



## HANDOUTS TABLE OF CONTENTS

### May 13, 2014

<a href="#"><u>Handout Introduction</u></a> .....	Page 2
<a href="#"><u>Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) Genealogy Blog</u></a> .....	Page 4
<a href="#"><u>Northwest Suburban Council of Genealogists (NWSCG) Program for June 7, 2014</u></a> .....	Page 5
<a href="#"><u>DuPage County Genealogical Society (DCGS) Program for May 21, 2014</u></a> .....	Page 7
<a href="#"><u>Computer Assisted Genealogy Group of Northern Illinois (CAGGNI) May 17, 2014 All-Day Conference; Regular Monthly Program June 21, 2014</u></a> .....	Page 8
<a href="#"><u>Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) June 10, 2014 Genealogy Program</u></a> .....	Page 10
<a href="#"><u>The Basics of Scanning</u></a> .....	Page 12
<a href="#"><u>Ancestry.com Member Trees Not So Good</u></a> .....	Page 14
<a href="#"><u>The Statistics of Ancestry.com</u></a> .....	Page 16
<a href="#"><u>"Dial "G" for Genealogy"</u></a> .....	Page 18
<a href="#"><u>"Case Studies and Why You Should Read Them"</u></a> .....	Page 20

## May 13, 2014 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our May 13, 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](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 JUNE 7, 2014

**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 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, June 7, 2014. The program for the morning is titled **"From Land Records To Google Earth; Mapping Your Family's Place"**. The speaker for the morning will be Jane Haldeman.

**This program is a "special" make-up program for one that was cancelled on February 1, 2014 due to inclement weather.** The topic and speaker for this program are the same as what was supposed to have happened on February 1, 2014. The society does not normally meet during the month of June during a calendar year.

There are numerous sources that give our ancestor's legal land description; where are they and what do they mean? **Learn where to look and how to convert section and range into Google Earth to see how that property looks today.**

Jane's passion for genealogy began in 8th grade with a school assignment. Her other passion is technology which lead her into theater as a stagehand. Today she has blended her love of family history and technology and shares that love with others. Jane lives in the suburbs of Chicago and her lectures focus on technology as applied to genealogical research. She is owner of "It's Relative," [www.itsrelative.net](http://www.itsrelative.net); President, Illinois State Genealogical Society; Immediate Past-President, Fox Valley Genealogical Society; past Registrar Fort Payne Chapter, NSDAR; and past Design and Technical Editor, Illinois State Genealogical Society Quarterly Journal.

**Meetings take place at the Arlington Heights Senior Center, 1801 West Central Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005 at 10:00 AM. There is a round table discussion that takes place at 9:00 AM prior to the main meeting that starts at 10:00 AM.**

Participants are invited to attend this round table and bring their research questions for discussion.

You may visit the society web page at:

[www.NWSCG.com](http://www.NWSCG.com)

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

We do our best here to try to be sure that information we convey about programs is accurate. However, sometimes we are unable to convey changes unless we are made aware of those changes.

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**Handout #3 – DUPAGE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEXT  
REGULAR SOCIETY PROGRAM ON MAY 21, 2014**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, May 21, 2014. The program scheduled for that evening is **“La Famiglia – Beginning Italian Genealogy Research”**. The speaker for the program will be **Jennifer Holik**.

Join us for an overview of how to begin researching your Italian ancestors in the U.S. before jumping across the pond. **Learn about naming patterns, tips of locating the village or origin and surnames.**

You may visit the society's web page at:

[www.dcg.org](http://www.dcg.org)

The society also has a blog that you can visit to find out about “this and that” related to the society as well as find genealogical tips. You can visit the DuPage County Genealogical Society blog at:

<http://dupagecountygenealogicalsociety.wordpress.com/>

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

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**Handout #4 – COMPUTER ASSISTED GENEALOGY GROUP OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (CAGG-NI) SPECIAL ALL-DAY CONFERENCE ON MAY 17, 2014 AT ELGIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE; NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MONTHLY PROGRAM ON JUNE 14, 2014 AT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY**

CAGGNI will be having their first ever "all-day" genealogical conference that will be coming up on Saturday May 17, 2014 at the Elgin Community College (ECC), Building E, 1700 Spartan Drive, Elgin, IL 60123. This program is in lieu of their normally scheduled regular 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month program. Read the details about this program below as well as use the links included to get you to more details.

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[Register now](#) for CAGGNI's first ever day-long conference, GeneaQuest! GeneaQuest 2014 features nationally-acclaimed genea blogger and genealogy-tech professional Thomas MacEntee. Thomas's keynote address, *Genealogy: The Future Is Now* will present the programs, apps, and websites that are hot now and how you can prepare for the genealogy technology of the future.

Breakout sessions and computer labs featuring CAGGNI's own presenters Caron Primas Brennan, Nancy R. Thomas, John Stryker, Sandra Trapp and Michelle Bray Wilson will deep-dive into Genealogy Apps, Google Tools, Ancestry.com, FamilySearch, Family Tree Maker, Genetic Genealogy, Picasa and Flip-Pal.

Visit our [GeneaQuest page](#) for complete program and speaker information.

Join us also at GeneaQuest's exclusive GeneaUs Bar for informal discussion in your favorite genealogy or technology specialty area.

This event will be held at Elgin Community College building E. [Map](#).

**Societies and Vendors:** Please share this [Program Brochure](#) with your membership. Contact [Events@caggni.org](mailto:Events@caggni.org) for conference handouts, to host a society table, or for further information.

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The next regular meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, June 21, 2014 at the Schaumburg Township District Library starting at 10:30 AM. The program scheduled for this day is "**Technological Advances in Polish-American Genealogy**". The speaker will be **Jason Kruski**.

Polish-American genealogical research has never been easier with the wealth of information that has come online in the past few years. Join speaker Jason Kruski as he walks you through resources from both the United States and Poland available to all via the internet to help build your Polish-American family tree.

You may visit the organization web page at:

[www.CAGGNI.org](http://www.CAGGNI.org)

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

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## Handout #5 – SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY NEXT GENEALOGY PROGRAM ON JUNE 10, 2014

We will have another "break-out" session for our gathering on June 10, 2014. 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 June 10, 2014.

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 – THE BASICS OF SCANNING

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated March 28, 2014.



The Library of Congress' newsletter about digital preservation has an interesting article by Mike Ashenfelder that describes digital scanning for newcomers. It is not an in-depth article that tells you everything you need to know, but it does serve as a good introduction. I especially like the information about choosing scan properties: dpi and bit depth.

If you have been thinking about digitizing some old photographs or documents, you might like to read Mike Ashenfelder's article at <http://goo.gl/NMkRhZ>.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on March 28, 2014 in [Genealogy Basics](#) | [Permalink](#)

### Comments by Tony Kierna

Regarding the above link to the article, also consider to take a good look at the "Comments" that individuals left at the end of the online article. As of this writing I noticed 19 comments that also contain good information related to scanning. The article itself is very good as a guide but the comments provide even more information for the reader to consider.

The author of the article does mention early on in the process about the need for the cleanliness of the glass upon which your documents and photographs are placed. **CLEAN THE GLASS BEFORE YOU EVEN START SCANNING THE FIRST PHOTO OR DOCUMENT.** We often tend to do scanning in groups of materials we have. We generally don't always do just one image. If your glass is smudgy or dirty you are in essence scanning that onto your digital images. More importantly, don't just grab the photo off the scanner glass by reaching for it with your fingers. You will soon learn that your fingers will touch the glass and reintroduce more smudges from your oils on your fingers. The author suggests that you simply take a piece of paper and slip it under the document on the glass to lift it up and then remove it with your fingers once lifted. This way you will not touch the glass.

The author does a good job of providing us with insights into Dots Per Inch (DPI) lingo and file formats to use for saved images. The higher the DPI and using the file format of TIFF will result in larger size files. High DPI size will allow your scan to be magnified without looking grainy. This can be important for reading handwriting on these documents. You will not get good images that can be magnified if you start

with a small DPI. Keep that in mind! This is not the place to want to reduce that because of the size of the image file that will result. After all, it is likely you will only scan the material once. External storage devices are very large and relatively inexpensive. Don't short change yourself on something this important. Go with the best DPI and file format as recommended within the article even if the file sizes are large.

The article focuses on desktop scanners and their settings and how to use them and clean them. Not mentioned in this article, however, is the ability to use your smartphones as portable scanners. Know what software exists for your particular phone, Apple (iOS) or Google (Android). Know what settings you can use on your portable smartphone. Perhaps they may not allow DPI as large as a desktop scanner. Or perhaps you cannot save the files as TIFF files. Know this in advance before you start making hundreds of scans with your smartphone.

Perhaps, the portability is not as important in comparison to a desktop scanner that simply has more horsepower to accomplish what you want. Save the smartphone scanning process for when you know you would not be able to scan a document on a desk top scanner e.g. you are at a research facility and the book you have in front of you has meaningful information for you that cannot be checked out for you to scan at home.

Don't just go with any default settings on your home desk top scanner. They may not be what the author recommends. You will have to become familiar with the settings for the software you have and how to adjust them to produce the best scans possible.

Don't forget to look at the comments as part of the link to the article itself.

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## Handout #7 – ANCESTRY.COM MEMBER TREES NOT SO GOOD

*The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated April 5, 2014.*

Writing in *The Jersey Journal*, Daniel Klein describes his experiences with Ancestry.com's member-contributed family trees. He describes the problem caused by novice genealogists using information from a reasonably reputable source (The US Census) and applying it to the wrong person. Now other people have accepted this erroneous information as gospel and it perpetuates over and over. You can read Daniel Klein's article at [http://blog.nj.com/tracing\\_your\\_roots/2014/04/post\\_6.html](http://blog.nj.com/tracing_your_roots/2014/04/post_6.html).

I will quickly add that Klein writes only about his experiences with Ancestry.com but those of us who have been looking at online genealogy sites for years know that the problem is more widespread. It is not a problem solely on Ancestry.com, but also on all genealogy web sites that accept and republish user-contributed family trees without question or verification. Indeed, no organization can verify the information contributed by users. That would be a Herculean task.

I do have to agree with the one positive statement in Klein's article: "...use them as a guide and not gospel. Take all information you find with a grain of salt, examine it closely, ask questions, check sources and then do all those things over again until it hits all of the Genealogical Proof Standard's points."

We tend to treat this as a modern problem of the Internet. However, I will invite anyone to go to a genealogy library and look at the books published before the invention of the World Wide Web, especially the self-published books. Many of them contain huge errors and offer no source citations where the information was found. This is not a new problem.

I still use Ancestry.com, MyHeritage.com, FamilySearch.org, WeRelate.org, WikiTree.com, and any other genealogy web site that I think might be able to help. I expect to keep using them for many more years. However, unless there is an image of the original document included, I treat all genealogy information online and in books as **CLUES ABOUT WHAT MIGHT BE FACTUAL**.

I have to agree with the first part of Daniel Klein's title: *Ancestry is an Excellent Genealogy Resource...*

I still love online sites as they have saved me a lot of time by giving me clues. However, I always attempt to verify or disprove the claim by independent research.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on April 05, 2014 in [Genealogy Basics](#) | [Permalink](#)

### Comments by Tony Kierna

*As anecdotal evidence I too have heard from researchers about their disappointment of uploaded materials for family trees being less than stellar as to accuracy. It just*

seems to me that much of what is being uploaded by individuals is not their original primary research, but rather what they themselves have found online and chose to incorporate into their own family trees.

And perhaps this is where we as researchers are simply becoming too trustworthy of what exists on the internet. We simply get excited that we have made a discovery of an ancestor that appears to be for us. Rather than researching itself we simply in our level of excitement incorporate it into our family trees.

Perhaps we have seen the TV commercials that appeared online for State Farm and the app they have. The actor is basically interacting with another character who simply states very clearly that whatever they discover on the Internet is correct and true because after all you can't upload false information!

The same applies to genealogy family trees and data. We seem to have fallen asleep and are so trusting of our discoveries that we simply attach the information to our family trees and say the same thing, "well, if it is on the internet it must be true!". Worse, we may then upload it to an online family tree without having taken the time for verification! As genealogy researchers we need to start applying the age-old philosophy we learned in school about critical thinking. We need to look closely at online family data and see if there is a trail of citations contained in the uploaded data. Then we might actually need to look at the data alluded to in the citation to see if indeed it is accurate. We need to be able to research and document properly before we upload material.

If you cite your sources as a good researcher should then you are establishing a good paper trail for other researchers to simply follow and see the accuracy of what you have done. So why not question when you see un-cited material before you incorporate it into your own material or worse, pass it on even more on the internet as truth.

We will be having Jeanne Larzalere Bloom as our guest speaker for our August 12, 2014. Her program topic will explore the problem with online family trees. It is titled "Mysteries, Miracles and Mayhem: Online Family Trees".

Be a good disciplined researcher. Don't incorporate inaccurate data into your family trees from existing online sources. Don't spread inaccurate data yourself on the internet. Research vigorously and cite your sources so other researchers can follow your trail and arrive at the same research conclusion as you have.

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## Handout #8 – THE STATISTICS OF ANCESTRY.COM

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated April 14, 2014.



1,400 employees, a 10 petabyte (10 quadrillion bytes) database with 13 billion structured and unstructured records going back to the 1300s, a number that grew by 1.2 billion documents in 2013. That's impressive but then add in a paying subscriber base of 2.7 million people around the world who generate an average of 75 million searches a day on the company's various Websites, including [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com), [MyFamily.com](http://MyFamily.com), [FamilyTreeMaker.com](http://FamilyTreeMaker.com) and [Genealogy.com](http://Genealogy.com).

In addition, the AncestryDNA database currently has DNA from more than 300,000 people, who get information on which of the 26 regions of the world their ancestors came from. To determine someone's ethnicity, AncestryDNA has to analyze 700,000 markers—clearly a big data analytics initiative.

These statistics were extracted from an article by Eileen Feretic in an article in *Baseline*, a trade journal about the use of technology in businesses. The full article is available at <http://goo.gl/ZpdgjB>.

Posted by [Dick Eastman](#) on April 14, 2014 in [Business News](#) | [Permalink](#)

### Comments by Tony Kierna

*Nothing like good old gobs and gobs of statistics! Capturing data and making it available for genealogy researchers is a big time business worldwide. Ancestry.com is known as the big time provider of this data. There are many competitors to Ancestry.com, some as business competitors, some as competitors in a non-profit manner like FamilySearch.*

*One of the statistics above that surprises me somewhat at a gut level is the subscribable base of 2.7 million customers of Ancestry.com. I am one of them and I am sure many of you are paid subscribers. Again anecdotally, for as popular as genealogy research is today worldwide, the 2.7 million subscriber number seems somewhat small to me. Our population in the US is about 313 million. Just doing a percent of 2.7 million to 313 million, you do not even come up with 1% of the population being subscribed to Ancestry.com!*

Yet even with subscriber base percent, we all think of Ancestry.com as the big player it really is in the industry.

It would sure be nice to know how many individuals subscribe to other genealogy database providers. It is not a given that those who subscribe to Ancestry.com also subscribe to other databases. After all, we are not created with unlimited money to subscribe to everything! Maybe if you add up all other subscribers to all other kinds of genealogy information then the total subscribable number really grows even more. Imagine if we know how many registered users there are for FamilySearch which is for free? There may be much overlap between the providers because genealogists really go to whatever source they can find for them to solve their research problems with data existing in location that does not exist anywhere else.

I also thought that another fascinating statistic was the 75 million searches per day that access all of the varieties of databases owned by Ancestry.com. Now that seems like an enormous figure to me! Some days I feel like I contribute about half of that total myself! I am sure you do also. When you do the math on that figure in comparison to the total 2.7 million subscribed base to Ancestry.com, you get an astounding result of 27 searches per day per each subscriber to Ancestry.com! Again, you and I know that each subscriber is probably not searching each and every day. That means that the average number of searches per day by subscribers who are searching is even greater.

Also look at the storage space for all of the data being handled by Ancestry.com. WOW! We are familiar with Gigabytes. Many desk top computers have 500 GB of storage. We are seeing that increase to where desk top computers now may have 1 Terabytes of store, 1 TB (1000 GB = 1 TB). But now we see the word PETABYTE. Ancestry is using 10 Petabytes of storage. 1000 TB = 1 PT, 10,000 TB = 10 PT. Are your eyes glazed over with those numbers?? And you thought you had a lot of storage with 100 GB of space used. Think again. Those 10 PT of Ancestry.com storage are used for the 13 Billion records you and I are searching through in our quest to find the 1 record pertinent to our own ancestor.

Genealogy research is big business at Ancestry.com. The numbers are astounding. Yet with all that is there think of how much is NOT there! We know that Ancestry.com adds data each month in the millions of records and even sometimes in the tens of millions of new records. Each month you must keep coming back to Ancestry.com or any other database provider you follow to see what has been added that may now include that one magical record you are personally seeking.

Big business, big numbers! Always fun to look at and play with the numbers because you can make them say whatever you want them to!

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## Handout #9 – “DIAL ‘G’ FOR GENEALOGY”

*The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the March/April 2014, Volume 18, Number 4 issue of Family Chronicle.*

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I thought that a very good article in this issue is one titled “Dial G for Genealogy”. The author of the article is David A. Norris. The article provides insights into how to use telephone numbers and directories as resources for your family history research.

The author provides some fascinating historical information going back to the development of the telephone and its use at the time in the late 1870s. The author notes that there was already a telephone directory for New Haven, Connecticut dated 1878. It was not “book size” as we know them today because it only consisted of 11 residential customers and 39 business and professional customers.

Because the subscribing numbers were so small initially, it was not uncommon to have only 1, 2, 3 or 4 digit numbers associated with a phone number of the time. All calls at the time were placed through operators. Initially, operators would have a request to connect to a named individual. Within a short time though, the operator’s would respond to a customer with the famous words “What number, please?”. This was done so that the operators would not have to do the lookup themselves.

Automatic switchboards started in the 1890s. Some reason they developed was that there was a fear involved that operators were steering customers to businesses. So to alleviate that fear an automated system would connect customer A to customer B without the intervention of an operator. As more and more phones came into use, more and more numbers were needed to identify an individual number. The days of 1 to 4 digits were soon over and the early standard of 7 digits came into play. The first three digits of the 7 were often identified as the “Exchange” which was the grouping of telephone numbers within a certain geographical area. This is where you remember exchange names such as “BUtterfield”, “KEystone”, “BEechwood” and the like.

Making local calls was fairly easy, making long distance was a gargantuan effort in the early days. Many handoffs of calls had to be made between operators before the call was actually connected. It was very expensive to do so. The author notes a rate for a call from San Francisco to Seattle as being \$2.50 for the first minute and \$.05 more for each “2 second” increment after the initial minute.

By the 1940s the country was divided into area code locales. Each was identified with an additional 3 digit code that preceded the standard 7 digit local number. As this developed the old idea of alphabetic exchange names soon disappeared and was replaced with what we now know as a standard 10 digit number associated with our phone number.

The author notes that phone directories are a great source to use when researching ancestors between the 10 year decennial census years. These books were created

annually with lots of advertising included in them to offset costs. They are in print and are easily readable. Early on from the 1870s to the 1920s, these books were often known as city directories, listing individuals that lived in the city whether they had a telephone or not. Most individuals did not have telephones in the early years because a telephone was considered a luxury. You could track your ancestor in an urban setting from a census year through the intervening years to help you in your research. If the ancestor disappeared from a phone directory/city directory, it was possible the individual moved or even passed away. All of that gives you further clues to look into other genealogical research on that individual to account for the disappearance.

These early phone books are also a great source for maps that are included and valuable historic information about the city, its population, economy and government. Don't overlook this important information when researching an individual ancestor.

There is a growing number of historical city and telephone company directories online. One resource to look at is the Internet Archive at [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org) and within Google Books at [www.books.google.com](http://www.books.google.com). Also check the websites of local state archives, universities and cities to see if any contain directories of important historical note.

Ancestry.com offers British Phone books from 1880 to 1984. There are 1,780 phone directories from British Telecom in the Ancestry.com databases. You can even search the directories by address. Ancestry.com also offers Canadian Phone Directories from 1995 – 2002.

For United States data within Ancestry.com, be sure to look at the U.S. Public Records Index, Volume 1 and 2. Within these databases you will find telephone directory material for your research. Generally covers all 50 states from 1950 to 1993.

FamilySearch also has microfilmed US and foreign telephone directories within its own collection.

Don't overlook using these valuable resources, especially on how you can use the phone directory/cit directory material to track your ancestors between census enumerations. Plus, they are generally readable because they are printed! That alone is worth the look because we often face so many unreadable handwritten documents in our research.

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## Handout #10 – “CASE STUDIES AND WHY YOU SHOULD READ THEM”

*The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the March/April 2014, Volume 18, Number 4 issue of Family Chronicle.*

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I thought that another good article in this issue is one titled “Case Studies and Why You Should Read Them”. The author of this article is George G. Morgan.

What is a “Case Study”? According to the author “a typical case study defines a research problem or scenario, and then describes and documents the evidence found that support the hypothesis (or hypotheses) reached by the researcher”. The researcher can typically encounter these “case study” articles among the various journals associated with the genealogy community. My own observation is that you can easily find extensive case study articles in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. You can also find these in just about any genealogical journal such as The American Genealogist and The New England Historical Genealogical Register.

Often times when you see a titled article that says “Case Study” the natural tendency for the reader is to see no connection to their own research. So they often do not bother to read such case studies. Yet, these case studies are not so much about all the details of another researcher’s ancestor, but rather the case studies provide insights into how research questions and problems are addressed.

The author provides some good examples on how case studies can help you:

- You may not have African-American ancestors, but a case study concerning how to locate slaves in the antebellum United States can present examples of strategies for locating records of women prior to the 1850 U.S. Federal Census.
- Even if you don’t have ancestors who emigrated from Poland to the United States, a case study may describe the types of immigration and naturalization laws and documents employed at the time. These may apply to one of your ancestors who migrated from somewhere else at approximately the same time.
- A case study that describes how court records were used to learn more about an ancestor, while not for your ancestor’s state of residence, can educate you about the types of records used in many different courts and what they may contain.

Just like you are expected to cite your resources for your ancestral discoveries, case studies are also heavily “footnoted” as the author provides the reader with an ability to retrace the research process taken to provide an answer to the research problem and hypothesis. I have seen case studies in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly for which there was often times more footnoting for the process than basic text in the article!

The author also provides some insights into what are some of the case studies we might encounter:

- A case study might document how the researcher traced a particular individual's emigration in the late 1700s from one country to another, and then documented the individual's marriage(s), children, occupation, religious or ethnic origins etc.
- A case study might discuss how a researcher's work was able to distinguish between two women living in the same geographical area in a specific period of time who shared the same name.
- A case study might seek to identify and trace the parentage or the descendants of an individual.

Don't turn your head away from spending some time in reading a case study. At first, you will simply see no connection to your own research. Look deeper, the author of a case study is trying to provide you with a methodology trail that you could apply to your own research. Don't be turned off by the copious amounts of footnoting. Don't just think the story is about their ancestor! Their ancestral story is the basis through which methods and processes of research are being described that can very well be the same methods and processes you could use in your own research brick wall strategy.

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