



The Pipes
Family
Foundation

Introduction

Public interest in genealogy has increased significantly in the 21st century, with technological developments in DNA analysis, television shows that highlight family histories, and websites devoted to documenting family trees. In the front of this backdrop, The Pipes Family Foundation was established not only as a philanthropic organization, but as a repository of historical resources for our own family. We have developed a number of internal software packages to make our own research easier to manage, and we are happy to share this one with the public. We hope you find it as useful as we do.

Installation

The Family Tree Listing software was designed to be easy to install and maintain, for a staff that doesn't necessarily have its own IT infrastructure. It assumes you already have a website, and it requires a recent version of PHP (7.4 or later). Extract the .zip file into a single folder (we recommend calling it "tree") and then perform the following steps:

1. Create a subfolder with the name of the individual who will serve as the "root" of your family tree. You will name this folder as such: <gender>-<name>. For example, "M-John Smythe" or "F-Kathy Thomas". Refer to the next section for details on customization.
2. You will need to edit a couple of sections in the PHP code itself. Don't worry, this doesn't require any knowledge of software development. In the section labeled "Variables" you will need to update the `$serverPath` variable to represent the location of the "tree" folder on your webserver. If you used a shared hosting provider, it might look something like the example (see figure below), or it might be completely different. If you are unsure, check with your hosting company.

```
#-----  
# Variables  
#-----  
// server path  
$serverPath = "/home/<username>/<website>";  
// store number of tree levels  
$maxDepth = 0;
```

3. You will also need to modify the starting folder (based on the name you chose in Step 1 above (see figure below)). On the line that says `displayPerson`, inside the quotation marks, you will enter the name of the install folder ("tree" or whatever you decided to call it) and the

starting folder (the name from Step 1).

```
#-----  
# Main  
#-----  
// output page header  
printHeader();  
// display listing of target path  
displayPerson("<install folder>", "<starting folder>", 0);  
// output page footer  
printFooter($maxDepth);
```

4. You may also want to modify the <title> tag inside the *printHeader* function to reflect your family name. Once you have made these changes, save the file and then verify the installation by pointing your web browser to the location of the tree:
<http://www.yourwebsite.com/tree/>

Customization

This is where the Family Tree Listing software really shines. To keep the operation as simple as possible, it does not use a conventional database to store its data. This means that if you can create a folder, and copy files into it, you know everything you need to know in order to build and maintain your family tree!

You may find it easier to create the entire tree on your local computer before uploading the folder structure to your website. It's up to you how you do it, but you will follow the steps below.

People

In the structure you are going to build, each folder represents a person. Inside that folder, you will create some files and subfolders that represent data associated with that person. As an illustration, let's assume your starting folder was named "M-Benjamin Jones". Inside that folder, you will create two subfolders that are named for Benjamin's parents. So we'll create a folder called "M-Thomas Jones" and "F-Phyllis Wagner" – note that the female should retain her maiden name.

Now that Benjamin has parents, you can add a few more details to his bio. In his folder, create an image file called "photo.jpg" and this picture will appear when you hover over his name. Also in his folder, create a text file called "vitals.txt" and inside this file you enter three dates, each on a separate line. These will be the date that Benjamin was born, the date he married, and the date he died. If he does not have the last two, leave them blank. Note that the software assumes only one marriage per person (there is no way to annotate divorces or multiple marriages).

Example vitals.txt:

18 Sep 1978

21 Jun 2003

25 May 2020

If Benjamin was a veteran, create a text file called “veteran.txt” and enter a single line of text – something like “USMC 1996-2000” that tells which branch he served in and what years. A small icon that looks like a medal will appear next to his name and when you hover over it, it will display the contents of this file.

Lastly, if you have other reference material for Benjamin (either on your own website or elsewhere on the internet) you can provide links to those references by simply dragging and dropping .URL files into his folder. These files will appear on his card in the References section at the bottom. So, for instance, if there was a story about Benjamin in the newspaper, you could drag a link to this story out of your browser onto your desktop (assuming Windows operating system) and this will create a .URL file. Put this file into Benjamin’s folder and it will appear in the tree. Note that the name of the .URL file is the text of the link itself, so name the file appropriately.

Siblings

What if Benjamin has siblings? You can add his brothers and sisters inside a subfolder called “s”. These siblings will have folders with the same naming convention, and can contain a photo and a vitals.txt, as well as reference URLs. However, siblings do not contain any subfolders. So **do not** duplicate the parents inside the sibling folders!

Software License

Version 1.0 of the software was released on Nov 1, 2024, under the GNU General Public License to be freely used, modified, and distributed, provided this license text is retained and unmodified.

Subsequent releases will be made available on The Pipes Family Foundation website at:

<https://pipes.family/archive/software/>