)

<https://www.americanancestors.org/services/custom-research>

New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (NYB&G)

~\$85/hour + membership \$75-\$180/year (10-hour min ~\$1000)

<https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/research-services>

Pros:

- Large pool of expertise to draw from
- Vetted and trained pool of experts

Cons:

- More expensive
- Not as much individualized attention

\$\$ The Independent Professional Genealogist

Depends on:

- Area of Expertise
- Experience

◦ Location, Location, Location

- DC ~ \$150+/hour
- New York ~\$100/hour
- Colorado ~ \$50-\$150/hour
- N. Carolina ~ \$75 /hour
- Midwest ~ \$25-\$35/hour
- Southwest ~ \$15-\$50/hour

(Note: These estimates are based on my own experience and research as of 2018.)

How to Proceed in Hiring a Professional Genealogist.

Do Your Homework

- Have a focused goal → Write it down!
- Make a list of questions.
- Set reasonable expectations.
 - “I would like to locate death records for my great aunt who died in Bent County, Colorado after 1923.” ← **Reasonable**
 - “I would like you to generate four generations of my family tree in ten hours or under.” ← **Unreasonable**
- Provide the genealogist with as much information as you can.
- Understand that the genealogist has to come up to speed on your family history.
 - You have studied it for years.
 - They are seeing it for the first time.

Vet the Genealogist

- View their website. (*They should have one!*)
- Check credentials.
- Ask around.
 - Local Library
 - Genealogical Societies
 - Archives and Repositories
- Recommendations from previous clients.
- Examples of work or article written.
- Talk to the genealogist. Let them know your particular goals

Get a contract.

Set expectations up front. Get a contract that clearly states:

- Hourly rate
 - What **is** covered.
 - What is **not** covered.
- Minimum and maximum hours.
- Travel and expenses.
- Final product – deliverable (i.e. a report, family tree diagram, online family tree creation.)
- Regular communications.
 - You will be contacted every two weeks.
 - You will be contacted after 50% of the project is completed.
- Time frame.
 - *“My goal is to give this as a gift to my nieces for Christmas 2018.”* (Requested in June 2018.)

Most Important

Have fun!

You are on a journey of discovery.

Your ancestors are waiting to see you...

??? Questions ???

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