

Our speaker this month was Marilyn Cocchiola Holt and her topic was Pennsylvania Vital Records. Notes from her presentation follow.

Vital records in Pennsylvania have changed and evolved over time. Many of them are online at the source noted. But there are gaps in most of them which may require a visit to Marilyn's Pennsylvania Department to view fuller versions of them on microfilm or in books. Here are some key dates:

1852 - 1855: birth, marriage and death (BMD) records by county - not broadly implemented. Ancestry

1860 - Philadelphia city/county BMD records - Familysearch

1870 - Pittsburgh BMD - Familysearch - Births

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/137583>

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/257622> - marriages only viewable at a Family History Center

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1589502> - Deaths

1870 - Allegheny City BMD - Familysearch, not indexed so you have to browse the file and only viewable at a Family History Center

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/956331> - Births

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/136693> - Deaths

1877 - 1882 - Allegheny City marriages - pamphlet at Pennsylvania Department

1885 - Marriages at county level mandated by the statewide - Familysearch

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1589502>

1893 - Birth and death by county (coverage varies) - Familysearch

1906 - Birth and Death records retained at state level - Ancestry. For privacy reason births only through 1910 and deaths only through 1966. Free access is available here from home if you input your Pennsylvania zip code:

<http://www.phmc.pa.gov/Archives/Research-Online/Pages/Ancestry-PA.aspx>

1800's - BMD records for Catholic Churches in the Pittsburgh Diocese. No online access - write to their archives

<https://diopitt.org/genealogy>

Death notices were often published in the local newspaper. They can provide information on the date of death and often other members of the family. The Post-Gazette archives covers Pittsburgh area newspapers and is available to access for free at the Pennsylvania Department. Or you can subscribe for \$7.95 a month after a two week free trial. It's a subset of Newspapers.com.

<https://archives.post-gazette.com/>

Here's a free site with selected newspapers across the state. It's far from comprehensive but maybe you'll get lucky:

<http://panewsarchive.psu.edu/>

Westmoreland County has marriage records from 1885 and and naturalization records from 1906 online here:

<https://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/1572/Public-Record-Searches>

Ancestry and Familysearch both have valuable guides to Pennsylvania genealogy and it's records:

<https://www.ancestrycdn.com/support/us/2016/11/pennsylvania.pdf>

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Pennsylvania,\\_United\\_States\\_Genealogy](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Pennsylvania,_United_States_Genealogy)

Marilyn is always ready to help you in your genealogy quest. You can contact her at her email address: [holtm@carnegielibrary.org](mailto:holtm@carnegielibrary.org), her phone number: [412-622-3154](tel:412-622-3154), or by visiting her at the Pennsylvania Department of the Carnegie Library in Oakland. If you want to visit it's best to schedule with her ahead of time so you're sure she'll be there.