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## Access your Ancestors: Introduction to Free Online Genealogy Resources

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Messiah University is a Christian university of the liberal and applied arts and sciences. Our mission is to educate men and women toward maturity of intellect, character and Christian faith in preparation for lives of service, leadership and reconciliation in church and society.



# *Access Your Ancestors: Introduction to Free Online Genealogy Resources*

Sarah K. Myers

Librarian

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# What's the attraction?

- To satisfy your curiosity about yourself and your roots.
- To provide your children with a sense of who their ancestors were, where they came from and how they lived their lives.
- To preserve family cultural and ethnic traditions for future generations.
- To compile a medical family history to give family members an advantage in the battle against inherited diseases or defects.
- To qualify for a lineage or heritage society.
- To assemble and publish a family history book, whether for family members or for profit.
- To discover facts that others have overlooked and solve the puzzle of a lifetime.



# Getting Started: Goal Setting

- Write down goals to help with focus
  - Ex: A question to think about...
    - Why am I researching?
      - I would like to know from what countries my ancestors came to the United States.
      - I would like to confirm a suspected culture or ancestry in my family.
      - I would like to know why my family settled in \_\_\_\_\_.
      - I heard a story about an ancestor who \_\_\_\_\_.
    - Do I want to go straight up the family tree? Or do I want to explore all the branches?
    - Do I want to make connections with distant family?



# Start with...

- Yourself
  - Collect items: birth certificate, photographs, diplomas, yearbooks, greeting cards etc.
  - Explore your own family archive (family Bibles, photo albums, and more)
  - Write down memories:
    - Places you have lived.
    - Stories from loved ones.
    - Schools attended, major life events.


# How to record discoveries

- Charts
  - Family Group Sheet
  - Pedigree Chart
- Online family trees
- Notecards

Compiled by \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## FAMILY UNIT CHART




MIDWEST  
GENEALOGY  
CENTER

	DATE (day-mo-yr)	LOCATION (city / township, county, state)
<b>HUSBAND</b>		
Birth		
Marriage		
Death		
Burial		
His father's full name		
His mother's maiden name		
Other wives' names		
<b>WIFE</b>		
Birth		
Death		
Burial		
Her father's full name		
Her mother's maiden name		
Other husbands' names		
<b>CHILDREN</b>		
	DATE (day-mo-yr)	LOCATION (city / township, county, state)
#1	B _____	
	M _____	

## ANCESTOR CHART

Compiled by \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



MIDWEST  
GENEALOGY  
CENTER

	<b>Samuel Albright Bankert</b>	
	B December 31, 1817	B August 2, 1783
	W _____	D April 24, 1846
	D May 1, 1860	M _____
	W Glenville	<b>Barbara Miller (1787-1846)</b>
	M _____	
	W _____	B _____
	<b>Harriet Albright</b>	D _____
	B February 27, 1823	M _____
	D July 15, 1871	
	W _____	<b>George Pressell</b>
	<b>David H Pressel</b>	B Aug. 16, 1811 PA
	B December 25, 1835	D Jan 6, 1894
	W York Co, PA	M Wildasin Meeting house
	D November 20, 1905	
	W Marburg, York Co, PA	<b>Fannie (Franey) Hohf?</b>
	M _____	B _____
	W _____	D _____
	<b>Rebecca Leightner</b>	M _____
	B July 19, 1835	
	W York Co, PA	
	D _____	
	W _____	

<b>Aaron Pressel Bankert</b>		
<b>Father</b>		
B December 9, 1877		
W York County, PA		
D July 7, 1944		
W Hanover, PA		
M November 22, 1903		
W Hanover, York Co, PA		



# Cite your sources

- ALWAYS record where and when you got the information.
- Write down searches you've tried and where you tried it
- Record everything, even if you don't think you will need it.
- Save the record to a USB flash drive. Print out copies.



# Primary Sources

- U.S. Census
- Birth, marriage, death records
- Court records
- Land records and maps
- Church records (Baptism, marriage, burial)
- Newspapers



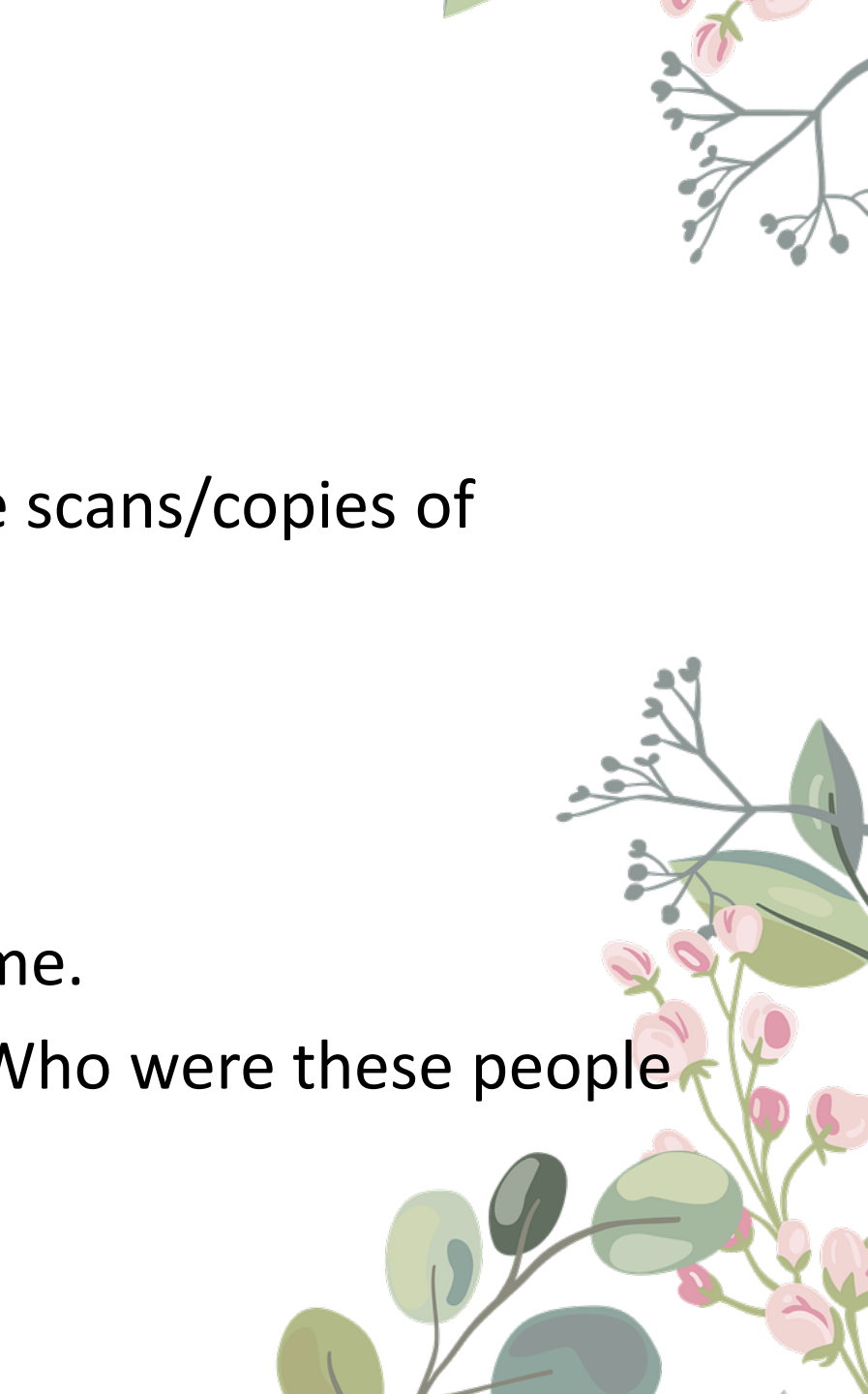


# Secondary Sources

- Biographies
  - Family histories
  - Published local histories
- 



# Tips

- Talk to your relatives ASAP.
  - Write down your sources (and make scans/copies of everything, if possible).
  - Question all information.
  - Verify and cross check your sources.
  - Family legends must be questioned.
  - Try multiple spellings of your surname.
  - Dig deeper, past names and dates. Who were these people of the past?
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# Today's Goals

- Explore:
  - [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) (Free account required)
    - Family Trees
    - Records
    - Research Wiki
    - Books
  - [Ellis Island Foundation](https://www.ellisfoundation.org) (Free account required)
  - [FindaGrave.com](https://www.findagrave.com)
  - [Chronicling America Newspapers](https://www.chroniclingamerica.com)



# Office Hours

Wednesday, March 17

5 to 9 PM on Zoom

Ask your genealogy questions