June 18, 2024

Good morning fellow family researchers,

I was thinking yesterday about ways I have tried to get more stories about my family. I don’t want to have only dates and places on a page. My Mom is from a small town in southern Illinois. I just love to go there with her and take a drive around. If my husband is with us, he will drive and my Mom and I will talk about things as we pass. “That’s where I went to grade school”. “This is where we lived when I was about four years old. I remember when we moved here I had on a red snowsuit. There was an old piano when we moved in and I would try to play it. My friend lived just down the road.” “Grandma worked here when I was in high school.” As she was talking and remembering, I would either video her with my phone or use voice memo on my phone to record all that she was saying. I would also stop sometimes to take pictures of the places she was telling me about. I try to do the same thing when we visit cemeteries with her. Seeing the names there brings back memories. It’s really important to do something with your video or voice memos soon after you get home. I’ve found that if I don’t, it gets buried in my phone and I either can’t find it later or I forget why it’s there and what we were seeing and discussing. I’m so blessed to still have my Mom here with me. If you have any family around, try this sometime. It really adds to your family story.

Talk to you soon,

Kim Van Vorst

President, Tri State Genealogical Society