

# A FAMILY AFFAIR

(NAPSA)—Tracing your family genealogy is an intriguing and fun activity that can be quite simple once you get started. For some families, this exercise is not only fascinating, it can be an essential tool in carrying on family traditions. For example, take the McWilliam wine-making family in Australia. From the moment Samuel McWilliam planted the family's first vines six generations ago, the family has been producing quality wines.

Tracing family heritage and history isn't limited to just well known wine-making families, however. With technology and the research tools available today, it's now easier than ever to explore your own family genealogy and story.

## Start Digging

If you're interested in learning about your family genealogy, one of the best places to start is the genealogy or family history section of a local library or county archives. A visit to the court house or county clerk's office may help you find deeds, marriage records, divorce records, tax lists, voter polls, and even wills and probate records. A trip to the newspaper archives may also help your family history research.

## Get Wired

The Internet offers numerous helpful investigative tools. A good place to start is the free and non-commercial USGenWeb Project ([www.USGenWeb.org](http://www.USGenWeb.org)), a group of volunteers working together to provide Internet Web sites for genealogical research in every county and every state of the United States. Other useful sources of information on the Web



**Ellis Island, gateway for immigrants, can be a great place to research your family history. You can visit it in person or online.**

include Ellis Island Online ([www.ellisland.org](http://www.ellisland.org)), the online research room at the U.S. National Archives & Records Administration ([www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)), and the National Genealogical Society ([www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org)). Various commercial genealogy organizations also have Web sites, including Ancestry.com and Genealogy.com, to help you search your family history.

## Putting It All Together

Once you've gathered your information and discovered your ancestors and family history, an assortment of family tree-making software programs are available to help you put it all together. Programs such as "Family Tree Maker," "Ultimate Family Tree Platinum" and "Generations Family Tree" are widely available at software stores.

Tracing family heritage and history can be easy, fun and very rewarding for the whole family.

So gather your aunts, uncles and cousins together and enjoy a glass of McWilliam's Hanwood Estate 2002 Shiraz or Chardonnay while you enjoy researching your ancestors.