



Dane County Area Genealogical Society News

Apr 2017 - May 2017
Volume 11 Issue 4

President's Message from Bob Rettammel

Happy Spring 2017 to all of you! Spring brings longer days, better weather and gardening opportunities for our area. It also is a great time for new approaches and learning in the genealogy field. In this issue, we will learn some of the new technology trends that are available for genealogists or likely to have some impact for doing research in the future. Technology is a tool to learn more and can provide quicker access to family research records.

We still need to adhere to certain research methods and principles that were started years ago in the field of genealogy. Digging into records is fun but knowledge of the correct approaches to source citation and documentation are also vital to the stories of our ancestors' story. One of the early influencers in the field of genealogy

was Gilbert H. Doane, who wrote the book *Searching For Your Ancestors: The How and Why of Genealogy* in 1937 and several editions thereafter until the 1960s. Doane was a librarian and professor with positions at several university libraries, most notably the University of Wisconsin. He was also an author and genealogist. He died in 1980.

It is vital to merge both the newer opportunities in the field of genealogy with the foundations that were started and continue to be vital in the success and fun of doing family history. Our ancestors and future generations will be glad we did all the work to learn about who we are in the land of immigrants.

Ask DCAGS
We are hoping to help members who are experiencing a problem or "dead end" in their research. At the next membership meeting, stop at the Name Tags table where you can provide us with a description of your problem, with your name and phone number/email address. Joyce Nigbor and helpers will respond with suggestions about how your situation might be approached. They will not do the genealogical work, but will offer ideas.

Regular DCAGS meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 11:00 am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, WI.

The DCAGS Governing Board meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 9:00 am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, WI. For more information, see: www.dcags.wildapricot.org

DCAGS Outreach News

Starting May 6th and continuing through July 29th, 2017, DCAGS will be at the Dane County Farmer's Market on the Capitol Square! A table to distribute literature about our society has been approved by DOA for us to be at located in the area across from the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. The actual location is on capitol square side and near State Street. We are allowed to be there from 8:30am to 1:30pm.

We welcome all members and their family members, friends, or neighbors to stop by and say hi to those on the Outreach Committee. Should you be interested in helping to be at the table at certain times on Saturdays, please let Bob Rettammel, brettammel@gmail.com know. A great opportunity to market our society and gather interested individuals to join us in our genealogy passion!

April and May Membership Meetings

April 8 Saturday at 11am, *Memory Keepers - Stories Our Heirlooms Tell: Stories, Care and Documentation*

People's heirlooms -- from photos to furniture -- help to shape our families' histories. Our new podcast, "My Favorite Family Heirloom", unlocks the stories these objects contain and how to preserve them for future generations. We will talk about some of the stories that have been brought to light in our podcast and delve into proper preservation methods using economical archival advice. Lastly we will talk about how to tell your heirlooms' stories and document them for your family.

May 13 Saturday at 11am, Jan Bosman - *There's a Lot of History in Your Old Recipe Box*
She will show dates on recipes, a variety of papers on which they have been written, ingredients, and handwriting to illustrate historical inferences. Old recipes tell the reviewer something about the foods eaten during various periods of time and in various locations of the United States. Attendees will be invited to contribute to the conversation so bring a handwritten family recipe, if you have one.

Dane County Area Genealogical Society Meeting Schedule

The Governing Board at its meeting on March 11, 2017, voted to continue DCAGS Program meetings on the 2nd Saturday of each month, from April 2017 through March 2018, at 11:00am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 4505 Regent St., Madison. As our society offers genealogy programs to members and the public, our hope is that we can continue to get quality speakers and have a time that overall is best for most members but also allows for working parents and younger adults who are busier during the week to come. I know this will not match all schedules but many genealogy societies offer Saturday programs for similar reasons.

In late Summer 2017 the Board will conduct a Membership Survey in two formats, On-line (electronic) and hard copy. One purpose of the survey is to learn from DCAGS members whether they prefer weekday evenings or weekend programs, a combination of those two approaches, a Winter Schedule and Spring to Fall Schedule option. More on the details of this survey in the next few months. This concerns Membership Meetings after March 2018.

2017 Programs

June	10	Ute Brandenburg, (Iowa Genealogist) <i>Finding Your German Origin</i>
July	8	Summer Outing
August	12	Sherry Lloyd, <i>Webinars and On Line Genealogy Websites</i>
		This program will show you where to find education and training to help you do genealogy.
September	9	Emil Hoelter, <i>WHS-War History Commission Records</i>
October	14	Richard L Pifer, PhD, <i>Family History and Genealogy during the Great War</i>
November	11	Thomas MacEntee, Webinar - Live Speaker
December	9	Show and Tell

Recent Meeting Highlights

February

Our Saturday, February 11, program was done by Lee Grady, Senior Reference Archivist at the Wisconsin Historical Society. The title of his program was "Military Records and Other Genealogical Resources in the WHS Archives."

Lee discussed genealogical sources in the Archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society. He also pointed out that 2017 marked the 100th anniversary of American participation in World War I (1917-1918).

The speaker also discussed reference materials and documents that provide the experiences of Wisconsin soldiers and citizens during this war. He also highlight-

ed collections in the WHS Archives that cover military conflicts from the Revolutionary War to Vietnam.

March

On Saturday, March 11, our speaker was Robert Allen, Treasurer and Board Member of Computer Assisted Genealogy Group - Northern Illinois (CAGGNI). The title of his program was "Secrets of Find-a-Grave.com."

Mr. Allen spoke to 43 DCAGS members about all the interesting and valuable items that Find A Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com> can provide to genealogy researchers. Mr. Allen went to the webpage and showed participants examples of how informa-

tion like dates, locations, parents, siblings, and burial information can be found on ancestors. He informed us that some of this information is submitted from family members of the deceased, and that as other people search for their own ancestors, they sometimes find a link to a distant cousin who submitted death record information.

Find A Grave can be a great tool to solve brick walls, and, build connections to other living relatives so you can learn more about your own family.

Sponsor a Guest

DCAGS is offering an opportunity for members to sponsor a guest with a one year free membership. Here's how it would work:

1. Current members could sponsor a free one-time guest membership for a new guest and/or family with emailed newsletters and other electronic correspondence. No directories and no printed materials will be sent.
2. Thereafter, the guest may join as a regular member with full member benefits (newsletters, directory, emails, mailings and events).
3. The year for inclusion runs for the membership period-April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018. Members who wish to sponsor a free guest member would send an email to the DCAGS email address, widcags@gmail.com with the following information:

- sponsor's name
- guest's address
- guest's name
- guest's phone number and guest's email address

This is an excellent opportunity to increase the visibility of DCAGS and promote membership. So, send us the name of a guest.

Technology Past: Do You Remember . . . ?

As Baby Boomers, we love nostalgia and we love remembering the good old days of new technologies like . . . 8-track tapes, microwave ovens, the Sony walkman and more. But as we look back, we are we not seeing out in the future, especially those technologies that will be important to our genealogy research?

2017 Tech Trends for Genealogy

Part of the problem I see with recent technology innovations in the general user population is that these same technologies are either a) not relevant to genealogy and family history research OR b) are not yet ready to be embraced by the genealogy community. That being said, many of the emerging technologies you could expect to see in 2017 will most likely have some impact on us as genealogists:

Tablets and Mobile Devices

More and more users will be purchasing tablet type devices meaning tablet computers and multi-purpose devices such as the Kindle Fire or the Lenovo Thinkpad Yoga. There is a trend towards “2 in 1” devices

such as tablets that convert to a laptop etc. Genealogists are starting to use these devices for “portable research” meaning they can have a virtual research assistant at their fingertips especially when they visit an archive or repository.

Of course, not every repository will allow such devices - remember to call ahead and ask (don’t rely on websites which might not be updated). Genealogists don’t want to be tied down to a computer at the archive - they want to use their device which might be loaded with Evernote, their genealogy database software, their files, scanned documents, photos etc.

In addition, genealogists are using these tablet-type devices to do more and more scanning or capturing of documents. Applications like **CamScanner** (<https://www.camscanner.net/>) and Ancestry.com’s **Shoobox** (<http://shoobox.ancestry.com/>) make this possible.

DNA Testing

Look for continued growth in the area of DNA testing for ancestry and genealogy purposes. The market has expanded to include

vendors such as 23andMe (<https://www.23andme.com>), AncestryDNA (<https://www.ancestry.com/dna/>), FamilyTree DNA (<https://www.familytreedna.com/>), Living DNA (<https://www.livingdna.com/en-us>), MyHeritage (<https://www.myheritage.com/DNA>) and more. In addition, DNA testing will be one of the key “hooks” to bring newcomers into the genealogy and family history market.

Look for these advances in the area of DNA:

- more webinars and educational materials to understand the DNA results
- better and easier ways to connect with other testers to share results and share research
- new tools such as the X-Matches feature at Family Tree DNA (<http://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog/2014/01/05/x-marks-the-spot/>) and GEDMatch (<https://www.gedmatch.com>).

Big Data and Predictive Data

“Big Data” continues to be a big topic and one that has a big impact on genealogy. When it comes down to it,

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(Genealogy: the Future is Now continued from page 6)

the major vendors in the genealogy space are really just “big data” companies. Ancestry.com’s main asset is its collection of over 15 billion records. When you think about it, Ancestry and other companies take two approaches to monetizing their records: 1) they provide ways to “easily” search the records and find your ancestors; and 2) they “gamify” the process of doing genealogy by letting you build family trees, connect with other researchers, share information with family members etc. This “gamification” is key because much of it represents work performed by members and users which is then uploaded and incorporated into Ancestry’s growing database.

So look for new ways to work with data which could mean:

- Reindexing of data sets including new fields added to the original index (occupation added to a US Census which was not part of the original index)
- Advanced story telling such as how Ancestry is using its new Story

View (http://help.ancestry.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/5567) to bring many different data points together so users can get a better idea of an ancestor’s life

- Use of “pinning” either to maps/geography programs or to story board similar to Pinterest; one concern will be copyright and how vendors can control any “leakage” of records out to sites like Pinterest

Privacy

Protecting one’s privacy became an even bigger challenge given the revelations about the NSA and metadata / phone surveillance here in the United States. One emerging trend in 2017 will be the creation of “personal clouds” which are self-hosted. This means instead of placing your data on Dropbox or Box and accessing it from various devices, you will create your own cloud site and make it private.

Lifestreaming

One thing that we as genealogists don’t do is document our own lives and experiences. Perhaps because we are so focused

on documenting the lives of our ancestors, we suffer from the “cobbler’s children have no shoes” syndrome.

There are many apps and programs available under the category of “life streaming” and some would say that Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms can serve this purpose of assembling a personal diary. But the keyword is “personal” - many of these sites are very public. One program I’ve discovered is called One Sentence Diary (<http://onesentencediary.com>) which helps you keep a personal diary with each daily entry limited to 300 characters a day.

One twist you could see: having these apps used to develop an ancestor diary. Already there are “historical Twitter accounts” that actually tweet diaries of the famous and not so famous. It isn’t so far-fetched to think that genealogists sitting on a collection of ancestor diary materials might take to these platforms to share information about their ancestors. Also, look for

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more and more methods of keeping a personal journal and more genealogists using these tools for their own life streaming projects.

Life Consolidation

This is a difficult topic for which there isn't, nor should there be, a catchy title: **how do you handle cleaning out the home of a parent or loved one after they die or they are placed in a care facility?** Having been through this journey myself, I struggle with the terminology. "Boxing up a life" seems so cold but there is that aspect to the process.

Especially as Baby Boomers begin dealing with this process, they also come to the realization that someone will have to do the same for them in 20 or 30 or more years. Any technology that can simplify the "tracking of items" or assist with organizing and scanning documents and images will be more and more attractive to everyone, not just family historians. This is a growing niche and its own industry - how to settle an estate, disperse family mementos yet also celebrate a person's life through storytelling. Look for specific apps and platforms geared towards this problem and providing solutions.

Storytelling

And once you've gathered research and information on a loved one or an ancestor, how do you make sure it is preserved and shared with others? There are so many choices for storytelling out in the marketplace that most are overwhelmed. One thing you'll see develop alongside technologies like Saving Memories Forever (<http://SavingMemoriesForever.com>) are Facebook groups and educational offerings to assist users in telling the best story possible. Both video and audio will be popular and highly shareable with family members.

Wearables

While Google Glass is getting all the attention as of late, the general trend is towards devices that are getting smarter about where we are and what we want. Google Glass uses for genealogy could be as simple as viewing a tombstone and finding information about the person buried to viewing entire genealogy presentations.

Future Proofing Genealogy

When you future proof something, you try to anticipate the evolution or

future developments of that item as a means of being prepared. Taking it one level further, you can also use future proofing as a way to eliminate or minimize any negative consequences as well as prepare for opportunities.

The inability to anticipate future means of access to your genealogy research data and the possible loss of such data has a potentially large impact whether you are a professional genealogist (an economic impact) or a non-professional genealogist (a personal impact).

Imagine if businesses did not upgrade their magnetic backup tapes, a material with a ten-year shelf life, to newer media and then had to rely upon those backups? What if libraries and digital repositories had spent many years and large portions of their budgets scanning documents and photos yet they neglected to keep that data "alive" by making certain the file formats were still in use?

Imagine if you had spent years researching your family history and then storing the data on what you had thought would be a safe

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format, only to discover, years later, that the storage media had degraded or that the apparatus to read the media was no longer manufactured?

And now in the days of cloud computing and everyone uploading photos, documents and data with ease, have you considered how you could export such data if the platform goes dark one day and the business closes down?

One way you can stay up-to-date on what your genealogy colleagues are using in terms of technology is to join the Technology for Genealogy Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/techgen/>). You can even ask questions and get good advice on what others are using in terms of hard drives, storage media, and even hardware.

Genealogy: The Future Is Now
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Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford

This wonderfully, readable book was first published in 2009, but is very pertinent even today. It weaves together a love story between a Chinese boy and a Japanese girl, and the interment of the Japanese American people during WWII (1942).

Henry, a second generation Chinese American boy, is the main character in this book, and we follow along as he journeys from boy to man trying to make the best of the confusing world all around him. He is a boy who is made to wear a button by his first generation father saying I AM CHINESE as he attends school in Seattle. This is so he won't be mistaken for Japanese. A Japanese girl, Keiko Okabe, becomes his best friend along with a black Jazz musician, Sheldon, who is prominent in the North West Jazz scene. The friendship between Henry & Keiko is not looked on favorably by Henry's parents.

In 1942, the United States government decreed all Japanese as threats to our nation's security so in Washington State, they were rounded up in the Nihonmachi District of Seattle to end up eventually in Camp Minidoka, Manzanar or Tule Lake. Keiko's family was rounded up during this

time, and Henry, defying his father, visits the family in the camps. Henry wants to help Keiko's family, but, of course, there is little a boy can do. Letters are exchanged between Keiko and Henry, but soon, Henry's father secretly puts an end to this special friendship.

Life goes on as Henry eventually finds a Chinese girl, Ethel; marries her, and has a son. Many years pass, and Henry pushes his thoughts of Keiko to the very back of his mind to become a good husband & father to Ethel, & his son Marty. Unfortunately, Ethel dies of cancer, and Henry is left to make his way alone. He says, "To see her (Ethel) get up and walk again, he'd gladly have lain down in that hospice bed. But in the end, he was the one who had to keep living."

Marty decided to help his father get on with his life. I won't tell you how the book ends, but I will say that the book will hold your attention, and is well worth reading. This book may possibly give you some information to help you sort out your thoughts about the 2017 immigrant situation.

by Joyce Hasselman Nigbor

World War I: Discovering Facts About One Wisconsin Soldier

As I was growing up I had heard stories of an ancestor who served in World War I and was an uncle to my father. However, my own father never knew this uncle since he died before my father was born.

My great uncle Theodore Rettammel died in March 1919, while in the military but after the armistice on November 11, 1918, that ended World War I. The information I originally had about him was limited as many from his generation were also deceased before I took an interest in genealogy in the late 1970s.

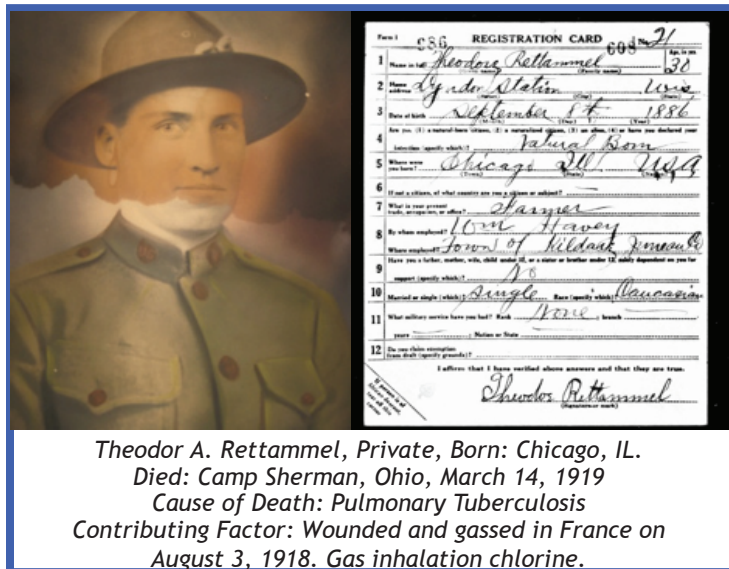
Theodore's tombstone was always something I saw every Memorial Day when my Dad would put flowers on his grave. I also knew something about his dates of birth and death since they are listed on the tombstone in the family cemetery in Wisconsin.

Over the years, I discovered a photo of a few of my great uncles on my paternal side that served in World War I. One of

these was (as learned) of my great uncle Theodor. So, between seeing his tombstone and the only picture I have of him (below), he was in a way always in my family history but never with any facts of who and what happened to him as a doughboy in World War I.

try Wisconsin National Guard on June 29, 1917 at Camp Douglas, Wisconsin.

Later the U.S. War Department directed the National Guard to form the 32nd Division on July 15, 1917, Theodor was transferred to Company



Service Record

One of my interests was to locate the place and battle where my great-uncle was wounded and gassed. I visited the Wisconsin Veterans Museum in Madison recently to look for his service record and found that he enlisted in the 3rd Infan-

128th Infantry 32nd Division of American Expeditionary Force, on August 4, 1917. The 32nd Division was composed of troops from Wisconsin and Michigan.

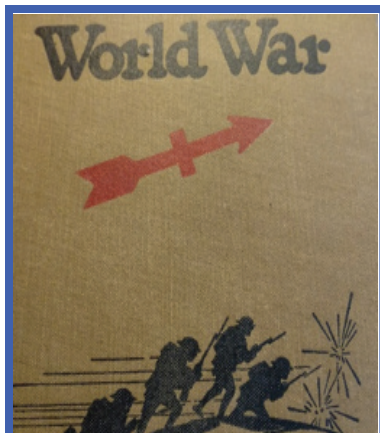
The division was trained in Waco, Texas at Camp McArthur. Eventually

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Theodore served overseas from May 23, 1918 to December 18, 1918 (nearly 7 months). Wounded in battle on August 2 or 3, 1918. He was returned to the United States in December 1918 and died at Camp Sherman, Ohio on March 14, 1919, age 32.

The Division selected a red arrow piercing a line to show that the division went through every line the enemy threw up before them. The insignia did not get officially approved until November 11, 1918, the last day of the war.



Cover of Book: *The 32nd Division in the World War, 1920*

Wounded in What Battle?

Theodore was overseas and said to be wounded in battle on August 2 or 3, per two sources, first his death certificate

from Ross County, Ohio and second his service record says the 3rd.

During this time the American Expeditionary Force was fighting in the Second Battle of the Marne and Chateau-Thierry. Specifically, on August 1st an attack by 63rd and 64th Infantry Brigades of the 32nd Division attacked and forced the enemy to abandon Bellevue Farm. On August 3rd, the division pushed forward to the Vesle River and the 32nd Division captured the town of Fismes, France, in north-east France. Theodore as a soldier in Company D, 128th Infantry was part of the 64th Brigade that fought on those days and area.

What I Learned

I have learned the battle and the area where he was wounded. I also know that he stayed overseas until December 18, 1918. This was 4 months after his being gassed and wounded. I also know he was hospitalized when he was back for 3 months until his death on March 14, 1919 while still in the

Army. The time from August 4 to December 18th I still do not know how much he suffered because of the initial damage he experienced or how much more fighting he did. I can only guess that he continued to fight and eventually his wounds in early August made him too weak to continue.

Sources

1. The 32nd Division in the World War, Copyright 1920 by the Wisconsin War History Commission, Madison, WI (author's family copy)
2. Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Archives
3. Ohio Deaths, 1908-1953, database FamilySearch

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Bob Rettammel

Can You Hear Me Now?:

Advice on How to Preserve Audio and Visual Genealogical Material

On Saturday February 11th, I was interviewed for a podcast (an internet radio show episode) where I got the chance to speak on my grandfather's singing career in Minnesota.



This podcast, "My Favorite Family Heirloom," focuses on genealogy through the artifact. The experience was interesting in two different ways. First, I was being interviewed. I worked at Minnesota Public Radio and Milwaukee Public Radio during graduate school and I currently have a radio show, "Melodic Roulette," on 103.5 FM The Sun out of Sun Prairie. I was the person interviewing throughout that time and in this experience, the tables were turned and I was the one being interviewed! Second, I was giving a voice to an heirloom in my family's history. I was only able to describe the context in which this heirloom (his performing outfit) was used, but imagine the stories that I could have learned if my

grandfather was the one being interviewed!

By some stroke of luck, both sides of my family valued recording technology and used it to preserve family history. My maternal grandfather recorded his radio shows on wax records and some of the discs survived 70 years. He was also able to buy a reel-to-reel recorder and recorded himself singing and capturing noise of my great-grandparents in the background. My paternal grandfather bought a reel-to-reel recorder/player that he used for work but also used to journal and communicate with his brother in Texas. But with the evolution in audio technology and information on reel-to-reel tapes and wax records quickly became inaccessible.

My parents bought a VHS tape recorder shortly after I was born and were documenting everything from holidays to everyday life. The invention of the DVD player and discs put VHS into the past and we are only able to watch the tapes through our working VHS player.

Recording technology accessible to the average consumer is not meant to survive infinitely and therefore, this lack of accessibility has become a problem. The red wax records that my grandfather recorded on are now brittle and the wax is flaking off. The reel-to-reel tapes and video tapes are aging and in some cases can only be played once more before they begin to snap and break. Preserving the medium if it can be helped is excellent, but getting the information off inaccessible medium is a must.

I have found different ways to extract the information through conversation and digging deep. When I was at Milwaukee Public Radio, I traveled around the south-eastern part of Wisconsin conducting interviews. I was given a handheld recorder that would then plug into a computer, but if that was not available, I used my cell phone! The audio quality on my smart phone was excellent and it picked up the audio nicely! I was then able to plug my cell phone into my computer and save the audio to my computer.

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I recommend exploring the microphone application on your smart phone to learn the quality it has.

For transferring information off my grandfather's wax records, I got a little creative and did some research on old recording technology. There is a museum in Milwaukee called Bob Paquette's Microphone Museum (<http://www.coutant.org/paquette/museum1.htm>). The museum is amazing and it is free! Bob has microphones and old music playing devices, including a record



player that had the ability to play my grandfather's 78 rpm records. I got the information from the records onto my phone and transferred it onto my computer, and then saved them to my computer and to a CD. Those recordings

featured some of his best songs and a full episode of his radio show!

Technology that transfers reel-to-reel tapes is surprisingly common. Libraries around the Madison area have machines that can transfer the audio from tape to computer at the Sun Prairie Public Library, for example, has opportunities for people to pay for a one-on-one class to learn how to transfer and edit the audio. You can edit the files once they are transferred to your computer by using a website called Audacity (http://download.cnet.com/Audacity/3000-2170_4-10058117.html).

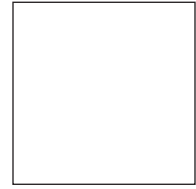
Transferring VHS tapes to computer files uses a similar technology as reel-to-reel transfer players. However, if you have a working VHS player and a computer at home, you do not need to leave the house to convert the video! For approximately \$40, you can buy Roxio Easy VHS to DVD 3 Plus that gives you the equipment and the software. My mother bought it recently because it was

the same equipment her library uses for transferring. It is easy to use and it will let you make as many copies of the video as you want!


Preservation and dissemination of the information on these platforms adds richness to your genealogy. Because of the preservation that I went through to convert this material, I have recordings of three of my great-grandparents and my grandparents that I can then pass down to my children. I have their voices telling stories in their own inflection. I can make copies for myself, my cousins, and for local repositories. As I record stories told by family members and by myself, I want to make sure that the information is accessible and preserved. Staying informed of the recording technology will help the future generations of my family.

by Eleanor Brinsko

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