

# FGS 2012 Conference

## Indians, Squatters, Settlers, and Soldiers In the “Old Southwest”

David E. Rencher, National Conference Chair



**B**irmingham, Alabama, is the site of the Federation of Genealogical Societies 2012 annual conference for the nation’s genealogists. FGS is proud to sponsor this event with the Alabama Genealogical Society, which will serve as the local host. Genealogists will have the opportunity to experience both an incredible conference and superb research facilities near the venue.

Genealogists and those interested in learning more about their family history from across the nation are all welcome. You do not need to be a member of a genealogical society to attend the conference and enjoy this rich learning experience.

### Alabama Genealogical Society

Our local host, the Alabama Genealogical Society ([algensoc.org](http://algensoc.org)), was chartered in 1958 and serves all sixty-seven Alabama counties. It is dedicated to preserving the history and heritage of families in Alabama. The society is proud of its multi-award-winning *AGS Magazine* that spotlights relevant genealogical information statewide. AGS past-president, Elizabeth Wells, and current first vice-president, Yvonne Crumpler, are serving as the local conference co-chairs. They will work with David E. Rencher, national conference chair to create an outstanding genealogical conference experience.

### Birmingham, Alabama

Birmingham is a late addition to the cities of the Old South—founded in 1871, the genesis of its founding interestingly enough was the intersection of two major railroads. It was an industrial center with plenty of natural resources readily available—primarily coal, iron ore, and limestone. With these resources in abundance, the area grew rapidly. During the Great Depression, residents suffered much with the downturn in the economy. However, Birmingham bounced back after World War II and has been moving forward ever since.

Centrally located in northern Alabama, Birmingham is easy to get to by any mode of transportation—something that wasn’t as easy for the early settlers of the “Old Southwest.”

- **Planes:** Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport ([www.bhamintlairport.com/](http://www.bhamintlairport.com/)) is Alabama’s largest airport and serves the greater Birmingham area. It is served by many of the nation’s major airlines including America West, American, Continental, Delta, Southwest, United Express, and US Airways.
- **Trains:** Birmingham is on the Amtrak line that runs from New York to New Orleans. The Amtrak station in Birmingham is located just blocks away from the Sheraton Hotel and the Birmingham

Convention Center (1.1 miles).

- **Automobiles:** If you plan to travel by car, Interstates 59 and 20 intersect Interstate 65 in Birmingham. As a crossroads, Birmingham is located 140 miles from Atlanta, Georgia; 214 miles from Jackson, Mississippi; 236 miles from Knoxville, Tennessee; and 206 miles from Mobile, Alabama.

### The Conference

At FGS 2012, *Indians, Squatters, Settlers, and Soldiers In the “Old Southwest,”* attendees will enjoy four terrific days of learning new tips and tricks to further their genealogy and family history. The conference is scheduled for 29 August (Wednesday) to 1 September 2012 (Saturday). You’ll want to mark your calendar with these dates and watch for additional details about the upcoming conference through all of the FGS media outlets.

FGS conferences provide a great opportunity to associate with others who are interested not only in genealogy and family history, but those with common interests in the same geographic or ethnic groups that interest you. Networking is a valuable outcome of every conference and you will want to make as many new friends as possible during these four jam-packed days of genealogical paradise. Numer-

ous meal options will give you an added opportunity to make new acquaintances—reach out and have lunch with someone new! We know you'll be tempted to sit with those you already know to catch up and renew friendships, but you may be missing out on the most important clue to further your research if you don't mix and mingle!

The nation's genealogical vendors will bring their goods and services to an overflowing exhibit hall and you will be able to browse, network, and learn from a variety of experts in their field of specialty. Many genealogical vendors are outstanding genealogists in their own right and can help you understand how their product or service fills a critical void you may be experiencing in your research. Come learn from the best in the business!

### The Venue

The Conference Hotel is the recently renovated [Sheraton Birmingham](#). Attendees will enjoy the amenities of the twenty-one million dollar makeover and transformation of this strategically situated hotel adjacent to the [Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex](#). Connected by an enclosed air-conditioned over-the-street walkway, attendees will be able to enjoy the comfort of indoor temperatures in the late August heat of this beautiful Southern city.

The Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex will house all of the speaker sessions and exhibits. With all of the amenities of a well-architected facility, there will be ample space, parking, and concessions for this event. Meal functions will be held in the Sheraton Hotel.

### Research Opportunities

Attending genealogical conferences provides a perfect opportunity to squeeze in some research at nearby repositories and libraries. Birmingham provides a great selection of top-tier facilities to further your research, including:

#### Jefferson County Courthouse

716 Richard Arrington Jr. Blvd.  
North Birmingham, AL 35203  
(205) 325-5300  
Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., closed major holidays

#### Lynn-Henley Research Library— Birmingham Public Library

(adjacent to the Jefferson County Courthouse)  
2100 Park Place  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
(205) 226-3600  
[www.bham.lib.al.us](http://www.bham.lib.al.us)

Monday–Tuesday, 9:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.; Wednesday–Saturday, 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.; Sunday 2:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m., closed major holidays

#### Samford University, Harwell Davis Library—Special Collections

800 Lakeshore Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35229  
(205) 726-7248  
<http://library.samford.edu>

#### Birmingham-Southern Archives and the North Alabama Confer- ence of the United Methodist Church Archival Collection

Birmingham-Southern College  
Library  
900 Arkadelphia Road  
Birmingham, AL 35254  
(205) 226-4752

#### Wallace Community College – Genealogy Collection

801 Main Street, NW  
Hanceville, AL 35077-2000  
(256) 352-8265  
<http://www.wallacestate.edu/library/genealogy.html>  
Tuesday–Thursday, 7:30 a.m.–8:30 p.m.; Friday 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.; Saturday 8:00 a.m.–3 p.m.

#### Alabama Department of Archives and History

624 Washington Avenue,  
PO Box 300100  
Montgomery, AL 36130-0100  
(334) 334-4435  
[www.archives.state.al.us](http://www.archives.state.al.us)

For information on these and other archives in the Birmingham area see: <http://www.bbgardens.org/documents/ArchivesinAlabama.pdf>

### The Program

The program committee has received an overwhelming number of recommendations from national and local speakers from which to draw the program. From the initial review of these proposals, it is clear that the program for FGS/AGS 2012 will have something for everyone. Best of all, it will cover a number of topics that address key ethnic settlement groups and little-known records and sources for solving your toughest genealogical problems.

Speakers were encouraged to submit proposals for presentations in the following areas:

#### Fundamental

- Basic genealogical instruction
- Methodology and problem solving techniques
- Burned courthouse research



