

## **Meeting notes:**

The topic for today's meeting was "Getting Started on Ancestry: Starting Your Family Tree". Unfortunately internet connectivity was down during our meeting, so Jim Stuber gave a prepared talk titled "**What you can and can't do with your family tree if you drop your Ancestry subscription**". Here is the intended video which you can watch at your leisure: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUEtr\\_b63CA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUEtr_b63CA).

Here's are the notes from Jim's talk. He started with a show of hands from the 46 attendees about the use and future plans for their Ancestry tree:

How many have an Ancestry subscription? About 2/3

How many have a substantial tree on Ancestry, i.e. more than 50 people? About 1/2

How many have a substantial tree on Ancestry and let your subscription lapse? A couple

What is going to happen to your tree when you're no longer doing genealogy?

- Do you probably have someone to take it on? Just a few
- Do you probably not have someone to take it on? Most
- You don't want to think about it? Most

## **You can:**

- add people, facts and your own photos to those persons
- create a GEDCOM file and transfer your textual information to another system. Your photos and document images will not transfer
- respond to messages another Ancestry user sends you
- receive hints for new records that might match people on your tree. There might be enough information in the hint to add a fact to that person
- change who can view your tree

## **You can't:**

- send a new message to another person on Ancestry, unless you're done a DNA test at Ancestry and you have a DNA match with that person

*Workaround - ask any person(s) you want to correspond with for their email before you let your subscription lapse*

- transfer images or photos to your PC or another system

*Workaround - save all your images to your PC before you let your subscription lapse. To get them into your PC software you'll have to do it one image at a time.*

*Workaround – snip the image you want to retain and put it in the Gallery for that person.*

- view photos or document images attached to your tree, **except** the minority of sources that are free to access, and your own photos
- Access details of hints, i.e. the transcripts and document images
- print your tree, but Ancestry doesn't really support that well even if you have a subscription

**You can, but it's not for the faint of heart (and you may end up with two damaged trees):**

- before you let your subscription lapse, install either Roots Magic or Family Tree Maker on your PC and let Ancestry synchronize your two trees. The only really safe way to do it is to start with a blank tree on your PC. Two attendees have done this.

**Alternatives? Two examples.**

There are others, e.g. Geni, WikiTree, WorldConnect

**FamilySearch:**

- It's free, so you can always add and update it
- It's one shared tree so not "yours". Anyone can add to it, which can be very good, not good, or of no consequence
- You can connect two family tree lines by changing a parent/child relationship. In Ancestry you have to get the other person to export a GEDCOM file from their tree, import it into your own, and deal with duplicates. Ancestry only moves complete trees. Or move people one at a time.
- FamilySearch has no support for DNA cousin matching
- You can view an Ancestry record image without an Ancestry subscription only if you save it to your PC and copy it to FamilySearch, or at a library or Family History Center
- You can only export 4 generations at a time via GEDCOM – no images or documents
- You can print a very good pedigree chart, but only 4 generations at a time

**MyHeritage**

- Support for DNA cousin matching with other DNA testers on their site
- But their DNA database size is 1/10 of Ancestry's, so many fewer matches
- Very good print support, with subscription, including a pedigree chart and a full family book
- You can't add or update your family tree without a subscription if you have more than 250 names. That's between 4 to 5 generations with one person's tree. For most people in this group that gets you to the mid 1800's. If it's your child, to include your spouse's line, it's more like 3 generations from you, so late 1800's
- You can view FamilySearch sources, but Ancestry sources only if you have an Ancestry subscription
- Moving information from another tree is the same as Ancestry – GEDCOM export and import, or add people and facts manually. My Heritage lets you export part of a tree so fewer duplicates to handle.
- You can message DNA matches without a subscription but can't otherwise
- You can export your entire tree using GEDCOM – no documents or images

Some people asked how I collect information when I do genealogies for other people. I do not use any program, but instead use a fill-in-the-blanks PDF form. Here is the URL for that form. You have to save it

off on your PC with a meaningful name and fill in the copy that you bring up from there:  
[http://misbach.org/download/pedigree\\_chart.pdf](http://misbach.org/download/pedigree_chart.pdf)