



"I don't regret anything I've ever done as long as I enjoyed it at the time." --- Katharine Hepburn, 1907-2003

"Letter writing is the only device for combining solitude with good company." --- Lord Byron, 1788-1824

When work, commitment, and pleasure all become one and you reach that deep well where passion lives, nothing is impossible. --- Nancy Coey

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Want to see your name in print?  
Submissions welcomed and will  
be used eventually.

The Editor

## Collecting Your Ancestors' Markers

— Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG

Have you been collecting your ancestors' markers? "Markers?" you ask, "What's a marker? I don't remember anything about markers in genealogy class." Markers are the things that identify, or mark, our ancestors. They are not documents and they are not events, although they are found in documents and events.

For each person you are researching, review the records you have found and make a list of markers.

Occupation is a valuable marker. We find an ancestor's occupation in censuses from 1850 onward, in deeds, and in obituaries. Tax lists and city directories may give occupations. If we look thoroughly, we may find that an ancestor had more than one occu-

pation, either two related occupations, such as carpenter and shipwright, or a skilled occupation in addition to being a farmer. The tools in a probate inventory may silently tell us an ancestor's occupation. The inventory and agricultural censuses tell us of the types of crops and livestock an ancestor raised.

Another marker is a focused place of residence (smaller than a county). Again, censuses, deeds, obituaries, and tax lists will help. For urban dwellers, death certificates and city directories may provide exact street addresses. The residence for farmers may be a named township, a township-range-section description, or the name of a waterway.

You should be specific about each marker. Land ownership is not necessarily the same as residence. Some men, as funds permitted, purchased land removed in distance from the "home place" with the intent of giving, selling, or willing it to their sons to get them started on their own place. On your list of markers indicate "residence" versus "land ownership."

At this point, it would be good to point out that you shouldn't add more to the marker than what is actually given in the source. If the census says "tool man," don't say "tool man at ABC Manufacturing." If another record tells you of the place of employment, list "employer: ABC Manufactur-

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### CONTACTING A COUSIN THROUGH AN OLD ADDRESS BOOK

In my mother's old address book I found some names of relatives. The addresses were very old but were all in Atlanta, Georgia. In hopes that some of their children had stayed in the Atlanta area I looked online in the white pages and found the last name and wrote to a few with a general letter of who I was and containing all the ancestors' names that I knew would connect us if by chance we were related. I gave them my parents' names and the names in the address book, as well as a little history and included my phone number and email

address.

I sent out about six letters and one of them knew of someone I might contact. This person passed on my letter and I found a cousin. She also is a great-granddaughter and we have kept in contact now for two years. We finally met this year when she came out to California to her visit her son. He was only one hour from me at the time. We have shared so much knowledge of our families and gained a friendship.

Sally Walker French

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# MESA DWELLERS

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Annual Dues: \$10 Singles; \$12 Family. Membership period is March 1st to April 30th. Those with **UNPAID DUES (after April 30th.)** will not receive the Newsletter. **Send a SASE to receive a current membership card if you do not attend regular meetings.**

Contributions of neatly typed or written stories, requests for/ or giving information, queries, or other information of importance to the membership are welcomed.

The Society disclaims responsibility for statement of fact or opinion made by contributors and will not accept material with obvious errors.

## USGenWeb Mesa County Site

Mesa County USGenWeb site now has cemetery pages. If you have headstone shots or other photos that would enhance a cemetery in **Mesa County OR Dolores County**. Please Contact Terri Cleaveland at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] for postal instructions. Terri would prefer that pictures be at least 150 dpi and no smaller than 4x5 inches.

The Mesa County USGenweb site is [www.rootsweb.com/~comesa2/index.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~comesa2/index.html)

The Mesa County Genealogical Society was established in 1980 as a non-profit organization to promote an interest in genealogy. A Newsletter is published in March, June, September, and December. **Note: All Society meetings are held at the Museum of Western Colorado 7:00 p. m., on the second Thursday of each month.** Visitors are welcome. The Museum is located at 4<sup>th</sup> and Ute. The meetings are held in the conference room located in the Whitman School Building.

## August 2003

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## September 2003

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30				

## October 2003

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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## Collecting Your Ancestors' Markers

ing." This helps prevent you from overlooking the fact that your ancestor left his job as a tool man at XYZ Manufacturing to take a job as a supervisor at ABC Manufacturing.

The people in the lives of our ancestors are important markers. I find it helpful to identify those people by specific type of connection and by year. I include locality if this is a migrating ancestor. For example, a deed might provide the following names:

Sarah ( ) Smith (wife, 1791)  
 Stephen Simpson (sold Clear Creek land to, 1791)  
 John Jones (adjoining Clear Creek, 1791)  
 William Wilson (adjoining Clear Creek, 1791)  
 Adam Ackley (witness, 1791)  
 Benjamin Brown (witness, 1791)

Notice that I didn't mention the deed, go into the details, or add a citation. That all belongs elsewhere in your research files.

Don't neglect the other persons found in lists containing your ancestor's name. You've surely used the census in your research to record information about your ancestor, but have you collected the nearby names for your list of markers? I recommend doing ten households on each side of your ancestor. For lengthy lists of names, I sometimes note only surnames; I can add given names later if needed.

If you are adding markers from the 1850 or a subsequent census, the state of birth of each child may be a marker:

Virginia resident (1838)

Kentucky resident (1841, 1843, 1845)  
 Illinois resident (1848, 1850)

Needless to say, kinship is an important marker. The names of siblings, parents, spouses, and children are important markers. Our ancestors had extended kinship networks, so pay attention to in-laws also. Take care to be specific and not to add more than a record says:

John Jones (married daughter Jennie, 1788)

When we write our family narrative, this care will help us be accurate in what we say. For example, look at these two markers:

John Jones (married daughter Jennie, 1788)

John Jones (adjoining Clear Creek, 1791)

### MARYLAND, GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1684-1744

In 1634, just a short while after colonists arrived in the area that today is known as Maryland, the first General Assembly was held. The General Assembly is the legislative body of the Maryland state government, and the purpose of the first Assembly was the same as that of the Assembly today--to create laws and ordinances that will promote the welfare of the State. In the late nineteenth century the Maryland Historical Society published several volumes of collections of the Maryland Archives. This database contains volumes 13, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29-30, 33-40, and 42 of the series, which are comprised of the

proceedings and acts of the General Assembly from sessions held at St. Mary's and Annapolis from 1684-1744.

Source Information: Ancestry.com. "Maryland, General Assembly, 1684-1744" [database online]. Provo, Utah: MyFamily.com, Inc., 2003.

Original data: Eds. William Hand Browne, Clayton Colman Hall, and Bernard Christian Steiner.

"Archives of Maryland. Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland." Volumes 13, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29-30, 33-40, and 42. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1894-1923.

We would say "In 1791, when he sold his land on Clear Creek, John Jones, husband of his daughter Jennie, was an adjoining landowner." But we would not say "In 1788 his daughter Jennie married adjoining landowner John Jones," because we don't know that John Jones owned that land in 1788. By keeping markers separate and specific, we avoid small errors, which can grow into big ones.

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### MCGS Refreshment List

Aug.	<b>Picnic 6:00PM</b>
Sept.	Jody Nestler
Oct.	Liz Mustee
	Pat Blackburn
Nov	Available
Dec	<b>Season Dinner</b>



# You've Got Mail *Juliana Smith*

When I first began using the Internet to search for ancestors, I was absolutely thrilled to discover mailing lists. I signed up for one or two at first and "lurked" in the background for a while. Here were all these wonderful friendly people, sharing interests and helping one another. Cool!

So I decided to join more lists—lists about everything that related to my research—Irish lists, Polish list, Hungarian list, UK list, NYC list, NY State list, Ohio list, and what the heck, since I live in Indiana near the Illinois border, how about the Illinois list, the Cook County list, and the Indiana list. Needless to say, the next time I booted up, I gave my e-mail program a run for its money. While I was desperately trying to dig my way out from under the deluge of messages, I realized that there were some things I needed to think about.

## What and Where

For those who are not familiar with them, mailing lists are kind of like interactive "e-discussions" (I just love making up new words!), which are held among the list's subscribers. When a message is sent to the list, each subscriber receives a copy and can respond. The purpose of mailing lists is to allow list-members to help each other by sharing ideas, new finds, research strategies, and resources that pertain to their area of shared interest.

There are literally thousands of mailing lists that pertain to various aspects of family history. There are lists for those researching a particular geographic area or ethnicity, for a specific surname, or topical. Some of the topical mailing lists at RootsWeb include Adoption, Genealogical Computing, Newbies, Military, Obituaries, Occupations, Prisons, Religion, Research Techniques, Software, and Technical—and this is just the tip of the iceberg. RootsWeb currently supports 21,827 mailing lists and this number continues to grow.

The trick is finding the list that is right for your needs. While there will obviously be some overlap, most lists address a specific area. It is good to remember that the folks on the Liechtenstein list are probably not going to be able to help you locate your ancestors from Madagascar. Similarly, the

folks on the Immigration list may not be thrilled to receive your post on Adoption. (Although some immigrants may have been adopted, that is not the purpose of the list.)

To locate a list that addresses your needs, see: [lists.rootsweb.com/](http://lists.rootsweb.com/) or [www.rootsweb.com/~jfuller/gen\\_mail.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~jfuller/gen_mail.html)  
**Being A Good Neighbor**

Once you have found the right forum, it is a good idea to lurk for a bit (that is, join and get a feel for the list before posting to it). Each list has its own personality. While some are very open and friendly with jokes, recipes, and stories being exchanged, other lists may be more rigid, with only information that directly pertains to the business at hand being exchanged. After you have observed the various exchanges on the list, you will have a better feel for what is acceptable and what is not and can make sure that your query is appropriate there, thus avoiding the dreaded "flames" (nasty messages from folks who seem to have gotten up on the wrong side of the bed or are just plain grumpy) that can arise from the occasional faux pas.

When you think about it, flames are totally unnecessary and do much more harm than good. Most of the time, any breach in "netiquette" is unintentional. A kind message (sent off the list) that gently helps the newcomer in the right direction will correct any problems and save that person embarrassment, hurt, and possibly keep them from leaving the list with any information they have that may have helped others.

Most lists also come with a "welcome" message that outlines what is acceptable and what is not. This message also contains important information like how to unsubscribe, switch to digest form, etc. Be sure to read and save these messages. I have a special folder for them in my inbox so that I can locate them when necessary.

## Organizing the Flow

As George mentioned in his column Friday, it is a good idea to start with one list and add more slowly so you are not in-

undated. Traffic on the lists varies greatly, with some getting only a few posts if any each day, and others, like Roots-L and Gen-Newbie typically generating between 50 and 100, and sometimes even more.

One way to manage all the e-mails you will have coming in from various mailing lists is to filter them into separate folders. Your e-mail program most likely has this built into it and you should be able to find out how by checking your help screen, for information on filtering. In IE it is called "Rules Wizard" and to be honest I'm not sure if AOL allows for filtering messages. (I don't use it often so only have version 4.0, but later versions may have changed in this regard. Maybe someone can share some info with us on this as a Quick Tip?)

Another thing you might want to consider is subscribing in Digest form. This allows you to get messages posted to the list in groups of between 10 and 25 posts, all lumped into one e-mail. A couple of things to keep in mind with digests:

If you are replying to a digest mes-

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## PAGE-BY-PAGE SEARCHES THROUGH OLD BIBLES

When searching old Bibles that have not been used for long periods of time, it is wise to go through the Bible page by page because items are some times placed in them. I found news clippings of obituaries for two of my ancestors this way. The clippings were over one hundred years old. Some of our ancestors would also hide cash in Bibles, so it can pay to search these old Bibles page by page.

John A. McCall



## GEORGE G. MORGAN: "ALONG THOSE LINES . . ." "Writing Your Family History: Defining Local Context"

George G. Morgan – 6/20/2003

### An Exploration of Canadian Immigration Records

The United States and Canada have always had an interesting relationship. Many of us have ancestors who came to the United States via Canada. Others have ancestors who came to Canada via the United States. Whatever route was taken and whatever means were used, we share many similarities.

There are many Canadians or people of Canadian descent conducting their own family history research. Many are using the growing body of Canadian materials at Ancestry.com, and not a week goes by that I don't hear from readers of the "Along Those Lines . . ." column letting me know how much they enjoy it and how they'd like to see more information about Canadian research. So, in the spirit of good neighborliness, this column is for you, my Canadian friends. Read along, non-Canadians, and you'll learn some things too.

### The Basics

Approaching genealogical research begins the same way in all places. It means starting with yourself and what you know and working backwards. In some places, there are many, many resources available. In others, you may have to dig fairly deep.

Most of us will use the resources of census records where they exist, religious records, vital records, and any other materials available. Another source of information is immigration records—those ships' passenger lists and manifests that document the immigration of our ancestors and where they landed. It's these records that we'll discuss in this column.

First, you should know that there are no comprehensive lists of immigrant arrivals in Canada prior to 1865. Until that year, shipping companies were not required to create, retain, or supply their passenger lists to the government of-

fices. There are apparently a few of the lists that include passenger names, and the "Miscellaneous Immigration Index" in the archives' reference room is accessible with those few records. The contents relate to immigrants from the British Isles to Québec and Ontario between the years 1800 and 1849. That information also is included in the inGeneas website at: [www.ingeneas.com](http://www.ingeneas.com)

### Archives are Golden

There are, fortunately, a good many collections of materials, and not just immigration documents, in the holdings of various archives in Canada. Together, let's document a brief overview of some of these archives and their websites. Later, on your own you may take a brief (or detailed) online tour of these archives to discover all that they have to offer.

### Library and Archives of Canada

[www.archives.ca](http://www.archives.ca)

The Library and Archives of Canada provides its content in both English and French. Here you will find a wealth of information for your research, even including portraits of Immigrants and Aboriginal People of Canada, located at: <http://collections.ic.gc.ca/portraits/docs/imm/enatimm.htm>

Descriptions of the archives' immigration records can be located on the following website: [www.archives.ca/02/02020204\\_e.html](http://www.archives.ca/02/02020204_e.html)

Here you also will learn something about the immigration policies of the Canadian government. Border Entry records also are available for immigrants arriving across the U.S./Canadian border between April 1908 and December 1935. However, not all immigrants were recorded.

Passenger lists from 1865 to 1935 exist and have been microfilmed. Check the website for details at: [www.archives.ca/02/020202/0202020401\\_e.html](http://www.archives.ca/02/020202/0202020401_e.html)

It is important to know that the records are arranged by name of the port of arrival and the date of arrival, with the exception of the years 1923 to 1924 and some records from 1919 to 1922 when a separate gov-

ernmental reporting Form 30A (individual manifest) was used. Please note that records from 1 January 1936 are still in the custody of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Privacy of individuals is protected, and certain requirements exist. For more information, visit the following website: [www.archives.ca/02/02020204\\_e.html#Post-1935%20Immigration%20Records](http://www.archives.ca/02/02020204_e.html#Post-1935%20Immigration%20Records)

The passenger arrival records in the custody of the National Archives of Canada have been microfilmed. They can be accessed in person by visiting them at 395 Wellington Street in Ottawa, Canada, through Interlibrary Loan among the Canadian libraries, and/or through the LDS Family History Center nearest you. More information concerning other genealogical resources at the National Archives of Canada can be found at: [www.archives.ca/02/020202\\_e.html](http://www.archives.ca/02/020202_e.html).

There are a number of other resources available online for individual ports. These can be found by visiting the Canadian GenWeb Project ([www.rootsweb.com/~canwgw/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~canwgw/)), Cyndi's List for Canada ([www.cyndislist.com/canada.htm](http://www.cyndislist.com/canada.htm)), or by using a search engine such as Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)). There are a growing number of valuable sites with databases and helpful information on immigration, as well as other Canadian records.

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## From the Editor

*Sometimes manna falls from Heaven....*

Not long ago I revisited my surname postings on the Internet. I hadn't done that in a real long time. And of course I paid the price. There on a site that I used to visit frequently was a message from a distant cousin about having a picture of my gr-gr-grandfather and his bride. Not only did I not have a picture of the both of them, this photo also included his siblings and their brides and their mother.

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## Defining Local Context

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### Other Records

Immigration records are just the tip of the iceberg. Don't forget to use other record types throughout your Canadian research. These include:

- Ecclesiastical records, including letters of membership transfer
- Marriage records
- Census records
- Naturalization papers
- Death records
- Newspaper articles
- Obituaries
- Cemetery records
- Wills and probate packet documents
- Family histories
- Published local and provincial histories
- Genealogical and historical society documents

- Maritime museums and archives
- Academic libraries and archives and their special collections

Each of these is a possible source for prospecting for your immigrant ancestors' origins.

### And a Great New Book!

Researchers who are seeking help in their French-Canadian research already know that there is a distinct lack of published guides in this area. What you may not have known is that there is a new book available on the subject. *French-Canadian Sources: A Guide for Genealogists*, is a compilation which began as a project of the French-Canadian/Acadian Genealogical Society, Inc., of Hales Corners, Wisconsin. The book contains excellent introductory materials to acquaint you with Gallic culture and its organization, but presents clearly

written descriptions of all types of records, what they contain, and where to locate them, along with scores of illustrations. The book contains an exhaustive appendix of French vocabulary words and phrases. Another appendix addresses dates in French, while two others provide detailed coverage of Canadian census records and census substitutes. Resources for locating those census records as well as the LDS microfilm resources for the Loiselle Marriage Index are also included. Published in late 2002 by Ancestry, I can tell you that this is one book every genealogist working on French-Canadian ancestry should add to their personal reference book collection.

À bientôt!

George

Visit George's website at <http://ahaseminars.com/atl> for information about speaking engagements.

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## E-mail

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sage, make sure you delete all of the extraneous messages and only include pertinent lines from the previous post. This is also a good idea for other lists (particularly when replying to a long message), but critical when it comes to digests.

Don't forget to change the subject line. If you reply to a digest message, the subject line will most likely read something like:

RE: ROOTS-L Digest V01 #255

This isn't going to mean a lot to anyone scanning headlines for items of interest and is a good way to get your message missed entirely. Which brings us to our next point...

### Getting Noticed

So you have found the right forum and you are ready to add your query to the many exchanges already taking place. You want people to actually read your message. Bear in mind that many people are on many lists and like you are battling the flow of increasing e-mails coming in. Most of us are just too busy to read each and every post, so often we'll just scan through the headlines. For this reason, it is important to make sure that the subject line is concise and reflects the informa-

tion you are seeking. "Genealogy," "Searching for Ancestors," or "Help" (tempting as it may be at times!) is not as likely to get results as a specific subject heading. A commonly accepted format might be something like:  
PUBLIC, John Q. 1887-1934  
IRL>NYC>OHIO

Or  
Need info on New York City Vital Records

If you have some humor or something that is a bit off topic and would like to post it (providing the list accepts that type of thing) it is common practice to label it as such:

Off Topic: How many Genealogists does it take to screw in a light bulb?

Or

OT: Great-grandpa Freddie's recipe for Stewed Snails

**E-mail is Instantaneous, But Archives Live Forever**

Last month there was an article in Wired News about Google.com reposting Deja.com's Usenet Archives of messages dating back to 1995. The opening paragraph

gives us something to think about "...The chronicles of many nasty flamewars are back, too. And everything you ever said in Usenet, back before you had a real job or kids to worry about, has now returned to haunt you."

Like Usenet, many of the mailing lists we post on are archived too. If flamers would remember that every time they send a nasty note to someone on a list, it is archived for anyone who wants to pull it up, we'd probably have a lot less carnage on the lists. It is all too easy when we are looking at typed words on a screen, to forget that there is a living, breathing person with feelings on the receiving end. Plus, remember, that person just might hold the key to your family history!

*Juliana Smith is the editor of the Ancestry Daily News and author of The Ancestry Family Historian's Address Book. She has written for Ancestry Magazine and Genealogical Computing.*



## He Stole My Ancestors- Ethics in Copyright

By Rhonda McClure

Recently on television, I saw a commercial for an SUV vehicle. The car is in a stadium going up against a bull in a bullfight. At the end of the commercial, they say, "Just because you could, doesn't mean you should." I felt this was quite appropriate to the world of genealogy, with a slight modification. Just because you could, doesn't mean you should.

In genealogy, there are certain aspects of our research that are not protected under the rules of copyright. Facts cannot be copyrighted. Genealogists deal in facts in every aspect of the research process. How those facts are ultimately put together is what may be protected by copyright. Most of us, though, will simply plug all of those names, dates, and places into our genealogy program and then generate a standardized report, perhaps in a Web page, following either the NGS *Quarterly* or the Register format.

For many of us, that Web page represents years of research and hundreds, perhaps thousands of dollars in expenses to compile our family history. In many ways, that ancestry is ours, and it is often more personal than perhaps our living family. We feel ownership for that ancestry. We have put more than money into it. We have put our hard work. As we worked on the line, those ancestors became real people. We became involved in their lives. We took pleasure when they succeeded, we felt sorrow when they had hardships. To a degree, we feel that we are the only ones entitled to that lineage. They are my ancestors.

Perhaps it is this feeling of ownership that makes people feel cheated if they find their ancestry incorporated into another person's Web site, or on a data CD-ROM, such as Family Tree Maker's *World Family Tree*. People feel they have been taken advantage of when they find their ancestry elsewhere. They are sure that someone has taken their ancestry against their will or without asking permission. Unfortunately, they are sometimes right. Of course, we live in a world structured with rules, and has a rule been broken here?

As a researcher, I have spent time amassing the data that I eventually share on my Web site. Provided that the individual has not taken my entire Web site as it now appears on the Web, then there has been no copyright violation. It is important to remember that under copyright law, it is the creativity that copyright protects. The names, the dates, and the places are not creative; they are facts. These facts can be found in many ways during the research process. Genealogy isn't as cut and dried as song lyrics, a poem, or a fiction book when it comes to copyright.

While you were striving to compile your family history, it is possible that I was doing the same thing on the same line. It is highly unlikely that we would both publish to the Web in the exact same format, including the exact names and information, but it is possible. It is possible that we both used the same genealogy program to generate those Web pages that we uploaded. Provided we found the same information then it is conceivable that the pages could look alike. So, who is to blame? Did you steal from me? Did I steal from you? No. What are the odds of such a scenario? Probably longer than you would find in any gambling establishment.

Usually what happens is another researcher comes upon your research as you have displayed it, and since they descend from the same line, they incorporate your information into their database. Unfortunately, proper source citation is not what it should be in today's genealogical community. While there are some valuable articles and Elizabeth Shown Mills' *Evidence! Citations & Analysis for the Family Historian*, few people take the time to properly cite their sources. Because researchers do not cite sources, there is no attribution for where information has been found. Just because the information came from a Web site, does not mean that Web site shouldn't be cited as a source. If that was where the information came from, then it is the source.

This is more a problem with those who I consider name gatherers rather than researchers. Analytical researchers spend hours going through microfilms, books, original documents, and yes the Internet. As they find new information, they evaluate it, incorporate it, and attribute it. Analytical researchers often have a small number of names in their database, because they want to be sure before they add a new name or family. Name gatherers somehow think that being able to claim that they have 60,000 names in their database means they are an impressive genealogist. I doubt they know half of the people who are actually in their database or how those names got into the database in the first place.

Usually the name gatherers will swallow up the entire line of another researcher. They do not see what they are doing as wrong. After all, we just pointed out that facts are not copyrighted, they are available to anyone. From a perfectly legal standpoint, it perhaps isn't wrong. They are incorporating the facts from a site into their database. However, is it ethical to swallow up another person's hard work and then turn around and publish it as yours? No.

As I said at the start, just because you could, doesn't mean you should. In a world where we hear "mine, mine, mine" all the time, genealogists really are a rare breed. They are willing to share their hard work. I don't know how many times I have had researchers share a large file with me because I asked them for some information. I have shared some of my work with other researchers when we found a connection. I have posted some of my research on the Internet. Genealogy thrives when researchers share. Unfortunately, this ethical issue is beginning to affect that sharing atmosphere. Some researchers refuse to post their information on the Internet or submit it to a database such as RootsWeb's *WorldConnect*. They worked hard for the information and do not appreciate others coming

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## "WHAT I'VE LEARNED WRITING FOR THE 'ANCESTRY DAILY NEWS,'" by Michael John Neill

In my four years of writing for the "Ancestry Daily News," I have gained a great deal of knowledge, most of which has some bearing on genealogy. (We will forgo grammar lessons that have crossed my desk, however.) This week we look at the lessons that have been brought to my attention in ways ranging from the suggestively subtle to the overtly blatant.

### PEOPLE CANNOT READ YOUR MIND.

Express yourself clearly, especially when composing e-mail messages.

Write something and let it sit a while before sending it. What was

crystal clear at 3:00 a.m. is sometimes as clear as mud eight hours later. Wait even longer and think it over at least three times if you are e-mailing out of frustration or irritation.

### THERE ARE ALWAYS THINGS YOU DO NOT KNOW.

The careful genealogist makes himself open to new methods, new sources, and new ideas. The clever writer applies this new information as topics for future articles or columns.

### SPELL CHECK DOES NOT ALWAYS WORK.

The computer thinks Calvary

and cavalry are spelled correctly and they are, but the computer typically does not look in context. If your ancestor was in the cavalry at Calvary you've probably overextended your pedigree and need to get a little more sleep before doing any more research or writing.

### WE LIVE IN A GLOBAL WORLD.

Receiving e-mail from "Daily News" readers has made me blatantly aware of the increasing "smallness" of the world we live in. Family historians are advised to keep this in mind when composing their own

### Member Research Inquiry

We will be publishing in the newsletter the states and counties that our members are currently researching. We hope that this will aid in research exchanges and tips on which resources are available and more relevant and beneficial. Please return this form by mail at the address below or bring to one of the meeting for Rick Sheldon. You can include an email address if you want to be contacted by email. We will not publish your address in the newsletter unless specified

State	County

Comments:

Name

Address

Phone

### MESA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Mesa County Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 1506  
Grand Junction, Colorado  
81502-1502

## Genealogy Seminar

### Images of the Past

featuring Jim and Paula Warren

Saturday, October 18, 2003

Whitman Educational Center

4th & Ute

### Topics

The WPA Era:

...What it created for Genealogists

Vital Records and Substitutes:

Fundamental Tools for Family History

Did You Marry Me for my Family History

Twentieth and "Twenty-First Century

Research

20 Tips in 60 Minutes

Pre-registration is required, register at the History Museum, 5th & Ute,

Grand Junction Colorado

970-242-0971

[www.wcmuseum.org](http://www.wcmuseum.org)



## Views of the Editor

(Continued from page 5)

So instantly I sent off an email in the hopes that I could contact this person from a 2+ year old posting. Her email address was no longer a valid one and searching by phone books went futile. But sometimes manna does fall from heaven. Another person read my frantic postings, contacted me and offered a copy they had of the same picture. Not only did they have this picture but others of the siblings and their children. And since they were also members of that Genealogy fraternity, I also received in exchange, work they had done on that lineage. My Wife, has been the recipient of more than one care package from total strangers who have only one thing in common with her. The search for family ancestors.

I am sure that there are many of us that can attest to joy of receiving a packet or letter filled with wonderful,

otherwise lost family "heirlooms".

Those packages of pure genealogical joy, be it pictures or data, most likely we would have never seen or even heard of, if it were not for the generosity of others. Others, that chances are, we may never see or meet.

It is an unusual thing about genealogists that we work so hard, and diligently (maybe even obsessively), to uncover every tidbit of information that we can, to give us some insight to who our ancestors were and what they were like. And we treat these nuggets like the very gold it is and yet, will freely and gladly give it to someone else, expecting nothing in return, but hoping for more gold. But why is it that the information that we seek is often supplied by those outside of our immediate family? Why is it that our family feels that that the information is better left to dust or as one lady put it "That's family business."

And here I always thought I was

"family"... Or is it that embarrassment factor, we have all found the unexpected skeleton that Uncle John did work on the weekends but it was running his still, not repairing farm machinery. One of the most revealing bits of information that I came across was the fact that one of my ancestors died from what would now be called an STD and this information was from his published obituary. I am fairly certain that current family didn't have any knowledge of this. But I'll guarantee that if they did, this would have never passed the lips of those who knew. Here's thanks to all the strangers, and in the best sense of the word, be a stranger. Dig for Gold, but gold is best appreciated by all who view it. Not just the miner who found it. Just remember where you found that piece of manna and feed everyone.

*(in the same vein be sure to read the story He Stole My Ancestors- Ethics in copyright on page 7)*

## WRITING FOR THE 'ANCESTRY DAILY NEWS,'

(Continued from page 8)

communications for the masses. Anyone from virtually anywhere may read your posting to a message board or listserve. One never knows where other relatives may live, so keep your posting clear, to the point, and as free from abbreviations and local vernacular as possible.

### SOME PEOPLE NEVER SLEEP.

Regardless of how long your computer is on and how infrequently it is off, there will always be e-mail coming in. Set yourself a time to shut down and go to sleep. Research is better done when you have some rest. What you write in the wee hours of the morning may need massive rewriting the next morning. You don't need to answer e-mail immediately, and you shouldn't expect immediate answers from others.

### READERS ARE EVERYWHERE.

I have recently learned some distant (and more importantly, some not so

distant) relatives read the "Ancestry Daily News" on a regular basis. Consequently I have to watch what I write because people who knew me when I was a toddler are actually reading what I write. Consequently, I have to rewrite the entire set of columns I had ready for July unless I want to quit going to family reunions for the next ten years. The same can be said for message boards and mailing lists.

### I DON'T HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS.

I have been asked for everything from English records (which I apparently have in my basement) to e-mail addresses from 1910. I do not have either.

### EVERYONE HAS INTERESTING ANCESTORS.

"Daily News" readers have some extremely colorful ancestors. Some of their stories make the ones I share in my columns seem mundane by comparison. Family historians locate these colorful stories in many places, but family tradition, newspaper

and court records are frequently cited as sources. So if you're missing out on all the family scandals, consider these sources.

### BUT NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO HEAR ABOUT THEM.

You may think that your ancestor's 1880 agricultural census enumeration is scintillating and mind-boggling. There is a remote chance others do not. Other family members might not be overly impressed if you mention that their (and your) third great-grandmother went through three husbands (or four if you count the two marriages to and divorces from the same man).

### THERE IS ALWAYS MORE RESEARCH TO BE DONE.

Just when I think I've written on one topic or family so much that I've pretty much maxed out the editor's patience, I learn of a new source or technique that brings a fresh research angle. Keep looking and keep searching for your

*(Continued on page 12)*



# Genealogical Standards

## Standards For Sound Genealogical Research

*Recommended by the National Genealogical Society*

Remembering always that they are engaged in a quest for truth, family history researchers consistently—

- record the source for each item of information they collect.
- test every hypothesis or theory against credible evidence, and reject those that are not supported by the evidence.
- seek original records, or reproduced images of them when there is reasonable assurance they have not been altered, as the basis for their research conclusions.
- use compilations, communications and published works, whether paper or electronic, primarily for their value as guides to locating the original records, or as contributions to the critical analysis of the evidence discussed in them.
- state something as a fact only when it is supported by convincing evidence, and identify the evidence when communicating the fact to others.
- limit with words like "probable" or "possible" any statement that is based on less than convincing evidence, and state the reasons for concluding that it is probable or possible.
- avoid misleading other researchers by either intentionally or carelessly distributing or publishing inaccurate information.
- state carefully and honestly the results of their own research, and acknowledge all use of other researchers' work.
- recognize the collegial nature of genealogical research by making their work available to others through publication, or by placing copies in appropriate libraries or repositories, and by welcoming critical comment.
- consider with open minds new evidence or the comments of others on their work and the conclusions they have reached.

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### Ancestral Markers

*(Continued from page 3)*

The church your ancestor attended is a marker. Actually, it is two markers--the name of the church and the denomination. Membership in a fraternal organization is a marker, as is society membership of any kind. In turn, the membership of the church and organization may provide a list of persons who are markers for your ancestor. Did your ancestor have a talent? You may list as separate markers "played a cornet" and "was in John Philip Sousa's band."

In your haste to find relationships that fit on a family group sheet, don't neglect the other persons found in records, such as the doctor and the informant on a death certificate, the bondsmen or the official for a marriage, and the sponsors at a baptism.

The cemetery in which your ancestor was buried is a marker. If you can identify the specific plot, that's another marker.

Your ancestor's signature or mark can be an interesting marker. Collect as many original signatures as you can, but don't neglect the facsimile signatures found in record books such as county will books

and deed books; many clerks tried to replicate unusual signatures and marks. It is useful to scan just the signatures for your markers file.

Markers related to wealth and social status (or lack thereof) may be found in probate inventories, wills, tax lists, and some censuses.

As is so often the case in good genealogical practice, collecting your ancestors' markers is about recognizing that our ancestors were people, not a collection of documents.

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## Ethics in Copyright

(Continued from page 7)

along and swallowing up their hard work. I have found that most researchers would just like to be acknowledged as the originator of the work. That's all it will take for them to share what they have compiled.

Personally, I prefer to acknowledge another researcher if I am relying on his information. When I publish a family page to the Web, I am showing the world my evaluative abilities. I am asking other researchers to come and examine what I have done so far. I am asking them to critique my research. If there is a mistake, and it is brought to my attention, I want to fix it. However, if I have overlooked a mistaken connection or date from someone else's information, I want to know that too. I want to be able to return to the person from whom I got the information and let him know that there is a discrepancy.

The bottom line in research and publishing of that research, in any format, is source citation. As good genealogists, we are supposed to cite the sources. Many of those sources will be original documents such as wills, vital records, census records. However, we also rely on published sources such as books. For some reason we are willing to cite a book, but do not cite a Web page. Publishing is publishing. The Web site is a source and should be cited, giving attribution to the other researcher who was of help to you.

Unfortunately, there will always be name gatherers. There will always be people who come upon your research, especially if you have published it to a Web site or submitted it to one of

the many compiled databases such as *Ancestral File*. They will see it and incorporate it into their research, which they will then publish themselves. You can keep your research locked up in your computer, never sharing with anyone, but in the end that will only defeat your own purpose.

As more articles such as this and the other articles about copyright in this series, as well as in other publications, continue to appear, people will begin to listen. They will begin to see what they are doing wrong. This "swallowing" of ancestors is not done maliciously. That doesn't necessarily make the hurt or feeling of betrayal any less, but I chock it up to a lack of understanding.

Recently, I received an e-mail from one woman who discovered her ancestry in one of the compiled databases that is available online. She was quite upset and wanted to know who had given permission for her tree to be published. Based on the answer, she was planning to take legal steps if necessary to get it removed. If she shared her data with someone, which she must have done for it to end up in the database, she has in essence given permission already.

As soon as you share your ancestry, perhaps in the form of a GEDCOM file, with someone else, you have opened the door for that information to show up anywhere. You have no control of the information after you share it. It is hoped that the person you shared with will cite you as the source before sharing the information, but that doesn't always happen. I will say that I have been pleased with some of the modifications in genealogy programs that now

supply a blanket source citation when importing a GEDCOM file that at least points out that the information came from a GEDCOM file, and then states the name of the file. This is certainly a step in the right direction.

Bottom line: if you don't want your entire database to appear somewhere else, then don't share your entire database with another researcher. The only other person I know who needs my entire database is my brother. All others I correspond with need only a portion of my data, the line or lines that we share. Learn to use your genealogy program so that you can create GEDCOM files of only the line that you and the other researcher are sharing. That way you should never know that feeling of dismay at discovering your entire database under someone else's name.

Ethically, the swallowing up of your database and submitting it to a compiled database or publishing it on a Web page as their own is wrong. Legally, as long as they haven't taken personal stories you wrote or photos you took, they have not breeched any copyright laws.

In the end you have to decide how you will deal with such a problem. I do not let it bother me. I share with those I have corresponded with, those I know are actively researching elsewhere besides the Internet. I have misjudged the individual, and the information appears in a compiled database I do not hold responsible the company that made the data available. I hold the person I shared with and myself as responsible. Will it keep me from sharing in the future? No. I know how important sharing is in this hobby. I will continue to share only those lines that I share with the other researcher and to a degree I expect to find that information on another site or in a compiled database later. I just hope that the work I did will be attributed to me.

National Genealogical Society

## Obit Tips.....

My family spent almost ninety years in the same city. The obituary for my great grandfather only listed his death in one paper, and listed his children in the other newspaper. I figured I was at a dead end. But then I looked at the listings the local library provided and realized there was one more paper that was published at that time, and they had it microfilmed. Sure enough, when I checked the third local paper, I found three brothers

and two sisters listed as surviving him, and one of the brothers was living in the same city. Just remember that different papers will give you different information, so check them all.

Chris Barbera  
Hubbardston, MA



## Mesa County Genealogical Society

Mesa County Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 1506  
Grand Junction, Colorado  
81502-1502

We're on the Web  
[www.gimesa.com/mcgs](http://www.gimesa.com/mcgs)

**Annual Summer Potluck Picnic**  
**August 14, 2003 6:00 pm**  
**Family History Library Outdoor**  
**Pavilion**  
**543 Melody Lane**

Room - Nov. 5th Wed.  
Conf. Room - bring lunch  
at Museum  
Refresh. Nov. 9th  
Fifield  
Don

### What I've Learned

*(Continued from page 9)*

own new techniques and sources. Family history is literally the hobby that never ends. I've had brick walls for years that have come tumbling down overnight, frequently when I least expected it. And personally, I'm hoping the new 1870 every name census index breaks down a few more.

#### WHY DO WE DO GENEALOGY?

I have had readers give me an inordinate number of reasons why they research their family history, ranging from the academic to the spiritual and from the medical emergency to simply being "interested." One workshop attendee told me her husband was always giving her grief about her doing genealogy research. He told her that after she was gone it would probably be pitched in with the trash. She retorted that the flowers and gardens he tends so carefully in the front

yard are not going to last forever either and that the kids were just as likely to dig them up and plant grass where flowers had once been. They have agreed to tolerate each other's hobbies.

#### THERE IS ALWAYS AN EXCEPTION.

Readers are always sending me exceptions to virtually everything. Laws and customs necessarily guide us through a significant part of our research. In genealogy, everyone is born and everyone dies. Everything else is up for grabs (getting married, paying taxes, having children). Keep this in mind. While people frequently do behave according to certain societal norms, there is an exception to virtually every rule and custom. Just when I think I've seen about every flaky family history story one can imagine, another one crosses my e-mail inbox. There is always that one person or family who just can't seem to color within the lines. Some can't find the lines and others do not use crayons.

**SOMEONE WILL ALWAYS DIS-  
AGREE.**

I'm frequently asked, "What do I do if cousin Gert disagrees with my research?" There will always be at least one family member who does not agree with some conclusion you have reached. Some people also do not believe the sky is blue or rain is wet. What you should do is simple. State your sources and reasoning clearly, and review your research periodically. Continue to learn about the area and the available resources. And if cousin Gert insists on believing something else and you've looked at her evidence (or lack thereof) and are still not convinced, state your case and move on.

#### REGRETS

I will end with two regrets that frequently appear in my mailbox. I could write a long list of people who regret:  
Not identifying individuals in family pictures. Not interviewing family members while they are alive.  
Please avoid adding yourself to the list!

Michael John Neill