

So, Latter-Day Saints, your family history is all done, right? WRONG!!! Not only can you work on your tree more (another nag for another day), you can use your special powers in Ancestry to benefit non-Church researchers. You can transfer their ancestors, and all of the research attached to them, from Ancestry to FamilySearch using the FamilySearch icon that only WE have in our Ancestry accounts. But this episode isn't just for members of the Church. This episode is a great way for non-members to learn how it is that they can work with Latter-Day Saints (nope, I'm not saying "Magical Mormons" anymore) to get ALL of their research over into FamilySearch in a clean, simple way. Working together, members of the Church and non-members can make FamilySearch a better, stronger, more representative tree. And when Latter-Day Saints volunteer to work with black researchers to cross their data over from Ancestry to FamilySearch, volunteerism becomes reparational genealogy.



Hello and welcome to Episode 30 of From Paper To People, Ancestors Alive! Genealogy's podcast for the curious researcher. We've topped 10,800 downloads in 34 countries so far this year, and I am very grateful - pretty cool considering this is a one-woman show on a shoestring discussing arcane subject matter with pedantic precision. Well, and fudge.

Today, I'm specifically talking to you, Latter-Day Saints. I haven't really done that much so far. But if you're not a church-member, you really need to listen in too, because this episode is about using what I used to call the Magical Mormon tool, the superpower that we get in Ancestry that enables Latter-Day Saints to cross data from Ancestry to FamilySearch. If you're a member of the Church, I am urging you to listen so that you can learn to do this for others, and if you're not a member, I am urging you to listen so that you understand what we can do for you.

So, my sisters and brothers, you say your work is done in FamilySearch? It's the most common complaint I get from Latter-Day Saints. Well, I beg to differ. We'll quibble about your

own tree a little later on, but today we're going to talk some nitty-gritty procedurals about how Latter-Day Saints and non-member communities and individuals can work together so that no one's work is ever "done" again. The goal is to increase the quality and quantity of family lines represented in the one-world family tree that is FamilySearch.

Let me preface by saying that I'm trying not to use the phrase "Magical Mormon" anymore. The Church has asked all members to refer to themselves by their proper name, Latter-Day Saints, and while I frequently go for the vaguely disobedient punchline, I am trying to be alliterative and lend a little humor yet not offend the wishes of the First Presidency of my church. Not always an easy thing to do, you know?

Now, though I've been chugging along on my own family's work for decades, I am also a temple and family history consultant for my ward at church and have been for only a few years now. This means that I have an unpaid job within my ward, as do all other members of the Church. A ward is a group of people who meet at the same time every week. I teach how to research family trees. Some of the older and more intransigent voices in the Church prefer that I only teach how to use FamilySearch, but I think that's poppycock and balderdash. I teach how to use Ancestry to do research, and then how to cross all of that research over into FamilySearch, where more records lie. After that, I teach how to finish the work in FamilySearch, then how to add scanned documents and photographs to complete each ancestor's profile. This is the most thorough way to do the work for the benefit of the entire genie population.

As I've said in prior episodes, there is a key difference between Ancestry and FamilySearch, and it ain't just money. The two sites are fundamentally different in form. Ancestry allows each subscriber to open up his or her individual membership. Each tree in a membership is a special room that can be public or private, airtight and watertight, or with windows in the walls so that others can see in. It can even have doors in it, so that other helpers can come in and lend a hand in the work. But each tree on Ancestry is discrete from every other tree. So when people talk about quote my tree unquote, they're literally talking about a tree created

from scratch and owned. Each tree a person creates in Ancestry has a gedcom file as its root data file, and that file can be downloaded from Ancestry, uploaded elsewhere, and ultimately, deleted from Ancestry altogether. Its permissions and very existence is purely down to the whims of its creator.

FamilySearch, on the other hand, is a single tree for the entire planet. No one person owns any part of the tree. The idea is that, for every one person who lived on the planet, there is one electronic version of that person in the tree at familysearch.org. Ancestry has a paid subscription service model, but FamilySearch is free for anyone who wishes to join. That is a service that my church provides to the entire world, in multiple languages.

The reason that I use Ancestry for my research is that I make a lot of mistakes, just like everybody else. I want to make those mistakes in a private space, not in a giant one-world tree where my errors could mess up hundreds and thousands of users. Also, Ancestry has many, many more resources than does FamilySearch. FamilySearch frequently shares some records with Ancestry, as I'm sure you have noticed, but Ancestry owns the rights to a lot of records that it doesn't share with anybody. For instance, FamilySearch shares its marriage records with Ancestry. Ancestry shares Findagrave with FamilySearch, but the US City Directories of the 19th and 20th centuries are Ancestry-only. And those City Directories can be really helpful when you're missing information from a census year. In fact, that's how many people make up for the loss of the 1890 Census. It only makes sense, therefore, to research in both sites.

So, what am I on about THIS week? Well, a lot of times, because Latter-Day Saints are told from birth that they just HAVE TO DO their family history, they grow to resent it. Isn't that right, Latter Day Saints? I know you're out there, and I hear you laughing in recognition. I've even asked people, people I trust, to tell me straight out - why is it that you so resist me? Why won't you to come to class? Why don't you do your family history? And the answer is always the same - "it's boring," "it's for little old blue-haired ladies," "it's dry," "nobody ever showed me how to do it, they just lectured me on why I should do it," and the all-time classic

- “it’s all already been done by prior generations.” And some of that is absolutely true. A lot of the teaching is dull as dishwater. But there’s one thing that’s not true - it’s not all done. In fact, it’s never all done.

First off, if your predecessors didn’t have access to Ancestry, they didn’t have access to a full and growing complement of records, so chances are good that they missed some family members here and there. Second, if they didn’t have me to teach them how (and yeah, I’m going to be that way), they didn’t do it right. Because unless you are absolutely systematic in your shrubbing, you ABSOLUTELY WILL MISS marriages, in-laws, cousins, and parts of your extended or ancillary family tree will go unconnected. I find this ALL THE TIME - husband is in FamilySearch, was born in the 1870s, yet wife is not in FamilySearch. Or, husband and wife, both born in the 1870s, are both in FamilySearch, but because they had no kids whose descendants were there to do the research and connect them up, they were never linked up as spouses.

This kind of unification is of the essence to Latter-Day Saints. Remember, non-members, that this is a religious exercise for us. We believe in the unification of family after death, and getting it right in our observance of who people were on Earth by representing them correctly in FamilySearch is everything. It’s the work of Elijah. And it doesn’t have to be about our own blood kin to be very, very important.

Also, Latter-Day Saints, your work is simply never done. Someone is always leaving this earth and moving on. Your forbears made mistakes in their genealogical work, I guarantee you. And others in this completely public one-world setting probably have screwed some stuff up. But we’re not going to worry about that today. I’m just issuing you a challenge, as I am prone to do on this podcast - If you want to do something that’s interesting, fresh, and of service to others, help somebody else. Get involved in a project that has nothing to do with you or the Church. And there are a lot of ways to do that.

Some people believe that the best way to get into Heaven is to stand next to somebody

holier than they are on the right day. I don't know about that, but I do know that the best way to get your data crossed from Ancestry to FamilySearch is to have a Latter-Day Saint do it for you. And that's because we have what I used to call the Magical Mormon Tools. I have alluded to this a lot but I've gotten sidetracked a bit, so I apologize for making you wait. At long last, we're going to talk about that for a minute.

In Ancestry, there's an icon with powers that only Latter-Day Saints have. I got it because I signed up for my Ancestry account through FamilySearch. Upon sign-up, Ancestry and FamilySearch had a kind of handshake session, during which FamilySearch said "hey hi there, Carolyn is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Give her the Church membership, and include that special tool so she can exchange data and citations between our two sites, mmmkay?" and Ancestry said "You got it, Cap'n!" Then, when my new Ancestry membership was created, the first four generations of my family tree was pulled over from FamilySearch and slapped into a new family tree in Ancestry.

I had a large, extant tree in Ancestry already, so I just converted it to the Church membership, ultimately. But somebody signing up for a fresh Ancestry account would get one as I just stated.

Magical as that is, it's not where the magic ends. It's just the beginning.

The tool I refer to is a little green icon that looks like the FamilySearch logo: a tree with picture frames instead of leaves. And on my Ancestry screen, it's located in the upper right hand corner, to the left of the spyglass. It's what I call the keyhole - it allows me to pass back and forth between the two websites, and to transfer data and citations. I'm not going to go into great detail about it. If you subscribe to my Patreon for \$10 a month or more, I will provide a series of how-to screenshot videos that only you can see. They'll show you everything you need to know about every variety of opportunity, problem and solution posed by the keyhole. There are a lot of varieties of experiences that you can have in adding data over to FamilySearch, finding and resolving duplicates in FamilySearch by going in from

Ancestry, and other fine points of the tool.

In short, though, I'll tell you here that any Church member who wishes to learn how to use this tool, or who already knows how to use it, can help others. If your non-member acquaintance Gemma Engelbert wants your help, she can make you an admin on her Ancestry tree, and the tool will appear onscreen in that Ancestry tree for you, on the profile page of every deceased person.

Get Gemma to open a free FamilySearch account for herself, and to enter her living ancestors into the FamilySearch tree. This will give her a feel for the interface. Meanwhile, you can get started on adding the first few generations over from Ancestry to FamilySearch so that she can link up to them.

The best way to cross over a tree is to start with the most recently deceased person in the tree and go sideways, down to any deceased children, and then back a generation, just as you would with your own research. So, for the purposes of this example, say you've got Gemma's grandmother, Alberta Johnson. Normally I start with men and go to their wives and then their children, but for some reason, I'm feeling Alberta today. I don't know why. Anyway, she's been thoroughly researched - all her names and dates are there, all her hints are exhausted, and her spouse Roddy Engelbert and their kids are all in place with solid research, too. Gemma's done her due diligence.

Alberta's deceased, Roddy's deceased, and one of their children, daughter Juno, is deceased as well. Juno's brother, John, is alive. He's Gemma's dad, and Gemma has already added him into FamilySearch herself as a live person. You'll be helping Gemma to link everybody up once you've added these three deceased people to FamilySearch, but in the meantime, you have this family unit that you can cross over to FamilySearch in relation to one another. You do this one person at a time.

First, clean up formats - FamilySearch likes month names fully spelled out, no leading zeros

in days, and for American BMDDs, the preferred place format is United States, not USA. It's not a giant deal, but you won't get error notices in FamilySearch if you enter it correctly from jump. Once you've done that, go to the top of Alberta's profile and click on the FamilySearch icon. A dialog box will open. In this case, FamilySearch and Ancestry shake hands, and FamilySearch finds that no person exists in FamilySearch with Alberta's combination of names, dates, places and relationships. Because you've been given the all-clear by FamilySearch, you can click on the "add to FamilySearch" button. Next, you go to Roddy.

Perform the same actions with him - clean up data formats to align with FamilySearch preferences, save them, then go to the FamilySearch Icon. Click on it and you'll see, for the purposes of my simple example, that Roddy's isn't in FamilySearch, either. All you have to do is add him using the "add to FamilySearch" button. It'll say on another pop-up that he's being added as Alberta's husband, so you can be sure that their relationship is being created in FamilySearch.

The important part: whatever documentation you have located, and whatever dates you have included for birth, marriage, divorce and death for any couple that you are newly adding to FamilySearch, all will be carried over into FamilySearch both as data filling the fields for dates and places AND as citations to the URLs of the individual documents you used to establish proof in Ancestry.

Now, Alberta and Roddy have a deceased daughter named Juno. You established both parents in FamilySearch, so now you can add Juno to FamilySearch as their child. She needed both of them in place to insure that she'd be added to the FamilySearch database properly and that they'd connect as family. Go through the same process as you did before - clean up formats, save, go to the FamilySearch icon, and click. She's not in FamilySearch either, for the purposes of this exercise, so add her the same way you did her parents. A pop-up will show that she's being added as a child to Alberta and Roddy. And poof! You've created a new family in the FamilySearch database.

Give Gemma the FSID numbers of John Engelbert's parents Alberta and Roddy, and she can connect her father to his folks. Then, any ancestors you add in from Ancestry will be connected to Gemma, and she can go into FamilySearch to enhance her own research with the hints that FamilySearch provides, and by adding her own scanned photos and family documents, whenever she likes.

Because I'm interested in reparational genealogy, and I know that the vast majority of research shown in FamilySearch is European and American, I firmly believe that one of our callings as members of the church is to reach out and let people know that we are here to provide this service to them, but most particularly, to black researchers. If FamilySearch is supposed to be for everyone, Church or not, we need to make it be FOR EVERYONE. And right now, it's NOT representative of those who need it most.

Here's the small homework: be of service in genealogy groups on Facebook, among other places. Offer to upload the gedcom file of a tree built in MyHeritage or some other site or software to Ancestry in your own account. Make its owner an admin. Then, work together on adding all correct research hints to it in Ancestry before you cross it over into FamilySearch as I've described. Making lineages available in FamilySearch helps families to cooperate freely with adding photos, stories, recordings and other resources. It brings families together without membership fees.

Or, offer to cross an Ancestry tree over for someone.

And here's the big homework, brothers and sisters: what if you gathered some volunteers from your ward, started working with another organization in town, taught them Ancestry and FamilySearch, and then had your volunteers cross trees over into FamilySearch? What if you made a point of working with African Methodist Episcopal congregations to do this, honoring their ancestors? What if family history became a form of community outreach, not as a form of charity, but as a form of parity? That's Consecration, each giving of his or her time and talents to benefit the greater good. I talked about that in Episode 2. Using your expertise and

willingness to teach and learn together with another whose research might look very different from yours is reparational genealogy. That's the work of Elijah. And there is, in my view, no higher calling.

I leave you with those questions and thoughts. Well. Your ears make me happy. Thank you. Stop by the COMPLETELY redesigned website at ancestorsalivegenealogy.com for links to all previous episodes, all my social media incarnations, Patreon, the place where you can sign up to financially support what I'm doing here TWICE A WEEK for the rest of the year. Until next time, do your research, don't be a Jeffrey, reach out and help someone just because you can, and above all, Expect Surprises!


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