

# WMGS List of Virtual Resources

**Note:** The libraries, museums, historical societies, archives, and historical sites listed below, were previously featured in the WMGS newsletter. Enjoy exploring them from the comfort of your home!

## Virtual Massachusetts & New England Museums & Archives

### Amherst Historical Society

<https://amhersthistory.org/>

Archived videos of their popular lunchtime History Bites lecture series, links to online books and documents pertaining to Amherst's history, links to city directories from 1889-1923, several films related to local farming and the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Morrill Land Grant Act to establish the University of Massachusetts.

### Berkshire Museum – Pittsfield, MA

This site offers digital experiences that differ from our other selections. From virtual narratives, to podcasts, to stories of legendary locals, to exploring myths, it's a fun website to explore.

<https://explore.berkshireremuseum.org/art-of-the-hills-narrative>

### Chicopee Public Library- new website

<https://www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org/archives/>

New online scrapbook collections, including the 1938 flood, 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary parade, summer baseball in the 1950's, Camp MacArthur, events at Westover, and WWII images

Collections include historic photographs, city directories, Fisk Tire company photographs, stereographs, Duryea Magazine ad collection, a Civil War Soldier's record and documents, Skipmunk magazine, created by local authors and high school students, 1977-1981, and more.

### Commonwealth of Massachusetts State House – Boston, MA

<https://malegislature.gov/VirtualTour>

Tour the Great Hall, Senate Chamber, Office of the Speaker of the House and more, including pictures and descriptions of artifacts, documents

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### **Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association- Deerfield, Massachusetts**

The societies, *American Centuries: Views from New England*, site features a digital collection of objects and transcribed documents from the Deerfield Memorial Hall Museum and Library. Images of early American art, family life, work, leisure, military, religion, and even rituals are available for browsing. The website covers a broad selection of topics, from Native American and African American presence in the area, to Shays' Rebellion and the American Revolution, the Civil War, to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The website is geared to a variety of age-levels, with many resources for young children and educators. It's a great website to explore with younger family members, as well.

<http://americancenturies.mass.edu/>

### **Fitchburg Historical Society – Fitchburg, MA**

Explore the online archives that tell the story of one of Massachusetts earliest 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial cities. Located in Worcester County, Fitchburg attracted many immigrants to work in the mills located there. Watch episodes of their "I Remember When" video series.

<https://www.fitchburghistoricalsociety.com/>

### **Freedom Trail- Boston, MA**

Take virtual tours of early Boston, including the Old South Meeting House, King's Chapel, Park Street Church, Paul Revere's House, King's Chapel Burial Grounds, Massachusetts State House, USS Constitution and its museum, the MA 54<sup>th</sup> Regiment Memorial, Faneuil Hall, Copp's Hill Burying Ground, Granary Burial Ground, Old North Church, and more.

<https://www.nps.gov/bost/virtual-freedom-trail-tour>

### **Historic Deerfield**

Join their email list to view short video tours of Historic Deerfield and their collections and to learn about upcoming virtual events and tours.

<https://www.historic-deerfield.org/>

### **Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum – Hadley, MA**

Head to the online site of the Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum in Hadley, MA for a fascinating tour of this 18<sup>th</sup> century homestead. The collections on this website are a bit more academic, but you'll find many articles of interest, including information on the Connecticut River Byway that helped to shape our region.

<https://www.pphmuseum.org/>

### **Historic Northampton**

Historic Northampton has several collections of historical material related to Northampton and the surrounding area, including photographs, maps, atlases, and Northampton State Hospital information. Their website includes virtual exhibits, online research material, and digital collections.

<https://www.historicnorthampton.org/>

**Update:** We're not sure if Historic Northampton has recently updated their website or if we didn't notice these items before, but we're duly impressed by the virtual activities and resources that are available on their website.

In the History at Home section, you can have fun doing an interactive activity to find out how you would fare in a 1600's witchcraft trial in Northampton. Or, move to the 1700s and take a tour of the prayer requests made to minister Jonathan Edwards to find out what Northampton residents were thinking. Test your 1700's spelling know-how while you're there or learn some interest details of clothing items.

Browse their online resources, such as maps, early editions of the Hampshire Gazette, original plans for the Bridge Street cemetery where the earliest residents were buried, inscriptions on grave stones at the cemetery, or tour the Parsons house and examine inventories of other historic houses. You'll also find early photos and description of buildings at Northampton State Hospital from 1865 through the 1960's, along with photo collections by other notable early photographers.

<https://www.historicnorthampton.org/>

### **Holyoke Public Library – celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020**

An online presentation of the library's history is available at:

<http://www.holyokelibrary.org/>

Two recorded lectures are now available:

**A Case Study of French-Canadian Genealogy** with Jack Keane

**The Newton Brothers: Building Industrial Holyoke, 1862-1899**

**with Will Melton**

<http://www.holyokelibrary.org/historynews.asp>

### **John Adams Historical Museum- Adams National Historical Park, Quincy, MA**

Take a virtual tour of both John Adams and John Quincy Adams' birthplaces, America's first father and son presidents at this national historical park and see some of the artifacts and collections associated with this family.

<https://www.nps.gov/adam/index.htm>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/adams-national-historical-park>

### **Lawrence History Center – Lawrence, MA**

Lawrence, MA is often known as the “Immigrant City,” as many of our ancestors were drawn to this area to work in the huge mill complexes.

You’ll find an overview of the city, early city maps, and a history of the Industrial Revolution that led to the development of this city. Explore the online resources and learn about the Bread and Roses Strike of 1912 that may have impacted our ancestors throughout our country.

<http://www.lawrencehistory.org/>

### **Lost New England**

This blog-site contains a database of photographs of New England, searchable by place or topic.

<https://lostnewengland.com/>

### **Maine State Archives Bicentennial Projects**

The Maine Virtual Reality experiences lets you tour several historical places in Maine, including the State House, Fort Knox State Historic Site, West Quoddy Head Lighthouse and Park, and Old Fort Western in Augusta. Images and documents from the Maine State Archives relating to the state’s history and an extensive list of historical material is included in its Digital Collections. There’s also a helpful list of historical societies in Maine, along with links to them.

<https://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/bicentennialmsa.html>

### **Massachusetts Historical Society**

<http://www.masshist.org/>

Fascinating collection of material about the various time periods in our history, starting from the colonial period up to the present.

### **Museum of Our Industrial Heritage, Greenfield, MA**

If you are researching Franklin County ancestry, you’ll enjoy this site.

<http://industrialhistory.org/exhibits/>

### **New Haven Museum & Historical Society– New Haven, CT**

Head south to our neighboring state to discover many resources on an area founded by the Puritans as the New Haven Colony.

<https://www.newhavenmuseum.org/>

### **Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA**

<https://www.nrm.org/fromthearchives/>

Virtual exhibitions, videos of the museum experience, an online gallery, and a lovely collection of Storybooth sessions of immigrant experiences.

### **Old Sturbridge Village**

Take a virtual tour of Old Sturbridge Village to learn what life would have been like for your ancestors in the 1830's.

<https://www.osv.org/>

### **Palmer Public Library**

Vital Records of Palmer to 1850, town and school reports from 1852 to 1908, digital copies of the Palmer Journal newspaper begun in 1850, the History of Palmer (pub. 1889), *Inscriptions of Two Ancient Cemeteries* (pub. 1902), *Pictorial Palmer* (pub. 1896), and more.

[www.palmerlibrary.org/services/local-history-eresources/](http://www.palmerlibrary.org/services/local-history-eresources/)

### **Pioneer Valley History Network**

A Western Massachusetts treasure, the Pioneer Valley History Network is a consortium of non-profit institutions, including museums, historical associations, and libraries with historical collections. The network serves as a resource both for the institutions and the general public. Their website features links to the various institutions, a blog, recent collaborative projects, and an historic resources guide. You can also learn about upcoming events in the region on their website or sign up to have notifications for them sent directly to your email account.

<https://pioneervalleyhistorynetwork.org/>

### **Plimoth Plantation- Plymouth, MA**

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Visit the early 17<sup>th</sup> century Pilgrim village and witness the day to day life of a Wampanoag homesite.

<https://www.plimoth.org/learn/plimoth-online-historyhome/virtual-field-trip>

### **Plymouth 400<sup>th</sup> 1620-2020**

400 years of Wampanoag history is offered by the non-profit Plymouth 400<sup>th</sup>, Inc. through a long list of videos. The Wampanoags were the first tribe encountered by the Pilgrims when they landed in Provincetown harbor.

<https://www.plymouth400inc.org/our-story-exhibit-wampanoag-history/>

### **Porter-Phelps-Huntington House Museum – Hadley, MA**

This well-preserved 18th century home and estate is the heart of a large farmstead known as “Forty Acres” that stretched from the Connecticut River to the top of Mount Warner in No. Hadley. The home, occupied by one family for over 300 years, contains many of their belongings and collections.

<https://www.pphmuseum.org/>

### **Quabbin Park Cemetery**

This website includes a short virtual tour, map, and historical pictures collection of the cemetery, which was created in the early 1930’s to hold the remains of 6,601 graves that were removed before the creation of the Quabbin reservoir.

Be sure to check out the handout from our Oct. 2, 2019 presentation on the cemetery for more information.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/quabbin-park-cemetery#quabbin-cemetery-guided-tour>

### **Revolution Happened Here: What Happened in Your Town?**

As we approach the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Revolution, the Pioneer Valley History Network has partnered with local history organizations to create a collaborative website presenting historical resources about the American Revolution. Information and material are contributed by historical organizations and museums throughout the Pioneer Valley.

Check back often to view the new items and resources as they are added to the website.

<https://revolutionhappenedhere.org/>

### **Salem Witch Museum – Salem, MA**

This tour allows you to view sites around Essex and Middlesex counties that are related to the Salem Witch events of 1692. There are over 120 links to museums, historical societies, cemeteries, and historical markers in the cities and towns associated with key figures in the trials. Included is a link to a list of resource material and helpful websites.

<https://salemwitchmuseum.com/witch-trials-online-tour/>

### **Joseph Allen Skinner Museum – So. Hadley, MA**

Short tour of the museum founded by the famed industrialist and owner of the Skinner Silk Mills.

<https://artmuseum.mtholyoke.edu/tour-skinner-museum>

### **Springfield Preservation Trust**

This site has many resources including the WPA Image Project and digitized copies of books about Springfield, MA.

<https://www.springfieldpreservation.org/>

### **Springfield-History.com**

Billed as a virtual historical society for Springfield, MA, this blog-site contains user-submitted material and links to a variety of historical material.

<http://springfield-history.com/>

### **Stanley Park Webcams – Westfield, MA**

View live activity at the Covered Bridge, International Bridge, and the Ozzie Memorial. View pictures of the colonial-era village, greenhouse, and gardens to delight your senses between your ancestor searches.

<https://www.stanleypark.org/webcams.html>

### **Strawberry Banke Museum – Portsmouth, NH**

Time travel through almost 400 years of the Puddle Duck neighborhood, established in along a tidal inlet in Portsmouth in 1623.

<https://www.strawberybanke.org/virtual-tour.cfm>

### **Swift River Valley Historical Society – New Salem, MA**

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This society helps to preserve the history of the four towns which now lie beneath the Quabbin Reservoir - Dana, Prescott, Enfield, and Greenwich. Though the society does not have collections available online, the site contains links to many interesting videos, documentaries, old photographs, and oral histories of former inhabitants of these towns.

<https://swiftrivermuseum.org/>

### **Vermont History Center – Barre, VT**

The Vermont Historical Society has a variety of collections on their website, including transcriptions of diaries and manuscripts written by early citizens and Civil War diaries. There's also a partner site, Digital Vermont, offering many more resources, including some of the earliest known images taken in Vermont. Be sure to check out each site

<https://vermonthistory.org/digital-resources/>

<https://digitalvermont.org/>

### **Westfield Athenaeum**

Browsable online collection includes an impressive array of material related to the Woronoco Indians, early maps, early records of Westfield's settlers, documents, town meetings, ministers' sermons, and military documents.

<https://www.westath.org/>

The library website now has a series of local history presentations called "History Chats" by Robert Brown, Ph.D. retired WSU professor, with more being added monthly.

<https://www.westath.org/events/virtual-events>

### **Wistariahurst – Holyoke, MA**

The Wistariahurst Museum in Holyoke has an extensive collection of historical material to add to your ancestors' stories. Here are two: Online collection of Holyoke postcards Online history exhibits including the Holyoke Street Railway, Wm. Skinner & Sons silk manufacturing, Holyoke & Pioneer Valley history resources

<https://wistariahurst.org/>

### **Worcester Historical Museum**

Online collection of Worcester city directories, city directories, Worcester magazine (1901-1914), historical photos, and items from the Worcester Society of Antiquity Collection



<http://digitalworchester.com/>

## United States Virtual Museum & Archive Tours

### American Battlefield Trust – Washington, D.C.

<https://www.battlefields.org>

Tours, videos, and historical resources about the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War

### Colonial Williamsburg

Feel like you're at Colonial Williamsburg! Tour the Capitol, Governor's Palace, and art museums. You can even participate in a virtual scavenger hunt

<https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/learn/virtual-tours>

### Ellis Island- New York

View the Great Hall, baggage room, hospital, and dormitories where our ancestors may have first stepped on American soil. Take a 360-degree tour of the island, view historic photos, explore the museum, and search for your family in the Family History Center.

<https://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/photosmultimedia/virtual-tour.htm>

<https://www.statueofliberty.org/ellis-island/national-immigration-museum/>

### Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York City

This site provides a fascinating glimpse of life in ethnic immigrant communities in New York City in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries through virtually guided tours of two tenement buildings. In addition, there are featured stories of immigrant families into the 1950's.

<https://www.tenement.org/about-us/>

### Museum of the American Revolution – Philadelphia, PA

Take a virtual 360 degree, immersive tour of a large number of galleries at the museum.

<https://www.amrevmuseum.org/>

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**Mount Vernon – Mount Vernon, VA**

<https://virtualtour.mountvernon.org/>

**National Archives – Washington, DC**

<https://www.archives.gov/research>

**Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History – Washington, D.C.**

Where to begin? There’s so much available here.

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/online>

**Statue of Liberty- New York**

<https://www.nps.gov/stli/learn/photosmultimedia/virtual-tours.htm>

## **International Museum & Archive Tours**

**American Pilgrim Museum – Leiden, Netherlands**

Located in a beautifully preserved house built ca 1365-1370 near the clock tower of the Hooglandskerk, the Leiden American Pilgrim museum tells the stories of the founders of New England, the Pilgrims. Furnishings from Pilgrim times show aspects of daily life, while events involving the Pilgrims themselves are illustrated with a remarkable collection of sixteenth and seventeenth-century maps and engravings by such artists as Gerard Mercator, Adrian van de Venne, Adriaen van Ostade, and Jacques de Gheyn.

<http://leidenamericanpilgrimmuseum.org/index.htm>

**Virtual Tours of Ireland**

Celebrate St. Patrick’s Day by exploring the beautiful country of Ireland. Choose from a long list of historical venues to tour.

<https://www.virtualvisittours.com/>

**Discover Paris, France**

<https://en.parisinfo.com/what-to-do-in-paris/info/guides/virtual-visit-paris>

**McCord Museum – Montreal, Canada**

View online collections of items related to Canadian culture, including items related to the daily lives, work, and leisure activities of residents from Quebec province and throughout the country. Then, check out the historical and genealogical material in their archives.

<https://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/keys/collections/>

**Papal Basilica of Saint Peter, Vatican City, Rome**

[http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/san\\_pietro/vr\\_tour/index-en.html](http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/san_pietro/vr_tour/index-en.html)

**Quebec City – Quebec, Canada**

This site offers a long list of virtual tours of Quebec City and heritage sites, including Montmorency Falls, the Ursuline Monastery, and tour Old Quebec, a UNESCO World Heritage treasure.

<https://www.quebec-cite.com/en/what-to-do-quebec-city/virtual-tour>

**Rothenburg, Germany 360 degree virtual tours**

[https://www.panorama-cities.net/rothenburg\\_ob\\_der\\_tauber/rothenburg\\_ob\\_der\\_tauber\\_germany.html](https://www.panorama-cities.net/rothenburg_ob_der_tauber/rothenburg_ob_der_tauber_germany.html)

**European Christmas markets and holiday attractions**

<https://www.official-esta.com/information/reports/virtually-tour-famous-attractions>

**Santa Claus Village in Rovaniemi in Lapland, Finland**

Live webcam is available at:

<https://santaclausvillage.info/video/arcticcircle-live-webcam/>

## Other Resources

**Franco American Portal Project: Beta**

This is a new collaborative five university project focusing on archival material related to French-Canadian, Quebecois(e), and Acadian diaspora communities in the Northeast. In its initial stages, the free public database will bring together archival material from around the world. The beta test version is available now.

<https://beta.francoamericanportal.org>

**History Hub**

A research support community for genealogists, historians, and citizen archivists, History Hub is maintained by the National Archives. If you have a research question, are looking for specific documents to help your genealogical research, or find blog posts related to your topic, check out this site.

<https://historyhub.history.gov/welcome>