

Family Tree Information

Privacy Issue

A short but very important note to all. All information given will be kept with the main family tree only. Any tree or report that may be given out to other family members will not include most personal information like their social security number. The only information that will be given is names, birth, marriage and death dates, unless requested to be removed or excluded. No information will be given to any other source without written permission.

So remember any information asked for is completely optional. You do not have to give any information that you don't want to be known. And if you see any information that has been given and you want it removed, let us know immediately so we can remove it.

What Kind of Information to Submit

The minimum that we would like is people's names. Any other information is optional, but birth, marriage and death dates we feel are essential for a family tree. Any of the "Family Group Record" sheets include space for this plus some other personal and family information. (I prefer if you use the Family Group Record V 2.) Any other information that you would like to be shared would be nice, including pictures. If you would like to submit other information about yourself or someone else, the "Biographical Outline" sheet will help you do this. Information can be anything from adoptions, christenings, and graduation from schools, military service, nationally, occupations, parish, and religion, up to retirement.

A good researcher uses documentation to keep proper record keeping. This also allows proof for any questions that may arise although information is sometimes incorrect on older documentation. This request we are making is completely optional and we only ask this of family members that have passed on. Copies of birth, marriage and death certificates would be a great help in record keeping. We can obtain copies of these for a small charge. Sometimes it's a guessing game in certificates that are ordered. It might be what you are looking for, but may be not. That's why we are asking for a copy of this type of paperwork if you can. Much information can be obtained from this type of paper work.

I think an important item that should be included in all family trees is photographs. Just about everybody would like at least one picture of all family members. Family Tree Maker allows you to include lots of pictures within the tree. What we would like in this area is pictures around certain times in life, a birth or baby picture, one around high school and/or college graduation, a marriage picture, and one or two between marriage and death. This is what we are thinking but any pictures would be nice. As we put together a good album, we will make it available to all. Or if you would only like one photograph of an individual, we will do that too.

Another type of picture that might sound a bit strange is pictures of the gravestones and the of the cemetery entrance. Some info can be obtained here or proved, but we feel the best reason of these pictures is sometimes people like to visit family members at their place of rest. This we feel can help them find the site easier. A short description on where the stone can be found can be added to the tree.

Where to Get Information

Information can be gathered form hundreds of sources. In the "Downloads" section of the Family Tree Web Page, there is a PDF file named "checklist". This can help with many different places where information can be found. Most of the items on this list are some type of paper documentation. A basic place where everyone should start is just talk to others. Just one thing about this, if dealing with one or two facts, memory is fine. But if you really start getting information, which usually happens, write it down as you go. It's too easy to mix up facts or forget information. If you want to go the extra step, record it. A small tape recorder is the best way. It allows you to play the conversation over again instead of writing things down.

Other places can be virtually anywhere from church records, again gravestones, courthouses and libraries. Libraries are the best place to start looking after talking to families. It's where you can get more names, sometimes addresses, answer some questions, census records, obituary and stuff like that. If the paper documentation is what you are looking for, the next step is in the courthouses. As I said above, anybody can order copies of birth, marriage and death certificates. It does not take much to order them.

Formats of Information Submitted

For the names, please use their full names, example: Michael David Gussy. For places, please use 'City, State and Zip Code' or County, State and Zip Code, examples: Avoca, PA 18641 or Luzerne County, PA 18641.

If you are unsure of information, please note what you are unsure of. For spelling, put (sp) next to or above it. For unknown information, leave blank.

As far as dates, you can use a number of things. Not sure of a day, use only month and year. Not sure of the month, then just use the year. Around or about use - abt. with the date. For between two dates - bet. and the dates.

How to Submit Your Information

There are many forms online that many people use. We prefer if you use a worksheet called "Family Group Record V 2". You can use this form, another from our web page, or any other form you find. You can just scribble down on paper if you like. You can send it anyway you like, US mail, E-mail, or in person.

If you are going to send us copies of any certificates, **NOT THE ORIGINAL**, you can just send them by regular mail. Folding them is fine. As I said, these are for informational purposes and record keeping and will not be shown to anyone without your permission first.

Pictures are a different story. I would like the original sent to us so we can scan them. Because of our settings and the size of the files after scanning, this is the reason we ask this. A 3 1/2" x 5" picture scanned in is about 2 MB. This size is a bit too large to send by email. Don't worry, we will return all photographs. Please send them in a sturdy envelope as to assure that they will not be damaged in transit. A piece of cardboard slipped in will help. At present I cannot scan negatives or slides myself, but if this is how you have them let us know. I have a neighbor that can scan them for me.