

## Using Social Media for Family History: A New Horizon of Skills & Tools

In today's scene, social media is being creatively being used in genealogy as an aid in finding and evaluating records and resources. In the comfort of our own homes we can now research your ancestors' names, expand our family trees, search through archives of photos, explore countless genealogical websites, do indexing, download digital images, upload stories of our ancestors, and share instantly what we find with family members who live thousands of miles away, to name just a few. We can even "tweet" about it to our friends, blog about it, or post our finds on Facebook and Instagram." If you don't know how to use it, you just need to "ask your children, your grandchildren, or the teenager next door to tell you. Chances are they'll be happy to bring you up to speed and teach you how to use this new technology."

### **Consider These Types of Social Media for Genealogical Purposes**

---

**Blogs** - an online journal or informational website displaying information in the reverse chronological order, with latest posts appearing first. It is a platform where a writer or even a group of writers share their views on an individual subject. Currently there are 505+ million blogs.

- A blog is just a specialized web page

**Facebook** - social network' with 2.41+ billion users

- There are hundreds of Facebook groups and pages which cover topics from research in a specific county to entire countries.

**Flickr** - a photo-sharing platform and social network where users upload photos for others to see. Users create a free account and upload their own photos (and videos) to share with friends and followers online. It's more focused on the art of photography than any other major social network out there

- Currently run by Yahoo, it is a great repository for photos and images a person has taken or owns that can be made available for people to find, and use.

**Google+** - social network

- Google+ is social network operated by Google.

**Instagram**, - a social networking app which allows its users to share pictures and videos with their friends with 111 million users

**Pinterest** –a visual discovery engine for finding ideas like recipes, home and style inspiration, and more with 291+ million users

**Skype** - chat software

- Skype is free software that allows you to communicate with individuals or groups through video, audio, or typed chat.

**Twitter** - mirco-blog with 330 million users

- Twitter is a service where you type short messages, called 'tweets' to broadcast a message about something you want others to know about.

**Wikis** - collaboration

- A wiki is nothing more than a web page that can be modified by anybody who can view it.

**YouTube** - media and entertainment

- YouTube is a site that has revolutionized the way people use the Internet to share short videos about just about anything.

## Need Motivation of Where to Start Using Social Media?

Consider some of the following tips for actively utilizing social media. Don't limit yourself to just hanging out with friends or family but rather think outside of the box and you'll be surprised about what awaits you in connecting with others who are also expanding their genealogical pursuits. Below are some excerpts from Angelle Anderson that offers basic tips that can be easily used for family history endeavors. The complete article is from **The Family History Guide** at: <https://www.thefhguide.com/blog/ideas-and-help-for-using-social-media-the-new-language-of-family-history/>

### Facebook

- Create a family page or group
- Post old family photos to share with or be identified by family members
- Create family reunions and events
- Connect with genealogical societies, organizations, and groups
- Find and connect with distant cousins or family members in foreign countries

### YouTube

- Create a family history channel
- Upload and share family videos or photo montages
- Watch how-to videos about family history research
- Watch videos about places your ancestors lived or events they went through

### Instagram

- Create a family history hashtag or username
- Use keywords or ancestors' names for hashtags
- Share hashtags with other family members so everyone can see their photo shares
- Post photos of ancestors
- Post photos of current family history activities

### Twitter

- Create a family history hashtag or username and share with family members
- Share posts about current family history activities and needs
- Connect with family history organizations and libraries
- Steven and Jill Decker caution that, "social media is not without its issues when it comes to sharing family history. Not every social media claim is accurate: users may use profile pictures of heroes or loved ones rather than themselves or, for whatever reason, may say they are from a place to which they have never been. That said, imagine how many events and special occasions would pass unnoticed by large numbers of family and friends without social posts. Social media can be a great way to share family memories and instill a real sense of belonging among today's spread-out families

### More references for Other Social Media Platforms

- 3 Ways to Use Instagram for Family History by Tyler S. Stahle, blog post, <https://familysearch.org/blog/en/3-ways-instagram-family-history/>.
- Kludge Fellow of Digital Studies, Katrin Weller, also offers advice in a Library of Congress blog post, *Preserving Social Media for Future Historians* (<https://blogs.loc.gov/kluge/2015/07/preserving-social-media-for-future-historians/>).
- For ideas about how to use Pinterest see: <https://www.pinterest.com/conniesmith1/family-history/>, <http://lialisson.com/2015/06/25/pinterest-for-genealogists/>, or <https://www.pinterest.com/familysearch/>.
- Facebook is Family History by Maggie Stevens, blog post, <https://familysearch.org/blog/en/facebook-family-history>.

## Specific YouTube Channel Recommendations

Consider learning from professional genealogists as well as active family history buffs who follow these blogs in these recommended 17 YouTube Channels. If you find any of them appropriate for your needs, recommend subscribing to them. Their audiences are global and represent a wealth of family history information if you are willing to search them. These YouTube Channels are highly recommended and are linked as well for your convenience in perusing them.

- [American Ancestors](#)
- [Ancestry](#)
- [BYU Family History Library](#)
- [Caroline Pointer](#)
- [DearMYRTLE](#)
- [Devin Ashby](#)
- [FamilySearch](#)
- [Family Tree Magazine](#)
- [Findmypast](#)
- [Genealogy Bank](#)
- [Genealogy Tools \(Family Tree Maker\)](#)
- [Legacy Family Tree Software](#)
- [Lisa Louise Cooke's Genealogy Gems](#)
- [MyHeritage](#)
- [National Genealogical Society \(NGS\)](#)
- [RootsMagic TV](#)
- [US National Archives](#)

## Need Tutorials for Mastering Social Media? The Family History Guide Is Your First Choice!

There are many social media tools you can use to communicate with others and share your progress and accomplishments. The Family History Guide offers six tutorials with an abundance of “how to” articles and videos covering how to use social media tools for family history pursuits. They are located at:

<https://thefhguide.com/project-7-tech03.html>

- Google Tools
- YouTube
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Pinterest
- Instagram

## Again: Don't Neglect Social Media With One More Example!

Peruse the November 11, 2019 posting entitled: [Need Help? Many Experienced Genealogist Read This Facebook Group: There's Even More Help Available. . . Read On!](#) for a plethora of Facebook Groups geared for extensive family history networking and original research! Welcome to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century of Genealogical Tools and Techniques!