

MIDWEST HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

ALERT

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MYHERITAGE.COM: A REVIEW

1203 N. Main,
P.O. Box 1121
Wichita, KS 67201

316-264-3611

info@mhgswichita.org
mhgswichita.org

Library Hours:
Tuesday & Saturday
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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I have recently subscribed to MyHeritage.com after several years of membership on Ancestry.com. My frustration with Ancestry began with their change to storing data on Amazon Web Services instead of their own servers. The frequent error messages as well as lost links were not what I was willing to pay premium prices for. I allowed my subscription to expire with a note that the service must return to previous levels before I would rejoin.

In the meantime, I decided to try out MyHeritage. The first difference I noticed was the price. MyHeritage was offering access to ALL their research records for a discounted \$125 for the first year. Ancestry was asking \$300 to renew access for their worldwide databases. I examined the catalog and was not surprised to find MyHeritage listing 6,000 entries versus Ancestry's 10,000. They both heavily promote DNA testing. They both use web software as the primary research method. Ancestry is based in Utah. MyHeritage is based in Israel. Both have offices worldwide.

My own research for relatives outside the United States was less than extensive. I had subscribed to the World access on Ancestry for a year, but was not pleased with the amount of data. Many of the references were index listings, which don't allow examination of the actual records. I wasn't finding the amount of information I expected. I switched back to US Discovery when my year was up. I found the records available on Family Search were more useful than Ancestry and they were free.

I haven't actively tried to use the records on MyHeritage for European ancestors as yet, as I am still learning to use the tools there. I do recognize some differences in the approach. MyHeritage has emphasized the use of family trees available from Geni, Family Search, WikiTree, and other trees from their own site. These are not original sources and therefore are more hints than actual records, but are still useful. The filter can be changed to actual records, but that serves to point out how much they depend on trees.

They do have the majority of sources we have come to rely on in genealogical searches. Census records, Death indexes, extensive yearbook listings, Public records, passenger lists, some newspapers, and court records. They are not as extensive for the United States as are

found on Ancestry, but the rest of the world looks well represented. I did miss more extensive obituary and cemetery records, but the access to BillionGraves gives some hope.

MyHeritage has used optical character recognition to digitize a large number of their records. The success of that approach depends on the original documents. Many mistakes are visible, but the ability to have SOME searchable record rather than none keeps the process in perspective.

MyHeritage has created proprietary software that will synchronize with their web app and offer it as a free download with a subscription. It allows offline reference and research to be carried out and recorded when internet access isn't available.

I have started to understand the process MyHeritage uses for recording any records found. It is radically different than other providers, but with practice can be very efficient. The addition of "Instant Discoveries," "Smart Matches," and the use of artificial intelligence in forming their algorithms has impressed me with its speed. The more I use MyHeritage, the more I think Ancestry better watch out.

Jim Scharnhorst

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! HELP PLEASE!

Thanks to some very dedicated typists we are slowly getting the Sedgwick County marriage books indexed. If you are interested in this project, please come by the library or email Julia at library@mhgswichita.org.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & LIBRARY EVENTS

POWER UP YOUR GENEALOGY. Tuesday, Feb 12 @ 1:30 to 3 pm. Led by Julia Langel. This month we're going to learn about FindAGrave.com and how to access their information.

GENEALOGY DNA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP. Saturday, Feb 9 @ 1 pm to 2 pm. Led by Paul Renner Smith. Discover the latest news in the field of Genealogical DNA study. This informal discussion group uses the newest information available to learn what DNA can tell us about our ancestors. Learn what different tests are available.

PHOTO MYSTERIES, Tuesday, Feb 19 @1:30. Led by Rex Riley. Bring your mystery pictures and let our photo detectives go to work finding clues about the dates, places and people.

AFRO-AMERICAN SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP. Saturday Feb 23 @ 1:00. Led by Jozel Smith Eckels. Interest group that encourages historical and genealogical study of families with special emphasis on African-Americans. This informal group seeks to learn more of the history and factors within the family stories that we have been given. We will demonstrate how to research your family tree with the goal of discovering and understanding your family history.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

Me and Mine in the Sunflower State	G-C 136
The Jacob Schrag Family Record 1836-1974	G-S 148
The Picture History of Photography: from earliest beginnings to present day	I 277
The History of Photography: from 1839 to the present	I 278
Camera: a history of photography from daguerreotype to digital	I 279
American Photographic Patents 1840- 1880	I 280
Photography: the early years: a historical guide for collectors	I 281
The Art of Retouching and Improving negatives and prints	I 282
Illustrated Catalogue of Photographic Equipment and Materials for Amateurs	I 283

How to Make Photographs and a Descriptive Catalogue	I	284
Illustrated Descriptive Price List of Photographic Apparatus - Anthony & Co	I	285
The Ambrotype & Photographic Instructor – Photos on glass and paper	I	286
The Daguerreotype in America	I	287
The Daguerreian Annual: official yearbook of the Daguerreian Society	I	288
19 th Century Photographic cases and wall frames	I	289
Photographic Cases: Victorian design sources, 1840-1870	I	290
The Tintype in America, 1856-1880	I	291
Case Histories; the Packaging & Presentation in Victorian Britain 1840-1875	I	292
Cartes de visite in nineteenth century Photography	I	293
Victorian Cartes-de-Visites	I	294
Card Photographs: a guide to their history and value	I	295

JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

The National Genealogical Society 2019 Family History Conference is coming to St Charles, Missouri 8—11 May 2019. For additional information: www.conference.ngsgenealogy.org.

ANNUAL MEETING

The MHGS Annual Meeting will be held Saturday March 9, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. We will be holding elections for Vice President, Librarian, and Secretary. Jozel Smith-Eckels has agreed to serve as Vice President again, and Julia Langel will continue to be the Librarian. Twila Brown is term-limited and cannot serve as Secretary again – WE NEED A VOLUNTEER FOR THIS POSITION!

All members are encouraged to attend and cast their vote. If you are interested in serving on the board, please contact Rex Riley.

REMINDER- you can renew your membership for 2019 now by snail mail, on the MHGSWichita.org website, or in person. Renewals are due by April 1.

2018-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Library open Tuesdays and Saturdays, 9 to 4

Call 316-264-3611 for information or to check on library closing.

GENEALOGY DNA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP	PHOTO MYSTERIES
Second Saturday @ 1:30 Led by Paul Renner Smith	Third Tuesday @ 1:30 Led by Rex Riley
POWER-UP SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP	AFRO-AMERICAN SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
Second Tuesday @ 1:30 to 3 pm Led by Julia Langel	Fourth Saturday @ 1 pm Led by Jozel Smith Eckels

Midwest Historical & Genealogical Society

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Change Service Requested