

Five-Minute Family History

by Julie Wilcox

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– Discover, Gather and Connect even when you have just a few minutes of “free” time.

Archibald F. Bennett, a prominent genealogist, said: “Sister Susa Young Gates . . . once asked her father [Brigham Young] how it would ever be possible to accomplish the great amount of temple work that must be done. He told her that *there would be many inventors of labor-saving devices, so that our daily duties could be performed in a short time, leaving us more and more time for temple work.* The inventions have come and are still coming but many simply divert the time gained to other channels, and not for the purpose intended by the Lord.”

– Archibald F. Bennett, Improvement Era, October 1952, p. 720

“We need to make time to find our ancestor’s ordinance-qualifying information...My dear brothers and sisters, I entreat you to make a sacrifice of time to the Lord by increasing the time you spend doing temple and family history work, and then watch what happens. It is my testimony that when we show the Lord we are serious about helping our ancestors, the heavens will open and we will receive all that we need.”

Sister Nelson (Roots Tech 2017)

“And that means sacrificing time we normally spend on other activities. We need to be spending more time in the temple and in doing family history research, which includes indexing.... I invite you prayerfully to consider what kind of sacrifice, and preferably a sacrifice of time, you can make to do more family history and temple work this year. “

President Russell M Nelson – Roots Tech 2017

Here is my list of some things you can do in just a few minutes to help discover, gather, and connect your family history:

1. Make a To-Do List – take a few minutes to make a plan, set some goals. You can use the To-Do list found on your home page of family search after log-in
2. Once you have made a list, when you have a few minutes, knock off one of those items!
3. Do some indexing. Indexing makes records searchable online.
4. Help fix place-names. See New Volunteer Opportunity on home page of FamilySearch.org
5. Share a Memory – add a photo, document.
6. Add a new story to Family Tree.
7. Record an Audio Memory.
8. Add information or an audio memory about a photo in Memories on Family Tree.
9. Tag a photo or document – the Memory gallery has a drop-down menu at “arrange” – select “Not Tagged” and you will see any photos or documents that need tags
10. Get to know an ancestor – randomly select someone on your tree and look at any attached photos and documents, read stories, what can you learn from the sources?
11. Read a story about someone on your Tree – go to <https://stories.familyfoundapp.com> or an easy route is to find the link for “All the Stories” in the APP Gallery. Find a story that is 5 min or less.
12. Attach Record Hints – more sources to verify the data on family tree is always great. Find record hints on a person’s detail page, or on the pedigree view of your tree. Puzzilla.org is also a great way to find

unattached record hints (Premium version). Be sure to check the “Recommended Tasks” on the home page of Family Search once you sign in.

13. Look for Data Problems (marked with red box that has an exclamation point). Correct them if it is an easy fix – many are simply missing standardized dates and places. Search for and merge possible duplicates – you can use **puzzilla.org** premium version to search for these, or go to “Find Similar People” on each person page of Family Tree
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15. Review the weekly changes on your “Follow List” – Go to the little Bell icon near your name after you sign in on Family Search. This is where you see new Notifications. It is a good idea to review changes – someone may have added something spectacular or made a mistake that needs to be fixed.
16. Reserve a Name for Temple Ordinances – The Premium version of Puzzilla.org can help you find these temple names. (Be sure to watch out for possible duplicates and persons born within 110 years). Share temple names with relatives.
17. Google an ancestor or a place your ancestor lived. Follow through by exploring the place on Google maps – be sure to use the street view and zoom in to see how that place looks today. Do a google image search for old photos of the place an ancestor lived – add a date to the historical search to refine results.
18. Post a photo of an ancestor on Facebook and start a family discussion.
19. Colorize a photo for free on MyHeritage.com – it’s easy and fun!
20. Make photos of living people private in your Memories Gallery on family tree.
21. Try new Tools – check the Family Search Solutions Gallery for some of the latest family history tools. Some great tools can be found at BYU’s Family History Technology Lab online: **familytech.byu.edu** I like Tree Sweeper and Pedigree Pie. They have fun family history games too!
22. Look at RelativeFinder.org to see which famous people you are related to. You can also create your own relative group like co-workers or ward members. Fun.
23. Record Heirloom Origins – do you have special artifacts or heirlooms? Make sure you have made a note of that items origins, so your future generations will know.
24. Try one of the Discovery Activities on Family Search – click on “Activities”.
25. Play a Family History Game - <https://familytech.byu.edu/> or go to Games on the Family Search SOLUTIONS gallery – see what is new. Family History Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy, Crossword Puzzle, Matching game, and more.
26. See what’s new on the Family Search Blog (link is found at the very bottom of each page on family search.org).
27. Educate and inspire yourself by watching a family history video on lds.org or the Learning Center on Family Search. Ancestry.com also has some videos at Ancestry Academy – or look for Family History videos on YouTube. (you really can find some videos that are less than 5 minutes).
28. Check “My Contributions” on Family Tree. See how you are doing!
29. Review your “Private People” to see if you can update anyone with a death record.

President Boyd K Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “family history work has the power to do something for the dead. It has an equal power to do something for the living. Family History work ... has a refining, spiritualizing, tempering influence on those who are engaged in it.” (Boyd K Packer, “Your Family History: Getting Started,” Ensign, Aug 2003, 17)