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## March 14, 2017 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our March 14, 2017 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 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 “Research 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”. You may have to scroll down slightly on the page to see the information for the 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 the “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 GENEALOGY SOCIETY WILL BE ON SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 2017**

The next meeting of the Northwest Suburban Genealogy Society will take place on Saturday morning, April 1, 2017. The program for the morning is titled **“What’s New on the Internet”**. The speaker for the morning will be **Caron Brennan**.

There are new genealogy sites on the Internet every day. This fast-paced presentation is a review of popular, new, little known, and perhaps unusual genealogy resources on the internet to help you in your research.

This meeting will take place at the Arlington Heights Senior Center, 1801 W. Central Rd., 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/program 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:

<http://www.nwsgenealogy.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.

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 APRIL 19, 2017**

Please note that meetings that will take place for the society will occur between September 2016 through May 2017. The September and October 2016 programs will occur at the DuPage County Historical Museum located at 102 E. Wesley Street in Wheaton, IL. The November 2016 through May 2017 programs are once again taking place at the Wheaton Public Library in the Lower Level. The address of the library is 225 N. Cross St. in Wheaton, IL. Please note the times for refreshments and the program. Refreshments are offered at 6:30 PM. The meeting will start at 7 PM and last till no longer than 8:45 PM.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, April 19, 2017 between 7pm to 8:45pm. Refreshments are offered at 6:30pm. The program scheduled for that evening is "Family History Research in the British Isles". The speaker for the program will be Maureen Brady.

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 (CAGGNI) NEXT PROGRAM ON MARCH 18, 2017 AT SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY**

The next regular meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, March 18, 2017 at the Schaumburg Township District Library in Schaumburg, IL between 10:30am to 12:30pm. 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 our favorite obsession - genealogy!

**Ed Rosenthal** has served three terms as the President of CAGGNI and has been doing family research for over 20 years with Family Tree Maker and recently tracing his DNA. Ed has presented his research during his family's 150th and 160th reunion in Germany.

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.

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 #5 – SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY NEXT GENEALOGY PROGRAM ON APRIL 11, 2017**

Our next Genealogy Program will be held on Tuesday, April 11, 2017 at 7:30 PM in the 2nd floor Classroom. The guest speaker for the evening will be Barbara Peterson. Barbara will present a program titled "Ancestral Stories, Fact or Fiction?: Researching the Legends".

We all have great stories of our ancestors. Military heroes? Scoundrels? Stowaways? Sea Captains? Sounds good. But are they real? Maybe we just want to let the stories exist. Maybe you really want to know. Barbara will provide us with a case study review on just such an ancestor. Hear how she went about substantiating the story or perhaps even refuting it.

Barbara Peterson has been an active participant at our monthly genealogy programs. Her research skills have developed over time from a novice researcher to a highly skilled researcher. She has also become an expert on genealogical DNA and has previously presented a program on that topic at our library. This program's case study is based on research she provided to a client.

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 and other libraries.

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**Handout #6 – NEW SEASON FOR “WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?”  
STARTS SUNDAY EVENING, MARCH 5, 2017, AT 9PM CENTRAL ON TLC**

**The following was found at Dick Eastman’s Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated February 15, 2017.**

The following announcement was written by TLC:

**New season premieres Sunday, March 5 at 10/9c**



TLC’s Emmy Award-winning series, **WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?** returns this spring with a new group of celebrities ready to delve into their lineage and get answers to the questions they’ve wondered about their entire lives. Eight new one-hour episodes bring more unexpected turns and surprising discoveries of great historical significance. Executive Produced by Lisa Kudrow and Dan Bucatinsky, the new season premieres on Sunday, March 5th at 10/9c.

This season’s celebrity contributors include:

**Jessica Biel** makes surprising discoveries that change what she thought knew about her heritage.

**Julie Bowen** uncovers the story of two relatives whose moral codes are from opposite ends of the spectrum.

**Courtney Cox** traces her maternal line back seven centuries to the Medieval times to discover royalty in her lineage and an unbelievable tale of family drama.

**Jennifer Grey** uncovers new information about the grandfather she thought she knew, learning how he survived adversity to become a beacon of his community.

**Smokey Robinson** searches for answers behind the mystery of why his grandfather disappeared from his children’s lives and finds a man tangled in a swirl of controversy.

**John Stamos** digs into the mystery of how his grandfather became an orphan, and learns of tensions between families that led to a horrible crime.

**Liv Tyler** learns that her family is tied into the complicated racial narrative of America.

**Noah Wyle** unravels the mystery of his maternal line, uncovering an ancestor who survived one of America’s bloodiest battles.

Ancestry, the leading family history company, is teaming up again with TLC as a sponsor of the upcoming season. As part of the show sponsorship, Ancestry provides exhaustive family history research on each of the featured celebrities to help make discoveries possible and build out the story of each episode.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? is produced for TLC by Shed Media (part of the alternative department at Warner Bros. Television) and Is or Isn't Entertainment. The series is based on an original format created by Wall to Wall Media and Alex Graham. More information can be found at [TLC.com/WDYTYA](http://TLC.com/WDYTYA). 'Like' Who Do You Think You Are? on [Facebook.com/WDYTYA](https://www.facebook.com/WDYTYA) and follow @WDYTYA on Twitter.

## **ABOUT TLC**

Offering remarkable real-life stories without judgment, TLC shares everyday heart, humor, hope, and human connection with programming genres that include fascinating families, heartwarming transformations, and life's milestone moments. TLC ended 2016 strong ranked as the #6 Female ad-supported Cable network in prime with W25-54; a top 10 network for the 10th year in a row.

TLC is a global brand available in more than 91 million homes in the US and 325 million households in 220 countries and territories. Viewers can enjoy their favorite shows anytime, anywhere through TLCgo – the network's TVE offering featuring live and on demand access to complete seasons. A destination online, TLC.com offers in-depth fan sites and exclusive original video content. Fans can also interact with TLC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and Pinterest. TLC is part of Discovery Communications (NASDAQ: DISCA, DISCB, DISCK), reaching 3 billion cumulative viewers in 220 countries and territories to satisfy curiosity and engage superfans with a portfolio of premium nonfiction, sports and kids programming brands.

## **Comments by Tony Kierna**

*It's back! Get ready to get motivated if that is what you need. And no, no one will probably just hand you all of the research that was done by someone else as usually happens in these shows. This is the beauty of TV and being a "star". Someone else does the work and the "star" just takes it all in. You will see touching responses from the "star" because those are real emotions connecting to an ancestor of the past. We do it. And generally these ancestral connections are usually more significant than what you and I would discover. Preliminary research is done way in advance of being selected for the show so that there is a good story line e.g. someone connected to slavery, an ancestor was in the battle at Gettysburg, etc. I have seen "stars" names mentioned that were not able to be in the show because the preliminary researchers could not discover any family ancestors that would make a good story and good TV!*

*Unfortunately, by the time you see this write-up 2 episodes will have already aired. But don't worry, you can generally access previously aired shows through the TLC website and register yourself with them. Since TLC is part of Cable, you would need to enter in your cable account number on TLC to view the episode online. Better yet, if you have cable at home, just DVR the series and watch the shows when you want. You can also just go to the "On-Demand" part of your cable subscription and just find the series and select any episodes you may have missed.*

*I am not sure if the list of stars noted above represents the entirety of the series for this season or if there are more to be announced. I think that is the complete list. But maybe not! Sometimes TLC throws out an unexpected one later in the series.*

*Also keep an eye open for a "marathon" viewing of a number of shows of the series. You can often expect to TLC to show a previously "aired" episode just before or after one of the newly premiered episodes.*

*I do want to see if the style or template of the shows have changed somewhat. Probably not because they are working within the successful format that has been established over time*

*Get yourself back in the rhythm of when these shows will air in the premier episode. Watch them live if possible because that is what ratings are based on. We don't want them to succumb to low ratings and be taken off the air.*

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## Handout #7 – SOCIAL SECURITY DEATH INDEX (SSDI); HOW DID CONGRESS GET SO FAR OFF TRACK?

*The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated February 21, 2017.*

Writing in the [RPAC Blog](#), Fred Moss points out an excellent example of Congress taking a valuable tool and totally messing it up. As a result of legislative ineptitude, a tool previously used to **REDUCE** identity theft has now been mis-labeled as a frequent **CAUSE** of identity theft. Genealogists, historians, and average citizens all suffer as a result.

You might want to read Fred's article in the RPAC Blog at <http://www.fgs.org/rpac/2017/02/21/dmf-how-did-the-congress-get-so-far-off-track>.

I suggest printing Fred's article out and mailing it to your elected representatives. (I have read that most legislators don't read email from constituents as most legislators receive too many email messages to manage. Old-fashioned paper and "snail mail" reportedly works better.)

### **Comments by Tony Kierna**

*I actually refer to this database as the SSDI (Social Security Death Index). I see a new term being used to describe the same database as the DMI (Death Master Index). It also looks like the term SSDI today refers to Social Security Disability Insurance. Pardon me if I still use the term SSDI! It equates to the Death Master Index for me.*

*The SSDI is a great tool for genealogy researchers. You can find it at FamilySearch at <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1202535>. You can find it ancestry.com at <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=3693>. It is a wonderful tool to identify our potential ancestors who have died over the last 70 or so years and had a Social Security Card. Upon their death, the death information is reported to Social Security either by the family or more likely by the funeral director. Once reported to Social Security, the name becomes discoverable after a 3 year window of unavailability.*

*If you find an ancestor in the database, you might find lots of good information or just some basic information. This often equates to a more recent death where more information is captured versus someone who passed away 60 years ago when less information was captured. You may find the exact date of death, the exact date of birth, the state that issued the card, the state of last residence and most recent zip code. The data provides lots of clues to advance your research. Sometimes you only receive a Month/Year as the date of death (bummer).*

*The SSDI has often received a bad name when in fact it is a great tool to prevent ID fraud. Knowing that a SSN is no longer associated with a living person is very helpful to know if you want to prevent ID Fraud. Businesses can check it to see if someone is using an SSN of a deceased individual. But Congress through privacy concerns has*

seen to not show those that have passed away in the 3 most recent years. Once 3 years has passed the name is visible in the database. Unfortunately, the privacy concerns seem to allow those intending mischief to move forward because you cannot see the names of the recently deceased. The wisdom of our legislators to make a great tool to help with preventing ID theft turn into something with no teeth when the 3 most recent years of deaths reported to the SSDI are not viewable sounds typical.

Thank goodness the SSDI was still allowed to exist online and be available to genealogy researchers even if the 3 most recent years of reportable name is not visible. Great for genealogists, not so good for preventing ID Fraud.

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## Handout #8 – THE BIG 4; COMPARING ANCESTRY, FINDMYPAST, FAMILYSEARCH, MYHERITAGE

*The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at [www.eogn.com](http://www.eogn.com) dated February 21, 2017.*

You may have asked, "Which is the best online genealogy service for me to use?" Or perhaps you want to know the best two or three services. Sunny Morton gave a presentation about these four online powerhouses at the recent RootsTech2017 conference that may answer your questions.

The one-hour four-minute presentation was videotaped and is now available as a video on the [RootsTech.org](http://RootsTech.org) web site. I suspect this video will answer most of your questions. Topics covered include cost, record types, geographic coverage, genetic testing, DNA matching, search flexibility, languages supported, mobile-friendly, automated matching, and a lot more. Sunny provides the most information about these four sites that I have ever seen in any other one document or video.

As Sunny states, "No site has it all."

This is a keeper! I have been using all four of these web sites for years and yet I learned several new facts about them, thanks to Sunny's online video presentation. I suspect you will learn some things as well if you watch the video.

*The Big 4: Comparing Ancestry, Findmypast, FamilySearch and MyHeritage with Sunny Morton is available at*

<https://www.rootstech.org/videos/sunny-morton>.

Also, look at the size of that audience!

### **Comments by Tony Kierna**

*The link to the video above from the recently concluded RootsTech 2017 Annual Conference is well-worth viewing. Many of us use one or more of the various "Big 4" providers of genealogy databases, especially if we have chosen to have a personal subscription and then also use FamilySearch. Many of us use only FamilySearch because it is free. At least researchers should use at least 2 of the "Big 4" because FamilySearch is free and will always be free. Free always sounds good. Many of us use two of the Big 4 for free when we take advantage of our local public library's subscription to Ancestry Library Edition we can use at the library for free plus using FamilySearch.*

*I have not yet viewed the presentation at this time. I am looking forward to seeing it. Many of you may have a personal subscription to Ancestry.com which can be expensive and preclude you from subscribing to any more genealogy databases. Having one and only one subscription without knowing the contents of what some of the others of the "Big 4" offer may be like flying blind. You assume that perhaps Ancestry.com has all of the data that coincides with your personal research. But does it? Don't know. Maybe another subscribable database provider has more*

records that coincide with your research. Maybe they have more bells and whistles to subscribers than your current subscribable provider!

What a great presentation topic. Now at least you can gain a better understanding of what each of the "Big 4" has for you as well as does not have for you. And this is critical when there are your subscription fees to consider. Dick Eastman really capsulized it well above with all of the individual items to consider as to whether they are included or not in any of these offering by the Big 4. It is not only the raw data that is included in all of the databases offered but also how things are presented and displayed to make your viewing easy and productive. Great data is not helpful if you cannot find it in the databases or if you find it looks terrible on your screen.

I am looking at whether MyHeritage and FindMyPast have database offerings for libraries. Sometimes these providers only market to end-users like yourself and not to institutions like libraries. If they have library products, then I look to see if they have trials we can use. Ultimately, it breaks down to cost and usage levels over time, as well as whether these products are available only to users in the library or are can it be accessed from library users at home. Costs ramp up quickly if these products are made available for home users. Sometimes home use is not even an option for us. The product may only be available in the library.

Spend an hour looking at the video. Get a better idea of the "pluses" and "minuses" of the Big 4 and their offerings. At least know if there is a better fit for your own research needs that might be worth entertaining.

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## Handout #9 – “FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, WHAT KIND OF NAME IS “GOTTLIEB”?”

*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 2017, Volume 2, Number 6 issue of Your Genealogy Today.*

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I thought that a good article in this issue is one titled “For the Love of God, What Kind of a Name is “Gottlieb”?” The author of the article is Robbie Gorr.

If you are doing Germanic research, then this is a good article for you to take a look at. The author notes that those doing Germanic research today will often come across more common Germanic names such as Johann, Carl, Friedrich and Wilhelm. These have English equivalents such as John, Charles, Frederick and William. But if you do enough Germanic research you are bound to run into Germanic names such as Gottfried, Gottlieb and even Christlieb. These names do not have an English equivalent because their names were part of a German history that is now all but forgotten.

These names are connected with a time in German history in the seventeenth and eighteenth century called Pietism. Pietism got its name from “piety” or the reverence that was thought to be the most important facet of Lutheran worship. It was the first important change in the Lutheran church since Martin Luther began the Reformation in the sixteenth century. It gave a new emphasis to the laity of the church and contributed to a revival of biblical studies in Germany.

Many scholars view German Pietism as similar to the Puritan reformation of the Church of England. In Puritanism, many individuals were named according to the virtues of faith. You often saw these English named individuals as Thankful, Silence, Mercy, Amity and Charity. The Pietists did not literally name their children in such a naming pattern but under Pietism they created names using “Gott” or God and combined it with a pious adjective. Gottlieb was a combination of “God” and “love” which translated to “love of God”. “Gotthilf” meant “help of God”, Gotthard meant “strength of God”. Sometimes the “Gott” part of these naming conventions would be reversed and be at the end of the name. Names such as “Liebgott” could translate to “trust God”.

There were many Pietistic German names that were even more unusual. An example of one is “Leberecht” that translate to “live right”. Other very unusual names were “Hassdenteufel” which translates to “hate the devil” or “Tugenreich” which translates to “full of virtue”.

The author notes that most Pietistic Germanic names were directed to boys. But over time these were even adopted to girls. A name such as “Gottfried” for boys was converted to “Gottfriede” for girls. Even “Gottlieb” for boys was found to be converted to “Gottlieben” for girls.

The German Pietistic movement ended toward the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century. The Puritan naming equivalent also started

declining at about this time. Only a few of the Pietistic names survived over time. Gottfried and Gottlieb are two of these names that have survived passed the Pietistic period.

As Germans migrated to the United States, some of these Pietistic names might still be found, especially for those carving out wilderness areas of the United States. And when it appeared it generally was not the first name of the child but rather the second name or if three names were given, it was the third name.

The author included in this article a very nice table of some of the more traditional Pietistic names used by Germans. Here are the names included in the article:

- Christhard = strength of Christ
- Christlieb = love of Christ
- Dienegott = serve God
- Ehregott = honour God
- Freimut = free spirit
- Furchtegott = fear God
- Glaubrecht = believe right
- Glaubegott = believe in God
- Gottbert = shining God
- Gottfried = peace of God
- Gottgetrau = to dare God
- Gotthard = strength of God
- Gottherz = heart of God
- Gotthild = fight for God
- Gotthilf = help of God
- Gotthold = dear to God
- Gottlieb = love of God
- Gottlob = praise of God
- Gottmar = fame of God
- Gottschalk = servant of God
- Gottvertrau = trust in God
- Gottwals = power of God
- Gottwin = friend of God
- Grazia = grace
- Hassdenteufel = hate the devil
- Helfgott = help God
- Lebefromm = live piously

- Leberecht = live right
- Liebgott = love God
- Pius = pious and godly
- Traugott = trust God
- Tugen = virtue
- Tugenreich = full of virtue

I thought this was a fascinating article because it shed light on discovering first names of German ancestors that we might not even think of as being real. Knowing the time period when such naming conventions existed can certainly help you better interpret the discovery of such names in the older documents you may be reviewing. These names are what they are. You may very well see such names and think that the handwriting is bad and the name must be something else that you simply cannot decipher.

You may now think of older Germanic naming conventions in a completely different manner.

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## Handout #10 – “A WEALTH OF INFORMATION; THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL MORTALITY CENSUS”

*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 2017, Volume 2, Number 6 issue of Your Genealogy Today.*

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I thought that another good article in this issue is one titled “A Wealth of Information”. The author of the article is Mary F. Good. This article sheds some light on information contained in the special United States Federal Mortality Census.

The United States Mortality Censuses were special censuses that took place in the census years of 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880 and 1885. The census covered people that had died within a year prior to June 1 of the regular decennial census years noted above. As an example the 1850 Mortality Census reported those that had died from June 1, 1849 to May 31, 1850.

Data that is reported in these mortality schedules consists of the following:

- Name of the individual
- Age of the individual
- Sex of the individual
- Race of the individual
- Month of the death of the individual
- Cause of death of the individual
- How long the deceased had the condition leading to death
- Marital status of the individual
- Place of birth of the individual
- Occupation of the individual
- If the deceased was a free person or slave (1850 and 1860)
- If parents were of foreign birth (1870, 1880 and 1885)
- Name of attending physician at time of death (1880, 1885)

Just to be clear, 1885 was not a normal decennial census year. However a mortality schedule was intended for that year and was optional for the states to do. The 1885 mortality schedule only took place in Florida, Nebraska, Colorado and the territories of New Mexico and Dakota.

Each page of the mortality census can contain about 35 names. At the bottom of the page is an area for comments by the census taker. Comments were not limited to death information. Comments can be about the environment, the rivers and streams in the area all of which tie in to the health area of those on the mortality schedule. One can judge by any significant numbers of deaths in a very local area that the

community might have been affected by a natural disaster or some kind of health related epidemic possibly that contributed to the high number of deaths in a very short time that coincided with the mortality required one-year death interval prior to the regular census.

In fact, the author of this article had an ancestor that was reported in the 1850 mortality schedule. The author noted that the comments part of the page reporting the deaths of multiple ancestors of his noted the following:

*"The smallpox, an unusual disease in my district prevailed during the months March, April and May in a fearful form the supposed cause of its inception the neighborhood where it raged is attributed to the discharging of a green matter being rubbed on the barrel and lock by a physician clandestinely individual who fired off the gun was attacked of said disease on the 9<sup>th</sup> day afterward, there were 152 cases and 28 deaths."*

The author noted that for this particular ancestor in 1850, the census taker created numerous comments pages throughout this one local area of high deaths in a similar manner to what is noted above.

Sometimes your ancestral research may simply be very lucky to uncover the death of an ancestor in one of these special mortality schedules. In the 1850 time-period, there were generally no civil laws requiring the reporting of such deaths. Civil reporting of deaths generally did not start in the United States until about 1870. The actual reporting time periods varied all over the map by geographic area at the county area. Some states and counties started in the 1870s. Other states and counties may not have even started until the 1920s. A researcher might have to also depend on luck and discover reported within church records of the area.

It is also highly likely that the mortality schedules did not include every death that occurred during the one-year window preceding the decennial census date. Reasons for these omissions are:

- There might be no one remaining to report the death
- The person that died may have been living alone may have no one left to report the death.
- Families were often split up after a death and there might have been no one there to report the death.

These special mortality schedules can be found at [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com) (all of them), [www.FamilySearch.org](http://www.FamilySearch.org) (only 1850), and [www.Mortality-Schedules.com](http://www.Mortality-Schedules.com). Microfilms of this data exist within the United States National Archives and the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.

While we all should use the United States Census data all of the time, think about also searching these mortality schedules just to see if by luck an ancestor of yours from the 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880 and 1885 time-period may have perished in the year before each of these censuses and was actually reported in the mortality schedules. The death report is one nice thing to discover, but as you can see from the above example, discovering copious comments by the census taker can also add a lot more to the story of providing insightful information on what may have been other contributing factors that led to the death of an ancestor.

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