

TUTORIAL

Telling Your Story with Treelines

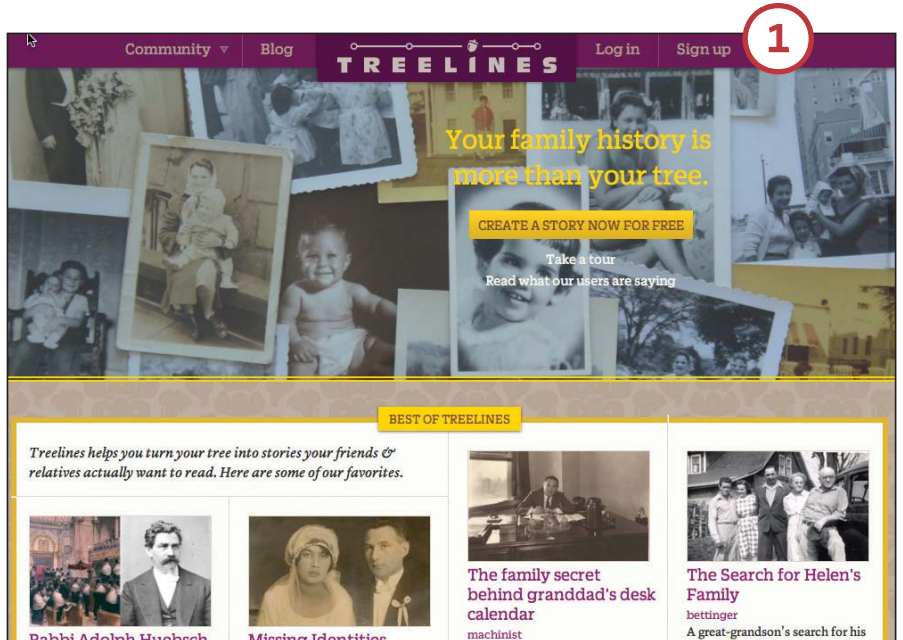
Genealogists rely on timelines to help organize people, places and events. They're also powerful research tools when it comes to untangling ancestors with the same name. But while tables and spreadsheets are efficient tools for building timelines, they don't make for exciting reading.

Treelines <www.treelines.com> is a free online tool for creating timelines that offers a unique story-building perspective for working with dated events, chronologies or almost any kind of narrative. It's an easy-to-use, engaging resource for curating and sharing stories.

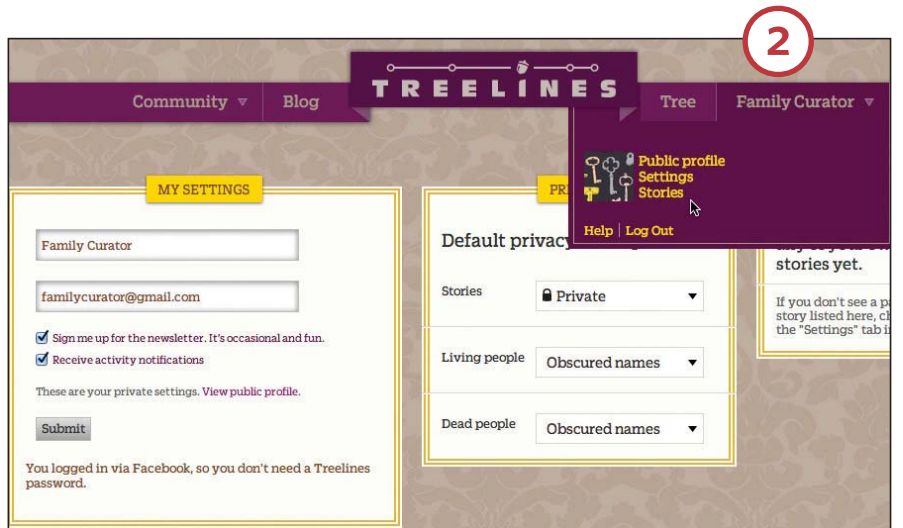
Most family historians think of people and events when crafting personal stories, but you also can use the tool to share other kinds of narratives, such as:

- the origin and provenance of family keepsakes and heirlooms
- a short vignette or memoir of a significant event in an ancestor's life
- narrative detail to help untangle a complex genealogical puzzle
- the founding, development and highlights of a family business
- the chain of ownership for a long-time family farm or homestead

Treelines guides you in building "pages" that hold brief narratives, digital photos with captions, and links. You can add embellishments and borders, similar to a scrapbook, to enhance the visual appeal. Additional information such as names, places, dates and keywords help others find stories of interest, but the default privacy settings keep stories private unless you want to share them. A timeline along the bottom of the story shows the intersection of people and places.



1



2

As a web-based tool, Treelines is accessible with a computer or tablet. The intuitive interface makes it a good fit for a mobile genealogy project. Before you start, it's helpful to collect images you want to use (they should be JPGs, 4MB or smaller) in a single folder on your computer or mobile device. You also can upload a GEDCOM (the standard file format for family tree data) or enter names and dates manually.

1 Sign up for a free account with Treelines or log in with your

Facebook <www.facebook.com> account. All information is private by default. You'll be prompted to set up a family tree. Select "I don't have a tree yet" to enter names for a story. You can always add a GEDCOM later if you want.

2 Click your user name in the menu bar to view and edit your Public Profile, Settings and Stories. Click Public Profile to change your user name, upload a profile picture and add links to your social media accounts. Click Settings to adjust privacy. Click Stories to begin creating a story.

3



You don't have any stories in progress.

Start your family story

4



OK, you've started a story connected to your tree, **Treelines family tree for Family Curator!**

We will help you turn the information in your family tree into the beginnings of a story using the Tree Wizard. This is a fast way to create your story from the people and events already in your tree!

Start the Tree Wizard

I've done this before. Let me jump right in.

5

Write a page of your story here.

WHO IS THIS PAGE ABOUT?
(Link to Treelines family tree for Family Curator)

Name

WHEN DOES THIS PAGE TAKE PLACE?
A date, a year, or a range
Ex: 5/9/1978, May 9, 1978, May 1978, est. 1978, 1978-1980

Where and what will connect your stories to similar ones.

WHERE DOES THIS PAGE TAKE PLACE?
City, State, or Country

WHAT IS THIS PAGE ABOUT?
Events, groups, or themes
Ex: "Civil War" or "Immigration"

The source will appear as a footnote.

ADD SOURCE
How do you find this out?

Done Cancel Delete this page

6

Write Preview Publish ? TREELINES

A New Story
Last updated: Oct. 7, 2014, 10:38:54 AM
By Family Curator
Add collaborators Try it!

This story is associated with Treelines family tree for Family Curator Start Tree Wizarding!

PEOPLE
Daniel Levenick
Denise Levenick

PLACES
Los Angeles, California

TOPICS
Family Keepsakes

While cleaning out the family home, we come upon an old wooden toy chest filled with garden gloves, fertilizer and hand trowels. My husband remembers it as a childhood toy chest and takes it to his workshop for

With new safety hinges and several coats of marine varnish, the toy chest is now the first stop when children walk in our door.

7

Preview Publish ? TREELINES

The History of the Pirate Toy Chest

Nathan David Cass was born in 1875 to Abram Cass, an English machinist, and Sarah Cass, a native New Yorker, in Amsterdam, Montgomery County, New York.

By 1910, Nathan is living with his wife Grace and her parents in Athol, Massachusetts where he is a paper box maker.

Cass Toys in Wartime
During World War II, a major portion of the toy manufacturing facilities were turned over to the war effort, but Cass Toys continued to produce toys.

FIRE DESTROYS TOY WAREHOUSE
The Cass Toy warehouse on South Athol Road was destroyed on May 16, 1996 when fire broke out in the building causing nearby homes to be evacuated. The huge fire burned down the warehouse and an adjacent home, and

Former toy chest now a storage

Fire! Fire! Fire!
FORMER CASS TOY FACTORY IN ATHOL GOES UP IN FLAMES
Firefighters from Athol and surrounding towns are battling a massive blaze on an old wooden Lumber Street. Reports post that

FIRE DESTROYS FORMER ATHOL TOY FACTORY
"Fire among the largest in Athol history"
--Worcester Telegram and Gazette

While cleaning out the family home, we come upon an old wooden toy chest filled with garden gloves, fertilizer and hand trowels. My husband remembers it as a childhood toy chest and takes it to his workshop for

With new safety hinges and several coats of marine varnish, the toy chest is now the first stop when children walk in our door.

3 The Stories window offers Getting Started tutorials and sample stories to explore. Start your family story by clicking the green button. If you want to explore the site and view tutorials, click "I'm not ready to write yet." When you're ready to proceed, select the Treelines family tree.

4 In the next window, you'll have an option to use the Tree Wizard, which will automatically lay out the people and events named in your tree or GEDCOM file. To create a story from scratch, click "jump right in" at the bottom of the window.

5 The Write Story screen shows the story cover and a blank page one. Click the blank page and the Edit option to bring up the Edit window. Prompts will help you fill in your information. Add a short few lines of your story. You can format the text with bold or italics, increase the font size and add page links. Next, upload a photo and add a caption. Add details in the right-hand panel; this information helps readers find your story and builds the timeline across the bottom of the page. Also include details about your sources so you'll remember where you found the information.

6 Click the small green plus sign between story blocks to insert a page, or drag story blocks to reorder the chronology.

7 Toggle between Write and Preview to view your story and edit it. If you're writing too much text on a story page, you'll be prompted to start another page. Brief is better in Treelines. When you're finished, click the Publish button.

A link lets you share the story with family and friends. Treelines is designed to help you tell stories, but it's also a useful collaborative tool for building a family history. Invite a research buddy to join you and work together to develop an illustrated narrative or untangle a tricky family relationship.

» Denise May Levenick