

# LIFE STORY WRITING

Presented by Craig Siulinski

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Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society

Venue location: Santa Clara Central Public Library

## Main points covered in the presentation:

- The Importance of *not waiting* to interview and record the stories of our living elders. Every Life Story is a Treasure to Preserve for Generations to Come...is the business mission of Sharing Legacies ([www.sharinglegacies.com](http://www.sharinglegacies.com))

- Definitions of different types of writing life stories – *see handout below*.

Note: The style I write in when I publish blog posts is referred to as memoir writing. Also, the writing class offered by the GAB format is in the memoir style.

- *Blog Writing* and the writing done in *Life Story Writing* classes both offer ways to tell stories about one's life or one's family history in pieces or vignettes rather than trying to write a full life story in a chronological format.
- Both blogs and writing classes offer **sharing** options but in different ways. In the Life Story Writing classes, sharing is done in real time and is more personable. With blogs, people can comment and offer their own stories at any time.
- Blogging Tips (*see slide below*) Two of my blogs were shared: [www.augustlegacy.blogspot.com](http://www.augustlegacy.blogspot.com) and [www.jackandpauline.blogspot.com](http://www.jackandpauline.blogspot.com)
- Other forms of Publishing - (*see slide below*)
- GAB general information and video clips (*see the links below*)
- 5 min Writing exercise with writing prompts provided
- 5 min Sharing with someone sitting close

- Research shows the benefits of the GAB format; source:  
<https://tinyurl.com/yatte58o>
- General Writing Tips (*see slide below and attached handout*)

### Links to Video Clips:

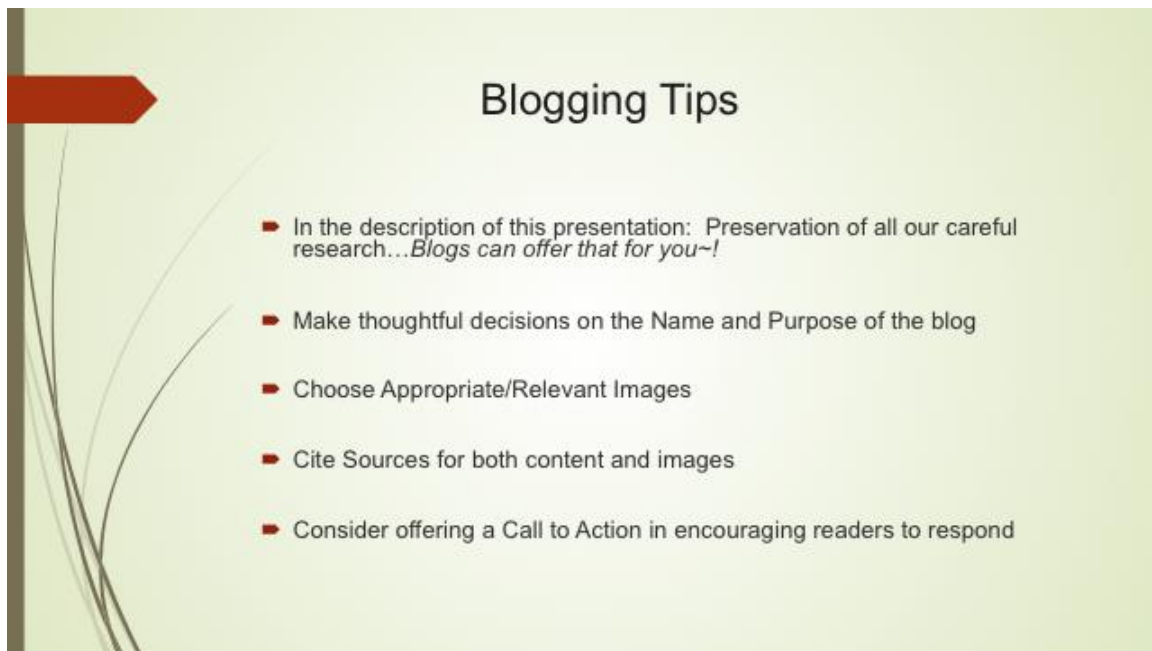
Overview video clip - Now is the time~! (with music) 3:50 min  
 Scroll down a bit; the video clip is embedded into this web page  
<http://guidedautobiography.com/classes-1>

GAB video clip with a student and instructor: 7min  
 Describes GAB in general and the online class version of the class  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIB2Zj9WBMI>

man with journals re: with son on a fishing day  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZpCYGrV814>

This video clip (3 min) was not shared in class. It's very short and the discussion centers around the sharing aspect to the class  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_3ToD7PddLU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3ToD7PddLU)


### Selected slide images from Craig's PowerPoint presentation:






## Blogging Tips (cont.)

- Read and Respond to the blogs of others; there are *many*~!
  - Listen to a few examples ☺
- Use Social Media to share when you publish each post
- Make Historical Connections with your family history content
- Watch Tutorials to learn the different features and capabilities of the blog platform
  - Two suggestions: Lynda.com and Udemy



## Other Options for Publishing

- PRINT BOOKS, i.e., small-print-run publishers (DIY)  
Examples: Family History Publishers, Inc., Gateway Press, Inc., Heritage Books, Inc.
- E-PUBLISHING (self-publishing)  
Examples: Blurb and Lulu
- BLOG TO PRINT  
Example: Blog2Print.com
- Use Social Media for posting links to your content in real time and for promoting finished products...Examples: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest



## General Writing Tips

- Just Write – *don't worry about grammar and editing*
- Use the Senses
- Be Descriptive
- Be Truthful
- Use your Own Voice
- Include *well-chosen* Images
- Is there an underlying message or meaning to why you are writing on that topic?
- Consider making Historical Connections...*timelines can be a useful tool.*
- Before sharing, *read it aloud to yourself, a family member or a friend...* and do some basic edits regarding verb tense, word choices, run-on sentences, etc.