

Senior Advice: Old census data is new to Web

by *Doug_Mayberry*

Q: Several years ago my family designated me as the family historian. I enjoy being so, and at our annual family picnic I disperse the latest information. A cousin recently called and reported she had heard the government was releasing a lot of new census data.

If this is so, can you direct me to how I can find it?

A: Your cousin is correct. Census information is released through the Census Bureau and the National Archives. A census is taken every 10 years, and the records from 1930 have just been released. The information is available for viewing at the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C., and at the 13 regional repositories. You can learn how the 1930 census was taken, which records survived, and how to find microfilm that may contain your family's records.

The microfilm locator is not a family or initial-name index. Only by viewing the actual microfilm rolls will you be able to start your research. By accessing the Web site home page (<http://1930census.archives.gov>) you can find which roll of microfilm you need to view, rent or buy for your family's information. You will need to know where your family lived, and you can then match that address to the census enumeration districts to determine which of the 2,200 roll of microfilm holds that record.

Although the process is somewhat daunting, hopefully you gain more specific information about how your family lived. It will be interesting to learn how little food and housing cost in those days.

Q: In recent months two of my childhood friends passed. I miss them terribly and feel depressed. Finding and making new friends at 73 is not an easy thing to do.

Is there a checklist to help me to overcome some of my grieving?

A: Pep yourself up by focusing on those wonderful times you enjoyed. How many friends do we make in a lifetime? Each one is a blessing and what a difference they make in our lives.

Remember, as young ladies, what crazy things you experienced when you first dated and how you all cried when you broke up with your first boyfriends. Dig out the old photo albums and slides to remind yourself how you matured and survived. Visualize positive affirmations. If you have living mutual friends, phone them and share your memories.

Organizations, such as senior centers, churches and hospice organizations have support groups and offer regular grieving sessions to share with others. Join singles' groups, schedule planning to make a new acquaintance every week, which will distract and reaffirm your reasons for living. Invite an acquaintance for coffee, lunch or enjoy a movie or walk. Don't be afraid to say, "Hello, isn't it a beautiful day?"

We all go through different varieties of grieving as we mature, such as when a child leaves home, we divorce, accidents happen, remarriage or the passing a pet. Even though your friends are gone, write each one a letter about things unsaid. These will serve as a morale builder and will help you rid of the blahs. Stay focused on your health and balancing your life.

The secret of coping and overcoming grief is "doing." By shifting your attention and helping others, you will find more comfort and peace. When you are passionate about others, time loses its meaning! Your love and caring for your friends will never be forgotten.

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