

Files and Fotos and Folders, Oh My!
By MaryLynn Strickland

Controlling documents and data was the topic at the November, 2013, general meeting and the presentation by the society computer users group. Following are some major points for organizing your records:

Group Family Records by Surname, Record Type, Historical, or Geographical.

How do I view my family's history? Ancestor down with folders for each child or Descendent up with folders for each new family line?

What about Digital? Am I using my genealogy software to its fullest capacity?

- Be sure to enter names, dates and places uniformly

- Cite sources as I enter each and every fact

- Optional—Link document images

- Create digital folders to correspond with my paper file system. Use the same names to identify folders and put the same documents in each.

- Physical or digital, file hierarchy should be the same

Digital Systems—these are various programs and websites that can help me get organized

- Genealogy software—Family Treemaker, Legacy, Roots Magic, Reunion

- Note taking—OneNote, Evernote

- Digital Images—Adobe Lightroom or Photoshop Elements organizer, Picasa, iPhoto, Aperture, Flickr

- Websites —Ancestry, FamilySearch, WikiTree

Storage and Backup

- Back up family files within genealogy software frequently

- Print reports—if my computer files are lost, I have a hard copy

- Back up hard drives frequently

- Keep archived reports, images, notes, etc., up to date

- Migrate to modern media as hardware and software progress

Preserving Photos and Heirlooms—Move prized photos and original documents out of shoeboxes into acid-free, lignin-free, archival quality storage

One Step at a Time—Identify Documents by asking

- What is it?

- Who does it pertain to?

- What does it prove?

- Where do I put the useful data in my software?

- Have I cited the source in my software?

- Do I need to keep this paper, if so where?

- Do I want to scan it and file the image, if so what shall I name it?

Cloud Storage By Michelle Lyons

One way to be organized is to store your files where you can retrieve them from any location or computer. Storing photo, images or files in the Cloud provides this service.

What you need to know.

Storing photos or document “in the cloud” is no different than saving a file to any folder on your computer. The physical location is “virtual”, not on your hard drive.

Cloud services are password protected. Use a complex password for safety.

Cloud services differ as to which operating system they recognize and the manner in which they sync to your other devices. Read the home page carefully to make sure your operating system is compatible.

Several offer a limited amount of Gigabytes of free storage and the option to pay for more.

Concern is often expressed over the “safety” of the data you store there. I personally believe the threat is low, but would not store and financial or other sensitive data in the cloud; great for photo storage.

You can link particular folders from your cloud storage to allow another person access. For example, my granddaughter last spring had her art on public display and being a proud grandma, I wanted to share. So I stored the photos in a particular file folder then sent a message to friends and relative to allow them access.

Here are some cloud storage services that offer some free space and are on most top 10 lists:

1. Amazon Cloud Drive - 5 Gigabytes of free storage
2. Apple iCloud - 5 GB of free storage plus more. Music, apps, books, and TV shows you purchase from the iTunes store, as well as your Photo Stream, can also be stored and streamed from it, and none of the purchased media counts against your storage quota.
3. Dropbox - 2GB of free storage. Dropbox offers file storage without any special features (like Apple iCloud), but is known for being compatible with any operating system and any file manager. I personally use Dropbox. It is easy to understand and easy to use. For the person who has not used a Cloud Storage service or likes things simple, Dropbox is the way to go.
4. Google Drive - 5 GB of free storage. It integrates with both Windows based and Mac file systems.

Unless you clearly know what you are doing I would avoid MediaFile, Mega, and Microsoft Sky Drive. They come with challenges; slow, limited amount of bytes you can download at any one time and in the case of Microsoft Sky Drive, there are security issues.

Evernote & OneNote

By Michelle Lyons

Evernote & OneNote

Both these programs are note taking programs for the purpose of better organizing your life, your business or your genealogy. Both programs are based on a hierarchal structure likened to a student notebook with several dividers and within each divider, many pages. Within these programs, one can write text notes, download or copy images, photos or documents. Both programs will sync with other devices. The core purpose of both these programs is the same but operate differently. Evernote is available as a free download. It has a premium version for which you have to pay. OneNote comes with Microsoft Office. A free trial of Microsoft Office is available at Microsoft.com. The trial version of OneNote as a standalone product is no longer available. The following are some tutorials which help to describe the programs.

Tutorials:

Evernote www.evernote.com

Go to Utube.com and use the search box "evernote screencasts": several levels of tutorials are available for learning.

Another popular YouTube presenter is Caroline Pointer. She has a presentation on Evernote as well as OneNote. (In search box: "evernote Caroline Pointer")

A third is Keith Everett's YouTube videos "How to Use Evernote-Evernote Overview" and "How to Get Insanely Organized in Evernote." (In search box:"evernote Keith Everett"). In my opinion he gives a better basic description of how Evernote Works; then watch Caroline Pointer's presentation on how to apply that to your genealogy materials.

Lynda.com offers training in many software applications:

http://www.lynda.com/Evernote-training-tutorials/1212-0.html?category=beginner_337

Tom MacEntee presents an "Exploranar" where he demonstrates Evernote at:
www.hackgenealogy.com/features/videos/# Evernote

OneNote

YouTube tutorial Brian Bouchard, "Intro to OneNote for Genealogists"

Lynda.com : <http://www.lynda.com/OneNote-training-tutorials/266-0.html>

For a comparison of Evernote and OneNote, check out a YouTube video by Dirch Ebenzers, "Evernote Vs OneNote -- A Full Comparison Review From Someone Who Has Used Both A Lot."