

# Family Stories: Woven Generations - Clan McCloud8

Family stories can be a motivating research tool for increasing family history interest. Sometimes we are looking for new stories from other family members, both near and far. Often times, the reverse can also be possible coming right from within ones own family members. For example, sometimes through our careers, hobbies, talents or in this video as an example at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5KsJnH8u08>, the unpredictable is also possible!

Never underestimate the opportunities that may be before us!! How can you connect with your ancestors? How about learning to play the Great Highland Bagpipe? This video is only 4:47 minutes in length and is both entertaining and intuitive that illustrates through our talents and interests, it is possible to accomplish much in connecting ourselves to our family history roots.

## **My Testimony: How Did My Talents Assist Me with Family History?**

With all of my family roots being behind the "Iron Curtain," I had little hope of traveling to Eastern Europe to do original research. When I began my family history in 1970, the Cold War was in full force. I developed my career, got married, built a family, and developed my membership in the Lord's church. But when the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, my imagination blossomed that there was hope to travel to Eastern Europe and shared it with my family if possible. In about 1985, I was living in Chicago Illinois and having been the senior editor of an international jazz education magazine. Suddenly out of the blue, I had the opportunity to host the editor of a prominent jazz education magazine from Poland. I hosted him in my home for maybe two or three days and he took an interest in me because of my Polish roots. And because of that relationship and my professional ties in my career with jazz education, he left me with an open invitation to visit Poland and he was willing to assist me with translating if I could travel to Poland. And 11 years later, an opportunity arose in which I took advantage of his invitation.\

## **But Traveling to Eastern Europe was Still Difficult Because. . .**

But getting there was hardly easy because of the expenses for my family with airplane, continental transportation, room and board, etc. But as a music teacher I did do a lot of the teaching private lessons on the side to augment my income because educator salaries are not well endowed so when it came time when my son was completing his mission in Munich Germany in 1996, it became possible to consider traveling from Munich Germany in an equilateral triangle with Warsaw being on the northeast corner and Ljubljana Slovenia being on the southeast corner. Because of my abilities to augment my income and my professional relationship with the senior editor of the Polish jazz magazine, my wife supported me to take a "Giant Step "and we went as a family but the prerequisite was I had already done my genealogy in America first which fortunately I had accomplished much for 15 years prior. So be aware that you as an individual can make opportunities if you pursue a course of action that's appropriate for your situation. And for me it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity because in later years when I retired in 2009, my children were all too old to travel since they had their own families to accompany Roslyn and me. By taking advantage of this travel option 13 years before my retirement , I was able to share this once-in-a-life experience with my entire family and at the same time, we were able to get more research accomplished and meet elderly relatives before they passed away and even obtain many family history stories and photos as a treasure chest of memories to share with future generations to come!