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## August 13, 2013 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our August 13, 2013 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](http://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](http://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. Or, just click on the WordPress icon in the lower right part of your screen that simply states “Follow”. By clicking on the “Follow” link you will subscribe to the blog and will receive follow-up e-mail notices when I publish a new post.

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 SEPTEMBER 7, 2013**

**THE SOCIETY WILL NOT BE MEETING DURING THE MONTHS OF JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 2013. THEY WILL RE-GATHER AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER 2013. I WILL PROVIDE UPDATES ABOUT THE PROGRAM IN SEPTEMBER AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE**

***THE SOCIETY WILL BE MEETING ON THE 1<sup>ST</sup> 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, September 7, 2013. The program for the morning is titled **"Dating Photographs Through Clothing"**. The speaker for the morning will be Elizabeth "Elle" Carlson.

Elizabeth "Ellie" Carlson is a museum curator with twenty-five years of experience in small to mid-sized museums. She currently serves as the Curator of Costume for the Winnetka Historical Society, but, as that is a part-time appointment, she also works with many other historical societies on special projects and exhibits. Ellie has a B.A. with honors from Roosevelt University and a Masters of Historical Administration and Museum Studies from the University of Kansas. She completed her professional internship at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in the Division of Costume in 1987. She has mounted over thirty museum exhibitions, moved the entire collection of six institutions, and is the recipient of over twenty Illinois Association of Museums, Illinois State Historical Society and American Association for State and Local History awards.

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 9:00 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](http://www.NWSCG.com)

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**Handout #3 – DUPAGE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEXT  
REGULAR SOCIETY PROGRAM ON SEPTEMBER 18, 2013**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, September 18, 2013. The program scheduled for that evening is **“Write Your Family History NOW”**. The speaker for the program will be Mike Karsen.

We genealogists are very good at doing research and collecting many facts about our families. For any of a number of reasons, however, most of us delay publishing the results of this research. Mike Karsen shows how you can publish your findings in books that vary from a simple 30 pages to one that contains detailed biographies and places your family in historical context. Your goal should be to organize your findings and share them with your family as soon as possible.

A professional speaker, Mike Karsen is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG), the Genealogical Speakers Guild (GSG), and is currently President of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois. He speaks on family legacy topics locally and nationally, presents conference programs and has presented at Newberry Library and Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies in Chicago. Mike is the author of the JewishGen website "Guide to Jewish Genealogy in Chicagoland" and has published articles on genealogy.

He holds an undergraduate degree in mathematics/computer science and a master's in operations research alongside 30 years in telecommunications management.

This meeting will take place at the DuPage County Historical Museum, Upstairs Meeting Room. The address of the Museum is 102 E. Wesley St. in Wheaton, IL. The meeting room opens at 6:30 PM. Refreshments are available at that time. The society conducts business at 7 PM, the speaker will start by 7:30 PM and the program will conclude by 8:30 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](http://www.dcgcs.org)

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**Handout #4 – COMPUTER ASSISTED GENEALOGY GROUP OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (CAGG-NI) NEXT PROGRAM ON AUGUST 17, 2013 AT THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS MEMORIAL LIBRARY**

The next meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, August 17, 2013 at the Arlington Heights Memorial Library starting at 10:30 AM. The program scheduled for this day is " **Getting Started in (Online) Genealogy**". The speakers for the program will be together as a panel of current CAGGNI members. Those on the panel will be Skip Bieber, Larry Olson, Nancy Reese and Jacquie Schattner.

A panel of CAGGNI's own members will outline the essentials you need to get started in your family history research. We will cover the basic principles, software for entering your tree, the essential repositories for genealogy data, the on-line community and even some pitfalls you'll want to know about.

Whether you are just beginning your search or looking for a few new tips, don't miss this engaging and informative meeting.

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](http://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 SEPTEMBER 10, 2013

We will have another “break-out” session for our gathering on September 10, 2013. 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
- Sharing Your Printed Family Histories/How To

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 another ethnic group of interest if that is also in your research interests or join me at the Beginner’s 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 on September 10, 2013.

You may visit the library's web page at:

[www.SchaumburgLibrary.org](http://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 – CLEANING GRAVESTONES, MONUMENTS AND STONE SCULPTURES

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated July 5, 2013.



A newsletter reader asked today, "How can I safely clean an old headstone?" I am not a headstone expert but I do know that Jonathan Appell is such an expert and he also runs a great web site called Gravestone Preservation at <http://www.gravestonepreservation.info>. The site has a number of articles about cleaning, repairing, and preserving cemetery markers of all sorts.

Jonathan's article on proper cleaning methods may be found at <http://www.gravestonepreservation.info/articles/cleaning-gravestones-monuments-stone-sculptures>.

Pay close attention to rule #1 in that article: "If the stone shows signs of chipping, scaling, flaking or other forms of deterioration, do not clean. You will do more harm than good."

### Comments by Tony Kierna

*Now is the time of the year for your onsite cemetery research. I can tell you that as I write this there is really about 3 months left for you to visit your ancestors at their final resting place. The time left may even be a little less because once the leaves start falling in the mid-October time period, your research will be even more challenging especially for gravesites that have the flat headstones in the ground. Nothing like trying to move those leaves to see if your ancestor is right below your feet!*

*I just thought of another tool for family historians to bring to cemeteries in the fall months when the leaves are falling. You might want to bring a battery-powered leaf blower! Those are getting more and more popular because they are cordless and portable everywhere!*

*A controversial issue over time has been that related to unreadable gravestones and what to do about making it more readable by cleaning it. What do you do? How do you clean it for better viewing? Should you even clean it? Will you damage it? The answers run the gamut from clean it using Technique A to Leave It Alone!!*

*The article that appears on Dick Eastman's blog above conveys that you can do some gravestone cleaning, but with caution and as long as you do not see any chipping*

*already having taken place.* Cleaning will wear away the surface. The more you clean the more will be worn away making the inscription less and less readable!

*Jonathan Appell is the author of the guide noted by Dick Eastman.* The link above will get you to this short guide. *You will see a list of 8 items created by Jonathan Appell on the questions you need to ask* as you observe the stone and the “Do’s” and “Don’ts” if you want to take on a stone cleaning exercise.

*Here is a list of the 8 things the author notes when attempting any stone cleanup you would find at a cemetery. I recommend you access the link to the full descriptions for each point provided by the author:*

- **Is the stone cleanable?**
- Next, determine **what kind of stone is it?**
- Regardless of what kind of stone you are cleaning, the first rule is **always to be as gentle as possible.**
- **Always begin with clean water, a soft scrub brush, and plastic scrapers.**
- There are many different types of brushes which work well for cleaning cemetery memorials. It is best to **always have a wide range of brushes on hand**, including multiple sizes, with various stiffness, of the bristles.
- **Always scrub in a random orbit motion, to avoid streaking or erosion to the surface of the stone.**
- **A non ionic detergent is safe to use on nearly all types of stones encountered in Cemeteries and graveyards.**
- **Another highly effective cleaning method is to poultice the stone.**

*With proper assessment of the material and extra care you can clean the stone to attempt to enhance the readability of the inscription.* Following the above steps can help you improve the readability while protecting the stone with the least amount of damage and wear and tear.

*If you want to attempt to clean any gravestones you need to prepare now before you get to the cemetery.* You will need to have the variety of tools and materials as recommended by the gravestone cleaning expert. Don’t make haste with one brush and some spray on cleaning product from home! That is worse than doing nothing.

*You have to take on the motto that applies to doctors –“First, do no harm!”*

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## Handout #7 – PERIODICAL SOURCE INDEX (PERSI) TO MOVE TO FINDMYPAST?

*The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated July 14, 2013.*

PERSI (the PERiodical Source Index) is a great tool for genealogists. It is the world's largest and most widely used subject index to genealogy and local history periodicals written in English and French (Canada). The collection dates from approximately 1800 and contains more than 3 million searchable records from nearly 10,000 different periodicals indexed by staffers at the Allen County Public Library. Since its release in 1986, PERSI has gained wide recognition as an essential tool for high-quality genealogy research.

Periodicals indexed in PERSI include magazines, newsletters, journals, and other publications produced as a series that deal with topics of interest to genealogists and family historians. Each year, these publications add thousands of records, histories, articles, pedigrees, and other materials that can point researchers to new or obscure sources, record types or repositories, or family histories. PERSI gives family historians a way to learn of and access these materials, which otherwise may not be easy to find.

PERSI has been produced by the Allen County Public Library in Ft. Wayne, Indiana since 1986 with new additions being made monthly.

The first volumes of PERSI were printed as books, eventually published as about 30 volumes that went from 1996 back to 1847. The Allen County Public Library later switched to publishing on CD, which dropped the price dramatically, making it affordable to individuals. While the price dropped dramatically, the increase in sales made up for the lower prices.

About the same time, the library began working with what was then a small startup company called Ancestry. Most of us know that the company has since grown into a genealogy powerhouse. PERSI was Ancestry's first product. Ancestry paid ACPL for the index, then charged its customers for access to it.

In 2006, the library contracted with Heritage Quest to publish PERSI. While still available to the general public, Heritage Quest is only available through participating libraries.

According to an article by Dan Stockman, published in the (Fort Wayne) Journal Gazette, the Allen County Public Library is working with Brightsolid, an online publishing firm in the United Kingdom. Brightsolid is the parent company of FindMyPast and a number of other genealogy sites. Dan Stockman's article also states that Brightsolid hopes to do something no American firm has been able to do: Link the index to the full text of the article.

The library's collection is so big, the index now contains about 2.5 million citations, and ACPL adds about 100,000 more a year.

You can read a lot more about the beginnings of PERSI and especially about the work of Michael Clegg, associate director of the Allen County Public Library, at <http://goo.gl/Wo9I1>.

### **Comments by Tony Kierna**

*PERSI is a wonderful genealogical research tool that all family historians should be aware of and at least explore it. PERSI used to actually be created in book print format years ago. These were "huge" volumes that took up a lot of shelf space. Then PERSI went to CD that could be purchased. Then PERSI became part of Ancestry.com, which at that time was a small, start-up company and not like the genealogy behemoth they are today. PERSI then made one more move to Heritage Quest where it exists today. Heritage Quest is a product that libraries purchase for use for their own customer base. So today, if you have a library card, it is very likely your local library has Heritage Quest and therefore has PERSI available to you. But all libraries do not purchase it. You could be in that base that your library for which you have a card does not offer Heritage Quest and therefore you cannot access PERSI.*

*So now does it appear that FindMyPast is riding to the rescue to be sure PERSI becomes available in a truly open manner with no strings attached with it being embedded in another product as it is today?*

*My answer is "I don't know".*

*FindMyPast, by Brighsolid, is a subscribable genealogy product that has databases to search just as Ancestry.com. Yes, you can search these sites and get indexed results that you CANNOT access for further details unless you subscribe.*

*So my question is does FindMyPast take over PERSI and simply make it available for anyone to use at the FindMyPast American site rather than available to only those that subscribe to FindMyPast? I surmise that may be their intentions because that sounds like the answer to PERSI being unavailable when libraries do not subscribe to Heritage Quest.*

*I guess we will just wait and see if PERSI moves over to FindMyPast as a completely free, available to all, product.*

*I think there is an even more important comment noted in the Eastman article about PERSI. Full-text access to the articles you find in the index searching for PERSI is a costly process. You do not receive access to the full-text article in PERSI that the index results give you. You have to submit a request to the Allen County Public Library, the owner of PERSI, that costs a good amount of money and takes time for each article that you may want based on your index search results.*

*The biggest announcement in the Eastman article above notes that perhaps there may be some movement by Brightsolid, owner of FindMyPast, to actually make inroads into making the full-text of the articles you find in the index of PERSI linked to the index! How great would that be!!*

*I don't know if FindMyPast would make PERSI part of their subscription offering giving you the full-text of articles only if you are subscribed to FindMyPast!*

*So right now, only time will tell how this unfolds. Will PERSI be part of FindMyPast? Will PERSI be available to anyone at FaindMYPast or only to FindMyPast Subscribers? Will full-text of indexed PERSI articles be the next great thing offered by FindMyPast? For free, or for subscription?*

**Keep watching!**

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## Handout #8 – HOW DO YOU RESEARCH ONLINE?

*The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated July 4, 2013.*

Employees at all the major online genealogy database providers spend a lot of time and effort watching how users perform searches on the site and analyzing the results. The purpose is to learn and to make future adjustments to the site to improve search capabilities. Those who monitor and analyze users say they have noticed that genealogy newcomers typically perform searches in a very different manner than do the "old pros." I suspect the experienced users typically end up with more productive results, although no statistics are available to prove that assumption.

Genealogy newcomers typically search everything at once. For instance, when looking for records on a particular ancestor, newbies typically enter the person's name into the search field and then search through everything at once. If the person has a rather unusual name, that might work. However, most of the time, the newcomer receives hundreds or even thousands of "hits," can't filter out the ones of interest, loses interest, and then goes elsewhere.

In contrast, the experienced genealogists usually FIRST search for the smallest piece of the many databases as possible.

For instance, the more experienced user will generally enter the name of interest, then perhaps specify only one database (such as the census records for one year), specify only one county, and any other parameters available to narrow the search as much as possible. If the search is unsuccessful and doesn't produce the information needed, the experienced user then expands the search just a little bit and tries again. For instance, he or she might add in the previous census or the following census, then search a second time. If unsuccessful this time, the experienced genealogist might start a third search by adding in the adjacent counties. And so on and so on.

Bit by bit, the experienced genealogist typically expands the search by a small amount each time. All of the search parameters are based upon what the genealogist already knows about the person of interest. Did he likely live in Monroe County? If so, there is no need to search the entire USA at once. Did he serve in the Civil War? If so, there is no need to search for records prior to 1820 and probably not prior to 1830 (on the first search) as he probably wasn't born yet. (Most Civil War soldiers were under the age of 30 although there were numerous exceptions. Very few were 40 years old or older.)

By focusing the first searches on as narrow a geographic area as possible and as narrow a time range as possible, you greatly increase the odds of finding the one person you seek. If unsuccessful in your search, broaden the search area a bit and the years of interest and try again.

I suspect the experienced genealogists have far better results with their online searches than do the newcomers who jump in and search everything, everywhere, at once. Which would you prefer: finding one or two people with your ancestor's name,

located in the area where he or she lived, in the years he or she lived there? Or will you find 100 men or women across the country with the same name?

### Comments by Tony Kierna

I can agree completely with the observations noted from Dick Eastman's post above about online researching. Far too many novice researchers jump in with both feet and enter into the infamous "Search Box" the surname of their choice. That search box will search perhaps thousands and thousands of database files. Imagine if the name entered into the "Search Box" is Rogers or O'Brien or Kowalski? Those are common names even within the ethnic origin. I did not even mention Smith as a search term!

It is more helpful for the online researcher to get the lay of the land of the databases themselves, especially as to what is contained in them. Look to see how many databases are there in total. What geographic areas and what time periods are covered. Why search various states and countries where your ancestor had no connection? If you do, you may obtain results that may include your ancestor but might include so many unrelated names that you will be spending your time weeding through and eliminating so many unrelated ones.

Pick a database you believe may contain information about your ancestor. Even to do this you do need to know some details about the ancestor. Year of birth? Year of death? Year of marriage? Where resided? This is where even family stories rather than hard evidence you may not have may help you when you are looking through the results. Otherwise you may never know that Result A in your search is the person you seek. In this case an unusual last name may be your only hope that is the person you seek.

There is nothing more frustrating to the new researcher than to receive a gigantic list of "hits" and not know who is who or how to reduce the hits to a manageable number.

Database providers often provide an associated "template" that allows the researcher to add in the additional pieces of information about the ancestor that may be known to reduce the number of extraneous hits. Things such as "Year of Immigration", "Year of Birth", "Year of Death", "Country of Birth" etc. Once again, the researcher should not always input an "exact" year or time because our ancestors may have reported an inaccurate year themselves of an event. Look at the template that is offered and use a "number range" for the above items. If you think a person was born in 1870 you may want to show a "+ or -" range of 5 years so a follow-up search using that range will find those that were noted as born between 1865 to 1875.

Keep expanding the search in increments of new facts you enter. However, if any one of them is incorrect no result will be provided. You are always better adding or removing an additional search term one at a time. Don't just enter in 6 items in the template.

Always look for an "Advanced Search" function. Read the "Help" information provided by the database creator so you are clear on how to access the material using the tools provided by the creator. Don't just blindly use the "Search Box" on

*the first page you encounter without knowing about the materials contained in the databases. Explore first. Learn the search techniques. Select appropriate databases rather than all. Your results will be more manageable and your frustration level trying to deal with hundreds of extraneous hits will be better managed by you.*

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## Handout #9 – “BLOGGED: 25 TOP GENEALOGY BLOGS TO HELP SPEED YOUR RESEARCH”

*The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the June/July 2013, Volume 8, Number 2 issue of Internet Genealogy.*

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I thought that a very good article in this issue is one titled “Blogged: 25 Top Genealogy Blogs to Help Speed Your Research”. The author of the article is Tony Bandy.

Blogs can be a great source for you to keep yourself updated on all of the activities related to genealogy news. Active “bloggers” can crank out enormous amounts of genealogical information to help you in your research. But let’s be honest. There is an overwhelming amount of blogs that exist. It is simply a fact of life that there is a lot of good stuff out there. The problem is how do you keep up with it?

The author notes that anyone can be a “blogger”. There are plenty of “free” sites that you can investigate and become a blogger with them. You will not need to have your own website. You can learn to blog on the fly using the tutorials the sites have to help you get started. Sites mentioned in the article by the author to get you started “blogging” are:

WordPress @ [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

Google’s Blogger @ [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)

Blogging Information At Wikipedia @ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog>

Information on blogging Software @ <http://blog-software.findthebest.com>

The author also suggests that just finding a blog of interest to you or finding one that really provides great information in your genealogy research can be challenging. The author also suggests you use some of the existing sites to help you find some good blogs. You can try the following:

BlogRank @ [www.invesp.com/blog-rank/genealogy](http://www.invesp.com/blog-rank/genealogy)

GeneaBloggers @ [www.geneabloggers.com](http://www.geneabloggers.com)

Genealogy Blog Finder @ <http://blogfinder.genealogue.com>

Here is the list of 25 blogs provided by the author. They are not in ranked order but are simply in alphabetical order. The author provides a small abstract describing each blog mentioned in the article. For purposes of brevity, I will not be including that abstract but rather steer the reader to simply explore the sites mentioned. You may encounter sites that are considered Personal. Some may be considered

Corporate. Some are known as Aggregator sites. Some are Governmental. You will encounter a variety of blogs all focused on some aspect of genealogy.

Here are the sites for your consideration provided by the author!

AnceStories: The Stories of My Ancestors @  
<http://ancestries1.blogspot.com>

The Ancestry Insider @  
<http://ancestryinsider.blogspot.com>

Anglo-Celtic Connections @  
<http://anglo-celtic-connections.blogspot.com>

Black Nashville Genealogy @  
<http://blacknashville.wordpress.com>

Dear Myrtle: Your Friend in Genealogy @  
<http://blog.dearmyrtle.com>

Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter @  
[www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com)

FamilySearch Blog @  
<https://familysearch.org/blog/en>

FootnoteMaven @  
[www.footnotemaven.com](http://www.footnotemaven.com)

Genea-Musings @  
[www.geneamusings.com](http://www.geneamusings.com)

Genealogy Canada @  
<http://genealogycanada.blogspot.com>

Genealogy's Star @  
<http://genealogysstar.blogspot.com>

GeneaBloggers @  
[www.geneabloggers.com](http://www.geneabloggers.com)

GeneaNet (Blog) @  
<http://genealogyblog.geneanet.org>

The Genetic Genealogist @  
[www.thegeneticgenealogist.com](http://www.thegeneticgenealogist.com)

Granite in My Blood @  
<http://granite-in-my-blood.blogspot.com>

JewishGen Blog @  
<http://jewishgen.blogspot.com>

Little Bytes of Life @  
[www.littlebytesoflife.com](http://www.littlebytesoflife.com)

London Roots Research @  
[www.londonrootsresearch.blogspot.com](http://www.londonrootsresearch.blogspot.com)

MyHeritage Blog @  
<http://blog.myheritage.com>

The National Archives Blogs @  
<http://blogs.archives.gov>

The Olive Tree Geenalogy @  
<http://olivetreegenealogy.blogspot.com>

RootsMagic Blog @  
<http://blog.rootsmagic.com>

Shades of the Departed @  
[www.shadesofthedeparted.com](http://www.shadesofthedeparted.com)

West in New England @  
<http://westinnewengland.blogspot.com>

What's Past is Prologue @  
<http://pastprologue.wordpress.com>

Many of the blogs may already be familiar to you. Explore those that are not and see what you can learn from the words of the author.

One site that caught my attention as being unaware of was the one titled "Granite in My Blood". The title is catchy but how does it relate to genealogy? By exploring that site you will discover that the blogger has dedicated the site to all of those interested in gravestone photography as well as family history. What a catchy title, especially after you discover what the meaning of "granite" is to the blog!

Explore what the author intended and you may connect to blog of great interest to you!

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## Handout #10 – “FIVE TIPS FOR NEWSPAPER RESEARCH”

*The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the June/July 2013, Volume 8, Number 2 issue of Internet Genealogy.*

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Another good article in this issue is one titled “Five Tips for Newspaper Research”. The author of the article is Mary Kircher Roddy.

Sometimes our only connection to newspaper research is discovering that fantastic obituary of a departed ancestor. Maybe that is all we care about, but consider, you may be leaving so much more information on the table if you do not explore that particular newspaper a little deeper. If not that particular newspaper, perhaps other issues. If your ancestor was in a rural area, maybe the newspaper was small and published weekly. That can make your researching a little easier because your ancestor’s stories may be more easily discovered within a smaller based population location. Today’s digitization of newspapers can speed up your research even in larger urban setting newspapers.

There is so much more than just obituaries! Newspaper articles of the past provided information about births, christenings, engagements, marriages, family visits from other locations, vacation news, illness news! The sky was the limit and news included just about any event. Don’t leave this information on the table of undiscovered events!

The author noted the 5 following tips to consider when doing newspaper research, whether it is digital or microfilm or even real hands on newspaper research where you can get it:

- **READ THE WHOLE PAPER** – you found the obituary but did you know there may be an entire article about the deceased over and above the obituary. Don’t just stop with that issue. Look at the day before or even the days after for fuller stories about the deceased. The author provides a personal story about finding an obituary for an ancestor under the name AHERN and then found some information that appeared to be for the same man but under the name LOCKREN. The author was confused until one day discovering in the newspaper of the obituary that there was a small story of the deceased on another page that noted the deceased, although having the name AHERN, the deceased was actually going by the surname of the aunt he had been living with which was LOCKREN!
- **PICK A NUMBER AND ADD 21 OR 25 OR 50** – let’s say you know when a marriage occurred. Try searching the newspaper area where that family is living 25 or 50 years later (assuming you have researched and know they are still alive) and search for newspaper articles about their 25<sup>th</sup> or 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Many lengthy and descriptive insights into the

lives of these people can be found for these special events in their lives. If you know the birth year of an ancestor, try checking 21 years later to see if there was any special article written about them when they turned 21.

- **NOBODY CAN READ JUST ONE** – let's say you discover an article about an ancestor in their local newspaper of the time. Don't just stop with that one. Check the newspapers of other nearby towns to see if a similar but yet different article may have been written about that event. A different article may contain different tidbits of information than the original article you discovered. If the story was of even greater note, look for newspapers from far away to research (think of our July 9, 2013 genealogy program with Robin Seidenberg and her presentation about the "Kissing blonde" and the stories she discovered in Wyoming about the Chicago event!).
- **ALL OCR IS NOT CREATED EQUAL** – because OCR (Optical Reading Reader) is a great but imperfect tool, you need to consider broadening your search to get the best results. Let us say that you have used a local digital newspaper online that exists in Data Base A. If that newspaper was digitized again to be contained in another Data Base B, you may well discover that the OCR process for Data Base B is far superior for Data Base A. It is more accurate from the perspective of the OCR process and thus gives you better results. There is nothing worse than working with poorly done OCR data. Find the best OCR scanned newspaper you can that is online to make your research efforts less frustrating. That may not always be an option, but you should at least determine if the newspaper you seek is available in multiple databases.
- **UNDERSTANDING OCR GLITCHES** – OCR as great as it is still produces failures in scanning because of a newspaper fold over a word or a letter, or faded ink, or even a certain letter from the typography set-up is worn and always produces a faint copy. That faint letter on the newspaper may not be picked up during OCR or may be picked up and interpreted incorrectly. In the OCR world a "c" might look like an "e", an "a" might read as an "s" or a "G" might appear as an "O". Those misreads will cause an index search term to be created incorrectly. You will think you have made a discovery, only to find out the result is nowhere near what you really hoped for. I get this all the time in my own personal research where I get a hit for the last name KIERNA only to discover when actually looking at the image that the actual surname in print is actually KIERNAN. Such is the nature of the OCT beast!

I think the author does a good job of noting these good tips to consider when you are searching using digital newspapers online. You can certainly improve your research results if you broaden your review of newspapers to more than just the one that might contain an obituary. Newspapers of the past considered just about anything that happened to a family as a "newsy" item. What a great way to really discover so much more about your ancestors than just the last piece of information about their life, church service, cemetery information that might be contained in the

obituary. Broaden your search for items you would not normally consider. Know the limits of OCR and what errors it can give you.

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