

Partial Virtual Family Reunion: Part 2, technology that can add fun and excitement to your summer gatherings (Don't miss Part 3 forthcoming)

This weekend my family initiated a partial virtual family reunion since my son and family from Los Angeles were unable to attend while being blessed with my daughter's last minute family trip surprise with a car visit from Utah arriving Sunday evening. It was a marvelous Memorial Day with short visits over Zoom. Activities ranged from Memorial Day breakfasts in Cerritos, California and Golden, Colorado to roasting marshmallows on gram crackers for eating smores over a gas lite BBQ pit into darkness of night to a spectacular Jeopardy game on our smartphones. The one principal of hosting a partial virtual family reunions is that we learned was that time zone differences which were a challenge especially with all the holiday excitement in following a prescribed schedule. Needless to say we have a fantastic Memorial Day together. But the most exciting event was playing the "Jeopardy" TV game show on our 4K TV with everybody participating on their cell phones and tablets which will be featured in part 3 of this Facebook Group because there is so much information to share as we assembled our family into 8 feisty, competing teams.



Los Angeles cooking - Neighbor hosting bonfire Wife providing Memorial Breakfast singing

Below are some ideas to consider incorporating in your partial virtual family reunions.

Sharing through Technology

You can add stories to FamilySearch by [Using FamilySearch Apps to Record Oral Histories](#) that can be shared in the virtual conference. The *FamilySearch Memories* app makes it easy to preserve your photos, documents, and audio files in a way that your entire family can access them. See an [overview and instructions here](#). You can also find step-by-step instructions in **The Family History Guide** to add documents and photos to [Ancestry](#), [MyHeritage](#) and [Findmypast](#). Putting information on FamilySearch or other public sites may enable someone to find out more about a family they did not know they had or learn more about them.

There are numerous ways to share your family history. [4 Enduring Ways to Share Your Family History Research](#) lists some ways to share your family history:

1. Start a family history Facebook group.
2. Assemble a genealogy binder.
3. Create a family history blog.
4. Write biographies of your ancestors.

Additional suggestions to share your family history discoveries are provided in [5 Great Ways to Share Your Family History](#):

1. Reach out to others. Share your family history research and photos either in hard copy or digital format.
2. Submit your family tree to databases. This makes information easily accessible to anyone searching for the same family.
3. Create a family web page.
4. Print beautiful family trees.

5. Publish short family histories.

Social Media is another great way to share. [Ideas and Help for Using Social Media – "The New Language of Family History"](#) gives a variety of ideas for different ways of sharing on the following:

- Facebook
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Twitter

Use Social Media for Family History Story-telling



- Find how-tos and ideas [here](#).
- Enjoy the video on [this Facebook page](#) of a grandmother sharing a personal story. Her little brother lost his shoes while swimming in a river in Panguitch, Utah, during WW II, with no rations for another pair.
- Learn how to share your stories using [FaceBook Live](#).

Create and Keep a Personal or Family Blog Story-telling

Learn [How To Create and Reap The Benefits of Family History Blogs](#). Your blog can be private (just you can see it), semi-private (share with whom you choose), or public (anyone can view it). For those of you who may feel intimidated, find the help you need from Lisa Louise Cooke in a [free series of videos](#) on the Genealogy Gems YouTube channel. These videos give instructions for creating a blog with Blogger using a Google account. Another option (along with instructions, benefits and links to get started) is explained by Dick Eastman in this article: [Why You Might Want A Personal Genealogy Blog On WordPress](#). Learn how to share events, activities, family news, milestones, stories, photos, videos, and memories in [this blog post](#) by Lisa Louise Cooke.

Sharing Through Virtual Reunions or Get-Togethers



Although it is fun and more personal to gather as a large group for your family reunion, the typical family reunion gathering does present some difficulties. Difficulties of family reunions might include concerns of maintaining social distancing, travel costs, time commitment, reunion costs, lack of enthusiasm, entertaining a wide variety of ages, housing and feeding large groups, or a large enough venue.

Virtual reunions (those facilitated over the internet) may help alleviate some of these difficulties and may make even more family participation possible. In *How to Plan a Family Reunion* at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXcCnf_mr1g, it discusses the difficulties of family reunions and suggests reunions as a solution to many of these challenges. Virtual reunions are not an imitation of traditional reunions; they are a new venue with different benefits. Read more [here](#) for more ideas for hosting virtual reunions.

Find an Online Meeting Tool



Check out some internet options for meeting with your family over the internet. Find one that works for you. Some ways to do that would be:

- Google online meeting tools or web conferencing.
- See meeting tools listed in [this blog article](#).
- View additional ideas listed in [this blog article](#).

Some of these options are free or minimal cost, while others require a subscription. Some will allow for your get-togethers to be recorded and stored online which can be viewed at a later date. While these tools can be used for extensive family reunions, don't forget you can also keep in touch with individual family members or small family groups living away from home.

Sharing through Family Reunions



Closing Comments with Technology Tips for the Virtual Family Reunion

If you'd like to see more appropriate software products and to evaluate additional feature options, compare all **Video Conferencing Software** at <https://www.g2.com/categories/video-conferencing> to ensure you use the right product.



For those unfamiliar with hosting a videoconferencing event, consider these resources cited below.

[Zoom Rescue: Collaboration Time With Ward Temple & Family History Consultants](#); or see *May 14, 2020 posting*