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**NEW BUSINESS PRESERVES FAMILY HISTORIES IN VIDEOS, DVDS AND BOOKS**

Genealogy was the start, scrapbooking followed – now an unprecedented number of individuals are currently engaged in documenting family history. Mary Ann Mayers founded Extraordinary Lives, LLC to produce family histories that incorporate facets of genealogy and scrapbooking, but delve much deeper into the realm of family stories. These projects combine storytelling with photos, family movies, and historical records to provide a more comprehensive and colorful family history. The Cincinnati-based company offers a choice of methods to preserve these treasured memories, including published books, memory books, video and audio recordings, and DVDs.

Personal history work involves in-depth interviewing of the subject, and then preparation of the resulting stories and supporting materials for the selected history format. As such, the work requires an unusual combination of interpersonal and technical skill. “My background in business *and* sociology was great preparation for this high-tech, high-touch field,” says Mayers. For over twenty years, Mayers has worked in research, writing and the business applications of digital technology.

Extraordinary Lives is part of a new but rapidly growing industry devoted to documenting life stories for family use. “The sharing of family history used to occur as a natural part of everyday conversation” says Mayers, “but the complexity of our lives has eroded that tradition. We now must make a deliberate effort to know our own history, and to do so before it is too late.”

Personal histories are most often commissioned by sons and daughters to chronicle their parents’ lives. “Other uses are emerging all the time,” states Mayers. “Personal histories are also being produced to commemorate significant milestones such as adoptions and wedding anniversaries, and to preserve the messages and wishes of a terminally ill family member.”

For additional information about personal and family histories, contact Mary Ann Mayers at Extraordinary Lives, LLC. Address: 5571 Deervalley Court, Suite 102, Cincinnati, OH 45247. Phone: 513.385.1637. Email: [info@extraordinarylives.com](mailto:info@extraordinarylives.com)

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