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November 8, 2011

November 8, 2011 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our November 8, 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.

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 JANUARY 7, 2012

THERE IS NO PROGRAM SCHEDULED BY THE SOCIETY DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER. ENJOY THE HOLIDAYS!

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 <u>NO LONGER</u> 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, January 7, 2012. The program for the morning is titled **"Organizing and Writing Your Family History"**. The speaker for the evening will be Steve Szabados.

Steve Szabados is a retired project manager with a Bachelor of Science degree and a MBA who started researching his ancestors in 2004. He has given numerous presentations to groups in Illinois and Wisconsin and wants to share his passion for Family History . He is a member of the Polish Genealogical Society of America, Illinois State Genealogical Society and also a genealogy volunteer at the Arlington Heights Library. His roots are Polish and Hungarian plus he has also had success researching Slovenian and Bohemian records.

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 NOVEMBER 16, 2011

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, November 16, 2011. The program scheduled for that evening is **"Discovering the Naperville Family History Center"**. The speaker for the program will be Sandra Trapp.

This presentation will include what you can do before you visit and tips on searching the Family History Library catalog. Find out why you may want to join the patron's mailing list and Yahoo groups. Attention will be given to Chicago ancestor resources at the Center.

Sandra Trapp has been researching her family, her husband's and her son-in-law's for 13 years. She is a member of multiple genealogical organizations, an officer of some presented genealogical programs at various locations in the area, and resource chairman for the Naperville Family History Center.

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.dcgs.org

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Handout #4 – COMPUTER ASSISTED GENEALOGY GROUP OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (CAGG-NI) NEXT PROGRAM ON NOVEMBER 19, 2011

The next meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, November 19, 2011 from 10:30 AM until 12:30 PM at the **Arlington Heights Memorial Library (not the Schaumburg Township District Library for this meeting)**. The program scheduled for this day is **"The Search for Civil War Surgeons: A Personal Quest"**. The speaker for the program will be Dr. Trevor Steinbach.

Dr. Trevor Steinbach is not only a Civil War Medical Re-enactor but has done extensive research on all four of the people that he portrays. His quest to research Dr. C.A. Bucher from his home town Batavia has taken over 10 years. The processes that he used and the data that he uncovered while research 4 Civil War Surgeons will both entertain and provide the audience with new resources.

Dr. Steinbach has been portraying Civil War medical officers since the early 1990's. His current personas include Dr. James R.M. Gaskill from 17th Corps Field Hospital and Dr. Urban G. Owen from the Army of Tennessee Field Hospital. He has written a monthly column on Civil War Medicine for the Civil War Courier Magazine since 2003. He is a board member of the Society of Civil War Surgeons, the national organization for medical re-enactors.

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 DECEMBER 13, 2011

We will have another "break-out" session for our gathering in December 2011.   Our previous attempts proved to be quite a good success. I would like us to build on those successes and afford those participants the opportunity to meet with those again or sample other groups.

After an initial introduction of new participants at the start of our normally scheduled meeting, we will establish our "breakout" groups at approximately 7:45 PM. We would have these breakout discussions from about 8:00 PM until about 9:30 PM. These groups would consist of about 7 to 8 participants. They would discuss some common topic of genealogy that interests them or from which they could learn even more to assist their research from sharing with others in the group and learning from others within the group.

The groups we previously tried seemed to work out quite well. I want to go with those same groups and am open to suggestions to attempt to add others or delete those that may not have a following.

I want to reconvene the following groups:

> Polish Researchers
> German Researchers
> Czech Researchers
> Irish Researchers
> Italian Researchers
> British Researchers
> Scandinavian Researchers
> Colonial Americans Researchers

I also will have a Beginner's Group that I will lead.

We will also have the computer in the room for anyone to access the internet.

I would also encourage participants to bring their personal laptop or netbook to these sessions and tap into the internet via our WiFi network. I saw many researchers doing this at our last breakout session and they found it very productive to access internet information while being in one of the groups if they wanted to show something to someone else at the table.

Please remember that the group's composition is based on the numbers that will participate. If only one person is present to participate in the Polish group, then we cannot have a Polish group that evening. I cannot guarantee there will be enough participants to form a group. In that case I would always recommend participating in the Beginner's Group or the Troubleshooting Group.

The key to this effort is to be flexible in selecting a group to work with.

I look forward to our next "break-out" session in December 2011.

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 – MOCAVO SEARCH ENGINE RAISING 1 MILLION DOLLARS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at www.eogn.com dated October 3, 2011.

I have written before about Mocavo, the genealogy search engine. (You can read my previous articles about Mocavo if you start at http://goo.gl/rtuuI.) Mocavo is a unique and valuable service for genealogists. Now the start-up has received a $1 million round of financing.

Founder Cliff Shaw says that Mocavo is setting out to make genealogy "open, social, and automated". He explains that while there are existing services that use proprietary data sources, few take advantage of the abundance of information that's freely available on the web — information that Google often passes over, because genealogical information is neither fresh nor popular (he says Google only indexes less than 5% of this content).

You can read more about Mocavo's new financing in an article by Jason Kincaid in the TechCrunch web site at

http://goo.gl/gNLUd

Comments by Tony Kierna

Mocavo is an absolute great genealogical search engine that you need to be plugged into when doing your genealogical research. As noted above from the blog post by Dick Eastman, Google, no matter how good we think it is, still only captures 5% of the total amount of data that exists on the web. That is why it is always a good idea to try other search engines when researching.

But even more importantly, always consider using Mocavo because it is designed from the ground up as a genealogically oriented search engine. It is designed and programmed to go find genealogical material on the web that is free and open to use.

The article that is linked above indicates that Mocavo has 5.8 billion names in its index. Visitors to the site often stay for an average of 17 minutes on the site accessing the voluminous amounts of free data.

In addition, keep your eyes on Mocavo for more than just being a great genealogical search engine, as the article above indicates it looks like the creator of the site is soon to expand into the realm of "social media" through Mocavo. It appears that the future for Mocavo holds the possibility of being able to upload family trees to the site as well as creating other aspects of social media from within the site.

I have used Mocavo and I have found research information through it that I did not find anywhere else. So for me, every additional piece of information that is discovered is an added bonus for my time invested.

As the story in the link above indicates, this search engine is designed to find the "dead" which is exactly what genealogical researchers crave to do.

If you have never used Mocavo, I would strongly urge you to give it a try and consider using it side by side with Google if Google is your search engine of choice. If you have used it, visit it now and watch to see what social media aspects start appearing now that Mocavo has an additional one million dollars at its fingertips for ongoing development of the product.

You can visit Mocavo at www.mocavo.com.

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Handout #7 – DIGITAL PRESERVATION-FRIENDLY FILE FORMATS FOR LONG TERM EFFECTIVENESS FOR SCANNED IMAGES

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated October 12, 2011.

If you want to keep family photographs or even scanned images of documents and books available for use by future generations, you'll be interested in an article by Bill LeFurgy that has been published in the Library of Congress' web site. *Digital Preservation-Friendly File Formats for Scanned Images* describes the better file formats to use. The article is essentially an introduction to a longer paper with the title, *Sustainability of Digital Formats Planning for the Library of Congress Collections*.

Quoting from the article:

"From a preservation standpoint, some digital file formats are better than others. The basic issue is how readable a format remains over the course of time and successive waves of technological change. The ideal format will convey its content accurately regardless of advances in hardware, software and other aspects of information technology.

"Over the last several years, the Library has developed a web resource to help guide preservation-optimal choices in selecting file formats. Sustainability of Digital Formats Planning for the Library of Congress Collections outlines a number of sustainability factors that have a bearing on how effective formats are expected to be with regard to long-term preservation."

I also noticed that LeFurgy suggests:

"Application of these factors to current format choices has led to identification of different flavors of TIFF and JPEG 2000 as preferred choices for scanned digital images. Also in the mix is PDF/A-1, PDF for Long-term Preservation."

You can read the entire article at http://goo.gl/Ohcxt

Comments by Tony Kierna

First off, we all probably have hundreds, if not thousands of photographs in our possession that are part of our family history. The article above speaks to the image scanning file saving format you should consider to use. So if you have not yet scanned these photographs, the article above will be very helpful for you to know what file format to save the images you will begin scanning.

For those of you that have already scanned your photos, you may want to reconsider scanning if the image format mentioned for saving is not one that you chose. I know that this re-scanning possibility may not be a good choice simply because of time constraints. In other words, you already spent countless hours scanning your images and don't want to go through that again.

It is a good rule of thumb to scan your photos once and save multiple formats of the images. Save as both TIFF format because this format saves the image in a "lossless" format meaning that it is of the highest quality and also highest in file size. When you save in JPEG, this format is a "loss" format and saves the image in much smaller file sizes in which you really do not visually detect a dramatic difference in picture appearance. But it does compress the original maximum image to a smaller size file with less quality in order to save on file space.

It is ideal for anyone not having scanned their photos to really narrow in on the recommended file images to save your data because this file format appears to be the one that over time will still be the file format for images into the future.

That is always the $64,000 question? Will what we create today with the media formats that exist today and the equipment used to create the media today be able to be read and used by our future generations?

So rather than picking and choosing file formats just because it is there to select or we heard it is good from someone else, the article above and the recommended file formats for images should seriously be considered when you are scanning your photos today. You simply want to go with the "odds" of creating something today that will be of benefit to our future generations.

Check out the above link from Eastman's blog post and read the article in its entirety. There are some good tips in the article as well as a series of links to other resources about scanning photos that can be helpful to you during the scanning process.

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10/24/2011

Handout #8 – FAMILY TREE MAKER 2012 NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated September 25, 2011.

Ancestry.com has announced the features to be available in Family Tree Maker 2012 for Windows with the product expected to ship this week. New features include:

- TreeSync — lets you easily synchronize your tree in Family Tree Maker with an online Ancestry.com tree.
- Access and update your tree anywhere. Continue your research wherever you are whether it's through your computer, Ancestry.com, even your iPhone or iPad.
- Easily share your tree with your family, and even work on it together. Your family and friends can view the online version of your tree without any software or a subscription. They just login with their name and email and they can always see the latest version of your tree, and can even work on adding to it if you'd like them to.
- Collaborate with the largest, most active family history community in the world. You can keep your online tree private or make it public so that others researching your family can always find the latest version of your research. You may connect with others who have insight on your ancestors or even rare photos to share with you. And you may even find relatives you didn't know you had.
- Blended family view — shows combined families, including stepfamilies and adoptees at a glance.
- Improved Smart Stories — give you new tools for adding and editing details.
- Chart personalization — lets you personalize charts by adding text and displaying generation labels such as parents, grandparents and great–grandparents.
- Index of individuals report — lists every individual in your tree, plus their birth, marriage and death dates.
- Customized fact sentences — let you change wording and choose what data is in sentences that Family Tree Maker generates for certain reports and Smart Stories.
- Descendent charts between two people — make it easy to choose two individuals in your tree and create a descendant chart that shows their relationship.

Family Tree Maker 2012 requires:

- Windows® XP, Vista® (32-bit or 64-bit) or Windows 7 (32-bit or 64-bit)
- Hard disk space: 500 MB for installation
- Memory: 1 gigabyte of RAM memory or more
- Display 1024 x 768 resolution
- CD-ROM Drive
- All online features require Internet access

The program sells for $39.99 but a limited time, presale price of $31.99 is available now.

You can read more about the new release of Family Tree Maker 2012 at

http://goo.gl/rHi1h

Comments by Tony Kierna

Mark your calendars for the "annual" upgrade of Family Tree Maker. Version "2012" appears ready to purchase.

The nice "summary" above provides a good overview of what will be available within the 2012 version that is new. It does appear that one of the new features will allow a user of Family Tree to automatically "synch" data between what they have on their computer and also what they have uploaded to Ancestry.com. This new feature appears to be a very desirous one that may have been requested by the user community as more and more family trees are uploaded to Ancestry.com. This appears to now solve the problem of family trees being out of synch between a home based computer family and a web based family tree at Ancestry.

Some of the new features also appear to be coming together with what the program will now allow with "mobile devices" such as an iPhone, or an iPad.

Over time more and more "blended" families exist with step-children. It appears that this new version can accommodate that identity of a family member better than previously.

It also sounds like Family Tree Maker 2012 now has added capabilities that allow the program itself to "write stories" about your ancestors by using intelligent construction of sentences in conjunction with data you have entered into the program about your individuals.

You can even find some nice embedded tutorial videos about the new version of Family Tree Maker 2012 at the Family Tree Maker website that is accessible from the link above in the Eastman blog entry. These tutorials are nice because they do give you some insights on the benefits of new features that you may not even understand as benefits. Knowing more about functionality can help you make a better decision to consider purchasing the product.

If you are a current user of Family Tree Maker, then understand you are not obligated to upgrade. Your version will work fine provided you understand the new features of Family Tree Maker will not be in your at-home version unless you upgrade.

Also remember, that Family Tree Maker has both a Mac version and a Windows version.

If you like the new features of Family Tree Maker 2012, then by all means consider upgrading to this new version. If the features interest you who do not currently use Family Tree Maker, then by all means give it a try. It is not that expensive plus you will get the benefit of trying out a new product. Remember, you can all always GEDCOM export data from your existing lineage program to Family Tree Maker or any other lineage product. Many researchers have a copy of just about any lineage

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Handout #9 – BECOME AN INTERACTIVE GENEALOGIST

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the October/November 2011, Volume 6, Number 4 issue of <u>Internet Genealogy</u>.

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I thought that a good article in this issue is one titled "Become An Interactive Genealogist". The author of the article is Lisa A. Alzo.

The point of the entirety of this article is that you as a researcher need to be "active". The levels of activity can vary from "barely" to "full out". Your activity involvement may not involve just pure research efforts you make. You involvement can and should span a myriad of activities that a genealogy researcher can do that are over and above just "pure" research. The researcher should not just sit back and wait for discoveries to happen. The researcher can positively affect their research results by actively participating in other learning aspects of genealogy.

The author does a good job in identifying the various kinds of activities that a researcher can do to be considered an "interactive" genealogist.

The author identified 10 genealogy activities for the researcher to consider:

- ***Creating Fold3 Memorial Pages*** – Fold3 (www.fold3.com) is the database service formerly known as Footnote.com. Fold3 is focusing on military records but does have other records at its site including Census data. We have that database as part of our genealogical online collection. The author indicates that you can consider yourself "interactive" by contributing online tribute pages for your ancestors. You will need an account with Fold3 to do this and you will also need a subscription to Fold3 if you plan on using any of the data from Fold3 to include in your tribute. Fold3 also has an "interactive 1930 census" where you can annotate entries for your ancestors with the hope that anyone else doing research on that ancestor will discover your notes and be able to connect to you.

- ***Skype*** – Skype (www.skype.com) offers a great way to keep in touch with relatives for free using their video conference capabilities. Again this keeps you "interactive" in your genealogical research efforts.

- ***Family Website*** – Be interactive with other fellow researchers by using a web site that allows you the privacy to be able to share and research together. The author notes her activities using Myfamily.com (www.myfamily.com). It is an invitation-only, password-protected environment to interact with fellow researchers for the cost of $29.95 per year for the entire group.

- ***Google Alerts*** – The internet is dynamic. You may keep visiting it over and over and doing the same searches to see if anything new has

been added. Why do it that way? ==Let Google Alerts tell you what new data has been discovered for the searches of your choice.== Look at www.google.com/alerts. You need a Google Account to use Google Alerts. If you already have a Google Account, take advantage of Google Alerts. You tell Google what you are interested in and you will receive e-mail alerts from Google when it discovers new things on the web that match your search conditions. Consider Google Alerts as your own personal research assistant.

- ***Genealogy Radio Shows*** – what better way to be interactive and advance your research skills than ==listening to genealogy radio shows at www.blogtalkradio.com==. You can register to participate during the actual "live" broadcast of the show and interact with the host and other participants. Specifically look at a radio show being hosted by GeneaBloggers at www.blogtalkradio.com/geneabloggers and one being offered by the Federation of Genealogical Societies at www.fgs.org/fgsradio.

- ***Webinars and Online Learning*** – ==go to genealogy school online and hone your skills.== These are often offered by genealogical societies, genealogy companies and skilled individual genealogy instructors. Some are free. Some require registration. Some have a cost. Some are available for "free" after a certain period of time and for a short period of time. Find out about these at www.geneawebinars.com.

- ***Online Family Trees*** – ==put your family trees online== and be interactive and open up the possibility of a fellow researcher finding you. You will generally have to subscribe to a service such as Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com) that then allows you to upload your family trees to its site. You can upload material as "private" or "public". Other sites to consider to upload your family tree are Geni.com (www.geni.com), MyHeritage.com (www.myheritage.com/family-tree-builder), Wiki Tree (www.wikitree.com).

- ***FindAGrave and DeadFred*** – take the time to be interactive with FindAGrave (www.findagrave.com) and ==upload information about any of your deceased ancestors.== You will need to register with them for free. It is a very nice feature to also to be able to upload any pictures you have of gravestones. Do you have ==unidentified pictures== of possible ancestors? Who doesn't! ==Give the pictures exposure for other eyes to see and maybe help you uncover information about the picture. Do this with DeadFred (www.deadfred.com).== Be interactive with these sites.

- ***Locality-Based Research Sites*** – have you hit a brick wall? Again, who hasn't! Sometimes researching friends and neighbors of the ancestor may shed more light on your dilemma. ==Visualizing geographical areas may also be a way of you making a discovery to solve your problem.== Two sites exist to help with your =="mapping" of your ancestors locations.== Try Ancestral Atlas (www.ancestralatlas.com), and Ancestral Hunt (www.ancestralhunt.com). Both charge a fee but they may help overcome a research problem through "mapping".

- **Social Media** – create some online social media exposure and be interactive. Facebook (www.facebook.com) and GenealogyWise (www.genealogywise.com) are places to start. Consider writing a blog to gain exposure and be interactive. Check out GeneaBloggers (www.geneabloggers.com) to see existing existing genealogy blogs as well as some great tips and insights into how to make a good genealogy blog. You can see about 2,000 genealogy blogs at this site.

The author did a fantastic job of identifying those things to keep genealogists "interactive" outside of the scope of actual research. All of the above tips are intended for you to gain further knowledge and insight into all things genealogy as well as to provide you with more chances of finding the right connection to living relatives. More connections means more facts and history that can be put together.

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Handout #10 – THE PROMISE OF GOOGLE + (PLUS)

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the October/November 2011, Volume 6, Number 4 issue of <u>Internet Genealogy</u>.

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I thought that another good article in this recent issue of <u>Internet Genealogy</u> is one titled "The Promise of Google +". The author of this article is Dan Lynch.

So you think Facebook rules the roost? Maybe it does. But any leading company or service generally can always be assured of at least one thing – competition. Facebook is no different. It may be the biggest social media player in town, but that does not mean someone won't try to challenge them by inventing another and better mousetrap.

Right now, it appears that Google is the new kid on the social media block. A new product from Google has arrived. It goes under the name of "Google +" (Google Plus) and it is in the early stages of challenging Facebook as an alternative social media hub. Apparently, for as good as Facebook is it can still upset its customers with services methods of operation that may not please its customer base. Competition arises from these methods that makes customers "unhappy" in one sphere and be willing to try something else that may not upset them that much while providing the same good basic service and even throw in some new "toys" to interact.

The author does a good job of bringing this new Google offering to light. Initially, the service was made available only by invitation to give it an appearance of being a cached service. Now it is open to anyone having a Google account. The key here is that you do need to establish a Google account which is free in order to take advantage of this new Google offering. With a Google account you can also take advantage of the following services:

- Gmail
- Google Alerts
- Blogger
- Picasa
- iGoogle

All of the above services offered by Google can also be nice tools to further your own genealogy research or make yourself more visible to attract other researchers working in the same family.

The author notes that in Google + you will notice a nice clean screen appearance. You will also notice a new term in the social media world called "Circles". Circles are groups you create for the different relationships you have in your life. Obviously, one circle could be your connections with your genealogical contacts. A circle can be broad in scope, say, all of your genealogical contacts, or it could be very narrow, say, for one surname of interest. You can edit these circles and even delete a circle if needed.

You can invite others to join Google + and place them in the circle setup of your choice. These individuals can be in multiple circles that defines how you interact with the participants. A big benefit of the Circles concept is the tight integration that exists between your Circles and the content visible to you by those friends and family members who have posted something online for you to see. In Google + your incoming content is referred to as "Streams", similar to what is known in Facebook as the "Wall". In "Streams" you may find text, links to external sites, photos, videos and comment threads.

Your Circles appears on the left-side navigation area, allowing you to filter inbound content to just a particular group. Apparently, this is not as clean-cut on Facebook.

In Google + you will also see a query function called "Sparks". Search for topic the "sparks" your interest and then view the results in your "Stream". You can also save these queries for future use within the left-side navigation bar.

Another new term you will see used in Google + is called "Hangouts". This service is a multi-party video chat function. You can have up to 9 participants in a "Hangout" session. You do not have to participate on-camera but you can still interact with audio-only or text chat while still having the ability to view the video of others. You can also all together view videos from YouTube as part of the Hangout functionality.

The author does a very good job of describing the basics of what is evolving in this new Google + social media product. It is in its early infancy but does appear to have agood following when it was only by invitation. It is estimated that there may be as many as 20 million participants already involved with Google +. Only time will tell if this becomes a viable competitor to Facebook. In the long run, it may not become a substitute for Facebook but simply another social media outlet that each of us may consider joining. So you can see that there is not just one social media site for us to join but that we may in essence be joining all of them over time. You can already see that choice occurring today.

Take a look at the entirety of this article to get a fuller inkling of what is developing within Google +. Here is a link to get you to Google + to take a look at what is there:

https://plus.google.com/up/start/?continue=https://plus.google.com/?utm_source%3Dembedded%26utm_medium%3Dgoogleabout%26utm_campaign%3Dlink&type=st&gpcaz=3e42f2a5

If you are already a member of Google then you need to just investigate this new service. If you are not currently signed-up with Google then you will need to first establish an account and then begin participating in Google + and the additional services I mentioned earlier on in this summary.

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