



Frequently Asked Questions

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General Information

What are the dates of the 2022 MGC Virtual Seminar?

April 2 to May 31. All the LIVE events (presentations, Chats, and Workshops) will take place during the month of April and all pre-recorded presentations will be available through May 31.

Do I have to be a member of MGC to attend the Seminar?

No, the Seminar is open to everyone. If you’re interested in joining MGC, visit the membership page on our website (www.massgencouncil.org/membership) to join MGC.

Registration

How much is the registration fee?

\$49.00 US.

What does the registration fee cover?

In a word--everything! The registration fee includes access to all recorded lectures (April 2 to May31), an electronic syllabus in PDF format, access to online Workshops (limited space), access to special online activities planned for April.

Do I need to register early?

The earlier you register, the more opportunities you will have to take part in the Seminar. Workshops are limited to 25 people. Everyone can view the recorded presentations.

Will I be able to register once the Seminar is underway?

Yes, you can register all the way up to May 31, the very last day that recorded presentations are available. LIVE online events will not be recorded, so if you register after the date of a LIVE event, you won't be able to view it.

What happens if the Seminar is over-subscribed?

There is no limit to the number of people who can view the recorded presentations. LIVE online presentations are limited to 500 people.

What if I must cancel my registration?

Cancellations received by Wednesday, March 30, 2022, will receive a refund, less any processing fees.

Payments

How can I pay the registration fee?

You can pay by PayPal, credit card, or check. If you pay by check, your registration will be considered as "pending" until we receive full payment.

Why do I have to go to PayPal when I want to pay by credit card?

PayPal's "Pay as a Guest" functionality is the only option MGC has to accept credit card payments. You don't have to have a PayPal account.

When you are directed to the PayPal page, choose the "Guest check-out" alternative or "Don't have PayPal Account" option.



Presentations

How do I know the target level of the presentations?

Each presentation's title is followed by a code. This code indicates the target level: [N] Novice, [N-I] Novice to Intermediate, [I] Intermediate, [I-A] Intermediate to Advanced, [A] for Advanced, and [All] for everyone.

Will all presentations be recorded?

All but the two LIVE presentations will be recorded in advance of the start of the seminar and can be viewed from 9:00 AM EDT on April 2 through 11:55 PM EDT on May 31.

How long are the presentations?

Presentations vary in length. They last about an hour, though some may be shorter and others longer.

When can I view the recorded presentations?

You have on-demand access 24/7 to all recorded presentations from 9:00 AM EDT on April 2 through 11:55 PM EDT on May 31.

Why are the presentations organized by Tracks?

Tracks, five topic areas, allow genealogists to focus their on-demand streaming on related research issues.

Chats

What are Chats?

Chats give you an opportunity to connect with the speakers. Come with questions and enter them into the Zoom chat box. Moderators will try to make sure that all questions are answered.

Do I have to sign up for Chats?

No, Chats will be Zoom meetings. There is no limit to how many can attend.

When are the Chats?

The Chats take place via Zoom at 7:00 PM EDT. Chats are currently scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, April 5, Technology with Alec Ferretti, Susan M. O'Connor, and Jennifer Zinck
- Tuesday, April 12, Cultural with Thomas Green, Michael J. Leclerc, Alice Nash, Adina Newman, and John Warner
- Tuesday, April 19, Repositories with Marta Crilli, Janis Duffy, Kimberley Toney, and Jessy Wheeler
- Tuesday, April 26, Unique Records with Janis P. Duffy, Margaret R. Fortier, Kathleen Kaldis, and Margaret R. Sullivan
- Thursday, April 28, Town & County Records with Michael J. Leclerc, Beth Finch McCarthy, Rhonda McClure, and Claire Smith

How do I submit my questions?

You can ask your question by typing it into the chat box during the Zoom session. Moderators will monitor the chat and make every effort to get all the questions answered.

Will the Chats be recorded?

No, you must be present at each chat.

Workshops

How are Workshops different from presentations?

Workshops are interactive sessions lasting about 2 hours. Participants should view the presentation on which the Workshop is based and should complete any pre-workshop assignments.

How many workshops are there?

There will be four Workshops, each at 7:00 PM EDT:

- Finding Family History Evidence in Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (April 6)
- Mining Massachusetts Town Records (April 20)
- Researching Your Revolutionary Roots (April 13)
- Using Catholic Records in Massachusetts (April 27)

Detailed descriptions of each workshop can be found on the MGC website:

www.massgencouncil.org/workshops-2022

How do I sign up for a Workshop?

During the registration process, you will be asked if you are interested in attending one of the Workshops. If you specify yes, you will receive a separate email with directions for signing up for a Workshop.

Can I attend all the Workshops?

Each Workshop is limited to 25 participants, so sign up only for your first choice. The signup process will ask you to specify the priority of any other Workshop of interest to you and you will be put on a waitlist. If space becomes available, you will be notified, based on the order in which your Workshop signup response was received.

What if the workshop I want is filled?

If the workshop you want is filled, please specify that this is your first choice within the waitlist so that we can notify you if a slot opens. Slots will be filled in the order in which your Workshop signup response was received

What if I can't attend the workshop I signed up for?

Please let us know as soon as possible if you find that you cannot attend the workshop. We'll take you out of the workshop so that someone on the waitlist can fill the opening.

Track Talks

What are Track Talks?

Track Talks (aka SIGs) are a way for you to connect with other attendees with similar interests and to share what you've learned. The speakers will not be taking part in Track Talks.

There are two Track Talks:

- Wednesday, April 6, for the Cultural and Technology Tracks
- Thursday, April 21, for the Repositories, Town & County Records, and Unique Records Tracks

Do I have to sign up for Track Talks?

No, Track Talks will be Zoom meetings with Breakout Rooms—one for each Track covered that evening. There is no limit to how many can attend.

Accessibility

What types of accommodation are you offering for individuals with disabilities?

All recorded presentations will have closed captioning. During LIVE events, participants can turn on a live transcription through Zoom and Rev software. Just click the up arrow to the right of the Live Transcript button in the Zoom toolbar and choose "Show Subtitles." 

Spam/Junk Folder

Why does MGC email go to my Spam/Junk folder?

Your email provider may have highlighted the Seminar as a sender of potential spam. The first time you find an email from the Seminar in your Spam or Junk folder, identify it as "Not Junk / Not Spam" so future seminar emails will arrive in your inbox.

About the Seminar and MGC

What is the history of the Seminar?

Part of MGC's mission is to provide genealogical education to its members and the genealogy community in general. MGC has offered seminars and conferences since it was founded in 1980.

Was this Seminar planned as a virtual seminar?

Yes, this is the second time that MGC has offered a virtual seminar. In 2020, MGC had an in-person seminar planned but chose to convert to a virtual format when COVID-19 restrictions made meeting in person impossible. Genealogists from all over the US took part, something new for MGC. Because of the success in 2020 and the ongoing pandemic, the Seminar will be a virtual event again this year.

How can I learn more about MGC?

MGC is a non-profit membership organization. You can learn more by visiting our website:

www.massgencouncil.org

Please consider joining MGC.

Additional Questions

What if something changes?

Changes will be listed in the weekly Seminar email and posted on the Seminar page on the MGC website:

massgencouncil.org/seminar-2022

What if I have other questions?

Please direct any other questions to the Seminar coordinator at seminar@massgencouncil.org.

During the Seminar

Accessing the Seminar

How will I access the 2022 MGC Virtual Seminar?

Registrants will receive an email a few days before April 2 explaining how to access the content of the seminar. This will include the URL of the seminar page on the MGC website, the required password, access to the syllabus, and instructions for downloading any required software.

Which browser should I use?

We have had two reports of problems with Safari, so if you encounter issues, please give Chrome or Firefox a try.

I'm signed in. How do I sign out when I'm done?

Once you have entered the virtual site by using the password, you will not need to sign out. Just close your browser (or browser window if you have multiple browser windows open).

Why is the password so tricky?

We need to use a password that can NOT be easily guessed, by either people or computers. If the password is easy to break, the seminar website could see heavy use by trolls or bots: automated attacks that would log in and use up services that need to be reserved for registrants' use.

How do I copy and paste the password?

Select and highlight the text. On a PC, use Ctrl + C to copy, and Ctrl + V to paste the password into the provided field. On a Mac, use Cmd + C and Cmd + V.

What if I have more problems logging in?

If you continue to have problems, contact seminar@massgencouncil.org

Syllabus

What is in the syllabus?

Most of the content is presentation material provided by the presenters. There is one section for each presentation. Other contents include advertising from our sponsors, information about special offers, the Chat schedule, and thank-yous to the many volunteers, presenters, and sponsors who made the MGC Seminar possible.

Can I buy a paper copy of the syllabus?

No. Since the Seminar is virtual, only electronic versions of the syllabus are available. Feel free to print it out.

How should I use the syllabus?

That's a personal preference. You may want to print the syllabus for ready access and to take notes while you are viewing presentations.

Opening the syllabus in a PDF viewer, such as Adobe Acrobat, will allow you to easily navigate the pages using the syllabus bookmarks.

Can I print the syllabus?

Yes!

How do I get to a specific page within the syllabus?

The page numbers within the Table of Contents are links to specific pages. If you have Acrobat Reader installed on your device, you can also use the Bookmarks panel to access specific sections of the syllabus.

Can I download the syllabus to my device?

Yes! We recommend you do so, as it can take a while to download or open. Your browser, depending on its settings, may offer to save the file when you open the syllabus. Or you can open the syllabus, then select File > Save As > and navigate to a save location. **A quick reminder: these materials are copyrighted and are for your personal use only.**

"Door" Prizes

How do you have "door" prizes in a virtual seminar?

The prizes are real, but the tickets and selection process are virtual.

How many prizes are there?

There are over 20 unique prizes that have been donated by sponsors and members. The prizes range from one-year memberships in MGC societies to DNA kits, from books to bullet journals to a custom portrait of an ancestor, from a mobile device charger to a hand knitted shawl to Vera Bradley totes and accessories.

How does the process work?

Each Sunday the Seminar Email will contain a list of the prizes for the week, together with instructions for electronically placing one virtual ticket in a bucket for the prize in which you are interested. You have until 2:00 PM on Friday of that week to specify your choice. Names will be randomly chosen from those indicating interest in a specific prize. Winners will be announced the following Sunday!

How will prize winners be notified?

Those who win prizes will be notified by email, and their names listed in the next Seminar Email.

How will winners receive their prizes?

Some prizes are in the form of certificates. These will be sent to the winner via email.

Physical prizes such as books will be mailed to the winners using the address specified when they registered for the Seminar.

Viewing Recordings

Do I need special software?

No, the videos can be played with your browser.

What type of device should I use?

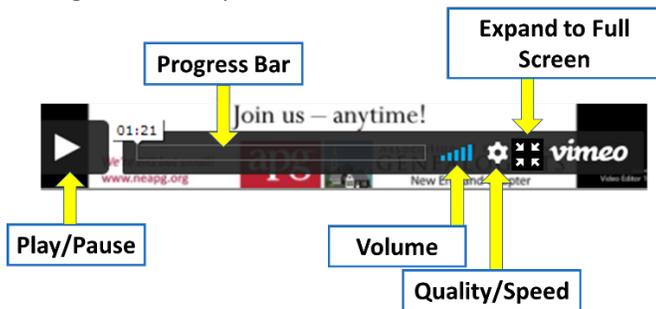
You can use any device that runs a browser, a PC – Windows or Mac, laptop, tablet, or smart phone.

What type of Internet connection do I need?

You need a strong Internet connection to successfully view the pre-recorded sessions. If you are having difficulty, move to another location or try plugging your device physically into your internet connection (e.g., into a cable modem port).

What do the icons on the video window mean?

The icons in the Vimeo tool bar allow you to play the recordings, know how far into the video you have progressed, control the volume and speed of the video, and expand the viewing frame to fill your screen.



I see a circular icon when I start, and when I advance during a video. Is this normal?

Yes, that's normal. The image you see when you start or skip forward within a recording indicates that portions of the video file are downloading to your device. If loading delays increase in frequency, performance might improve if you reboot your device or increase the strength of your Internet connection.

How can I make the videos larger or smaller?

Use the icon in the far lower right of the video controls to open the video full screen.

If you want to make the videos smaller (to exit full screen mode), click the Exit Full Screen icon at the right in the video tool bar.



On my PC or mac, how can I increase the size of text on the web pages?

On a PC, use keyboard commands Ctrl + (Control and Plus sign) to expand the size of the page. On a mac, use Cmd + (Command). Continue to press the + key while holding the Ctrl or Cmd key until the contents are a comfortable size. Likewise, use the minus key (-) with Ctrl or Cmd to shrink page content.

Participating in LIVE Sessions

What are the LIVE sessions?

There are LIVE sessions scheduled throughout April. They consist of Chats with the speakers, Track Talks, LIVE presentations, and Workshops. A schedule of these is

available on the MC website. **LIVE** sessions will NOT be recorded. You must be present at these sessions. A list of **LIVE** sessions for the upcoming week will be published in the Seminar newsletter.

Do I have to register for each LIVE session?

Except for Workshops, there is no need to register for the LIVE sessions. At the beginning of each week in April, you will receive an email about the seminar from MGC. That email will contain the information needed to access the LIVE session scheduled for that week.

Do I need special software for the LIVE sessions?

You must install Zoom on your device and use the link and password to join the LIVE sessions.

If you already have Zoom installed on your device, you should install the latest version of the software. You can do this any time by going to <https://zoom.us/support/download> and follow the directions for downloading and installing on your device.

What type of Internet connection do I need?

You need a strong Internet connection to successfully participate in the **LIVE** sessions. If an image freezes on the screen or the sound is interrupted, your Wi-Fi signal strength may not be adequate. Try switching to a wired connection or move to a different location that has a stronger Wi-Fi signal.

Should I reboot my device prior to the LIVE sessions?

Yes! Especially if it is an older device and it has had a lot of activity since the last time you re-booted.

Will I be on camera during the LIVE sessions as I am on a Zoom call?

Only if you want to be. If there are a lot of people attending a Chat, we will ask that everyone turn off their cameras and microphones to minimize disruptions.

What if I am not available to take part in the LIVE sessions?

LIVE sessions will not be recorded. There is no way that you will be able to access them once the sessions are over.

What if my connection drops during a LIVE session?

The link you received is still active until the **LIVE** session has ended. You can close the Zoom window and click the link in the email to re-connect.

I can see the speaker, but I can't hear anything. What should I do?

Make sure your computer audio isn't on mute and the volume is turned up. If that doesn't resolve the problem, try another browser (e.g., use Chrome instead of Firefox).

Participating in Chats

Do I have to prepare for a Chat?

The best preparation for a Chat is to have viewed the presentations of each of the Chat participants. The list of Chats and which speakers are in that Chat can be found on the Schedule Page for the seminar.

How do I ask questions in a Chat?

By entering your questions into the Chat box in the Zoom session. Moderators will try to make sure that all questions are answered.

Still Have Questions?

What if something changes?

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