

So You Want To Know Your Ancestors

Presenter: Bob Curry

Acknowledgement:

The source of much of this presentation is from *Basic Research Skills* by Sheri Lynn Lemon

1/12/2011

Family History research is an adventure!

- You will learn who your ancestors were
- Where they came from
- How they may have influenced your family
- You may learn about the times they lived in

1/12/2011

Finding your ancestors

- What we are going to cover
 - Basic steps in family history research
 - How to get started
 - How to keep track of what you find
 - Where to look for information
 - Where to go for help

1/12/2011

Research Process

Genealogical research involves a cycle of 5 basic steps

- Gather and Organize what you know
- Decide what you want to learn
- Locate and search the records
- Analyze and evaluate your findings
- Record, source and share your findings

REPEAT this simple process over and over with each new find.

1/12/2011

Where do I Begin?

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What do I already know? 
- What specific questions need to be answered?
- What information sources might answer my questions?
- What do the information sources actually tell me?
- What conclusions can I reach now? 

1/12/2011

Step 1: Gather and organize what you already know

Includes your own knowledge or documents already in your possession.

Quiz relatives for what they know or have. 

Look for certificates, letters, obituaries, photos, genealogy forms, histories, stories, etc. 

1/12/2011

Step 1: Gather and organize what you already know

Because human memory is fallible, it is important for you to keep permanent records and organize them so you can find them.



You can begin by obtaining and installing genealogy software for your home computer, and then recording the information already in your possession.



Don't forget the importance of backing up your information!



Genealogy Software

Software compatible with New FamilySearch

- Ancestral Quest
- Roots Magic
- Legacy (Should be now))
- Family Insight and PAF (together)

You can find information about genealogy software at new Family Search



FAMILYSEARCH
Welcome to the new FamilySearch

We are changing the sign-in system so that one user can have multiple accounts. This will allow you to log in to all FamilySearch Web sites. From now on, please use your LDS Account for new.familysearch.org. If you don't have an LDS Account, enter your new.familysearch.org user name and password, and we'll help you upgrade.

User name Forget?

Password

Having trouble signing in?

News and Updates

 Click here to view a list of recent updates to the new FamilySearch.

FamilySearch Web Site

 Click here to go to the FamilySearch Web site.

More Great Products

 Click here for free, trial, and other products for the new FamilySearch.

<http://www.familysearch.org/eng/affiliates/index.html>

1/12/2011

Step 1: Gather and organize what you already know

Step 1: Gather and organize what you already know

Step 2: Decide what additional information you need.

Doing research means trying to find the answers to questions.

With genealogy, there are an unlimited number of questions that we could ask about each of our ancestors such as:

- What was their name?
- When and where were they born?
- When and where did they marry?
- Who did they marry?
- How many children did they have
- What were their names?



Step 2: Decide what additional information you need.

Questions that we could ask (continued):

- Where did they live?
- What type of work did they do?
- What religious institutions, military organizations, or other organizations did they belong to?
- What did they look like?
- When and where did they die, and what was the cause of death?
- Where were they buried?

1/12/2011



Step 2: Decide what additional information you need.

Overwhelmed by the number of questions?

Focus

- Select 1 individual or family at a time
- Select 1 question at a time.

Use your pedigree charts and family group sheets to help you identify the questions that need answers.

Create a "Research Plan".

On the left you'll list which questions you want to answer
On the right you'll list the steps you plan to take to obtain the answers.

Research Plan	
What do I want to Know?	How can I find the Answer?
1.	
2.	
3.	

1/12/2011



Step 3: Search compiled and original records.

Before you can fill out the rest of your research plan, you'll need to figure out which information sources are likely to be best for answering your question.

Types of sources

Primary – created at the time of the event by someone who was involved.

Secondary – created much later than the event or by someone who was reading or interpreting the original source.

1/12/2011

Step 3: Search compiled and original records.

Some sources are both

Primary for the event described

Secondary for the other events listed.

Example: A death certificate is a primary source for the death information, but is a secondary source for the birth, parents names, occupation, etc. also listed on the certificate.

1/12/2011



Step 3: Search compiled and original records.

In the absence of primary sources, however, you may have to depend on secondary sources.

Even when primary sources are available, using secondary sources first may speed up your ability to locate a primary source.

It is often a good idea to locate research that has already been done by others.

While it is possible that this research may contain errors, it may save you a great deal of time in locating the primary sources you need.

1/12/2011




Step 3: Search compiled and original records.

What kind of records do you look for?

Use a "Record Selection Table" which can be found on the FamilySearch "wiki".

To obtain information for...	1. If You Need	2. First Look In	3. Then Search
Name		Census, Vital Recs, Cemeteries	Military Records, Taxation
Birth Date		Vital Records, Church Records, Bible Records	Cemeteries, Obituaries, Census
Birthplace		Vital Records, Church Records, Census	Newspapers, Obituaries
City or Parish of Foreign Birth	Church Records, Genealogy, Biographies, Naturalization & Citizenship		Vital Records, Obituaries, Histories, Emigration & Immigration

1/12/2011

Step 3: Search compiled and original records.

Where do you find them?

Some information sources are available online, via the Internet.

Copies of some information sources, especially vital records, can often be obtained via postal mail.

For more information on obtaining records held by U.S. states, counties and towns, see the book *Ancestry's Red Book* on our Reference Desk.

Many sources can be searched in books, films and fiche at our Family History Center (FHC).

We also have many city directories, family histories and manuscripts.

Always check our card and/or computer catalogs for available sources as well as books on the Reference Desk.

Step 3: Search compiled and original records.

Some especially helpful materials on the Reference Desk to guide you to the sources you need are:

- LDS Register** which contains film #'s for temple records, ward membership records, LDS censuses, etc.
- "A Guide to Mormon Family History Sources"** by Kip Sperry on using and locating records created by or referencing LDS people.
- Research Outlines**, detailed guides to sources in specific states, regions, countries, ethnic groups, record types, etc. A must for every researcher! Also available online.
- Township Atlas of the United States** is a guide to the jurisdictions used in each of the federal censuses and a good residence locality finding aid.

Step 3: Search compiled and original records.

Helpful materials on the Reference Desk (continued):

Phillimore Atlas Index of Parish Registers is a guide to the parish registers of the United Kingdom.

"Map Guide to the US Federal Censuses 1790-1920" by William Dollarhide shows the existing county lines for each census as an overlay to current boundaries.

"The Library", "Handy Book", and "Ancestry's Redbook" to help you determine what kinds of records are available where.

"Evidence, Citation Analysis for the Family Historian", by Mills, shows how to document sources correctly.

Spanish/Hispanic Resources, "Finding Your Hispanic Roots", and "Hispanic Resources" binder are excellent guides to Hispanic research.

Step 3: Search compiled and original records.

Always use a Research Log

Record which information sources you have searched

When you searched them

What you found or did not find.

Genealogy Research Log				
Researched Name				
Goals (parents of etc)		Locality		
Date of Search	Location/ Call number	Description of source (Author, title, year, page)	Comments (purpose of search, results, years and names searched)	Doc. number

1/12/2011

Step 4: Analyze and evaluate your findings.

Evaluate what you found

- Did it answer your question?
- Does it agree with the other facts you know?
- Does it point you in another direction?
- Does it suggest more questions?



If new information conflicts with existing information, you will have to decide which, if either, piece of information is more likely to be accurate.

Is one from a primary source and the other from a secondary source?

Is one from a more authoritative or believable source?



The more time you spend doing genealogical research, the more skillful you will become in deciding these difficult questions.

Step 5: Record and source your findings.

Be sure to document your findings.



Identify the source in such a way that others can easily find it.



Incorporate the new information into your pedigree charts and family group sheets.



Check this information against the information already in your pedigree charts and family group sheets to see if the new information makes sense.



Don't forget to share what you have learned with other family members.

What Now?

Go back to Step 1 and REPEAT the entire cycle again, asking yourself



What more do I know now?



What else do I need to learn?

1/12/2011

Where to look

Subscription sites available at the Family History Center Portal



1/12/2011

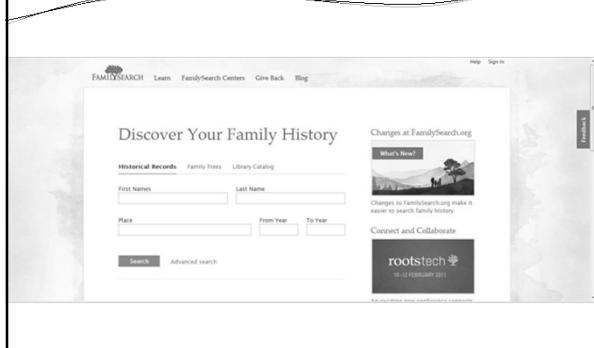


1/12/2011

Where to look

FamilySearch.org – This is a free website sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is accessible from any computer with internet access.

1/12/2011



Discover Your Family History

Historical Records Family Trees Library Catalog

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Place _____ From Year _____ To Year _____

Search Advanced search

Changes at FamilySearch.org
What's New!

Changes to FamilySearch.org make it easier to search family history

Connect and Collaborate

rootstech 10-12 FEBRUARY 2011

1/12/2011



Familysearch.org

FAMILYSEARCH Learn FamilySearch Centers Give Back Blog

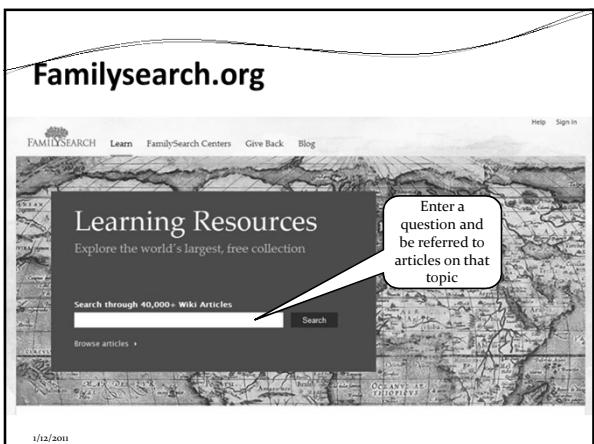
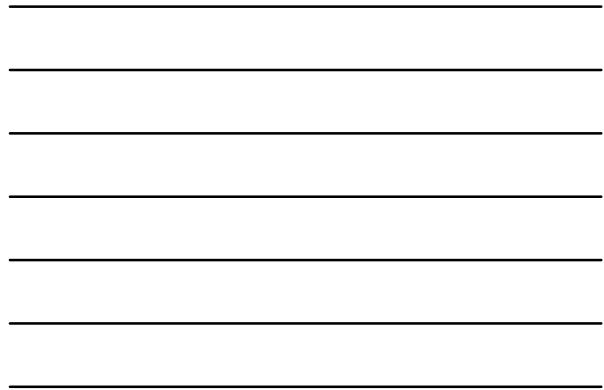
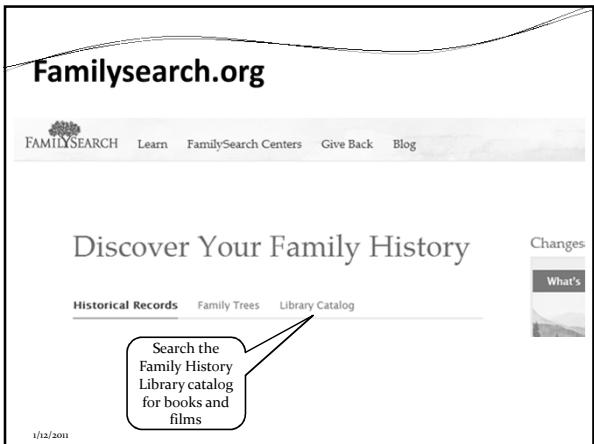
Discover Your Family History

Historical Records Family Trees Library Catalog

Changes
What's

Search record collections that have been indexed.

1/12/2011



Research Example

Allen Eugene Cox

1/12/2011

Questions?

1/12/2011
