

# FAMILY REUNION INSTITUTE'S

## STICKY REUNION SITUATION

### DOCUMENTING FAMILY FACTS

July 2017

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#### The Situation:

As some families look to identify and formally document their family history by getting verbal information from family elders, they discover that some of the history they've been given is tainted with untruths, and that "facts" about certain situations change based upon who's providing the information. How should the family members who are doing research go about obtaining and documenting their history so that it is as accurate as possible?

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#### The Fix:



Shamele Jordon

An important first step when beginning to research family history, is to interview family members. Collecting these oral histories will be an ongoing aspect of your journey. Family members may have different recollections of the same events. That is why the family historian is important. We attempt to distinguish fact from fiction.

Our job is to document the story with records and analysis. It is these stories which guide us on our journey. The best records to begin with are census and vital records. These are the records which are used in my Online Genealogy quick start method, which is an episode of Genealogy Quick Start. To begin the quick start, determine the family lineage(s) that you want to research. Then you ask the question "Who was living in 1940?" The year 1940 is important because it is the latest census available to the public. Search for your family in 1940, then 1930, and continue to search back decade by decade. Soon you will have a nice foundation with lots of people. Use this information to fill in your family tree.

While searching the census you may hit a road block, unable to find your family. This is when you turn to vital records, birth, death, marriage, and divorce. These records will provide additional information to assist with continuing your census search.

Soon you will have tons of information.

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