

Family History Newsletter



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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 virtually until further notice.

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A Few Clues

By Gina Leigh

We can have little information when we begin a research project, yet achieve a surprising degree of success using the few clues at hand.

I was reflecting on a recent telephone conversation with a friend and my curiosity was piqued by a few things, most notably, that her mother's first husband had died in a fire. She didn't appear to know much more. I was curious about other aspects of her mother's marriages but have found that she is not very open about that. I decided to try to do a little sleuthing with the few clues I had.

Surnames are withheld for privacy, and for this reason no citations are included.

What did I know?

- Mother's name was Elise.
- Elise was married three times: her first husband died in a fire after they had separated; her second husband who was friend's father had died of cancer in the early 1950s not long after her birth; and her third husband was Samuel L.
- Elise had three sons from her first marriage; the youngest named Bobby was 11 years older than my friend.
- Samuel married Elise when my friend was quite young. He worked in construction and the family

was very transient, moving around BC often due to his work.

- Samuel died a few years after he and Elise were married; my friend was a pre-teen when he died.
- My friend had adopted her stepfather Samuel's surname; I do not know her birth father's surname.

I entered Samuel L's name into *Ancestry* which was fruitless as expected – not enough information. Next, I tried BC Archives' vital records search (<http://search-collections.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Genealogy>) – the only Samuel L. had died years after the correct timeframe and had a different wife though, interestingly, was a carpenter in construction.

I tried Elise L.'s name. Those who have used BC Archives know that unless the name(s) are entered exactly as they are written in the database there will be no hit. Often there is more success when entering less information, so I used the surname L. and narrowed the search to females and deaths. One result was for Alice Sarah L. dying in Kelowna. Alice was the widow of Samuel L., she was born in 1913 in a small Kootenay community. The informant was her son A.R.D. (R could be Robert or Bobby; a guess because he had signed using only his initials A.R. and his surname).

As I rolled the name Alice around in my mind I thought that if pronounced a certain way Alice would sound like Elise. There was enough "correct" information in the death registration that I decided to follow this clue.

A.R.D. fortunately knew enough about his maternal grandparents that the death registration contained their full names and where they were born: John R. born in England and Elizabeth Francis C. born in Ireland.

Elise/Alice was born in 1913 – too late for the 1911 census. What about her parents? I located her family:

father John R, mother Elizabeth, and one year old Richard. John was 14 years older than Elizabeth; they had immigrated to Canada in 1907. No combination of names or individual searches has been successful in locating them in the 1921 census.

Although John R was in his 40s, I wondered whether he had served during the First World War. A search at Library and Archives Canada, Military Heritage, Personnel Records of the First World War turned up a likely looking candidate (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war>). As I reviewed the personnel record I was able to confirm this was the John R. I was searching for. The file also provided the information that John was married to Elizabeth and had two children: Richard and Sarah (Sarah was Alice's second name) with the correct ages. The family had returned to England when John was posted there in 1916 as a soldier in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

I looked for their return to Canada after the war in the immigration records on Ancestry and found John, a returning soldier, on a ship in January 1919. Elizabeth returned to Canada in April 1919. She was with her children Richard, Sarah, and a son named Eric, four months old who had been born in England. This explained the probable reason they had travelled separately. Elizabeth stayed in England until her baby was a few months old and they were better able to travel.

But back to Elise/Alice and her son A.R.D.'s father.

With John's surname from Alice's death registration (and with the other records located) I now had what I believed was Alice's birth surname, and with her son A.R.D.'s surname I was able to search the BC Archives for a marriage between Alice Sarah R. and a man whose surname was D. Success in 1933, where I found Alice with the same parents as in her death registration. The marriage registration indicated that Mr D. lived in the same community as Alice and I now had Mr D.'s parents' names, and his age.

Another search in BC Archives turned up Mr D.'s death registration indicating that he had died in a hotel fire in 1968. His brother was the informant, said that Mr D. was married, and his wife was Alice R. (her birth name). Hadn't they separated/divorced in the 1940s?

Mr D. had died of carbon monoxide poisoning. Could I find more information? I turned to a new resource for library card holders: the Fraser Valley Regional

Library's website, Digital Content, News and Magazines, Canadian Newsstream (https://www.fvrl.bc.ca/news_magazines.php) and entered the name of the hotel (which was on the death registration) into the *Vancouver Sun* newspaper database. A news article indicated four men had lost their lives and several others had sustained various injuries; cause of the fire was likely a cigarette smouldering in a mattress (not Mr D.'s room).

What did I discover?

- Elise was actually named Alice.
- Alice's first husband D. did die in a fire. His brother considered that Alice was still D.'s wife in 1968, although Alice had subsequently married my friend's father around 1950, and then married Samuel L. Or perhaps she didn't. The marriage events are too recent to be available on the online database at BC Archives.
- If Samuel L didn't die before Alice, is the death registration I located for Samuel L with a different wife the correct Samuel, and the marriage to Alice didn't end with his death?

By following the few clues I had I was able to discover a fair bit of information—some of which tallies with what my friend has told me, some which doesn't, and some which is still in question. It was an interesting exercise and I enjoyed putting my sleuthing skills to the test.

March 3rd Meeting Short Program—New Year's Challenge, The Results—Part Two

Census records and your ancestors.

Do you have a story unfolding? Consider sharing your results in a short presentation or timeline format. However, simply telling the story is fine too.

You've hit a brickwall! Share the details—members might have suggestions for you to explore.

Maple Ridge Heritage Awards

Every year the City of Maple Ridge marks BC Heritage Week with the Community Heritage Awards. The Heritage Awards recognize special initiatives, accomplishments, and projects that have advanced heritage conservation and awareness in our community. This year the Community Heritage Commission has worked with the City to create a special video to capture the award winners in a way that respects the Public Health orders in place. Congratulations to all of our 2021 Heritage Award Winners! Here's the video link:

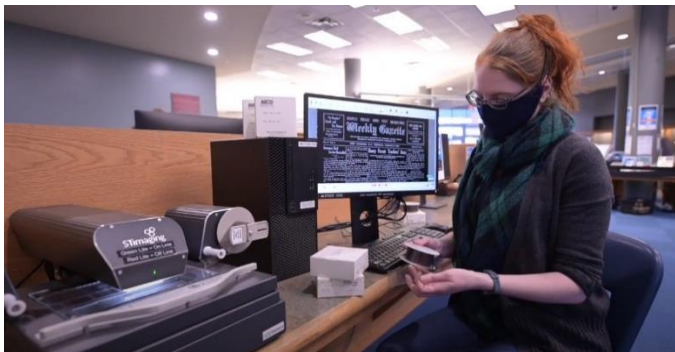
<https://youtu.be/VFT0H7CBtQw>

Heritage Education Award

The Maple Ridge Public Library have shown long term dedication to heritage preservation through their stewardship of a unique microfilm collection — the Maple Ridge newspapers: *Haney Gazette* (1922–1984), *Maple Ridge News* (1979–1996), and *Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows News* (1997–2012). As well, the *Fraser Valley Record* (Mission, 1908–1927) — available in limited locations. These newspapers have not been digitized and are not available electronically.

Additionally, when the library's antiquated microfilm reader was beyond repair, library managers worked with Fraser Valley Regional Library Administration in 2019 to purchase a state-of-the-art microfilm reader/printer and dedicated computer. This is the only such equipment in the FVRL system.

Their dedication towards maintaining and making searchable the historical newspapers of this community provides a valuable archive.



The library maintains a family and local history section. The collection contains various subscription magazines and newsletters, books about local history, research aids and how-to-publications, the Family History Group's newsletters from first publication to present day.



Maple Ridge Library encourages exploration of local history by providing the use of display cabinets to Maple Ridge Museum and Archives and the Maple Ridge Family History Group. With support of the library these organizations are able to present local history through such mediums as vignettes, artifacts, community history displays of pioneer families.



During the annual Family Literacy Day the museum and archives and the family history group have been given a high visibility location in the library lobby

for their displays. During the event visitors can speak to representatives of those organizations to learn more about the history of the community and to encourage their own research.

For approximately eight years the library has presented the monthly **Local Voices** program, where groups of three residents give a 20-minute talk each about the community. This series celebrates the City of Maple Ridge, past and present, through the voices of its citizens. Collaborating with the library are the Maple Ridge Community Heritage Commission and Historical Society, Family History Group, and Golden Ears Writers' Group. The District of West Vancouver Public Library adopted this concept and for the past two years have run a program based on the Maple Ridge model.

The Haney Library opened in 1930 and has been housed in several locations. From 1986 to 2001 the Maple Ridge Public Library shared space with the Maple Ridge Museum and Archives. This association of the library with the history of Maple Ridge has continued since those days.

Sheila Nickols Award

This year's winner of the Sheila Nickols Award for Heritage Teaching and Preservation is Erica Williams. Erica, who really needs no introduction to the Heritage Community with her years of conservation work, has long been dedicated to researching, preserving, teaching, and sharing historical facts and memories. With a background in geology and engineering, Erica has developed heritage walking tours of the cemetery and the Town Centre, documents local heritage sites, edits local history journals, and has recently published her 50th map, this one of the historic dyking systems of the Fraser River. Congratulations Erica and thank you for your long-term dedication to heritage conservation in Maple Ridge!



Census 2021—Statistics Canada

www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/road2021-chemin2021/index-eng.cfm

Statistics Canada's website is full of information about the upcoming 2021 Census. Beginning with [Painting a Portrait of Canada: The 2021 Census of Population](#), you can get a detailed look at how census data are collected, analyzed and released to Canadians.

You can also view the 2021 Census of Population short-form (2A) and long-form (2A-L, 2A-R).

There are fact sheets and technical reports available under The road to the 2021 Census and a section which deals with Privacy matters – Statistics Canada's Trust Centre.

And if you've always wanted an upfront experience, you can apply for a Census job!

Census day is May 11th. Get informed!

WHILE WE ARE APART...

Since the onset of COVID protocols, Maple Ridge Family History Group has increased sharing through Zoom meetings and enhanced newsletters. We have been inviting our members and family historians farther afield to share their experiences. For myself, family history has taken a couple of interesting turns lately. I am sharing more with my cousin Marina who lives in Prince George. Recently she sent me a sample of my grandmother Margaretha Kehler's bottle cap crochet. As well I am meeting our program coordinator Alberta McNamara's census challenge by exploring a family that I believe was central to my Nock family's grain milling occupation.



After a conversation with Joan Kirkbride of Kelowna, she sent this description of her recent progress.

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Been working on and enjoying genealogy for 20+ years. I have written 2 books on my family. One on my mother's paternal family and the second one finished this past spring on my Dads paternal family. A benefit from the COVID-19 shut down! Now working on my husband's side.

I have given decorative family tree charts to my siblings, daughter and grandchildren which are framed in their rooms. I believe strongly on sharing the information you have..
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In her role of Kelowna and District Genealogical Society President Joan shared an update of what her organization has been doing while we all practice precautions.

The Kelowna and District Genealogical Society has been very active during the last year. We had to quickly figure out what ZOOM was and then start to take advantage of the new technology. We had to cancel our biennial Harvest Your Family Tree conference for Sept 2020. Soon we started to master using Zoom for our general meetings. We were getting up to 40 members on these Zoom meetings. Our meetings consist of an Education portion and we were able to book Dave Obee as our first guest speaker. He was a great draw and didn't have to travel at all. It was great. The next month we have a presentation from Thomas McIntee from the US on Zoom, which was another great draw.

Our Special Interest Groups (SIG) got busy holding their meetings on Zoom and it has proven very successful. We added another session each month to just chat (Let's Talk Genealogy!) and ask advice and problem solve. Again, more than 40 people attended each month. A Family History Forum outreach through the Okanagan Regional Library was changed from in person to zoom and is open to the public. We have been able to continue our Genealogy in Residence (GIR) program. While our Genealogy section of the library is closed, our GIRs are able to go in and find information for patrons. We are presently offering a beginners' course in Zoom for new members. We are very busy and many people have said they want to continue meeting this way, especially the Chat and SIG groups, after COVID is gone. Another bonus is not having to cancel winter meetings if the weather is bad!

Adele Peterson and I have communicated about articles for the Abbotsford Genealogical Society's newsletter. It is a pleasure to have her entry here in our pages.

Let me introduce myself—Adele PETERSON: named after my paternal grandma (Adela) first, and my maternal grandma (Mildred) second. My grandparents immigrated to Canada, all ending up in Spalding, SK where I grew up: paternal (KINDOPP / HOFFMAN) from Crimea and maternal (MICKELSON / WARD) from Norway and England.

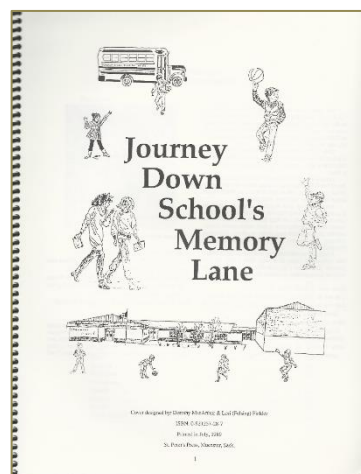
Looking back, my interest in genealogy began at a pre-teen public speaking event about the origins of both my hometown and SK. Later, as a part-time school secretary when Spalding, switched from the Humboldt School District to the Melfort School District, my access to student history (before records disappeared) created 'Journey Down School's Memory Lane' (ISBN – 0-921257-28-7, printed July 1989). (Crazily – as Editor, assisted by neighbour Olwen (JONES) HOFFMAN, we didn't even acknowledge ourselves in it; despite the compiling and typing, etc.!)

After tenacious (and often disappointing) sleuthing a few years ago, my random Facebook plea to locate mom Shirley (WARD) HOFFMAN's father was immensely awarded: "my grandfather was your grandfather's brother!" Ronald Leslie WARD had disappeared 82 years prior. Most of his life still remains a mystery to us – both about leaving his wife and baby behind, plus his life after leaving Spalding and returning to England (and beyond?). My Mom longingly searched for decades after being stifled about her dad (when truth 'disappeared' and you were told to STOP asking). Although Alzheimer's restricts her awareness, at some level her heart can find solace amidst her 'father 'book' made from what I was able to collect.

People who know their family roots often take that precious history for granted. Others simply can't recognize or don't care about the yearning or importance to those knowing where they come from.

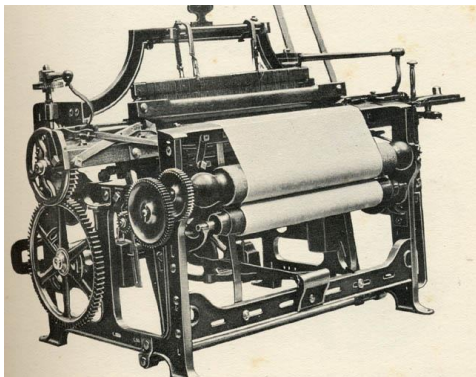
My career paths have been many within six decades of SK and BC living, including clerical and administration, writing, food service, wife, mother, grandmother, holistic empowerment coach, horticulturist, landscaper, easing-your-move

specialist, and floral designer to name several. As current editor of the Abbotsford Genealogy Society's newsletter, I enjoy creating 'paper connections' while sharing information to be recorded in history.



Andrea Lister is our wunder-tech, newsletter editor, and community history project leader. She has been researching her family since her teenage years. After our December meeting she discovered a new collateral branch involved in the Industrial Revolution.

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In December, the Blackburn Museum posted an image on Twitter of the "half-sized" model of the Blackburn Loom by William Dickinson and Sons, a copy of the 1826 original. I have cotton-mill ancestors so I did a little digging and discovered that William Dickinson "became familiar with cotton mill machinery at the works of his uncle, Mr. Throp in King Street. (cottontown.org)"



Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council for use in the Cotton Town digitisation project: www.cottontown.org.

Mr. Throp is my 4th great-grandfather. William Throp was a cotton-spinner and machine maker in Blackburn, Lancashire. The Cottontown website had a little more information on William's family tree stating that he was from Golborne and the son of James, a cotton spinner and Margaret. I have yet to find the parents for William Throp and his sister Margaret but I am excited that I have found a sister and added a whole branch.

"William Dickinson patented various improvements to the power loom, notably the overpick system. In 1862 the firm exhibited a loom at the International Exhibition in London. This ran at a speed of 400 picks per minute, when previously looms had run at a speed of 70 to 90 picks per minute."

While it is exciting to find new ancestors and to learn their trades, it is sobering to know that his mill undoubtedly employed children in horrific work conditions and even more disturbing, while I cannot find any evidence so far of Dickinson or Throp owning plantations, they certainly profited from the transatlantic slave trade.

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Using Zoom

Are you missing our family history meetings but still hesitant to try Zoom? Do you have a smart phone, iPad, Android tablet or laptop? Then you already have a camera.

Joining from Your Web Browser

You can join a Zoom meeting from your browser without downloading the Zoom app, however, your meeting experience may be restricted. Joining a Zoom meeting from your web browser may vary depending on what browser you are using and whether you are you using a PC or a Mac system.

1. Open your browser (Chrome, Safari, Firefox, or Edge).
2. Go to join.zoom.us.
3. Enter the meeting ID from the invite email.
4. You may be required to enter the passcode.
5. Click **Join**.
6. If this is your first time joining from your browser, you may be asked to open the Zoom client to join the meeting. Click **Allow**.
7. Click **Open Zoom Meetings** (PC) or **Open zoom.us** (Mac).
8. On most devices, you can join computer/device audio by clicking **Join Audio**, **Join with Computer Audio**, or **Audio** to access the audio settings.

Download the app

Before joining the virtual meeting on a computer or mobile device, you can download the Zoom app from <https://zoom.us/download>.

NOTE: You **must** allow the Zoom application to have access to your camera and microphone in order to participate in the virtual meeting.

How do I join by computer/device audio?

On most devices, you can join computer/device audio by clicking Join Audio, Join with Computer Audio, or Audio to access the audio settings. Most laptops and mobile phones have built in microphones.

Do I have to have a webcam to join on Zoom?

While you are not required to have a webcam to join a Zoom meeting, the other participants will not be able to see you. You will be able to listen and speak during the meeting, see the other participants and see any presentations. Most laptops and mobile phones have built in cameras.

Online Resources

Historical Newspapers Database

www.fvrl.bc.ca/news_magazines.php

Fraser Valley Regional Library has added a new database to its collection—ProQuest Historical Newspapers. The newspapers available are: *Times Colonist* (1884-2010), *Vancouver Sun* (1912-2010), and *The Province* (1894-2010). Also available through the data base are: Canadian Newsstream offering newspapers from across Canada. The International Newsstream carries magazines, newspapers, trade journals, etc from Asia, Australia and New Zealand, Europe, Middle East and Latin America. Library card holders can log in to the FVRL website, digital content, databases, newspapers and magazines, Canadian Newsstream:

Nanaimo Free Press

<https://viurrspace.ca/handle/10613/6679>

Part two of the digitization of the *Nanaimo Free Press* (1874-1928) collection has been completed. The *Nanaimo Daily Free Press* was founded by George Norris in 1874. It can be searched for free.

New on FamilySearch

www.familysearch.org/en/

- Nova Scotia Church Records (expanded)
- Norway Census, 1870
- United States, Colorado, Military Discharge Records, ca.1919-1972

Ancestry—January 2021

Just a reminder that you can search this subscription service in numerous ways. Take a look at the features pointed out in their January newsletter. In addition to

searching for your particular person, try geographic and record group searches, using the tools below:

- **[Don't overlook the card catalog.](#)** Searchable listing of all record collections
- **[Use wildcards when searching.](#)** This handy trick helps you track down records when the exact spelling is unknown.
- **[Search members' trees.](#)** Uncover photos, confirm names and dates, or find new leads with public member trees
- **[Connect with Ancestry@members.](#)** Collaborate with other members to share information, track down details, and learn handy tips

Family History Events

Abbotsford Family History Centre

www.genquebec.com/en/2021-conference

- **Ancestors in Context: Putting the History in your Family History**, with Karen Inkster Vance, March 18, 2021, 7:00 pm, virtual. Email bc_abbotsford@familyhistorymail.org to register.

Craven Museum

www.cravenc.gov.uk/skipton-town-hall/whats-on/

- **Specialist Talk: Anne Buckley: Skipton's First World War POW Camp & its German Prisoners.** Online event. Thursday March 4, 2021:19:00 PM UK Time.

Legacy Family Tree

<https://familytreewebinars.com>

Legacy Family Tree offers a vast selection of webinars for free. You can attend live and ask questions or you can often watch the session's recording.

Scottish Indexes

www.scottishindexes.com

- **Scottish Records in The National Archives** with Audrey Collins, Family History specialist at The National Archives, March 20, 2021. Free event through Zoom and Facebook.

Ridge Meadows Seniors Society

- **Family Matters online workshop** with Brenda L. Smith, Tuesdays, April 6, 20, May 4, 1:00-2:30 pm. Email carmen@rmssseriors.org to register.

Surrey Library

<https://www.surreylibraries.ca/>

Email address is required for registration.

- **Fun Family History Fridays**, Friday March 26, 2:30 pm–3:30 pm, Digital Branch.
- **Their Business is Your Business** with Ann Buchanan, Thursday April 15, 2021, 1:30 pm–2:30 pm, Digital Branch.
- **Getting the Most Out of FamilySearch.org**, with Jeannie Vance, Wednesday April 28, 2021, 6:30 pm–7:30 pm, Digital Branch.

Maple Ridge Family History Group, first Wednesday of the month, 7pm on Zoom until further notice. Email us at: mrfamilyhistory@gmail.com for information on how to join the meeting.

March 3, 2021: New Year's Challenge – Census Records – The Story They Tell Share the story of an ancestor through the details/clues found in census records.

April 7, 2021: Treasured Family Heirlooms - The artwork of John Robert Gibson (1899-1960) with Annette Fulford.