

West Houston Area Genealogy Society



March 2021

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"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Lao Tzu

Presenting Virtually!

March 11, 2021 Kyla Bayang will present "Maximizing Your Use of Ancestry.com".

She will be responding to member submitted questions. Some topics included are menus and sub-menus, new features, and best searching techniques.

Kyla is a Library

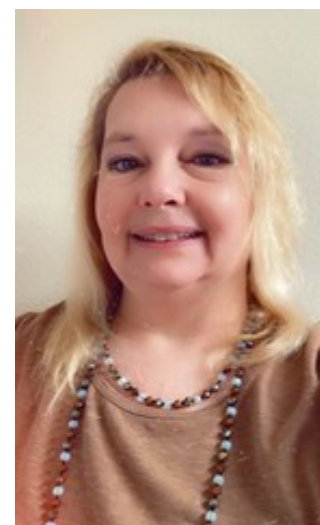
Services Specialist at Lone Star College -Tomball Community Library, and she leads the Rootsquad Genealogy group.

Our Zoom will open at 12:30 pm and the program starts at 1:00 pm.

Register at

www.houstonfamgen.org

to receive the link to attend.



"Getting Started on Ancestry.com" by Ancestry®

This article is the first of five lessons on getting started on using Ancestry.com. To get to the other four lessons log onto Ancestry. In the top black search bar, go to *Help*, then *Support Center* and

type in *Getting Started*.

The first step in building a family tree, regardless of where you are building it, is gathering the records you already have. These records include:

- Family group sheets, pedigree charts, and books of remembrance

Cont. on page 3



The President's Note....

Greetings,

As I write this note, we are in the midst of one of the worst *winter* events in Houston's history. Weather forecasters are going all the way back to 1989 for a comparable cold spell. There are rolling power outages all over Texas with many suffering extreme hardships. I so hope you have found ways to stay warm.

It is up to each of us to choose our view of this '*wintering*' time in our lives. The same is true for the organization. Spring is coming, let's be ready. I invite you to join me in seeing our organization's many opportunities to grow beyond this '*winter*' in ways we would never have imagined just a few years back. Please continue to partner with your leadership team to support what is possible.

We are adding to our successes every month! The new Members Helping Members offerings have been a hit. Our monthly speakers have been outstanding. The webinars from TxSGS were very well received. Our wonderful newsletter and website are just the frosting on the cake in terms of keeping you informed and providing you with more genealogy knowledge.

Your board just voted unanimously to upgrade to a paid subscription to Wix, our web hosting platform. Members at the February members' business meeting embraced our new name—West Houston Area Genealogy Society, WHAGS! At the same meeting, members gave the

bylaws committee a thumbs up on the first round of revisions. The revisions paved the way to establishing a nominating committee to fill our open board vacancies for the 2021-2022 year.

I ask each of you to think about what you can contribute to the society during 2021-2022. Do you have secretarial skills? Are you able to call and keep fellow members informed about upcoming events? Can you assist with programming by working with a speaker or two if you have a checklist to go by? Do you have leadership experience and skills?

If a member of the nominating committee calls, please ask questions to help you decide whether you will say, 'yes'. Hope you will. Start now to consider whether serving on the WHAGS board is an opportunity you would embrace.

Stay tuned as we work to bring you more exciting adventures in finding your roots!

Jenny Sharrer, President

Contact me at
jennysharrer@sbcglobal.net

“Getting Started on Ancestry” *cont’d from pg 1.*

- Family Bibles
- Journals, diaries, and letters
- Photographs
- Obituaries and newspaper clippings
- Birth, marriage, and death certificates

You may want to organize information in a paper chart before entering it online. Ancestry has some free sheets you can download. These include a “Family Group Record” and a pedigree or “Ancestral Chart”. They are not editable. These are located in the *Support Center* by typing in “Free Charts and Forms”.

Personal interviews with family members can help you gather information about your ancestors. Members of your family may remember important details or have family heirlooms, records, or photos that can help you. Take notes.

Entering information in a tree

Names: Enter full names when possible. Use maiden names for women (leaving off their married names; these are implied by any spouses they have in the tree). For more information on when to use maiden names, search in the *Support Center* for “*When to Use Maiden Names.*”

Dates: List dates in dd mmm yyyy format (for example: 25 Dec 1928). If you’re unsure of the day or year, use the words *before*, *after*, or *about* before the date. You can also use *ca.* (circa) to indicate an estimate.

Places: Record as much information as possible about where an event happened. List the city first, then the county, and the country last (for example: “Venice, Veneto, Italy”). Put a comma and a space between the locations and include the country. Include all known locations of a place when not all levels are known.

Starting a tree

Most people start their tree with themselves and include all known ancestors in a single tree. Some start a separate tree for each parent or grandparent.

However you organize your tree, Ancestry recommends that you begin with the most recent person and work your way back.

From any page on Ancestry, click the *Trees* tab and select *Start a New Tree*. If *Start a New Tree* isn’t an option on the *Trees* tab, select *Create & Manage Trees* instead. On the page that appears, click *Create a new tree*.

Click *Add Yourself* or *Add home person*.

Enter information and click *Save* or *Continue*.

Cont'd

Click *Add Father* or *Add Mother*, enter their information, and click *Save*.

Follow the prompt to add more people or to name the tree. Once your tree is created, you can access it from the *Trees* tab.

Sharing your tree

It's relatively easy to share your tree with friends or family. From any page on *Ancestry*, click the *Trees* tab. On the drop down, select *Create & Manage Trees*. Click on *Invite family* that shows up under you as the **Owner** of the tree. You then have the choice of adding the person either using their email or their *Ancestry* username. Next, you have the option of adding them as a Guest, Contributor or Editor. It is optional to add a personal message to go along with your invitation.

The other four getting started lessons are:

- Building Your Tree

- Finding Records

- Collaboration

- Search Tips

There are additional articles in Ancestry's Support Center. Check them out!

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"Why I Dabble in Genealogy" by Tom W. Matchett

I'm sure most of us have said one time or another, "I wish I had talked to mom, granny, or auntie about our family tree." I surely do! I believe my mother knew how all her family fit together. Had I had a 'tree talk' with her, I could have saved many Ancestry.com or MyHeritage.com fees.

Growing up during post WW2 in Pittsburgh, I would often hear my mother talk about her relatives, when she was hosting family gatherings. This was even more evident when my Aunt Rebecca came to visit from Philadelphia. They were quite close as sisters as they had emigrated to the US together from County Donegal, Ireland in the 1920s. Only later did I realize that many of the relatives they were talking about were their first and second cousins, sometimes a couple of generations removed.

I knew I had two first cousins in the US on my mother's side and one on my father's side (yes, my father was an Irish immigrant, too, from County Antrim). But, I didn't know how most of these other "relatives" fit into my life. Growing up, I don't remember my folks talking much about their parents and siblings or life in Ireland. Later, I found out my maternal grandparents had both died the year I was born. My paternal grandfather died shortly after the end of the war. In my early teens, my parents took my brother and me on a two plus month visit to Ireland. It was the first time they were back in almost 20 years. Wow! Relatives everywhere! At least 13 direct aunts and uncles and 20 plus first cousins on both sides. Some of my cousins have remained lifelong friends, connections, and sources for genealogical information and collaboration. Looking back, this trip was the beginning of the journey that's led to where I am in genealogy today.



Thus, to know my family and know from whence I came has been an important part of my life. So, be sure to have "tree talks" with your older family members to find out from "whence you came".

County Donegal, Ireland

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My maternal grandparents and other family members are buried here at Kilcashel Cemetery, Loughros Point, Ardara, County Donegal.

Near where my mother was born, Loughros, Ardara, County Donegal.



The remains of the vine covered church, upper center, are over 600 years old. The Matchett burying ground in Aghalee, County Antrim, Northern Ireland.

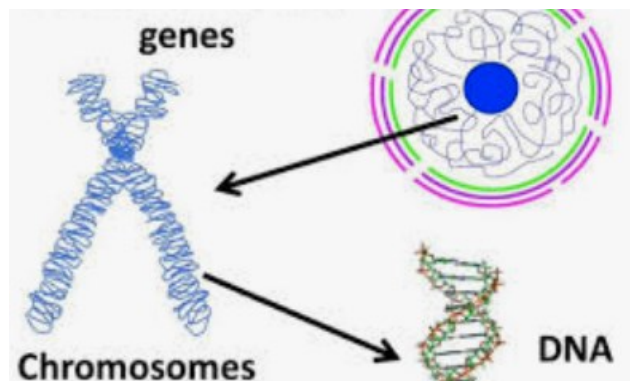
“Getting to Know Your Genes” by Mark Winzenburg ©

Linda Hudson asked me to write about DNA for our newsletter. This is the first of what may be a few columns. DNA can be an amazing tool for genealogists. It can also be bewildering. I will offer my ideas on how to use it and understand it. If you have any questions or comments, please write to me: mlwinzenburg@gmail.com

A cousin asked me why she should take a DNA test. After all, she said, “I know my family tree.” The answer is that DNA tests help you find cousins that you don’t already know. Some of these cousins have pictures and family stories that you didn’t know. Prior to testing my DNA, I knew my mother’s grandparents’ names and that most of them came to the US from Canada. DNA led me to two cousins who knew where in Canada (SW Ontario and Nova Scotia) and stories of how they got there. Another cousin filled in the story of my matrilineal line, which was Silesian Polish, not German as we had believed. Even if you know your entire family tree six generations back, the practical limit of an autosomal DNA test (like Ancestry.com’s test), DNA testing will help you confirm that your research is correct.

One of my brothers refuses to take a DNA test. He’s worried that the information will be misused by big corporations or the government. That’s a risk I suppose, but I judge it to be a small one. If anyone really wants your DNA, it is trivially easy to get it. We leave it behind on coffee cups and tissues everywhere. The practical downside of DNA testing is that you may find out

something you’d rather not have known. People have discovered that their Dad isn’t their biological father. One cousin found a half sister that her Dad had never disclosed.



Autosomal DNA testing is by far the most common type of DNA test. Prices vary but typically run under \$100. These tests examine the first twenty-two chromosomes of your nuclear DNA. They don’t typically test your sex chromosomes, the X (women and men) or Y (men only). Each test checks about 0.03% of the DNA genome. At each tested position along the DNA chain, the test finds one of four values – A, T, C or G. The chemistry behind this isn’t important to us. The test result gives you a list of other testers and how much of their DNA matches yours, an approximation of how closely related they are to you. This is the most important part of the test. The DNA test results also report an estimate of your ancestral ethnicity. These ethnicity estimates are mostly for entertainment value. The percentage of your DNA that is typical of European, African, Asian, or Native American populations is probably valid, as are some distinct populations like Ashkenazi Jewish. Differences between English and Norwegian and German are much less certain and not worth worrying about IMHO.

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Y chromosome testing is largely done by Family Tree DNA (FTDNA), YSEQ, and Full Genomes Corp (FGC). 23 and Me's autosomal DNA test covers enough of the Y chromosome to offer a less precise result. Y DNA is passed down almost unchanged from father to son over many generations, giving you a look at the deep history of your patrilineal line. This is a huge topic and should be covered in another article.

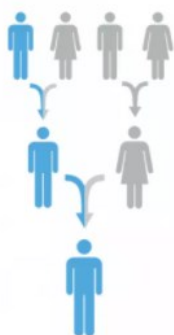


Image source: LivingDNA

FTDNA also tests the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA). 23 and Me's autosomal DNA test covers enough of the mtDNA to offer a less precise result. mtDNA is outside the cell nucleus, not part of the 22 autosomal chromosomes and the X and Y chromosomes. It is passed down more or less unchanged from mother to children, so it provides deep insight into your matrilineal line. It has limited use in genealogy but can be used to confirm or deny an uncertain ancestry. More on this later, too.

Complete tests of the DNA (all ~3 billion positions) are now available for less than \$1,000. As of yet these don't have much value to genealogy but may be useful for assessment of medical and trait (e.g. eye color) data. I personally have no experience with these tests.

The primary autosomal DNA testing companies are Ancestry.com, 23 and Me, Family Tree DNA (FTDNA), My Heritage, and Living DNA (British centric). Which DNA test should you take first? I recommend the autosomal test from Ancestry.com. Ancestry has the largest number of participants, meaning more cousin matches than other tests. Just as important are the family trees that your matches may identify. While I never assume that a posted tree is 100% correct, the first 3-4 generations frequently are, which allows me to understand how we are related. The 23 and Me test is the second test I would take. It provides a rough estimate of the Y and mtDNA lineage and has the second largest database of users. I also recommend uploading your Ancestry and/or 23 and Me results to FTDNA. This is free, although unlocking cousin matching costs about \$20. FTDNA has a much smaller user base and very few family trees, so matching there is often more difficult. FTDNA does have some really good in-depth analysis tools, including a chromosome browser. They also have limited support of X chromosome matching, a feature that helped me find a cousin from my mother's maternal grandfather's side of the family.

How do you use the results of the Ancestry or 23 and Me DNA test? I'll show you how I did that in the next column.



Image source: smarterhobby.com

Spotlight Member:

Gail Colby is "WHAGS" Secretary Extraordinaire

It's not often you get to work with someone who is a standout contributor and resource. Gail Colby is one of those. All of us know Gail. She is currently the Secretary of our society. She has been a member of the society since September 2017. In January 2018, she began serving as the Secretary. She holds a Certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University and has attended the Institute for Genealogical and Historical Research and the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. She has always stepped up when asked to serve.

Gail's life has taken her down some extraordinary roads. As the child of a naval officer, she has lived in many places. She was born in Southampton, Suffolk County, New York and grew up on the east coast of the US, from Key West, Florida to Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Much of her youth was spent in various parts of Virginia. Gail came to Texas in 1975 to attend Texas A&M University. She completed her degree, a BS in Anthropology, at the University of Houston.



Gail is married to a retired oil tanker captain who came ashore after twenty years in Valdez, Alaska. While in Alaska, Gail moved the Eskimo Museum from Fairbanks to Valdez and established a museum for Prince William Sound Community College. She went on to work for Alyeska Pipeline Service Company in the oil spill prevention and response arena. After fourteen years in Alaska, the family returned to Texas and Gail continued work for a major oil company in Houston. She retired in 2016 and began genealogical research as more than a hobby. Lucky for us, she has a love of genealogy and after settling in Houston decided to join our society.

As a valued member and Secretary for the society, she often contributes to conversations with great knowledge and ability to approach issues or concerns with technology assistance. Her knowledge of genealogy and technology tools is vast.

Here are a few of her recent contributions: she is serving on the bylaws committee to update the society's functionality. She is on the website committee. She is now hosting the Members Helping Members sessions. She has also led the creation and hosting of the DNA SIG. There are about sixteen of us participating in the society's first ever special interest group.

Gail joined Jenny Sharrer, our President, and Tom Woltz, our Vice President, in meeting with Bay Area Genealogical Society to learn from their practices to help us grow and better meet the needs of our membership. She is consistently brainstorming and sharing ideas to help our society become stronger and more accessible to the community. Her role as Secretary of West Houston Area Genealogy Society has grown as she now also has created spreadsheets to track and monitor the board's progress on our action plans. This is just one of her many contributions to ensure the society is robust and meeting the needs of the members. Gail, without a doubt, is a critical thinker. She is a great asset to our membership and our leadership. Thanks Gail for all you do!!

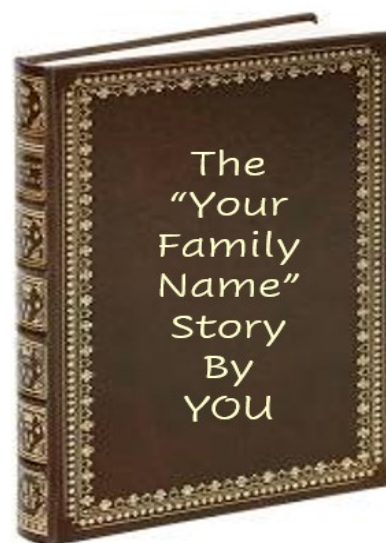
"Family History Writing Special Interest Group" by Ron Ware

Forming in the Fall 2021

You are probably the only person in your family group who enjoys the thrill of the chase: the research. You have visited libraries and archives for years. Now you have hundreds, if not thousands, of documents, photos, and stories in your computer and paper files. Others do not want to wade through your piles of documents. Their interest is in the stories. So, what happens to your research after your gone? Will your legacy be an unorganized pile of documents that probably no one will ever read? No. You need to bring those documents and photos to life by writing a family history book or better yet, multiple books.

You tell yourself that you are not a writer. Not many of us are practiced authors. You do not have to be. All you need to do is tell the stories of your ancestors in your own words. I'm in the process of completing my second book, and, among other elements of the writing craft, I don't know the difference between a colon and a semicolon. I just let the story flow and let Grammarly make grammatical corrections.

There is strength in numbers. It occurred to me that if a few of us band together, we can help each other improve our story telling. What we need is a Family History Writing Group. So, join me this September in a Special Interest Group (SIG) and we will help each other become writers.



Watch the upcoming newsletters and website for more information. See you in **September!**

West Houston Area Genealogical Society 2021-2022 Board Elections

I have accepted a request to chair the Nominating Committee for the upcoming 2021-2022 board elections. Each year we have three openings on our leadership team and this year they are President and Secretary, and one Director position. President and Secretary positions are two-year terms and the Director position is a three-year term.

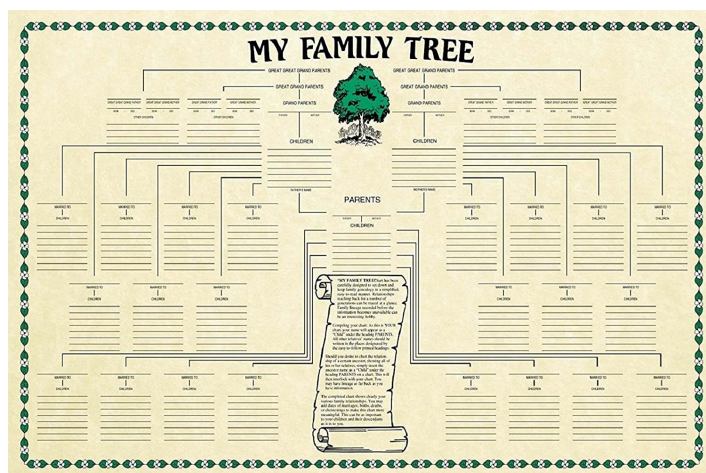
We are looking for individuals interested in joining our leadership team who wish to work to continue our current growth and success.

Job descriptions for these positions will be posted on the website on, or before, March 10st in the "Leadership" submenu under the "About Us" menu. If you are interested in running for one of the positions, please contact me by March 15th. I look forward to hearing from you!

Ron Ware
Ronware845@gmail.com

“Connecting with the Past and the Present through Ancestry.com” by Linda Hudson ©

“Ancestry” is a wonderful tool to seek out family history. It is more than leaves and records. It is people, like you, wanting to know more about their family history or make connections to them. Most of us know our immediate family. We know a few branches back in time. We have some idea about their origins. But what happens when one of our ancestors throws us a curve ball by changing their name and moving, and none of the descendants take note and record the information? Or are not around to tell us. Ancestry, if we are lucky, can provide us a path to greater knowledge.



Long before I had my DNA tested, my Mom had a quest which became my quest. My maternal grandmother's grandfather had left his wife in "Sue City" and had come to Texas. Mom knew he changed his name from Schramm, pronounced Schrum, to Schultz and that her grandfather (an only child) had followed his father to Texas when he turned 16. The real hope for my Mom was to find where her great grandfather Schultz, a doctor, was buried in Texas. So, with few facts to go on and a quite common name, the hunt began.

For a few years, I pursued the wrong Schultz in Ancestry. I knew Dr. Schultz had been a doctor in Yorktown and Indianapolis and later in Victoria. The Schultz I tried so hard to connect my Dr. Schultz to was the wrong family. In Texas, my Dr. Schultz had married again and had another son, one Otto Schultz – how original. I also did not know the name of the wife he left in "Sue City."

I had one story to work from. My Mother had recalled that a lawyer once visited my grandmother. If she knew where her grandfather, the doctor, was from there was an inheritance left by her grandmother. All she knew was Sioux City. Wrong. For most of us, Sioux City means Iowa. It got me thinking. As a result, one of my googling explorations turned up a Sauk City, Wisconsin. Of course, accents and what they are made it "Sue City" back then. Today, they call it "Sock." I was off and running. Someday, I will tell you more of this story. It is filled with great discoveries. But the reason I'm writing this is to tell you how I came to learn more.

Sauk City is in Wisconsin. Online, I was able to find that my Dr. Schultz, "Schramm," had married Julia Bosch in Wisconsin. I found she was buried in a local cemetery. I could not find much more as there were no other surviving descendants from the couple. No answers as to why he left her. Why she did not come with him. I did find after he left, she lived with a sister and her family.

I was just dying to know more.

I began researching the tree of my great-great grandmother's sister. That search

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led to a plethora of information. As I followed branches of the tree, I found one female descendant of my great-great grandaunt who had moved to Texas as a young woman. Here, she married and raised a family. I was able to track down a daughter who was on Ancestry. We conversed via Ancestry messenger and she had an awareness of my branch. As it happened, my husband and I were planning to go to Fort Worth, and this fourth cousin lived in Austin, and her Mom was in Waco. We met for lunch. It was a joyous and informative meeting. I also received an invitation to the family reunion to be held that summer in Wisconsin. I went, and the descendants of my great-great grandmother's sister had many written records to share, even some from my great-great grandfather's sister. They were very gracious and kind. Both my great-great grandparents, Theo and Julia Schramm, had descended from long lines of Lutheran ministers, and several descendants continue to be in the ministry. It was great. This encounter is my all-time greatest revelation thanks to Ancestry and being able to connect to other members. No DNA was involved. Finding the sister my ancestor lived with led me to her descendants and the rest as they say is history.

What else have I learned in my varied research? I was able to connect to my husband's birth mother's surviving daughter, his half-sibling. His mother had given him up for adoption under incredibly sad circumstances, and the birth family always wondered about him.

He was with them for four months. I also discovered the real family name of my Mother-in-Law. Her father had changed his name and never told his kids he was born with a different name. We still don't know why he changed it. It may have had something to do with his Dad and little brother both dying in the same year, and his Mom, I believe, had him live with another family. As a boy, he suffered great loss. I have also connected with people that have been invaluable in helping me solve questions in my mother's father's tree. I have discussed other lines with distant relatives who created a Facebook page for our family in Tennessee. Members ask and answer questions for those looking for help. Being able to connect to other members has been a gift in my family research. A gift that keeps on giving.

Very recently, a young man reached out and said we were first or second cousins based on DNA. He was adopted at birth. I recognized the paternal name on his birth certificate. I never knew this father. At first, I thought he was my Aunt's child. His birth father and mother had divorced before I was born. They divorced right after their four-year-old son contracted spinal meningitis and died. It made some sense that she would give up her child under such trying circumstances. However, the young man told me in a subsequent email he was born in 1971. So, not my Aunt. I have some sleuthing to do. This story will take time to unfold.

I am sharing all this because Ancestry is not just about the records that you can find. It is about talking to people and

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helping each other get the story straight. For all the wondrous conversations and insights I have had via Ancestry, I can also recall all the messages where I chose to tell someone they were barking up the wrong tree. I am a Rutledge and a Lee. Many want to believe they are related to someone famous. I thought I was, several someones in fact. I am not, and for many, neither are they. It is an art to tell someone tactfully, they are wrong. When I do, I try to briefly explain the error, and I also offer to help them. I correct them because sharing erroneous information only makes the search harder for the rest of us. Truthfully, I have found greater joy in many of the stories of the not so famous. Like those learned when I went to Wisconsin. The story of my family in Wisconsin and of my great-great grandaunt (great-great grandfathers' sister), who later came with her Mom and sister on a coffin ship is awesome, inspiring, and well documented. Ordinary people doing extraordinary things. It is amazing what hardships people survived to build a better life.

Everyone wants to get all they can from their research. Making connections to persons with similar lines may open doors for your family research. However, I don't message people just because we appear as matches. I message people because they may have a tree with information, and I'm looking for where they got that information or what led them to that conclusion. Inquiring minds want to know. A tree whose sole sources are other trees or self-made records doesn't rock my research world.

I am offering some suggestions that will hopefully make those contacts easier and more fruitful.



Image source: www.augustanahydepark.org

Things for your consideration:

- Most important, make sure your email and contact information is up to date.
- If it is a DNA match you are inquiring about, Ancestry suggests sending the message from the DNA match page. Your message will include links to your matches that you can both view.
- The most frequent reasons people attempt to make contact are for family tree information and to ask a person to upload the results to GEDmatch according to theoccasionalgenealogist.com, so be prepared.

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Next, invest some time thinking about what you want to ask. Your questions may have nothing to do with DNA. You may be seeking more information about a relationship without the DNA evidence. So, consider these points:

- Mention who you are and what your research interest is. You might tell the recipient a little about yourself and how excited you are to find someone who is working on the same family.
- Try to be brief until you establish a rapport.
- Do not overwhelm the recipient with every detail you have. Think about your goal. You want them to keep reading.
- Massage the message. "I can see you have done a great deal of research on "....." and I am wondering if you can help me resolve some of my research issues with this line." People like being helpful. Be pleasant. We all have good manners, but sometimes we get anxious, in a hurry, etc....and our good manners slip. I know mine have. If they do.... apologize, even if you never hear from them again. They may be related to the next person you message and they talk.
- Remember the adage your Momma used to tell you, "you catch more flies with honey." It applies to this research too.
- Do not write in all caps...that's like yelling at them. Put the names of

interest in caps, or in quotations – just to be clear. Refrain from overcapitalization.

Family History Daily suggests you carefully consider your subject lines. Don't be too vague: example, "We're related." Try instead, "we have a 2nd cousin DNA match," or "I'd like to discuss our Robert Williams line." When possible offer to help a visitor by giving a local tour. An example from Family History Daily, "Since we share such a close connection, I wanted to reach out and introduce myself. If you're ever in middle Tennessee and would like to visit some of the local family landmarks, please feel free to contact me." This offer should come after you feel you have a rapport with the contact. I have offered a few distant relatives the opportunity and some have reciprocated. When they pan out, you get great trips to cemeteries, homesteads, old schools, and great stories, trips to the local diner for a good meal, and new family. You also have someone who knows where they are going, which makes the search less stressful. I am certain some of my ancestors are smiling down. It is sadly true that today I am probably closer to some of my fourth cousins than my first cousins. So many of my first cousins are not on Facebook – which makes it harder to stay in touch. Fourth cousins appreciate this Facebook.

If someone was adopted and they are reaching out, that requires more tact. I have been the wife looking for my husband's birth family and I've been the person contacted because I was the closest match to someone looking for their birth family. Be gracious. Be kind. Be mindful of the family you know as family. Words matter.

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You can't dispute DNA matches, but the match being sought may not be your story to tell.

Proceed with caution. My husband and his two adopted siblings all came from different families under quite different circumstances. They have all learned, and two have met their birth families – and it turned out okay. But, you never know.

Experts recommend that you do not mention adoption in the first message. Adoption, and all the feelings that go with it, can make people uncomfortable. Take some time to build a rapport on more generalized research topics. Think of your approach. Consider bringing up some surnames that may be shared to discuss family history.

Margaret O'Brien shares some great insight on "Data Mining DNA, Genealogy Research and Education." She cautions that you look at the information you can from "the other tree." When did they begin their tree and when did they last login. Let this sink in for a minute. Ancestry will tell you how often they research. If they are not on much, maybe your time is better spent reaching out to someone else.

Check to see how many DNA matches the profile person manages. Pay attention to the match and who is the manager. It may make a difference in your response and how you should interact with them... i.e. how to frame your interest. This website, <https://www.dataminingdna.com/in-depth-guide-chapter-9-send-ancestry-messages-that-get-replies/> has some very worthwhile information on people managing multiple trees. Before you

start your next message, check it out.

If you are not getting a response, the recipient may not have seen it. According to Kitty Cooper's Blog, "many people are using the Ancestry App on ipads, tablets, or smartphones and the Ancestry App does not show your messages." One suggestion is to comment on an ancestor on the person's tree with a link to Find-a-Grave, or other similar site, to leave them a message. The Ancestry App issue may have been resolved, but I am unable to determine that.

The opposite may be true, also. Some potential relations may be trying to contact you, and you are not receiving those messages. To see what your settings are, click on your name in the top right corner and go to site preferences. Here you can choose to receive hint notifications for various trees. If you keep scrolling down, you will find Community "Connection preferences." If you want to receive notifications, make sure you have not blocked contacts. To receive all messages, click the first button. You can block certain people if you need to. Just above "save" is a connection to block certain people. You will be asked to fill in the Username of the person you want to block. It is that simple.

A final note. If you reach out to someone and have made several attempts and not received a response, It may just be bad timing, or they may not be interested period. Try again in a few months, and if nothing transpires move on. There is more than one way to get the answers you need. Clearly, connectivity is a great aspect of this program. Using it wisely and thoughtfully will hopefully yield the desired results.

Cont'd

Resources:

Ancestry. (2017, Sep 12). Contacting DNA Matches: Get More Responses with These Pro Tips. <https://www.ancestry.com/corporate/blog/contacting-dna-matches-get-more-responses-with-these-pro-tips/> (Retrieval date: 2021, February 15)

Cooper, Kitty. (2017, Nov 18). 'How to get your ancestry match to respond,' *Kitty Cooper's Blog*. <https://blog.kittycooper.com/https://blog.kittycooper.com/2017/11/how-to-get-your-ancestry-match-to-respond/> (Retrieval date: 2021, February 10)

Dondero, Jennifer (n.d.) 'Contacting DNA Matches: Do It Right.' *The Occasional Genealogist.com* <https://www.theoccasionalgenealogist.com/2019/01/how-to-contact-ancestrydna-matches.html> (Retrieval date: 2021, February 12).

Hartley Patricia (n.d.) 'Ready to contact your DNA Matches? Here's what to say (and not to say)'. <https://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-help-and-how-to/contacting-dna-match/> (Retrieval date: 2021, February 10)

NAME CHANGE FOR HWFGS TO WHAGS



West Houston Area Genealogy Society

Public group · 34 members



+ Invite

At the last Board meeting, it was unanimously voted to change the name of our society to West Houston Area Genealogy Society. This came after several months of discussion and input from society members. We hope you will share our site with your friends who have an interest in genealogy. Importantly, the name change on our Facebook page, changed the name of the Facebook extension. Be sure to change the url in your site saver so you can easily access the page.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/whags>

Please note that while the organization has changed its name from Houston West Family Genealogy Society to West Houston Area Genealogy Society, it may take a few months for our various documents and programs to reflect the change. Thank you for your patience!!

"International German Genealogy Partnership Conference 2021"

Do you have German ancestors? Maybe? Then you may just want to check out this learning opportunity.

This organization has opened its registration for the **virtual conference taking place 17 July to 24 July 2021**. The theme this year is

"Researching Together Worldwide/ Weltweit Gemeinsam Forschen."

Early registration is open until

March 31. There are a variety of purchase options for this conference. You can view them at <https://iggpartner.org/index.php>. You

can check out the 2019 program schedule at their site to get an idea of what they offer. Playback Now is coordinating the production of the conference and they do a great job.

On their website, you can check out their newsletter, "Partner Zeitung." It has updates on

what's happening in the German genealogy world and links to resources and articles of interest. Like this one about "Why Germans love getting naked in public." Go to any vacation spot popular with Germans and from 5 to 85 — they'll be naked. LOL.

"Join Our DNA SIG!"

Our DNA SIG has begun!! It meets once a month on Saturday from 10 am to 12 noon.

If DNA is a new genealogy tool for you, this Special Interest Group will bring you up to

speed. We are using the workbook "Genetic Genealogy in Practice" by Blaine T. Bettinger and Debbie Parker Wayne. You can purchase the book online via Amazon or NGS. You can also Kindle it from

Amazon for less than 1/3 the price. The Kindle format allows you to convert it to a pdf if you prefer.

Due to recent weather, we are adjusting and slowing our schedule just a bit in order to help our attendees take care of

life matters. It's not too late to join us. The March 20th meeting will begin at 10 AM. Questions? See our FB page or website, listed on the last page of the NL.

Editor's Corner by Linda Hudson

Hi all,

It seems like all we do these days is move from one bad thing to the next. I hope each of you were able to stay safe and mostly warm during our

extreme cold spell. I hope that if your home suffered any damage, it was minimal. I'm hopeful your power is restored and home life is getting back to normal. I suggest a deep genea-

logical distraction. Get back in the research game and find some joy. A little joy goes a long way in recovering. I remain hopeful that "next time" will be a long time away.

All my best, Linda





2021 INTERNATIONAL German Genealogy Conference

INTERNATIONAL GERMAN GENEALOGY PARTNERSHIP

Announcing IGGP's First **Virtual Conference** 17th – 24th July 2021

RESEARCHING **TOGETHER** WORLDWIDE
WELTWEIT **GEMEINSAM** FORSCHEN

The virtual format will allow both passionate genealogists and expert speakers from around the world to attend and participate.

Will you be one of them?

- All-star lineup of prominent international speakers
- Two days of live lectures
- Streaming access to dozens of on-demand video lectures
- Bonus sessions from sponsors and exhibitors
- Interactive online sponsor and exhibitor hall
- International "Connections" breakout sessions
- Electronic copy of conference syllabus

Registration Beginning January 2021!

<https://iggp.org>

The International German Genealogy Partnership's Conference has become the largest in the world devoted exclusively to German genealogy. Genealogists will participate from around the world and interact with other researchers!

LET'S CONNECT VIRTUALLY!

SUBSCRIBE TO RECEIVE UPDATES VIA EMAIL FROM THE IGGP

Subscription to Newsletter is free.

Houston West Family Genealogy Society

The Only Genealogy Society in West Houston

www.houstonwestfamgen.org

2020-2021 Sept-May Calendar of Events

Everyone researching for ancestors...*Novice to Expert*...is invited to participate virtually until further notice!

2020	2021
August 6 1-3 PM Kick-off & Virtual Ice Cream Social 13 1-3 PM HWFGS Board Meeting 17 HWFGS Membership Applications sent September 2-5 Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference The conference will be virtual— www.fgs.org 10 12:30 PM Gail Colby - "DNA Results!? Now What?!" 23 10 AM-12 Noon HWFGS Board Meeting October 6 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting 8 12:30 PM Caroline Pointer – "10 Tech Tools to Help You Collaborate with Family for Your Research" 29 12:30 PM Elizabeth O'Neal—"Using Digital Libraries: Search Strategies for Family Historians" November 1 Daylight Savings Time Ends - Fall Back! 10 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting 12 12:30 PM "Maximizing Your Use of FamilySearch.org" 13-15 TSGS 2020 Family History Conference - Irving, TX - www.txsgs.org (virtual) 28 10 AM Members Helping Members December 10 12:30 PM Holiday Party & Members' "Show & Tell" 12 10 AM Members Helping Members	January 7 4 PM Members Helping Members 12 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting 14 12:30 PM Jeanie Smith - "Organizing and Preserving Your Stuff" 16 10:00 AM DNA Special Interest Group (SIG) 23 9:00 AM Members Helping Members February 9 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting 11 12:30 Susan Kaufman - "Researching Our Ancestors in Libraries, Archives & Repositories" 25-27 RootsTech Connect FREE info@rootstech.org (virtual) March 9 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting 11 12:30 PM "Maximizing Your Use of Ancestry.com" 14 Daylight Savings - Spring Forward! April 6 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting 8 12:30 PM Cari Taplin – "How Did You Find That? Knocking Down Brick Walls" May 11 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting 13 12:30 PM "Two Approaches for Recording Your Finds: 1) Writing as You Go and 2) Family Book Creator" 2021-2022 Board Elections 20-23 National Genealogical Society 2021 Family History Conference – Salt Lake City, UT https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/ June, July & August - We are off for the summer

Good to Know! Beginner Tips!

Most Asian descendants are very knowledgeable about their ancestral lines. Family names and lines began being recorded 3000 years ago in some areas. Your research may take you to clan origins. Even if you are uncertain how to start, if you have your family name and a location in a country, you can begin looking. Several sites provide records and information to help you get started.

Start with the FamilySearch Wiki to see what is available in modern records. Search Findmypast, FamilySearch, and Ancestry. Family History Daily and FamilySearch both have Beginner's Guides. You may find info like this (example) to help you get started: <http://files.lib.byu.edu/family-history-library/research-outlines/Asia/HongKong.pdf>

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**West
Houston
Area
GenSoc
Currently
Meeting
Virtually**

MORE TO KNOW

For other events

Legacy Family Tree

If you are relatively new to genealogy research, here is a way to learn a lot, at your pace, without breaking the bank. MyHeritage offers "Legacy Family Tree Webinars."

For a nominal subscription of \$50/year, you have unlimited access to recorded webinars on all things genealogy. Want some ideas on finding Polish records or your African family that moved to Canada? If there is a question, they have a webinar which may have the answer.

Go to: www.familytreewebinars.com

Texas Institute for Genealogical Research.

<https://www.txsgs.org/2021/01/08/tigr-2021-registration-is-open/>

This year their institute is June 13-18, 2021. It has four courses of study. You pick a strand: Advanced Southern Research, African Americans in the South, DNA Fundamentals in Genealogy or From Spanish Rule to Republic: Research in the Lone Star State. Go to their website for more details and cost. Members of TxSGS receive a discount.

Dates: **June 13—18, 2021**