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Title

One name studies – what use are they to you?

Summary

One Name Studies are a neglected resource for family historians. The study co-ordinator of a One Name Study collects information about a specific surname worldwide or restricted to a geographic region and utilising a wide variety of sources, nowadays often including the use of DNA testing, and then tries to establish family linkages where possible.

Abstract

The presentation discusses what a One Name study (ONS) is and how and why it is done. Some of the aims include Origin or early references to the surname, meaning, relative frequency, distribution in geography and time, patterns of immigration and emigration and name variants and 'deviants' .

The study co-ordinator of a One Name Study (ONS) collects and collates information about that surname and variants of the surname from a variety of sources both documentary and, nowadays, often using DNA testing. Most surnames date from 13th and 14th century and names were acquired due to expanding population and bureaucratic requirements. There is discussion on surnames and the types of surnames that occurred e.g. Patronymic, Diminutive, Locative, Occupational etc. and the evolution of surnames.

The presentation discusses ways the ONS organise the information using a few different computer programs. Most ONS use a traditional family history program but also use a spreadsheet/database program such as Excel/Access or a more specialised program such as Custodian or Clooz.

We will then consider how to find out if anyone is doing a ONS on your surname so you can access this great archive of information.

Finally, we will look at the Guild of One Name Studies and using Google to find One Name societies, blogs and other resources to help you in a surname search.

Audience

Intermediate