

Community, Past, Present & Future



Family History Newsletter

September 2025

The Family History Newsletter is a publication of the Maple Ridge Historical Society

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The Family History group supports members with their family history research.

Members have ancestors from around the globe. We respectfully acknowledge that the land on which we live, work, and play is the traditional and unceded territory of the Katzie First Nation and the Kwantlen First Nation Peoples.

We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM PST.

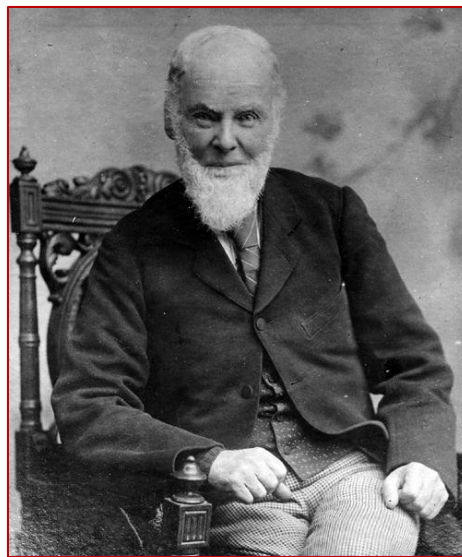
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Connecting Through Sharing

By Andrea Lister

There are a variety of reasons to write about your family history and share it with an audience beyond your family. One reason is making connections with other researchers around the world. I have been fortunate in making several connections this way.



William Parker, son of Thomas Parker and father of Jane Parker, 1896.

ANDREA LISTER COLLECTION

I have shared part of my tree on Ancestry and one day a hint for my Lister grandparents appeared. I took a look and was surprised to see my grandparent's wedding photo on a tree. I made contact with the tree manager, David Turner. It turned out David was not a relation but a local historian researching families in Embsay and Eastby, North Yorkshire. He has had access to three separate archives of the Parker and related families and created a tree of Thomas Parker's descendants. Thomas Parker's granddaughter Jane Parker married William Lister of Intake Farm Embsay in 1876.

David has been able to share other

photos of Intake Farm, where my grandfather was born in 1887, and of other Parker relations.

Through David I was able to correctly date and name the photo of William Parker, who had been wrongly associated with William Lister.

Recently a researcher contacted me regarding the DeWolf family whom I have written about several times in this newsletter.

He is a direct descendant of Josiah and Martha (Ely) DeWolf and just came across the March 2008 *Family History Newsletter* where I wrote about contacting Yale regarding Nathan DeWolfe who was Josiah's brother! Nathan was my 6th great-grandfather so that makes us distant cousins. We are now in the process of exchanging information.

Sharing your research journey with others connects you to cousins and other researchers and enriches your research.

We Bid Farewell

With sadness, we say goodbye to Pat and Alan Woodland who left us 27 June 2025. Pat and Alan were dedicated volunteers and passionate audience in Maple Ridge. We deeply appreciate their contributions to Maple Ridge culture, and especially to our Local Voices program. To learn more about our friends see

www.mapleridgenews.com/obituaries/patricia-adele-woodland-scoones-alan-norman-woodland-8165831

Cultural Maps

<https://heritagebc.ca/cultural-maps/>

Discover the Heritage BC Cultural Maps, a community-sourced project showcasing the diverse stories, heritage, and history of BC. Each map reflects the values of participants from communities across the province, offering a rich tapestry of sites and submissions that celebrate BC's cultural legacy.



Technology Tips: Full Text Searching

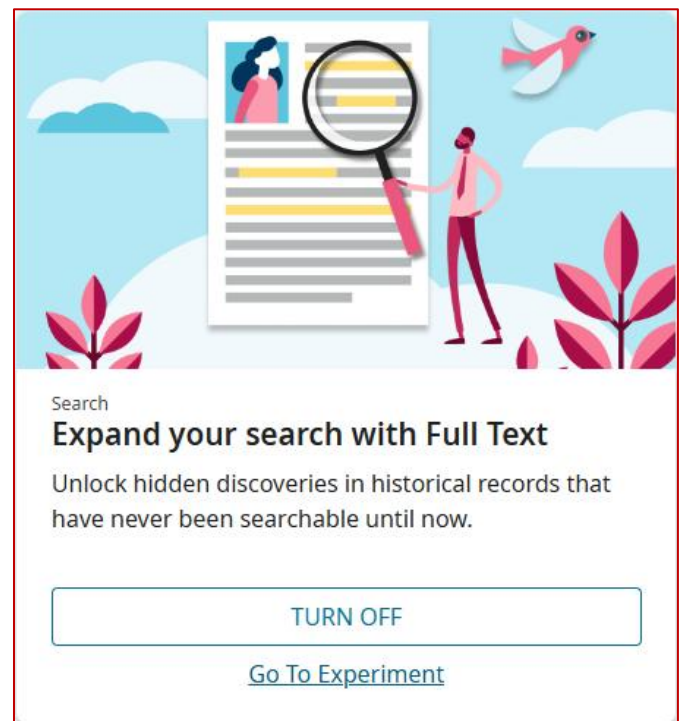
By Gina Leigh

www.familysearch.org/en/search/full-text

I've recently been experimenting with Full Text searching. Full Text searching is available on FamilySearch, part of their experimental labs. According to FamilySearch, with Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software they can convert text images to machine-readable text format including handwritten documents, even before the records are indexed.

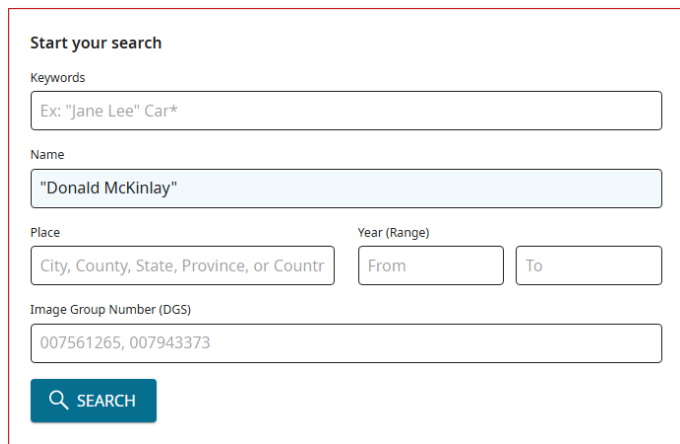
I've had some good success, particularly in finding documents which I feel would have been difficult otherwise. These are records where a person's name is imbedded in the text, such as a deed, a will or a book, or as a member listed in an organization.

Here are two examples. After logging into FamilySearch, on the Home page scroll down to FamilySearch Labs and click on "View Experiments". There are eight choices; click on "Go to Experiments" in the "Expand your search with Full Text" box.

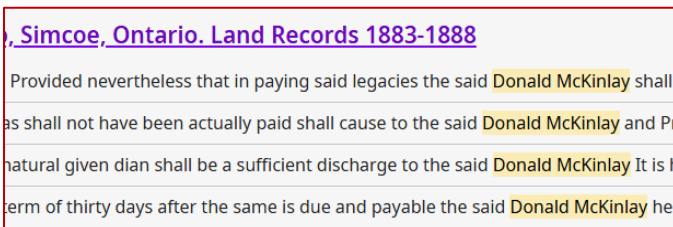
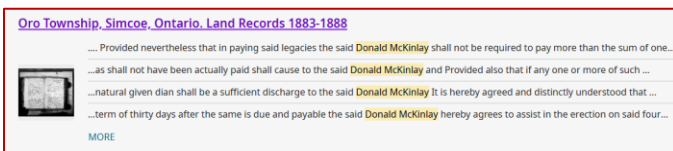


An easy way to get started is to enter an ancestor's name in the Name field. I've been amazed at the results, without even refining the search terms. To be fair, if you enter a person's given and surnames you will get a broad return which also includes anyone else on the page who has the same given name but a different surname.

I entered the name “Donald McKinlay” with no other search terms and got 627 full-text results.



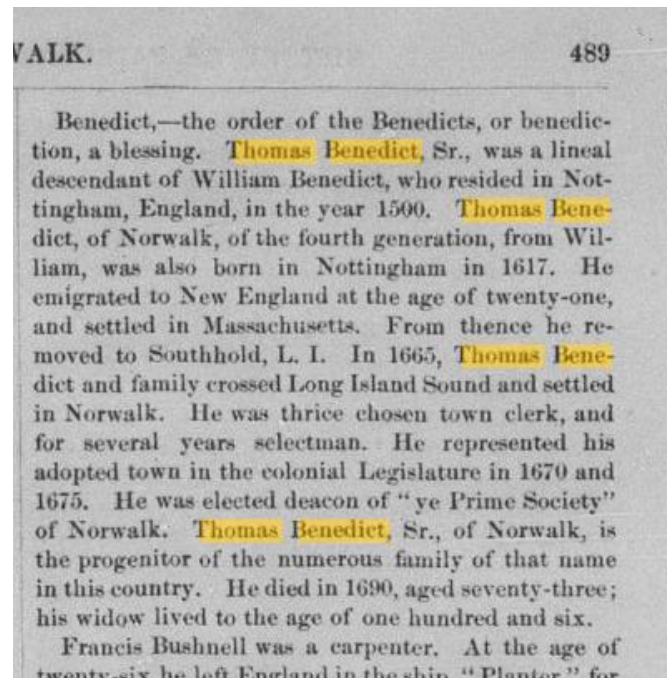
One of the first results happened to be for the correct person, however there were also results for unrelated Donald McKinlays. Obviously, additional details would have narrowed my search more effectively. Adding more specific search terms such as place or year range reduce the results to a manageable number. (Entering another family member’s first name in the Keywords field has also helped me narrow results in some cases.)



Each result has a thumbnail of the document, title of the record, and an excerpt, along with a notation, in this case, that there are 6 matches within this document. Clicking on the thumbnail reveals the document as well as a transcription, with my person’s name highlighted so I can easily find where his name appears in the document. Don’t neglect going to the previous or subsequent pages as they are often part of the same document.

There are options to download the document with or without the transcription, and to edit the transcription. You can even get a summary of the document!

Another example. Thomas Benedict in Colonial Connecticut.



Would I have found mention of Thomas Benedict on page 489 of the approximately 600 pages of *History of Fairfield County, Connecticut*? Maybe, but it would have taken me awhile. I know this because I’ve actually perused this book previously. And looking at the pages preceding page 489 showed other instances where Thomas Benedict’s name appears.

As exciting as this is, full text searching brings unexpected results. Little glitches that give returns where in addition someone on the page with the same first name and a different surname is also highlighted, or a name with a second forename or initials show as results. But it’s definitely worth exploring Full Text Searching in FamilySearch.

Canadian Titles on Full-text Search

FamilySearch has 129 Canadian collection titles, including:

- Canada, Probate Records
- Canada, Homestead Records
- Canada, Ontario, Properties, from 1800 to 1955
- Canada, New Brunswick, Properties, 1786
- Canada, Nova Scotia, Properties
- Canada, Saskatchewan, Legal
- Canada, British Columbia, Legal, from 1300 to 1987
- Canada, Alberta, Military Service, from 1814 to 1832
- Canada, Newfoundland, Military Service, from 1913 to 1919

Down the Research Rabbit Hole

Editor Brenda L. Smith



Share the stories of your discoveries off the beaten track.

def. a rabbit hole currently connotes "a time-consuming distraction of one's attention as happens when clicking through online links, following social media posts, or pursuing information."

dictionary.com

You are invited to share your rabbit hole experiences. This is a safe space for you to confess your whims, because we have all been lost in the rabbit warren. And we especially welcome hearing about the amazing finds you make on these journeys.

It was my pleasure to meet Marilyn when the Maple Ridge Family History Group was engaged in researching the fishing industry in our part of the Fraser River. Marilyn's family has local roots going back to the beginnings of the City of Maple Ridge in the Gustav Smith, William Ansell, and Joseph Lawry families in the heritage neighbourhood of Webster's Corners. Here Marilyn shares a story from research notes gifted to her by another researcher and invites your assistance in finding her way to ground level.

James Sanderson I

By Marilyn Marshall, Nanaimo BC

I am Marilyn Ann Rose Marshall (nee Godfrey). James Sanderson I is my 3rd great grandfather on my paternal side from a series of Godfrey/Sanderson marriages.

When he decided to retire from genealogy, Clare Wendell Sanderson passed all his work on to his sister, Gladys Holmes. In 1995, Gladys Holmes passed these documents to me. Amazingly, it turned out Gladys lived in Chemainus and we collaborated for years before she moved back to Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The following notes are from Clare Wendell Sanderson, Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer, and descendant of James Sanderson I. Clare was stationed in Ontario at times, so had easy access to archives. I thought I might already have done this work, and then realized the dates are too early. I didn't start doing Genealogy until 1995. I had been to archives in Ottawa and at the Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society myself, but after 1995.

This is Clare's rabbit hole in researching our ancestor, James Sanderson I (only because he is the first one to live in Canada. He was born in Northern Ireland).

Clare had notes from a Baldwin researcher and an interview, that made him go looking for records supporting the family legend.

NOTES FROM CLARE WENDELL SAUNDERSON

(Sanderson/Saunderson are the same family – another long story!)

James Sanderson I

He was killed in an election campaign in early March of 1843 in Sheffield Township, Ontario, which is north of Kingston. Following are all known details of his death including the name of the man who killed him.

I searched the Public Archives [now Library and Archives Canada] in Ottawa during 1964 and found in *The Examiner*, Toronto, Wed. Mar 22, 1843, the following small item.

The report mentioned in our last, of a man having been killed at the election of a District \Council for Sheffield, turns out to be correct. He was a quiet old man named Sanderson. Whiskey was supplied by pailfulls to the voters, and a general row was the result. In this the old man took no part, but went in the crowd to fetch out his son, when he was struck. Another account says he was coming home when he was attacked. The man who struck the blow, has escaped, and two others who were aiding him have been admitted to bail- the provisions of the new election law will have to be extended to township elections. from Kingston Herald

In August of 1965 I visited the Ontario Archives in Toronto and found some additional information:

Tues., Mar 7, 1843 issue of *Kingston Herald*

The election of a District Councilor for Sheffield has resulted I Mr. Wheeler being returned and it reported that there was sever ____ing and one man killed, but we cannot vouch ____.

Tues., Mar 14, 1843, *Kingston Herald*. As the above found in *The Examiner* of Mar 22, 1843. - from the Public Archives in Ottawa.

Tues. May 16, 1843 *Kingston Herald*

The court of Queens Bench continues sitting, but will probably close tomorrow. John Tyner and Hugh Bailey have been found guilty of manslaughter as accessories to the death of Sanderson who was killed at the late Council Election in Sheffield; the principal, Whitelock, escaped to the States.

Tues. May 23, 1843 *Kingston Herald*. Under the part beginning

The Court of Queens Bench -----John Tyner and Hugh Bailey, found guilty of manslaughter, as mentioned in our last, were sentenced to three years penitentiary.

I [Marilyn] believe this is the start of Clare's search!

Notes from Caroline Price Magee (daughter of Mary Sanderson Price, and granddaughter of James I) of Sillsville, Ont. wrote to Mr. Baldwin in 1938 and included the following account of her grandfather's death:

Our grandfather was ill with what they called a low fever from a year after he arrived in Canada so was not able to work consequently was on expense in Kingston so had not sufficient means to buy but rented a farm at Catarqui, three miles out of Kingston. After her (Ann's) death (1838) they thought it wiser to have land of their own. Her (Ann) brother and sister (both with family) had come to Canada and settled in the township of Sheffield, so to Sheffield the Sandersons went. An election was being held at Hayes Corner just outside the village of Tamworth. A row was heard and grandfather ran out and found them beating his son William. He cried out "O for God's sake spare my son" and the great ruffian with a terrible oath said no and we won't spare you either, and that was the last word our Grandfather ever spoke. The man escaped and left the country, but years after my father read in a newspaper of the execution of a man for murder and just before he was executed he made a confession and told of killing our grandfather. This occurred some place in the USA but I have no idea where. Our grandfather's body was taken to Cataraqui and laid beside his wife, but I do not think they were properly or permanently marked and could not be located now.

Marilyn asks you, the reader:

Here is a challenge to solve Clare's rabbit hole. Who was the killer Whitlock, and who else did he kill? Where was he executed? When?

Further exploration

On the River: The Fishing Industry in Maple Ridge

www.mapleridgemuseum.org/on-the-river-the-fishing-industry-in-maple-ridge/

Kingston Branch—Ontario Genealogical Society

<https://kingston.ogs.on.ca/category/kingston-branch-of-ogs/>

Work in Progress

Editor Brenda L. Smith



Report your research undertakings here!

We want to hear about your research projects as they happen. Since we hear from people who discover information in our newsletters, you can take this opportunity to reach out to the world.

Ancestors and Pets

Alberta McNamara has done it again. As our family history group program guru, Alberta asked us to examine our family photographs for evidence of pets. Our August gathering was a delightful evening of photos and memories of the animals who have enriched our and our ancestors' lives. Here is an update and renewed invitation to take part.

Background and Goal

As often happens when Alberta sends us back to our own research, I discovered a new project in the albums documenting the Nock and Kehler families from their arrival in the Peace River Country in 1930 until the 1960s. My take on presenting these photos was to look at the bond and interdependence between working animals and their humans.

So far...

I have laid a treasure of thirty photos into a PowerPoint, arranged by family and chronology. I will add the birds, swine, and cattle who were an essential part of the story. Reviewing captions and research notes leaves me with many questions, so I will continue talking with my siblings and cousins to refine dates and personality descriptions.

Next steps...

I plan to develop the slide show into a presentation that includes the stories that lie behind the pictures. Then I want to share the product with my relatives, bearing in mind the formats that work best for the recipients.



On the homestead. Arras, British Columbia ca. 1931. Adeline Dorothy (Pugh) Nock and her daughter Dorothy Louise.

BRENDA L. SMITH COLLECTION

Call For Photos



<https://tinyurl.com/bdh3cpkf>

Debbie Lee Jiang has undertaken a massive project to create a photographic biography of all the Japanese Canadian soldiers who served in the First World War. This project is funded via the British Columbia Historical Federation's Centennial Legacy Fund grant.

Photos are still needed for several of these Japanese Canadian veterans; see the link above for a list of their names. If you or someone you know has photos of these veterans, please send an email to Debbie at

jcanadianscef@gmail.com.

Maple Ridge Family History Group Call for Questions

The December 3, 2025 Short Program's Topic is Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning

What do you want to know?

Darren Durupt and Andrea Lister are preparing a presentation on Artificial Intelligence (AI)/Machine Learning for the December meeting.

AI is a big topic, so we need help narrowing the focus. What do you want to know? Should we focus on AI in general or just its use in genealogy? All questions are welcome.

Send your questions to mrfamilyhistory@gmail.com and we will do our best to build them into our presentation.

Ontario Ancestors Call for Speakers

<https://ogs.on.ca/webinar-submissions/>



Ontario Ancestors is accepting proposals for their monthly 2026 webinar series. The live webinars will take place on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM (EST) on Zoom. They are looking for proposals on a variety of topics. The most popular topics, however, for their members are:

- Methods and Tools for Research
- Preserving and Communicating Our Family History
- Records for Research
- Researching Ethnic, Religious and Cultural Communities.

Speakers may submit up to three proposals for consideration.

Chosen speakers will receive an honorarium. The deadline for submissions is September 15, 2025.

Research News

Atlantic Canada Genealogy Project

<https://chignecto.org/index.php>

The core of this project is related to descendants of the migration of families from Yorkshire, England in the late 1700s, to what is now Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, in Canada.

The subsequent lines and interconnections through marriage have a pan-Canadian and global reach (including: Black, Carter, Chapman, Dale, Darling, Emerson, Frost, Ibbitson, Killam, Stocks, Tate, Thompson, Tuttle, Weldon).

1821 Irish Census

<https://virtualtreasury.ie/>

For the first time there are now 60,000 names on the Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland from the 1821 census which was destroyed in 1922. The 1821 portal was compiled by hand, from transcriptions and notes preserved in the National Archives of Ireland and Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

The 1821 census recorded the names of 6.8 million people and those names were contained in the public record office in 479 massive volumes. Only four volumes survived.

Minute Books for Welland County, 1856-1930

<https://omeka.wellandlibrary.ca/items/browse?tags=County+of+Welland+meeting+minutes>

Scanned copies of the proceedings of the council of Welland County for 1856–1930 are available through the Welland Library with plans to scan up to 1969.

Baptist Churches of Atlantic Canada

<https://libguides.acadiau.ca/baptist-church-map>

Explore centuries of Baptist heritage across Atlantic Canada with Acadia University's brand-new interactive map. Each pin represents a church whose records are preserved in the Atlantic Baptist Archives at Acadia University. The map includes both churches that are currently active and those that have closed.

BC Vital Statistics Agency Release

<https://www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/about/our-work/publications-news/latest-news/bc-vital-statistics-agency-release-1904-birth>

On July 29, 2025, BC Archives announced that the much-anticipated release of 1904 birth registrations from the BC Vital Statistics Agency is expected to take place in Spring 2026.

Ontario HERITAGE P-Index

<https://ontario.heritagepin.com/>

Discover Ontario's municipal boundaries circa Confederation (1867-75). Historical Maps and Directories reveal thousands of families who first 'located' on land parcels and towns in this early period. Ontario's colonial settlements were separated from Lower-Canada (Quebec) and re-arranged into Counties and Districts. Boundary changes are summarized in the Upper Canada Land Grants project. Names of earliest settlers, transcribed from maps and gazetteers can be searched Province-Wide or at Township pages. The locations of initial land grants are essential clues for genealogical research.

Marriages and Baptisms for Gore and London Districts, Ontario

www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.79211/1

A register of marriages and baptisms in the Gore and London Districts, performed by the Rev. Ralph Leeming, from 1816 to 1827.

Directory of Japanese Residing in Canada

<https://centre.nikkeiplace.org/research/other-resources/>

Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre has digitized the *Directory of Japanese Residing in Canada* (1929) by Jinshiro Nakayama, edited and translated by William Tasaburo Hashizume and Saeko Suzuki.

In 1921, Jinshiro Nakayama published, in Japanese, a two-volume book on the history of Nikkei in Canada as well as the profiles of prominent Japanese pioneers. Of greater genealogical importance to our community today is volume two which is a directory of Japanese living in Canada. Explore the searchable PDF on their website. A printed version of the Directory is also available in the Charles H. Kadota Resource Centre and can be viewed by appointment.

Royal BC Museum PARC Campus

<https://vancouver.sun.com/homes/the-home-front-how-parc-is-reshaping-b-c-s-story>

The Royal BC Museum PARC Campus (short for Provincial Archives, Research and Collections) is expected to open sometime in 2026. The Colwood location is not a replacement for the downtown museum, but an expansion. Architect Michael Green of MGA, says, "PARC will house collections currently stored at the Royal BC Museum's aging downtown Victoria site, giving much-needed room to archives, conservation labs and storage. But it's more than a warehouse, it's a storytelling loop."

Family History Events

BC Genealogical Society

www.bcgs.ca/bcgs-events

- **Genealogy—The Next Step** with Celia Lewis and Eunice Robinson, Mondays, September 8, 15, 22, 29 & October 6, 2025. 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM (PDT) via Zoom. Free for BCGS & Affiliate members, \$40 for non-members.

Campbell River Genealogy Society

www.crgenealogysociety.ca

- **Crowd Sourcing the Unchosen Quest** This meeting looks at Harry's Quest submission from the spring to see if we can help him knock down a long-standing Brick Wall. See his quest in the June issue of the *Treehouse.*, September 4, 2025, 7:00 PM (PDT), hybrid event.

Kelowna & District Genealogical Society

www.KDGS.ca

Fees: Free for KDGS members; \$10 CDN for non-members

- **Taking Advantage of Google Translate on Foreign Language Databases for Better Results** with Vera Ivanova Miller, September 8, 2025, 7:00 PM (PDT) via Zoom.
- **Creating an Ancestor Sketch**, with Thomas MacEntee October 6, 2025, 7:00 PM (PDT) via Zoom.
- **Every Source Matters**, with Dave Obee, November 3, 2025, 7:00 PM (PDT) via Zoom.

Legacy Family Tree Webinars

<https://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars/>

- **Eight Little-used Published German Sources** with Warren Bittner, September 3, 2025, 12:30 PM (PDT).

- **Using Historical Context in Your Genealogy Writing: A Gettysburg Soldier Case Study** with Bonnie Wade Mucia, September 10, 2025: 11:00 AM (PDT).
- **10 Surprising Things I Discovered about My Ancestors Using MyHeritage** with Lisa A. Alzo, September 17, 2025: 8:30 AM (PDT).
- **Mexican Immigration Records Through the Centuries** with Nefi Arenas Salazar, September 19, 2025: 11:00 AM (PDT).
- **Early British and Irish Census Project** with Amy Harris, October 22, 2025 11:00 AM (PDT).

Surrey Libraries

www.surreylibraries.ca/services/family-history

Free. Registration required. Cloverdale.

- **Discover Ancestry Library Edition**, Wednesday, September 24, 2025, 2:00 to 3:00 PM (PDT) Cloverdale Branch
- **Caring For Your Family Treasures** with Surrey Archives and Artifact Collections staff, Thursday, October 9, 2025, 2:00 to 3:00 PM (PDT) Cloverdale Branch
- **Family History Orientation**, Saturdays, September 25, October 18, 2025, 10:30 to 11:30 AM (PST)
- **Fun Family History Friday**, Fridays, September 19, October 31, 2025, 2:30 to 3:30 PM (PDT).
- **Family History DNA Chat**, Friday, September 12, October 10, 2025, 2:30 to 3:30 PM (PDT).

Vancouver Public Library

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

- **Indigenous History Research History and Genealogy** with Library and Archives Canada, September 11, 2025, 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM (PST). Online event via Zoom. Free.

The Family History Group is a standing committee of the Maple Ridge Historical Society and we encourage, but do not require, that our members join the society.

We meet on the 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.

September 3, 2025: Is Summertime Family History Time? It can be! Maybe you planned a trip to places your ancestors lived or visited cemeteries during the good weather. It might be something as simple as relaxing outside in the sun, catching up on reading the many research articles you've gathered over the winter. Share details of your summer family history research!

October 1, 2025: Women's History Month in Canada In 1992, Canada designated October Women's History Month. This is the perfect opportunity to share the story of women in your family who were memorable. Were they the core of the family, community leaders, trailblazers or advocates? This is your time to highlight their story.

Have something to share? There's always time to hear about an exciting new find or an interesting family story.