

Family History Interest Group Annual Report 2021-22

Craig Swan and Lynn C. Anderson co-chair the Family History Interest Group (FHIG) for UMRA. In 2021-22 we offered five programs from 10-11 a.m. on Wednesdays via Zoom. Attendance ranged from 15 to 44 for each program. We had announcements about our programs in the UMRA Newsletters and sent emails to all UMRA members a month and a week before each program. After each presentation we had 10-15 minutes for discussion and Q and A. Each of our programs was recorded and is available for viewing on the UMRA website and many of them are also on the UMAA Gold Mind website.

On October 13, 2021 UMRA member Vicki Gaylord described ways that she has found to encourage family members to join in the adventure of learning about the lives of those who've gone before us, including ideas for using digital communications.

On December 8, 2021 our topic was "Scanning Family Photos." Craig Swan talked about taking pictures (of your family pictures) with a digital camera, and the pros and cons of fee-based services and flat-bed scanners. David Spear, Professor Emeritus of medieval history at Furman University (and a friend of Lynn's), explained the workings of the Epson FastFoto FF 680W photo scanner (a top-feed scanner), with all its strengths and weaknesses, and made a brief comparison to flat-bed scanners. Part of his presentation was filmed in advance to show how the device works.

On February 9, 2022, our program focused on "Doing family history research with DNA." UMRA member and retired Professor of Biology, John Anderson talked about the science behind this approach, and his own personal experience with DNA analyzed by Ancestry.com.

On April 13, 2022, our topic was "Writing your family stories" by Brenda Hudson, U of M PhD in 2010. Hudson guided us in her story-project method to capture our family's history easily and quickly, one story at a time. We learned how to overcome doubt, writer's block, and/or being overwhelmed as Hudson shared practical and creative ways to finally write or expand the stories that shape your family's past, present, and future. Hudson teaches writing at Walden University, The Loft, and Voiced Life. Her book *Story by Story: 15 Projects to Write Your Family Legacy* was the foundation for the workshop.

On May 11, 2022 we had a general FHIG Q and A where participants could share ideas, information, insights, and questions. We had a lively discussion and got great ideas for FHIG 2022-23 topics.

Submitted by Lynn C. Anderson and Craig Swan, FHIG co-chairs