Unlocking the Secrets of Your Family Tree

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- ✓ What is Genealogy?
- ✓ Where Do I Begin?
- ✓ Verifying Facts
- ✓ Research, Research, Research!
- ✓ Organizing Your Data
- ✓ Tricks of the Trade
- ✓ Resources

Start with YOU:

- ❖ Write down when and where were you born, raised, and the schools you attended.

- ❖ Did you receive any awards or medals? Who were your friends? What major events occurred during your lifetime? When and where were you married?

- ❖ What are your favorite memories about your parents and grandparents?

- ❖ If you have children, write down what you recall for them as well.

- ❖ Now ask the same questions about your siblings and other close relatives. This info offers clues to help you trace your family back to subsequent generations

Verifying facts with records you already have at home:

- ❖ Obituaries, wedding invitations, birth announcements are great sources to verify information

- ❖ Is there a family bible that can verify dates for deceased relatives?

- ❖ Newspaper articles, yearbooks and school or church directories are useful resources as well

- ❖ Employment records and union cards

- ❖ Military service records

- ❖ Mortgages, deeds and property taxes

- ❖ Church records (baptisms, marriages etc.)

- ❖ Citizenship papers, passports and visas

❖ Misc. records: library cards, autograph albums, greeting cards and letters

Looking for Clues:

❖ Photographs, even unidentified ones, can tell you a lot about your family.

❖ Be wary of family bibles where all of the hand-writing is in the same hand.

❖ Yearbook and class photos are a great way to identify family members.

Putting it Together:

❖ Make 2 copies of any documents provided. Keep one with you and store another off-site

❖ Organizing your records is vital to effectively tracing your family tree.

❖ Devise a system that works for you.

❖ Purchase a genealogy software program: Software Reviews Updated fall 2022:

❖ www.smarterhobby.com/genealogy/best-genealogy-software

❖ https://www.techradar.com/best/genealogy-tools

❖ Still not sure how to choose? Read this article from family Tree Magazine.
https://familytreemagazine.com/resources/software/meeting-your-match

❖ Keep original documents, memorabilia, and negatives in a safe location.

❖ Keep a detailed log of where, when, and how you find information.

❖ CITE YOUR SOURCES!

❖ Re-evaluate your findings once a year.

Tricks and Tips:

• https://archivesoutside.records.nsw.gov.au/useful-tips-for-reading-handwritten-documents

❖ Try searching for ancestors under various spellings or soundex codes or try another relative.

❖ Use free genealogy sites like Internet Archive www.archive.org and www.familysearch.org

❖ Google is only as good as your search. Try www.duckduckgo.com or www.bing.com

❖ Blank census sheets are available for every census year.

❖ Forms and worksheets are available online for free: www.familytreemagazine.com/freeforms

❖ Call the library or historical society in the town you are researching or visit their website.

❖ Don't underestimate the usefulness of books & microfilm.

Websites:

- ❖ Afrigeneas www.afrigeneas.org
- ❖ Archivegrid https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid
- ❖ Allen County Public Library www.genealogycenter.org
- ❖ Family Search www.familysearch.org
- ❖ Find-a-Grave www.findagrave.com
- ❖ Illinois Digital Archive www.idaillinois.gov
- ❖ Illinois State Archives www.ilsos.gov/departments/archives
- ❖ Illinois State Genealogical Society www.ilgensoc.org
- ❖ Internet Archive www.archive.org
- ❖ Jewish Genealogical Society www.jewishgen.org/databases
- ❖ Library of Congress www.loc.gov
- ❖ Linkpendium www.linkpendium.com
- ❖ Newberry Library www.newberry.org/genealogy
- ❖ U.S. National Archives: www.archives.gov

Genealogy Books:

- ❖ Bettinger, Blaine. *Family Tree Guide to DNA testing and Genetic Genealogy*. Family Tree Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2019
- ❖ Crow, Elizabeth Powell. *Genealogy Online*. McGraw Hill. N.Y. 2015
- ❖ Eicholz, Alice. *Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County and Town Sourcebook*. Salt Lake City, UT. Ancestry Publishing. 1992.
- ❖ Helm, Matthew. *Genealogy for Dummies*. Wiley. Hoboken, N.J. 2017
- ❖ Hendrickson, Nancy. *The Unofficial Guide to Ancestry.com*. F+W Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2014.
- ❖ McCullough, Dana. *Unofficial Guide to Familysearch.org*. Family Tree Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2015
- ❖ Morgan, George. *How to Do Everything with Your Genealogy*. 3rd Edition. McGraw Hill. N. Y. 2015.
- ❖ Scott, Kerry. *How to Use Evernote for Genealogy*. Family Tree Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2015.
- ❖ Smith, Drew. *Organize Your Genealogy: strategies and solutions for every researcher*. Family Tree Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2016
- ❖ Szucs, Lou. *The Source: Guidebook of American Genealogy*. 3rd Edition. Ancestry Publishing. Provo, UT. 2006.