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July 11, 2017 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our July 11, 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. 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 by looking for the tab called “Services”, pull down for “genealogy”. This will take you to my genealogy page at the library. Scroll down a little and look for the bi-colored blue and black box. In the black part of the box is a hot link titled “Tony’s Genealogy Blog”. Click on the link for the blog title and you will get to my 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 AUGUST 26, 2017

THE SOCIETY WILL NOT BE MEETING DURING THE MONTHS OF JUNE AND JULY 2017. THEY WILL RE-GATHER AGAIN ON AUGUST 26, 2017 INSTEAD OF A SEPTEMBER PROGRAM THAT WOULD CONFLICT WITH LABOR DAY.

The next meeting of the Northwest Suburban Genealogy Society will take place on Saturday morning August 26, 2017. The program for the morning is titled **“Preserving Your Family History on Family Tree (FamilySearch)”**. The speaker for the morning will be **Maureen Brady**.

FamilySearch®, a free website sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, provides many resources to help you discover your family history, but it also provides a way for you to preserve your family history. **Family Tree is designed as a collaborative record of your family, including photos, documents and audio memories. Using both the website and mobile apps, Family Tree provides a system to record your family events, preserve precious photos & documents and provide a record of your family today for future generations. Using her own family data and photos, Maureen Brady will provide an overview of Family Tree, and its mobile apps, including making additions and corrections to Family Tree and using the mobile apps to record today’s memories.**

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 SEPTEMBER 20, 2017**

THERE WILL BE NO MEETINGS OF THE DUPAGE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY DURING THE MONTHS OF JUNE, JULY, AND AUGUST 2017.

Please note that meetings that will take place for the society will occur between September 2017 through May 2018. **The September 2017 program will occur at the DuPage County Historical Museum located at 102 E. Wesley Street in Wheaton, IL.** The October 2017 through May 2018 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, September 20, 2017 between 7pm to 8:45pm. Refreshments are offered at 6:30pm. The program scheduled for that evening is **“European Immigration to America from 1800 to 1940”**. The speaker for the program will be **Steve Szabados**.

Description of the **When did your ancestors immigrate, where did they leave, why did they leave, how did they get here?** We may never know the exact answers to these questions, but hopefully, this program will give you insights to possible ancestors and clear up some of the confusions.

You may visit the society's web page at:

www.dcgcs.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 JULY 15, 2017 AT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY

The next regular meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, July 15, 2017 at the Schaumburg Township District Library, Schaumburg, IL between 10:30am to 12:30pm. The program scheduled for this day is "Are You Related to Someone Famous?". The speaker will be **Bob Allen**.

A really fun aspect of genealogy is identifying "famous people" who are related to you.

We will talk about initial steps; how to prepare to do your research; helpful websites like gene.com; famouskin and abcgenealogy; ways to explain your discoveries; and how being related to a famous person can lead you to other relatives.

We will learn about the genealogies of Davy Crockett, Harriet Beecher Stowe, John Adams, Tom Hanks, Laura Welch Bush, Ling John "Lackland" of England, Ann Boleyn and others.

Bob Allen received a BA in Political Science and a Masters of Business Administration (M.B.A.) from the University of Kansas.

He then graduated from the University of Texas Law School in Austin, Texas.

Now retired, he held executive positions with Container Corporation of America and Baxter Healthcare.

You may visit the organization web page at:

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 AUGUST 8, 2017

Our next genealogy program will take place on Tuesday evening, August 8, 2017.

Our guest speaker for the evening will be Jeff Bockman. Jeff will present a program titled "Transcribing Genealogy Records for FamilySearch: You Can Do It!".

Have you ever wondered how the records you discover at FamilySearch got there? Let's just say they get there through the help of lots and lots of transcribers who volunteer to look at images and then digitally enter what they see into templates provided by FamilySearch. Many of the participants at this program are probably transcribers.

Our speaker, Jeff Bockman, is going to give us an inside view of how to become a transcriber and contribute to the genealogy community. If you were waiting to take the plunge but were hesitant, perhaps Jeff's presentation will get you to take the plunge.

Genealogy Lecturer, Author, and Writer, Jeff has been doing genealogical research since 1988 and has been active in societies, society management, classes, and lectures since 1994. He was the DuPage County ILGenWeb Project webmaster from 1996 to 2012.

He was a contributing editor for the former *Everton's Genealogical Helper*, and a feature writer for the former *Heritage Quest Magazine*. Articles have also appeared in the *Digital Genealogist*, *FGS Forum*, *Family Tree Magazine (UK)*, *Missing Links*, and others. Many of the articles can be found online at **Genealogy According to Jeff** at his website

He is author of *Give Your Family A Gift That Money Can't Buy/Record and Preserve Your Family's History - 5th Edition*, a book that encourages people to record and preserve their family's history - see www.alenjjes.com for details.

Jeff was the Chairperson of the Chicagoland Genealogical Consortium and Local Arrangements Chair for NGS 2006. He served four years as the Vice President of the Illinois State Genealogical Society. He was the President of the DuPage County (IL) Genealogical Society for five years.

He has applied his engineering, management, computer, and organizational development background to help with the analyzing, problem solving and organization of records necessary for genealogical research.

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 and other libraries.

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Handout #6 – VIDEOTAPES ARE BECOMING UNWATCHABLE

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at www.eogn.com dated June 7, 2017.



How many videotapes do you own? Are any of them videos made at family reunions or videos of your children or grandchildren as they grew? Would you like to preserve them for a few more years? If so, you need to take action **NOW!**

Research suggests that videotapes aren't going to live beyond 15 to 20 years. Some call this the "magnetic media crisis." The problem is that many people don't realize their tapes are degrading.

You need to copy your videotapes to digital media **NOW**. You can do it yourself or find any number of services that will do it for you. If you only have a few videotapes, it probably is cheaper and certainly is easier to have someone else make the copies. If you have dozens of tapes that need to be preserved, you might want to undertake the effort yourself.

An excellent article about the preservation efforts of the XFR Collective (pronounced Transfer Collective) may be found in an article by Scott Greenstone published in the NPR web site at: <http://n.pr/2r0r5JN>.

Comments by Tony Kierna

Over the years I have been a big advocate to convert any of your "videocassette" material to digital media, at least get the cassette material transferred to DVD. And even before "videocassette" material, many of you may still have 8mm and super 8mm films in your possession. Those are an absolute must to convert and likely more difficult to convert to digital format simply because you probably do not have a projector to play the films on to see what is actually contained in the films. So if you convert these to digital format, you might just have to pay to have the entire film converted sight unseen on your part as to what is on the film.

Regarding videocassettes, I recently just reviewed a lot of videocassettes I had in my possession. Almost 100% were of the kind to discard. Many were of TV shows I had recorded in the early 1990s. None were of family gatherings since those that I did record had already been converted to at least DVD. Any films I had were also converted to DVD.

I am not a true believer yet in that videocassettes degrade to non-viewable over 15 years as the Dick Eastman article notes. I don't want to taunt fate but all of the videocassettes that I played to evaluate were all viewable in great quality. These 1990 era cassettes were about 25 years old. In fact, I recorded (did not remember) some of the original Ken Burns programs about the Civil War and Baseball that were on PBS and played them recently and they looked great! In fact they looked so good that I got distracted from my mission to discard meaningless videocassettes and wound up watching the first three "innings" of the Ken Burns "Baseball" series!! In fact, I did not even have to adjust the "tracking" of the videocassette to play on my current videocassette player.

Would you experience the same with your own videocassettes in your possession? I don't know. Maybe your experience would be worse to coincide with the fear that videocassettes have a certain lifespan that has probably already been exceeded for the most part. I simply did not see degradation happen to me with my 25 year old cassettes.

But I also know that as storage media changes fast and furious you have to keep up with that so that any of your recorded memories can be accessed via today's media e.g. DVD, Cloud, Flashdrive etc. So, would I say keep your family material on videocassettes because it is too hard to transfer to digital? NO! Start the transition. You may be in luck, like me. Maybe your videocassettes will still play with no problem. Maybe that won't be your problem. Maybe your problem is that you no longer have a videocassette player!

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Handout #7 – ANCESTRY.COM CONFIDENTIAL SUBMISSION TO BECOME A PUBLICLY TRADED COMPANY AGAIN

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated June 19, 2017.

 Genealogy website Ancestry.com Inc on Monday said it had confidentially submitted a draft registration statement on a proposed initial public offering (IPO) to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. The company did not disclose the number of shares to be offered and the price range for the proposed offering.

Last May, Ancestry.com said in a [statement](#) that the company was valued at about \$2.6 billion. We can probably assume today's price is higher. However, the draft registration statement is confidential so today's expected price is still not known.

Here is the official announcement from Ancestry, Inc. (which seems to be very brief):

LEHI, Utah, June 19, 2017 — Ancestry, Inc. today announced that it has confidentially submitted a draft registration statement on Form S-1 with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") relating to the proposed initial public offering of its common stock. The number of shares to be offered and the price range for the proposed offering have not yet been determined. The initial public offering is expected to commence after the SEC completes its review process, subject to market and other conditions.

Comments by Tony Kierna

Well it looks like Ancestry.com is about to enter the world of publicly traded stock companies. This will not be their first excursion into that method of corporate life. Ancestry.com is currently a privately held company. Years ago, however, they were publicly traded and then decided to shed that category and re-enter back into the world of privately held companies.

Oftentimes, it is the Initial Public Offering (IPO) status of a company that triggers buying frenzies by investors to get that "hot" stock. For now, I guess we will have to wait a little while this unfolds and see if Ancestry.com actually takes the next steps to once again be a publicly held company.

Many of us already have a vested stake in Ancestry.com through our own subscriptions to access the data they make available to help us in our research. It is not that uncommon to take it to the next step and purchase stock of this company if they do become publicly traded. It shows our belief in what they do and the hope that as investors our stock can gain in value. Sometimes I have looked at that if you were purchase stock in Ancestry.com and its value increases by just \$300 over the period of a year, you can look at that increase as offsetting your subscription fee. In

essence it would look like it costs you nothing for your subscription because the stock gain offsets your out-of-pocket subscription.

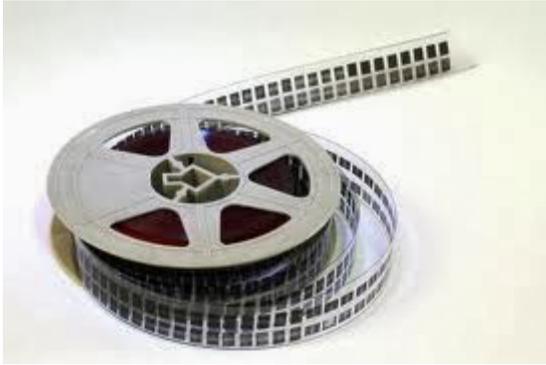
But that assumes the stock goes up. Lately, many of these high-flying companies have not proved to be investor friendly and return gobs of money back to you. I think of companies like Twitter, GoPro, Snap (Snap Chat), FitBit that are losing money and stock value ever since their IPO debut. So you never know what I going to happen. Could the same happen to an IPO for Ancestry.com? Sure. Invest with your eyes open, especially with a possible future stock like Ancestry.com. Throw away your "genealogy" hat and look at the financial reality for Ancestry.com before making an investment choice. Don't buy Ancestry.com just because you are "hot" on genealogy and you think everyone else is. Based on Ancestry.com reporting, they have 2.6 million subscribers. That may sound like a lot but it is in reality a very low amount compared to the entire population. Yes, it has room to grow but why does it already not have 5 million, 10 million or 20 million subscribers??

Let's see where the road to publicly traded company takes Ancestry.com. Remember, they were there once before and chose to exit that corporate status.

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Handout #8 – FAMILYSEARCH TO DISCONTINUE ITS MICROFILM DISTRIBUTION SERVICE

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated May 24, 2017.



This announcement shouldn't surprise any genealogists. The end of microfilm has been predicted for years. Microfilm and microfiche has become harder and harder to purchase. Most of the manufacturers have stopped producing microfilm and microfiche so the companies and non-profits that release information on film have been forced to abandon the media.

Over 1.5 million microfilms (ca. 1.5 billion images) have been digitized by FamilySearch, including the most requested collections based on microfilm loan records worldwide. In addition, many records that FamilySearch has not yet published can be found online on partner or free archive websites. FamilySearch plans to finish microfilm digitization by 2020.

The following is an extract from the announcement from FamilySearch:

On September 1, 2017, FamilySearch will discontinue its microfilm distribution services. (The last day to order microfilm will be on August 31, 2017.)

The change is the result of significant progress made in FamilySearch's microfilm digitization efforts and the obsolescence of microfilm technology.

- Online access to digital images of records allows FamilySearch to reach many more people, faster and more efficiently.
- FamilySearch is a global leader in historic records preservation and access, with billions of the world's genealogical records in its collections.
- Over 1.5 million microfilms (ca. 1.5 billion images) have been digitized by FamilySearch, including the most requested collections based on microfilm loan records worldwide.
- The remaining microfilms should be digitized by the end of 2020, and all new records from its ongoing global efforts are already using digital camera equipment.
- Family history centers will continue to provide access to relevant technology, premium subscription services, and digital records, including restricted content not available at home.

You can read the full announcement at: <http://bit.ly/2sGGePz>.

Frequently Asked Questions about the change may be found at:

<http://bit.ly/2s6OvO6>.

Comments by Tony Kierna

BIG ANNOUNCEMENT! How does this affect you? **If you have been identifying microfilms to order, order them now, quickly!** If you are an "online only" searcher then this decision has no impact on you other than you realize how much data you had left on the table that you could have searched through now. Plus you may simply be patient enough to wait for non-digitized microfilms to become available over the next 3 years.

You can't say that this was unexpected. FamilySearch has been on a digitization tear for quite a while now knowing that the day of microfilming was going the way of the DoDo bird. With so much being available in digital format, indexed, in the Cloud etc. the end of microfilming as we know was on shaky ground. It is expensive to archive and transmit data in this fashion.

And so the end is around the corner as we know it with FamilySearch provisioning of microfilms. **September 1, 2017 is the looming end date.**

Perhaps you do not realize how much data has been digitized by FamilySearch already. You can discover this by searching their catalog for locations of interest to you. Once you find these locations you can do a few clicks and ultimately see that a "camera icon" is present for a film of interest to you. Two things you may discover. You click on the camera icon and the entire digital film opens up for you to view online (view as on a microfilm reader, not search by surname). You become a "happy camper" and start poring over the images. Or second, you see a long list of "camera icons" for film after film, get excited, click on the "camera icon" and discover a message from FamilySearch that says the film is available for viewing online but **ONLY AT A LOCAL FAMILY HISTORY CENTER**. That's right, not from home but at a local Family History Center only!

To the best of my knowledge, a Family History Center "Affiliate" does not qualify for viewing this data either. Many of you may have been viewing microfilms at Affiliate locations usually Public Libraries e.g. Palatine Public Library, Arlington Heights Memorial Library, Algonquin Public Library etc.). **Because this announcement is so new, I believe Affiliates will not have access to these images** but I would see if this happens. There is a distinct difference between "Affiliates" and "Centers" where Affiliates do not have the same accessibility or function as Centers.

There are some of my Polish villages having films that I can view online 100%. And I discovered that there are others that are digitized but when I click on the "camera icon" link the message indicates the film can only be viewed at a local Family History Center. I still do not understand what differentiates me being able to see one kind of Polish town film from home and precludes me from seeing another Polish town film from home??

Let's see how solid the September 1, 2017 date is. If you wanted films now, get your order in NOW! If films of interest to you can be accessed from home, then enjoy them. If other films of interest give you the pop-up for viewing at a local Family History Center, then I guess it is time to prepare to visit these centers again with \$7.50 more money in your pocket because you can look at the digitized data for free and not spend the money on film.

I would say this is a change you want to follow in the FamilySearch blog or anywhere else news exists about this. While you may not have been ordering films previously, you may discover so much more is at your fingertips through a local Family History Center.

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Handout #9 – “DON’T GO IT ALONE”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the June/July 2017, Volume 12, Number 2 issue of Internet Genealogy.

I thought that a good article in this issue is one titled “Don’t Go It Alone”. The author of the article is Ed Storey.

Many of us start our genealogical research in a solo manner. We capture the stories of our ancestors. Use those stories as a starting point to connect to records. Establish the facts from where our research takes us. However, today, it is very easy to branch out and seek help with your research directly from collaborating with newly discovered cousins. You do not have to pursue your research by yourself. The author likes to use the phrase “Many computers break down brick walls” to prove the point that there is benefit in numbers.

Here are the methods the author has used to expand his research by connecting with others often doing the same line of research:

- **Online Forums**

- “RootsWeb, Yahoo and other sites have opportunities to communicate with others with a common interest in a location or a family name.”
- These groups should have enough postings to keep interest alive but no too many to be so overwhelming. The author suggests the sweet spot for amount of posting might be between 3 to 6 per week.
- The author discovered groups on Europeans who lived in India and those that lived on the island of St. Helena.
- Sometimes you have to be lucky to connect to a group in which the participants provide great amounts of knowledge. Sometimes you might be the one with the most expertise.
- The group that focused on the St. Helena connection was not as active but the depth of information from the postings was extensive.
- The group focused on India was more active. There were many experiences by ancestors to have gone to India that led to many descendants today having an interest in researching these ancestors during their stay in India.
- The author suggests that once you find an online forum, it is good to start being a “lurker” once you have registered yourself with the group. Just observe and read the messages being posted initially. Get a feeling for the frequency and the types of messages. Make your posts after you have studied the activity level of the group.

- Always include a time period, location and full names for which you seek help.
- Don't imply yourself immediately as an expert on a topic without knowing that it may have already been discussed in the archived messages of the group.

- **Family Tree Postings**

- Take advantage of all of the family trees posted on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch, especially those that are Public on Ancestry.com thus not requiring you to become a subscriber if you do not choose such. You can contact those that posted the trees if the tree looks similar to what your own research has uncovered.
- Sometimes the material in these trees comes from bibles or family diaries that are in the possession of others posting the trees. This might be material you cannot discover in any other way other than through a document in someone else's possession.
- Assume that any contact you initially make will be viewed as questionable on the part of the one receiving your inquiry. The author notes that he has only about a 25% success rate on receiving a contact back from those who he has initially contacted.
- Many trees posted online are considered as being "one and done". The original poster puts up the tree and does not do any follow-up with supplying new information. Perhaps, the original poster has lost interest.
- Be cautious of trees that look to be copied from other trees and that do not show any documentation as to where the information was obtained. Try to find potential helpful trees where the researcher has documented where the material was found.

- **Working Together**

- The author has had good luck in his collaborations with others, many of whom are in different countries.
- Quick responses between individuals are often a good sign of high enthusiasm. Same day responses are really welcome and appreciated.
- Collaborators in different countries can have access to information that the other does not have. Think cemeteries, archives etc.
- You may discover that you connected to someone for which the tree turns out to be the wrong tree. Discoveries like this are good to know.

The author provided good insights into how to expand your circle of fellow researchers through Forums and Online Trees. You do not need to work "solo" in

this day and age of online forums and family trees. More collaborators could mean more success.

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Handout #10 – “BETTER CHARM THAN INCANTATION”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the June/July 2017, Volume 12, Number 2 issue of Internet Genealogy.

I thought that another good article in this issue is one titled “Better Charm than Incantation”. The author of this article is Sue Lisk.

The point of the article is to make your communication skills better between you and other genealogists in order to improve your chances of getting good information returned to you. According to the author, the best way to make this happen is to establish a personal bond with each individual you approach online.

The author has seven suggestions how to make this happen:

- **Do Your Homework**

- First do some research yourself. Show that you have made some effort to construct your family history rather than just asking for someone else to provide you with all that they have done. When you have done some research, you can ask for help on gaps that you might have in your research that perhaps the other researcher has already discovered. You may be a “beginner” but be an “informed beginner”.

- **Craft Effective Messages**

- First impressions through writing are important.
- Be friendly and polite but brief and direct.
- Ask for something specific. Never ask for everything.
- Share information back if you receive something.
- You may discover that the person you sent a request to actually knows less about the person related to your question than you do.
- Always know that you do not have to share everything you have. This way over time you will build a bond with the person as you work with them over time.

- **Establish Trust**

- Make the other person feel “safe” when establishing a connection. You want to be viewed as honest and well-intentioned.
- Try sending a lighthearted message one that conveys your intentions as with a “smile”.
- Be authentic and down-to-earth.

- **Be a Good “Conversationalist”**

- Ask targeted questions to make it easy to gain a response, but avoid questions that just elicit a “yes” or “no” answer.
- Always be polite even if the other party provides information that you disagree with. Suggest an alternative viewpoint.
- Be a good listener especially so because you don’t have the benefit of observing body language or eye contact.
- Notice what is not only “said” but also what is “not said”.
- Make it clear you only want to know what the other person feels comfortable to reveal.

- **Dangle A Carrot Or Two**

- Don’t tell other researchers too much too soon.
- If you share all too soon you may just see that other researcher takes what you provide and then leaves the conversation without providing you with anything they know.
- Keep the other person in suspense. Share one bit of information at a time.

- **Send An Online Gift**

- Offering unusual information early on shows you are willing to give. Let the other person know you would certainly appreciate if the sharing can be mutual.
- Be creative in what you can send. Sending images of documents or photos is a great choice.
- Take a photo of a special object you may have in your possession. Send the photo to the other party.

- **Share Stories**

- Stories can command your attention. Sharing stories can connect you to the other person. Stories can give hints for other research to pursue.
- For a private tree on Ancestry.com, stories you post are not visible but the titles appear with the name of the individual.
- Consider using place names as part of stories and not just using names of ancestors. Perhaps others having ancestors connected with this geographic location may bite on your location.
- Don’t give up hope on delayed messages. It is not uncommon for someone to stew over your initial contact for information. Sometimes it just takes them a little longer to become comfortable to hit the “send” button.

Some of the above may seem obvious. Sometimes you have to present yourself in the best light possible in order to show authenticity and instill trust. Isn’t that how you want to be treated if approached first by a stranger? However, be prepared that your contact may simply not work out. Be polite, be friendly. Maybe it was just not meant to be initially. However, second thoughts may occur by the other person in the future and a new bridge might develop in the future.

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