

HOW TO FIND YOUR FAMILY HISTORY & CULTURAL ROOTS: An Online Guide

(one-page guide, October 2004)

Your family history is growing every day – on the Internet

For generations, our ancestors have left a trail of public, private and religious records across the map of the world. Today, more and more of us are trekking along this trail to find the inspirations and aspirations that brought our families to this place we call *home*. So, put on your virtual hiking boots and take your family on a wonderful trip in search of your family history. It's a great legacy to build for *future* generations of your family.

(1) Start with one name – yours, an ancestor's, or one of your family's surnames

Go online to www.google.com, or www.yahoo.com, and type a single name or a family name (like this: "Patrick O'Reagan" or "O'Reagan family") in the SEARCH box. You may get a direct hit, or dozens of links that'll send you around the world on a voyage of discovery. (Tip: if you need language-translation help with web sites, try Google's Language Tools).

(2) Search the large genealogy databases to find more of your ancestors

Go online to RootsWeb, www.rootsweb.com, the oldest, *free* genealogy site, or its related sites, www.ancestry.com (with all 124 million names in the 1930 U.S. Census) and www.familyhistory.com (state-by-state), with their 2 billion-name databases (full access at home requires a fee; free access at public libraries). Try their SEARCH, FAMILY TREES, and MESSAGE BOARD sections. Or, try www.genealogy.com, which features the 1900 and 1910 census (full access requires a fee). The LDS (Mormon Church) genealogy collections at www.familysearch.org are shared on a *free*, non-denominational basis (it has the 1880 U.S. Census). Also, don't miss the grassroots, state-by-state, USGenWeb, www.usgenweb.org, and WorldGenWeb, www.worldgenweb.org. If you need Vital Records (birth, death, marriage, divorce), see: www.vitalrec.com and www.vitalrec.com/links2.html. For a wealth of Spanish-language resources, start at Anillo de Genealogía Hispana, www.elanillo.com.

(3) Learn more about your family's cultural roots in U.S. & World History

Go online to the extraordinary Cyndi's List, www.cyndislist.com, and find your roots by geography, culture, or topic, ranging from Adoption to Wills & Probates. Its all-USA list is at www.cyndislist.com/usa.htm. The "must see" history resources for all countries and cultures are at: WWW-VL (U.S. History), vlib.iue.it/history/USA/index.html; and, WWW-VL (World History), vlib.iue.it/history/index.html. If you think your ancestors passed through Ellis Island, check www.ellislandrecords.org.

(4) Visit the U.S. National Archives, the Library of Congress, and your community libraries

Be sure to go online or on foot to the National Archives, www.archives.gov (click Research Room), for the largest collections of immigration, military service, and census records in the world. Go to the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov (click Research Centers – Local History & Genealogy), for the resources of the largest library in the world. When you visit your local libraries and archives, *ask* the librarians and archivists for help (they're amazing). You can locate 18,000 local, state, and national libraries at The Library Index, www.libdex.com.

**For additional help, ask any Wells Fargo banker for a free copy of the CD (a 37-page Online Guide)
"HOW TO FIND YOUR FAMILY HISTORY & CULTURAL ROOTS: AN ONLINE GUIDE"**

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Good Luck in Your Search!