Family History Research Online

New Albany-Floyd County
Public Library
Our Bridge to Knowledge

Pick up some forms in the Stuart B. Wrege Indiana History Room, or print them from our website (www.nafclibrary.org) beginning on August 15, 2013. Once you have the forms you need…

www.familysearch.org is a good place to start. It's run by the Family Search Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. They have the largest genealogical collection in the country because they have been collecting since at least 1400. Unfortunately, not all of the original images are archived online. There are ways to see the original image if you find a record that doesn't have one. If you have a Family Search Center near you (you can find out on their website), you can go there and request a roll of microfilm and they will order it from Salt Lake City (for a fee, to cover shipping) . You can also request their microfilm from the Indiana History Room at New Albany-Floyd County Public Library (for a fee, to cover shipping), if it is a roll that the Library doesn't already own.

Example: This is what I found for Shirley Smith.

https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/V83T-KGN
Name: Shirley Opal Smith
Event Type: Birth
Event Date: 29 Sep 1930
Event Place: Bexar, Texas
Gender: Female
Father: William Thomas Smith
Mother: Opal Beatrice Penington
Certificate Number:
Collection: Texas Birth Index, 1903-1997

With this information you can: request the Texas Birth Index, 1903-1997 at your local Family Search Center, as mentioned above; request a copy of the birth certificate from the Texas State Health Department in Dallas-Ft. Worth; plug in William Thomas Smith or Opal Beatrice Penington on Ancestry and see what you come up with. Ancestry will often have images of the original or microfilm copies. They will not have anything for persons born after 1940, due to the Privacy Act, which requires that files be kept private for 72 years.

Note: The default search is for records, but you can also search trees, books and the catalog.

www.ancestry.com is another good place to start. Unfortunately, you can't get anything out of them unless you pay. New Albany-Floyd County Public Library subscribes to Ancestry Library Edition, which we offer free to our patrons. You can come into the Indiana History Room (or any Library computer) and access it from there. Go to www.nafclibrary.org and click on Indiana Room on the blue bar. Now you can click on Ancestry Library Edition on the left side menu. This has the same records as regular Ancestry, you just can't create a tree here. On Ancestry, sometimes less is more. I would start with Opal Penington or Opal B. Penington instead of Opal Beatrice Penington because you never know how it appears on records.

Another database that New Albany-Floyd County Public Library subscribes to is HeritageQuest. You can access this from the Library, as with Ancestry, or you can access this one from home. Simply go to www.nafclibrary.org and click on Indiana Room on the blue bar. Click on HeritageQuest on the left side menu. There will be a place to log in. Use your barcode #: 2311000******* and PIN: (usually the last four digits of your phone #). Here, you can search through census records, books, PERSI (PERiodical Source Index), Revolutionary War records, Freedman's Bank, and U.S. Serial Set. The book search is especially helpful if you are trying to find a name in the Report of the Adjutant General.

Another good source is the Allen County Public Library in Ft. Wayne, Indiana (http://www.genealogycenter.org). They are in the process of archiving genealogical records on their online database. Internet Archive is currently working with them. They have records from all over, not just Indiana. And, they are the second largest genealogical collection in the country.

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And, as we just mentioned, Internet Archive (http://www.archive.org/) is another good place to start. They archive books, but this includes family histories and other genealogy books. You will want to check out the texts section here. Sometimes, you will be redirected to Open Library (http://openlibrary.org/) so you might simply want to start there.

http://usgenweb.org/ can be helpful. It varies from state to state and even county to county because people adopt a county and then upload information. Floyd County is currently mostly cemetery records. Just click on the state on the left and then click on county map or county table and select your county.

We Relate (http://www.werelate.org/wiki/Main_Page) works like Wikipedia. Just type in what you're looking for and it will pull up related trees and articles. It can be a bit confusing, so be prepared to work with it and take it slow.

http://ellisisland.org/ is, you guessed it, passenger lists. Well, there's more to it than that. They also have photographs and free charts and things.

Castle Garden (http://castlegarden.org/) was another point of arrival for immigrants. They also have passenger lists that can be useful.

If you can't find it on Ellis Island or at Castle Garden, maybe Steve Morse (http://stevemorse.org/) can help. He's collected links to masses of passenger lists.

http://www.deathindexes.com/ collects links for websites that contain death indexes, obviously, as well as obituaries and other records.

While we're on the subject of death, you might want to try http://mortalityschedules.com/. Mortality schedules give an overview of the people who died in a given county and a given year. It will often tell you their occupation, cause of death, and sometimes who their parents were.

Along similar lines, www.newslibrary.com, is a good way to search for obituaries and any other newspaper articles related to your search. Click on a state and then the paper you wish to search in.

www.findagrave.com is a great site for death. You will often find photos of tombstones and obituaries along with the information you seek.

Now on to the random sites that you might find useful:

Wolfram|Alpha (http://www.wolframalpha.com/examples/PeopleAndHistory.html) has some useful conversions. Do you want to know what your mother's cousin's grandson is to you? He's your second cousin once removed. Do you need to know what $10 in 1900 would be equivalent to now? The answer is $282.03.

Birth Date Calendar (http://www.progenealogists.com/birthfromdeath.htm) can be useful if you know the date someone died and how old they were when they died. Plug in the numbers and the calculator will tell you when they were born.

Time and Date (http://timeanddate.com/calendar/) is great if you need to know on what day of the week something happened. Let's say you need to know what day of the week Columbus left Spain. Look up August 3, 1492 and you find that it was a Friday. Did you know we lost 11 days in September of 1752? This is because we switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar at that time.

The Geographic Names Information System (http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic/) can be helpful if you are searching for a town that has changed names over the years.