**Genealogy SIG**

**July 26, 2016**

**Using Ancestry Like a Pro**

* You may find it helpful to use 2 screens while doing your research. i.e. – display your tree on your laptop and the various internet webpages (using multiple tabs and even multiple browsers) on your regular monitor. (in some cases it’s also possible to add a 2nd monitor)
* To succeed in your research, you need to set specific – and manageable, or small – goals. Be focused.
* Always start with “what you know.” The Vital Records - DOB; DOM; DOD.
* There can be inconsistencies in these records; you need to be *at least* 90% certain. . . you must confirm how you know what you say you know!
* Once you decide what you want to know, you need to ask “where might I find that?”
* If you’re using Family Tree Maker, or Ancestry you have the added bonus of “hints” – the leaves accompanying the entry of various persons in your tree. Tip - open these sources in a different tab in your browser(s).
* Given what you now have – Analyze; Question; Write - you can do so in both FTM and Ancestry.

Two standalone software programs are available in PC/Mac/Tablet and Mobile versions that would also serve your needs: **OneNote** or **Evernote**. However, when using the genealogy family tree software, your notes are attached to your people’s profile.

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/store/p/onenote/9wzdncrfhvjl>

<https://www.evernote.com/Home.action#n=b8a1a007-145b-43dd-87f0-2134b64e08c6&ses=4&sh=2&sds=5&>

* You should now do a “Person Search” – on the various websites that may house relevant and useful information. If in the beginning stage of research on an individual, you might want to start by using just the last name. Look for different ways to display the search results. Expect to find discrepancies and/or conflicts in information contained in “hints.”
* Next step is a Location Based Search. *Be sure to use the various filtering tools that appear in drop-down menus*. For a simple approach, choose your target State from a U. S. Map or listing of States. This will often reveal a listing of all available Data Bases.
* Be sure to use the Card Catalog for a Location Based Search. (select it from the drop-down menu under Search)
* Next use the Learning Center; the last item on this Menu is Family History Wiki. Type your target State in the Search Box; this normally brings up a recap of Vital Records (birth, death, marriage) as well as a complete summary of all data bases kept by the State. It should indicate when record keeping started, what records are available and where they’re located. Remember, not all records are online – for various reasons. (if they keep them it’s generating revenue for the State!)
* After completing the above steps, you’re now ready to attach pertinent records that you’ve located to your people in your tree. Review records you’ve located one last time for accuracy and consistency with other records you may already have, or are adding at the same time. In some cases, you’ll find that the physical record is kept by a City/County Library, a Historical Society or elsewhere – not the State.

To use the Ancestry.com feature “Learning Center” that was hugely popular and helpful prior to their upgrade and redesign, click on this link. You’ll see that major changes have been made, both in design and content.

<http://www.ancestry.com/cs/learning/Home>

For more Videos from Ancestry.com, visit their You Tube channel. Try sorting results using the drop-down Menu at the top right-hand corner of the screen.

<http://youtube.com/user/ancestrycom>