

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ROOTSWEB

Cass County Public Library – Genealogy Branch

About RootsWeb

www.rootsweb.com

Founded in 1993, this Ancestry-owned database is free to use from any computer. It is an online community geared toward connecting users with other genealogists researching the same families. With RootsWeb's family trees, message boards, mailing lists, and user-created websites, users can collaborate with like-minded researchers to explore their shared family history.

2017 Security Breach

Hundreds of thousands of RootsWeb users' email, login information, and passwords were exposed externally. Over 300,000 accounts were affiliated with the database's *surname list* service that it retired in 2017, 55,000 of the user names belonged to both the free RootsWeb site and also to Ancestry. RootsWeb was temporarily taken offline to enhance its security. *Because of this, all users will have to create a new account to login in to the database.* However, it is not necessary to have an account to use the website. **RootsWeb accounts are free to create.**

NAVIGATING THE MAIN PAGE

Library patrons who use *Ancestry Library Edition* will find the home page of RootsWeb familiar – it is visually similar to the Library Edition's home page. Using the navigation bar at the top, patrons can access all of the major features of the database.

Also like Ancestry Library Edition, RootsWeb's home page has **multiple ways to get to the same place**, (as seen below).

The image shows a screenshot of the RootsWeb homepage with several navigation arrows pointing to different sections. The navigation bar at the top includes: Home, Family Trees, Mailing Lists, Message Boards, Web Sites, My Account, Wiki, and Help. The main content area features a large banner for 'Connect to Family Trees' with a 'Begin Searching' button. Below the banner are three sections: 'HOSTED WEB SITES', 'MESSAGE BOARDS', and 'MAILING LISTS'. The 'MAILING LISTS' section includes a notice about the discontinuation of mailing lists functionality as of March 2nd, 2020, and mentions that message boards are available as an alternative.

Click to search the **WorldConnect** family trees

Click to join and search archived **Mailing Lists**

Click to browse **Hosted Web Sites**

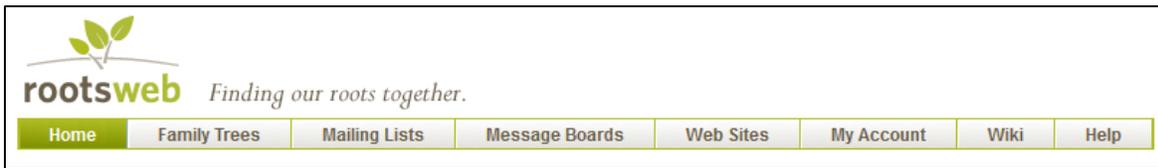
Click here to access the **RootsWeb Wiki**

Click to search Ancestry's **Message Boards**

Navigation Bar

The bar across the top of every page provides direct navigation to RootsWeb's various features.

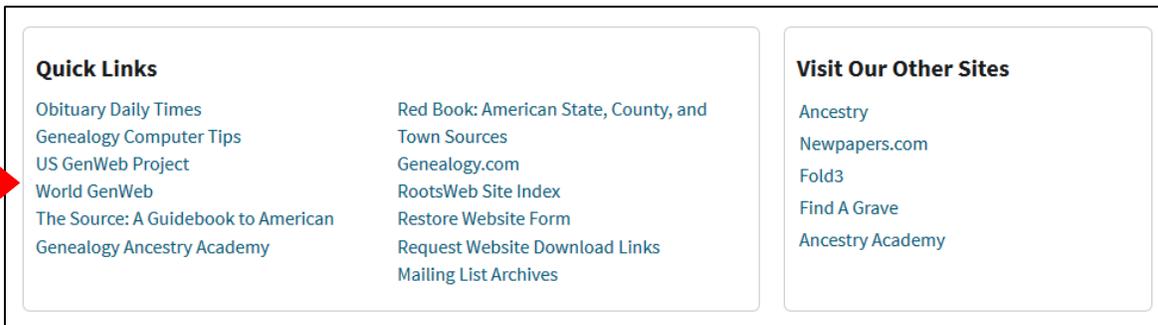
- Clicking **Home** from any page of the website will take you back to the page shown above.
- Log into your account (or view your account details) by clicking on **My Account**
- If you need help using one of RootsWeb's features, click on **Help** to view answers to basic support questions



Quick Links

Located at the bottom of the home page are the *Quick Links* – links that provide direct access to many of the sub-sections of the database. The most beneficial links here include:

- *Obituary Daily Times*
- *US GenWeb Project*
- *Genealogy.com*
- *Red Book & The Source* (directs you to the RootsWeb Wiki)



WORLDCONNECT PROJECT — FAMILY TREES

What is WorldConnect?

This feature is a searchable collection of GEDCOMs submitted from users around the world. There are over 6 million surnames in this database, and over 787 million individual names.

What is a GEDCOM?

The acronym stands for **GE**nealogical **D**ata **COM**munication. It is a type of file that is used by genealogy software programs such as *Family Tree Maker* or *Legacy Family Tree*. Most of these software programs allow users to import and export their family tree data as a GEDCOM file.

Searching for GEDCOMs by Name/Tree ID

This type of search is helpful when you are going directly to a family tree for which you already know the Tree ID or Gedcom Name. By default, this is the search form that appears on the WorldConnect main page.

The image shows a search form for the WorldConnect project. It has a title "Go directly to gedcom (enter Treeld or Gedcom Name)". Below the title are two input fields: "Treeld" and "Gedcom Name". Both fields have a question mark icon to their right. To the right of the "Gedcom Name" field is a green "Go" button.

Tree ID

This is the number directly following <https://wc.rootsweb.com/trees/> in the address bar when viewing the tree.

- E.g. entering 121394 in the Tree ID search will direct you to the summary page for the main person in the “Clarke Family Tree”

Gedcom Name

With this you are searching for the name given to the GEDCOM provided by the user who originally submitted the GEDCOM file.

- The *Gedcom Name* is often the name of the family tree, e.g. “Clarke Family Tree,” but can also be a string of numbers and letters e.g. “a10001”
- If there are multiple GEDCOMs with the same name, you are directed to the first one, not a list of all GEDCOMs with that name.

Search for People by Name

This type of search is beneficial for users who are doing a general search of the database. Click on [search for people by name](#) at the top of the form to view. With the search form, users can search by:

- first and last names (with phonetic filters)
- gender
- birth year and location
- death year and location

Note: *Not all blanks must be completed to search*

WorldConnect

Click on a letter below to browse the uploaded gedcoms by name. You can also [search for people by name](#).
We have also added the ability to [upload your gedcom](#).

Search database for a person

First Names Last Names Phonetic? Treeld

Gender Male Female Unknown

Birth Year +/- Birth Place

Death Year +/- Death Place

Results:

Herman James THEROFF: Birth: . Death: OCT 1994 in Aptos, Santa Cruz, California
Barbara Theroff: Birth: 12 MAR 1861 in Velle, Iowa. Death: 1951 in Boonville, Cooper County, Missouri
? Theroff: Birth: WFT Est. 1847-1879. Death: WFT Est. 1873-1959
Dlada Lena Elizabeth Theroff: Birth: 1 Dec 1974 in Missouri. Death: 16 Sept 2007
Heinrich "Henry" Phillip Theroff: Birth: 22 Sept 1886 in Cole County, Missouri. Death: 22 Jul 1912 in Jefferson City, Cole, Missouri

Example: A basic search with a last name

Search results appear at the bottom of the page, including the birth and death information for the individual (if available).

Click on a name to view the summary page for that individual in their tree.

Individual Page (right)

This page displays the information this family tree has for the individual, including name, gender, birth and death data, Person ID number, and Tree ID number.

Any relatives also included in this family tree will be shown below. This individual has both parents in this tree, but no spouse or children. Attached sources for the information provided may also be shown here.

Note: *Information contained in RootsWeb family trees is user-contributed and may not be accurate.*

Individual Page

Person Info

- Name: Heinrich "Henry" Phillip Theroff
- Sex: M
- Birth: 22 Sept 1886 in Cole County, Missouri
- Death: 22 Jul 1912 in Jefferson City, Cole, Missouri
- Person Id: P493
- Tree Id: 121394

Search for Heinrich "Henry" Phillip Theroff in Fold3 World War I and World War II Records
Search for Heinrich "Henry" Phillip Theroff in Newspapers
519 Possible Record Matches on Ancestry

Parents

Father:

- Adam Theroff: Birth: 1863 in Bayern, Germany. Death: 1952

Mother:

- Rosina Katharina Lochner: Birth: abt 1865 in Missouri.

Viewing Family Trees

From the Individual Page (*shown above*) you have several additional options for viewing the information in the family tree. These can be accessed using the secondary navigation bar at the top of the page.



- *Descendancy*
 - Arranges descendants of a specified individual or couple vertically, often including birth and death data of each individual.
- *Pedigree (Text)*
 - A horizontal family tree that lists names and nothing else. *All names can be clicked on to view the corresponding Individual Page.*
- *Pedigree (Table)*
 - A horizontal family tree that lists names and birth, death, and marriage data for all individuals. *All names can be clicked on to view the corresponding Individual Page.*
- *Registry*
 - Similar to a Descendancy, but more narrative about the birth, marriage, and death data for each descendant in the direct line *moving forward in time.*
- *Ahnentafel*
 - German for “ancestor table.” Similar to a Registry, but starts with the individual selected and *moves backward in time.*
- *Index*
 - A list of all individuals included in the tree alphabetically by surname.

Submitting GEDCOMs to RootsWeb

To submit a GEDCOM to RootsWeb, you must be logged into a personal account. Click on *My Account* located in the navigation bar at the top of the page.

- From the User Account page, you can view the trees you have already submitted and upload a GEDCOM file from your computer.
- Users can *delete* or *download* a previously submitted tree by clicking on the buttons provided.
- Trees cannot be edited from RootsWeb. To change any of the information, you will have to update the GEDCOM file using family tree software and upload the file to RootsWeb again.

User Account
Edit Profile Manage Emails Change Password Hosted Sites World Connect Trees Logout Delete Account

Worldconnect Trees

We are in the process of importing all of the gedcoms from the old WorldConnect system. This will take some time. You may upload a gedcom if you wish.

Gedcom Name	Email	Title	Name	URL	Created	Status	Download	Delete
cmclarke	clarke@casscolibrary.org	Clarke Family Tree	Chelsea Clarke	View Tree	03-14-2019 04:03:18	Finished	Download	Delete

To upload a GEDCOM, choose a file from your computer below

[Select GEDCOM from your computer](#)

MAILING LISTS

Note: Beginning March 2nd, 2020 the Mailing Lists functionality on RootsWeb will be **discontinued**. Users will no longer be able to send outgoing emails or accept incoming emails. After that, mailing list archives will remain available and searchable on RootsWeb.

RootsWeb Mailing Lists

A complete index to RootsWeb's 32,740 genealogy mailing lists!
[RootsWeb Mailing Lists Help](#)

Search List Archives

[Search all list archives](#)

Search archives of messages sent to all mailing lists over the years.

Please note that we are working hard to bring mailing list archives back online, but will not be finished for some time. Thus, searching archives does not currently return complete results.

Popular Lists

[Join Roots](#), the first and largest genealogy list

[Join Gen-Newbie](#), for internet and genealogy newbies

[Join the Transitional-Generologists-Forum](#), for genealogists who are looking to improve their skills. This is the place to ask questions.

Find a List

Type in a surname, location, or topic:

Match Exactly Use Soundex

You can subscribe, unsubscribe, or search the archives for an individual mailing list.

Browse to a list by surname, location, or other topics

Surnames

A	H	O	V
B	I	P	W
C	J	Q	X
D	K	R	Y
E	L	S	Z
F	M	T	
G	N	U	

USA

Alabama	Illinois	Nebraska	South Dakota
Alaska	Indiana	Nevada	Tennessee
Arizona	Iowa	New Hampshire	Texas
Arkansas	Kansas	New Jersey	Utah
California	Kentucky	New Mexico	Vermont
Colorado	Louisiana	New York	Virgin Islands
Connecticut	Maine	North Carolina	Virginia
Delaware	Maryland	North Dakota	Washington
District of Columbia	Massachusetts	Ohio	West Virginia
Florida	Michigan	Oklahoma	Wisconsin
General Purpose Lists	Minnesota	Oregon	Wyoming
Georgia	Mississippi	Pennsylvania	
Hawaii	Missouri	Puerto Rico	
Idaho	Montana	South Carolina	

International

Acadia	Djibouti	Latvia	Sao Tome and Principe
Afghanistan	Dominican Republic	Lebanon	Saudi Arabia
Africa	Ecuador	Lesotho	Scotland
Albania	Egypt	Liberia	Senegal
Algeria	El Salvador	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Seychelles

Searching Mailing List Archives

Even after this feature is discontinued, users will be able to search archived messages sent through RootsWeb mailing lists.

To Search: click on [Search all list archives](#) or type a surname, location, or topic in the Find a List search.

Browsing Mailing Lists

Users can also browse lists by surname, location, or topic. This may help users locate mailing lists when they don't know exactly what they are looking for or are trying to cast a wider net.

Surnames: Click on a letter to browse surnames alphabetically.

USA: Click on a state to view all Mailing Lists associated with research or resources there.

International: Click on a country to view Mailing Lists associated with international research and resources there.

Other: Mailing lists included under the *Other* category cover miscellaneous topics such as ethnic group research, record types, digitization, newsletters, and more.

Example: A search for name "Clemency Pipkin" brought up a message in a mailing list called KYALLEN dedicated to research in Allen County, Kentucky.

Search for a list

2020	Re: [KYALLEN] Asa Roark of Allen County, Kentucky	2 messages	12/15/2001, 2:57:14 AM
2018	Asa Roark, grandfather of Asa Walter Roark was the Baptist minister. Asa, the minister, was the son of William Roark who had a large part in establishing the Puncheon Creek Baptist Church.		
2016			
2015	"This church, located in the southeastern part of Allen County, Ky., near the state line, on the waters of Puncheon Camp Creek, was organized in the year 1804. The history of the church is very meager. The minutes do not give the date of its constitution. It seems to have been gathered through the labors of Elder Wm. Roark, who came from North Carolina in an early day and entered a large tract of land on Puncheon Camp Creek. There were nine members entered in the constitution of this church. Namely: Elder Wm. Roark, Lewis Pipkins, Dea. Benj. Poe, Lovel Stinson, (?) Taylor, Clerk, Comfort Poe, Clemency Pipkins, Sarah Taylor and Sarah Roark.		
2014	Elder Wm. Roark gave two acres of land to the church and assisted in building the first house or worship for the church.		
2011	Elder Asa Roark gave the church two acres of land, making it four in all. A portion of the lands has been set apart as a burying ground. "		
2010	Melody		
2009	Get your FREE download of MSN Explorer at http://explorer.msn.com/ind.asp		
2008			
2007			

Re: [KYALLEN] Asa Roark of Allen County, Kentucky

Gale Carter

Asa Roark, grandfather of Asa Walter Roark was the Baptist minister. Asa, the minister, was the son of William Roark who had a large part in establishing the Puncheon Creek Baptist Church.

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Elder Wm. Roark gave two acres of land to the church and assisted in building the first house or worship for the church.

Elder Asa Roark gave the church two acres of land, making it four in all. A portion of the lands has been set apart as a burying ground..."

Melody

USING MESSAGE BOARDS

Clicking on the Message Boards link in the navigation bar directs users to Ancestry's message boards feature. It contains over 25 million posts and more than 198,000 boards covering a variety of locations, surnames, genealogy topics, and more.

Ancestry Message Boards

Here you can view interactions between Ancestry members including research questions, volunteer look-up solicitation, and collaboration between genealogists researching the same topics, geographic regions, and families.

- A **Board** is a group of conversations in a specific category
- A **Thread** is a single conversation in that category.

Note: An Ancestry account is needed in order to contribute and interact with other members on these boards. Even with a free account, users can search, view, and comment on existing boards and threads, as well as start new ones.

Searching

Enter a name or keyword into the basic search form. Search results will include boards dedicated to localities and surnames that include the keyword(s).

Browsing

If you are unsure what you are searching for, you can try manually browsing by clicking on one of the categories listed below and filtering to more specific categories from there. E.g. clicking Canada > Alberta > Cypress will result in a list of all boards associated with Cypress County, Alberta, Canada regardless of topic.

The screenshot displays the Ancestry Message Boards page. At the top, the navigation bar includes 'ancestry', 'Trees', 'Search', 'DNA', 'Health', 'Help', 'Extras', 'Subscribe', and 'Sign In >'. The main heading is 'Message Boards' with a subtext: 'The world's largest online genealogy community with over 25 Million posts on more than 198,000 boards.'

There are three main sections highlighted with red boxes:

- Search for content in message boards:** This section contains a search bar with the placeholder text 'Names or keywords' and an example 'e.g. John Smith or Civil War'. It includes a 'Search' button and a link to 'Advanced Search'.
- Find a board about a specific topic:** This section has a search bar for 'Surnames or topics' with a 'Go' button. Below it, there is a 'Surnames' section with a list of letters from A to O.
- Find a board about a specific topic (Detailed View):** This section shows the search results for 'clarke'. It includes a 'Surnames or topics' field with a green checkmark and a 'Go' button. Below this, there is a 'Boards' section listing several boards with their full paths, such as 'Localities > North America > United States > States > Alabama > Counties > Clarke'. At the bottom of this section, there is a pagination control showing '10 per page' and '1 of 1'.

On the left side of the page, there is a 'Categories' section with 'Localities Categories' and a list of categories: Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and Ireland, United States, and Western Europe. There are also links for 'More Localities Categories >' and 'Topics Categories'.

ROOTSWEB WIKI

Similar to Wikipedia and FamilySearch's Wiki, RootsWeb's Wiki contains genealogy articles pulled from *The Source* and *Red Book*.

- Users can access helpful information about genealogy research and resources based on location, record type, ethnic group research, and more.
- The Wiki can be searched with keywords using the *search bar* in the top right corner or browsed using the general *links* provided

The screenshot shows the main page of the RootsWeb Wiki. At the top, there is a search bar labeled 'Search Rootsweb'. Below the search bar, the page is divided into several sections. On the left, there is a navigation menu with links like 'Main page', 'Recent changes', and 'Help'. The main content area includes a 'Welcome to the Ancestry.com Family History Wiki' message, a 'Read the Featured Article' section with a snippet of text and a handwritten document image, and an 'Explore the Wiki' section with a list of links and a brief description of the site's content. A red arrow points from the search bar to the search input field, and another red arrow points from the 'Explore the Wiki' section to the 'Content added by you' link.

Example: Kentucky Revolutionary War Records

This page provides contextual information regarding the war in Kentucky, record and resource availability, and links to other types of records for Kentucky.

The screenshot shows a specific article on the RootsWeb Wiki titled 'Kentucky Military Revolutionary Records'. The page includes a search bar at the top right and a navigation menu on the left. The main content area features a title, a byline, and a detailed introduction to the records. It lists various resources such as 'The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy', 'Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources', and 'Other great Ancestry.com content'. A red arrow points from the search bar to the search input field, and another red arrow points from the 'Explore the Wiki' section to the 'Content added by you' link.

HOSTED WEBSITES

RootsWeb hosts a variety of user-created website. Users can browse an index of these sites organized by location, both in the United States and international, websites dedicated to specific family trees, and other miscellaneous topics.

Obituary Daily Times

This began as an obituary sharing project for genealogists. This volunteer database contains obituaries submitted from the United States, Canada, and around the world. Users can search the obituary index which provides a transcription of the information provided including: name, approximate date of birth, age, place of death, name of publication in which it was published and publication date.

Note: This database is not comprehensive and the level of detail provided varies.

Search Obituaries

Keywords
Example: Alfred Hitchcock, CA

Advanced Search

SUBMIT **RESET**

Obituary Results

AARON, Sylva (); 83; OH-Dallas TX; Dallas M-N; 1996-2-24; ksavage
 ABERNATHY, Ruth (SINNOTT); 86; KY-Dallas TX; Dallas M-N; 1996-2-24; ksavage
 ABRAM, Arthur J; 97;; Worcester T-G (MA); 1996-2-26; cwhee
 ACORS, Etta M (); 84; Richmond VA; Richmond T-D; 1996-2-26; wstyles
 ACOSTA, Carmen Della (); 65; New York NY-Casselberry FL; Orlando Sentinel; 1996-2-26; hommelt
 ADAMOVICH, Milan;; ; West Australian (WA AUS); 1996-2-27; tdavey
 ADAMS, Ethel "Susie" (QUEIR); 95; Indio CA; Desert Sun; 1996-2-21; whugheslq
 ADAMS, John Gene; 90; metro Portland OR; Oregonian; 1996-2-25; beverly
 ADAMS, Wallace Leroy; 60; Kewadin MI; Traverse R-E; 1996-2-24; rglfwlter
 ADCOCK, Edward;; ; Perth AUS; West Australian (WA AUS); 1996-2-27; tdavey
AGUILAR, Silvino; 22; Medford OR; Mail Tribune; 1996-2-25; beverly
 AHERNS, Julius E;; ; Baltimore MD; Baltimore Sun; 1996-2-22; cacausey
 AINSWORTH, Heldy;; ; North Augusta SC; Augusta Ch (GA); 1996-2-26; ifoley
 ALAGNA, Anthony J; 78; Detroit MI; Detroit News; 1996-2-26; cwkirsch
 ALCOCK, Albert Jr; 71; Claysville PA; Standard-Times (MA); 1995-2-21; pdg
 ALIOA, Albert; 69; Lincoln Park MI; Detroit News; 1996-2-26; cwkirsch

Example: Obituary Search Results

Name: Silvino Aguilar

Approx. Birth Year: abt 1974

Age: 22

Place of Death: Medford OR

Publication Abbreviation: Mail Tribune

Publication Date: 25 Feb 1996

GenWeb Project

This is an ongoing volunteer project working to provide free genealogy help and information for every U.S. state. The goal is to have a website dedicated to every county in each state. These websites provide access to user-contributed records and resources, volunteer look-ups, research tips, and inquiry boards. *Click on a state in the map or select it from the drop-down list in the top right corner to begin.*

Visit the library's locations page (www.casscolibrary.org/locations) for CCPL Genealogy's location, contact information, and hours of operation. Information regarding our digital collections, access to online databases, submitting inquiries, and more, can be found on Cass County Public Library's Genealogy Resources page, located here: www.casscolibrary.org/genealogy

Send Research Inquiries to:
askgenealogy@casscolibrary.org

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