

Family Tree: The ins and outs of the Family Tree timeline

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Introduction

On September 5th 2018, FamilySearch released an update to the Family Tree web site. Several new features were added, some features were retired, and others are being updated and will return to the site soon. This session will discuss many of the changes to the FamilySearch web site, with a focus on the new Timeline feature and the movement of the Sources tab. We will discuss how to efficiently use Family Tree to enter, correct, and accurately document your ancestors in the common, shared, community tree.

Notable Features:

Faster load time for the person detail page. The person detail page was originally built as a single component page. Over time as new features were added to this page the load time of this page ballooned to over 14 seconds on a fast network connection. If you were on a slower network the time to load this page could be over 20 seconds. The load times are now under 5 seconds for the same page on a fast network.

Sticky Header.

On any tab in the person page the header is now sticky. When you scroll down the page, as the header scrolls off the page it changes to a smaller header that always show the person of focus, their life span, and there PID. The header also includes a pink or blue bar at the bottom depending on the sex of the person.

Details Tab.

The details tab now uses the edit link to expand each conclusion to examine in more detail. Clicking edit displays the conclusion and all of the sources that are tagged to the conclusion, with the date each source specifies shown below the title of the source. Sources are now able to be

tagged to any conclusion, not just vitals, and the number of sources tagged to each conclusion is shown next to each conclusion.

Other information is now listed alphabetical by date.

Timeline tab.

The new timeline tab gives users the ability to view a person's life events in a timeline view, and in a map view, based on the location of events in relation to other events in an ancestor's life. Users can customize the timeline to show only the events and relationships they want to see. The map can also be turned off to just see the timeline.

Sources Tab.

Sources have been moved from the details tab to their own tab. Depending on the number of sources attached the sources section can be several megabyte's in size. We load all of these sources each time the person page is loaded, even if the user never opens any of the sources. Having sources on their own tab allows us to better manage the size and load time for the person details page. Testing also showed us that it was more efficient to switch between the details and source tab than it was to scroll between the vitals and sources sections on the same page. We will show users how to open and switch between two tabs to make it easier to use the new sources tab.

Copy ID.

Clicking on the person ID in the header now opens a link to copy the ID.

Fan Chart.

The fan chart has been updated to show up to 7 generations in one view. You can now highlight the chart by Birth country, Sources, Stories or Photo's.

Available on more devices.

With this latest release Family Tree now works seamlessly on more devices. If you're on your computer, tablet, or mobile device the experience will be the same.

Portraits

In November we released a new Portrait Service. This service controls how portraits get created, stored and edited. Each person in the tree will now show the same portrait for everyone viewing it. If the portrait gets changed, it changes for everyone viewing it. The selection tool for tagging a portrait is now a rectangle instead of a circle. This allows users to tag right to the edge of a picture.