



Wikis, RSS and Blogging— Emerging Genealogical Resources

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Routes for Roots
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Introduction

- Help you understand what is:
 - Wiki
 - Blogs and blogging
 - RSS
- Understand their genealogical usefulness
- How to find them
- Take a look at some
- Provide you with at least one golden nugget of information that you can't wait to get home to try!





What is a Wiki?

- Page or collection of Web pages designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content, using a simplified markup language.
- Wikis are often used to create collaborative websites and to power community websites.
- The collaborative encyclopedia Wikipedia is one of the best-known wikis.
- Wikis are used in business to provide intranets and Knowledge Management systems.
- Ward Cunningham, developer of the first wiki software, originally described it as "the simplest online database that could possibly work"
- "Wiki" is a Hawaiian word for "fast" "Wiki Wiki" is a reduplication.
- "Wiki" can be expanded as "What I Know Is," but this is a backronym
[Source: Wikipedia]



Why Use Wikis?

- Great source of genealogical information
- Generally easy to use and search
- Information that can be corrected
- Dedicated to a specific genealogical purpose
- Excellent means to facilitate communication



Finding Wikis

- Search using a search engine
- Cyndi's List: Wikis for Genealogy
- Lots of Wikis dedicated to surnames



Wiki Genealogy Sites

- FamilySearch Wiki
- FamilyPedia
- WeRelate
- WikiTree
- Encyclopedia of Genealogy
- GENWiki



FamilySearch Wiki

- Found at:
 - wiki.FamilySearch.org
- Owner: LDS Church
- Key Features:
 - Uses professionally written Research Outlines as a base
 - Professional publishing requirements
 - Professional access?
 - Barn Raising

Announcement About the FamilySearch Research Wiki and a Request for Help - Me...

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Actions Help

Reply Reply to All Forward

From: FamilySearchSupport [FamilySearchSupport@ldschurch.org]

Sent: Tue 2/17/2009 4:20 PM

To: English Consultants

Cc:

Subject: Announcement About the FamilySearch Research Wiki and a Request for Help

To: Family History Consultants in English-speaking Wards and Branches

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We want to inform you about the launch of an exciting project from the FamilySearch Wiki community, the England Barn Raising. A wiki barn raising is a short, focused genealogical community effort to create or revise content relating to a single topic such as "getting started with genealogical research in England." During February 2009, we are looking for volunteers from the genealogical community to revise the England wiki pages for the four basic English record types and add pages for major English research Web sites. At the end of February, the FamilySearch Research Wiki will contain information about the latest and best basic records and Web sites to find English ancestors.

The FamilySearch Research Wiki is a resource to help individuals find their ancestors. This resource is available on the Internet at wiki.familysearch.org. The wiki is written by individuals around the world to help individuals with their family history research in all parts of the world. We encourage you to use it as you seek to help your ward members find their ancestors. The genealogical community asks for your help to make the barn-raising a success. Please pitch in and contribute a few edits to the England pages. You don't need to be an England expert to contribute, but experts are certainly welcome!

To see a list of pages to update and also a list of simple tasks that you can do whether you're a family history novice or a professional genealogist, see the England Barn Raising Tasks page at wiki.familysearch.org/en/England_Barn_Raising_Tasks.

The first barn raising activity for the U. S. state of Maryland proved to be a lot of fun, and we're learning things that will help improve future barn-raising for other areas of the world. Hope to see you soon on the wiki!

Sincerely,



FamilyPedia

- Found at:
 - *http://genealogy.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page*
- Goals:
 - Focus on capturing details of lives of ancestors,
 - Historically significant people as well as everyday people usually not listed in encyclopedias, histories, or even "people's histories".
 - Provide information about the historical and social context of people
 - Site aspires to be truly global, with active contributors and information from multiple cultures and all four Hemispheres.
- Key Feature: Lots of surname submissions



WeRelate

- Found at:
 - http://www.werelate.org/wiki/Main_Page
- Details
 - Sponsored by the Foundation for On-Line Genealogy, Inc. in partnership with the Allen County Public Library
 - World's largest genealogy wiki with pages for over 2,000,000 people/families and growing
- Key Feature: Tightly coupled to Allen Co. Library



WikiTree

- Found at:
 - http://www.wikitree.org/index.php?title=Main_Page
- Details:
 - Goal is to provide a central place on the Internet for kin information about all people we know ever lived
- Key Features: Surname listings



Encyclopedia of Genealogy

- Found at:
 - <http://www.eogn.com>
- Details:
 - Serves as a compendium of genealogical tools and techniques
 - Provides reference information about everything in genealogy except people
- Key Feature: Great place to find definitions/discussion on genealogical topics



GENWiki

- Found at:
 - wiki-en.genealogy.net/Main_Page
- Details:
 - Designed to become main source for genealogy in German-speaking areas of world
 - Society for Computergenealogy E. V.
- Key Feature: Trying to become THE Germany genealogy source on Internet



Blog—Web Log





What is a Blog?

- A **blog** (a contraction of the term "**Web log**") is a Web site, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order.
- Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries.
- A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic.
- The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.
- Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (artlog), photographs (photoblog), sketches (sketchblog), videos (vlog), music (MP3 blog), audio (podcasting), which are part of a wider network of social media.[



Blogging

- Highly personal views
 - Read, biased
 - Information very relational
- Many professional genealogical researchers using blogs to draw customers
- Easy to create a blog
- In many ways is easier to create and maintain than an entire website



Finding Blogs

- 1000's available
- Google Blog Search
 - Go to Google Home, select “more”,
Select Blogs
- Genealogy Blog Finder
 - <http://blogfinder.genealogue.com/>
- Cyndi's List Blogs for Genealogy
 - www.cyndislist.com/blogs.htm



RSS—Really Simple Syndication





What is RSS?

- Stands for "Really Simple Syndication:"
- RSS is a family of Web feed formats used to publish frequently updated works – such as blog entries, news headlines, audio, and video – in a standardized format
- An RSS document (which is called a "feed", "web feed", or "channel") includes full or summarized text, plus metadata such as publishing dates and authorship.
- Web feeds benefit publishers by letting them syndicate content quickly and automatically.
- Benefit readers who want to subscribe to timely updates from favored websites or to aggregate feeds from many sites into one place.
- RSS feeds can be read using software called an "RSS reader", "feed reader", or "aggregator", which can be web-based or desktop-based.



Benefits to RSS

- Get distributed articles from a source in a single location rather than finding them via your e-mail
- Stores past entries on their site
- Great way to organize
- You subscribe to an RSS feed
- Need to install or use an RSS reader



RSS Readers

- Web based or computer based
- Many options available
- Reviews:
 - http://www.download.com/RSS-Readers/3150-9227_4-0.html
- Google Reader most used



Google Reader-RSS Google[™] Reader

- **Stay up to date** Google Reader constantly checks your favorite news sites and blogs for new content.
- **Share with your friends** Use Google Reader's built-in public page to easily share interesting items with your friends and family.
- **Use it anywhere, for free** Google Reader is totally free and works in most modern browsers, without any software to install.

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+ Add a subscription

Home

Home

All items (1000+)

Starred items ☆

Your stuff

Trends

Browse for stuff

Friends' shared items

Subscriptions

Computer Sites (11)

Microsoft Windows (11)

Genealogy (707)

24-7 Family History C... (2)

Ancestor Search Blog

Bootcamp for Geneab... (2)

Crowe's Nest by Eliza... (18)

DearMYRTLE's Genealog... (

Eastman's Online Gene... (13

Elyse's Genealogy Blog (6)

Family Matters (14)

FamilySearch Blog

FamilySearch Labs Blog

Footnote Blog (4)

footnoteMaven (12)

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Genealogy Insider (37)

Genealogy News (42)

Genealogy Reviews Online (

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A look at what's new

Internet-Genealogy Blog (7)

"All Things Genealogical" catalog? *DearREADERS,* About 30 people replied, via comments or email, to Tuesday's post mentioning the Family History Catalog of "all things genealogical" being developed by FamilySearch and World Vital Records. Replies strongly supported such a project, ...

1911 UK census quirks *DearREADERS,* Thank heavens we've got lots of genealogy publishers out there trying to keep on top of the news. I just opened the May/June 2009 issue of Discovering Family History magazine and spotted a blurb in the editor's comments called "W-W-Worth ...

NO, It Can't Wait! (Backup now) *DearREADERS,* On Facebook this past week, one of Ol' Myrt's southern California genealogy friends was lamenting the process of attempting to access her data files on her old computer which was barely limping along -- a problem that had necessitated ...

See more from **Genealogy (707)** »

Microsoft Windows (11)

Is Microsoft shooting its other foot with Windows 7 on netbooks? Back in 1997, I acquired an HP Jornada H/PC running Windows CE 2.0 and began writing a weekly column for Microsoft's Windows CE site. The Jornada was a great little computer that basically looked like a miniature laptop and was about as big as an ...



Avoid frustration and display a full Windows command prompt history If you often work from a Microsoft Windows command prompt, chances are you know that you can cycle through a list of all the commands that you've typed in a particular session using the up and down arrows on your keyboard. You can also change the ...

How do I ... use Tag2Find for better Windows searches? Do you have a PC full of files that you are often scrambling to locate? Are you not the most organized of users? If either is the case, then you know how difficult it can be sometimes to locate that one specific file. Sure Microsoft Windows Vista has ...

See more from **Computer Sites (11)** »

Crowe's Nest by Elizabeth Powell Crowe (18)

Volunteers Transcribe 250 Million Historical Records Incredible Effort Speeds Up Access to Online Genealogical Information SALT LAKE CITY—FamilySearch volunteers reached a monumental milestone this week, transcribing their 250 millionth historical record. The incredible online initiative started in ...

Popular British Jewish Database Grows to 40,000 Records PRESS RELEASE FROM FAMILY SEARCH: SALT LAKE CITY—FamilySearch expanded its Knowles Collection—a free popular database of Jewish records hailing from the British Isles. The collection builds upon work commenced by the late Isobel Mordy—a well-known ...

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Tips and tricks

View your Google Reader reading list on iGoogle by adding the Reader gadget to it.

+ Add it now

You can add multiple gadgets to view different tags at the same time.



Final Comments





Conclusions—Using RSS, Wikis and Blogs

- Great resource
- Exploding in popularity
- Wiki—controls content
- Blog—large potential for good and bad
- RSS—great way to organize and access feeds