**Tips for Genealogy Trip - 1 or 2 days - weekdays best**

1) Check ahead for hours of facilities – a) Courthouse - Health Department - may be in different location

 b) Libraries - Public, Genealogical or Historical Societies, Archives? County Museum?

 Take cash/change for copies – 10 cents to $1.00 per copy. Load up copy card.

 Take scan discs - Portable Scanner, Flip Pal

c) Cemeteries - Many close/lock at dusk. Do they have an office? Who holds records? Tools to clean away weeds or clean off stone – bucket, soft brush, weed clippers, milk jugs of water

 d) Church records – call ahead to office to be sure someone is there or would meet you there.

2) Check ahead for fees - Death Certificates, Birth Certificates, Marriage and Divorce Documents, Last Will and Testaments. Do they have indexes?

3) Take lists of what you are looking for. Print off family sheets or listing of items you’re missing from your database.

4) Drop off Death and Birth Certificate requests at first of day and they will try to have ready for you by set time in afternoon. Do they offer a Genealogy copy? If not, ask them to type parent information, etc on back of certificate: Father’s name, Birthplace, Mother’s Name, Birthplace

5) Library - Look for Listing of Persons and where to find them in local history books, atlases, etc. Look for Cemetery Books or Databases. Let the Library personnel know what/who you are looking for – usually very helpful and will help you search. Look for Local Histories with Biographical Sketches. Do they have Family Vertical Files or Books – many times filed by alphabetically by Family Surname. Look for Listings or Databases of Marriages, Deaths, Births, Wills. Tear little slips of paper and write page numbers and make copies all at once. Use Genealogy Calendar to write down books you look at and what was found or not found to keep track of what you have already looked at.

6) Cemeteries - some listings give section or plot number and grave number or they give Row numbers and then graves by number. Some give no help at all and you just have to walk the cemetery. I drive around first and see if see family names. Many times family buried close to each other. Start with Cemetery office if you do not already have grave locations. Try to get there before dusk to avoid shadows and also some close at dusk.

7) Court House - definitely check hours and days open. Some not open on Wednesday or close at Noon. Many close at 4:00, instead of 5:00. Take cash to pay for copies. Offices vary –some will not let you touch the books and others will set you up to a desk to look through them. Most will make copies for you as they do not have public copy machines for your use. I make copies of the Index pages too. Write on back of document where it was found – Book, Page, etc.

8) Other Useful Supplies – plenty of batteries for camera – and/or be sure to take your phone charger, Clip board – helpful to attach Cemetery list and mark off as find or bring blank paper to sketch where plots were located. Pencils – some libraries will only allow you to take in pencils and loose papers – not bag or notebook. That is where having your list written out for what you are searching for comes in handy. Highlighters – highlight dates, places, etc. Always have Tom-Tom or directional device available and you can still get lost! Comfortable walking shoes – maybe two pairs in case the ground is wet. Bring a friend. -some cemeteries are out in areas with no one around --or you find yourself with strangers way out in the country.