

WRITING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY: A UNIQUE TREASURE OF WORDS

Mesa Family Search Library's Fall Expo 2012

WHY WRITE

- If we can understand the Why, we can find a Way
- In 3 generations without history being written information is lost
- Helps your progenitors know and love their ancestors
- Helps explain family dynamics, health issues, relationships
- Helps explain and recall life choices
- Helps us to understand and appreciate the sacrifices made

BE ORGANIZED

- System of ready references
- Find a space/box to store all materials
- Outline
- Commitment of time
- Log each source, record
- Card index/folders/notebooks

CHOOSE A FORMAT

- Check out other Family History examples
- Memoirs/Narrative/Timeline
- Video/Audio
- Scrapbook/cookbook
- Book/Spiral/hardbound
- Each Line stories (decendency)

GETTING STARTED

- Gather all materials/use folders, notebooks
- Let your heart guide you/be creative
- Memories beget memories
- Question oldest members of family/or their children

DOCUMENT

- Record statements of Family members
- Gather Census/BDM documents
- Immigration/War/Land/Wills
- Letters/Journals/Books

MAKE YOUR BOOK PERSONAL

- Express yourself as if that ancestor is before you
- Create a Beginning, Middle, and End
- Feel what they might have felt/memory box
- Make your reader feel they are an eyewitness

SOCIAL HISTORY

- Place your ancestors with facts/social history
- Pictures of Places/news articles of the times
- Talk about what daily life may have been for ancestor

PHOTOS – CHARTS

- Photos/charts bring your story to life
- Dependency and Pedigree charts
- Include some of their documents
- Newspapers/maps

EDIT

- Spend quality time editing
- Let computer do your spelling/grammatical work
- Ask at least one person to read and critique
- Share your story as it is developing
- Follow basic rules of expository writing
- ALWAYS back up any work done on the computer

THE REMEMBERING:

You are unique, your family is one of a kind, capture that and always write using your senses.

You are the author, creator, and historian - frame it to your liking.

Share emotional experiences.

Pace yourself/be consistent.

Every time you write, even if it's only one paragraph, you make progress.

Your sense of who you are will come through your words.

Take time to do a good job, so your children's grandchildren will know all that you do.

Enjoy this once in a lifetime experience.

As we contemplate what those before us have gone through that we might be here, as we sense their faith, and courage and feel their love for us, we realize what is really important in life. **WE GAIN GREAT INSIGHT AND NEVER AGAIN ARE WE THE SAME.....**

Anne Benham