

How to Compile Your Memoirs by Connie Stinchfield

You won't live forever, so while you are here, why not leave some memories in writing for the kids of today? They have no idea what you've endured. Here are a few hints.

Gather stories and photos

Talk with the oldest members of the family first. They have things to say that are worth hearing. Don't we all wish we'd written things down that our grandparents told us about? Don't be bashful. Ask everyone to tell you their stories and give you photos. You can scan them, if you have a computer, or copy them, if you don't.

Figure this will take time. I took two years, working on it when I had time, typically working for an hour or so in the morning. If you have kept a journal over the years, you'll have an easier time of assembling your memoirs and knowing what to ask others.

Include family jokes, events, whimsies

If you come onto some family jokes, include them, as well as life experiences, memories of events of your life. What were you doing when significant events occurred in your area, our country or world?

If you find a bit of whimsy, throw it in. Mine was "We're survivors!" Were you an only child? Did you fight siblings? Throw in a bit of advice, subtly, e.g. Six people got married at a wedding, the bride and groom and each of their parents.

Organize by Chapter and Self Publish

Put your notes into separate folders by subject. These become chapters for your book, which you can self publish on a copier and have it bound at Kinkos or a UPS store. Or you can have it bound at a bindery. Computers make the task easier to scan photos, revise, cut and paste.

Use of email lets you send and receive information and photos easily.

If you want more information, you may write me: Connie Stinchfield, 15 Lovell Street, Nashua, NH 03060 Email: writeme11@comcast.net. Phone between 8:00 and 9:00 p.m.: 603-594-0601

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