

## Curating with the Mac

14 Jun 2014

### ***Preserving the history of treasured “things”***

We do a lot of research trying to find the history of our ancestors lives. We carefully enter that information into our databases and keep paper and/or digital copies of where and what we have found. Are we as thorough with the history behind Grandma's jewelry? or Grandpa's accordion? Let's ensure the stories behind you treasured memorabilia live on with the item for many more generations.

### **Memorabilia & Heirlooms**

It is not an heirloom without a memory or story. Think about all of those Christmas ornaments that Grandma had on her tree, or that the kids made, or that you collected from your travels. At best, a handful of people will remember when and where those little ornaments came from. Here is your chance to ensure that those closest to you include them in their holidays and pass them down to generations to come.



### **Photograph**

Use your camera, iPhone, or iPad to take a photo of your item.

- Take the pic into iPhoto (see below) or your favorite photo management software, label, tag and date
- Upload and print, OR
- Drag image into a word-processing file.

### **Tell the Story**

Use your word-processor to keep track of the information you have on the item, where it came from, and who has it now (and who it is to go to next).

- Describe the object
- Who made it or where did it originate
- Who owned it first, second, and so on until it came to you
- Is there a story that goes with it? Why is it important to you?
- Do you need to add a family tree chart?

### **File the Story**

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If no one knows the items have stories or that you have documented their provenance, the memorabilia or heirloom may be disposed of in an untimely manner.

- Put the story with your important will and trust papers or in a place that will not be missed.
- Tell your executor(s) about the file you have created.
- Add to your Drop Dead book.

This is a good article from Family Tree Magazine by Denise Levenick about creating an inventory of your items.

### Treasure Tales

By Denise Levenick

<http://familytreemagazine.com/article/treasure-tales>

You can keep your information online at this website. It is an interesting model. You purchase a registration number (\$3) and they will send you a sticker (or brass plate for more \$) with a number on it. That number will give you access to a webpage where you will add pictures of the item, write the history and a story of the item. You can share this with family or keep the link in your private papers.

### Heirloom Registry

<https://www.heirloomregistry.com>

**Fingerprint Your Heirlooms**

Buy *The Family Curator's New Book* and Receive **3 Free Heirloom Registry Stickers** with the Purchase.

**THE HEIRLOOM REGISTRY**

THIS ITEM REGISTERED AT HEIRLOOMREGISTRY.COM  
WXYZ-123-456-7891-2345

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For a really shareable file, use the **Heirloom** app on your iPhone or iPad. \$1.99. Use your camera to take a picture and then add the owner timeline and story behind why is a keepsake. Send it to your cousins to share or just keep the app full of items as an inventory. Be sure to include the list in your personal papers.



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## Books

If you have a copy of Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Evidence Explained* and/or a copy of *The History of Bedford County, Tennessee*, you have a library. Chances are, you have many more books than that. Some of these books will be reference books that tell you how to document your research, others might give you information on where to look for your documents in your state or how the land lottery was done. In addition, you might have histories of the counties in which you are researching, or books that tell about the Civil War and what was happening in your family's town around their farm. You might have a book that has listings of immigrants or DAR ancestors. You might even have books of fiction that tell about the times in which your own ancestor lived.

## What books do you have?

Organizing and making an inventory of these books will help ensure that the important ones, those that have your ancestor's name in them, are identified and preserved for your family.



- Make an Inventory of your books, Name, Author, Comments
- Identify which ones are to be given to your local genealogy society/library (location specific, history, reference books)
- Identify which ones have your ancestor's name in it

You can use your word-processing program, Word/Pages or Excel/Numbers. Or, you can use an online website like LibraryThing,

### What is LibraryThing? (from <https://www.librarything.com/home>)

- need a login (free)
- LibraryThing is a cataloging and social networking site for book lovers.
- LibraryThing helps you create a library-quality catalog of books: books you own, books you've read, books you'd like to read, books you've lent out ... whatever grouping you'd like.
- Adding books to your catalog is easy. Just enter some **title words, the author, or an ISBN** into the **Search** box.
- The results list will show you matches. Click on the edition you want, to add it to your catalog. You can also manually add a book that isn't otherwise available.
- You can search your books, sort your books, create new collections, edit book information, print a copy of your catalog, write reviews and apply [tags](#).

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## Photos

Photos are probably the most telling thing we can give the family. They are tangible expressions of lives that were real but past. In many cases, they are the only record of our family in a time and place. They are treasures, whether digital or printed, color or b/w, recent or very long ago. If you are lucky, Grandma put the names and dates on the backs of your old photos. With digital images it is more difficult to keep the information with the picture but just as important. You can do it!

## Identify the subjects, date, and place

Whether you receive a digital file from your cousin or scan the pics yourself, you will need to ensure that the important information about the image stays with it. This data is called Metadata.

You can use your favorite photo management program to add the metadata. This example will use iPhoto.

- 👁 Click on the "I" icon, bottom right. Enter information about the image, Date, Place, Subject, any other info including photo owner.
- 👁 Add to Reunion10, file in person's folder or, Export and/or print.

## Sources:

Books: **How to Archive Family Keepsakes** - Denise May Levenick, the Family Curator

Online:

**Low-Cost Ways to Preserve Family Archives** - ALCTS Webinar - Karen E.K. Brown, University at Albany, Suny.

[http://downloads.alcts.ala.org/ce/20140429\\_Low\\_Cost\\_Ways\\_to\\_Preserve\\_Family\\_Archives.pdf](http://downloads.alcts.ala.org/ce/20140429_Low_Cost_Ways_to_Preserve_Family_Archives.pdf)

**Personal Digital Archiving** - YouTube. Mike Ashenfelder, Digital Preservation Project Coordinator

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=636oczg6k2U&feature=youtu.be>

<http://www.thefamilycurator.com>

**The Southern California Genealogical Society** has **FREE webinars** twice a month. Some of these presentations are about document and memorabilia preservation. If you miss the live broadcast and are a member of SCGS, you can go into the Members Only section and watch at your leisure. Denise Levenick has done several webinars of interest

**Caring for Keepsakes: The Top 10 Family Treasures.** Original webinar was Wednesday, 16 April, 2014

**Dirty Pictures, Save Your Family Photos from Ruin,** originally 7 Jun 2014.

<http://www.scgsgenealogy.com/webinar/jes-index.html>