

Genealogy: New Year's genealogical resolutions

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Welcome to 2016! Well... what's on your genealogical bucket list this year?

Traditionally, at this time of the year, most people think of making New Year's resolutions. Some will succeed while others will not. I propose that you become a "family history detective" and make a New Year's resolution to conquer your genealogy research.

Here are a few hints and ideas you may consider to help with your genealogical resolution. Have you ever considered taking a holiday for the sole purpose of genealogy research? The Family History Library (FHL) in Salt Lake City, Utah, has long been considered a mecca for genealogists. Many genealogy researchers feel it as a must-see trip to take, allowing you the opportunity to conduct a large amount of research in a short period of time.

Advantages are many, instead of ordering micro-films at a cost delivered to a local family history centre, you can view for free all the films you wish pertaining to your family research. You can also take advantage of the tremendous number of books, records, extensive map collections, and the use of online data bases, which are only available at the FHL.

Not sure how or when you can go to the FHL? Why not go with our local Medicine Hat and District Genealogy Society (MHDGS) members. A bus trip to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City is scheduled for May of 2016.

There are still some seats available. Contact any of our members for more information. They can help with everything from where to eat and stay, as well as how to tackle and plan for your research trip.

Another resolution to consider making is to visit the home town or the home land of your ancestor. Walking a mile or two in your ancestors' footsteps, where they grew up and lived, can give you a sense of what their lives were like, and how they experienced that period of time. This also enables you to research some primary source materials on your ancestor that could be located at the area's local history centers or societies.

Have you ever thought of attending a genealogy conference? Each year there are numerous genealogy conferences, with different themes, sponsored by local, provincial and national genealogical societies. When you attend one of these conferences, knowledge can be gained from these professional genealogists.

The information acquired can help solve many road blocks and break down those brick wall we all experience in our research.

Your most important New Year's resolution would be to start writing your family history or story. Stop procrastinating and start writing! Imagine the joy your descendants will experience when they read your family history. I know this first-hand, from one of my great grandfather's autobiographies which he wrote 140 years ago. Your family history or story would truly be a legacy for your descendants to read, a voice from the past speaking out to them.

As we welcome 2016, may you have fun and success in your genealogy research. Wishing you a very Happy New Year filled with hope, happiness and most of all good health.

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