



HANDOUTS TABLE OF CONTENTS August 8, 2017

Handout Introduction	Page 2
Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) Genealogy Blog	Page 4
Northwest Suburban Genealogy Society (NWSGS) Program for August 26, 2017	Page 5
DuPage County Genealogical Society (DCGS) Program for September 20, 2017	Page 6
Computer Assisted Genealogy Group of Northern Illinois (CAGGNI) Program for August 19, 2017	Page 7
Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) September 12, 2017 Genealogy Program	Page 8
Australians Providing Fake Names To Keep Their Privacy	Page 10
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library Flooded in Michigan; \$1.5 Million Cost..	Page 12
How to Find Genealogy, Family History, Local History on Internet Archive	Page 14
"Road Trip for Road Blocks"	Page 17
"Silhouettes of Silence: In Search of Imperfection"	Page 20

August 8, 2017 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our August 8, 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 AUGUST 19, 2017 AT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY

The next regular meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, August 19, 2017 at the Schaumburg Township District Library, Schaumburg, IL between 10:30am to 12:30pm. The program scheduled for this day is **"Bringing Life to Our Ancestors: Manuscript Collections"**. The speaker will be **Jeanne Larzalere Bloom**.

If our genealogical research is limited to the Who, When and Where questions we compile a collection of skeletons. To answer the interesting questions the What, the Why and the How we can use manuscript collections. These underutilized collections bring our ancestors to life and put flesh on their bones.

Jeanne Larzalere Bloom, CG, is a full time professional researcher specializing in Chicago and Cook County research, forensic genealogy, problem solving, and multi-generational family histories.

On behalf of the Department of the Army, Jeanne searches for and identifies family members of unaccounted for servicemen from World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

Jeanne writes articles for scholarly journals and society publications. She is a frequent lecturer at conferences, workshops and institutes.

She is trustee and president of the Board for Certification of Genealogists.

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 SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

Our next genealogy program will take place on Tuesday evening, September 12, 2017.

We will have another "break-out" session for our gathering on September 12, 2017. 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
- DNA/Adoption Researchers (NEW as of 12/16!)

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 September 12, 2017.

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 – AUSTRALIANS PROVIDING FAKE NAMES IN THEIR CENSUS REPORTING OUT OF PRIVACY CONCERNS

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at www.eogn.com dated June 28, 2017.

[Dick Eastman](#) · [June 28, 2017](#) · [Current Affairs](#) · [2 Comments](#)



In the 2016 census, many Australians provided fake names and withheld their date of birth. A sharp drop in the number of respondents allowing authorities to keep their data archived for 99 years was also noted.

The first batch of data from last year's bungled census was released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on Tuesday with authorities insisting the information collected is useful. Privacy concerns plagued the half-billion-dollar exercise in the lead up to Census night on August 9 with several politicians, including independent senator Nick Xenophon, vowing to risk a \$180-a-day fine by refusing to provide their names and addresses.

The action seems strange as the Australian Bureau of Statistics is prohibited from sharing the data with other agencies. Census records in the past in many countries, such as in the United States since 1790, have proven to keep the information private for 72 years (in the U.S.) to 110 years in some other countries.

In the 2016 Australian census, about one per cent of respondents gave no name or a fake name, while three per cent chose to provide their age instead of date of birth.

Details may be found in an article by Belinda Merhab in the Australian Associated Press at:

<http://bit.ly/2tm9mNL>

Comments by Tony Kierna

You get a sense from reading the above that even where there are standards of not sharing the information originally collected, Australians are still very hesitant to provide details about themselves to the national census. Not boding well for census researchers is the amazing drop in Australian allowing their data to be archived for 99 years. Actually, in the United States I don't even remember being asked if the government could keep my data for 99 years in their archives. But for us that simply means the data will be available to view in the future. For Australians, less

and less data will be available for viewing by future Australian researchers because fewer and fewer Australians are giving permission to the Australian government to archive their data for 99 years.

Read the short but informative article via the original link in the Dick Eastman post. Amazingly, it does note that the proportion of residents allowing the government to maintain their archived data for 99 years fell from 63% in 2011 to 50% in 2016 for the census being described. That is a significant decline in a short period of time that will have research effects out into the future. Future Australian genealogy census researchers will actually have less opportunity to discover information on their ancestors simply because more and more are not allowing archiving of the census data for 99 years.

What a difference between countries. The privacy concerns issue seems like it is operating at full tilt even though the data is not allowed to be shared. Sounds like a matter of trust to me. We are always told the same things and then something gets hacked and all of a sudden data is out there that is not supposed to be. So I can understand that Australians are simply saying no to keeping data for any length of time. But remember, they at least have a chance to say yes or no. We are not asked the same question in the US for our census data.

I am sure that supplying "fake" names during the Australian census is probably no different than some individuals do in our own Federal Census. Maybe the fake names worked better in the earlier censuses and not so much now. We previously had enumerators come to our houses. You could and did probably tell the census taker anything you wanted ... truth or lie. Today however, we receive a form in the mail for us to fill out so the Census Bureau knows who they are sending material to and will then do a follow-up check if you do not return what was originally sent to you.

Oh well, we have three more years to go until our own 2020 census in the US. How are you going to "give it to the man" in 2020 when faced with responding truthfully and accurately to questions asked of you for the Census.

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Handout #7 – GRACE A. DOW MEMORIAL LIBRARY FLOODED IN MICHIGAN; \$1.5 MILLION DOLLARS IN DAMAGE

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

[Dick Eastman](#) · [July 19, 2017](#) · [Current Affairs](#), [Preservation](#) · [2 Comments](#)



Here is still another example why we cannot depend upon paper documents alone to be accessible in the future. Homes, streets, businesses, parks and city buildings in Midland, Michigan got soaked in a flood several weeks ago. In the city alone, more than 1,000 homes had some type of damage. Of interest to genealogists, the hardest hit city building was the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library. The early estimate puts clean up and repair work for the library at \$1.5 million.

The library had never flooded before.

Library Director Melissa Barnard said the basement was covered in at least three inches of water. "We've lost pretty much everything downstairs, except for the books. You know, built in furniture, the furniture that was on the floor. You know, the carpeting, the walls had to be cut because they had absorbed so much water," Barnard said.

The books were moved to storage, and the services in the basement have been relocated. All ebooks and online databases are safe as they were hosted on servers located elsewhere.

Barnard said library visits have dropped since the flood, but they hope to spread the word that they are open for business.

My thanks to newsletter reader Mary K Freel for telling me about this story.

How safe are **YOUR** books and papers?

Comments by Tony Kierna

Does all of this sound somewhat familiar to recent July 2017 flood activity currently being experienced on the Fox and DesPlaines rivers in Illinois? Rainstorms coming day after day dropping 2-3 inches of rain in what seems like a non-stop sequence of

events. These are river locations in Illinois where over time floods have occurred off and on all the time. But you can listen to longtime residents of the towns along both rivers today say very emphatically that they have lived in their homes along these river areas and have never seen such massive flooding in the 40 years they have lived in their locations.

Even the library noted above had never had any incidents of flooding in its history.

What is the lesson to be learned here for the genealogy researcher?

You are not going to avoid all forms of paper for your research. But you can digitally convert much of that to non-paper format and have it safely and secured available on the Cloud. If you don't do that, then at least get all of those genealogical papers you have accumulated out of the basement. Don't just raise it off the floor, move the material to a higher floor closet in your house at least for storage. I am sure people thought if they just raised cardboard boxes off the floor by 6 inches their material would be safe since their basement never flooded higher than 6 inches. Ask the people along the Fox and DesPlaines Rivers today who have seen basements filled with water up to the ceiling.

Digitize your data. Burn the data to DVDs. Share those DVDs with cousins at off-site locations. Put stuff into the Cloud. Reduce your paper and keep what paper you have after digitization in interior closets in your house and not in basements or attics. Make an effort to convert this material now while you have a chance now before some catastrophe strikes.

Sure, a catastrophe of nature has never impacted you before. But why take a chance. The material of our ancestors is priceless. All of your time researching what you did is priceless. Don't let "mother nature" win over you. You are better than that and know the perils of archiving material as just a part of doing genealogy. Protect your materials now as best as you can. It may be too late when you really have to act.

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Handout #8 – HOW TO FIND GENEALOGY, FAMILY HISTORY AND LOCAL HISTORY MATERIAL ON THE INTERNET ARCHIVE

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated July 6, 2017.

[Dick Eastman](#) · [July 6, 2017](#) · [Online Sites](#) · [8 Comments](#)

Would you like to electronically search through 129,577 genealogy books? You can do that on the Internet Archives' online service at: <https://archive.org/details/genealogy>. Not only can you search these books, but you can do so electronically. A search for a name might require a few seconds, not hours or days in the manner of a manual search through printed books in a library.



The Internet Archive (also known as The Internet WayBack Machine Archive) is a San Francisco-based nonprofit digital library with the stated mission of "universal access to all knowledge." It provides free public access to collections of digitized materials, including websites, software applications/games, music, movies/videos, moving images, and nearly three million public-domain books. This online library now has a collection that fills more than 15 petabytes.

NOTE: 15 petabytes is equal to 15 million gigabytes.

The Internet Archive's collection is growing daily. Best of all, the use of the Internet Archive is always **FREE**. There is only one class of available service: **FREE**. There is no upgraded, or "pro" version. The Internet Archive is funded solely by voluntary donations, so everything is free.

I have written often about the Internet Archive. You can find a list of my past articles about the Internet Archive by starting at: <http://bit.ly/2ttEHvd>.

The Internet Archive has always collected genealogy, family history, and local history books. However, searching through the huge collection used to require imaginative search terms to find specific references. For instance, searching all of the Internet Archive for references to my last name of Eastman used to find a few genealogy books buried in a listing of hundreds of book related to photography. In addition, a search for family names often also produced listings of book authors who shared that name, even if the book had nothing to do with genealogy. A search for a family name that is also a common English word, such as Black or Street was almost hopeless. Luckily, a change made some time ago has now reduced the search problems.

The Internet Archive now has a dedicated section just for genealogy, family history, and local history books at <https://archive.org/details/genealogy>. You might want to go to that address first and then conduct a search there.

When writing this article, I went to <https://archive.org/details/genealogy>, found the box labeled "Search this Collection" and performed a search for: Eastman. That search found 37 books. Unlike searches I have performed in the past, all the books were either (1.) books about Eastman genealogy or (2.) genealogy or local history books that had the name Eastman someplace within the book. In fact, quite a few of the books were local histories for towns where Eastman families had settled. One book was a history book written by Ralph M. Eastman although the book did not appear to contain any genealogy information. I also tried searching for geographic locations, such as "Penobscot County," and had equally good success.

A few of the books listed in my searches were about U.S. Civil War histories. Those books had little or no genealogy information but contained great information about the soldiers and sailors who served during that war.

Many of the books were originally published in the 1800s; all of the ones I found were published prior to 1923.

The front covers of each book were displayed, and clicking on the image of any book cover immediately showed the contents of the book. Once I clicked on a book's image, full source citations also were displayed for that book, including:

- Author(s) name(s)
- Publication date
- Publisher's name
- Internet Archive call number
- Number of pages within the book
- The name of the person or organization who contributed the book and even the name of the OCR software used to convert the book to text

The searches seem to work best for surnames of families that have been in North America for a century or longer. It does not work well for recent immigrants with eastern European or Oriental or Hispanic names. After all, these books are out of copyright; therefore, almost all were published prior to 1923. Don't look for more recent immigrant families in this collection. Almost all the books listed are in English although a very small number may be in other languages.

The addition of a dedicated genealogy section on the Internet Archive is an incremental improvement but a very welcome one indeed. It greatly simplifies the searches for genealogy, family history, and local history books in this fabulous online resource.

I suggest you might want to go to <https://archive.org/details/genealogy> and search for any surnames of interest. You never know what you might find. You probably want to bookmark that address. Did I mention that the service is **FREE**?

Comments by Tony Kierna

As Dick Eastman notes it is important to connect to the Genealogy part of the Internet Archive and gain access to search through over 129,000 items categorized as genealogy. Big contributors have been the Allen County Public Library and the University of Toronto.

My first impression is simply that this material is not as easily accessible as one would think. You will have a lot of trial and error to just get the lay of the land and begin searching meaningfully. I experimented entering in a surname to search and more often than not received few results if any. You may get the same.

I also tried to click on some of the subject categories, like microfilms, to see what that all looks like. You can combine a subject like "microfilms" and also filter it down by selecting from the "year" box and it will show which microfilms are for that year. I was browsing through some military pension microfilms from our own National Archives. You do have to spend some time trying to determine what a film might have for you and to try to assess how the data is organized. You can click on the full viewing of the microfilm and use the zoom in and out functions to magnify the image. Worked well. You can go page by page or pick a page to view. Quality of the images looked very good. You have to use the filters on the left side. As an example I combined microfilms, US Census, 1920 and it gave me a list of 17 films in the Internet Archive that were for the 1920 Census. This probably does not have the same significance today since we would be looking at census microfilm data using Ancestry.com or FamilySearch.

One big drawback is that when you open up to see the full list of "filters" for a topic you are presented with possibly pages and pages of additional items to select but they are not in alphabetical order. Can make it challenging if you thought you could select something specific to the state of Illinois, but have to go through all of these pages to see if it exists.

There is so much more than just genealogy. You can find current videos programs from recent shows from major networks. You can find lots of YouTube material. You can find audios of old-time radio shows. You can spend countless time looking for just about anything here. And of course, you can look through books. Some current and popular that can be checked out (saw a basic current book with 48 holds to read).

If you have the time and the energy, the Internet Archive is one of those resources that you could easily lose yourself into. You may start out looking for a couple specifics and will then find yourself exploring all over. You will open up this category. Then that one to see what is there. Then see you can find old time radio shows. Pretty soon you find yourself listening to a 1944 recording of a "Boston Blackie" radio show! Be prepared to find yourself getting frustrated. But I think you will have some fun nonetheless making discoveries of items that connect to your early life.

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Handout #9 – “ROADTRIP FOR ROAD BLOCKS”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the July/August 2017, Volume 3, Number 3 issue of Your Genealogy Today.

I thought that a very good article in this issue is one titled “Road Trip for Roadblocks”. The author of the article is Karena Elliott.

So many of us do almost all of our research by accessing whatever can be found on the Internet. But even if you are only doing online research, you will undoubtedly reach a point where you will be stuck and won't be able to move forward with your research on a particular person or family. Unfortunately, one answer is to be patient and to just wait for more material to be discovered on the Internet. Or, you could take the bulls by the horns, and plan for an actual “boots meet the ground” road trip to try to discover information that may very well exist but just has not seen the light of day f the Internet.

The author of this article provides readers with a 10 tip list of actions to take that could lead to further discoveries in the real world. Here are the tips:

- **Start with everything you know about the person causing the road block.**
 - Full name
 - Birth and Death dates
 - Name of the spouse
 - Name of the children
 - Locations person lived at.
 - The above information should be able to point you to a physical geographical location assuming the information itself that pointed you there is accurate.
- **Go to the courthouse in the county of the physical location**
 - May involve significant travel so plan for more than a few days.
 - Consider staying at a local bed and breakfast because the owner of such a location may very well have more information about the area itself to help you.
 - Purchase some small gift cards to give to those that gave you some special help during your stay.
- **At the courthouse, search for wills of the individual, as well as the spouse, parents or children.**

- Wills can provide you with death date information and names of additional family members.
- Be kind to the staff at the courthouse. They know a lot about what they have and can really offer to share that information with you for your research effort.
- **While at the courthouse, check out the Recorder and Auditor's offices for landowner records.**
 - Purchase or sale of land records which will help place them in that geographic location.
 - If you find these records, drive to the locations and ask permission from current owners to take photos of any buildings on the property.
 - Something on the property might actually date to the time of your own ancestors.
- **Visit the local Public Library in the area**
 - They may have Local History records that can be of help for your research.
 - May have an index of obituaries not only of the person of interest to you but other family members.
 - Ask if they have an online Local History link that may contain even more data.
- **Visit the local cemetery where your ancestors are buried.**
 - Find the gravestone markers for family members. Compare birth and death date information to any previous information you may have obtained from online sources only.
 - Confirm spellings.
 - Look nearby for other family gravesites.
 - Take photographs of any gravestones.
- **Ask if the town has a historical museum and go there.**
 - Much related history of the town can be found that will connect events of that time to the events of your ancestors.
 - Find out if there are any historical sketches of possible family members.
 - Listen to ideas of historical staff members for ideas you may not have previously been aware of or considered.
 - Offer some little gift cards to helpful staff.
- **If you have discovered any new links from some of the previous steps, go back to the local courthouse with that information and new searches.**

- **Check with the courthouse, the library and the museum for newspaper archives.**
 - Look for obituaries for family members from your earlier research on the road trip.
 - Look for news items that may be applicable to your ancestors.
 - Early newspapers did not have sections as we see today. You may have to look through lots of text to make these discoveries. It may be easier using digital newspaper data if available.
- **Once you return home, assemble all your new information and get back to work on the Internet.**
 - Look at census records, marriage certificates and military records.
 - Chase after the new families from your road trip discoveries.
 - Document all of this newly discovered information and send it back to the library, museum and genealogy association you visited.
 - Enclose a "Thank You" note.

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Handout #10 – “SILHOUETTES OF SILENCE: IN SEARCH OF IMPERFECTION”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the July/August 2017, Volume 3, Number 3 issue of Your Genealogy Today.

I also thought that another good article in this issue is one titled “Silhouettes of Silence: In Search of Imperfection”.

Has your research uncovered what are considered “black sheep” in your family history? Discovered any thieves, murderers, robbers, adulterers? Are you comfortable with these discoveries? Do you enjoy making such discoveries? To each their own. Many of you may very well enjoy these discoveries. Many of you may cringe and be embarrassed at what are the facts in the case. You just never know what you are going to uncover when you do family history. If you do it long enough you too will undoubtedly make such discoveries. How are you going to react?

This article offers seven tips to actually help you find these savory characters in your family history and the good that come from such an investigation. These seven tips are:

• **To Dispel Any Myths**

- o Stories change as they are passed through many layers of generation of family. Now is the time for you to actually research what the facts are rather than perpetuating the story.
- o Someone in the family storytelling chain may have felt uncomfortable and may have “modified” the story to sanitize it even further.
- o Refusing to even speak of an ancestor may even accentuate the possibility something is not savory. Research again will follow the facts rather than perpetuate a shaky story or no story at all.

• **To Reinvigorate Research**

- o Maybe you have hit some brick walls in your research. Now may be the time to re-open an investigation on one of your “black sheep”.
- o “You’ll often be forced to ask yourself new questions, guess at motivations, and then test your hypothesis as you learn more about the person you’re focusing on.”
- o Flawed ancestors may have stories that simply pop and excite you to pursue further research.

• **To Open Lines of Communication**

- Maybe you have not been communicating much lately to your known cousins. “Black Sheep” research results may in fact open up a line of communication that has recently been dormant.
- Consider easing into the results of your search out of respect for the feelings of these cousins. Maybe you are fine with the discovery. Maybe they will be uneasy and offended by the information you share.
- Perhaps your discoveries will be just facts for you while connecting to a cousin may allow a further and deeper explanation from a cousin who knows more of the background on what becomes a “black sheep” ancestor.

• **To Hone Research Skills**

- Family “misfits” have a way of leading you down new research paths. New research paths add to your overall skilled research abilities. Maybe you have never researched military records. Maybe a “black sheep” ancestor leads you down a path to research their military records.
- Perhaps now will be your time to research court records because initial research indicates an ancestor was arrested for robbery.
- Discovering “odd” coincidences may cause you to formulate new hypotheses in your research.

• **To Deepen Knowledge**

- Perhaps these odd ancestors will require you to now learn more about the places they lived and the norms and beliefs of the times. Divorce was once heavily stigmatized in comparison to our times today.
- Maybe you will discover the person abandoned a child, avoided military service or ran off with a sibling’s fiancée. But could someone who was simply poor, eccentric or willing to challenge the status quo of the times be treated as an outcast?
- What if that “black sheep” was really suffering from an undiagnosed and untreated mental illness of the time?
- Historical circumstances may have played a very important part in categorizing someone as a “black sheep”.

• **To Understand Family Dynamics**

- Push and pull of family allegiances contributes to determine who is considered acceptable at any particular time.
- Do family letters consistently mention someone over and over and ignore others?
- Does a will make mention of all known children except for one?
- Some family members may shun a “black sheep” ancestor while other family members may embrace that same person. You

can read the dynamics of such family relations through such interactions. Points of view can change over time so you might see a change in these dynamics over time.

• **To Heal Rifts**

- o Actions of “black sheep” ancestors can tear families apart.
- o You cannot change the past but you can better understand what actually happened as your research takes down the path of discoveries.
- o You may actually be able to promote a “truce” through your research among living family today.
- o You do not have to approve the actions of a “black sheep” family member but you can develop a willingness to forgive the “black sheep” person.
- o Honest discussions are always a good thing leading to a strengthened living family today.

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