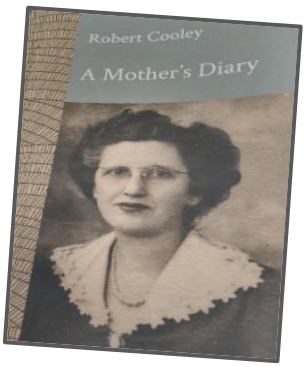


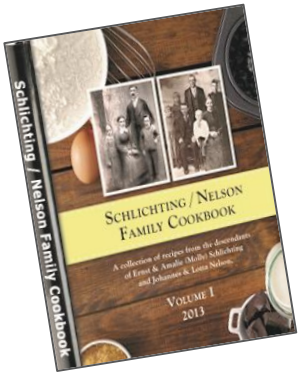
Sharing Your Family History Research with the Non-Genies in Your Family

Presented by Sue Schlichting, Professional Genealogist

Genealogists think differently about family. We are often focused on gathering information and data points in our ancestors' lives. And it seems our work is never done! We need to approach our family members with stories, rather than data. What are they interested in? How can we connect what we're doing as researchers with those interests? How can we tell compelling stories that capture their attention and intrigue them enough to come along with us on this journey?

Creative Ways to Share Your Research





- Personal Stories
- Diaries & Letters
- Poetry & Art
- Cookbooks
- Family Newsletters
- Family Calendars & Books
- Quilts
- Shadow Boxes & Collages
- Create & Share Heritage Gifts
- Host Reunions – In person or virtually
- Hold an Ancestor Party
- Plan Family History Outings & Events – Homestead Tours, Cemetery Visits, Christmas Past
- Create Museum Displays
- Conduct Interviews
- Create Videos
- Share Digital Scans
- Create a Blog – Blogger – Word Press
- Map it out with Google Maps
- Create a Closed Family Facebook Group





Holiday Strategies

Use Family Dishes – mix & match – talk about them.
Table Topic Cards at place settings

- Favorite holiday food
- Jobs you had as a young person
- Describe the holiday gathering at grandma's house.
- Holiday shopping
- A favorite vacation memory

Bring Family Recipes & Dishes to share – have cards available.
Set out the old photo albums.
Arrange a "quiet room" for recording stories.

Interviewing Family Members

Set the stage for success by preparing the individual in advance with a list of questions you might ask. Invite a young person in your family to conduct the interview or provide the technology by serving as the videographer for the event.

- Use Interview prompts
- Set up in a quiet space
- Bring out photo albums to bring out memories
- Record when possible

Cultivate interest in the next generation

- Share stories
- Go on outings
- Involve them in your research
- Engage them in family history games and activities

Sharing formats that work

Short narratives
Photo books
Timelines and maps
Oral storytelling

Sharing Your Family History Research Resources

Engaging Children in Genealogy

Involve Children and Youth in Family History
Family History Ideas for Children and Teens – FamilyLocket.com
6 Genealogy Projects to Interest Kids and Teens in Family History
Fun Tips for Getting Your Children Involved in Genealogy
National Children of the American Revolution – Links to Educational Activities
Scouting America – Genealogy Merit Badge Book

Sharing Strategies

Mapping - Google Earth or Google Maps

Learning Center – FamilySearch Wiki – Ancestry Wiki

Writing Prompts - www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/52-ancestors-in-52-weeks/

Setting up a Blog – Blogger.com – WordPress.com

Interviewing Ideas

Helpful Tips - http://www.americanancestors.org/conducting-family-history-interview
117 Questions to ask Family - https://blog.myheritage.com/2017/03/questions-to-ask-your-family/
Library of Congress – Veterans History Project
StoryCorps – Oral History Recording 101

Recording Suggestions

Creating Oral Histories - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Creating_Oral_Histories
Recording Oral History Interviews at home - https://www.modernheirloombooks.com/new-blog/2022/4/4/best-practices-for-recording-family-history-interviews-at-home
Recording Family Interviews - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQ5W3M8qDow

Writing Family Stories

Turn an Oral History into a Compelling Story - https://www.modernheirloombooks.com/new-blog/2025/08/04/how-to-turn-an-oral-history-into-a-compelling-story
FamilySearch.org – Writing Your Family and Personal History

Notes

All links active as of 12 November 2026.

Presenter is not affiliated with any of the businesses or organizations discussed in this presentation. Providing these links does not imply endorsement of any of the above products or services. It is simply a starting place for you to explore resources concerning this important topic.

Your Genealogy Sharing Plan

This handout is designed to help you actively translate your genealogy research into formats that non-genealogists in your family can understand, appreciate, and preserve. Use it during the session and afterward to create a realistic sharing plan.

1. Identify Your Audience

Who are the non-genealogists you want to reach? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Parents or grandparents
- ☐ Siblings or cousins
- ☐ Children or teens
- ☐ Young adults
- ☐ Distant relatives
- ☐ Not sure yet

What do they seem most interested in?

_____

2. Choose One Story

Instead of sharing everything, choose one meaningful story.
Ancestor or family group:

_____

Why does this story matter?

_____

3. What Makes This Story Engaging?

Check any elements that apply:

- ☐ Migration or immigration
- ☐ Military service
- ☐ Hardship or survival
- ☐ Love or family relationships
- ☐ Community involvement
- ☐ Humor or unusual events

Notes:

_____

4. Translate Genealogy Language

Write one genealogy term or concept you often use:

_____

How would you explain it in plain language?

_____

5. Choose a Sharing Format

Which format best fits your audience? (Select one to start)

- ☐ Short written story (1–2 pages)
- ☐ Photo book or album
- ☐ Timeline or map
- ☐ Interactive family history outing
- ☐ Video or audio recording
- ☐ In-person storytelling
- ☐ Other _____

Why this format?

_____

6. Decide What NOT to Share

Not everything belongs in a family share. Identify what you will leave out.

- ☐ Full citations
- ☐ Conflicting evidence
- ☐ Sensitive information about living people
- ☐ DNA details
- ☐ Unresolved research problems

Notes:

_____



7. Your First Sharing Plan

Who will you share this with first?

_____

When will you share it?

_____

8. Measuring Success

Success is not measured by enthusiasm or accuracy alone. How will you define success for this effort?

_____
_____
_____
_____

9. Reflection

What is one thing you will do differently when sharing your genealogy after today?

_____
_____
_____
_____

