

TMG Technical Issues

OneDrive (and how to avoid it), Backups, Migration

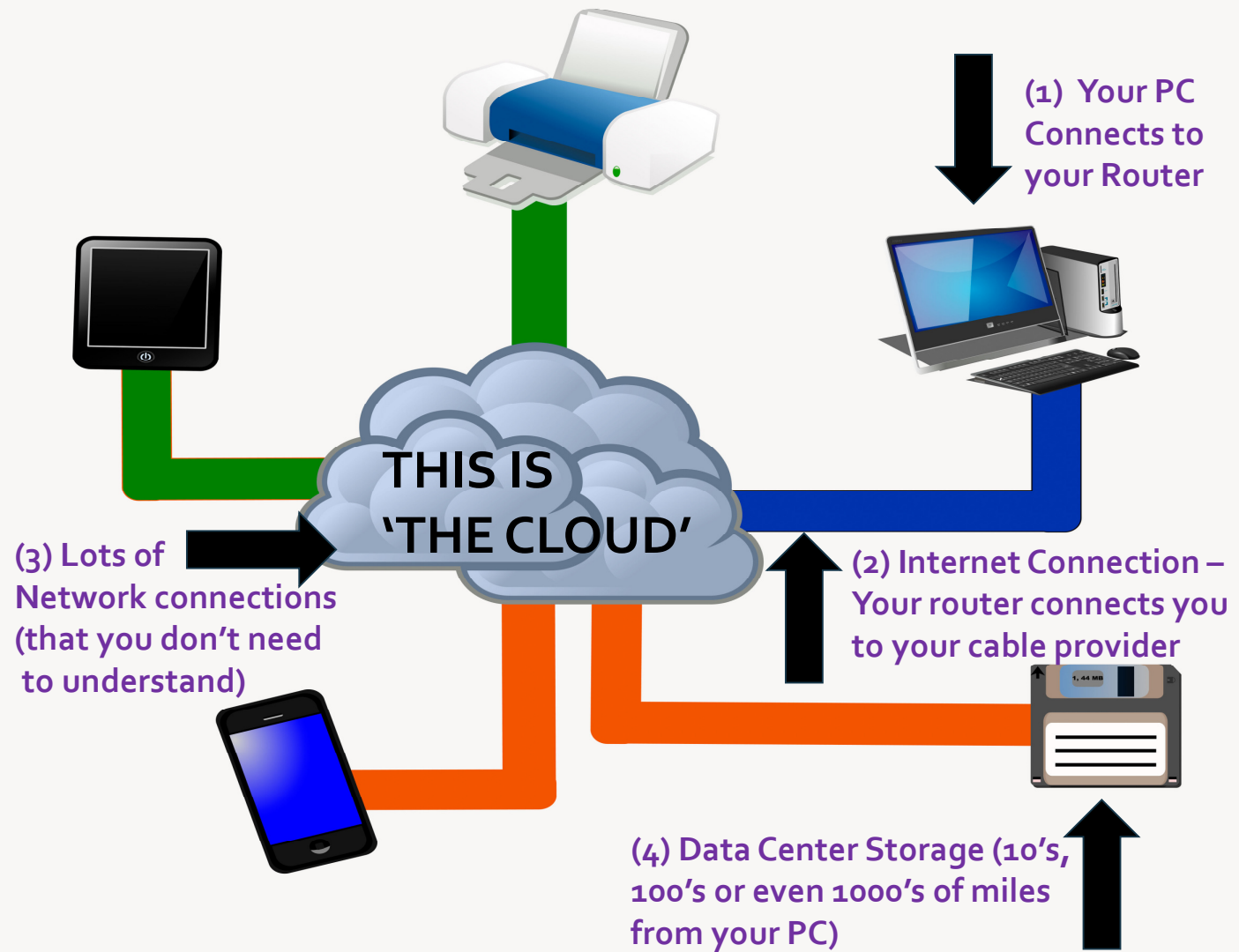
OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **WHAT IS ONEDRIVE?**

- A Cloud-based Backup service from Microsoft
- Windows license gives you 5GB for free
 - Many other 'Cloud' services
 - Amazon, Google, DropBox, and others all offer cloud storage solutions
- Monthly fee = more space over any free amount
- Cloud backup is, by definition, off-site
- Provides double backup since vendors back up their cloud storage, too, recognizing that THEIR storage could get damaged, as well
- If you use Teams, OneDrive is apparently REQUIRED, otherwise, it can be safely uninstalled – the trick is uninstalling it the right way

Here's why it's called
'The Cloud'



OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

GOOD or BAD?

- Seems like a good thing, right? BUT - for TMG users, it's very BAD
- How OneDrive works vs. how the TMG database works makes them incompatible
- OneDrive can seriously corrupt your database, making it unusable, and causing the loss of all your work
- OneDrive backs up any file in its domain, when they change
- TMG Database is made up of about 80 files
- They all change at different times
- Some of them can get backed up before others
- If the PC is shutdown before OneDrive 'notices' the other file changes, or before the transfer backup is complete, the backup becomes useless, as it doesn't reflect what's on your PC. Other scenarios can damage or destroy your files, as well
- OneDrive does not do incremental backup – it takes a copy of the entire file

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- How to handle this issue depends on whether you use MS Teams or not, or want to use OneDrive for other things or not
- Available options include:
- Remove OneDrive completely
 - If you need MS Teams, NOT an option
 - OR
- Use OneDrive but not for TMG
 - Two ways to do this
 - Exclude all extensions used by TMG
 - Use a data_paths.txt file – relocates all your data files

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **How to remove OneDrive completely**
- If you Google 'uninstall OneDrive', this is usually what you find :
 - 1) Make sure anything on OneDrive has been copied to your local PC
 - ('Outside' the 'Desktop', 'Documents' and 'Pictures' folders)
 - 2) Open OneDrive - click the OneDrive cloud icon in the task bar
 - 3) Go to Account Settings – click on the 'Settings' tab and then select the 'Account' tab on the sidebar
 - 4) Disable OneDrive – click on 'unlink this PC'
 - 5) Uninstall OneDrive
- Unfortunately, these instructions are incomplete (and this stings people all the time, apparently - myself included, the first time I tried this under Windows 11)

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good



- **How to remove OneDrive completely**
- Problem is a missing critical step (marked below)
- The steps that MUST be followed, in order to successfully uninstall OneDrive:
 - 1) Make sure anything on OneDrive has been copied to your local PC
 - ('Outside' the 'Documents' folder)
 - 2) Open OneDrive - click the OneDrive cloud icon in the task bar
 - 3) Go to Account Settings – click on the 'Settings' tab and then select the 'Account' tab on the sidebar
 - 4) From the list of folders that OneDrive will back up, **DESELECT ALL FOLDERS** so that **NONE** of them are to be backed up
 - 5) Disable OneDrive – click on 'unlink this PC'
 - 6) Uninstall OneDrive
- Unfortunately, you may still have to occasionally check to see that the OneDrive folder doesn't reappear from time to time, at least for a while

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **How to remove OneDrive completely**
- Wait – WHAT???? REAPPEAR????
- Yes, unfortunately. Under certain circumstances, the OneDrive folder can reappear from time to time
- Regardless of whether OneDrive is installed or not, if some program specifically references OneDrive in a file path, Windows appears to restore the OneDrive folder, rather than reporting 'file/path not found'
- It has been suggested that some Microsoft updates seem to restore the folder, as well (although my experience is that they don't reinstall OneDrive if it has been uninstalled)
- So, periodically, check for the presence of 'OneDrive' in your user profile folder, and delete as appropriate
 - In my case, the 'Pictures' folder kept showing up from time to time, but nothing was ever in it except a couple of empty sub-folders, and it hasn't reappeared in a couple of months now

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **How to remove OneDrive completely**
- My best guess is that Windows has knowledge of OneDrive embedded within it, and even uninstalling OneDrive leaves those tidbits behind to get in your way and to mess with your head
- If the folder does reappear, I've found it necessary to do these three things:
 - 1) Examine each sub-folder, and make sure they are empty (or, if they aren't, save out the contents – deal with any duplication, after you get rid of the OneDrive folder again – it's faster and easier that way) – Maintain the file hierarchy you find – it will ease duplicate resolution
 - 2) Delete the (now empty) sub-folders – repeat for any and all folders inside the OneDrive folder. Deletion should proceed from the 'bottom up'
 - 3) Once it's empty, delete the OneDrive folder
- If you don't do this, you can wind up with duplicate folders in your home directory, which can't be otherwise deleted

OneDrive –
Bad

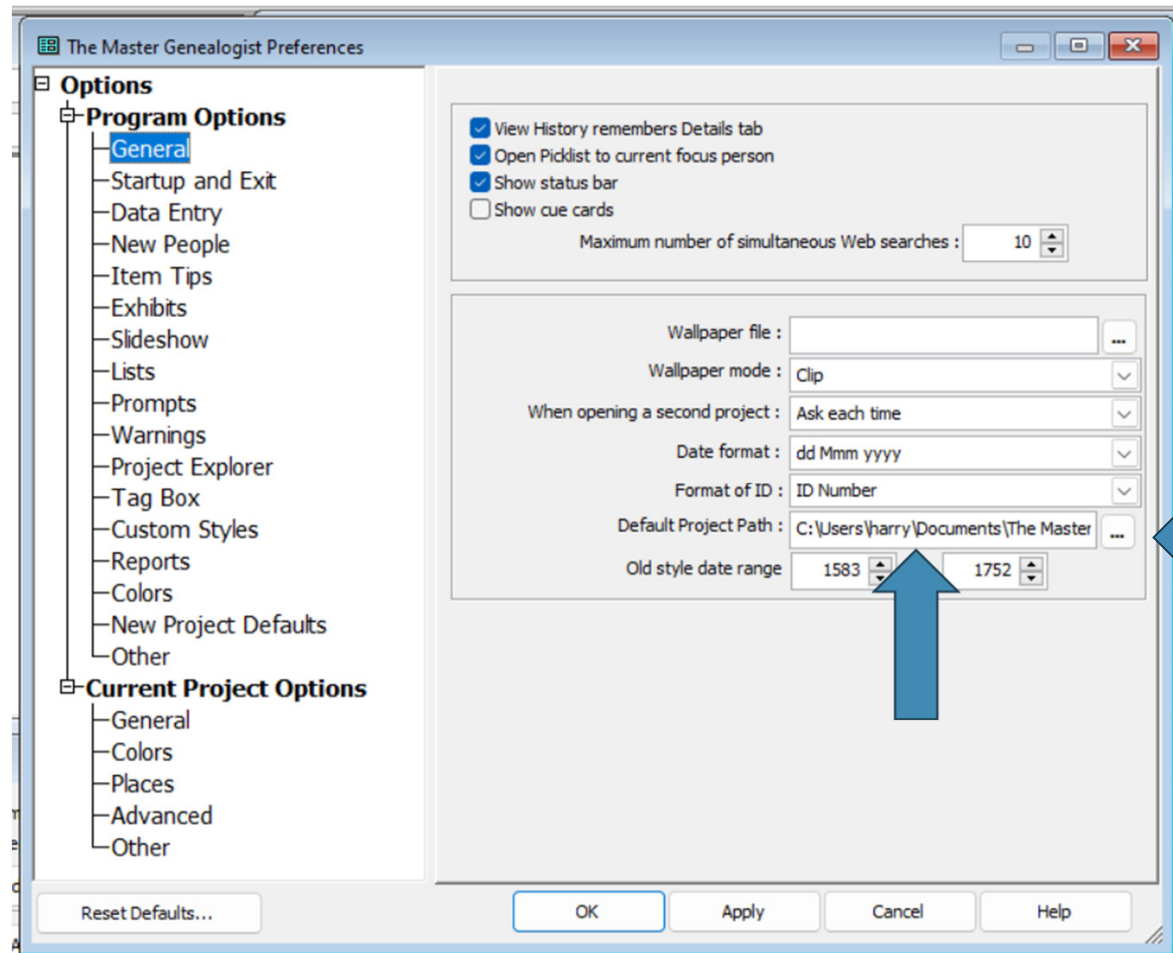
Backups -
Good

- **How to remove OneDrive completely**
- Additional steps to take include examining other programs to see if they are trying to save things to the OneDrive folder, and alter their behavior to avoid referencing that folder
- TMG can be one of the culprits, if OneDrive is in ANY of the default paths in ANY of the program settings

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

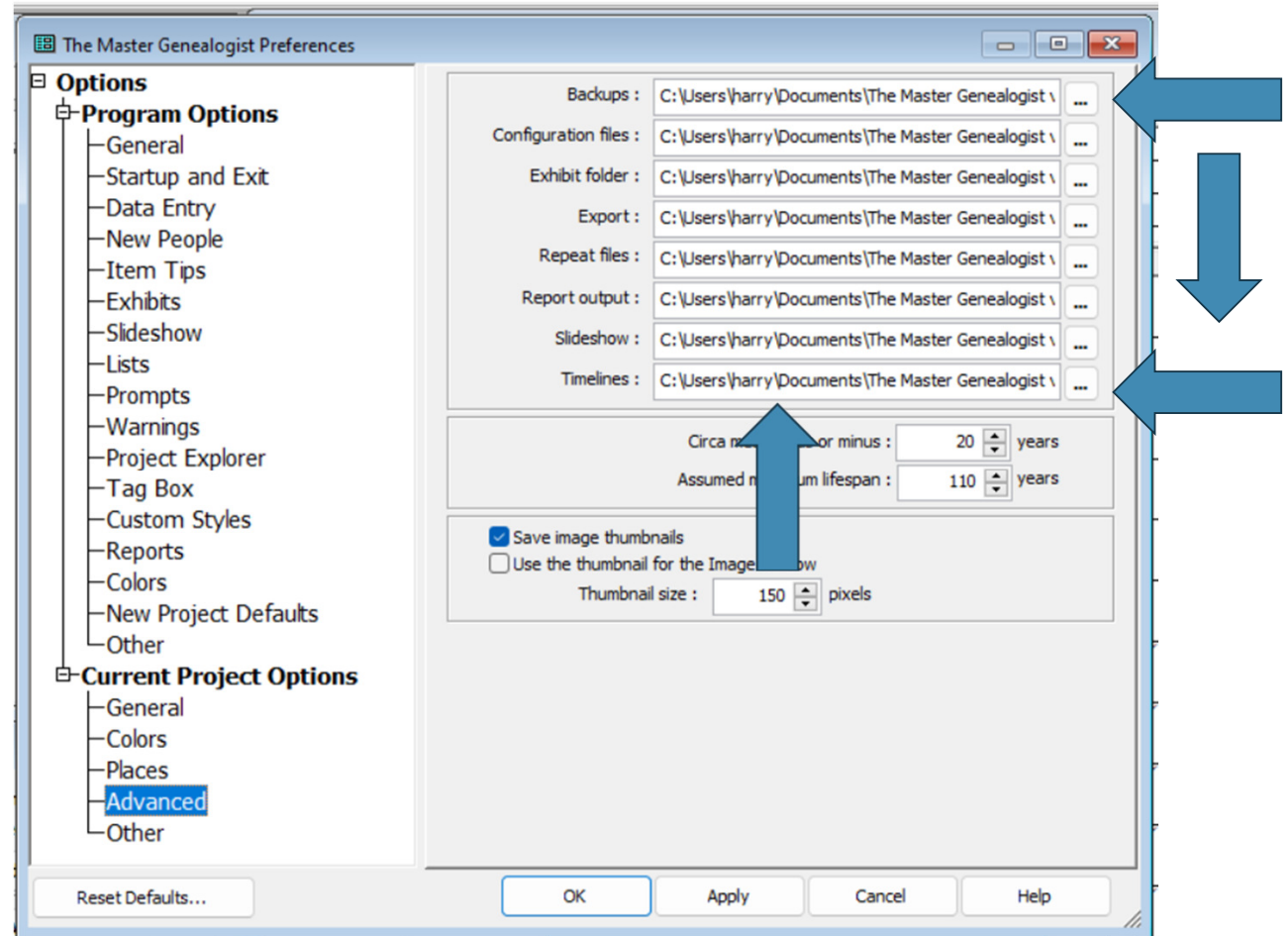
- How to remove OneDrive completely



OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- How to remove OneDrive completely



OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **How to use OneDrive for everything EXCEPT for TMG**
 - Two main ways to do this
 - Exclude all extensions used by TMG
 - Use a data_paths.txt file

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- How to exclude all extensions used by TMG
 - Recently discovered this feature when migrating to a new Windows 11 machine and uninstalling OneDrive
 - In the configuration screen for OneDrive, there is an option to exclude certain file extensions from being backed up – any file with one of those extensions will NOT be monitored or backed up by OneDrive
 - Note – I have NOT TRIED THIS, so I can't guarantee that it will completely prevent TMG database corruption – but I think it likely will

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

If you want to give it a try, here are the steps to exclude all extensions used by TMG v9

- 1) Open OneDrive
- 2) Go to the Settings tab
- 3) Add ALL of the TMG extensions to the 'exclusion' list

If someone is brave enough to give this a try, I'd love to know whether it works properly or not!

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

As near as I have been able to ascertain, these are all the file extensions used by TMG V9:

DATABASE FILES

- DBF – Foxpro database files
- FPT – Foxpro memo files (supports memo fields, when present)
- CDX – Foxpro structural compound indexes
- PJC – Project configuration and version control file (ASCII text)
- LOG – Log file (ASCII text)

My SUSPICION is that these are the only files that need to be excluded from OneDrive – but that needs to be verified by some brave soul

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

ACCENT AND FILTER FILES

- ACC – Accent Definition Files
- FLC – Filter Definition Files – List of Citations
- FLE – Filter Definition Files – List of Events
- FLK – Filter Definition Files – List of Tasks
- FLL – Filter Definition Files – List of Places
- FLN – Filter Definition Files – List of Names
- FLP – Filter Definition Files – List of People
- FLR – Filter Definition Files – List of Repositories
- FLS – Filter Definition Files – List of Sources
- FLY – Filter Definition Files – List of Tag Types
- FLW – Filter Definition Files – List of Witnesses

Note – many of these files will not be present unless you have created an accent definition, or the appropriate type of filter – you probably would want to add them to the exclusion list anyway, in case you later create them!

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER FILES

- COL – Color Definition Files (may have been replaced with 'colornames.xls')
- DNA – DNA Laboratory Definition Files
- INI – Configuration Files
- LO – Layout Files (may have been updated to a different extension)
- TBR – Toolbar Files
- TXT – Text Files
- DBT – Database Text Files Used With Timeline databases
- DOC – Descriptive Text Files
- RPT – Report Definition Files
- BKP – Backup Definition Files
- EMF – Frame Files for use with Visual ChartForm
- SQZ – TMG Backup Files

Details about the TMG file names and their content can be found on Lee Hoffman's TMG Tips pages at:

<http://www.tmgtips.com/dbnames2.htm>

Note – Exhibit Files are NOT included in the above list of file names

Also, some of these extensions are NOT UNIQUE to TMG and should be excluded from OneDrive with care (e.g. .DOC, .TXT, .INI, .LOG, etc.)

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Use a DATA_PATHS.TXT file to 'relocate' TMG files**
- The data_paths.txt file instructs TMG on where to store all the various databases and other data files that TMG uses
 - 3 locations for different kinds of data
 - Shared Program Data (SPD) – program data files common for all users
 - User Program Data (UPD) – program data files specific to each user
 - User Data (UD) – user databases, exhibits, backups, logs, etc.
 - data_paths.txt explicitly sets these locations, as opposed to the default locations used in the absence of a data_paths.txt file

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Use a DATA_PATHS.TXT file to 'relocate' TMG files**
 - If installing TMG from scratch, this is a tiny bit easier:
 - 1) Run the installer, but DO NOT START TMG when the install finishes (uncheck the 'start TMG' box on the final installer page) and then finish the installation
 - 2) Put a 'data_paths.txt' file into this directory:
C:/Program Files (x86)/The Master Genealogist V9
 - 3) Start TMG in admin mode and enter your registration credentials
 - 4) Exit TMG
 - 5) Start TMG in 'normal' mode – by this point, the various files and directories will have been created in the locations specified by the 'data_paths.txt' file
 - 6) Always run TMG in 'normal' mode from this point onward

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Use a DATA_PATHS.TXT file to 'relocate' TMG files**
 - If adding a 'data_paths.txt' file to an existing TMG system, it's almost as easy:
 - 1) Put the data_paths.txt file in the same location as for a scratch install (i.e. c:/Program Files (x86)/The Master Genealogist V9)
 - 2) Start TMG – this will create the new folder structure in the new locations
 - 3) Migrate your existing projects and all associated exhibits and other files to the new locations
 - Do a backup of the project and restore to the new location
 - OR
 - Use File Explorer to move all the directories involved
 - My personal preference – go the backup/restore route
 - You will STILL have to copy over exhibits, though
- Note – having used a data_paths.txt file does NOT INVALIDATE your pre-existing data – it's all still there, and accessible from within TMG

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- Use a **DATA_PATHS.TXT** file to 'relocate' TMG files

- Here's what the default paths would look like on my PC (with OneDrive already removed), if put into a data_paths.txt file:

```
[harry]  
SharedProgramData=C:\ProgramData\The Master Genealogist v9  
UserProgramData=C:\Users\harry\AppData\Roaming\The Master Genealogist  
v9  
UserData=C:\Users\harry\Documents\The Master Genealogist v9
```

- In a system without a data_paths.txt file, files will be located just as if the above file WERE present
- This is why, if you get the [username] parameter wrong in a data_paths.txt file, you wind up with files in the Documents folder tree again
- You can identify the exact value to use in the [username] field by opening a command prompt and typing: `echo %username%`

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Example data_paths.txt file:**

- Assuming you are the only person using TMG on this PC, you might set up the data_paths.txt file like this:

```
[harry]  
SharedProgramData=C:\Genealogy\TMG9\SPD\  
UserProgramData=C:\Genealogy\TMG9\UPD\  
UserData=C:\Genealogy\TMG9\UD\  

```

With more than one TMG user on the PC, create a 'four line group' for each user, with the [username] value set appropriately. The <username> should be embedded in lines 3 & 4 (and possibly line 2), to separate out each user's data files – e.g.:

```
[guest]  
SharedProgramData=C:\Genealogy\TMG9\SPD\  
  
UserProgramData=C:\Genealogy\TMG9\guest\UPD\  
UserData=C:\Genealogy\TMG9\guest\UD\  

```

← Optionally, add user name to this line – but if you do, you should also add it to all '4-line groups', as appropriate

Other layouts are possible – this is just a suggestion

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Backup Your Data!!!**

- At some point, you WILL experience a disk crash, or some other event that will mangle your data (and this holds for EVERYTHING you do on a computer, not just TMG)
- WHEN that happens (not IF), you will be glad of a backup
 - OR
- You will be sad/mad/angry that you have lost some or all of your data, and that all the time spent creating that data has now been wasted - - - Backups will eliminate most of that pain/anger/repeated work/time lost

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Backup Strategies**

- 1) Local backup on the working disk
 - Good to recover from some issue that you caused yourself, just 'now' – like making a series of tag entries and updates, and then realizing you were on the wrong person and have messed up some good data
- 2) Local backup on a separate disk
 - Good to protect against a disk drive failure – disks DO crash, albeit much less frequently than in the 'good old days' – they will also sometimes decide that they won't spin up any longer, making the data on them totally unretrievable
- 3) Off-site backup
 - Good to protect against a physical calamity at the site of your computer
 - Examples: Flood, Fire, Hurricane, Tornado, Earthquake, Theft or other physical loss of the computer, etc.

- 1 and 2 can be handled using the TMG backup process
- 3 can be handled by:
 - A) Copying the resulting .sqz file to a cloud storage system
 - The backup is immediately available in the event of a problem
 - B) Copying the .sqz file to a removable disk that is stored elsewhere
 - You have to first retrieve the externally stored disk before you can restore data
 - Subject to transportation 'problems'
 - In either case, if you use EXTERNAL Exhibits, don't forget to back them up[, as well!!!!

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Backup Strategies**

- Frequency
 - Schedules vs. Workflow
- Methods
 - TMG Backup Files
 - Internal vs External exhibits
 - Manual directory backups
 - Windows backups

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Backup Testing**

- You should test your backups from time to time
 - A non-working backup is no better than having NO backup!
- Restore a backup to TMG from time to time, to confirm it is valid
- Pick a different name/location for the restore, to prevent damaging your working project

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Migrating Your Data**

- Renaming a project
- Copying a project from place to place on the same PC
- Moving all your data from one PC to another

Renaming a Project

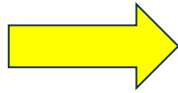
- **Migrating Your Data**

- Renaming a project
- Your project must be CLOSED in order to rename it
- This is because the files will be renamed at the Windows level, and Windows cannot rename a file if it is open

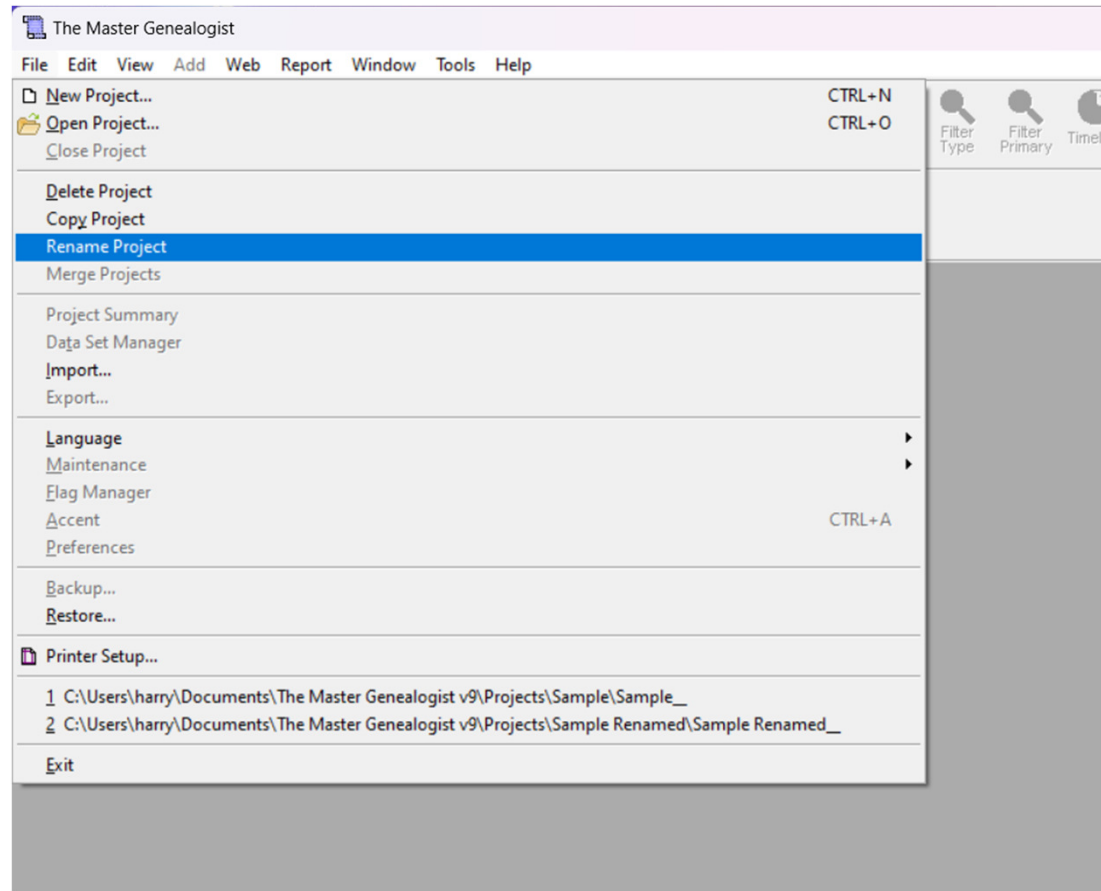
Renaming a Project

- **Migrating Your Data**

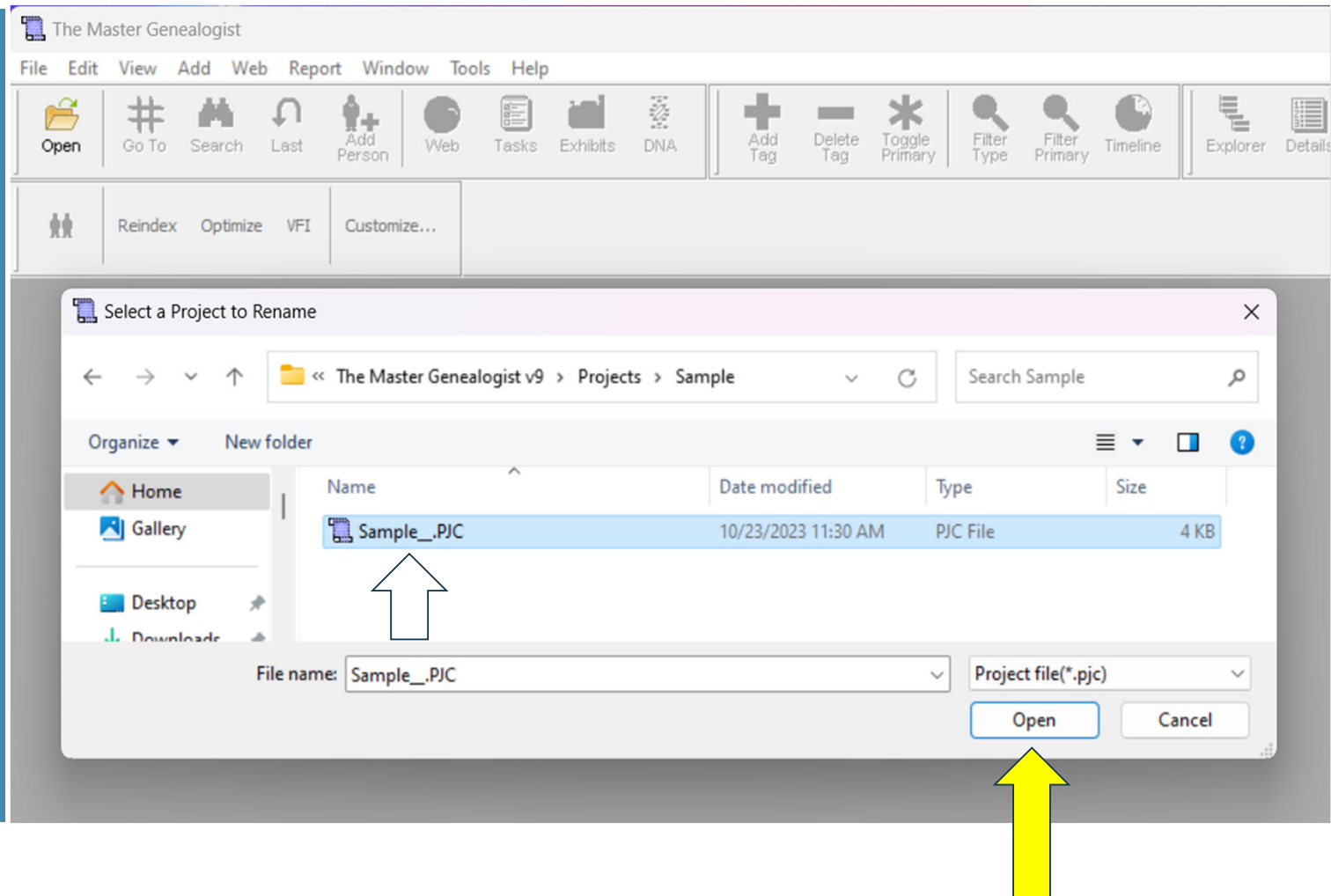
- Click on 'File->Rename Project'
- This will open the File Selection window
- Navigate to your project .PJC file and select it



Click on
'Rename
Project' from
the File Menu



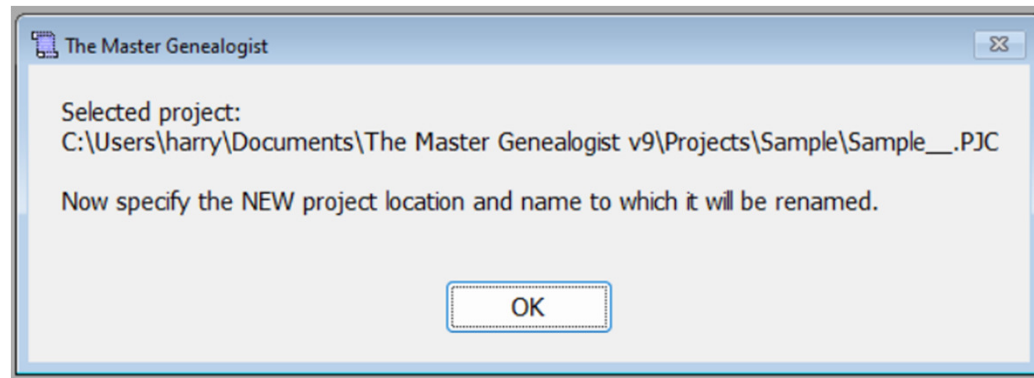
Navigate to the project file to be renamed, select it and click 'Open'



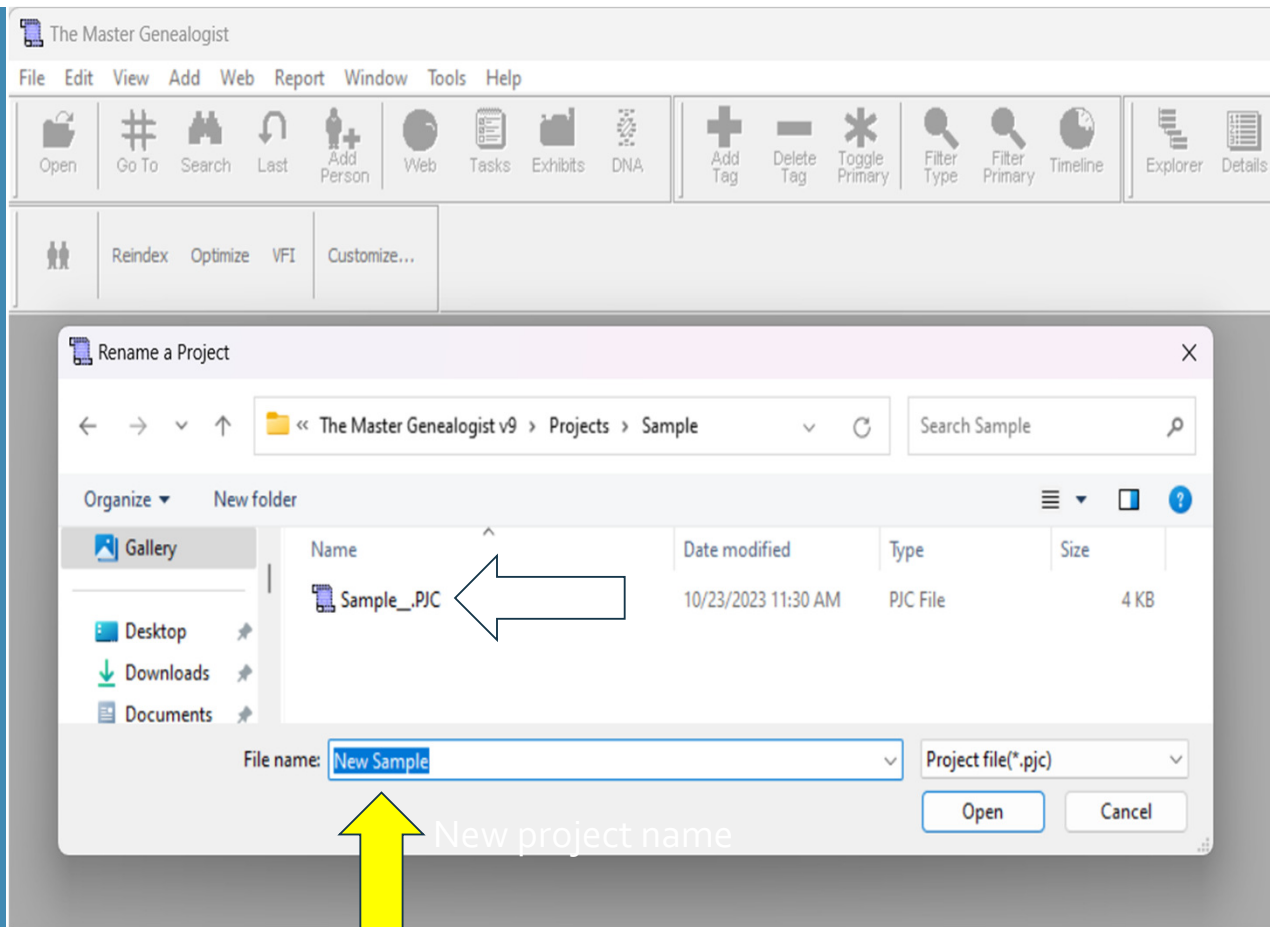
Renaming a Project

- **Migrating Your Data**

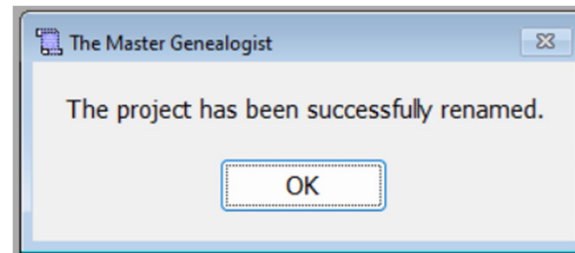
- A window will pop up, telling you the project being renamed, and telling you that you need to pick a new name for the project – This is an informational box, so click on OK



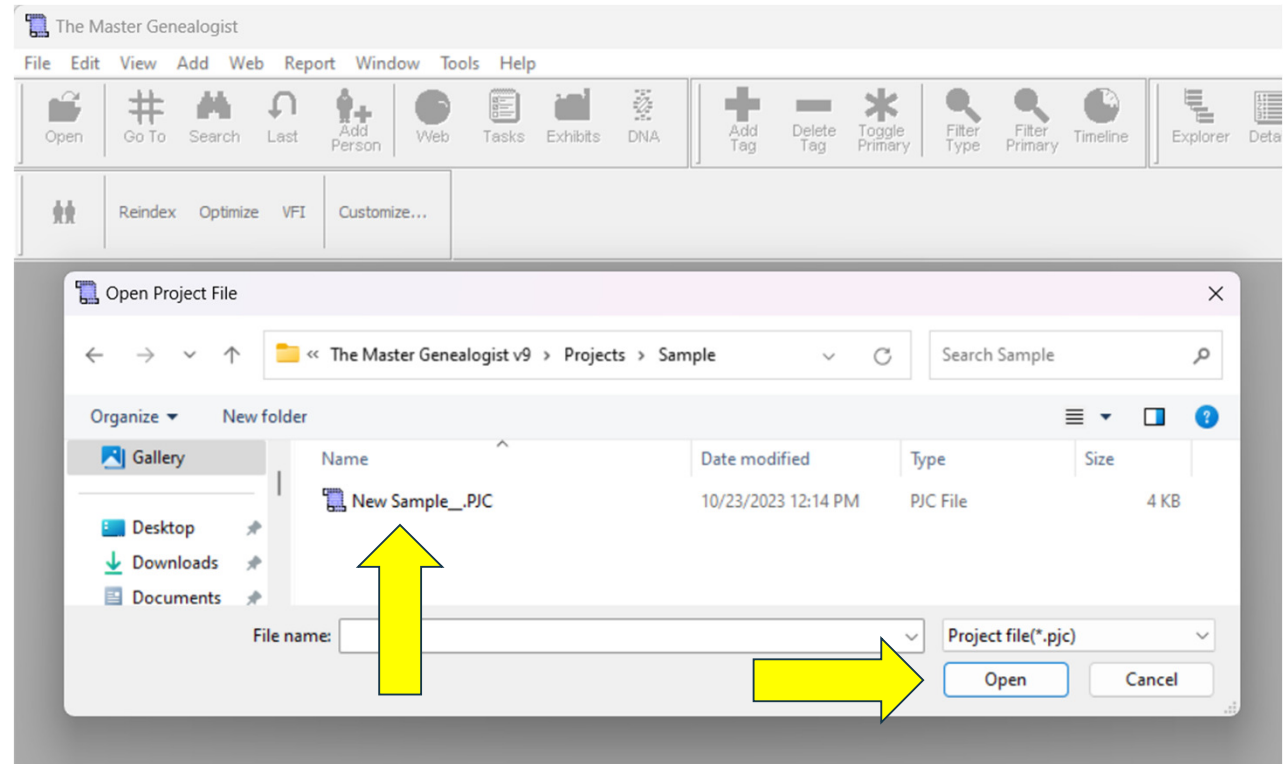
The file selection window will open again – pick the new name for your project,, and click 'Open'



A pop-up will appear, notifying you that the rename has been completed – click OK to finish up



If you now select 'File->Open Project', you will see the renamed project file – select it and click OPEN to continue working with the renamed project



OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Migrating Your Data**

- Copying a project – this is how to move a project to a new location, and possibly also giving it a new name at the same time
- Almost the same as renaming a project
- Instead of selecting the SAME folder as the original, select a NEW place
- Select a new name, click 'OPEN' and you are done

- The difference between the two is that when renaming a project, if you pick a new folder for it, the database will be moved but no supporting files will be moved. If you COPY the project, then ALL the TMG files in the source folder will be copied to the target folder

OneDrive –
Bad

Backups -
Good

- **Migrating Your Data**

- Moving all your data from one PC to another
- The best way to do this is to create a full backup of your project, install TMG on the new PC and then restore the project to the new PC
 - Don't forget to backup/copy external exhibits!
 - Good idea to copy the exhibits folder even if using internal exhibits

OTHER GOOD RESOURCES ON THESE TOPICS

Some other web sites to reference:

1) Lee Hoffman's TMG Tips are full of good information on these subjects:

<http://tmgtips.com>

2) Terry Riegel's help pages contain a wealth of information on these and other TMG topics (including John Cardinal's various TMG tools):

<http://tmg.reigelridge.com>

3) Michael J. Hannah has written an on-line book with a huge wealth of information on various aspects of TMG:

<https://www.mjh-nm.net/>

4) There is some useful information still available on the Wholly Genes forum pages – but only people in the US (or using a US VPN) can access them, unfortunately

<http://www.whollygenes.com/forums201/index.php>

Note – I've consulted, and shamelessly lifted some of the information in this presentation from all the above web-sites. Thank you Lee Hoffman, Terry Reigel, Michael J. Hannah and Bob Velke!

QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

If anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to try to answer them

If anyone would like, I can do a live example of a project rename, copy and move