

HOW DO I START MY FAMILY TREE?

Are you the family historian? Are you the keeper of your family tree? Many will not recall the past without the records that you have kept or sought out to encourage the family tree of knowledge. Without you and your diligence in seeking facts and photographs – memories and memorabilia will be lost to future generations.

Going, going, gone. Many born prior to 1930 have left us.

Will you know your grandparent's full names? Will you recall the cars driven, the price of milk, where you originated, and will someone come across your name again in the far future ...because you documented your life and your families? Did you write down your family's wisdom and share it for future generations? Did you remember to keep your sources and list them accurately? Below find the help you need to encourage the memories about yourself, the world around you, and the members of your family that have come and gone.

"To forget one's ancestors is to be a brook without a source, a tree without a root." Chinese Proverb

Step 1. Start with yourself

Step 2. Talk to Family Members & Relatives

Note the family legends and traditions, maiden names

Note any organizations membership was involved

Preserve your family history by writing family stories

Preserve the world around your family by writing the incidentals of life: i.e. the price of

milk, who were the neighbors, family dog's name, flowers grown in the garden, etc.

Step 3. Find Records:

Family Bibles and Photographs Diaries and Wills School, Military, Social Security Records Birth, Baptism, Marriage, Church and Divorce Records Land Records, Death and Funeral Home/Cemetery Records Cause of Death Occupations News Articles of Announcements, Town Gossip Columns, Obituaries Naturalization Records Court Records, Probate Records, County Records Hospital, Criminal and Finance and Bankruptcy Records Books (some places do centennial books listing biographies) Plat maps Genealogical society quarterlies High School Year Books

Step 4. Find Ancestors in Census Records_–Use your public library's Heritage Quest site or Ancestry.com {purchase of Ancestry.com allows you personal access for a limited time}

Step 5. Join a Mailing List: A Mailing List is a group of researchers with similar interests. Suggestion: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/> You can post queries, ask questions, and share information with other subscribers. Mailing lists might be based on the following interests: Surname mailing list (for example, a Humphries mailing list for all people researching the name Humphries)

Location mailing list (for example, an Ada County Idaho mailing list for all people interested in searching Ada County Idaho) Topic mailing list (for example, a Census mailing list for all people wanting to find their ancestor in census records)

Step 6. Search_The LDS Family History Library. It is physically located in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The library has 2,000 branches throughout the US and abroad.

The website is: www.familysearch.org The Family History Library has the following genealogical records: Family History Library Catalogue Search: The Family History Library has millions of microfilm reels of records for birth, death and marriage records; census records; ships passenger lists; naturalization records; orphan records; almshouse records; city and county histories; court records; tax lists, etc. Your local Family History Center [FHC] can borrow titles from the main library. International Genealogical Index™ (IGI): The IGI has over 225 million surnames organized by county. Ancestral File™: With about 30 million names so far, Ancestral File is a collection of pedigree charts submitted by genealogists worldwide. Ancestral File makes it possible to find relationships to parents, grandparents, and several generations of a pedigree.

Note: Records are submitted by folks interested in preserving their ancestry...mistakes are made however. Document and verify your sources to keep accurate family histories.

Step 7. Get Organized.

Organize yourself Organize by family Alphabetize family group records by last name Organize your pedigree charts (ancestry) Organize your descendant charts (descendants) Organize County folders (repositories, maps, etc.) Keep a Correspondence log Keep a Research log Document your sources! Keep a To-Do list Obtain photos of cemetery headstones and document locations Set aside space to store records in the home If you have a computer, get a family file program Set a Goal, nothing gets done by wishful thinking Use manila and/or hanging folders Use a notebook Helps and Tips you've found Research the whole family, sibling info too

Step 8. Help Others

Send copies to relatives Publish your own Family History Donate your family file to the Ancestral File Make your work available to Genealogical Societies Join a Genealogical Society Join a genealogical link Help make cemetery/grave stone photographs and records available