

Internet Genealogy

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Basic Internet Research Tips

- Think of the Internet as an online “library” of information.
- Web pages are like “books” in the Internet library.
- The Internet Library never closes so you can research at a time that is convenient for you.
- The information available is constantly changing.
- The Internet won’t solve all of your genealogical problems.
- Information you find on the Internet should be scrutinized carefully.
- There are many different methods and tools for finding Web sites.
- The best way to find information on the Internet is to learn to use its “card catalogue” aka Directories and Search Engines.

Directories & Search Engines

- A **Directory** is a list of Web site URLs compiled with human guidance.
- Information in the directory may be arranged alphabetically or divided into subheadings.
- Caution: Website titles may not fully described what information is available, ie: A web site entitled “My Family” does not tell you what surnames are included.
- **Genealogy Directories**
 - Cyndi’s List <http://www.cyndislist.com> is the best-known directory for Genealogists.
 - Internet Genealogy Directory <http://www.chez.com/agi/intro2.htm>
 - Google Directory <http://directory.google.com/Top/Society/Genealogy/>
 - All Genealogy Sites <http://all-genealogysites.com/>
 - Genealogy and Family History Directory <http://genealogy.freewebsitehosting.com/>
- A **Search Engine** allows you to search for anything on the Internet.
- It allows you to type in certain key words or phrases, which get compared to the database of links at the search engine site, and then displays a list of possible matches.
- It is based on electronic computations.
- **General Search Engine sites**
 - Google <http://www.google.com>
 - AltaVista <http://altavista.com>
 - Excite <http://www.excite.com>
 - Lycos <http://www.lycos.com>
 - Yahoo! <http://www.yahoo.com>
 - Go.com <http://www.go.com>
 - Ask Jeeves <http://www.ask.com>
- **Metasearches**
 - A way of searching multiple search engines at the same time.
 - The number of search engines used in a metasearch will vary.

- Warning: Some metasearch sites have been known to hi-jack computers.
- Dogpile <http://www.dogpile.com/index.gsp>
- MetaCrawler (www.metacrawler.com)
- Hotbot <http://www.hotbot.com>
- **Genealogy-Specific Search Engines**
 - Genealogy Portal.com <http://www.genealogyportal.com>
 - The Genealogy Register <http://www.genealogyregister.com>
 - Genlink.org http://www.genlink.org/en/index_en.shtml
 - NedGen <http://www.nedgen.nl>
 - Surname Finder <http://www.surnamefinder.com>
 - Ancestor Search <http://www.searchforancestors.com>
 - Family Tree Magazine <http://familytreemagazine.com/search>
- **Search Tips**
 - Google search helps <http://www.google.ca/help/basics.html>
 - MSN search tips <http://search.msn.com/docs/help.aspx>

Types of Genealogy-Specific Web Sites

- **Searchable Databases**
 - Where did the compiler get the information?
 - Is this information from original sources?
 - Ancestry.com <http://www.ancestry.com>
 - Familysearch.org <http://www.familysearch.org>
- **Compiled Family Histories**
 - Usually submitted by individuals.
 - Look for source citations or owner contact information.
 - Janice's Genealogy Page <http://telusplanet.net/public/jcushman/genmain.html>
 - Judi's Genealogy <http://www3.telus.net/public/judimlee/index.htm>
- **Abstracts, Transcriptions, or Digitized Images**
 - Transcription - A verbatim copy of the record.
 - <http://www.us-census.org/inventory/>
 - Abstract – A record of just the pertinent facts.
 - <http://www.co.clark.nv.us/recorder/certs.htm>
 - Digitized Images – A digital photo of the original record.
 - http://content.ancestry.com/Browse/view.aspx?dbid=8054&iid=MAM432_304-0366
- **Commercial Sites**
 - You must pay money or subscribe to access the information.
 - Includes sites that sell genealogy specific software (FTM, Master Genealogist, Progeny, Legacy, etc.)
 - Genealogy.com http://genealogy.com/index_r.html
 - Ancestry.com <http://www.ancestry.com>
 - 1901 British Census <http://www.1901census.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.html>
 - Everton's Genealogical Helper <http://www.familytreemaker.com>

- Family Tree Maker/Genealogy.com
<http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/wftonline/>
- One Great Family <http://www.onegreatfamily.com>
- Ohana Software <http://www.ohanasoftware.com>
- **Online Library Catalogs**
 - Family History Library Catalog <http://www.familysearch.org>
 - Cyndi's List/ Libraries <http://www.cyndislist.com/lib-lending.htm>
- **Discussion Areas**
 - Bulletin Boards
 - Contains messages from individuals to which others can post a response.
 - Each bulletin board has a subject.
 - Some bulletin boards offer e-mail notification when someone responds to your post.
 - Rootsweb.com <http://boards.ancestry.com/mbexec?htx=main&r=rw>
 - GenForum <http://genforum.genealogy.com>
 - Genealogical Journeys
<http://www.genealogicaljourneys.com/wwwboard/wwwboard.html>
 - Mailing Lists
 - Individuals send an e-mail message to specific e-mail address. That message is then sent out via e-mail to all individuals who are on the list.
 - RootsWeb <http://lists.rootsweb.com>
 - Yahoo!Groups <http://groups.yahoo.com>
 - CFHC Patron Mail List
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CFHCPatronNewsletter>
 - Newsgroups
 - Similar to Bulletin Boards but subjects are generally broader.
 - You must seek them out and have the ability to read them.
 - Contain threaded messages.
 - Google Groups <http://groups.google.com>
 - UseNet Newsgroups http://www.rootsweb.com/~jfuller/gen_use.html
 - Chat Rooms
 - Real time conversation with fellow researchers.
 - Genealogy Forum <http://www.genealogyforum.org>
 - Web Rings
 - See definition below.
 - http://directory.google.com/Top/Society/Genealogy/Web_Rings
 - Blogs
 - See definition below
 - Example: see Eastman's Genealogy Newsletter/Blog
<http://www.eogn.com/>
 - Create your own blog at Blogger <http://www.blogger.com/start?hl=en>
- **Newsletters**
 - Eastman's Genealogy Newsletter/Blog <http://www.eogn.com/>
 - Family Tree Maker Newsletter
<http://genealogy.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.familytreemagazine.com%2Fnewsletter.asp>

- **Country-Specific Web Sites**
 - USGenWeb <http://www.usgenweb.com>
 - GENUKI <http://www.genuki.org.uk>
 - Scots Origins [Scots Origins - Genealogy data for family history research in Scotland](#)
 - Canada GenWeb <http://www.rootsweb.com/%7Ecanwgv/html/e-index.html>
 - Danish Demographic Database http://ddd.sa.dk/DDD_EN.HTM
 - Ancestry.ca <http://www.ancestry.ca>

- **Tutorials**
 - BYU Family History Tutorials <http://ce.byu.edu/is/genealogy>
 - FamilySearch/Education http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Library/Education/frameset_education.asp?PAGE=education_homestudy.asp
 - Family Tree Maker <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/university.html?priority=0000900>
 - Heritage Quest <http://www.heritagequest.com/gen101/index.html>

Organize Your Favourite Web Sites with Bookmarks

- Save and organize Bookmarks (aka Favourites) in your browser to help you find your favourite Web sites quickly.
- You can create subfolders for these URLs (ie: surnames, localities, history, societies, miscellaneous)

Internet Terms

Blog - A blog or weblog is a web page made up of usually short, frequently updated posts that are arranged chronologically—like a what's new page or a journal.

Bookmark – In your browser software it records the necessary information for returning to a Web site. This way you don't have to follow the same links you did when you originally located the site. You just open a special section of your browser and select the site from a list. Also called *Favorites*.

Boolean search – A search based on the mathematics of inclusion and exclusion depending on which operator (AND,OR,NOT) you use.

Bulletin Board – a space on the Internet where messages can be posted for others to see and comment on.

Chat Room - An online discussion group which facilitates simultaneous live electronic discussion.

Database – A searchable, compiled, and computerized list. It could be used to select items that include death records, or it could be used to research for certain names.

Download – To receive a file sent from another computer via modem. *Download* is synonymous with *receive*, while *upload* is synonymous with *transmit*.

Export – To transfer data from one computer to another or from one application to another. See *Import*.

E-Zines – Electronic newsletters. They come out at set intervals and can be a number of different lengths. (example: Missing Links <http://rwr.rootsweb.com/2005.html> , Eastman's Online Newsletter <http://www.eogn.com>)

Frames – Offer a way of viewing multiple windows in a single browser.

Gazetteer – A dictionary for places that give you details about the place, including the county it is in.

GEDCOM – Stands for Genealogical Data COMmunication. It allows you to share your information with other genealogy programs without having to type it all in again. You can use the file created to generate a Web page.

Import – To bring a file created in one application or system into another application or system.

Mailing List – A group of individuals that discuss a single idea, locality, surname or record type. The messages arrive in your e-mail box just as other e-mail does. (CFHC mailing list - CFHCPatronNewsletter-subscribe@yahoogle.com)

Metasearch Engine – A site where you type in your keywords and then the site generates searches in a number of different search engine sites. (Example: Dogpile <http://www.dogpile.com/index.gsp>)

Newsgroups – Message areas where online discussions on a given topic take place. They require a newsgroup reader to view and respond to the messages. These readers are built into IE and Netscape.

Online – Refers to the successful connection with another computer via a modem, cable line, or network.

Queries – Request for help regarding a particular line that you are having problems with, posted online on bulletin boards and other message areas.

Surfing – When you go from a link on one page to a link on another page, going from one Web site to another.

URL (uniform resource locator)- The address of a page on the Internet.

Web Browser – A software application that allows you to maneuver around the Internet. The browser lets the user access sites on the Internet either by links within other pages or by typing in the URL of a Web page. (Netscape, Internet Explorer, etc.)

Web Rings - A **web ring** is group of related web pages linked to each other in a sequence that forms a ring. When someone searching the web stumbles across one of the web ring's pages, they can click through to other sites that have related content. Web content-providers can add their pages to the ring by 'linking in' to the ring so that web surfers are more likely to encounter their

site. Web rings usually have a moderator who controls which pages are 'related' and which are orthogonal to the purpose of the web ring.

Web site (Web Page)– A location managed by a single entity that provides information such as text, graphics, and audio files to users as well as connections (called *hyperlinks* or links) to other Web sites on the Internet. Every Web site has a *home page*, the initial document seen by users, which acts as a table of contents to the rest of the site.

Bibliography

The Genealogist's Computer Companion by Rhonda R. McClure, Published by Writer's Digest Books, Cincinnati, Ohio, 2002.

Finding Information on the Internet: A Tutorial

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/FindInfo.html>

Internet Genealogy Website, <http://www.internet-genealogy.com/>