

Tips for Recording Jack and Mariah Summerall Descendants

Schedule Interview

- Contact the senior and explain what we are doing.**

“The JSFG history committee is working on a family history project to preserve the stories and memories of our family members so future generations can know where we came from and the lives that helped shape our family. I would like to record a short conversation with you about your life, your relatives and family gatherings you remember to share at this and future gatherings.

The interview is very informal—just a chance for me to listen and learn. If you have any old photographs, I'd love to see those too and hear who the people are and what was happening when they were taken. Would you be willing to sit down with me for a short recorded interview?

- Set a time and location for the interview.**

Phone and Settings

- Charge your phone to 100% and if possible keep it plugged in during recording.
- Clean the lens with a soft cloth.
- Check the microphone port and blow out any dust.
- Check the settings on your phone for recording a video.

View iPhone settings at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tJA2rL9DcoMCtf40CGaJOnq3450A-ID1/view?usp=sharing>

View Android settings at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10T-LwNwmMQhpIKgf8ZXFjuWUQGmXVML/view?usp=sharing>

Day of the Interview

- Download the “Jack and Mariah Summerall Family Tree” form or (take your computer with you).
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cZhj0M4HbeGB_ip4ZQJmLuwDxIISSz4R/view?usp=sharing
- Fill out as much information as is known with the senior.
- Have a copy of the questions with you (print them out or take your laptop with you).
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Lk8w746LRiddoQD9d2O8Wmi3DBaczGNFQtLKWIJ9qP8/edit?usp=sharing>

Location, Environment, Lighting and Positioning the Person

- Choose a quiet room, preferably one with natural light from a window if recording during the day and

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determine where the person can comfortably sit (*a chair that doesn't squeak or swivel*).

- Avoid having a bright window or light behind the person.
- Adjust indoor lighting to highlight the person's face. Place lamps/ring light IN FRONT of the person (not behind them).
 - If possible, seat people **not wearing glasses** facing a window for soft, natural light if possible. (*Figure 1*)
 - Seat people **wearing glasses** alongside the window on their left or right side. This reduces glare on lenses. (*Figure 2*)

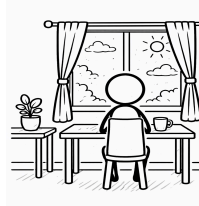



Figure 1



Figure 2

- Check for background noise like refrigerators, clocks, traffic and turn off fans.

Phone Position

- Place the phone in a horizontal position  on a tripod or stand at or slightly below the person's eye level and within 2–5 feet of your subject for clear voice pickup with the built-in mic.
- If a stand or tripod isn't available, prop the phone with books or other items or [view this video for making a simple stand with a plastic cup.](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16drLnvBAObdRvFB-p6zNznqriR_hyN4y/view)
- Please do not hold the phone by hand**

Framing the Person

- Center or slightly off-center the person for a natural look. Leave a small amount of space above their head, not too much.
- Lock focus and exposure on the person's face
 - ~ iPhone: Tap and HOLD on your subject's face until AE/AF Lock appears at the top.
 - ~ Android: Tap and hold on the subject's face until a lock icon appears.
- Position yourself **next to the phone's camera lens** so when the person is talking their eyes are in line with the camera.
- Ask the person to look at you when talking.

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Recording

- Keep the phone in the same position until the interview is completed.
- Have a glass of water and tissues nearby.
- Enable Do Not Disturb or Airplane Mode** on **ALL** phones present in the room to avoid call interruptions.
- Start the recording and double-check that it is **ACTUALLY** recording.

Save and Upload Immediately After Recording

- Save the video file to your photos library.
- Upload your video to the Dropbox link below.
 - Tap to open the following link: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/y637m97r1j5i2vr7cncc>
 - Select the video in your photo library
 - Add your name and email in the displayed boxes
 - Tap "Upload"
 - That's it!
- If possible , keep the original file on your phone until the gathering is finished in case we need it.

Quick Reference

✓ DO's and DON'Ts	
DO: Use a tripod, stand or prop up phone. DO NOT: Hand-hold the phone while recording.	DO: Enable "Do Not Disturb" on all phones in the room. DO NOT: Record in a noisy or echoey room.
DO: Record in landscape position (horizontal). DO NOT: Record in portrait position (vertical).	DO: Light the subject from the front. DO NOT: Record with bright window or light behind subject.
DO: Record at 1080p / 30fps. DO NOT: Record in 4K.	DO: Upload file to LaVeta's Dropbox DO NOT: Send video by text message

QUESTIONS?

Just call, text or email cousin LaVeta Gilmore Jones who lives in the Pacific Time zone. She will be in the Eastern Time zone from July 30 - August 27, 2026.

Call/Text: (503) 936-2870

Email: jsfghistorian@gmail.com