### **Genealogy 101**

By

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### **Livingston County Historical Society**



### Agenda

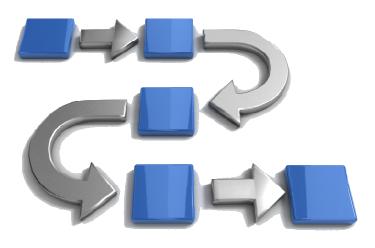
- 1. Genealogical Research is a Process
- 2. What the Web Can and Cannot Offer
- 3. Recommended Hardware & Software
- 4. Where to Begin
- 5. Other Information Sources
- 6. Documenting Your Family Tree
- 7. Research Check List
- 8. Q & A

### **Genealogical Research Process**

- 1. Set Goals
- 2. Research
- 3. Saving the results in an organized fashion -save in home computer directories
- 4. Creating the Family Tree
  -Ancestry.com
  -other software
- 5. Sharing results with family members

  -paper scrapbook
  -Book(s) using Shutterfly
  -Thumb drive copies of all documents
  -printed and framed family trees
- 6. Saving information for posterity

  family members get paper books and copies of computer files
  upload images to Ancestry.com and/or FindAGrave.com
  some libraries accept paper family Genealogy books (Dominy does)



### Set Goals

1. Think about and write down the reasons you want to perform genealogical research.....

-I want to trace our family tree back to the source countries

- -I want to discover and share our family history with current and future family generations
- -I would like to confirm suspected American Indian ancestry in my family



### What the Web <u>CAN</u> offer:

- Indexes and (some) vital statistics records
- Classified directories and collections of Web genealogical resources
- Personal family history pages posted by other researchers
- Genealogical discussion groups
- City, county and state genealogical or historical society pages
- Individual library websites with information about locations, schedules and holdings

### What the Web <u>CANNOT</u> offer:

- Information about every family or ancestor—if no one has placed it online, it won't be there
- Accuracy or authenticity of the information found on any site—always look for documentation to support the information
- Original documents—although some items, like census records, can be viewed online and copied

# Something to keep in mind during your research:

"Some family trees have beautiful leaves, and some have just a bunch of nuts. Remember, it is the nuts that make the tree worth shaking."

-Author Unknown

### Recommended Hardware & Software

- Home personal computer with Internet access
   -smart phone screens too small to understand images
   -Microsoft Word (to type up information)
- 2. Combination printer and scanner -scan in all paper images
- Ancestry.com
  -\$20 per month
  -easy access to many records
  -easy to create family tree

-can download family tree file, discontinue \$20/month, resume later

#### 4. IrfanView

-free program for handling images -easy to optimize images, crop images





### Where to Begin?

Gather existing family information

 -scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, papers [scan them], Bibles
 -oral history from relatives, [type up using Word]



- Create account in Ancestry.com

   create your family tree
   use "hints" to see if they match up with your family
   use "search" to find info including Census and Military Records
  - -use "search other members trees" at bottom of search list
- 3. Download Ancestry.com info files onto your home computer -family portraits
  - -military draft cards or other info
  - -text or word files
  - -because you may want to use them when you publish your results

### After you exhaust Ancestry.com



### **Other Information Sources**

- Find-a-Grave.com

   search to find where family members buried
   often find a text bio with the grave site info
- Google Search
   -put name in quotes, e.g. "John Edward Bodley"
- Google Book Search
   -under "Other" search options
   -may find relative info in a book or trade magazine
- 2 volume book set on Livingston County Cemeteries (not online)
   -by Mary Petersen Erickson (in Fairbuy Dominy library)
- Can search Fairbury cemeteries using Dominy Library web site
- Can search Fairbury cemeteries using Prairie Central Geography Class site -link http://www.prairiecentral.org/highschool/geography-class-cemetery-project/
- State of Illinois Web Site with Civil War veteran information
   -link https://www.ilsos.gov/isaveterans/civilmustersrch.jsp

# Find A Grave



- Fairbury Blade

   -was digitized for \$10,000 in 2016
   -free access from Dominy Library web site
- Pantagraph archives
   -\$60 per year subscription



- Chicago Tribune archives
   -\$0 (but not many stories on Livingston County)
- Pontiac Daily Leader
  - -Not digitized except 1970's in Ancestry (very difficult to use)
  - -Pontiac library history room has 3x5 index card by name, give year and page

-new microfilm viewer, but I could not get it to work last time I tried -would be great if Pontiac Library got the Daily Leader digitized ©

- (3) Livingston County History books

   -1878, 1888, 1909 Vol II
   -all 3 available as searchable PDF files
   -Fairbury Museum sells 3 CD's for \$5 each
   -hard to find on Internet, takes long time to download
- GenealogyBank.com
   -\$70 annual subscription
   -has a lot of nationwide newspapers





# www.familysearch.org

- Access to records from around the world
- Excellent for European research
- A non-profit service sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Free Registration is offered for this site; not required to register to search the site
- Allows you to add your family tree to the site

### www.usgenweb.com

- Volunteer-maintained, free site for genealogy
- Site was based on a prototype for Kentucky, so lots of KY information available
- Offers valuable information that commercial sites like Ancestry will not have, such as family photographs and headstone transcriptions
- "Researchers" page offers a wealth of helpful hints

### www.castlegarden.org

- New York Passenger Lists from 1820-1913
- Free access to a database of information on 10 million immigrants. Over 73 million Americans can trace their ancestors to this early immigration period

## www.ellisisland.org

- Immigrant passenger lists from post-1892 to 1924
- Excellent source for "new immigrant" research (Poles, Italians, Eastern Europeans)
- Website requires registration, but searching is free
- Make sure to perform your searches on Castle Garden as well and then compare the results—they could be different!

# www.cyndislist.com

- A "card catalog" to the genealogical resources on the Internet
- A pathfinder that will point you in the direction of sites for topics that you need
- Lots of information divided into smaller, more specific categories for easier and more effective research

# Genealogy Software

- Family Tree Maker is one of the most popular genealogy software programs
- May be purchased via the website <u>www.genealogy.com</u>
- There is a free web version of the software on this website, but it is limited
- <u>www.genealogy.com</u> will also allow you to post your trees
- Some free resources on this site and some by subscription

Livingston County Death Certificates

 not required by State law until 1916
 you can check the book in the Old Court House to see if available before 1916



- U.S. Patent Office
  - -do Google Search for "Google patent Search", gives patent search option -do Google patent search by inventor name first, maybe city
  - -can download PDF file of patent from Google
  - -once you find patent number, can also go to USPTO.gov to save or print the pages

#### Old slides

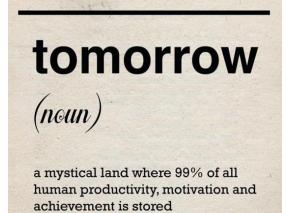
-extremely time consuming to digitize yourself -all slides have dirt on them that show as specks -recommend hiring a company to digitize them

-companies can afford expensive equipment to automatically fix slides -many companies send you a new external hard drive with the files in 3 levels of resolution

-can use slide digital images in your family tree or scrapbook

-give copies of digital files to family members on USB thumb drives





#### Paper Picture Digital Repair

-companies can digitally repair old photographs
-including photos with pieces that have fallen apart!
-can remove "measles" from colored paper images from aging
-JMC Photo in Bloomington has done excellent work for me (by Bloomington airport)



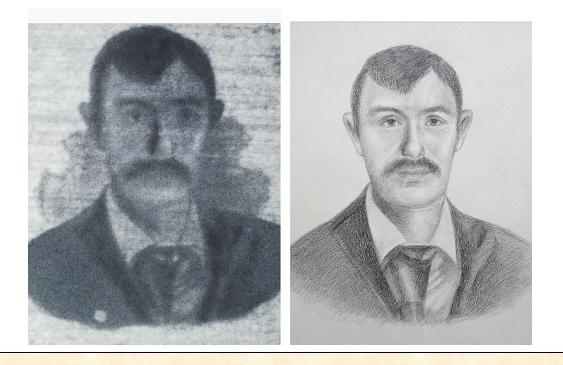
Measles – Circa 1900

Repaired by JMC

#### Artist's Rendition of Poor Quality Photograph

-old newspaper images are often of very poor quality -if photo can not be repaired, another option is to hire an artist to re-create the image. PaintYourLife.com

-1899 image of Fred Baird – Fairbury City Marshal killed in line-of-duty



- Searching in other countries
  - -Ireland is extremely difficult
    - -use paper census records as wood pulp in WWI
    - -Ancestry.com international version not much help, costs extra
    - -must know County name and parish
    - -can be many different spellings for the same name
    - -Michael Walsh at MylrishConnections.com is reputable genealogist

-England, Germany

-Ancestry.com international version can be helpful





Ancestry.com issues

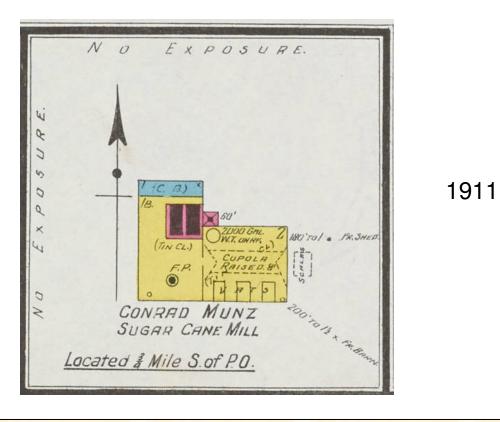
 many errors made by users
 take all hints with a grain of salt

-\$20/month or \$240 per year is expensive to maintain

- -I have 129 family trees on Ancestry.com
  - -Fairbury history research
  - -use results to write Fairbury history books
  - -answer questions from people on Fairbury history Facebook page
  - -"You know you are a history nut when you have over 100 family trees on Ancestry.com" ©

Sanborn Insurance Maps

 made for many small towns
 Fairbury has (5) different years from 1885 – 1911
 may exist for other Livingston County towns



• The Fort at Lexington -People there very helpful



### **Documenting Family Tree**

- Ancestry.com very easy to use
   -can take screen shot images and use them in scrap books
   -Ancestry does offer some print options
- Shutterfly.com

   Can make a book(s) of your family history
   use images you found
   include text you found
   cost is \$50 to \$70 per book (usually sales around Christmas time)
   make great Christmas gifts for family members
   include USB thumb drive with all files used
- Make your own paper scrapbooks

#### Computers & the Internet

- Genealogy research really tough to do before computers
- Computers and the Internet make it 100X easier to research
- Can search 6,000+ pages of the 1878, 1888, and 1909 Livingston County History books in less than 10 minutes!

### U.S. Census Records

- About a 70 year wait until they go public -latest available is 1940
- Some years records were destroyed by fire -St. Louis military records destroyed also

### Old Photographs with no Names $\otimes$

 If you know someone getting older, help them sort through old photos and label them

-my mother-in-law is 93

-she sorted boxes with her daughter and labeled them

-she was oldest survivor of her siblings

-if she did not know the names, she threw them away

 Might be able to figure out who they are from Studio Name/City -E.g. Storm City, Iowa

### **Research Checklist**

- ✓ Gather Existing Information ✓ Google Patent Search, then USPTO.gov
   ✓ Ancestry.com
- ✓ FindaGrave.com
- ✓ Dominy Library Fairbury Cemeteries
- ✓ Prairie-Central Geography Class Cemetery directory
- ✓ Book(s) with Livingston County Cemeteries (not online)
- ✓ 3 Livingston Co. History Books, 1878, 1888,1909
- ✓ Google Search
- ✓ Google Book Search

- ✓ Death certificates or marriage from old Liv. Co. Court House
- ✓ Fairbury Blade online archives from Dominy Library site (free)
- ✓ Pantagraph Archives (paid)
- ✓ Chicago Tribune Archives (free)
- ✓Daily Leader microfilm
- ✓ Fairbury High School year books

- ✓ GenealogyBank.com (paid)
- ✓ Cemetery visits & photos
- ✓Library visits
- ✓ Sanborn Insurance Maps
- ✓ Stuffed Clubs & Antimacassars
- ✓ Other web sites
   listed above in
   presentation

### Congratulations!

You've completed

"Genealogy 101"



### Good luck in your research!