

# **DATABASE TO LIST ELLIS ISLAND IMMIGRANTS**

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## **Body**

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Old **Ellis Island** is going high-tech.

The American Family Immigration History Center will have a computerized **database** of arrival records on the 17 million people who passed through **Ellis Island** between 1892 and 1924, officials said. The center is scheduled to open in 2000.

Visitors to the **Ellis Island** Immigration Museum will be able to search the **database** to find the manifests from the ships their relatives arrived on and get a copy of that record and a picture of the vessel.

About 40 percent of Americans can trace their ancestry to **Ellis Island**.

Public access to the records was a goal since the foundation was created in 1982, said Lee Iacocca, chairman emeritus of the Statue of Liberty-**Ellis Island** Foundation.

The records were removed from **Ellis Island** decades ago and placed on microfilm by the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington. They are being entered into the **database** by volunteers from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The project will cost about \$15 million, all of which will come from private fund-raising.

The **database** will be accessible through 35 computer stations. Visitors will pay a "nominal" fee for access; each search should take seven to eight minutes, Edwin Schlossberg, who designed the center, said. The **database** has been set up to search for close matches and phonetic spellings.

Schlossberg, husband of Caroline Kennedy, said people's curiosity about that famous family made him realize how much family histories matter to the public.

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