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April 8, 2014 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our April 8, 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 MAY 3, 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, May 3, 2014. The program for the morning is titled **“Have You Ever Thought About Joining A Lineage Society?”**. The speaker for the morning will be Joan E. Murray.

Joan will explain what lineage societies are and what their purpose is, whether it's philanthropic or genealogical. She will help you determine if your interests would benefit from joining a society, who is eligible and what types of proof are required. If a decision is made to join a society, Joan can explain how to become a member.

Joan E. Murray Born in Brookfield, Il in 1934, Joan E. Murray has long had an interest in family history. When the youngest of her six children was a few years old, and the country was preparing for the Bicentennial, thoughts of what parts her own forefathers had played in the making of America began to stir in her mind. Returning from the Smoky Mountains in 1974 with her family she was spurred on when she realized her great-grandmother's birth had taken place not far from the famed Ft. Harrod in Kentucky where she and her family stopped for a visit. Encouraged by a docent at the fort, she went into the court house to check out the names she had related to the docent. Instant success came so easily that she was soon on her way to doing genealogical research and has not yet stopped.

Joan has published five personal genealogical family histories, one genealogical history for the Palatine Historical Society and was a writer for a Kane County genealogical history.

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 APRIL 16, 2014**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, April 16, 2014. The program scheduled for that evening is **“Mining Census Records – Information to Enrich Your Heritage”**. The speaker for the program will be **Steve Szabados**.

Census records are constantly being used by genealogy researchers to add ancestors to their family trees. This session will look beyond the first couple of columns and review the wealth of information that can be found in the US census records. It will discuss ways that you can garner each morsel of information from records from 1850 to 1940. A second area discussed will be ways of finding those missing census records. To have a more complete understanding of your family history, all census records should be found. This presentation will discuss methods to find the census records that were indexed incorrectly and now are “missing” when using normal search methods. The presentation will also discuss ways to deal with the lack of information in the census records for 1790 through 1840 and give you ways that may help you identify which records belong to your family.

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 APRIL 19, 2014 AT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY

The next meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, April 19, 2014 at the Schaumburg Township District Library starting at 10:30 AM. The program scheduled for this day is "BillionGraves". The speaker will be Debra Dudek.

BillionGraves is contending to be the top cemetery search site on the web. Toting a hot new app and an easy interface, BillionGraves is making cemetery transcription projects and research information more accessible to tech-friendly users. Get a look at this site as a researcher, transcriber, and in-the-field data gatherer.

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 MAY 13, 2014

Our next program will take place on Tuesday evening, May 13, 2014 at 7:30 PM. The title of the program is **“Using Non-Population Census Schedules”**. Our speaker will be Matt Rutherford.

When genealogists refer to "the census," we usually mean the population census, in which households are enumerated. Invaluable though these are, we short-change ourselves if don't use all the other census information that is available for our research. **If you have ancestors who were farmers, slaves, or manufacturers, you'll want to avail yourself of the non-population census schedules.** Even those Americans who had other occupations often had a farming or manufacturing business on the side. Don't lose out on all the census has to offer.

Matt Rutherford, MLIS, is Curator of Genealogy and Local History at the Newberry Library. In addition to managing the Newberry's renowned genealogy collection, Matt has also answered thousands of questions on a wide range of genealogy topics. He has spoken at the Illinois State Genealogical Society and the Conference on Illinois History, as well as several local genealogy societies, including the North Suburban Genealogical Society, the Elgin Genealogical Society, Genealogical Forum of Elmhurst, and the Illinois St. Andrew Society. In addition, Matt teaches seminars on a variety of genealogy topics, including beginning genealogy, researching at the Newberry Library, using repositories and archives, researching pre-fire Chicago, adoption searches, non-population census schedules, and the history of the federal census. He is the co-author of *A Bibliography of African American History at the Newberry Library* (2005).

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 – HOW TO REQUEST COPIES OF MICROFILM IMAGES AND OTHER RESOURCE MATERIAL FROM FAMILYSEARCH

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



FamilySearch has slightly reworded the policy for patrons who are requesting copies from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. Here is the summation:

"All requests for information copied from films, book pages, CDs, marriage, death or birth certificates, wills and/or deeds, etc. will be copied in digital format and emailed to patrons in a zipped PDF or JPG file format. There is no charge for this service if we are able to email to information to patrons."

You can read more in an article by Merrill White in the FamilySearch Blog at <http://goo.gl/moULsS>.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on March 06, 2014 in [Genealogy Basics](#) | [Permalink](#)

Comments by Tony Kierna

Did you even know that you can ask FamilySearch to provide you with a copy of some data, book page, CD content etc?

FamilySearch can provide up to 5 copies of data to you for any given month provided you provide them with a request form that describes in detail what it is you are seeking. It does not appear you can just broadly say "Find a birth record for my KIERNA ancestor from the Polish village of Wawelno". The requester has to provide as much detail as possible that already identifies what FamilySearch should access to provide the material.

FamilySearch will provide the "found" material via electronic file sent to a researcher's e-mail address for free. Limit of 5 requests per month.

If for some reason you do not have a computer or an e-mail address, found material can be sent electronically to your local Family History Center where you can then obtain the copies of the material. You would still have to provide FamilySearch with a "snail mail" request with details.

For many of us doing our online research accessing existing digital material online from FamilySearch we simply browse through online images or find indexed

information and then save that material. I can see many possibilities for using this service even if we are able to discover material and save it, not needing FamilySearch to find it for us. As an example, say you are researching in Salt Lake City at the Family History Library. You have used many onsite films. You have used many onsite books. In using them, you have cited copious amounts of details about the film or the book. Perhaps you did not make a copy of the record or discovery you needed. You could now ask FamilySearch to provide you with that copy because you have all of the details from your research to provide to FamilySearch allowing them to access the data, find the page you noted, and they make the copy and send it to you.

Or, let's say you are at a local Family History Center (FHC) researching a film you ordered. Perhaps the film reader is broke for copying and making a paper copy or you cannot use your flashdrive on the system because that part is not working. You could again, by taking copious notes and citations, be able to send a request to FamilySearch to have them make a copy of the details of the film you accessed at the FHC but could not make a copy yourself because the functionality to do so was not working.

Or let's say a collaborator researcher has given you citation and documentation information referring to a book source, but you do not have the copy of the book page. By providing the details of the material you could now request FamilySearch to provide you with a copy of that page from the specific book mentioned.

The key to all of this appears to be the copious amounts of detailed information you must supply. FamilySearch is not going to do "research" but it does appear they can easily find the material you seek provided you identify it for them. They can then make the copy and electronically send it to you.

Here is some text from the above article that notes what needs to be provided to FamilySearch for them to successfully find the material and provide an image copy to you:

- Film or Fiche number
- Item number
- Name of Individual(s) referred to in the record
- Title of the record
- Name of parents, spouse, grantor, grantee, etc.
- Event type (Birth, Death or Marriage)
- Complete event date and place
- Event place (county, parish, township, etc.)
- Volume or page number
- Registration or Certificate Number
- Any other information that will help us locate your record.

In the article noted above in the link provided, you will find another link to an electronic "online" form you will fill out and ultimately send to FamilySearch.

So if you know the above congratulations! If you don't, then you will need to continue researching until you discover something you can provide them.

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Handout #7 – PERSONAL HERMETICALLY SEALED DNA TIME CAPSULE

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated March 15, 2014.



Save a sample of your DNA for your grandchildren or even later generations! Hammacher Schlemmer (Isn't that everyone's favorite toy store?) is now selling a triple-sealed time capsule that securely stores your genetic sample for use by future generations. Quoting from the advertisement:

"Preserving one's DNA in the present enables future scientific advances to reveal any predispositions to disease—currently undetectable by today's methods—a family's genetic makeup may bear. Dispensing with the need for long-term refrigerated storage in a lab, a chemical matrix of dissolvable compounds stabilizes DNA within a blood sample at room temperature (blood provides a higher quality and quantity of DNA than samples taken from cheek swabs), preserving the sample for over 100 years. A blood sample can be taken at your preferred medical facility or using the included kit. Once a sample is secured within the capsule, it can be stored within a home or bank lock box for decades until one's progeny submits it for genetic analysis."

You can find the Hermetically Sealed DNA Time Capsule at <http://www.hammacher.com/Product/Default.aspx?sku=84551>.

If you do purchase one of these "Time Capsules," drop me a note and let me know how it works. At \$299.95, I don't think I will buy one. In fact, if you have ever seen a Hammacher Schlemmer catalog, you already know about the company's high prices.

My thanks to newsletter reader Scott Tilden for telling me about this item.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on March 15, 2014 in [DNA](#) | [Permalink](#)

Comments by Tony Kierna

Sound gimmicky? Probably. Could it be something that really works? Maybe. Do you have \$300 burning a hole in your pocket? What about when the day comes 80 years into the future and your descendants want to access your blood that you left for them for analysis when science may have made even further strides to keep mankind alive forever through DNA manipulation? Will the blood sample be there in 100% perfect shape for analysis? Who knows! What if scientists of the future say

the preservation techniques of 80 years previous were not "state of the art" and the sample preserved for 80 years is worthless?

I guess I look at this skeptically. Why not just get your DNA tested via the available cheek swab process right now? The article alludes to blood being better than cheek swabbing. Yet for all the millions participating in DNA testing for genealogy they are providing cheek swabbed material. I do acknowledge that today's DNA analysis is state of the art for today. Certainly that will continue to evolve over the next 100 years. So yes, if you saved your blood into the future it can be tested for what is state of the art at that time.

Hammacher Schlemmer is known for its unique products. It is a quality company that sells fairly expensive products. You might be able to draw a conclusion that what you put into this product today will be useable 100 years from now. But in the big picture we all know that as successive generations pass, your best laid plans may simply not have a supporter for your intentions 100 years previously. I suppose you could make some written legal arrangements today that will carry forward 100 years into the future but at what cost and at what interest from your future descendants.

I guess you can look at this product as a novelty. But very successful ideas and novelties can become very successful. So if you want to be an early adapter, here is a new toy for you to consider today even though no one can touch it and use it until many moons have passed. You can now have your very own blood bank time capsule right now!

You can also take this to the nth degree also. Why stop at just a sample of blood? Why not just get yourself cryogenically frozen today so your entire being will be around some day 100 years from now? Why just have your blood available for testing that can't help you? Why not have your entire being available? OK Hammacher Schlemmer, when are we going to see you selling a cryogenic storage unit so we can put our entire body into it?

We really just want to hear those magic words 100 years in to the future that we heard from a famous movie made in the 1930s ... "It's Alive, It's Alive" (Frankenstein).

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Handout #8 – USING ANCESTRY.COM FOR FREE IN THE LIBRARY

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated March 20, 2014.

Writing in the Ancestry.com blog, Anne Gillespie Mitchell offers suggestions for effective use of Ancestry.com at no charge. She writes:



"Did you know that Ancestry.com is available for free in thousands of libraries in the U.S? You can't create a tree, or post messages on message boards. You can't sit in your jammies and work on your family (please don't sit in your jammies in the library!). You can't work until 3am in the morning. But you can view much of our great content.

"But how do you get the content home?"

You can read the full article at <http://goo.gl/Z1bpbO>.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on March 20, 2014 in [Online Sites](#) | [Permalink](#)

Comments by Tony Kierna

Do you have a personal paid subscription to Ancestry.com? Is it for 3 months, 6 months, 1 year, including all databases? If so, then you are covered to access this data from your home. You are also covered if you visit your local public library and access the "library" product version of Ancestry.com. It is called Ancestry Library Edition. In the above little post from Dick Eastman the article does note that there are limitations to using the library version of Ancestry.com. These limitations are mainly involved with your inability to upload family trees or post messages to message boards. That is why there is a subscribable Ancestry.com product in which they can provide you with these nice and important additional services for a cost.

The data between the two products is comparable. You are able to access the same data whether you personally subscribe or use the Ancestry Library Edition product. And yes, you can come to our library and sit in front of a Reference computer and have at Ancestry Library Edition. Unfortunately, another drawback of the library product is that through licensing agreements you cannot use it from home. You must be physically present in our library using our computers with the product on. You can also access then Library Edition product from your laptop as long as both you and your laptop are physically in our library building.

As the article points out you can use the library product, find your ancestors and then send that data to your e-mail address from within the library product. In our library we also do allow you to connect your flashdrive to our computers that contain the Ancestry Library Edition product so you can download the data to it immediately. This will in essence save you a step of emailing from here and then opening up all those emails at home to capture your sent data. Saving the data electronically is always better than just immediately printing it, whether that be at home or in the library where it will cost you to print.

When you click on the link within the above Dick Eastman post, there is more to read. Additionally, there is a link in the article to a 5 minute YouTube video that even gives a deeper explanation of how you go about sending Ancestry.com material to yourself when using the Ancestry Library Edition at your local public library. Here is a direct link to that video:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZO-oG_hwd6A&feature=share&list=PL0xuz8BBkD4hP8k3ExCn1hxhbeuWdVY5x

So if you personally subscribe to Ancestry.com then this information is not so much for you unless you happen to be using the version of Ancestry Library Edition in our library. For non-subscribers, take advantage of this ability to find material in your searches and then send them home to your home e-mail for review and saving as a digital file for future use again and again.

When I looked at the above YouTube video the speaker indicated that your images will be mailed to you under 1 e-mail, called and Ancestry Discovery e-mail, and not on a per image basis so it won't look like spamming messages to your e-mail program (I hope I am correct on how I am interpreting what was said!). You will want to save this e-mail so you can access the information now or at a future time. Apparently, the images you select can be accumulated over a 12 hour period and they will all be sent when you end your session or when 12 hours is completed. Also, the speaker noted that there is a limit of 300 images that will accumulated to be sent. (Again, I hope I am interpreting what was said. It sounded like you get 300 images or records during a 12 hour use session.).

This is a nice function to be aware of if you only access our library version and do not have your own personal subscription. Try it out the next time you are by us. Work with the digital file at home. Don't just print it out at our library.

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Handout #9 – “FIFTY YEARS OF GENEALOGICAL CREDENTIALING”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the January-March 2014, Volume 40, Number 1 issue of NGS Magazine.

I thought that an interesting article in this issue is one titled “Fifty Years of Genealogical Credentialing”. The author of the article is Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL.

This article focuses on how the process has evolved over time whereby “genealogists” can become credentialed through a rigorous process so that they can be viewed as legitimate and trustworthy researchers. By proving their skills and capabilities they become recognized as being trustworthy and legitimate in their genealogical endeavors.

Why was credentialing necessary? Just like in any other profession, discoveries were made of those claiming to be genealogists who took that title and did unscrupulous things with it. The article points out that there are some “infamous” names that have besmirched the title of genealogist with illegal and illicit behavior. The article mentions a John Casper Branner who in 1913 wrote a book about his father’s family. Mr. Branner basically got all of his information from “correspondence” from other BRANNER families. He did not research any of it and made connections and conclusions that were for the most part incorrect. So anyone that followed his family history was basically going down the wrong path.

Another “infamous” genealogist was Gustave Anjou. He is actually listed in the online Wikipedia under the category of “Genealogical Fraud”. Quoting from the article: “What Anjou did was fleece the unsuspecting. He produced beautiful works, star-studded genealogies, and who was going to argue? After all, the work was by somebody with credentials – even if most of them were made up.”

So even in the enjoyable of genealogy we can easily discover scams, fraud, hoaxes. Some were maybe innocent or even hilarious. Some were very injurious. Some may have been out and out criminal!

In order to put some faith into the genealogical community the American Society of Genealogists (ASG) was formed in 1940 and “designed to foster the training of genealogists, eliminate improper and unethical practices, and establish a code of ethics and standards”. Just like in any other profession when taken to a professional level, the American community was looking for ways of establishing trust within the genealogical community. Faith has been restored through rigidly constructed processes within the professional genealogical community. By 2013, more than two thousand individuals can claim the rank of credentialed genealogist.

The Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG) has been the organization created to establish a rigorous methodology requirement to do genealogical research for someone. If standards did not exist for genealogical research, we would simply be back at the problem of “my cousin said this”, or “I go back to the line of” kind of

research. That is not going to happen and cannot happen in order to provide legitimacy.

Even today, new standards are being developed though BCG. The development of DNA testing and how that can be utilized in a standards process is one of the hot topics now of the time. The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) are going to be allowing the use of Y-DNA to support a proof argument for lineage research. Use of such research techniques is going to disclose things that the paper trail, never could, and not everyone will be happy or comfortable with that.

Another hot topic for today will be lineage itself. The tradition of bloodlines as we know them is changing, certainly on case by case matters rather than across the board. The traditional son, father, grandfather sequence through bloodline will have its future challenges that will need to be thought about. The traditional Mother/Father role is changing. Today, you can easily find Mom/Mom, Father/Father cases that will need to be documented as they are and not under the traditional ways we have used. Families today are so much more than simple bloodlines as we have always known them.

I thought this article really presented a side to genealogy that few of us really understand or even want to. Yet without ethics and standards genealogical fraud could be rampant. It was very nice to read an article of this nature and to better understand that there is an organization behind this that provides us with the ethical and standards guidance that helps us all as genealogists.

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Handout #10 – “REALITY TELEVISION: A NEW PERSPECTIVE”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the January-March 2014, Volume 40, Number 1 issue of NGS Magazine.

Another good article in this issue is one titled “Reality Television: A New Perspective”. The author of the article is Jean Wilcox Hibben, Ph.D, CG.

The author provides you with a true view of what it is like to be involved in the slew of TV Genealogy reality shows. We all know that there is “Who Do You Think You Are?” that focuses on the genealogy of a particular “celebrity star”. In 2013 there was the birth of a new TV Reality show that was called “Genealogy Roadshow”. This show is created by Public Broadcasting which is why the familiarity of the naming convention for the show is there e.g. Antiques Roadshow. The show tours through various United State cities. Participants on the show are not your traditional “celebrity star” as on the other show. These are more common, down-to-earth people who approached PBS with some version of a family story that they would like researched.

Well, they don’t just ask the PBS host for help at that very moment. They submitted their “story” quite a long time in advance. You see the author of this article was the “lead” researcher for the PBS show. So she made connections with possible applicants early in the process before they and their story were deemed television worthy! As lead researcher the author hoped that who was selected and the story they presented would translate into being “ground-breaking” genealogy news.

The author also noted that the PBS staff in general connected with production of the series were not always that knowledgeable themselves about genealogy itself. They wanted to produce a genealogy show but they were not aware of how genealogy research is successfully completed. But over the three months for the production of the original airings in 2013, many of the staff became more knowledgeable and understanding of genealogy and research. In fact, the author believes that many of the production staff became budding genealogists once the 3 month production period came to an end!

The author noted that the 3 month period was stressful and rewarding. They got to know the applicants and their stories and their deceased relatives for which a story was unfolding. They discovered newly found relatives for the applicant. There was a lot of joy and happiness discovered through the research and the connection to the applicant that appeared on the show.

It was also nice to see that the author showed a side-by-side comparison of what the “producers” of the show wanted versus what the “researchers” could give. It went something like this:

Producers Desires

Researchers Abilities

Exciting Stories

What the real experience was

Research in 4 to 6 hours

Unknown time commitment

Everything found online research

Much online but more in traditional

Minimal cost

Researcher cost plus expenses

Facts

Facts (as far as provable)

Positive phrases "people are related"

Use of phrases reflecting reality such as "the people could be related"

A good experience for applicants

A reality experience for applicants (some information that was located was not positive.)

A good TV program for the viewers for

An educational and enlightening program the viewers.

The article was short and sweet but it certainly presented some inside stories of what it is like to actually be involved in the production of a reality genealogy TV show. Keep your eyes open on the PBS airwaves. The Genealogy Roadshow was deemed quite successful in its initial on-air appearance. It is expected that new shows will be broadcast in a new season on PBS during 2014.

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