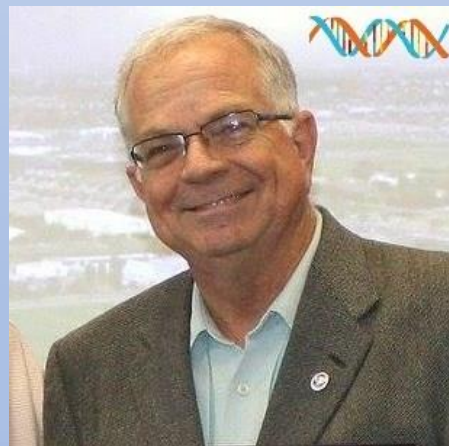




Identifying Those Unknown DNA Matches



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All slides and handouts can be found at:

<http://www.familytreeaz.com/Presentations/>

A Caveat (...or two)

- Your DNA matches are presumed to be still living

Thus, this presentation will focus on methods rather than specific examples in order to protect their privacy

- This presentation is focusing on GENEALOGY

How can identifying your matches improve your family tree? (e.g., not stalking or investigating people)

Why Identify?

- 1) More context to determine if you should attempt to contact; for example, a close cousin who might be able to provide important information
- 2) **Start a research tree (“Quick and Dirty Tree”)**
 - Use to determine how you are related to the person (i.e., work their ancestral tree back in time to find a common ancestor)
- 3) Add the person to your tree



Key to Identifying --- Build Clues

- Locations
- Age
- Surname
- Siblings, Parents, other relatives
- Birth Date
- Birth Location

Primary Methods Used

1. BeenVerified (et al)
2. Ancestry (public records, city directories, yearbooks, birth indices)
3. Facebook
4. Google searches (can point to Facebook, LinkedIn, professional affiliations, help with aliases, etc.)
5. Metadata included with match (Age range, Location, etc.)
6. Use those shared matches (can sometimes yield surnames)

Get the Individual Clues from Different Sources and then Build on them – “Re-”search

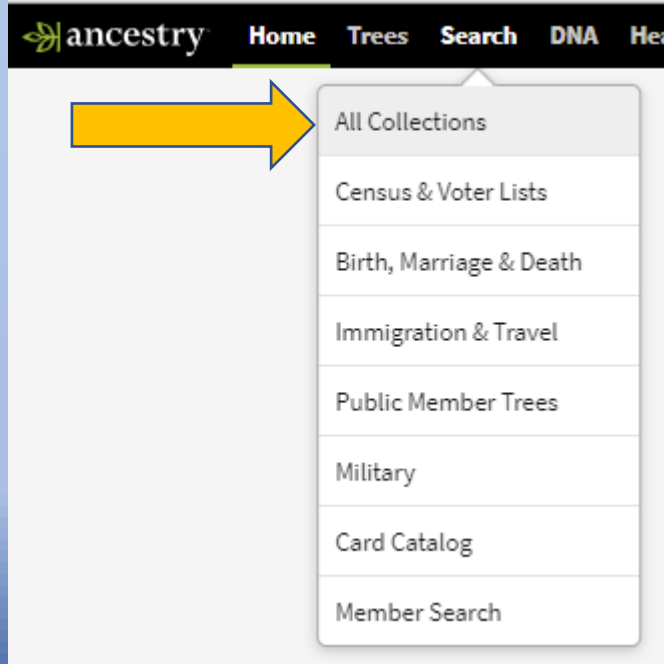


As you get new pieces of the puzzle, go back and search again



Ancestry Searches for Living People

- Family trees are not useful in this regard due to intentional privatizing
- HOWEVER....
 - Many other records can be found. Especially useful are public records which often yield a complete birthdate as well as location. Also useful can be yearbook entries which can often place a person's location when they were in their teens



Don't Forget to Check Related Records in Ancestry

- This technique has actually solved several mysteries for me!

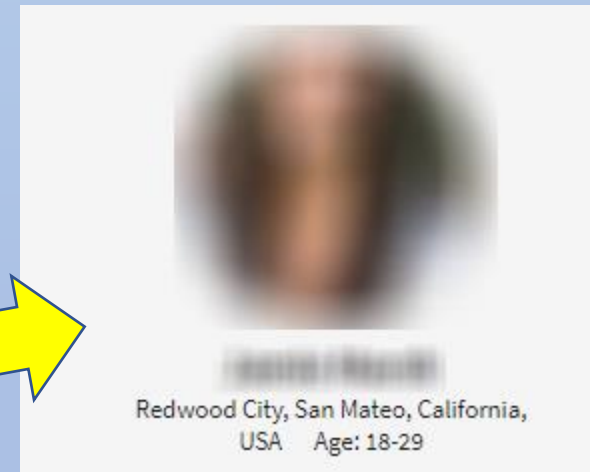
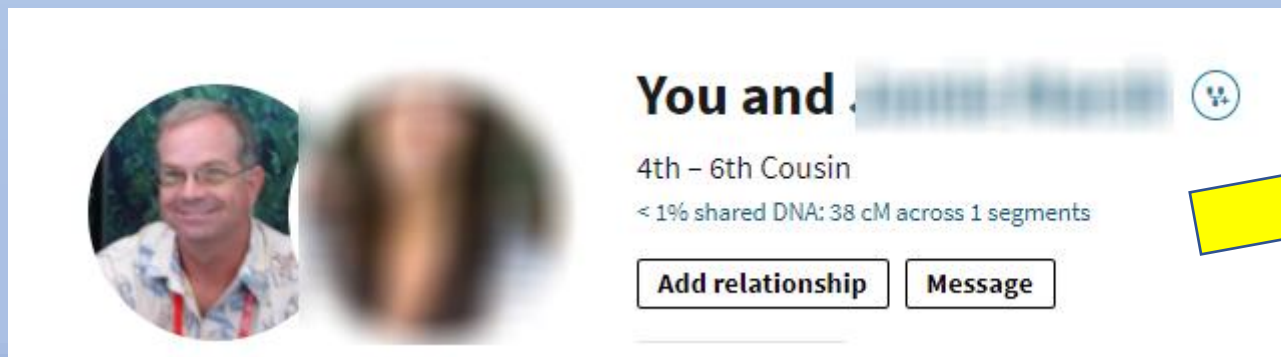
The screenshot shows a person's profile on Ancestry.com. The profile is for a person with the name [REDACTED] in the U.S., Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 2. The profile includes fields for Name, Birth Date (21 Nov 1958), Address, Residence Place (Lawton, Oklahoma, USA), and Zip Code (73507). A green 'Save' button is visible below the profile information.

To the right of the profile is a 'Suggested Records' section, which is highlighted with a red border. This section lists five related records, each with a yellow arrow pointing to it:

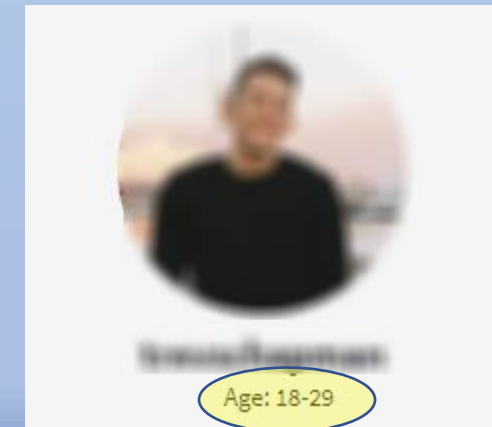
- North Carolina, U.S., Birth Indexes, 1800-2000
- U.S., Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 1
- U.S., Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 2
- U.S., Index to Public Records, 1994-2019
- U.S., School Yearbooks, 1900-1999

DNA Match Metadata

- Sometimes you can get important valuable clues when the test taker includes other information. In Ancestry remember to click on the test taker's (or administrator's) profile. Factors such as age group or location can quickly narrow down the search.



Redwood City, San Mateo, California,
USA Age: 18-29



Some Matches You'll Never Be Able to ID

- No first or last name
- My experience:
 - ~20% can not be identified (initials only or very common name)
 - ~10% can be partially identified (e.g., narrowed down to 2 brothers)
 - ~70% are identifiable
- Of course, YMMV (Your Mileage May Vary)

Examples of Difficult ID's – Common Names

- Not a lot you can do as far as searching for this person but don't forget to check shared matches before you give up

Very common name with no other details



David Smith

Seemingly Difficult ID's can be made with shared matches

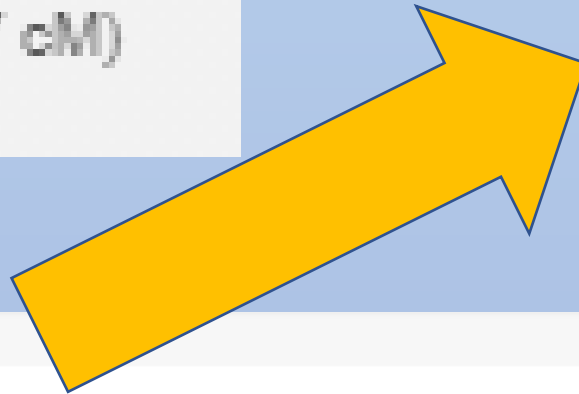


Dna Test

3rd - 4th cousin

Shared DNA: 1.0% (68.7 cM)

HOWEVER--- I believe I have identified her based SOLELY on a combination of match strength (68.7 cMs) and match strength of other shared matches (MyHeritage has that very useful feature).



Dna Test

From: USA

[Contact Dna Test](#)

Estimated relationships

3rd - 4th cousin

DNA Match quality

Shared DNA: 1.0% (68.7 cM)

Shared segments: 2

Largest segment: 59.3 cM



[Review DNA Match](#)

[View tree](#)

Appears in a family tree with 4 people that she manages

Shared Matches Can Reveal Clues

- All DNA testing companies have some sort of shared match information
- MyHeritage and 23andMe have additional benefit of showing match strength (cMs) between shared matches

MyHeritage

Home DNA Research

Ken Waters
This is you

Dna Test
3rd - 4th cousin
Shared DNA: 1.0% (88.7 cM)
Contact

Shared DNA Matches, estimated relationship to you

Shared DNA Matches, estimated relationship to Dna Test

Estimated relationship to you	Shared match	Estimated relationship to Dna Test
Daughter	49.9% (3,540.7 cM) P	1.0% (72.8 cM) 3rd - 4th cousin
Uncle, half brother, grandfather	22.8% (1,612.7 cM) En	1.2% (84.7 cM) 1st cousin twice removed - 4th cousin
3rd cousin - distant cousin	0.2% (16.6 cM) Thi	11.3% (798.1 cM) 1st cousin, great-aunt
1st cousin - 1st cousin once removed	10.2% (725.1 cM) Mil	1.0% (71.7 cM) 3rd - 4th cousin
3rd - 5th cousin	0.5% (37.1 cM)	1.2% (87.4 cM) 1st cousin twice removed - 4th cousin








Shared Matches Can Reveal Clues

23andMe

- All DNA testing companies have some sort of shared match information
- MyHeritage and 23andMe have additional benefit of showing match strength (cMs) between shared matches

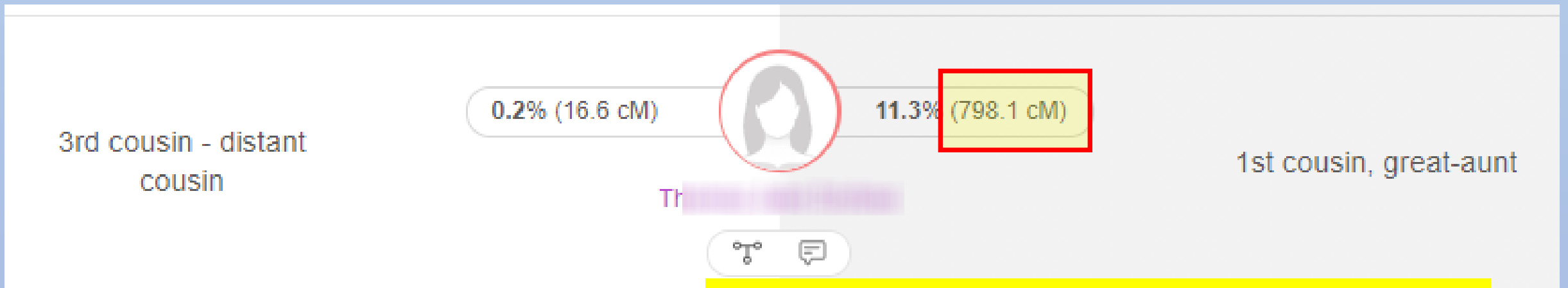
You have Relatives in Common

Each Relative in Common shares at least one small segment of DNA with Norman.

Relative in common	You	Norman	DNA Overlap
 Mic [blurred]	1st Cousin (12.88)	2nd Cousin (2.17)	Yes
 Mel [blurred]	1st Cousin, Once Removed (5.04)	3rd Cousin (0.62)	No
 Ter [blurred]	2nd Cousin (3.23)	2nd Cousin, Once Removed (3.12)	Yes
 Sus [blurred]	2nd Cousin (3.09)	2nd Cousin (2.12)	Yes
 Fran [blurred]	2nd Cousin (2.59)	1st Cousin (13.63)	Yes
 Har [blurred]	2nd Cousin (2.55)	2nd Cousin (1.68)	No
 Chr [blurred]	2nd Cousin, Once Removed (1.15)	4th Cousin (0.55)	No

Example of a MyHeritage DNA Match with Close Shared Match

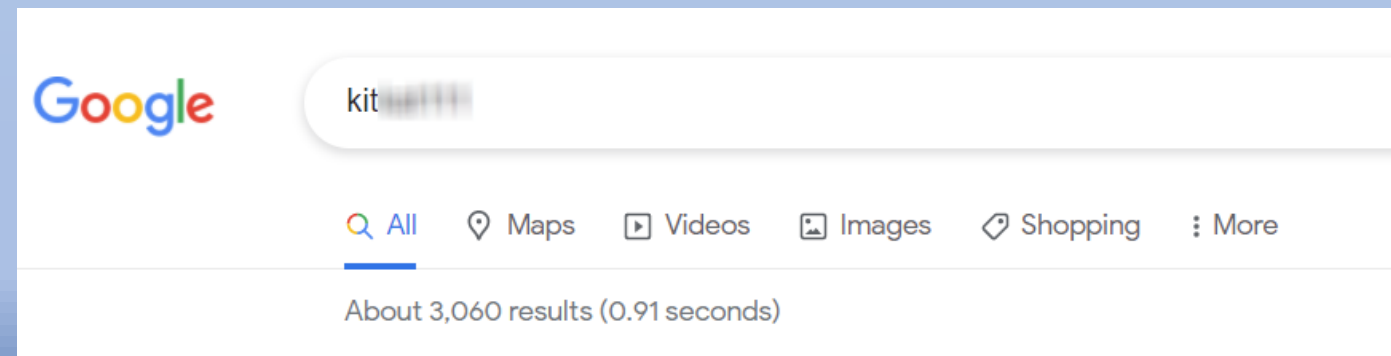
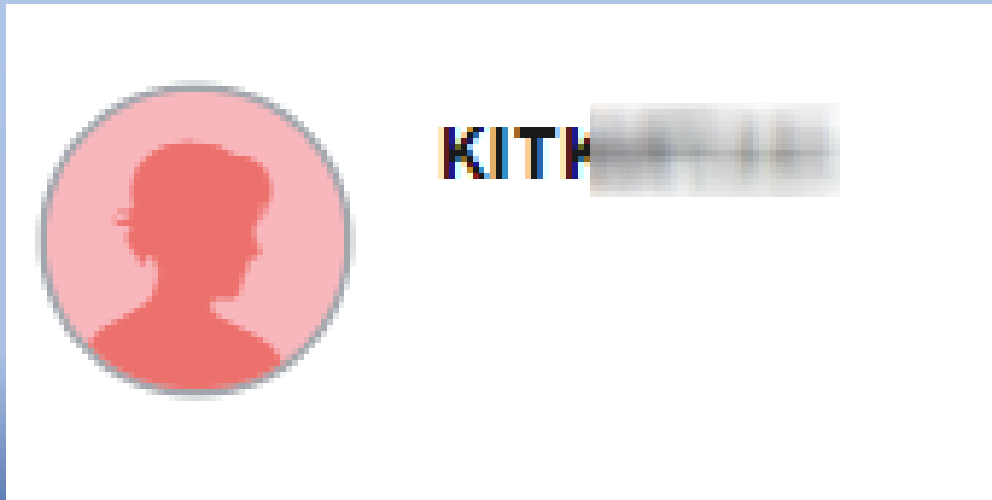
- This match, 798.1 cM indicates that the two shared matches are very closely related



Turns out this shared match was determined to be the 1st cousin of the mystery "DNA Test" match and used to solve the identity of the test-taker.

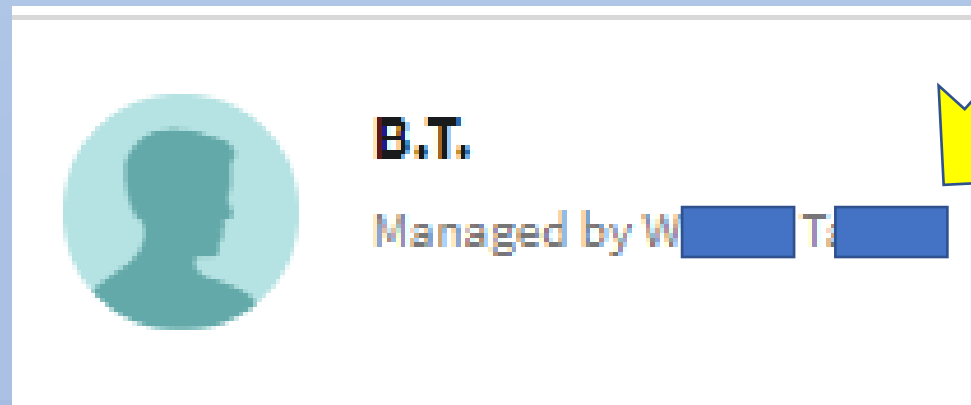
For Aliases --- Be sure to search for them on the web

- Some people love to use aliases
 - Often they will reuse those aliases across different types of accounts
 - When you see an alias be sure to search for it (e.g., try Google)



For Kits Managed by Administrators

- In Ancestry kits identified only by initials are typically kits managed by someone else, often a family member
- Sometimes that can be a useful hint as to the surname



In this case I was able to determine the surname of this match by using the name of the test administrator in combination with other shared matches.

Use BeenVerified or Other People Search Sites

- Free for simple information; pay site has more information

Ad <https://www.beenverified.com/> ▾

Don't Waste Your Money - Just Enter A Name & State

Our **People Search** Technology Makes It As Easy As Ever To Locate **People**, Try BeenVerified@!
Find Someone Confidentially & Fast. Phone, Address, Email, Social, Work...

Reverse Phone Lookup

Enter A Phone Number And Search
For Relevant Info About the Owner

Search Property Records

Search Real Estate Assets & Their
Potential Owners. Enter Address.

Ad <https://tracking.intelius.com/find/people> ▾

People Finder - Lookup Anyone · Search Someone By Name | Free

[1] Enter Any Name & City/ State [2] **Search** Phone, Address & Full Public Records Data Fast.
Confidential **People Search Engine**. **Search People**, Phone Number, Addresses, Age, DOB ...

Ad <https://www.top10.com/best/peoplesearch> ▾

10 Best People Search Sites - Just Released Jul 2021 Re...

Find The Best **Site** to Find Information About Someone. Private and Reliable. Review
The...

2021's Best Choice · Online Background Check · Criminal Background Check



Ad <https://www.peoplefinders.com/people-search> ▾

PeopleFinders.com - Official Site

It's easy! [1] Enter any name [2] See contact info, relatives, age, and more.

 **BeenVerified**.com

Sign in

Sign In

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Send a One Time Login Link](#)

[Unsure what email you used?](#)

Use BeenVerified or Other People Search Sites

- Has been invaluable in identifying:
 - Birth dates (Month + Year)
 - Siblings
 - Maiden Names (shows other names)
 - Locations
 - Relationships (especially likely parents)

BeenVerified

People Search Phone Search Property Search Email Search Social Media Search Business Search Dashboard Menu

Overview

- Phone Numbers 4
- Email Addresses 3
- Address History 12
- Relatives 2
- Names & Ancestry 2
- Associates 4
- Neighbors 16
- Criminal or Traffic 0
- Bankruptcies 0
- Jobs & Education 10
- Social Media 3
- Assets 3
- Free Bonus Data ★
- Additional Details 0

Free Bonus Data

Report as PDF Monitoring Enabled Bonus Data

C. [REDACTED]

Age 64 years old

Born September 1950

Location Thief River Falls, MN

Aliases Ca [REDACTED] View 6 more

Thief River Falls, MN 56701 View 12 more

(218) 681-0371 View 4 more

View 3 more

View relatives

0 criminal traffic records identified Learn more

2 social networks identified View details

No

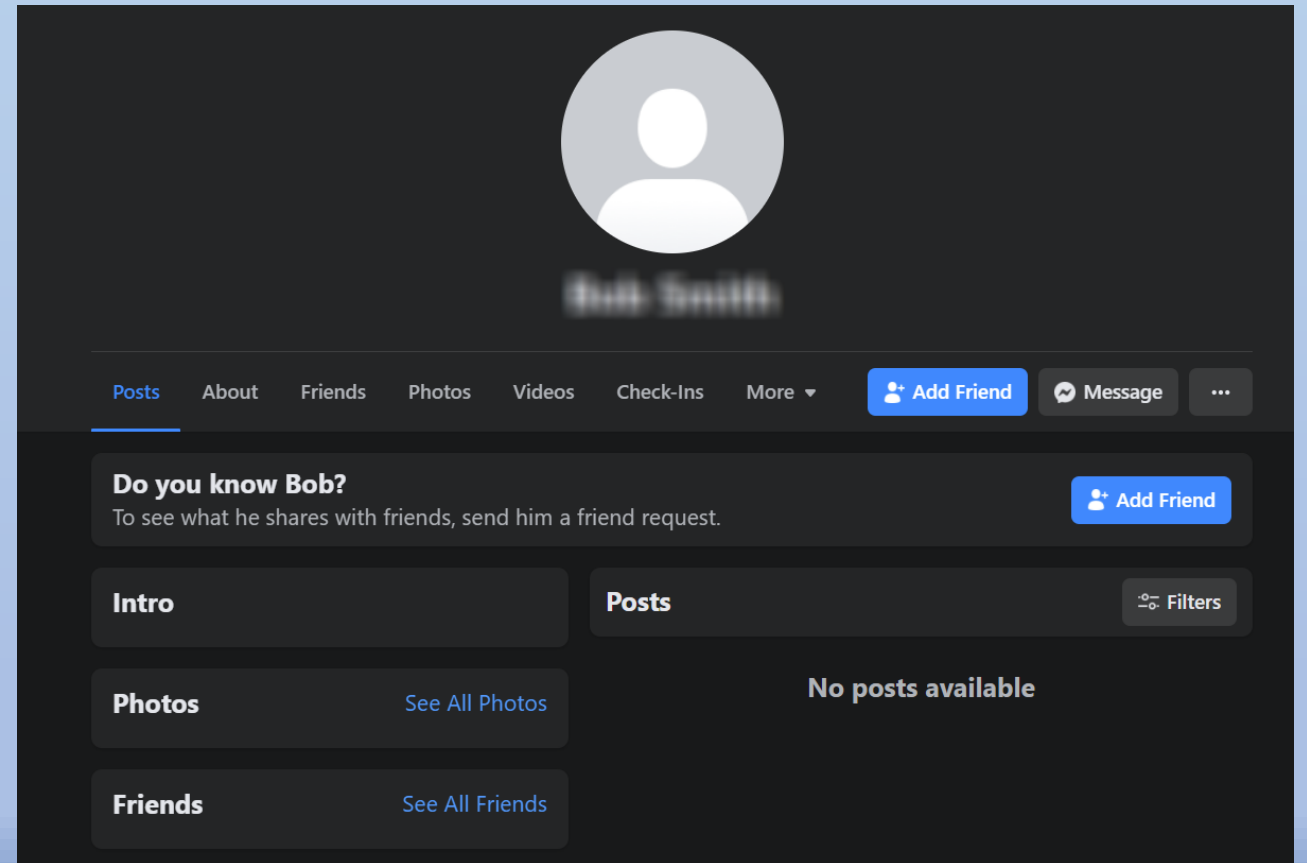
Identified birth mother, death date, birth date

He [REDACTED]
Deceased at age ~79 on Sep 2001

Lived in [REDACTED]

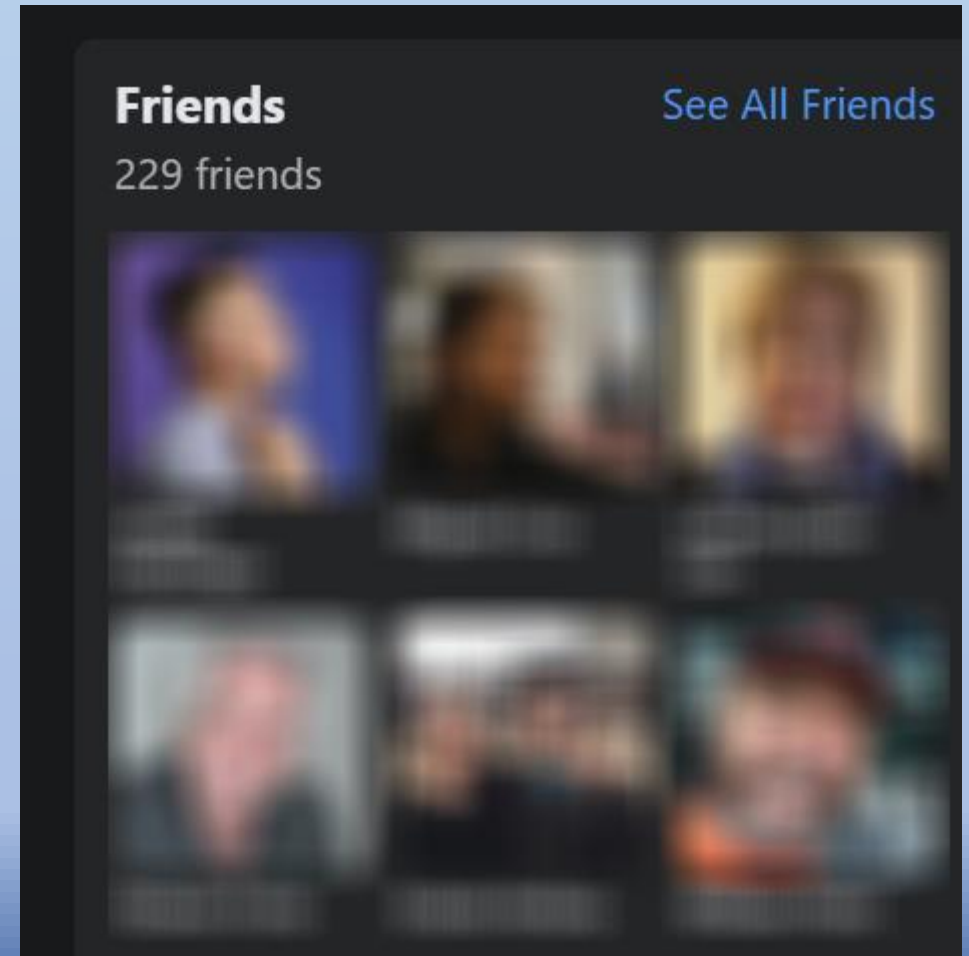
Don't Forget Facebook

- Some profiles on FB have high security and you can't see friends



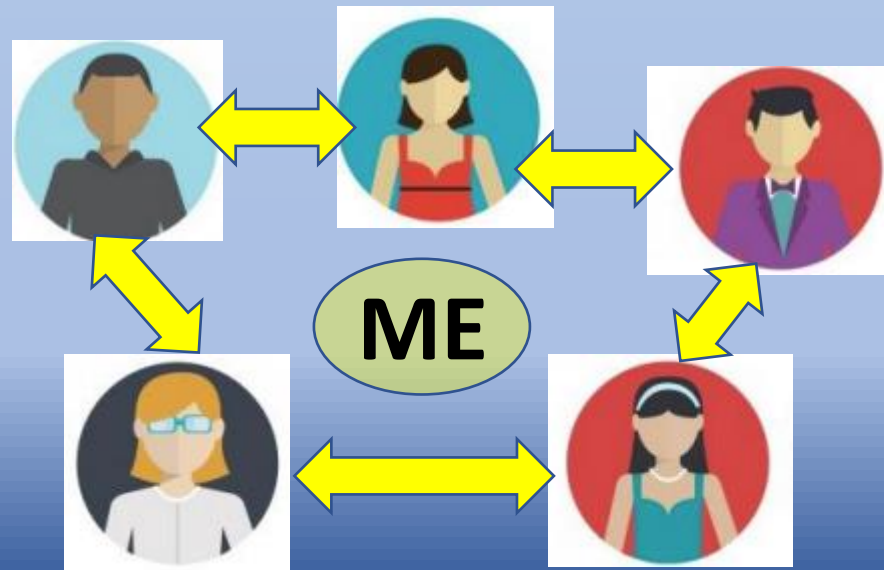
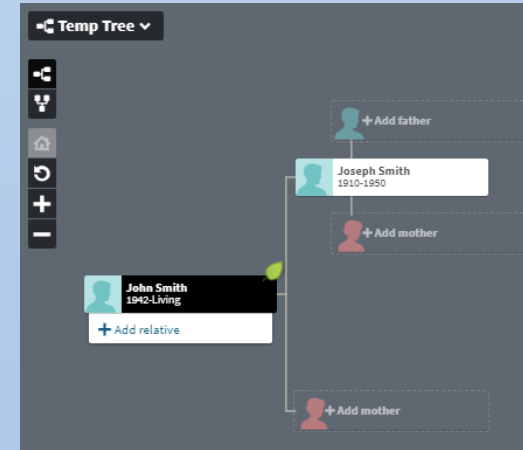
Don't Forget Facebook

- However --- Some profiles have low security
 - Showing Friends
 - Can yield surnames, siblings, parents, children even if the target's account is set at high security
 - Also, check locations of the friends -- this can often yield clues as to where this person is from




Okay, I've Identified the Person --- now what?


- Build a research tree (see my June 2021 presentation)
- Look at shared matches to this match --- might help identify others in the genetic network







Don't Forget to Document


- In Ancestry, once I've ID'ed a match I always enter the information into the note field




 **Michelle** 2nd cousin 1x removed
152 cM | 2% shared DNA
Mother's side


 Unlinked Tree [View match](#)


 2C1R, great-granddaughter of , niece to 

 **2C2R Wilma** 2nd cousin 2x removed
46 cM | < 1% shared DNA
Mother's side



 No Trees [View match](#)

 2C2R Wilma (born  1940 living in Salem OR. Born in Fort Smith AR. Mother was  Spencer, grandfather was Daniel Spencer.

 **Gath** 4th - 6th Cousin
29 cM | < 1% shared DNA
Mother's side

 Public linked tree
7 People

Do you recognize them?
[Yes](#) [Learn more](#)

 28.7/2. Likely Spencer line. This appears to be actress Gath  (CABI: b. 1985)

Put the Puzzle Pieces Together

- Small Pieces
 - Location
 - Birth date (going from just year to year-month to year-month-day)
 - Birth location
 - Relatives
- Can allow putting the puzzle together!



You can do it too!

One Final Note About Contacting

- Don't try to contact the person until you've completed a thorough search for records and identification
- If you do attempt contact, put a few clues in the message to pique the person's interest (e.g., mention surnames from the suspected line)
- Whatever you do, don't:
 - Overwhelm with facts (e.g., chromosome matches, centiMorgans, etc.)
 - Add insensitive remarks before establishing good communications
 - "I believe you're the sister of my birth father"
 - "Are you adopted?"
- REMEMBER: you want this person to respond so be as respectful as possible, adding a few clues to get them interested without overwhelming them.



It looks like we may be related on my Spencer-Cummings line out of Michigan. My 3rd great-grandfather was Nathan Gould Spencer who lived in Eaton Rapids, MI



Next Class

Date: Thursday, 8/19, 2 pm

Topic: Exploring GEDMatch

Learn all about the free tool known as GEDMatch. You'll be able to upload DNA kits there to compare with others who have taken DNA tests from other companies. Learn how to upload your family tree there and interrogate DNA matches by examining common segments.

To join the email list for class announcements visit <http://familytreeaz.com> and scroll down on the left for the subscribe option.



Questions?

- Contact:
 - Ken Waters
 - E-Mail: ken@familytreeaz.com
 - Blog: familytreeaz.com
 - Twitter: [@familytreeaz](https://twitter.com/familytreeaz)
 - Slide Presentations: <http://familytreeaz.com/Presentations>

