Genealogy 2.0 International Panel

International panelists discuss their use of social media to connect with cousins, collaborate on projects, discuss issues, market and promote genealogy services and perform acts of genealogical kindness.

Panelists

Amy Coffin: Amy is a librarian by training, and utilizes that past experience in her current genealogy career. She uses multiple social media tools in both professional and personal family history pursuits. She lives with her family in Houston, Texas.

Audrey Collins: Family History Specialist at The National Archives of the UK. Audrey likes to explore the possibilities of various social media for genealogy, both in the job at The National Archives and on her own blog. She is an umpteenth generation Glaswegian, but now lives in Chesham, Buckinghamshire.

Jill Ball (Moderator): Jill, a proud Australian, has been a librarian, teacher and most recently Head of Information Technology in a Sydney Independent School. Now semi–retired she is devoting too much time to her passion, family history.

Joan Miller: A former lab manager, Joan Miller is a genetic genealogist who uses DNA, social media and technology to complement traditional genealogy research. Joan lives with her husband and their daughter’s cat in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Outcomes

As a result of attending this session attendees will:

- Become familiar with social networking tools;
- Learn how to connect with genealogists and family via social media;
- See examples of genealogists’ use of social networking tools;
- Acknowledge the benefits of social media to genealogists;
- Have an enjoyable time hearing about the experiences of genealogists from four lands.

In this session the panelists will share their experiences of using Social Media for Genealogy with reference to the following discussion questions and resources.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is Genealogy 2.0 and Social Media?

Social media brought we panelists together although we live in four different countries. After meeting in person at Rootstech 2011 we continued to communicate and keep up with each others’ activities through use of Social Media.
The first iteration of the internet, Web1.0 was static in nature and did not allow for direct user interaction with websites. With the emergence of dynamic Web 2.0 sites users were given the opportunity to communicate with, collaborate and contribute directly to the sites. Recently the term Social Media has replaced Web 2.0 to describe such sites or applications.

The term Social Media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content."[1] Source - Wikipedia

2. How can Social Media help my genealogy/family history research?

- Connect with cousins
- Collaborate on projects
- Discuss issues
- Market and promote genealogy services
- Perform acts of genealogical kindness -
- Live sharing of information from conferences
  - Watch tweets etc - get valuable links - TWEET direct from powerpoint as slide advances.
  - Facebook sharing
- Vendors sharing information - interaction with vendors - react to concerns much quicker as out there in a public forum.
- Build a PLN (Personal Learning Network) - contacts give links to resources and learning opportunities. Ask for help and people will answer.
- Breaking news - hear of happenings both inside and outside the genealogy world before they are reported by the press.
- Monitor a conference hashtag eg #rootstech from home or in person for the latest news from an event

3. How does one get started with Social Media?

- Determine your goals - What do you want to get out of Social Media?
- Select an appropriate Social Media platform
- Sign up and create your profile
- Monitor the conversations
- Identify the leading lights or leaders in the community
- Become an active part of the community

4. What Social Media tools can genealogists use?

- Panelists will discuss appropriate tools
5. How does one Manage Social Media?

- Start small - select one social media channel and learn it before moving onto others.
- Don’t let social media rule your life - it’s ok to have a day off and delete a day’s tweets or RSS feeds.
- Be selective in whom you follow - you do not have to follow someone just because they follow you.
- Use aggregation tools like Tweetdeck, su.pr, networked blogs, RSS feeds, Google Reader.
- Suggest all bloggers have ‘a subscribe to comments’ button so people can be notified if the conversation continues
- Use a mobile device to catch up when in on a bus or train, in the doctor’s waiting room or while waiting in the car for the kids.
- Reciprocity - social media love - give some, get some. Interaction is key.
- Use social media to ask for help.

6. What does one need to engage via Social Media?

- A Computer, Smartphone or Tablet Computer
- Internet Connection
- Membership of Social Networking Sites
- A Willingness to give it a go

Connect with the Panelists

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NOTE: The four panelists in this presentation used Google Docs to collaborate on preparation of this syllabus document.