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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Editorial:

The story of their lives: writing your family history *Page 2*

Production:

Worth a thousand words: tips on using images, *Page 2*

Marketing:

Your book's "birth certificate":
how to give your book a legal identity
Page 3

Editorial

The story of their lives: Writing your family history

To know who you are, it helps to know where you come from. As more and more archives around the world put their contents online, it has become easier to research your family's history from the comfort of your own home. There are dozens of computer genealogy programs to help you organize and record what you've found out. And, of course, you'll want to share your knowledge with relatives and leave a record for future generations. A great way to do this is to self-publish a book or website to make your family's history really come alive.

Getting Started

Start with yourself and work back.

Begin with what you know and work backwards to what you don't know. Select one branch of your family tree to work on, either your mom's side or your dad's. Choosing the one with the more unusual surname can make your research work easier.

Has another relative done any family history research? You don't want to duplicate work that's already been done, so you may have to choose another family branch.

Write down everything you know so far, using index cards or some of the genealogy software available on the market.

Record basic information: names, dates, and places. Collect any family photos you have and make sure they are labeled accurately. Do the same with any other family papers.

Create pedigree charts, working up from yourself to your ancestors as far back as you can. This will help you to see what you need to find out next.

Research

Talk to everyone you can think of who might have information for you. If your parents and grandparents are still alive, ask them to tell you stories about their own lives and those of family members that they remember. Write it all down, and double check where you can: nobody's memory is perfect. And if you are planning to write a history rather than just recording a family tree, be sure to get as much detail as possible. Funny anecdotes, sad war stories, romances, all will contribute to an interesting narrative. Find out about people's occupations, hobbies, friends, and beliefs—anything that will make real people out of names, dates, and statistics on a page.

• continued on page 4

Production

Worth a thousand words

Tips on using images

Many books are improved by adding some kind of illustrations, whether you use photos, drawings, or some kind of chart or graph. There are a few important things to remember when you want to include non-type material in your book, and keeping them in mind will save you time and money when it comes to having your book printed.

Drawings and graphic images

Unless you are a talented artist, it can be worth hiring a professional to produce the graphics for your book. Sloppy or badly drawn illustrations will drag down the quality of the whole book. The correct resolution for monochrome images for print is 1200 dpi (dots per inch). This will ensure a crisp reproduction on the printed page. Check with your printer about the method of colour separation that will be used when your book is in production. The usual one is CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, black) and you will want your artist to use this to make sure the drawings are as clean and clear as they can be.

Photographs

The kind of photos you use depends on the book's content. A family or local history will include snapshots: the quality of the photos is not necessarily high, but their content makes them worth having in the book. They don't have to be perfect, but you will want to have them scanned properly and saved at a resolution of 300 dpi. (This is the correct resolution for the printed page; photos for use *only* on a website can be scanned at 72 dpi. If you are downloading images from the web for use in print, be sure to check that the resolution is high enough.) You can make a virtue of the

• continued on page 3

Marketing

Your book's "birth certificate": how to give your book a legal identity

ISBN (International Standard Book Number)

The ISBN, or International Standard Book Number, is the unique 13-digit number issued to every book published in the world that is intended for public distribution. The components of the ISBN identify the language in which it is written, the country where it was published, its publisher, and, in some cases, its imprint. The ISBN also includes a "check number" that can be used to determine whether the ISBN is genuine and correct. ISBNs assist book buyers and sellers to identify individual titles and editions so they can be sure of ordering the correct book. The hardcover and the paperback editions of a book, for example, will have separate ISBNs.

ISBNs are based on the original Standard Book Numbers created in Britain by booksellers WH Smith in 1966. The numbering system was taken over and given ten digits by the International Standardization Organization in 1970 (although British books continued to have only nine-digit numbers until 1974). The International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) is used for magazines and periodicals.

Since January, 2007, ISBNs have had 13-digits. Just as popular telephone exchanges are split to provide more numbers, the ISBN was expanded to avoid running out of numbers to assign. The extra three digits also mean that ISBNs conform to the international standard for identifying all other merchandise, the Universal Product Code (UPC). "Book-like" products, e.g. audiobooks, have ISBNs. Music CDs do not. They have a UPC.

Both the new 13- and the old 10-digit ISBNs will be used until all the 978 codes are assigned; therefore both are printed on a book's cover with the 10 above the bar-code and the 13 below.

ISBN agencies assign batches of numbers to publishers who then assign individual numbers to their books. Any time you change the binding or the content, you need to give a book a new ISBN.

ISBNs are in 4 parts:

- 1) Identifies the country or language-sharing group of countries where the ISBN was issued

This is a 1- to 5-digit number. E.g. 0 or 2 for English-speaking countries; 2, French; 3, German; 4, Japanese; 5, Russian; 7, Chinese. That's why a book printed in English in Canada will begin 978-1

- 2) Identifies the publisher to whom the number was issued. This will be the book's original publisher, but as the numbers are usually assigned to imprints, if the imprint has been sold to an-

• continued from page 2

"homemade" look of family snaps by framing them with line borders. Be sure to leave white space in your design so the photos aren't overwhelmed.

If you want a more professional photo—to use on your book's cover, for example, you can often purchase one from a photo library or agency. To keep your costs down, choose an image that is "royalty free." Photo library websites have thousands of images on every subject you can think of, from historic and current events to generic pics of food, people, places, and everything else. Really think about what you want before you begin to search: narrowing the limits means sifting through fewer photos to find just the right one for your book.

• continued on page 5

Editorial: family history

• continued from Editorial page 2

Get as much detail as possible from “primary sources.” In other words, look for first-person accounts, diaries, letters, scrapbooks, and photos. All this material will point you towards the questions you need to answer.

Do your background research before talking to any interview subjects. Once you’re ready to go to “secondary sources,” there are many outside facilities available to help you conduct your research. You must be aware of what each has available in your area of research. Joining a genealogical society early on in your project can help you focus your efforts in the right direction and you’ll gain valuable research tips from fellow genealogists. Contact and plan to visit the appropriate public archives, the archives of relevant military, educational, or sporting organizations, churches, cemeteries, and public record offices. In some cases the archives of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) may be very useful, and these facilities are open to all.

When doing research on the Internet, have your credit card handy and set a budget. Many useful sites charge a small user fee, but these can mount up if you haven’t narrowed down your search fields before going online.

Get organized

As you accumulate information, be sure to keep it organized. Put all your documents in one place, label photos and video and audiotapes of interviews, and take photocopies of irreplaceable documents. Note down the addresses of websites with useful and interesting information.

You can use special genealogy software to make all this easier. Check out numerous reviews to select the product that’s right for you. You’ll need a package that helps you plan, record, document, and share your materials. In addition, some allow you to include photos, cross-reference, generate timelines, and add fields to your databases.

You’ll also want to be able to move data from one platform to another: to publish an actual book, you will probably want to be able to put your data into a PDF (Portable Document Format) for transmission to your printer, or into HTML for publication on a website.

And back up, back up, back up. Don’t risk losing months (years!) of research just because you couldn’t be bothered to take a few minutes to back up your work.

Watch out for...

Many families have stories about connections to royalty or some other illustrious character, either famous or infamous. Check these *very* carefully.... You may find that the truth is much less glamorous but much more interesting: it might not be Henry VIII you’re descended from but his bodyguard, for example. Try to confirm all information using at least two sources.

If your family emigrated from Europe to North America, check carefully for the immigration records. There may be a story that the surname was changed at the port of entry: maybe, but maybe not. Spellings may have changed, however, particularly if your family’s original language used a non-Roman alphabet.

Be sensitive when you are sharing your information. In the course of your research, you may uncover secrets that other family members would like to keep quiet: illegitimate children, university degrees not awarded, bankruptcy, criminal charges and more. You are not a muckraking journalist: if someone asks you not to share a piece of information, you can always agree to seal it until after their death (or after your own).

Marketing: your book's a legal identity • continued from Marketing page 3

other company, it may not match the ISBNs of other books published by the same house.

- 3) Identifies the individual title
- 4) The check number to indicate that the ISBN is correct. Some ISBNs have an "X" at the end. This is the Roman numeral for 10

If a book has an ISBN-10 and an ISBN-13, both should appear in the following places: on the copyright page, on the back cover, in catalogues, on printed inventories, and on printed statements.

The ISBN should be expressed as a bar code on the back cover. If it's not printed there, a bookseller might have to generate a sticker bar code and they'll charge you a fee for that. If your book is a mass-market paperback, for example, with a paper cover that would be removed and returned to the publisher for credit, the ISBN must be printed on the inside of the front cover as well.

There are companies that will generate bar codes for you.

An inaccurate ISBN causes problems for inventory systems and for automatic ordering systems such as Amazon. For this reason, there are formulae to calculate whether an ISBN is valid. A bookstore may sell a book with an incorrect ISBN, but it will be impossible to order it through Amazon, for example.

As a self-publisher, if you intend to sell your books to the public, you will want to have ISBNs for them. Ardith can help you arrange these or you can contact the National Library of Canada:

395 Wellington Street

Ottawa, ON

K1A 0N4

Phone: (819) 994-6872 Fax: (819) 997-7517

Email: isbn@nlc-bnc.ca

ISBNs are assigned in blocks of 10, 100, and 1,000. Once assigned, they cannot be reused. Publishers find it useful to keep the same initial prefix if possible, so when deciding how many ISBNs to ask for, work out how many books you intend to publish in the next five years. This will help you decide how many ISBNs you need.

Only publishers with a Canadian address are eligible for ISBNs assigned by the National Library of Canada. US publishers should contact the Library of Congress in Washington DC.

CIP (Cataloguing in Publication)

Cataloguing in Publication is a system used by publishers and libraries that allows books to be catalogued before they are published. What makes it different from other cataloguing systems is that the entry is created before publication and can therefore be included in the book itself. Each country's national library administers the system.

The program assists in publicizing new books, enabling librarians and others to order books in advance of publication. CIP entries are published in various journals used by librarians and others who acquire books to order their selections each season. For example, Collections Canada's website includes "New This Month," which publicizes new books.

To be included in the Canadian program, a publication must:

- Be published by a publisher with a Canadian address
- Not yet be printed
- Have a print run of at least 100 copies
- Be intended for public distribution

To participate in Canada, visit www.collectionscanada.gc.ca and download the appropriate form.

• continued on page 6

Marketing: your book's a legal identity • continued from Marketing page 5

You must include the following info:

Author(s) name, title, subtitle, place of publication, publisher's name, projected date of publication. If possible, also include a copy of the title page, the table of contents, and the introduction and preface.

Then, print the CIP data on the back of the title page of the book. Do not change the sequence, punctuation, capitalization, or spacing. This is standardized so that librarians all over the world can understand it.

Once you have submitted CIP data, you must inform CIP if you make any changes before publication.

How to register your copyright

Copyright is literally "the right to copy" or disseminate something you have created. You also have the right not to publish it and to prevent others from doing so either.

You don't need to do anything special to have the copyright to something you have created: it's yours because you made it, unless you were employed or commissioned by someone else to make it. You can also assign copyright to somebody else permanently or license it for temporary use.

If you want to ensure that you are recognized as the holder of a copyright, you can register your rights with the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) and you can use the international copyright symbol © to remind people whose work they are reading. CIPO will not enforce your copyright, nor will they help you assert your right (only the courts can do that), but having registered copyright means that others must prove that you do not have the right to use material, rather than proving that they do.

Copyright of an original work also includes the sole right to:

- produce, reproduce, perform, or publish any translation of the work;
- convert a dramatic work into a novel or other non-dramatic work;
- convert a novel, a non-dramatic work, or an artistic work into a dramatic work by way of performance in public or otherwise;
- make a sound recording of a literary, dramatic, or musical work;
- reproduce, adapt, and publicly present a cinematographic work;
- communicate the work by telecommunication;
- present an artistic work created after June 7, 1988, at a public exhibition;
- rent out a computer program that can be reproduced in the ordinary course of its use, and
- authorize any such acts.

You can't copyright an idea for a game, but you can copyright the way the rules are expressed. You can't copyright the plot of a book, film, or play because it actually has to be written first. In other words, you can't copyright an idea; you can copyright only concrete things that could be reproduced.

Other items that are not protected by copyright include:

- names or slogans;
- short phrases and most titles;
- methods, such as a method of teaching or sculpting;
- plots or characters; and
- factual information.

In Canada, copyright generally lasts for 50 years after the end of the calendar year of the author's death. After this, the material passes into the "public domain," where everyone can use it, free of charge. You can't

Marketing: your book's a legal identity • continued from Marketing page 6

copyright something that is in the public domain, but you can copyright a new translation or a new preface to an old work.

For more information, contact the Canadian Intellectual Property office at 1-866-997-1936, or visit www.cipo.gc.ca.

Access Copyright

The Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency (formerly Cancopy) or Access Copyright, is a not-for-profit collective that collects fees and issues licenses for use of copyrighted materials on behalf of copyright holders.

It licenses educational institutions, businesses, government, and so on to photocopy or reproduce copyrighted books, magazine articles, and other printed materials. These temporary licenses allow users to reproduce copyrighted content when they need to and ensure that copyright holders get the fees they have earned.

As Canada's copyright administrator, Access Copyright has agreements with organizations around the world, allowing Canadians' copyrights to be recognized in other countries. Access also lobbies the government and represents publishers and creators in discussions of copyright law.

If you want to use material by a copyright holder and you don't know how to contact them, Access may be able to help. They will issue a license on the holder's behalf and then pay when they are located.

Publishers and creators can become "affiliates" for free. Register yourself and they'll pay you a fee for any use of your materials. Writers, photographers, and illustrators who are Canadian citizens or residents can apply to become affiliates as long as:

- one of your works has been published in print format (book, magazine, scholarly journal);
- you have one work over which you retain repro rights; not already affiliated with another agency such as COPIBEC in Quebec. You can still licence your work yourself.

The estates of eligible, deceased authors will continue to receive copyright payments until the work has passed into the public domain, and even if an author was not registered with Access in their lifetime, deceased authors can be registered by their estates as long as they meet the criteria.

You must register by mail. Visit their website to find out more:

Access Copyright, The Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency,

1 Yonge Street, Suite 800,

Toronto, Ontario, M5E 1E5

www.accesscopyright.ca

Phone 1-800-893-5777, (416) 868-1620

Fax (416) 868-1621

Email info@accesscopyright.ca

Public Lending Rights

Canada's Public Lending Right (PLR) program is intended to compensate authors for royalties lost when people borrow books from libraries rather than buying copies. The concept originated in Denmark in 1941 and has spread to fifteen countries, with more considering legislation to set up programs. The system is not universal because opponents feel that adding extra fees to libraries' operational costs risks limiting public access to libraries. The United States does not have a PLR system.

• continued on page 8

Marketing: your book's a legal identity • continued from Marketing page 7

Not all PLR programs are the same: some base payments on the number of times a book is borrowed from the public library system, others simply on whether the book is owned by the library. Some nations pay only for works of fiction, others include non-fiction and scholarly works. Most countries pay PLR fees only to authors who are citizens or residents, but some have linked the system to their copyright laws, making it less restricted. The sums are relatively modest: in Canada, an author will be paid less than \$40 per book per library, with a maximum of \$2,681 to any author in a given year.

Canadian authors must register their books in order to collect this money, and the registration period is limited. Unlike copyright and royalty payments, which can be claimed by an author's estate, PLR money is limited to living authors.

For more information or to register with the Public Lending Right Commission, visit www.plr-dpp.ca or use the following contact details:

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E-mail plr@canadacouncil.ca