Free Websites for Family History Researchers

Susan Kaufman, Senior Manager | Houston Public Library, Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research (susan.kaufman@houstontx.gov)
Cherie Bush, Account Manager, FamilySearch International (bushcd@familysearch.org)

General:

- FamilySearch- www.familysearch.org:
 - Billions of records (Search)
 - Research wiki (Search)
 - Hundreds of free recorded classes (Get Help- Learning Center)
- RootsTech- www.rootstech.org
 - o Free recorded conference sessions
 - Blog posts
- Cyndi's List- www.cyndislist.com:
 - o Directory of free genealogy resources and databases online
- US GenWeb Project- www.usgenweb.org:
 - Massive free genealogy resource directory by US state and county
- WorldGenWeb Project- www.worldgenweb.org:
 - Genealogy resources by country and region
- Traditions of the Ancestors- <u>www.tota.world</u>
 - Cultural knowledge and experiences
 - Contributions are welcome

Libraries

- Allen County Public Library- Genealogy Center- www.genealogycenter.org:
 - Special collections focus on Native American, African American, military and family Bible records.
- Midwest Genealogy Center- http://www.mymcpl.org/genealogy:
 - Index to 1.5 million US Railroad Retirement Board Pension Records

Cemeteries and Obituaries

- BillionGraves- www.billiongraves.com
 - Millions of headstone records
- Find a Grave- www.Findagrave.com:
 - Over 210 million memorials
- Arkansas Gravestones- http://arkansasgravestones.org/
 - Browse over 1 million gravestone photos from across Arkansas
 - Fantastic state project

Military

- Preserve the Pensions- <u>www.preservethepensions.org</u>:
 - War of 1812 pension records access free through fold3
 - o https://www.fold3.com/title/761/war-of-1812-pension-files
- Patriot and Grave Index- www.patriot.sar.org:
 - Revolutionary war graves registry and patriot index from the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

Free Books

- Digital Public Library of America- https://dp.la/:
 - o Over 44 million digitized items from libraries, archives and museums

- Internet Archive- www.archive.org:
 - Non-profit library of millions of free books, movies, software, music, websites and more
 - o A large amount of information useful to genealogist, but digging required
 - Wayback machine- archive of how website pages appeared in certain time periods

Ethnic

- AfriGeneas- www.afrigeneas.com:
 - o Education and resources for African-American research
- Jewish/Eastern European- https://www.rtrfoundation.org/index.shtml
 - Jewish and Civil records from Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova
- JewishGen- www.jewishgen.org:
 - Jewish ancestry research

Immigration

- Castle Garden- http://www.castlegarden.org/
 - o America's first immigration center
 - Over 100 Million names
- Ellis Island- www.libertyellisfoundation.org:
 - o Immigration records, free indexes and original records
 - Fee to download copies

Newspapers

- Chronicling America- https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/
 - Huge database of archived US newspapers from the Library of Congress
- Illinois Digital Newspaper Collection- https://idnc.library.illinois.edu/
 - IL newspapers, Farm newspapers, Vaudeville newspapers, student newspapers, Black newspapers
- Fulton History- www.Fultonhistory.com:
 - Historical newspapers from the US and Canada
 - Historic postcards

United States

- Bureau of Land Management- <u>www.glorecords.blm.gov/default.aspx</u>:
 - o Generated when ancestors bought land from the federal government
 - 5M records dating back to 1820
- Missouri State Archives- www.sos.mo.gov/archives/:
 - o Repository for state records of permanent and historical value
- TXGenWeb Project- www.txgenweb.org:
 - Volunteer genealogical/historical effort
 - Each county webpage contains useful tips and online databases
- Atlas of Historical County Boundaries- https://www.newberry.org/digital-resourcestype
 - Genealogical records created by counties
 - View interactive map
- Seeking Michigan- https://michiganology.org/
 - Death records (1897-1920), Civil War heritage, old photos, state censuses and more
- US National Archives- <u>www.archives.gov</u>:
 - Official US National Archives site
 - Many free genealogy databases and resources