

# Maris Grove Genealogy Club

Welcomes you to the wonderful world of your ancestors.

We meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of every month at 2 p.m. in the Redwood Theater.

No meetings June, July & August and our November & December meetings are usually combined to a Friday early in December.

We help each other with ideas about where to find records and how to pass on family history. Some of our members have been searching for years and others are just getting started.

## Strategies for Building a Family Tree

The strategies listed below explain how to be successful with your own family history research.

- 1. Start** by documenting names, dates, and stories about family members. Let family know your interest and interview older family members. Church and civil records will always be there, but personal memories and records will be lost with time unless documented.
- 2. See if someone has already done your family tree.** Many families have shared their family trees on the Internet and some in book format. Family trees are posted on Ancestry.com (\$), FamilySearch.org and wikitree.com. Many family histories in book format are available at FamilySearch.org. **Warning**-many family trees are copied from other trees and may have errors.
- 3. DNA and Genealogy-A Simple Introduction** DNA has become a valuable tool in finding one's ancestors (great-great-grandparents, triple or quadruple great grand-parents, etc.) and ones extended family (2nd , 3rd , 4th cousins, great aunts and uncles, etc.). For \$50-200 one can submit saliva (or similar body fluid) to a testing company who will analyze their DNA in that sample. The results can then be compared with the results of others to determine the likelihood that they are related.

### *There Are 3 Types Of DNA Tests:*

**Autosomal-DNA** detects characteristics from both parents, ½ father ½ mother. Since the parents have characteristics of their parents, the tested person has characteristics of all 4 of their grandparents, all 8 great grandparents, etc. Of course, the further back the weaker the connection. Cousins share 2 of their 4 grandparents, so cousins have some DNA in common. Similarly, aunts and nephews have some DNA in common, as do second cousins, third cousins, grand uncles, grand aunts, etc. So autosomal-DNA is useful for linking to ones extended family. Often these extended family members have family history to share (family trees, photos, etc.)

**Y-DNA** detects characteristics only from a male's male ancestors. Although we have 4 male great grandfathers, the Y-DNA only detects characteristics of 1 great grandfather, a male's father's father's father.

**Mitochondrial DNA (mt-DNA)** similarly only detects characteristics of a female's female ancestors. It detects the characteristics of only 1 of 4 great grandmothers and 1 of 8 great-great grandmothers.

### **3 General Ways These Results Are Used**

**Regional Ethnicity** The test company provides estimates of where in the world the user's ancestors were probably located. Interestingly, this is used a lot in TV ads for DNA testing but it doesn't link to possible family members.

**Matching** It gives the test user information on how to contact other test users who probably have the same ancestors. Very helpful for most people who are trying to add to their family tree, as the other test user may have useful information/research about their family tree.

**Researchy** A collaborative effort by users to fill in holes in family trees or verify questionable links (people) in a tree. A big part of their collaborative effort is to seek out people who haven't been tested and encourage them to be tested as those results could prove or disprove hypotheses on "ancestors". They typically use the Y-DNA or the Mitochondrial-DNA test.

**4. Internet research.** Some helpful websites are listed on the backside of this sheet.

**5. Focus your research effort.** How do you cope with a large family tree? For starters, you have to be selective in your research. A popular approach is to take one branch of the family tree and follow it back as far as possible. Another

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possibility is to go sideways and try to record all branches of the family tree that are still alive today.

- 6. Keep good records.** To be successful in your family history research, you have to be prepared to treat it like a hobby. Make sure to keep careful notes. Document all your sources and all of your work. There are formal ways to document genealogy research. Keeping a journal can be a simple and useful way to get started.
- 7. Be prepared for conflicts.** It is common for genealogists to come across conflicting information on the same individual. Take something as basic as date of birth. The more you go back in time, the more likely you are to come across situations where a given individual has different dates of birth listed on various documents. Many people could not read and often had only a vague idea of when they were born. Over their lifetime, it is perfectly possible they listed different birth dates on different forms, particularly if it was to their advantage. For example, a woman might change her birth date on a marriage certificate to make herself look younger. A man might change his birth date on a military enrollment form to make himself older. Keeping careful records and questioning all sources of information will help sort out conflicting facts. Consider family lore to be clues not facts until proven.
- 8. Have fun.** Successful genealogists are ones that go slow, focus their efforts, don't expect to find everything conveniently packaged for them on the internet, question all their sources and keep good records.

### **A Few Helpful Genealogy Websites** some require a subscription which is denoted by (\$)

Maris Grove Genealogy Club has pages on the Computer Club website [mg3c.org](http://mg3c.org) click "Clubs" on the top right banner

[Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com) (\$) Take the most used genealogy data subscription site for a spin. Anyone can click on the Learning Center tab and then First Steps for the site orientation. Can include subscriptions to Newspapers.com and Fold3.com. During the Covid Pandemic access to Ancestry.com was free thru the Delaware County Library system (still true 6-20-21). Ancestry is under "Explore e-Resources" at Rachel Kohl or Delco Library website and requires a login with one's Delco Library card name and number.

[Newspapers.com](http://Newspapers.com) (\$) has over 200+ million pages of historical newspapers from 5,400 newspapers from around the United States and beyond. Can be a standalone subscription or part of an Ancestry.com subscription.

[Fold3.com](http://Fold3.com) (\$) Has digitized military records from Revolutionary War forward. Can be a standalone subscription or part of an Ancestry.com subscription.

[FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org) (free) This is one of the best online sources available. Search billions of digitized and indexed records from around the world. Has many family trees, easily searchable. Under the Search tab and then "Research Wiki" there are many educational resources about genealogical methodology and records. This is a service of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon church) and although free, it requires a signup account.

[FindAGrave.com](http://FindAGrave.com) (free) burial information from millions of tombstone images here. Search by individual or cemetery name.

[GenealogyTV.org](http://GenealogyTV.org) (free) has many helpful videos on various genealogy topics.

[Rootstech.org](http://Rootstech.org) (free) is a website providing lectures on many genealogy topics.

[GenealogyBank.com](http://GenealogyBank.com) (\$) This is best known for its 6000 plus historical newspaper sites.

General Land Office Records [blm.gov/services/land-records](http://blm.gov/services/land-records) (free) You can find many records generated when our ancestors bought land from the federal government, especially in the Midwest and West. Access images of more than 5 million land title records back to 1820.

[Google.com](http://Google.com) (free) In addition to the ability to search for names and places, Google offers several genealogy-friendly tools. [translate.google.com](http://translate.google.com) helps you translate text and websites into or out of English. [Books.Google.com](http://Books.Google.com) includes an online library of out-of-print resources such as local histories and compiled genealogies. [Maps.Google.com](http://Maps.Google.com) helps you locate ancestral addresses.

[ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov](http://ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov) (free) The Library of Congress' portal to historical newspapers has two important areas of content: digitized newspaper pages (1836-1922) from 25 states and Washington D.C. and an index to all known newspapers published in the United States and where to find them today.

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