

CHAPTER 6



Best of the Internet

KEY FAMILY HISTORY WEB SITES



The internet contains a wealth of information and makes it easy to contact and stay in touch with others who might be working on your family roots. Whether you are experienced or a novice in tracing your family roots using the Internet, these personally-reviewed and singled-out-for-excellence web sites will empower you in your search for your treasured family heritage. A virtual *treasure trove* of empowering, irreplaceable knowledge and information—much of which had been essentially “lost” to mankind in dusty archives around the world—is now instantly available to you at your fingertips at any time.

Web sites come in all degrees of value, efficiency, and friendliness. And since everyone has different needs, not all are equally useful for every family historian, but each may have something of immense value to offer you and perhaps add an important piece to your family history puzzle.

This collection of key web sites is not meant to be a comprehensive listing of family history web sites available, as there are well-known web directories, such as *Cyndi's List*, that do this very well. Searching the various online genealogy databases can be time-consuming and even difficult. Rather, this is a valuable, easy-to-use selection of personally pre-screened, key web sites to save you valuable time, help you get started and get organized, and help you add new branches to your family tree, thus empowering you with the *Best of the Internet*. (See also the *Best LDS Family History Web Sites in Chapter 7*.) These sites and resources are free unless marked with an **\$\$\$** to signify that access to some or all of the content requires a fee.

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Winston Churchill

Opportunity in Difficulties

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees

the opportunity in every difficulty.” — Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

Best of the Internet

KEY FAMILY HISTORY WEB SITES



Top Ten U.S. Web Sites to Search for Your Ancestors

There are literally thousands of Web sites available on the Internet to help you trace your family roots and stories which can become overwhelming if you don't know where to start. But some sites really stand out at providing the best information and records to get you headed in the right direction. Here's my list of the top sites.

These *Best of the Internet* web sites can help you trace your family roots, connect to your ancestor's lives, and locate information about your ancestor's culture, traditions, homeland, and history.



Best of the Internet Hotlinks at Easyfamilyhistory.com -

Everything you need to make your genealogy easy.™



The Internet is the place—the place where some of the most exciting family history resource

advances are taking place. So it's important that you not only have information about these resources, but be able to conveniently and readily access the hundreds of websites listed in this guidebook/ resource book. To assist you, we have created a companion website so you can conveniently access all of these (and other) web sites with just a keystroke or two. No more typing in those lengthy website addresses.

This new companion site allows you to easily connect to the hundreds of key family history web sites worldwide which contain billions of database records and resources. You also get website reviews, software reviews, how-to and historical articles, and pertinent announcements. You can easily locate the referenced web sites, and for your convenience, every link to a website is LIVE, so that you can simply click on the link and go to the website or send an email. You just point and click to access the site instantly.

And since *new* web sites become available constantly, and web addresses often change, we constantly scour the Internet and review all the new information and web sites to keep the hotlinks current. We work hard to try to keep you up-to-date on changes and the latest news and tips. So this web site is a friendly, easy-to-use, up-to-date Internet directory of the *best* family history web sites just for you. Enjoy!



1. FamilySearch.org -

www.familysearch.org



FamilySearch™ is one of the comprehensive, preeminent family history web sites on the Internet. It provides access to the Family History

Library and the largest collection of *free* family history, family tree and genealogy records in the world. You can do significant research online and also discover what records you need to search to find your ancestors in record-breaking time. It provides easy access for the gathering and sharing of family history information. Due to the free access to billions of records, their recent and ongoing projects to: improve their infrastructure, digitize and index their extensive collection of genealogical records held in the Granite Mountain Records Vault, partnerships with others in digitizing

FamilySearch is in the early stages of designing the new replacement home page for the esteemed FamilySearch.org website.



At print time, here is what FamilySearch looks like now, and the current concept design (Alpha) for the new home page. The expected release date for the new site design has not been made public.



New FamilySearch home page (alpha)

their records, expanding their new extensive collection of published family histories, upgrading their new Family History Library Catalog, adding new searchable maps, a digital image viewer, and their new wiki site, I've selected this as the number one overall site.

“New FamilySearch” Preview

A major project to improve *FamilySearch* has been in process for the past few years to upgrade the software and infrastructure. They have been developing ways to make organizing, viewing and sharing personal family histories online easier, faster and more accurate for more people. It is temporarily called “New FamilySearch” and it is temporarily located at <http://new.familysearch.org>. But soon it will be called *FamilySearch FamilyTree* and will be relocated to the regular website.

FamilyTree is a single family tree that all of us share and work on in common. It provides a free, multi-language, internet-based environment for everyone to collaborate, and will eventually include capabilities to link scanned images of proof documents with each record. It has the option to dispute and provide alternative lineages with notes and proof documents. The links to images of documents is a key component to compiling accurate lineages. This ability to combine our genealogy data with online proof documents (for free) will revolutionize family history research collaboration and be a boon to tracing and sharing your family roots and stories.

FamilySearch has begun to implement the new system worldwide in gradual phases, and at press time have issued a very limited release to LDS Church members only—which is a great way to work out all of the bugs with a small user group before the major world roll-out. Hopefully this means that we will be spared the disappointment of slow access and the usual major problems of a gigantic new release, and that we'll be able to find support from experienced local Family History Center volunteers when *FamilyTree* is available to