

AMES FREE LIBRARY GENEALOGY CLUB

Who We Are

The Ames Free Library Genealogy Club is a group dedicated to helping each other with genealogical research. The group is free and open to all who have an interest in family history. We meet monthly to use the library's free access to ancestry.com. Research help and access to the New England Historic Genealogical Society databases will be provided by local historian Ed Hands. Now in our third season, the group is adding this monthly newsletter and other features during the year.

Meeting Dates

October 12, 2019

November 9, 2019

December 14, 2019

Queset House 2:00-4:30

October Meeting

The October Meeting of the Ames Free Library Genealogy Club will take place this Saturday, October 12 at Queset House from 2:00-4:30.

Be Fruitful and Multiply

A recent edition of American Ancestors featured an article on saving your genealogical research electronically. The biggest takeaway is that there is no safe way to save your research! If you have been using computers for genealogy since the first programs came out then you remember 5 1/4 inch floppy disks that could save about 1.4 megabytes of information (less than a selfie today), but today's computers don't have any way to read them. Every storage device since the floppy disk has seen its day and been rendered obsolete. The same goes for the programs and file formats that create our family trees. Photos too often get corrupted in use.

What to do? Well, first, there is this wonderful invention called paper. You should definitely print out your research notes often and save your family trees every six months or so depending on the amount of changes you've made

Electronically, you should copy the pedigree you maintain online to a genealogy program on your computer and then save that to an external hard drive or jump drives. Research notes should also be saved on several separate media types and checked annually for corruption, Cont'd



Ancestry News

Crista Cowan's YouTube video for September announced some new tweaks for [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com).

One tweak was an improved method for giving someone an additional set of parents. This can be useful for someone like me whose grandmother was adopted. All you have to do is go to a person's profile page open the "edit relationships" drop down menu and then follow along where it says add alternate parent. You can label parents as biological, adopted, step, foster, related, guardian, private, or unknown.

Another tweak relates to the new Thrulines feature. For example, Alvah Paine is my 4th great grandfather, by both DNA and historical evidence. His daughter was Susan Paine (listing in a solid box indicates the relationship is proven.) Thrulines suggests that Susan had a sister named Laura Taylor Payne who is my "half 4th great aunt." The new feature is called "evaluate" which was added because, I presume, so many people complained that Thrulines threw up a lot of false matches. Clicking on evaluate brings up a sidebar with the evidence for Thrulines suggestion.

The first thing evaluate tells me is that no trees linked to me by DNA show Laura as a daughter of Alvah although one linked tree has Laura, but not as Alvah's daughter. Next comes an analysis of member trees that include Laura. Each tree presents the records that support the conclusion that Laura was my relative. A close look at the evidence says, contrary to what Thrulines suggested, Laura, born in Indiana, was probably not the relative of Alvah and Susan who both lived their whole life in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

If you download pages from the internet with your web browser, you might want to evaluate the information and then transfer it to a format like PDF or Word. Use multiple formats if the info is important. Writing **Easton's Neighborhoods** back in 1993, I downloaded files through Internet Explorer and also created files in Clarisworks, both file types I can no longer open.

With photos data loss can start as soon as a file is created. File formats like JPG use an algorithm to reduce the size of a file by only saving important pixels and leaving out a certain percentage of similar ones. You can adjust how much is lost, but details helpful to identifying a location could disappear.

Most cameras internally create a file in a format called RAW. It is the ultimate no loss file, but it creates a giant file and until recently most photo editors couldn't handle it. Now many programs can edit RAW, but your computer might not have enough zip to run them. More typical loss less files are BMP and PNG, familiar to PC users, and TIFF for Macs. PNG was designed for screen shots of your computer and can create a large file with jumbled colors for real world photos. TIFFs can be compressed like JPGs so make sure you set it for no losses. Modern computers can work with all three file types. If you are creating a NEW file you should save in one of these formats. If for some reason, you need to save between these formats, make sure the file size of the saved file is equal to the original file. However, if you already have a JPG it will do you no good to save in one of the loss less files. Once lost data can't be restored.

So the final message is save your data in many ways and in many places!