

MyTrees Website

MYTREES, www.mytrees.com, is a Kindred Konnections website, www.kindredkonnections.com. Most of what you find on the website is supplied by users, either through the GEDCOM files they have submitted or through the data extraction program.

What this means for you, the visitor, is that you might find wonderful data about a family you are researching or you may not find anything!

It also means that you may access certain information for "free" and then a membership fee is required to get more. As stated on the website, "The concept of 'DATABASES FREELY GIVEN' will be FREELY SHARED" is our policy. This organization is dedicated to the advancement of genealogical research, not to the selling of genealogical databases." This means that there is a fee to access the most detailed information and you have a choice whether to subscribe by paying the fee or you use your "own sweat equity" to extract data or submit your own GEDCOM files; both of which are ways to "earn" membership privileges.

Now that I've explained how the site operates, I'll discuss what MyTrees contains. There is so much to this

EXTRACTED VITAL RECORDS

The Extracted Vital Records contain records for Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the US, and some census records (though these are also listed under the country to which they pertain). You can search globally across the extracted vital records or you can choose the country for whose records you would like to look at and you will see a screen listing the available extracted records.

Basically, the choice of records is limited, it is a site relying on donated material and it is constantly growing as more people visit the site, submit their family trees and help extract data.

I decided to check out North Carolina to see what was available and found "North Carolina Marriage Records". I entered the name Farrow, since I have been searching on this name in the coastal counties. I got no hits. This does raise one of my frustrations, in that I wish there was a bit more description about the records; any description would be nice. You only have the title and then you go directly to the search engine. For all I know, the North Carolina Marriage Records only covers one western NC county.

You will also find on the search results page that you can click a link titled "LDS FamilySearch Results" and you will be taken to www.familysearch.org where you will see the entries for the surname you entered.

Note that when using the search engine, you are required to enter a beginning year and an ending year. If not, you will be reminded to do so. This is a little frustrating at first, since it seems to limit what you can search on, though quickly enough you will remember to fill in those blanks and use a broader range for a general search.

In addition, as you are searching on the site, regardless of which area, there is a "work list" of the already submitted queries maintained. This allows you to re-visit your searches.

ANCESTRY ARCHIVE

This is a pedigree-linked database that contains more than one billion names. Using this index, you can quickly



The MyTrees homepage.

site that it is hard to know what to start with!

The three main areas unique to MyTrees are: Ancestry Archive, MyTrees PLUS and Extracted Vital Records.

Now, let's talk about the three main areas, starting with the Extracted Vital Records section.

search through the pedigree information currently available. The information in the Ancestry Archive Index comes from two main sources. The first is the collection of pedigree files from submitters and other genealogists. The other source is indexed family history websites.

You may search in the archive for free, though, once you determine that there are names of interest to you, you will need to create and activate an account to see the data in pedigree-linked format with notes and submitter information.

MYTREES PLUS SEARCH

This is the area where you can either upload a GEDCOM of your family or you can "Build Your Tree" directly online. I submitted a GEDCOM file for my husband's family, Cortright from Pennsylvania and Matthews from Wales and Chicago.

It was straightforward to do. Once you submit your GEDCOM, it takes up to 24 hours for your family members to be included in the Master Index. Once in the index, others can search on your family and you can also take advantage of the MyTrees PLUS service.

By the way, just for submitting this tree, I earned a free month of access to the MyTrees website! Realize, though, that you can only do this once to earn free access.

Once in the index you can then use the matching service. This can be done for any GEDCOM that you have uploaded. You are asked a few questions, to determine how narrow or broad a search you would like to perform and then you push submit. Then, within minutes to a day, you will receive an e-mail stating that the search has been completed and to login to the site and click on "match results".

The above GEDCOM resulted in 39 matches in the database. When you look at the matches for a person, there are often many records listed.

Besides all the matching and searching options, there is much more that you can do including: adding new individuals and families, creating custom family tree charts, uploading pictures and biographies, posting family news and much more.

OTHER FEATURES

As I mentioned, there are some other areas on the website to check out:

- Research Interests: anyone can submit their research interests and these can be searched on or you can look at the interests arranged alphabetically. Additionally, every month MyTrees will search the Internet for your ancestor. When they find a qualified name, they will send you an email linking you to your ancestor.

- Surname Browse
- A resource area that includes: Professional Genealogists, Genealogical Libraries, White Pages, Forms and Data Converters (mostly age and calendars)

- A fee-based service for having your family tree printed in a professional-looking chart

- There is a family access component. You can upload your family tree and

access to "living" individuals is restricted to "your family members". This is controlled by the family access password. You can also set up an on-line family reunion. A fun feature is that you can add family photos or other scanned images.

I did discover a few sections that are out-of-date such as the "What's New" section whose latest entry is 2004! A newsletter dated June 2005 is available (you can sign up to get the newsletter e-mailed to you) and the News Releases are from 2001!

I recommend that you check out the main page for the plethora of database and service options. I know this page can be overwhelming, as it has so much, but the columns under the headers really do help you navigate.

Once I started digging into the site, I found it harder to use the left-hand and top navigation, except for the obvious, so I frequently revisited the home page to get my bearing.

I know that I have not told you everything there is available to you at MyTrees and in the hit-and-miss world of genealogy, this is a website definitely worth looking at. You never know where that next great clue will come from!



The Matthews-Cortright family tree from the GEDCOM submitted to MyTrees.

Work List of 39 Match Queries	
Match Queries 1 through 10 of 39 queries:	
☐ Query 1: CURRY, JAMES from 1769 to 1801; CURRY, CHALLENGER, ; Born: ; in all volumes.	View Search Site
☐ Query 2: CURRY, ROBERT from 1774 to 1776; Born: ; in all volumes.	View Search Site
☐ Query 3: CURRY, ROBERT from 1801 to 1802; Date: ; in all volumes.	View Search Site
☐ Query 4: HAWKINS, FRANCES from 1805 to 1807; HAWKINS, ; CURRY, ; Born: ; in all volumes.	View Search Site

Here are the matches for a GEDCOM submitted.



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