



**Xenia Stanford** is an award-winning writer, award-winning editor, popular genealogical speaker and highly regarded researcher. She is a professional genealogist with over 40 years' experience. She has written many articles for genealogy magazines and was the editor of the Alberta Family Histories Society journal *Chinook*, when it twice won the National Genealogical Society Newsletter Competition. She also won an international writing competition and has authored several books including a memoir, the sold out "Pigtail Times at Taimi: True Tales from My One-Room School." As well she has written many family histories for her family and for others. She also has edited professional books and articles for authors around the world and ghost-written and/or edited many books for North American authors. For more, see <https://familyrootstracer.com/about/>

## ***EASTERN EUROPE***

### ***Use Ten Steps to Smash through Brick Walls in Eastern European Genealogy***

This step-by-step guide will assist you in tracing your Eastern European ancestors. Countries covered include the former Austria-Hungarian Empire and former USSR, such as Poland, Ukraine, Russia (e.g. Germans from Russia). When the Berlin Wall came crashing down, genealogists looked forward to much easier experiences in finding their ancestors in these countries. For many, hopes were dashed because these are still among the most difficult countries for access to records —difficult but not impossible when you follow these steps. Level: All

### ***Overcome Challenges in Finding Elusive Roots in Eastern Europe***

Searching for your Eastern European roots is complicated and can be intimidating. There are many changes to borders and jurisdictions over time. There are 30 different languages from Albanian to Yiddish, written in various foreign scripts and changed in dialects from region to region and from earlier times than now. Add to that multiple ethnicities, religions and calendars. Yet all these challenges can be overcome without you having to learn 30 languages, all the differing scripts and every dialect. You will learn strategies to find records, interpret records and discover your elusive roots. Level: All

**Note:** *the above two talks cover similar material. The step by step one covers basic challenges and solutions while the other takes a broader view.*

### ***Locate and Use Emigration and Immigration Records for Your Eastern European Ancestors***

Knowing the ins and outs of migration records can lead you to uncover another layer of understanding of your ancestors' lives. You will learn the differences between emigration and immigration. Also, you will discover how to find migration records including and beyond passengers' lists. Even if you have already found a passenger list for your migrant ancestor, you will find out why you should not stop looking because more records may be waiting to be uncovered with additional important details. Further, you will be shown the possible shipping routes that may surprise you. You will leave knowing more and having possible leads to uncovering migration records that await you.

### ***Find Your Ancestral Place of Origin in Eastern Europe***

Using gazetteers, atlases, guidebooks and maps including online and Google maps can help you find your ancestors' place of origin in Eastern Europe. First you will learn what records can give you clues to place names. Then you will be shown how to make sure you have the right location. Knowing variant spellings of place names, differences in languages, changing borders and differing jurisdictions over time will help you pinpoint the place your ancestors originated so you can visit the right village, discover the records you need and perhaps find living relatives. I did and so can you!

## **MILITARY RECORDS**

### ***War and Peace: Access Austrian Military Records to Flesh Out Lives of Your Eastern European Ancestors***

Every able-bodied man in Eastern Europe had to spend a minimum of two years compulsory service. Not only did the records include vital facts for the soldier but that of his wife and children if he was married during his service period. This happened even during peace, not that there was much peace in the region.

You also can learn height, complexion, eye and hair colour and distinguishing features to flesh out your ancestor's appearance. Don't miss out! Learn how to use this amazing resource.

### ***Uncover War Records at Home and Abroad***

Eastern Europe has always been in conflict resulting in changing borders and jurisdictions. Many became enemy aliens in Canada. In country of origin other records were Nazi "internal passports" with ancestor charts for three to five generations back. There are lists of those incarcerated in Siberia, interned at prison camps and most recently leaked KGB files. Even in North America enemy alien lists and files exist to show how the war was on this continent as well. To find the men in these records is to understand how the entire family was affected.

## **DATABASE SEARCH TECHNIQUES**

### ***Beyond the Basics: Find Elusive Records at FamilySearch***

If you think all there is to familysearch is putting in names to see what pops up and then maybe restricting by place, date or family members, you may be missing the billions of documents for which this basic search won't work.

Discover the many ways to focus on what you need and skip the records that don't apply. Even find your people in records not yet indexed.

### ***Search Ancestry Like a Pro Not Like Alice in Wonderland***

You see a leaf and off you go following it down a rabbit hole but learn it is not a leaf on your family tree. Don't write off Ancestry.com (.ca) as only other people's family trees. There are billions of records that you may miss while running after some misleading leaf. Learn tips and tricks to make Ancestry work for you and not lead you down the rabbit hole of false information for your family.

## **SHARING FAMILY HISTORY**

### **Present Your Family History Before it is Too Late**

What use is all your research if you don't share it with your family or in some cases the world? Xenia has shared hers with others and helped many others share theirs, whether through books, memoirs, scrapbooks or wall charts. How do you know whether to publish formally, do reports from your software or use other methods? How to avoid plagiarism and ensure proper privacy are also important considerations.

### **Trace Your Roots and Share Your Story**

A workshop for you, if you are ready to start writing. Before you can write, you must do some tracing, but starting research with the end in sight is how to meet your goals. How you want to share your story affects what research you need to do. And all of that depends upon your audience and your purpose. There will be pre-workshop assignment sheets. Workshop time will focus on instruction, discussion and writing. Each participant will receive a copy of Xenia Stanford's book "Oh, What a Character!"



Xenia (in red jacket on right) leading workshop