



# Using Social Media for Family History

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Social media is a wonderful resource for family history. It can be used to connect with family, friends, colleagues, and group or societies members. Social media can be used to share text, photos, videos and other media. Queries posted on social media websites may be answered by individuals living in a local town, researching the same surnames, or by someone who may have resources available to help you.

In this class you will learn about Social Media and its uses for family history. The value of hashtags and why to use them will also be reviewed. Finding communities to help in family history research will also be discussed

## Definition of Social Media

Social media consists of communication tools used online to connect people by sharing information through technology, social interaction, and collaboration using text, pictures, links, videos or other media.

## Why Use Social Media?

- Connect with family and friends
- Crowdfund by posting research queries
- Locate cousins or distant relatives
- Learn new skills online through e-learning and wikis
- Research collaboration
- Share text, photos, and videos

## Social Media Platforms

All of the social media tools that are in use today can be placed into one or more of the following categories:

- Blogging/Microblogging
- Content Creation/Curation
- Messaging
- Photo Sharing
- Social Networking
- Video sharing and Live Streaming
- Wiki's E-Learning

## **Blogging/Microblogging**

### **Blogs**

Blogs can be posts about any topic such as family history, grandchildren, hobbies or any subject that is of interest. Photographs, images, videos, and sounds can be added to a blog. Posts are added in chronological order with the newest post at the top. Older posts can be accessed by links on the right side.

### **Microblogs**

A microblog is a blog with less content. Microblogs can include text, links, photographs, video, or other media. Hashtags can be added to the end of each post. Twitter and Tumblr are two places for microblogging.

### **Social Networking**

Social Networking is a fun way to connect with people you know or to find people you want to know. Photographs and posts can be shared with family members, friends, the public, or group members. Sharing photos and stories about your ancestors with family members can get them involved in doing family history. Groups can be created to share family stories, photographs, or videos and can be private or public. You can “like” or “follow” groups and societies to see posts about genealogy topics, sources for finding your ancestors, or finding out about new collections. You can also post queries to various groups to get assistance with your research. This is called crowdsourcing.

Social networking tools that can help you are the following:

- Facebook
- Google+
- LinkedIn

Google+ can be used to “hangout” with people. Under “Events,” choose “Plan A Hangout” to invite people. Video hangouts can also be scheduled. LinkedIn is a popular social media tool in the business world. Individuals can connect with people in their own industries and post to groups about various subjects.

### **Content Creation/Curation**

Tools like Pinterest have boards where you pin content. The content for a board can be for any topic: recipes, gardening, family history, whatever subject is of interest. The content can be created by the owner of the board or curated by finding content from other boards. Followers will be able to see information on a topic in one place. Paper.Li is another content curation tool used to find and collect content that can be shared on social media.

### **Photo and Video Sharing**

Some of the tools to use for sharing photos are Instagram, Flickr, and Snapchat. These can also be microblogs because the number of characters are less but include photos or video. Hashtags

can also be added at the end of each post. Video sharing tools are YouTube, Vimeo, and Periscope which is used with twitter.

## **Messaging Tools**

Tools for messaging individuals are Facebook Messenger, Marco Polo, Skype, Wechat and WhatsApp. Some of these apps that can be used on your phone to contact people and some add video to the chat.

## **Wikis**

A Wiki is a website that allows collaborative editing of the contents by users. FamilySearch Wiki is an encyclopedia of how to do genealogical research. It contains country pages, United States state pages, and province pages. There are links to online records for each US state and links to parish registers for localities in England. FamilySearch Wiki has pages that include research tools, localities, repositories, migration routes, methodology, language helps, Native American records, naturalization records, calendars, and handwriting. If you know about resources that are available in a locality, you can add information to a page or create a new one.

## **Online Learning**

E-Learning is electronic learning that includes online classes. Live online classes called webinars are available on many topics that can be watched live or after the webinar is archived. Some are available for free and others are available for a fee. FamilySearch has classes available that can be watched any time for free. There are classes for beginners, classes on doing research in various countries, and on subjects such as DNA, census, and military records. These can be found at FamilySearch.org by choosing "Get Help" at the top right, then "Help Center." This takes you to a page where you can choose Genealogy Assistance. Choose "Lessons" underneath "What do you want to learn about?"

## **Forums/Message Boards**

Forums/Message Boards have been around for a very long time. Forums and message boards are websites where you can post queries by topic, surname, or locality. When you post a message, you may get an answer right away, or it may take weeks or months to get a response. You can also search forums and message boards for localities or surnames to see who else is doing research on your surname or in your locality and connect with them to share information.

## **Using Hashtags on Social Media Sites**

Hashtags are keyword phrases or labels that are given to any topic you choose to post about. These are similar to the tags you put at the end of a blog article. When you use a hashtag, you put a # mark before the topic you are writing about to give it a label. Hashtags are links that can be used to find posts or images with the same hashtag. When hashtags are used frequently, the topic is "trending." One example of a hashtag is #Genealogy. If you are attending a genealogy conference such as the National Genealogical Conference, attendees use #NGS and the conference year to describe what is happening at the conference. You could also use the surnames you are writing about as hashtags. Social media websites can be searched by

hashtags to find information about a topic. Public conversations from different users will be placed into a single stream. Please use hashtags thoughtfully and sparingly.

## Social Media Tools

### Blogs

	Site Description	URL Address
<b>FamilySearch Blog</b>	Blogs written by FamilySearch and guests	<a href="https://familysearch.org/blog/en/">https://familysearch.org/blog/en/</a>
<b>Blogger</b>	Free web publishing tool from Google	<a href="http://www.blogger.com/start">www.blogger.com/start</a>
<b>Wordpress</b>	Free Wordpress blog and website publishing	<a href="http://www.wordpress.com">www.wordpress.com</a>
<b>Weebly</b>	Free Weebly blog and website publishing	<a href="http://www.weebly.com">www.weebly.com</a>
<b>Dear Myrtle</b>	Genealogy writer since 1995	<a href="http://www.blog.dearmyrtle.com">www.blog.dearmyrtle.com</a>
<b>Dick Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter</b>	Genealogy Blog	<a href="https://blog.eogn.com/">https://blog.eogn.com/</a>
<b>Cyndi's List</b>	Catalog of genealogical resources online containing blog information.	<a href="http://www.cyndislist.com/blogs/">http://www.cyndislist.com/blogs/</a>
<b>Geneabloggers</b>	Online genealogy blogging community	<a href="http://www.geneabloggers.com">www.geneabloggers.com</a> Search blogs
<b>Genealogical Societies</b>	List of genealogical society blogs by Genealogy Bank	<a href="https://blog.genealogybank.com/genealogical-society-blogs">https://blog.genealogybank.com/genealogical-society-blogs</a>
	Genealogy Blog	<a href="https://blog.eogn.com/">https://blog.eogn.com/</a>

### Social Media

	Site Description	URL Address
<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	A description of social media platforms.	<a href="http://sbtvirtual.ca/10-types-social-media-platform-updated-2017/">http://sbtvirtual.ca/10-types-social-media-platform-updated-2017/</a>
<b>Cyndi's List</b>	Catalog of genealogical resources online for social media.	<a href="http://www.cyndislist.com/social-networking/">http://www.cyndislist.com/social-networking/</a>
<b>Facebook</b>	Social media website used to connect with family, friends, groups and societies.  FamilySearch Research Wiki Genealogy Help on Facebook with Communities	<a href="http://www.facebook.com">www.facebook.com</a>  <a href="https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Genealogy_Help_on_Facebook">https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Genealogy_Help_on_Facebook</a>

	<p>FamilySearch.org Blog post with Social Media links</p> <p>FamilySearch Facebook page</p> <p>Family History Library Facebook page</p> <p>Facebook Social Media for Genealogy</p> <p>Social Media for Genealogy on Facebook list</p> <p>FamilySearch Webinar Followers</p> <p>Adoption/DNA: DNA Detectives, Search Squad, DD Social</p> <p>RAOGK</p> <p>Social Media for Genealogy</p> <p>Examples of other groups or societies: Georgia Genealogy Research, Library of Virginia, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Allen County Public Library, Oklahoma Historical Society, Ancestry.com, Findmypast.com, Geneanet.org, Heritagequest.com</p>	<p><a href="https://familysearch.org/blog/en/social-media/">https://familysearch.org/blog/en/social-media/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/familysearch/">https://www.facebook.com/familysearch/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/familyhistorylibrary/">https://www.facebook.com/familyhistorylibrary/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/socialmediagen/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/socialmediagen/</a></p> <p><a href="https://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list/">https://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/1805859502989278/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/1805859502989278/</a></p>
<p><b>Facebook Groups</b></p>	<p>Various pages where help is available for managing a group.</p>	<p>Customizing your group page  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/help/206871819351594">https://www.facebook.com/help/206871819351594</a></p> <p>How To Create a Group  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/help/167970719931213">https://www.facebook.com/help/167970719931213</a></p> <p>How to Create a Page  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/help/1040">https://www.facebook.com/help/1040</a></p>

		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groupadmins/tips.pdf/">02523024878</a> Administering a Facebook page <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groupadmins/tips.pdf/">https://www.facebook.com/groupadmins/tips.pdf/</a>  Tips for managing a Facebook page <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-tips-running-facebook-group-successfully-jason">https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-tips-running-facebook-group-successfully-jason</a>
<b>Google+</b>	Circles to connect with family, friends, colleagues, groups, and societies. Some examples are Dick Eastman (genealogy newsletter), Thomas MacEntee (Geneabloggers), Dear Myrtle Hangouts and Wacky Wednesdays	<a href="http://www.google.com/+/learnmore/getstarted/guide.html">http://www.google.com/+/learnmore/getstarted/guide.html</a> <a href="http://googleplusforgenealogy.blogspot.com/">http://googleplusforgenealogy.blogspot.com/</a>
<b>Twitter</b>	Social networking and microblogging website using short messages called tweets.	<a href="http://www.twitter.com">www.twitter.com</a> <a href="http://www.tweetdeck.com">www.tweetdeck.com</a> <a href="https://familysearch.org/blog/en/social-media/">https://familysearch.org/blog/en/social-media/</a> <a href="http://www.cyndislist.com/social-networking/twitter/">http://www.cyndislist.com/social-networking/twitter/</a>
<b>FamilySearch Family Tree</b>	It is more than just a pedigree. Add sources, documents, photographs, stories and sounds. Share items in your Memory Gallery on Social Media websites.	<a href="http://www.familysearch.org">www.familysearch.org</a>
<b>Pinterest</b>	Content creation and curation tool for sharing boards and pins on various topics such as family history.	<a href="http://www.pinterest.com">www.pinterest.com</a> <a href="https://familysearch.org/blog/en/social-media/">https://familysearch.org/blog/en/social-media/</a> <a href="http://www.cyndislist.com/social-networking/pinterest/">http://www.cyndislist.com/social-networking/pinterest/</a>
<b>Instagram</b>	Online photo and video sharing social networking tool	<a href="http://www.instagram.com">www.instagram.com</a> <a href="https://familysearch.org/blog/en/social-media/">https://familysearch.org/blog/en/social-media/</a>

<b>Tumblr</b>	Microblogging social networking website allowing sharing of media and other content.	<a href="http://www.tumblr.com">www.tumblr.com</a>
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## Wikis

	Site Description	URL Address
<b>FamilySearch</b>	FamilySearch Wiki contains genealogical related pages for countries, states and provinces, counties, and topics including methodology, repositories, migration routes, calendars, language helps, and handwriting.	<a href="https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/FamilySearch_Wiki:Introduction">https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/FamilySearch_Wiki:Introduction</a>
<b>Cyndi's List</b>	Wikis for genealogy	<a href="http://www.cyndislist.com/wikis/">http://www.cyndislist.com/wikis/</a>
<b>Ancestry.com</b>	Family History Wiki	<a href="http://www.ancestry.com/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page">http://www.ancestry.com/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page</a>

## Online Learning

	Site Description	URL Address
<b>FamilySearch</b>	FamilySearch learning center contains links to genealogy courses for beginners, research in various localities, and research on many subjects	<a href="https://familysearch.org/ask/landing?show=lessons&amp;category=Genealogy%20Assistance">https://familysearch.org/ask/landing?show=lessons&amp;category=Genealogy%20Assistance</a>
<b>Cyndi's List</b>	Educational links to various online courses and webinars related to genealogy	<a href="http://www.cyndislist.com/education/online-courses-and-webinars/">http://www.cyndislist.com/education/online-courses-and-webinars/</a>
<b>GeneaWebinars</b>	News about upcoming hangouts, meetings and webinars offered throughout the online genealogy community. Add the Geneawebinars calendar to your Google Calendar.	<a href="http://blog.geneawebinars.com/">http://blog.geneawebinars.com/</a>
<b>Legacy Family Tree</b>	Genealogy Education	<a href="http://www.familytreewebinars.com/">http://www.familytreewebinars.com/</a>

## Forums/Message Boards

	Site Description	URL Address
<b>Genforum</b>	Message boards by surname, localities, and subjects	<a href="http://www.genforum.com">www.genforum.com</a>
<b>Rootsweb</b>	Message boards by surname, localities, and subjects	<a href="http://boards.rootsweb.com/?o_iid=33216&amp;o_lid=33216&amp;o_sch=Web+Property">http://boards.rootsweb.com/?o_iid=33216&amp;o_lid=33216&amp;o_sch=Web+Property</a>

<b>Cyndi's List</b>	Queries and message boards	<a href="http://www.cyndislist.com/queries/general/">http://www.cyndislist.com/queries/general/</a>
<b>Ancestry</b>	Messages boards similar to Rootsweb and the Ancestry Support Community	<a href="http://boards.ancestry.com/">http://boards.ancestry.com/</a> <a href="http://ancestryforums.custhelp.com/pages/home">http://ancestryforums.custhelp.com/pages/home</a>

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