# A daylong exploration of genealogy resources
featuring experts in researching and preserving family history

We were looking for a signature event for an adult audience and chose genealogy because of its universal appeal and popularity, especially with the advances in DNA research.

The response from the public was extremely positive and we quickly "sold out" the 60 available spaces. However, our event was time consuming to plan, taking a 5 member team over 3 months to get it organized, and on the expensive side. There are ways, however, that you could cut costs.

Important Planning Considerations
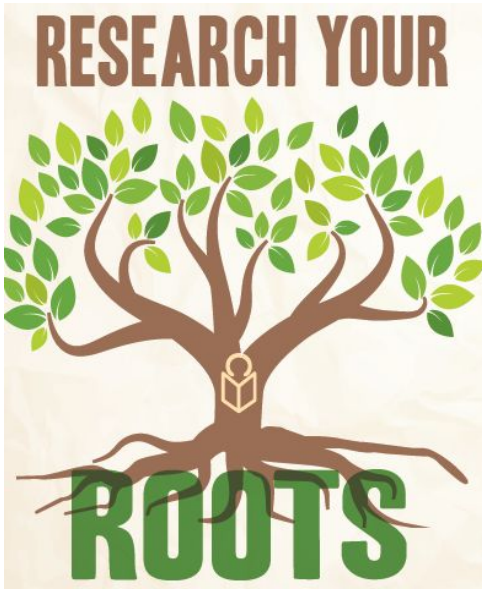
Decide on the type of program(s) to be offered:
We had a number of options: a short term weekly or monthly series, random individual programs, each on a single day, or a full weekend (Saturday and Sunday) conference. In the end, we opted for a single day workshop of 4 sessions, plus lunch and an end of the day Q&A session.

Choose interesting and varied topics:
We wanted to offer a topic of interest for the newbie as well as a seasoned amateur genealogist. We designated 2 sessions for general topics, as well as one for organizing and storing your collected material, and one on DNA and its role in genealogical research.

Choose your speakers:
We checked out the Genealogical Speakers Guild, asked for recommendations from the genealogy librarian at the New Jersey State Library, and attended at least one of the speaker's programs.

Cost:
We paid each of the three speakers (one speaker gave two presentations). Two were in-state and did not have additional travel expenses. One needed transportation costs and hotel accommodations covered. Lunch was a catered boxed lunch from Panera. We used funds from the library's programming budget along with contributions from our partners, The Historical Society of Princeton and the National Endowment for the Humanities, to cover the costs. The program was free for participants. Our total budget was $1400 for the day.

How many to host?
Our limit was 60 which was the number of people we could seat at tables in our largest programing space. If you have a bigger venue then there would be no need to limit to this amount. Registration was required.

What we would do differently next time:
The day was too long! Most people stayed the entire time but 3 sessions would have been enough. The organizing session could have been longer and slower. The talk on DNA was the most popular and we should have had it earlier in the day. Provide more time for mingling, allowing attendees to interact with each other and the presenters.

Ways to Cut Costs:
-- Seek local experts who will talk for free or reduced rates or use staff with expertise
-- Schedule the day so you don't need to provide a lunch
-- Use a library venue so you don't have additional rental fees

For more information contact: Gayle Stratton, Princeton Public Library, gstratton@princetonlibrary.org

Photos from the day, including speakers and room layout.