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March 11, 2014 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our March 11, 2014 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. 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 APRIL 5, 2014

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 60 MINUTE ROUND-TABLE HELP SESSION THAT STARTS AT 9:00 AM PRIOR TO THE ACTUAL PROGRAM.

The next meeting of the Northwest Suburban Council of Genealogists will take place on Saturday morning, April 5, 2014. The program for the morning is titled **“The Care and Handling of Material of Enduring Value”**. The speaker for the morning will be Laura Cosgrove Lorenzana.

This talk is about preservation and conservation issues. Who will look at your genealogical collection? Think like an archivist and preserve your family history for generations to come.

Laura Cosgrove Lorenzana is a Consulting Archivist, Genealogist and writer/lecturer. A trip to the Louvre Museum in Paris changed the direction of her life and lead her to the University of Illinois at Chicago where she earned a BA in Art History with a Certificate in Museum Studies. Since 2006, she has worked as a Consulting Archivist in a wide variety of archives from Shure, Inc. to the Union League Club of Chicago. It was there that Laura's interest in genealogy was resurrected as she assisted researchers in their efforts to locate information about their relatives in the ULCC's collection. Laura renewed her own genealogical research and began her blog, The Last Leaf On This Branch (<http://thelastleafonthisbranch.blogspot.com/>). Her passion for Archives and Genealogy have combined and she is now providing personal archives and genealogical services to those interested in ensuring their long hours of diligent research and lovingly collected family treasures are organized and ready to share with others. Laura enjoys sharing what she has learned as an Archivist and is an enthusiastic and engaging speaker. Laura is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Society of American Archivists, National Genealogical Society, Association of Professional Genealogists, and National Trust for Historic Preservation, along with a number of State and Local genealogy societies.

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:

www.NWSCG.com

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**Handout #3 – DUPAGE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEXT
REGULAR SOCIETY PROGRAM ON MARCH 19, 2014**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, March 19, 2014. The program scheduled for that evening is **“Tech Toys for Genealogists”**. The speaker for the program will be **Nancy Thomas**.

Come see a demonstration of some useful hardware and software “toys” that will help you “play” in today’s genealogical sandbox.

This meeting will take place at the Wheaton Public Library, Lower Level. The address of the library is at 225 N. Cross 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.dcgs.org

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Handout #4 – COMPUTER ASSISTED GENEALOGY GROUP OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (CAGG-NI) NEXT PROGRAM ON MARCH 15, 2014 AT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY

The next meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, March 15, 2014 at the Schaumburg Township District Library starting at 10:30 AM. The program scheduled for this day is **"What's New in Technology"**. The speaker will be Ed Rosenthal.

Ed Rosenthal will present his very popular annual survey of emerging technologies. Sharing of the insights he gains from keeping tabs on new developments in the computing and digital imaging scenes will provide us all with a glimpse of what new tools will soon be available to leverage in our favorite obsession—genealogy! You won't want to miss this program.

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 APRIL 8, 2014**

Our next program will take place on Tuesday evening, April 8, 2014 at 7:30 PM. The title of the program is **“Researching at Appomattox Courthouse: Genealogy through the Lens of the Civil War”**. Our speaker will be Dr. Daniel Hubbard.

This talk reviews how Civil War era records aren't just about soldiers and sailors. Before, during and after the war, a wealth of different types of unusual records were produced that speak of that time and tell the story of a whole generation.

Daniel Hubbard is a full-time professional researcher who has been researching almost as long as he can remember. Inspired by family stories and a pair of genealogist aunts, he began to seriously conduct family history research at about eleven years of age. He spent eight years at CERN outside Geneva, Switzerland learning to handle very large research projects while performing research in particle physics (Ph.D. University of Michigan, Post-doc Harvard).

After living in Sweden for eleven years during which he was a software designer, strategic product manager and editor of technical documentation, he returned to the U.S. to fulfill his passion for family history. Daniel now combines his skills in technology, genealogy, complex research, the organizing of large amounts of information, writing, editing and book design to assist clients with their family history projects. He works with a variety of clients on projects including untangling problems in Swedish immigration and ancestry, analysis of 19th century letters and photographs, and extensive research into colonial families.

His goal as a speaker is always to inform in a memorable and entertaining way. He likes to come at his topics from slightly unusual angles making speaking more fun and he hopes this technique encourages people to take a fresh look at each subject.

You may visit the library's web page at:

www.SchaumburgLibrary.org

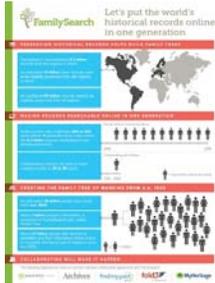
to view a Calendar of Events section of the library web page for this program and for many more non-genealogical programs offered by our library.

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 – FAMILYSEARCH GOAL IS TO PUT ALL THE WORLD'S HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS ONLINE IN ONE GENERATION

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at www.eogn.com dated February 4, 2014.



The **FamilySearch Blog** contains a short article by Thom Reed that points to a much longer article that explains why FamilySearch is working with commercial genealogy vendors to share data and other resources. Reed's article states, "This collaboration will carve centuries off the time needed to increase access to the world's historical records, enabling millions more people to quickly discover, share, and preserve family memories for generations."

Every time FamilySearch has announced a new partnership with commercial vendors, including Ancestry.com, MyHeritage, BillionGraves, OCLC, [DC Thomson Family History \(findmypast.com\)](http://DC Thomson Family History (findmypast.com)) and others, a number of newsletter readers have questioned the wisdom of such agreements. These two new articles explain the reasoning behind the arrangements.

The summation appears to be a statement in the longer article:

"FamilySearch CEO, Dennis Brimhall, explains that joining forces with other organizations, where possible, brings significantly more financial investment and technological resources to the family history industry than the nonprofit community could provide on its own."

Another statement caught my eye:

"For the top countries with the highest online research demand, using our existing resources and volunteers, it will take up to 300 years to index the 5.3 billion records that we already have," Brimhall noted. "That means you and me and the next 10 generations of our posterity would not live to personally benefit from them. And there are another 60 billion records that still need to be digitally preserved. We can do significantly better by working together with other organizations and as a community."

In short, FamilySearch says that, without partnerships with other major organizations, the non-profit will not be able to finish its planned efforts until the year 2314. I'll point out that plan addresses only those records created **BEFORE** 2014, it does not address new records to be added in the next 300 years. I would think that any effort to shorten the predicted 300 years to something of one generation or less is a good thing.

You can read Thom Reed's introduction at <https://familysearch.org/blog/en/familysearch-works-put-worlds-historical-records-online-generation/> and the longer *FamilySearch Works to Put the World's Historical Records Online in One Generation* article at <https://familysearch.org/node/2523>.

You can also find a very interesting infographic that illustrates the problems and the planned solutions at <https://familysearch.org/node/2520>. A small version of the infographic is shown above but the full-sized version is available at <https://familysearch.org/node/2520>.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on February 04, 2014 in [Online Sites](#) | [Permalink](#)

Comments by Tony Kierna

I was astounded when I read the above. Without even doing any math calculations, I could understand that it will take a long, long time for the LDS to digitize and index all of the data they currently have in microfilm format. Somehow I kept using the phrase "in our lifetime" as a possibility I would be able to see the data. Of course, that assumes that I would still be here for another 10 to 15 years.

Little did I know that I was not even close in my own personal estimate (maybe I should call it "wish").

I am not sure I clearly understand the "numbers" noted in the above. LDS says there are 5.3 billion records that will take 300 years to completely digitize and index. I always would ask "How did they come up with that number?". It sounds like the LDS has about 5.3 billion records in their possession. Unfortunately, it sounds like the LDS indicates there are at least 10 billion records from all over the world that they do not have.

Maybe I was simplifying the process in my own mind. I was thinking they were working on the films in their possession to digitize and index. But it is bigger than that. In fact, it is bigger by 10 billion records at least!

In my own simplistic view of digitizing and indexing, I fall back to the recently digitized/indexed effort to make the 1940 census available to researchers. I understood that there are 132,000,000 individuals that were in that census. Stay with me here. Digitizing and indexing that vast quantity when it was a united effort across the globe by indexers took about 8 months. Which would mean to me that 1 billion records would take about 64 months to index and digitize based on the 1940 Census effort. 5 billion records would take 5 times that amount or 320 months or approximately 26 years to index based again on the 1940 Census project that produced results on 132 million records in 8 months.

I know I am simplifying this but I think there is a far difference between 300 years and 26 years. My estimate is based on records in the possession of the LDS where I believe their estimates is based not only on the 5 billion they have, but also the 10 billion they do not have plus the new records that would be created during the time period intervening.

However you look at it getting all of the data online is a massive effort. But I just wish there would be a little more clarity on how the estimate was arrived at by the LDS and how the partnerships they are establishing is improving the deliverability of the data to one generation instead of 300 years!

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Handout #7 – FAMILYSEARCH ANNOUNCES A NEW MAJOR INDEXING PROJECT TO FOCUS ON OBITUARIES

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated February 6, 2014.

The following announcement was released by FamilySearch at today's RootsTech conference:

Obituaries + Volunteers = A Treasure Trove of Searchable Stories



FamilySearch has declared 2014 the “Year of the Obituary” and is working with partners and the larger genealogy community to collect and digitize millions of obituaries from the United States, with other countries soon to follow. The goal for this year is to index 100 million names from these historical documents, including the name of the deceased, relatives, and all other individuals found in each document.

This massive collection of obituaries will add a fabulous new dimension to online family history research. Obituaries are a “treasure trove” of valuable genealogical information. Each is a unique story of a person’s life. Many obituaries include a photo of the person along with the names of generations of family members.

The success of this indexing campaign depends on volunteers. Tens of thousands of additional volunteers are needed to keep up with the volume of obituary indexing projects coming this year. This represents an excellent opportunity for societies, archives, schools, and churches to participate in a meaningful act of service that will pay big dividends for generations to come.

Many indexers will enjoy indexing obituaries because they are so interesting to read and are virtually all typewritten. However, each obituary is as unique as the deceased person it portrays, and this uniqueness can make obituaries deceptively tricky to index correctly. Good judgment and a willingness to closely follow the instructions are crucial.

Volunteers are encouraged to start immediately. The quirks of the project may take some getting used to, but help resources are readily available, including:

- A video: [Indexing Obituaries](#)
- A blog article: [12 Vital Hints to Guide You as You Index Obituaries](#)
- FamilySearch support: <http://familysearch.org/help/contact>
- FamilySearch indexing Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/familysearchindexing>

If you haven't indexed before, get started today by following these steps:

1. Go to familysearch.org/indexing and click **Get Started**.
2. Follow the download instructions.
3. Open the indexing program using the new indexing icon on your desktop.
4. Sign in with your FamilySearch or LDS Account.
5. Enter your profile information.
6. Read and agree to the license agreement.
7. Click **Download Batch**.
8. Select a project to index.

To download a set (or batch) of obituaries to index, do the following:

1. While in the indexing program, click the **Download Batch** button.
2. Select **Show all projects**.
3. Scroll down to US indexing projects, and select a project that includes the word "Obituaries."
4. Click **OK**.
5. A message will pop up offering help. Use the help resources as needed, and then click Close to begin indexing the batch.

Although 2014 is the "Year of the Obituary," this collection will likely require several years to fully index. Working together we will unlock this treasure trove of fascinating information for researchers everywhere.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on February 06, 2014 in [Announcements](#), [Conferences](#) | [Permalink](#)

Comments by Tony Kierna

I was ecstatic when I became aware of this new major project being started by FamilySearch. I have always loved obituaries! Why? Because generally they are fascinating and can often be full of more contemporary information related to the deceased e.g. wife's name and maiden name, siblings, wife's names of the siblings, children, grandchildren etc.. You might even be lucky to get a geographical name of origin from Poland! The obituaries can really add to the tracking of descendants that you may not be aware of in your research. Even better, these obituaries are generally printed and more easily readable.

From a personal perspective, I already see one major challenge to this effort. If you factor in "language", I wonder how this project is going to deal with obituaries in foreign languages. I can attest to that personally. My own Polish genealogical research has relied heavily on tapping into the "obituaries" I discovered about my ancestors. Guess what? They did not have the obituary published in the local English speaking newspaper of the time in my area, the Chicago Tribune. No, my ancestral obituaries from the 1890s to the 1960s often appeared in the Polish language newspaper of the time in the area called the Dziennik Chicagoski. My early Polish ancestors stuck with their language for publication of this event. It was only as the next generations became more Americanized did those obituaries start appearing in the Chicago Tribune.

Thank goodness that the Polish Genealogical Society of America (PGSA) provides wonderful reference resources to help the researcher make some sense out of what the obituary says. Looking for "key" words in Polish over time helps the researcher be able to interpret what is in Polish. Another reason to hook up with genealogical societies affiliated with the ethnicity of who you are researching.

I have not been actively indexing of late. However, hearing of this new project is going to make me take a good look at this project. Perhaps I will jump in with both feet and see what they have to offer for indexing.

If you have never indexed data through the LDS now may be the time to at least take a look at the process, especially when the data on the surface might be relatively easy to index. The indexing of the US Census Data of 1940 was another good example on how a relatively large amount of data can be quickly addressed for indexing involvement. It appears the LDS is highlighting this obituary indexing project in a similar appearance.

From my own previous indexing involvement, being able to read the material is always the first hurdle to overcome. When you can read it, as hopefully the obituaries will be able to be read, your job of indexing can be more rewarding for you. You like what you are doing and you continue indexing! It is the difficult handwriting of the resource that can make indexing challenging.

So this looks like an ideal indexing project for those that are new to indexing or for those that want to give it another try if they have been on the sidelines for a little bit of late.

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Handout #8 – NEW FAMILYSEARCH INDEXING PROGRAM COMING IN 2014

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated February 6, 2014.

Here is another announcement made today at RootsTech. This one concerns the software used for FamilySearch indexing:

Index From Your Internet Browser, Including on Your Tablet Computer

The way we index historical documents is changing. FamilySearch indexing is currently developing an all-new program for volunteers to help make records searchable. The new browser-based indexing program **will be introduced later this year** and will be compatible with any tablet, desktop, or laptop computer that can access the Internet. The program will also be integrated with FamilySearch.org so the experience will be familiar to FamilySearch patrons.

What else is changing? New users will have an easier time getting started, and all users will find the help resources to be more accessible and complete. The program will make it simpler to find and learn about projects, with the ability to launch into a batch with a single click. And a new column-based entry option will be introduced, making it easier to index census and other tabular records.

Indexers will also be able to join multiple groups and enjoy a personalized My Indexing page, which will provide individual feedback, progress updates, and messages.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on February 06, 2014 in [Software](#) | [Permalink](#)

Comments by Tony Kierna

Based on the general description above, it appears that the biggest change in the indexing program that will occur is that you will not have to download an application to install on your desktop. That is how it is done today. That is not a big deal at all. It appears FamilySearch will make available indexing capability directly through your browser that you access FamilySearch.

I actually looked for more material regarding the proposed new program over and above the general description noted above in Dick Eastman's post. I was actually able to find an online PDF that provides more detail about what will be included in the new program when it. I wanted to share that with you because it gives a slightly more detailed list of the changes we can expect to see when it is released sometime in 2014.

You can look at the write-up here:

[Introducing the New FamilySearch Indexing Program](#)

You will also notice that if you read through the above document, that **there is going to be far greater support for mobile device support.** With the move toward more tablet devices and fewer desktop PCs, it appears that FamilySearch is recognizing that change and moving to make mobile computing devices more recognized as the computing devices users are using. **The document does make it clear that smaller screen size phones simply do not have enough screen real estate size to make them functional for indexing.** So indexers may only be able to access informational information via their small screen smartphones rather than being able to actually index on those small screen devices.

It also sounds like you will be able to "favorite" certain projects of interest to you and even be able to take for indexing certain specific batches from a specific location and time.

The new program will also allow you to establish "groups" of indexers within which you can work with the group. You will be able to even join multiple groups.

The new program also touts that there will be more effective training and help resources for indexing projects. It will be better organized and easier to find.

Right now if you are new to indexing you will need to download the application. Don't let that hinder you if you have an interest in trying out indexing through FamilySearch. One of my earlier handouts mentioned in this package noted that FamilySearch is starting to create a new "obituary" indexing project. Anything in print format can certainly make indexing efforts much easier than reading handwritten documents. Most obituaries were printed so readability should not be that great of an obstacle.

Keep your eyes open during 2014 for the activation of this new browser related indexing program that will have more ability to allow tablet users to do indexing. But until then, if you want to index, download the current program and give it a try.

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Handout #9 – “GETTING PAYMENT FOR A FAMILY HISTORY BOOK: RESOLVING THE DILEMMA”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the January/February 2014, Volume 18, Number 3 issue of Family Chronicle.

I thought that an interesting article in this issue is one titled “Getting Payment For a Family History Book: Resolving the Dilemma”. The author of the article is Margaret Moen.

So you have been discovering your family history over time. But what should you do with it? Perhaps, now is the time for taking all of the accumulated material and turning it into a book. This article offers some good insights into how to make your attempt at publishing a family history book a successful venture with your distribution goal of getting it into the hands of your living relatives.

There is always a balance to be had between creating a quality product both in appearance and content and the ability to recoup your costs in a fair manner by pricing it correctly. You have to ask yourself some basics based on your own personal goal. Do you want to make a little money, cover your expenses or simply share your family history?

If you will want the book published by an outside firm then begin searching online for credible family history publishers, especially if you see the book being hardcover in final format. Consider the inclusion of color photos. Also consider that your publishing costs will rise the more color is included. A smattering of included color photos adds quality to your effort but will not break the bank. One publisher mentioned in the article that can help is Creative Continuum.

You will want to spend a great deal of time in the “editing” portion of your publishing effort. Here is where any mistakes need to be discovered. The further a mistake goes in the process, the more costly it becomes to correct it, especially if print runs of producing books has already started. If your book was in notebook style rather than bound, you could correct individual pages for re-insertion and limit expensive corrections. During editing, you may be looking at a computer screen but you may be proofreading it from within your mind and not through your eyes. Another set of eyes can be very helpful to edit.

Probably one of the best things you can do to spice up your book and make it more sellable is to include stories and not just facts after facts after facts! Be accurate, but make it read like a historical novel instead of a history text.

Consider including photos of memorabilia and not just of people. Think of personal items of various ancestors. Think of handwritten letters from various ancestors.

Interested family readers will definitely want to see pedigree charts, descendant charts, family group sheets, biographies, maps and photos. The book should also include what you would expect from any nonfiction book. Formalities such as a

Foreword, Table of Contents, an Index and Citation of Sources. Do not shortcut any of these inclusions because you want to present your material in the best light.

The hardest part of the process is ultimately coming up with a price for the book, if that was one of your goals at the onset. If you plan on absorbing all of the costs yourself, then you are the one to determine the expense side of how far you will go to get the material into the hands of your relatives. If you have been working with a publisher by all means continue to work with them on establishing a price for your material if that was your goal.

Once a price is established, send out an order form with a pre-publication price and a higher post-publication price to those relatives that may have expressed interest in making a purchase. Include sample pages of the material for your potential purchasing audience. Try your best to get the interested relatives to pay in advance and avoid bad feelings if you actually distribute the book to them assuming they will forward you the money. You do not want to create bad family feelings.

Maybe you have chosen to put the material together without being compensated for your efforts. Your family members will now have the history in their possession and it will be your legacy gift to all of them. But start with a clear-cut goal at the beginning of the process rather than later.

There were a lot of good tips in this article should you choose to embark on being a family history author. Plan your efforts at the beginning and reap the rewards at the end.

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Handout #10 – “LOCATING GERMAN PARISH RECORDS”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the January/February 2014, Volume 18, Number 3 issue of Family Chronicle.

I thought that another good article in this issue is one titled “Locating German Parish Records”. The author of the article is Leslie Albrecht Huber.

German Parish records are a great resource for genealogists discovering their German roots. They generally predate most of the documents we use for recordkeeping. German Parish recordkeeping goes all the way back to 1540. The researcher has to be realistic that a good amount of these records simply have not survived the test of time. All the usual culprits are the cause for lost records such as fires, floods, poor preservation, wars and you can just name it. We may very well discover that records do exist for the parish of our ancestors, but they may be incomplete due to the causes noted above that prevented them from surviving to this day.

To discover your ancestors German parish records you do need to have in your possession the town they lived in during these periods. Sometimes that knowledge is readily available. Sometimes, you are clueless. If you need to discover that fact you often have to turn to immigration records if they migrated or to local parish records in the United States where a town may have been identified in US records that can lead you back to the original area where the ancestors originated from.

It is important to note that the town name may not necessarily be the parish name. Using road atlas maps is often helpful to get a birds-eye view of the towns surrounding the town of your ancestor. One of those towns may be the parish town you will use to see if records exist. Gazetteers are often helpful to use to make these discoveries. One source on the internet for German gazetteer help is at ProGenealogists at www.progenealogists.com/germany/gazetteersmain.html. Also consider using Genealogy.net at <http://gov.genealogy.net/search/index>.

If you do not know the state in Germany where the town existed you can also check the free online historical gazetteer of **Meyers Orts Und Verkehr Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs** at Ancestry.com. You do not need to have a personal subscription to Ancestry.com to access this database. This German gazetteer can be challenging to use so you might want to access a nice guide from Family Search that will help you use it more skillfully. You can find this aid at http://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Step-by-step_guide:_Using_Meyers_Gazetteer_Online.

Once you feel you have a correct starting town/parish name, you can then determine if any material is online for you top research. You may want to start with FamilySearch to see what online databases they may have for Germany. Choose “Search” from their main web site at www.familysearch.org. Then scroll down looking for the map and list of continents. Select “Continental Europe” and then look in alphabetical order by country name to see what is there for Germany. You may

very well find applicable databases, some of which may be fully indexed and searchable and some that may just have images only un-indexed.

Another place to look for German Parish records online is Ancestry.com. They have some for the Prussian province of Brandenburg, Mecklenburg and Pomerania. Still another place is the Posen Marriage Project for marriages from 1835 to 1884 at <http://poznan-project.psnk.pl>.

If you do not find much online, you can turn to FamilySearch to see what material they have in their microfilm collection for you to consider renting. Access their online catalog at <http://familysearch.org/catalog-search>. Remember to search by the name of the town your ancestors went to church and not the town they lived in. If you are lucky to see positive potential records existing for the parish town then note the types of records and the years they cover to see if they coincide with what you seek. You can then order the film online and pay for it online. Direct that film to be delivered to the Family History Center of your choice where you can do the research.

If nothing shows up in the FamilySearch catalog, you are left with determining if material exists by letter-writing to German Archives for the area or the German parish of your ancestors. Consider using the FamilySearch Wiki for resource aids about better understanding the German Archives. There is also a book to help titled *“Ancestors in German Archives: A Guide to Family History Sources”*. The author of the book is Raymond Wright.

Expect to construct your letter to the Archives or the German parish in German! FamilySearch again has a wonderful letter-writing guide for German letters you can find at http://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Germany_Letter_Writing_Guide. To get a German postal to direct your letter go to the German post website at www.deutschepost.de/de.html. Change the language to “English” then choose “Search Zip” for the town you want to direct the mailing.

Your letter should not ask the recipient to search for everything. You will need to limit your request to a small span of years. You may include a “donation” in Euros. Don’t forget to include a stamped self-addressed envelope for them to use to return material to you.

It would be great if you could find all you wanted online. Realistically, that is not going to happen. Follow the sequence of actions to take in this article and you may still discover important pieces of information that are not online. Yes, you will have to work a little harder, but the results will be worth the effort.

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