



American Ancestors[®]

A NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY HISTORY, HERITAGE & CULTURE



Enriching Lives,
Inspiring Legacy

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



American Ancestors®

A NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY HISTORY, HERITAGE & CULTURE

American Ancestors is a national center for family history, heritage & culture, and one of the world's top destinations for family history research, according to *USA Today*. American Ancestors is the country's oldest and largest genealogical society, founded in 1845, and today it serves more than 400,000 members and subscribers, and millions of online users engaged in family history nationally and around the world through its website AmericanAncestors.org. Its headquarters houses world-class spaces and resources dedicated to advancing family history, including the Brim-DeForest Library, the Family Heritage Experience, the R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, the Brue Family Learning Center, 10 Million Names, and the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center.

Mission

To advance the study of family history in America and beyond, we educate, inspire, and connect people through our scholarship, collections, and expertise.

Values

- Joy
- Service
- Leadership
- Accuracy
- Community
- Innovation
- Education
- Scholarship
- Stewardship

A Look at
Fiscal Year
2025

Total revenue
\$23,372,770

Total membership and
subscribers
423,335

Members and
subscribers across the
world
All 50 states and
139 countries

Headquarters
28 million items in our
world-renowned library and
archive
1,120 Ask-A-Genealogist
Live Chat Sessions

Social media
1,991,538 Facebook
impressions
134,644 YouTube video views
1,524,000 minutes watched
JHC TikTok page 50,000
interactions

Brue Family Learning
Center
250 programs
34,618 attendees

AmericanAncestors.org
505 unique searchable
databases
More than 10 billion total
searchable records
Over 4 million new
searchable names

Published
scholarship
13 new American
Ancestors and Newbury
Street Press books
4 *American Ancestors* magazines,
4 issues of the *Register*, and
2 issues of *Mayflower
Descendant*
52 issues of *The Weekly
Genealogist*

Wyner Family
Jewish Heritage
Center
More than 4 million records
and more than 700,000 searchable
digital documents

Vita Brevis blog
Over 175,000 page views
27 new articles

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The Family Heritage Experience: A Milestone Year

In our 180th year, American Ancestors opened the Family Heritage Experience (FHE)—a groundbreaking visitor destination and the defining achievement of the year.

Designed to transform how people engage with the past, the FHE brings family history to life through immersive exhibits, digital storytelling, and hands-on discovery.

Visitors learn how to uncover ancestral records using innovative research tools, explore cultural traditions, and connect personal stories to larger historical moments. By teaching practical research skills and encouraging critical thinking, the FHE turns curiosity into meaningful exploration.

The impact is both personal and communal. Discovering one’s roots fosters belonging and identity, empowering individuals to see themselves as part of a larger narrative. Families who visit together deepen bonds as they uncover shared origins and connections. At the same time, the FHE highlights diverse histories, fostering mutual understanding and respect across communities.

The opening of the Family Heritage Experience marks a new chapter—one that makes history accessible, engaging, and deeply human. It embodies our mission to connect people to their past, enrich their present, and inspire future generations through the power of family history.



Report of the President & CEO

Founded in 1845, American Ancestors began with a simple but powerful idea: understanding our origins enriches our lives and strengthens our understanding of the American story. What began as an effort to document early New England families has grown into a national and increasingly global enterprise dedicated to helping people discover their ancestors and understand how individual lives connect to the larger sweep of history.

In 2025, we marked the 180th anniversary of our founding. That milestone offered an opportunity to reflect on how far this vision has evolved. What began with the study of early New England families now encompasses a far broader effort to document the full diversity of the American experience. Today, our collections include Catholic parish records, immigrant aid society archives, Jewish community collections, and records that illuminate the lives of enslaved people, free Black communities, Indigenous families, and other people of color whose stories were too often absent from the historical record.

Taken together, these sources reveal something fundamental about our nation's past: the American story has always been complex, diverse, and deeply personal.

Family history is often misunderstood as the study of names and dates. In reality, it is something far more meaningful. Family history is a life-enriching experience, an opportunity to discover something about yourself while connecting to a larger human story. When we recover an ancestor's name, we restore agency and humanity. Names connect generations. They spark conversations between grandparents and grandchildren. They transform history from something distant into something immediate and personal.

Yet even as we celebrate the richness of historical records, we must acknowledge a deeper truth: millions of Americans were written out of those records entirely.

For generations, the names of enslaved men, women, and children were scattered, obscured, or lost within the historical archive. Recovering those names is not simply a scholarly exercise. It is a moral responsibility.

That responsibility stands at the heart of 10 Million Names, our collaborative initiative to recover and restore the identities of the estimated ten million people of African descent who were enslaved in pre- and post-colonial America. Through archival discovery, digital scholarship, and innovative technology, this work is helping reconnect descendants with stories long believed lost to history.

The project continues to make remarkable progress. Over the past year, researchers working through this initiative recovered more than one million names across fifteen databases, spanning twenty-one states and several national record sets. These records include manumission documents, military service records, church registers, and other archival materials that illuminate lives once hidden within the historical record.





Each recovered name represents a person whose identity can once again be remembered, and whose descendants can reclaim a piece of their history.

The project has also brought unprecedented national attention to the work of American Ancestors. Coverage included a feature in *The New York Times Magazine* connected to genealogical research supporting a major profile story. There was a widely read article in *National Geographic* highlighting the 10 Million Names project's use of artificial intelligence to help recover the identities of enslaved Americans whose names were lost to history. That article alone reached an estimated 5.4 million readers.

While the recovery of historical records remains central to our mission, our work also focuses on ensuring that those records are accessible to the widest possible audience. Across the country, we partner with archives, libraries, and cultural institutions to digitize historical materials so that more people can see their ancestors' names preserved in the historical record. At the same time, we invest in technology, education, and outreach so that discovery is not limited by geography, background, or circumstance.

One of the most important milestones in this effort came in April 2025 with the opening of the Family Heritage Experience at our headquarters in Boston. This new destination reimagines how people encounter their past. Through interactive exhibitions, immersive storytelling, and hands-on research tools, visitors learn not only about history but also how to uncover it themselves.



Whether locating ancestral records, interpreting archival documents, or exploring cultural traditions, visitors experience family history as something both joyful and empowering.

The Family Heritage Experience reflects a truth we see every day in our work: family history and civic history are inseparable. The great events of our national past were not lived in textbooks. They were lived in households. They shaped marriages, migrations, allegiances, livelihoods, and freedoms. When people trace an ancestor's life, they begin to see how personal decisions intersect with public events.

Nowhere is this connection clearer than in our exploration of the American Revolution.

As the nation approaches the 250th anniversary of independence, the Revolution has become a central focus of our work. We often picture a Patriot standing on a battlefield, musket in hand, fighting for liberty. Yet the Revolution was also America's first civil war, a conflict that divided towns, congregations, neighbors, and families.

Historians estimate that roughly 40 percent of the population supported independence, while approximately 20 percent remained loyal to the Crown. Many others navigated uncertain ground between those positions. Understanding this complexity is essential not only to telling the national story but also to understanding our own families.

The Revolution was not a single narrative of triumph. It was a mosaic of loyalty, loss, courage, risk, reinvention, and hope.

Our collections help bring that mosaic into sharper focus. Databases such as *New Englanders in Nova Scotia* document Loyalists who resettled in Canada during and after the war. The *Black Loyalist Directory* records thousands of formerly enslaved individuals who sought freedom behind British lines and were evacuated at the war's end. Muster rolls, land petitions, and Loyalist claims reveal the difficult decisions families made during one of the most consequential periods in American history.

In my own work as a genealogist, I am continually reminded that family history has a remarkable ability to collapse time. A document written centuries ago can suddenly make the past feel immediate and personal. When that happens, history is no longer abstract. It becomes part of who we are.

At its heart, the work of American Ancestors is about belonging and perspective. Discovering one's roots provides a sense of identity and connection. Families who explore their history together strengthen bonds and uncover relationships long hidden. Communities benefit as shared history fosters deeper understanding and respect across cultures and experiences.



Educate

Education remains central to the mission of American Ancestors. During the past year, we presented 250 programs, engaging 34,618 live attendees through lectures, conferences, workshops, and public programs. Thousands more participated through watching archived lectures, utilizing online learning materials, and downloading research templates and other resources.

Our commitment to genealogy education for young learners continues to grow. Student field trips to the Family Heritage Experience introduced new audiences to the excitement of genealogical discovery. Professional development workshops helped teachers incorporate genealogy into classroom instruction and connect family history to broader themes in American history.

Since launching our genealogy curriculum in fall 2022, the program has been downloaded more than 1,800 times across all fifty states, and we have trained more than 175 teachers nationwide.

The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center continued to expand its impact through preservation, scholarship, and public programming. During the year, the JHC was honored to host Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey's annual celebration of Jewish American Heritage Month. The event brought together community leaders to explore archival materials documenting Jewish contributions to the civic life of the Commonwealth.

Our publishing program also had a productive year, releasing thirteen new books and continuing publication of our scholarly journals, including *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* and *Mayflower Descendant*. These publications remain essential resources for genealogists and historians around the world.



Inspire

American Ancestors continues to inspire new audiences through dynamic public programming that connects family history to broader cultural and historical conversations.

Our American Inspiration author series remains one of the most successful public programs in our history. Since launching in 2019, more than 192,000 people have joined conversations with over 300 distinguished authors, including Nathaniel Philbrick, Annette Gordon-Reed, Stacy Schiff, Scott Simon, Margaret Atwood, Julie Satow, Gail Collins, and Ken Burns.

During fiscal year 2025 alone, the series attracted more than 13,000 live attendees, with thousands more viewing programs online.

Our Art & Architecture lecture series also reached wide audiences through beautifully illustrated programs exploring art, design, and cultural history. These lectures help audiences understand how the built environment, artistic traditions, and historical landscapes intersect with the lives of families and communities across generations.

Connect

At the heart of American Ancestors is our extraordinary staff of genealogists, historians, and archivists—professionals widely recognized as among the most accomplished in the field.

Their expertise spans DNA analysis, African American and Native American genealogy, Jewish family history, and immigration research across Europe and North America.

This past year, our researchers conducted more than 1,120 consultations, helping members overcome research challenges, discover new sources, and develop effective research strategies.

Researchers also continued to work onsite in the Brim-DeForest Library, one of the nation's most important collections for genealogical scholarship and a cornerstone of our institutional mission.



Heritage Tours offer another powerful way to engage with family history. These immersive travel programs combine historical learning with exploration of the landscapes where our ancestors lived. In fiscal year 2025, we offered four sold-out tours to Italy, Germany, England, and Wales. The Christmas program at Weston Park in Shropshire proved so popular that it was offered twice.

As we reflect on the past year, we do so with deep gratitude and confidence in the future.

The strength of our mission and the confidence of those who believe in it were reflected in a record year of philanthropic support. In fiscal year 2025, supporters committed more than \$16.5 million to advance the work of American Ancestors.

These resources ensure that we can continue to preserve historical records, expand access to family history, and help people everywhere discover the stories that connect them to the past.

Family history reminds us that the past is never as distant as it seems.

It lives in our families, in our communities, and in the records we preserve together.

When we recover those stories, we do more than study history. We strengthen identity, deepen understanding, and illuminate the shared human experience that binds us all.

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan J. Woods
President & CEO



Get Connected. Be Inspired.

American Ancestors is a national center for family history, heritage & culture based in Boston, Massachusetts, that has been setting the gold standard for family history research since its founding in 1845. American Ancestors is the global brand of New England Historic Genealogical Society, America's oldest and largest genealogical society. American Ancestors serves more than 400,000 members and online subscribers engaged in family history nationally and around the world through its website [AmericanAncestors.org](https://www.AmericanAncestors.org) with one of the world's largest online collections of free family history resources, scholarship, educational programming and events, and more than ten billion names in its databases.

Located in Boston's Back Bay, American Ancestors' headquarters houses world-class spaces and resources dedicated to advancing family history, including the Brim-DeForest Library, the Family Heritage Experience, the R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, the Brue Family Learning Center, 10 Million Names, and the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center. American Ancestors also maintains a publishing division that produces original genealogical research, scholarship, and educational materials, including the *Register*, the flagship journal of American genealogy since 1847, and *American Ancestors*, its award-winning magazine.

With a mission to advance the study of family history in America and beyond, we educate, inspire, and connect people through our scholarship, collections, and expertise. We strive to connect with our members and the public in personally meaningful ways, serving as respected expert genealogists and historians who care deeply about helping people.

National Center for Family History, Heritage & Culture

Named by *USA Today* as a top 10 world destination for family history, all are invited to visit our eight-story headquarters, where the Brim-DeForest Library, R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center, and Archives are home to the largest collection of original family history research materials in the country. Our growing collection dates from the 14th century to the present and spans North America, Europe, and beyond. It includes more than 28 million diaries, letters, photographs, and other manuscripts, and more than 200,000 books and microforms.

Family Heritage Experience

In 2025, American Ancestors launched the Family Heritage Experience, an interactive, state-of-the-art exhibition that introduces visitors to the joy of family history research as well as learning how to trace your ancestry. Boston's newest historical attraction is located at 97 Newbury Street in the historic Back Bay neighborhood. The experience leverages items from our collections to build curiosity and stir interest in the kind of questions most people have about their family tree. The FHE is a welcoming, visually exciting, and intellectually engaging introduction for visitors on their journey to other collections and spaces in our building.

Visitors will perceive the historical significance and contemporary relevance that is the broader story of American Ancestors. Throughout the floors of our building, visitors will encounter the collection in specific, sometimes unexpected places, each encounter reinforcing American Ancestors as a vibrant, thoughtful, and inclusive institution.



Expert staff

Our researchers and genealogists are among the most respected and advanced in the profession. Ask a Genealogist, our free online chat service, allows family historians to ask short research or history questions; other services include expert assessments and research-for-hire projects. With research specialties including DNA and genetics, early American, New England, New York, Irish, English, Italian, Scottish, Atlantic and French Canadian, African American, Native American, Chinese, Jewish genealogy, and more, our expert staff can assist family historians by providing research advice in person, over the phone, or in writing. We can also conduct research on behalf of family historians, providing authoritative, documented research reports and family tree charts.

Databases

AmericanAncestors.org provides access to more than 10 billion names that span the United States, the British Isles, continental Europe, and beyond. The site features an extensive online collection of early American genealogical records, the largest searchable collection of published genealogical research journals and magazines, the only online source for records from Boston's Catholic Archdiocese, and 10 Million Names, which is dedicated to recovering the names of the estimated 10 million men, women, and children of African descent who were enslaved in pre- and post-colonial America between the 1500s and 1865.



Education opportunities

Family history research is, at its core, a pursuit of endless learning—encountering unfamiliar places, languages, and times; uncovering long forgotten family stories; and meeting the thousands of ancestors who came before you. We provide exclusive, in-depth learning opportunities online and in person, including more than 250 annual lectures, seminars, intensive research programs, Heritage Tours, American Inspiration book talks, and special events designed to benefit family history researchers of all levels and heritage and cultural enthusiasts. Through guided research tours to repositories around the world, we help you maximize your results and take your family tree to new heights.

Original scholarship

We produce significant original research and publications in genealogy, including the longest continually published academic journal in the field, the quarterly *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*. We also publish the quarterly *American Ancestors* magazine, the *Vita Brevis* blog, *The Weekly Genealogist* email newsletter, and up to twenty print publications per year. These books include study project compilations like Robert Charles Anderson's *Great Migration to New England* series, research handbooks like the *Genealogist's Handbook for Irish Research*, Pilgrim researcher Sue Allan's popular books, and many other titles of special interest to seasoned genealogists and novice family historians alike.

From its inception, American Ancestors has sought to produce and share the very best in genealogical research. From scholarly articles to introductory research guides, our publications have appealed to and assisted researchers of all levels. In the early years our interest was solely on New England, but over the past several decades we have expanded our focus well beyond the region's borders. Today our scholarship, old and new, is offered in an unprecedented variety of accessible formats.



Senior Leadership Team



Ryan J. Woods President & Chief Executive Officer

An educator and historian, Ryan J. Woods is President & Chief Executive Officer of American Ancestors. For more than two decades, he has dedicated his professional life to developing experiences to educate, inspire, and connect people through the exploration of history, heritage, and culture.

Since joining the American Ancestors staff in 2007, he has played a key role in bringing the enduring power and promise of family history to people across the country and around the globe. He was the lead creator of AmericanAncestors.org. By fostering important collaborations with commercial and nonprofit partners, he recruited more than 1 billion searchable records to American Ancestors. He also led the collaborative effort to establish our Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center. Currently, Ryan is focused on record access, partnerships, business planning for capital expansion, the creation of a national visitor destination experience, and the launch of 10 Million Names.

Ryan serves in leadership roles for several nonprofit organizations including as chairman of the Committee on Heraldry; appointed commissioner of the Special Commission for the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; advisory board member for the 250th Anniversary of the Boston Tea Party; Secretary-General of the 36th International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences; member of the Committee on Pretensions of the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Connecticut; Deputy Governor of the Society of Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; partner representative on the Mayor of Boston's Green Ribbon Commission; and past-President of the Boston University School of Education Alumni Association. Ryan is also an active Mason, belonging to the Lodge of Saint Andrew, where he serves as an appointed officer.

He is a member of the Order of Saint John, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the Mayflower Society, the Sons of the Revolution, the Saint Nicholas Society of New York City, and the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society.

In 2022, Ryan was elected an Honorary Life Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society. He also was honored by the New England Society in the City of New York (founded 1805), with the Townsend Award "in recognition of outstanding achievement representing the finest attributes of the New England character." Prior to joining American Ancestors, he held several positions at other cultural and historical institutions, including the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). During his tenure with NARA, he received the Archivist of the United States' Award for Outstanding Public Service.

A dedicated researcher, Ryan has authored pedagogical articles about the use of historical biographies to teach character and ethics and contributed genealogical articles and several book forewords for historical and genealogical publications. Born in Houston, Texas, and raised along Lake Champlain in Vermont, Ryan attended Boston University earning undergraduate and graduate degrees in history education.



Bruce Bernier Chief Financial Officer

Bruce Bernier is responsible for the areas of finance, human resources, information technology, and facilities. Bruce is focused on the well-being of American Ancestors and serves as a resource to its management team and employees. Bruce has served in a senior capacity at Massachusetts and New England-based not-for-profits for over 20 years. He earned his BS at the University of Vermont and MBA at Northeastern University.



Lindsay Fulton Chief Research Officer

Lindsay Fulton is a nationally recognized professional genealogist and lecturer who joined American Ancestors in 2012. She leads the Research, Library & Archives, and Database teams and oversees 10 Million Names. She was featured in the Emmy-winning program *Finding Your Roots: The Seedlings* (a web series inspired by the PBS series *Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.*), as well as another popular PBS series *Samantha Brown's Places to Love*. She holds a BA from Merrimack College and an MA from the University of Massachusetts Boston.



Dorothy Kauffman Chief Advancement Officer

Dorothy Kauffman brings an exceptional breadth of experience in advancement, nonprofit leadership, and mission-driven organizations. She served as executive director and chief advancement officer in a wide range of nonprofits including the Royal Academy of Arts and the Jerusalem Foundation. She previously worked in classical music at the media giant Bertelsmann; as a producer and on-air personality at WQXR, a premier classical music station; and at RosettaBooks, a pioneer in digital publishing. She holds a BA from Barnard College, an MS in journalism from Columbia University, and an MBA in international marketing from Fordham University.



Rachel King Executive Director, Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center

Rachel King leads the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center and oversees the JHC's work to preserve, illuminate, and connect people to Jewish history and heritage through its archives, programming, community relations and partnerships, and fellowships. She brings deep experience in communications, fundraising, strategic planning, and operations to advance the JHC mission. Rachel is a graduate of Brown University and has an MA from Columbia University.



Ginevra Morse Chief Learning & Interpretation Officer

Ginevra Morse is responsible for genealogical programming, heritage & cultural programming, publications, and youth education. She joined the team in 2010 and developed the American Ancestors online learning center and currently oversees all education programs, including research tours and programs, seminars, workshops, online programs, conferences, group visits, offsite lectures, youth education, and community events. Ginevra holds a BA in anthropology from McGill University in Montréal.



Don Reagan Chief Business Development & Marketing Officer

Don Reagan is responsible for analytics, communications, digital strategy, marketing, and member services activities that drive scalable financial growth and expand membership for American Ancestors. Don earned his BS and MBA from Clarkson University where his focus was business and technology management. Don also earned a BA in history from Clarkson.



D. Brenton Simons OBE Chief Stewardship Officer & President Emeritus

Author of the award-winning *Witches, Rakes, and Rogues* and other books, Brenton Simons is the former President and CEO of American Ancestors, a position he held since 2005. In 2024, he stepped into his new role of President Emeritus and Chief Stewardship Officer to provide strategic and tactical assistance for donor relations, content initiatives, and partnership relationships in support of annual budgets and strategic plans. Brenton has an ME in education and a BS in communications from Boston University. In 2023, he was awarded an OBE by HM King Charles III for services to Anglo-American history.

Officers, 2026–2027



David Martin Trebing Chair

Director of External Affairs for the global commercial vehicle maker Daimler Truck, having previously served in a variety of executive positions at Chrysler Corporation, DaimlerChrysler Corporation, and Daimler AG for almost 40 years. Mr. Trebing was the 37th Governor General of the General Society of Colonial Wars, serving from 2016 to 2019. He is also a member of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, the Society of the Cincinnati in New Hampshire, La Société des Filles du roi et soldats du Carignan, and other organizations. In addition, he is a member of the Church Club of New York, the Pilgrims of the United States, and is a Commander in the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem. He is currently a member of the Board of Directors of the American Independence Museum in Exeter, NH, the James Monroe Memorial Foundation, and serves on the advisory board of Enslaved.org. Previous nonprofit board positions include the Michigan State University Development Fund, the Detroit Historical Society, the Cultural Development Corporation, the Meadow Brook Theater and Festival, and the Historical Society of Michigan. He is a member of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations. Education: Wake Forest and Michigan State Universities. American Ancestors: member since 2016; member of the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving; Benefactor Member.



M. David Sherrill Vice Chair

Managing Director, Senior Portfolio Management Director, Private Wealth Management at Morgan Stanley; President, MD Sherrill Foundation; former Governor, Society of Colonial Wars (NY); former Treasurer, New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; member, Society of the Cincinnati; former Board member and Treasurer of the NYGB. Former board member of the California Jazz Conservatory and jazz pianist; member of several other historic and hereditary societies; and champion backgammon player. Author, *The American Ancestry of Edward Mason Knight*; *The American Ancestry of Julia Hutchinson*; *The American Ancestry of Helen Christina Smith*; *The Ancestry of Mary Alice Hoyt, From Hoyt to Hoyt*; *Dice, Cubes & Gentlemen: The History of Backgammon at the Union Club and Elsewhere*; and *The American Ancestry of Albert Wesley Ferren*. Education: B.S. in mathematics, University of California, Berkeley; CFA, CMT. Spouse: Mary Alice Sherrill. American Ancestors: member since 1999; current Vice Chair, past Trustee, Councilor, Treasurer, and Chair, Finance Committee; past member, Executive, Investment, Audit, and Nominating Committees; member, the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving; Life Benefactor.



John E. Corcoran Second Vice Chair

Founder and past CEO of Trinity Life Sciences, a global life sciences advisory firm. Previously, founder and board member of Shyft Analytics, a provider of cloud-based analytics solutions for the pharmaceutical industry. John is the founder and chairman of Odyl, LLC, a technology platform developing AI-based solutions for the publishing industry focused on book discovery. John's board memberships include Catholic Leadership Institute, Concussion Legacy Foundation, iCatholic Media (chair), Catholic University (trustee), Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary, Saint John's Seminary, and Mount Auburn Cemetery (trustee). John received an AB from Harvard College, an MA from Northeastern University, and a master's degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. John is married to Julie (Schneider) Corcoran. American Ancestors: member since 1995; Individual Member; and member of the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving.

Gerard A. Halpin III Treasurer



Forty-year career in international finance; retired President and Chief Executive Officer of Siemens Capital Company LLC. Education: BA from The College of the Holy Cross; MBA from the University of Virginia; Certificates in Genealogical Research from Boston University and American Genealogical Studies from the National Genealogical Society. Continuing genealogical education courses from American Ancestors, Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, and Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. Genealogical interests include Colonial and early America, New France and early Canada and Irish genealogy. Spouse: MaryLee Halpin. American Ancestors: member since 2013; past Councilor and Trustee; Life Benefactor; and member of the Charles Ewer Society of Lifetime Giving.

Eric N. Ward Secretary



Executive Vice President and Global General Counsel of Natixis Investment Managers, Paris and Boston. Previously he was an associate of Linklaters law firm in Paris and London, and Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP in New York City, specializing in mergers and acquisitions and securities transactions. He was a Legal Officer at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the first American to hold such a position. Eric is an active member of the bar of the State of New York; treasurer and a trustee of the Association of Institutional Investors; member, Society of Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Holland Society of New York; William Henry Harrison Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution; French Society of the SAR; Society of Indiana Pioneers; Middlesex County Beekeepers Association; member of the Council of the Massachusetts Audubon Society; Archives Advisory Group of the Boston Symphony Orchestra; and Trustee Emeritus of the French Library in Boston. Education: BA, history and French, DePauw University; JD, Indiana University School of Law. Spouse: Sarah Rainwater Ward. American Ancestors: member since 2009; Life Member; Trustee; member, Executive and Investment Committees; member, Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving and Henry Bond Society.

Mark Kimball Nichols Corresponding Secretary



Managing Director, Founder and Principal of Global Capital Advisors LLC. He was previously Managing Director, Debt Capital Markets, at Bank of America Securities. Mark is a Proprietor and Life Member of the Boston Athenæum and sits on their Finance committee. He has served on the Advisory Board of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, and the Governing Board of the Unitarian Church of Barnstable ("UCB"); He is Chair of UCB's Investment Committee, and serves on its Finance Committee. Mark is a Life Member of the Bostonian Society and has served as a Council Member of Mount Auburn Cemetery. Mark is a member of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, the Mayflower Society, and the Jamestowne Society. Education: BA, Dickinson College; MA and MALD, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. American Ancestors: member since 2008; Life Member; former Councilor and current Trustee; member of the Executive, Nominating, and Investment Committees; and is a member of the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving.

Chairs of the Board, 1845–present*

2021– David Martin Trebing
2017–2021 Nancy Sands Maulsby
2012–2017 David Henderson
 Burnham
2008–2012 Eric Baker Schultz
2002–2008 David Watson Kruger
1996–2002 John Godfrey Lowell
 Cabot
1991–1996 William Morgan Fowler, Jr.
1987–1991 Theodore Chase

1982–1987 Arthur A. Dunn
1977–1982 Rodney Armstrong
1974–1977 Richard Brigham Johnson
1971–1974 Robert Churchill Vose, Jr.
1963–1971 Walter Muir Whitehill
1961–1963 Charles Moorfield Storey
1954–1961 Thomas Temple Pond
1948–1954 Walter Merriam Pratt
1942–1948 Frederic Alonzo Turner
1936–1941 Frederick Silsbee Whitwell
1922–1936 John Carroll Chase
1901–1921 James Phinney Baxter
1899–1900 Edward Griffin Porter

1892–1898 William Claflin
1887–1892 Abner Cheney Goodell
1868–1886 Marshall Pinckney Wilder
1866–1867 John Albion Andrew
1861–1866 Winslow Lewis
1859–1861 Almon Danforth Hodges
1858–1859 Samuel Gardner Drake
1853–1858 William Whiting
1850–1853 Joseph Barlow Felt
1845–1850 Charles Ewer

*Prior to 2006, the Chair of the Board was titled "President."

Council of the Corporation, 2026–2027

Officers

David M. Trebing **Chair**
M. David Sherrill **Vice Chair**
John E. Corcoran **Second Vice Chair**
Gerard A. Halpin III **Treasurer**
Eric N. Ward **Secretary**
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In the News

American Ancestors and its signature initiatives — including the Family Heritage Experience and 10 Million Names — generated strong national and regional media visibility throughout FY25, with coverage spanning top-tier print, broadcast, digital, travel, and cultural outlets. Media relations efforts combined expert commentary, major program launches, public history initiatives, and national thought leadership to reach broad and diverse audiences.

Together, these placements delivered strong national and regional visibility across print, digital, and broadcast channels, elevating awareness of American Ancestors' leadership in genealogy, historical documentation, and public-facing heritage initiatives.

10/11/24 *Bay to Bay News* reported on the addition of the *Daughters of the American Revolution Patriots of Color* database to the 10 Million Names platform, highlighting this collaborative effort to expand access to more than 6,500 records of Revolutionary War Patriots of African, Native American, Iberian, Latin American, and multiracial descent. This story underscored American Ancestors' role in broadening public access to under-represented historical data and supporting more inclusive genealogy research.

10/18/24 *AARP* included American Ancestors among "5 Genealogy Centers That Make It Easy to Research Family History," highlighting it as a premier destination where travelers can pair exploration of their roots with broader genealogy research. The piece positioned genealogical centers as compelling vacation experiences for history-minded visitors and underscored interest in immersive family history travel.

11/5/24 National online news outlet *Reckon* focused on inequality and social change, featuring 10 Million Names Director of Research Cynthia Evans in a major story on evolving interpretations of former slave plantations and reparative historical work. Coverage highlighted the project's mission to restore the names and histories of enslaved individuals and expand public access to genealogical resources.

11/14/24 *Yankee Magazine* quoted Chief Genealogist David Allen Lambert in a feature exploring hidden histories and early New England culture, reinforcing American Ancestors' role as a trusted authority in regional and historical research.

1/4/25 A national feature story in *National Geographic* highlighted the 10 Million Names project and its use of AI-supported research to help recover and document the identities of enslaved Americans whose names were lost to history, reaching an estimated 5.4 million unique visitors.



From left to right: Gwill York, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Brandon Terry, and Kendra Field gathered in the Family Heritage Experience to discuss Dr. Gates's feature article on Pope Leo's ancestry in *The New York Times Magazine* and the exhibit on the same topic.

1/24/25 *On Granny's Trail*, a genealogy focused blog, spotlighted the 10 Million Names project, introducing its mission and public-access research tools to a family history and heritage audience.

3/8/25 A nationwide press release announcing the opening of the Family Heritage Experience generated 52 media placements with a combined estimated audience reach of 198,528,053. Coverage spanned national and regional travel, tourism, culture, lifestyle, history, and genealogy outlets, establishing broad advance awareness.

4/10/25 *The Boston Globe* travel section featured the Family Heritage Experience with prominent placement and lead photography, delivering high-visibility regional and national travel audience exposure.

Spring 2025 Widespread national and regional pickup of the Family Heritage Experience opening across major media platforms and broadcast affiliate networks, including placements with Boston.com, MSN.com, *AARP Magazine*, *Reunions Magazine*, *The Bay State Banner*, *The Boston Sun*, *MetroWest Daily News*, *Boston Real Estate Times*, and the *USA Today/Wicked Local* network, along with more than 30 television network affiliate news sites nationwide.

5/1/25 CEO Ryan Woods is featured on the cover of the May issue of *MyBoston Magazine*, a hyperlocal magazine that reaches 5,000 residents in Back Bay and Beacon Hill. The 1,200 word-feature story is about the launch of the new Family Heritage Experience.

6/11/25 *St. Thomas Source* — Regional Caribbean news outlet coverage featured CFVI's partnership with the 10 Million Names project for a public discussion on identity, ancestry, and historical recovery, reaching nearly 87,000 unique visitors.

6/12/25 *Virgin Islands Daily News* — Advance coverage promoted a co-hosted virtual conversation on African American family history and genealogy with Marc Morial, connected to the 10 Million Names initiative, reaching more than 43,000 unique visitors.

6/15/25 *The New York Times Magazine* published the feature article, "Finding the Pope's Roots," by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., in its Sunday edition, reaching an estimated 1.6 million readers, contributing major national visibility for advanced genealogical research and historical scholarship connected to the institution's field.

7/2/25 WGBH's *The Culture Show* aired a broadcast feature on the Family Heritage Experience, highlighting its impact for regional and public media audiences.

8/1/25 *The Bay State Banner* ran a community spotlight feature on the Family Heritage Experience, expanding reach within key regional audiences.

8/12/25 *Family Tree Magazine* published a photo feature on the Family Heritage Experience, reaching a dedicated national genealogy readership.

8/14/25 Regional influencer outlet Make Boston Home published feature coverage introducing the Family Heritage Experience to visitor and relocation-focused audiences.

8/29/25 ABC affiliate WCVB Channel 5 featured the Family Heritage Experience in "New interactive Boston exhibit kickstarts journey to uncover family history." The segment highlighted the Family Heritage Experience's interactive approach to genealogy discovery and its value for individuals and families on their research journey. With an estimated 3,998,000 unique visitors, the placement delivered high-impact visibility and exposure in Greater Boston.



The launch of the Family Heritage Experience in April generated widespread media coverage.

Research Journey



Toby Webb

Morrison "Toby" Webb is a retired EVP, External Affairs and Corporate Communications for Bell Atlantic (now Verizon) and past General Counsel, NYNEX and New England Telephone. He is a Life Benefactor, Councilor, and past Trustee. He resides in Falmouth, Maine.

I first visited the library now known as the Brim-DeForest Library in 1991, and my personal research goal has always been to identify each of my immigrant ancestors and to trace my way back to their immigration stories. After 30-plus years, that has proven to be more than 60 lines, with folks arriving as New England Puritans, Pennsylvania Quakers, Germans, and Scots-Irish headed to the Shenandoah Valley; Cavalier enslavers in Tidewater, Virginia, and Maryland; even a Spanish-born lawyer from Peru.

At each step in my research journey, as I have needed to learn about new record sets or struggled to differentiate among same-named neighbors, American Ancestors has offered access to important databases and other resources. Print resources from the stacks got me going; the internet tools available on the premises have been invaluable. More important, the staff at Newbury Street love to ponder research problems and to offer solutions.

I try to make the Salt Lake City research tour every year because it offers, not just a week of uninterrupted research time, but opportunities to discuss my work with the professional genealogists from American Ancestors who lead the tour. Formal and informal consultations move my research along. A chance "Have you looked at ...?" comment at dinner one night led to the biggest breakthrough in my work so far. Our guides also are current on the new technologies being used in research; Melanie McComb and David Lambert walked me through an analysis of confusing DNA results and steered me away from misidentifying a misassigned paternity. Rhonda McClure showed me the value of the newly available Full Text tool in finding unindexed mentions of my ancestors in local records.

With almost five dozen chapters written, the support I am getting now is in making certain that the stories I have told are clear and adequately documented. American Ancestors' heritage of accurate, scholarly, well-proven publications is in the organization's genes. If I am able to publish my work for my family, it will be a resource they can rely on, because the experts at American Ancestors have been guiding me since I entered the library 35 years ago. ●



Databases

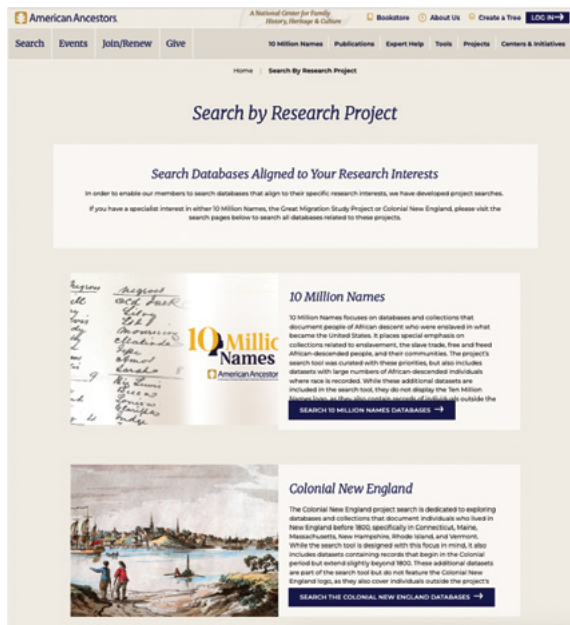
Project Search launched

Members can now access our 10 Million Names, Great Migration, and Colonial New England databases through a new “Search by Project” feature on AmericanAncestors.org. Choose “Search by Project” from the main search menu. (These collections are also available on the right-hand side of the “Search All Databases” page.)

- 10 Million Names databases contain collections related to enslavement, the slave trade, and free and freed African-descended people and their communities. These databases include datasets with large numbers of African-descended individuals.
- The Great Migration Study Project databases include comprehensive genealogical and biographical accounts of the 20,000 English men, women, and children who settled in New England between 1620 and 1640.
- The Colonial New England project search is dedicated to exploring databases and collections that document individuals who lived in New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont) before 1800.

Top 10 Databases

1. *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*
2. Massachusetts Vital Records, 1620-1850
3. *The American Genealogist*
4. Essex County, MA Probate File Papers, 1638-1881
5. Massachusetts Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records
6. Middlesex County, MA Probate File Papers, 1648-1871
7. *Mayflower Descendant*
8. Massachusetts: Vital Records 1841-1910
9. General Society of Mayflower Descendants Membership Records
10. Suffolk County, MA Probate File Papers



New and updated databases

- Early Vermont Settlers, 1700–1784
- Boston Tea Party Biographies
- Portsmouth, NH: School Records, 1846–1958
- Daughters of the American Revolution: Patriots of Color, 1712–1888
- Godfrey Memorial Library: Middletown, CT Manumissions, 1774–1823
- Biographical Entries of People of African Descent (New Bedford & Dartmouth, MA-area towns)
- *Mayflower Descendant* (Volumes 71 & 72)
- Massachusetts Society of Colonial Wars Membership Applications, 1560–1970
- *Vermont Genealogy*, Volume 22 (2017)
- *American Ancestors* magazine, Volume 24
- Suffolk County, MA Probate File Papers
- Newport, RI: Records of Enslaved, Free, and Manumitted People of Color
- *The New Hampshire Genealogical Record*
- North America: Records of Enslaved People from Plantations and Estates, 1765–1890

Vita Brevis

During the past year, *Vita Brevis* recorded over 175,000 page views and explored a wide range of topics, from German surname research tools to complicated naturalizations and personal family narratives. Posts traced the ancestry of public figures such as Pope Leo XIV and the Anoa'i, while others centered on individuals, overlooked communities, and moments of historical rediscovery.

Vita Brevis is more than a traditional blog; it is a unique, searchable repository of genealogical research and storytelling. Rather than simply presenting conclusions, authors share their full research journey: laying out their questions, assumptions, frustrations, and breakthroughs. *Vita Brevis* invites readers into the work itself, fostering a sense of connection and community around family history.

This year's top-performing posts revealed a clear pattern. Articles that connected genealogical research to recognizable public figures generated the highest engagement, demonstrating that grounding our expert scholarship in familiar names and cultural touchstones is an effective way to reach and draw new audiences into genealogy.

At the same time, other popular posts spanned German origin, Italian heritage, and individual family lines. Narrative-driven pieces further underscored the power of emotionally resonant storytelling—particularly stories of identity, migration, and rediscovery. In pairing rigorous research with compelling narratives, *Vita Brevis* continues to deepen our readers' connection to family history.



Top 5 *Vita Brevis* posts

1. The Pope's French-Canadian Cousins
2. The Anoa'i Family: Four Generations of Wrestling Greatness
3. Tools for German Origins
4. 150 Years Later, a Family Bible Comes Home
5. Between the Lines

◆ Brim-DeForest Library

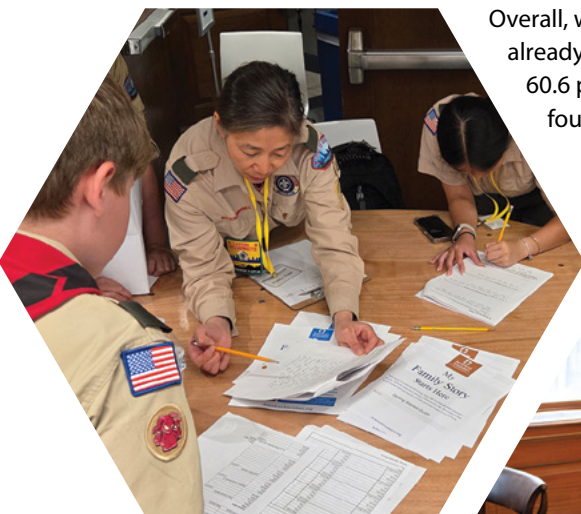
In fiscal year 2025, we reopened the library, now named the Brim-DeForest Library, after nearly two years of being closed for renovations. After our grand reopening in April 2025, we welcomed 574 visitors with an average of 6.23 visitors per day.

Our expert reference desk staff answered 442 reference questions, averaging 4.8 questions a day. Library patrons consulted 2,079 books with an average of 22.6 books viewed per day. Library staff helped fulfill photocopy requests for members and non-members and responded to virtual chats, ensuring continued access to guidance and resources for patrons wherever they were located.

The library also hosted many group visits and special event groups after our reopening which included:

- Monthly tours of the Brim-DeForest Library since May 2025
- Stow Council on Aging group visit
- Scout youth education program
- RiverMead group visit
- Come Home to New England
- Youth education teacher workshop
- August Adventures, a one-day free access program sponsored by the Highland Foundation

Overall, we had a successful reopening and are already seeing higher visitor counts, with a 60.6 percent increase in visitation in the first four months of the new fiscal year.



Top five collections used in FY2025

1. Local History Books (The Brim-DeForest Library)
2. Revolutionary War Manuscripts (R. Stanton Avery Special Collections)
3. Jewish Community Relations Council, Boston Massachusetts (Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center)
4. Young Men's Hebrew Association and Hecht House, Dorchester, Massachusetts (Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center)
5. Family and Personal Papers (R. Stanton Avery Special Collections)

*Based on page views

Five largest collections in the Digital Library and Archives, FY2025

1. Combined Jewish Philanthropies, Boston Massachusetts
2. Jewish Community Relations Council, Boston, Massachusetts
3. Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Boston, Massachusetts
4. Rabbinical, Synagogue and Jewish Education Papers
5. Family and Individual Papers (Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center)

*Based on the number of compound objects

Connecting Across Generations



Major Gift Officer Kelse Petersen interviewed Jack B., an Associate Member of American Ancestors since 2018, about legacy, family history, and the Rembrandt Peale portrait of George Washington his mother donated to American Ancestors in 1992. It is now on display in the Brim-DeForest Library.

The “porthole portrait” of George Washington had been in Jack’s family for generations. His great-grandfather, Isaac H. Frothingham, bought it from the artist Rembrandt Peale himself in 1853 for only \$50. Notably the frame cost \$150, a disparity that became something of a family legend.

“My grandfather would complain about the price of the frame,” Jack said with a laugh. It hung in his grandparents’ house on Long Island, NY, then came to his mother’s house in Brookline, MA, in the early 1960s, before being donated to American Ancestors in 1992. Jack’s mother, Anne Frothingham, was downsizing and wanted more people to enjoy it. She went to speak with Ralph J. Crandall, then Executive Director of American Ancestors, and together they discussed the donation.

“It’s wonderful to see the painting on display now,” Jack says. “It’s been professionally cleaned and the frame restored. The painting is like a jewel; it shouldn’t be kept in a box for only one person to enjoy. My mother wanted more people to enjoy it and donating it to American Ancestors felt like the right way to share it in my grandfather’s honor.”

Jack’s mother’s love of genealogy came from her love for her father, whom Jack describes as a wonderful character. “My Grandfather Frothingham used to buy a bottle of olives and we would sit on a park bench and chat for hours, solving the problems of the world. He was, as I used to say, ‘bald as a cue ball.’ It was his influence that inspired my mother to become a member of American Ancestors. She wanted to honor his memory through that connection.”

For Jack, carrying that connection forward across generations is deeply meaningful. Through the family research of his nephew, Jason, the family learned that five relatives participated in the Boston Tea Party, their line traces back to the *Mayflower*, and another branch descends from the designer of the Goddard Buggy. “Knowing about your past and taking pride in what your ancestors have done is important,” Jack says. “I feel very fortunate to know as much as I do. To me, this is about keeping the past in the present, and that is very important to me and my family.”

Jack emphasizes the importance of an organization like American Ancestors. “It provides an incredible opportunity for people to learn about their past. Having these resources available is invaluable—it’s like a door that opens many more doors and windows.”

The importance of learning about one’s past, Jack believes, cannot be overstated. “With the technology and resources American Ancestors makes available, that discovery is now possible for so many more people. That’s why I support this organization. It’s a remarkable resource, and contributions help that process continue for future generations.”

Jack B. Keeping the Past in the Present

Jack B. (who requested we only use his first name) is a member of the Henry Bond Society and an Associate Member of American Ancestors. He resides in Massachusetts.



Rembrandt Peale’s *Porthole Portrait of George Washington* (1853) hangs prominently in our Brim-DeForest Library.

Above: Jack (center) his son John (right), and Kelsey Petersen (left) visit the Family Heritage Center ribbon cutting ceremony on April 24, 2025.



Revolutionary Roots

American Ancestors commemorates the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution

The 250th anniversary of the American Revolution offers American Ancestors—and the country—a renewed opportunity to remember the events of 1775 to 1783, while also exploring broader themes that shaped the Revolution and continue to resonate today. Over the next several years, American Ancestors will host special events, publish scholarly publications and searchable databases, conserve and make accessible manuscripts from the Revolution, and launch interactive exhibits. To stay up to date with these initiatives and more, visit RevolutionaryRoots.AmericanAncestors.org.

Website

In November 2025, American Ancestors launched its “Revolutionary Roots” website. The site brings together guides, articles, how-to videos, databases, blog posts, and other resources for researching Patriot and Loyalist ancestors, applying to lineage societies, and delving more deeply into the stories of the Revolution through the holdings of the R. Stanton Avery Special Collections. The website also contains a dedicated calendar that highlights upcoming events and programs, and a catalog of past Revolutionary War–themed events. Resources will continue to be added to this site over the next several years, through the anniversary of the Revolution. Visit RevolutionaryRoots.AmericanAncestors.org to learn more!

Special events & educational programming

From conversations with award-winning historians to special concerts, family history lectures to illustrated talks on Revolution-era decorative arts, walking tours to open houses, American Ancestors has a growing line up of events for all audiences.

Starting in January 2026, American Ancestors began its monthly hybrid lecture series—“Revolution in the Records”—highlighting the contributions and stories of people who participated in the founding of America. Topics include:

- January** Discovering Your Revolutionary Roots
- February** Researching Black Patriots and Loyalists
- March** Researching Women in the American Revolution
- April** From Tyranny to Freedom: Irish Contributions to the American Revolution
- May** Germans in the Revolution: Hessians and Patriots

June From Plimoth to Yorktown, a concert performed by Seven Times Salt

July Drums, Diaries, and Duty: The Roles of Children in Revolutionary America

August Conscience and Conflict: The Quaker Experience in the American Revolution

September Tracing Loyalist Lineages: Sources and Strategies

October Jewish Patriots in the American Revolution

November No Battlefield Service Required: Uncovering the Patriotic Service of Your Ancestors During the American Revolution

December Applying to Revolutionary War Lineage Societies

American Ancestors will also offer walking tours of Revolutionary Boston led by local historians and our experts. The popular American Inspiration series will continue to highlight best-selling authors including Andrew Lawler with *A Perfect Frenzy: A Royal Governor, His Black Allies, and the Crisis That Spurred the American Revolution* (December 2025) and Rick Atkinson with *The Fate of the Day: The War for America, Fort Ticonderoga to Charleston, 1777–1780* (January 2026). The Art & Architecture webinar series will present “Forged in Revolution: The Story of Paul Revere’s Sons of Liberty Bowl” (May 2026) and “Inking History: Charles Schulz’s Peanuts and the American Revolution” (November 2026).

Download Free Research Guides



Exhibits

A new temporary exhibit, *Patriots of Color*, debuted in the Family Heritage Experience at American Ancestors in April 2026 and will remain on display through the end of the year. The exhibit sheds light on the overlooked histories of Black, Native, and multiracial men and women who fought, labored, and led in the struggle for American independence across all thirteen colonies. Through documents, family history artifacts, personal narratives, and digital interactives, the exhibition uncovers the courage and resilience of Patriots whose contributions helped shape a new nation, even as they continued to confront inequality and enslavement.

Bridging past and present, *Patriots of Color* also highlights the voices of descendants who are reclaiming these stories today—connecting revolutionary ideals of freedom and justice to contemporary America.

This exhibit is just one outcome of a groundbreaking initiative undertaken by 10 Million Names in partnership with National Society Daughters of the American Revolution and FamilySearch to build descendency trees for seventy-five Patriots of Color who served during the Revolutionary War.

Revolutionary War–related publications

During the anniversary period, *American Ancestors* magazine will dedicate several issues to a “revolutionary” cover story. The fall 2024 issue was on researching and remembering Revolutionary War Patriots; fall of 2025 focused on Loyalists, the hard winter, and a Black soldier from Massachusetts; and in fall of 2026 the focus will be on the forgotten or overlooked contributions that women, children, people of color, Indigenous peoples, and others made to the American Revolution.

Other volumes commemorating the 250th anniversary, have been published or will be published, including:

- *Portable Genealogist: Researching Veterans of the American Revolution* by Ann G. Lawthers
- *The Loyalists of Massachusetts and The Other Side of the American Revolution* by James Henry Stark, foreword by J. L. Bell
- *Massachusetts Privateers of the Revolution* by Gardner Weld Allen, foreword by Len Travers
- *Rhode Island Town Meeting Records During the American Revolution* by Jolene Roberts Mullen
- *General Jacob Bayley: A Biography* by Carl Anderson III and Meaghan E. H. Siekman
- *Ancestors and Descendants of Rev. Col. John Hancock, Father of Governor John Hancock* by Christopher C. Child



Research initiatives & database development

Research initiatives and new databases on AmericanAncestors.org will help more individuals connect with their revolutionary roots than ever before.

One such database is the Fort Ticonderoga Soldiers Project. Begun by the Fort Ticonderoga Association, the project documents the thousands of individuals who were stationed at Fort Ticonderoga from 1755 to 1783 by combing through primary sources from the 18th century and providing firm documentation of service. This collection is now available on AmericanAncestors.org.

The Daughters of the American Revolution: Patriots of Color, 1712–1888 database debuted on AmericanAncestors.org in 2025. Continuing this work, American Ancestors, in partnership with FamilySearch, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of the American Revolution, and the Society of the First African Families in English America, is creating searchable family trees of known descendants for the approximate 6,000 men of color who served during the American Revolution. We aim to create descent trees for seventy-five Patriots by summer 2026.

Conservation & digitization

Several never-before-digitized Revolutionary-era manuscripts will be conserved and made available on the American Ancestors Digital Library and Archives at Digital.AmericanAncestors.org, including:

- Accounts, bills, and receipts of the British Quartermaster-General and Commissary General
- Hannah Mather Crocker’s unpublished manuscript “Reminiscences & Traditions of Boston”
- “Documents Concerning the Ship Protector, 1779–1780”
- “Wagon Department Papers, 1776–1783”
- “Journal of John Varnum, 1777–1780”
- “Account Books of Aaron Blaney, 1773–1776”

Much of the above work is made possible by a grant by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism.

New Publications

Our Publications team released thirteen new titles during fiscal year 2025.

2025 American Ancestors Books

In Search of Mayflower Pilgrim James Chilton of Canterbury, by Sue Allan

Genealogist's Handbook for Portuguese Research, by Michael J. Hall, Al Viera, Lauren Wake Vasylyev, and Rhonda R. McClure

The Great Migration Directory: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1640—A Concise Compendium, 2nd Edition, by Robert Charles Anderson, FASG

Heraldry of the Howard Cox Family, by Susan Donnelly

Portable Genealogist: Getting Started with U.S. World War I Records, by David Allen Lambert

Portable Genealogist: Getting Started with U.S. World War II Records, by Melanie McComb

Portable Genealogist: Top Tips for Family History Research, by Melanie McComb

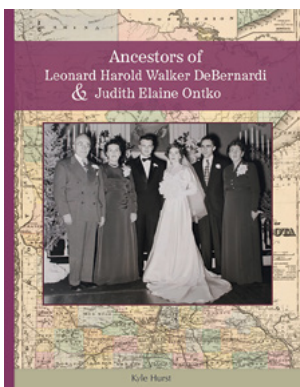
Portable Genealogist: Getting Started with Revolutionary War Records, by Ann G. Lawthers

Portable Genealogist: Getting Started with Newspapers in Family History Research, by Ann G. Lawthers

Portable Genealogist: Getting Started with U.S. War of 1812 Records, by David Allen Lambert

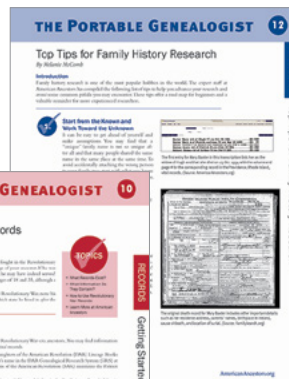
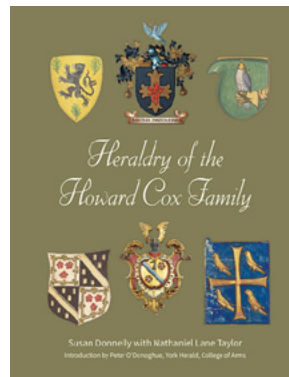
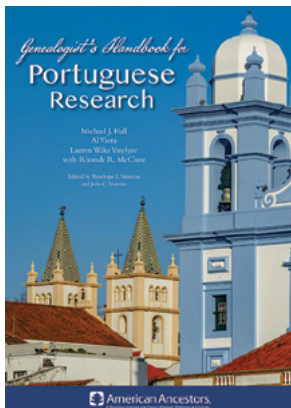
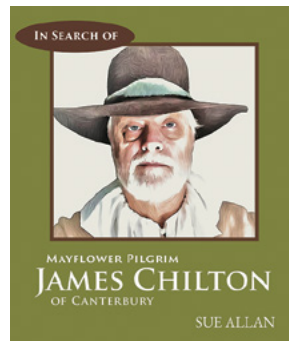
Portable Genealogist: Getting Started with Civil War Veteran Records, by David Allen Lambert

2025 Newbury Street Press Books



The Cabot Family of Jersey, 1500-2000, Volume I, by John G. L. Cabot

Ancestors of Leonard Harold Walker DeBernardi & Judith Elaine Ontko, by Kyle Hurst



Periodicals

In fiscal year 2025 we published four issues of *American Ancestors* magazine, four issues of the *Register*, and two issues of *Mayflower Descendant*.



American Ancestors magazine

The four issues of *American Ancestors* magazine (fall 2024 through summer 2025) published during this fiscal year featured a range of interesting themes and captivating stories. We focused on researching and remembering Revolutionary War patriots, heraldry in America and beyond, an introduction to our Family Heritage Experience, and hunting for genealogical treasure at home. Columns on state research (Pennsylvania, Minnesota, and Massachusetts), genetics, the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center, and our collections offered readers a variety of genealogical and historical topics. Reader-submitted magazine content included letters, brick walls, and photo submissions. We also presented the latest information on American Ancestors member benefits, education programs and tours, special events, our 10 Million Names initiative, youth education, and other news.

The Register

In the four issues of the *Register* in FY2025 we have presented the English origins of Anne (Briggs) (Hutchinson) Hawkes of Charlestown and Lynn, Mass., and her first husband Nicholas Hutchinson; Robert Cutler of Charlestown; William Clarke of Hartford and Haddam, Conn.; James Beard (the husband of widow Martha Beard of Milford, Conn.); Robert Winchell of Dorchester, Mass., and Windsor, Conn.; brothers Anthony, William, and John Tompson of New Haven, Conn.; sisters Joan (Porter) (Chillingworth) Doggett, Susan (Porter) Fiske, Mary (Porter) Dunham, and Rose (Porter) (Waterbury) Garnsey of Mass. and Conn.; and Thomas Carter of Charlestown. We also had articles extending the English ancestries of Thomas Boreman and Samuel Boreman (including a fascinating connection to some of the intelligentsia of the early Tudor court), James Chilton of the *Mayflower*, sisters Ann (Borodell) Denison and Margaret (Borodell) (Shepard) Mitchell, and Richard Masterson. The families of later immigrants Thomas Burnside (Ireland to New Hampshire in the 18th century) and Margaret MacFarlane alias Gilbraith (Scotland to Norwich, Conn., in the 19th century) were also explored. Additionally, we had several articles on families within New England, many with out-migrations across the continental United States (surnames Walker, Rowley, Rouse, White, Moulton, and Dodge). Other articles included family Bible records, the twelfth part of *The Roll of Arms* registered by the Committee on Heraldry, and a tribute to Robert Charles Anderson.

Mayflower Descendant

The year 2025 was our tenth and final year of publishing the *Mayflower Descendant* journal under the editorship of Christopher C. Child. The winter issue contained a tribute to Robert Charles Anderson with his descents from William, Susanna, and Resolved White; updates on Matthew Fuller's origins; the family of Warren Rogers *alias* Sparrow, a Thomas Rogers descendant who changed his name after leaving his first family behind in Cape Cod; and a tale of two John Whites in competing genealogies. The summer issue included continuations of the Rickard and Curtis family; Truro and Wellfleet records; additions to Gary Boyd Roberts's *The Mayflower 500*; new research on James Chilton and his wife in England, Leiden, and Plymouth; additional William White descendants; and three articles that utilize mitochondrial DNA for extending descendants of Peter Brown (at the third generation) and John Alden, Edward Doty, and George Soule in later generations.

◆ Family Heritage Experience



Ernst and Joan Berndt

Joan M. Berndt had a career in Financial Services and Treasury at Merck & Co. Inc. Ernst R. Berndt is a retired Professor of Applied Economics at the MIT Sloan School. Joan is a member of the Council and, along with her husband, a Life Benefactor. Joan and Ernst Berndt reside in Boston, Massachusetts.

When asked to comment on why we provided a donation to name a Records and Research Station kiosk in the Family Heritage Experience, our answer was brief. With its selection of family history questions—such as “what did my grandfather do for a living?”—the Records and Research Station is the foundation of all the work that American Ancestors does.

There are many interactive stations that members and visitors will pass along the way in their family heritage journey, but Records and Research seemed to us to be the place where a newcomer to genealogy will unearth the fundamental clues that will guide him or her on the path to uncovering the richness of their family’s past. Thus equipped, they possess the basic tools to explore and profit from other exhibits in the Family Heritage Experience, or to delve more directly into the vast resources of the Brim-DeForest Library.

In a short period of time, and using easily managed technology, a visitor can gain insight into questions such as ancestry and cultural heritage, prompting them to learn more through engaging with a trusted leader in genealogy and historical research. Family research is surprisingly addictive; it seduces the questioner and makes that person want to learn more.

An added benefit is the readiness of knowledgeable staff to provide assistance in navigating American Ancestor’s collections. It’s a fun and very affordable historical attraction right in the heart of Boston. ◆





Explore!

Take another step into family history by exploring these experiences:

- *Your Name, Your Year:* Unlock interesting information about your name and the year you were born.
- *Family Treasures:* Take a peek into our collection of fascinating objects from the present and the past.
- *What About DNA?:* Find out what a DNA test can, and cannot, reveal about your ancestry.
- *Records and Research:* Explore resources with interesting details about individuals from the past.
- *The Story Station:* Listen to adventures in family history from the people exploring

THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER



Fiscal year 2025 was a success for Education & Programming. Our team developed an engaging calendar of in-person and online events that was popular among our audience. We produced a total of 250 programs—many “programs” representing multiple days, multiple presentations, and multiple hours’ worth of content and attracted 34,618 LIVE attendees. Many thousands more registered for our programs, viewed archived online lectures through our video library and YouTube channel, and utilized our online research guides, templates, and other materials in the online learning center. Below is a listing of our education programs from September 2024 through August 2025. For a full picture of our offerings, review the sections on the American Inspiration series, Heritage Tours, Youth Education, and Special Events in this report.

Programs and Family History Education

September 2024

- ONLINE LECTURE** New Member Orientation
- ONLINE SEMINAR** Expert Strategies for Breaking Down Genealogical Brick Walls, five-week program
- JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER EVENT** Jewish Stories of Nantasket Beach and Ice Cream Social
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Family History Education
- ONLINE LECTURE** Migrations Into and Out of New England
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Introducing American Ancestors
- PRIVATE CONFERENCE** Finding Elusive Ancestors Conferences (6 Lectures)
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Using Mug Books
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Verifying Descent and Applying to Lineage Societies
- PRIVATE WORKSHOP** Revolutionary War Workshop
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Introduction to 10 Million Names
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Introduction to 10 Million Names
- CONFERENCE** International Congress on Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences

“Over the last decade or more, I’ve attended perhaps 30 or more webinars per year. This was the most comprehensive presentation that I’ve ever attended.”

—Participant from English Immigration to the American Colonies





“This was my 3rd tour with American Ancestors in under a year. I will be signing up for future tours!”

—Participant from the Washington, DC, Research Tour

October

ONLINE SEMINAR The 17th-Century Great Migration to New England and Beyond, five-week program

PRIVATE LECTURE Using AI In Family History Research

ONLINE LECTURE Preparing for the Salt Lake City Research Tour

PRIVATE LECTURE Using AI In Family History Research

ONLINE LECTURE New Member Orientation

PRIVATE LECTURE Colonial Migrations to 1770

CONFERENCE Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society Conference

PRIVATE LECTURE Getting Started in Scottish Genealogy

PRIVATE LECTURE Searching Great Migration Databases on AmericanAncestors.org

ONLINE LECTURE The Basics of *Mayflower* Research

PRIVATE LECTURE Mapping Migrations on the Move

PRIVATE LECTURE Introduction to American Ancestors

PRIVATE LECTURE Using AmericanAncestors.org

PRIVATE LECTURE Getting Started in Genealogy

PRIVATE LECTURE Introduction to American Ancestors

ONLINE SEMINAR Researching & Verifying *Mayflower* Ancestry, five-week program

PRIVATE LECTURE Strategies for Tracking Your Ancestors on the Move

November

PRIVATE LECTURE WIKITREE Symposium

PRIVATE LECTURE Great Migration Study Project & Salem Witch Descent

ONLINE LECTURE Westward Migrations 1783–1900

RESEARCH TOUR Salt Lake City Research Tour

ONLINE LECTURE Ten Steps to Writing & Publishing Your Family History

PRIVATE LECTURE Basics of New England Research

PRIVATE LECTURE Basics of Jewish Genealogy

JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER EVENT Torah Arks to Yahrzeit Plaques: Preserving our Sacred Spaces and Community History

CONFERENCE National Council for Social Studies Conference

December

ONLINE SEMINAR Writing and Publishing Your Family History, five-week program

ONLINE RESEARCH WORKSHOP Verifying Your Family Tree

ONLINE LECTURE How to Avoid Common Family History Pitfalls and Myths

January 2025

ONLINE SEMINAR Getting Started in Family History Research, five-week program

ONLINE LECTURE Choosing a DNA Test for Family History Research

PRIVATE LECTURE Applying for Dual Citizenship by Descent

JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER EVENT The Genevieve Geller Wyner Annual Lecture: Catholic and Jewish Communities' Reactions to Antisemitic Violence in Wartime Boston

PRIVATE LECTURE Civil War Pension Records

PRIVATE LECTURE The Great Migration

ONLINE LECTURE Virtual Open House

ONLINE SEMINAR Making Connections: Interpreting DNA Test Results, five-week program



“Exceptional. I’ll certainly be inclined to partake in similar tours in the future.”

—Participant from Connecticut Research Tour

February

- ONLINE LECTURE** New Member Orientation
- ONLINE RESEARCH WORKSHOP** Preserving Your Family History Research: Documents, Bound Volumes & Photographs, five-week program
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Great Migration Resources
- ONLINE LECTURE** Researching Famine Irish Ancestors in Ireland’s Poor Law Unions
- ONLINE SEMINAR** Getting Started in African American Genealogy
- ONLINE SEMINAR** Introducing 10 Million Names
- ONLINE SEMINAR** Federal Land Records
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Introducing 10 Million Names
- ONLINE RESEARCH WORKSHOP** Genealogical Skills Bootcamp
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Using AmericanAncestors.org
- ONLINE SEMINAR** Finding Irish Origins, five-week program

March

- PRIVATE LECTURE** Getting Started in Genealogy
- CONFERENCE** RootsTech
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Introducing 10 Million Names
- ONLINE LECTURE** Friend or Foe: Researching Colonial Ancestors During the American Revolution
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Introduction to 10 Million Names
- JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER EVENT** “Der Shusterman”: A Conversation with Stuart Weitzman
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Researching Women in Archives
- RESEARCH TOUR** Washington, DC, Research Tour

April

- PRIVATE LECTURE** Using the US Federal Census
- PRIVATE SEMINAR** Revolutionary War Research: Tracing Patriot and Loyalist Ancestors, five-week program
- JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER EVENT** “The Body Politic”: Boston Jews, Disability, and US Immigration Policy
- ONLINE LECTURE** New Member Orientation
- RESEARCH GETAWAY** Filling in the Dash: Uncovering Ancestral Stories
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Researching Women in the American Revolution
- ONLINE LECTURE** Best Published Resources for Colonial New England Research
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Getting Started in Genealogy
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Ten Published Resources for New England Research
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Breaking Down Brick Walls in Family History Research
- PRIVATE LECTURE** The ABCs of Using School Records in Family History Research

May

- ONLINE SEMINAR** Researching Colonial New England Ancestors, five-week program
- LIBRARY TOUR** Tour of the Brim-DeForest Library
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Introducing American Ancestors
- ONLINE LECTURE** English Immigration to the American Colonies
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Introducing American Ancestors
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Working in Notarial Records
- RESEARCH CLUB** Roots & Branches: A Research Club for Members
- RESEARCH TOUR** Connecticut Research Tour
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Getting Started in American Jewish Genealogy
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Adopting the Regiment
- PRIVATE LECTURE** Using Tax Records in Family History Research
- ONLINE LECTURE** American Ancestors Virtual Open House

June

ONLINE SEMINAR 17th-Century English Research

PRIVATE LECTURE Dual Citizenship

ONLINE LECTURE Best Published Resources for German Research in America

ONLINE LECTURE 10 Million Names: A Conversation About African American Family History and Healing

LIBRARY TOUR Tour of the Brim-DeForest Library

PRIVATE LECTURE Researching Your Ancestor's Medical Records

PRIVATE LECTURE Getting Started in Family History Research

RESEARCH CLUB Roots & Branches: A Research Club for Members

July

ONLINE SEMINAR Researching German Ancestors, five-week program

ONLINE LECTURE New Member Orientation

ONLINE LECTURE On the Ground: Top Repositories for Researching Upstate New York

LIBRARY TOUR Tour of the Brim-DeForest Library

OPEN HOUSE Open Newbury

RESEARCH TOUR Come Home to New England

PRIVATE LECTURE Getting Started in Family History Research

RESEARCH CLUB Roots & Branches: A Research Club for Members

PRIVATE LECTURE Rockbound Roots Conference in St. John's, Newfoundland

JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER EVENT Strangers and Sojourners: The Jews of Colonial Boston

ONLINE SEMINAR Researching Upstate New York Ancestors

"I had a wonderful time meeting new people, learning from the lectures and diving deep into the research."

—Participant from Genealogical Skills Bootcamp 2025

August

PRIVATE LECTURE Dual Citizenship

OPEN HOUSE Jewish Heritage Center Open House

PRIVATE LECTURE Descendancy Research

LIBRARY TOUR Tour of the Brim-DeForest Library

OPEN HOUSE Open Newbury

ONLINE LECTURE When the Record Doesn't Exist: Strategies for Determining Vital Data About Your Ancestors

ONLINE LECTURE Virtual Open House

PRIVATE LECTURE Getting Started in Family History Research

RESEARCH CLUB Roots & Branches: A Research Club for Members

ONLINE LECTURE It Was There All Along: How to Examine Records for Overlooked Clues and Details

OPEN HOUSE August Adventures

"Excellent, I needed to see what was available to me and see where everything was, it was hugely helpful to me in planning another trip to go!"

—Participant from Research Getaway in Boston: Filling in the Dash—Uncovering Ancestral Stories



Youth Education

American Ancestors is committed to making genealogy accessible to all students and addressing critical challenges in social studies education. This year marked a period of significant growth for our youth education program. We hosted student field trips in our new Family Heritage Experience and conducted our first on-site workshop for teachers, furthering our work to elevate social studies instruction.

Across the country, the marginalization of social studies continues to pose systemic challenges for students and teachers. Research shows that social studies receive the least instructional time in elementary grades compared to other core subjects, and teachers often face limited professional development opportunities and a shortage of high-quality curriculum materials.

These challenges are compounded by shifting political debates over historical content and heightening scrutiny around classroom discussions. Topics once considered safe to teach are now controversial, leaving teachers hesitant to cover important subjects.

This uneven landscape disproportionately affects students in low-income communities, who experience reduced access to social studies learning. The result is a widening equity gap and persistently low student proficiency in essential social studies content.



The urgency of these challenges highlights the promise of our work. American Ancestors addresses these issues through its first-of-its-kind Family History Curriculum and a growing teacher professional development program. Since its publication in fall 2022, our curriculum has been downloaded more than 1,800 times across all 50 states, and we have trained over 175 teachers nationwide.

Our mission continues despite recent federal budget cuts that eliminated grants for libraries and museums for their student programs and teacher workshops. In this challenging landscape, our teacher professional development program has expanded its reach, having delivered workshops in five states and US territories, including our on-site workshop in our newly renovated headquarters.

To kick off the 2025–2026 school year, we hosted a three-day workshop for teachers in grades 4–8 at our headquarters. The workshop equipped teachers with inquiry-based lessons and strategies to incorporate genealogy into their existing curricula. This single workshop has the potential to impact up to 800 students in the Greater Boston and Eastern Massachusetts area.

Teachers nationwide are facing intensified challenges due to rising levels of anxiety and depression among students. Our workshops help teachers meet these evolving challenges by providing materials and training that strengthen both academic and social-emotional learning while empowering students to connect more deeply with history, their communities, and themselves. Research shows that engaging students in family history can strengthen their emotional well-being, build resilience, and foster a stronger sense of identity by encouraging meaningful connections with family members.

A key focus of our workshops is to provide teachers with lessons and strategies to improve students' ability to analyze primary sources. The rapid deployment of AI-generated content and misinformation has made it increasingly difficult to teach effective media literacy skills. Genealogy offers a powerful solution: by researching and analyzing primary sources, students learn to question sources, identify purpose and bias, verify information across multiple sources, and develop confidence in their ability to discern reliable evidence.

In addition to our curriculum and workshops, we welcomed students to our Family Heritage Experience for the first time, including a Massachusetts Scout troop. The Scouts earned their genealogy merit badge by learning basic research skills, analyzing primary sources, and interviewing our expert staff during a behind-the-scenes tour of our building.

We are also proud to highlight student voices through our 2025 American Ancestors Young Family Historians Essay Contest. Eighth-grade semifinalist Benjamin Ahumada of Boston Latin School wrote about his great-great-grandfather's perseverance during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines in World War II.

Reflecting on his ancestor's experiences, Ahumada wrote,

[My] great-great grandfather's story has helped me to understand resilience and perseverance. His journey from wealth to devastation and back to success has taught me that even when everything seems lost, we can endure and rebuild. What impacts me most is how he transformed tragedy into opportunity, not just for himself but for his family, including those of us he never met.

Stories like Ahumada's exemplify the personal and transformative impact of family history research on students' understanding of resilience, identity, and community.

We are grateful for our dedicated supporters who make this work possible. Together, we are filling gaps in school curricula and addressing critical challenges in social studies education. Building on this success, we plan to significantly expand our reach next year by conducting more teacher workshops around the nation and welcoming more students to our headquarters.



Heritage Tours

by American Ancestors



Art & Architecture and Heritage Tours

The Art & Architecture lecture series and the Heritage Tours travel program turned in an extraordinary year of accomplishment. Curt DiCamillo presented and hosted a record-setting 32 lectures (17 in person and 15 online), many of which were cosponsored by partner institutions, including the English-Speaking Union, the Jane Austen Society of North America, the National Trust for Scotland, the Trustees of Reservations, the Providence Athenaeum, the Concord Museum, and the WGBH Educational Foundation.

The lectures covered a wide variety of subjects, including the 250th anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord, King Henry VIII, J. P. Morgan, Queen Victoria, *Downton Abbey*, Irish country houses, Jane Austen, medieval British architecture, the 14th Earl of Derby, historic Scottish houses, and embroidered coats of arms in 18th-century Boston, to name just some of the subjects covered. Curt also traveled around the United States and the United Kingdom promoting his book, *A British Country House Alphabet: A Historical & Pictorial Journey*, which was published by American Ancestors in 2024.

Curt led four sold-out Heritage Tours that visited Italy, Germany, England, and Wales, all of which received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The Christmas tour to England and Wales, based at Weston Park in Shropshire, ran twice due to popular demand.

Our tours and lectures create immense goodwill toward American Ancestors, aiding the recruitment of new members and donors and helping to lay the groundwork for a healthy and growing organization.



Siena, October 2024.



Dinner at Weston Park, December 2024.



Meissen factory tour, June 2025.



Travel Deeply,
Travel Distinctly
with American Ancestors

Led by Curator of Fine Art Curt DiCamillo and other internationally respected experts, our 2027 Heritage Tours combine stimulating travel with lifelong learning, leaving you enriched, enlightened, and inspired.

France Bordeaux: Architecture, Wine & the Art de Vivre

May 10–16, 2027

Germany The Castles & Palaces of the Bavarian Fairy Tale King

September 10–16, 2027

England At the Edge of England: A Tour Through Devon & Cornwall

October 2027

For more information, please contact us at heritagetours@americanancestors.org or 617-226-1215.

We hope you will join us!



AMERICAN INSPIRATION

A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR SERIES
BY AMERICAN ANCESTORS®

In 26 events in fiscal 2025, our American Inspiration author series focused on our country's history, its diverse peoples and families, and reached 13,000 audience members—readers, researchers, and history-lovers around the globe. These virtual and in-person book talks and panel discussions, held online, in person at 97 Newbury Street, and offsite at partner institutions, raised the total viewership of the series to 192,917 since its launch in 2019. The balance of events (15) was presented as ticketed offerings, yielding new revenue for the organization. Our average audience was 340 people attending free events, 80 at paid events.

Creator and producer Margaret M. Talcott and our team at the Brue Family Learning Center were joined by partners at cultural organizations across New England, including the Boston Public Library (several departments and branches), GBH Forum Network, Ford Hall Forum at Suffolk University, Brandeis University, and first-time partners the Chinese Historical Society of New England, My China Roots, the Asian American student group at Harvard University, and *The Harvard Crimson* newspaper. Porter Square Books supported with book sales.

A total of 22 moderators, including renowned academicians and authors new to the series, Kenyatta D. Berry, Vincent Brown, Joseph J. Ellis, W. Ralph Eubanks, Michele Filgate, Thavolia Glymph, Jill Lepore, Robert Putnam, Ted Widmer, and Serena Zabin, joined in presenting 28 authors and their books during the fiscal year.

"I appreciate that you give space to the stories seldom told. Ironically, those stories have the most important messages about our shared humanity."

John Kaag with **American Bloods: The Untamed Dynasty That Shaped a Nation**

Edward L. Ayers with **American Visions: The United States, 1800–1860**

Gregory P. Downs, coauthor of **Nat Turner, Black Prophet: A Visionary History**

Edward F. O'Keefe with **The Loves of Theodore Roosevelt: The Women Who Created a President**

Kenneth W. Rendell with **Safeguarding History: Trailblazing Adventures Inside the Worlds of Collecting and Forging History**

Frank X Walker with **Load in Nine Times: Poems**

Bruce Upholt with **The Great River: The Making and Unmaking of the Mississippi**

Michael Owen with **Ira Gershwin: A Life in Words**

Curt DiCamillo with **A British Country House Alphabet: A Historical and Pictorial Journey**

Nicholas Nugent with **The Spice Ports: Mapping the Origins of the Global Sea Trade**

Alan Taylor with **American Civil Wars: A Continental History, 1850–1873**

Justene Hill Edwards with **Savings and Trust: The Rise and Betrayal of the Freedman's Bank**

David Levering Lewis with **The Stained Glass Window: A Family History as the American Story, 1790–1958**

Jeffrey Boutwell with **Boutwell: Radical Republican and Champion of Democracy**

Megan Marshall with **After Lives: On Biography and the Mysteries of the Human Heart**

A panel "The Power of Learning Your Family History" featuring Authors Lee Hawkins (**I Am Nobody's Slave**) and Martha S. Jones (**The Trouble of Color**)

Alan Pell Crawford with **This Fierce People: The Untold Story of America's Revolutionary War in the South**

Michael Luo with **Stranger in the Land: Exclusion, Belonging, and the Epic Story of the Chinese in America**

Matthew Lockwood with **Explorers: A New History**

Marcus Rediker with **Freedom Ship: The Uncharted History of Escaping Slavery by Sea**

A panel "The March to Freedom for All, 1860–1920," featuring authors Bennett Parten (**Somewhere Toward Freedom: Sherman's March and the Story of America's Largest Emancipation**) and Manisha Sinha (**The Rise and Fall of the Second American Republic: Reconstruction, 1860–1920**)

Brian Black with **Ike's Road Trip: How Eisenhower's 1919 Convoy Paved the Way for the Roads We Travel**

Augustine Sedgewick with **Fatherhood: A History of Love and Power**

Henry Wienczek with **Stan and Gus: Art, Ardor, and the Friendship That Built the Gilded Age**

Mary Beth Norton with "I Humbly Beg Your Speedy Answer": **Letters on Love and Marriage from the World's First Personal Advice Column**

Griffin Dunne with **The Friday Afternoon Club: A Family Memoir**

We thank American Inspiration series sponsors Susan K. and John D. Thompson and other donors.

Discovery and Identity



Paula Williams Madison

From Kingston to Guangzhou: Paula's Search for Home and History

Paula Williams Madison is a 10 Million Names Advisory Board Member. Formerly with NBCUniversal for 22 years, she is now Chairman and CEO of Madison Media Management LLC and 88 Madison Media Works Inc. She resides in Louisiana.

Director of Advancement Stacie Madden talked with Paula Williams Madison, a member of the 10 Million Names Advisory Board, about her family history.

Paula Williams Madison's story begins with a childhood truth that remains present, always.

"I grew up knowing that my family was different," Madison says. "I was born and raised in Harlem, but my family didn't quite fit any single story. My father was African Jamaican. My mother looked Chinese. No one else in our neighborhood looked like us, and no one could quite explain why. I never met any of my grandparents and from a very young age, my sense of identity was shaped by absence as much as by belonging."

For years, the longing to understand stayed with her.

"That absence sparked curiosity," says Madison. "I wanted to understand how my family came to be in Harlem, how my parents came together, and where their parents came from. At first, I was searching simply for answers about myself and my brothers. The deeper I looked, the more I realized I was really searching for connection, for people, for place, and for truth."

For most of her life, Madison believed her maternal grandfather had abandoned her mother. Then research rewrote the story.

"Nothing prepared me for the discoveries I would make about my own family and completely changed what I thought I knew," she says. "My grandfather, whose Western name was Samuel Lowe (and whose Chinese name was Lowe Ding Chow) had not abandoned his daughter at all. He had searched for her for years. Cultural expectations, painful family decisions, and the realities of life in Jamaica kept them apart."

"That realization led me to produce my documentary film, *Finding Samuel Lowe*, the search for my grandfather and his descendants in China," Madison says. I retired early to devote myself fully to this journey."

"When I finally found my family, everything changed," she adds. "I had aunts, uncles, cousins ... people who didn't even know my mother had existed. For the first time in our lives, we felt rooted in something larger than ourselves."

"That experience made something very clear to me: identity is not abstract," she says. "It is personal. It is lived. And when histories are lost or erased, the consequences are profound. That is why 10 Million Names and recovering overlooked and marginalized histories matters so deeply to me."

"When names are missing, when stories are silenced," Madison says, "people are left floating, disconnected from their place in history and civilization. I have seen how transformative it can be when those connections are restored. People change physically and emotionally when they learn where they come from." ●



Lowe Ding Chow, Paula's grandfather.



Nell Lowe Williams, Paula's mother.

Special Events



Brady Brim-DeForest speaks to family, friends, members, and supporters at the dedication of the Brim-DeForest Library.



Library Dedication

In April 2025, we celebrated the long-awaited opening of our 97 Newbury Street building and our newly renovated 99–101 Newbury Street building with events that brought together old and new friends of American Ancestors and the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center.

On Wednesday, April 23, a dedication ceremony and open house was held in the Brim-DeForest Library. More than eighty-five guests attended this event, which showcased our beautiful library and formally announced its naming in honor of entrepreneur, author, and American Ancestors Trustee Brady Brim-DeForest and his family. The ceremony began with opening remarks from American Ancestors President and CEO Ryan J. Woods, followed by comments from Brady Brim-DeForest and Chief Research Officer Lindsay Fulton. Following the ceremony, guests were invited to tour the library, view treasures from our archives, and enjoy a reception.

Family Heritage Experience Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening

On Thursday, April 24, nearly 200 honored guests, members, friends, and staff gathered to celebrate the grand opening of the expanded American Ancestors headquarters and the Family Heritage Experience, a state-of-the-art, interactive exhibition designed to inspire curiosity and discovery around family history and cultural heritage. The 97 Newbury Street building is named for philanthropist and Trustee Thomas Bailey Hagen. The 99–101 Newbury Street building is named for Honorary Trustee Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Harvard professor and host of PBS's *Finding Your Roots*.

Chairman of the Board David Trebing emceed the morning ceremony and ribbon cutting, welcoming the crowd to the occasion. Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll congratulated American Ancestors on its 180th anniversary and presented President and CEO Ryan J. Woods with a Governor's Citation. State Senator Lydia Edwards presented a Senate citation, followed by remarks from State Representative Paul McMurtry; Maccon Bonner, Neighborhood Liaison for the City of Boston; D. Brenton Simons OBE, President Emeritus and Chief Stewardship Officer; Ryan J. Woods; and Trustee Thomas Bailey Hagen.

Dr. Gates reflected on how his lifelong quest to uncover his family story began at age 9 when he saw a photograph of his enslaved ancestor, Jane Gates. "History is not an abstraction. History is alive in each of us," he shared, describing how that moment inspired his first family tree. He thanked friends, colleagues, and supporters, including Trustee Brenda Johnson, whose philanthropy made the building naming possible. "Today we are doing more than opening a building," Dr. Gates said. "We are opening a portal to the past and helping to illuminate the path ahead."

That afternoon, the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center dedicated its new suite. With supporters present, members of the JHC Advisory Council affixed a mezuzah to the doorway and recited a traditional blessing—a visible sign of commitment to Jewish life within the community.



Trustee Thomas B. Hagen, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and President and CEO Ryan J. Woods in the Family Heritage Experience.

Annual Benefit Dinner

The celebration continued into the evening of April 24 with the annual American Stories, American Lives gala at Boston's Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel. More than 150 guests gathered for drinks, appetizers, and vibrant conversation. Following a cocktail reception, Ryan Woods introduced a panel on "the power and promise of family history." Panelists Kendra Taira Field, Associate Professor of History at Tufts University and Chief Historian of the 10 Million Names project; Councilor Bill Griffeth, CNBC Anchor-at-Large; and Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. discussed what genealogy means to them and those around them. This profound conversation was an appropriate close to one of the most significant weeks in the history of American Ancestors.



President and CEO Ryan J. Woods with panelists Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Chief Historian and 10 Million Names Advisory Board Member Kendra Taira Field, and Councilor Bill Griffeth.



Gala guests raise their glasses to toast the American Ancestors event staff.

Thank you to all our benefit sponsors

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Thomas B. Hagen

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Mary Alice Sherrill, Board Vice Chair M. David Sherrill, Trustee Thomas B. Hagen, and Kristin Talarico.



Kath Vogler, Valerie Moffitt, Honorary Trustee Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Will Mbah, and Trustee Brenda L. Johnson.



Family Heritage Experience artists Christle Rawlins-Jackson and Susi Ryan with Councilor and 10 Million Names Advisory Board Chair Gwill York.

◆ Jewish American Heritage Month Celebration with Governor Maura Healey

The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center (JHC) at American Ancestors was chosen by the Jewish Community Relations Council and Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey's office to host the governor's May 2025 celebration of Jewish American Heritage Month. For the first time, organizers decided to take the event out of the State House and host it in a setting that represented Jewish heritage. Approximately eighty people—Jewish political and institutional leaders from across the state—gathered in the American Ancestors rotunda on May 28 for speeches, refreshments, and a display of JHC archival items that told the story of Jewish history and heritage in the Commonwealth. Among those in attendance was State Treasurer and Receiver General of Massachusetts Deborah Goldberg, whose family is represented in the JHC Archives in both the Rabb Family Stop &

Shop Collection (P-679) and the Kehillath Israel Synagogue (Brookline, Mass.) Records (I-488). After the event, JHC Executive Director Rachel King and President and CEO Ryan J. Woods escorted the governor to the JHC's office suite and exhibit. This event provided an important opportunity to inform the community about the rich resources and educational programs located at the JHC.



JHC Executive Director Rachel King and Governor Maura Healey shake hands behind the podium in the rotunda of the Family Heritage Experience at American Ancestors.



Governor Maura Healey, President and CEO Ryan J. Woods, and JHC Executive Director Rachel King in front of the exhibit at the entrance to the JHC office. Photos by Josh Qualls, Office of Maura Healey.



Recent Keynote Speakers and Honorees

2025

Kendra Taira Field
Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
Bill Griffeth

2024

Ron Howard
Lucy Worsley

2023

Nina Totenberg
Lonnie G. Bunch III
Alan Taylor
Drew Gilpin Faust

2022

David M. Rubenstein
Governor Charlie Baker
Julian Fellowes
Rick Atkinson

2021

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham
The Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH
Anthony Amore
Mary Beth Norton

2020

Jill Lepore
Scott Simon

2019

Joseph J. Ellis
Douglas Brinkley
Dan Rather

2018

David Hackett Fischer
David McCullough
William M. Fowler, Jr.

2017

Winston Groom
Stacy Schiff

2016

Cokie Roberts
Bob Schieffer
David Hartman



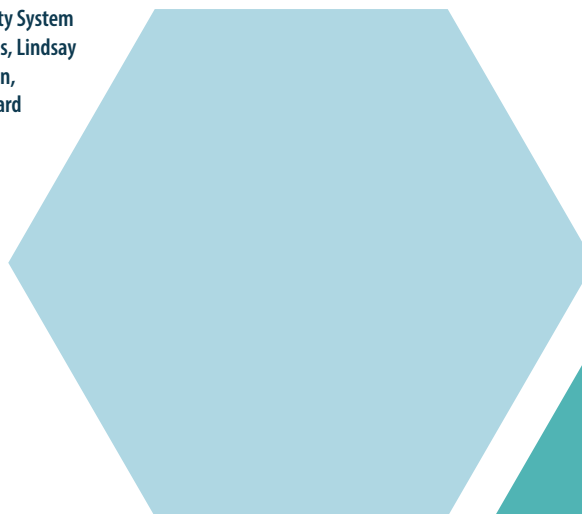
10 Million Names in New Orleans

Members of our staff and our 10 Million Names Advisory Board met at New Orleans's Chapter IV restaurant in February to discuss the role of health in genealogy with medical professionals, Historically Black Colleges and Universities faculty, and philanthropists.

10 Million Names Advisory Board Member Christal Jackson welcomed attendees. Past President of the National Medical Association Dr. Yolanda Lawson explained how understanding one's ancestral health patterns can lead to more accurate diagnoses, better treatment plans, and overall improved healthcare outcomes. American Ancestors Chief Research Officer Lindsay Fulton discussed 10 Million Names, helping families reconnect with their lost histories, and the social and emotional benefits of family history.

Also in attendance was Super Bowl Champion Leonard Fournette and his mother, Lory. They shared stories about their own family history. Their reflections highlighted how discovering one's roots can create a sense of identity, resilience, and belonging for African American families seeking to reclaim their lineage.

Above: Southern University System President Dennis J. Shields, Lindsay Fulton, Dr. Yolanda Lawson, Lory Fournette, and Leonard Fournette.



◆ Civic Memory in Action



Dee Baecher- Brown

Dee Baecher-Brown has served as President of the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands since 1996, working with donors and businesses, and nonprofits in the U.S. Virgin Islands, to prioritize programs and services that enrich the quality of life on the islands, with particular attention to the most vulnerable residents.

In the U.S. Virgin Islands, family history and civic history are woven together; our community's story is American history. When St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. John became American in 1917, it reshaped our civic identity, but our connections to American history began long before. When students trace their family roots, they are not stepping outside civic history, they are stepping into it.

During the Revolutionary era, enslaved people and slaveholders moved between the Caribbean and the American colonies. Though not yet officially American, we were part of the Atlantic world that shaped the Revolution. Those movements deepen how we read national milestones and remind us that the American story has long been interconnected.

Our partnership with American Ancestors' Youth Education and 10 Million Names programs brought it home. Through genealogy training for educators, we saw individual discovery strengthen collective memory. Teachers embraced new tools to help students explore family histories and connect them to local and national events. When a student uncovers a name in a record, history becomes tangible. It shifts from something distant to something lived.

For Virgin Island students, seeing themselves in American history, builds pride and deepens critical thinking. These discoveries restore context, bridge island heritage with the American experience, and prepare young people to understand both.

Accessibility is essential to that work. As an island community, isolation can limit access to research tools and professional development. Curriculum materials, archival access, and training help overcome that barrier. American Ancestors provided resources, support and sensitivity to our community. Civic memory must remain accessible to scholars, families, teachers, and students if it is to serve the public good.

Institutions like the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands and American Ancestors carry a responsibility to shape civic understanding. We must provide accurate scholarship, grantmaking, and educational tools that empower communities to explore their stories. Our designation as the Humanities Council for the Virgin Islands in 2024 strengthened our work and helped revitalize humanities learning in our territory.

At its best, civic memory uplifts while it informs. It connects individual lives to national milestones and affirms that history is shared. When history is shared in that way, it becomes more than remembrance; it becomes a public good. ◆



Research Projects

Over the past fiscal year, the Research Services team has continued to uncover new family information, clarify earlier findings, and strengthen our understanding of family connections. This work has led to significant discoveries, provided ongoing support to our constituents, and advanced the American Ancestors mission while contributing to its revenue goals.

While continuing to exceed revenue goals, the team completed an estimated 12,175 hours of genealogical and historical research for our constituency. Our experts' passion and deep knowledge are evident in the daily support provided to members, both near and far. By the close of fiscal year 2025, these efforts resulted in \$1,536,943 in revenue generated through for-hire research projects.

In addition to research-for-hire projects, our team deepened connections between patrons and their ancestors through daily interactions on our *Ask a Genealogist* online chat and in-person visitation at the Brim-DeForest Library. These important engagements allowed us to sustain strong, personalized connections with our members across both in person and virtual settings. Over the past year alone, we successfully responded to more than 1,120 genealogical and historical inquiries through the AmericanAncestors.org online chat service. We also welcomed 574 visitors to the Brim-DeForest Library—while promoting broad access to expert guidance and supporting meaningful discoveries.

We also continued several partnerships with a diverse network of organizations, including lineage societies, universities, law firms, and media outlets. Our team played a vital role in supporting these relationships by reviewing applications for the General Society of Colonial Wars, the Colonial Dames of America, and the Boston Tea Party Descendants Program. Within each review, our experts are ensuring accuracy, rigor, and historical integrity while preserving family connections to several historic events in American history. Within fiscal year 2025,

we reviewed 197 applications for the General Society of Colonial Wars with an approval rating of 97 percent and 64 applications for Colonial Dames of America with an approval rating of 100 percent.

Reflecting on the past year, our department made significant progress in genealogical research for many of our constituents, while also strengthening relations with two ongoing projects that will carry on for the next several years: the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery Initiative and PBS's *Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.*

Lastly, and certainly most exciting, was the high-profile research project for *The New York Times Magazine*: a front-page feature on Pope Leo XIV that appeared on June 11, 2025, underscoring the quality, credibility, and national reach of our research expertise.

The Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum

One major accomplishment that certainly is cause for celebration as we approach the 250th anniversary of the events that led to the American Revolution was the final phase of our research alongside The Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum. Over the last several years, our experts have been aiding in the confirmation of 132 participants and 36 eyewitnesses of the momentous historic event that occurred on December 16, 1773. This genealogically verified list became accessible on AmericanAncestors.org and The Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum website. While additional participants and eyewitnesses may be discovered with additional research phases, we commemorated this achievement in December 2025, when the official list of participants and eyewitnesses was unveiled at the Museum, alongside multiple descendants of The Boston Tea Party Descendants® Program.



The New York Times Magazine

The *New York Times Magazine* published an in-depth profile of Pope Leo XIV that examined his genealogical roots and extraordinary family history, including a detailed family tree developed with the expertise of American Ancestors. Created in collaboration with Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the article featured our research into Robert Prevost—born in Chicago and elected as Pope Leo XIV in May 2025 as the first American pontiff. The investigation revealed a richly diverse heritage, with ancestral lines from France, Italy, and Spain, as well as multiple branches including people of color from historic New Orleans, all while highlighting a multiracial background that reflects the complex fabric of American history.

This months-long project traced the broader narrative of his rise to the papacy, positioning Pope Leo XIV as a figure who embodies both continuity and change within the Catholic Church—deeply rooted in centuries of European Catholic tradition while shaped by the cultural and familial diversity of the American experience.

Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery Initiative

In fiscal year 2025, American Ancestors' role in the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery Initiative's Slavery Remembrance Program expanded from providing genealogical research support to taking the lead research role in conducting systematic identification of enslaved individuals connected to Harvard affiliates (leaders, faculty, and staff). Now managed by Research Services, we are tasked with locating evidence of slavery amongst over 1,737 Harvard affiliates.

We dedicated fiscal year 2025 to combing through historic records, visiting local repositories to learn more about Harvard affiliates while helping to restore the names of the people they enslaved in the United States, and most importantly, identifying any descendants (both living and deceased) of these individuals who helped to build America. At the conclusion of the fiscal year, we had identified 1,492 descendants (592 living descendants) in this multi-year contract.



Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Our longest-standing collaboration is with Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and the team behind PBS's *Finding Your Roots*. Since 2017, the Research Services department has supported fact-checking for every episode of this acclaimed series, now in its 12th season. Through this partnership, we help ensure accurate genealogical and family history research, which Dr. Gates then shares with each guest on the program.

This dynamic collaboration also inspires our own experts to continually learn from leaders across the genealogy and DNA fields. Through this work, we are exposed to geographic regions and research challenges that may not typically arise in our research-for-hire projects, sparking lively discussion and a shared enthusiasm for every discovery. Every American Ancestors expert involved approaches the work with curiosity and commitment, and we look forward to supporting the *Finding Your Roots* team for many seasons to come.

In summary, fiscal year 2025 was marked by meaningful growth, impactful discovery, and sustained excellence across every facet of the Research Services department's work. From personalized support for our members and partners to nationally visible, high-profile research initiatives, our team consistently demonstrated rigor, integrity, and passion for uncovering and preserving family history. These efforts not only advanced American Ancestors' mission and financial strength but also deepened public understanding of the past and its enduring connections to the present. As we look ahead, we remain committed to expanding our research, strengthening partnerships, and continuing to illuminate the stories that shape individuals, families, and the nation.

10 Million Names



In fiscal year 2025, the 10 Million Names initiative made remarkable strides toward its mission to recover, restore, and remember the names of enslaved African Americans, connecting their descendants to their family histories. Spearheaded by American Ancestors, the project demonstrated its transformative potential across multiple domains, including research, fundraising, media outreach, and education.

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors who gave \$50,000 or more to make it possible for us to find the names of the estimated ten million men, women, and children of African descent who were enslaved in pre- and post-colonial America before 1865.

Robb Aley Allan
American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. (ABC)
Marc E. Chardon
Kenneth Chenault
Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands
Fidelity Charitable
General Society of Colonial Wars
Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund
Tabitha King
Henry J. Russell Foundation
Gerry and MaryLee Halpin
Steven and Jane Hoch
Brenda L. Johnson
Paula Madison
National Society Daughters of
the American Revolution
Jonathan Nelson
Helen and DuWayne Sayles
The 1772 Foundation
Gwill E. York and Paul Maeder

R. W. Harrison, photographer, "Six Generations," Selma, Alabama, ca. 1893. Library of Congress, loc.gov/resource/cph.3c04928.



New partners

- California Genealogical Society
- Famous Kin
- HEARTS
- Historic Sotterley
- Howard University
- International African American Museum
- New Bedford Historical Society
- Newport Historical Society
- The Northeast Slavery Records Index
- Prince Project
- The Reckoning
- Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy



Volunteers

Since launching in December 2023, the 10 Million Names volunteer program has grown dramatically. Over the past year alone, volunteers contributed approximately 3,500 hours in service, advancing multiple projects central to our mission of recovering and restoring the names and lives of enslaved and free people of African descent. The accomplishments below reflect the extraordinary dedication and care of this community.

With volunteer support, we published two volumes of the *Biographical Entries of People of African Descent in New Bedford and Coastal Towns Also Once Part of Dartmouth* (Westport, Dartmouth, and Fairhaven). The remaining two volumes are scheduled for publication in FY26, completing this foundational resource.

Volunteers also fully indexed two volumes for the forthcoming database *Biographical Entries of People of African Descent in Beacon Hill*, laying the groundwork for its public release.

Through the Deeds Projects, volunteer researchers completed work in four Missouri counties (Callaway, Howard, Jefferson, and Moniteau) and two North Carolina counties (Cumberland and Edgecombe), resulting in the recovery of an estimated 7,800 names of enslaved ancestors—names that had been hidden for generations.

Finally, volunteers played a critical role in the launch of the *Kentucky U.S. Colored Troops Project*, researching and building family trees for more than 150 soldiers of the 72nd Infantry Regiment, reconnecting these men to their families and communities.

New and updated databases

Daughters of the American Revolution: Patriots of Color, 1712–1888

New database content. Published 7,114 records documenting Patriots of Color.

Godfrey Memorial Library: Middletown, CT Manumissions, 1774–1823

New database content. Added 50 manumission records from Middletown, Connecticut.

MA: Biographical Entries of People of African Descent (New Bedford & Dartmouth-area towns)

New database and expansion. Published the initial database and a second volume (E–J), adding 13,509 records and bringing the total to 26,104 biographical entries.

Newport, RI: Records of Enslaved, Free, and Manumitted People of Color

New database. Published 11,827 records, resulting in a database of 12,786 total records.

North America: Records of Enslaved People from Plantations and Estates, 1765–1890

New database. Published 600 records, bringing the database to 805 total records.

10 Million Names databases available in FY25

1. American Offshore Whaling Crew and Voyage Lists, 1799-1927
2. Black Loyalist Directory, 1783-1788
3. Boston, MA: Taking Records, 1800
4. Daughters of the American Revolution: Patriots of Color, 1712-1888
5. GU272 Descendants, 1785-2000
6. Hampden County, MA: Black Families in Hampden County, 1650-1865
7. Massachusetts: Biographical Entries of People of African Descent in New Bedford and Coastal Towns Also Once Part of Dartmouth (Westport, Dartmouth, and Fairhaven)
8. Massachusetts: People of Color in the State Census, 1855-1865
9. Middletown, CT: Manumissions, 1774-1823, from the Godfrey Memorial Library
10. Newport, RI: Records of Enslaved, Free, and Manumitted People of Color and Enslavers (17th-19th Centuries)
11. North America: Records of Enslaved People from Plantations and Estates, 1765-1890
12. Pittsburgh, PA: Gaines Funeral Home Records, 1925-1934
13. Profiles of Black Soldiers Who Served in the Civil War, 1861-1865
14. United States 1830 Census: Free Negro Heads of Families
15. United States 1850 Census (Slave Schedule)



The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center™ at AMERICAN ANCESTORS

In fiscal year 2025, the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center (JHC) expanded its reach through preservation and scholarship, community programming, and digital platforms. Throughout the year, the JHC focused on bringing the stories of Jewish family and community life out of the archives and into public life—engaging thousands of people in connecting with the Jewish past and seeing themselves as part of an ongoing communal story.

The year began with a vivid example of how community memory and historical preservation reinforce one another.

In September, the JHC hosted *Jewish Stories of Nantasket Beach*, exploring a once-thriving Jewish summer community south of Boston that welcomed Jewish families when they were excluded from other resort areas. Nearly 200 people gathered for a panel discussion, a digitization station, a story-recording booth, and an ice cream social. Attendees eagerly shared memories, photographs, and documents, many of which have since been archived, demonstrating the power of participatory history and setting the tone for a year of active community engagement.

In addition to community events, the JHC brought meaningful and accessible primary-source Jewish history into educational settings across Greater Boston. Through *Opening the Dor*, an initiative funded by Combined Jewish Philanthropies, JHC staff worked with more than 300 students and 15 educators in day schools, Hebrew schools, and teen programs. Students engaged with oral histories from the *Jewish Neighborhood Voices* project alongside archival materials that contextualized those narratives; educators and students alike found it powerful, as one student put it, “to hear this history in the words of someone who was there.” The outcome of this work will be a new section of educational materials on the JHC website.

Ensuring the accessibility of archival materials online and in person also remained central to the JHC’s mission. In FY25, use of the JHC’s website and Digital Library & Archives continued to grow, with tens of thousands of views and significant additions to digitized collections, including thousands of new records added to the HIAS–Boston collection. We accessioned 28 new archival collections within the year and, with the arrival of a new Senior Archivist, streamlined collections records to improve discoverability. Our digital reach also expanded significantly through unprecedented social media growth, driven by creative and educational content highlighting JHC collections and programs.



JHC Advisory Council members Carol Clingan, Steven Greenberg, and Herb Selesnick attaching a mezuzah to the JHC office doorway.



JHC Programming and Outreach Manager Sarah Quiat teaching a teen group about Jewish community history, August 2025.



Benjy Maor reviews archival materials with Sarah Quiat.

The JHC also amplified its impact by supporting research and scholarship. This year saw the launch of a new research fellowship: the Professor Ronald C. Curhan and Joan Pokross Curhan Research Fellowship, funded by longtime supporters Ronald and Joan Curhan. This new fellowship joined the existing Genevieve Geller Wyner Research Fellowship. A fellowship review committee selected two scholars in the Spring: Benjy Maor of Haifa University was chosen as the 2025 Wyner Fellow, and Shiyong Lu, a doctoral candidate at New York University, was selected as the inaugural Curhan Scholar. Both conducted research in the JHC archives over the summer on, respectively, the history of Jewish philanthropy in Boston, and the history of Jewish Americans' embrace of Chinese food. Alongside these fellowships, the JHC served hundreds of additional researchers in person and online throughout the year. Furthering its reach, the JHC also strengthened partnerships with organizations such as the Yiddish Book Center, the Boston Holocaust Museum, and the New England Jewish History Collaborative.

Over the course of the year, the JHC offered four webinars, reaching broad audiences with wide-ranging topics, including:

January: "Catholic and Jewish Reactions to Antisemitic Violence in Wartime Boston," by Prof. Laurel Leff, 2024 Genevieve Geller Wyner Research Fellow

March: "Der Shusterman: Stuart Weitzman and the History of the Jewish Shoe Industry" with shoe designer Stuart Weitzman and Dr. Jonathan Sarna

April: "The Body Politic: Jews, Disability, and US Immigration Policy," with Dr. Hannah Zaves-Greene

July: "Strangers and Sojourners: The Jews of Colonial Boston," with historian Ellen Smith

The opening of the expanded American Ancestors building marked a milestone for the JHC. Our new dedicated space brings staff, researchers, and collections together for the first time, strengthening our ability to serve the public and steward our holdings. On the day of the April ribbon-cutting, the JHC marked its own new chapter by hanging a mezuzah—a Jewish symbol traditionally affixed to Jewish homes—on the entrance to its offices. As the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center looks ahead, we are grateful to the donors, partners, scholars, educators, and community members who make our work possible and our momentum possible.

"It's not just a relief to have [our family's papers] all housed at the Wyner Center, it's a privilege to have had an archivist take the time to explain the significance of the papers, preserve them, and make them available to future scholars. Right now, with all that is going on in the Jewish community, it's important to show the younger generation the accomplishments and dedication of our Jewish American ancestors."



JHC Digital Archivist Henry Treadwell discusses archival materials at the August 2025 Open House.

Events

The JHC offered an array of events in fiscal year 2025 that provided rich opportunities to engage with Jewish history and heritage. Beginning with a standing-room-only event about the history of Nantasket Beach, Massachusetts, that invited attendees to add to the story with their memories and artifacts, and ending with an open house enabling community members to get up close to the fascinating and precious materials in the JHC's archives, the emphasis of our events in FY2025 was community engagement and participation.

The JHC held an event in November at New-Bridge on the Charles in Dedham, Massachusetts, "From Torah Arks To Yahrzeit Plaques: Preserving Our Sacred Spaces and Community History". Featuring a talk by Samuel Gruber, 2024 recipient of the JHC's inaugural Ruth Fein Research Scholarship, about synagogue architecture and the early-20th-century ark builder Sam Katz, the event also honored genealogist Carol Clingan, a member of the JHC's Advisory Council, with the 2025 Community Preservation Award.

In the spring, the JHC was honored to be chosen by Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey's administration as the site for the governor's annual celebration of Jewish American Heritage Month. Guests gathered in the American Ancestors rotunda to view items from the JHC's archival collections about historical Jewish involvement in Massachusetts politics, business, and social services, and to hear remarks from Gov. Healey about Jewish contributions to the state and the state's commitment to the Jewish community (see more on page 41).

A week later, on June 5, the JHC held its annual Benefit Dinner, which honored the 30th anniversary of the publication of a seminal book, *The Jews of Boston*. This groundbreaking book was the first, and remains the definitive,



Justin Wyner acknowledges the celebration of his 100th birthday at the JHC Benefit Dinner.

comprehensive history of Jewish life in Boston—with the JHC's collections as its central source material. The lively evening featured a reception with early centennial birthday greetings for benefactor Justin Wyner; dinner and a panel discussion by scholars (and co-editors of the book) Jonathan Sarna and Ellen Smith, moderated by historian and Rabbi Daniel Judson; and remarks from the past and present CEOs of Combined Jewish Philanthropies, Barry Shrage and Rabbi Marc Baker, respectively.

These events, along with other community-based events and online webinars, brought the Jewish family and community history in the JHC's archives to wide audiences and both showcased the story of Jewish life and involvement in America, and reminded people of their own place within it.



Advisory Council co-chairs Justin Wyner and Lionel Spiro present Carol Clingan (second from right) with the Community Preservation Award.



Panelists Rabbi Daniel Judson, Ellen Smith, and Dr. Jonathan Sarna discuss the influential book *The Jews of Boston* at the JHC's Benefit Dinner in June 2025.

Family Heritage Experience



Since opening our doors to visitors in April 2025, the Family Heritage Experience has utilized our unique series of exhibitions, interactives, and knowledgeable staff to engage with more than 1,300 visitors. Designed to provoke thought and conversation about origins and identity, visitors are offered a variety of ways to discover these concepts. Whether that is by exploring some of our collections in the Jonathan “Dutch” Treat Gallery, hearing about how genealogy has shaped people over the years in our Story Station, or engaging with fact and fiction in our Hidden Histories exhibit, visitors are encouraged to dig deeper.

The Records and Research Station is a particular favorite with our visitors. Guests are able to choose their favorite question and learn how they might go about doing their own research. Among the favorite questions chosen are those which highlight the more personal aspect of family history: What did my great-grandparents look like? Where did my mother’s ancestors live? What foods did my ancestors eat? Our visitors delight in the records each question shows them, providing the knowledge they need to go about finding out these answers for themselves and their families.

Another favorite, especially with our younger guests, is the *Your Name, Your Year Station*. Here, we invite visitors to learn about the importance of historical context in family research through the lens of their own family. Guests become excited when they can share with one another what their surname means and where it comes from, or the most popular song the year they were born! Each guest who utilizes this interactive exhibit walks away excited to continue connecting with their family history, and to share it with those around them.

Each guest comes to us with distinctive stories, different family histories, and varying ways in which they have already connected to their heritage. By visiting the Family Heritage Experience, utilizing our resources, and speaking with our staff, these guests are empowered by the meaningful connections forged and the knowledge gained to continue growing these connections—with us as an organization and with their own unique family history.

“I visited the Family Heritage Experience to learn more about my family’s history. I was able to chat with a genealogist who gave me advice on how to find the information I was looking for, and I participated in some of the interactive exhibits. If you’re interested in learning more about your family history this is a great place for beginners to experts.”

—Gary Case



Named Spaces

The named spaces shown here honor the vision and generosity of donors whose leadership support made this transformative project—the Family Heritage Experience and the expanded American Ancestors headquarters—possible.



The Cornerstone Society

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors who donated \$100,000 or more to make it possible for us to expand our headquarters and create the Family Heritage Experience.

\$5 million or more

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Thomas Bailey Hagen
Brenda L. Johnson
Anonymous

\$1,000,000-\$4,999,999

Brady Brim-DeForest
Nord and Suzanne Brue
Tabitha King
Gwill York
Anonymous

\$500,000-\$999,999

American Broadcasting
Companies, Inc. (ABC)
Helen C. Powell
Kristin and Roger Servison
The Hearin-Chandler Foundation
Jonathan Buck Treat
Gypsie and Thomas Van Antwerp
Wallace S. and Isobel B.* Wilson
Anonymous

\$100,000-\$499,999

Robb Aley Allan
Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund
Judith Avery*
BayTree Fund
Gwendolyn Babcock
Flora N. Beggs Trust
Helen H. Berkeley
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Thomas O. Carlson*
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Kenneth Chenault
Community Foundation of
the Virgin Islands
Mark Thomas Cox IV
Cheryl L. Edwards
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Judith W. and Louis M. Freeman
Leigh Maxwell Gelser*
General Society of Colonial Wars
Gerry and MaryLee Halpin
Beverly L. Hamilton
James and Susan Hunnewell
Priscilla and Gustavus Ide*
John F. Keane*
David W. Kruger
Jane D. Kivlin
Andrew P. Langlois
Dr. J. Philip London, Sr.* and
Dr. Jennifer London
Jo Anne Makely
William R. Marsh MD*

Massachusetts Cultural Council
Mattie McFadden-Lawson
Carol R. McGee
National Society Daughters of the
American Revolution
Jonathan Nelson
Peck Stacpoole Foundation
John S. Rando Jr.
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Helen E. R. Sayles CBE
L. Ted Sloane*
Diana M. and David N. Smith
John Thorndike*
The Arnold Garrison Foundation
The Lynch Foundation
Kathleen* and Peter Van Demark
Nancy Clay Webster*
Justin and Genevieve* Wyner
Anonymous (3)

*Deceased



Financial Report

Summary Balance Sheet as of fiscal year end August 31, 2025

Balance Sheet	FY25	FY24	Increase (decrease)	% Increase (decrease)
Total Assets	\$97,054,844	\$85,102,082	\$11,952,762	14%
Liabilities	\$26,454,452	\$24,727,133	\$1,727,319	7%
Net Assets	\$70,600,392	\$60,374,949	\$10,225,443	17%
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$97,054,844	\$85,102,082	\$11,952,762	14%

REVENUE	FY25	FY24	% Increase (decrease)	% of total
Earned Revenue	\$5,013,852	\$4,736,024	6%	21%
Contributed Revenue	\$16,561,918	\$9,241,045	79%	71%
Investment Return Designated for Current Operations ^(a)	\$1,797,000	\$1,193,750	51%	8%
Total Revenue	\$23,372,770	\$15,170,819	54%	100%

EXPENSES	FY25	FY24	% Increase (decrease)	% of total
Member Services	\$326,345	\$360,086	-9%	2%
Research Library	\$2,681,026	\$2,678,182	0%	17%
Tours and Seminars	\$1,990,676	\$1,816,569	10%	12%
Retail Store	\$226,414	\$86,438	162%	1%
Publications	\$2,158,750	\$1,927,311	12%	13%
Website	\$2,035,595	\$1,610,356	26%	13%
General and Administrative	\$3,015,159	\$2,904,748	4%	19%
Fundraising	\$3,629,528	\$4,271,180	-15%	23%
Total Expenses	\$16,063,493	\$15,654,870	3%	100%

Consolidated Net Income from Operations	\$7,309,277	(\$484,051)
Non-Operating revenue, including investment return ^(b)	\$2,916,166	\$5,332,161
Consolidated Net Income	\$10,225,443	\$4,848,110
Endowment Net Assets ^(c)	\$29,879,326	\$28,099,864

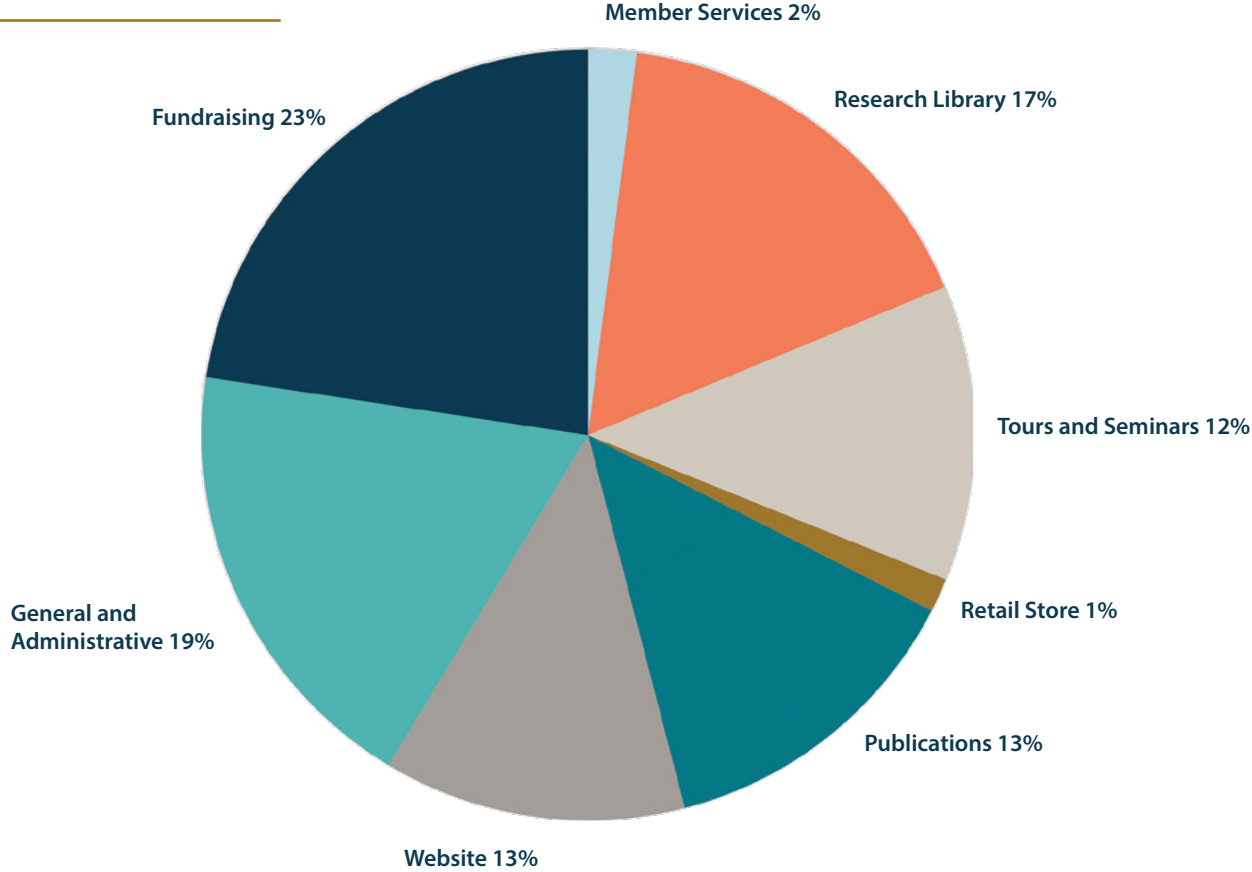
Notes

^(a) Investment Return Designated for Current Operations represents the release of the annual draw, which is based on appropriating a board approved percentage of the average of the prior twelve quarters of fair market value of the investments.

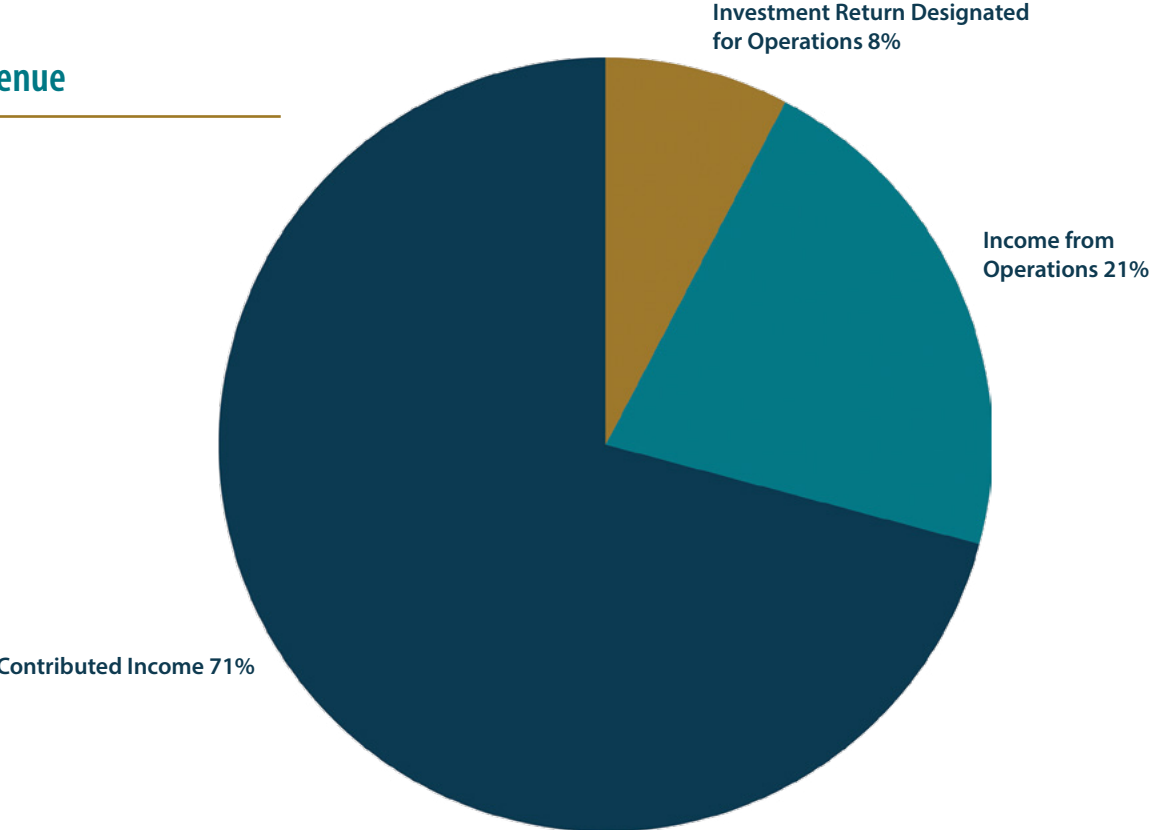
^(b) Includes: (1) Interest and Dividends, Realized and Unrealized Gains, net of Investment Management Fees; and (2) Appropriation of Investment Return Designated for Operations.

^(c) Includes: (1) Board Designated Endowment, (2) Appreciation on Endowment, and (3) Permanently Restricted Endowment.

Expenses



Revenue



Why I Give



Assistant Vice President for Inspirational Giving Dionne Jackson interviewed Gwill York, 10 Million Names Advisory Board Chair and new Trustee, about her personal journey that prompted her to give back her time and treasure.

For Gwill York, 10 Million Names is not an abstract idea. It's a magic that happens when families find a missing piece of their story. "The intimacy of the work and the joy that it has brought to so many people has been beyond my imagination," York said.

Gwill York

Gwill York is an entrepreneur with 30 years of experience financing early-stage technology and healthcare companies. She is the co-founder of Lighthouse Capital Partners. She has been an Individual Member since 2018 and resides in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

York references Aaron Haynes, an African American man who reached out to American Ancestors after finding an unusual document in his basement. He urgently needed to know what it was. It was confirmed to be an authentic freedom paper of an ancestor who lived in Maryland.

"This is what 10 Million Names makes possible," York said. "What was once hidden in the basement becomes a verified record and a family can hold its story with confidence."

York's instinct to show up was shaped early by parents who were committed to the Civil Rights movement. She learned the importance of amplifying voices that have been left out. That impulse guides how she gives today. York describes her generosity as relationship-driven, grounded in listening, learning, and being present. She has spent time with families in Charleston, Savannah, New Orleans, and other places where this work feels personal.

Those visits, she said, have been joyful, especially when records are put into accessible formats so families don't have to do the legwork alone.

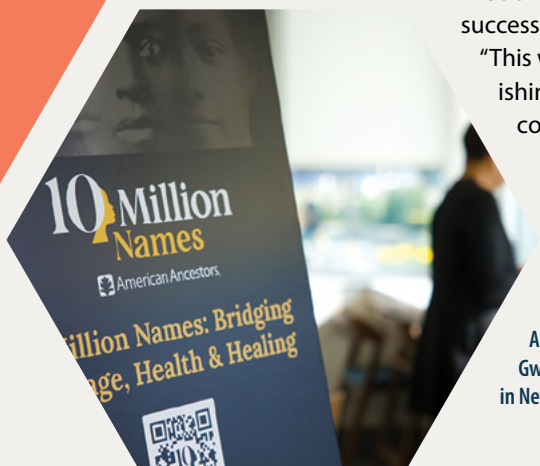
Now, after seven years as a Councilor, York is becoming a Trustee, where she will help guide strategy, fiduciary oversight, and mission-based leadership. She sees this as an opportunity to bring skills, ask good questions, and support the team's work. When CEO & President Ryan Woods invited her to join, her "yes" came easily. "I feel personally invested in helping to build the family trees of as many Americans as possible," she said. "And this seems like a terrific place to invest time and treasure."

York's decision arrives at a time of great momentum. She points to the organization's rebrand, strengthened leadership, and progress. "10 Million Names success of publishing a million names per year has been exciting," she said.

"This work is very close to things that I care a lot about: justice and flourishing." She adds, "I now believe that [family history] is a really important component for this experiment we call the United States of America."

As a Trustee, York will help guide what comes next. This includes expanding the work and keeping its standards, so more families can find what they've been missing and feel seen in the process. ●

Aulston Taylor, President & CEO at St. Augustine High School—New Orleans, and Gwill York, 10 Million Names Advisory Board Chair, at a 10 Million Names event held in New Orleans before Super Bowl LIX in 2025.



Giving Societies

We gratefully acknowledge the following members and donors for making it possible for us to advance the study of family history in America and beyond.

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The Presidents' Society recognizes the generosity of individuals who have given cumulative gifts of \$5,000,000 or more.

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This society is named in honor of John Quincy Adams, a member of New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1845. It recognizes the generosity of individuals who have made cumulative gifts of \$500,000 to \$999,999.

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The Daniel Webster Society, named after a prominent New England statesman and senator, and early member of American Ancestors, recognizes the generosity of corporations and institutions with cumulative gifts of \$100,000 to \$999,999.

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	Institute of Museum and Library Services	Symonds Foundation	

The Benjamin Franklin Society

The Benjamin Franklin Society recognizes the generosity of individuals who donated materials to our archives, including the R. Stanton Avery Collection, and made a gift of \$10,000 or more to support its long-term care. In 1856, American Ancestors participated in the construction of a statue in Boston commemorating Benjamin Franklin, who recounted his family history in his famous autobiography.

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Legacy of Discovery



Tom Carlson

The Helen Herzer Volunteer Endowed Fund

For Thomas (Tom) Oliver Carlson (1943–2023), family history was more than a hobby—it was a life-long curiosity.

Tom, the second of six children, was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Paul and Ruth Carlson. During his childhood the family moved to Washington state, where Tom graduated from Mt. Rainier High School in Des Moines, Washington. He later earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Pacific Lutheran University.

After graduating in 1965, Tom was drafted into the U.S. Army. Following basic training at Fort Ord, he was assigned to the NORAD bunker in Colorado Springs for the remainder of his two-year tour of duty. There he learned skills that led to a position with Booz Allen Applied Research. Tom remained with Booz Allen for nearly 40 years, much of that time in the Washington, DC, area.

After retiring, Tom moved to West Des Moines, Iowa, where he enjoyed honing his bridge game and pursuing favorite hobbies such as stamp collecting, reading mysteries, and researching family genealogy.


Tom joined American Ancestors in 2011 and quickly became an enthusiastic family historian. Through our resources and staff expertise, he deepened his understanding of the lives that shaped his family's past.

His sister Mary remembers how much he enjoyed sharing each discovery. "Tom often called with something new he had learned or that the American Ancestors staff had uncovered," she recalls. "Most of our ancestors were farmers, and many arrived in the 1600s. He especially enjoyed identifying their occupations, their military service, or something about their lives from their wills. When he told me we were descendants of an officer killed in the Great Swamp Fight during King Philip's War, I asked, 'What war?' Tom challenged me to go online and research it myself."

Tom's passion for discovery also shaped his philanthropy. He looked for a meaningful way to support American Ancestors. After learning about the volunteer program—an initiative that plays a vital role in advancing research, collections, and member services—he began making generous annual contributions to sustain that work.

Before his passing, Tom shared his philanthropic priorities with Mary. In keeping with his wishes, she worked with American Ancestors to establish a permanently endowed fund in his memory, ensuring a lasting impact on the volunteer program for generations to come.

The fund is named in honor of Helen Herzer, who served American Ancestors for many years as Volunteer Coordinator. Through her thoughtful leadership, she expanded the scope and professionalism of the volunteer program. American Ancestors remains deeply grateful for her dedication, which continues to shape the volunteer experience today.

Through The Helen Herzer Volunteer Endowed Fund, Tom Carlson's passion for discovery—and his belief in the power of volunteers—will continue to support the work of American Ancestors for generations to come. 

To contribute to The Helen Herzer Volunteer Endowed Fund, or to explore creating your own endowed fund, please contact Ted MacMahon, Vice President for Gift Planning, at ted.macmahon@americanancestors.org or 617-549-0300.

The Henry Bond Society

The Henry Bond Society recognizes those donors who have invested in the future of American Ancestors through their estate plans. It is named for Dr. Henry Bond, a preeminent genealogist known for his work on the history of Watertown, Massachusetts, and who left American Ancestors its first bequest in 1859.

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Italics indicate members of the Ashburton Circle, named for the site of the first permanent home of American Ancestors, who have given irrevocable gifts to American Ancestors.

*Deceased

The Legacy Society

Dr. Henry Bond led the way for hundreds of estate gifts since his bequest was received in 1859. The Legacy Society memorializes the past members of the Henry Bond Society whose thoughtful estate planning has resulted in generous contributions. American Ancestors continues to grow and thrive as it has since 1845 thanks in large part to those who ultimately made their final and most significant act of generosity. These investments into our future will ensure that family history is preserved, advanced, and made accessible for future generations of genealogists.

We are humbled and honored to recognize the following individuals whose estates contributed \$2,841,519 since September 1, 2024.

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Thank you to our supporters!

We gratefully acknowledge gifts from the following generous individuals, foundations, corporations, and societies in support of our operations and programs during the fiscal year 2025, September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025. These committed donors provided essential funding for American Ancestors' many accomplishments outlined in this report. Thank You!

During fiscal year 2025, American Ancestors received 4,680 gifts totaling \$9,922,027 to support current programs.

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Gifts herein were made between September 1, 2024, and August 31, 2025, unless otherwise specified. We have made every effort to ensure accuracy in this Annual Report. We apologize for any inadvertent error. Please notify Stacie Madden at 617-226-1217 or stacie.madden@americanancestors.org to report any corrections.

Member Spotlight



Ross Gamble Perry

Ross Gamble Perry is a retired senior vice president and managing director of the private wealth division at SunTrust Bank and was president general of the Society of the Cincinnati 2013-16. He has been an Individual Member since 1999 and resides in Arlington, Virginia.

In 1987, the bank where I was employed at the time moved me to Washington, DC, and this gave me the opportunity to work on my family history with all the resources in the area. I've always had a love of history, and genealogy gave me the link between my family and the events in our shared history. I soon discovered that my lineage was 75% New England, and while I could build the big picture in Washington, there were many gaps that needed more local information. The internet was just developing, and my best tool was Everton's Genealogical Helper (remember that?).

On my next business trip to Boston, I went to the now known as Brim-DeForest Library just to kick the tires. Wow, I still remember the first encounter. Open stacks, extensive manuscripts and archives, and extremely helpful and supportive staff. I was hooked and made many return trips. Over time I was able to fill in most of my gaps, identify my Perry line back to Hertfordshire in the early 1500s, and document my Society of the Cincinnati line. Robert (Bob) Charles Anderson was particularly helpful.

As I rose in the leadership of the Society of the Cincinnati, I started to become aware of how well-run American Ancestors was as a business entity. The banker in me appreciated the growth and efficiency of the organization, and I started to ask questions of those I knew in the American Ancestors leadership team so that I could understand and perhaps emulate some of their best practices with the Cincinnati. Brenton Simons, Ryan Woods, David Trebing, and Jennifer London were patient and helpful with my many rookie questions, and they encouraged my continued interest.

My final step was to understand and endorse the vision of American Ancestors, how they rebranded from NEHGS to American Ancestors and expanded and embraced their mission to include all Americans. The Society of the Cincinnati was embarking on a similar journey as we developed the American Revolution Institute to reach beyond our 4,400 lineage members and advance the message of the importance of the American Revolution to all 340 million Americans. I had numerous talks with American Ancestors leaders on this topic, and all were open and incredibly supportive.

So, it was almost an anti-climax when Brenton asked me to join the Council in 2022. I had been a member for years for my personal genealogy, and had learned about and appreciated the organization for its business success and vision for a decade. I'm honored to be part of the team, and look forward to continued support and engagement. 🍷

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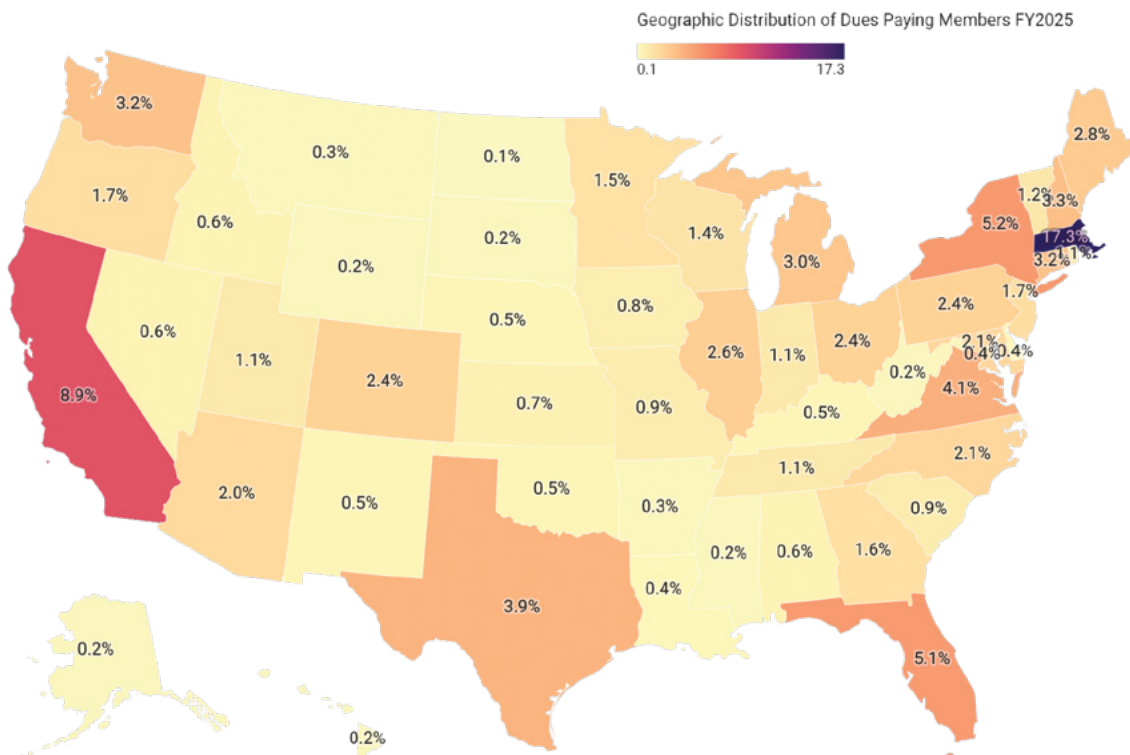
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Volunteers

Over the fiscal year 2025, 180 volunteers donated 17,327 hours, equal to 8 full-time staff years.

In quarter 1, American Ancestors had 155 volunteers, who donated 4,159 hours, assisting with a variety of projects across activity areas. In September 2024, members of the Committee on Heraldry and additional volunteers logged significant hours on tasks related to hosting the successful International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences; altogether, they donated 284 hours. The Committee on Heraldry meets quarterly to review and act on all requests for registration of coats of arms and other projects and queries requiring committee discussion and consensus. All members review docketed cases and lend expertise in meetings. Committee officers spend additional time on writing and editing heraldic publications (as volunteers); reading, researching, and answering queries on heraldic topics which come into American Ancestors; and doing administrative tasks for the committee itself.

In quarter 2, American Ancestors had 134 volunteers, who donated 4,116 hours. Web team volunteers, managed by Zobeida Chaffee-Valdes, accounted for 50 individuals, or 37% of the share of hours, and donated 2,809 hours or 68% of the total accounted hours. Web volunteers assisted with digitizing records, indexing genealogical information from them, and proofreading indexed records.

In quarter 3, 168 volunteers across the organization donated 4,800 hours. With the grand re-opening of the Brim-DeForest Library in April, Research & Library Services volunteers returned to the building and spent time shelving and organizing books; volunteers who remained off-site continued working on the Family Registers and Bible Records project managed by June Henry. In this quarter, Research & Library Services volunteers donated a total of 564 hours, a 126% increase from quarter 3 in the prior year.



In quarter 4, American Ancestors had 158 volunteers, who donated 4,252 hours. In this quarter, the Web team had two interns from the Family History program at Brigham Young University, Kaitlin Tyler and Jennifer Huntington. Kaitlin scanned books and assisted in scanning some of the York Rite Mason Card collection. Jennifer helped index poor records from New Bedford, MA and Franklin Township, NJ, which will be part of two upcoming databases. Web volunteers assisted in 11 separate projects in FY 2025. In this quarter, the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center had four interns, representing Clark University, Skidmore College, Brandeis University, and Phillips Exeter Academy. JHC interns processed archival collections and encoded finding aids, helped inventory archival items, assisted with the Jewish American Heritage Month event, the JHC open house, and the annual benefit dinner, processed education session feedback forms, worked on outreach lists, labeled digitized archival images for marketing purposes, and digitized and created metadata for 25 folders from the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society Boston Port Records, I-96.

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Assistant Archivist

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Todd Pattison

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Digital Archivist

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10 Million Names

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Staff Milestones

25 years

Steven Shilcusky

20 years

Rhonda R. McClure

10 years

Ellen Maxwell

Curt DiCamillo

Cécile Engeln

5 years

Amanda Opalenik

Angela Napolitano

Matthew Macy

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