Building and Preserving a Genealogy Legacy
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Steps to building and maintaining a legacy:

1. Try out and select a genealogy database software program

    a. Ancestral Quest
    b. Roots Magic
    c. Legacy Family Tree
    d. Family Tree Maker
    e. Heredis
    f. Many others

2. Find and fix any errors and clean up any junk genealogy

    a. What is junk? Definition: "cheap and poorly made"

        i. Genealogy junk

        ii. Fantasy genealogy

        iii. Badly "fixed" genealogy

        iv. Lazy genealogy

        v. Unverified genealogy

        vi. Uncaring genealogy

        vii. Disrespectful genealogy

        viii. Short-term solution with long-term consequences

3. Watch the Details
        i. Sally Overacker (Metcalf)

        ii. Birth ~ 1800 in New York state, death information still unknown

    b. Death listed in Ancestry.com and FamilySearch Family Tree as 1880, from an indexed entry in California Death Index; record actually referred to 29-year-old women named Sally Metcalf, also born in New York state.

    c. Copied hundreds/thousands of times

    d. We looked up microfilm of death certificate, clearly not relating to my Sally Overacker; no way to undo the numerous copies of the incorrect information and its source

    a. Jens Jensen

        • Wrote and signed letters, documents; I am familiar with his name and signature
        • FSFT entry changed to "Jense Jensen" -- Why?? "It looked better."
    b. Pay Close Attention

    c. Follow the Entire Story

    d. Not every entry by everyone is correct; don't trust information even if it has a souce

e. WAYS JUNK GENEALOGY HAPPENS

- Christening dates used as birth date, place of birth
- Marriage banns used as marriage date and location
- Falsified certificates
- Errors in transcripts (don't follow line; Bishop's transcripts)
- Misinterpreted dates, calendar changes
- Impossible, improbable stories, exaggerations
- Get the right person – many people can have the same name
- Incorrect family links
- Conversion from patronymic names to fixed surnames
- Name changes in naturalization process

PREVENT JUNK GENEALOGY

- Check for errors using software reports.
- Avoid Junk in the First Place
- Document as you go.
- Use online trees for clues and hints *only*.
- Enter sources and notes in a consistent format.
- List all sources found for each event.
- Make sure sources match information.
- Don't put information into online trees that you haven't verified for correctness.

RESOURCES FOR PHOTOS AND ARCHIVING

- ***Digital Imaging Essentials,*** Geoff Rasmussen, Legacy books

- ***How to Archive Family Photos***, Denise May Levenick, Family Tree Books, 2015.

- "How to store your digital photos safely: Pros and cons of all the choices out there." *Consumer Reports*, 5 May 2014.
  TINY URL: **tinyurl.com/pl9hpbz**

- *New York Times*: "Tips on Archiving Family History, Part 2"
  TINY URLs (you may need free NYTimes account):
    - Part 1 (digital media): **tinyurl.com/m4r65fh**
    - Part 2 (films, photos): **tinyurl.com/o7yoaws**
    - Part 3 (manuscripts, video, other): **tinyurl.com/owl3jxr**

- Free RESOURCES

- ***Library of Congress: Preserving Your Family Treasures***
  www.loc.gov/preservation/family/

- **Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University – Preserving Memories**
  https://www.cmich.edu/library/clarke/PublicPrograms/Advice_and_Resources/Pages/Preserving-Memories--Caring-for-Your-Heritage.aspx

- **U.S. National Archives**
  www.archives.gov/preservation/

GETTING IT ALL IN ONE PLACE

- Where are your **family photographs?**

    - Boxes
    - Albums
    - Piles
    - Garage
- Focus on the forgotten

- **Where are your digital photos?**

    - Cameras (memory cards)
    - Tablets (iPad, etc. – anything with a camera or email inbox)
    - Computers (current)
    - Computers (old)
    - Email on computer
    - Family members' digital devices and computers
    - Online
    - Backup drives, flash drives
    - Cameras (memory cards)
    - Tablets (iPad, etc. – anything with a camera or email inbox)
    - Computers (current)
    - Computers (old)
    - Email on computer
    - Family members' digital devices and computers
    - Online
    - Backup drives, flash drives
    - Older and really old media ("floppy" disks, CDs, DVDs, zip drives, etc.)

- **Whatever media your digital images are on, move or copy them to a central place where you can organize them.**

- No way to read them? Ask around, look online, contact experts

- An archival system to consider

    - No need to organize into folders, subfolders, etc.

    - View images with thumbnail images if necessary

    - Keep a reference list of image contents and filenames

    - Link genealogy images (photos, documents) to your database, where they are organized by person and by family

How I organized hundreds of documents, photos (etc.) I inherited

- Two big boxes in my late aunt's basement in Idaho
- Letters and other documents
- Deliberated long time (several years)
- Learned to think like an archivist: contacted an archivist

- **Put** letters in groups by author and chronology (not necessary, but it helped me deal with the scope of the task)
- Put each letter in an **archival sleeve**, with its envelope
- **Scanned** thousands of images
    - Developed workflow to keep images safe
    - High-resolution scans (600 dpi)
    - Saved to computer hard drive and external drive immediately
    - Took me months
- Entered information about each image into an Excel **database**
- Hand-carried the originals in carry-on luggage to Utah State University's Special Collections library
(the archivist copied the files onto the university/library network)

- What Utah state university has done to organize this collection -- I can't take any credit for this
    Sections: letters, family history, local history, life sketches, blessings, speeches, notes, tributes, funerals, reports, miscellaneous, subjects (personal names, family names, corporate names), subject terms, form or genre terms, geographical names

Finding aid/Register created by Andrew Izatt , 2012, USU 2014 scholarship student

A thought about organizing: "[T]he simpler the method the better chance it has to survive into the future. If you develop a preservation storage strategy for your digital photographs and keep an inventory of each photograph in a simple spreadsheet, you'll be doing a lot of good for anyone who comes across your library in the future. (*Bertram Lyons, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress*)

M y thought: Our ancestors were worthwhile, everyday people. They mattered. Each has a unique life story. Each person deserves attention and understanding. It may be up to you to preserve THEIR legacy

TO REITERATE: Building and preserving a legacy
TO BUILD IT and MAINTAIN IT
1. Select a genealogy database software program
2. Create a personal genealogy database from your information
3. Find and fix any errors and clean up any junk genealogy
4. Digitize and attach documents, photos, and other images
5. Document the sources
6. Include information, explanations, and plans in the Notes fields

TO PRESERVE IT
1. Identify possible repositories where your ancestor lived, or which focus on specific topics. *Check repositories in locations where your ancestors lived.* Look at local college and university libraries and any other historical archives. Don't assume a local library or historical society will take it – they may have no place to store it and no idea what to do with it
2. Approach curators or archivists
3. Establish a plan with the repository representatives
4. Specify conditions for donation
5. Deliver the materials in proper condition and order