

[Let Your Genealogical Research Live Beyond You!](#)

The purpose of family history isn't just to concentrate on your deceased ancestors! Let your research live beyond you! Put it all together with these tips for writing your family history, plus a project organizing worksheet you'll refer to again and again. If your family research is to live beyond you, you'll need to put it into some shareable, lasting form. That usually means summarizing your findings in writing, may be enhanced with photos and images of interesting documents. Whether you go all out with a self-published hardback or just pass out staple pages at the next family reunion, you'll create a legacy – a framework others can use to understand your family story and the genealogical evidence you've gathered. I can't promise the project will be a breeze, but I can promise it'll be easier when you follow these six tips offered below and use a handy organizing worksheet linked below.

- **Define Your Purpose**

Before you begin it's important to know what you hope to accomplish with this writing project. Do you want to summarize all your research, share your family legacy? Pass down the stories relatives told? Tell how your family fits into local history. Share the story of an ancestor or family you admire? Celebrate your ethnic heritage or something else?

- **A Plan Makes a Difference**

An outline gives you a framework for building your project especially if it involves multiple people or longtime span. Make a list of elements you want to include – you can use the worksheet that you can download from <http://familytreemagazine.com/freeforms> which I have already presented with you in the November 3 posting entitled [61 Free, Useful Genealogy Forms from Family Tree Magazine!](#)

- A family tree of your Dad's family
- Information about the paces the family came from with a map
- Names and immigration details of all the immigrant ancestors.
- Where these families settled in the US, their jobs and their children

When you know the topics you want to cover, arrange them in an order that makes sense to you. It could be chronological, geographical, all second generation information, family branches one at a time or some other arrangement.

- **Pictures Will Make A Difference**

Pictures and graphs will engage your readers, help them follow complicated lineages and show what you're talking about. Plan as you go with pictures, documents, maps, charts and/or genealogical reports that will best illustrate your narrative. Depending on how many photos and documents you found, you want to organize the options to those with key moments in your family history, selecting those that will reproduce well in the finished product

- **Getting Assistance**

Now you're ready to write. As you work, go over your records for families and people you are writing about. To help you organize source references, add in-text references with the title, author and page or record number in parentheses when you use information from a record, article, book or website. Also create a bibliography of sources as you go to include everything needed to find that source again.

- **Don't Necessarily Begin At The Beginning**

Don't let the "how to start" roadblock stall your project right out of the gate. If you don't know how to begin, just start writing a story you like – maybe it's about an ancestor's immigration, military service or venture to the wrong side of the law. The words will flow from there. An interesting or dramatic event is often the best way to begin a story, anyway. Remember, you're not carving a stone: you can always rearrange things later.

- **Deadlines? Take Your Time**

A deadline can motivate you, but give yourself plenty of time. You want this project to add fulfillment to your family research, not cause stress start now and work on your writing project a little at a time, once a week or every evening if you can manage it. Imagine where you'll be a year from now.

When Is A Good Time To Write Your Story?

If you answer yes to any of the following questions, it may be time to pause your genealogy research and start writing:

1. Have you accumulated a lot of records and contextual information you found difficult to adequately record in a family tree?
2. Has the pace of your research slowed?
3. Are you stuck in your research, unsure what to do next?
4. Are you worried what will happen to your research when you're gone?
5. Have you discovered a compelling or surprising story your relatives would like to hear?
6. Would family history knowledge add meaning to an upcoming birthday, anniversary or other big family event?

Here's My Multimedia Life Story in a Nutshell!

Below is my multimedia presentation of my life story. Each photo is actually a folder with multiple photos organized in separate nested folders, groupings or chapters with my photos. Interspersed in each nested folder, chapter or groupings are historical documents, videos clips, music performances, pedigree charts and much more. The second image below is the first sub-grouping of my life story thus far. The quotation, "A picture is worth a thousand words" is so true. This multimedia presentation is web-based covering not only life as outlined in these two images below but also covers my children, my grandparents and Roslyn along with her extended family with great grandparents and beyond. Why did I include Roslyn and her ancestors, because 50% of my children's genealogy comes directly from Roslyn! And what makes this web-based multimedia presentation so special is that it is password protected for privacy and guaranteed to be on the Internet for hundreds of years after I pass away even if the Internet is no longer free, such as Internet 2, Internet 3 or whatever develops. Thus, my grandchildren and their future off springs for hundreds of years in the future will have full access to my life story which will live far beyond my years! Now this is but one example of "Letting Your Genealogical Research "Live Beyond You!" In my situation, far beyond me!!!



00 Life Story Of John Kuzmich
1 Nested Album, 2 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



01 Table Of Contents
2 Nested Albums, 2 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



02 Paternal & Maternal Roots
2 Nested Albums, 2 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



03 Roots: Lemko, Slovak, Ukra...
18 Nested Albums, 2 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



05 John Anthony Kuzmich, Jr. ...
12 Nested Albums, 49 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



06 Roslyn Christensen Kuzmich
8 Nested Albums, 11 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



07 Special Memories
9 Nested Albums, 5 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



08 Unique Trips
21 Nested Albums, 2 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



09 Rhys Rasmussen Kuzmich
7 Nested Albums, 2 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



10 Quinn Christensen Kuzmich
1 Nested Albums, 1 File
Shared with Friends & Family



11 Reva Kuzmich Paget
8 Nested Albums, 1 File
Shared with Friends & Family



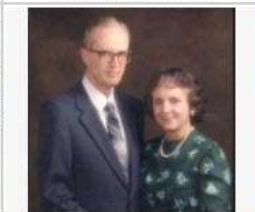
12 Dallin Thorup Kuzmich
10 Nested Albums, 2 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



13 John's Paternal Ancestors
5 Nested Albums, 4 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



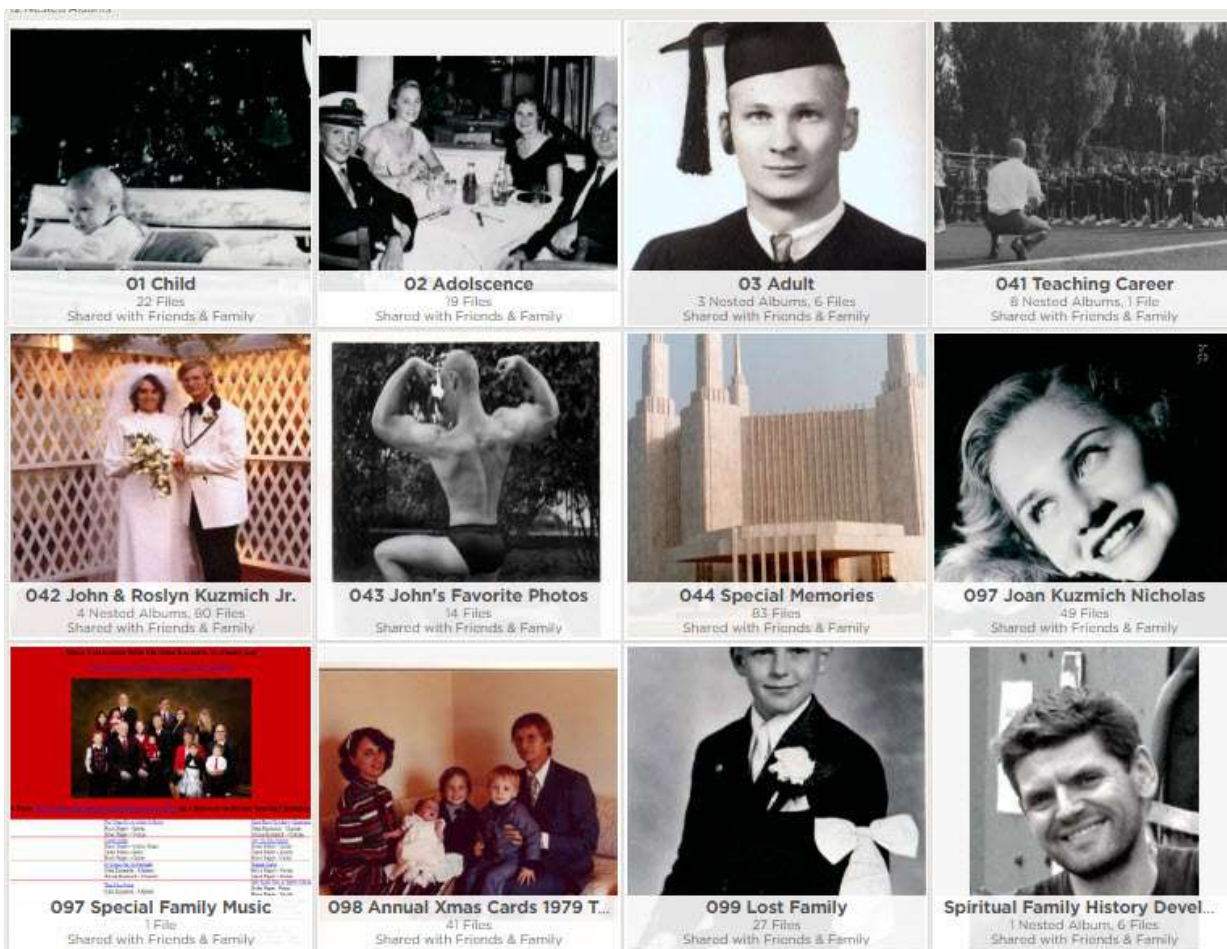
14 John's Maternal Ancestors
8 Nested Albums, 4 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



15 Roslyn's Paternal Ancestors
10 Nested Albums, 10 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



16 Roslyn's Maternal Ancestors
13 Nested Albums, 4 Files
Shared with Friends & Family



Below is a worksheet that I am particularly fond of that perhaps can better organize your efforts to “Let Your Genealogical Research Live Beyond You!”

WORKSHEET

Organize Your Family History Writing Project

PROJECT SUMMARY
 What person, family or event is your focus for this project? What do you want the final results to look and feel like, for example, do you want it to be short or long? Do you want a quick read with bulleted names and family charts, or more complex? What about a story heavy with photos, record images and other visuals; more narrative focused; or somewhere in between?

FORMAT
 How will you share your final product?

printed at home or at a copy shop

self-published book

photo book

PDF

video

slideshow of captioned images

other format

Notes: _____

YOUR AUDIENCE
 Who do you know will read this project?

very close family

current and future relatives

other genealogists

history scholars

Notes: _____

STORIES TO INCLUDE
 What stories and topics are important to cover in this project? Continue your list on another page, if needed. Depending on your time and other resources, you may want to break down a long list into multiple writing projects.

VISUALS
 List family trees, maps, photos, records and personal timelines you want to include. Remember that images you plan to print must have a resolution of at least 300 dots per inch (dpi) when printed at the size you want them to appear in the book. If you have a small photo that you want to be larger in your book, it must have a resolution higher than 300 dpi. Also take into account copyright considerations, and make sure you have permission to use images you find online or in printed sources.
