



Arkansas Genealogical Society

AGS Ezine

Volume 13, No. 1, January 2018

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If you are not a member,
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invitation to join AGS.

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If you are a member,
look at the back of your
Arkansas Family Historian.
Your membership expires
on the date printed under
your name.

It may be time to renew
your AGS membership dues!



Inside this issue

Coming Events

3-6

The Widow's Legacy

7-11

5 Tips for Discovering
Biological Family with
AncestryDNA

12-15

Rootsweb Is Down:
Data Recovery Strategies
for the Genealogist

16-22

Administrative Stuff

21

Tidbits —

The following are six tips recommended by PBS' *Genealogy Roadshow*, on getting started with genealogy and staying motivated:

- Cast a wider net with your research.** If information about one specific ancestor is not easily located, try researching the spouse, children, brothers, sisters, and other relatives. Documents of the friends or others associated with of your ancestor could also hold the answers to the questions you seek.

- Create a timeline for your ancestor** with all the details you have collected about his or her life. Timelines can help determine what resources we still need to consult.

- Try "genealogy crowdsourcing."** Post the info on a genealogy Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+ or other social media page or group. Be as specific as you can with names, dates, and locations. Or present your research problem to your local genealogy group or society and ask for feedback and suggestions.

- Create a formal research report** of all of your findings to date. This may spark ideas for additional sources that may have been overlooked.

- Step away from the problem for a little while.** After you give yourself some time, you can return to the research problem with a new perspective, ideas, and insights.

- Ask / hire a professional genealogist.** It is advisable to find a professional genealogist with a specialty in the area of your research inquiry. For example, if you are researching a German immigrant ancestor, it is best to hire someone with expertise in this area.

If you would like to read the article in its entirety, visit <http://www.pbs.org/genealogy-roadshow/genealogy-tips/getting-started/>.

Coming Events

January 22, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *Preserving Family Heirlooms*, by Andy Zawacki, Historic Arkansas Museum, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Jan. 23, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series: Sundays with TJ: 100 Years of Memories on Varner Road*, by Janis Kearney, 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Diamond Room, located at 1100 North Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Feb. 3, 2018 -

Arkansas State Archives, *African Americans in Arkansas's Rural History*, Speakers include Chelsea McNutt, Dr. Simon Hosken, Dr. Cherisse Branch-Jones, and Carmen Williams, 10 a.m. at Mosaic Templars, 501 W. 9th Street Little Rock, Arkansas.

February 26, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *Faithful to Our Tasks: Arkansas' Women & the Great War*, by Elizabeth Hill, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Coming Events *(continued)*

March 26, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *An Introduction to Genetic Genealogy*, by Mike Engles, Genetic Genealogist, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

April 17, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series, African-American Athletes in Arkansas: Muhammad Ali's Tour, Black Razorbacks & Other Forgotten Stories*, by Evin Demirel, 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Diamond Room, located at 1100 North Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

April 23, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *The Story Beneath the Stone*, by Jan Davenport, Oakland & Fraternal Cemeteries, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

May 2-5, 2018

The NGS 2018 Family History Conference will be in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The announcement was in the *NGS Monthly* from May 2016. Call for proposals opened January 3, 2017.

May 21, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *An Armchair Tour of Mount Holly Cemetery*, by Kay Tatum, Registrar Mt. Holly Cemetery, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Coming Events (*continued*)

June 2–7, 2018

[The Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research](#) (IGHR) will be at the Georgia Center's UGA and Hotel Conference Center.

Aug. 21, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series, Rock Island Railroad in Arkansas*, by Michael Hibblen, 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Diamond Room, located at 1100 North Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

August 22-25, 2018

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

August 27, 2018

Heritage Seekers, *The Rise & Fall of Napoleon, Arkansas*, by Sheila Moore-Mithell, 6:30 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, located at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

October 13, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Tracing Your Arkansas Roots: Genealogy 101*, speakers include Thea Baker and Diana Gilpin, 9 a.m. at Historic Washington State Park.

Coming Events *(continued)*

October 19-20, 2018

The Arkansas Genealogical Society 2018 Fall Conference will be at the Benton Event and Convention Center in Benton, Arkansas. Cee Cee Moore, Professional Genetic Genealogist is scheduled to present.

November 13, 2018

Arkansas State Archives, *Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series, Hidden History of Fort Smith*, by Ben Boulden, 6:30 p.m. at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Diamond Room, located at 1100 North Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

August 21-24, 2019

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Washington, D. C.

September 2-5, 2020

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Kansas City, Missouri.

The Widow's Legacy

The following is republished from the The Legal Genealogist website, <http://www.legalgenealogist.com/2017/12/16/the-widows-legacy/>. The article written by Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL, was posted December 16, 2017.

Chasing those German cousins

You remember what *The Legal Genealogist* says about reading every word, right? Every word, in every record, in every resource, so you don't miss a critical clue somehow. Not that *The Legal Genealogist* would *ever* miss a critical clue...

Well, okay, so eventually I would have found it.

It's just that "eventually" turned out to be today.

Today is the 132nd birthday of a woman to whom I am only collaterally related. Erdmute Magdalena Hedwig (Späte) Geissler was no blood relative, but just a name in a database – simply the wife of my granduncle, the woman who married my German grandfather's brother.

She was born 16 December 1885 in Kayna, Germany(1): "a village and a former municipality in the Burgenlandkreis district, in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany. Since 1 July 2009, it is part of the town Zeitz."(2)

She married Arno Werner Geissler, my grandfather's only brother, on 9 June 1908 in Gera,(3) a city in the modern German state of Thüringen.(4)

Called Werner, my granduncle was a painter – probably a house painter, rather than an artist of any kind – there in Gera, and was recorded in the Gera City Directory living at Leontinenstrasse 9 in 1909,(5) 1910,(6) 1911,(7) 1912,(8) 1913,(9) and 1914.(10)

And then came the war.

The Widow's Legacy (*continued*)

The next available city directory is for 1917. And Werner isn't there.

Oh, there's a Geissler there, all right.

At Leontinenstrasse 9.

But it's not Werner.

The listing in 1917 is for Magdalena. Shown as "Verw."(11)

A widow.

I've told Werner's story before: how he and Magdalena married, how they appeared to have no children, how in 1914 Werner was a reservist in the seventh company, second battalion, of Reserve Infantry Regiment No. 83, part of the 50th Reserve Infantry Brigade and 25th Reserve Division of the German Empire. How in the winter of 1914-15, his unit was sent east, to the fighting along the border of Poland and Galicia. And how his name came to be on a list, published 20 July 1915:

Geissler, Werner. Köstritz. Gera. Gefallen.

Geissler, Werner. Born in Köstritz. Lived in Gera. Killed in action.(12)

The record goes on, year after lonely year, of the widowed Magdalena, living there at that same address in Gera, Leontinenstrasse 9.

She was recorded there in 1920.(13)

In 1922.(14)

In 1925.(15)

In 1927.(16)

Even in 1929.(17)

But that was the last entry. She died even before that 1929 directory was published, on the 18th of December 1928, at the age of 43.(18)

There is no Geissler on Leontinenstrasse in the 1931 directory.(19) No Geissler on Leontinenstrasse in 1934 either.(20)

The Widow's Legacy (*continued*)

Now... more than five years after Magdalena died, at that point, you almost give up going year by year through the city directories.

Almost.

But not quite.

Because the story changes in 1936. In the city directory for that year, there *is* a Geissler on Leontinenstrasse. Not just on that street, but living at Leontinenstrasse 9. His name was Fritz. And he was a tailor.(21)

Still there in 1939, still at Leontinenstrasse 9, still a tailor.(22) And in 1941-42.(23)

Now Geissler isn't exactly a unique name in Germany or even in Gera. In the last city directory available, there were 50 entries for people with that name. So it could be a coincidence that a Geissler appears at the same address where Werner and Magdalena lived as young marrieds and where Magdalena continued to live out her life.

Except for one little thing. That one little critical clue you don't ever want to overlook. The informant on Magdalena's death certificate.

Fritz Georg Geissler.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature reads "Fritz Georg Geissler". The word "Fritz" is underlined. The signature is written on a piece of paper with a dotted horizontal line.

The Widow's Legacy (*continued*)

Who lived at Leontinenstrasse 9.

Hot damn, Magdalena! Did you and Werner leave me with a legacy?

Do I really have *cousins* to chase?

Sure looks that way, doesn't it?

Oh, boy...

SOURCES

1. See Sterbeurkunde Nr. 928, Standesamt Gera, Erdmute Magdalena Hedwig Geissler geb. Späte, 18 Dec 1928. Note that her marriage certificate says the 6th, rather than 16th, but there's a handwritten correction that she was really born on the 16th and not the 6th. Heiratsurkunde Nr. 180, Standesamt Gera, Arno Werner Geissler-Erdmute Magdalena Hedwig Späte, 9 June 1908.
2. Wikipedia (<http://www.wikipedia.com>), "Kayna," rev. 24 Jan 2017.
3. Heiratsurkunde Nr. 180, Geissler-Späte, 1908.
4. Wikipedia (<http://www.wikipedia.com>), "Gera," rev. 15 Nov 2017.
5. *Adressbuch der Haupt- und Residenzstadt Gera 1909* (Gera: Verlag Karl Bauch, 1909), 44.
6. *Adressbuch... Gera 1910* (Gera: Verlag Karl Bauch, 1910), 44.
7. *Adressbuch... Gera 1911* (Gera: Verlag Karl Bauch, 1911), 45.
8. *Adressbuch Gera 1912* (Gera: Verlag Karl Bauch, 1912), 46.
9. *Adressbuch... Gera 1913* (Gera: Verlag Karl Bauch, 1913), 55.
10. *Adressbuch... Gera 1914* (Gera: Verlag Karl Bauch, 1914), 55.
11. *Stadthandbuch der Haupt- und Residenzstadt Gera... 1917* (Gera, Germany: Verlag Karl Bauch, 1917), 54.
12. See Judy G. Russell, "Death on the Eastern Front," *The Legal Genealogist*, posted date (<http://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog> : accessed 15 Dec 2017).

The Widow's Legacy (*continued*)

13. *Handbuch der Stadt Gera... 1920* (Gera, Germany : Verlag Karl Bauch, 1920), 70.
14. *Handbuch der Stadt Gera... 1922* (Gera, Germany : Verlag Karl Bauch, 1922), 68.
15. *Adressbuch der Stadt Gera... 1925* (Gera, Germany : Verlag Karl Bauch, 1925), 76.
16. *Einwohnerbuch der Stadt Gera... 1927* (Gera, Germany : Verlag Karl Bauch, 1927), 73.
17. *Einwohnerbuch der Stadt Gera... 1929* (Gera, Germany : Verlag Karl Bauch, 1929), 82.
18. Sterbeurkunde Nr. 928 (1928), Erdmute Magdalena Hedwig Geissler geb. Späte.
19. *Einwohnerbuch der Stadt Gera... 1931* (Gera, Germany : Kanitzsche Buch- und Kunsthandlung, 1931), 69.
20. *Einwohnerbuch Stadt Gera... 1934* (Gera, Germany : Kanitzsche Buch- und Kunsthandlung, 1934), 66.
21. *Einwohnerbuch Stadt Gera... 1936* (Gera, Germany : Kanitzsche Buch- und Kunsthandlung, 1936), 66.
22. *Einwohnerbuch Stadt Gera... 1936* (Gera, Germany : Kanitzsche Buch- und Kunsthandlung, 1939), 69.
23. *Einwohnerbuch Stadt Gera... 1941/42* (Gera, Germany : Kanitzsche Buch- und Kunsthandlung, 1941), 70.

5 Tips for Discovering Biological Family with AncestryDNA

The following is republished from the Ancestry Blogs website, <https://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2017/12/07/5-tips-for-discovering-biological-family-with-ancestrydna/>. The article written by Jake Fletcher and was posted December 7, 2017. Fletcher a genealogist for Ancestry ProGenealogist is a professional genealogist originally from Massachusetts, he currently resides in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Few journeys in the world of genealogy are as poignant and challenging as an individual searching for his or her biological family. While all people who pursue genealogy experience some sense of self-discovery and emotion, researchers solving “unknown parentage” questions produce even more passion. With the world of genetic genealogy exploding in popularity over the last four years, these genealogical mysteries are being solved almost daily thanks to consumer tests like AncestryDNA.

Testament to this is the fact that, to date, there are more than 6 million people in the AncestryDNA community, making it the largest database of personal genetic data. Because of this, many families are reconnecting and individuals are finding closure thanks to the vast AncestryDNA network. With the high level of interest in genetic genealogy, many people who were previously hesitant to take the plunge are wondering what is involved in this type of research. If one of your research goals is to solve an unknown parentage mystery, here are some tips to help you get started on your journey.

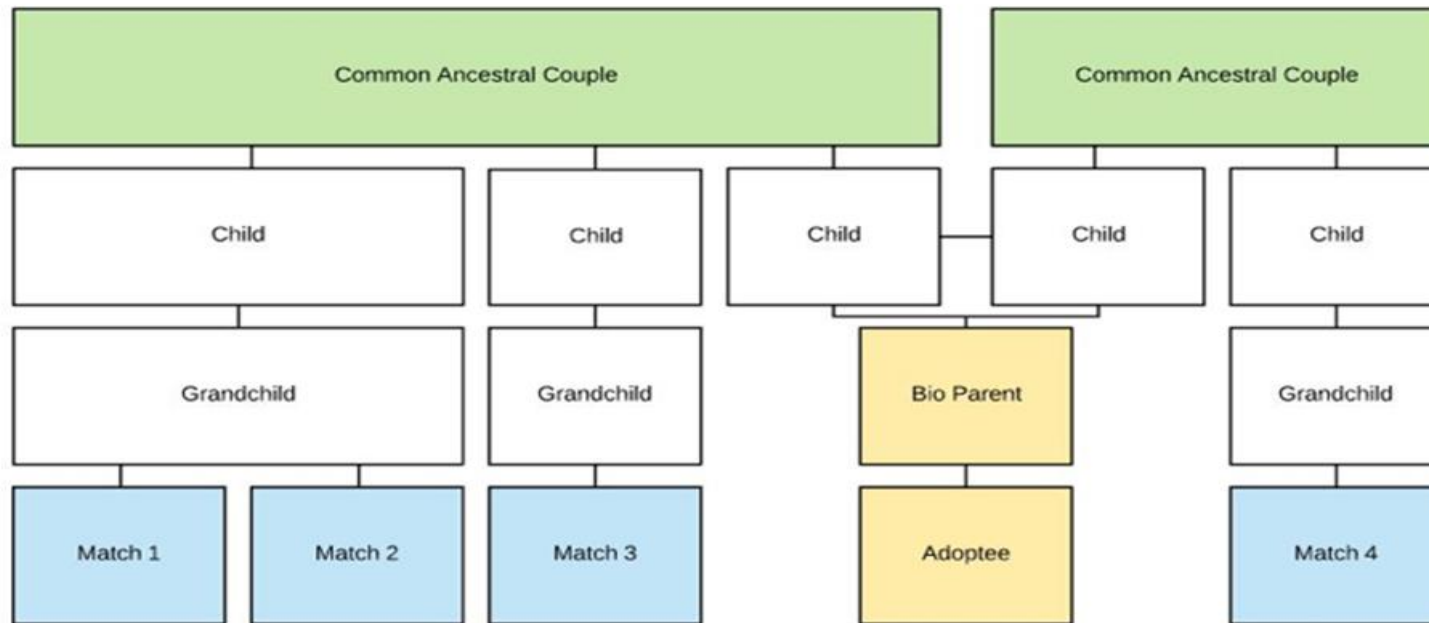
Once you receive your AncestryDNA results, catalog and assess your matches. This is one of the most important steps when you begin to do DNA research. You want to keep a personal record of DNA matches for posterity and also to help with analysis. Start by creating a spreadsheet or catalog for your DNA matches that includes the following information:

5 Tips for Discovering Biological Family with AncestryDNA (*continued*)

- User name.
- Amount of shared DNA (measured in centimorgans). This information can be obtained by clicking on the [info icon](#) on a match's profile.
- The predicted relationship between you and your match.
- Note whether a tree is attached to your match's DNA results. It is also worthwhile going to their Ancestry profile page to see if they have a private tree.
- Make note of surnames included in the tree.
- Shared matches, which can be found by clicking on the "Shared Matches" button. This will allow you to identify groups of matches, which will better organize your research.

Create a match tree. One of the most important steps in working with DNA is to visualize connections between the matches. Groups of matches are often related through a common ancestral couple, so it's a good idea to chart these out. This will help you in your research as you envision theories for the identity of a biological relative. There are a number of programs that can do this, but I suggest [Lucidchart](#), because it's simple, intuitive, and cleanly presents your match tree.

5 Tips for Discovering Biological Family with AncestryDNA (continued)



Carefully weigh all the evidence (both DNA and non-DNA). Success in unknown parentage research does not rely solely on DNA analysis. Traditional genealogical research and documents can provide crucial evidence. Depending on the state, adoptees may be able to obtain an original birth certificate or non-identifying information about their parents from an adoption agency. Another example would be looking at a common ancestral couple. As you do so, you'll want to obtain all the documents pertaining to that family and their children, because online trees can miss these crucial details.

5 Tips for Discovering Biological Family with AncestryDNA *(continued)*

Be prepared for contact. This can be the most difficult part of the journey. It's exciting when research solves the mystery, but then what does the person do when they decide to make contact with a biological parent or other members of their biological family? More important than the method of establishing contact is the mindset going into it. We are all human and need to recognize that our contact may elicit diverse reactions.

Rootsweb Is Down: Data Recovery Strategies for the Genealogist

The following is republished from Lisa Louise Cooke's: Genealogy Gems, <https://lusalouisecooke.com/2017/12/30/rootsweb-is-down/>. The article written by Lisa Cooke, originally appeared on December 23, 2017.

RootsWeb is down! This important free genealogy platform hosts millions of names on hundreds of genealogy-related websites for locales, societies, and even individual family trees. Here's what you should know about the situation-and how you may be able to access older versions of RootsWeb or other sites that are not currently available.

RootsWeb had a security issue

On December 23, 2017, Ancestry.com reported receiving a tip that thousands of RootsWeb usernames and passwords were publicly exposed. Affected accounts were users of the RootsWeb surname list, which Ancestry discontinued earlier in the year. For those of you not familiar with RootsWeb, it's a long-time free web platform where individuals and organizations can host their own genealogy-related websites. I often find sites there with information about counties I'm researching in and sites run by local genealogy societies. More than 11 million names are indexed or transcribed on RootsWeb sites-that's in addition to the wealth of information you'll find on local history, sources, and societies. Ancestry.com has been hosting RootsWeb since 2000. Even if this particular security concern doesn't affect you directly, I encourage you to keep reading. This scenario provides a perfect example of the kinds of data security, privacy, and loss issues we need to be aware of as genealogists. Even if you don't have a site yourself on RootsWeb, it's a common resource you will likely come across as you research your family tree. So here are a few take-home points for everyone, including advice on how to look at archived versions of any website that is temporarily down or no longer in service.

Rootsweb Is Down: Data Recovery Strategies for the Genealogist (*continued*)

The extent of the problem

Ancestry did some quick reconnaissance and reported the following:

- No sensitive personal information such as credit card or Social Security numbers were exposed since RootsWeb doesn't collect it.
- That said, about 55,000 customers have the same account info for both RootsWeb and an Ancestry.com site, which means that these Ancestry.com customers' login data was potentially compromised. Most affected accounts are free trial accounts or they're not currently in use. But Ancestry says, "We are currently contacting these customers. Any user whose account had its associated email/username and password included on the file has had their accounts locked and will need to create a new .
- Ancestry found other RootsWeb login information that could have been potentially exposed, and they're letting these account-holders know.
- They have temporarily taken RootsWeb offline to do a "deep analysis" of the site's design. Ancestry says they "are working to ensure that all data is saved and preserved to the best of our ability. As RootsWeb is a free and open community that has been largely built by its users, we may not be able to salvage everything as we work to resolve this issue and enhance the RootsWeb infrastructure."
- In the Comments section of the Ancestry.com announcement, Anne Gillespie Mitchell stated, "We do not have a specific timeline at this point. We hope it will take no more than a few weeks to resolve these issues. RootsWeb mailing lists will, however, remain active."

Rootsweb Is Down: Data Recovery Strategies for the Genealogist *(continued)*

Bottom line: Anyone whose account was potentially affected is receiving an email notice to change their password. For everyone else, Ancestry.com says, “There is nothing you need to do as a result of this incident. However, we always recommend that you take the time to evaluate your own security settings. **Please, never use the same username and password for multiple services or sites. And it’s generally good practice to use longer passwords and to change them regularly.**”

RootsWeb is down: Why it matters and what to do

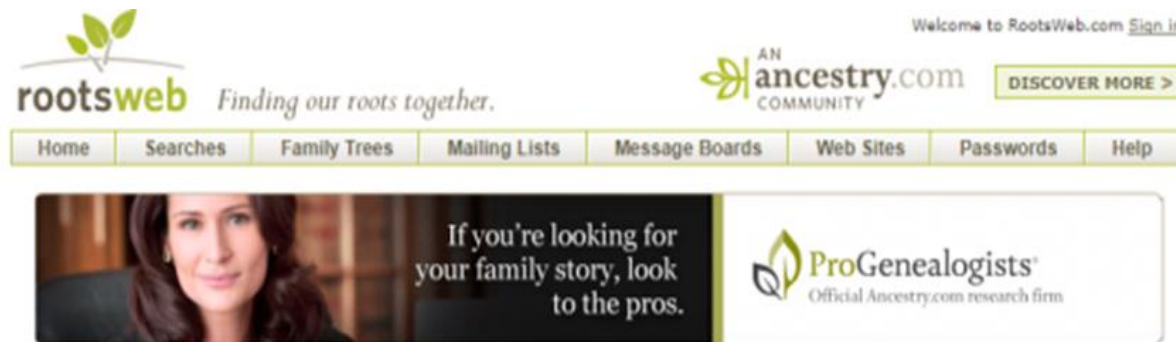
Contributing Editor Sunny Morton shared an email that was forwarded to her by her mother, a genealogy librarian at a public library in Northeast Ohio. I’m sharing it here with the permission of the author Cynthia, who helps manage several RootsWeb sites. Cynthia says: “I put a couple of items on my websites the morning of the twenty-third. By that afternoon, RootsWeb was shut down. Almost the entire RootsWeb is down, probably for several weeks while they fix a security breach. This involves the Cleveland District Roundtable site, Cuyahoga GenWeb, Lake County GenWeb, and Lake County and East Cuyahoga County Genealogical Society sites. This feels even scarier than the last major outage. Fortunately, I have copies on my computer of my entire sites, so no panic for lost data. But [the data] is now not very accessible for most folks.”

Cynthia followed her message with this tip: “A workaround would be the [WayBack Machine on Archive.org](#). You put in the URL and it shows you the dates they downloaded. You may need to look at several of them to find a more complete copy. Some are just a few front pages.”



Rootsweb Is Down: Data Recovery Strategies for the Genealogist *(continued)*

- I talked more extensively about the **Internet Archive's Wayback Machine** (along with Google's own backup copies, called caches) in the free **Genealogy Gems Podcast episode 145**. Here's how to use the Wayback Machine to find one of the downed websites Cynthia mentioned: the Cleveland District Roundtable, which is a fantastic collaborative directory and group calendar for all genealogical organizations in greater Cleveland, Ohio. If you run a Google search for that site now, you will find the site. But if you click on it, you'll see a message that RootsWeb is currently unavailable:



Rootsweb is currently unavailable

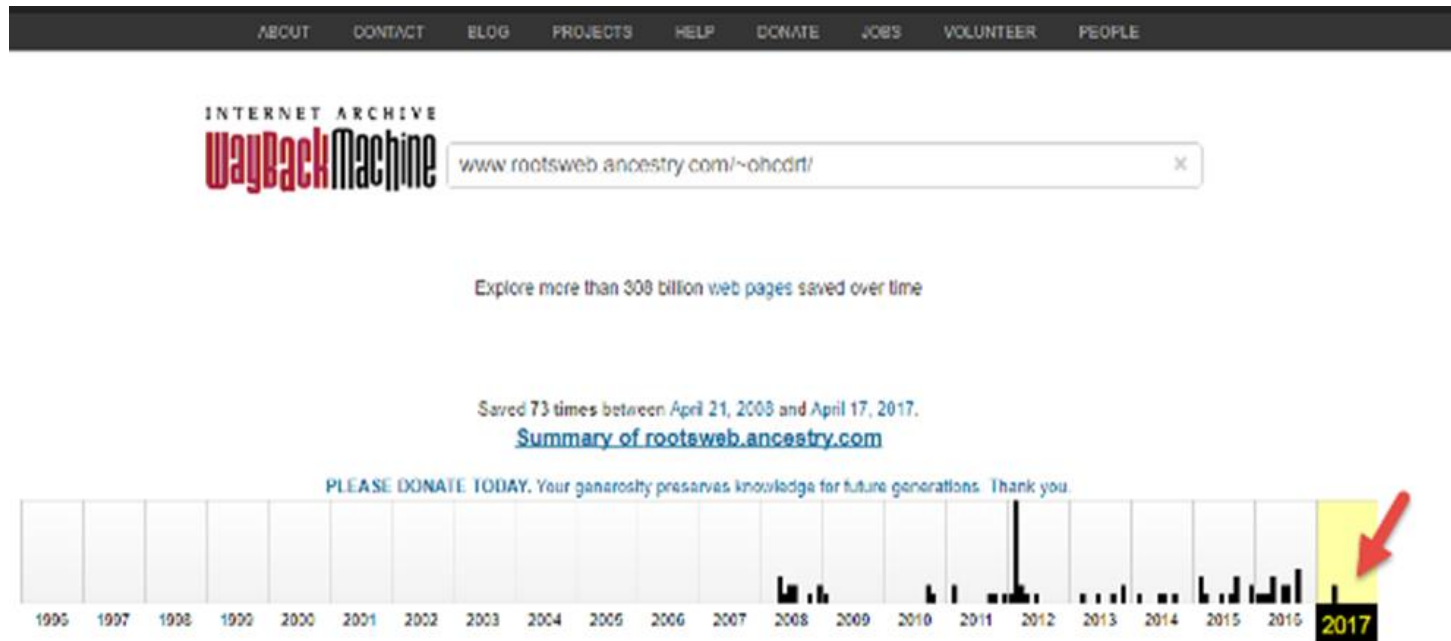
Rootsweb is currently unavailable. We have been in the process of improving the site throughout 2017, and as a result of an issue we recently became aware of, we have taken the site offline while we work to resolve it.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, but protecting our users' personal information is our top priority. During this down time, we are working to preserve all data saved to Rootsweb, and hope to have an update within a few weeks.

If you would like to learn more, please visit our [blog post](#).

Rootsweb Is Down: Data Recovery Strategies for the Genealogist *(continued)*

When this happens, you can copy the URL from the top of the browser page and paste it into the **Wayback Machine search box**. You'll then see a timeline showing that the Roundtable site has been captured (or archived) by the Wayback Machine 73 times since 2008, most recently (as shown by the arrow) on April 17, 2017:



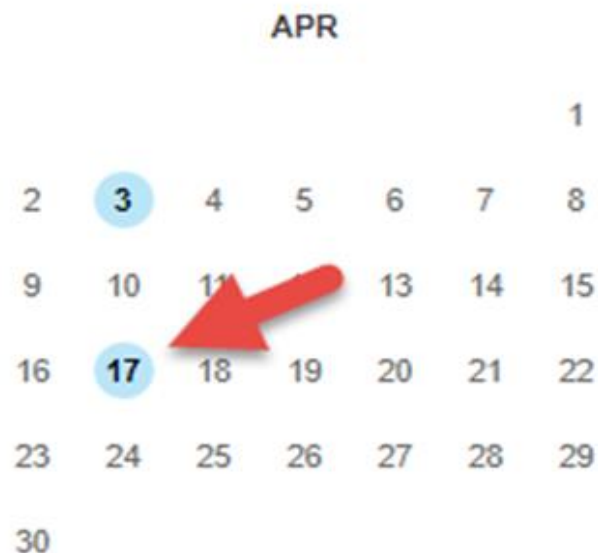
Scroll down on the page a little to see a calendar, shown here, and you can click on highlighted dates on which updated captures were taken. Click on the most recent highlighted date.

Rootsweb Is Down: Data Recovery Strategies for the Genealogist (continued)

Tips for everyone on avoiding genealogy data loss

A huge hat-tip to Cynthia for the work she does in her local genealogy community-and for sending out advice to those she knew would be affected by the temporary loss of RootsWeb. In addition to her tip on using the Wayback Machine, she says something else absolutely critical:

“Fortunately, I have copies on my computer of my entire sites, so no panic for lost data.”



The true and deep loss is when there is no backup copy of painstakingly-collected genealogy data, whether it’s a family tree, research files, or over 11 million names in RootsWeb’s online indexes and transcriptions. I’m not implying that RootsWeb is permanently lost: Ancestry.com does mention its plan to “resolve this issue and enhance the RootsWeb infrastructure.” But if they don’t bring all of RootsWeb back (they admit it’s possible there will be some loss), or if your genealogy data is lost from any website or computer, you *always* want to have a backup plan in place. **In this companion post**, you’ll find a strategy for backing up your tree at Ancestry.com. It’s actually a template for something near and dear to my heart: a master plan for your genealogy data security. Things to think about in your master plan are:

Rootsweb Is Down: Data Recovery Strategies for the Genealogist (*continued*)

Saving digital copies of every document and artifact on your computer in organized, consistently labeled files. Listen to the free **Family History: Genealogy Made Easy Podcast** episodes 32-33 for a tutorial on naming and organizing these files.

Keeping your master family tree in software on your own computer rather than online.

Backing up everything on your computer with a reliable cloud-based backup service.

Organize and secure your genealogy data once and for all

Genealogy Gems Premium Members can take genealogical organization and security to the next level with my how-to videos. I recommend these:

“Take Control of Your Family Tree”

“Hard Drive Organization, Parts 1 and 2”

“Organize Your Research with Evernote”

“Organizing Your DNA Matches”

Be sure to download the video class handouts on the video page. I can't think of a better way to start the year off right than to take action to secure your hard-won data!

Administrative Stuff

Contributions: If you have news for the Ezine, send it! To agscontributions@gmail.com – Thanks!

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