

ROOTDIGGER

2nd Quarter: April - June 2008

The Rootdigger is a publication of the Marion County Genealogical Society, a division of the non-profit Historic Marion County/ Ocala Preservation Society. Annual membership fee is \$15.00.

IT'S ALL ABOUT FAMILY

The Great Genealogical Need

By: Leo Talbot

For those of you that are experienced genealogists and have so far weathered the storms of years of research through dusty archives, old Bibles, sweet ancient relatives with unreliable memories, cold cemeteries, civil war records and all sorts of Vital Records, and who are now in the 'nirvana' of online research...this article is for you.

Who have you introduced, of late, to this most exciting and worthwhile personal and family past-time, next to the nurturing of our immediate family of course?

May I ask respectfully, but with conviction, when was the last time you shared with somebody close to you a heart warming story about one of their direct, but deceased, ancestors: Perhaps something that they have never heard before? When did you last take a grandson or granddaughter to visit a cemetery, or an old church where they could see some old baptismal records, or to the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) and Social Security Death Records(SSDR) offices, or some other place of relevant interest?

For that matter, again with respect, when was the last time you shared with somebody, who does not get involved with what you know to be of great personal value, something of a 'testimonial' about what is going on in the earth in relation to those who are responsible for their being here in the first place???

Of the thousands that somehow do commence the pursuit of genealogy (family history), only few 'survive'. There are many reasons for this high 'mortality rate'. One of the most often quoted is, "it simply takes too much of my time". It's true! Genealogy does consume time, and lots of it. But this is more than just a search for names, dates and places; it is a search for the discovery of our own identity, and in a sense, the discovery of our nation, as we seek for those of our ancestors who left their footprints somewhere in time. Unfortunately the

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Introducing Genealogy to his granddaughter

2nd Quarter 2008

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Marion County Genealogy Society member passes away.

Flora "Flo" Reed Walter, 84, died at Estelle's Hospice House May 21, 2008. She was a native of Marion County, born in Weirsdale and moved to Belleview in 1959. She was an insurance salesperson and veteran of WW II serving in the United States Navy. Burial will be at Florida National Cemetery, Bushnell.

Special points of interest:

- Remember Genealogy is all about family
- Create interest for future generations
- Document your memories
- Pass on your skills to others



The Great Genealogical Need

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‘apprentices’ get worn out before they discover the true joy of this ‘recreation’. This should be genealogical ‘recreation’, not genealogical ‘work’.

What is needed to maintain the interest and commitment of our ‘new’ colleagues? The answer is simple: They need to find the ‘stories’ of their ancestors, not just the data. It’s the stories that will keep them coming back, back to the genealogical libraries, online facilities, the churches, the cemeteries, back to those Vital Records, back to their living ancestors, back for more. But they’ll need more data won’t they? Yes they will, because the data will help them to find the stories.

Encourage them not to get lost in those early days on all the collateral lines, dealing with cousin ‘this’, and second cousin ‘that’. The almost irresistible emotional attraction lay in the sagas of the direct ancestors; the men and women from whom they sprang.

It will help if they understand that each of us is a physical and ‘spiritual’ composite of those who have gone before. We need to encourage them to look for the stories that are behind the names, dates and places, so that they can begin to see and feel who they really are: To see the character traits in ancestors, that they recognize in themselves, otherwise, researching the Social Security Death Index (SSDI), the Social Security Death Records (SSDR), the myriad of Vital Records such as birth, death and marriage certificates, old church baptismal records and the like, old wills, probate documents and shipping lists, will simply wear them out. Rather than searching through the cemeteries for those interesting headstones, they’ll be buried under one.

It may come as a surprise to many of you, but genealogical research needs every advocate and devotee possible. Why? Because the fact is, that the more researchers there are, the more records we discover and the more relevant research we produce.

Since the first Genealogical Society was established back in 1836, more pages of research have been produced than existed in the world at that time. For history to make a contemporary contribution, whether family history or the history of communities or nations, it has to be researched, written about and indexed. It has to be made available, to be given ‘true’ meaning, by being able to be absorbed into the lives of each of us; to touch us, to motivate us, or perhaps to cause us to revile at certain practices of the past. History, and its records, cannot be allowed to lie dormant and unused.

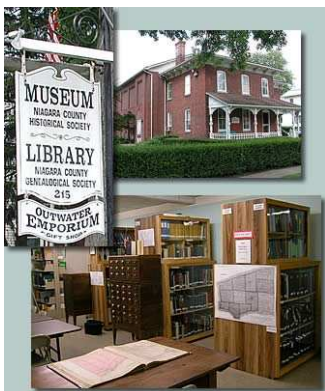
If you are one of those who has a life-time membership at the SSDI or SSDR etc, and you are known in genealogical circles from New York to San Francisco, and you are in the Guinness Book of Records for the most names submitted to the IGI, please ask yourself, notwithstanding all the data you have collected, is it not the stories about your direct ancestors that really

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What story is contained in this picture?

Since the first Genealogical Society was established back in 1836, more pages of research have been produced than existed in the world at that time.



Niagara County Historical Society Library

Grandpa's Book

By: David McLeod

It's Grandpa's 80th birthday in a few months time and, of course, he's impossible to buy for. You want to come up with something you can be sure that he doesn't already have. One thing that occurs to you from your recent visits is that it's his memories which are becoming more and more important to him.

So you're going to use these memories to make something personal for him - a gift of love. A gift which records the highlights of his life, which preserves some of his story for future generations, and which presents his Place in History.

It's not as hard as it sounds, as long as you remember a few basic rules:

Rule number one - keep it simple. You don't want to be overwhelmed by the task and find it impossible to finish.

Rule number two - this presentation is about Grandpa, not about your publishing skills.

Rule number three - don't tell Grandpa!!!

OK, so what comes first? Start with the folder or binding. A 'spring-back' or 'clip-together' folder is ideal because you can complete one page, put it in the folder, and feel you are actually getting somewhere. Remember that deadline? Whatever point you're at by the time the birthday comes around a loose leaf format can be made to look complete.

What comes next? Decide on the approach to your presentation. Choose a format which allows you to complete one section at a time, or to change the order of your pages at a later date. You really don't want someone to come up with the absolute classic photo or story at the last minute and find that there's no way you can include it.

Next, think about paper. Try two complementary types of paper - one plain for written information, the other with a border which acts like a photo frame. Alternate the written and photographic pages. If you have multiple photo pages for each written page, don't worry; the loose-leaf format allows you to mix and match.

Lastly, think about the mechanics of production for Grandpa's Place in History. Obviously you'll need access to a computer, but if you don't have a scanner or adequate photo quality printer, see what your local photo shop can do for you (or co-opt a friend).

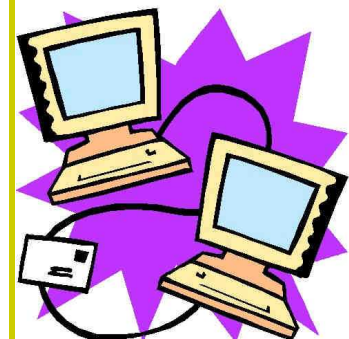
Now start writing. Begin with some of that genealogy you have spent so much time searching for. It doesn't matter if you don't have a complete history - this is not the Oxford Dictionary! Divide your information up into decades if possible. That way you don't ignore an entire section of his life. It also makes you more aware of which sections of his life about which you know very little. Now is the time to find out before it's too late.

In each of the decades of his life include the obvious major points -



Grandpa

Choose a format which allows you to complete one section at a time, or to change the order of your pages at a later date



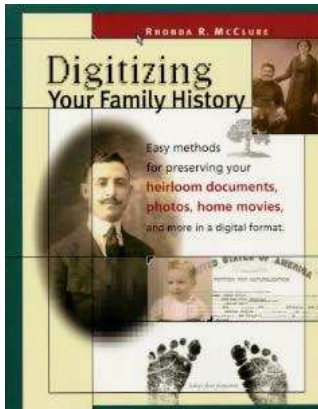
If you don't have a computer it can still be done!

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Create your Own Traditions with Family to Help Future Genealogists

By: Paul Duxbury and Kevin Cook



Create a Family History!

Ask family or friends if you can copy any original photos that you don't own.



Use current technology whenever possible.

Have you ever wished you could ask your Great-Uncle George how soldiers felt about World War I or your Great-Aunt Georgina how she weathered the Great Depression? Or perhaps you rue the loss of your Grandmother Gretel's recipe for delicious German strudel? Family traditions and lore can be completely lost in a generation or two if families do not actively take steps to preserve their history. A family history is a legacy, and preserving your legacy for your grandchildren and great-grandchildren can be an invaluable gift. You don't have to sit down and write out a laborious record of your family history, however, in order to preserve your legacy, although that would indeed be an incredible gift. Small projects and new family traditions can instill an invaluable sense of history in future generations.

If your house burned down tonight and you could only save one of your belongings, what would it be? A frequent reply to that question is "family photos." As the old saying goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Nothing is more interesting than realizing you have your grandfather's nose or your great-grandmother's eyes. Photos can become disorganized, scattered, and, in the end, meaningless, however, if you don't take steps now to compile them into some semblance of order and to share them with younger generations. Ask family or friends if you can copy any original photos that you don't own. Describe the people in the photographs, either orally or in writing. Regale your children and grandchildren with anecdotes about your summer trips to the beach or the day you caught the prize-winning fish. Placing your photos in a scrapbook is a particularly powerful way to preserve their meaning and message, and be sure to incorporate captions and other written descriptions of the pictures. Also, don't forget to include other important documents, such as birth certificates, old report cards, or original art work, poetry, or songs in the scrapbook. Even if you are not artistically inclined, the acid-free scrapbook paper and glue will preserve your photographs and memorabilia for years to come, so just slap them onto the paper as best you can. A lovingly-composed scrapbook will really become a family treasure.

Another way to capture an image is on video. On a lazy Sunday afternoon, take your home video camera and sit down with an older family member. By asking certain questions, you can mine their memories for gems of wisdom and valuable family anecdotes. You can also help steer the interview so that it is relatively chronological or comprehensive. Perhaps the interviewee may even want to prepare his answers beforehand. Ask about family residences, including physical descriptions or even a room-by-room verbal tour. Sensory descriptions are particularly interesting. Talk about ethnicity and religion and its impact on family traditions or customs. Ask family mem-

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Family Traditions

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bers about major historical events. Move the discussion from childhood friends to high school events to college, career, and romance. Perhaps you could even interview people from the past, such as old friends or current spouses, about the interviewee. Also encourage your family members to share the disappointments and struggles that they faced as well as the life lessons and wisdom that they gained. A permanent record of not only your family member's memories but also the way they looked and talked is an invaluable gift to future generations.

If you don't have a video camera, then use a tape recorder; and if you don't have a tape recorder, then use a pen and pencil to record your family history. Start a journal, and include not only thoughts and feelings but also descriptions of current events and culture. Such a record will be fascinating to your descendants, no matter how mundane it may seem in the present. There are numerous book and internet sites about journaling or writing a memoir that can help you get started.

Finally, make your family history an interactive experience for your children and grandchildren. Visit the house where you grew or the country from which your grandparents immigrated. Seeing a place first-hand will give future generations a sense of their background and roots. Permanent edifices also provide valuable clues about the economy, architecture, and culture of the time in which family members lived. In addition, make your grandmother's German strudel with your children, or teach them how to play a harmonica like their Great-Uncle George. Pass your skills and wisdoms down to them in ways they can enjoy. Such highly sensory experiences are not easily forgotten.

Article Source: <http://www.familyhistoryarticles.com>

About the Authors Paul Duxbury and Kevin Cook own www.amateur-genealogist.com and www.our-family-trees.co.uk two of the leading Genealogy Websites. In addition Paul owns a wide range of exciting websites which can be viewed at www.our-family-trees.co.uk

The Great Genealogical Need

continued

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touch you, and help to fill your heart and mind with the wonder of all that has come to you through them?

Well, if this strikes a chord with you, please, make up your mind today, that you will do something that will stimulate another person's interest? You might just add another valuable researcher, perhaps the best yet, to Genealogical research?

Article Source: <http://www.familyhistoryarticles.com>

Leo Talbot enjoys searching genealogy records such as the social security death index to build his family tree.



Get back to your roots if possible.

If you don't have a video camera, then use a tape recorder; and if you don't have a tape recorder, then use a pen and pencil to record your family history.



"How can there be a story that has no end? The story is of our family ~ it has no end."



Gramma's Rocking Chair

By: Cheryle Hoover Davis



Do you remember learning from your Grandmother?

The business failed because her husband had such a kind heart he gave food away to anyone who needed.



Barbershop

She sat, enfolded in shadows, brushing her long, dark hair. Gramma rocked gently, the rhythm of her brush matching the soft 'tap tap' of her slippers on the floor.

This was Gramma's routine for as long as I can remember. Brushing her hair while rocking in her favorite old chair. As I sat on the edge of her bed, watching her sing-song movements, I wondered if I'd ever look like that. She hardly had a gray hair, even after raising eight children during the Great Depression. Four sons in WWII, one daughter stillborn, another daughter disabled after a fall from the porch. Gramma was an amazing woman.

Born into large family herself, Gramma helped raise her brothers and sisters. Her mother was of German stock and one of the families who pioneered in the Iowa Territory before it became a state. Her father was Irish and Cherokee-Choctaw Indian. She always laughed about that combination, especially with her dark hair and eyes and long skirts, the neighbor children would tease her about being "gypsy". She'd chase them off with a broom, certainly not helping her image as that 'gypsy Indian' woman. "Gypsy" was not a nice name in those days.

Her name was Elsie. Elsie May. She married my grandfather when she was only seventeen years old, and had her first child at the tender age of eighteen. Grampa was of old German stock...his family's origins reaching back to the Switzerland Mennonites escaping religious persecution. He was twenty one when he married Elsie, and loved that woman all his life.

Elsie and her new husband started a restaurant in a small town in Iowa, near where they grew up. The business failed because her husband had such a kind heart he gave food away to anyone who needed. After joining the railroad, like his own grandfather, Grampa raised his family for thirty years on the wages of a foreman. Elsie and Eber had their job cut out for them as a parents of eight during the Depression.

Gramma knew how to cook! Everything from 'scratch' and made to fill as many hungry mouths as possible. Good, filling, old fashioned German foods...homemade noodles, steaming in a huge pot of beef broth...I'll never forget how good it was to go to Gramma's on Sunday for dinner!

Not until many years later did I realize how difficult it must have been for her to feed so many with so little.

Elsie had migraines. Oh, how this poor woman suffered, and how she could cope with eight children, only God knows.

Elsie's father, James, was a barber in town. Now, in those days, being a barber meant also pulling teeth and fixing minor injuries. James' mother, Mahala (the full blood Choctaw) was a 'medicine woman', working with the local doctor as a midwife. Everyone called her "Mahaley" and she was well respected.

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Gramma's Rocking Chair

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I wonder if Elsie ever watched her Gramma brushing her long, black hair?

Elsie's eldest daughter, Zola, was healthy and strong, and helped her mother raise all those children. Many years later, Zola told me how her mother agonized over her sons' welfare in the War. How they kept track of my father when it was reported he was missing when his ship, the U.S.S. Helena was sunk in the Kula Gulf. He came home a hero. My Gramma was a hero too.

As she sat there, in the twilight of her little bedroom, in the house she raised her family in, I admired her strong face, her gentle hands, her tiny feet tapping the floor as she rocked. By this time, her husband had passed away, her children were all grown and gone (with children of their own), and she was living alone in that big old house.

The memories of her life surrounding her, her eldest granddaughter watching her, silently, sharing a moment neither would forget.

As I looked around the room, I saw the pillow my father had sent her while onboard the U.S.S. Helena. Silk, with fringe and tassels, as only a war era souvenir pillow could be. "The U.S.S. Helena" proudly printed on the front, and my father's signature: "To My Mother, with Love". The handwriting was typical of a seventeen year old, in its happy scrawl. This was just before Pearl Harbor. Little did either of them know, in a few short weeks, the beginning of a long series of sea battles would commence.

I saw the picture of Grampa on the wall. The old oak frame with its well cared for patina, surrounding his photo. He was twenty one in that picture, and I could see why my Gramma loved him so. Bright blue eyes, handsome, and a kindness that one could detect in that gentle face. They made a beautiful couple.

There, on her dresser top, sitting on a hand-crocheted doily, were her toiletries. An old atomizer for the perfume she rarely wore. A small pin tray for her hair pins when she let that long hair down at night. She told me it was a "Jenny Lynd" tray, made of milk glass. An old gilt-framed hand mirror, small scissors, a button off her mother's dress.

That old rocking chair: Grampa made it for her when their first child was born. She suckled them all, rocked them to sleep, comforted the crying....all in that big old chair.

Gramma's long gone now. Her big old chair sits in her eldest grandson's home.

I'll never forget Gramma's Rocking Chair and the life she lived in it.

Article Source: <http://www.familyhistoryarticles.com>

Genealogy is Cheryle Hoover Davis' passion and her blog "Surnames and Her-names" can be found at: surnamesandher-names.blogspot.com/ and more at eHow: www.eshow.com/members/Ceile.html



WWII Soldier

*That old rocking chair:
Grampa made it for her
when their first child was
born.*



Remember gramma's hand made doilies?



**Marion County
Genealogical Society**

Mission Statement

The Marion County Genealogical Society is dedicated to creating and promoting an interest in genealogy, focusing on research in Marion County, Florida and in supporting members in their research.

2nd Quarter: April-
June 2008

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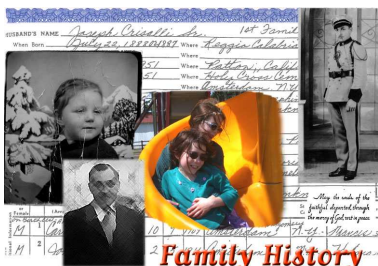
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**We're on the web:
Mariongenealogy.tripod.com**

Grandpa's Book

continued



Cover page of a family history book.
Remember, it's all about family!!!!

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birth, school, work, marriage, children, grandchildren. But decide whether you want to include the external events in your main text, or whether to include them as separate lists (this gives you a chance to get another page completed and in the binder). If you decide to separate the external events from the main story, make sure you personalize them (include his football team's successes).

Maybe you can't get a comprehensive picture of his whole life, in particular his early days. Perhaps he's the last of his generation and the information is simply not available. If that's the case then you can take a different but equally effective approach.

Instead of doing a chronological presentation, collate his book as a series of portraits. Each friend or relative who provides you with a story about Grandpa becomes part of that particular portrait. It doesn't matter if each portrait covers the same topics, because each person will have their own particular memories. That way you present a series of portraits which reflect on how their lives intertwine with Grandpa's and his with theirs.

Finish Grandpa's book with a collage of photos of those who surround him now – his cat may even be as much a part of his family now as you are, so don't forget the "real family".

Article Source: <http://www.familyhistoryarticles.com>

David McLeod and his wife have had bursts of enthusiasm over many years chasing genealogical information. You can see more of Grandpa's book on their website www.GeneFrog.com.