

## Family History Newsletter



Editors: Annette Fulford, Andrea Lister  
Contributors: Sandra Ayres

Production: Val Patenaude, Allison White  
Distribution: Brenda L. Smith

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The Family History group supports members in researching their family history research. Members have ancestors from around the globe.

They meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm at the Maple Ridge Library.

Email: [mrfamilyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:mrfamilyhistory@gmail.com)

### Reading Scotland's Records

by Sandra Ayres

[www.futurelearn.com](http://www.futurelearn.com)

Recently I was made aware of a free "Early Modern Scottish Paleography, Reading Scotland's Records" course from *FutureLearn*. It promised a three-week course with each week only requiring about three hours to complete. As this would give me insight in deciphering handwriting hieroglyphics and the time required was manageable I decided to try it. I have not been disappointed.

The course, offered through the University of Glasgow, was broken into many easy sections. It was a mix of Scottish history, church development through the time period in question, as well as the political situations all of which contributed to the writings in question. The course instructors, Scott Spurlock, from Scottish Religious Cultures, and, Neil McIntyre, research assistant from the School Of Critical Studies created a good background for the course. The articles were concise yet deeply detailed and gave context for the content. These were mixed with the informative and delightful lectures of Doctor Lionel Glassey that specifically pertained to recognizing handwriting idiosyncrasies. Fortunately, many examples were shown to help the participant recognize what was being demonstrated.

The quizzes were multiple choice, usually needing more than one answer and only on the actual handwriting examples. Many Scottish sources were given as well as specific websites. Subjects such as capitals, currency, numbers, abbreviations, and contractions were covered. Even a link to a Scottish Dictionary, almost 100 years in the making, was given as well as a link to a Scottish handwriting website.

Whereas I previously thought certain marks on the paper were accidental, I will now look at them with a different eye. I will be mindful of date changes due to the method of dating or whether the Julian calendar was being used instead of the Georgian calendar — it turns out my birthday was considered New Year's Eve! I will even consider whether the pound spoken about was Scottish pound or pound Sterling.

Reading the comments from other participants was enlightening. Concepts or history I was not aware of were talked about from individuals around the globe. Many taking this course were genealogy oriented.

I took the free version at this time so my ability to access the course expires after about seven weeks but the paid version gets you unlimited access to the course until the website ends, with a certificate at the end for your records.

*FutureLearn* gave me good background information, plenty of websites to learn more about my ancestral country and fun practice on deciphering early handwriting. I would recommend it to anyone wanting to learn how to read old documents whether Scottish or not.

## Online Resources

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### Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.

<http://mennonitemuseum.org/>

Housed inside the Mennonite Heritage Museum is a library and databases for historical and genealogical research.

Computer stations are available for anyone interested in researching family history. The collection includes oral history interviews, photographs and various archival documents.

1818 Clearbrook Road  
Abbotsford, BC.

### BC Genealogical Society

[www.bcgs.ca](http://www.bcgs.ca)

The BCGS Walter Draycott Library is an affiliate of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Now as an affiliate library, the BCGS Library has free access to record collections previously restricted to the Family History Library and Family History Centers. BCGS members and visitors to the BCGS Library are now able to view these collections at the BCGS Library.

### 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele

[www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/get-involved/remembrance-day/passchendaele](http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/get-involved/remembrance-day/passchendaele)

The Battle of Passchendaele raged in Belgium in the summer and fall of 1917. Learn more about the First World War's bitter Battle of Passchendaele at Library and Archives Canada.

### Drouin Institute Blog

[www.genealogiequebec.com/blog](http://www.genealogiequebec.com/blog)

The Drouin Institute launched a blog to promote the resources it offers on the subscription-based *GenealogyQuebec* and *PRDH* websites. They will also be posting a monthly series of articles pertaining to Quebec genealogy.

### Fix for FTDNA Upload

[www.mapmy23.com/tools/ancestry\\_ftdna\\_fix.php](http://www.mapmy23.com/tools/ancestry_ftdna_fix.php)

Having a problem uploading your *Ancestry* DNA to *FamilyTreeDNA*? This tool will convert an *Ancestry* raw DNA file into a format accepted by FTDNA.

## Family History Events

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### Abbotsford Family History Day

[www.abbotsfordfamilyhistory.com](http://www.abbotsfordfamilyhistory.com)

Saturday, April 28, 2018. 30635 Blueridge Drive, Abbotsford, BC. Schedule TBA. No charge.

### British Columbia Genealogical Society

[www.bcgs.ca](http://www.bcgs.ca)

- **Christmas Social** -- refreshments, pocketbook sale, BCGS Auction, Dec 13, 2017, 7:30–10:00 pm. Downstairs Hall, 6010 Kincaid St., Burnaby, BC.

### Cloverdale Library

[www.surreylibraries.ca](http://www.surreylibraries.ca)

- **Orientations**, Saturdays, 10:00–10:50 am, Dec 2 Pre-registration recommended. Fee: free.
- **Fun Family History Fridays**, Fri Dec 1, 2017, 2:30–4:00 pm.
- **9th Annual Family History Show & Tell**, Sat. Nov 18, 10:30 am–12:30 pm. Bring

whatever you've made to honour your ancestors. This year continues the "home movie" theme. Visitors without stories are welcome to watch and listen. No charge.

### Kelowna & District Genealogical Society

[www.kdgs.ca](http://www.kdgs.ca)

- **Harvest Your Family Tree Conference**, Sept 28–30, 2018. Details later at Kelowna and District Genealogical Society.

### Qualicum Beach Family History Society

[www.qbfhs.ca](http://www.qbfhs.ca)

- **Unlocking The Past seminar**, April 20-21 2018, Parksville, The Beach Club Resort.

### Vancouver Public Library – Dunbar Branch

[www.vpl.ca/](http://www.vpl.ca/)

- **Genealogy for All Ages!**, Explore your genealogy with your younger generation! Grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles and cousins are invited to bring young relatives (ages 3-18) for an afternoon of games and crafts focused on sharing family history – and making it fun. Friday, December 1, 2017, 2:00–4:00 pm.

Maple Ridge Family History Group, Wednesday, Dec 6, 2017, 7pm at the Maple Ridge Library.

December Challenge: bearing in mind Christmas is a time for giving/receiving gifts, I am suggesting members look over their research and think about research "gifts" they have received i.e. special help from someone, a record that unlocked a door to solving a research brick wall, a lead that saved you from following the wrong family, etc.