



CousinsClub.org

Going beyond your family tree

Sharing your Story

Great - now you have a large family tree and know how everyone is related. Have you or your family ever wondered how family members ended up in the countries they live in? Who fought in World War II and what their experience was? Do you have any family members impacted by major world events, such as the holocaust, and want to share their experiences with your family?

What follows are a few tips on how to go beyond the family tree to document and share your family story.

Finding your family story

The first step in your family story is collecting the information. There are quite a few good online resources that you can use to find basic information about your family, such as when they immigrated to the countries they live now, who served in the military and more. These are listed below, but keep in mind - there is no replacing interviewing your family members to truly fill in the story. Questions you can start off by asking include:

- Did your parents or grandparents share any stories with you on why they emigrated to the country you are living in now? What was their trip like? What was life like where they grew up?
- Did they know any family members who served in the military? Did they fight in any significant battles? What was their experience like?
- Anyone in the family involved in any major world events? The Holocaust? World War I? Hold a political office?
- Tell me a bit about you and your immediate family. What is a day in your life like? Any hobbies or special interests?

To supplement the information you get from your family, the following links contain a list of the best sites to go to

Online Resources

CousinsClub.Org

[Google Translate](#)

[Constant Contact - Create Newsletters](#)

[Creating Facebook groups & privacy concerns](#)

Sharing your story sample sites

Create a Family Website

We created a 40+ page custom website for our family covering our family story going back to the early 1800s including the experiences of the family in World War II and the Holocaust.

Check out:

www.CousinsClub.us

Sample Facebook Group

We created a Facebook group for our own family now with 150+ family members in 11+ countries on 3 continents. We found this to be a popular site for the family to go to not only to learn more about each other, but to be able to

for more details, along with supporting records:

- [All Inclusive Genealogy Sites](#)
- [Researching the holocaust](#)
- [Military records](#)

interact with each other.

[Sample Facebook Family Group](#)

Share the story

As you accumulate information and pictures - you'll need a place to share it with your family. There are a number of online options that offer a lot of functionality for you to use. These include:

Option 1: Create a Facebook group. This is a great, free, way to share pictures and stories with your family. For more information on how to create a Facebook group and/or to find out how to properly set your Facebook privacy options - [click here](#). Facebook groups offer a number of features that make them useful for this purpose. These include:

- Its already a popular platform, so you will probably find many of your family members already have accounts. In fact, this is also a great way to connect with your family and through them, find other family members on Facebook (including ones you may not have already known about).
- It has many features to allow family members to interact with each other, making it a great platform for the family to get to know each other better.
- You can make it a private group so that you can control who has access to the posts and documentation.
- You can upload documents and photos, including any part of the story you've written offline in Microsoft Word or your family tree software,
- Other family members can contribute their own documentation and photos directly to the group making this a very collaborative effort.

Option 2: Several family tree software packages, including [Family Tree Maker](#) and [Legacy Family Tree](#), allow you to create a write up to document your family story. These integrate well with the family tree, but you can also allow you to export them to a document which you can upload to your families Facebook group or e-mail to the family using your regular e-mail software or, if you want to also create newsletters for your family, an online package like [ConstantContact.com](#).

Option 3: If you are tech savvy, you can create your own website to share the story. This will require more work for you, but gives you complete control over the

format and flow of the story. For an example site, check out www.CousinsClub.us.

About the author

I became fascinated with my family tree in the early 1990s. Since then, I've traced my family tree back to the early 1800s including over 900 family members who now live throughout Europe, Australia, Israel, North America and South America. Along the way, family members started sending pictures and stories about their part of the family, including information about more than 20 family members who were in Concentration Camps. I wanted some way to share these stories and photos with the rest of the family. So I created a password protected website, www.CousinsClub.us. This has grown to include ~175 family members in our FaceBook group and newsletter, both of which we use quite a bit for sharing information about our family history and getting to know each other better.

Rich Pollner

www.CousinsClub.org

E-mail: rpollner@CousinsClub.org

My Family Website: www.CousinsClub.us

Engage Enrich, Educate | rpollner@CousinsClub.org | <http://www.CousinsClub.org>

10 William Penn Road
Warren, NJ 07059

Lexabean, LLC

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