

ILMO



August 2023

NEWSLETTER OF

Tasmanian Family History Society Inc

Mersey Branch



Programme 2023 Year

AUGUST

14th (Monday) Committee Meeting

August is Family History Month

SEPTEMBER

11th (Monday) Committee Meeting

OCTOBER

9th (Monday) Committee Meeting

NOVEMBER

13th (Monday) Committee Meeting
Afternoon Tea & Trade
Table

DECEMBER

No Committee Meeting

JANUARY

Committee Meeting

FEBRUARY

Committee Meeting

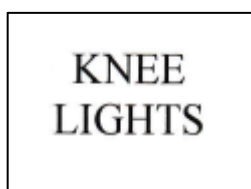
MARCH

Committee Meeting

APRIL

Committee Meeting

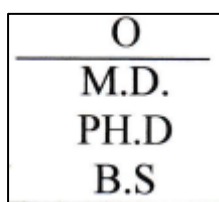
EXPLAIN THE MEANINGS OF THESE SQUARES



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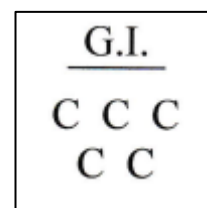
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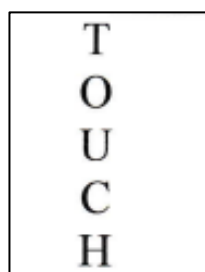
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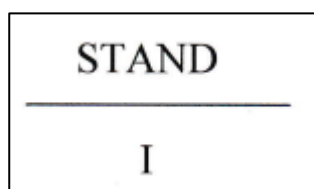
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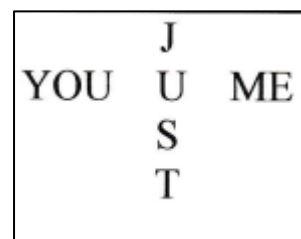
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CREATING YOUR FIRST FAMILY HISTORY BOOK

by Helen Anderson, 2023

YOUR COMPUTER IS GOING TO BE YOUR VERY BEST FRIEND!

If you are new to family history research, I would like to encourage you to use a computer and to purchase family history software for that computer. It is to your advantage to do both whether you want to write a book or not.

Family history software such as Legacy, Rootsweb, and Family Tree Maker make it easy to produce reports and charts at the touch of a button or two. Like all computer programmes there is a learning curve but it is worth the effort.

In this short article I would like to help you get started with producing your family history. Of course, the content is very important. But how you present what you write is equally as important. You want to make the content look interesting, even exciting, so how the book looks and feels is very important. So, you can be thinking about this as you write up the stories that you have collected.

The amount of information that you have to play with will drive the decisions you make as to how your book will look.

- Decide which family or person you want to write about.
- How much information do you have? Do you have enough?
- What format is it in at the moment? On paper! On computer!
- Do you have photographs to illustrate the story? What kind of photographs are they – formal, informal, photos of houses, churches, towns and villages, ships...

DECIDE ON THE TYPE OF BOOK.

You have sorted through everything you have for the subject you have chosen.

There is not enough to write a “block-buster” but because it is your first effort in writing a small and simple format could be the way to go.

I love the look and feel of small books. So, I think a small 8” x 8” expandable scrapbook album would be a great starting format.

BEGIN TO WRITE YOUR STORY

In every family tree programme for the computer you have the facility to store notes. Now I don’t necessarily use this in the way the programmers intended. I choose to record everything that I have been able to find with the source of that material recorded beside each fact and enclosed with square brackets. Each fact is placed into chronological order...

"At the conclusion of the service in Trinity Church, Ulverstone, on Sunday evening, a presentation was made to Mr. J.A. Fogg, sen, who is leaving the district. The Rector said that for many years Mr. Fogg had been a faithful and loyal member of the church, and the hearty good wishes of the congregation and of himself would go with Mr. Fogg, wherever he might journey. In the name of the congregation, the churchwardens, and himself, he asked Mr. Fogg to accept the cheque presented to him, as a small token of hearty goodwill and earnest appreciation." [North West Post Tuesday 26 June 1900]

From this I could create a report and save it in an editable format to my desktop. With a bit of tweaking this could be the basis of my story.

Save the file regularly as you use it. Save it to the C drive, save it to an external drive, save it to a USB stick. Whatever you do, save it regularly.

In its new format you can decide what to keep and what to leave out.

I like to quote quite freely from newspaper articles as I think it gives any story the feel of the time the article was written — all I need to do is to write a few sentences to introduce the subject, and a few sentences after to finish it off.

For example: you have a wedding write-up for one of your subjects. Type it out and edit it if you wish. Write a few sentences to introduce the event e.g.

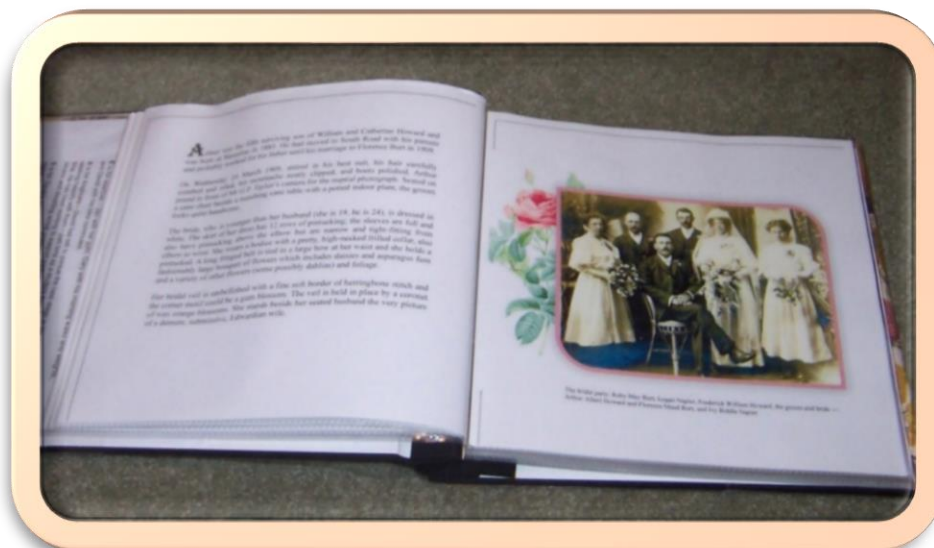
“Florrie and Arthur were married on the weekly half-day holiday in the small, timber-clad, Holy Trinity Church at Ulverstone and no doubt the little church would have been decorated with flowers and greenery by the brides’ friends as was the fashion.”

insert the quotation ... and finish off with another sentence or two...

“Six months later their first child, a daughter, was born at the little cottage at South Road where they had made their home.”

If you have a family heirloom, however humble, you can photograph it and weave its story into your story.... For example ...

“When I was a young girl, I remember that we would visit my mother’s parents’ home on a Sunday for a roast lunch. My mother’s sister, my Aunt Mavis, and her family would also arrive during the morning and depart mid-afternoon to return home to their farm to milk cows. Granny had a spare bedroom where she kept a very simple wooden box with a lift-up lid. It was upholstered in a pretty floral fabric. This was where she kept her old issues of the Australian Women’s Weekly (in the days when it was a weekly). It was a real treat to look through these magazines as we didn’t have them at home. Remember when school books were covered with brown paper and adorned with pictures from magazines? This was where I found the pictures for the covers of my books. My elder sister Margaret probably scoured through these magazines for recipes for the cook book she made at the



Secondary School she attended, complete with snipped-out pictures of the finished dish.”

Already I have a paragraph of 10 lines of type-written memories... of course I don't have a picture of that old box but the cookbook still exists and I could include a couple of photos, some showing the dainty hand-writing of my sister and some showing the hand-writing style of my mother – not much in the way of method from my Mum! There are a couple of invoices in the cookbook showing the weekly grocery order and the cost of those groceries – how different from the way we shop now – so even these are worthy of a place in your book.

YOU can bring to mind memories such as these. Type them up as they come to you and then put them into any order you like.

Do you have a photo to compliment a story — a wedding photo for example could accompany a write-up found in the local newspaper.

Decide on the photos you want to include. Importantly, are they in focus — I hate out of focus photos — don't use a fuzzy photo just because it is the only one you have of the subject.

Specks of dirt and dust on your photos, maybe some creases or tears — learn how to restore them — or find someone who can do it for you — even just getting rid of a crease can make a big difference. Coloured borders may be to your taste – be consistent with style and colour.

If you don't have the benefit of a computer-generated report then of course you will have to start from scratch, but again, your computer is your best friend in creating the written word – once you have mastered the computer keyboard you will never go back to a typewriter. And, to create by writing by hand includes much cutting and pasting.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO START!

REVISE YOUR DRAFT...

You have finished the writing of your story. Print it out. Proof read it. Make corrections. Check the spelling. Correct the grammar. Make the amendments and print it out again.

Then put it away for a week or two or a month or so. Then go back to it. Have someone read it and respect their suggestions.

Because you can cut and paste, copy and paste and insert anywhere in your document you will find yourself constantly refining what you have written and the end product may have very little likeness to the beginning product.

It isn't too late to gather more facts. Revisit some of the online sites that didn't exist when you first started researching. Trove is an absolutely amazing resource, and the pre-1900 BMDs are online and easy to access in case you need to recheck a date etc. Some original post 1899 records are now starting to become available.

COPYRIGHT ...

Have to mention copyright. For this unpublished book it probably doesn't matter but it does if you intend to publish and distribute. If you do intend to distribute don't forget you will need two additional copies to fulfil your legal deposit obligations, and don't forget your TFHS Inc branch library.

YOU HAVE REVISED THE DRAFT AND YOU ARE HAPPY WITH THE RESULTS...

Now give some more thought to the layout of the book. Are the margins consistent? Have you included footnotes? Where have you put the footnotes? Does the book need an index? Indexes can be created in a “Word” document as you type your draft or when you finish. They can be automatically updated every time you move something or add something, or delete something. The same with footnotes.

Are your photos the right size—not too big—not too small? Are they interesting? Are they relevant to your story? Do you have captions for them. Have you acknowledged the source of the photo and the photographer? Have you added borders around each photo — have you been consistent with the style and the weight of the borders? Is there enough white space around each photo?

CIRCULATE YOUR BOOK AMONGST FAMILY MEMBERS. If they are interested you could create further copies for them either in the scrapbook format or as a small bound book. You may even get new stories to include...

EXPLAIN THE MEANINGS OF THESE SQUARES - ANSWERS	
a) NEON LIGHTS	f) BAGS UNDER EYES
b) PARADISE	g) TOUCHDOWN
c) 3 DEGREES BELOW ZERO	h) I UNDERSTAND
d) BACKWARD GLANCE	i) JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME

e) SOLDIERS LETTERS OVERSEAS	
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