
JUMP START YOUR GENEALOGY RESEARCH USING FREE WEB SITES

Submitted by Joe Petrie

The title is essentially the title of a free seminar that I recently gave at the Irish Cultural Centre of New England (ICCNE) in Canton MA. The attendees received two handouts: a hard copy of much of the material that I was presenting and a CD with a file of the free web sites (with hyperlinks).

The seminar focused on a dozen of free web sites from the six page list of free genealogy web sites. (The list follows after a few additional background paragraphs.) Many of the dozen sites were new to the 60+ “official” attendees – the count was based on Email addresses. (There were groups of people who had the same Email address so that only one was counted and not the group’s individuals) Some of the web sites on the six page list are favorites of my peer volunteers at the Genealogy Library at ICCNE. I’ll admit that I really was not too fluent on one.

I prepared the list for many months. As I prepared the list for the Seminar, I wondered where would family historians and other researchers be today without the Internet? In fact, some new to the field seem to assume that researchers are easily be able to find generations of ancestors simply by using our browsers and entering Boolean formulas like Joe+Petrie.

We all wish it was that easy. I’ll admit that it is easier today than 20+ years ago when I started. The work is still challenging – but easier. For example, one Saturday in Florida, while talking to another guest at dinner, he told me that he had always wanted to know where his mother was from in Sweden, when she had arrived in Boston and on what ship. The next day after lunch, using my laptop and the condo facility’s WiFi, we found his family’s Passenger Manifest (which included an uncle that he did not know was on the ship), where they were going in the Boston area (Winthrop MA), the correct spelling of the name of the locale that they left behind when they migrated, the date that they arrived, the name of the ship, and a photo of the ship. We downloaded the Passenger Manifest page’s image and the image of the ship. Since I did not have a printer, we sent the images to his Email address in a Boston suburb.

The result is not always positive. For example, recently, I was able to prove that an ICCNE client’s ancestor was born in Ireland and not in Boston - and essentially that the family member who was source of the written history was incorrect. The client was using a PC in Missouri and I was using a PC at home in Norwood MA.

In both cases, the genealogy research was significantly faster, easier and less costly today because use of the Internet. The downside is that the use of the Internet has virtually eliminated those periodic trips to libraries, court houses and repositories in far off places like, Boston, Sydney NS, Halifax, NS, and St. John’s NL. Now, when we visit those cities, we can really be tourists.

I am a free genealogy database hyperlink collector. Please contact me if you have comments, additions, etc. at joe-appg@norwoodlight.com. The links follow. The grey highlights identify the Minuteman Library System resources that are available to residents of Massachusetts and individuals who work in Massachusetts at an initial cost of \$1. Please note that some of the Minuteman Library System’s links are restricted to in-library use only. The others can be accessed from anywhere in the world.

List of Links as of 5/8/2012

World

<http://www.familysearch.org/>
<http://www.mln.lib.ma.us/info/norwood.htm>¹
AncestryLibrary²
<http://www.Ancestry.com/Freebies/>³

United States

<http://www.mln.lib.ma.us/info/norwood.htm>
Heritage Quest⁴
Ancestry Library
<http://www.usgenweb.com/>⁵

United States Immigration

<http://www.castlegarden.org>
<http://www.ellisland.org>⁶
<http://stevemorse.org>⁷
<http://www.mln.lib.ma.us/info/norwood.htm>
Ancestry Library
<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcidx.htm>⁸

Massachusetts

<http://www.mln.lib.ma.us/info/norwood.htm>
Historic Boston Globe
Massachusetts History on-line
Massachusetts Newspapers
Massachusetts News Stand
New England Ancestors (NEHGS)⁹
<http://www.americanancestors.org/>¹⁰
<http://www.walpolehistoricalsociety.org/>

New York City

<http://Italiangen.org>¹¹

Caribbean and the Americas

<http://www.immigrantships.net/>¹²
<http://www.findagrave.com/index.html>

Europe

<http://www.genealogylinks.net/europe/>¹³

Ireland

<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>
<http://www.askaboutireland.ie/>
<http://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
<http://www.nli.ie/en/homepage.aspx>
<http://www.failteromhat.com/index.php>
<http://www.IrishGraveyards.ie/>
<http://www.HistoricGraves.ie/>
<http://www.igp-web.com/IGPArchives/index.htm>
<http://www.genwed.com/UK/ireland.htm>
<http://maps.osi.ie/publicviewer>¹⁴

Ireland County Libraries with at least one free on-line database

<http://www.clarelibrary.ie/>
<http://www.kerrycolib.ie/>
<http://comres.leitrimcoco.ie/>
<http://www.mayoancestors.com>
<http://www.waterfordcountylibrary.ie/>
<http://www.westmeathcoco.ie/>

County Cork Map Site

<http://www.corkpastandpresent.ie>

County Cork FamilyWeb Site

<http://www.magner.org/>

Originated in the USA and of interest to individuals researching Ireland

<http://www.tiara.ie/>
<http://www.infowanted.bc.edu/>

Canada

<http://www.automatedgenealogy.com/census>¹⁵
<http://www.archivescanada.ca/>
<http://www.canadiangenealogy.net/>
<http://www.canadagenweb.org>
<http://www.mln.lib.ma.us/info/norwood.htm>
AncestryLibrary¹⁶
<http://users.eastlink.ca/~grose/acadian1.html>¹⁷

Canada Provincial Resources¹⁸

<http://www.culture.alberta.ca/paa>¹⁹
<http://www.archives.gnb.ca/>²⁰
<http://www.ngb.chebucto.org/>²¹
<http://www.novascotiagenealogy.com/>²²
<http://www.gov.pe.ca/archives/>²³
<http://www.saskarchives.com/>²⁴

Lunenburg Nova Scotia Families

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canns/lunenburg/>
<http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=hegerich&id=I30725>

Italian

<http://Italiangen.org>²⁵
<http://www.ItalianAncestry.com>²⁶

Jewish

<http://stevemorse.org>
<http://www.jewishwebindex.com/>²⁷
<http://www.americanancestors.org/>

- 1 The Minuteman Library System provides in-library access to Ancestry Library.
- 2 Ancestry Library is available for in-library use only in any Minuteman Library (for example Norwood's Morrill Memorial Library). Access requires a Library Card for a Minuteman member library. Legally, a library card for a Minuteman Library is available to any Massachusetts resident. Also, Ancestry Library is similar to Ancestry.com's US Version with some of the World Version databases (like the 1882 Census of Canada).
- 3 AncestryLibrary's "Drill Down" is better. Ancestor/Freebies is adequate for use when the Library is closed.
- 4 HeritageQuest requires a Minuteman Library Card. It is available 24/7 from Minuteman Library websites.
- 5 Links to free databases for all the States.
- 6 Ellis Island requires registration. I use castlegarden.org for pre-Ellis Island records.
- 7 Requires an Ancestry User-id and Password. The site's One-Step approach is an interesting technique. For the Surname, there is a phonic search. For first name, there are a sounds like and contains searches. In addition, there is a link to a combined CastleGarden and Ellis Island. This site also includes links to other US Ports.
- 8 I use the Passenger Manifests link to find individuals who landed in Boston.
- 9 The New England Ancestors link connects to americanancestors.org and it is restricted to in-library use only.
- 10 Americanancestors's registered users (including registered using the Free Account tab) can connect through the americanancestors.org web site. New York databases are gradually being added to the collection.
- 11 Volunteer organization collects records for New York City. The original focus was on Italians in New York City. One current emphasis is to digitize all Court Naturalization records for the New York Metropolitan Area including parts of New Jersey.
- 12 Europe to the Americas. Includes the immigrant ships to Halifax NS. The Surname list for the Chebucto peninsula is in Volume 3.
- 13 This site contains many links to European databases. It should be treated as a starting point.
- 14 This is a map site that allows the user to overlay historical information on the current usage.
- 15 Includes the Census of Canada for 1901 and 1911. Also includes 1852 Censuses of New Brunswick. In addition Ontario and Quebec is combined in the 1852 Census.
- 16 Includes the Census of Canada for 1882.
- 17 The section on information links is valuable. It is an excellent source for Acadiens.
- 18 Provinces are responsible for Birth, Marriage and Death records. The following have not made their Birth, Marriage and Death databases available: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland, North West Territories, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Yukon.

19 The site provides links to free Alberta databases such as cemetery records. It includes other cemeteries in Canada.

20 New Brunswick Death records are available on-line. Birth and Marriage records are not available on-line.

21 Volunteers have built and maintain the Newfoundland Grand Banks web site.

22 Nova Scotia Birth, Marriage and Death records are available on-line.

23 Three on-line databases are available for Prince Edward Island. Birth, Marriage and Death records are not available on-line.

24 One database is available for Saskatchewan. Birth, Marriage and Death records are not available on-line.

25 Volunteer organization collects records for New York City. The original focus was on Italians in New York City. One current emphasis is to digitize all Court Naturalization records for the New York Metropolitan Area, including non-Italians.

26 This site contains a vast collection of links to genealogy resources in Italy and the United States.

27 This site contains a collection of links to Jewish genealogy resources in the world.



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Topic: Finding Fallen and
Buried Headstones in
Burgeon

David Dawe
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Pat Walsh
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Where Do I Start?