

Genealogy: Chasing Your Family Roots

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Beginning Family History or Genealogy

1. Record parents, grandparents-- birth dates, marriage locations, and children.
2. Find old photos and write names and dates that you know on the back
3. Identify old letters written by family members
4. Note cemetery locations if known
5. Work one generation at a time
6. Remember that families traveled with friends or in groups
7. Write “story” about your parents or grandparents
 - How did they meet?
 - Where did they date?
 - What was their favorite activity?
 - Who were their friends?
 - Did they attend a church?
 - What was their occupation?
 - Did your mother or grandmother cook or sew or run a business?
 - What was their occupation or trade?
 - Did they homestead and where?

Starting your family history

1. Write it down—*(put it in a shoe box or safe if you do not wish to go further!!)*
2. If able to use a computer obtain a computer program to help organize the data such as Family Tree Maker

Sources for help

1. Another researcher—most will assist as all were beginners at one time.
Remember that someone is probably working on a part of the same line.
2. Topeka-Shawnee County Public Library www.tscpl.org
3. State Historical Library (Has hours and closed on Sunday /Monday at present)
4. LDS Stake Church in west Topeka on Kingsrow Road (Has hours)
5. Topeka Genealogical Society on Indiana Street (Has hours)
6. Professional researchers (Most charge a fee on an hourly or unit basis)

On Line resources

1. Ancestry.com (subscription) (Available free at Topeka-Shawnee Co. Library)
2. Ancestry.com for DNA (sign up at the home page for a test kit)
3. Family Search.com(sponsored by LDS Church- free online)
May find information from the submitter of an individual.
4. Bureau of Land Management (Government source of homestead patents- free)
5. USGenWeb.com(free)—One can find information on any state/county
6. Newspapers.com (Site of digital newspapers cost but free to try)
7. DAR and SAR records (DAR is available for a fee on line)
8. Family Tree Maker (FTM) found at Ancestry.com (Good program for recording information)
9. ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov (Free site of historical newspapers on-line)
10. FaceBook now is listing genealogy information (I have no experience with it)

Remember everything that is written might not be true or accurate! This Includes Government documents!