

# Genealogy Research Material Organization

AGS Edmonton Branch  
Computers in Genealogy SIG  
Neal Finn - March 19, 2015

# 'Family' Definition is Key

- \* A definition of the family in family history research helps  
A family starts with a marriage or equivalent 'joining together' of two people, usually (but not always) a man (father) and a woman (mother), usually (but not always) by marriage, usually (but not always) having and raising children.
- \* Material stored for each family would generally include:
  - \* Marriage documents
  - \* Children's birth documents
  - \* Emigration and/or immigration documents
  - \* Census records
  - \* Death records for the mother, father and unmarried children
  - \* Obituaries
  - \* Individual and family photos, etc.
- \* If a person doesn't get married and start their own family, their records would remain as part of their parent's family.
- \* Consistency is the key. Create a pattern or method and follow it.

# Folder Naming Convention

- \* Folder Name

To organize the many folders (manual and computer) some type of naming convention is required. I use folder names identified by the Father's Last Name & Mother's Last Name (always using maiden name)

Example: The folder name for my grandmother, Flora MURPHY, and her first husband Severin TORGUSON would be TORGUSON-MURPHY.

- \* A person can be found in several folders if they re-marry (remember the definition)

My paternal grandmother was married twice. Artifacts for the second marriage (family) are found in FINN-MURPHY

- \* Some documents will belong in multiple folders (eg. a census record for families with children from multiple marriages). I duplicate the file and save it twice.

- \* If two brothers/cousins marry two sisters/cousins I insert their first names to make unique folder names

WEIMAN-George-STREITENBERGER-Susan

WEIMAN-Joe-STREITENBERGER-Mary

- \* I also arrange folders into groups: Father's paternal line (red), Father's maternal line (blue), Mother's paternal line (yellow) and Mother's maternal line (green)

- \* Computer file folder names can be color coded with a utility such as Folder Marker



# Computer Filenames

- \* For digital files, a consistent file naming is also helpful
- \* I start the file name with the year of the document
- \* Followed by the type of document  
(eg. Marriage Reg, Census, Birth Regn, Death Regn, etc)
- \* And then the person's name and other details
- \* Sample:  
1847 Bapt Patrick FINN St Michaels Chatham NB 4 Aug 1847.jpg
- \* When sorted by the file name the folder index then reads something like a family diary

## Documents library

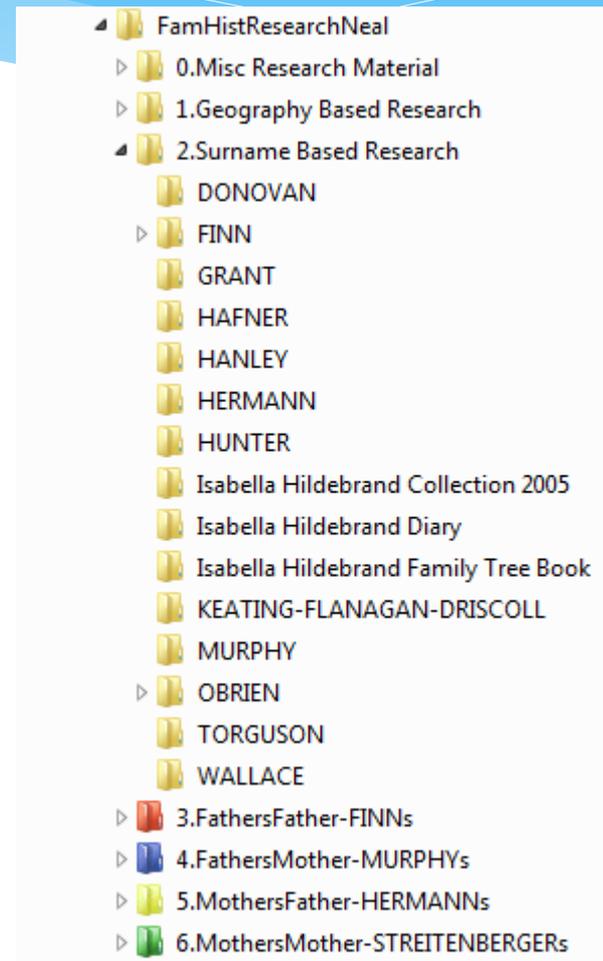
FINN-KEATING

Name

-  1851-NB-census-Others
-  1845 Bapt Maria Finn do Jacobus Finn Maria Keating 12 June 1845.jpg
-  1847 Bapt Patrick Finn so James Finn Mary Keating 4 Aug 1847.jpg
-  1847 Bapt Patrick FINN St Michaels Chatham NB 4 Aug 1847.jpg
-  1847 Saint John Almshouse Mary Finn 29 June 1847.jpg
-  1849 Bapt Michael Finn St Michaels Chatham NB 8 Aug 1849.jpg
-  1851 Census Daniel Eliza Finn page 15.jpg
-  1851 Census James Mary Phin Finn page 26.jpg
-  1851 Census page 1.jpg
-  1851 Census page 92.jpg
-  1851 St Michaels Chatham Bridget FINN-Baptism 19 aug 1851.jpg
-  1851-NB-Census-Finns-Keatings.xls
-  1853 Richard FINN Baptism Aug 1853.jpg
-  1857 Cleveland Ohio Map.jpg
-  1860 US Ohio Brecksville Mary and John Finn.jpg
-  1860 US Ohio Cuyahoga Ward 5 James Mary Finn Page 67.jpg
-  1860 US Ohio Cuyahoga Ward 5 James Mary Finn Page 68.jpg
-  1860 US Ohio Cuyahoga Ward 5 James Mary Finn Transcript.jpg
-  1861 Cleveland Directory James Finn pg 91.jpg
-  1862 Cleveland Ohio Map.bmp
-  1863 Cleveland Directory James Finn pg 126.jpg

# Storing Non-Family Material

- \* Miscellaneous research  
Folders as required (eg. Legacy-Webinars, OCR, MiscDocs, etc)
- \* Geography based research  
Folders by geographic areas (eg. Ireland-Wexford, Ireland-Sligo, Scotland, Russia-Volga)
- \* Family name research  
Folders by family surname (eg. FINN, MURPHY, etc)



# Conclusion

- \* I have used this method for storing paper and computer files for over ten years now. As long as I consistently file things according to the definitions and guidelines, I can always find a document quickly.
- \* I hope this helps you in arranging your documents.

Good luck in your research!