



Planting a Family Tree

What started out for Maxine Gray as a hobby and an attempt to find out about her roots, has become a lifelong obsession of unearthing historical family treasures.

And much of what Maxine has uncovered about her family, including tracing her family back 400 years has been buoyed by the ease and convenience of the Internet.

As an only child, Maxine, a volunteer with the Society of Australian Genealogists, first started researching her family history about 20 years ago, simply, she says, because she wanted to find out where she came from.

"Back then before the Internet I did all my family research the old fashioned way, on lots of paper and a typewriter. Then genealogy software packages became available," Maxine said.

"Now - in fact for the last six years - I have been researching families, mine and others on the Internet, and there are so many differences from doing it the hard way, on paper. There are so many genealogy sites online now to give you a helping hand and get you started."

According to Maxine, some of the most popular Websites visited by Australian users, especially seniors, each month



Maxine Gray and her ancestors

are those devoted to genealogy.

"You do need patience and tolerance researching online and the first step is to really think about where you want to go and what type of information you want to find out about your family. There is a high strike rate (of finding the correct information) and I would recommend it to anyone as a pastime," she said.

"For me it is exciting, as I can contact and meet up with relatives all the time, both through email and chat."

Recording a family tree is a special gift to bequeath a family and many seniors new to the Internet are finding this is a great

way to get started online, combining learning Web skills with fun and enjoyment.

There are many sites on the Web which can get you started (see *Surf's Up* overleaf) and often starting your expedition is as easy as keying in your surname, or those of the people you are researching, into a search engine on one of the genealogy sites.

As for Maxine's discoveries, she traced her family tree back to the 1600s in Ireland.

"I was able to see the very house where some members of my family once lived all that time ago. I was so lucky to have had that experience," Maxine said.

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www.seniorcard.nsw.gov.au

Surf's up!

Here's a list of Websites which you might find useful or interesting. Happy surfing!

www.cyndislist.com

With more than 135,000 lists from across the globe, Cyndi's List is one of the best sites to start researching your family tree and also has extensive tips for beginners including how to get started and how to research different collections of information from census and land records, ships and passenger lists, and immigration. Once you have found something interesting (or even before) why not join the site's chat rooms and mailing lists and make new friends - they may even be able to help you track down what you are looking for.

www.awm.gov.au

The Australian War Memorial site is one of the easiest to use for searching your family history, especially if your family has served in any of the conflicts since 1860 in which Australia has been active. With easy to fill in search fields and a step-by-step guide to help you discover other areas of your family background apart from military service, this site is a must for anyone just starting their research, or for those with an interest in Australia's proud history of active military service.



www.bdm.nsw.gov.au

NSW Births, Deaths and Marriage Indexes. Even if you are not originally from NSW, the NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages Website is the perfect starting point for delving into your family's roots. With plenty of easy to understand information, links to other sources and tips on how to get you started, this site has a wealth of useful information, which also makes for interesting reading. If you require extra assistance, or can't find what you are looking for, there are email links and telephone numbers across the site that you can use to help you get on the right track. As well as online research, you can also view actual records at the Registry to glance first hand at a real piece of your family's history.

www.sag.org.au

The promise of this Website from the Society of Australian Genealogists is "happy family history hunting" and while some of the local sections of the site are currently under construction, it is still a wealth of information from databases of ship musters and tickets of leave, to local member's special interest groups. With links to genealogy software packages and other tools, you will find all you need to start tracing your family tree. Links to overseas agencies and an in depth collection of UK and Ireland databases also form part of the site.

Master the Web in just two days

Expand your online horizons with a fun filled two-day workshop of the Internet, organised by seniors, for seniors.

This year's 4th Australian Computer Seminar for Seniors in September will give you a host of information to help you get online and enjoy the benefits of using the Internet. Learn in an interactive and caring environment about Creative Computing and Technology Alternatives, ensuring you have the right tools and hardware to surf and use the Web.

Organised by the Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association (ASCCA) the seminar is on September 11 -12, 9.30am - 4.30pm in Sydney at Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney.

Registration fee is \$60 for one day or \$90 for two days. The cost includes morning tea and a light lunch. Discounts apply to ASCCA members. To avoid disappointment register your interest now via email on office@seniorcomputing.org or ring 02 9386 2871.

Hands on Funding

The NSW Government recently announced funding worth more than \$300,000 to help get seniors online.

Part of the Seniors Online Strategy, a \$1.7 million strategy over three years, the Hands On program includes grants to 16 organisations across metropolitan Sydney and regional NSW.

The funding covers programs such as specialist Internet and computer training services for seniors, free access to computer and email services and upgrading of software and computer equipment.

"This funding will make a positive difference to older peoples lives by removing the barriers which stop older people accessing information technology," the NSW Minister for Ageing, Carmel Tebbutt, said.

Access for all Seniors

If you thought you needed to own a computer to get online, think again. There's a range of venues that offer seniors access to the Internet so you can surf the web, send emails or digital pictures to friends, or even do your shopping.

The focus of the NSW Government's \$1.7 million Seniors Online Strategy is to engage, encourage and enthuse older people to get online and see the Internet as adding value to their daily lives.

The Government has announced new programs which enable community based organisations around the State to offer information technology training and Internet access to older people.

For many seniors, the local public library is a convenient starting point where they get their first taste of the Internet, with all public libraries offering access to the Internet with the added value of library support staff on hand to guide first time users.



Many community organisations catering to seniors also offer discounted or free Internet access to encourage seniors online, so it is worthwhile to check this out at your local club.

Commercial operations such as Internet cafes also offer access to seniors and others. Generally the fee is a few dollars per each session, but before you go online

check all the fees and charges which relate to accessing the Web, downloading information and sending emails as they may all incur separate fees.

You can read more about the NSW Government's Seniors Online Strategy on the Seniors Card Website: www.seniorscard.nsw.gov.au and simply follow the links to News and Events.

All Aboard for transport discounts

With fares as low as \$1.10 for a Sydney Suburban Excursion ticket and \$2.20 for a Country Excursion ticket, you don't need to wait around for a reason to catch a train.

Why not take advantage of your Seniors Card rail travel discounts and see parts of NSW you've never seen before? For details on the range of discounts available and the distances you can travel on each ticket, go to the Seniors Card Website at www.seniorscard.nsw.gov.au/Discounts/Transport.asp If you need help planning your trip, simply log on to the NSW Transport Info Line's Website: www.131500.com.au or www.countrylink.nsw.gov.au for up-to-the-minute fare and timetable information.



www.seniorscard.nsw.gov.au

Special TechnoSenior Offers

EXCLUSIVE TO SENIORS CARD MEMBERS

This issue there are two specialist computer magazines offering discount prices to Seniors Card members.



PC User aims to demystify technology, making it accessible to a broad cross-section of the community with practical information on hardware, games, educational software reviews, tutorials and much more in every issue.

If you are a Seniors Card member you can subscribe to Australian PC User for a year for only \$56 (usually \$70). That's a huge saving of \$14. To redeem this offer call the customer service centre on 13 61 61, 8am-8pm, Mon-Fri and 8am-6pm, Sat. Quote the reference number TSEN 03.



Published by the Australian Consumers' Association, Computer CHOICE magazine targets the beginner or intermediate user by helping you get the most out of your computer.

As a Seniors Card Member you will receive two free issues plus the Computer Tips and Shortcuts Booklet when you take up either a one or two-year subscription. Subscribe for one year for \$41.80, or two years for \$79.20. To take advantage of this offer, call 1800 069 552 and quote SNR\0204.

TIPS

“Favorites” in the browser application Internet Explorer are a way of keeping a personal library of your favourite Websites, so you can access them quickly and easily without having to key in the Website address each time you go online. Next issue we will outline “bookmarks” in Netscape Navigator.

Follow these simple steps to create your list of “Favorites” in Internet Explorer.

- 1** When you are on a site that you would like to view again, move your cursor along the top tool bar to “Favorites”. The top tool bar should read “File, Edit, View, Favorites, Tools, Help”.
- 2** Left click your mouse on “Favorites” and a drop down menu will appear, (“Add to Favorites”, “Organise Favorites”).
- 3** Left click on “Add to Favorites” and a new box will appear.
- 4** The name of the site you are on will appear in the window in this box. There will be a check box you can enter if you wish, which will allow you to view this site offline, as well as online. Click on OK.

To view your “Favorites” list and return to a favourite site, follow these steps.

- 1** Open your browser to your homepage (or any Website you are on once you have gone online).
- 2** Left Click on “Favorites” in the top tool bar. When you do this a drop down menu of all your “Favorites” will appear.
- 3** Scroll down the list until you find the site you want to visit. As you scroll each listing will become highlighted.
- 4** Left click on the site you want and your computer will automatically load that Website on your screen. You can click on “Favorites” at any time while you are online.

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