


Genealogy Research on the Internet

- I. Basic genealogy research principles apply to all researchers whether they are doing online research or not:
- start with oneself and work back generation by generation
 - understand the scope and origin of the source you are using
 - document all the sources you use in your research carefully and note where you obtained them

- II. What are the differences between online genealogy vs. “traditional” genealogy?

Online genealogy

- 
- Errors in sources:
 - Sources as seen on Internet are possibly several steps removed from original, the possibility for errors, e.g., transcription errors is greater.
 - Origin of sources:
 - Not understanding origin of sources you are accessing, e.g., where and when the source was created, is more likely to occur.
 - Changes in sources:
 - Rapid updates, changes, additions, e.g., moved or expired web pages.
 - Publications:
 - Personal publications and web pages produced by fellow genealogy researchers are now commonplace. Researchers have expanded the pool of available genealogy sources and made them available to a greater number of people via the Internet.
 - Forums:
 - Email, chat groups, listservs, newsletter subscriptions, etc., have provided the opportunity to find sources and people more rapidly than before.

- III. Computers: having the right equipment will aid your use of the Internet and your ability to organize and publish your research
- Computers
 - Updated computers with sufficient power, memory, and storage, and a fast connection speed are desirable.
 - Software programs
 - Many companies sell software for organizing genealogy research – Brothers Keeper and Family Treemaker, etc., are a few examples
 - Scanners
 - Photo and image manipulation programs can be helpful for creating web pages, scrapbooks, published genealogies, and sharing photos and documents with others
 - LIBRARIES! The Bridgeport Public Library is a great source for computers and so much more...the BPL provides access to “Ancestry” and “Heritage Quest,” online databases with loads of sources for genealogy research.

IV. Expectations – What can I expect to find online for my genealogy research?

Genealogists won't find *all* the records they need on the Internet. There are simply too many documents in the world that are useful for family history research. But more and more items are being made available every day.

Genealogists may expect to find *many* things via the Internet, including:

- Where to find/get information
- Forms to order information/documents
- Library and repository catalogs, hours, and research services available
- Publications/indexes/lists/research produced by other genealogists, e.g., GenWeb project
- Forums, chat sites, and newsgroups where participants may submit research questions
- Subject specific web sites, e.g., a site devoted to researching a specific family or topic like African-American genealogy
- Background history on various places/events/groups/people/historical periods
- Commercial sites/fee based publications such as “Ancestry” that provide access to multiple sources such as census and various federal, state, and local sources

Selected Web Sites

Cyndi's List of Genealogy Links on the Internet	http://www.cyndislist.com/
Family Search – LDS Church	http://www.familysearch.org/
Genealogy Home Page	http://www.genealogy.org/
Genealogy.com	http://www.genealogy.com/
Library Spot – Genealogy Links	http://www.libraryspot.com/genealogy.htm
National Archives – US NARA	http://www.archives.gov/index.html
National Genealogical Society	http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/
USGenWeb Project	http://www.usgenweb.org/

Heritage Quest - ICONN.org (for all CT public library card holders; may access at home)

AncestryLibrary - Bport Library subscription, for use inside library

The ***Historical Collections Department*** on the third floor of the Burroughs-Saden Library has hundreds of sources for genealogy research. Stop by Tuesday through Saturday and our staff will help you get started on your family tree research!

Historical Collections
 925 Broad Street
 Bridgeport, CT 06604
 203-576-7417