

Reviews

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Reunion 11 and *ReunionTouch* for iPad, iPhone, and iPod Touch. By Leister Productions, Inc., Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. *Reunion 11*: \$99 (upgrade \$49.95); download or CD. Purchase online at <www.leisterpro.com>. *ReunionTouch* for Apple iOS devices: \$7.99; download from the App Store. Synchronization through Dropbox: free (up to 2G of storage). Download at <www.dropbox.com>.

For genealogists working on Apple's Macintosh computer platform, or those considering switching to it, now is a good time to take a look at *Reunion 11*, the latest version of the robust Mac-based genealogical software program. Those already running *Reunion* may want to upgrade to take advantage of the substantial updates in *Reunion 11*, which were made based on feedback from users, according to the developer, Leister Productions. Perhaps the biggest news is that *Reunion 11* now automatically syncs through Dropbox with *ReunionTouch*, a new universal app for all iOS mobile devices, eliminating manual syncing by Wi-Fi.

Getting Started

After *Reunion 11* is installed and launched, a prompt directs the user to select a family file to open. Select either a GEDCOM file or an existing family file created with a previous version of



Reunion, and it converts in seconds to a *Reunion 11* file, bringing along notes, source citations, and photos.

The main window opens in Family View, showing three generations of a family in a large central pane, framed by a navigation bar at the left and a side bar at the right. Each side panel can be collapsed using the arrows at the top. From there, *Reunion 11* is relatively intuitive and easy to use by clicking, entering information, and dragging and dropping items.

For example, double clicking on a person in Family View opens the Edit Person screen, where source citations, events, facts, notes, and flags can be added with the click of a button. This feature has been enhanced by a new undo/redo feature. Clicking Add Source, selecting New Source, then choosing Free Form from the source-type pop-up menu provides a blank screen for a citation to be manually entered in *Evidence Explained* (EE) format.

Clicking the Tree View tab in the left navigation bar opens a family tree in the center pane. Double clicking on any person in the tree brings back the Family

View. Thumbnail photos can be added by dragging and dropping them onto a person, and then removed by clicking on the minus sign at the base of the pop-up viewer. The searchable *Reunion 11* Help menu is also just a click away via the top menu bar or the question mark icon in the lower left corner of the footer.

New Navigation Highlights

Reunion 11 offers a full complement of data-entry, charting, and report options that genealogists regularly use. These are located on the left navigation bar, which includes two new tabs: Thumbnails and Lists.

The Thumbnails tab displays a family's thumbnail photos in a separate window, where they are identified by the people they are attached to. Here, thumbnail photos can be added, removed, viewed, searched, adjusted, cropped, annotated, shared, or added to a slide show using tools in the window's footer.

The Lists menu generates lists of people, sources, events, relatives, and places; results of searches within a family file; a calendar; and couples or contacts

for a particular family. Feasibility, a valuable new addition to the Lists menu, flags items or events that warrant review, and provides check boxes allowing the override of specific warnings if the information proves accurate.

The Family View area now includes small, clickable icons in the marriage field showing, at a glance, whether multimedia, documents, and events are attached to the couple or family. Relationships are also now easier to handle in Family View. The source person can be selected by clicking on the down arrow in the upper right of that individual's Person button, and choosing Find Relatives from the drop-down list. If the source person is later changed to another individual, all relationships are automatically recalculated.

A new Book Creator in the Reports tab automatically creates a PDF book version of a report, complete with a custom cover; table of contents listing surnames; the body of the report; a list of sources, photos, and other multimedia; a place index; a person index; and a back cover. Links to online sources are live throughout the book. The Book section of the extensive *Reunion 11* Help menu explains the many options for modifying a book layout, such as dragging and dropping charts and images. Also, the Ahnentafel report (under the Reports tab) has been renamed the Ancestor report.

Some Sidebar Updates

Sidebar tabs at the bottom of the left navigation bar control the information that appears in the sidebar to the right of the central pane. The Islands sidebar tab, new in *Reunion 11*, is particularly useful for finding and handling individuals or families that are not linked to any others. Once a list of islands is generated, individuals or families can be clicked for review and further action.

The Sources sidebar in *Reunion 11* now allows users to choose "All" for a full list of every source for a family, or "Family" to see the same list broken down by individuals. Other source



improvements include the ability to merge duplicate sources by dragging one on top of the other in the sidebar (or by manually connecting two source numbers); add a source to a family by dragging and dropping it from the sidebar onto a family; and drag and drop the URL of an online source directly into a source citation, where it remains as a live link.

A shortcoming of the Sources feature in *Reunion 11*, however, is the continued lack of predefined source templates in EE format. As a workaround, users will still need to select Free Form when entering a source type, which presents a blank screen where an EE-formatted source citation can be entered. Other options include customizing existing templates to EE style or creating new, custom EE source templates. For more on this issue, visit the ReunionTalk discussion board.

ReunionTouch Mobile App

A thoroughly revamped *ReunionTouch* mobile app, universal for all iOS devices, has been created specifically for use with *Reunion 11*. It replaces earlier *Reunion* apps and revolutionizes the synchronization process between desktop and mobile devices by connecting them in the Cloud through Dropbox. While

ReunionTouch does not work with earlier *Reunion* files, the streamlined automatic syncing process is reason enough to upgrade.

Getting started is relatively seamless. Users will need *Reunion 11* installed on their Mac, *ReunionTouch* installed on their mobile device(s), a Dropbox account (available for free at <www.dropbox.com>), and a Dropbox folder set up on their Mac. Once these are in place, dragging a family file into the Dropbox folder on the Mac is the first step toward syncing. Next, open the *ReunionTouch* app, click or sign in to connect to Dropbox (this only needs to be done once), and follow the prompts to open the family file. Once this is done, automated syncing is ready to go.

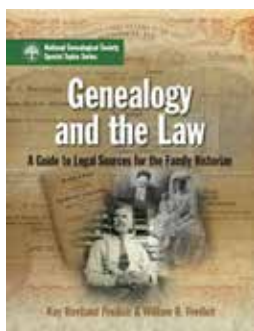
If a name, date, photo, or other detail in this family file is updated on the Mac, the change is transmitted in seconds to the *ReunionTouch* app, and vice versa. When working on a mobile device when there is no Internet connection, changes made to the family file in *ReunionTouch* are saved in the app and automatically synced to the Mac file when Wi-Fi is available.

ReunionTouch puts many mobile iOS features to good use, such as allowing photos to be taken and saved from within a family file using a device's built-in

camera, and enabling users to both see and zoom in on documents and photos attached to a file using reverse pinching. *ReunionTouch* can also accommodate and sync multiple family files, an asset for genealogists working simultaneously on several projects, as long as the original family files are stored in the Dropbox folder on the user's Mac.

In combination, the revamped *Reunion 11* and its companion *ReunionTouch* app work well together to provide a quality genealogy software package for genealogists who are Mac users. Video tutorials covering what's new in *Reunion 11* and *ReunionTouch* and how to load the programs, along with written descriptions of many other updated features too numerous to cover here, are available on the Leister Productions website at <www.leisterpro.com>.

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Genealogy and the Law: A Guide to Legal Sources for the Family Historian. By Kay Haviland Freilich and William B. Freilich. Published by National Genealogical Society, Arlington, VA, 2014.

Professional genealogists know that reasonably exhaustive research involves examining a variety of sources. Many of those sources—court, census, land, military, immigration, naturalization, tax, probate, and vital records—were created to fulfill the dictates of laws. Genealogists must be able to find and understand historical laws; however, many have difficulty navigating the complex world of federal, state, and

municipal laws, and do not know how to utilize law libraries. There is no doubt that the genealogy field needs a comprehensive guide to finding, understanding, and using legal sources for genealogical research. Unfortunately, *Genealogy and the Law: A Guide to Legal Sources for the Family Historian*, does not adequately meet this need.

Genealogy and the Law, co-authored by a genealogist and a lawyer, purports to teach genealogists how to understand legal terminology and find pertinent laws, enabling researchers to understand their ancestors' lives better. While there are redeeming qualities to this book—such as the quiz questions, which are useful for assisting readers with finding relevant federal and state laws—the organization of the book is confusing, and errors abound. And, while typographical errors and incomplete citations may be minor mistakes, when combined with legal errors, they add up, and the reader loses confidence in the accuracy and reliability of the information. Additionally, inadequate coverage of areas of law essential to genealogical researchers, such as private laws and canon law, contribute to this book falling short of its goals.

From the beginning, there seems to be an imperfect idea of how U.S. laws are created, how they intersect, and how they influence each other. The first chapter—“Understanding the Law”—does an admirable job explaining how a federal bill becomes statutory law; however, it gives the impression that the only laws are statutory laws passed by a governing body. While this is truer in Louisiana (which follows a civil law system), this is certainly not the case in the forty-nine U.S. states that follow a common law system. Common law—a body of law (generally, case law) that exists separately from and in support of statutory laws—is, detrimentally, not discussed until the third chapter, “Types of Law.” These organizational choices result in a lack of clarity.

The above two chapters are confusingly separated by a chapter titled “Understanding the Terminology,” which

is not much different than the glossary. Reading a dictionary definition rarely helps a beginner understand the complex terminology, and there is not much to be gained from this chapter. Interestingly, the last chapter, “Applying the Law to Ancestral Events”—where the terminology is used in context—assists a beginner's understanding of why it is important to know not only the “what” and “where” of the law, but also the “why.” The “why” of the law can be essential knowledge for genealogists, despite the authors' claim that there is “...no reason—except perhaps curiosity—to determine why the law was initially enacted.” (p. 35) Perhaps it was this viewpoint that led to the absence of discussion of genealogical treasure troves, such as the United States Congressional Serial Set and American State Papers. These resources do not contain the law, but they demonstrate the legal process—the “why” and the “how” of lawmaking. They include an abundance of genealogically valuable material, including private claims that sometimes succeeded to become the private laws found in the Statutes at Large. Searching only for the law, and not for the “why” behind the law may cause a researcher to miss out on relevant information.

Another type of law useful for genealogists that was not addressed in this book is canon law. Canon law—the body of laws governing some Christian churches and their members—can be essential to accurate interpretation and analysis of an ancestor's actions and of the records created by a denomination. Our ancestors' daily lives were, for centuries, regulated by religious law in addition to secular law. The church kept track of its flock by recording births, baptisms, marriages, deaths, and burials. Baptismal and marriage records contain information that may not be found in other sources. Such information can be more thoroughly understood when the laws of the sect are also understood. When researching individuals of particular Christian faiths, failing to understand canon law fully can result in inaccurate conclusions. Although the authors have defined canon law in the glossary, it is not