



Presentation to Lincoln Hills Genealogy Group

GEnealogical **Data** **COM**munication (**GEDCOM**)

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Sharing Data With Others

Genealogy is a hobby in which the first genealogist wishes to share everything he/she collects with other genealogists, and wants other genealogists to share everything they collect with him/her.

“share and share alike”



Why GEDCOM?

Timeline of Computing and Genealogy

- Before 1977 — mainframes
- About 1977 — assembled home computers
- By 1980 — Basic/CPM family history programs
- 1981 — IBM PC
- 1983 — PAF
- 1984 — Roots III
- **1985 — GEDCOM**
- 1988 — Windows
- 1991 -- WWW
- 1993 -- Mosaic
- 1994 — Netscape
- 1995 — Internet Explorer



What is a GEDCOM file?

- **GEDCOM is just a special text file *format* used for transferring genealogy data that:**
 - **Allows transfer of data between genealogy programs.**
 - **Can be read and edited by any word/text processing program.**
 - **Was developed & published by the Church of LDS in 1985.**

When is a File a GEDCOM File?



- A file is in **GEDCOM** format when it ends in the extension **.ged** .
- If a file ends with the extension **.zip** , then it has been zipped (compressed) and needs to be unzipped first to become a **.ged** file.

Use a GEDCOM File:

- **To backup a genealogy database.**
- **To merge two genealogy databases.**
- **To split a genealogy database.**
- **To send your genealogy database to a different program.**
- **To upload your genealogy database to a web site.**

GEDCOM Example

- **0 @I2@ INDI** <- The level 0 means this is a new record. The INDI tag means the record is for an individual.
- **1 NAME Charles Phillip /Ingalls/** <-name of individual
- **1 SEX M** <- level 1 info denotes data about the individual in level 0, Charles Ingalls
- **1 BIRT**
- **2 DATE 10 JAN 1836** <- this is level 2, because it refers to the birth in level 1 above
- **2 PLAC Cuba, Allegheny, NY**
- **1 DEAT**
- **2 DATE 08 JUN 1902**
- **2 PLAC De Smet, Kingsbury, Dakota Territory**
- **1 FAMC @F2@**
- **1 FAMS @F3@**
- **0 @I3@ INDI** <-A new record (level 0) for a new individual
- **1 NAME Caroline Lake /Quiner/**
- **1 SEX F**
- **1 BIRT**
- **2 DATE 12 DEC 1839**
- **2 PLAC Milwaukee Co., WI**
- **1 DEAT**
- **2 DATE 20 APR 1923**
- **2 PLAC De Smet, Kingsbury, Dakota Territory**
- **1 FAMC @F21@** <-FAMC indicates the FAM record where this person appears as a Child
- **1 FAMS @F3@** <-FAMS indicates the FAM record where this person appears as a Spouse



Acquiring a GEDCOM File

- E-mail.
- Snail mail.
- Downloading from a web site.



Opening and Reading a GEDCOM File

- Is it really a **GEDCOM** file?
- Scan the **GEDCOM** file for viruses.
- Save the **GEDCOM** file on your hard drive.
- Backup your existing genealogy database.
- Import the **GEDCOM** file into your genealogy program.



Generic Instructions for Opening/Importing a GEDCOM File

- Launch your genealogy software program.
- Click the **File** menu.
- Select **Open, Import, or Import GEDCOM.**
- Select **.GED** or **GEDCOM** in the **File Type** box.
- Browse to and select the GEDCOM file you wish to import.
- The program will create a new genealogy database containing the information from the GEDCOM. Enter a filename for this new database. (RingoFamily)
- Click **Save** or **Import.**
- Select choices or accept defaults.
- Click **OK.**
- Confirmation of successful import when finished.
- Open and read the newly imported GEDCOM file in your genealogy software program.



Generic Instructions for Creating a GEDCOM File

- Launch your family tree program and open your genealogy file.
- Click the **File** menu.
- Select either **Export** or **Save as...**
- Change the **Save As Type** or **Destination** drop-down box to **GEDCOM** or **.GED** .
- Select the location where you'd like to save your exported file.
- Enter a filename such as 'RingoFamilyHistory'.
- Click **Save** or **Export** .
- After confirmation box appears stating that your export has succeeded, Click **OK**.
- You may need to run a GEDCOM privatizing program.



How to Share a GEDCOM File

- E-mail.
- Snail mail.
- Uploading to a web site

How well does GEDCOM Transfer Genealogy Data?



- In general, “BMDB” information is effectively transferred.
- The biological relationships of parents and children are handled well by most genealogy software programs.
- Beyond these areas, it all depends on the genealogy software and it varies greatly.



Properly Written Place Names

- city, county, state, country
- Bartlesville, Washington, OK, USA
- Bartlesville, Washington, OK
- ,Washington, OK
- ,,OK
- Bartlesville,,OK



Improperly Written Place Names

- Bartlesville, Cooweescooee District, Cherokee Nation, IT (now Bartlesville, Washington, OK)
- Germany (Is it the country or a city in GA, IN, OH, PA, or TX?)
- Lincoln, California (Either Lincoln,,CA or Lincoln, Placer, CA is correct.)



TIP

- When transferring your database back and forth between the same family history program on different computers, always use the “**File Backup**” and “**File Restore**” commands to avoid any data loss.





Questions ?

