



ROOTS & BRANCHES

Wetaskiwin Branch

Alberta Genealogical Society

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JANUARY 2020

VOL. 18. #1

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ROOTS & BRANCHES

is published three times a year
by and for the members of
Wetaskiwin Branch of AGS.
It is emailed to members and
it is posted on our website.

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BRANCH MEETINGS

3rd Tuesday of the month,
except July, Aug & Dec
7:00 pm at LDS CHURCH

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

Alice Hoyle

Another new year, another decade! I'm sure all of you remember the stress and worry associated with the turn of the century, 20 years ago. Would all the computer systems stop functioning? Would all the electrical systems short out and would we be without power until someone figured out how to rectify the problem that the year 2000 created?

These were all concerns that our ancestors would have chalked up to Science Fiction. Imagine their lives in a world without electricity, telephones, cars and trucks, and of course – technology. It was a simpler time but one has to wonder: what would we do if suddenly all the technology we take for granted were to be dismantled or rendered useless because of an asteroid or perhaps a world altering event that is man-made.

I am currently reading a book that has made me think: in Society's rush to have more of everything, less contact with neighbours and friends, more individualism but less community involvement – are we better off than our

EXECUTIVE

President: Alice Hoyle

Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Lorraine McKay

Treasurer: Leroy Koop

BRANCH LIBRARY

At City of Wetaskiwin Archives

4904 – 51 Street

Tues. Wed. Thur.

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

COMMITTEES

- **Newsletter**

Sharon Aney
sharonaney@gmail.com

- **Library**

Robin Sheehan

- **Webmasters**

Leroy Koop
Lyn Meehan

- **Volunteer Research**

Alice Hoyle

Leroy Koop

- **Membership**

Leroy Koop

- **Programs**

Claudia Malloch

- **Publicity**

Alice Hoyle

- **Historian**

Rosella Plaquin

- **Youth**

Patti Caputo

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FAMILY DISCOVERY CENTER

5410 – 36 Avenue, Wetaskiwin

Wednesdays:

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

& 6:15 – 8:15 pm

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President's Ponderings, continued

ancestors? This book quotes research that indicates just joining a "group or Society" lessens your chances of coming down with cancer and reduces the stress in your life. Sounds good, doesn't it? ☺

I hope that your membership in the Wetaskiwin Branch of AGS has helped you in ways that perhaps many of us do not realize. If there is any way that we can be of assistance to you, please contact either myself or Lee Koop our Membership Chairperson. The branch members are always willing and eager to help each other out. We don't know what you would like help with unless you tell us.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy New Year. Hopefully the New Year will bring some meaningful genealogical discoveries into your lives.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

EDITOR'S CORNER

Sharon Aney

Happy New Year!! Russ and I wish you all the best in 2020... health, peace and happiness.

Have you been making resolutions to save the Christmas letters that you send and those that you receive? Allowing for the propaganda included, ☺ they will be a reminder of the more important events in the family, and a resource for your memoir or family history.

I really enjoy attending our branch meetings. They are interesting and enjoyable from several viewpoints: friendship, information, education, and sociability. Some of us have been together for the 20 years of our Branch's existence!

I've noticed that there are more "silver threads among the gold". At our age discussions with friends often turn to plans for moving to smaller accommodations, and to estate planning.

We genealogists have another challenge to face when contemplating and planning how to dispose of our estates.... What will happen to the research that we have done and family history that we have accumulated over the years?

I have not often reprinted articles by professional genealogists, but I believe that the one by **Cheri Daniels**, "**Donating Your Research**" on page 10, deals with important issues that we must consider.

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## **GENFAIR 2020 – APRIL 25** **WETASKIWIN SENIORS CENTRE** **9:00 am – 4:00 pm**

### **OUR BRANCH IS 20 YEARS OLD!**

In the fall of 2000 several people responded to an ad in our local paper and welcomed the idea of joining together to learn how, and to help each other to research our family histories. We called upon members of the Alberta Genealogical Society for advice and assistance. On October 4 a letter was written to AGS asking that we be accepted as the Wetaskiwin Branch.

One might wonder why we are celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary 10 months early! "Genfair 2020" seemed to be an ideal opportunity to "put on a party" and host members from the other branches. April 25 is the date.

And so.... we encourage all of our members to take part in this genealogical celebration.

**BRINGING THE PAST  
INTO THE PRESENT  
FOR THE FUTURE**



There is extensive information on our website. Registration procedures have been developed and the registration form will soon be on the website as well.

We have a line-up of experienced speakers & interesting topics:

**Dr. Karen Aberle** — Wetaskiwin & District Heritage Museum

**"What's in a Name?"** Discover how this region of Canada became settled and why Wetaskiwin was known as "Siding 16"

**Rene Georgopolis**, Executive Director, Archives Society of Alberta  
**Caring for personal and Family Documents**

She discusses which personal and family papers to keep and not keep and how to store those items so they last a long time.

**Sharon Aney**, Wetaskiwin Branch Editor of "Roots & Branches"

**Do You Have a Plan?** An interactive discussion on a topic of importance to all genealogists and family historians.

**Sandi Ratch** Historical Archaeologist. She will discuss three primary research tactics used to unravel a mystery in old family postcards.

**Claudia Malloch**, Wetaskiwin Branch Member

**The Legacy You Leave** How can we ensure that family members are aware of our (and their) family history?

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VOLUNTEER RESEARCH REPORTS

SHARON ANEY

Lapaire

I was asked by a friend to "do" the genealogy on the paternal side of her family, which was from Switzerland. She brought me the information that she had. It turned out that the genealogy had already been done, back to 1752, by a family member, using archives in Switzerland. It was just recorded in a very inefficient way, and in French. I translated the report, downloaded a free Legacy family tree program, reentered the data, and printed out various reports that she could now understand.

Mondor

I could not resist the opportunity to delve into her maternal side, as it appeared they might have come from Quebec. They did. I was able to access birth, marriage and death data online at www.nosorigines.qc.ca and traced almost all lines to immigration from France to New France in the 1600s. www.fichierorigine provided data on 13 persons from earlier French sources.

6 women were Filles du Roi, and I was able to provide biographical information on them. At least 1 male was a noted explorer of the day. 2 gruesome murders were reported, and 1 woman was fined 100 pounds for selling brandy to the natives... plus the proceeds of her sales! My friend was delighted to receive her family tree.

LEE KOOP

Re: *The Pedigree of a Book* - published in 2016

I was contacted again through our website by Joan K. from Kelowna, BC about the Arnold album. Joan was looking for any information on Jane (Leeson) Arnold who owned the album. Joan is a Leeson and she is Jane's 1st cousin twice removed i.e.

Joan's great grandfather, James Leeson, was the brother to Welburn Leeson, the father of Jane. Got it?

I sent Joan write-ups in local history books about Jane; her obituary; a copy of her death registration; information from AGS Surname Database; a photo of the renovated house in Wetaskiwin where the album was found; John and Jane Arnold's timeline; spread sheets on Arnold/Leeson families; and, a copy of John Arnold's will. I also sent Joan digital copies of all 64 photos in the album.

Joan is in contact with a great granddaughter of William, Jane's brother. Joan is confident that she will be able to find a home for this album.

Re: Henry & Delia Bergey

Chuck B. from Philadelphia contacted me via email. He is in the process of updating the Bergey family history book published in 1924. He discovered that the family of Henry and Delia Bergey emigrated from the USA to Alberta in 1907. Chuck uses Ancestry exclusively to do his research. He was wondering if I would be able to assist in researching this family in Alberta.

From the Provincial Archives of Alberta website I found several death and several marriage indexes for family members. I forwarded these to Chuck with instructions as to how to order the certificates online.

I had a fair number of hits from the AGS Surname Database. I tracked one of Henry and Delia's daughter, Lena Lainchbury and her family, to Vernon, BC. With the help of British Columbia Cemetery Finding Aid, I found Lena's daughter, Evelyn, and her husband, Leslie Griffiths. The Griffiths' obituaries were attached to the Find-a-Grave records. These obituaries included the names of the next 2 generations.

I next checked 411 (phone directory online) for the surnames of Bergey & Lainchbury in

British Columbia and Alberta, and Griffiths in British Columbia. I found 5 to 7 in each group and some in each group had addresses.

I suggested that Chuck should go "old school" and write letters to these addresses to try and find a genealogist to aid in the research of Henry and Delia Bergey in Alberta.

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## **MEETING PROGRAMS**

### **OCTOBER, 2019**

**"ESCAPE ROOM"** Patti Caputo,  
Our Youth Co-ordinator challenged our members with the activity she had put on as this year's activity for Youth at the Wetaskiwin Public Library. She set up the same scenario for us in 2 rooms and 2 groups of us vied to solve the genealogical problem within 30 minutes. It was an exercise in problem solving and co-operation. See Page 5 for the Youth Activity report. Ice cream & cookies followed..... an educational and a fun evening.

### **NOVEMBER, 2019**

**Preserving and Sharing family history in Fun and Modern Ways** with Olivia Jewell is a webinar sharing internet sites and programs that allow you to preserve and share your family history in diverse ways, some of which will probably work for you. Olivia has a blog on which she also shares family history information including the slides from the webinar at [www.LivsTreeHouse.blogspot.com](http://www.LivsTreeHouse.blogspot.com). They are just a very short way down the page and show all the programs she discussed. Check them out; they offer a lot of great choices.

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SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT ARCHIVES

- Archives are important because they provide evidence of activities and tell us

more about individuals and institutions. They tell stories. They also increase our sense of identity and understanding of cultures. They can even ensure justice.

- Records weren't usually created for the purpose of historical research so they often provide a less biased account of events than secondary sources.
- Archives are places of knowledge, memory, nourishment, and power. Archives at once protect and preserve records; legitimize and sanctify certain documents while negating and destroying others; and provide access to selected sources while controlling the researchers and conditions under which they may examine the archival record.
- George Orwell recognized that archives represent power. In his novel Nineteen Eighty-Four, Orwell declared: Who controls the past, controls the future; who controls the present, controls the past. Past events, it is argued, have no objective existence, but survive only in written records and in human memories. The past is whatever the records and the memories agree upon.
- People preserve their heritage to maintain and reinforce its cultural identity. It's, as a matter of fact, a question of identity, local, regional or national identity.
- For most people, history starts with simply learning about their family or their community. A concerted effort to preserve our heritage is a vital link to our cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, and economic legacies — all of the things that quite literally make us who we are.

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# GENEALOGY FOR YOUTH ESCAPE ROOM

# Patty Caputo

This year, for our branch's Genealogy for Youth program, I wanted to do something a little outside the box. I had recently been to an Escape Room with some of my family members, where we had a great time "Escaping from a nuclear explosion at a Nuclear Power Station". Afterwards, I thought to myself, and then later, aloud to the family, "Wouldn't it be fun to build a Family History Escape Room?"

They all agreed that it would be fun to PARTICIPATE in one, but only Jason Dick, my grandson, thought it might be fun to BUILD one. With that, we set out researching Escape Rooms on the internet. There are actually a lot of websites dedicated to creating and building your own. Who knew? We spent many hours over the summer researching, and then sharing ideas back and forth. We made a wish list of all the puzzles we wanted in our room, some of them a bit beyond our capabilities and price range, and finally settled on just the right ones.

About this time, as I was looking at some posts on a Family History Facebook group I belong to, I saw a post about a Family History themed Escape Room that was done in New Zealand by a lady named Lyn McOnie. I contacted her for details. She quickly responded by email, with attachments for all of the photos and documents she used to build hers, and permission to use them. I was thrilled! What a time saver to not have to find photos and documents from my own tree to create a room.


I set up a practice run, for my family, using her photos, documents, and the instructions Lyn sent for setting up the room. I'm glad I did! My family had some difficulty solving the room as there were some documents

missing. But I made some notes, including how to make it more challenging, more like a professional Escape room, and more Fun!



We worked with the Wetaskiwin Public Library to secure a date on which the activity would be open to the young people in the community.

The next few weeks were spent finding different kinds of locks and locking boxes (or creating them), making puzzles, ordering safes, black light markers and flashlights, etc. and doing practice runs.



The day finally arrived (October 12) to take it to the library. We had enough

supplies to build two rooms. They were designed to be Nana Vera's dining room.

The object of the room was to find all of the photos and place them on the family tree



before Nana Vera woke up from her nap in 30 minutes.

The photos and supporting documents were hidden around the room, locked in various boxes, with clues to help find them.

Twelve youth, ages 12-17 attended. There was a girl's team and a boy's team. The girls finished their tree with 5 minutes to spare, while the boys got hung up looking for one elusive photo, and didn't finish before the 30 minute deadline.

Since that Saturday in October, we have shared the Escape Room experience with several others.



At the October meeting of our AGS branch (11 participants). Claudia & Mavis below.



And again the following week at the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Family History Centre, located in Wetaskiwin.

We had 32 participants: 11 adults & 21 youth.



All participants were rewarded with cookies and ice cream. Several of the participants shared positive feedback, and said they would be glad to participate in the "next one".



There was not enough time to accommodate all those who wanted to try the Escape Room, so I will make it available through the Family History Library again!

Overall, I'm very pleased with the activity. I think it would be a great Family Reunion game as well, using our own photos and documents.

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*The older I get,
the earlier it gets late.*

LINKING THE PAST (1904) TO THE PRESENT (2019)

Sharon Aney



In 1904 my husband's great aunt & her husband, (Lucille & Alfred Clas) built a summer home on Lake Oconomowoc, near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She proudly sent postal cards of pictures with descriptions of their new home, named "Beaux Rivages", (Beautiful Shores) to her brother in Saskatchewan. These have ended up in our possession, and we have treasured them as a rare link to a distant relative.

In 2019, as we planned a driving vacation which would take us into Wisconsin, I suggested that we try to look up this now 115 year old house. Needing an address, I did a Google search for "historic homes" at Lake Oconomowoc. A real estate listing from 2012 came up. Now we had an address.



Alfred Clas a leading Milwaukee architect of the day, is shown here at work in the "boat house".

The next idea was to find out whether the current owner might have an interest in receiving these old pictures of their newly constructed house. I had already scanned and used them in family stories, and could part with them. I wrote and mailed (old technology) a letter to "Owner" at the address, explaining that we had these pictures, how we came to own them, that we would be on vacation in the area in July. Would they be interested in allowing us to visit?

The response was enthusiastically positive. On a day in July 2019 we followed instructions of "Roda" (our navigation device) along the winding roads of Wisconsin, and came to the gate of Beaux Rivages. The name is apt because of its situation – lakefront on a lovely lake which is private to the owners of properties on it.



The current owner, Aimee H. showed us through the main floor and lakeside yard. She was pleased to tell us that, although some additions had been made to what they use as their summer house at the lake, much of the house was still original, including the electrical wiring and concrete patios, foundations & walkways, etc. (You might note the rose arbor on the right hand of this pic is the same on the first picture).

The antique wiring causes basement lights to flicker, the children to claim that the house is haunted and electricians to avoid it like the plague. For safety's sake there are many fire and smoke detectors around. Concrete foundations and patios are crumbling. Thus they are planning to demolish and replace the house.

As she compared the pictures with her home she pointed out some original details. Aimee was



thrilled to notice that the railing of the upper gallery was the same as in 1904, (although tapestries were hung to cover some of it), and her husband pointed out that the smoke stain on the fireplace was also 115 years old.



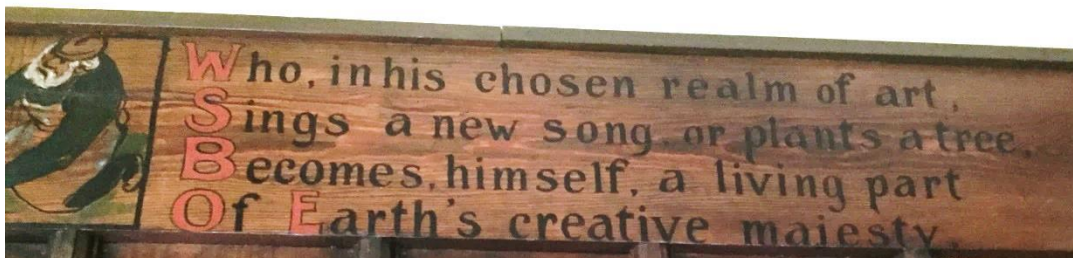
We went out to explore the boat house, now used to shelter several expensive watercraft, and were delighted to note that the fireplace where Mr. Clas had worked (see the picture on previous page) was still intact, although its façade was modernized a bit.



Aimee was getting more excited at the many original details, and she thought that they could, and should, incorporate as many of them as possible in their new house.

One of the things that struck me was a stencil on the wall. It seems to speak of the creative spirit of Alfred Clas, the architect.

*"Who, in his chosen realm of art Sings a new song or plants a tree
Becomes himself a living part Of Earth's creative Majesty"*



It was heart warming to connect our family's legendary house with its current owners. We are satisfied that the pictures from 1904 are now, in 2019, "at home" at Beaux Rivages.

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## Donating Your Research

**Cheri Daniels,  
MSLS**

Your friendly,  
neighborhood,

Genealogy Librarian – Author, Speaker,  
and Genealogist with 25+ years of research  
experience. Head of Reference Services at  
the Kentucky Historical Society, Editor of  
Kentucky Ancestors Online.

PUBLISHED ON [February 25, 2018](#)

*(Note: in reprinting this article I  
have taken the liberty of “bolding”  
some sentences that I feel are  
really worth paying attention to.  
Sharon)*

The information I am about to share will  
naturally be a tad controversial. But after  
years of watching genealogy donations come  
into a state institution, the severity of this  
issue has been weighing heavily on my heart  
for quite a while.

**For anyone planning to donate their  
genealogy research to an organization  
or even to a capable family member,  
you NEED to read this post with an  
open mind and a willingness to take  
precautions.**

### **Repeated Scenario:**

Aunt Matilda, the family genealogist, has  
passed away. Everyone loved hearing her  
stories at the family reunion, or seeing the  
charts she would bring along, but her small  
pieces of genealogy that she shared with the  
family were the result of decades of research  
– with 20+ boxes and 6+ file cabinets to  
prove it. Aunt Matilda was very organized,  
and loved displaying her binders of family  
research – they were an impressive site –

she even shared some of these brag images  
with her favorite genealogy Facebook group!

But Aunt Matilda is gone – and her family  
has been tasked with finding a new home for  
this valuable truckload of genealogy. It's  
precious. It's priceless. But who's going to  
take care of it as it should be cared for? For  
all eternity!!!???

### **Usually one of four things happens in a case like this:**

1. The family passes on the collection to  
another willing family member who will  
lovingly continue Matilda's work, and care  
for the collection as we all envision.
2. A willing family member volunteers to take  
the collection, in the hopes of continuing  
Matilda's work, and it goes in a basement or  
attic until they retire and can devote  
sufficient time to its care. However, if this  
next family member dies before taking on  
the work, the collection will need to find  
another home.
3. No one in the family wants this, but realizes  
its value and donates it to a non-profit  
organization of their choice: Library,  
historical society, local museum,  
genealogical society, etc.
4. The family members in charge of Matilda's  
estate have no clue about the value of her  
genealogical research and toss the many  
files of research into a dumpster! Oh, the  
horror!

### **Considering scenario #3:**

This is the impetus of this post – and the  
hardest to take.

Donating the collection to a non-profit  
organization is a smart move for long term  
preservation and future accessibility by  
descendants from multiple branches. I  
encourage this with every fiber of my being!

### **But...**

A problem is fast arising – at an alarming  
rate: Collection size in relation to  
space availability. I work for one of the  
lucky ones. We have a very large, modern

facility, built to handle incoming donations of all size – for decades to come. Despite our current comfortable space capacity, it will not last forever. For those who are not so lucky, space is at an even greater premium.

Our current collecting practices had to move to a smarter model over a decade ago because at the current rate we were taking things in, we were going to run out of space quickly. **So, we adopted a collecting policy** – related directly to our mission and mandate from the state.

Every item coming into our facility has to be voted upon by a Collections Committee. We base our voting upon historical significance, **condition** (mold and bugs are pretty quick declines unless there is something stellar inside that warrants conservation.), **uniqueness** (do we already have 25 of these or is this only 1 of a few?) and **subject need**. We implemented these policies to not only ensure responsible stewardship, but to encourage collecting in a broader spectrum – we want our collections to cover all subjects and time periods.

**For incoming genealogy collections the questions are getting harder and harder** because the sizes of the collections being dropped off are getting larger and larger....and with much greater frequency.

To analyse a genealogy collection for inclusion, we look at the contents to the best of our ability. This is not a full scale archival processing which would come after acceptance. This is a spot review of folders and boxes.

What are we finding in this collection – and should we take it?

**Is there original family material inside?** If we find original family photos, correspondence, sourced research reports, bible records, diaries, ephemera, etc.....that's a home run.

We LOVE these components because they are unique, tell a story, and in many cases, are fragile. Our facility can preserve them, and make the collection accessible to researchers and many future family members.

But more often than not, these collections contain a large photocopy paper collection – with very little to nil original family elements. For instance – print outs from websites such as: Findagrave, Ancestry, RootsWeb, message boards (Genforum), etc. E-mail correspondence can be valuable as cousins collaborate their research, but I've seen binders devoted to one family, which includes complete copies of each stage of the e-mail chain – from the first e-mail, followed by each reply, until the final response – repeating the chain as it grew – filling up half of the binder!

Many binders, folders, or boxes contain printouts of census images, wills, death certificates, etc. collected by the genealogist along the way.

While these are valuable to your research....I'm going to be blunt:

***This is why we practice responsible and thorough citation methods!***

You will never see a National Genealogical Society Quarterly article that contains copies of all of the documentation necessary for a proof argument. Why? Because it would take up too much space! **Citation guidelines** were adopted in the history and genealogy professions as tools to defend our research conclusions. We have to defend them with primary information – **but through citations, not actual copies of the supporting documentation.**

Many of you are rolling your eyes right now – “Duh – of course we cite our sources! Besides, who has time to complete the research in a professional report with citations?! All of our branches???! We are never finished! This is why we pass on the

research, hoping someone else will complete the work!”

Point taken – but I’m here to pour a bucket of cold water over your head: Which would you rather have, a research report with full citations donated to a non-profit collection that your family can access for generations – **OR – would you rather see your decades of hard work tossed into the dumpster?**

Here’s the bigger problem that accompanies the material I described. Even though we, as archivists, are trying to evaluate an incoming collection as to its research value and historical/genealogical importance, there is always a possibility that we could get the assessment wrong. Not overall, mind you, **but the sheer volume of print outs from the genealogy web could obscure the original family elements that might be lurking inside.** And remember, we’re not talking about assessing a binder of material....we’re talking about assessing 6-20+ boxes of binders or folders....within a half hour or so, to make a donation recommendation.

#### **Passing the Ball to your Court:**

So, what can you do to ensure your collection is handled appropriately to survive in the long term?

**It is MANDATORY that you reduce the genealogy collection footprint. Here are some ways to do this.**

1. **Begin to prioritize.** *Most genealogy organizational how-to articles will help you organize your research into colour coded folders, binders, boxes, cabinets, etc. Forget that for now. Your prioritization should begin with the most important pieces of your family collection.* If you walked into the office/closet during a natural disaster and had to pick one box to take with you, what would it be? If you can’t lay your hands on one to two boxes of original family material

or research, you’ve already lost the estate battle.

2. One way to reduce, as I mentioned earlier, is through **citing your sources without keeping a photocopy of the original.** I know that makes you nervous, but it’s the goal we should all be striving for in our research. **Caveat:** The copies I am referring to include items that can be easily pulled up via Family Search or Ancestry, Internet Archive, or Photocopies from other books that are readily available, etc. **If you have a photocopy of a record that has never been digitized, and it took a trip to the courthouse to retrieve, by all means, keep that copy. The same goes with family group sheets and family Bible record copies from relatives – these are not things you can cite and find anywhere else (usually) – so retention is a must.**
3. **Photo albums** are their own beast: consider decreasing the amount by eliminating images taken of landscapes while on vacation, blurry images, and duplicate images – **pick the best – eliminate the rest** (of these photo categories).
4. **Ephemera** – While I’m a big fan of ephemera, there should be a limit on what you keep. Travel brochures, postcards with little to no family info, restaurant napkins, matchbooks, receipts, cancelled checks, should all be reduced or eliminated unless there is a great story or sentimentality to the item. If you do have a large ephemera collection tied to places over the years, consider pulling those out and donating to an appropriate institution on the collection’s own merit.
5. Always **separate publications away from your genealogy collection.** Sure, they can be in the same area during your research years, but separate them out during the organizational process. Someday, these can be donated to local libraries, or discarded if there are multitudes of copies already out there – but don’t muddy your genealogy waters with outside, mass produced publications.



### A Few Last Pieces of Advice:

There are a few other things you can do to ensure your family history survives, from housing the items, to labelling photographs, to estate planning.

1. Once you have prioritized the most important sections of your collection, go through them with a fine toothed comb of analysis. **Label** all of the photos. Re-house the important documents and photos into **archival safe** folders and boxes (this is also a nice way to differentiate between the important and less important segments).
2. For each box of documents related to a surname or family, write a **research report** that fits into the first folder – serving as a family introduction to what’s inside and where this collection fits into the family history. This is your opportunity to use the citations I mentioned earlier – but in smaller reports that do not seem as daunting. Include photos of heirlooms in the report to connect them in family context. You can keep these electronically active as you research, updating them periodically, and placing an updated version of the report in the file every year or 6 months depending on the research activity for that branch.
3. Think about the odds of the entire collection surviving – and then explore ways of **sharing copies of the history**. The more copies that exist out there, the better the chance of connecting to future researchers: Making a photo book history through the many self publishers out there. These books come in slick professional looking products that your family will love to pass on as important keepsakes. Also, if you don’t plan on donating the entire collection to an organization, make copies of the research reports or photo books you wrote and donate to local libraries and museums – this allows them to survive on file for researchers.
4. Do you want to donate the collection you just put together? Consider getting **advice from a local professional**. Contact the museum/library of your choice and ask to consult with an archivist about your

genealogy collection. They can advise you on best practices, and whether they would be interested in obtaining the collection – if you already know that they wouldn’t be interested, or wouldn’t make a great fit, shop around for a place that does, and then consider estate planning to make the donation a legal agreement. Also, don’t be afraid to ask them about their collection space and future collecting policies – as well as staffing levels – as this affects processing time and the future access of your collection.

5. But...you have a different scenario: your research is well sourced, not bulky, but stored neatly as a **digital file on your PC or in the cloud**. You’ve used a wonderful genealogy software that allows your files to be shared with multiple family members. That’s great! But what happens when the software you are using upgrades after you are gone – and the file can no longer be read – save as a gedcom?
6. Since we cannot see the advanced technological environment coming along, it’s a **safe bet to store your reports in multiple formats**, including printed reports, and make sure you keep up with best practices of data migration.

### Conclusion and a Last Word of Caution:

I am NOT suggesting that you have to reduce your collection to one box or binder. In some cases, that is not possible – in others, that isn’t practical. However, when we archivists process collections, we are allowed to discard elements that do not fit the collection – categorized as “processing discards” = superfluous papers with duplicate information, blank sheets, commercial (widely published) brochures/publications, damaged elements, etc.

Knowing this, you may be tempted to dismiss my entire post – after all, an archivist can process my collection as they see fit after I’m gone.

Really? Do you really want the reduction filter to come through someone who does not know your family and related collection?

**NO** – you want to retain that power and prepare to donate a unique and useful research collection.

Everyone thinks their genealogical research will be valued and preserved for future generations. **However, unless we are proactive in ensuring its survival, it may not last past our generation.**

I understand the need to keep all of our research on hand while we work, but we must be more organized in the research, keep clear goals in mind for each branch, and then wrap up our work with reports – on a periodic basis.

Just remember, reports can be amended in the future – but lost genealogy is an irreversible tragedy we all want to avoid!

I hope this makes everyone think about what I consider to be an emergency epidemic – one that I face every week. Please take this advice to heart – it is well intended and shared in genealogy love.

Happy Organizing

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*No matter how much
you push the envelope,
it'll still be stationery.*



*I changed my iPhone's
name to Titanic.
It's syncing now.*

CELEBRATE



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