

Vera Wimberly  
49 Blush Hill Drive  
Conroe, Texas 77304-1109  
Phone: 409-856-2313

## **SO, YOU WANT TO GO TO SALT LAKE CITY?**

First off, the only reason I went to SLC was because of your own Johnnie Jo Dickenson. She spoke to our Genealogical Society several years ago and I was in SLC two weeks later and have been twice a year for the past 16 years. She probably knows more about this subject than I do.

If you have a question, please stop me and we'll talk about it at that time. I'll try to answer all your questions. If I plan to cover your question later in this presentation, I'll tell you and we'll go on from there.

So, let's go.

Number one on the agenda. Make Hotel reservations. It is necessary to make reservations at least 6 months ahead of time, wherever you plan to stay.

The Hotel I recommend is formerly Howard Johnsons, now Best Western. It is in the same block as the Family History Library. We go out the back door of the hotel, to the front door of the Library. There are several other good motel/hotels in the area, but the convenience of Best Western and the fact that they give you a genealogy discount is attractive – you do have to ask for that rate. The rate when I was there last was \$65.00 a night plus tax. When I first began to go out there the room rate was \$24.00 a night.

Your travel agent will be able to help you, but try to get a hotel no further than a block away. I'll tell you why later.

Watch the air fares – sometimes you can get a really good deal. You have to make those reservations at least two weeks ahead of time to get the best deal.

I like to arrive on Wednesday on the early morning flight which gives you almost a full day to spend at the library. By going in the middle of the week, you have time on Sunday to recoup and see where you are and where you want to go. You need that time to rest a little bit, and take a walk across the street to Temple Square. It is always colorful, summer or winter. There are other sights around if you are so inclined. Speaking of Temple Square. Please take the time out on Thursday evenings to go hear the Tabernacle Choir practice. Think the time is at 7:00, but they will tell you when it is.

The week ends on Wednesday night, and the morning flight is taken on Thursday morning, so you won't be arriving at the Houston Intercontinental at midnight.

May I tell you my favorite time of the year to go? Never in the summer time. It is so crowded you may or may not get a reader even though they have over 200 microfilm readers on the

premises and sometimes it is so crowded you have trouble finding a table on which to work. I like to go in early November or in late March. So – you get some snow, but you are not out in the weather long enough to worry about the cold. The benefits of November or March is that it is never crowded. Tables & readers are always available. In those months you can be a little late and not even leave the hotel until about 8:00.

Well, you have arrived at the hotel, unpacked and heading for the Library.

Lets talk about the Library for a minute.

Hours: Monday 7:30 – 6:00 – this is family night; Tuesday – Saturday 7:30 -10:00.

If you plan to go in the summer months, It is necessary to be at the Library when it opens if you plan to get a reader.

There are, I understand, over 200 volunteers a day in the Library who are eager to answer your questions and show you around.

It is easy to get around in the library. On the first floor as you go in you will find the State & County book collection, and the Family History Collection. Everything uses the dewey decimal system, so if you don't have those call numbers you may have trouble. There is a loose leaf binder on one of the desks to show you the State and County dewey decimal number. If you want to browse – the numbers will get you into a state and the counties are usually housed together, but not in an alphabetical manner. There are computers available to look for anything. We'll talk about that later.

The second floor is the American/Canadian floor. There is where you will find the millions of microfilm rolls covering everything including County records, and many, many readers. Also the entire Census collection. Think that is the only section you don't have to have some kind of number to get into the film. It is by years, and states and is complete.

There are foreign floors in the basement and on upper floors. They have a very good German collection, as well as Irish. You are better off trying to research overseas records If you speak or write the language of the country. They do have people to help you, but they will not sit and read the film for you. They will interpret and they are in the process now of translating the foreign records into English.

It is absolutely necessary for you to have done your homework and know what it is that you want to find before you go out to SLC. Believe me, your generation chart will not automatically fill up because you walk through the door of the Mormon Library – you will have to dig for every fact and proof and documentation you want -BUT you must know what you are looking for and where you expect to find the record.

Our local Montgomery County Library has the entire card catalogue on microfilm, microfiche and computer. Or check these records in the local Morman library. You can check to see if SLC library has certain records from a certain locality (taking down all call numbers, etc.) then you

may not be disappointed when you get out there and find they do not have any records from that particular area. And it will enable you to prepare to work on another line.

May I suggest the following: (I work on this plan) I first check all the previous research done by others:

1. **Records Collection.** You may find that someone has already researched your family or the particular line you are out there to prove out. This collection consists of the International Genealogical Index [IGI], The Ancestral File; and the Family Histories. These are on computer. Fortunately our Montgomery Co. Library has these on computer which you may use.

**CAUTION.** The information in this collection has been submitted by library patrons and has not been verified by the Genealogical Library. Some histories may contain inaccurate or incomplete information – but they will give you a name and address of the submitter to whom you might write.

2. **Family Histories.** There is a separate section in the library containing family histories; however, you must have a Collection or Call Number. Use the Surname Section on computer and which is found on each floor. The catalog is divided into four sections: Surname; Locality; Subject; Author-Title. In the surname section, the names are listed alphabetically. It does not list every name in every record, but lists the major families covered within each record. Be sure to write down all the call numbers, you'll need everyone of them to find what you are looking for. The record will give you the location in the Library of the book or if on film, the call number.

3. **Family Registry** (They do have a copy of this family registry at the local Mormon libraries and at our Montgomery Co. Library). This is an effort to find others who may be doing research on the same family you are. They are listed on microfiche and/or computer found on each floor.

4. **International Genealogical Index (IGI).** This is a computerized index of various records. It lists births, christenings, and marriages of more than eighty-eight million deceased persons from many countries and time periods. It is printed on microfiche and computer and is found on each floor. To find your ancestor's name, first look for the place where he or she might have been born or married: Country – State -Surname. If you find any information you want, you may buy forms to copy this information on, or copy the entire page for 5 cents a page if you download from the computer. Be sure to make note of the Batch and Serial Sheet numbers from the two columns on the right. These numbers can lead you to the source where you may be able to find additional information or identify the person who submitted the information.

5. **Ancestral Files.** These are on computer. You can enter any surname and the pages that come up on the computer will have many of the same names, which may or may not be the same person. You can bring up any chosen surname in a family group sheet, five generation chart and these can also be printed out. If you are familiar with the ancestral files, then you know that these too must be proven out.

There are information desks on all floors staffed with people who are just dying to help you find your guys. No question is stupid. They are eager to help.

THEN I CHECK THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS. This is the main reason for going – because most of the county records are on film at this library. We have this catalogue at our local library on computer.

Use the computer – it's faster, and cheaper to print out. Just follow the simple instructions on the screen. It will bring up the records you ask for and you don't have to plow through a lot of records you are not interested in.

These are under the Locality Section and are found on every floor on Microfiche and now on computer. The locality section lists records under the name of the country or state, followed by the county, and then the town. Each county is listed alphabetically, then look for the type of record you are interested in. I usually copy the entire listing for a county and records I am working on. It saves time and makes it easier for you to decide which record you feel it would be worth looking at. If you do not copy the entire county, but just one or two records – be sure to copy all of the Film Call numbers. Some may add pt. 1, 2, etc., and it is necessary for you to be able to find these films. Many of the country records have been abstracted and published in book form, which is much easier to use; however, if you find a record in the book, have a look at the film while you are there to be sure it has been abstracted properly.

Since I usually know what records I want to see because I've done my homework, I find and "stake out" a reader the first thing when I get to the library. If you leave your reader to go get more film or to go eat or have a break, be sure you leave some film threaded on your machine (and your books or records left open) – or you may find someone else at your machine when you return and that's just tuff-stuff – you have to find another machine -if you can! Especially in the summer. You don't have any problem in the winter months.

You can take 5 rolls of film at one time to your reader. You get your own film and you are responsible for refileing this film.

If you find something on a film, you wish to have a picture of – take the film off the reader (both reels) (just where the record is) and take it to one of the copy rooms. Copies are 20 cents a picture. Be sure to get the right film back in the right box and refile your film when finished.

Okay. You have found the film you want to look at. Most county records are indexed. You may find an index film which will send you to another roll of film, but you must have the film number. If you put a roll of film on and do not find an index at the front of the roll – do not discard it until you have checked at the end of the roll. You will sometimes find the index in the back or sometimes in the middle of the film. Sometimes this is a bore because the machines are all hand-turned. The electric machines are saved for the handicapped.

Time just does not permit reading un-indexed records -unless that is the only source you may be able to find something on your guys. The Court minutes are almost never indexed and they contain some really neat stuff.

**BOOK SECTION** – This is on the first floor. Do plan to spend some time there. You must have the call numbers of the books you wish to see, but you will find them on the Locality Section of the catalogue, or computer. The books are shelved by States and you are free to browse. If you find pages you wish to copy -Xerox 5 cents page -they ask you not to Xerox more than 5 pages at one time, if others are waiting for the machines. Hint: do not wait until the last hour of the day to get copies made -everybody has saved all day to get them made before they leave – and sometimes they close up on you and you've waited all that time and still don't have copies.

When you enter the lobby of the Mormon Library, you may pick up a brochure showing where all the departments are and what records are where. Most of your work will be done on the second floor for that is where all the film is filed and where most of the readers are.

Then, consider this....This is how I operate. I present this to you merely as a working outline.

### **DO YOUR OWN THING!**

**CLOTHING.** Pack light – take whatever is comfortable for you. I usually wear a skirt or suit for travel, but take slacks for comfort. Bluejeans are permissible. Nobody cares what you are wearing and you will see everything. Skirts with nice deep pockets that will hold everything you need without taking your purse or billfold to the library with you is a real asset.

A topcoat or raincoat is necessary. Even though our hotel is just around the corner – you could get wet or cold and even late September it is beginning to get rather chilly in SLC.

A folding umbrella that you can put in your carry-all to take with you to the library may come in handy. Take a light weight carry-all to take to the library.

Something that will carry what records you want to research (and your umbrella).

**DO NOT EVER LEAVE** your handbag unattended in the library. Take a small bag that will hold your billfold & whatever necessary items you need during the day -- preferably one that has a shoulder strap that will fit around your neck, so that when you have to go to get more film or to other sections of the library – it leaves both hands free. Please do not ask your neighbor to watch your belongings – they have their heads stuck in the readers and it is not fair to them. Be prepared to carry your belongings with you or leave them at the hotel. Nowadays everybody wears "Fanny Packs" but be sure to wear them as "Tummy Packs." And don't take them off and lay them on your station.

Walking or comfortable shoes. Even though the hotel is right around the corner (in the same block) as the library, you will do considerable walking in the library and to get meals. If someone tells you anything is just a couple of blocks away, be prepared for a good walk. It just takes 7 of SLC blocks to make a mile!

**FOOD.** I do not go to SLC to eat! I go to research and I don't like to take any more time than necessary to get a meal. I take instant coffee, instant oatmeal, etc, and a heater coil to heat water, and eat my breakfast in my room. Some time around 11:00 a.m. (to beat the noon crowd),

I like to go out for either a late good breakfast or an early lunch. I eat one good balanced meal a day. Then around 5:00 p.m. have desert or whatever. When I get back to the hotel if I'm hungry I fix a cup of instant soup or snack on cheese & crackers and perhaps a piece of fruit. There are several places to eat around the library. There is a place in the library where you can get snacks etc., all from vending machines. They do have a Microwave machine where you can heat sandwiches, etc. but you need to get there early, if you want a seat.

**Booze** – You must carry it with you if you wish to indulge. Liquor stores are State-owned and sometimes hard to find. If you pack it in your suitcase, be prepared for bottles to break. If you carry it on the plane, it must be in an unopened bottle. Had a friend who packed a bottle of gin and a jar of instant coffee in her suitcase and the first night there she spent washing and cleaning everything in her suitcase because both the gin & coffee containers broke!

**MONEY.** Copies are so cheap you will find yourself Xeroxing or making copies of everything because it will save you time. Xerox copies are 5 cents a page. Microfiche & microfilm are 20 cents a copy.

I take two rolls of dimes and a supply (about 20) \$1.00 bills. There are change machines for \$1.00 and the copy machines will give you change for the quarters. Late in the day the change machines often are out of change. If you think you will need some change get it early in the day. As far as money for meals, that depends on how and what you want to eat – but prices in SLC are comparable with anywhere else. After sampling eating places all around, I usually sick to the restaurant at the hotel. The food is good and as reasonable as you get at home. The service is good. Of course, it depends on the time of the day how fast you get in and get out.

**RECORDS.** I would not plan to work on more than two or three lines. Take only the necessary records that will aid you in this research. A small "Our Family Tree" with all lines might be good to take so that if you run into a dead-end on the lines you planned to work on, you will have your other records to fall back on.

Take a supply of pens or pencils. You may use pens in the library.

Take a good notebook – May I suggest a knee-pad note-pad that has the three ring holes punched so that when you return from SLC you may insert these notes or records in your family notebooks.

A ruler, pair of scissors, small stapler, hole punch, paper clips always come in handy.

You will find in the forms handout, a research log. I find this is absolutely necessary. I make a note of ALL films read or even scanned and results, so when I do go back to SLC I will not waste time rereading the same film. Or you may want to look it again, and these films may be ordered through the local Mormon Library.

I take other genealogical forms such as family group sheets, and other forms I have designed to make copying of the records easier. (See samples in handout – I have some of these printed and padded to make them easier to use. You may copy any of these forms.) The SLC Library has a

great many forms especially the Census records forms for 1 cent a piece, so it is cheaper just to buy census forms out there.

If you are with a buddy, let your buddy know where you are at all times. If you decide to leave your reader and your buddy is absent from hers to get film, etc., leave her a note to tell her where you are going. That saves a lot of worry.

After a days research, we usually get our baths and into our Pj's and gather in one of the rooms where we can discuss any problem that we may have. **SOMEBODY** should be able to answer questions and make suggestions for the next days' research. We are there to help one another. Good Luck and have fun.

P. S. I do not pack my genealogical papers in my suitcases. I carry them with me on the plane. They may lose my clothes – but I'll be darned if they lose all my hard work!!!!

**NOW YOU KNOW HOW TO DO IT – GO DO IT!!!**

Any questions?