iKeep mUp with Technology

By Janet Brigham

I work for a research institute that tags itself *The Soul of Silicon Valley*. Many technology companies struggle to stay at the leading edge, because technology changes rapidly. By the time a product or an app is released, it's already outdated.

As technology has outpaced our capacity to stay current, our language has adapted. Like in the headline above, a lower-case *i* (as in *iPad*) or *m (*for *mobile,* as in *mHealth* for *mobile health)* is attached to familiar words*.* The *i*'s *and m*'s, along with RunTogetherWords, make things seem new and necessary.

But are they? And, most importantly, are they worth the money? How do we know what's worth the cost? To help you make decisions based on your own needs and experiences, we offer some suggestions:

1. List features you need or want. Think you want or need a color laser printer? List the features you'd like (such as duplex printing or wireless connectivity), the features that are optional for you, and the cost, immediate and long-term.

2. Read multiple reviews. Even if Dick Eastman, *Consumer Reports*, or TopTenReviews.com recommends something, that doesn't mean it's right for you. Read both the positive and negative reviews. Watch for comments indicating that items are difficult to install and set up or have design problems that affect usability.

3. Don't mistake others' preferences for your own. Don't buy something just because your friends want it or like it. Some items, such as the Flip-Pal scanner or Microsoft Office 2010, have considerable utility for some users but merely frustrate others. Read enough to get a sense for whether an item will meet your needs. Ask questions; don't spend your money if you can't get direct answers.

4. Watch for compatibility. A case in point is a desktop organizing system that was welcomed by early adopters. As later versions were released, these early folk could no longer access their files; the company suggested solving the problem by buying a new system and starting over.

Turn on, tune in, but don't drop out.

This situation is particularly problematic with software or hardware that generates nonstandard files or folders. An organizing system with proprietary formatting might prevent your accessing material when the software is outdated or when you upgrade to a newer operating system.

5. Get the good stuff. I thought buying a netbook was an extravagance because I already had a functional laptop. I was wrong: To my delight, my new netbook soon became indispensible.

Be cautious, but get good tools within your means and use them. And remember — it's okay to call them toys.
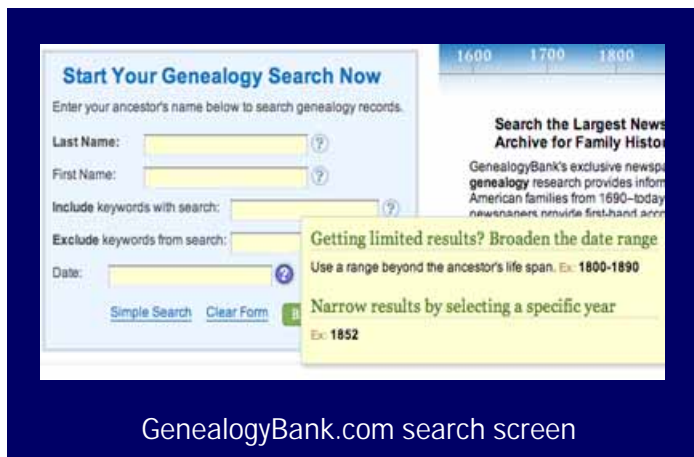
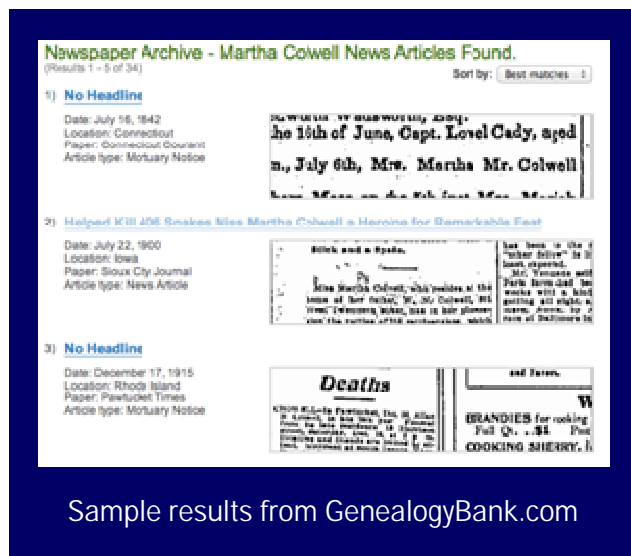# GenealogyBank: Millions of newspaper articles

By Pamela Brigham

I was looking for information online when I came across GenealogyBank.com. I was searching for my great-grandfather, and a link came up in the search. There were some search results, but it was the usual — pay for a trial to get the results. These days it's a 30-day trial for $9.95. It's then $5.83/month after that if you get an annual membership (~$70/year) or a monthly membership at $19.95/month. The annual membership is the better deal and could be worth it for this service. I decided to go ahead with an annual membership.

I've since used the site to find articles and unexpectedly interesting information on my ancestors. One example is when I started looking into my Dad's mom's side of the family. I only had so much information on them, so I put in a search on GenealogyBank and came up with an article about my great-grandmother killing 256 rattlesnakes with her uncle. No one in the family had mentioned that before. The article included a picture of her as well, which was a great find for me.

So what does GenealogyBank offer? Access to millions of newspaper articles and obituaries online from all over the United States from 1690 to today. They have a basic search engine showing just the first and last name you're looking for. You can click on the advanced search to see more options, including entering specific keywords to include or exclude, and dates. Each field has a ? next to it where you can click for help with what can be entered in the field and how. For example, in the date field you could enter a range from 1890 to 1910 to narrow the search to a specific time frame.

Sample results from GenealogyBank.com

If you don't want to search for a specific name but want to see all the articles that come up about a certain subject such as Civil War Gettysburg deaths, enter the topic in the "Include keywords with search:" field and begin a search; then read through the articles about the specific topic.

Another nice item about GenealogyBank is that it separates family history records into six categories. This allows you to narrow your search to a more specific document if you are getting too many search results. The six categories are Historical Newspapers (1690-2007), Historical Books (1801-1900), Historical Documents (1789-1994), Newspaper Obituaries (1977-Current), and the Social Security Death Index (1937-Current). The obituaries and SSDI are more recent documents.

You also can see the titles for historical newspapers for a specific area of the country. You can click on a U.S. state, select a specific county, and see what newspapers are available. In some cases the site does not have newspapers for your locale of interest. In many cases, it does. I have found articles in newspapers I didn't expect. I found that my second great grandmother was married in 1885 in the Episcopal Church in Riverside, CA. This information was in the *Riverside Daily Press*, a newspaper I would not have known to search.

Once you've searched, the site lists how many results ended up in each of the six categories. You can then select a category to view that portion of the results. The list of results has a preview of the article as

GenealogyBank.com search screen

Scanning with your iPhone — a review of apps

By Pamela Brigham

After one of the SVCGG classes on scanning documents, I wondered if I could scan documents with my 8G iPod Touch. I started looking into it and found several programs in the App Store that had to do with document scanning. Since I recently received an iPhone 4S, I decided to use that instead since it has an 8-megapixel camera on it.

Of the 23 possible scanning applications in the App Store at the time, I selected seven to examine more closely. I was looking for something under $10 that had a good number of features. Several are free but typically have available upgrades that include additional features.

All of them require either use of the camera or access to a photo in a photo library. The higher the resolution the better when working with these documents. I did work with a photo, a handwritten letter, and a typewritten document, all of which I photographed with my iPhone.

I wanted to make sure that no matter what the app could do to the documents, I could get the file off of the phone easily. There were a couple different options for this, including email, wi-fi upload to a web page, or uploading to a document storage site. The other concern was whether I could edit the file on the phone. Were automatic options available, and/or did it allow me to control the settings? The apps vary a lot in functionality for the price. In the end I found that iPhoto could do most of what I wanted, and I could have the photo emailed to me.

The table on the next page outlines each one and what it can or can't do. All but one of the applications defaults to PDF (Adobe's portable document format). All of them have some sort of sharing support – it could be to Twitter or Facebook or to a document storage site such as GoogleDocs or Evernote.

Here's more about each one:

CamScanner Free and Pro

I really liked the free version of this app. The print and OCR functions aren't available in

GenealogyBank *(continued)*

well as a Date, Location, Paper, and Article type.

When you click on a result, the site takes you to the article itself. The interface will try to zoom into where the words you searched on are located in the article. It does highlight the words; this becomes interesting if you include an initial in the name field in your search, because the results highlight those letters if they appear singularly in the article. Looking for the highlighted words showing up together in a row within the newspaper page is usually the best way to locate the targeted words. You can also search on a name within quotation marks in the Include Words field to focus your search more effectively.

The interface for reading the article is fairly user friendly. If you mouse over any of the symbols on the upper right of the screen, the site will tell you what they are. You can remove the highlights if you prefer. You can search for other words on the page and have it highlight them. It allows you to zoom in and out,

reset to the original view, maximize the view, download a PDF of the article, and print the article.

On the left side you can see the entire page of the article and all the pages for the issues you're searching. The top of the screen allows you to go to the next result or previous result. If you have a small number of results, this might be an easier way to review them than looking at the small previews in the list. Once you're done with the article you can either go back to the search results, start a new search, or can click on Home in the upper right corner.

Overall, I like using Genealogy Bank in my research, since I've discovered some unexpected information regarding several of my relatives through it. The site does have a blog and an option to ask a genealogist a question. Both of these offer additional information. If you get a chance, check it out at www.genealogybank.com.

> *Pamela Brigham is director of technology for Equinix, a data center colocation provider.*

Scanning with your iPhone (continued)

App Name	Cost	E-mail File?	Print support?	Auto Enhance?	Default document type	Share support?	OCR	Editing capability
CamScanner Free	Free	Yes	No	Yes	PDF	Yes	Yes	Yes
DocScan	Free	Yes	Yes	Yes	PDF	Yes	No	Yes
Genius Scan - Lite	Free	Yes	No	Yes	JPG	Yes	No	No
Pocket Scanner	$0.99	Yes	No	Yes	PDF	Yes	No	Yes
Scan Pages	Free	Yes	No	No	PDF	Yes	No	No
Scanner Pro	$6.99	Yes	Yes	Yes	PDF	Yes	No	Yes
Tablet Scanner OCR	$2.99	Yes	Yes	No	PDF	Yes	Yes	Yes

A comparison of scanner app features

the free version, but are available in the Pro version. The free version does have ads, and all PDFs have a watermark with the word *CamScanner* printed across the lower right corner of the page. It does have a "magic color" option for enhancing the scan. It also allows you to update those properties after the scan. You can upload the document to Google Docs, Box.net, Evernote, iDisk, and DropBox. One nice feature is that you can also add notes to the scan, which allows you to cite the source easily. The notes show up in the PDFs as a yellow box you can click to see your notes.

One issue I had with this and other applications is that once a photo is processed into a PDF, you can't go back and do additional editing. In the pro version, the optical character recognition doesn't allow me to see what the program came up with, and the text wasn't searchable, which it should have been. This free version comes with a tutorial.

DocScan

Both this and CamScanner were fairly good at detecting the edges of the document to make it easier to crop the photo to what you want. The free version of this app only allowed six documents and three pages per document. It didn't have much editing capability other than a brighten button which often brightened the object so much that I ended up using the original image. It did allow me to upload to Google Docs in either PDF or JPG. The pro version ($1.99) allows you to print as well. While it did allow me to print, I couldn't find an upload destination other than Google Docs, although it mentions online that other uploads are possible.

Genius Scan — Lite

This did a good job at detecting the edges and allowing me to crop the picture. An enhancement feature offers the options of none, black and white, or color. It doesn't allow manual adjustment of the enhancements afterward. You have the option of PDF or JPEG, although upgrading to the + version ($2.99) is required for the upload options or printing.

Pocket Scanner

The interface on this one took a little getting used to, and I ended up reading the help file to figure out how to get started. For 99 cents, this does offer a lot of options. You can edit the photo by cropping it and adjusting the exposure and the contrast. It allows you to preview the document before saving it as a PDF. Once it was saved, I couldn't find a way to add additional pages. It allows you to print and has several upload options. It comes with wi-fi download capability. With all the options available, this app offers the most for the money.
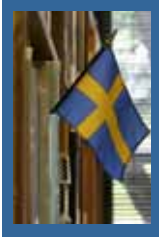
Scan Pages

The App Store lacked much description of this app, so I wasn't sure what to expect. It had a button to clean the photo, but cleaned a handwritten letter and a document to the point they were no longer legible. Also, it wouldn't allow me to crop the photo unless I selected the Clean options. When I was in the main menu and emailed the document out, the app allowed me the choice of JPG or PDF, but when I was just in the photo area, it defaulted to emailing it as a JPG. The app is free but offers no more than what can be done through iPhoto.

Scanner Pro

A feature I liked about this app and CamScanner was that they zoomed into what I was cropping to better define the corners of the picture. That was useful on a screen as small as the iPhone. The enhancements on both a photo and a handwritten letter made them much worse than they were origi-

Accessing Swedish records

Part 2 in a series

By Richard Rands

In the last issue of the *PastFinder* I dwelled on the importance of a thorough search for as many North American records as you can find about your Swedish ancestors. Knowing as much as you can about them, especially where in Sweden they originated, will prevent a lot of frustrating effort when you begin delving into the records in Sweden.

Knowing a bit of history about a country before launching into a research project will go a long way, especially knowing details about wars, government, religion, calendars, and record-keeping mandates.

In 1526, a full-fledged Reformation took place in Sweden, leading to the establishment of the Lutheran Church as the national religion, replacing Roman Catholicism. Many parish registers were confiscated and placed in a newly formed Royal Library.

Later, in 1571, the church was ordered to keep birth, marriage, and burial registers, but few survive from that period. It was not until the early 17th century that parish registers survived.

In 1618 the National Archives was established, and throughout the remainder of the century the country began keeping military records, probate records, census records, and the documents listing the movement of individuals among parishes. Then in 1697 a devastating fire destroyed nearly two-thirds of the records in the National Archives and the Royal Library.

The patronymic naming practice of using the father's given name as the basis of his children's surname was not officially prohibited in Sweden until 1966; it was strongly discouraged beginning in the last decades of the 19th century, and by 1890 was no longer widely used.

Beginning in 1700, Sweden began the 40-year

Visby, Gotland County, Sweden, Scandinavia's best preserved medieval city. Photo by Ake Mokvist.

Scanning with your iPhone (continued)

nally, and I wouldn't recommend using them. This one was the most expensive option at $6.99, and other options perform better for much less cost.

Tablet Scanner OCR

This does have print capability. Many of the buttons in the application were small and hard to work with. The cropping of the file was a challenge. This app crashed often on my iPhone, and it deleted all of the work I'd done, and I had to start over. It wasn't a user friendly app, and I wouldn't recommend using it for $2.99.

Besides all of these options, many other apps were listed in the App Store, and even more probably are available now as well. I recommend either Pocket-Scanner or CamScanner Pro if you want an app that allows you to edit photos and email them to yourself as PDFs from your iPhone. With the number of features they offer, both are worth the price.

Finally, remember to ask yourself what you want to use the app for. If you come across a document that you need to copy and you don't have a scanner or scanner app, you can always use the camera on your iPhone to photograph the document.

You can then email it to yourself using the iPhoto or Photos application. It's the easiest solution for scanning that unexpected document without a scanner.

Accessing Swedish records *(continued)*

process of converting to the Gregorian Calendar. Between 1710 and 1713 a plague swept through the country, killing up to one-third of the population in the major cities, including Stockholm, Göteborg, and Malmö. Prior to that, the church had instigated a process of keeping track of an adult's religious faithfulness, called *husförhör*, or house examination.

However, many in the upper classes refused to participate, believing they were above church jurisdiction. Then in 1750, church records were designated the official state records, and everyone was required to answer questions about their adherence to Lutheran policies.

Today the Clerical Survey, as the *husförhö*r came to be known, is the primary source for Swedish genealogical research.

Besides the Clerical Survey, a variety of other parish registers, including, births, marriages, burials, moving in and out records, and emigration records have been filmed, digitized, and are being indexed for online searching. For example, abbreviated extracts taken every ten years from the Clerical Surveys beginning in 1860 were used in place of censuses through 1890.

Records from the very small number of non-Lutherans, including Catholics, Jews, and Reformed congregations, are usually found among the Lutheran parish registers. In 1950, Sweden instigated a Civil Registration that supplanted the use of church records as state records.

In any case, a host of record sources are available for research in Sweden, but the environment for

Sweden's Arkivdigital web site

searching these records has changed in recent months and is likely to continue to evolve.

The fee-based company Genline, hosting searchable transcriptions of church records between 1600 and 1920, is available at www.genline.com. A one-year subscription to Genline costs about $292, and shorter than one-year periods can be purchased. Genline's web site describes their collection as "records from the 16th-20th century. These records consist of birth/baptismal, confirmation, marriage, death/burial, church ledgers and household examination rolls."

Until recently, Genline also was available free through the Family History Center Portal. But Genline was purchased by Ancestry.com and subsequently removed from free access at the FHC Portal.

As a result, the LDS Church, which hosts the Family History Centers, has made arrangements to offer free access to the Swedish church records at the FHC Portal site through a Swedish provider called Arkivdigital, which also is available at www.arkivdigital.net/ for a subscription fee. A one-year subscription for Arkivdigital currently costs about $175, and shorter than one-year periods can also be purchased.
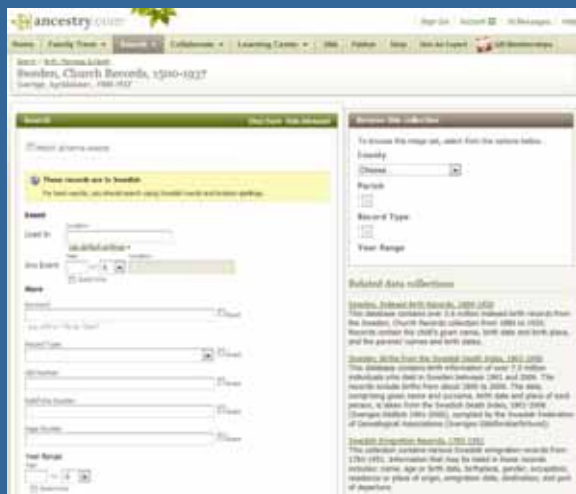
Arkivdigital describes its collection as "Sweden's Church Records from the 17th through the 20th century. Over 30 million color images of original church records on-line," and they claim to be adding more records continuously. You also can purchase specific volumes of the record images on CD-ROM.

In addition, a conglomeration of church records from 1500 have been digitized at the subscription-

Three sources of Swedish records — Swedish collections at Ancestry.com (top), record collections at FamilySearch.org (middle), and Sweden's Genline web site (bottom).

based Ancestry.com, listed as Sweden, Church Records, 1500-1937. However, Ancestry's collection of images can be searched only "by county, parish, record type, and year range," but not by an individual's name.

Finally, as we would expect, the LDS Church is continuing to digitize and post its collection of Swedish church records online at www.familysearch.org. At this time, 27 individual collections of Swedish records are available, including three that have been indexed and are searchable by name.

These three collections are based on the old International Genealogical Index (IGI) records that were extracted by volunteers many years ago and contain indexes for selected birth, marriage, and burial records for a few localities. These collections would be a logical first place to look; count yourself very fortunate to find what you are looking for.

Remember that the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, especially in this case. The remaining 24 collections have been digitized only, must be browsed image-by-image, and are in Swedish, as is the case with all the providers mentioned above.

At each of the sites, searching the records will require that you have some understanding of Swedish genealogical terms, as well as knowledge of how the records are organized and which location you believe your ancestors came from. The search methodology at the sites differs enough to make it a challenge to be adept at using all of them.

My recommendation for a search strategy is to start out with the free sites, and then if you still cannot locate your ancestors, pick one of the two subscription sites, Genline or Arkivdigital, and learn its particular search techniques.

The final installment of this series, to be published in the February 2012 *PastFinder*, will present a case study (part of our "How I Found It" series) using these Swedish record sources to find elusive Swedish ancestors. ◢◿

Ask the doctor — Parent Link

Q **On the Family screen of my PAF file, one of the columns for the children is titled Parent Link.**

I cannot figure out what that is used for and how to access it. It does not appear on the Edit Individual screen, and I have never seen any information in that column.

Parent Link is the place where you can indicate if a child has been adopted, if he or she is part of the family due to guardianship, or several additional unusual circumstances. Normally, when a child is part of a family as a biological child, the column is left blank by default.

If a child is adopted, for example, you should enter the child as part of the biological family headed by the biological parents. In addition, you should add the child to a second family in which one or both of the parents is the adoptive parent.

To access the Parent Link field, place your mouse pointer on the child's entry on the family screen and right-click. A menu box will pop up with a list of options. Select the Edit Parent Links option to open the Parents edit screen, where you can manage the Parent Link details.

The Add button will allow you to add a child to a different family and select from the list of relationships with the secondary parents.

If you already have added the child to the secondary family, you can select the secondary parents from the list and edit the relationship name from a list including Biological, Adopted, Guardian, Sealing (an LDS ordinance term), Challenged, or Disproved.

Be sure to click Save to apply the new information to your file.

Upcoming meetings

The group meets monthly except December, on the second Saturday of the month from 9 to 11 a.m. at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 875 Quince Ave., Santa Clara, California (see map at right). The group is not affiliated with any religious group.

See the Meetings section of our web site (www.svcgg.org) for any last-minute changes in the class lineup each month.

Classes for 14 January 2012

- German Research
- Tips and tricks for PAF and Ancestral Quest
- Reunion for the Mac
- Getting started with Reunion
- PAF and PCs for beginners

Classes for 11 February 2012

- Revolutionary War pension files
- How to do stuff in Windows
- Reunion for the Mac
- Getting started with Reunion
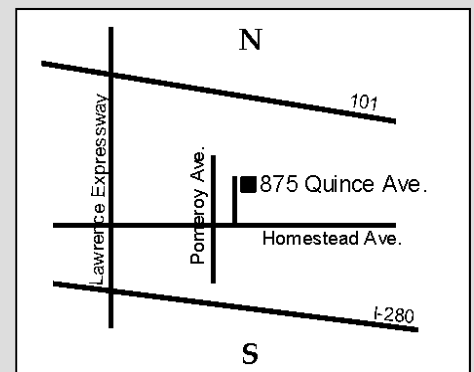- Getting started in genealogy

Our meeting site has ample free off-street parking, with an accessible entrance near the front of the building.

About the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group

SVCGG is the former Silicon Valley PAF Users Group, a nonprofit group offering classes, seminars, and publications to help family historians improve their skills in using technology for genealogy research. The group is based in Silicon Valley in the Bay Area of Northern California; members live around the world.

PastFinder is the official publication of the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group. Published monthly except December, *PastFinder* is distributed at meetings to members and mailed to others after the meetings. Members can receive the newsletter by email containing a download link.

SVCGG offers research tools and materials through its web site, www.svcgg.org. Membership dues are US$15 per household per year, US$20 for Canada, and US$25 for other international locations.