

S. C. S. Computer / Genealogy Class SIG
October 13, 2016, 10:00 a.m., Computer Classroom
Karen Ristic

Nine
Ways to
Wake Up
Your
Family
History
Research





Nine Ways to Wakeup Your Research Up:

**1. Revisit / Review
Old Research**

2. Search Siblings

**3. Search a
Different Ancestor
or Family Line**

**4. Verbally
Discuss Your
Research**

**5. Make a
Timeline of Your
Ancestor's Life**

**6. Look for Alternate
or Obscure Records**

**7. Know Your
Geography**

8. Take a DNA Test

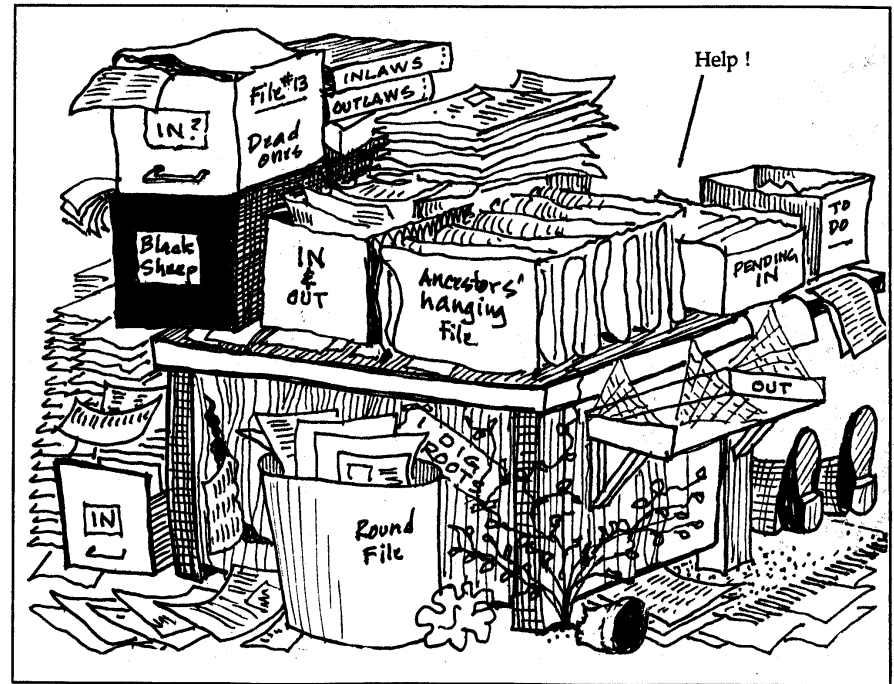
9. Take a Break

Way #1: Revisit and Review Old Research

One of the greatest assets you have in hand is the research you have already done. Take out all your research on that brick wall ancestor. Go over it again.

Organize it. Read it carefully, analyze it, see if there are clues there you might have missed the first time around.

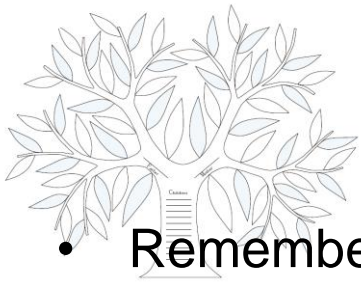
- Do you have all the census records pertaining to the family?
- Are your charts up to data?
- If you have family tree software, are there any mistakes in the dates and times?
- Are there records you can send for?





Way #1: (cont.):

- Have you checked for alternate spellings of names?
- Maybe you need to reorganize your data in different ways. Consider these steps:
 1. Review your information by reading everything you have.
 2. Create a timeline. Sort your information by date.
 3. Create a lifetime migration map.
 4. Create a Location List to see where your people have lived.
 5. If you have genealogy software, print out some charts and/or reports.
 6. Make a to-do list. What are some places/names you can further investigate?



Way #2: Search Siblings

- Remember that siblings share common ancestors. Even half-siblings share at least one parent. You may find that your ancestor's brother or sister's obituary has the information you have been seeking.

Way #3: Search a Different Ancestor or Family Line

- Sometimes it's time to see Grandmother Mabel aside for a bit and work on someone else. When you are ready to go back to the puzzle of Grandmother Mabel, you may find that fresh eyes will make all the difference in the world.
- Go beyond the direct line. Expand your search to include collateral relatives and go beyond the immediate siblings, in-laws, half-siblings, cousins, step-parents, and whoever else you can dig up. Their records may include details missing in the records of your direct ancestors.



Way #4: Verbally Discuss Your Research

- Verbalizing what you've learned to a friend, family member, genealogist or professional will provide objective feedback on your research. Try to have your discussion with someone who is not already familiar with your research. If they don't understand or see holes in your research they will ask you questions. These questions can lead you to further research targets. This is one of the most effective techniques for genealogist of all levels. If you've done extensive research for many years, formally type up all your research and allow your partner to read it before the discussion.
- It's beneficial to have someone approach the mystery with a different outlook. Often that person comes up with something that you didn't think of.

Way #5: Make a Chronological Timeline of your Ancestor's Life Events

This is one of the most helpful ways to organize your thoughts and see at a glance where the holes are in your research.



1. What is a Timeline?

Definition of a Timeline

A table listing important events for successive years within a particular historical period.

Elements of a Good Timeline

Name of ancestor, spouse, children, parents

- Year, month, day of all the events
- Event name: birth, marriage, death, of ancestor, spouse, children, parents and age at time of the event
- Localities and dates of all events, displayed in reverse order --
Nevada, Clark, Las Vegas, 1934/11/31
- Citation number (source)
- Comments
- History



2. Why a Timeline?

Granted, the people genealogists study usually had no affect on history, but, instead, they were affected by it. As a calendar of events in that ancestor's life, a researcher can use a time line to:

- * demonstrate mathematical **problems** (such as a 5 year old giving birth),
- * **summarize** a person's life,
- * stay focused,
- * keep chronology in mind,
- * demonstrate how **lives interconnected**,
- * divide an ancestor's life into workable parts (such as childhood, marriage, old age, years, **localities**),
- * discover **discrepancies**,
- * aid in evaluating the quality of another researcher's work
- * eliminate possibilities when two or more with the same name live in an area at the same time
- * **suggest cause and effect** when compared to historical data.



3. How Can a Timeline Help Us in our Research?

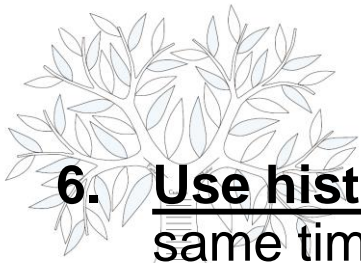
1. **ORGANIZES:** A chart of ordered events gives a valuable overview of your ancestor's life. At a glance, you'll see milestones such as marriages, changes in occupation or residence, the births of children, the death of a parent or spouse, military service and other significant dates.
2. **REVEALS:** Your ancestor didn't live in a vacuum. Adding relevant historical events to your timeline reveals the impact of social, political and economic circumstances. This helps you understand how events affected him and his family.
3. **ILLUMINATES:** A timeline can expose gaps in your research, as well as conflicting information you need to resolve. It can help you solve identity puzzles by anchoring your ancestor to a particular place at a certain time.
4. **SUGGESTS:** How did your ancestor get from Point A to Point B? Why did he take a new job? What did she do after her husband died? A timeline might suggest possible migration routes, or shed light on why things occurred.



4. How to Create a Timeline

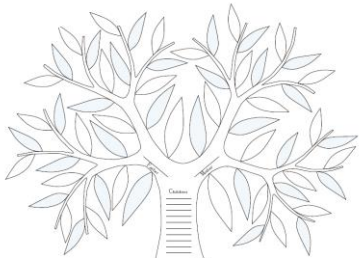
A timeline can be as **simple** as a handwritten straight line with dates on one side and events of a person's life on the other. Or, it can be a **complicated** chart, with pictures, floating bars, etc. Whichever type of timeline chart is chosen, the steps for putting it together are basically the same.

1. Decide what the objective is and what sort of time line to use to reach that objective. **Do you want to**
 - * compare members of a family?
 - * look at the direct events of one person's life and see what's missing? or
 - * compare an ancestor's life with what is going on around him?
2. **Review records** and decide which events to include. Begin with major events in the ancestor's life. In an attempt to determine what is important to include in a timeline and what is superfluous,
3. **List events** to be included **in chronological order**.
4. **Decide the units of time**: months, years, or decades to be used.
5. **Label dates**. Some events have definite dates, some have approximate dates and some have no time reference at all.



How to Create a Timeline (cont.)

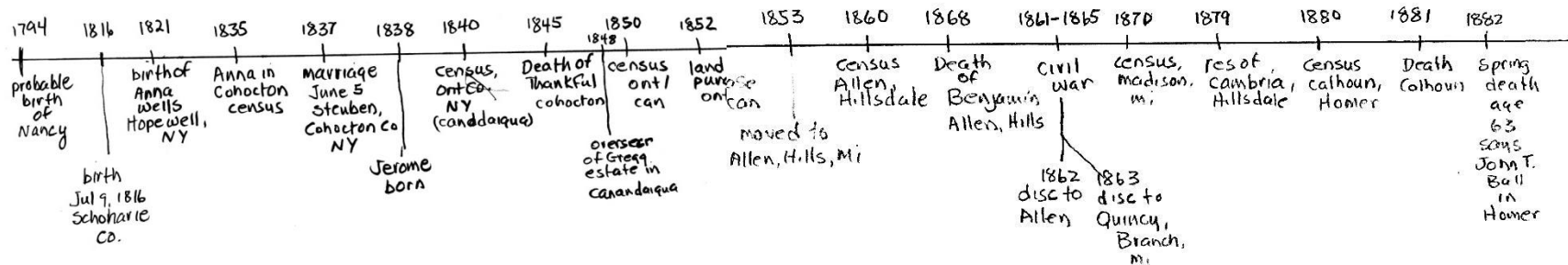
6. **Use history books** to find out what was happening in the world at the same time. Frequently, encyclopedias and Internet sites already have historical timelines. <http://www.e-referencedesk.com/resources/state-history-timeline/> provides timelines for the history of each of the fifty states.
7. In addition to using a simple paper and pencil method, a timeline can be created with any number of **programs most people already have** on their computers. A **spreadsheet** based timeline is one of the easiest to use, while **word processor** documents allow the flexibility to include more information than spreadsheets do.
8. Some genealogy **programs include timelines** as part of their packages. Certain historical events that surrounded the targeted person geographically, ethnically, religiously, and occupational are included while others can be added.
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/timeline-30007.html> provides free horizontal and vertical timelines on its website. At Ourtimelines.com, custom timelines are produced for free, although they do have a page asking for a donation.



5. Timeline Examples

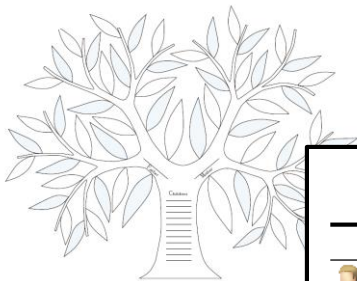
a. Paper and Pencil Timeline

John Truax




NY	1816 - Schoharie 1837 - steuben 1840 - Ontario
Mi	1853 - Hillsdale 1863 - Branch 1870 - Lenawee 1879 - Hillsdale 1880 - Calhoun 1881 - death Calhoun

Where he lived



c. Family Tree Maker

Timeline Report for John TRUAX

Yr/Age	Event	Date/Place/Description
 1816	Birth	John TRUAX was born on 09 Jul 1816 in NY, Schoharie County. He is the son of [--?] TRUAX and Nancy [--?].
 1821 4	Birth (Spouse) Anna WELLS	Anna WELLS was born in 1821 in NY, Ontario, Hopewell. She is the daughter of Benjamin WELLS Jr. and Thankful REDFIELD.
 1837 20	Marriage Anna WELLS	John TRUAX married Anna WELLS on 05 Jun 1837 in NY, Steuben, Cohocton.
 1838 21	Birth (Son) Jerome F TRUAX	Jerome F TRUAX was born on 12 Apr 1838 in NY. He is the son of John TRUAX and Anna WELLS.
 1840 23	Death (Father) [--?] TRUAX	[--?] TRUAX died before 1840.
 1840 23	Birth (Daughter) Thankful TRUAX	Thankful TRUAX was born on 09 Jan 1840 in NY. She is the daughter of John TRUAX and Anna WELLS.
 1843 26	Birth (Daughter) Clarissa J TRUAX	Clarissa J TRUAX was born on 17 May 1843 in NY, Ontario County. She is the daughter of John TRUAX and Anna WELLS.
 1844 27	Birth (Son) Greig TRUAX	Greig TRUAX was born in 1844. He is the son of John TRUAX and Anna WELLS.
 1844 28	Death (Daughter) Thankful TRUAX	Thankful TRUAX died on 10 Dec 1844.
 1846 29	Birth (Daughter) Sylvia A. TRUAX	Sylvia A. TRUAX was born in Jul 1846 in NY, Ontario County. She is the daughter of John TRUAX and Anna WELLS.
 1848 32	Birth (Son) Ralph Chapin TRUAX	Ralph Chapin TRUAX was born on 27 Jul 1848 in NY, Ontario, Canandaigua. He is the son of John TRUAX and Anna WELLS.
 1852 35	Birth (Daughter) Mary Emigene "Jennie" TRUAX	Mary Emigene "Jennie" TRUAX was born on 24 May 1852 in NY, Ontario, Canandaigua. She is the daughter of John TRUAX and Anna WELLS.
 1859 43	Marriage (Daughter) Clarissa J TRUAX	John T BALL married Clarissa J TRUAX on 17 Jul 1859 in MI, Hillsdale, Allen.
 1867 50	Marriage (Daughter) Sylvia A. TRUAX	Job D. WILKINSON married Sylvia A. TRUAX on 26 May 1867 in MI, Lenawee, Clinton.
 1870 54	Death (Mother) Nancy [--?]	Nancy [--?] died before 19 Jul 1870 in MI.
 1870 54	Marriage (Daughter) Mary Emigene "Jennie" TRUAX	Richard TORBRON married Mary Emigene "Jennie" TRUAX on 18 Oct 1870 in MI, Lenawee, Madison.
 1881 64	Death	John TRUAX died on 20 Feb 1881 in MI, Calhoun, Homer.



Family Tree
Maker 2014



Way #6: Look for Alternate or Obscure Records.

- Are you new to working with probates? Do you find land records downright scary? (Metes and bounds—yikes!) Take a step toward conquering new resources. Take an online (webinar, podcast, etc) class, ask for help from a local society, or get your hands on a reference book that will help. FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com offers a growing selection of online classes that can be viewed in the archive in the Learning Center at your leisure.
- Take a look at submitted trees on the Internet, but be sure to verify the information before you use it.
- Newspapers.com and GenealogyBank.com are newspapers (for a fee) that often presents useful information.
- **SEE THE HANDOUT FOR THE TOP 101 BEST WEBSITES**



Way #7: Know Your Geography

- Understanding geography is an important aspect of solving brick walls. Have you studied the map of the area where your ancestor lived? Have you identified the proximity of the various residences? Have you looked at maps that were created during your ancestor's lifetime? Some of your ancestors' residences may be on county or state borders. Residences in two different states may only be a few miles away.
- Understanding that relationship may cause you to revise your view of your ancestors' movements and where to look for records. Knowing the geography and changing borders will also help you determine the legal jurisdiction of the records you will need.
- Make sure you determine the political boundaries of your ancestors' residence for all the years they lived at a particular location.

Way #8:

Take a DNA test. DNA will match you with others who share a common ancestor.

The topics for this Class for the next three sessions, November and December 2016, and January 2017 will cover information about how DNA can help you in your genealogical research:

November 10, 2016 – Autosomal DNA Frequently Asked Questions

December 8, 2016 – Family Tree DNA and
23 and Me

January 12, 2017 – Third Party Helps

The first class deals with Ancestry.com DNA. You might consider getting tested with a DNA test from Ancestry.com before the class.



SEE HANDOUT FOR SOME BASIC DNA INFORMATION

Way #9: Take a Break

Yep! That's right. Sometimes it's time to say "Enough!" Put your genealogy aside and go for a walk, or out for lunch with friends, or to a movie. Do something relaxing such as read a book, or visit a museum. . . Do something completely different and you may find yourself coming back to your research in a better mood and with new ideas. You may get a new perspective on your work.





Well, Look Who Woke Up !

*Let's get going on
your Family
History Research!*





S. C. S. Computer / Genealogy Class SIG

Next Computer Class

Thursday, November 10, 2016, 10:00 a.m.

Karen Ristic

Ancestral DNA: Frequently Asked Questions, Part I

