

# ROOTS & LEAVES

A FAMILY HISTORY MAGAZINE

EVANS GEORGIA FAMILY HISTORY CENTER



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**OUR STORY IS YOUR STORY**



## Evans Georgia Family History Center



# Welcome to Roots & Leaves!

The air is feeler cooler and drier and summer is coming to a close. Fall is in the air and Halloween is right around the corner and the holiday season will be in full swing before we know it. Before we rush into the holiday season let's take the time to celebrate October!

October is an ideal time to focus on Germany records as many Germans still celebrate Oktoberfest, a celebration that includes multiple days of celebration, food and fun. However, if you are doing German family history research, you might find little to celebrate as reading and finding the documents that tie your family together are difficult. However, FamilySearch.org gives some guidelines to make your search easier.

In addition to Oktoberfest, October is also national Family History month! What kinds of activities or traditions do you do to celebrate your family? If you don't have any, we've got you covered in this issue of ROOTS & LEAVES.

Searching for your ancestors graveyards during October is perfect timing. You don't have to contend with heat or snow and the fallen leaves offer the perfect setting for photos. However, learning how to navigate the information cemetery websites can be scary!

All of these subjects are covered in this issue of ROOTS & LEAVES, a free e-magazine available from the consultants at the Evans Georgia Family History Center. Please stop by the center and find your family's story -because **our story is your story!** Please come and find out how fulfilling Family History can be!

We offer free Access to the Following Websites:

19th Century British Library	Genealogy Bank
Access Newspaper Archive	FamilySearch.org
Alexander Street Press	FindMyPast.com
American Ancestors	- Institution Version
American Civil War	Fold3.com - Military Records
Research Database	Geneanet
Ancestry.com- Institution	Historic Map Works
(US, Australia, Canada,	Kinpoint-Premium
Germany, Sweden,	MyHeritage.com
United Kingdom)	Newspapers.com
Arkiv Digital	Paper Trail
FamNet	Puzzilla.org - Premium

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# Researching German Ancestry

BY FAMILYSEARCH.ORG

Tracing your ancestors back to their places of origin can sometimes make you feel like a tourist in a foreign country. Overwhelmed by unfamiliarity with the language, culture, and resources, it's difficult to know where to start. The FamilySearch Facebook page recently dedicated a week in October to helping German ancestry researchers who were faced with the same challenge. Here's a summary of the posts and resources that were shared.

## Where to Start

Unless you already know where in Germany your ancestors came from it's best to start close to home. Searching immigration records is a great way to find clues about where your ancestors may have started their journey. The Germany page on the FamilySearch website provides access to more than 54 million German related indexed records. It's a valuable resource once you've traced your family lines back to Germany.

## Research Challenges

Changing borders, shifting political alliances, and wars caused many people to leave the country. The migration of these people is also known as the German diaspora. Events that hastened migration present many challenges to family history researchers. But before these challenges stop you from doing more research, try reading the Germany Genealogy page. It contains useful information about past and modern place names and boundary changes.



# Where to go from here

If you don't know where to go after you have exhausted your own family information, turn to the FamilySearch Research Wiki. This page has location specific information for any area all over the world. To research Germany follow this link: [!\[\]\(529949c2c3dadbaa4e538e8c643454bc\_img.jpg\)](#)

Specify which area of Germany you would like to research. In addition the FamilySearch Wiki offers aids such as videos on how to read and use Germany documents –even if you don't sprechen Deutsch!

Family Search also offers community groups where you can reach out to others who are also researching Germany historical records. Who knows?! You might find a relative who is researching on your own family tree. German community groups can be found by following this link: [!\[\]\(99f58673407353e96a019fbca558fd72\_img.jpg\)](#)

These community pages also contain dozens of links that have proven invaluable for others in their German research.



## It looks more Greek than German!

Reading and transcribing German handwriting can be especially daunting if you don't read or write the language. For many people trying to trace their families, staring down at a German parish record is enough to make them break out in a sweat. They're hit with a double whammy—not only is the record in German, but it's also written in the old Gothic script, meaning that many of the letters were formed differently than we form letters now. Although in a dream world, we would all be fluent in the languages of all the countries our ancestors come from, this is almost never the case.

Actually, all you need to wade through most parish records is a general familiarity with the script and a knowledge of relatively few words—and both of these are easy to come by with the tools available at FamilySearch.org. Unlike French and Spanish, which is spoken in many countries around the world, many people assume that German speakers and records stayed in Germany. Remember German is also spoken in parts of Switzerland and Austria and may be found in parts of Poland, Denmark, Luxembourg, Czech Republic, Hungary and wherever German people settled in the United States such as Pennsylvania.



Most Germany parish records were recorded in tables with predictable columns of information. Even parish entries that were written as paragraphs almost always follow set formats. They tend to contain the same words and phrases across years and places. Here are two resources that will help that you don't want to miss at FamilySearch.org:

**German Word List.** This guide contains the most commonly used words in German parish records and their English translations.

**German Handwriting Guide.** Here you'll find links to examples of the old script as well as hints on how to decipher it.

The list contains German words with their English translations and if there is a word that you are looking for that happens not to be on the list, refer to an online German-English Dictionary such as Linguee or Google Translate.



## Refer to the German 'Kataloge'

Instead of researching only historical records on FamilySearch take the time to investigate other resources found in the FamilySearch Catalog. The FamilySearch Catalog has a wealth of information for any region in the world outlining all the resources found on FamilySearch.org in addition to other websites and organizations that may have the information that you are looking for.

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Germany\\_Online\\_Genealogy\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Germany_Online_Genealogy_Records)



# Honoring The Human Family

BY FAMILYSEARCH.ORG

Did you know that October is National Family History Month? In 2001, Senator Orrin Hatch introduced a bill making October, Family History Month. Imagine that, an entire month dedicated to doing something to find and preserve the memories of our ancestors. Senator Hatch wrote, “By searching for our roots, we come closer together as a human family.” Family history enthusiasts continue to celebrate Family History Month every October.

## Family History Month

October has been officially designated Family History Month, which makes this the best time of year to ignite—or maybe reignite—your passion for genealogy. You can certainly pay tribute to your heritage in a direct way—by researching your family tree, participating in an indexing project, visiting cemeteries, or interviewing elderly relatives. But there are also countless small and simple ways to weave family history moments into your everyday activities and experiences to foster a spirit of connection and purpose all month long. Follow along as we explore four simple ways to honor your family relationships.



## Count the Ways

### Idea #1: Capture Compliments

Next time you are on a roadtrip with your family and have a 'captive audience' share what you love about your family members. If you don't have any long car rides in your future, then find a quiet uninterrupted moment to share how you feel. Write or record their comments and refer to them often. Perhaps posting them on your refrigerator or as wallpaper on your computer or phone. Seeing them often will help you and your family members feel better about themselves.





These aren't revolutionary or groundbreaking ideas; they may even be things you're doing already in one form or another, but with a subtle shift in mindset, you can infuse your daily activities with greater purpose and a spirit of family connection, which will enrich your everyday life while also strengthening generational bonds.

## Idea #2: Cook Up Family Stories

You've heard the old adage: the way to an ancestor's heart is through their descendant's stomachs—or something like that.

Some people say that Thanksgiving or Christmas just isn't complete unless they eat a favorite holiday dish; I completely agree. For as long as I can remember, my mother made the most delicious Pumpkin Chiffon pie that was the crowning glory of her Thanksgiving meal.

Now, it's your turn! Go through your family recipe box and pick out the favorite recipes that have sentimental meaning for you and make them a part of your family history by making the dish together and recording it into your family archives.

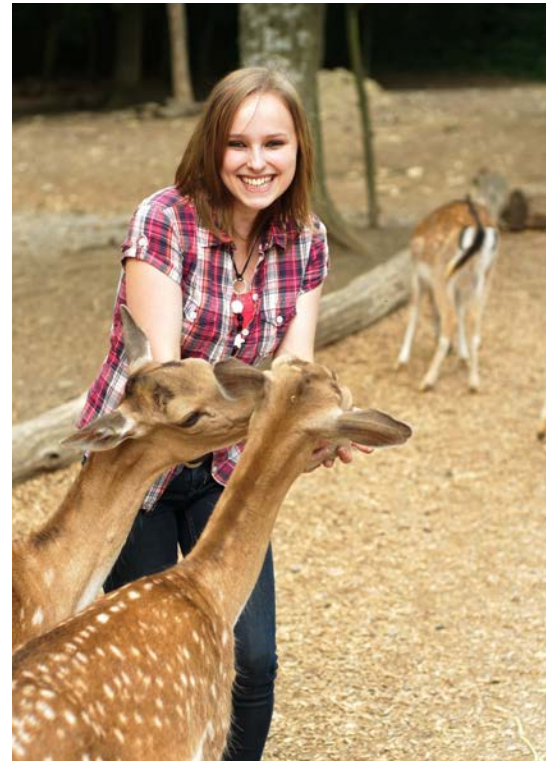


### Idea #3: Revisit a Favorite Place from Childhood

Will reality measure up to the magic of your childhood memories? There's only one way to find out.

Rachael Hutchings, a wife, mother, and food blogger originally from Southern California, loved visiting a nearby mountain town, Oak Glen, as a child. She fondly remembers picking raspberries and cherries from the orchards, visiting the petting zoo, feeding the deer, and eating apple pie for dinner. But what she treasured most of all was taking refuge in her family, far away from the normal stresses of life.

"Those simple summer outings helped me to know that my parents loved me and my brothers," Rachael says. "I saw how their focus on our family impacted my life. I felt important. I felt valued. I had a place where I felt safe and where I knew I belonged." Rachael recently took the opportunity to go to Oak Glen as an adult with her husband and two daughters in tow. She hadn't been back since she was a teenager.



### Idea #4: Take Nostalgic Family Photos

Dig up childhood photos and re-create them today—by posing in the same place with the same people. Or photograph your children standing in front of the same landmarks, mimicking the original photos.

Post your "now and later" photo pairs on social media with hashtags #familystories or #familyhistory. Or include them as a Story on your FamilySearch profile. Not sure what to do? Use our Nostalgic Journey Photo Checklist on page 9 to make your photos memorable.





## NOSTALGIC JOURNEY PHOTO CHECKLIST

10 IDEAS FOR WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH ON A TRIP BACK TO A FAVORITE CHILDHOOD DESTINATION:



- Snap pictures of road signs, building signage, restaurant names, menus, and other identifying markers.



- Photograph your feet standing here in this spot, after all these years.



- Get at least one portrait of just YOU (not a selfie), perhaps with the sunrise or the sunset bathing your face.



- Ask someone to take at least one group shot of you and everyone who came with you.



- Photograph things that have remained the same. When you find yourself thinking, “I remember that!” with fondness, stop and take a picture.



- Photograph things that have changed over the years—what’s new, different, and unexpected.



- Get close-ups of foliage, flowers, architectural details, tiled floors, cobbled footpaths, and other details that are unique to this place.



- Take pictures of the local food—a produce stand, hand-scooped ice cream, a basket of fries from the diner, the picnic you enjoyed on your hike.



- Recreate a childhood photo of you in the exact same place, in the exact same pose, many years later.



- If you have children with you, photograph them in front of some of the same landmarks, mimicking your original photos.

# MAKING HEADWAY WITH HEADSTONES

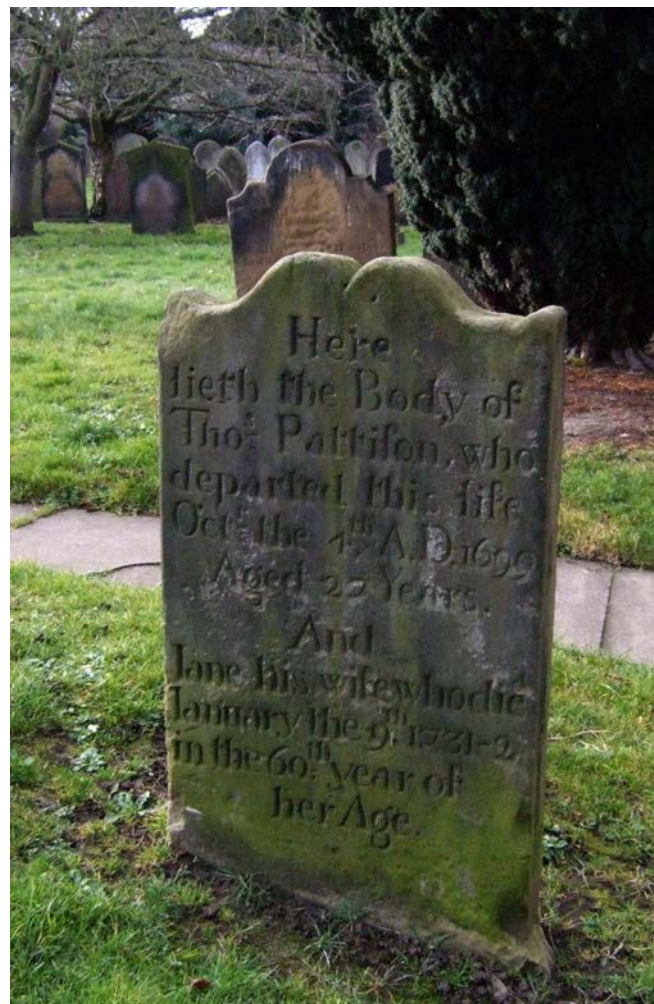
BY EVANS GEORGIA FAMILY HISTORY CONSULTANTS

Visiting your ancestors graves isn't always convenient nor feasible - instead you can stand at their headstone while at home made possible by a joint effort between FamilySearch and BillionGraves.

A new experience at [familysearch.org/memorial](https://familysearch.org/memorial) called "My Ancestors' Headstones" allows you to scroll through images of headstones of people related to you—all from the convenience of home or on any mobile device.

Once you sign in to FamilySearch.org you can learn the location of a headstone, learn exactly how you are related to that ancestor, and click a link to see more photos and stories about that relative.

"We hope visitors to the website will have a one-to-one heart-turning discovery as they connect with their family members who've passed on," said Justin Russell, analytics and campaigns manager for FamilySearch.org. "If they click on the address provided, a Google map appears that can guide them to the cemetery. Plus, through another link to BillionGraves.com, a user can see the exact location of the headstone."



## Grave Relativity

For those of you who can travel and visit your ancestral graveyards or cemeteries, information from headstones can help validate or give insights to existing or non existing information. To help prepare for the visit here are some items to make the trip more successful: Smartphone or camera with extra battery, water and cleaning rags, rice paper (for rubbing - See page 13), water resistant boots and umbrella, maps and snacks. With these items in tow, you'll be able to navigate any cemetery you might find!

The following are a list of items and resources that will help you find your ancestors grave by using headstone inscriptions, written records, cemetery websites and apps. Now let's go grave hopping!



## Headstone Inscriptions

Headstone inscriptions are information recorded on headstones (also known as tombstones or gravestones). Even when burial or death records exist, headstone inscriptions might provide information that the parish or civil certificate of death does not, such as place of birth. Sometimes, multiple family members are buried in the same vault and the inscription will give information on all that are buried there. Information recorded on headstones is of primary importance. Often, this information has been transcribed, indexed, and published and is found in manuscripts and books in libraries and archives.

## Written Records

Written records are information recorded by cemetery officials or caretakers, included in parish and cemetery records recorded by the civil authority. Many persons could not afford permanent purchase of the grave and gravestone or monument, so after a period of time the grave was reused. Written cemetery records can be especially helpful for identifying ancestors who were not recorded in other records, such as children who died young. Because relatives may be buried in adjoining plots, it is best to examine the original records such as Cemetery sextons' records, Municipal cemetery records, Church yard records, grave books, plot books and maps. Whatever records you use, if they confirm information located somewhere else, you'll know your information is accurate.

## Finding Cemeteries

Most cemeteries are often located next to a church or on personal property. If you know where your ancestor attended church or lived, check those locations first. If your ancestor died in another part of the country he or she may have been brought to the home parish for burial. Your ancestor may have been buried in a church or a civil (local authority) cemetery - usually near the place where he or she lived or died. You can find clues to burial places in church records, newspaper announcements, or family histories.

There are a number of way to find cemeteries:

- Look in phone books or other directories for a location
- Look in atlases, gazetteers, or other maps to see if cemeteries are shown.
- Search for them on Google, which has many listed, but not all. Google Maps has a large number shown on them in English-speaking areas, coverage is incomplete in most other languages.
- Use burial databases online, such as those described below to locate not only the cemetery, but often listings or photos of headstones for those buried in them. Coverage varies from site to site, so search in more than one site.

## Websites for Cemetery Research

The following websites are useful in locating many burials. Coverage is best in North America, the United Kingdom (Great Britain), and occasional data in some parts of western Europe so any data, especially outside those areas, will eventually prove very helpful to those in the areas not covered presently. If you wish to contribute data, see the individual sites mentioned below to learn how to contribute and what data is needed and in what form to contribute. FamilySearch has indexing projects on occasion for funeral home or cemetery records, go to the 'Indexing' tab at the top of the page, above this article, for more information on FamilySearch Indexing.

When searching for a name and burial location, be sure to search any of these sites by cemetery, and overall. There are times when you may have information that leads you to believe that a burial took place at one location, when in fact it may have occurred elsewhere nearby, often very close by. Sometimes several cemeteries will be next to each other or be across the road from each other. Also sometimes two or more cemeteries will combine together under a single name. Many times this will be obvious, but at times it is not.

Also as with any genealogical search for a particular person, be sure to search for variant spellings, or if for an adult woman, the married surname. Most cemeteries have a few infant burials, which can often only have the surname of the infant that died, especially if it took place within a couple days of the birth.

Find A Grave.com and BillionGraves.com are probably the best known sites for cemetery information. Photos, death certificates, obituaries, and other information are gathered by site visitors and users, then submitted to it. The information is then made searchable. The site not only includes burial information in the United States, information can be found for a burials throughout the world on the site. If it is known that a person was definitely buried in a cemetery, a memorial can be created by a person anywhere in the world and a request can be submitted for someone to photograph any tombstones that may be located on the grave.



Interment.net is a site where transcriptions of headstones are gathered and placed online. There are no photos, but you can often find listings of burials that can be nearly complete for older or very small cemeteries.



## NAMES IN STONE® CEMETERY MAPS

Names in Stone is another site that uses GPS technology to map cemeteries. An additional feature is that the site partners with cemeteries to add new headstone information to the site on a regular basis since often a cemetery is still having burials take place.

There are other mapping features on the site, too. One very nice feature is that the site shows a map of the cemetery showing where each burial is located within the cemetery.



Waymarking.com Worldwide Cemeteries is a new project to geolocate any cemetery or burial place anywhere in the world and 'waymark' it so that anyone can find it should they go to the location. Some locations will have photos, all will have GPS coordinates although in a few cases that can be somewhat off so verify what you find with Google Maps, Bing Maps, or other searchable mapping site. No actual data is here, only the geolocation data and occasionally some other information about the cemetery.

### Genealogy and Family History Data Websites

In addition to the above, genealogy and family history data websites that have aggregated data on them will often have databases, large and small, of burials, or funeral home records that will often indicate which cemetery the person at the funeral home is buried in. Both FamilySearch and Ancestry have databases containing this type of data. The US Genweb Project and World Genweb Project, along with local societies, also will post transcriptions of cemetery data on their websites as well. Rootsweb also has cemetery transcriptions.

## Headstone Rubbings

A very special remembrance that you could take home after a visit to a cemetery is a gravestone rubbing. Making one is not hard if you have the necessary equipment. You will need—

- Soft brush or broom to sweep dust or dirt from gravestone.
- Large sheets of butcher paper or newsprint or rice paper that can be purchased at art supply stores.
- Masking tape to hold paper flat against the gravestone.
- Wax crayon with wrapper removed. Large crayons work best.
- First, clean the gravestone with your brush or broom so that particles of dirt won't show up in your rubbing. Next, tape the paper tightly over the stone, making sure that you have plenty of margin. Then, using the side rather than the end of the crayon, rub carefully and evenly across the paper. The impression of the words and design will soon appear on your paper. When you have finished, remove the tape and take your gravestone rubbing home. You can put a protective covering over it and keep it in your Book of Remembrance, or frame the rubbing and hang it in a special place in your house.

If you don't recount your family history,  
it will be lost. Honor your own stories  
and tell them too. The tales may not  
seem very important, but they are what  
binds families and makes each of us  
who we are.

-Madeleine Engle



CHILDREN IN HALLOWEEN COSTUMES,  
LITTLE SMOKY RIVER FARM INDUSTRIES SETTLEMENT 1950



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