Genealogy Rocks!

Facial Recognition Software Identifies Ancestor's Photos

For over a decade, facial recognition has been used by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies to search or identify criminals. A demonstration of facial recognition software

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is seen on several popular TV crime shows such as CSI, Bones, NCIS, Person of Interest, and Hawaii 50.

For genealogists, facial recognition software can compare photos of people to determine if they are a close match between two time periods. Although not perfected yet, the software works best comparing between 20 to 60 years old, providing the person hasn't changed radically or had cosmetic surgery. A good example is when you receive lots of photos from relatives without any identification. It's usually the last 25% of photos that are difficult to identity. With the help of facial recognition software, ancestors can be identified. And some photos may never be identified, because they may be friends of relatives. But someday with the help of a national photo data-

base such as Ancestry.com, those friends and other relatives may be identified using facial recognition software.

Here are several facial recognition programs available to genealogists for Free up to $20.

• Google's Picasa (version 3.5 or higher) digital image organizer has built in face recognition. It associates faces with persons in a specific group. Considered the best program by different reviewers. FREE to the public.

• Face Off by Visual Facial Recognition software uses facial recognition. Also considered very good. Cost is $20.

• Windows Live Photo Gallery (2011) includes face recognition capabilities too. No reviews yet. Free to Windows users.

• Facebook has facial recognition for tagging photos through your personal page with privacy limits. FREE as a Facebook subscriber.

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