WEBSITE TO WATCH 👁 👁

WikiTree
Free Online Family Tree

http://www.wikitree.com/

At first sight this website is somewhat similar to many others that allow contributors to publish their genealogy on the Internet. WikiTree.com is a collaborative project that has been growing since 2008. Membership is free for everyone. Expenses are covered by discreet advertisements on public pages. The website currently contains more than two million profiles which provide yet another resource to search for your family history. This website should not be confused with another site of similar name, WikiTree.org.

BRANCH DIARY

- **HAVERING** – 3 September, 2.00 pm
London Remains to be Seen (Peter Lawrence)
- **BARKING & DAGENHAM** – 10 September, 2.00 pm
Bazalgette – Great Engineer (Jeffrey Page)
- **NEWHAM & REDBRIDGE** – 28 September, 7.30 pm
London Life in the 17th Century (Patricia Melville)
- **BISHOPSGATE** – 30 September, 6.00 pm
Stepney Women's Stories (Louise Taylor)
- **COMPUTER GROUP** – 1 October, 11.00 am
Getting to grips with Google (Meryl Catty)

OTHER EVENTS

■ **Essex Record Ofice** – Tuesday, 6 September, 10.30 am
Essex History Group, free talk by Eric Probert "*Family History through Books, Magazines, Newspapers and Radio*".

■ **London Metropolitan Archives** – 1 September until 23 December
Free exhibition "*Mapping the London Blitz*".

■ **London Metropolitan Archives** – Thursday, 8 September, 11.00 am
Guided walk "*The History of the Lower Lea Valley and the Impact of 2012*", cost £7.50 and must be booked in advance. See below for website.

■ **Open House London** – Saturday & Sunday 17-18 September
Visit some of the greatest architecture and historic buildings in London, many of which are not normally open to the public. Visit the website for further details: `http://www.londonopenhouse.org/`.

■ **London Metropolitan Archives** – Monday, 26 September, 2.00 pm
"*Present Your Family History*" workshop, cost £5.00 and must be booked in advance. See website: `http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/`.

■ **Guildhall Library** – Friday, 30 September, 2.00 pm
Free talk by Dr Samantha L Bird "*The Reconstruction of the Stepney Area in the Post Second World War Period up to the Festival of Britain*". Must be booked in advance.

NEWS

■ **Essex Record Office** – Please note that the annual stocktaking will take place from Monday 28 November until Saturday 10 December inclusive. The search room will be closed during this time.
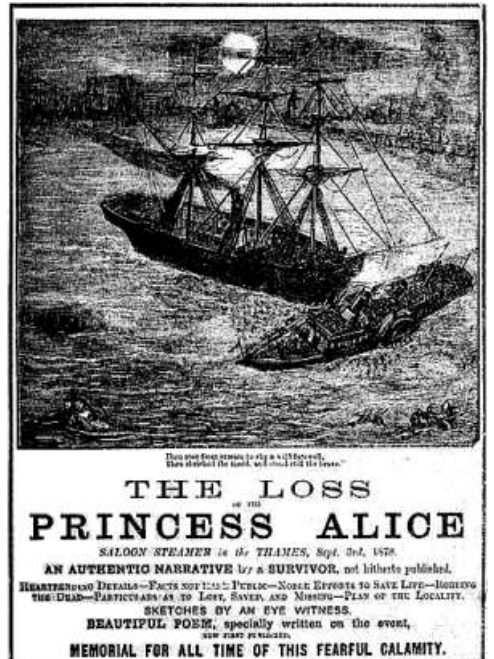
THIS MONTH

This month we welcome back Ian Williamson who will be talking about *Google Maps for Family Historians*.

NEXT MONTH

More Google next month when Meryl Catty will be "*Getting to Grips with Google*".

On This Day, 3rd September

Feast of St Marinus founder of San Marino

THE LOSS OF THE PRINCESS ALICE

SALOON STEAMER in the THAMES, Sept. 3rd, 1878.
AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE by a SURVIVOR, not hitherto published.

1878. The passenger paddle steamer SS Princess Alice, returning from a moonlight pleasure cruise, was struck by the Bywell Castle off Tripcock Ness within sight of North Woolwich. The Pricess Alice was split in two and sank within four minutes causing the loss of over 650 lives. To this day it remains the single worst disaster on the River Thames. The accident happened a little after 7.40 pm. The twice-daily release of 75 million gallons of raw sewage from the northern and southern sewer outfalls had taken place one hour before the accident. The heavily polluted water is believed to have contributed to the deaths of many who went into the river. 120 victims lie buried in a mass grave at Woolwich Old Cemetery, Plumstead.

The EoLFHS website contains up to date information about the Society. You will also find there the Computer Group message board and archive of handouts from our meetings. **www.eolfhs.org.uk**

Meaningful File Name
How to record dates

When we save files on our computers it's not uncommon to include a date as part of the file name. Adding the date of birth for a scanned image of a birth certificate can be useful when there are several certificates for individuals with similar names. Adding the date can produce another benefit as it can be used with photos (or anything else) to sort them into a chronological order.

Always be consistent in the way you name files as this will pay dividends later on. A consistent naming structure will make it much easier to find the right file. The method for recording dates set out below will help you keep your files in chronological order.

The essence of this method is to use numbers for the months and record the date backwards. For example if you want to use the date 3 September 2011 then record this as "2011-09-03" and put it as the first part of the file name. By doing this you will find that when sorted the files will be displayed in date order. This would not be the case if the names of the months were used, where July comes before May and follows August alphabetically. It is also important to use a leading zero for dates preceding the tenth of the month. Use "03" rather than just "3" otherwise the 3rd will come after the 29th. Always use four digits for the year to ensure that 1991 comes before 2010, this would not be the case if only the last two digits were used. Putting dashes between the year, month and day is optional. They may help make the things easier to read if you're not used to backwards dates.

So instead of saving that digital photo as "Family reunion 3 Aug 09" save it as "2009-08-03 Family reunion".

Those were the days...
Psion Series 3

The Psion Series 3 was launched in 1991. This popular pocket size portable computer was a forerunner of today's PDAs. It was powered by two standard AA size batteries which could last up to 30 hours. The Psion operating system was based on a subset of Linux.

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Type: Genealogy database.
Platforms: Windows, Solaris, Linux, Mac OS X.
Website: http://www.ancestris.org/

Ancestris is unusual amongst family history software in that it does not use its own proprietary file format to store data. Instead it uses the standard Gedcom 5.5 file format, which makes it a very useful tool for all family historians and genealogists.

Anyone who has worked on their family history for a while and has made contact with others researching common ancestors is very likely to have received or exchanged Gedcom files. Before taking the plunge and importing this data into another genealogy database it's a good idea to take a look inside the Gedcom to see what's there. With Ancestris you can not only look inside a Gedcom but edit it too, all in an easy to use graphical interface.

In order to install and use Ancestris you must have the Java Virtual Machine version 1.6 or higher installed on your computer. You can check your installed Java version at the on-line Java verification page (http://www.java.com/en/download/installed.jsp). Many PCs will already have Java, but if you need to install it yourself then download it from http://java.com/download/ (Apple users with Mac OS X can download from http://developer.apple.com/java/download/).

Ancestris has some very useful features. You can navigate around your data in a single navigable tree containing everyone in the Gedcom file. The program will produce a range of reports and attractive charts which can be saved as Postscript files or PDFs. To view the Postscript files you'll need a utility like IrfanView (see April newsletter) or GSview. Ancestris can be linked to Google Maps so that the data can be plotted on a map of anywhere in the world. The program can also produce time lines and a range of useful statistics.

Ancestris is a good all round genealogy program and well worth downloading if only to view the contents of Gedcom files.

COMPUTER GROUP RATING
★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆