



Arkansas Genealogical Society

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**AGS Ezine**

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**JOIN US!**

If you are not a member,  
this is your official  
invitation to join AGS.

[AGS Membership Application](#)

If you are a member,  
look at the back of your  
*Arkansas Family Historian*.  
Your membership expires  
on the date printed under  
your name.

It may be time to renew  
your AGS membership dues!

**A PRAYER FOR GENEALOGISTS**

Lord, help me dig into the past  
And shift the sands of time  
That I might find the roots that made  
This family tree of mine;  
Lord, help me trace the ancient roads  
On which my fathers trod  
And led them through so many lands  
To find our present sod.  
Lord, help me find an ancient book  
Or dusty manuscript  
That's safely hidden now away  
In some forgotten crypt;  
Lord, let it bridge the gap that haunts  
My soul when I can't find  
The missing link between some name  
That ends the same as mine.

Curtis Woods, Tennessee Author

From [http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mostfran/miscellaneous/quips\\_etc.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mostfran/miscellaneous/quips_etc.htm)

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## Tidbits –

### Arkansas Birth and Death Records

How many of you have had difficulty in getting a birth or death certificate from Arkansas Vital Records? Were you surprised a couple of weeks ago when the Arkansas Department of Health recently announced that Arkansas Vital Records has a current backlog of 11,000 requests? There are some very simple steps researchers can take to avoid a long wait:

1. Know what time frame the records are available. In Arkansas, state wide birth and death records began in 1914.
2. Know what the restrictions are in obtaining the records. Birth records are public after one hundred years and death records after fifty years. Otherwise, you have to be a direct descendant of the individual.
3. Do your homework. Check the Arkansas Death or Prior Birth Index to verify an individual has a record on file. It will also give you the basic information for the application.
4. Once you have verified a certificate is there make sure you go to Vital Records in person or submit your application by mail. Online requests are most affected by the backlog.

If you would like to read the article about the Department of Vital Records follow the link below:

[http://www.fox16.com/news/local-news/arkansas-has-backlog-of-11000-requests-for-vital-records/795798831?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=twitter](http://www.fox16.com/news/local-news/arkansas-has-backlog-of-11000-requests-for-vital-records/795798831?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter)

## Coming Events

September 15, 2017

The Independence County Library, *Heaven, Hell or Home by Christmas: The Arkansas Great War Letter Project* by Mike Polston, Director Museum of American History in Cabot, at 12:00 p.m. in the Loft of the Barnet Building, located at 267 East Main Street, Batesville, Arkansas.

September 16, 2017

The Arkansas State Archives, *Fruit of the Vine: Arkansas's Italian Community and Foodways*, from 10 am to 3 pm at the north campus of UA Pulaski Technical College in North Little Rock. To register, visit <https://italian-foodways.eventbrite.com>.

September 16, 2017

Ozark Genealogical Society, Inc., *Show Me the Evidence* will be held at the Relics Event Center in Springfield Missouri.

September 25, 2017

Heritage Seekers, *Bringing it Back: Basic Cemetery Maintenance & Safety* by Holly Hope, Arkansas Historic Preservation Project, from 6:30 pm to 8 pm at Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock.

October 6-7, 2017

Pierre Chastain Family Association, 2017 Annual Reunion at the Hampton Inn in Louisville, Kentucky.

October 17, 2017

The Arkansas State Archives, Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writer's Lecture Series; Erik Wright - *Main*

## Coming Events (continued)

*Street Mayhem: Crime, Murder and Justice in Downtown Paragould*, from 6:30 pm to 8 pm at Historic Arkansas Museum in Little Rock, Arkansas. For more information contact the Arkansas State Archives at 501-682-6900.

October 20-21, 2017

The Arkansas Genealogical Society 2017 Fall Conference will be at the Benton Event and Convention Center in Benton, Arkansas. D. Joshua Taylor is scheduled to present. Watch our [website!](#)

October 23, 2017

Heritage Seekers, *Notes from the Surgical Suite Operative Report: WWI* Phillip A Snodgrass, MD/author, from 6:30 pm to 8 pm at Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock.

May 2-5, 2018

The NGS 2018 Family History Conference will be in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The announcement was in the *NGS Monthly* from May 2016. Call for proposals opened January 3, 2017.

June 2–7, 2018

[The Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research](#) (IGHR) will be at the Georgia Center's UGA and Hotel Conference Center.

August 22-25, 2018

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

## Coming Events *(continued)*

October 19-20, 2018

The Arkansas Genealogical Society 2018 Fall Conference will be at the Benton Event and Convention Center in Benton, Arkansas. Cee Cee Moore is scheduled to present.

August 21-24, 2019

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Washington, D. C.

September 2-5, 2020

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Kansas City, Missouri.

## Technology Tip of the Month--Scanning continued - Why Save as TIFF?

The following is republished from the Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library. The article written by Kay Spears was published in the July 31, 2017 newsletter.

When you scan something and you are going to archive it, you want to save it as a TIFF. Whenever I say that, I often hear this reply, “You don’t save your images as JPEGs?” The answer is no, always save your original image/document/diary/whatever as a TIFF. That is what we do here in the Genealogy Center, and we will continue to do so until a better option comes along. Let’s take a look at some of the file extensions that may be used for images: TIFF, JPEG, PNG, and GIF.

TIFF stands for Tagged Image File Format used to store raster images. TIFF was created sometime in the 80s as a way to share images between people - up to that time images were saved in a variety of formats which made it impossible to share those images. The TIFF as we know it today is perfect for storing archival images. Why? Because it is lossless. That means the image does not degrade if you do any editing on the image. Well, don’t they take up a lot of space? Yes, they do. Hopefully, though, you are not leaving your archived images parked on your computer’s hard drive. Scan those old family photographs or letters, save them as TIFF and put them on external hard drives or some other means of storage. We advise storing your family treasures on more than one kind of device. And, a word of warning - keep an eye on changing technology, you just never know when a device is so old that nothing can open it. Can anyone say Floppy Disc? What if you never plan on doing any editing? Doesn’t matter, you want the initial scan saved in a lossless format. Also, if you are going to do some editing on your image, do that editing on a copy of the original. Never mess with the original scan; that image should remain untouched.

## Technology Tip of the Month--Scanning continued - Why Save as TIFF? (continued)

JPEG stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group, and it too can be used for images, just not for storing archive images. Why? Because JPEGs compress the image when saved. That means bits and pieces of the image are lost every time you save a JPEG. Normally, your eye won't be able to see the loss, but if you do it enough you will start to see a certain fuzziness in the image. Have you ever taken an image off of the Internet and noticed it was rasterized, fuzzy, or had what appears to be haloes around the image? That is because in most cases that image is a JPEG, and some of what you are viewing is what is called a JPEG artifact. You do not want your archived family photo to have JPEG artifacts. Do we use JPEGs? Yes. We use JPEGs when we want to post an image to websites, do Powerpoint shows, or send through email. We always used JPEG when we need something smaller; we just never use it for archival purposes or if we want to print the image. Printed images usually look better if they have been created using a TIFF.

PNG stands for Portable Network Graphic. PNGs were created to replace GIFs. PNGs are a lossless format and are largely used on the web. What makes them great for web usage is that they support transparency. Their format is great for web use, not so great for print. A PNG wasn't invented to use in photo scanning or for archiving images. Here's the trick with a PNG: Even though it is supposed to be a lossless format, a PNG still compresses the image and through some complex algorithms, bits of your image will still be tossed out. So, do use the PNG for creating lovely posts online, just not to archive your photos.

GIF stands for Graphic Interchange Format. This format was created in the 80s and is still widely used. A lot of the animated images that you may see online are GIFs. In fact, I have created a couple all by myself for some Powerpoint shows. It only took me eight hours to do a one-minute animation. It also is a compressed format, which once again means "lossy." It's a simple format and works well for use on the web. It does not

## Technology Tip of the Month--Scanning continued - Why Save as TIFF? (continued)

support transparency. It is also not to be used for archival purposes.

So, there you have it: four of the most common file formats that can be used for your photographs. However, we recommend only one of those for archival purposes and that is the TIFF. Remember, you can always change your TIFF to a JPEG if you want to; just make sure the original scan is out of sight when you do.

## Update on Preserve the Pensions

The following is republished from *The Legal Genealogist*. The article written by Judy G. Russell was published August 3, 2017.

### *Cautiously good news from FGS*

The news has finally turned good, at least cautiously so, for the Preserve the Pensions project. And, along with *The Legal Genealogist*, the entire genealogical community – all of us – we all need to keep our fingers, toes and everything else crossed that the news continues to be good. Here's the story.



So many of us contributed our funds and our time towards raising the money needed to ensure that all of the millions of pages of records of War of 1812 pension records held by the National Archives could be protected and preserved – and made available – for the future.

Through the Preserve the Pensions project, the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) spearheaded this drive to digitize these oh-so-fragile documents that are in grave danger of deterioration.

The records documenting more than 180,000 pension records for War of 1812 soldiers and their families are among the most heavily requested documents at the National Archives and, because of their

## Update on Preserve the Pensions (continued)

use, their age and their fragile nature, they really need to be digitized to protect them forever. FGS began the project, with matching funds support from Ancestry, and the way it works is that every image digitized becomes available, free, to the public, forever.

To fund the campaign, the Preserve the Pensions project needed to raise millions of dollars. And, in September 2016, what had seemed like it might be unimaginable happened: the fundraising went over the top. An anonymous contribution of \$500,000, matched by Ancestry and added to the pot, put the project into the black.

The pensions for surnames from A to M went online steadily.

And we all thought we were heading home.

Onward to Z!

Until ...

There's always the "until...", isn't there?

All of a sudden, we were stuck in the Ms. And stuck in the Ms. And stuck in the Ms. Rorey Cathcart, FGS President, explains in a recent blog post what went wrong:

A security incident at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) facility in St. Louis led to a work stoppage of digitization projects for security review. This incident was unrelated to the Preserve the Pensions project in Washington D.C., however, our project was

## Update on Preserve the Pensions (continued)

impacted. The Federal bureaucracy is a slow-moving beast, as many of us have experienced outside of genealogy. The completed review led to new security and project protocols. These protocols imposed new cost, space, and completion date constraints on the project. Neither conservation nor digitization could resume without a renegotiated project plan. These negotiations were difficult and time-consuming as each partner fought for their organization's priorities. Ultimately, each partner compromised where they could to bring this important preservation project back online. The negotiations, however, are not over. The project plan above is a test of both the new project protocols and the compromises each of us made. It is a proof of concept. As this new project plan is put into practice, NARA, Ancestry.com, and FGS will continue to work together to evaluate the process with an eye towards negotiating the project plan for the final phase of conservation and digitization of surnames R-Z.

So things are now cautiously and carefully moving forward: "National Archives staff have recently resumed document conservation of the War of 1812 Pension files covering surnames M(Moore)-Q. Document conservation is the essential first step in digitizing these files. Our digitization partner, Ancestry.com, has scheduled image capture of these newly conserved documents to begin the second week of September 2017. As capture resumes, new images will be added to Fold3.com on a rolling basis."

## Update on Preserve the Pensions (continued)

Right now, it doesn't look like any more funding will be needed – Cathcart explained that it turns out that while the per-page cost is higher under the new protocol, the actual number of pages is turning out to be less than anticipated.

And then came the promise. It's in bold. It's clear as a bell. And it's something I for one am so grateful to FGS for: ***“The Preserve the Pensions team is dedicated to seeing this project through until the very last page of the very last pension is online.”***

This isn't the “everything's fine, and there won't/can't be any more glitches” news we might have hoped for, but it's the first cautious good news we've had in a while on the Preserve the Pensions project.

Fingers, toes, even eyes crossed that the news continues to be good...

## Preserve Your Legacy: 9 Tips for Interviewing Relatives

The following is republished from FamilySearch Blog. The blog written by Katy Barnes was published August 28, 2017.

My grandma June was a lively, intelligent woman who loved to share memories of her past. Back in college, as I worked on my degree in family history, I came to her house one day to interview her about her life history. She told wonderful stories about her childhood, her parents, and her siblings. I am so glad I captured everything on a cassette tape and was required to transcribe it for my project. I did this with several other relatives as well to fulfill various assignments.

Many years later, my daughter needed to interview someone about what it was like to live during World War II. I immediately thought of Grandma June, who was still very active, both physically and mentally. However, when I called her, I was surprised to hear her say, “I don’t remember.”

We just never know how much longer our relatives will be able to share precious memories of their past and their ancestors. It is so important to take advantage of every opportunity to listen to and record our loved ones so their posterity can remember them.

Here are nine tips to make recording interviews an enjoyable activity for you and your family:

1. **Seize the moment.** Most of us have smartphones with voice and video recorders built in. You never know when your relative will start sharing a memory. Be ready to record at any time; if you are, you will capture some precious gems.

## Preserve Your Legacy: 9 Tips for Interviewing Relatives (continued)

2. **Plan an evening.** My husband and I invite our parents over once a month for an evening of questions and answers about their lives. We have a nice digital voice recorder for these events, and we send the questions ahead of time so they can think about their answers and bring along any memorabilia they want to share. Our children love hearing their grandparents talk about their courtship, their favorite pets, their first jobs, and the houses they've lived in.

3. **Capture the video.** It is wonderful to watch our loved ones' expressions and gestures as they share their life stories, perhaps shedding tears or breaking into joyful smiles. Capturing these moments on video allows us to enjoy them now and after they pass on.

4. **Upload and share.** Many family history and social media websites allow you to upload these precious audio and video files and attach them to your ancestors' profiles. They add a wonderful dimension that goes beyond documents and written stories, and they inspire greater love for your relative. Young people are more likely to find and share these stories if they can access them through the internet.

5. **Let them do the talking.** The skillful family history interviewer will say as little as possible and allow their relative to take center stage. Don't be afraid to let them pause and think before answering a question. Encourage them with your expressions rather than frequent verbal cues. Allow them to ramble and follow their stream of memories. They may end up sharing things you didn't think to ask about.

6. **Ask open-ended questions.** Ask questions that cannot be answered with a "yes" or a "no." Some examples include: "How did you spend your Saturday afternoons as a child?" "How did you spend your

## Preserve Your Legacy: 9 Tips for Interviewing Relatives (continued)

time before the internet and cell phones were available?” “What do you remember about your grand parents?”

**7. Record songs and poems.** Does your relative have favorite songs he or she is always singing or a favorite poem he or she memorized as a child? Invite them to sing or recite—you’ll be glad you did.

**8. Bring photos and memorabilia.** Prepare beforehand by gathering photos and scrapbooks that will trigger memories and fuel the narrative. Keep a pencil handy to label those photos if you haven’t already.

**9 Break it down.** These days, we are accustomed to scrolling through social media, flipping through magazines, and channel surfing. We are more likely to catch a story and re-share it if it is relatively short. Once you have your interview, try to break it down into smaller chunks that can be labeled by topic, such as “First Date” or “Saturday Afternoons.” Audio and video editing software make this editing process simple. You can also start and stop your audio and video recorder with each question you ask.

*Katy Barnes works for Legacy Tree Genealogists, a genealogy research firm with extensive expertise in researching and finding immigrant ancestors. Legacy Tree also has numerous onsite agents in hundreds of countries worldwide who can access archives and repositories for records that may be necessary in tracing your immigrant ancestors.*

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## **Administrative Stuff**

**Contributions:** If you have news for the Ezine, send it! To [agscontributions@gmail.com](mailto:agscontributions@gmail.com) – Thanks!

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