Getting Started in Family History

**Start at home:**
- Talk to your oldest living relatives and ask about names of parents, siblings, grandparents, and more.
- Explore or inquire about family Bibles, photo albums, newspaper clippings, and scrapbooks can also yield interesting information.

**Stay organized:**
- Use a pedigree chart, family group sheets and timeline to record facts. (Example on back)
- Use a research log to keep track of sources reviewed.
- Always cite the source of information and proof of relationships and dates.
- Use a software or online program to keep track and print out research.
- View our MOOC for examples and printable charts: https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/ghl/genealogy/roots-mooc

**Things to know:**
- Always start with self and work backwards in time, death to birth.
- Research the FAN (Friends/Family, Associates, and Neighbors) club to find missing information.
- Locations are important for finding records on city, county, and state level. Remember boundary lines can change putting a place in different counties through time, refer to a Gazetteer for the geographical history of an area.
- Note historical events that occurred during the ancestor’s lifetime.
- Check sources for all spelling variations. Examples: Smith, Smithe, Smyth, Smythe

**Begin your search:**
- Federal and State Censuses
- Vital Records – NC births and deaths after October 1913, marriages
- Court Records – minutes, wills, estates
- Transactions – grants, deeds, taxes
- Military Service – militia lists, service records, pensions

**How the Government and Heritage Library can help:**

**Resources**
- Catalog: ghl.nccardinal.org
- Published family histories and family files
- Indexes and Abstracts of original records (Not just NC)
- State and County histories
- North Carolina Newspapers
- Databases
- NC Legal History

**Services**
- Knowledgeable staff
- Book a Librarian - One on one assistance by appointment, call or go online to book.
- Borrow materials
- Remote assistance
  - Chat: statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/ghl
  - Text: 919-887-9495
  - Email: slnc.reference@ncdcr.gov

**Please feel free to ask for help at any time.**
We will be happy to point you in the right direction!