



Getting It Right

Sharing Your Family History



Diamond Wedding anniversary of William and Grace Milne
Masterton District Library and Archive

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These notes accompany the 3 part series "Sharing Your Family History". They should be read in conjunction with the accompanying videos which you can find on the [NZSG Website](#).

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Sharing With Collaborators

A great part of genealogy is all the cousins you find around the world. Collaborating with them can help your research immensely. There are a number of ways to share your information with them.

Gedcom

This can be the easiest way. You can export a Gedcom out of your family tree software program.

A Gedcom is a Genealogical Data Communication file. It allows data to be transferred across platforms and programs. Note, it will link to media files but it does not contain your media files.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GEDCOM

A gedcom will allow you to:

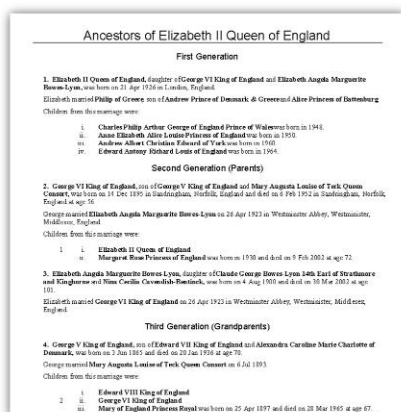
- move information between genealogical software programs
- upload and download information to/from online family trees
- swap information with relatives



Reports

There are a number of reasons why a Gedcom may not be what you would like to send to a family member. Another alternative from your family tree software program is one of the many reports.

Ahnentafel Report

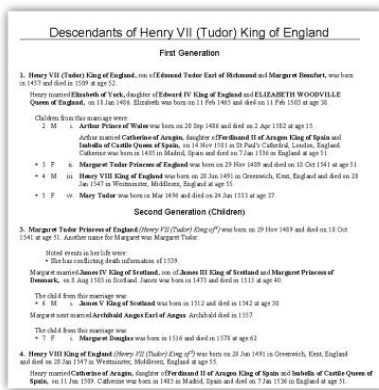


This is an Ancestor Report. It can contain as many generations as you would like. The numbering of people makes tracing the generations easier.

There is often the option to include notes and sources.

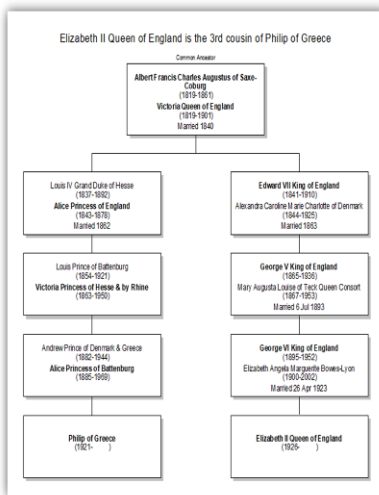


Descendant Report



This is similar to the Ahnentafel Report but goes in the other direction!

Relationship Report



This report shows how you are related to a family member.

It could be useful to illustrate your relationship to a new DNA match.

Family Group Report

Generally you would need to print a large number of these to get the same information as a Gedcom or Ancestry/Descendant Report. However, this can be one way of sharing and publishing your family history at the same time.



Sharing at Family Reunions

Families often get together. Sometimes it's for a full-blown reunion of those with common ancestors. Other times, it's for a significant event such as a wedding anniversary or birthday. Charts are a great way to present your research to your family.

Options

Having tried a number of ways to do this, the easiest way is using the options provided by a family tree software program. There you will only be limited by the options of the program and what you have included in your tree. Most programs give you lots of options of who and what you can include in your Chart.

If your family tree software doesn't do what you would like, or you don't use one, there are a number of options available online. Here are a couple for starters:

- www.warwickgenealogyservices.com.au/free-genealogy-forms-and-charts/
- www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Genealogy_Research_Forms#Family_Tree_Magazine

Publishing Options

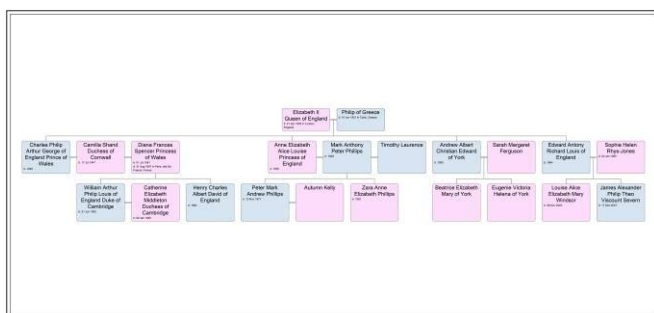
It is easy enough to print out your Chart, but note it may spread onto a large number of pages to be readable. This will involve sticky tape and not confusing the pages!

Another alternative is take the Chart as a .jpg or .pdf to a print shop and get them to print it on one large piece of a paper.

Chart Types

Here are a some options:

Descendant Chart

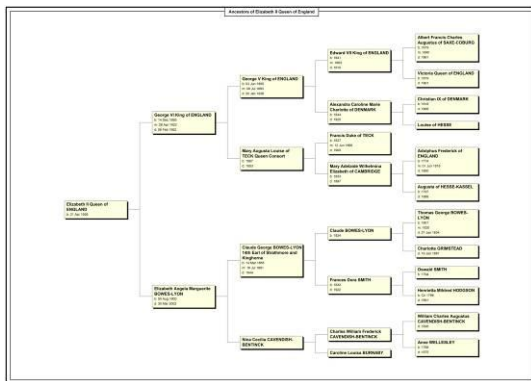


This chart shows all the descendants of a particular person or couple. It can contain as many generations as your program will allow.

Note it will quickly get very wide. If you're self printing, get out the sticky tape!



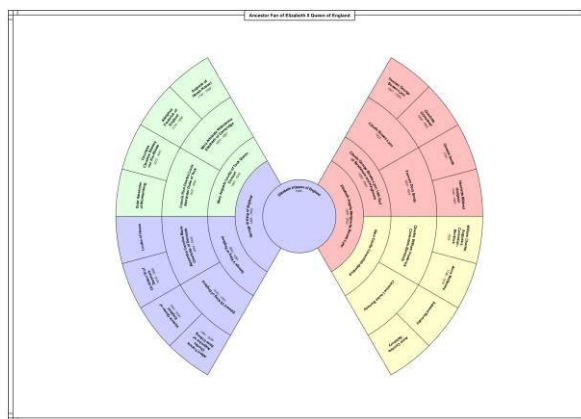
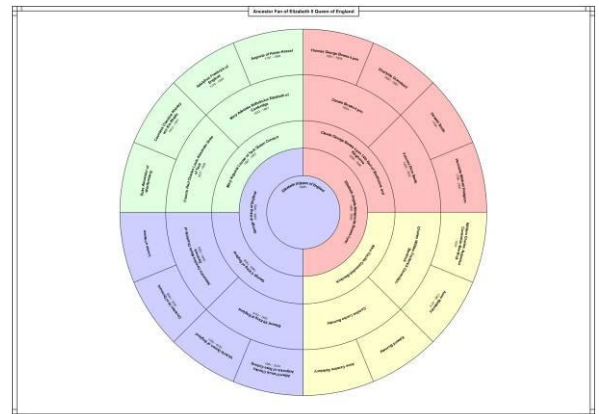
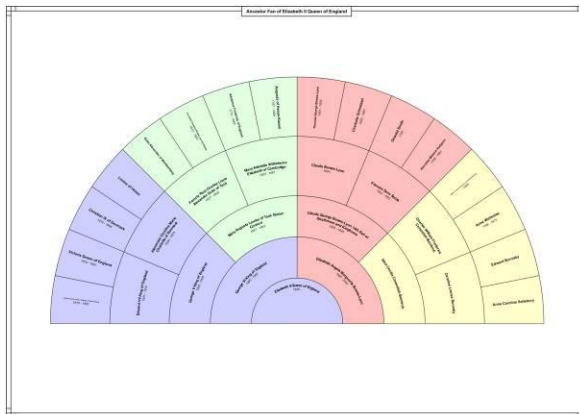
Pedigree Chart



This chart displays your ancestors. It can be either horizontal or vertical. It's a great option if you're celebrating a particular family member.

Note that it does not include aunts, uncles or cousins.

Fan Charts



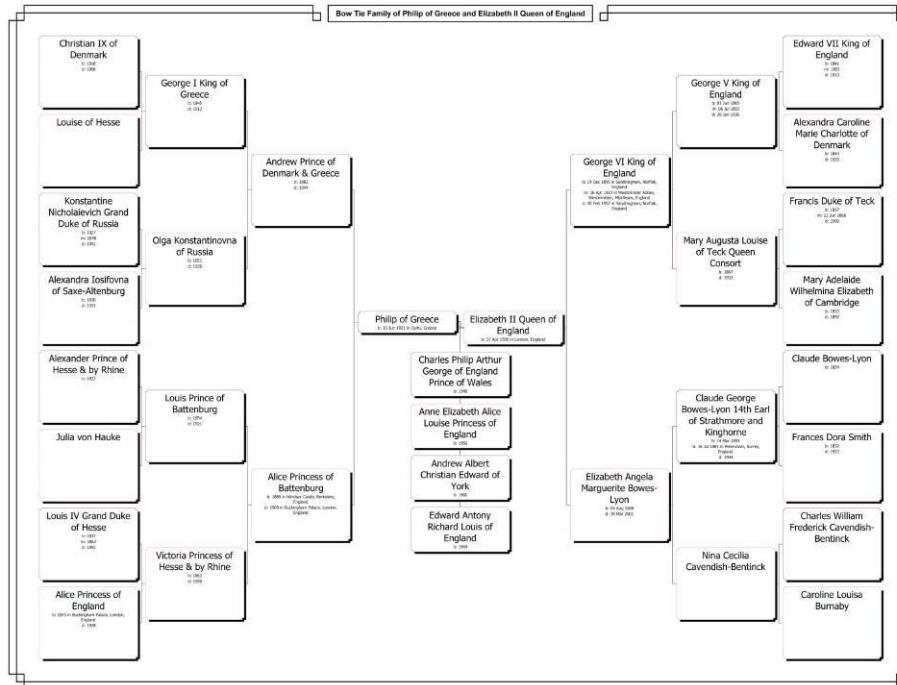
These charts display your ancestors. These 3 charts show the same information but in a different layout. Note that it does not include aunts, uncles or cousins.

These charts can also be useful for instantly seeing any gaps where you're missing ancestors.



Bowtie Chart

This is different to the Fan Chart above because it is showing the ancestors of a couple, with their children listed in the centre. It can make a great display for a wedding anniversary.



Adding details

The charts above are very plain. Many programs give you the option of adding photos, colour and backgrounds. Have a look around and see what's there.



Other options



If you're competent in a desktop program (eg word processing, spreadsheet etc), you can use them to put together a display. These programs can easily put together a colourful presentation, complete with pictures.

Sharing with the Uninterested

Many members of your family will show no interest when you tell them about your research. But start telling them a story and their ears prick up.

Writing stories is a great way to communicate with everyone in your family. It's also a good way to check your research. When you're writing "Gt-grandpa Johnny did this", you may find yourself stopping and asking yourself "How do I know that? Where's the proof?". It can help make your research more credible and robust.

Where to start?

Decide who your audience is.

Adults or children, near family or distant cousins.

Then get writing in whatever medium suits you.

Computer, typewriter, pen and paper. Just get started!

One place to start can be turning into sentences the information on the documents you have.

Make sure your story fits your research!

"Grandpa Joe arrived in New Zealand in 1863." - Can you prove it? Or should it be "Grandpa Joe arrived in New Zealand around 1863. He first appears on the electoral roll that year."

Don't forget you can include charts and pictures.

Charts can clarify relationships, especially given how complicated our families can be! Pictures and photos can add visual interest. If you don't have photos of the people in your family, you can always add ones of the locations they lived in, when they lived there.



Getting Help!

If you don't think you have the writing skills to write your family stories, help is not far away.

Online - there are lots of blogs and websites which can give you ideas and techniques

Local Library - people like to write about writing!

Seminars and Lectures - the NZSG and other organisations often run events on how to write your family's stories. See our presentation on "Getting Help" to see how you can ensure you find out about these events.

Courses - check out your local Community Education provider.

Publishing Your Stories

There are lots of ways to publish your stories. Here are some of them.

Digitally

If you've put your story into a word processing program, you can share it as a digital file. Add some photos and charts and off you go! If you save it as a .pdf, then it can't be edited and the photos will stay where you put them. Most desktop programs will give you this option.

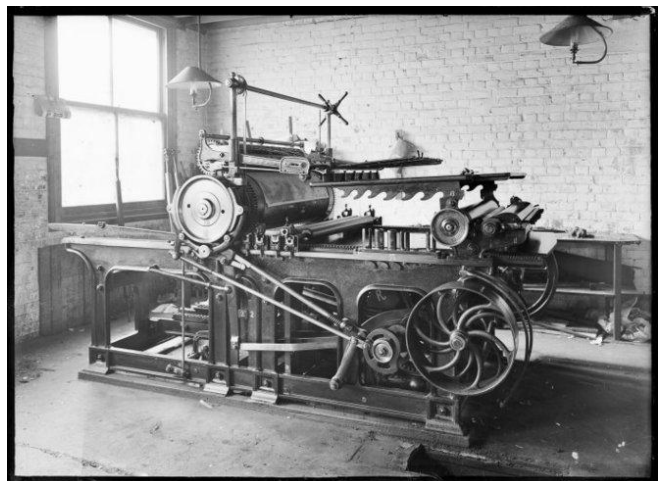
If you would like to share it with everyone and get some free cousin bait, you could consider putting your stories on a blog. There are lots of free blog websites available. Many of them work in a way that is similar to a word processing program.

rednicnz.wordpress.com/blogging-your-tree/

Printed Stories

This takes your story off the computer and puts it into paper form. There are a number of options.

- **Print and self-bind**
Print off your story and combine with a craft activity to make a beautiful book. Bookbinding courses are often available at your local community education centre.



- **Print and bind**
Print off your story (either yourself or at a printers/copiers) and get it bound at a printshop.
- **Photobook publisher**
There are a number of companies which make photobooks. This can be a cheap way of doing a small number of books with good bindings. Never pay full price. This can be a great option if you have photos to go with your story. It's one way to make picture books for children. Hard-cover books will survive small children better than soft-cover books.
- **Self-Publish**
This is a much more complicated process that can take considerable time and effort. People who have done it say that is an epic undertaking. You may need editors, proof readers and graphic designers. You'll also need to make sure all your writing is supported by proof.

There are lots of publishers out there. Ask around. Someone at your local NZSG branch is likely to have done this.

The National Library has guidance on publishing including how to get an ISBN number for your book and your legal deposit obligations:

natlib.govt.nz/publishers-and-authors

Here is further information on self-publishing:

www.familysearch.org/blog/en/publishing-genealogy-traditional-ebook/

www.thoughtco.com/publishing-your-family-history-book-1422316



Travelling with your Family History

With thanks to Gerry McGlinchy, NZSG Kilbirnie

Sometimes we have to leave the house. It may just be to pop down to the shops. But it may be to go to a specific repository, visit family members or visit where you family immigrated from 150 years ago. Whether you're going down the street or around the world, you need to take your family history with you.

Planned genealogy

Sometimes we leave the house intending to do genealogy, even on a once-in-a-lifetime holiday.

Do as much as possible before you visit a repository. Make you know who you're going to research and which records you want to start with. It can be easy to get distracted, so have a plan!

Look at all the material on its website. Many larger repositories have online catalogues. Others have general information.

Ring/email and ask about four things –

- the opening hours for the specific day you want to visit
- whether it actually holds the material you need and if that material will be available on the day of your visit,
- what you must bring with you to register
- how long it is likely to take for material to be retrieved.

Some repositories are spending more time on their records and people researching than their website. Things may be out of date.

If you're going to a smaller repository, getting in touch will give them time to find things for you - before you arrive.

Talk to locals - to local librarians, people at the bus stop. They know their library or town.

Allow twice as much time as you think you will need for every visit.



Accidental Genealogy

Sometimes you get chatting to someone and realise there might be a family connection. Or while on family (tree) holiday, you can't find a car park and end up a little way away from where you want to be - outside a museum you never knew existed.

Take all your genealogical records with you in some easy-to-carry form, wherever you go. Even in 35-degree heat! Even on outings with close family! These days there are lots of mobile apps that can read a gedcom file. Have a look in the Store.

Carry all possible forms of identification with you - passport, photos, envelopes addressed to your home address etc. whenever you go out. You never know when you might need them!



Privacy



When you're sharing your family history, you need to be aware of privacy concerns. If you don't want information out there, don't put it out there. This does include sending it to your family. Once it leaves your computer or home, it's out of your control.

You may also like to consider any family politics or sensitivities when publishing charts or stories.

Glossary

Terms used in this presentation:

Blog - website which is regularly updated and is often in the form of diary

Repository - museum, library, archive - anywhere you might find records.



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Sharing a Bicycle

Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, [AWNS-19391025-49-1](#)

Taken from the supplement to the Auckland Weekly News 25 October 1939 p049

Portrait of a dancer with fan; William Berry; photography studio; circa 1920; Wellington B.047068
collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/380802



Wedding anniversary of William and Grace Milne

Date of Work: 1890-1905

[Reference Number: 10-151/2-50](#)

Masterton District Library and Archive

De Orestis (family tree)

www.flickr.com/photos/bibliodyssey/8329578305/



The family tree of Ludwig Herzog von Württemberg (ruled 1568–1593)

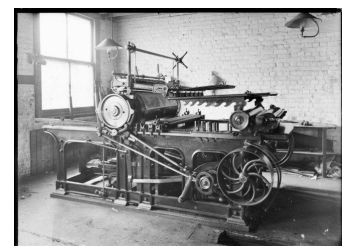
Jakob Lederlein - eingescannt aus: Robert Uhlend (Hrsgb.): [900 Jahre Haus Württemberg](#)

Printing press. The Press (Newspaper) :Negatives. Ref: 1/2-040902-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. [/records/22752558](#)



Woman writing, James D Richardson

Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, [4-7046](#)



Woman seated at desk with a typewriter
Tudor Washington Collins
Auckland Museum [PH-2013-7-TC-B412-02](#)



C. F. Goldie Manuscript Notes on Paintings
[Auckland Art Gallery](#)

Lyttle family going on holiday 1915
Reference Number: [99-300/27](#)
Wairarapa Archvices



Mr & Mrs Alex McPherson c1923
[Palmerston North Libraries and Community Services](#)

Mr & Mrs McPherson of Stout Street Shannon were the Ex-Publicans of the Club Hotel in Shannon.

Packhorse outside a Whare c1900-1910
[Palmerston North Libraries and Community Services](#)



Samuel Vaile at a desk, 1907 by Hubert Earle Vaile
Sir George Grey Special Collections,
Auckland Libraries, [2-V1104](#)

Two sailors carrying the Christmas tree and holly for
Christmas festivities with the destroyer flotilla at Gladstone
Dock, Liverpool, December 1941. Tomlin, H W (Lt)
Royal Navy official photographer
Imperial War Museum - [Catalogue number A 6666](#)



We're prepared for Zeppelin raids
Postcard produced during the First World War by DFG McGill.
Auckland Museum Ephemera Collection
Reference [EPH-W1-1-12](#)



Where to next?

These are the notes for the *Sharing Your Family History* series in Getting It Right. Have a look at our other resources at genealogy.org.nz/Getting-It-Right/10915/

Getting It Right:

- Starting Your Genealogical Journey
- Effective Research
- **Sharing Your Family History**
 - **With Collaborators and at Family Reunions**
 - **With Uninterested family**
 - **Travelling with your family history**

