

## Telling the story of your family's history

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### Handout for presentation to BIFHSGO 8 April 2020

For your listeners to become most engaged... tell the story. (Human's are hardwired for oral narrative.)

- Character
- Setting
- Plot

**Character:** Choose one ancestor or family to follow (rather than 100 names!)

**Setting:** Know the era, the location and the events the individual lived through that would have shaped their character and their actions. We can not understand who an individual is and why they act the way they do if we don't have some context. Narrative provides this, especially if you carefully craft the setting.

You are not making things up. You are adding factual details to intensify the images in your story.

**Plot:** The storyteller needs to move from one event to the next in a logical, sequence that allows your listener to follow you down the path of history.

Reoccurring themes or patterns cause your listener to reflect, make connections, and become engaged in the story.

#### **The process to fashion the story for telling:**

1. Gather the information
2. Sort the information
  - a. by time, family groups, themes, location, events, politics, social services, relationships,
3. Find connections points to link different episodes within the story
4. Add context (setting)
5. Fashion into a telling
6. Tell to a friendly face
7. Revise
8. Tell to a small friendly audience
9. Revise
10. (rinse and repeat!)

I chose to tell the story of my paternal grandmother, fourth generation Canadian on both sides.

Resource starters for a pandemic time:

Nursing studies, WGHospital,

- <https://hscarchives.com/resources/> Health Sciences Centre Archives
- [wghhscnursingalumni.com](http://wghhscnursingalumni.com) Association History | The Nurses' Alumni Association of the Winnipeg General Hospital & Health Sciences Centre

- <http://ghsonalumni.ca/> General Hospital School of Nursing Alumni.
- [www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/winnipeggeneralhospital.shtml](http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/winnipeggeneralhospital.shtml)

#### Social Movements

- House on Henry Street <https://www.thehouseonhenrystreet.org/>
- **The House on Henry Street** by Lillian D. Wald
- Nellie McClung <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/.../McClung/Pages/nellie-mcclung.aspx> ; <https://www.thoughtco.com/nellie-mcclung-508318>
- VON <https://www.von.ca> ; <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/victorian-order-of-nurses>
- <https://www.saskatoon.ca/community-culture-heritage/saskatoon-history>
- Henrietta Muir Edwards (VON) <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/biography-people/edwards/Pages/henrietta-edwards.aspx>