

FAMILY HISTORY JUMPSTART

By Michael Boyter of FamilyHistoryProducts.com



A collection of inspirational articles and stories that are designed to motivate us all to preserve our priceless family stories and memories for our generations next.

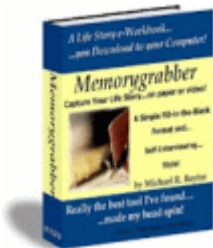
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ATTIC ARCHAEOLOGY

By Bob Brooke

According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, archaeology is "the systematic recovery and scientific study of material evidence of human life and culture in past ages." Most see an archaeologist as someone wearing khakis and an Indiana Jones-style hat, who's up to his or her elbows in fossils and shards.

Sure, archaeologists dig up and study bits and pieces of the past to help reconstruct life back then. And while rifling around a dusty attic or basement may not be as romantic as finding a 4,000-year-old pottery shard, it, nevertheless can yield some interesting finds. It's amazing what can be found in old trunks and shoeboxes.

A family history amounts to more than mere vital statistics. While many searchers compile lists of names, birth, marriage and death dates, they often miss the most important part--who were these people?

Letters, diaries, personal journals, memoirs, photo albums, clothing and other family artifacts can add flesh and blood to the ancestral bones and show these peoples' personalities.

Mothers, especially, are great savers. Beginning with keeping a baby book, they tend to amass an entire childhood history of their offspring. When her son is part of the team that won the state basketball championship, she cut out newspaper clippings telling of it. When her daughter got married, she clipped the newspaper engagement and wedding announcements. When her husband went off to war, she saved the letters he sent.

Thanks to Eastman Kodak, even ordinary families kept a record of

their lives through photographs. While the appearance of the photo albums has changed considerably--from black and white snapshots to videotapes--the purpose remains the same: to make a visual record of family events. Often, scrapbooks contained not only photographs but recipes, souvenirs, postcards, ticket stubs and such.

Old letters between friends, acquaintances and lovers can reveal the innermost secrets of their lives. Letter writing was the main means of communication until the mid-20th century. Before the days of television and the Internet, people sat down and wrote long, detailed letters containing news from home to faraway family members. A letter filled with details of widely scattered relatives helps to trace generations, especially when localities are mentioned.

Letters also may suggest relationships that aren't easily determined otherwise. And the date or year of a given letter may supply a valuable point of reference for an event which isn't recorded elsewhere. When perusing old letters, not only look at their contents but also take note of their postmarks, dates, and return addresses.

Diaries and personal journals didn't contain the immature line-a-day ramblings of teenage girls but were adult depositories for thoughts and reactions to events. Their authors filled them with personal expressions and reactions to life and events that helps attach a personality to their name. It's essential to record any names found in a diary, since they may come into play later.

It's a good rule never to borrow or keep personal documents. Make a copy, if possible, or extract all the information needed and ask to see the items again.

Lastly, don't take it for granted that attics and basements are the only places relatives kept treasured documents. Letters were often stuffed within the pages of a favorite book, while personal diaries and letter collections were often hidden in secret places in walls or floors. Look for clues and get permission before going on a wild goose chase that could do damage.

As in archaeology, the people who could have answered questions are long gone. But their thoughts remain.

You can learn more about Bob Brooke by visiting his Web site
<http://www.bobbrooke.com>

WHAT YOUR CHILDREN WILL WANT TO KNOW!

by Michael R. Boyter

Does your life story read like it is straight out of a best-selling novel?

Maybe, or maybe not, but regardless the life stories, knowledge and experience you pass down, through some form of recorded life story, will be invaluable to your children and grandchildren now and especially in the future.

From the day your children first stepped foot on that big yellow school bus to the day that they left home for college you were concerned that they were ready for "life" without you. You wanted to "be there" for them, didn't you? Your life experience could provide valuable advice and guidance to your children. From the time they were little, you coached and prepared them for much of what life would throw their way.

Even now, your adult children probably rely on you for sound advice on things ranging from marriage matters to child rearing.

As your children advance and mature through all the stages of their lives, they will have a natural deep yearning to know and compare their life situation to that of your life, while in the same approximate stage of life. "Am I doing things right"?

The ability to "compare notes" inspires confidence and can cause a calming effect in our children. This can be derived in knowing that their parents faced some of the same tough challenges early in their lives, thus giving them the strength and perseverance to do the same.

As just a young married couple, my wife Sheri and I struggled to make ends meet. There were occasions when all we had to eat in the kitchen was boiled noodles and nothing to put on them but catsup!

Was this normal or was I failing as a provider? I feared the latter was the correct answer.

As far as I knew, my parents always had plenty and never struggled like we had. On one occasion, my mom mentioned that for a stretch of time, when I was only an infant, money was so tight that she and dad wondered how they were going to make it to the next paycheck.

This is only one example, of many, that I could give you.

Therein lies the power of journaling and preserving, at least, some semblance of a biography.

Most of us continue teaching our children, through example or otherwise, until the day we leave this life. But what then?

THINGS YOUR CHILDREN WILL WANT/NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR LIFE:

Your posterity will want to know some of the small, seemingly inconsequential, stories from your life; ones that are fun to tell. We all have stories like these. They are often stories steeped with insight and coincide with life lessons learned.

YOUR DATING STORY: How did you meet their mother/father. How did you know he/she was the one?

Do you ever feel down?

What motivated you and got you going again?

Did you ever have a boss that you couldn't stand? How did you handle the situation?

When grandma and grandpa passed on, how did you manage?

How did you deal with a person that just outright didn't like you?

If you've ever lost your job, describe your feelings and attitude.

How did you overcome?

Tell of the day-to-day pressures of providing/caring for your children.

Were you living on the "financial edge" when you were newly married? How did you get by. Were there any special measures that you had to take?

AS YOUNG NEWLYWEDS, YOUR CHILDREN MAY WONDER...

...Did you and dad/mom ever argue as newlyweds?

...How did you decide who to spend the holidays with each year?

AS YOUNG PARENTS, YOUR CHILDREN MAY WONDER...

... "Did I really cry this much as a baby?"

... If you ever got any sleep when they themselves were newborns.

... What were the events in and around their own birth?

... "How quickly did I learn to walk, talk and potty train?"

AS PARENTS OF A TEENAGER, YOUR CHILDREN MAY WONDER...

... "Will I ever make it to old age?"

... "Will my teenager make it to old age?"

... "Was I ever that unruly?"

BEING MIDDLE-AGED, YOUR CHILDREN MAY WONDER...

...How the effects of aging played on your mind and body

...How you dealt with the loss of your parents. (This one may be too uncomfortable to talk about now, but writing down your feelings now for future reading by your children, will serve a very helpful purpose.)

AS NEW GRANDPARENTS YOUR CHILDREN MAY WONDER...

...What becoming a grandparent for the first time was like for you.

AS SENIOR CITIZENS, YOUR CHILDREN MAY WONDER...

...How you dealt with bad health situations.

...How you dealt with the loss of a spouse.

...How you felt in your role as the family patriarch/matriarch.

Don't leave your children unprepared for all that lies ahead of them once you depart this world. Write down or record to tape all that you know your children will want to know about your life someday, but won't think to ask until it's too late!

FLUNKING FAMILY HISTORY

By Michael R. Boyter
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If someone were to give your children a "test" that covers many of the details of your life, and included questions about their own family's history, how do you think they'd do?

If your children are school-aged, no doubt, they are inundated with tests of all kinds. When they fail those tests, or do horribly on them, we are often quick to blame the school and the teacher.

After a number of years of living (studying) in the same home with you, you'd figure that they'd know a lot about your life, the lives of their grandparents and more.

In this scenario, the home is the school and we, the parents, are the teachers. I fear that, when it comes to communicating significant family history and why they are significant, many of us may not be receiving as good of a grade as we would hope for.

Believe me, it's not that we don't want to teach our children about these things, but in today's hectic lifestyle, the traditional opportunities to share these stories and memories may be fewer.

- Hectic modern family schedules, especially when both parents work, may curtail time spent talking around the family dinner table.
- Full-blown family reunions and get togethers are less frequent due to the distances we live from other family members.
- Distractions, such as, non-stop cable television, computers, video games and more reduce the actual time that we spend talking

with each other.

- Increases in extracurricular school and community activities absorb family time as well.

In past, years I've assisted individuals, ages 17-27, with background investigation paperwork. For this, some family information was required on the application.

I would estimate that nine times out of ten, these individuals would have to call someone to be reminded of their parent's birth dates and their grandparent's full names. It always made me wonder.

What

else didn't they know about their own family?

Okay, ready?

Here are some sample test questions. How would your children do? How would you do, if given the same questions about your parents and grandparents?

-Describe how, when and where your parents met? And Grandparents?

-What would your parents say were the 3 most influential people and events they experienced during their childhood? How were they influential?

-What did your parents want to be, when they grew up?

-What kind of students were your parents?

-What would your parents, individually and collectively, consider their best decisions made? Which have been their most regrettable decisions?

-Who is the oldest member of the family that your parents (or grandparents) can remember, while growing up? What is known of them by the family?

Well, how do you believe your children would have done? How well could you have answered those same questions about your parents?

No one has been given a guarantee that they'll live to be old and gray. It really makes one stop and think, when confronted with this sobering reality.

"If I didn't live past tomorrow?"

"Have I conveyed everything about my life, that I've intended to, to my children? If not, what am I waiting for?"

"Have I shared with them the hard-learned lessons I've learned about life? Or am I just going to let them figure it all out on their own?"

"Have I passed on all the great family stories and memories that were told to me by my parents?"

Then wonder..

"Will my children know, or will they someday understand the happenings in my life that.."

..Cause me to think the way I do?

..Make me believe the way I do?

..Make me act the way I do?

..Cause me to celebrate the things that I do?

..Help me make the decisions that I do?

..Worry about things like I do, etc?

Then these questions

- What have I taught my kids, so far, that will impact them the rest of their lives?

- What have I NOT taught them that will impact them the rest of their lives?

- What will they remember most about me?

One day, this test will actually be given to your children. It will come, most likely, from the sweet innocent voice of your grandchild or great grandchild. They will have questions about you. Questions that will help them understand who they are and how they fit into the family, historically.

Will your child have the right answers to give them? Will they have an answer at all?

Nothing beats an open book test. When you keep a journal or create a record of your life, the test your child faces someday, will indeed, and thankfully, be an open book test.

Won't you get started today?

ORAL HISTORIES...UNLOCKING THE PAST

(Part 1 of 2)

by Bob Brooke

Memories are the most precious of all family treasures. Nothing can capture the essence of a family the way grandparents and other relatives can. They've lived through some great events and can recall them first-hand. They may remember the smallest details of significant family moments that aren't recorded anywhere else. And these stories can bring ancestors to life.

When these spoken recollections are gathered, organized, and preserved, the information is called an "oral history." Oral histories don't grow out of rambling reminiscences- they're collected through carefully directed interviews.

Because those who provide the information are generally older members of the family, both their lives and their memories are at risk of being lost to time. Therefore, it should always be the first priority of a beginning genealogist or family historian to find these patriarchs and matriarchs of the family, be they grandparents, great-grandparents, granduncles, grandaunts, great-granduncles, great-grandaunts, older first and second cousins, and even older neighbors and acquaintances of these people.

Who should be interviewed first? While there's no particular order to compiling an oral history, it's logical to begin with the oldest members of the family. After that, everyone is game. After all, probably every family member knows something no one else knows. And one of those memories may help solve a piece of the family puzzle.

Older members know the most about the earliest days of the family. They are, in fact, a precious link to the past. Someone born in 1920 can not only give you clear memories of the 1930s, but he or she may

have heard first-hand tales of the 1880s from someone who was 70 years old in 1930. In one conversation, it may be possible to connect 100 years of family history.

But many genealogists don't feel comfortable talking with older relatives, especially ones they may not know very well. For many, beginning with parents and working their way back is more comfortable and, likewise, productive.

Also, it won't always be possible to sit down with an older family member. Some of them may live far away, necessitating telephone or questionnaire interviews. However it's done, conducting a successful oral history interview isn't always easy. Some of it depends on those being interviewed-what they know, what they are willing to talk about, and how much they remember.

Information gathered through oral histories should be treated as guidance, not as the ultimate source, because memories often fade and facts get confused with other facts. Sometimes, the information obtained through oral interviews exists nowhere else and must be taken at face value. Of particular value are the stories, anecdotes, and family traditions, songs, and especially information associated with pictures, documents, and other records.

Also, it's important to establish rapport with family members prior to interviewing them. Older relatives, especially those with whom there's no friendly relationship may distrust the genealogist who interviews them cold. Breaking the ice is sometimes more important than the quantity of information gathered on the first visit. A second visit may be in order to be productive.

Many beginning researchers think oral histories should only be taken of family members. But family acquaintances can be just as important. These people may give an objective look at subjective information obtained from a family member. It's only human to remember only certain facts in a situation.

Sometimes, valuable information or documents, such as diaries, may have been handed down to friends or relatives by marriage at the time. The descendants of these people may not have any interest in them.

Transcribed oral history collections may assist researchers who are beginning their genealogies or family histories. There are many such collections in archives and libraries around the United States. These range from interviews with miners, cowboys, Indians, and early settlers, to industrial leaders, politicians, doctors, midwives, ecclesiastical leaders, and so forth. Sometimes by speaking with a

relative, a genealogist will find that they or another family member has already participated in a oral history project. The State of Texas annually conducts oral interviews and photographic sessions in towns throughout the state. That means that some of the work has already been done.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

**(Part 2 of 2) by
Bob Brooke**

Oral histories are only as successful as the interviews it takes to make them. In normal conversation, both people talk. Ideas are exchanged. Each person contributes information. The talk flows in unpredictable ways. But interviews are different.

In an interview, one person has a goal-to obtain information from another person. The interviewer wants the interviewee to feel comfortable, yet direct the conversation to certain points.

Unlike in a conversation, the interviewer may have to lead the interviewee back to back to the main point-without hurting his or her feelings. This can be difficult, but practice helps develop good interviewing skills. These tips will help:

1. Before interviewing anyone, give advance warning. Interviewers should explain what they want to do, why they want to do it, and why a person is important to them and their research.
2. An interviewer should be prepared before the interview by finding out about a relative. Where does this person fit into the family? What documents might he or she have? What other genealogical items might this person have? Whom did this person meet that no one else knew, or whom might he or she remember best? Where did this person live? As much information as possible should be gathered ahead of time about this person's relationship to everyone in the family.
3. Interviewing requires structure, so questions should be thought out beforehand. List questions on a sheet of paper, organized by subject. An easy way is to organize chronologically beginning with the early years.

4. Summarize what's already known so that the interviewee can verify the facts. Then ask for more detail.
5. Remember, ask open-ended questions. "What do you remember most about your first apartment?" or "Tell me about your relationship with your sisters" may yield something unexpected and wonderful.
6. Use a tape recorder but don't depend on it solely. A small recorder usually doesn't disturb anyone, and it catches every bit of information, including the way interviewees sound and exactly how they answer questions. However, tape recorders have a way of stopping just when there's important information-without any sign to the interviewer. So a backup notebook is a necessity.
7. During the interview, write down names and dates, and double-check them with the interviewee. Facts are important, but the most important information interviewees offer are their stories. Try to capture not only the way they talk but their colorful expressions.
8. Begin with easy, friendly questions. Leave the more difficult or emotional material for later in the interview, after trust has been established. If things aren't going well, an interviewer should save difficult questions for another time.
9. Also, begin with questions about the interviewee. Get some background information about him or her. And when asking for dates, relate them to the interview.
10. Bring family photographs to the interview and use them during it. Look for photos, artwork, or documents that will help jog the interviewee's memory. Ask the interviewee to describe what's going on. "Do you remember when this was taken? Who are the people? What was the occasion? Who do you think took the picture?"
11. Don't be afraid of silence. Silence is an important part of interviewing, and it can sometimes lead to very interesting results. Because people find silence uncomfortable, they often try to fill it if the interviewer doesn't, and, in doing so, they may say something that they might not have otherwise.
12. Allow interviewees time to ponder their thoughts. Asking interviewees to think back on things they may not have considered in years is a challenge. Calling up these memories may spark other thoughts, too.
13. Be ready to ask the same question in different ways. People don't

know how much they know, and rephrasing a question can give more information.

14. Ask to see any family treasures belonging to the interviewee. When interviewees bring out an heirloom, they should be asked to describe it. What is it? How was it used? Who made it? Who gave it to them? Ask if there are any stories connected with it, or any documents.

15. Be sensitive. Sometimes people become emotional talking about the past. They may remember relative's long dead, or forgotten tragedies. If an interviewee is upset by a memory, the interviewer should either remain silent, or quietly ask, "Is it all right if we talk some more about this? Or would you rather not?" People frequently feel better when they talk about sad things. Give the interviewee the choice of whether or not to go on.

16. Try not to interrupt. If the interviewee strays from the subject, let him or her finish the story and then bring them back on track. Not interrupting makes the conversation friendlier, and may lead to something unexpected.

End

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Brooke has authored six books, one of which, THE AMISH COUNTRY, showcases the Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Amish community. His articles have appeared in many national and international publications, including Adventure West, Delta Sky, Business Traveller(UK), British Heritage, Hispanic Magazine, Genealogy Week, AntiqueWeek and Travel Mexico.

Brooke is also the recipient of Mexico's prestigious La Pluma de Plata Award for excellence in travel writing and the Real Award for journalism.

**To learn more about Bob Brooke  
and read more of his work, visit his Web site at  
<http://www.bobbrooke.com/>**

## **BUILDING A FAMILY TIMELINE**

**By Michael Boyter**

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With summer here, more than likely you will have a few big family get-togethers or reunions. These will be great opportunities to have the whole family help construct a large life-size family timeline.

Get some large sheets of poster board; butcher's paper or any large roll of paper. A newsprint roll, for example.

If you decided to use poster board, I recommend using one sheet for each ten years. Go back as far as you think people can remember. Allow about 3-5 inches per year and mark it accordingly.

Place each sheet width-wise on a wall where family members will have easy access to it. Hang them on the wall in chronological order. Encourage family members to write events directly onto the time line or supply a stack of Post-it Notes. Later you can transcribe it to a smaller version to send out to family members and/or display at the next reunion.

Hint: Tell people ahead of time that the time line will be displayed so they can begin thinking about events to write in. Encourage them to bring a few pictures to place on the timeline as well.

Once completed, the information from the time line would go great in a family newsletter or on a family web site.

## **TIME CAPSULE OF FAMILY MEMORIES**

**By Rachel Webb**

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Time capsules are a fun way to celebrate the New Year or can be made anytime as a fun way to preserve your family memories!

The first time capsules were found in temples in Egypt and Babylon. Those ancient time capsules were filed with small statues and scrolls as was their custom. Some modern day religious temples still practice this tradition of placing items of significance in the corner stone of the building.

You can make your own time capsule as a fun New Year activity for your family or as a party favor for guests.

### **MAKING A TIME CAPSULE**

There are many different items that can be used as the housing for your time-capsule. As long as the capsule is made out of a non-biodegradable material like plastic, metal or heavy duty rubbers. You can purchase small square banks that have a combination lock at office supply stores or use kitchen food storage containers with a lid.

If the time capsule is for children you can make it out of large plastic Easter eggs and use silicone caulking to seal the two sides together after it is filled. Kids would also enjoy making a capsule out of the plastic boxes watches come packaged in.

### **TIME CAPSULE ITEMS**

When deciding what to put in your time capsule think of interesting topics that were of significance in the past year. You could include headlines clipped from a newspaper or magazine. Remember to think of both local and world events as well. Include items of social and scientific interest as well as objects of everyday life like photographs of your car, postage stamp or grocery store receipt so you can compare the price of gas or milk.

Backup your computer and add the CD to your time capsule. If you store your recipes on the computer you may want to print out your favorites and include those as well.

If you are a scrapbooker, it would be fun to copy a few of your favorite family pages and add them to your time capsule. You can purchase plastic file folders that have a top clasp that folds over so your pages and other memorabilia can lie flat.

Children would enjoy cutting pictures out of a magazine showing the hottest toy of that year or the latest fashion trend. Just as we look back at the popularity of Cabbage Patch Kids, Tickle Me Elmo, Beanie Babies, Pokeman or Scooters, these are items that are sure to be left behind in a few years and will be fun to remember when the capsule is opened.

Include ticket stubs from a special trip, sporting event or theatrical play. Add the oldest coin you can find and a current coin from this year. This is a good time to add the latest State quarter that is available. Make a recording of your favorite singing group or pictures of your friends.

All ages would enjoy writing a letter to the future and tell the people what life is like for you now. Be sure and include your favorite family traditions, your worries and your joys too!

### **OPENING YOUR CAPSULE**

The family will enjoy making a treasure map of where the time-capsule is buried so you can remember where to find it again. Hide the map in the back of a picture

frame holding a family photograph.

Let the family decide when you want to open the time-capsule and look forward to sharing the memories of how much your family has grown and how the world has changed.

=====  
Author Rachel Webb designs decorative affordable entirely Magnetic Fridge Calendars that are easy to Write-on/Wipe-off. E-Mail [Rachel@Note-Ables.com](mailto:Rachel@Note-Ables.com)  
<http://www.Note-Ables.com>

## **ONE FAMILY'S TIME CAPSULE EXPERIENCE**

by Teena Brown

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This is an actual account of putting together a time capsule. It originally was posted on the Purple Ink YahooGroups message board. It's reprinted here with Teena's permission.

**W**e put in lots of pictures and a bunch of brochures and stuff from our trip to NYC last summer.

Also some CD's (Backstreet Boys "Millennium" and others)

Barbie dolls,

Pokemon stuff,

Baseball cards,

tracings of my little boys hands and scribbled crayon pictures,

karate medals,

People and Oprah magazines, and more.

My husband put in his old pager and a computer hard drive. My daughter put in an American Girl magazine and catalog. I included a copy of my wish list from Amazon.

So we put all this stuff in a big plastic bin and screwed the lid on and sealed it with silicone, then wrapped it in a couple of trash bags.

Then on New Years Eve we all went outside with our flashlights and put it in the hole we had dug. My husband reiterated the plan, "Y'all be here in 20 years," and then everyone, even my two year old, threw in a nice, ceremonial shovel full of dirt.

As Joel finished filling the hole we stood there shivering and cracking jokes. Then we gathered around a fire we had started earlier and sang songs. It was a memorable evening and a happy start to a new year.

## **HOW BORING CAN YOUR LIFE REALLY BE?**

By Michael R. Boyter

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This really puzzles me!

So many people today believe their life is so boring that nobody would possibly want to read about their life story.

But these same people would admit that stumbling upon an old journal or writings of a great grandparent, for example, would be a treasure beyond contemplation.

I ask you... what's the difference between your life and that of an ancestor?

The parallels between the lives your ancestors lived and the life that you now live are relative.

You're great-grandma didn't write about her life because she didn't think her life was anything special. To hear her tell it, her life was boring. You don't write for the very same reason.

You're great-grandma now has great grandchildren wishing that she had done and thought differently. Someday you'll have great-grandchildren that will wish and hope the same of you!

Great-grandma lived to see some of the biggest events and inventions known to man. She most likely lived through World War I, The Great Depression. She witnessed the invention of the automobile, the airplane, the telephone, electricity, radio, the Industrial Revolution and so much more!

Likewise, you live in a time of no less greatness and arguably the most exciting period in history!

You live in an age of the Internet, fiber optics and broadband. Space stations hover over head in the heavens along with satellites that warn you of approaching storms, weeks ahead. You can email somebody in Africa from your bedroom computer desk and have it arrive in light-seconds! Now that's both amazing and exciting!

You also live in a time when you can talk on a phone that weighs ounces; call practically anyone anywhere; all while standing in an isolated desert somewhere.

You've, most likely, lived through Desert Storm, remember Watergate, witnessed the collapse of communism, survived disco and the Beatles Invasion and now experience the high-tech revolution on a daily basis.

What do you mean your life is boring and that nobody would want to read about your life?

Here is an example of all things being relative and that history truly does repeat itself.

Do you ever wonder what great-grandma thought about the invention of the automobile? I mean, how did she "take to it"?

- Did she love it?
- Did she think it was nonsense?
- Did she think it was someone's crazy idea that wouldn't amount to anything?
- Did she keep using a horse and buggy for as long as she could?
- Or, did she embrace the idea and become one of the first automobile owners in her town?
- What was her reaction as she took her first ride in a car?

Wouldn't it be nice to know such information?

Now, back to you.

Someday your great-grandchildren will wonder the very same thing concerning you and the Internet. Is this too far fetched to fathom?

### **Concerning the invention of the Internet and computers...**

- Did you love it?
- Did you think it was nonsense?

- Did you think it was someone's crazy idea that wouldn't amount to anything?
- Did you keep using "paper" for as long as you could?
- Or, did you embrace the idea becoming one of the first computer and Internet users in your town?
- What was your reaction the first time you surfed the Net?

**To someone, sometime...this will be "nice to know" information!**

Your descendants will someday number in the thousands. Do not underestimate the impact that your few preserved words today will have on future generations. It may be far greater than you may ever know.

So, I challenge each of you to pick up that pen and paper, or even a tape recorder, and get busy!

## **KEEP YOUR FAMILY HISTORY FROM BECOMING “HISTORY”**

**By Michael R. Boyter**

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### **Fire! Fire! Fire!**

In a frantic minute you grab the kids and get a safe distance from your house. There you witness your home, and everything in it, burning to the ground. It's a total loss!

A disaster of any kind is never a pleasant experience, but at least there is insurance to build again and to buy new furniture. But let's talk about what is not insured. Things that once lost, are gone for ever!

I'm referring to your family keepsakes. Your home videos, family photos, journals, diaries and other priceless family treasures. Losing any of these things is a terrible tragedy!

-Video of your baby's first steps...Gone!

-All your wedding pictures...Gone!

-Your diary you wrote as a teenager...Gone!

What if you had to evacuate your house and only had minutes or less to get out?

As I pondered this, I realized that it would be next to impossible, in a short amount of time, for me to get all of these things out of the house and to a safe location.

Why? Because I had 8mm tapes all through the house. My old journals were stuck in a box somewhere in the garage. Some photo albums were up in closets while others I looked and looked for but couldn't find for awhile. I had no idea where they were. I had to go looking for them.

In a disaster situation, there is no time to go looking.

Here's some of the preventative measures that I took in order to keep myself from such a situation. Use these ideas and tips to ensure that your family memories are preserved for generations to come!

#### **FAMILY PHOTO ALBUMS:**

Share them as gifts often – Pictures of the family are great gifts to give to grandparents and other family members. If you lose yours, you always have a way to regain copies.

Online photo storage – My wife and I have put many of our pictures on a free, safe and secure family web site. There are many of these but I personally like MyFamily.com. Build your site in minutes and you don't need to know a thing about making a web page. Your pictures are stored remotely and something like a house fire couldn't touch them.

One central location - Designate a location for all your photo albums and don't deviate. By putting them in a box and in one location in your house, you increase your chances of being able to get out quickly with all your pictures.

#### **HOME VIDEOS:**

Duplicate them - Makes copies and get them to other members of the family. This makes for a great gift. Technology today makes this pretty simple.

#### **JOURNALS, DIARIES, and PERSONAL HISTORIES**

Personal histories of your own or those of an ancestors are one of the most valuable items in your possession. If kept protected, they will be

treasured for generations to come.

**Duplicate & Distribute** - My grandma gave me a copy of my late grandpa's life story. I typed it up and printed multiple copies for all of my cousins and aunts and uncles. They loved it and we took steps to make sure grandpa's life story will live on in the hearts and minds of his posterity.

**Diary Safeguards** - If you are currently writing a journal or diary I realize that some of it may be personal and you may not wish for it to be distributed out at this time.

If you write your journal by hand, take your journal in and photocopy any part that you plan to pass on to your children someday! Don't wait. You may then look into putting a copy into a safe deposit box. Just as long as it is out of your house.

If you write your journal with the aid of a computer, I recommend storing copies often to any one of the many online storage web sites. Nobody will be able to access your data but you. I personally recommend <http://www.xdrive.com>

### **SO, IN CONCLUSION...**

Rule #1 in any of this is to duplicate your family keepsake items and store them in multiple locations. This is the only way to ensure that if disaster strikes, you will be able to easily recover those priceless family keepsakes that define you as an individual and as a family!

## **KEEPING FAMILY STORIES ALIVE**

**By Michael R. Boyter**

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Below is an excerpt from a book that I am currently reading. It's called "Keeping Family Stories Alive" by Vera Rosenbluth

It demonstrates that there are additional benefits to preserving family history through interviewing, such as the therapeutic value for those

who hear the stories.

So many of our attitudes and patterns are learned in our childhood. When we understand our parents, and what people they became, we can then better understand ourselves and our relations with others.

When we are able as adults to revisit our childhood through the stories of our parents, we sometimes understand more clearly what our parents were going through at particular times in their lives.

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A woman in her forties interviewed her father at length, and tells how she gained a new perspective on a period of her own life:

"I have a memory of leaving to go to a birthday party and having a very ragged dress on. And of my mother, on the way to the party, rushing into a clothing store and buying me a fancy dress. My feeling around that was, "You should have thought of that beforehand. Don't you care about me? Don't you love me?" Well, I was looking at some old slides with my dad, and it was the time of that birthday party, and my mother was about seven months pregnant. And she had four young children! And suddenly, I realized that it wasn't that she didn't love me. It was because she was pregnant, and had four children under the age of six, that she didn't have time to think about whether my dress was brand new. She's dead now so I can't ask her about it.

But I could ask dad what was happening around that time. When I asked Him why my memories are so sad around that time he said, "Well, my business wasn't doing well. Mom was about to have another baby" and suddenly I saw that it wasn't my fault. Suddenly I realized that she did love me.

I'm a mother and I understand. If I had four kids and was pregnant, the last think I'd be worrying about would be my daughter's dress."

## **LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD**

**By T.W. Winslow**

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I think one of the things we all have in common is our sense of restlessness. No matter where we are in our lives, regardless of how good or bad things may be for us at any given time, it seems we are forever doubting or at least questioning ourselves - our happiness, fulfillment, and where we're going. I know this is true, at least for me.

Over the past several months my wife, Diane, and I have made a great many changes in our life together. Although these changes were designed to improve things, and ultimately will, this reorganization, if you will, did get me thinking about and questioning many aspects of my life. I have to admit that this caused me some personal anxiety, even mild depression. I guess I got too caught up in looking at my current situation and contemplating my future, without the benefit of considering the past.

I found that by examining my life as it is right now without taking into consideration the past - all those things which led me to this point, it was very easy to become dissatisfied. I began to question if I was really satisfied with who I was, where I was in my life and career, and the direction my life was headed. Slowly, this led me to become moody, ill-tempered, and sad. Then something happened which helped me to gain a more positive perspective. Something which left me feeling very fortunate for where I am in my life and for all the things which fill my life.

I was cleaning out the attic and found an old box of memorabilia I had collected and saved over the years. I never realized what a pack rat I was. I blew the dust off the box and dumped the contents out onto the floor. I sat down and one by one carefully examined each item. There were some things I couldn't remember why I had ever saved in the first place; an old movie stub, a bottle cap, a fountain pen. But there were many others, which held great significance and which brought back a flood of memories. Things which, when combined, made a path of sorts leading me to where I am now.

I found an old high school report card, which reminded me, just how lucky I was to ever have graduated, considering my low marks, let alone to have gone on to finish college. There were a few items from some of my first jobs. I had to laugh when I thought of just how many really lousy jobs I had held over the years. I had completely forgotten, or perhaps blocked from my memory, the fact that at one time I sold insurance, door-to-door no less. I shook my head in disbelief thinking of that skinny kid fresh out of high school dressed in a really bad suit knocking on the doors of strangers trying to sell them some insurance policy they didn't really need. I remembered how much I hated that, and other such jobs, but realized how much each of those experiences had taught me.

I found a picture of the first house my wife and I bought right after we were married. I remembered my mom almost cried when she first saw it. I guess

she, unlike Diane and me, couldn't see the "jewel" that was waiting to be discovered beneath its pink paint and dirty green shag carpeting. I recalled how hard Diane and I worked on that old house and the pride we felt when it was finished. I also remembered that it was through fixing-up that old house which taught us early in our relationship the importance of having common goals and working together as a team.

There were many cards and letters from Diane, which I had saved in the box. Some funny, some silly, and others so touching they brought tears to my eyes.

As I sat and read these, each one painted a picture. Some brought images of two young kids struggling to figure out what life and love were all about. Others reminded me of how lucky we were to have made it through those first several years together - through all the problems and hardships we faced together.

In the pile of memories I found old newspaper clippings announcing the births of my children. I remembered how nervous I was at the prospect of becoming a father, but how that all disappeared when I held my child in my arms for the very first time. There were countless drawings and notes my children had given me from Birthdays and Fathers' Days of years gone by. But the most precious of these were those notes of love that were given for no reason at all.

I spent a long time going through the contents of that box, reliving moments from my past. I could now see much clearer the path I had taken to get to where I am now. I also understood how important each step along that path had been. Rather than continuing to question how satisfied I was in where that path had led me, I was thankful for having been allowed to make the journey at all.

It's good to examine our lives and ourselves now and again. But when we do, it's important to retrace the paths we've taken to get to where we are now - remembering the struggles we've encountered, the hurdles we've overcome, and the love we've found along the way.

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About The Author:

Passing Thoughts is a syndicated column published on quality web sites, in electronic magazines and various print media around the world - read by millions each week. You can get Passing Thoughts FREE each week by email - subscribe at <http://www.taddgroup.com> For reprint information or to contact the author write to [twinslow@taddgroup.com](mailto:twinslow@taddgroup.com)

## **NOT TOO LATE FOR GRANDPA**

By Michael R. Boyter

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Some of us are fortunate in that we may still have living parents and grandparents that we can talk to and gather in the stories of their lives.

But what about the rest of us whose parents and grandparents have already passed on?

Here's what my family did after the passing of our grandfather last August. It's not an original idea by any means but I think it is worth mentioning to help others who may have "missed" some chances already.

I just received it in the mail today! Ever since my grandpa passed away last year, my cousin Cindy has been organizing a small project.

She ask for one or two favorite memories of grandpa from all ten of us grand kids and all three of his kids (including my dad)...plus a memory or two from grandma.

What I have in my hands today is a great treasure of memories of my grandpa...some I was pleasantly reminded of and some stories I was never before aware of.

We grand kids are spread out all over the country so Cindy used email to gather the stories. Then she used a simple word processing program to put the stories together. Most were just a paragraph in length.

She began the collection of memories with grandpa's eulogy that was read at his funeral and she ended the whole thing with the words from his obituary. It was very simple and a great idea. Now nearly 15 people have these stories to refer back to and to pass on to his, so far, sixteen great-grand-children.

Yes, loved ones may be gone but their memories remain a little longer in the minds of all the family that knew him/her. It's a second chance of sorts. Don't miss this opportunity to perpetuate the memory of loved ones down through the generations!

## **INVENTORY LISTS**

**By Michael R. Boyter**

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Inventory writing is very similar to list writing. In fact, it's almost the same thing with a different twist to it.

This involves writing lists of your possessions or property. One example, would be to write down all the books (or almost all of them) on your bookshelf. I wrote a similar article about this in particular: <http://www.familyhistoryproducts.com/bookshelf.html>

Using this same bookshelf example there are many other areas in your home that you can "inventory". Of course do not list something that would embarrass you or anybody else in your family, but by including these inventory lists in your family history and autobiographies you not only tell of events in your life but what your life was like, day to day.

Your grandchildren and great-grandchildren will have the next best thing to being able to "go back in time" and visit your home as it was during your life.

Time has a funny way of making bland things interesting.

Please remember, though, this is supposed to be fun and I am not saying you need to list everything everywhere, just a good sampling. This will not only give your family members in the future a chance to "visit" your home but many of these items will spark more stories to include in your autobiography, journal or diary.

Here are some ideas of places in and around your home that you may wish to consider inventorying and writing down.

### **INVENTORY LIST IDEAS**

**Key Chain** - What are all of those keys for? A boat? An old truck that you loved?

**Your Junk Drawer** - We all have one.

## **Storage Closets**

**Your Pockets** - What do you have in them right now?

## **Your Purse**

**Your Car** - What you keep in your car says something

**The Desk Draw** - Home or work. Do you keep candy in there?

**Computer Software** - What software have you accumulated?

## **Bookshelf**

## **Garage or Storage Shed**

**Keepsake Box** - Also a hope chest or footlocker

**Home Movies** - One tape of our "1992 trip to Canada" for example

## **Photo albums**

## **CD collection**

## **Your Barn**

Medicine Cabinet - Could be used for family medical history. Example, high blood pressure pills could mean a tendency for it in the family.

Clothes - Clothes and events go hand in hand

Your Yard - If you love hanging your clothes, you may even mention your clothesline.

The People in Your Office - If you don't work in an office, use the people on your street or people from any group that you belong to. These are "players" in your life story.

## **BONUS LIST OF LISTS!**

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**Whether you are a good writer or not, list making is a very easy way to write down parts of your life story. They jog your memory and they are the way you answer and list the responses are sometimes very telling!**

1. List a funny thing that has happened to you and a friend
2. List the people that have betrayed you
3. List the brand names that you use and swear by
4. What bridges have you burned?
5. List the compliments that you receive on a regular basis
6. List the gifts from friends that meant the most to you
7. List the gifts from your parents that have meant the most to you
8. List the most recent things you have learned
9. List the magazines that you have subscribed to
10. List all the great ideas that are in your mind right now
11. List all the projects that you are in the middle of but haven't completed
12. List people who you wished you had not trusted
13. List people that you thought you would marry but did not
14. List your possessions that you could not live without
15. List the things that you hide when someone comes to visit
16. List the presidents that you have voted for
17. List all the values that you adhere to
18. Write what you think about just prior to falling asleep at night
19. List places that you'd like to retire to...and why
20. List the ways that you learn best

21. List any volunteer jobs that you've had
22. List what you would do if you had no fear
23. List people who you'd like to be your friend but are not...why?
24. List any brushes with fame that you've had
25. List any celebrities that you've seen in person
26. List your proudest accomplishments
27. List what you worry the most about

## **PHOTO SWAP PARTY**

**by Dionna Sanchez**

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Pictures are such special, cherished mementos of the past. Almost everyone treasures the pictures they have in their frames and albums.

Sometimes as a loved one dies and you inherit their photos or you collect too many in boxes from family and friends sending them to you - it can get to be overwhelming. Yet, most of us hate to throw them out.

A wonderful way to save those pictures and clean out your cupboards is by having a photo swap party. Invite family members to your home with their extra, duplicate or miscellaneous photos.

You can select a special table to display all the photographs on, and people can choose the ones they would like to keep.

It's possible you still might have some leftover, and these you can save to put in albums for your children or save for a future photo swap down the road. It can be especially precious when a loved one passes away and people realize they don't have pictures of that person.

Don't let your photos of the past be lost...but share them!

Dionna Sanchez is Editor of Emphasis On Moms. Emphasis strives to encourage moms not only as parents, but also as individual women.

Visit Emphasis at <http://www.EmphasisOnMoms.com/> or subscribe at

## **PLAY FAMILY TRIVIA!**

**By Michael R. Boyter**

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Do you remember the game Trivial Pursuit?

Imagine if there was a version made just for your family! How do you think you'd do? How good were you at the original game?

I can remember making up all kinds of excuses for when I didn't know the answers. I would discount my lack of answers by saying something like "How am I suppose to know that stuff"?

Well, if the questions were based purely on an individual's family history, what kind of excuse could be used?

This game would best be played at a family get together and it would be a combined effort of several in your family. You could work on it a couple different ways...

One way would be to sit down with a few immediate

family members and write as many questions (that only family would know) as you can think of on an index card...one question per card.

As resources for information, items such as high school year books, journals and old home movies could be utilized.

Before you know it, you'd have quite a stack of cards with your family trivia/history on them.

Then, at a family gathering, use them in much the same fashion as the original Trivial Pursuit game.

The second way would be to give 5-10 cards to each family member as they are gathered together.

Give them a few minutes before the game started to write down some questions about themselves and some about other members of the family... You may want to make some easy questions and others with the intent to stump the rest of the family.

This is a unique way of preserving family history and it gets your family members involved.

I guarantee a good time!

Keep in mind that the whole reason for any of the questions would be to stir up fond memories from your family's past.

My family has tried this and it was a great time.

A few bits of advice...

- 1) Have a video or audio tape going as you play. Many stories will be told that may never be told again.
- 2) Don't throw those index cards away when you are finished with the game. Write the answers on them and save them.
- 3) Have the questions, answers and stories told typed up and have copies distributed to all the family.

This information, if preserved, can and should be passed down to future generations of your family. By making multiple copies, you ensure that the only copy isn't accidentally destroyed or lost!

This is one of the most fun and easy ways to finally get some of your parents and/or grandparents stories preserved!

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Michael R. Boyter is the author of the popular e-book MemoryGrabber. Over 900 questions and activities that make writing your life story simple and enjoyable.  
<http://www.familyhistoryproducts.com/memorygrabber.html>

## **RE-ENERGIZE YOUR JOURNAL WRITING TODAY FOR TOMORROW**

**By Michael R. Boyter**

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Some write journals and diaries for the therapeutic value of it. Admittedly, there is value in this exercise, but I have always written a journal with a sense of historical perspective. When I write, I envision my children, grandchildren and their children reading about me and the era in which I lived.

I highly encourage you to expand what you may currently be doing with your journal. As journal-keepers aren't we always looking for something more to write about? What you write today may be the only record of your current families' existence. Think about it!

**Write What You Think and Believe** - You're likely familiar with the saying, "Don't discuss religion or politics with others." That might be a good idea but not when you are talking about your journal. You wouldn't shy away from discussing such matters to your children today so why hold back your hard-earned wisdom, opinions and knowledge from your family's future generations? This is your chance to be, perhaps, more honest about what you believe in than you ever have. Don't miss your chance!

**Write About and For Your Children** - Your journal can easily become very

self-centered. That's not bad, but don't miss the opportunity to keep a record of your children as they grow up. Include important dates like "first tooth " and "first step". Write about their teenage and adult years from your perspective.

Your children will appreciate reading about themselves once they reach adulthood. Encouraging your children to keep a journal is highly recommended but nothing can substitute for your view on their early lives.

**Write About the World Around You** - Given a choice, would you prefer to read about history as lived by your great-grandparent or from a stale encyclopedia? Instead of reading a bland page or two about The Great Depression, an old family journal would reveal the struggles that your family went through and include how they survived and coped.

Instead of generically learning of the invention of the automobile from a textbook, you could perhaps relive the thrill your relatives experienced as they took their first ride. All of this is possible when historical happenings are included in journals.

If you are one of those who believes that "Well, yes the invention of the car was exciting but what have I to write today that can compare to that?" Here are some things that I believe will be of huge interest to future generations. If you agree, write about them.

- ⇒ **Write about your first computer**
- ⇒ **What was your early impression of the Internet?**
- ⇒ **What was your first purchase online?**
- ⇒ **Write about the first time that you saw the space shuttle blastoff.**
- ⇒ **Man walking on the moon**

If you really think about it, you could make a huge list of historical happenings and tell of your thoughts and how they affected the family.

For those days when you can't think of what to write or if you just want something different to write about, print out the news headlines from your favorite web portal such as Yahoo or CNN.com. Jot down your "take" on the day's happenings. You may even want to subscribe to free news services, such as the one provided by The New York Times, where the daily headlines are sent to your e-mail inbox.

It doesn't matter whether the news is about international things or Hollywood. If a particular news story doesn't interest you, simply write, "this doesn't interest me" then go on to the next headline. Even a no comment tells something about you.

If you use journal software or a word processor to write your journal,

you may even want to copy and paste parts of articles and news into your journal entry and write a little bit about your opinion of it. Is that article, for example, having a direct impact on the family?

A headline about war may mean that a brother, sister or cousin may be heading for the war front! Or, the article you include may be a local light-hearted article about your winning entry at the county fair.

**Name Drop** - Like most, you associate this with someone who likes to show off or brag, but "name dropping" in your journal is very important. The type of name-dropping that I refer to here is that of extended family members. Do not forget to mention brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, parents and grandparents etc. especially as they interact with you.

For example, "Today I spoke on the phone with my brother Jeff". Maybe mention a little about what you spoke about and don't forget to occasionally mention his wife and kids and a little bit about them. His son is your nephew and what you write today may be the only bit of information that his descendants may know of him. Maybe you think that this is a little overboard but, to be sure, hundreds of indirectly related relatives will someday be thankful to you.

**Family Stories and Traditions** - Are there any enjoyable family stories and traditions that you wish to perpetuate and have carried on? Of course there are! So don't forget to include all of those stories in your journal. The treasured family stories that you grew up hearing just might be told for hundreds and hundreds of years to come, but only if you act now to preserve them. Get with other family members so that they can help you recall those that you don't remember.

A journal writer's work is never done. There is always something else to write and endless stories to tell.

## **WHAT DOES YOUR BOOKSHELF SAY ABOUT YOU?**

**By Michael R. Boyter**

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On Page 17 of the MemoryGrabber, there is section that has piqued a lot of interest by some.

This activity is for listing all (or nearly all) of your books in your bookshelf (or anywhere in your house).

Some of us buy more books than others, of course, but the books we

buy tell something about us. A list of them will help your descendants understand you a bit more.

Let me try and make my point:

None of you, as far as I know, have ever met my wife Sheri. Here is only a sampling of the books that she has purchase and accumulated over the years. After looking the list over, I think you'll see that you will gain some insight into what Sheri's interests, concerns and loves are!

Here it goes!

**TITLES:**

**7 Simple Steps To Un-Clutter Your Life - *by Donna Smallin***

**Raising Money Smart Kids - *Barbara Weltman***

**Chicken Soup for the Couple's Soul - *various writers***

**The Total Health Makeover - *by Marilu Henner***

**Simple Abundance - *by Sarah Ban Breathbach***

**Take Time For Your Life - *by Cheryl Richardson***

**Diabetes For Dummies - *From the popular "Dummie" series***

**The Sky Is Falling - *by Sydney Sheldon***

**The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families - *Stephen Covey***

**Oprah's Magazine "O" - *subscription***

**Woman's Day - *subscription***

So you went from knowing nothing of Sheri but her name, but now after reviewing a list of her books, you now have some sort of idea as to what her interests, concerns and interests are.

Imagine if you had a similar list from your grandmother. You may get a glimpse, a side of your grandmother that you never knew.

So, what does your bookshelf say about you? Go ahead and get started

on your list. This one is fun! You may even surprise yourself.

## **YOU ARE HEREBY APPOINTED FAMILY HISTORIAN**

**By Michael R. Boyter**

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We all witnessed the passing of the last century, and with it's passing, the memories of the 1900s live on only in the minds and memories of we who lived it. Tragically, for those who fail to keep a record of it, priceless family history, is going, going and soon to be gone!

### **Think about this:**

Those who were born in the 1990's will not remember much if any of the 1900s. Many born prior to the 1930's have already left us! So it is left to the rest of us to record all we can about ourselves, the world we live in, and of our beloved family members that came and went in the 1900's.

Without doing so, when we are gone...so is your family's link to the past. Then your family, in the years to come, will have to make it through life without the benefit and comfort of your wisdom and knowledge.

So, it is incumbent upon us to become historians of sort.

Now how many of us, while sitting in a boring high school history class, ever thought that we'd be historians of the 1900s?

### **“...Someday Your Descendants Will Number In The Thousands”**

It's true that most of our written accounts of history will only be read by our descendants, but we ought not to discount the possibilities.

The Net is the futuristic version of a cave wall. The typical cave discovery tells us of how people lived thousands of years ago. Likewise, your personal history tells your story but it also indirectly records society and how it affected you and everyone around you.

Many of us put parts of our family history on the Net and it's likely that our descendant will someday "contribute" other parts of your history to online archive/biography-type sites.

Can you imagine the longevity of what you write today? Even on message boards!

I have, in my possession, a journal written by my great-great-great-great grandfather. His name was John Murdock. He was born in the late 1700s. That's more than two hundred years ago.

It's hard for me to imagine that my great-great-great-great grandchildren could be reading of my life in the year 2200. Imagine how the world will change by then and how the time in which we now live will contrast against theirs.

With the technology and ability to store information that we now possess, there really is no excuse for anyone's descendants in the year 2200, for example, not to know of you and of the time in which you lived.

If in the future there are no more newspapers, how "boring" will it be to comment on headlines in your local newspaper or about clipping coupons.

If in the future there are no more gasoline-powered cars, how "boring" will it be to passively mention changing oil, going to the fuel pump and using language like "miles per gallon/liter".

While to us, these things are boring everyday things, they will be read with interest by your great-great-great-great grandchild.

I know I may be preaching to the choir, but I have one last point.

To show how fast one's family history can fade, I wish to relate an experience that I had while working with some 18-26 year olds.

During the mid-1990s I was an Air Force recruiter and I routinely helped these young adults in filling out background investigation paperwork.

I think you'd be surprised at how often it was that twenty-something year olds couldn't tell me their parent's birth dates. Nor did many of them know where their parents were born. Some didn't even know their grandparent's complete names.

This is a sad trend. You, by keeping a journal and writing your family history, can prevent a trend like this one from happening in your family.

Someday your descendants will number in the thousands. Will they know of you and share your wisdom? Will they know anything of

the eventful 1900s and the times you had?

It's entirely up to you.

## **QUOTES AND INSPIRATION**

### Strangers In The Box

Come, look with me inside this drawer,  
In this box I've often seen,  
At the pictures, black and white,  
Faces proud, still, and serene.

I wish I knew the people,  
These strangers in the box,  
Their names and all their memories,  
Are lost among my socks.

I wonder what their lives were like,  
How did they spend their days?  
What about their special times?  
I'll never know their ways.

If only someone had taken time,  
To tell, who, what, where, and when,  
These faces of my heritage,  
Would come to life again

Could this become the fate,  
Of the pictures we take today?  
The faces and the memories,  
Someday to be passed away?

Take time to save your stories,  
Seize the opportunity when it knocks,  
Or someday you and yours,  
Could be strangers in the box.

~ Author Unknown

**I don't really understand my own life until I have storied it and told it to someone else. ~ IG**

**When an elder dies, it is as if an entire library burns down  
-African saying**

**When I was younger, I could remember anything, whether it had happened or not ~Mark Twain**

**Memory allows us to recall the people we've know, the places we've been, the music we listed to and the things we've done.**

**When I look into the mirror I see an elderly man, but also all my former selves at the same time  
~DJ**

**The history of the world is not complete until your history is written.  
~ unknown**

**"Interviewing our parents and grandparents will bring us closer to them especially as we can now relate with many of the stories they tell of their early parenthood years."**

**"I have no money to leave to my grandchildren. My stories are my wealth." ANGELA SIDNEY**

**"He is the happiest man who can trace an unbroken connection between the end of his life and the beginning"  
- JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE**

**"Biography Is the Only True History"**

**-Thomas Carlyle**

## **25 THINGS ABOUT “ME”**

by **Michael R. Boyter**

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Think about it. If you have been trying to figure out a way to get a jump start on writing your autobiography/life story then this is definitely it.

First off, it is a whole lot of fun coming up with the 25 things about yourself but can you see the benefit that such a list could be to your children and grandchildren someday?

If your posterity was only going to know 25 things about you, what would you write down?

There isn't many easier ways to get off to such a good start at writing your personal history.

Even if you've already written a lot of your life story, this list of 25 things would be a great addition to your work.

## **HOW TO GET STARTED IN FAMILY HISTORY**

© **Dale Lee**

Genealogy has become the number one hobby in the United States. For someone that is just beginning the journey into the past, the road can seem a bit confusing.

The following outline is a map of the steps a beginner can take to become familiarized with the terrain. There is an abundance of books written on the subject, however it is always good to get the big picture before digging into the details.

### **Collect what you have:**

Birth Certificates

Baptismal Certificates

Marriage Certificates  
Death Certificates  
Burial records  
Journals  
Diaries  
Wills  
Maiden names  
Deeds to land  
Family legends

**Organize yourself:**

Organize by family  
Alphabetize family group records by last name  
Organize your pedigree charts (ancestry)  
Organize your descendant charts (descendants)  
Organize County folders (repositories, maps, etc.)  
Keep a Correspondence log  
Keep a Research log  
Keep a To-Do list  
Set aside space to store records in the home  
If you have a computer, get a family file program  
Set a Goal, nothing gets done by wishful thinking  
Use manila and/or hanging folders  
Use a notebook  
Helps and Tips you've found  
Research the whole family, sibling info to

**Ask your relatives:**

Close relatives  
Distant relatives  
Family organizations  
Family Bibles  
Family Photo Albums  
Journals  
Diaries  
Family legends  
Gedcom files

**Document your sources:**

Photocopies of documents  
Book titles

Volumes  
Page numbers  
Microfilm numbers  
Microfiche numbers  
Individual ID's, when found  
Documents  
Serial numbers  
Certificate numbers  
Repository name where document found  
Author  
Source  
Publication information  
Printer name  
Date of publication

**Look for outside help:**

Libraries  
Family History libraries  
State libraries  
University libraries  
Family History Centers of the Church of Jesus Christ  
of Latter-day Saints  
Internet organizations  
Family History websites  
Family organizations  
County genealogical societies  
State genealogical societies  
Foreign country organizations  
Genealogical websites  
Genealogical societies  
Genealogical e-mail groups  
Newsgroups  
Mailing lists  
Vital Statistics sites  
Professional Genealogists

**Sources:**

Census records!  
Parish records (Bishop's transcripts, etc.)

Cemeteries  
Newspapers (obituaries and births)  
Immigration records (into a country)  
Emigration records (exiting a country)  
Ships passenger lists  
School records  
Naturalization records  
Military records  
Social security records  
Court records  
Official documents (county records)  
Business filings  
Wills  
Deeds  
Hospital records  
Criminal records  
Bankruptcy records  
How to genealogical primers  
Maps  
Gazetteers  
Trade journals  
History books (trace migrations)  
The International Genealogical Index (IGI)  
Ancestral File  
Pedigree File  
Many CD's with vital statistics records  
Microfilms  
Microfiches

**Publish your findings:**

Send copies to relatives  
Publish your own Family History  
Donate your family file to the Ancestral File  
Make your work available to Genealogical Societies

**Help others:**

Join a Genealogical Society  
Join a genealogical link  
Help make cemetery/grave stone records available  
Help extract and enter data from original records

**About the author:**

Dale Lee is a computer consultant who has been involved in Genealogy for over

12 years. For information on how to publish your own Family History or book manuscript, please visit <http://www.LeeSysInfo.com>

## **TRAVEL JOURNALS – TAKE IT ON THE ROAD**

**By Michael R. Boyter**

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Here is a great opportunity to mix things up in your journal writing. Being on the road gives us plenty of new and sometimes exciting things to write about.

Whether it's for business or pleasure, plan to keep an account of your experiences and dealings.

Almost without fail, I have made it a point to at least write a few pages when I am away from home. I actually find it easier to write when I am away from home.

New people, a new routine and a new environment gives me that added incentive to record the days happenings. For me, I know my memory is not that great so if I want to remember the good times that I am having or the good people I am meeting, I know that I had better write things down or I'll forget them. ☺

Last year my job took me away from home three times (Texas, Belakshir Turkey and to Cairo Egypt) and then a fourth time to Illinois for a quick vacation. In fact I think I may have wrote more on the road than I did at home last year.

Here are some tips that I have learned for writing while traveling:

**Get a new notebook to write in** – This of course is optional but I never would want to take the chance of taking my regular journal from home and then losing it somewhere. Also there is something about a blank book or notebook that makes me eager to write in it. This doesn't have to be expensive; we're taking about the less than \$3.00 notebooks here. ☺ Call me cheap. I don't mind and it works.

**Collect Brochures & Postcards** – Just a few that impress you particularly.

**Keep Tickets** - Not just airline tickets. Keep any other tickets like a bus ticket or a subway ticket. Heck, even a **speeding ticket**, if you were in another country, might be considered a good souvenir. I still have the small ticket to the first subway ride I ever took back in 1984. I was in Caracas Venezuela at the time.

I stuck it onto a page in the journal I was keeping at the time. I simply used a piece of scotch tape....its still there.

**Take advantage of your time** – When we are at home, most of us wait until things settle and quiet down before we think about writing anything. Well, when you are traveling you may not find time like that. Use small intervals of time like when you are stopped at a rest area, riding in a taxi or on an airplane.

**Take Pictures** – This may seem very obvious to most of us. It's nearly as important as the writing part. Don't forget to take pictures of people you meet (with permission of course) and don't forget to take a picture of your hotel room, especially if you spent more than one night in it. It's your home away from home.

**Supplies** – I recommend taking a few extras such as glue sticks. This works great for sticking small things such as the brochures and tickets into your journal. Also take some extra pens.

## **FOR THOSE LEFT BEHIND**

(This is a letter that I received a week ago.

\*The name has been changed)

**Dear Michael,**

**I received the MemoryGrabber yesterday and would like to know if you can give me any added suggestions for writing the life story of my son, who died 3 years ago , for my grandson who is 17.**

**Thank you very much.**

**Susan\***

~~~~~

Hello Susan,*

This is Michael. Thanks so much for writing.
It's great to hear from you.

I'm sorry to hear about your son.

When my wife and I first read your e-mail, one of the first things that popped into our heads was that you need to pull the family together, in one way or another, and have everyone who knew your son contribute, at least a little, to the life story of your son.

When I say everyone, I am referring mainly to family members, but if your son had some friends, either from childhood or adulthood, that are reachable and you feel could contribute, then seek them as well.

Most of the life story will, of course, come from you. Besides your son, you or a spouse would be the most "qualified" to write his life story for your grandson.

Think of this life story project as a puzzle and that everyone who ever knew your son, has a piece of that puzzle right now. The more pieces you gather and put together, the clearer the picture will be for your grandson someday.

Ask your other children for their brother and sister prospective. You of course will have the most to contribute as his mother. Former co-workers may also be able to contribute some stories as well. If you don't get those stories now, the chance may never present itself again.

As your grandson grows up, becomes an adult, gets a job, marries and has children of his own, he will come up against situations in life where he will wonder how his dad handled such situations.

"How did dad handle a bad boss"?

"What did dad do with his life before he met mom"?

These probably aren't the best examples but I hope you understand my point.

It's only natural for a son to compare his life against that of his father as a sort of benchmark.

Much of that "benchmark" will be what you and the family puts together.

My wife's mother passed away early with MS in 1991. There were and still are many things she'd like to know...things dealing with being a mother etc...

Two years ago my grandfather passed away. All the family, to include his brothers and sisters, grandma, children and the grandchildren wrote several favorite memories of grandpa.

My cousin typed it up and made a copy for each member of the family.

We did this, wanting grandpa's great-grandchildren (and so on) to also know him.

It also proved to be a very rewarding experience for all of us. Collectively there were moments remembered from his life that many of us never knew before and there were those stories long forgotten.

As far as MemoryGrabber goes, take and tailor what you can to your son. For example, there's the big list of favorites. Perhaps you can answer most of those etc...

One other thing, Susan. In the midst of all of this, don't forget to write about

your own life. This will be equally important to your grandson and the rest of your grandchildren.

Best Regards,

Michael
FamilyHistoryProducts.com

THANKSGIVING TRADITIONS AND MEMORIES

By Rachel Paxton

Family and tradition. Isn't that what the holidays are really all about? The holidays are the one time of the year that families come together and create memories that will stay with them throughout a lifetime. Children who don't get to spend time with their grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins are really missing out on an opportunity to form a bond that only close family ties can create.

I love to learn about how other families spend their time during the holidays. Some of people's fondest memories are from visiting with friends and relatives during the Thanksgiving holidays. I have put together some of my favorite Thanksgiving traditions that people have submitted to the Creative Homemaking web site.

Jeanette...My favorite memories are of my mother's family gathering at Grandma's house. The holiday did not begin until everyone got there. We often played cards or other games. The most fun is when we would go for a long walk in the country. This would include whomever wanted to go, and would always be an adventure.

Bethany...We rotate homes every year for Thanksgiving. Whoever's house Thanksgiving is at makes the turkey. Everyone else generally brings a vegetable, dessert or salad. Grandma always makes the dressing.

Mrs. Lee...Every holiday we always would write one thing we were thankful for on our place cards.

Shelly...One of my favorite holiday memories is the gathering of my mother's family at her aunt's farm at Thanksgiving. I remember

gatherings including five generations with relatives we only saw every couple of years, but with whom we shared a common ancestry and a common faith. These bonds allowed us to become reacquainted with one another over the course of the day and gave an almost hallowed meaning to the phrase "family ties". Even as a child, I knew my actions reflected on my family, and I would never do anything to bring dishonor to my family. Those family bonds are absent for so many people these days.

Ginger...Each year my husbands family (most of them live near) get together for the Thanksgiving meal. Each family brings a part of the meal (decided by the hostess) and we give thanks to God and enjoy each others company. It's a great time to catch up.

Kathy...Making the center piece with my children when they were little we used to go gather liquid Amber leaves and press them between two pieces of wax paper with some scrapped crayon and name tags also in with the leaves. The kids always looked so forward to this and we kept this up for many years now we make different kinds the kids are older so now we bake together instead which is a lot of fun. Having Thanksgiving at our home is tradition we love.

=====

Rachel Paxton is a freelance writer and mom who publishes the Creative Homemaking Recipe of the Week Club, a weekly newsletter that contains quick, easy dinner ideas and money-saving household hints. To subscribe send a blank e-mail message to <mailto:FreeRecipes-subscribe@egroups.com>

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LIGHT YOUR JOURNEY!

(C) 2001

JULIE JORDAN SCOTT

As a child growing up in a large family, our vacations utilized the least expensive alternatives in entertainment. With six children in a span of ten years, my parents very creatively convinced us, for example, that old cemeteries were very desirable sight seeing destinations. On more highbrow moments, Dad would spot a historical marker. With magnetic force of

unbelievable strength, our Country Squire made its way to the marker, where Dad would reverently read whatever magnificent facts were told on the marker.

While I am now revisiting the Historical Marker experience from a tongue-in-cheek perspective, it was in fact a very valuable learning experience for me. In fact, I have been known to drive off the beaten path if there is either a promising Historical Marker or an especially interesting appearing old cemetery to explore. Think about it a moment. What is significant about the often-overlooked beacon of Americana, the Historical Marker?

These historical billboards connect us to history. They are placed where they are on purpose, to celebrate a significant person, event or place that deserves eternal recognition. They are beacons that connect us with our past in a positive and powerful way.

As my childhood vacations are closely connected to learning about historical happenings outside my personal life, in adulthood, I have learned to grow from my personal historical markers. While these do not dot the landscape of the country backroads for others to read, they echo through my psyche for my heart and soul to read and communicate their significance to others.

You also have Personal Historical Markers. These plaques on our beings notice and remember distinguished people, places and events of significance in our lives. Turning points. Beginnings of chapters and ends of chapters. Characters that touch our hearts.

The power of our Personal Historical Markers is birthed when we use them to ignite our purpose and our passion into compelling action. Edward Gibbon said "Truth, naked, unblushing truth, the first virtue of all serious history, must be the sole recommendation. " These significant events can give us messages and light the path to our calling and to our destiny.

Determining what makes up your history, your authentic past (Mr Gibbon describes this as truth, naked, unblushing) is both simple and profound.

Take a sheet of paper, and draw a horizontal line across it. Fold it into three equal sections, which will be three equal chunks of time on your timeline. With the horizontal line as your guide, note

the highlights and lowlights from your life journey so far.

What will immediately rise to the surface are the huge events. Your birth, marriage, death of a parent, graduations, divorces, births.

These markers will begin to tell your story. With each marker, note briefly either in paragraph or list form the who, what, where, when and why and in ONE SENTENCE, write the main lesson gleaned from the historical marker. What is the message of that particular historical marker? What made it so significant in both your life and the lives of those around you?

To take your journey a step further, how do your markers call you forward? Who are they calling you to be? What are they calling you to do? What is the thread that connects them all together in the beautiful tapestry that will create the rest of your life?

As the physical historical markers I so cherish awaken something in my experience about the past, what are your personal historical markers awakening in you? Johann Friedrich von Schiller, German poet and dramatist eloquently stated "Before Truth sends her triumphant light into the depths of the heart, imagination catches its rays, and the peaks of humanity will be glowing when humid night still lingers in the valleys." Your Historical Markers are the messengers bringing forth that light.

Take the time today to begin to bring that light forth in your life. Allow your heart to speak not only to you, but to humanity as well. Allow your purpose and passion to be drawn forth, compelling others to catch your vision. See your possibilities. And a new personal historical marker will begin to be constructed for you and others as well. Light your journey now.

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Julie Jordan Scott is a Certified Life Purpose Coach who works with action oriented, creative people who are ready to live each moment with passion. Dare to Discover Your Passion, Decide to live YOUR Destiny by subscribing to Julie's daily ezine. Send an email now mailto:[DiscoverYourPassion-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:DiscoverYourPassion-subscribe@egroups.com) or visit her website at <http://www.5passions.com>

## **TIME IN MY POCKET**

By Michael R. Boyter

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It's been said that nothing disappears faster than money!

There have been times that I have had a fairly good amount of money in my pocket. This has usually been when I started out on a trip of some kind; a vacation for example.

Call it a false sense of security or maybe even laziness, but I usually never bother with keeping too close of a watch over how much money I have actually spent while on this trip. Just pull another twenty out of the ole pocket and move along.

"I've plenty of money", I think to myself.

A hotel room paid for here and another dinner there. Another twenty-dollar bill goes toward a souvenir and then don't forget about breakfast the next morning right before I fill up my car with fuel and hit the road again.

I reach a point in my trip that I begin to notice that the wad of twenty-dollar bills is unexpectedly smaller. Suddenly with great concern I hesitantly stop and count the money that is in my pocket. I'm afraid to actually know the answer.

I lament to myself that I should have been keeping better track. At the same time, I tell myself that, next time, I'll keep better track.

When I started out on the trip, I felt that I had plenty of money.

My mind races back, frantically. A feeling of defeated comes over me, as I try to retrace where all the money went! What follows is a sunken feeling, often accompanied by a big bout of depression. How could I let so much of it get away from me? I sit and wonder where it all has gone.

Consider now the years in your lifetime and compare them to the money in the above story. Can you see any comparisons?

It an awful feeling when you cannot account completely for all the

years you've lived. Where have all the years gone?

I just finished reading "The Notebook", written by my favorite author Nicholas Sparks. There is a passage near the end of that book that really made an impression on me and reinforced thoughts that I've always had about keeping journals and life stories.

The elderly central figure in the story is reflecting back over his life:

"I wonder what my daddy would think of my life...I HAVE NOT SEEN HIM FOR FIFTY YEARS and he is now but a shadow in my thoughts. I cannot picture him clearly anymore; his face is darkened as if a light shines from behind him. I am not sure if this is due to a failing memory or simply the passage of time. I have only one picture of him and this too has faded. In another ten years it will be gone and so will I, and his memory will be erased like a message in the sand. IF NOT FOR MY DIARIES, I WOULD SWEAR I HAD LIVED ONLY HALF AS LONG AS I HAVE. Long periods of my life seem to have vanished. And even now, I read the passages and wonder who I was when I wrote them, for I cannot remember the events of my life. THERE ARE TIMES I SIT AND WONDER WHERE IT ALL HAS GONE! "

Just as he could swear he'd lived only half the years he had, I would swear that I somehow should have had more money left. Since I failed to keep a record, I can no longer remember completely where all the money went.

Likewise the memories we have of our parents will surely fade to varying Degrees without taking measure to record stories and events from their lives; now while they are still alive. If our parents have passed on already, go to work at gathering all the memories of him or her from living relatives such as your aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters.

The memories and lives of our parents and grandparents are not completely gone until the last person with a memory of them, is also passed away. A story forgotten can never be retold!

I have long been a believer in keeping a journal or diary and preserving our life story, both for our own benefit and that of our children and our children's children.

Your life story should contain memories from your past, who you

currently are and what you've done with your life so far. Also include what you presently believe, think, value, hope and dream for.

So take some time and write at least a little about your unique life. This undertaking will be the difference between contently looking back over your life and sadly swearing that you've only lived half the time that you have.

Happy is the man that can trace a line from the end of his life back to it's beginning.

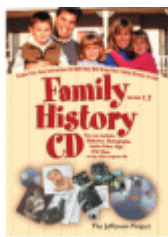
It's been said that nothing disappears faster than time!

Family History Jumpstart was presented by:

<http://www.your-life-your-story.com>

Please Pay a Visit to show your thanks...and don't forget to send a copy to a friend

[ALSO AVAILABLE AT WWW.FAMILYHISTORYPRODUCTS.COM](http://WWW.FAMILYHISTORYPRODUCTS.COM)



Family History CD is now greatly improved and renamed "Passage Express". This is super simple software to use, yet you come off looking very impressive to your friends and family. Compile all your photos, into a multimedia CD-ROM for easy and inexpensive distribution to family and friends.

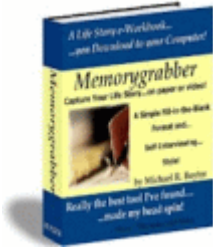


***The Journal***

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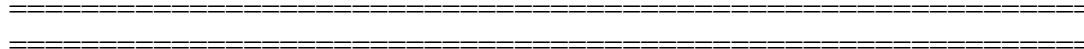
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[All They'll Need to Know](#) - Record and preserve vital information your family will need to know, when you aren't there to give it to them. A downloadable book that you need more than you realize.



**I thank you for downloading and reading Family History Jumpstart.** This is the end, but I do have two more quick things to pass on to you. This will interest you if you currently own a business, web site or have considered starting a business online.

I started FamilyHistoryProducts.com back in Aug of 2000 and it has been a great learning experience for me. I've spent countless hours trying everything I could to create a successful Web site and here are my absolute top two finds over the last three years. They are my top two picks based on what these products do and for their extreme value to me.

I think you will find this most interesting, as I mentioned before, if you are currently in business (online or offline), want to run a web business or know a friend who is in business for himself/herself.

### **ITEM #1 – A FREE, yet very **Valuable** DOWNLOAD**

**Site Build It** – The greatest thing I've found in my 7 years of searching the Internet. **Receives my Highest Recommendation!**



### **The Complete E-Business Builder... From Concept to Site to Income**

Every successful online business owner has a **system** that **works...**

- 1) Create** a Web site that **builds targeted traffic.**
- 2) Convert** that traffic into dollars...

- by selling a **service** through that site, AND/OR...
- by selling one or more products on that site (ex., **e-goods** such as an e-book), AND/OR...
- by causing visitors to click-through, with an open-to-buy attitude, to several, well-selected merchants who pay commissions for sales generated from such referrals (i.e., **affiliate** income).



The **most** successful SOHOs/small businesses develop **multiple** streams of income by blending two, or all three, of the above techniques.

The system is easy... **in concept**. But it's hard and tedious... **in execution**. Up until now, that system has been out of reach of most small business owners. The execution simply takes too much **time** and **money** and **organization** and **energy**. Too much (wo)manpower.

Up until now, only a very small percent could succeed... the people to the "far right" of the "bell curve of success." They figure it all out -- assembling a system composed of a variety of **expensive tools** from several different vendors, then paying for custom **design** and **programming** and **Web hosting**.

Unfortunately, that's simply beyond the reach of most small businesses... **up until now**.

---

## **Now... Shift The Bell Curve in Your Favor Start with The Free, Full Insider's Action Guide**

**Site Build It! (SBI!)**  
**<http://buildit.sitesell.com/>**

**SBI!'s** easy-to-use, powerful **system of e-tools** leverages your time and money 100-fold. From developing a Site Concept (theme), to brainstorming profitable keywords, to building a site, to generating **targeted traffic**, the **SBI! System** turns everything that is difficult and/or tedious into... a mouse click.

**Nothing** has been left out -- you can even **custom-design** your own logo, navigation bar, and your site's "look and feel." Take subscriptions to your **e-zine** -- publishing an e-zine is the best way to maintain contact and to build rapport with potential clients. Yes...

**SBI!** is **already THE** perfect business-building system if you want to generate **affiliate** income and/or sell a **service** online... and wait until you see the upcoming enhancements (**[which you can get for free by starting now -- more on this in my P.S. below](#)**).

**Want to get the full "insider's view?"**

I have arranged with SiteSell.com for you to download a **free** PDF-formatted copy of **Make Your Content PREsell!** (from my site). It's the **actual guide** that **SBI!**

owners use. You'll get a clear picture of how quick-and-easy **SBI!** makes it to execute all the profitable traffic-building and sales-generating strategies outlined in the guide... freeing you up to focus on **your business!**

Take advantage of the **free download**. See first-hand how the **SBI! Total System** works. Skim through the Guide and then decide.

Zero downside, terrific upside. My kind of risk/reward ratio!

[\*\*Click here to Download the SBI! Action Guide e-book.\*\*](#)

3.9MB - Windows and MacOs

You are about to download a zipped file ("SBI-AG.zip"). Save it to your desktop. After you have downloaded, unzip it.

**1) ReadMeFirst.txt**

Please **do** read this file first -- it will get you to a flying start!

**2) TOC.pdf**

Use the TOC to get the "big picture" of **SBI!** quickly.

**3) MYCPS!.pdf**

**Make Your Content PREsell!** is **SBI!'s Action Guide** that leads you step by step through an effective and easy-to-understand site-and-traffic-building process.

**Site Build It!** makes the technology and complexity of Net marketing disappear. There's no need to learn HTML, FTP, or Web site design. Nor do you have learn expensive, complicated site-building software like FrontPage. Search engines?... **Site Build It!** takes care of all the fine points of Search Engine optimization.

**Bottom line...** all you have to think about is... **your business**. Build a successful site that **your visitors and the Search Engines** will love and get on with the rest of **your business**.

To put it simply...

**SBI!** delivers the information and tools to get the job done easier, faster and cheaper.

**Download the SBI! Action Guide now and see for yourself.**

I will **not** make a more important suggestion during 2006.

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**P.S. Soon... SBI!** will **also** enable you to...

- process credit cards, in real-time, with your own merchant account
- sell your own e-goods (e-book, software, collection of e-photos, MP3s, etc.) from the site
- digitally fulfill orders in a **totally automated** fashion
- drive even more traffic through your own affiliate program, paying commissions to others for driving traffic to your site!
- send e-zines to opt-in subscribers (as explained above), **and also to** your customers and your affiliates.

**Special bonus news:** Don't wait for the e-commerce version to launch. Start building your **SBI!** site now. And start creating your own e-product. When **SBI!-E** launches, all **current SBI!** owners receive all the e-commerce functionality (not including the % transaction fee, of course) free, for the rest of the first year of your subscription!

**Site Build It! (SBI!)**

**<http://buildit.sitesell.com/>**

**....and then must see Item #2 is Audio Generator. An outstanding tool!**

**Does Your Website Talk?**  
If not, **click here** NOW!

**Click the graphic above and prepare to be amazed!**

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