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IDEAS FOR PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL ORGANIZATION OF GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION

STORING PHYSICAL STUFF----

IN GENERAL
Always make an effort to store save all tidbits of information and stories of persons that might be of interest. Discard nothing ; even if it means

duplicates because you will collect information over YEARS.
Put items/documents in their place as soon as possible with notes of explanation attached.

Have a "Place" for your precious information. Do not scatter files, paper, photos, records, letters, your jotted down "thoughts and ideas", etc. Keep literally everything in the same general place.
> **Plastic bins with foam seals around the top are very good.**
> **Store in cool places. No attics**
> **In worst case, dump them all together. BUT SAVE THEM.**

Treat them as valuable. Labeled as valuable genealogical material.

MORE SPECIFIC IDEAS FOR STORAGE
Store by categories as detailed as you have clear vision going forward.   Here are some topical suggestions.

> **Documents, notes, paper records of all kinds by----**
> > **Specific persons**
> > **Family names**
> > **Geography/Places, such as US, Europe, Canada, Israel, Chicago**
> > **Correspondence**
> > **Your special interest topics**

> **Physical Items like----**
> > **Manifests/ship records**
> > **Awards, medals, artifacts**
> > **Birth, death documents, grade cards, obituaries**
> > > **(or maybe by Person or Family)**

Photographs by---
      Specific persons
      Family names
      Locations/dates
      Trips/locations
(Label the photographs if you have the information as to person, date, event, etc.)

Research guides and reference material

Notes and ideas **from Genealogical Society Meetings**

Tips for searching.

Travel notes. Record places, dates, thoughts you had, people you met, photos you took, data you gathered, etc.

Tips and ideas for writing . Catch ideas and thoughts while they are hot!

Books and reference material **you may be using in hard copy.**

What file groupings of the entire body of information are the most important to you?   It is all the same pile of data. How do you want it "cut" or it organized?   This well may change over time as you get more focused by person, topic, etc.

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DIGITAL STUFF
(BACKED UP, BACKED UP, BACKED UP!)

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Topics for filing can be same as for physical information above
      as you deem useful.

Keep track of all the web sites you visit in Bookmarks/Favorites or a deliberate separate list.

Create a Genealogical Correspondence file for incoming or outgoing letters, emails, by year and then by date

Family Tree Maker (or other similar program) can provide a file structure for all kinds of files. ie Trees, notes/descriptions, pictures, personal details, dates. Encourages organization. Such software helps you identify items you should be collecting.

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Make backups. Make backups. Make backups!

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FILLING WHEN WRITING A BOOK

      Can use Word but need to break down document into
      manageable parts and avoid inter part references.

           (Any insertions should be one of last things done.)

      There is other software like Scrivener, InDesign but there
         is significant overhead in learning.

      Make backups. Make backups. Make backups!

      Keep your writing <u>versions</u> to allow freedom to change a
      document and then revert to an earlier
      version.

      Label your files in a meaningful way. Title, version, date, order---

      Learn to use your computer's Global Search Function to
         find items in your digital files. You can search on <u>CONTENT</u>
      as well as file names/labels

PHOTOS AND DOCUMENTS

Scan and file pictures or documents and label the files. Scan at useful
resolutions, ie 300 dpi. Color is now much cheaper. A color file
can always be made black and white or sepia.
Label the file in complete and meaningful categories.
Get desired photos off your phone and into the computer and the clouds
        and backed up.
Create a file system for photos by whatever categories are meaningful.
        Date
        Event
        Person
        Trip

MAKE THREE LAYERS OF DIGITAL BACKUP
        One backup on the pc.

        One back upon a connected backup disk or cloud being kept at
        least every hour

        One backup (better two) on a removable media every day or
        week or when you add or make changes.   This
        protects against ransom ware

How would you feel if you lost 20 or more years of work and data?!!

Even losing a week or a day of creative writing or data can be
devastating.