Family History Expos Research Tools Instruction Sheet

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Timeline Research Tool

Use this tool to track the life of an ancestor over time, discover migration patterns, and identify holes in your research.

1. Enter ancestor name.
2. Enter your name and the timeline creation date.
3. In Abstracts/Comments box make note of family surnames, different courts of jurisdiction, military campaigns, and other important clues to consider during your research.
4. Record each record in chronological order based on when the event actually occurred. Example: If you pick up birth data that was recorded many years after the fact, enter it on the birth line and make note in the abstract/comments field.
5. Based on what you know for sure, enter data by calendar date and age (if you are not sure of the birth date, use age based on census or some other record).
6. Enter data one line per source. If you have more than one source or document in a year, insert a new line to accommodate each record.
7. Fill in the census years that would include the ancestor. For example: in the U.S. Census an individual born in 1835 would appear in the 1840 census as a five-year-old, 15 in the 1850 census, and so forth. Enter and search each census year over the lifetime of the ancestor.

Genealogy Extract Tool

Use this tool to identify relationships for family members from historical documents.

1. Abstract names from an historical document into the form. This standardizes information and quickly helps you identify relationships
2. Abstract names for witnesses and others who do not directly link into the family group into the Source Abstract/Comments area for later analysis (these people hold clues to your family)
3. Enter data from one resource into one form. It is important to isolate your facts until you have enough information to tie the families together accurately.
4. Analysis is much easier when all the data is placed into a standardized format.
5. Data from the Genealogy Extract Tool can be added to the timeline for a specific person, this offers further analysis opportunities.

Research Log

Use this tool to keep track of sources you have searched whether you found data or not. This tool will help you quickly remember what you have already done and locate records you may want to look at again.

1. Enter family name being researched.
2. Enter researcher name, this helps others evaluate your work with confidence.
3. Enter the date of each search.
4. Enter repository name and appropriate call number and source citation for easy retrieval should you want to look at this specific resource again in the future.
5. Enter NIL in the Abstract/Comments column if nothing is found about the family.
6. Abstract data located in the record into the comments column.
7. Transfer this data to the Family Group Research Tool and Timeline Tool for further analysis.