

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP #5 - WHERE CAN FAMILY HISTORY TAKE YOU?



Preserving and protecting your family tree

Choosing Software

A genealogy program can be an important tool for managing your family tree data and organising your research.

- Remember to look for one which allows the transfer of your data to other programs using the GEDCOM format.
- Popular products include Family Tree Builder (free) and Family Tree Maker (\$)
- Inside History Magazine <http://www.insidehistory.com.au/2014/12/choosing-the-right-family-history-software/>
- Reviews: <http://genealogy-software-review.toptenreviews.com/>
- Gould's <http://www.gould.com.au/>

Genealogical Wills

Writing a Genealogical Will can give your research long term protection. Can be as simple as a letter expressing your wishes or a paragraph of your official will. Store it with your will or give to your executor.

- <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~alwalker/Codicil.htm>
- <http://www.devonfhs.org.uk/my-genealogical-will.pdf>

So I've made a family tree... Now what!?!?

Going beyond the photo wall

Take a look at these great ideas for using your special family items creatively:

- Photographs: portraits within portraits – showing the same person holding a picture of themselves or portraits of successive generations. Splicing together images of the same person over time. Incorporating your photos into household objects - from jigsaws and Christmas decorations to quilts!
- Memorabilia: framing medals or jewellery
- Documents: using copies of documents on household items or in frames.
- Pinterest.com can be a great source of inspiration.
- Don't forget that most of these ideas use copies of your items – make sure you keep any originals safe and sound.

Writing your own family history

- Define your project: choose a style and give careful thought to who your audience might be. What is the best format for your project, and will your audience pay for it?
- Choose your start and end point – perhaps by date or by historical events
- Think about your strengths, and which skills you need to practice. Do you need outside help to achieve parts of your project?
- What broader historical relevance is there in your family's story? A theme can provide important structure and make your story have broader relevance. Some common themes include: Immigration, Military service, Survival through war or natural disaster, the role of gender or race, rags to riches, (or riches to rags), triumph over adversity, a love story...
- Your background research should be wide ranging, so you learn about the bigger picture of historical forces, and about everyday lives. Knowing what was ordinary and what was unique about your ancestors will inform your writing – it will help draw out what is interesting about their story.

Some resources to get you started:

Free Uni of Tasmania course: <http://www.utas.edu.au/arts/writing-family-history>

FamilySearch Wiki: https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Preparing_a_Family_History

Genealogy.com: http://www.genealogy.com/articles/research/74_sharon.html

The State Library of Victoria provides free online access to this ebook:

Writing Family History Made Very Easy by Noeline Kyle, (2007)

Hitting the road: a family history trip

The key to a successful trip is to be prepared.

- An important thing to do before you leave home is to check all the details of the archives you'd like to visit. This includes their opening hours, address and their access requirements. Find out in advance if there is a particular expert who would be the best person to help you.
- Consider the facilities that will be available when you're there: transport, food, accommodation.
- Have back up plans. eg. a printed map to refer to when you have no internet access.
- <http://www.cyndislist.com/travel/general/> is a good place to start.

Getting the family together: reunions

Planning a family reunion can be both a pleasurable outcome of your research and an opportunity to learn more about your family's history.

- Share your research: make your family tree available for viewing and comment. Sell or promote your new book/blog/website about your family history – with people who are also connected to it.
- It's an opportunity to build upon your research: Can be a chance to ask questions and build new relationships. Learn about other family member's research and what they can show you from their personal archive. Make the most of the opportunity – get them to bring their historic items with them.
- Make sure you have a camera and a notepad on the big day. ☺

Cyndi's List: <http://www.cyndislist.com/reunions/>

Genealogy.com: http://genealogy.about.com/od/family_reunions/a/planning.htm