

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.

**Find us on the web:
www.mapleridgemuseum.org**

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10th Anniversary Edition

By Annette Fulford

It is hard to believe that it has been ten years since Brenda Smith and I first started the Family History Group newsletter in April 1999. At the time I was pregnant with my daughter who was born in August of the same year. So much has changed in the way we do research over the past ten years.

When I first started I was researching mainly at the Vancouver Public Library or the Family History Centre in Burnaby, with records that I brought in from Salt Lake City. Now a lot of the basic records, such as census returns and vital statistic indexes are online.

Ten years ago I was a fairly new internet user who was still nervous about using the world wide web. Now I am very adept at skillfully finding information online. I use a number of online resources such as census records at the Canadian Genealogy Centre or Automated Genealogy and the newspapers at Our Future, Our Past on a daily basis.

Back in 1999 I struggled to learn more about my maternal grandparents who came to Canada from Hungary in 1911. Although family members knew the village that my grandmother came from, we didn't know where our grandfather was born or who his parents were.

Today I have successfully traced both sides of my Hungarian ancestors with thanks due to the Hungarian Village Association that I belong to. As a group we were able to locate the Hungarian records for the villages our ancestors came from and get copies of the records, which are now available on CD Rom or DVD's for a very reasonable price.

Among my favourite records that are indexed and available online (in Ancestry Library Edition) are the Canadian Passenger lists 1865-1935. Finding out when the majority of my ancestors and their families arrived in Canada has been very exciting. For some of my families I had an inkling of when they arrived, but for others I didn't have a clue. I have copies of each manifest with family members on them in my files.

Another huge change that took place in the last ten years is the amount of information you can find on the subject of genealogy. When we first started the newsletter there were only a handful of books available to help you get started tracing your family history. Now there are a myriad of books and magazines available to help you get started tracing your ancestors. Researching your ancestors has gotten so much easier.

Happy Birthday

By Brenda Smith

The Maple Ridge Family History Group celebrates ten years of accomplishment this month. Join us in a toast to the vigorous and challenging world of family history.

In Annette's article, she writes of her personal growth in that time. I want to reflect on the changes I have seen in the ways that researchers are approaching their family stories and the burgeoning access to primary records.

Ten years ago, most of us were computer and internet novices. Many of the learners in my classes were hesitant to venture toward this demanding new literacy. Now I rarely encounter novice researchers who have not started by looking for grandpa on the Web.

When I began teaching courses for the Cloverdale Genealogy Collection in 1999, I had an uphill struggle to convince learners of the need for documented evidence. "This is just for my family. Why do I need to show them where I got the information?" they would say. Then came all the forensic programs on TV and suddenly family historians wanted to "follow the evidence" too. Current practice relies on revised Standards of Proof, and increasingly, family historians are demonstrating rigorous attention to accountability in their reports.

There was a time, not long ago, when family historians were greeted by librarians and archivists as the sometimes unwelcome greenhorns most of us were. No longer. Now family historians drive the digitization of historic records. We are the users making increased access necessary. And we are better research citizens for our diligence in telling the story of our communities and our country, as we tell the stories of our families.

In Maple Ridge, we have come a long way in ten years. We have cooperated with Maple Ridge Library providing displays and programs, advising on acquisitions and using the resources. This newsletter has informed the Maple Ridge Historical Society and others of events, ideas, techniques, and resources in the family history world. We look forward to sharing all this and more with you for at least another ten.

Family History Events

Abbotsford Genealogical Society

- **All About Ancestry**, with Chris Longley and AGS members, Tuesday, April 21, 2009: 6:30 pm.
- **DNA Explained** with Laurie Cook, Tuesday, May 19, 2009: 6:30 pm.
- **Dave Obee Genealogy Seminars**, Saturday, May 2, 2009: 10:15 am – 4:30 pm.

For more information, go to the AGS website at www.abbygs.ca.

Cloverdale Library

5642-176A Street, Surrey offers free orientations the 1st Saturday of every month 9:30 – 10:30 am.

Spring 2009

- **Tracing Your Australian Connections: How to Locate an Australian in Your Family** with David Berry, Saturday, May 9, 2009: 10:30 am – 12:00 pm. Fee \$10.00.

Pre-registration is required – please check the Genealogy section of the Surrey Public Library website www.spl.surrey.bc.ca or call us at 604-598-7328 for further information and updates.

Burnaby Village Museum

6501 Deer Lake Avenue, Burnaby BC V5G 3T6 24-hour Information: 604.293.6501 Program Registration: 604.293.6500 <http://www.burnabyvillagemuseum.ca>

- **Super Sleuths Genealogical Workshop II: Beginning Your Family History Workshop**, with Diane Rogers, Thursday, June 18, 2009: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Fee: \$10.50 (Registration code 175171).

Vancouver Public Library

- **Canadian Directories for Genealogists**, Thursday, April 16th, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm, Alma VanDusen Room. Fee: Free. Registration is required. Call 604-331-3716.