

Family History Newsletter

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The Family History Group meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm at the Maple Ridge Library.

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The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Maple Ridge Historical Society.

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Subscriptions are a benefit of membership in the Maple Ridge Historical Society. Please send membership applications, with \$20 to the Maple Ridge Historical Society.

Family History Group Meetings

The February meeting will be
February 4, 2015.

ScotlandsPlaces

by *Jamie Brown*

How many of you are frustrated by the lack of family history clues for your Scotland ancestors?

Cloverdale library is pleased to announce the recent addition of a new family history database – *ScotlandsPlaces*!

Although this database does not hold any vital records, it can take your research further “afield” (and parish, and burgh) than you think.

The main section in Scotland’s Places, where you can find “your” people – is the Historical Tax Rolls. These tax rolls run from approximately 1645 to 1799. So what sorts of things were the people of Scotland taxed for in 1797 you ask? Well what about the number of horses and mules used for “husbandry”, (Farm Horse Tax) or the number of horses used for saddles and carriages (Horse Tax). There is even a tax for those that owned “non-working” dogs (Dog Tax). There are other types of taxes such as Land tax, Cart tax, Clock and Watch tax and so forth. These taxes may well have been the start of the goods and services taxes we pay today!

ScotlandsPlaces also includes Ordnance Survey books, which contain information on place names, variant spellings, map reference and descriptions of the land. For example; Latheron in

the county of Caithness is described as: “presenting a continued and frequently rapid succession of hill and valley” (vol 6, page 1). There are a few other smaller little gems found on this site, but remember it is primarily organized by place name.

So think of what type of life your ancestors lived, where they lived, and check out *ScotlandsPlaces* at Cloverdale library!

ScotlandsPlaces is available only IN library at Cloverdale.

For any enquiries contact us at familyhistory@surrey.ca

Coroners' Records

by *Gina Leigh*

My friend Russ was named for his uncle Russell, his father’s brother. Russ had been told that when his uncle Russell was a young man he had died in a railroad accident in the Fraser Canyon.

In conducting a little research for my friend, I first turned to BC Archives www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/bcarc_hives to see whether I could locate a death registration for uncle Russell. (This information was also available on Ancestry.) BC Archives is in the process of scanning their birth, marriage and death registrations to make them searchable online. Unfortunately this is rather hit or miss at the moment until the scanning project is completed.

Fortunately for me, Russell's death registration has been scanned and I found that he had in fact died near McMurphy, which is north of Clearwater, and not in the Fraser Canyon. A copy of the death registration was obtained. It provided the interesting information that a Coroner's Inquest had been conducted into Russell's death.

I returned to the BC Archives site and searched the collection for "coroners' inquests", and discovered a *Research Guide to the Coroners' Records*. BC Archives has coroners' inquests from 1859 to 1967 and coroners' inquiries from 1859 to 1970. (Inquests from 1968 onwards and inquiries from 1971 onwards are only accessible through the Office of the Chief Coroner in Burnaby.) The *Research Guide* is a bit confusing because it appears to suggest that you can search the records online. You cannot.

I sent an e-mail to BC Archives at access@www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca inquiring how to obtain a copy of the Coroner's Inquest. I received a reply within a few hours asking for Russell's full name and date of death. Archives staff conducted a search and advised me they'd located the record, which would need to be reviewed by their Information and Privacy Section, after which I could purchase a copy of the file. I was subsequently notified of the cost and payment methods – in this case, \$30 plus tax for 15 pages.

The file contained a transcript of the examination of the witnesses

who had discovered Russell's body. Their testimony shows that Russell and his father were both part of a work gang riding a northbound train. It was the habit of the men to move about the train including riding on the top of the cars while it was underway. No one missed Russell as they all assumed he was somewhere else on the train. The crew on a southbound train spotted Russell's body on the track a short time after passing the northbound train, and were able to identify him as they knew him personally. Russell was 17 years old. A few questions have at last been answered about his Uncle Russell for my friend Russ.

Online Resources

Patent Plans

www.archives.gov.on.ca

You can now access more than 4,100 recently digitized patent plans on the Archives of Ontario's Visual Database. Use this online resource to trace your ancestors' Crown land records.

ScotlandsPeople

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

Now available to view are images for Scottish statutory births in 1914, marriages in 1939 and deaths in 1964.

Ontario School & Education Records

www.olivetreegenealogy.com/can/ont/education.shtml

New lists of teachers and pupils in early Ontario have been added to Olive Tree Genealogy's Ontario Education Records page.

Family History Events

Abbotsford Genealogical Society

www.abbygs.ca

- **Annual General Meeting**, January 22, 2015: Studio 2 The Reach; doors open 1:00 pm; Annual General Meeting 1:30 pm; **Finding Family using BC Archives Resources** with Ann ten Cate.

Clearbrook Library

32320 George Ferguson Way, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6N4

- **Workshop for Ancestry Library Edition** with Brenda L. Smith on Saturday, March 7, 2015 during the Clearbrook Library **Celebrate Your Roots Program**. 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm.

Cloverdale Library

5642 - 176A Street, Surrey, BC V3S 4G9, call 604-598-7327, or email familyhistory@surrey.ca

- **Start Searching Your Family History** with Brenda L. Smith, Saturdays, Jan 17, & 31, Feb 14 & 28, Mar 14 2015, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Fee: \$100 for the series of five 3-hour classes.
- **Start Writing your Family History** with Brenda L. Smith, Saturdays, Jan 17, & 31, Feb 14 & 28, Mar 14 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm. Fee: \$100 for the series of five 3-hour classes.
- **Navigating Ancestry & HeritageQuest** with Paul MacDonell, Saturday Feb 7, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm. Free.
- **Using FamilySearch.org** with Terry Rogers, Saturday March 7, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm. Fee: \$10.