

# THE MASTER GENEALOGIST SELECTED RESOURCES CAGG-NI TMG SIG

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*The Master Genealogist* (TMG) is a feature-rich genealogy program. It can do almost anything you would like to do with your genealogical information. It lends itself to being both a research tool as well as your lineage-based genealogy software. Many have shied away from it because it has a reputation of being complex. However, it is only as complex as you wish to make it depending on which features you select. Using it solely as a data entry repository means there is much less to learn. However, using its advanced features makes the software more multifaceted and therefore more complex.

One of the great advantages of TMG is that it is very flexible. You can customize it to suit your own personal tastes. Also, it highly encourages documentation of your research, which adds a deeper dimension to your family history repository.

*The Master Genealogist* is well supported both by Wholly Genes, the company that publishes TMG, as well as the TMG genealogy community. Since we all learn in different ways, the following selected list of resources should be helpful as you become acquainted with the various features of the software. Although many of the resources are geared to individuals new to TMG, the resources also will aid the long-time TMG user.

The TMG resource list identifies resources that specifically assist with understanding and using TMG. It does not include companion resources that support, in addition to TMG, other multiple lineage-based software programs, e.g., *Gen Smarts*, *Pocket Genealogist*, etc.

## BASIC TOOLS

If you do not already own TMG, these two resources will give you a good taste of the program.

1. A Guided Tour of The Master Genealogist, Wholly Genes,  
<http://www.whollygenes.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Screen=TMGTOUR>

This self-running demo provides a complete overview of TMG's main features including importing from another software product, recording, documenting and searching information, customizing input panels and output structures, creating reports and publishing your data. You can use pause, rewind, and fast forward buttons to view the demo at your own pace or you can jump directly to a topic that interests you. Recommended for new users.

2. The Master Genealogist, 30-day free trial download.  
<http://www.whollygenes.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?screen=TMG>

If you want to test-drive *The Master Genealogist*, you can download a trial version at the above site. It will give you a good idea of how it works and what its capabilities are. It also has a sample database that you can use to test aspects of TMG. This is a good way to practice using the program without affecting your personal data. This is a fully functioning version of TMG. The 30-day free trial will give you a good idea of its capabilities.

## INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS

All four videos are available for sale at

<http://www.whollygenes.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Screen=VIDEOS>

3. *The Master Genealogist: Getting Started*, DVD/VHS, Wholly Genes

This video teaches the new user of *The Master Genealogist* about basic concepts including: terminology, main display elements, navigation, creating a new project, simple data entry, searching for people, exhibit log and simple projects. Duration: 1 hour and 27 minutes. The CAGG-NI Library has a VHS version available.

4. *The Master Genealogist: Intermediate*, DVD/VHS, Wholly Genes

Introduces the intermediate user to a variety of concepts and features including: custom screen layouts, flag and image windows, project explorer and focus groups, filtering, bookmarks, importing data, data set manager, accents, advanced data entry mode, witnesses, and creating sources and repositories. Duration: 1 hours and 28 minutes. The CAGG-NI Library has a VHS version available.

5. *The Master Genealogist: Advanced*, DVD/VHS, Wholly Genes

Discusses some more advanced features including: automatic relation tag, custom toolbar, custom flags, report focus options, designing report filters, advanced report options, excluded and sensitive data, indexes and other publication tools, output file formats and watermarks. Duration: 1 hour and 30 minutes. The CAGG-NI Library has a VHS version available.

6. *The Master Genealogist: Expert*, DVD, Wholly Genes

Covers more advanced features including: custom roles, sentence structures, source templates, citation output, chart accents, and editing charts. Duration 1 hour and 30 minutes.

## LISTSERVS, FORUMS AND NEWSLETTERS

7. Rootsweb Listserv, <http://www.rootsweb.com>

Rootsweb has listservs that deal exclusively with questions from TMG users. It is a good place to ask a question and get a quick response. Since this is quite an active forum, receiving emails in a digest form is recommended. Go to [ROOTS-L Mailing List](#) to subscribe. ROOTS-L is a repository for mailing lists for people who are interested in any or all aspects of genealogy, anywhere in the world. Be sure to check out the archive of messages, your question may already be answered! There are both browse and search facilities available. Go to <http://lists.rootsweb.com/index/index.html> for the index, then scroll down to the “Other” box, click on “Software” then on “TMG” or one of the other several TMG related listservs. On the general “TMG” Listserv, answers and advice are provided by other TMG users including Lee Hoffman and Teresa Ghee Elliott, both helpful power-users of TMG; Elizabeth Shown Mills, author of two popular source citation books; and, even Bob Velke, author of *The Master Genealogist*. More than 100,000 messages are archived. Rootsweb Listserv subscriptions are free.

8. *Wholly Genes Community Forums*, Wholly Genes.  
<http://www.whollygenes.com/forums201/index.php>

The Wholly Genes Community Forum covers a number of different information groupings including “News and Information” which covers announcements, Wholly Genes Newsletter (described below), Frequently Asked Questions (described below), companion products and other resources. The “Support Forums” section includes information related to various versions of TMG along with Family Tree SuperTools and Visual Chartform/Chartform delivery. The “Other” forum section provides segments on tips and hints, examples of TMG user websites, site issues, cruise information (described below in the Travel/Learning Opportunities section), chat room information along with chat archives and a forum on sentence structures. Access to the forum is free.

9. *Wholly Genes Community - Forum - Wholly Genes Newsletters*, Wholly Genes. <http://www.whollygenes.com/forums201/index.php?showforum=5>

The Wholly Genes Newsletter is a periodic electronic publication to keep you up-to-date with *The Master Genealogist* product upgrades and other news from Wholly Genes software. Back issues are archived. The date and time of online chats are specified in the Newsletter. The subscription is free.

10. *Wholly Genes Community - Forum - Frequently Asked Question*, Wholly Genes. <http://www.whollygenes.com/forums201/index.php?showforum=6>

Wholly Genes' FAQs deal with such topics as installation, importing, charts, etc. This is a good place to check for information about common problems or issues. The answers are clear and straightforward. If you do not understand an answer, or you need additional information, the forum allows you to submit additional questions. Access is free.

11. *The Master Genealogist Forum*, Genealogy.com  
<http://genforum.genealogy.com/tmg/>

The Genealogy.com Listserv forum deals with TMG software and discussions. The archives include over 4,000 messages. The site provides a search engine to locate any messages that might assist you. Access is free.

## GENEALOGY SOCIETIES

12. Computer-Assisted Genealogy Group of Northern Illinois. TMG – Special Interest Group monthly meetings.  
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilcaggn/sigs/tmg/>

Our interest group provides a forum in the Chicago land area for TMG users to build their knowledge and share their experience with the *The Master Genealogist*. On the second Saturday of the month, the group meets at the Schaumburg Township Public Library to assist in this endeavor. Annual membership in CAGG-NI is required for continued participation after initial visit. CAGG-NI annual individual membership (2008) is \$20.00

13. The Roots Users Group of Arlington, VA. <http://www.rootsusers.org>

The officers and the newsletter editor respond to questions about features of TMG from members, either directly or through a newsletter article if deemed to be of general interest. Several of the members contribute to the [Wholly Genes forum](#)

(for TMG) and the mailing lists for [TMG](#) and [Second Site](#), a companion software package which builds web pages from TMG databases. Of great value is their monthly newsletter, which has in-depth coverage of all aspects related to TMG. The newsletter is delivered via email. The archive includes 12 years of newsletters, with newsletters since 1999 searchable with Adobe Acrobat's Reader's "Find" command. Current membership (2008) fee is \$15.00 annually.

## WEBSITES

14. *Terry's Tips*, Terry Reigel, <http://tmg.reigelridge.com>

This site contains over 75 articles about TMG on topics ranging from understanding the basics, to providing suggestions on using the customization features to achieve the results you want, to more advanced topics. There are also some suggestions on using companion products to complement TMG's built-in capabilities. You can browse by topic using the table of contents, find complete articles using the complete alphabetical index, or you can search by keyword or phrase. One place to start might be *TMG Basic Concepts: A Metaphor to Help Understand the Basics*. This is an excellent site, well documented and clear. Access to the website is free.

15. *TMG Tips* - Hoffman, Lee H., The Master Genealogist.  
<http://www.tmgtips.com>

In addition to providing a lesson plan/study guide to using TMG effectively, Lee Hoffman has over 30 tutorials and articles as well as an amazing number of tips and tricks for using TMG. A great addition to his website is the list of links to other websites that provide TMG information and help. Access to the website is free.

16. Elliott, Teresa Ghee. The Master Genealogist, 6.0.  
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~rutherfordcemetery/TMG.html>

Ms. Elliott has a very comprehensive site that deals with sentence structure templates among other TMG information. She has developed and/or lists what others have developed for specialized sentences. For example, she has templates for loss of loved one, adoption, military service, immigration, vaccination, pension and graduation sentence templates. She also provides several examples of filing systems to use with TMG. Access to all of the information is free.

17. Computer-Assisted Genealogy Group of Northern Illinois, Website, <http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilcaggni/>

The CAGG-NI website provides links to various websites that are of value to TMG users. Go to CAGG-NI's homepage, and under Special Interest Groups, click on *The Master Genealogist*. Then, under "useful links," you will find "TMG Hint and Tip sites," "TMG forum and list sites," and "Other TMG User Groups." These three lists will connect you with additional valuable sites that will help you with your TMG questions and issues. Access to the website is free.

## SOFTWARE

18. *The Master Genealogist Software*, Wholly Genes  
<http://www.whollygenes.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc>

Built into *The Master Genealogist* software are several support options. There is the "Help" function, which assists you when you have a question about some aspect of the software. This is either screen specific assistance or you can "read" the entire document from start to finish. In addition, there are "Tips and Hints" which flash on the screen when you open the program each time. This feature can be turned off once you become acquainted with these tips and hints. And, under the "Help" tab, there is a "Technical Support" button, which provides the ability to send a "Trouble Report" directly to Wholly Genes. Built into TMG software.

19. *TMG GenBridge*, Wholly Genes  
[http://www.whollygenes.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Product\\_Code=GENBRDG-DL](http://www.whollygenes.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Product_Code=GENBRDG-DL)

Although GEDCOM is supported by Wholly Genes, TMG's *GenBridge*<sup>TM</sup> import technology, in most cases, does a much better job of transferring your data from one lineage-based software product to another. Using this software, which comes with TMG, you can import directly from Family Tree Maker<sup>TM</sup>, Personal Ancestral File (PAF)<sup>TM</sup>, and many other programs. The import technology is built into TMG software.

20. Cardinal, John. *TMG Utility*. <http://www.johncardinal.com/tmgutil/>

John Cardinal's *TMG Utility* is a powerful database modification tool for TMG projects. Some of the features are aimed at correcting data problems that arise because data was transferred from another program into TMG. Other features are designed to help people take advantage of the power of TMG. A good description can be found at <http://www.ancestry.com/learn/library/article.aspx?article=3862>.

Currently, John Cardinal is updating the utility to make it compatible with the recently released V.7 of TMG. Although access to the utility is free, it is donorware.

21. Cardinal, John. *Second Site*. <http://johncardinal.com/ss/index.htm>

*Second Site* is a software program that creates web pages from *The Master Genealogist*'s database. It generates either narrative or grid-style person pages, a master index, a surname index, and source pages. *Second Site* is also a great tool to review your dataset. It is fast, and the HTML format makes the data easy to browse. Many users have reported that it has helped them to find inconsistencies in their data and other problems. Version 2, which is compatible with the latest release of TMG, is currently available. Purchase required.

## BOOKS/INSTRUCTIONAL CD ROMS

22. Reigel, Terry. *Getting Started with The Master Genealogist*. 2008

"This is a great introduction for new users!" says John Cardinal, author of *Second Site*, *TMG Utility*, and other companion programs for *TMG*. "Terry explains complicated topics in terms a beginner can understand, and he explains the concepts as well as the specific steps to make fast, effective use of *TMG*. Even experienced users will learn from this book, particularly in the chapters about more advanced topics. Terry's *TMG Tips* web site is a great resource for *TMG* users, and now Terry has expanded that with 'A Primer for *The Master Genealogist*'." Purchase required.

23. Hoffman, Lee H., *Getting the Most Out of the Master Genealogist - Version 5.0*.

This book helps you navigate the options and take full advantage of the program's features. Each chapter offers personal experience and real-life examples on a variety of intermediate and advanced topics. The 15 chapters teach you how to document where you found your information, arrange and print your data, create wall charts, enter your data to take advantage of the program features, and create reports that allow you to write your family history. It is currently out-of-print but an electronic PDF version is available at Wholly Genes. A second edition of the paper version is planned for 2008. Purchase required.

24. *The Master Genealogist, Users Guide*. Wholly Genes, Inc.

When you purchase *The Master Genealogist* software, you will receive a Users Guide. The Users Guide is included on the CD-ROM and is downloadable from <<http://www.WhollyGenes.com/tmgug.htm>>. This is a good reference tool. In addition to the expected basic information on using *The Master Genealogist*, it also includes several appendices on troubleshooting, source elements and source groups, support image and media formats for slideshows and exhibits, variables, glossary of terms, and an index to the resource.

## TRAVEL/LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

25. Velke, Bob. National Conferences – Wholly Genes Presentations

Bob often gives several presentations at the annual meetings of the Federation of Genealogical Societies and at the National Society of Genealogists. In addition to being taught by the Master, each of these conferences provides a wide breath of genealogical learning experiences. The 2008 venue for FGS is Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 3 – 6 and for NGS, Kansas City, Missouri, May 14 – 17.

26. Annual Genealogy Conference and Cruise, Hosted by Wholly Genes  
<http://www.whollygenes.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?screen=CRUISE>

October 26 – November 2, 2008 are the dates for the 4<sup>th</sup> annual conference and cruise. This is another opportunity to mix genealogy and pleasure. Three days of genealogy conference with several presentations by Bob Velke, John Cardinal and Lee Hoffman as well as other renown genealogists. The destinations this year are St. Kitts and Antigua, West Indies; St. Thomas, Virgin Islands; and, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

As you refer to the resources noted or visit the websites listed above you will find links to additional sources of information to assist you in using TMG.

*The Master Genealogist* is a powerful, flexible and comprehensive program. Extensive resources are available, but perhaps the best way to learn TMG is by just using it AND attending CAGGNI's TMG SIG which meets the second Saturday of the month at 10:30 a.m. in the Schaumburg Township Public Library. Enjoy!

February 9, 2008