

Genealogy and the Internet

This document was originally prepared by Alf Redekopp, for a presentation to a genealogy class as part of session 4 of the Canadian Mennonite University Continuing Education Program January 2001. (Links updated February 23, 2006)

Introduction

The many developments in the last half of the 20th century have led to this period being called "the Information Age". The term "information superhighway" has been used as an analogy to describe the universe of information linked together around the world through the electronic communication systems that our technological age has developed. All that a person needs to access this world of information and its professionals is a curiosity, a computer with a modem and a telephone line.

What can I do?

- E-mail across town or across the ocean at the same cost (friends, relatives , other researchers)
- Join a Listserve. A listserv is a means of communicating with people of similar interest. It is defined as a discussion forum revolving around a particular topic. It allows people to communicate ideas, ask questions and receive answers via a central mailing point. (ex. of listserves are MENNOLINK, GERMANS FROM RUSSIA, BROTHER'S KEEPER)
- Surf the World Wide Web going to places featuring a specific topic.

What will I find on the Internet?

- Genealogical method advice
- Free/inexpensive software
- Presentations of family histories
- Information about genealogy and historical organizations
- Publications
- Census lists
- Potential friends

A. Listserves

In order to become a part of a listserv, you first send a "subscribe" message to the specific listserv. Here are the specific instructions for several:

- a. **MENNOLINK** - Since this listserv is actual a set of e-mail lists and most people would not want to receive e-mail from all of them, the instructions are a little different. For information, go to <http://www.mennolink.org>. Read and follow instructions.

The group that you want to subscribe to is called **menno.rec.roots**.

- b. **GER-RUS2: Germans from Russia Genealogy Electronic Discussion Group** - This listserv features discussion topics such as recent developments in genealogical finding aids, news from the American Historical Society of Germans from Russian (Lincoln, Nebraska), news from Germans from Russia Heritage Society (Bismarck, North Dakota), inquiries regarding specific family genealogies, etc.

To subscribe send an e-mail message to LISTSERV@LISTSERV.NODAK.EDU

Leave the subject line empty

Send on line of text which reads: SUBSRIBE GER-RUS2 <your firstname> <your lastname> For example: SUBSCRIBE GER-RUS2 ALF REDEKOPP

You will receive a welcome message with further instructions.

B. "Surfing the Net"

You can explore the Internet's World Wide Web (WWW) in several ways:

- a. By going directly to a website that has been recommended to you, by typing in the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) (e.g.

- <http://www.archives.ca>)
- b. By jumping around the WWW from hotlink to hotlink.
 - c. By conducting a formal search using a Search Engine
 - Google: <http://www.google.com>
 - Yahoo: <http://www.yahoo.com/>
 - Webcrawler: <http://webcrawler.com/>
 - Excite: <http://www.excite.com/>
 - Lycos: <http://www.lycos.ca/>
 - Altavista: <http://www.altavista.com/>
 - Infoseek: <http://infoseek.go.com/>

C. Sites of Interest to Mennonite Genealogists

- Related: [Links: Genealogy & historical research](#)

Institutions and Organizations

- Mennonite Heritage Centre (Winnipeg):
<http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/archives>
- Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies (Winnipeg):
<http://www.mbconf.ca/mbstudies/>
- Mennonite Library and Archives (North Newton):
<http://www.bethelks.edu/services/mla/holdings/>
- Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies (Fresno):
<http://fresno.edu/dept/library/cmbs/>
- Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society: <http://www.mmhs.org/>
- Mennonite Historical Society of Canada: <http://www.mhsc.ca/>
- California Mennonite Historical Society: <http://calmenno.org/>
- Mennonite Heritage Village (Steinbach):
<http://www.mennoniteheritagevillage.com/>
- Mennonite Books (Winnipeg): <http://www.mennonitebooks.com/>
- Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta:
<http://www.mennonites.ca/mhsa/>

Specific Genealogical Resources

- Prussian-Russian-Canadian Mennonite Genealogical Resources:
<http://www.mmhs.org/mmhsgen.htm>

- Mennonite Cross-Index of East European Family History Societies: <http://www.feefhs.org/men/indexmen.html>
- CMEO Genealogical Resources <http://www.mhsc.ca>
- Mennonite Genealogical Data Index: <http://www.mennonites.ca>

Personal Homepages of Mennonite Genealogists

- Judii Rempel: <http://members.shaw.ca/rempej>
- Carol Friesen: <http://www.snaggedinmyweb.com/genealogy/>
- Tim Janzen: <http://www.timjanzen.com/>
- Adalbert Goertz: <http://www.cyberspace.org/~goertz/>

Genealogical Software Links

- Tim Janzen's links: http://www.timjanzen.com/genealogy_software.html
- Brother's Keeper (shareware) <http://www.bkwin.net/index.html>

Other sites of interest to Genealogists – (not Mennonite specific)

- Canadian Genealogy & History: <http://www.islandnet.com/~jveinot/cghl.html>
- National Archives of Canada (Ottawa): <http://www.archives.ca/>
- Canadian Archival Resources: <http://www.usask.ca/archives/menu.html>
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints: <http://www.familysearch.com>
- Ancestry.Com: Social Security Death Index and other resources: <http://www.ancestry.com>
- Canadian Genealogical Projects Register <http://www.afhs.ab.ca/registry/>