

## Fixing Your Genealogy Database

By Allin Kingsbury

It is said that, "Friends come and go, but enemies accumulate." In your genealogy database, you will find that errors certainly accumulate. Success in genealogy research can bring a steady stream of newly found ancestors, but as your database grows, errors sneak into the data. Some databases are cleaner or more error-free than others, but it is extremely rare to find a database that has no errors. You may have checked and rechecked your data, but it is easy to miss many of the errors.

Errors in genealogy data not only consist of wrong names, dates or places, but can include wrong spellings, transcription errors, incomplete place names, bad estimates for dates, nicknames instead of given names and many other kinds of errors. There can also be links to the wrong parents, spouses and children resulting from sloppy research.

### Errors in Names

Errors in names are the most difficult errors to detect. There is no standardization of spelling of names. In many families, one branch of the family would begin a new spelling of a surname and carry that spelling down to all descendents. Before the public schools brought education to everyone, illiteracy was common and many were igno-

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rant of the proper spelling of their name or were not aware of how the name was being spelled in the records that genealogical research would uncover many years later. The spelling of a name found in the records is not necessarily the spelling used by the family.

Many genealogists will use a standardized spelling for a surname because they assume that the early records with a variety of spellings are often incorrect and should not be used as evidence of a particular spelling. In such cases, variant spellings should be listed in the notes. Such practice gives the genealogist a list of variant spellings of a name which can be used for searching an index or for using a search engine on the Internet.

Given names can be even more confusing. The most common problem is the recording of a nickname as the given name. Many of the older nicknames had an equivalency that was common knowledge at the time. An example is the nickname Polly, which everyone in the nineteenth century knew was a nickname for Mary.

Another source of confusion is the practice of giving a child the same name as a par-

ent. Often the child will be known by his middle name to avoid confusion, but occasionally the child will be entered twice in a family, once with the middle name and once with the given name. This creates a non-existent child, and can create a great deal of confusion.

A similar confusion is created when there are two adults living near each other with the same given name and the same surname. They may be related as cousins or uncle and nephew, which would often place them in the same social circle. To avoid confusion, one of the individuals may be called by a middle name. More confusion comes when the individual reverts to being addressed by the first name when the other individual dies or moves away.

The only method for finding typographical errors in surnames that I have found effective is to scan through the alphabetical list of individuals in the database. Typographical errors will usually appear as a lone surname. Occasionally, if a family is entered at the same time, a misspelled surname will be copied and a small group will appear in the list. By carefully looking at the spellings of the surnames for each name, the misspelled names can be found and corrected.

### Errors in Dates

Errors in dates come from copying errors during research or from typographical errors. Some dates are recorded wrong in the original record. Wrong dates are difficult to detect unless they are inconsistent with other dates in the database. For example, a birth of a child after the death of a parent or before a marriage or too soon after the birth of a parent can indicate a possible error. Errors of this kind are easily found by computer. In most instances, the correct date can be in your research notes or in the source records.

### Errors in Places

Place name errors are common, but they are found only by checking places against a gazetteer. Programs like World Place Finder are excellent for both finding place errors and for supplying the correctly spelled place name. In a case where the place matches the glossary entry, but is the wrong place, there is no way to detect that there is a problem, unless a careful review of source material is done.

### Errors in Family Structure

A genealogy database has both individuals and families which are cross-linked. Thus an individual can be linked to a family where he or she is a child and another family or families where he or she appears as a parent.

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## Fixing Errors

(Continued from page 65) child is born, and a parent with no more than 60 years of age difference from their spouse.

The family in the database will be linked back to each of the individuals that are members of the family. Occasionally, a link is not deleted when an individual or family is deleted from the database, and when a new family or individual is added, taking the identification number of deleted data, the new data will be linked to the wrong data. These bad links are easily detected and can usually be fixed by unlinking and re-linking the individual with the bad link. The links can also be repaired by creating a GEDCOM file containing the bad links and importing the GEDCOM file back into the database or going to a backup file made before the bad link was created.

## Abbreviations

Some like abbreviations, but they are quite confusing. "Co." could be an abbreviation for the state of Colorado or the country of Columbia. "Al." could mean Alabama or the province of Alberta in Canada. A computer makes the importance of shortening names less important and features like auto complete and copy and paste eliminate the need to type all the letters in a name. Abbreviations can be quickly changed to complete names by using the "search and replace" feature in many genealogy programs.

## Check and Repair of Data

Your computer can be a big help in finding and repairing errors. Many of the popular genealogy programs include a feature for finding errors. These programs differ in the errors that are found. They all scan the database and check the data for a number of possible problems. The problems are primarily based on dates that are incompatible with other dates in the database. The problems usually include death before birth, children born before birth or marriage of parents, children born after death of parent or to parents too old or too young to have children. Sometimes the errors found are not real errors. For example, there are mothers who marry at age 12 and begin having children.

**Ancestral Quest** includes the "Possible Problems" report which produces a list of problems such as a death date before the birth date, or a birth date when the parents were too old or had died. The "options" screen allows the user to adjust the range of dates for specific problems. The options include a choice of sorting by RIN or by surname and the ability to print a limited range of records. The "Possible Problems" found by Ancestral Quest are not as broad as those found by other programs.

**Brothers Keeper 6** has a "reasonableness" report which lists possible problems with dates similar to the reports found in other programs.

**Family Tree Maker** produces a "Data Errors" report containing errors that include births that occurred when the mother was less than 13 years of age, births that occurred after a parent's death date, when deaths of individuals with ages of 120 years or more. The parameters of these errors cannot be altered.

**GenSmarts**, although not a genealogy database program, can be used to find database errors. The "jury" algorithm can estimate birth, marriage, or death dates in your genealogy database. These dates are compared with the dates contained in the database. The program checks for acceptable date ranges such as a mother between age 15 and 60 and a father between age 15 and 70 when a

**Gramps**, a program for Linux operating systems, creates a "Verify the Database" report that lists non-logical facts. It will report parents having children when they are too young or too old, or having children before they were born or after their death, and other problems with dates.

**Legacy** can produce a "Potential Problems" report that will list instances of a parent having a child at age 13 or younger, a mother giving birth at age 50 or older, a death age 120 or older, and other questionable dates. The ages for these conditions can be changed. Potential problems found to be valid can be marked so the problem will not be listed when a new report is generated.

**Personal Ancestral File 5.2 (PAF)** has a "Possible problems" report similar to the feature found in Legacy. The "Options" button will allow the user to change some of the criteria.

**Reunion** is able to find errors in dates such as a birth by a mother who is age 13 or younger as the data is being entered. The error can then be corrected before it becomes part of the database. The program also can produce a "Date Feasibility Report" which lists possible errors caused by erroneous dates in the database.

**RootsMagic** can produce a Problem List similar to the error reports produced by other programs. The age parameters can be changed.

**The Master Genealogist** has an Audit Report which is the most complete of any of the error check programs available at this time. All or part of the database can be scanned for a list of potential problems selected by the user.

**World Place Finder** can find errors in places in a genealogy databases. None of the genealogy database programs have this ability. The program will find and list any place that deviates from those places listed in the gazetteer that is included in the program. The gazetteer includes cities towns and villages throughout the world plus some historic places which no longer exist. The program will also list places in the database with empty fields, such as a missing city or county.

## Summary

It is an extremely unusual database that has no errors. The usual reason why a database has no errors is that it has no data. Errors in your data can cause you or others to make errors in future research. If you send data from your database to others, the errors will accompany the data and spread like a disease. To avoid embarrassment, do run an error check on your data and fix the errors before you send the data to others. They do notice errors.

## Genealogy Quote

Distant relatives are the best kind, and the further the better.

Frank McKinney Hubbard

1868-1938

American Newspaper Humorist

# Spider Webs: SiteFinder Online, The Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System , 1901 and 1906 Canada Census Index

## SiteFinder Online

SiteFinder Online is a free Web version of The Gold Bug's SiteFinder U.S. place name database. The database not only includes cities and towns, but also includes cemeteries, schools, and courthouses. The Web site has more than 700,000 locations of existing places plus thousands of historic places that have disappeared from current maps. Not all the cemeteries and schools are on the map. Locations not in the U.S. government GNIS database are likely to be missing from SiteFinder Online. On the Web site, these places can be located by entering place name, county, state, and type of location (place, courthouse, cemetery, church and so forth) and searching. The search engine at the site will produce a list of places that match the information supplied.

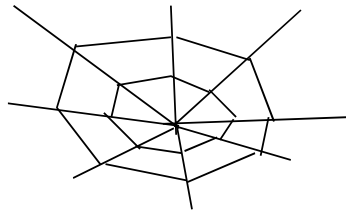
Each location found can be plotted on Google Maps where the user can zoom in and see the detailed features of the area with the exact location of the site marked on an overlay of the Google map. The marked map can be plotted or saved as an image file. Multiple locations can be plotted on a single map if they are close enough to be resolved after the user zooms in or out to adjust the scale of the map.

To visit the site, go to:  
[www.goldbug.com/map/sitefinder.html](http://www.goldbug.com/map/sitefinder.html)

## The Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System

The Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System (CWSS) is a computerized database containing basic facts about Union and Confederate servicemen. The database was created by the U.S. National Park Service, and contains the names and other basic information taken from 6.3 million index cards for soldiers found in the National Archives. The records include those of 235,000 African American Union soldiers among the estimated 3.5 million soldiers who fought in the Civil War. There are no records for navy personnel in the database at this time.

The data was recorded on index cards in the 1880s by General Ainsworth's staff in the Department of the Army to deter-



mine who was eligible for a pension. A card was made for every time a soldier's name appeared on a muster roll. The data from these cards was later transcribed manually to produce the General Index Cards in the Compiled Military Service Records at the National Archives which were then used to produce the current database for the Web site. The Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) and the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) checked the index cards for accuracy and edited the data before the National Park Service staff converted the edited data into an Oracle database for access on the Internet. Because some soldiers served in more than one unit and because of variations in spelling of names on the cards, the number of individuals in the index is 6.6 million instead of the 3.5 million individuals who served.

The search criteria include given name, surname, confederate or union, and state. Spelling variations for surnames are common, so multiple spellings should be searched to find all the data about a soldier. Once the soldier is found, the unit where the soldier served is displayed. By clicking on the unit, a detailed history of the regiment is displayed. The other information in the index is minimal and one must go the service records and pension records for the individual for any information of genealogical value. These can be searched in person at the National Archives in Washington D.C. or copies can be ordered by mail. For Confederate pension files, one must contact the State Archives for the state where the veteran lived when he would have been eligible for a pension.

To visit the site, go to:  
[www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/)

## 1901 and 1906 Canada Census Index

A searchable every name index for the 1901 and 1906 censuses for Canada is now available online from Ancestry.ca. The 1901 index includes over 5 million people and

each individual is linked to his or her record on one of the more than 130,000 images of the original census pages. Information in the 1901 census includes name, marital status, birth date, birth year, year of immigration to Canada, tribal origins, nationality, religion, occupation. The 1906 census was a special census covering only Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta where unprecedented growth was taking place as a result of the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. More than 800,000 people are included in the 1906 census index, each linked to the original census images.

In addition to the these census indexes, Ancestry.ca also has an every-name index to the 1911 census which was posted on the Web site earlier this year. This index contains more than 13 million searchable names.

Ancestry.ca is owned and operated by MyFamily.com, Inc., and is available by subscription to individuals. For more information or to visit the site, go to [www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca)

## Irish Historical Maps

Ordnance Survey Ireland, which is the national mapping authority of Ireland, now has an online database of more than 40,000 maps of Ireland. The maps were originally made to make land valuations to tax the citizens of Ireland. The first maps were completed in 1842 and the last of the project were completed in 1847. More than 2,100 men worked on the project which created the first 1700 maps that are now in the database. They covered all of Ireland. The work of these men also included the standardization of the Irish place names, most of which were Anglicization of names from the original Irish Gaelic language. The maps are known for their accuracy which shows every road, path, stone wall and hedge.

Modern computer technology was used to stitch the maps together into one continuous map of Ireland from each series. This makes it possible to move about the map and print a section the otherwise would have spanned several maps.

For more information or to visit the site, go to: [www.irishhistoricmaps.ie](http://www.irishhistoricmaps.ie)

## Software of Interest: Map My Family Tree

Progeny Software has a new software program available called *Map my Family Tree* that automatically geocodes and plots all ancestral life events on customizable, color maps. *Map my Family Tree* reads your genealogy data directly from:

- Ancestry Family Tree
- Ancestral Quest
- Family Historian
- Family Tree Maker
- Heritage Family Tree Deluxe
- Legacy Family Tree
- Personal Ancestral File

- RootsMagic
- The Master Genealogist

The program can also work with GEDCOM 5.5 files (including data with Western European diacritics) if the genealogy software used is not on the list of programs

where the database can be read directly.

The introductory price of *Map my Family Tree* is \$39.95. For more information or to order, go to: [www.progenygenealogy.com/map-my-family-tree.html](http://www.progenygenealogy.com/map-my-family-tree.html)

### Genealogy Quote

Families with babies and families without babies feel sorry for each other.

Edgar Watson Howe  
1853-1933  
English Novelist

## Of Interest to Genealogists:

**Hanover, Massachusetts Genealogy Project, Reward for Little Orphan Annie, Heritage Center in Scottish Highlands, DNA Project for Holocaust Survivors, Black Confederate Soldiers Committee**

### Hanover, Massachusetts Genealogy Project

The Hanover Historical Society has a project which will result in a genealogy book. Members of the society are at work on the project which they hope will include every family now living in Hanover. If you belong in the book, call (781) 826-1689.

### Reward for Little Orphan Annie

Annie was not an actual orphan. She is a genealogical orphan because her true story has been lost. Annie Moore was the first immigrant to arrive at Ellis Island. She came from Ireland with her brothers, Anthony and Phillip, on January 1, 1892. Being the first, she received much fanfare and was awarded a \$10 gold coin. She then disappeared into America and is lost to the historians Megan Smolensky, a genealogy writer and lecturer, wants to know what happened to Annie. She is offering a \$1,000 reward to anyone who can supply information about Annie Moore. Contest details are found at:

<http://megansrootsworld.blogspot.com/2006/07/1000-reward-for-ellis-islands-little.html>

### Heritage Center in Scottish Highlands

A new heritage center will be built in Inverness, Scotland at a cost of \$7.3 million. The Highland Archive Center will house a collection of documents about post-Culloden legislation, the Highland Clearances and 15th-century council meetings. The center will also have a family research facility for family history research. Construction will begin next year and coincide with the Highland 2007 year of culture. The facility is to open in 2009.

### DNA Project for Holocaust Survivors

The DNA Shoah project was announced last month by Howard Cash, the founder of Gene Codes. It may become the most extensive DNA investigation ever attempted. The project organizers plan to gather DNA samples from the 300,000 Holocaust sur-

vivors around the world. The samples would then be analyzed and the data would be used to solve the mysteries that remain from the Holocaust of World War II. The project will use many of the new tools developed for DNA analysis, including software used to help identify the remains of 9/11 terrorist attack victims.

Most of the 6 million Jews who were murdered by the Nazis were not cremated and were buried after their death. DNA can be obtained from the bones of these victims when they are disinterred. Remains of Holocaust victims are continually being found throughout Europe as new real estate development goes on. Before this project was conceived, there was no way to positively identify the victims. The DNA Shoah Project can help unite loved ones and help to closure for families who have missing relatives. The database is being created to assist European governments to identify victims and will not be available for any other purpose.

### Black Confederate Soldiers Committee

The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) has appointed a committee to gather information on black Confederate soldiers, including information on markers and monuments honoring these Confederate heroes. Each UDC Chapter is to find and document graves, markers, pensions, military records and other information on these men. The information they gather should include grave location, type of marker, and a picture of the grave or monuments.

### Pardon Our Slip

In the article about timelines that appeared in the August 2006 *PastFinder* (Volume 17, issue 8), the name of the book mentioned in the last paragraph in column 1 on page 58 should read, *The New York Public Library Book of Chronologies*.

## Stranger Than Fiction: Farmer Loses Bid for Cemetery

The farm of a Platte County, Nebraska farmer surrounds a 125-year-old cemetery that contains the grave of a Civil War veteran. Calvin Sjuts, the farmer, has owned the land surrounding the Granville Cemetery for about 32 years. In 1976, Mr. Sjuts installed a center pivot irrigation system to water his land. The large wheels of the irrigation equipment began leaving some well worn tracks which cross a portion of the cemetery. Mr. Sjuts claims that the tracks do not cross over any graves. However, irrigation pipe and sprinklers do pass over the graves.

The Granville Cemetery was incorporated in 1881. Seventeen stone grave markers identify some of those buried in the cemetery, and there is evidence of as many as 20 more unmarked graves. One marker stands over the grave of Francis H. Baker, who served in the Civil War. A few individuals think that more people are buried in the cemetery and have placed 49 white crosses in the cemetery to assert their estimate. In 2003, Mr. Sjuts quietly filed a title action against the Granville Cemetery Association so that he could take ownership of the property. He claimed that the cemetery had been abandoned and that the association no longer functioned and cared for the cemetery.

Nancy Hartman, a Bellwood genealogist, became aware of the condition of the cemetery in 2001 and began contacting descendants of those individuals who are interred there to get help in fixing up the cemetery. She contacted Mary Schott of Alliance and her sister, Roberta Sherman of rural Valentine. Their great-

grandparents, Adin and Dianna Potter, sold the land for the cemetery shortly after their 2-month-old daughter died. The daughter was buried in the new cemetery which could be seen from the window of the Potter home. The Potters moved west in about 1890 and the cemetery was eventually forgotten. Two other great-grandparents of Mary Schott are also buried at the Granville Cemetery.

The family of Mary Schott hired an attorney to look into the matter when they learned of the condition of the cemetery. As a result of their efforts, the cemetery board was reactivated in February 2004 and their first action was to build a fence around the cemetery.

The case initiated by Mr. Sjuts eventually went to the Nebraska Supreme Court. The court ruled against Mr. Sjuts, stating that "A cemetery is as public a place as a courthouse, or a market. It may not be frequented as much, but visits to it are necessary and as certain. We may keep away from the courthouse, and avoid the market, but the place of the dead none may shun." Judge Lindsey Miller-Lerman also said there was no legal evidence that the cemetery had been abandoned and even though the cemetery appeared abandoned, those buried there deserved protection. "We owe them a lot," Nancy Hartman said when she heard the decision of the court. "It's our responsibility to care for the people who passed on before us."

## Recently Published: Getting Started in Genealogy Online, Digital Genealogist

### Getting Started in Genealogy Online

Bill Dollarhide has written a book for those getting started in online genealogy research called *Getting Started in Genealogy Online*. The book does not start with the Internet. Mr. Dollarhide provides some sound research principles. The book starts with home sources and suggests interviewing all of the older relatives and the more distant relatives in the family.

The chapters about the use of the Internet also follow a logical procedure for good research. The book discusses obtaining death certificates and continues with funeral records, cemetery records, Social Security Death Index, federal census records, online lineage-linked databases, and many other kinds of records. Each Web site is described, followed by the URL.

A chapter titled *Research Help for the Addicted* lists the Web sites of professional genealogists, genealogy magazines, online genealogy newsletters, genealogy blogs and the top twenty genealogy books recommended by Mr. Dollarhide. The chapter titled *Genealogy Resource Centers in the States* contains a detailed listing of all the larger libraries, archives, and other records repositories throughout the United States. The book has nothing about research for families outside the United States.

Bill Dollarhide is a well-known genealogist, author, and lecturer. He has been awarded the Award of Merit from the American Society of Genealogists, an Award of Appreciation from the

National Genealogical Society and Awards of Appreciation from state-wide genealogical societies and associations in California, Missouri, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington. He has been featured at seminars for more than 600 genealogical societies since he started as a lecturer in 1985. He is the author of a number of other genealogy books and has been conducting research on his family history since 1971.

*Getting Started in Genealogy Online* is a 64-page booklet that sells for \$12.95. It can be ordered online at: <http://tinyurl.com/h9rx8> or from other sources by specifying ISBN number 0806317701.

### Digital Genealogist

Following the announcement that the magazine, *Genealogical Computing*, will no longer be published, a new electronic magazine, *Digital Genealogist*, has been announced. The new magazine will come in electronic format as a ".pdf" file which can be read with Adobe Acrobat Reader. The content of the new magazine will be similar to that of *Genealogical Computing*. In fact, many of the same authors and columnists will be writing for the new publication.

The first issue of *Digital Genealogist* will be sent to subscribers in November 2006. Subscriptions cost \$20 per year and can be ordered online at: [www.digitalgenealogist.com](http://www.digitalgenealogist.com) or by mail at: Digital Genealogist, LLC, P.O. Box 6386, Plymouth, MI 48170-8486.

# The Wild World of Wiki

By Janet Brigham Rands

Think of a world in which you can step onto a stage and say whatever you want. “Pickles are best eaten chilled,” you explain from the stage. “Consider the case of an albacore tuna sandwich, which contains chilled, crunchy bits of pickle. It can be both distasteful and unsafe to eat it at room temperature.”

Next, imagine that someone can step onto that same stage and change what you said to something they prefer. Instead of endorsing chilled pickles, your statement now reports that “Pickles are best eaten warm, since the flavor improves when they are heated, as in a grilled tuna sandwich.” You might step back onto the stage and amend the newly edited statement (but not too many times): “Pickles are best eaten chilled, although this is not a universal preference.”

If you’ve done this online through a type of Web page that allows “collaborative authoring,” you have entered the world—some would say the wilderness—of wiki. It is becoming a popular place.

In Hawaiian, the word wiki refers to quick. The concept of quick sharing of human knowledge is at the core of the technology labeled wiki: “Imagine a world in which every person has free access to the sum of all human knowledge. That’s what we’re doing.” That is from a WikiMedia page requesting donations to keep this newly popular form of communication available and viable. The next phrase in this no-free-lunch site states: “And we need your help.” It’s clear that many are responding to the call to help build the word of wiki.

## What Is Wiki, Exactly?

A wiki is a type of Web page that allows editing by others as well as the original author. What differentiates a wiki page from a typical Web page is that once the material is posted, others can modify it. Nonetheless, rules apply, to keep the discourse civil and the changing manageable.

The concept of wiki dates back more than a decade and has expanded in the last few years thanks largely to the popularity of a Website called Wikipedia, the best-known wiki. Wikipedia.com, a massive online encyclopedia of more than 1,355,300 articles, is still being built from donated descriptions of nearly any encyclopedic topic imaginable.

Wikipedia is posted in English, although smaller numbers of articles are available in at least 10 other languages. The quality of the articles varies, but the editability ingredient in the wiki technology allows persons other than the original author to comment on or fix inaccuracies in the original. This is not to say that a wiki is always a free-for-all.

If you look up genealogy and computing in Wikipedia, you will be led to an article about Ancestry.com, the owner of the soon-to-be-defunct magazine *Genealogical Computing*. The Ancestry article is locked, so that it cannot be edited by just-anyone who happens to take issue with its content. Comments have to be submitted and cannot be made directly onto the article, because a conflict between Ancestry and some other party has not been resolved.

On the other hand, a Wikipedia article about nicotine can be edited freely by anyone who chooses to do so. Users can access a history tab listing the changes that have been made to the article. On August 30, someone edited the Wikipedia entry on nicotine to improve its syntax. The author had written that large doses of nicotine can cause “vomit and nausea,” whereas the edited version now says “vomiting and nausea”. Unpleasant in either case, but now stated more clearly. A side-by-side comparison of versions shows just what changes were made. The history provides the Wikipedia username of the individuals who have made changes. Some wikis do not require registration for making changes; Wikipedia does not require it but recommends it.

Wikipedia is governed by these five rules of its character: (1) Wikipedia is an encyclopedia, “not an indiscriminate collection of information. It is not a collection of source documents or trivia, a dictionary, a soapbox, a newspaper, vanity publisher, an experiment in anarchy or democracy....” (2) Wikipedia has a neutral point of view. (3) Wikipedia is free content that anyone may edit: “Any writing you contribute can be mercilessly edited and redistributed at will by the community.” (4) Wikipedia’s code of conduct involves respect; civility; acting in good faith; and being “open, welcoming, and inclusive.” (5) The fifth rule is that there are no other rules; edit freely and extensively, and don’t worry about messing up, because Wikipedia keeps backups of its content.

## Why Is Wiki So Popular?

Why not? A wiki is an open, often free, platform, designed for the novice to create and access. Some wiki Web pages are so loaded with hyperlinks that a person with no background in the subject matter can link to other wiki pages with description of nearly every noun.

Perhaps one reason wikis are popular is because they seem like living documents. In at least one way, a wiki is not dissimilar to an email list. As those who have participated in email lists know, “flame wars” can erupt, sometimes causing meltdown of a list as the discourse deteriorates into livid exchanges. In the wiki world, this is called an edit war. Wiki rules can limit the number of times an author can “revert” changed text back to its original state. In the case of vandalism, however, authors are allowed to restore text to its pre-vandalized state.

## How Can I Create a Wiki?

First, if you plan to post a public wiki, prepare yourself mentally and emotionally to be edited. Consider a statement (paraphrased here) that belongs on every editor’s wall: “The greatest desire is not love or hate. It is the need to change another’s copy.” The word change has been crossed out and replaced with the word edit, which in turn has been crossed out and replaced with alter. And so forth. If you don’t like being edited, you might want to bypass a public wiki.

Wikis also can be private, with collaborative authoring limited to an invited group, such as co-authors working mutually on documents. This application could be useful for a cluster of family members working together on a genealogy manuscript. It saves the hassle of sending manuscripts back and forth by email and reconciling numerous people’s changes. Everyone can see the docu-

ment in its present state and can make modifications that all can see.

Also, prepare to learn a new lexicon. You'll want to locate a wiki farm (look it up in Wikipedia) where you can post your material. Some are free, and some involve a fee. From there, plan to add such terms as sock puppet and wikitext to your vocabulary.

Don't worry—in true wiki fashion, wikis will define the new terms with wiki links.

### How can I learn more?

How else? Look up wiki in Wikipedia at: [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

## Ask the Doc — “I Give No Answers Before Their Time!”

By Dr. Cornelius J. PAF

### Importing from Microsoft Access

**Q** I am a new PAF-user. Until this moment I put all my information about my ancestors (and this is quite a lot) in an Access-file (Microsoft ACCESS). I would like to import this information into PAF. How should I do this? I hope you know a way to do so.



**A** The only way available today for importing data into PAF from another source is through the use of the GEDCOM file format. The GEDCOM file format is a very rigid syntax standard that allows your data to be structured with a prefix code for each piece of information within a carefully crafted hierarchy that represents the family relationships.

It would not be impossible to generate a GEDCOM file from your ACCESS database, but it would take some time to perfect the file so that everything is perfectly accurate. The entire project would boil down to a question of how long it would take to generate the GEDCOM file versus how long it would take to enter everything by hand. Actually this notion intrigues me a lot. It would be sort of a test of one's skill at understanding the level of forgiveness that the GEDCOM import routine allows.

Part of the decision of generating a GEDCOM versus hand entering the data depends on the following:

- How many individuals you have in your ACCESS database, and how many families are there
- How much detail you have entered into the ACCESS database, and what is the density of these details (For example, you may have a rich ACCESS schema with lots of potential fields, but there may not be data in very many of the fields, or the records may be quite full. If the records are quite full, then that would imply going the GEDCOM route rather than hand entering the data.)
- Whether the field formats are compatible with the PAF formats (For example, are your date formats compatible, or are your place names able to be parsed correctly?)

You could consider doing the process in two stages. A GEDCOM file has two major sections. The first contains all the details about each individual, i.e., name, sex, birth date and place, death date and place, etc. The second part contains the family details, i.e., who are the father and the mother, marriage date and place, then each of the children. This family part is mostly building a

structure from the individuals in the first part by referencing their sequential reference number, and might be a difficult challenge to build in ACCESS. So you could create the first part using GEDCOM and then manually link all the families together using the PAF program.

### Missing Photos

**Q** Whether it's a Family Group Record or a Pedigree Chart, photos do not appear when I print. I checked the option "Include Photo" yet the photos do not appear. They do appear in "Preview." What is going on? Hope someone can help me. Thank you.

**A** There is a workaround for the photos not being printed when a report is sent to a file. It is impractical to do when you have lots of photos, or if you change your photos often. But if you really want to create a file with printable photos, here is what you might try doing. You will have to perform these steps for each photo.

- Open the .rtf file in MS-Word. Turn on the Show/Hide feature using the button on your tool bar. In the space where the photos are supposed to print you should see a period and the “¶” character.
- Place your Word insertion pointer (the blinking vertical bar) just before the period, and right-click on your mouse. If you don't have your insertion point in front of the period, you will get the wrong menu.
- The pop-up menu will give you an “Edit” option. Select the “Edit” option to bring up an “Edit” window. It should have the command "IncludePicture" already highlighted and the file path of the specific photo entered in the picture field. All you need to do is check the box "Data not stored with document" and click OK. (For some reason, Microsoft changed this aspect of the “IncludePicture” command after PAF5 was released, and it has never been updated in PAF5.

Your photo should now appear in the appropriate box. I found that some photos had to be resized by dragging the corners in or out to fit the space. When the photo is the correct size, click somewhere outside the photo space. I found that hitting the enter key will cause spurious results. For some reason, the “rtf” format treats the enter key strangely. Repeat this step for each photo. I recommend saving your file after each photo is fixed in case you make a mistake in the above steps.

## OFFICERS AND STAFF

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## Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group

[www.svcomputergenealogy.org](http://www.svcomputergenealogy.org)

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Please send inquiries, address changes, new memberships, and membership renewals to:  
SV-CGG, P.O. Box 23670, San Jose, CA 95153-3670 or Leslyk@earthlink.net

SV-CGG meets monthly, except December, on the second Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints building, 875 Quince Avenue, Santa Clara, CA. We offer classes and sponsor guest speakers at meetings to help family historians with computer technology and research techniques. Membership dues are US\$15 per year (US\$20 for Canada and US\$25 for other international). Members are offered classes at meetings, mentor help, *Silicon Valley PastFinder* (a monthly newsletter published each month there is a meeting).

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*Silicon Valley PastFinder* is the official publication of the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group, a nonprofit organization. Published monthly except December, *Silicon Valley PastFinder* is distributed at the door to all members attending the meeting, and mailed to others after the meeting. Members may elect to receive the newsletter by e-mail and get the PastFinder Bulletin too.

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Flash Drives with SVCGG logo and loaded with 9000 Internet genealogy sites	Available at cost on Web site and at meetings

## CLASSES FOR 14 OCTOBER 2006

Sorry, but details of the program for October are not available because a last-minute speaker is being considered. The program will be posted on our Web site when available.

For more details, go to: [www.svcomputergenealogy.org](http://www.svcomputergenealogy.org)



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The former Silicon Valley PAF Users Group

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