



Sourcing Your Family Tree

How many sources are listed in your family tree? A source is a document or historical record that is the source of information about family members and events in their lives. This may include census records, obituaries, birth, marriage and death records, tombstones, land or court records, etc.

Why is it important to list these sources? You found the document and typed the information into your tree. Why bother writing down where you found this information?

There are many answers to these questions. Some reasons: What if you later find a different birth date? If you don't know where you found the original date, how can you decide which is more credible? Without a reference to that original source, you can't know.

You may later want to publish your tree. Without a source list other genealogists might consider your work amateurish and disregard it. This is because they have no way to verify whether your information is reliable.

Applying for membership in a descendant's society such as DAR requires extensive documentation of sources. Your application would be immediately rejected if it has no sources.

Also, it is helpful to document sources you searched unsuccessfully. That way you won't later waste time looking there again.

Failing to document your sources is a mistake made by almost everyone new to genealogy. Don't be ashamed, but do start documenting your sources. Almost all genealogy software provides a way to do this.

Father's Day Has Arkansas Connection

Sonora Louise Smart Dodd is known as the "Mother of Father's Day." She began trying to make Father's Day an officially recognized holiday in 1909 after hearing a sermon about Mother's Day. The first celebration of Father's Day was June 19, 1910. It will be celebrated June 19, 2022.

According to the Encyclopedia of Arkansas, Sonora Smart was born on Feb. 18, 1882, in Jenny Lind (Sebastian County), the daughter of William Jackson Smart, a farmer and Civil War veteran, and Ellen Victoria Cheek Smart. She was the oldest of six, and the only girl. When Smart was 5 years old, her family left Arkansas to settle in Spokane, Washington, where she lived until she died. In 1898, her mother died in childbirth. Smart helped her father rear her younger brothers. Dodd was an artist and a poet, studying for a time at the Art Institute of Chicago, and she wrote a children's book about the Native Americans in Spokane.

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Genealogy Night Returns to Jonesboro Library

The Craighead County Jonesboro Public Library plans to have a 50s-themed summer Genealogy Night event on Saturday, July 16 from 6 -10 pm. This will be the library's first genealogy "lock in" since the pre-pandemic winter one in February 2020. The event ad says "Don your poodle skirt and dust off your suede shoes for an entire evening of genealogy classes, food, and fun."

The library offers microfilmed copies of Jonesboro newspapers from the 1890s forward as well as other microfilmed critical family history records. The Library's Manager of Technical Services and Special Collections, Nathan Whitmire, said, "I think that many are excited that we are bringing back this event." <https://www.libraryinjonesboro.org/adults-genealogy-night>

Find a Grave Controversy After Uvalde

Controversy has arisen about Find a Grave practices regarding the recently deceased in the aftermath of Uvalde shootings, when full memorials with news stories were posted immediately before burial, and not after 3 months, by non-family members. One criticism is that by incentivizing competition for high numbers of postings, FAG encourages premature memorials that are sometimes wrong as well, upsetting family members.

Well-known genealogists like Amy Johnson Crow, Roberta Estes, and Judy Russell have written about the ethical concerns for such postings. Learn more at @legalgen posts on Twitter.

Archives Genealogy Program Successful

About 70 people registered for the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives (SARA) presentation of "Many Roots, One Tree: Exploring Americans' Diverse Origins through Genealogical Research," a free program co-sponsored by AGS and others. It was offered May 21 in person with lunch and virtually from Washington, Arkansas. About 20 registered to attend in person.

Speakers included Carla Hines Coleman with the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society and AGS, Erin Fehr with the Sequoyah National Research Center, and Jane Wilkerson with the Arkansas State Archives. ASA Director Dr. David Ware introduced the program organized by SARA Archival Manager and AGS Board member Melissa Nesbitt. AGS President Scott Lee urged attendees to join AGS.

2022 Arkansas Statehood Day Celebration



Dr. Kelly Houston-Jones, Assistant Professor of History at Arkansas Tech University, delivered the main address during the Washington County Historical Society's annual Statehood Day observances on Sunday, June 12th, on the lawn of

Headquarters House Museum at [118 E. Dickson St.](#) in Fayetteville.

Dr. Houston-Jones, a native of Conway County, is the author of a groundbreaking book, *Slavery on the Ground in Arkansas*. It's the first academic update on the topic since the 1960s.

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Arkansas Genealogical Society Ezine, The publication Date and Editors Jeanne Rollberg and Andria Yakoubian

Genealogy for Genealogists: A Refresher Course 2022

AGS board member and Arkansas Family Historian editor Russell Baker presented a Zoom session, an updated "Genealogy for Genealogists" for the Little Rock-based Heritage Seekers Genealogy Club April 25.

He encouraged researchers to take advantage of increasing online resources such as the 1950 census while also remembering that the vast majority of information is still in archives, libraries, historical associations, courthouses and off-the-beaten-path locations. He cautioned against using undocumented online research and mentioned incorporating DNA research in family history sleuthing.

To be an outstanding genealogist, Baker suggested cultivating these characteristics: persistence, carefulness, open mindedness, flexibility, questioner skills, and skepticism.

