

Organizing Your Genealogy
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1. Why be organized

- Efficiency – saves time and frustration
- Reliability – accurate & complete so you can trust your results
- Control – not being overwhelmed

2. Goals

- Why are you researching your family?
- Goals prioritize your steps.
- Goals keep you focused.

3. What are you saving

- Records, photos, letters
- Data – compiled from records, photos, letters
- Stories

4. What is the difference between DATA and INFORMATION?

- Which is more critical to your research?

5. Ask yourself these questions:

- Why are you doing it?
- Do you share?
- How will you pass on your genealogy research?
- Will your family understand what is in your papers?
- If you are gone tomorrow, Will they keep your files or throw them out as a bunch of old papers?

6. Paper Filing Systems

- Buy filing cabinets or boxes or bins to store files
- Label your folders with systematic names
- Organize files in groups to fit in drawers
- Space guzzling
- Heavy to move
- Slow to find information
- The size of the paper copy of the document limits readability
- Does Color Coding Files Help?
- Will we ever have enough filing cabinets?

7. **Will using digital documents help?**

8. **Capturing Images**

- Multi-function Printer (stationary)
- (convert printed copy to digital)
- Hand-held or Portable Scanners (mobile)
- Digital Cameras (mobile)
- Smart Phones (mobile) – Can also store notes

9. **Record data**

- Smartphones (mobile) -temporary
- Tablets (mobile) -temporary
- Laptops (mobile)
- Desktops Computers (stationary)
- Transport files
- Thumb drives/Flash drives (mobile)
- External Hard drives (mobile)

Transporting your Files



OR



10. Collect Data with a smartphone and then transfer data to a computer or laptop

- Smartphone camera- images, data
- OneDrive - (Online Storage) – transfer files
- OneNote (Organize) - notes
- Evernote (Organize and Online Storage)

11. Save your mobile research

- Photograph Documents and other research with Smartphone
- Enter notes
- Label files using a system
- Use the cloud to transfer to your computer or laptop

12. My Strategy at Archives or libraries

- Save Digital images of documents:
- Photograph book pages about your ancestors with a digital camera or smartphone:
- The entire page containing your ancestor's information, including page number
- Title and copyright pages for later use recording source citation
- Record the archive or library where you found the book

13. Make notes using text documents on a smartphone (I use Onenote)

- What I found
- Thoughts on the story
- Any pertinent information about the research
- Copy and paste to summaries as needed

(I also use my laptop for this step if the facility allows)

14. My Strategy

- Using electronic devices such as my laptop, smartphones, and thumb drives:
- Reduces what I have to carry when visiting libraries and archives
- It allows me to quickly transfer research to my laptop to compile what I found into my research notes (my summaries)

15. Naming My Files

- Logical
- Easy to file document
- Quick to retrieve

16. What labeling criteria are useful?

- Type of record (census, marriage, death, etc)
- Surname (Family name)
- Given name (First name)
- Year of the document

Above is a suggestion. You can use your system, but be consistent.

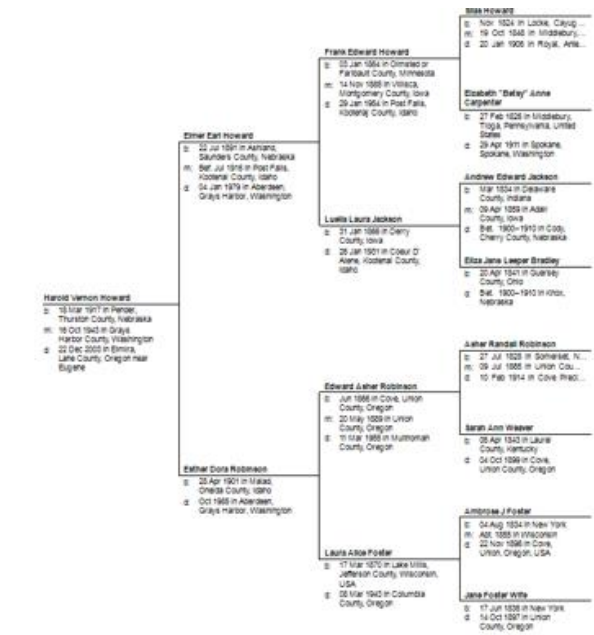
17. Labeling Electronic Files – examples

- Record type, surname, given name, year - (Census Fed-Smith-James-1900)
- Record type, year, surname, given name - (Census Fed-1900-Smith-James)
- - (Smith-James-Census Fed-1900) – Again Your Choice
- What is more important to you - name or year?
- Files will be sorted by your choice.

18. Why use Lineage Software?

- Organize and save names and dates (Beneficial but not complete story)
- Shows Relationships (Benefit)
- Gives the bones (Benefit and Problem)

This a Family Tree Not a Family History



19. Popular Lineage Software

- FamilyTree Maker (PC & Mac) (retail only)
- RootsMagic (PC & Mac) (retail and free trial version)
- Legacy (PC) (retail and free trial version)
- Reunion (Mac) (retail only)
- Online Trees – Ancestry, FamilySearch, MyHeritage, Geni, and others.

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21. Problems with Lineage software

- Challenging to understand by most family members (Problem)
- Difficult to share the stories with family members (problem)
- Had difficulty retrieving information in a readable format
- Saw that relatives had difficulty understanding documents & charts

22. What is your Goal?

- How are you sharing your information?
- Does your family understand what you show them?
- All of our research should be saved in a readable format so our family can enjoy it now and later.
- Can You dig out the stories from your readable notes?

23. To share stories with the Family, we need to

- Merge the details from documents, maps, and pictures into the family stories and then a family history.

24. My experience telling a story

- Trying to tell an accurate story points out missing facts that need more research
- Having data in readable format makes it easier to show to family members
- Sharing with family members at every chance provides more opportunities for family members to add details and more stories

25. My Solution

- Save documents and photos electronically on a hard drive
- Transcribe details and stories to Microsoft Word pages for each ancestor – as you find the information

26. Example of Summary

Steve John Zuchowski

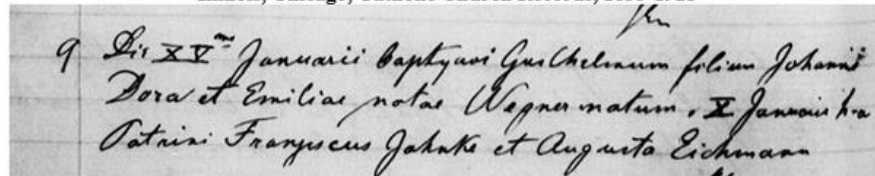
- Steve's name was Steve John Zuchowski on official documents but many people called him John instead of Steve. On his baptismal certificate his name is listed as Szczepan Jan Zochowski
- His baptismal certificate listed that Steve was born in Dmochy Kudly, Russia on December 26, 1893 to Leopold Zuchowski and Anny Dmochowski.
- He was baptized at the Catholic Parish Church, Peter and Paul the Apostles, in Czvezew.
- Steve's passenger manifest listed that at age 19, he boarded the steamship SS Rhein in Bremen and departed for America on October 3, 1912. (Note that the Ancestry.com index for the manifest has Steve listed as Jan Lackowski). His occupation on the passenger manifest was listed as farmer. The SS Rhein arrived in Philadelphia on October 16, 1912. The passenger manifest listed his final destination as his brother Boleslaw Zuchowski at 1217 W Monroe St in Bloomington, Illinois.
- On his first citizenship papers in 1914, he worked as a coal miner probably for the McLean County Coal Company which was a small coal mine on the Bloomington's west side. He listed his address as 405 N Hinshaw.
- Steve enlisted in the US Army on May 11, 1917 in Chicago. Steve listed his sister Mary Lapenska as his closest relative living at 1324 Holt Street.
- He served in the American Expeditionary Force in the 6th Division, 54th Regiment, Company K as a private with a rifleman's classification. His grave marker indicated that he was a member of the Illinois Mechanized Division.

27. Save Your Source Citation – NOW

John Dohra (1887)

- John was baptized at St Boniface Catholic Church on January 20, 1887 to John and Emilia Dora.
- He died sometime before the birth of the second John Dohra on December 19, 1888.
- John was one of the four Dohra children who died before 1900.
- No further information has been found for John.

Baptismal Record for John Dora
St Boniface January 20, 1887 Page 134 (image 404)
Baptismal Register 1865-1898, Familysearch.org Databases
"Illinois, Chicago, Catholic Church Records, 1833-1925"



28. Individual Summaries or Quick Reference Sheets

- Organize details and stories
- Acts as my research notes
- It tells a story and can be shared at any time
- What are Individual Summaries?
- Save Facts, Photos, and Stories
- Organized by Individual
- Sorted in chronological order
- Easy to read
- Flexibility to show how facts are related and tell the story
- Ready to print and share when needed
- It easily travels on a thumb drive or can be sent as a PDF in an email

29. Individual Summaries

- Individual summaries are my primary research and organizational tool
- Family Trees are the bones of our ancestors (They show the relationships but not the stories)
- Focus on identifying and saving stories
- They are also readable biographies or family histories to share with your family

Use your time wisely

**Be organized in how you
save your research**

**Documents give you the information that will lead to the
stories.**

Organize the Information so you can see the stories

