

Our speaker was Megan Clark Young and her topic was "Using Pennsylvania Land Records to Solve Tough Cases."

Here's the web page for Megan's genealogy business. <https://macysgenealogy.com/>

Megan provided a handout with more detail and lots of clickable links to get directly to the records. Click on the text "*Using Pennsylvania Land Records to Solve Tough Cases Handout*" on this page to get the handout.  
<https://macysgenealogy.com/downloads/>

Megan led us through a thorough explanation of historical land records, where they're located and how to access them. Warning, they are not all in one place so you'll have to use several web based systems to get the full picture. But the full picture is what you need since different stages in the process include different information, all of which must be considered. To get ownership of a piece of land in Pennsylvania you went through these steps:

**APPLICATION:** Applications may provide researchers with important historical details, such as when the property was first settled.

**WARRANT:** This is a written order, based on the application, to survey the requested tract of land.

**SURVEY:** A surveyor physically measured and marked the land on its premises.

**RETURN OF SURVEY:** A statement certifying that the survey is complete was added to the application. It included a diagram of the land and a written description of the property.

**PATENT:** A written first title to the property conveying ownership to the individual submitting the application.

By the early 1800's all of Pennsylvania had been patented and was in private hands. So this process only applies if you're researching an ancestor (or their land) prior to the early 1800's.

Subsequent transactions involving the property were recorded as deeds. Family Search is the place to research Pennsylvania deeds. Use the Family Search Wiki (see below).

A couple of highlights from the handout:

Here's a map of the formation of the state of Pennsylvania between the years 1682 and 1792.

<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Archives/Documents/Pennsylvania-Genealogical-Map-Counties.pdf>

Here's an interactive map of Pennsylvania county formation:

<https://www.mapofus.org/pennsylvania/>

The Family Search Wiki has information on land records for each of the counties in Pennsylvania. There's lots of other information on genealogy resources for the county so you'll have to scroll down to find land records. You can click on the county in the map or on the county name on the list.

**HYPERLINK**

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