



Genealogy: Everybody's Doing it! (or: What's in it for Me?)



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Genealogy = names, dates, places
Family History = people, stories, interests, events, activities, traditions, etc.

Getting started:

Work from the known to the unknown

Standard charts:

Pedigree chart and Family Group sheets

Planning the research:

Decide whether you want to use paper or electronic records – which will work best for you;
consider the future, ease of handling, ease of sharing information, cost, etc.

Determine your budget for research.

Make list of people to interview and set up appointments.

Interview hints:

Plan your interview questions in advance

Bring your paperwork with you so the interviewee can see what information you already have

Use a tape, digital, or video recorder (with sufficient battery strength & memory)

Let the person tell stories – these provide clues and also put flesh on the bones of your ancestor

Do not ask inappropriate/intrusive questions

Be courteous to the interviewee

Send a Thank You note afterwards and provide the interviewee with copies of the family group sheets you prepare

Sources for information:

Internet sites (see end of this handout)

Home sources – Letters, cards, bibles, diaries, school records, newspaper clippings, etc.

Church records, government documents

On-site research (cemeteries, libraries, genealogical/historical societies, etc.)

Types of sources:

Primary (original) records –

Birth certificates
Death registration (for death info)
Christening records
Marriage certificates
Military records
Probate & other court records
Naturalization records
Immigration records

Secondary (other) records –

Death certificates (for non-death info)
Family Bibles
Cemetery records/headstones
City directories and local histories
Census records
Newspaper articles
Compiled family books/websites
Family letters and diaries/journals

- The Corona Genealogical Society meets every 1st Monday evening, 6-7:45pm, in the Martinez Community Room, Corona Public Library, 650 S. Main St. If the 1st Monday falls on a holiday, meeting will be moved to 2nd Monday.
- The Society hosts free classes for the public every Tuesday afternoon, 12:30-1:45 in the Computer Learning Center at the Corona Public Library (Dark on holidays & month of December)
- For up-to-date information on programs & speakers for both meetings & classes, check our website: <https://CoronaGenSoc.org> or email: CoronaGeneaSoc@gmail.com or visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CoronaGS>

Document Documents

Proper documentation of your sources is imperative: it allows you to locate the reference again and it shows that your information came from an appropriate source.

Wrong: “death certificate”

Right: “Wisconsin. Department of Health – Bureau of Vital Statistics, *Death Registration (State Level)*, Reg. No. 2354P, 5 Mar 1981. Notarized copy of original dated 31 May 1922, held in 2022 by Jean Wilcox Hibben (Riverside County, California).”

BRICK & MORTAR HELP (subscription website access, in-person assistance, more):

Corona Public Library, 650 S. Main St., 951-736-2384 (Ancestry.com, Tues. classes)

<https://www.coronaca.gov/government/departments/library>

Family History Centers (FHCs) or FamilySearch Centers:

In Corona: https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Corona_California_FamilySearch_Center

1123 S. Lincoln (across from Corona High School) (check online for hours); 951-735-2619

National Archives & Records Administration (NARA), <https://www.archives.gov/riverside>

Pacific Region, Riverside County, 23123 Cajalco Rd. (Perris), off I-215 fwy 951-956-2000

Just a VERY FEW helpful websites:

<https://FamilySearch.org> (for documents, trees, catalog, and video & blog/wiki instructions)

<https://linkpendium.com> (for subject-listed links on state and county level – some for pay)

<https://USGenWeb.com> (links to state and county sites, privately operated)

<https://CyndisList.com> (for links to thousands of genealogy-focused websites)

<https://Ancestry.com> (subscription, free access at FHCs, NARA, & some libraries, incl. Corona)

<https://fold3.com> (subscription – free access at FHCs, NARA, & some libraries)

<https://GenealogyBank.com> (subscription – great source for newspapers)

<https://newspapers.com> (subscription – one of MANY websites that features newspapers)

<https://familytreewebinars.com/> (subscription – instructional videos on a variety of topics)

Using Federal census records (FamilySearch.org, Ancestry.com, & others):

- Begun in 1790, taken every 10 years, but data varies by year
- 1850, first listing of every household member; occupations, ages, & general place of birth
- 1870 added if married within the year, if parents were foreign born
- 1880 also gives person's relationship to head of household; month of birth, if born within past year; parents' birthplaces
- 1890 census was destroyed, for the most part
- 1900 census gives address, month & year of birth, immigration year, number of years married, how many children the mother had & how many are living, birthplaces of parents
- 1910 census gives number of years in current marriage, year of naturalization, but not month & year of birth
- 1920 census gives a bit less than 1910 & 1900
- 1930 census gives age at first marriage, veteran status
- 1940 census gives birthplace of listed individuals only (except for the rare 5%), but adds residence location for 1935. Much occupation and income data
- 1950 census gives much information about occupation, work, earnings, etc. Some supplemental questions but much of what was learned from previous canvassing

Cautions & Considerations:

- 1) Don't believe everything you read – some websites, family history books, etc. are pure fiction.
- 2) Don't spend money on research, documents, pay websites, etc. without checking other options (many resources are available for free or for a minimal charge – check on availability of deeds, wills, vital records, etc. on microfilm or digitized at Familysearch.org & "free weeks" at subscription sites).
- 3) Work one line at a time to keep from getting confused.
- 4) Don't forget the collateral lines . . . uncles, aunts, & cousins can be helpful in your direct line research.
- 5) Keep a research log of sites & records you have checked.
- 6) Even finding "nothing" is something – it could rule something out!
- 7) Recheck Internet sites (especially those updated often).
- 8) **Don't ignore the living for the sake of the dead!** (This is an addictive activity, but ancestors will not be any more deceased tomorrow; on the other hand, relationships with our living loved ones are to be cherished today.)

Prepared exclusively for
the Corona Genealogical Society
<https://CoronaGenSoc.org>

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