

FAN Club Research & Correlation of Evidence



Preface

There is a lot of information here. Do not let it overwhelm you.

"Take it one ancestor and one record at a time."

Connie Knox



Start with your Target Ancestor (the person you are researching). Let us go from there.

What is the FAN Club?



The FAN Club strategy, affectionately named by Elizabeth Shown Mills, stands for Friends, Associates, and Neighbors. Some family historians even use "family" in place of "friends." Regardless, the FAN Club Research strategy is versatile, applicable to family as well as friends, associates, and neighbors. It is arguably the most powerful research technique you can use in genealogy.

What is the FAN Club

Friends

Associates

Neighbors

Why FAN Club Research?

You might be using the fan club strategy without even realizing it. When you compare records and individuals in your family tree, you likely focus on names, dates, and other data to correlate evidence. By consciously applying the fan club strategy, you can discover more records, connect with more family members, and achieve better results.



GenealogyTV.org



YouTube.com/GenealogyTV

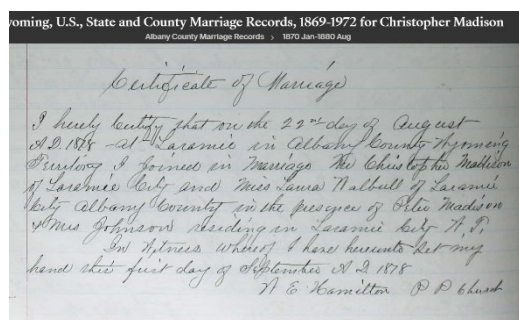
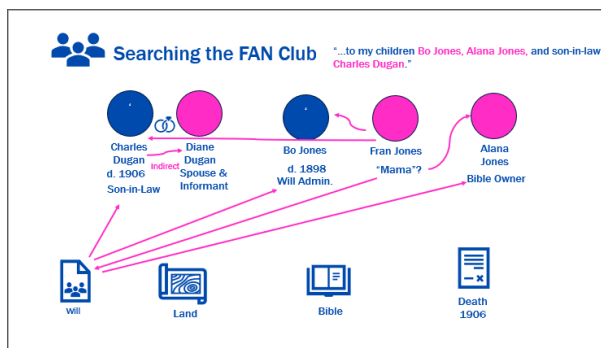
Confirming Records

Using multiple interconnected individuals, whether they are friends or family, helps confirm records. This approach also aids in placing people at specific locations during certain times.

Confirming Family

One of the things you want to look for in records to help you with the fan club

research is to look for witnesses and Informants. Transcribing this record, it says:



“Certificate of Marriage.

I hereby certify that on the 22nd day of August AD. 1878 at Laramie in the Albany County, Wyoming Territory I joined in marriage Mr. Christopher Madison of Laramie City and Miss Laura Wabull of Laramie City Albany County, in the presence of **Peter Madison** & **Mrs Johnson**, residing in the Laramie City W.T.

In whereof I have hereunto set my hand to this first day of September A D. 1878.

W E Hamilton. P P Church”¹

FAN Club

This record lists witnesses **Peter Madison** and **Mrs. Johnson**. Given that this family has many Madsen’s and Johnson’s and both families came from Denmark, these witnesses are likely family members. Even though "Madsen" and "Madison" are spelled differently, spelling was not as consistent in the past as it is today. Names were often spelled phonetically, leading to variations in records.

What to look for...

- Witnesses in Marriage Certificates
- Family in Obituaries
- Neighbors in Census Records
- FAN Club members in Social Columns in Newspapers
- Wedding Registries are full of FAN Club members

Just to name a few.

Reasonably Exhaustive Research - Using Other Platforms

In short, you are turning over every rock and looking everywhere.

¹ Albany County, Wyoming, Certificate of Marriage for Christopher Madsen and Laura Walbull, marriage date 22 August 1878, Laramie City, Albany County, Wyoming, received from vendor Backgrounds USA, 1760 Gaylord Street, Denver, Colorado, 80206.

- Think geographically, Federal records, State records, Local Records (District or County)
- Go Sideways, meaning research the siblings of your target ancestor (the person you are researching).

Family Tree Platforms

- Ancestry (Subscription, worldwide records)
- FamilySearch (Free, worldwide records)
- MyHeritage (Subscription, worldwide records)
- FindMyPast (Subscription, focused on UK & Ireland)
- WikiTree (Free)

Basic Strategies

- Use all platforms available to you.
- Reasonably Exhaustive Research – Not exhausting Research.
- Look for witnesses, neighbors, and others named in documents.
- Consider Extracting Neighbors from Census Records.

Lessons on extracting pages of census data into an excel spreadsheet can be found here [Extract Census from Ancestry into Excel](#).



No Brainer Strategies



Search All Platforms if Possible

- Ancestry (Subscription, worldwide records)
- FamilySearch (Free, worldwide records)
- MyHeritage (Subscription, worldwide records)
- FindMyPast (Subscription, focused on UK & Ireland)
- WikiTree (Free)

Use Smart Research Strategies

- **Target** Ancestor
- Research **Question**
- Research **Plan**
- **Execute** Research
- **Resolve** Conflicts

Reference Live from YT Video About the FAN Club



Newspapers

Make sure to look for FAN Club members as you are reading (and hopefully transcribing) newspaper articles. See the other handout for newspaper research.

Information found in newspapers can lead to other records. This was the story of a “Friend” who kept showing up in newspapers that led me to the story about my ancestors land transactions, foreclosure and recovering the bankrupt ranch.

See [this video](#) lesson for the full story. There is also another handout in that lesson about FAN Club Research.



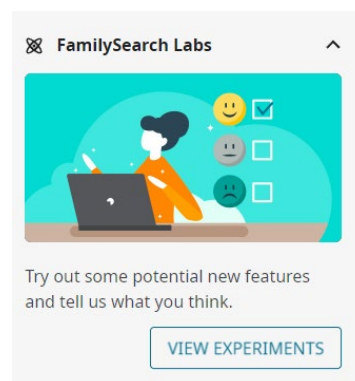
Emerging Tools

FamilySearch Full Text Search

This is the **newest and hottest technology in genealogy** since the invention of the computer.



Instead of searching for indexed names, this new experimental search feature from FamilySearch **reads the entire document, typed or handwritten** and finds the keywords you searched for.



New Strategy

Now you can search for things like “foreclosure,” or “Last Will,” or “Guardianship.” **Think about phrases in court records in combination with names, dates, and places.**

This is necessary for researching today. The results are amazing. We are finding records we never knew existed. As of this writing (July 1, 2024) these are the records available.

1. U.S. Land and Probate Records 1630-1975
2. Mexico, Notarial Records, 1600-1909
3. US Plantation Records cs. 1700s-1865
4. Victoria, Australia Probates 1853-1976
5. Auckland, New Zealand Wills and Probates 1834-1997

Land and probate records are some of the most family rich records you can find.

However, I have found records in this collection that go beyond land and probate. You must try this, and it is free!

Here is the example from the presentation. Search various keywords and names.

FamilySearch Full Text Search

- Use the **Filters** to narrow results.
- Search Other Family Surnames

The screenshot shows the FamilySearch search interface. The search box contains 'Guardianship' and the 'Add Ancestor Information' field contains 'Nannie Winslow'. The search results are filtered to 23,244 records. A red box highlights the filter options: 'Record Year: 1800, 1870 (34)', 'Record Year: 1800, 1880 (14,121)', and 'Record Place: United States of America, North Carolina (23,244)'. Below the filters, a search result is displayed for 'Randolph, North Carolina, United States Probate Estate File 1886'. The text of the document is visible, mentioning 'Randolph County Superior Court', 'Samuel H Hall W H Redding & wife Nannie H Redding A H McDaniel & wife ...', and 'Jane McDaniel Ed H Hall Petition for sale of Lands U. S. for Partition Crissie Winslow Bettie ...'. A red arrow points from the search box to the search results.

FamilySearch Full Text Search

The screenshot shows a full-text search result for a probate estate file. The document is titled 'Randolph County Superior Court' and is dated 1886. The text is handwritten and mentions 'Samuel H Hall', 'W H Redding', 'Nannie H Redding', 'Jane McDaniel', 'Ed H Hall', 'Crissie Winslow', 'Bettie Winslow', 'Edward Winslow', and 'James Winslow'. The document is a petition for the sale of lands in the U.S. for partition. The search results on the right side of the screen show the following text: 'Randolph County Superior Court . Samuel H Hall W H Redding & wife Nannie H Redding A H McDaniel & wife | Jane McDaniel Ed H Hall Petition for sale of Lands U. S. for Partition Crissie Winslow Bettie Winslow Edward Houston James Winslow | Wannis Winsever To the Court Your Petitioner would respectfully allegs and show that Sarah Hall late of said County of Randolph died intestate therein in the month of January 1886 leaving her surviving your Petitioner Samuel H Hale Names H Ridden wife of W H Redding Jane McDaniel wife of A H McDaniel Edward H Hale and the defendants Crissie Winslow Bettie Winslow Edward Winslow James Winsler and Nannie Visison who are the minor children and heir at law of Mary Winslow a deceased daughter of intestate and was the wife of Hill K Winslow said children resides in Shelly N C'. Below the document image, the following text is displayed: '1880 U.S. census, Randolph County, North Carolina, population schedule, Cedar Grove, enumeration district (ED) 220, p. 14 (penned), dwelling 128, family 128, Nannie McDaniel; NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 978.'

Learn More



Learn More about Full Text Search on FamilySearch here on the Genealogy TV Academy website in a video called [OMG Bingo! Finding a 5 Year Old Girl Who Was Missing in the 1880 Census.](#)

Ancestry

On Ancestry, you can easily **keep track of FAN Club members using the Floating Tree Strategy**. This is where you have disconnected persons as “floaters” in the tree so you can let the algorithm work for you.

[Floating Trees for FAN Club Members Path on Academy](#)

Use **MyTreeTags®** for Floaters so you can find them again. You do this from the tree view on **Ancestry**, then **Find**, then **Add Custom Tree Tags**.



AI Tools

Genealogy websites have been using artificial intelligence for years. This is nothing new. However, AI technology is getting smarter and faster every day.

However, the biggest change recently is the addition of **handwriting recognition**. Starting with the 1950 U.S. Census, Ancestry’s handwriting technology in collaboration with FamilySearch volunteers managed to index the entire 1950 census in days rather than months for the 1940 census.

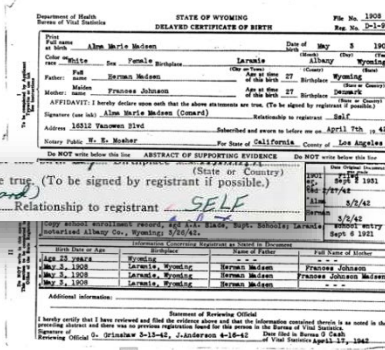
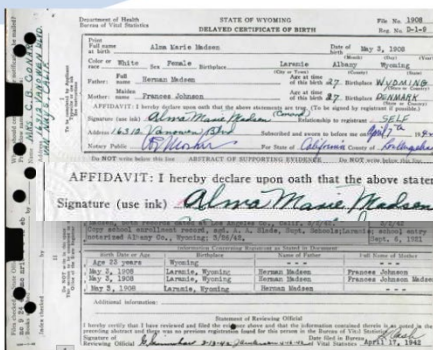
1950 United States Federal Census for Martha M Thomas

| Household Number | Apartment Number | Dwelling Number | Farm | Acres | Occupation | Sex | Color | Age | Marital Status | Relationship to Head of Household | Race | Gender | Age | Birth Date |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------|-------|------------|--------|-------|------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------|--------|-----|------------|
| 757 | No | No | No | | | Female | White | 1876 | Wife | Head | White | Female | 21 | 1876 |
| 758 | No | No | No | | | Male | White | 40 | Head | Wife | White | Male | 40 | 1910 |
| 759 | No | No | No | | | Female | White | 35 | Wife | Wife | White | Female | 35 | 1915 |
| 758 | No | No | No | | | Male | White | 14 | Son | Son | White | Male | 14 | 1936 |
| 759 | No | No | No | | | Male | White | 32 | Wife | Wife | White | Male | 32 | 1918 |
| 759 | No | No | No | | | Female | White | 25 | Wife | Wife | White | Female | 25 | 1925 |

New AI Tools on all platforms is allowing for records to be computer read and indexed faster than ever.

Ancestry’s Card Catalog

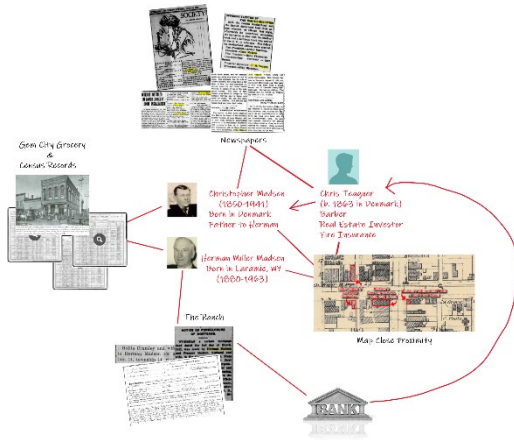
This newly uploaded record for a delayed birth certificate for my grandmother has her signature! This makes the color copy an original.



Original

Copy

Go to the **Ancestry Card Catalog** added for the latest records. It has several FAN Club members in it.



Correlation of Evidence & FAN CLUB

Using records in combination with FAN Club members may help enhance the family history story... or resolve a missing piece of the puzzle.

There are **two lessons** about **Correlation of Evidence**.







[Correlation of Evidence, Part 1: U.S. Census Records](#)


[Correlation of Evidence, Part 2: Any Record](#)

New Pro Tools

Ancestry recently added Pro Tools as an extra subscription. You may find more FAN Club members by using the Enhanced Shared Matches tool, to focus your DNA matches on a specific branch of the tree... and then see how your shared matches related to each other. This helps build the family tree faster by figuring out the relationship between the matches you share with a DNA cousin and how they relate.

Explore your Pro Tools

| | | |
|---|---|--|
|  <p>Tree checker Weed out duplicates, uncover errors, and verify details like dates, locations, and relationships.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Check your tree</p> |  <p>Enhanced shared matches DNA NEW</p> <p>See how your shared matches relate to each other.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">View matches</p> |  <p>Smart filters Sort your tree by family line, events, possible errors, location, time period, DNA, and more.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Visit All People page</p> |
|  <p>Charts & reports Whether tracing direct ancestors or descendants, reports make it simple.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Create a report</p> |  <p>Tree mapper Chart family members' journeys through life on a map.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Visit the map</p> |  <p>Tree insights Discover familial trends and commonalities in your tree.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Explore your insights</p> |



Ancestry's Pro Tools

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Extra \$10 U.S. per month

AncestryDNA®

Find more FAN Club and Family with DNA Cousins and their family trees.

DNA Cousin Matches

Looking at your **DNA Match List**, you can see how you relate to your cousin matches in a unit called cM. This can give you an estimated range of how you are related to that DNA Cousin.

Shared Matches

Drilling into a cousin match, you can then see more information. By clicking on the **Shared Matches tool**, you can now see all the DNA cousins that you share DNA with that one cousin.

Enhanced Shared Matches (Pro Tools Only)

Using the New **Pro Tools** version of the **Enhanced Shared Matches**, you can now see both your relationship to the shared matches and how your DNA cousin (whom you originally clicked on) also shares DNA with them.

The image to the right shows where I clicked into my DNA Cousin Carol. The left column is DNA matches we both share, thus coming from the same branch of the tree.

| Shared match: | My Relation | Carol's Relation |
|---------------|---|--|
| | Daughter 3,484 cM Both sides | 2nd cousin 1x removed 150 cM |
| | Sister 2,738 cM Both sides | 1st cousin 1x removed 596 cM |
| | Sister 2,505 cM Both sides | 1st cousin 1x removed or half 1st cousin 491 cM |
| | 1st cousin 1,091 cM Paternal side | 1st cousin 1x removed 408 cM |

The middle column shows my relationship with each row of cousins. The right column shows how Carol is related to those same cousins.

Keep Track of FAN Club Members

It is important to keep track of FAN Club Members. I do this in my research notes for people who regularly show up in records.

I also do this in Excel spreadsheets for census and DNA matches when working on a specific problem.

Comparing census like this from decade to decade can help you have confidence you have the right family. This is especially helpful when researching early census records when only the Head of Household (HOH) was listed.

| 1920 | | | 1910 | | | 1900 | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|----------|--------------|----------|-------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------|---------|
| Surnam | Given | Nar | Relationship | Surnam | Given | Nar | Relationship | Surnam | Given | Nar | Relationship | |
| 1920 | Settle | William | H | Head | | | | | | | | |
| 1920 | Settle | Francis | N | Wife | | | | | | | | |
| 1920 | Settle | Hattie | M | Daughter | | | | | | | | |
| 1920 | Settle | Hazlie | | Daughter | | | | | | | | |
| 1920 | Settle | Maloccia | J | Mother | | | | 1900 | Wagoner | James | P | |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | Joseph | M | Head | 1910 | Vanhoy | Joseph | M | Joseph | M | Head | |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | Thomas | R | Son | 1910 | Vanhoy | Sarah | M | 1900 | Vanhoy | Sarah | M |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | Ada | V | Daughter | 1910 | Vanhoy | George | W | 1900 | Vanhoy | Martha | L |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | John | F | Head | 1910 | Vanhoy | Mary | E | 1900 | Vanhoy | George | W |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | Ora | M | Wife | 1910 | Vanhoy | John | F | 1900 | Vanhoy | Mary | E |
| 1920 | Sale | Hugh | | Head | 1910 | Vanhoy | William | M | 1900 | Vanhoy | John | F |
| 1920 | Sale | Alice | A | Wife | 1910 | Vanhoy | Thomas | R | 1900 | Vanhoy | William | M |
| 1920 | Sale | Emma | V | Daughter | 1910 | Vanhoy | Ada | V | 1900 | Vanhoy | Jane | Mother |
| 1920 | Byrd | Thadus | C | Head | | | | | 1900 | Phillip | Joshua | F |
| 1920 | Byrd | Salle | | Wife | | | | | 1900 | Leffmon | Jasper | N |
| 1920 | Byrd | Ella | F | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Leffmon | Margaret | K |
| 1920 | Howell | Ford | M | Head | | | | | 1900 | Leffmon | Lula | L |
| 1920 | Howell | Matilda | C | Wife | | | | | 1900 | Leffmon | Willie | B |
| 1920 | Howell | Luther | | Son | | | | | 1900 | Leffmon | James | W |
| 1920 | Howell | Gather | | Son | | | | | 1900 | Leffmon | Walter | |
| 1920 | Howell | Clark | | Son | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Reuben | J |
| 1920 | Howell | Mary | B | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Mary | E |
| 1920 | Howell | Richard | L | Son | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Thursey | E |
| 1920 | Howell | Beulah | A | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Settle | John | F |
| 1920 | Howell | Maggie | M | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Charles | W |
| 1920 | Legans | Eliza | | Head | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Noah | C |
| 1920 | Wagone | Sandford | | Head | | | | | 1900 | Hallaman | James | Boarder |
| 1920 | Wagone | Martha | A | Wife | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Anna | Head |
| 1920 | Wagone | Gorden | | Son | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Annie | E |
| 1920 | Wagone | Andie | | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Julia | L |
| 1920 | Wagone | John | | Son | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Ardie | M |
| 1920 | Wagone | Linkford | | Son | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Tyrus | H |
| 1920 | Wagone | Bretta | | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Settle | Noah | M |
| 1920 | Wagone | Verla | | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Settle | John | F |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | George | V | Head | | | | | 1900 | Wagoner | William | Head |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | Ila | L | Wife | | | | | 1900 | Wagoner | Martha | A |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | Grace | M | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Wagoner | Mat | L |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | Verge | E | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Wagoner | Nellie | J |
| 1920 | Vanhoy | Reita | B | Daughter | | | | | 1900 | Gant | Arthur | Head |
| 1920 | Laster | Clifton | | Head | | | | | 1900 | Gant | Minnie | M |
| 1920 | Laster | Martha | L | Wife | 1910 | Laster | Elmer | H | 1900 | Gant | Werth | L |
| 1920 | Laster | Mary | E | Daughter | 1910 | Sale | Richard | D | | | | |
| 1920 | Laster | Lexie | L | Daughter | 1910 | Sale | Florence | A | | | | |
| 1920 | Laster | Maggie | M | Daughter | 1910 | Sale | Hugh | | | | | |
| 1920 | Laster | Paul | H | Head | 1910 | Sale | Alice | A | | | | |
| 1920 | Sale | William | E | Head | 1910 | Sale | Gretnud | M | | | | |
| 1920 | Sale | Laura | V | Wife | 1910 | Sale | Mary | E | | | | |
| 1920 | Sale | Ruth | L | Daughter | 1910 | Sale | Estelle | I | | | | |
| 1920 | Sale | Harold | R | Son | 1910 | Sale | Emme | V | | | | |
| 1920 | Sale | Fried | A | Son | 1910 | McLean | Walker | | | | | |
| | | | | | 1910 | Legan | Eliza | | | | | |

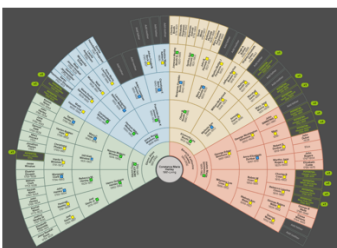
Floating Trees

Using floating trees is a perfect strategy for keeping track of fan club members.

On Ancestry from the tree view, Click on Find in Tree And create a custom tree tag that says floater or floating tree.

Correlation of Evidence

- Keep it all together...
 - Floating Trees to keep track of "floaters."



Filter by MyTreeTags™

Tag Definitions Off

Custom Tags 620

Biological Line

Civil War

Floating Tree

LEFT OFF HERE

Profile Cleaned

Quaker Back Creek Indiana

Quaker Back Creek NC

Quaker Black Water MM VA

Quaker Center MM NC

Quaker Henrico MM VA

Quaker New Garden MM

Done Cancel

Find in tree ×

Type in a name or select a filter to search

Floating Tree X

Filters

Jesse Lane 1741 - 1810

Thomas Booth 1711 - 1748

Charles Booth 1682 - 1713

John 1805 - 1888

Catherine Kattie McComas 1772 - 1859

Kurt Wilhelm Heinrich Schreder 1872 -

Christain M. Tegner 1863 -

Keeping Track of F.A.N Club Members

- One Ancestor at a time
- Floating Trees
- Spreadsheets
- Lists
- Research Notes



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Don't Get Overwhelmed

One Record... One Ancestor...
At a time!



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