



RED below are main points discussed in presentation

2013 Seattle Convention- 9 August 2013

Workshop name: SGGEE Online Databases- how to get the most out of them, and also how to prepare your data for submission to the MPD Database

Workshop by Gary Warner, SGGEE Databases Manager

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- I. **SGGEE Online databases**- there are many databases on our website, but I want to spend some time with just the four following databases:
 - A. **Membership database**- what it is and why you need to keep your contact information current, even if you are no longer a member of SGGEE. See https://sggee.org/members/member_data.html (currently 1660 records)
 1. The membership database is a directory of all current and former members of SGGEE- you need to keep it current, even if you do not continue your membership.
 2. **It is how we contact you if SGGEE, or some SGGEE member, has questions about your data- now and forever. Tell your children to provide their contact information if you die.**
 3. The member ID is the number shown in the Master Pedigree Database for each submitted record.
 4. Search the database by surname, member ID, city, state or province or country or email address.
 5. Partial searches work to find all members in a certain town, state or province, or country.
 6. **This is the theory of search criteria- little criteria makes big holes in the sieve and lets data through. Too much criteria, and the holes close up so no data comes through.**
 - B. **Parish records database (PRI)**- what it is, and how to use the search engine to find what you are looking for. Also, how to get more data for any given entry that does not show on our website. See https://sggee.org/members/pri_guide.html (currently 364,375 names)
 1. The PRI database is mostly **extraction of indices from Polish Lutheran parishes. Most of the data in this database is not in the Master Pedigree Database (MPD) discussed below.**
 2. It is transitional data that needs more work (or volunteers) to make it into the MPD.
 3. **Search using as little criteria as you can live with for a return.**
 4. Be aware that **your spelling may not be the spelling in the database.**
 5. Be aware that **B and P are often confused** in extractions- for instance, the surnames Buschke and Puschke might be one name or the other if you look closer.
 6. Be aware that the name (both given name and surname) in **the database may be either German or Polish in form** (usually that is because they are the same meaning in another language)- you need to be aware of both versions of the name you seek (if there are alternates)- see <https://sggee.org/research/AlternateChristianNames.pdf> (this includes equivalents like **Gottlieb=Bogumil, and Margarete=Malgorzata**) and <https://sggee.org/research/AlternateSurnamesDatabaseSubstantiated.pdf> (this includes equivalents like **Schwarz=Czarnecki, Rode=Czerwinski, Erdmann=Ziemiecki**) In addition, some families just changed the name! Geiger and Jaeger are interchangeable in my family, even though they are both common German names (the reason here is that the Russian language has problems with the letter J).
 7. So how do you find the variations in the names? You need to be aware of Polish and German equivalents- sz (Polish)= sch (German), the c (Polish)= ts or tz(German). **Use Google translate to help you find the sounds-** see <http://translate.google.com> for instance, Szuc in Polish sounds like Schulz in German. See also http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Polish/Polish_pronunciation



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8. Some example searches where you only know how to spell a portion of the name:
....bac,...uller, ...ueller, Euph..., Euf...
9. More data is available than is shown on the website if the extractor was E. Riske, and possibly others as well. Send an email to databases@sggee.org to see if there is more data.

C. **Volhynia-Kiev-Podolia database (V-K-P)**- what it is, and how to use the search engine to find what you are looking for. See the first three links at

<http://sggee.org/research/PublicDatabases.html> (currently 383,302 names)

1. The V-K-P database is extractions from the St. Petersburg Lutheran Consistory duplicate records books for Volhynia, Kiev and Podolia. It covers the years 1833 (with a few late recordings of earlier births) to 1885, and also some additional later years for Rozyszcze and Wladimir-Wolynsk parishes, which are from the original books, not the duplicate books. Most records provide the details on the person being registered, and usually some details for the parents or spouse of the registrant, if the data is for births or deaths. Marriages only give the date of the marriage, and the names of the bride and groom, except for the data from the original books noted, which is instead complete data for the marriage partners and their parents.
2. The records from which this database was created are German language records, and all of the data, except the village names, are in German. The village names are the ones that the Germans used, but they are almost always Russian names, as the Germans in this area did not rename the villages.
3. **Search using the minimum amount of input criteria, as noted above.** If you add too many parameters, you will significantly limit the data returned, and will most likely miss finding what you seek. Examples are searches for Ja instead of Jaeger or Jager, andnbac instead of Tiefenbach or Diefenbach or Diefenback.
4. If you search birth data, try using the mother's Surname (her maiden name). That will group all births and deaths in a family, and will save you much time. An example is ...nig for the registrant surname (in my family, this would find Koenig, Konig and Kenig), andnbac for the mother's name, instead of Tiefenbach, as that will miss the sometimes used Diefenbach. This does not work, of course, if for some reason the mother's name is not listed.
5. Try searching with only an unusual letter combination, or a letter combination in the middle of the name that will catch surnames with the wrong first letter, which can sometimes be difficult to read in the original records. An example is ...nig for the registrant surname, and ...ew for the mother's name, instead of Koenig or Konig and Schiewe or Schewe. Remember that a script B and P are often extremely difficult to tell apart, so use searches that avoid these beginning letters.
6. Try to avoid using the ending "e" or "a" in a name, as you may find that either the record shows something different, or the extractor changed the entry. In German, the ending "e" sounds like an "a".

D. **Master Pedigree Database (MPD)** - what it is, and how to use the search engine to find what you are looking for. Also, how to get more data that does not show online. See

<http://sggee.org/members/genealogy.html> (currently 524,539 records)

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1. The MPD is a database composed of data submitted by SGGEE members, and also extractions from original records, mostly from Lutheran church records of Poland.
2. The web version of this database is completely indexed. That means that you can search for any part of a name or place, and not just the complete name, or the first few letters.
3. There are not supposed to be any diacritical letters (special or accented letters) in the database, although from time to time some of our German, Polish or Spanish speaking members submit data that we do not catch and change.
4. The MPD database is only partially merged, since a complete merge of the data is limited by the time I can devote to completing such a merge. If we were to start a complete merge of the MPD data against itself, we would have to compare many millions of potential matches, and that would not necessarily match up names with differing given names (like Anna Rosina and just Rosina). So the merge is done completely only for all new data files of less than a few thousand names (this generates about 10 matches per record added, so a data submittal of 1000 names might generate 10,000 comparisons of data that need to be looked at). We are always looking for merges that we missed, so if you see anything to merge, let us know, and we will look at the records.
5. Each data record has at least one ID associated with it (and more than one ID if it has been merged with another record)0. That ID is the SGGEE member ID, or, if the data is provided by a volunteer as part of a parish extraction, then those records have an SGGEExxx ID (see <https://sggee.org/members/MPDSources.pdf> for a description of each of those data files). When data gets merged, then the merged record has the ID of each of the records that existed before the merge.
6. Because there are only so many columns of data that we can show on the SGGEE website, there is almost always more data in each record than is visible on the website. **If you want the source data that describes the film number of the actual original record, or notes that the submitter added, then you will need to send an email to databases@sggee.org to ask for that additional information.** If you make such a request, please use the "I" (individual) number or "F" (family) number shown on the data return on the website. This number is the same number that is in the Legacy data file that created the website data. **Be aware that the I and F numbers may periodically change when the database is compressed and renumbered every few years to fill in the blank spots created by merging.**
7. All records in the MPD are generationally linked- that is you can click on parents or spouses or children to jump to that record and discover more information about that person, and also new links to additional family members.
8. You can currently search this database using up to 9 fields of criteria. As noted above, however, **if you add too many search parameters, you are likely not to find what you seek.** You are far better to add as few search criteria as possible to find what you seek. For instance, if I were seeking Johannes Koenig, I would NOT enter Johannes as the given name, nor would I enter Koenig as the surname. I would instead add "Joh" (without the " ") as the given name, and "nig" (without the " ") as the surname. By doing so, I would be able to find records that are similar to what I seek, and not eliminate possible matches that differ only slightly from what I seek. **The search as I suggest it will provide 166 possible matches, and includes Johan, Johann, Johanna and Johannes, as well as Hoenig, Hennig, Koenig and others (oddly, there are no Konig names returned in this particular**

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- search). You can add more search criteria to make the list shorter, but if you can live with looking at the returned data with minimal search criteria, then you may discover a record you might miss by adding that additional data.
9. Try searching for a surname with a corresponding spouse surname to find a specific family. Be aware, however, that **we may or may not have the spouse in our database, or they may be in the database, but we do not show them married. So, if you add criteria on a marriage that we do not have, you will get either nothing, or less data than is available.**
 10. Be aware that in Poland many, but not all German given and surnames were sometimes changed to the Polish equivalent of that German name- Schwarz might become Czarnecki, Kirschbaum might become Wisniewski, Rode might become Czerwinski, etc. Likewise, Gottlieb might become Bogumil, Martin might become Marcin, Johann might become Jan, etc. Although we have tried to change all Polish names in the MPD to include their known German equivalent, we may not always know what the equivalent name is. **The pastors also seem to confuse some of the names from time to time, and you will sometimes see Gottfried and Friedrich interchanged, as well as Wojciech becoming Georg instead of Albert.** If you start by doing a search for just the surname that you seek (like Czerwinski), you will see from the returned data that we have linked Rode to that name, but not every record in our database may show that alternate name linkage. Therefore, if you are looking for Jan Czerwinski, we might have him only shown as Johann Rode. For German and Polish given name equivalencies, see <https://sggee.org/research/AlternateChristianNames.pdf>
For German and Polish surname equivalencies, see <https://www.sggee.org/research/AlternateSurnamesDatabaseSubstantiated.pdf>
 11. **When you do searches, be receptive to names and places that SOUND like the person or place you seek.** Remember that the data can be incorrect anywhere along the chain of data collection from the original record all the way to your data. Also be aware that even some names that do not sound like the name or place you seek may really be that name or place, and sometimes the initial letter in German or Polish script can be misinterpreted. For instance, as already noted, a B and a P are often confused. This is part of the reason that I suggest that you search for unusual letter combinations, and NOT complete names. **Look closer at the names of the children and spouses to see if the data you are looking at is really your data.**
 12. **D-M Soundex** This is a tool to use when all else fails in finding a surname you seek. If you click on the DM Soundex button before doing a search (you can only search surnames), then you will see the additional possible surnames that have the same DM Soundex code. Some of them are pretty bizarre matches, but some are worth looking at further in regular searches.

II. Your personal database

- A. **Why we use Legacy**, and suggest that you also use it for your own data (the basic version of Legacy is free at <http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/Download.asp>):

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1. Legacy has **auto-fill**- that is, once you type in a name or place, for all future entries of the same place or name, you can type in just enough letters to uniquely identify that name or place, and Legacy will complete the rest for you.
2. Legacy has **master lists** for locations and surnames and sources, and if you use them, you will be able to eliminate duplicate surnames and duplicate locations in your database.
3. Legacy has **excellent merging tools** that actually merge the data, instead of creating an alternate set of data (some genealogy programs do not actually merge data- they instead create alternate events).
4. Legacy has the ability to **show you relationships** for every name in your name list, and also in the main family view.
5. Legacy has a **potential problems** report that is configurable as to criteria, and allows you to review your data for duplicate parents, bad dates, parents born less than say 15 years before the child, children born more than say 25 years after a marriage, etc.
6. Legacy **allows you to carry conflicting or double dates** in the date field- many other programs will erase this non-standard date data if you import our data into those other programs.
7. Legacy has **maps** in the master location list that are available to both free and paid users.

B. Why your data needs to be as complete as possible:

1. If you submit **only a bare pedigree, and no aunts, uncles and cousins, we are less likely to find matches between your data and the MPD.**
2. **If you do not include yourself, we will not be able to determine who your relatives are, and consequently, we cannot send you any data back to add to your database.**
3. Any record submitted that does not include at least a birth year is assumed to be a record for a deceased person, and that person will be visible on the website database. **Please provide a birth date of less than 80 years ago if you do not want a specific record to show up on the website.**

C. Please submit your data according to our submittal guidelines:

1. It is **the submittal guidelines that make it possible for us to merge data.** See https://sggee.org/about_us/db_submittal_instruct.pdf
2. Probably the hardest part of making a submittal to us is to provide place names that conform to the **location guidelines** (see the first item at https://sggee.org/research/village_maps.html). See also the gazetteers listed below this link, which will allow you to easily add many locations, including coordinates, into the Legacy genealogy program. Coordinates for a location make the location unique. The defining of location in Europe is very complex, and the guidelines cover Europe and also all areas of the world. Spend time learning how to do it correctly for one area at a time. More on this subject below. **Remember that our goal is to put all locations into a format that you can find on a map, and that helps you find the location in the language that the original records name.**

D. How to trim your database so you send us only the Germans:

We only want data on Germans who lived in Poland or Volhynia, AND their spouses, and ALL descendants up to the present time. It is amazing how many SGGEE members are cousins,

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and the discovery of relationships is only possible by you submitting as complete data as you possibly can. If you use Legacy, submitting for only the Germans and their descendants is pretty simple. This process is much harder with other genealogy programs. For Legacy users, see https://sggee.org/about_us/trim_database.pdf for specific instructions on how to trim the database that you send.

III. Some tricks on finding and entering locations

A. The United States of America

1. Use Legacy's **Geo Location List** (paid version only)- it will find most places in the USA, and will automatically add counties and coordinates.
2. **For hard to find USA locations**, use <http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic/f?p=132:1:4136095017223955> It will find almost all locations, and will give you the county and coordinates.
3. If you still cannot find the location you seek, try <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?search=&button=&title=Special%3ASearch>
4. When all else fails with a USA location, then try doing a **Google search** to see what others say about that location. It is amazing what you can find using this method, especially if the place no longer exists, or the name has changed. This is the method I used to finally find a small village called Silberfeld in Russia. It is now Serebropol, , Altai Krai, Russia. The Russian and German names both mean Silver field.

B. Canada

1. Use Legacy's **Geo Location List** (paid version only)- it will find most places in Canada, and will automatically add coordinates, but not the counties. Canada does have counties, but very few people use them, and they are hard to find, and so we have elected to do as Legacy does, and omit them altogether.
2. **For hard to find Canada locations**, use <http://www4.rncan.gc.ca/search-place-names/name.php> It will find almost all locations, and will give you coordinates, but no counties.
3. If you still cannot find the location you seek, try <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?search=&button=&title=Special%3ASearch>
4. When all else fails with a Canada location, then try doing a **Google search** to see what others say about that location. It is amazing what you can find using this method, especially if the place no longer exists, or the name has changed.

C. Central Poland (Congress Poland or Russian Poland)

1. First, you need to recognize that there are **almost always many villages of the same name in Poland**. In order to find the correct one, you need to know which larger town the village you seek is near to that village.
2. **The Polish language has 32 letters, including 9 letters with diacritics (letters we have difficulty entering with a North American keyboard). There are no letters Q, V, and X.**

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3. Use the **virtual keyboard** at <http://translate.google.com/#pl/en/> to search using diacritical letters.
4. **DO NOT use Legacy's Geo Locator**, as it does not find the powiat (county), which is a necessary part of the location name. It may also not find the correct village of the name you seek.
5. Use <http://mapa.szukacz.pl/> as a first attempt, as it does not require the use of diacritical characters. Enter the complete village name (just the beginning letters will not do) in the field "Miejscowość." If you find the location, then use the location (without diacriticals) as shown in the box at the right of the search screen (but use the powiat without the ski or other ending- that is, use the large town name with a similar name on the map near the village you find. Find coordinates by selecting "współrzędne" at the bottom of the search screen. Use the coordinate line that says "w stopniach, minutach, sekundach i ułamkach sekund." Note that in Europe the comma and period the exact opposite of the way we use them in numbers.
6. If you still cannot find the village you seek, then use <http://maps.geoportal.gov.pl/webclient/> for the search, but be aware that you now need to use the diacritical characters that you can generate for the search using Google Translate, as noted above. The upside of using this website, however, is that it has all places that currently exist in Poland, AND it will find all places that begin with the letters you enter (you do not need the complete location name, but you do need to know the beginning letters). You can help yourself immensely in the search on this website if, after you open this website, you **first zoom into the general area where you expect to find the village**. This will then show the **pin icons** only in that area, and you can ignore all villages the website finds that are outside of the area you have zoomed into. Hover over the pins to find what location that pin represents. Let's find Łódź using the the two websites noted. Next, let's find Żychlin (the one near Kutno). Finally, let's try and find Konce near Chodecz- it cannot be found on either of the websites for Poland mentioned so far.
7. If you still cannot find the village you seek, then go to our **online gazetteers**. For Poland, this is https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Poland.pdf Note that you can scroll through the list to try and find what you seek, or, a better way is to use your **browser's Find feature**. Use it here to find the Konce we could not find above. The gazetteers were developed by Frank Stewner in Germany by comparing many old maps to find villages that once existed, but are no longer in existence. **Another little gem- if you highlight and copy both the latitude and longitude fields at once in the pdf of the gazetteer, you can paste them both into the latitude field in Legacy, and it will automatically move the longitude to the correct field!**

D. All of Europe and Russia that was at any time under German rule

1. Again, please recognize that **there are many villages of the same name** throughout all of Europe. **This is the most difficult area in which to name locations.**
2. **All of the area outside of central Poland is very difficult to name, so we suggest that you use our gazetteers** as both a first and last resort when dealing with European locations that are not in central Poland. These gazetteers are by no means complete, but they continue to grow, and they are very valuable tools. See for :

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- a. Congress Poland- https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Poland.pdf
 - b. German Empire- https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_German_Empire.pdf
 - c. Russian Empire- https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Russian_Empire.pdf
 - d. Austrian Empire- https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Austrian_Empire.pdf
 - e. Galicia- https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Galicia.pdf
 - f. Volhynia- https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Volhynia.pdf
3. Use <http://gov.genealogy.net/search/index> to help you find the correct village, including both the German and other language spellings, the correct County (or Kries, or Oblast), and the coordinates. This website also finds Polish villages, but is not useful in that part of Poland that was not part of the German Empire, since it does not give the county. In the GOV website, you can **enter in either the German or the other language village name**. In the GOV website, once you enter a village name and search, if there are search results, there will be a list of places found. The list is from many countries and provinces that may not be even close to the place you seek, so look at the **"Type" column** (for Ort, Landgemeinde, town, or municipality) and the **"Superordinate objects" column** for country and province to narrow down the possibilities. Once you think that you have a candidate, select the candidate in the **"Name" column**. You will now be taken to another screen that shows all the names that location is known by, and also the coordinates, and a small map to confirm where this location is. Under all that is a box with a line **sketch connecting bubbles- this is most important**, as it tells you what the country and county are today for that location. Let's try **Legnica in Western Poland**- an area in present-day Poland, but historically under German rule (this means that the birth, death and marriage records will most likely be in German). This town was German until 1945, and is now part of Poland. Because the main point of naming villages is to be able to find birth, marriage and death records using the name found in the original records, we would list this place by its German name, followed by its Polish name, and then continue the naming for modern-day Poland. Thus this place would be Liewgnitz (Legnica), Legnica, Donoslaskie, Poland.
4. **If you simply cannot find a location, or are having difficulty naming it, send a message to databases@sggee.org, and we will help you.**