

## Tools For Genealogy

# GFO Library Catalog – More than just a list of books!

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A little over a year ago the GFO library converted its library catalog to an online system. A link to the catalog is on all GFO computers and our website (by clicking on Library Catalog). You can also bookmark the site at <http://gfo.ind.opalsinfo.net/bin/home>.

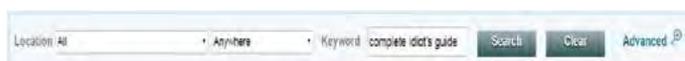
The library catalog website is maintained on the servers of the OPen-source Automated Library System – OPALS. That is why you will see OPALS in the URL address and on the home page. You might also hear those who work closely with the system call it the OPALS catalog.

### HOME PAGE



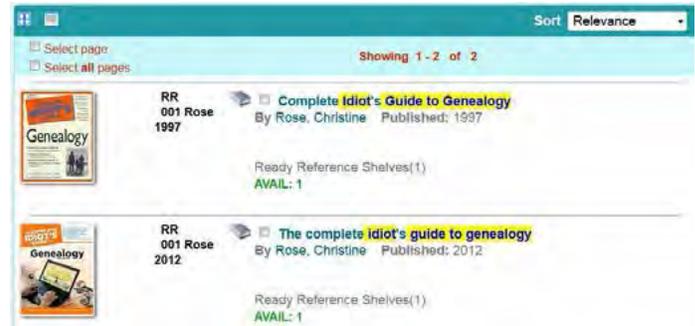
The OPALS home page has several features. Scroll down to see information about upcoming events, links to other GFO web pages, a list of new items, and a box with our hours. The links across the top of the page will take you to more information about these items. Two of the links, Pathfinders and Reserve Shelf, are still being developed.

### SEARCH



Near the top of the home page is a search ribbon. The easiest way to find a book is to type its name or topic into the Keyword box and click on Search. Some examples:

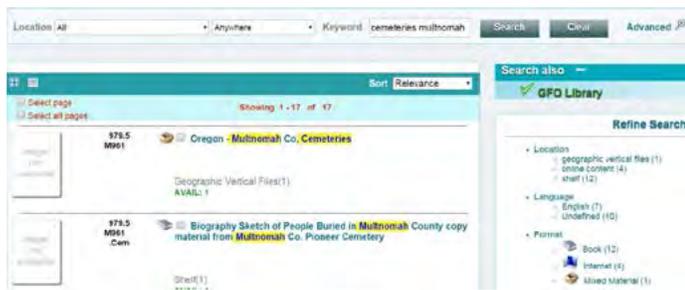
**1) Search by Title:** To find the Complete Idiot's Guide to Genealogy, type the title into the Keyword box and click on Search.



There are two results – different editions of the same book. Also displayed are the call numbers, authors, publication dates, and the items' locations in the library. While we are here, please note the two boxes in the upper left corner, and the boxes near the books' titles. These boxes will be discussed later in the section about bibliographies. Click on one of the book titles to get more information about that book.

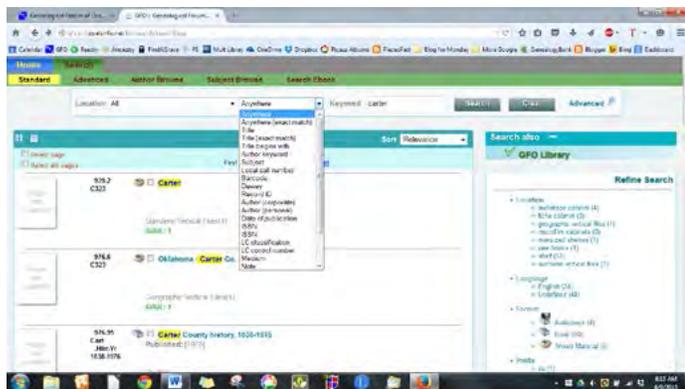


Now you can see even more information about the book as well as similar items on the right. My favorite part in this view is the bar across the top that allows you to review the books next to the book title you just clicked as they are arranged on the library shelf. Clicking on any of the books in the top bar will give you a more detailed view of the book you select. If you find a book you want to use in the library, but you want to keep searching for more, check the Add to Bibliography box. This will start a list of books that you can save or print at the end of your search session.



**2) Search by Keyword:** If you want to search for a topic you will get the best results using a Keyword search. For example, to search for books about cemeteries in Multnomah County, Oregon, type “cemeteries Multnomah.” You get 17 results. These include a Vertical File, 12 books and 4 articles that were published in the GFO Bulletin with a link to the online content.

Note: The results of a search include variations of a word, in this case results with “cemetery” as well as “cemeteries.” It does not correct for spelling.



Sometimes there are so many results that you need to refine your search parameters. You wonder if there is a book about the Carter family. A search for “Carter” gives 72 results, including those for the surname, Carter counties, and books whose authors are Carter. Try the following methods to narrow your results:

**a) Add another word in the search box.** You can narrow the search by adding a word such as “family” (9 results) or “county” (31 results).

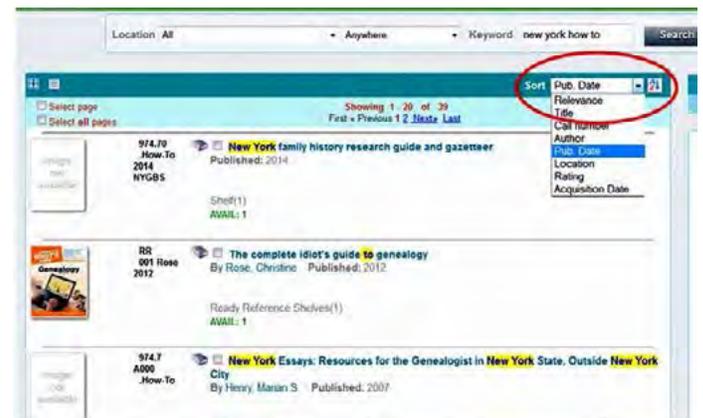
**b) Use the drop down menus.** If I limit the search to Title I get 26 results – a more reasonable number to review.

**Note:** The old catalog system did not contain any subject or topic information, so many of our books will not show up in a subject search. Until this information is added, you will get better results using Keyword.

**c) Use the Refine Search Box.** There is a box to the right of your results labeled Refine Search. You can click on the labels in the box to narrow your results. Choices include Location (in the library), Format (maybe you would like an audiobook to listen to in the car), and Call Number.



**d) Use Advanced Search.** The ribbon near the top of the page gives two places to click for Advanced Search. It lays out all of your options on one page.

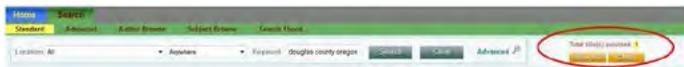


**e) Use the Sort option.** Sometimes it is helpful to sort your results. For example, if you want to learn about doing research in New York state, type “New York how to” in the Keyword search box. You get 39 results sorted by Relevance. You can change the order by using the drop down menu and sorting by publication date. The most recent book turns out to be New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer published in 2014.



If you are looking at county histories, you could invert the order by clicking the small box to the right of the drop down menu. This will lead you to the oldest book we have and it is a great tool for local histories which may lead to our Rare Book Collection.

**3) Creating a Bibliography:** Creating a bibliography allows you to plan your trip to the GFO. It will provide you with a list of items and their call numbers. Items can be added to the bibliography in three ways: From the results page you can click the Select page box, which adds all of the items on the page; you can click Select all pages if there are more results on the next screen; or you can add one item at a time by checking the box next to the title. You may also select individual items from their detail page.



When you add an item to the bibliography a new box appears to the right of the search box. When you are finished searching the catalog, you can see your list by clicking on View Bib.

**Bibliography**

Title:  Date: 2015-06-22

Call Number	Bibliography
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 974.70 How-To 1979	Clint, Florence. <i>New York State Area Key</i> . Elizabeth, Colo.: Keyline, 1979. Note: <input type="text"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 974.70 How-To 1989 JGS	Guzik, Estelle M. <i>The Genealogical Resources in the New York Metropolitan Area</i> . N.Y.: Jewish Genealogical Society, 1989. Note: <input type="text"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 974.70 How-To 2003 JGS	Guzik, Estelle M., ed. <i>Genealogical Resources in New York: The most comprehensive guide to genealogical and biographical resources in New York City and Albany</i> . N.Y.: Jewish Gen. Soc., 2003. Note: <input type="text"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 974.70 How-To 2014 NYGBS	<i>New York family history research guide and gazetteer</i> . New York, NY : New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2014. Note: <input type="text"/>

Title(s) selected for bibliography: 4

Select bibliography format:  MLA  APA  Shelf

Sort order format: Author | Title | Pub date | Call number

Include summary:  No  Yes

Include Content Note:  No  Yes

You can remove books from the list by selecting their checkbox, which removes the check mark so they will not be included when you print or save your finalized list. One of the most helpful tools is the Note field where you can add information you may want when you get to the library i.e., a specific name, event, or page in the book. You can also name your bibliography.

The Print Preview button at the bottom of the screen gives a simple list that you can print. You can also download the list by selecting Save, or Email it to yourself.

## Bibliography

Date: 2015-06-09

974.70 *New York family history research guide and gazetteer*. New York, NY : .How-To 2014 New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2014. NYGBS

RR 001 Rose 2012 Rose, Christine. *The complete idiot's guide to genealogy*. New York : Alpha, 2012.

RARE 979.55 Walling, A. G. *History of Southern Oregon: Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Curry and Coos Counties*. Portland, Or: A.G. Walling, 1884. Jack .Hist Au Jose Doug Curr Coos

929.2 C323 Whitt, Jane Chapman. *The Carter and Fulcher families, Nineteenth Century emigrants from England to Newark, New Jersey and Biloxi, Mississippi: their story and genealogy*. Parsons, W.Va: McClain Printing Co, 1985.

Take the time to explore the GFO Library catalog. If you have questions, ask a Research Assistant or send a note to [Library@gfo.org](mailto:Library@gfo.org).