

Genealogy Was Never This Easy!^[1]

The Story of

luxroots.com

By Georges Eicher

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Eicher (r) with Richard and Josée OSTER-RASQUIN at
Genealogy Days in Hesperange, October 2015

My First Steps in Genealogy

In 1981, together with my brother, I began the genealogy of the EICHER family. Descendants of our common ancestor live in Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany, and the U.S.A. The location of descendants in countries other than Luxembourg is due to the changes of the Prussian-Luxembourg border (1815) and the Belgium-German border (1919) as well as to emigration. My brother and I founded a family association and published a newsletter three times a year. We met at several family reunions during these early years, and realized very quickly that analyzing a single record, always written by someone else, is a very intensive and often impossible task.

Because of my interest in new technologies, I bought my first computer in February 1982 and attended evening courses in programming with relational databases. Between 1988 and 1989 I developed a dBase (a database management system for microcomputers) supported genealogy program. Most of the ideas I used in this program have been incorporated in the web-based luxroots applications. In 1999, I put the first genealogy website of Luxembourg on the internet (georges.eicher.com) with genealogical data from my native municipality of Hachiville. This was the precursor of luxroots.com.

In 2002, I set up the website www.roots.lu by publishing the genealogical works of several colleagues, i.e. family books of Diekirch, Ettelbruck, Mersch, Septfontaines. List of parish registers of the city of Luxembourg, Lorentzweiler, Steinsel and many others were made available with internal search engines. The census of 1766 for the deaneries of Bastogne, Mersch, Ouffet and Stavelot is also offered on this website as well as other information on family names and localities. [2] It also contains information about Luxembourgers who were soldiers of France from 1792-1815. You can check if your ancestor was a soldier in the Napoleonic army and in which campaign and battles he took part! [3]

I started the luxroots project in 2003

to ensure a standardized input of all details of available records. The digital camera and the internet, with its flat rates, were the technical advances that enabled the beginning of luxroots. A first step was the creation of the website and the databases so that each associate and subscriber could work remotely using our server. This involved the taking of pictures of all the records of each municipality and/or parish (from microfilms) in the National Archives. These pictures, with copies of the records, were then dispatched to an associate for entering the details in the database. The fact that pictures can be enlarged with more contrast, and records then analyzed one after another, make deciphering these records easier.

(Today, thanks to FamilySearch.org., genealogy in Luxembourg and elsewhere is easier than in 2003. At the beginning of 2010, FamilySearch put on its website copies of the civil registers of the municipalities of the Grand Duchy, 1796-1894. In January 2013 the records 1895-1923 were added along with copies of the parish registers.) [4]

The Unique Features of luxroots.com

Team work versus working alone on genealogy, that's the main idea of luxroots.com. With a highly motivated team it's possible to set bigger goals and reach them. We started with the municipalities of the canton of Clervaux (northern Luxembourg) and today are working in the whole of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg as well as in the neighboring regions of Belgium and Germany.

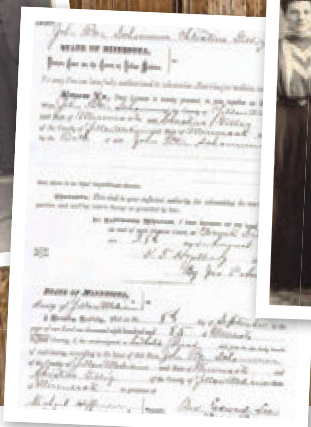
What's the Main Difference Between luxroots and Other Websites?

Luxroots enters details of records as they are written. For example, consider the following case: In the birth record this individual is listed as Wilhelm KLÄS; in his marriage record he is listed as Guillaume CLEES; and on his death record he is Willy KLEIS. All this data is in the luxroots data base as well as differences in birth and death dates that are found in his marriage record.

In general, genealogy is private research published either on a personal website or in family books. Luxroots is teamwork effort published by a non-profit association.

Associates and Subscribers

Associates are volunteers interested in genealogy who are looking for a useful task in their retirement. Currently there are 50 volunteers working on entering data into the luxroots database. Each volunteer associate gets copies of the records of a certain



municipality or parish to analyze and then to input into the luxroots server.

Subscribers are individuals who support the luxroots project by paying to use the database that has been created. Luxroots needs both associates and subscribers to fulfill its goals.

What are the Advantages of a Subscription?

The main advantages of a subscription are:

- Ability to check the database to find out details of records dealing with ancestors

- Creation of on-line pedigree charts, descendants' lists
- Creation of PDF-lists of births for a specific family, name, or a whole parish or municipality (marriages and deaths coming soon)
- Ability to add information about your family with the myluxroots transactions
- Browse the roots.lu and igenealogy.lu websites as well as our database on notary records and Luxembourgish soldiers of France, 1792-1815

What's Already in the Database?

Even though Luxembourg is a very small country, luxroots is a large project with nearly 3 million records to be analyzed and entered into our database. Therefore we have divided the work into several stages:

Stage	Type of records, if available	What's done, what's remaining to do on Nov 8th, 2015?	End expected
1	Births 1796-1923	Details of 704,000 of 770,000 possible births are entered	Mid 2016
2	Marriages 1840-1923	58% (73,690) are entered	Mid 2017
3	Deaths 1870-1923	39,000 deaths entered; 250,000 remaining	End 2020
4	Baptisms before 1800	41% (121,800; mostly from the northern cantons) are entered	End 2019
5	Marriages 1796-1839	17% (9,310; mostly from the northern cantons) are entered	End 2020
6	Deaths 1796-1869	All remaining to be entered; 440,000 death records	End 2023
7	Marriages before 1800	All remaining to be entered, approx. 70,000 marriages	End 2021
8	Deaths before 1800	All remaining to be entered, but often unusable	End 2024

For more details, see our current inventory [5]. N.B. Furthermore details of 192,000 births, 11,000 marriages and 10,000 deaths from the Belgian and German neighboring borders are online on the luxroots website.

Additional Websites Created by the Luxroots Project

myluxroots

This application suite has been developed to enable subscribers to add their recent family members born 1850 to today ; to link them to those already entered in our database ; and thus to obtain a pedigree chart for the people entered.

(Please note that people born before 1924 are often entered in our database on basis of information from the National Archives and that the people born after y (y=actual year-100) are not shown.)

The subscriber can add studies, jobs, functions, addresses, other information, pictures and links to all the records. The subscriber, enriching the database luxroots, earns myluxroots points. These points can be used to build pedigree charts and/or lists of descendants for people in the database already linked by marriage. [6]

igenealogy.lu

The place to publish your genealogical search results (as GEDCOM file) free of charge. Share your research with the world and send us your GEDCOM file in ANSI format ! [7]

luxbooks.lu

The virtual marketplace for luxemburgensia, Genealogy, Local History. Are you looking for a book on genealogy and/or local history or do you have such a book to sell ? Then access luxbooks.lu and make an offer to sell or buy this book. With the help of our bookshelf with more than 1,000 books, you can easily manage your personal library! [8]

A Notary records database with 10,090 indexed records [9]

The quality of our information and the satisfaction of our subscribers and visitors are our priorities. In addition to a FAQ section [10], we provide a Helpdesk[11] as well as an online Genealogy Quiz to improve the reading of old hand-written documents [12] Demo-Videos about our project and about some transactions are also available. [13] Georges EICHER, born 1949, is a former bank officer (of the Securities Dept). 1984, co-founder of the Association Luxembourgeoise de Généalogie et d'Héraldique. [15] 2003, founder of the luxroots project.

- [1] www.luxroots.com
- [2] www.roots.lu
- [3] www.luxroots.com/Display.php?pagename=Page190
- [4] www.familysearch.org
- [5] <http://www.luxroots.com/GEN/LuxrootsDeplInventaire.php>
- [6] www.luxroots.com/Display.php?pagename=Page155
- [7] www.igenealogy.lu
- [8] www.luxbooks.lu
- [9] www.luxroots.com/DisplaySelf.php?articleid=1070
- [10] www.luxroots.com/Display.php?pagename=Page281
- [11] www.luxroots.com/GEN/Hdstart.php
- [12] www.luxroots.com/Display.php?pagename=Page273
- [13] www.luxroots.com/Display.php?pagename=Page304
- [14] www.luxroots.club
- [15] www.algh.lu