

Beyond The Hints

By Beth Swartz

kindredgenes@yahoo.com

Exploring Family Search & Ancestry websites

Family Search

Typically, when signing into Family Search our instinct is to look at our own tree, do a record search or click on a hint box. However, additional information is available on the home page that isn't always utilized.

1. Home Page

- a. **Recommended Tasks**- hints for people in your tree
 - i. **View My Relationship**- if you're not sure who the ancestor is, you can click on this to see how you're related.
- b. **Left Column**- lists a variety of items posted by other members who share relatives in your tree. These can be pictures, memories/stories, records, etc. that may be useful to your research.
- c. **Recently Viewed People**- lists those ancestors you've recently looked at in your tree.
- d. **To Do List**- add starting/stopping points for future research
- e. **FamilySearch Labs**- new services available, usually in Beta Testing or limited ability

Search Options

1. **Records**- several options on how to search
2. **Images**- search by place, date or life event, images are grouped & must be individually viewed
3. **Family Trees**- ability to search by ancestor's name or by ID
4. **Genealogies**- trees uploaded to Family Search to help certain communities & time periods.
5. **Catalog**- search for books, microfilm/fiche, etc. Some materials are only available at FSC/FSL or affiliates.
6. **Books**- ability to search by subject, shows location & access level of materials. Available as PDF's
7. **Wiki**- basic information & resources about locations & history relevant to your ancestors.
8. **Cemeteries**- search cemeteries by location or person's name.

Beyond The Hints

By Beth Swartz

kindredgenes@yahoo.com

FamilySearch Labs- Full Text Search – offers searching by keywords, name, location, date or file to search previously unsearchable documents. New records are continuously being added.

Ancestry

Again, typically when signing into Ancestry, we look at our own tree, new hints or do a record search. However, additional ways to search for information is available, but typically not utilized.

Search Options

1. **All Collections-** several ways to search, by name, date, location, record type
2. **Public Member Trees-** used to search all public trees on Ancestry by name, location, keywords, etc.
3. **Military Records-** search by name for records available for conflicts up to WW2.
4. **Card Catalog-** search by title or keyword, not by individual names. Collections/Information may be grouped, not indexed.

While both, Family Search & Ancestry, provide computer generated hints, based on their systems algorithms, it's always good to search other aspects of the websites and find additional sources that aren't always captured by the algorithm.

Many documents haven't been indexed, so utilizing other options which include collections of records that require you to go through one at a time, could yield the information you've been searching for.

Databases are constantly being updated, with records being added and removed. Check back often for new records.