



HANDOUTS TABLE OF CONTENTS October 11, 2011

Handout Introduction	Page 2
Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) Genealogy Blog	Page 4
Northwest Suburban Council of Genealogists (NWSCG) Program for November 5, 2011	Page 5
DuPage County Genealogical Society (DCGS) Program for October 19, 2011	Page 6
Computer Assisted Genealogy Group of Northern Illinois (CAGGNI) October 15, 2011 Program	Page 7
Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) November 8, 2011 Genealogy Program	Page 8
Access To 1940 Census Will Be Free When Released	Page 10
Copyright Myths	Page 13
Genealogy Software Compared	Page 15
"Genealogy in the Classroom"	Page 17
"Protecting Precious Photographic Memories"	Page 19

October 11, 2011 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our October 11, 2011 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program.

What does this really mean?

Prior to this "new" process, our program handouts would actually be paper handouts that were based on me often printing up the first page related to a web site that I wanted to mention. Then on the paper for the web site I would handwrite what things of importance are associated with the web site that the researcher should know. Maybe it was a new web site or maybe an important date related to a significant event or maybe a new database was released. Whatever it was I noted it on the paper of the first page of the web site.

The source for the vast majority of what is in the Handouts is the monthly Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Newsletter. From within this larger document I extract information on upcoming genealogy programs local to our area, important items from Dick Eastman's Online Genealogy Blog, as well as I summarize some key periodical articles of interest that I think are important to be aware of. The Handouts simply provide me with the opportunity to focus in on what I consider are important genealogical bits of information important to the researcher as well as to share my own personal thoughts on why it is of note.

You will also see a small redesign of the PDF Handout package. You will now see a Table of Contents on Page 1 listing what the following "handouts" are by topic. Within the Table of contents you can quickly access the handouts by using the hyperlinks and bookmarks that will get you quickly to your handout of interest. You will no longer have to scroll through the entire package of handouts to get to the one you want.

I also plan on use the "yellow highlight" tool within Word and highlight certain areas of these notes that I think are important to note. The visual highlighting will take your eyes to areas of importance to note. Please let me know if you think this OK or if it may be a distraction? I thought I would give it a try.

Going forward I plan on creating this document on a monthly basis that will include my notes regarding a web site of interest and a link to the web site itself.

The reader of this "handout" list can themselves then read my overview summary of the site and then link to the site directly themselves to get more details or print out what they want from site.

I will clearly identify my own comments when the handout is a combination of material that came from some other source such as Dick Eastman's blog as well as my own comments. I will indicate my comments in Italics, clearly marked so the reader can distinguish between the original verbiage and my own comments. If a handout item was completely created by me then you will see that noted at the top.

In this case, the entirety of the handout was created by me and will not be shown in Italics.

This program "Handout" information will then be uploaded to the Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Blog that is titled "Genealogy with Tony". This blog will be accessible from the library's main web site page at www.schaumburglibrary.org. Select "Local History and Genealogy" at the top of the page, then look for the icon on the Local History and Genealogy page that says "Tony's Genealogy Blog". Open the blog link and then look at the right hand sidebar of the blog and you will see the "Handouts" information. The direct web address for the blog I author is <http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com>

Here we go with the list of "handouts"!

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Handout #1 – VISIT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY GENEALOGY BLOG

I will continue to remind participants of our library’s new genealogy blog. You can access it through our library home page at www.SchaumburgLibrary.org by scrolling across the top of the first page and look for the tab that says “Local History and Genealogy”. Click on that tab and look on the right side for our library genealogy blog on the right side that says “Tony’s Genealogy Blog”.

Or you can just go directly to the blog at:

<http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com>

You will find postings on upcoming programs, both at our library, and elsewhere in the area. You will also find a myriad of other kinds of postings, especially those that I offer on “Genealogy Tips” to help make your research efforts more productive.

You will also find our Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Newsletter and our “Program Handouts” at the blog as PDF files for you to view online, or download and save to your own computer for future referral.

Please remember that the blog will be the place to retrieve the newsletter and the “handouts”. I do not plan on making paper handouts of these available for distribution at the program or for mailing to individuals.

Try to visit the blog frequently to see what is going on. Subscribe to the blog via RSS (Really Simple Syndication) and you will receive notices when a new post or comment has been made at the blog.

Our blog is the way of the future and the future is here now!

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Handout #2 – NEXT MEETING OF THE NORTHWEST SUBURBAN COUNCIL OF GENEALOGISTS ON NOVEMBER 5, 2011

PLEASE NOTE THIS IMPORTANT CHANGE FOR THIS SOCIETY. THEY ARE CHANGING THE MEETING DAY, MEETING TIME AND MEETING LOCATION FOR PROGRAMS FOR THIS SOCIETY EFFECTIVE WITH THE AUGUST 2011 PROGRAM. THIS SOCIETY WILL NO LONGER BE MEETING ON THE 3RD TUESDAY EVENING OF MONTH FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER AND JANUARY-MAY AT THE FOREST VIEW EDUCATIONAL CENTER IN ARLINGTON HEIGHTS. INSTEAD, THE SOCIETY WILL BE MEETING ON THE 1ST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH STARTING AT 10:00 AM AT THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS SENIOR CENTER LOCATED AT 1801 WEST CENTRAL ROAD IN ARLINGTON HEIGHTS. THERE IS A 30 MINUTE ROUND-TABLE HELP SESSION THAT STARTS AT 9:30 AM PRIOR TO THE ACTUAL PROGRAM.

The next meeting of the Northwest Suburban Council of Genealogists will take place on Saturday morning, November 5, 2011. The program for the morning is titled **“Polished Gems: Property Records, Cook County, Illinois”**. The speaker for the evening will be Jeanne Larzalere Bloom, CG (sm).

Jeanne Larzalere Bloom, CG(sm), is a full-time professional researcher specializing in Chicago and Cook County research, problem solving, and multi-generational family histories. She conducts research projects for government agencies, attorneys, authors, newspapers, heir-search firms, professional genealogists, family researchers. Her clients are international and include Australia, Canada, England, France, Ireland, Norway, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. On behalf of the Department of the Army and the Department of the Air Force, Jeanne searches and identifies family members of unaccounted for servicemen from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Jeanne writes articles for scholarly journals and society publications and is a frequent lecturer at conferences, workshops, and institutes. She served as the editor of a book and a newsletter. Jeanne holds a Bachelor of Arts [History] from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a second-year certificate from the University of Chicago's publishing program. She is a trustee and Treasurer of the Board for Certification of Genealogists.

Meetings are held at the Arlington Heights Senior Center at 1801 West Central Road in Arlington Heights. They begin at 10:00 AM with a Round-Table discussion/mingling time starting at 9:30 AM. They encourage people to bring their research problems, achievements or interesting tips to share with each other during the time prior to the program start. **The main portion of the meeting begins promptly at 10:00 AM.** Donations are always welcome! Coffee is available to attendees for a charge.

You may visit the society web page at for any further details on the program as well as on the society:

www.NWSCG.com

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Handout #3 – DUPAGE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEXT SOCIETY PROGRAM ON OCTOBER 19, 2011

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, October 19, 2011. The program scheduled for that evening is **“Social Networking: New Horizons for Genealogy”**. The speaker for the program will be Thomas MacEntee.

Thousands of genealogists and family historians have discovered new ways to expand and improve their genealogy endeavors using social networking, also called social media networking. Learn the basics of blogging, Twitter, Facebook, wikis and more in an easy-to-follow session that cuts through all the hype and the lingo.

Thomas MacEntee is a genealogist specializing in the use of technology and social media to improve genealogical research and as a means of interacting with others in the family history community. Utilizing over 25 years of experience in the information technology field, Thomas writes and lectures on the many ways blogs, Facebook and Twitter can be leveraged to add new dimensions to the genealogy experience. As the creator of GeneaBloggers he has organized and engaged a community of over 1,000 bloggers to document their own journeys in the search for ancestors.

This meeting will take place at the Wheaton Public Library, Lower Level Meeting Room. The address of the Library is 225 N. Cross St. in Wheaton, IL. The meeting room opens at 6:30 PM. Refreshments are available at that time. The program starts at 7 PM and will conclude by no later than 9 PM.

You may visit the society web page to find out further information about this program and other future programs the society has on their schedule at:

www.dcgcs.org

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Handout #4 – COMPUTER ASSISTED GENEALOGY GROUP OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (CAGG-NI) NEXT PROGRAM ON OCTOBER 15, 2011

The next meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, October 15, 2011 at the Schaumburg Township District Library at 10:30 AM. The program scheduled for this day is **"Google Earth for Genealogists"**. The speaker for the program will be Ralph Beaudoin.

Learn how to use this free and fantastic mapping tool to solve your genealogical problems. Find ancestral homes, identify where old photographs were taken, locate and view churches and cemeteries and much more.

You may visit the organization web page to find out further information about this program and other future programs the society has on their schedule at:

www.CAGGNI.org

Visit the group's web site noted above for information about this program as well as what CAGG-NI is all about.

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Handout #5 – SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY NEXT GENEALOGY PROGRAM ON NOVEMBER 8, 2011

Our next program is scheduled for Tuesday evening, November 8, 2011. Our guest speaker for the evening is **Jeffrey Bockman**. Jeffrey will present a program titled **"Don't Find It in the Index?"**.

If you didn't find it in the index it only means that you didn't find it in the index. Jeff will share examples from Census, Court, printed, and various online indexes, especially the online Newspaper sites.

Examples include:

- Census records: people without a last name, online indexes, Soundex: the "G" and "H" issues
- Published Family Histories where several "new" generations were added but the index was not updated.
- Court Records, printed indexes, and various online indexes
- Online Newspaper sites showing that the full text may be there while few if any of the words are indexed.
- Jeff is a genealogy lecturer and author that with the following accomplishments pertaining to genealogy:

Jeffrey Bockman has been a past speaker at our programs on numerous occasions. Some of Jeff's accomplishments include the following:

- Past five-term President of the [DuPage County \(IL\) Genealogical Society](#)
- DCGS 2010 & 2011 Conference Chair
- Chairman of the 2006 Chicagoland Genealogical Consortium
- The Local Arrangements Chair for the 2006 NGS Conference
- Prior four-term Vice President of the Illinois State Genealogical Society
- [DuPage County IL GenWeb Project](#) webmaster since Sept. 1996

He has applied his engineering, management, computer, and organizational development background to help with the analyzing, problem solving and organization of records necessary for genealogical research. He has been doing genealogical research since 1987 and has been active in societies, society management, classes, and presenting lectures since 1994.

You may visit the library's web page at:

www.SchaumburgLibrary.org

to view a Calendar of Events section of the library web page for this program and for many more non-genealogical programs offered by our library.

You can also visit the Genealogy Blog of the library that is authored by Tony Kierna. Visit the blog at <http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com> for all things related to genealogy and the genealogy programs at the Schaumburg Township District Library.

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Handout #6 – 1940 CENSUS ACCESS TO BE FREE WHEN RELEASED IN APRIL 2012

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at www.eogn.com dated September 13, 2011.

This "news" has been mentioned in previous newsletter articles but I discovered last week at the FGS conference that not everyone has "received the word." Therefore, I'll repeat the news in an attempt to tell even more people.

The 1940 U.S. census records will be released by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration on April 2, 2012. That's less than seven months from now. Best of all, the more than 3.8 million original document images containing 130 million-plus records will be available to everyone free of charge.

To be sure, not everything will be available on April 2. Not only are the records unavailable to genealogists prior to April 2, those records are also unavailable to indexers and unavailable to the companies that host the records online. **EVERYONE** gains access on April 2. The companies involved in making the records available online will require several months to digitize and index the records and then to make them available online.

I would look for the records to become available online within days but without indexes. The indexes will probably be added around June or July. If you are looking for ancestors in any town or city of significant size, you will want the indexes.

Ancestry.com has already pledged to make the 1940 census records available online free of charge through the end of 2013. One will be able to search more than 45 fields, including name, gender, race, street address, county and state, and parents' places of birth.

Other online sites also will offer the same records online, although with different indexes and with different search criteria. FamilySearch will have the records available free of charge forever.

Having different indexes is a great benefit as errors are common in all indexes. Having two or more versions of the records available makes it easy to compare one version against the other version(s), greatly increasing the probability of finding the information you seek.

You can find more information about the release of the 1940 census on the National Archives and Records Administration's website at www.archives.gov/research/census/1940/index.html

You can also find 1940 census Enumeration Districts, a census street finder, and more at Steve Morse's *One-Step Genealogy* site at <http://stevemorse.org/>

Comments by Tony Kierna

This is great news! I believe the rationale behind making the data free is to encourage new genealogy researchers to be able to access important data early on in their research. We all know that this is when we can make the most progress. I think this is a great "customer" oriented strategy so that later on those new researchers will be able to turn to other database suppliers to access data to keep moving forward with their research.

It is amazing that within only 7 months another large chunk of valuable will become available for all of us to use to discover even more about our ancestors. Ironically, as we age it won't be too long until we may actually start seeing ourselves in these valuable records! Yikes! For me that first time when I see myself will occur with the 1950 census. I know that for many of you today you may already be able to see yourselves in the 1930 census.

As Dick Eastman mentions, it appears that there will be more "indexing" of this material when it will be released. While that may seem like a duplicative pursuit, it is actually a good thing that the effort will occur. There is nothing better than a second pair of eyes to look at data, interpret it, transcribe it and index it. This will allow us to find our ancestors in one indexed version that we might not be able to do so in the other. We may see results within both that differ to only add more to our uncertainty on how to interpret.

I am also very excited over the fact that this 1940 Census will be able to be searched on 45 fields worth of data. This is a great flexible means to search that is not really in the previous censuses. When census indexing is done you can set up which fields were captured from the census itself. Previous censuses have only captured MAJOR fields of interest while ignoring all others. Obviously, the more data you want to capture in the index the longer it will take if you include all of the fields of data. So it was probably thought that to make indexing a little easier, only the key fields of the census were to be captured and indexed and not the entirety of the fields for a household.

Think how nice it would be to be able to search by an address location you may have obtained from a city directory? Maybe the 1940 census will be the first in which we will have incredible search capabilities by combining multiple fields of information that would allow us to find our ancestors in an easier manner. We will know this better come about August of 2012 when the 1940 indexed material may become available.

Also, note that "free" does not necessarily mean free forever! It looks like the data will be "free" through 2013 and then may become part of all of Ancestry.com's databases for which you will either need to subscribe to personally or use a Library version to search the data. FamilySearch appears to have indicated once the data is free it will remain so forever under their own jurisdiction of accessing the data.

Also, don't forget to access the Steve Morse website noted above. They have a nice tool on the site that will allow you to find the Enumeration District if you know of an address that an ancestor lived at. Knowing this information, you will more easily be able to zero in on the data to look for your ancestor before the indexing of the material has been completed. In other words, you will be able to browse through the records for an enumeration district prior to the names being indexed and find an ancestor in the old-fashioned manner as if you were browsing through a microfilm.

So mark your calendars for April 2, 2012 for initial release of the 1940 census data. Soon thereafter, the images should be available to browse through and within 4 to 5 months after that you can expect to be able to search the data by entering a name.

I know you can't wait!!!

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Handout #7 – COPYRIGHT MYTHS

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated September 14, 2011.

Here are a few old wives' tales that I have heard recently:

"I found the information on the Internet, so I have a right to copy it and use it on my own Web site."

"Everything on the Web is free."

"If I attribute where I found it, I can copy it and use it."

"I can use that information as long as I don't charge for it."

"The original records are public domain, so I can legally copy that information from a book, CD-ROM or Web site."

"The information was published by a non-profit organization, so I can legally republish it."

"The information was not labeled as copyright protected, so I can use it."

"You cannot copyright facts, and I am only publishing the facts."

"Well, everybody does it!"

One problem: all of the above reasons are wrong. If you republish information without permission, you may find yourself receiving an unpleasant letter from a law firm.

Under U.S. copyright laws, all content today is copyrighted unless otherwise specified. It makes no difference if the information comes from the New York Times' Web site, from a non-profit society's site, or from cousin Lew's personal Web site: you cannot copy and re-use that information without permission. It also makes absolutely no difference whether you charge money or not. Likewise, attributing the source makes no difference. Publishing someone else's material without permission is illegal.

For further details, you might want to refer to the following:
U.S. Copyright and Genealogy by Mike Goad:

<http://stellar-one.com/copyrightgenealogy/>

Copyrights & Wrongs by Mark Howells:

<http://www.oz.net/~markhow/writing/copy.htm>

Comments by Tony Kierna

It is best you understand about the copyright process sooner than later. When you read some of the myths identified by Dick Eastman, it sure sounds like many of them make sense and those will insulate you from receiving letters from lawyers about "cease and desist".

The links above will give you some good insights into this potentially dangerous situation you could find yourself into if you misuse material and do not get proper permissions to use.

*There is another source that we have as a book in our collection titled **Carmack's Guide to Copyright & Contracts : A Primer for Genealogists, Writers & Researchers**. The call number of the book in our collection is 346.0482 Carmack, S.*

I do not think you can ever be too careful when using material you have found. You never know if and when a letter may arrive in your mailbox from a legal firm. You are not really anonymous no matter how many layers of protection you have placed around yourself.

I guess you really need to put yourself in the position of the person creating something original. How would you feel if you discover your material is appearing somewhere else and you were not contacted to grant permission? Maybe your initial reaction might be that you are flattered. But that may soon change to anger. You would really like to give the person that "stole" your material a piece of your mind, or even worse! In our litigious society, you might even think about suing them. So if you may feel that way, consider the other person might feel the same.

If you want to use something that exists somewhere else, make an attempt to ask for the permission to use it. Error on the side of caution!

Thank goodness that material created by Dick Eastman is useable by those of us in the genealogical community. Dick has made it clear that we can use the material as long as we provide inclusion of a reference that the material came from Dick Eastman. You will see that in the newsletter items I create that are from his online material.

If you have any thought of using material you obtained from somewhere or somebody else, spend some time looking through the "copyright" material in the links above or from the book we have in our collection. It is not always easy to go through. Just because it is hard doesn't mean you are free from the ramifications of misuse.

Be careful. Be wise. Be knowledgeable. Be courteous.

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Handout #8 – GENEALOGY SOFTWARE COMPARED

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated September 18, 2011.

A great comparison of available genealogy software can be found on... Wikipedia. That's right, the world's largest encyclopedia contains comparisons of genealogy products, including both free and commercial programs. Software compared includes Windows, Macintosh, Linux, and web-based products.

The Wikipedia article begins at

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genealogy_software

and then you can scroll down the page to find links to a comparison of genealogy software installed locally on personal computers and to a comparison of web-based genealogy software. Explanation of many terms, including GEDCOM, are also available in the article or in articles linked to the article.

I didn't see a listing for genealogy software for handheld computers although some of the web-based programs can be used on handhelds.

You might like to read the article that begins at

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genealogy_software

Comments by Tony Kierna

Dick Eastman is a guru of technology himself. When Dick Eastman speaks on technology I listen!

Genealogy software is our friend. But what product do we use? Is free good? Is expensive better? Do I want it on my machine or in the cloud? So many questions and yet so much time we have to spend trying to answer these questions.

The links above to the Wiki contents may offer you a way to answer the numerous questions you may have on genealogy software.

Dick Eastman makes a good point about the lack of information on software for handheld or smartphones. Those are growing by leaps and bounds complicating our understanding and selection of software even more.

Each of us may be at different levels of technology sophistication. Some of us may feel comfortable with the knowledge we have, some may be clueless. If most of my experience is on a Mac or a Windows PC, my choices of software will be for what works on that equipment. If I do not yet use a smartphone or a tablet device, then I really start to begin to feel uncomfortable in that I cannot really speak to software that may be for these devices. This is where you start feeling you are "behind the curve" being unable to address what is a growing aspect of technology that you know nothing about because you do not have the device on which it will reside.

Sometimes you may just have to take a step back and go with what you know. If you have a PC, then the above information from Dick Eastman can still be very helpful. Same if you have a Mac. Most of us have a PC or a Mac. Focus on what software is available for these machines and don't worry about what is or is not available for smartphones or tablets. If you have a smartphone or a tablet, put that on your "to do" list to understand what genealogy software exists that works on these devices. Start with your own software you may be using on your PC or Mac. Often these developers don't want to be left in the dust. They have been developing software of their existing genealogy software that will work on tablets and smartphones. You do not necessarily have to abandon your existing software if you want to move on to smartphones or tablets.

It does look like you can obtain plenty of genealogy software information from the Wiki link above. I did not see one master table comparing all software together, but you should find plenty of information on a software by software package. What is identified will be by what is "free", what is "buyable", what is "on the cloud" etc. See what interests you.

I still think the best way to find out about software is to ask around. Current users are the best to give you some insights into the "good" and the "bad" about what they are using. But don't fall into the trap of "analysis paralysis" where all you are doing is researching and asking. Sometimes you just have to find a free demo or a free product or one that you purchase. The Wiki information will help you get to these categories.

Consider the Wiki link a good source to help you muddle through all things on genealogy software.

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Handout #9 – GENEALOGY IN THE CLASSROOM; GETTING YOUNG CHILDREN INVOLVED WITH FAMILY HISTORY

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the July-September 2011, Volume 37, Number 3 issue of NGS Magazine.

I thought that a good article in this issue is one titled “Genealogy in the Classroom” by Elizabeth Drembus. While the article does focus on an actual classroom setting for 6th graders, I think it has broader meaning for the rest of us to inspire our own grandchildren to learn about family history research. We can be the teacher to our grandchildren and use this article as the basis for how to go about that task. This article lays out a very good roadmap for how we can “teach” our grandchildren to take interest in and become family historians.

The goals of the author were simple. She wanted to:

- Teach the students the basics of genealogy
- Have them learn about their family history
- Introduce them to organizations and resources available to them

The author indicated that early on it appeared that the boys in the class seem to take on less interest than the girls. Over the time of the class the boys seemed to take on more interest and participated more fully. The children needed to involve their parents in order to gain access to photos in the possession of the parents of family members going back generations.

The author discovered early on in the process that there were a significant number of students that while not being hands on researchers seemed to have already heard many family history stories of previous generations from their own parents. The stories were of interest to the children but they were unclear how they were related to these people from the past.

At the beginning of the class, the “basics” were emphasized to the students as they would be for any new novice researcher. Start with yourself. They were encouraged to understand how they came to be named who they were. They described their own physical characteristics. They identified where they have lived so far in their relatively short life span to date as well as identifying the schools they had been in so far if they had been in multiple schools. They were encouraged to identify any family traditions that they have already been experiencing.

The author noted that the group was most puzzled when they were asked to think about any other family member that they resembled. Most had never thought about it and did not think they looked like any other family member. Interesting observation!

In the second session the author explored the concept of family trees and oral history. Data that they had collected with the help of their parents was now starting to be pieced together. An emphasis was placed on oral histories and obtaining them. And as always the question of who would be interviewed? The students analyzed and often came up with wanting to interview the oldest living relative they had in their families. The same analysis often goes when we are trying to interview someone to get us started with our research. The eldest have a shorter time to still be with us so they and their memories are the most vulnerable to be lost.

The author then focused on documents that would be discovered to help with the unfolding of the family history. Vital records such as birth and death certificates were emphasized. The usual Who, What, When, Where and Why were on the tips of the tongues of the students. The students really seemed excited when documents containing physical descriptions were discovered.

Census records were identified as a key source of family history information to the students. The author discussed the history of the census and why it is done. The author gave the students a blank 1910 Census form and a blank 2010 Census form so differences could be observed between the time periods. Students thought that accessing the 2010 Census data in the future would be easier but they also realized that they will not really be able to get a better feel for what life was like in 2010. The questions for 2010 were too generic in comparison to questions that were asked in 1910. Very insightful students as to the relevant information future researchers will be lacking in the 2010 Census research to be done in 2082 versus the rich questions posed in the 1910 Census.

In the last session presented to the students, the topic was on Artifacts, tangible pieces of memorabilia that families have in their possession from previous generations. The author noted that these family heirlooms could be things as Bibles, toys, clothing, dishes or just about anything that may have a story behind it. Often a baby doll may have been saved by one of the student's great-grandparents that is still in their family. The children could then visualize a connection to the past because this doll was actually used a plaything by their great-grandmother just as the student themselves may have played with a doll as a younger child.

The students then put all of the pieces together on a genealogy project using what they had learned from the course. The author was thrilled with the level of zeal shown by the students. Their sense of discovery was infectious. The parents were thrilled with seeing the effort and the results to the point that the author has been invited for a repeat genealogy teaching session next year.

I would recommend using this article as a stepping stone for your own efforts to "teach" your grandchildren about genealogy. It does not have to be done in a formal classroom setting. Keep it simple and be enthused when trying to pique the curiosity of your grandkids, but also consider trying to teach them about genealogy in somewhat of a "teaching" experience as indicated by this article and what the author did.

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Handout #10 – PROTECTING PRECIOUS PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the July-September 2011, Volume 37, Number 3 issue of NGS Magazine.

I thought that another good article in this issue is one titled “Protecting Precious Photographic Memories” by Gordon Lynn Hufford. The one thing common to all genealogists is the fact that we often have in our possession hundreds, many even thousands of “paper” pictures in our possession from the past. Some may be recent past, some may very long past, some may even go back to the origins of photography when pictures were put on materials other than paper.

The author notes that among all of those pictures we may have, some may have been taken fairly recently and they look very deteriorated already. Some may be of significant age and yet they look like they were taken yesterday. These differences may be caused due to the variance of technology in photography and photo development at the time. Kodak was the “big player” of the most recent 100 years. They are not so much anymore with the advent of digital photography, which creates its own set of problems for genealogists to be concerned about.

Kodachrome color slide film from about 1938 will retain its colors for about 40 to 50 years if stored in dark conditions. Kodacolor film introduced in 1942 shows noticeable signs of color loss within 5 to 7 years. By the 1960s color prints were showing some improvement but will still lose about 30% of their dye within 10 to 15 years even when stored in average room conditions of 75 degrees and 40% relative humidity.

The author suggests that controlling temperature is the first line of defense to preserve photos. Deterioration will occur no matter what even at the average temperature and humidity for storage because the chemical process is always in play in the dyes used to create the pictures. When you store photos in hot attics, you are in essence accelerating the deterioration process because the dye deterioration is increased with hotter temperatures. So get your pictures you have stored in attics out of there, and do it quickly!

The author suggests the second thing to be concerned about is to avoid excessive dampness. Avoid storage conditions that exceed 50% relative humidity. Higher humidity encourages mold growth and softening of the gelatin that is part of the dye used to produce the image on paper. Once again, where are many of our ancestral pictures stored? Often in our basements that are naturally damp with higher humidity that is not a good condition for preservation of our family histories in the form of pictures. **Get your pictures out of the basement!**

The author states this fact. Photos stored at an average of 90 degrees and 50% relative humidity will show noticeable deterioration within 10 years. If those same photos are stored at 70 degrees and 40% relative humidity it may take up to 60 years to deteriorate. Reducing the relative humidity to as low as 30% will increase preservation to about 100 years.

The author suggests that scanning and digitizing your "paper" photos may be a very important first step to preserve the material. With scanning and digitization, the software you use will also allow you to improve the pictures even more so that you wind up with an improved digital photo, far superior in appearance than the original damaged original paper photo. The author suggests scanning your photos as TIFF format and then also making a copy of the same picture in JPEG format for general use. The TIFF is a lossless form that does not compress the image. Your files will be very large in comparison to the JPEG image but you will have as pristine of an original photo using TIFF to go back to over time.

The author also suggests preservation of your original paper photos even after digitizing them. Two companies mentioned by the author that are good sources of preservation material used by libraries are:

Hollinger Metal Edge @ www.hollingermetaledge.com

Gaylord Brothers @ www.gaylord.com

In a normal house the author suggests storing your preservation enclosed photos in a walk-in closet if you have one. There are generally no windows or heating or air conditioning vents in this location so the temperature is fairly constant. If higher humidity is still a problem in this location, add some sort of activated silica gel to the room that houses the photos.

The author suggests that even preserving your photos meticulously does not cover their loss due to fire or water damage. The author suggests that you consider implementing the LOCKSS principal. LOCKSS stands for Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe. Get your digital photos created from scanning out into the world of your cousins. They benefit from knowing more about their family history. You all benefit by having what starts out as one paper photo you have now in the hands of many other people all at different locations.

Even after digitizing your material into non-paper files, the author suggests you can then still print onto paper those digital images for family members to still be able to see in paper format instead of on a screen as a digital image.

This is a good article to get a basic understanding of how to go about preserving your photos for future generations to be able to see them with the same awe and wonder you did when you looked at the originals. It is a hefty responsibility you need to take seriously. While you are sleeping, those pictures you have in boxes stored in the attic or basement are slowly, but surely, dying a slow death of their own. Once a critical stage has been reached no CPR will be able to resurrect them in the future. Don't wait another minute. Take some action now.

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