

NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
2018 FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE
2-5 MAY 2018 | GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Paths to Your Past



PRESENTED BY:

NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY®

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LOCAL HOST SOCIETY:

WESTERN MICHIGAN
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

c/o Grand Rapids Public Library
111 Library Street NE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268
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<http://www.conference.ngsgenealogy.org>

Paths to Your Past



In the nineteenth century, the Great Lakes were strategic waterways that aided Americans moving west and immigrants coming from overseas through Canada to settle and develop the Midwest. Cheap land, mining, and the timber industry made the area attractive. Water power from rivers and rapids and access to grain and lumber furthered Michigan's growth. The cereal and furniture industries, breweries, and ultimately, automobile manufacturing brought wave after wave of migrants from the South and immigrants from abroad. During the second half of the twentieth century, manufacturing slowed down and many left Michigan, moving west and south.

These migrations inspired our conference program, Paths to Your Past. The program will focus on ancestors' migration paths with an emphasis on the states that border the Great Lakes. Some lectures will enhance your proficiency as a researcher and your methodological and analytical skills. Other presentations will broaden your understanding about your ancestors' ethnicity,

occupation, religion, military experience, economic status, and associations. In addition, the program will also feature tracks that highlight DNA and technology.

Registration for the NGS 2018 Family History Conference, including tours and events, will begin 1 December 2017 at <http://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/>.

You will enjoy Grand Rapids and the NGS 2018 Family History Conference whether it's your first conference or you're returning to experience another great NGS Conference!



DeVos Place Convention Center, Grand Rapids, MI

THE DEVOS PLACE CONVENTION CENTER

The DeVos Place convention center is located at 303 Monroe Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, along the banks of the Grand River. Come early or stay after the conference to enjoy a walk along the river in the morning, visit nearby museums in the afternoon, and dine at a wide variety of restaurants, cafés, and breweries nearby in the evening. As the second largest city in the state, Grand Rapids has a thriving economy with a small town feel, friendly people, and safe walkable streets. The conference program, luncheons, and exhibit hall will be held at DeVos Place.

CONFERENCE HOTELS

An NGS press release will announce when hotel reservations will open. Rooms at the conference hotels must be reserved with a credit card. Complimentary wireless Internet is provided at both conference hotels.

Amway Grand Plaza (Conference Hotel)

The historical Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, 187 Monroe Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, is the primary conference hotel and is connected to DeVos Place by an enclosed walkway. The Amway Grand is affiliated with the Curio Collection by Hilton and is included in the Hilton Honors program. Self-parking for hotel guests will be \$10.00 per day. Valet parking is \$29.00 with unlimited in-and-out privileges. The public parking rate for non-hotel guests is currently \$19.00 per day. Call 1-800-253-3590 for reservations or see the website at <http://amwaygrand.com>.

Courtyard Marriott

The Courtyard Marriott, 11 Monroe Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, is the second conference hotel and is connected to DeVos Place by an enclosed walkway through several city blocks. Parking at the Courtyard Hotel is currently \$16.00 for self-parking and \$25.00 for valet. Parking rates may increase before the conference. For reservations call 1-800-901-6632 or visit the website at <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/grrdt-courtyard-grand-rapids-downtown/>.

Rates for both hotels are \$144.00 per night plus all applicable fees and taxes for single, double, triple, or quad occupancy. For more details about hotel amenities and cancellation policies, see Hotel Reservations at <http://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/>.

TOURS AND EVENTS

TUESDAY

Library of Michigan and Archives of Michigan Research Day (Ten Hours)—After a one-hour bus ride to Lansing, Michigan, you will have approximately seven hours for research at the Library and/or Archives of Michigan. Details about the collections of the two institutions are under Research Facilities below. A box lunch will be provided.

Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park (Four Hours)—Discover the beauty and splendor of thirty acres of botanical gardens and the internationally acclaimed sculpture park. A tram guided tour will be available as well as paths for a leisurely walk around the grounds. Inside you can explore the largest tropical conservancy in Michigan and enjoy the current exhibits. Lunch will be on your own at the Garden Café.

Grand Rapids City Tour (Three Hours)—Explore downtown Grand Rapids and learn the history of the

city through an architectural tour of the Heritage Hill District, which has one of the finest concentrations of homes built in the nineteenth- and early-twentieth centuries in Michigan.

Civil War Tour (Three Hours)—The tour will view Grand Rapids' most significant Civil War monuments and will visit gravesites of three Civil War generals in the Fulton Street cemetery. Attendees also will visit the area's first Civil War cemetery at Oakhill and will learn about the cemetery's ongoing genealogy-based project to identify the many "unknown" Civil War soldiers who rest there.

Beer City Ale Trail—On Tuesday evening, enjoy a self-guided walking tour of several breweries in downtown Grand Rapids. The Beer City Ale Trail map will be available at the Hospitality Booth so you can taste some local brews.

The Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park (Tour, Tuesday); downtown Grand Rapids (Grand Rapids City Tour and Beer City Ale Trail, Tuesday).



WEDNESDAY EVENING

Society Night—State and local genealogical and historical societies from Michigan and surrounding states will be available from 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel to answer questions about research resources, publications, and membership. While in the hotel enjoy many examples of award-winning art from eight years of Art Prize, the largest annual judged and voter-participation art competition in the United States.



The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum

THURSDAY EVENING

Host Society Event at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum—Visit the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, 303 Pearl Street NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504, from 6:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. View the galleries and enjoy dessert and coffee with fellow genealogists while listening to the Schubert Male Chorus,

which has been performing since 1883. The museum is a two-block walk across the Grand River. For more details, see <http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov>.

RESEARCH FACILITIES

Numerous research opportunities surround this conference. More information about each facility, including hours of operation and research collection details, can be found on their websites.

Grand Rapids Public Library, 111 Library Street NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, is located a few blocks from the conference hotels. The Grand Rapids History & Special Collections department features more than five thousand genealogy and family history books and more than thirty thousand volumes on local, state, and midwestern history. More than 450 archival collections include maps, newspapers, photographs, postcards, scrapbooks, and ephemera relating to the Grand Rapids area. The library is also home to one of the largest collections of books on furniture design in the nation. Genealogy guides and a sampling of the resources are available at <http://www.grpl.org>.



Archives of Michigan, Michigan History Center, 702 W. Kalamazoo Street, Lansing, Michigan 48915. Onsite original collections include Michigan naturalization records, probate files, and tax rolls, and the Abrams Foundation Historical Collection, which includes published materials emphasizing

the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Great Lakes states. For research guides and free online content—including death certificates and state censuses—see Seeking Michigan: <http://www.seekingmichigan.org/>. The Archives is open Monday through Friday 1:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Other important repositories in the area include:

- **The Grand Rapids City Archives**, <http://grcity.us/city-clerk/Pages/City-Archives-and-Research-Center.aspx>;
- **The Archives of the Christian Reformed Church in North America**, http://www.calvin.edu/hh/crc_archives.htm; and
- **The Joint Archives of Holland, Theil Research Center**, <http://www.jointarchives.org/collections/index.html>.

Library of Michigan, Michigan History Center, 702 W. Kalamazoo Street, Lansing, Michigan 48915. The collections include surviving newspapers and city directories for all of Michigan in print and on microfilm, state as well as federal censuses, cemetery records, county histories, plat maps, and much more. For details about the collections, see <http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan>. The Library is open Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

More information will be available about these and other repositories at <http://www.conference.ngsgenealogy.org> in 2018.

Discover the Paths to Your Past at the NGS 2018 Family History Conference.
