

## Family History Interest Group Annual Report 2024-25

Craig Swan and Lynn C. Anderson co-chair the Family History Interest Group (FHIG) for UMRA. In 2024-25 we offered five programs from 10-11 a.m. on Wednesdays via Zoom. Attendance ranged from 15 to 40. We had announcements about our programs in the UMRA Newsletters and sent emails to all UMRA members a month and a week before each program. After each presentation we had 10-15 minutes for discussion and Q and A. Each of our programs was recorded and is available for viewing on the UMRA website FHIG page and many of them are also on the UMAA Gold Mind website.

October 6, 2024

“An African-American Family History.” Earl and Rebecca Scott drew from their book *Forging a Path to Wellbeing: The Journey of an African American Family*. The book starts with establishing their family ancestry. The challenges are quite different for families whose history involves de facto and later de jure segregation and where official records are often unavailable due to slavery and loss, e.g., fire.

January 8, 2025

"Out of the Basement & Into the Museums and Archives." Vicki Gaylord shared her experiences identifying family belongings that have historic value outside the family, and donating them to museums and archives.

“You Never Know What You Might Discover.” Craig Swan talked about how an unexpected DNA match led to new family discoveries including tales of sex, sin and scandal.

March 5, 2025

Will Craig and Laura Ericksen discussed how they research family history using local and virtual resources.

April 2, 2025

Barbara Brandt's presentation “Finding Almira Fifield (1833-1863) of Valparaiso, Indiana” her relative who, although trained as a MD could only serve in the Civil war as a nurse. Due to Barbara's efforts, Almira has been recognized but he state of Indiana and named a “Distinguished Hoosier in History.”

May 7, 2024

The May meeting is an open discussion among FHIG participants. Everyone shares questions, insights, new resources, challenges, and we request ideas for topics for the coming year.