

How to share your home movies and genealogy videos

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For the Franklin Public Library Genealogy Club, 10/26/2023

Why Home Movies and Videos?

First - home movies are a form of family history. Home movies captures of our families, whether from 50 years ago or today, are a wonderful time capsule for our future descendants. They provide not just a visual image but a window into our personalities.

Second – we spend a lot of time doing genealogical research and we are proud of the work we have done. But will our children or grandchildren feel as excited about our charts, genealogical summaries, and groups sheets as we do? Probably not. Video is the answer to put our genealogy in a form that our heirs and descendants will want to keep. Not only that, it serves as a way to get our families interested and excited about family history.

This talk covers:

1. Converting Home Movies
2. Creating Home Movies and Genealogy Videos
3. Sharing Your Videos

Converting Home Movies

By mail – LegacyBox.com

Put everything you want converted (any form of video, audio or photo) into their box and ship it off. They return the originals and the digitized materials in your format of choice (thumb drive, DVD or digital download).

Local - EverPresent.com

Local digitizer with locations across the northeast including Newton, Natick, Northborough, and Worcester. They can digitize documents, slides, negatives, albums and scrapbooks, video tapes, film reels and audio. You can ship your materials to them for free if you don't want to go to the store.

DIY

LOT= Library of Things which are items you can check out and take home.

Digital Photo Scanner – Franklin Public Library (LOT), Medway Public Library (Maker Space), Milford Public Library (LOT).

El Gato Video Capture – Franklin Public Library (LOT). Connect your video device to your computer and use the video capture to record as digital.

8mm/Super 8 film converter - Medway Public Library (Maker Space)

VHS to DVD Converter - Medway Public Library (Maker Space)

Home Movie and Video Creation Ideas

Home Movies

Home movies are just as relevant today as when our parents and grandparents were creating them. Leave a little slice of now for future generations. They don't have to be hard to make and with a little thought you can create some gems of important or touching moments. All you need is the camera on your phone. Here are some ideas:

- Grandchild and grandparent reading a book together
- Attending a child or grandchild's event such as an art show exhibit, musical performance, or a sporting event. A video allows you to capture the excitement that the child feels for the events and records for all time that you were a part of it.
- Videos of your family participating in events at a family reunion. Even small family reunions are worth capturing.
- Any multigenerational gathering where you can show the generations interacting and connecting

Oral History

Intentionally capturing oral history interviews can leave a wealth of family history information and get your family excited about participating. Genealogy is not just about the past. It's also important to record your life and that of your family. Recordings can be made in person or over the internet using a program such as Zoom. (The free Zoom account offers 40 minutes and recording to your local computer.)

- Record you and your siblings talking about your shared childhood
- Sit with a family member and a pile of photographs. Discuss each photo – what is happening, when and who is pictured
- Ask a family member about their military service
- Talk to older family members about the relatives they knew during their lifetime who have now passed on
- Talk to a young child about what they like to do now or what they want to be when they grow up

Genealogy Videos

Take your genealogy and video creation one step further by creating videos based on the information that you have researched about your family. Prevent overwhelm by keeping your focus small. You can use free video editing programs such as iMovie (Mac) and Photos App (Windows 10 – type 'Video Editor' into the search and it will bring up the Photos app already in video mode) or Clipchamp (Windows 11).

- Create a video based on newspaper clippings about one event or time period for an ancestor
- Create a video about your ancestor from their 4 years of high school or college yearbooks
- Discuss your immigrant ancestor's migration story
- Family heirlooms – describe an object passed down to you, who it was from, when it was from and why it is important enough to keep
- Create a profile video discussing the life of one ancestor

Sharing Your Home Movies and Videos (or not)

Transferring Videos

Once you have home movies or videos to share, you need to decide how to transfer them to other people. If you are going to share videos with a lot of people you could buy a bulk packet of large (256 GB or 1 or 2 TB) thumbdrives, which you can also label, and then distribute that way. Most people know what to do with a thumb drive.

You could also use a cloud service so that people could download your videos. Google Drive and Dropbox work well for this. Keep in mind however that video files are large and if you are using a free account you may want to remove videos after a certain time to make room for more videos. If this is the case, let your recipients know the last date that the file will be available so they will have a chance to grab it.

I would not recommend transferring via DVD since most laptops no longer come with DVD drives.

Home Movies

Home movies are very personal and are not necessarily anything more than capturing a moment. In some cases you might want to share these with family members directly or on social media. But you don't have to. It's important to realize that you can create a home video archive which you can store on your computer and back up to a thumb drive, external hard drive, or the cloud. The archive can then be passed down to whoever you wish, at the time you choose. However, make sure you tell someone that it exists or leave written instructions on how to access it.

Many people will want to share current home movies with their family now. The important thing to understand is that you are in control of who can see your movies if you share via social media. On Facebook you can limit who has access to what you post on your newsfeed. You could also create a private family group and then invite people to the group. Conversely you can make your movies open to all your friends or even the public. It's up to you to decide.

Genealogy Videos

Your genealogy videos, which seek to preserve information about your ancestor and to educate future generations, will likely appeal to a larger audience – grandchildren, cousins, childhood friends, great grandchildren and beyond. You can certainly continue to share via social media as mentioned above. However, YouTube provides an excellent sharing option. You can upload videos to YouTube for free and you don't have to worry about the size. You can also choose whether to make the videos public, unlisted (available to anyone with the link) or private. YouTube can also automatically caption your videos (you can edit the captions if need be) to make them more accessible. Vimeo.com and Wistia.com have free account options if you prefer not to use YouTube.

Future Proofing Your Videos

Applications such as Facebook and YouTube may not be around forever! If you want to ensure that your videos will be available publicly for the future consider uploading them to the Internet Archive. Their mission is to create a long-lasting online archive.

Instructions

1. Go to <https://archive.org/>
2. Click on Sign up in the right corner to create a free account.
3. After the account is created, login.
4. Click the Upload button in the upper right corner

Adding your videos to the Internet Archive will ensure that they will be around for a long time.