



AnceTree

The Nanaimo Family History Society Quarterly Journal
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President's Message

By Dean Ford

I would like to start with where has this year gone, but along with many of you it has not gone by fast enough. As my kids say, "Will someone stop this game of Jumanji?"

It has been a trying year for many of our members and their families. The executive hopes everyone is staying safe and well.

Over the past year the executive has been trying to keep members informed and active. A big thanks goes out to Carolyn Kemp for sending out our quarterly *AnceTree* publication along with numerous special editions. Also, another big thanks to Maureen Wootten for lining up our speakers over the past months. They once again presented great topics and I am sure this will continue in the new year. If only we could get those tech things to work in our meeting room! If it is not the wi-fi connection, it is something else which of course is a must when using Zoom.

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"We're all immortal so long as our stories are told."

Elizabeth Hunter, Contemporary American Author
from *The The Scribe*.

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Save the Date!

DATES ARE TENTATIVE

Nanaimo FHS January Meeting	Jan 18
Nanaimo FHS February Meeting	Feb 8
Nanaimo FHS March Meeting	Mar 15

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With the state of things as they are, the society had to put a few things on hold this year. The first was our March workshop for which everyone was gearing up. Then the pandemic started. Our guest speakers fully understood the reasons for the cancellation and have made themselves available for a future workshop. The workshop committee and the executive have since agreed to postpone the workshop indefinitely. Our second project put on hold was the Wellington Cemetery project on which we were going to work along side the Nanaimo Historical Society. This project will be reviewed over the spring and may start up late spring or early summer depending on several things working out.

Please do not forget that your membership fees must be paid by January 1st for you to continue receiving the benefits of the society including voting at our annual general meeting in February. If you are interested in being on the executive, please let your name be nominated for the 2021 executive. Currently only one member of the executive is stepping down, so if you are interested now is the chance.

On a final note, I would like to thank all the current executive committee members for their dedication

over this past year. It has been a trying year keeping the society moving forward while also social distancing during our meetings. I know you cannot see me laughing while wearing a mask, but you know, sometimes you have to with this group as they are so good to work with.

Happy holidays from the Nanaimo Family History Society executive and ...



Dean



2021 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you paid your 2020 membership **BY JUNE 1, 2020**

- ◆ 2021 senior \$12.50
- ◆ 2021 non-senior \$15.00
- ◆ 2021 additional family member \$5.00

If you did not pay your 2020 membership **BEFORE JUNE 1, 2020**

- ◆ Senior \$25.00
- ◆ Non-senior \$30.00
- ◆ Additional family member \$10.00

GENEALOGY NEWS IN BRIEF

FROM LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

✦ LAC CAN USE YOUR HELP WITH ITS DIGITIZING PROJECTS

Many Library and Archives Canada records have been indexed by name. You can access those genealogy databases free on our website in [Ancestors Search](#). Each database has its own search screen and a main page that explains about the records and how to access them. Some of the databases include links to digitized images.

✦ WW II SERVICE RECORDS — LENGTHY DELAY

LAC has just begun inquiries received in August 2018, so if you're thinking of ordering, expect a very long wait. LAC advises "Due to the high volume of urgent request, priority will be given to requests where documentation is required for medical or employment purposes, bursaries, benefits and services, which clearly demonstrate an urgency or deadline."



PIER 21 MUSEUM SEEKS RELATIVES OF FIRST ARRIVALS

The Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 is looking for relatives of immigrants who arrived on the Holland America steam ship *Nieuw Amsterdam* on March 8, 1928. If your ancestor's surname appears on the [passenger list](#), Pier 21 would like to hear from you.

Cara MacDonald, reference services manager, writes: "Are you part of one of these First Families of Pier 21? If you recognize your family name, reach out to us. We would love to hear about you and learn about your family's life in Canada since arrival. To share the story of your family arriving on the *Nieuw Amsterdam* on March 8, 1928, please [email](#) us.

If you did not locate your family on the *Nieuw Amsterdam* list, but you are interested in discovering what ship your family arrived on via any Canadian port of entry (Halifax, Saint John, Montreal, Québec City, Vancouver or US/Canada border crossing) please [submit a research request to our genealogical team](#) via our website."



BRITISH WILLS TO 1858 STILL FREELY DOWNLOADABLE

Due to Covid, the UK's National Archives is continuing Free downloads of digital records from their website. Of particular note are wills to 1858. If you are researching in Britain, wills are exceptionally valuable resources. Wills prior to 1858 are available at the National Archives, which has a good [question and answer page regarding downloading digital records](#). [Wills and probate records from 1858 to 1996](#) can also be ordered online, but these have a download fee of £3.50.



HISTORICAL COOKBOOKS

If you're looking for recipes that your ancestors used, a huge collection is available on line at McGill University archives. The [cookbook collection](#) from as early as 1615 through to 1966 is a treasure trove for the cooks and bakers among you!

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MEMENTO FOR LIVING WW2 VETERANS

Living Second World War veterans are eligible to receive a special memento from Veterans Affairs. Any veteran of the war who served in Canadian or Newfoundland forces, Merchant Navy or any Allied force can receive the pin and certificate. The application form and further information is available at the [Veterans Affairs Canada site](#).



NORWEGIAN CHURCH RECORDS

A collaborative project among *Ancestry*, *FamilySearch*, *MyHeritage* and *Arkivverket* (National Archives of Norway) will soon allow researchers free access to an extensive collection of Norwegian records.

Currently there are eighty million names in the Arkivverket digital archives. The Arkivverket images have been available for quite some time, but have not been searchable by name. Collaboration with the commercial databanks and *FamilySearch* will allow easy accessibility through name searches.

Genealogist Gail Dever notes in her October 19, blog:

"According to Arkivverket, the three genealogy companies are helping make the Norwegian church registers searchable on the national archives' website. In return, the three genealogy companies received permission to publish the records on their website. The records in this collection cover a critical period in Norway's history, beginning just one year after its secession from Denmark. The collection helps overcome the significant gaps in Norwegian censuses taken from 1801 to 1865. Five censuses were collected in Norway during those years, but they did not record names of individuals, making the church records the definitive source for genealogical data during that period. Due to Norwegian privacy laws, the birth and baptism records released in this collection extend until 1919, the marriage records extend until 1937, and the death and burial records extend until 1938. It appears the records will eventually be available to search for free on Arkivverket's Digital Archives, which is provided in Norwegian and English. According to genealogists on social media, the searchable feature in the Digital Archives could take some time.

Meanwhile, the collaboration with *MyHeritage*, *Ancestry*, *FamilySearch* and Arkivverket continues. The three genealogy companies are in the process of scanning and transcribing other sources from the national archives. Together with contributions from Norwegian volunteers, Arkivverket expects it won't be long before the searchable number of individuals' names in the Digital Archives reaches 100 million."

ALBERTA NEWSPAPERS



The University of Calgary has an extensive collection of [Alberta newspapers](#) on line. The site is searchable for specific newspapers and once a newspaper is selected, details such as names can be searched. This is a free site.



CANADIAN CASUALTY CLEARING STATION DATA BASE

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa has added more biographies to its database of chaplains' casualty records of soldiers who died at the Canadian Casualty Clearing Station No. 1 during the First World War. Many records are accompanied by biographies compiled by volunteers at the Ottawa society. The [data base](#) is easily searchable by name.

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VICTORIA, BC NAVAL COLLEGE YEARBOOKS

Yearbooks from 1943-1995 have been digitized and can be freely viewed online. [Log](#) is the yearbook for the Royal Roads Military College.

WEBSITE HONOURING WWII FAR EAST PRISONERS

[FEPOW75](#) is a new website honouring the more than 190,000 Commonwealth troops taken prisoner by the Imperial Japanese during the Second World War. Many of the captives who endured horrific conditions were Canadians. 1,642 Canadians from the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada (Quebec City) were imprisoned. FEPOW 75 commemorates the 75th anniversary of the return of the first prisoners of war.

Lieutenant-General Sir Andrew Graham, writes, "Many former Prisoners of War tried to forget their experiences; some would never be able to do so and would find their lives afflicted to a greater or lesser effect; but on this 75th anniversary of the return of the first of the Far East Prisoners of War to Britain none of us should forget what they endured and the courage and integrity of spirit and discipline which they showed during their time of captivity."



COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES SEEKS RELATIVES OF SERVICEMEN

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has posted an appeal regarding relatives of three servicemen currently commemorated on the Zaria Monument, Cameroon. The commission asks if you are related to one of the servicemen listed below to [contact the Commonwealth War Graves Commission](#):

BALDERS, Arthur William, Captain, Norfolk Regiment

HILLS, Ernest Leslie, Lieutenant, Royal Welsh Fusiliers

WALKER, George, Lieutenant Bedfordshire Regiment

NELSON DAILY NEWS ARCHIVES NOW ONLINE

Editions of The *Nelson Daily News* from 1902 to 1920 are now available free online at [BC Historical Newspapers](#). This is phase one — further digitization is in progress.

KELOWNA COURIER ARCHIVES NOW ONLINE

Editions of [The Kelowna Courier](#) from 1904 to 1949 are now available free online. Editions are searchable and readers can easily zoom in to the pages.



SASKATCHEWAN OR NUNAVIT ANCESTORS?

A new website, [Welcome to Memory Sask](#) is a database of material held in Saskatchewan and Nunavut archives. Both names and locations can be searched. The site is regularly updated.

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VIU ElderCollege

ELDER COLLEGE OFFERS GENEALOGY 101

Beginning in January 2021, NFHS executive member **Bronwyn Frazer** will be instructing this introductory course. Bronwyn continues in the tradition of another of our members, **Penny Bent**, who taught the course for a number of years.

"This course will introduce you to the basics of good genealogy practice — what to record, how to record it, and how to find what you want to record. By the end of the six-week course you will know how to determine if your family's stories are fact or fiction, and be able to share your work knowing it meets the Genealogical Proof Standard." Visit the [Elder College](#) site to peruse the many online courses offered.



SCOTLANDSPEOPLE ADDS MOTHERS' MAIDEN NAMES

Good news for those of you researching Scotland ancestors — [ScotlandsPeople](#) has added about a million mother's maiden names to its index of statutory death records: "We are pleased to advise that updates are currently being made to the mother's maiden name search field in the statutory register of deaths index, as part of our ongoing improvements to our website and in response to your requests in our customer survey. Before 1974 the deceased's mother's maiden name was not routinely included. Where this information was included on the death records before this date we are retrospectively adding this to the index beginning with the years closest to the introduction of statutory registration in 1855. We have now updated most years up to 1880, adding mother's maiden names to more than 1 million records, and plan to have completed records up to 1883 by the end of this year. You can populate the name search fields and also choose to 'include unrecorded mother's maiden surname'. You may find that if you enter a name in this search field and the information has not yet been added or it was unavailable at the time of registration then a result will not be found."



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN YEARBOOKS

Archived copies from 1912 to 1969 of [The Greystone](#), the University of Saskatchewan yearbook, have been digitized and can be freely viewed online."The digital copies were produced from a microfilm copy. Therefore, there are occasionally pages missing, duplicated, faded or otherwise illegible, or rotated, depending on the state of the original. It is possible to rotate individual pages through the web interface. Due to privacy concerns, the graduate and student photo sections of most of the yearbooks are not available online. These are being released consistent with provincial and federal privacy legislation: volumes ninety-two years and older are available. Resizing and printing are not currently supported through the web interface; you may use image software, browser functionality, etc., to resize or crop as needed."



CANADIAN MAIL ORDER CATALOGUES

As a child, the arrival of the Christmas Eaton's and Sears Christmas catalogues was an exciting beginning to a month or so of page turning in the toys section. Revisit your childhood and trip down memory lane with the [Library and Archives Canada collection found here](#).

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FAMILY LOCATED!

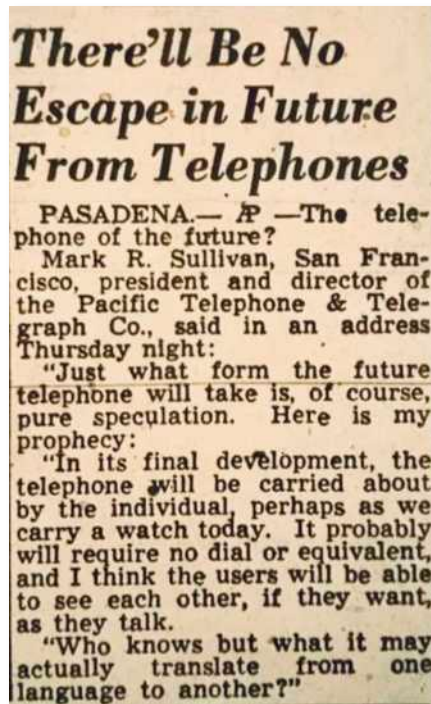


A collection of family photographs that was discovered in our old library has found its home thanks to a three year search by Dean Ford. Dean reports that he made phone contact with David Boyle whose baby book was part of the collection. This has been a lengthy search for Dean, but now the books are where they should be! Well done, Dean!

NEWS FROM 70 YEARS AGO!

In 1953, the *Tacoma News Tribune* published a glimpse into today's world. Your editor was busy at the time playing on her toy telephone. Today she is still trying to figure out her iPhone

...



Did You know..... that whilst the first known example of a handmade, wooden, Advent Calendar dates back to 1851, Advent Calendars as we recognize them today were first mass-produced in 1908 by Gerhard Lang who worked at the Reichhold & Lang printing office in Munich. Counting down the days to Christmas can be traced to the 1800's when German Lutherans began to mark out the days leading up to Christmas by burning a candle each day or by marking a wall with chalk. This counting down the days from the 1st December is different from the season of Advent, as observed by the church where the tradition developed that Advent is observed on the four Sundays before Christmas Day.

From Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, Newsletter 235, December 2020

IF IT WASN'T FOR THE WAR

By NFHS Member Lorie Heshka

On the 26th September 1941, **William Frederick Reuben Harris** (known as Reuben), a farm boy from Southeast Saskatchewan, answered the call to serve his country in the Second World War. He was twenty-three years old.



Two of his brothers, Reg and Norman, also signed up to the war effort leaving their youngest brother, Ralph, to help out on the farm.

Reuben trained throughout Canada in Regina, Saskatchewan, Truro, Nova Scotia and Vernon, British Columbia among other places.

Reuben trained as a motor mechanic in the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corp (RCOC), 3rd Anti-Tank Regiment Royal Canadian Army, 3rd Canadian Division. Eventually, in February 1944 while he was in Germany, he became part of the Royal Canadian Electrical & Mechanical Engineers (RCEME) which had just been formed.

In September of 1943, Reuben was deployed to England and continued his training at Aldershot, Hampshire. Luckily, his mother's family lived nearby in Horsell, Surrey. While on leave it was just a short bus ride to visit with them. Reuben's older brother,

Reg, also trained at Aldershot; however, he was captured in the Dieppe raid, his only action in WWII, in August 1942, and spent three and a half years in a German POW camp.



Reuben Harris middle of back row, Percy Hudson front row, second from left & Vic Marshall back row far left, became Reuben's life-long friends.

Meanwhile, Reuben's younger brother, Norman was training for action in the RAF near Bedford in Bedfordshire. Their father grew up in a small town called Campton just outside Bedford, so Norman was also able to visit relatives while on leave.

Finally, D-Day! We can only imagine what the soldiers were feeling as they finally crossed the English Channel to France — elation to be seeing action in Europe, exhilaration, terror, anxiety. Probably all the above!

Reuben landed on the beaches of the Normandy coast with his regiment about 4 a.m. on the morning of the 7th June, 1944. He was accompanying his recovery vehicle. The vehicle's engine had to be coated with grease to protect it from the waters as they came up on the Normandy beach. Percy 'Huddy' Hudson was usually with him in the truck.

My sister, Elaine Robinson, has kept notes from our father (paraphrased slightly): "We moved though Caen and up the coast toward Boulogne-sur-Mer and Calais into Belgium though Ghent and Antwerp and into Holland, to Nijmegen-oost where we stayed for the winter of 1944.

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We (the Allies) had to stop because the bridges had been blown up by the Germans as they retreated. "The Canadian Army was given the responsibility of holding the line along the Maas and the Nijmegen salient for about three months that winter. Then in February 1945, the Allies launched the great offensive (code named *Veritable*) which was designed to drive the enemy back over the Rhine and bring about final defeat. The Canadians were tasked with clearing the Reichswald Forest, breaking through the Siegfried Line, clearing the Hochwald Forest defences, and closing up the Rhine.

**Approximate path Reuben Harris traveled during the Second World War**

"In March of 1945 we started moving into Germany through the Reichswald Forest and the Hochwald Forest crossing the Rhine River near Cologne. From there we moved north on the Dutch German border up to the North Sea and finally to the port Emden, Germany. This is where we were when World War II was declared over on May 5, 1945."



Reuben with recovery vehicle somewhere in France.

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Reuben, as with most other war veterans, did not talk much about it. But here are some things I do remember him saying:

I spent the summer in Holland and was sent home in November, 1945. I sailed back to Halifax on the *Empress of Scotland*, then to Regina by train and then home to the farm outside of Maryfield, Saskatchewan."

- They had a fellow in the regiment whose name sounded like "moss." They would joke that his trench was filled with moss.
- Dad asked me one day how I would say "Ypres" (now "Ieper" in Belgium) and laughed at my attempts to sound out this French town.
- I remember him belting out "Mademoiselle from Armentières" and "The Tennessee Waltz."
- Most of all I recall him saying "If it wasn't for the war, it was the best adventure a Saskatchewan farm boy could ask for!"

Some early memories of my sister and I are watching the returned soldiers march down the street to the Legion Hall on November 11th. Afterwards, our normally teetotaling parents would stay at the Legion Hall to have a drink or two and reminisce about days gone by.



The Royal Canadian Legion was an important part of my parents' lives

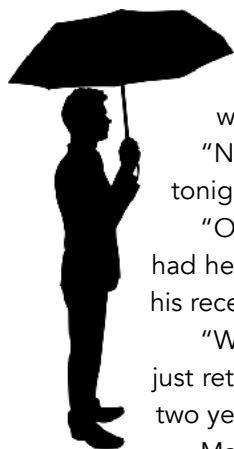
Did You Know ...



Nanaimo Family History Society has a [Facebook Page](#) hosted by NFHS member Lorie Heshka. If you would like to join this group, you will need a *Facebook account*. To do this, first Click "Google "Facebook Account" and follow instructions to set up your account. Once you have an account, you can "Search" for "Nanaimo Family History Society" inside *Facebook* then click "Join." Currently there are seventy-three members in the group. Host Lorie Heshka is very pleased lately with the Remembrance Day write-ups and requests for assistance.

UMBRELLA MAN
By NFHS Member Helen Webster

**From a favourite, if a bit bloodthirsty story, told to me by my grandfather, T. Robert Ross, MD
Drumheller, Alberta, Canada**



"Well, Robert, your 'umbrella man' is dead. I just pronounced him...I hear his was a very sad story?"

Startled, Robert looked up from the desk where he was writing up the case notes from his last patient of the day to see his partner, Dr. McTavish leaning against the open doorway to his office.

"What did you say? Are you talking about Charlie Bryson? Did you say he's dead, Mac? What happened? He was perfectly fine when last I saw him in the jail. At least he was fine physically. But there was no question that he was insane...the man planned to murder his wife and children."

"So I heard." Mac came into the room and settled into one of the comfortable chairs by the office window. Robert wrote the date, September 12, 1936, on his last entry before coming from behind his desk and walking towards Mac, who continued, "But, I never did hear the whole story. How did he become your patient?"

"Something to drink? Tea? Something stronger?" Robert gestured to the cupboard where he kept the 'medicinal' whiskey.

"No, no thanks. Nothing for me. I'm worn out and promised my wife that I wouldn't be late tonight. But, I do have time to hear the story if you have time to tell it."

"Of course, I'll tell you." Robert smiled. He loved to tell stories. "I thought everyone in the office had heard the sad tale. But, I'm parched. I need my tea." He paused briefly at his office door to ask his receptionist to put the kettle on for tea. "You're sure you won't have anything to drink, Mac? No?"

"Well then, the story began for me at one o'clock in the morning...oh, about a month ago. I'd just returned home after delivering Mrs. Thompson's newest baby...her third, by the way, in just over two years. I think they are coming too close together, don't you?"

Mac nodded and gestured for Robert to continue with the story.

"Never mind...back to the story...where was I? Oh, yes...I had just pulled into my driveway, I was tired and ready for bed, but surprised to see that the lights were still burning in my front room. I assumed it was another maternity call so didn't put the car away, though I was annoyed that whoever was calling was not waiting on the front porch, but had gone into the house. As I'm sure you do, I have a firm rule that all patients wait on the porch until I return home from my calls. So this was odd."

"Anyway, I went inside, and to my astonishment, there was a partially dressed man sitting in my big chair holding an open umbrella over his head with one hand and grasping a revolver in the other."

"What? A half naked man with an open umbrella...in your living room? And he had a gun? Good Lord! Maybe I'll have that whiskey after all."

"Yes," Robert said, as he handed Mac a drink and went on with the story, "even more alarming, my wife was in the same room, sitting in a chair as far from this man as she could manage. She was white as a sheet and I could see her trembling though it was obvious that she was trying to remain absolutely still. I was furious, but realized that I had better remain calm until I knew what this was all about."

"I quietly asked her why she was sitting there with Charlie at one o'clock in the morning when she should have been long abed. She tilted her head stiffly in the man's direction. She was terribly frightened, but did

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manage to whisper that Charlie had threatened her with the gun, and that he had forced her to sit with him until I arrived. He had been watching Jennie carefully while she and I spoke, and at this, he tipped his umbrella politely and told her she could leave now that I was there."

Mac, completely caught up in the story, asked Robert, "My God, man, what did you do then?"

"Well, I watched until Jennie, clearly shaken, was out of the room and the door closed safely behind her. By the way, I could now see that it was a service revolver, covered with rust, no doubt a souvenir brought home from the war. You remember that Charlie Bryson was an officer?"

"I eased a few steps closer to Charlie. He did not appear to be drunk, which had been my first thought, but given his behaviour, he was obviously insane. As I got a little closer, he lifted the gun in a threatening motion, so I stopped."

"You know, Mac, looking back on it now, I shudder to think that this mad man had been in the house with my wife. But, at the time, all I could think about was how to get him out of the house without being shot myself. It was clear that he was there to see the doctor. I knew that I would have to proceed with caution, so I asked him if he was sick, and why he was holding an umbrella over his head. I thought it best not to mention the gun at that point."

"Charlie's reply baffled me. He told me that he was holding the umbrella over his head to keep the rain off, and that, no, he was not sick. He also told me that he had pointed the gun at Jennie because it was an emergency, and that was the only way he could make her let him inside the house. Mac, I just had to get him out of the house."

"Behaving as though this was quite a normal visit to the doctor, I asked him what I could do for him. This tactic seemed to have the desired effect. He calmly told me that he needed my help, as he was in great trouble. He proceeded to explain to me that when he had arrived home from the mine at 11:00 o'clock last night, he had stopped outside to listen at the bedroom window as was his usual practice. He was sure that his wife was entertaining other men when he was at work and that this time, he had caught them red handed."

Mac settled further back into his chair at this development, enjoying the tale. "This is quite a story, Robert. Carry on."

"Well, I asked him how he knew that his wife was not alone in the house and he replied that he could hear men's voices through the open window. Of course I asked him what he did then. His reply shocked me. He told me that he went to the back of the house to find his axe, adding that shooting was too good for these men and that he was going to kill them with his axe when they came out."

"Charlie seemed to need my support and said in a plaintive voice that he had become tired of waiting and had decided to come and tell me his troubles, and ask for my advice. He told me that he often heard their voices talking to him, but this was the first time he had heard them with his wife. By now he was pleading for my help."

"I knew what I was dealing with...a full blown case of paranoid psychosis, and a dangerous man. Assuring him that I would help, I began cautiously to ask some probing questions beginning with the obvious...whether he had ever seen these men who talked to him. His response confirmed my diagnosis. He had never seen them, but was hearing their voices all the time. Then he snarled at me that he had had enough and was going to kill those men and his wife too. And maybe even his children, saying that there wouldn't be anyone to look after them when she was dead."

"All thoughts of my own weariness disappeared. I was filled with fear for the safety of Charlie's wife and children and knew I had to make a decision right away. But, of course, I had to be sure the poor fellow believed that I was on his side, keep him as calm as possible and certainly not alarm him any further."

"Speaking as firmly as I could, I told him that I would drive him to his house and see what could be done to help him. I was relieved when he accepted my suggestion with little resistance, closed his umbrella and

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walked out the front door with me. He was still clutching the revolver and watching me intently, but we made it to my car without incident. At this point he put the gun in his pocket and got into the passenger seat, placing the umbrella on the floor by his feet. The engine was still warm so I gave it a quick crank and we were on our way to his farm, which is about four miles out of town."

By now, Mac was leaning forward in his chair, completely engrossed. Robert, who loved an audience, chuckled and went on with his tale.

"Upon our arrival, all was silent. Charlie left his gun in his pocket, but took care to open his umbrella before we crept stealthily to the side of his house, stopping beneath the open bedroom window. Straining to hear any noise at all, I whispered to him that I could hear nothing. Charlie, however, hissed anxiously that he could hear men talking with his wife. Not wanting to contradict him, and mindful that he still had a revolver on his person, I agreed that he indeed had big troubles, but we couldn't solve them standing out there in the dark. All the time I was thinking that I had to get him away from the farm. I gently touched his arm and said that we should go back into town where we could make a plan to deal with his problem."

"But when he felt my hand on his arm, he became quite agitated and pulled away from me. He headed toward the front of the house, insisting that he could still hear their voices. I hastened to follow him, and was dismayed when he began to shout that he was going to get his axe. By now, he was in a real state, yelling at me that he would wait at the door until the men came out and would kill them. We reached the front of the house where Charlie lurched to a halt beside the porch. His words tumbled out as he revealed his bloody plan to me. After doing away with the men, he would go into the house and chop his wife's head off, and then cut off the heads of his children.

"I had no doubt in my mind that Charlie meant every word he was saying. I struggled to maintain a façade of calm as I asked why he must kill his children too. His agonized reply saddened me. He moaned that the baby was always crying and his wife and children whined all the time about being hungry, that there wasn't enough food, and how hard it was, and that he just couldn't stand it anymore. He told me that when they were all dead he would sell the house, leave town and never come back."

Sighing, Mac shook his head, "This damn Depression!"

"Indeed, Mac, indeed. I asked him where he kept his axe, hoping I could divert him and get my hands on it before he did."

"Suddenly amenable, Charlie smiled slyly at me as he replied that it was under the front steps where he had hidden it. But he was too crafty to give me a chance to grab it. Without turning, and still holding the umbrella, he reached back under the steps and pulled out the axe."

"I was taken aback to see that it was covered with blood, and immediately thought I was too late. But I did my best to hide my shock as I asked him where all the blood had come from." "Mac, I couldn't believe what came next. Even before Charlie came to my house and threatened my wife with a gun he had been on a murderous rampage. He laughed proudly as he told me that he had chopped off his dog's head because it had barked at him when he was getting his axe from the shed and the crowing cock had met a similar fate. To finish the job, he had then chopped the heads off all of the chickens. That's why the axe was so bloody. His smile was cold and I could see that he was contemplating the slaughter to come. He repeated his fervent wish to kill them all, sell up, and get out of that Godforsaken place."

"That's when it came to me. I still needed him to believe that I was on his side, but if I could convince him that I had an even better plan for him to get his revenge and get out of town, I could prevent this horror. I smiled at Charlie - though inwardly I was making rapid calculations - and told him that he didn't need to kill his family to see his way clear of the mess he was in."

"This caught his attention and he lowered the axe and listened as I went on, saying that I knew a man who was looking for a house and that I was sure he would buy the farm. Knowing that I had to sell the idea, I

UMBRELLA MAN continues on page 14

UMBRELLA MAN continued from page 13

added that this man was eager to settle down and start a new life and Charlie's place would be perfect. As you can imagine, Mac, my thoughts were racing, but I smiled encouragingly at him while he grappled with this idea. If I could just get him away from his farm, some opportunity to reach the mounted police might present itself."

"I thought it best to proceed as though he had accepted the new plan and I pointed toward town, urging him to come with me to speak to this prospective buyer. When I said that he would be able to leave town that very morning and that he could take the money and let the new owner deal with the troublesome wife, her callers, and the children, I knew that I had almost won him over. When I told him that he could avoid both the trouble of killing them and funeral expenses, that sealed the deal."

"To my great relief, Charlie agreed to go along with this new plan. He was almost jovial as we walked back to the car, axe swinging casually in one hand and umbrella twirling jauntily over his head. He grinned as he confided in me that I had solved all his problems and he was looking forward to selling up and moving on.

"Maintaining my helpful demeanour, I suggested that since he would no longer be in need of his axe and revolver, I would be happy to take them off his hands. To my surprise he immediately handed me the axe, then took the revolver from his pocket and passed that to me as well. He then carefully folded up his umbrella and, clutching it tightly, climbed into the car and promptly fell asleep. As I bent down to crank the engine, I set his weapons on the ground and surreptitiously kicked them out of sight. As you can imagine, I was glad to have those gone."

"Now, with the madman snoring peacefully beside me, I drove back along the road into town. It was just getting light by this time, and I hoped that we might meet some early riser whom I could send for help. On this morning though, the road was deserted."

"As we reached the edge of town, I was greatly relieved to see in the distance a light on in the police station. I knew then what my next step must be. As I drove that final half mile to the station, I nudged my passenger awake. He was somewhat bewildered to find himself so far from his farm, and I quickly reminded him of our plan, reassuring him that we would be meeting the buyer. It was clear to me that Charlie's mental state was affecting his ability to fully comprehend what was going on, and that he had no idea where we were. I did not tell him that we were actually at the police station. My plan depended upon Charlie's continuing lack of awareness of his surroundings. I knew that I needed to get him into the building before he snapped out of his stupor. Even in his befuddled state, Charlie took care not to leave his umbrella behind as he climbed out of my car and followed me into the station."

"He was still docile and it was easy to convince him that he should remain in the waiting room while I went to inform the buyer that I had brought in the owner of the farm, and that he was ready to sell. Still unaware that he was actually at the police station, Charlie seemed happy to slump in a chair and wait. Trying not to run in my haste to get help, I hurried down the hall to the rear of the building where I knew I would find the sleeping constable, Sam Walker. Sam had heard me coming and, half-dressed, met me at the door, with his gun drawn. Robert chuckled, remembering the sight of the groggy, half-dressed constable.

Mac was a bit more somber, and said, "Oh for God's sake. Another gun pointing at you."

Robert's smile faded a bit as he acknowledged Mac's concern, but he went on with the story.

"As you know, Mac, Sam Walker is a new constable in town, so I had to explain who I was before he would put the gun away. Only then could I tell him that I had arrived at his station with a madman who intended to do murder. Of course, Sam immediately reached for his gun again, but I assured him that I had a plan and if he would help we could deal with Charlie without any struggle."

"I explained the circumstances and Sam, who was very quick to understand the dangerous situation, agreed to act as a house buyer in order to trick Charlie into a jail cell. I waited as he rapidly dressed in

UMBRELLA MAN continues on page 15

UMBRELLA MAN continued from page 14

plainclothes and, following our plan, we returned to the waiting room where Charlie had dozed off again, still clutching his umbrella. He jerked awake at our approach."

"I reassured him that this was the man who had the money to buy his house. Sam was a very alert young man and played his role as buyer to perfection, asking Charlie how much he wanted for his house.

"Charlie laughed crazily and informed Sam that four hundred dollars would buy him everything...including the wife and children."

"Sam raised his eyebrows at this, but continued to play along, telling Charlie that four hundred dollars was just the right amount and that if he would throw in the umbrella, he had himself a deal. At this, Charlie eagerly thrust the umbrella into Sam's outstretched hand. Sam beckoned for Charlie to follow him down the hall, telling him they were going to get the money and the deal would be done."

"Mac, after the fearsome events of the night, the plan went off without a hitch. Charlie, who could think of nothing but getting the money and getting out of town, and who was still oblivious of the fact that he was in a jailhouse, calmly walked with the constable down the hall. I followed them, ready to reassure Charlie if necessary.

"You will recall that the prison cells are situated on the left side of the hall. Sam made sure to walk on Charlie's right and as they passed an empty cubicle, he gave the madman a great shove, tumbling him into one of the empty enclosures. I immediately slammed the door shut and locked it with a clang, then slumped against the wall in relief that the nightmare had come to an end."

"It was now five o'clock in the morning and I was utterly exhausted. I thanked Constable Walker for his quick thinking, had a final glance at Charlie, who looked somewhat puzzled, but was sitting calmly in his cell. After promising Sam that I would return later in the day, I went home to bed. My wife was still sleeping, but I knew we would talk later about the events of the night. Jennie would be reassured to know that the man who had frightened her so badly was now safely behind bars. And that, Mac, is the story of my Umbrella Man."

Mac placed his empty whiskey glass on the table by his chair. "That was quite an adventure, Robert. I suppose now you want to know why I pronounced him dead this morning?"

"Indeed I do. As I said, he was certainly alive when I last saw him in his cell last month."

Mac nodded and continued, "According to Sam Walker, Charlie was an awful prisoner, constantly yelling abuse at his guards, throwing his food around and refusing all efforts to help him. Finally, yesterday, he attacked two constables who were moving him to another cell while his own was being cleaned. In the ensuing struggle he suffered such severe injuries that he died. You know, Robert, he got his wish all right. He got out of town. But it was only after I pronounced him dead this morning. Sadly, his was just a short trip to the cemetery."

The two doctors sat in silence for a few minutes, reflecting on the harsh circumstances that had driven this poor soul to madness.

"Time for us both to go home," Mac murmured, as they quietly left the office. Robert nodded in agreement, silently counting his blessings. He knew they were the fortunate ones.



Just a reminder that unfortunately, due to health restrictions, our mini library at Beban and our library collection at the LDS are unavailable for the time being.



Faces of Our Ancestors — A Collection of Early photographs Shared by Members of Nanaimo Family History Society

from NFHS member Ross White



To the left is a photo of my grandparents, **George John White and Jessie Sutherland**, on their wedding day, September 6, 1911. My grandfather's first wife died of tuberculosis and left three children, two daughters and a son. I have surmised that my grandmother was well acquainted with the family as she was a witness for the first marriage. From this marriage, there were two children, the eldest being my father (1912) and another son (1914) who died when about seven. My grandfather was a businessman being the owner of an ice cutting enterprise on the St. Lawrence River in Valleyfield, Quebec. My grandmother was a teacher. Unfortunately, my grandfather died in 1926 and there was no will. Since women had few rights at the time, my grandmother had to engage notaries to authorize her to care for her son, have "tutor" care for the youngest daughter from the previous marriage, and the disbursement of funds from the sale of the business. The legal papers are overwhelming and include an inventory of all items and expenses. My grandmother returned to teaching to support herself, my father and his half-sister. The other two children were considered of age at the time of their father's death. Jessie Sutherland White died in 1963 at the age of 92. In a much later photo she is holding her great-grandson (my son) on the day of his Christening in 1962.

Note: *On the license for this marriage, my grandfather is listed as George James White and on the church registry he is listed by his legal name: George John White. An indication how names can be altered!*



from NFHS member Stephanie Williams

Two lovely photographs of Stephanie's great grandmother, **Mary Chapman Mason**, born in 1831. She is pictured left as a young Victorian woman and right, shortly before her 1916 death.



FACES OF OUR ANCESTORS continues on page 17

FACES OF OUR ANCESTORS continued from page 16

from NFHS member Stephanie Williams



Above are great grandparents of Holly Martin, **Daniel Norman Shipman** (1862-1929) and **Katherine Price** (1862-1929) who were married in 1885. They moved from the Ottawa area to homestead in Saskatchewan with their fourteen children.



Shipman Homestead, Plenty, Saskatchewan, 1915



NFHS CO-OP FUND RAISER

Don't forget to use our membership number when you visit a Mid Island CO-OP!

In 2019, members helped to raise \$214.51 for NFHS. Well done!

If like many of us you've been busy sorting old photos and trying to organize them for your descendants, the article below offers some excellent tips.

FINDING BOOMPA: SOME RULES FOR LABELLING PHOTOS

By NFHS Member Beth Skala

In mid-October, we were excited to open a FedEx box, sent to us by my husband Greg's cousin Annette in Illinois. Inside were some of my mother-in-law's belongings that had been stored since 1992. The box was filled with forgotten treasures, among them an armload of old photographs.

I volunteered to digitize the photos and send copies to other family members. Thus began an intense email correspondence with cousin Annette as we tried to figure out the subjects of the photographs. I realized quickly that not being familiar with Greg's extended family put me at a disadvantage. I also knew that the next generation would be even more bewildered than I was. I vowed to identify as many people as I could and to label both the hard copies and the digital photos accurately.

Leaning on Annette's knowledge of the family, I would send off an unidentified photo, and she would reply, "Oh, that's Bubbles!" or "That must be Corky!" Even the pictures she (or someone) had labelled were not helpful, using nicknames such as "Babi," "Pepa," and "Tootsie." These were not names I had in the family tree. I repeatedly had to ask for the real names, and between us Annette and I zeroed in on the people she knew only by nickname.

Some of the photographs were labelled "Nana" or "Grandma." But whose grandmother were we looking at? The prime example is this photo with "Grandma Skala, Grandpa Skala's mother" written on the back in pencil.



This woman was certainly not our children's Grandma Skala (Greg's mother). Nor was she Greg's Grandma Skala. We came to the conclusion that she must be **Barbora Loukata**, Greg's great- grandmother and our children's two- great- grandmother. Terms that are really titles, not names, are used in every family. But they can play havoc with identification attempts when those titles are used to describe photos.

It is not just the Skala family with this problem. My mother wrote, "Me and my adorable children" on the back of a photo. I knew the people in that one, but not the person in the photo labelled "me water skiing." Since that picture is fuzzy, it will go in the recycling bin, forever unnamed.

One of my cousins sent me a series of photos labelled "Boompa." In this case, I recognized the man (my uncle Joe), though I had never heard the nickname. I asked his son why he had labelled the pictures "Boompa"? He told me that was what my uncle's grandchildren called him. "Boompa" is very much a one-generation-one-family nickname, which would have no meaning to anyone else.

Barbora Loukata

Finding Boompa continues on page 19

Finding Boompa continued from page 18



As good family historians, we are told all the time to document our photographs. My experiences show, however, that it is important to do so in such a way that future generations will understand. So here are a few tips when you are labelling family photographs:

1. Use accepted archival methods for labelling your photographs.
2. Use legal names, not nicknames.
3. Use names, not titles, that is, avoid "Grandma" and "Papa" and other terms that describe a relationship but are not really names. "Me" is perhaps the most ambiguous of all!
4. If there is more than one person with the same name in your family, use the same method of distinguishing them from each other that you use in your family tree. I label the earliest ancestor with a name (1), the second person chronologically with the same name (2), and so on, as in: Otto (1) Skala, Otto (2) Skala.
5. Include the exact date if you have it and make an educated guess with a question mark if you don't. The same goes for location.
6. And finally, in your family tree (both hard copies and online) include the nicknames in quotation marks. Who knows what might turn up later, identified only by nickname. Future generations of your family will bless you for clarifying who was called "Boompa."

CITATIONS: How do I cite personal photographs?

If you have a photograph and include it in your family history, remember to add it to your source (bibliography, reference) list and also footnote (endnote) it properly.

Example

(Source): Smith Family Collection, ca1880-1920. Album privately held by Mary Brown, Nanaimo, 2018.

(Footnote): "Marjory Ellen Smith, Christmas 1913" in Smith Family Collection, c.1880-1920. Album privately held by Mary Brown, Nanaimo, 2018.

CITATIONS: How do I cite personal interviews?

If you have an interview with someone and include details from it in your family history, remember to add it to your source (bibliography, reference) list and also footnote (endnote) it properly.

Example

(Source): Kemp, Frederick T. Interview 20 July, 1986 at 991 Spruce St., Winnipeg, MB. Transcript held by C.F. Kemp, Nanaimo, BC.

(Footnote): Interview, Frederick T. Kemp, Winnipeg, 20 July, 1986.

Family Research Conflicts By NFHS Member Wilfred Phillips

In my effort to explore the paternal and maternal sides of my family, questions and conflicting stories soon emerged. Using many online resources and stories from family members, some interesting closed doors were opened. As family members encouraged me to find my family's past, it became apparent that fact soon conflicted with family members' embellished stories. This resulted in some family members not speaking to me about any details. The following details provide evidence of the information errors both with online resources and family lore. It is not to discredit anyone, but to show what can be discovered when one jumps on this adventure of family history. **Now let's see if I have it right.**



Thomas George Phillips

I'll begin with my great grandfather **Thomas George Phillips**, born to **Thomas and Rosa (née Emery)**. One *Ancestry* record has Thomas born January 5, 1856, in Handsworth, Staffordshire, England. A second record has him born August 23, 1855, in Embassy, Yorkshire, England. Did Thomas and Rosa's first Thomas die in 1855? I wonder if that is when he was baptized. The 1881 British Census noted that he was born in Handsworth. A passengers' list has him coming to Canada aboard the *SS Polynesian* in June of 1882 with a destination of Winnipeg, Manitoba. This is when I find the story interesting. Thomas George Phillips was the oldest son of Thomas and Rosa. By tradition he was to inherit the family wealth. A question here is why did Thomas leave England and his claim to the family wealth to go to Canada? I have found in court records that a Thomas Phillips living in the same area of the Phillips family was sentenced to six months in January 1882 for the crime of coin counterfeiting. This could not be confirmed by my relatives but the data was suspiciously close. As this story goes on, you may see foundation to this claim. I have unconfirmed information of a Thomas Phillips buying land in the Winnipeg,

Manitoba area as well as in the the Alberta area of the Northwest Territories from 1882 onward. Did Thomas George Phillips come to Canada with substantial funds to purchase land and received money to stay in Canada? The tradition of the remittance man was mentioned by one of my uncles. Another story is that once Thomas George Phillips reached the area of Cochrane, Alberta, he established a horse ranch. I have found to date no record of a ranch or branding iron under the Thomas Phillips name in this area. Family lore from one of my uncles also has Thomas raising horses for the Northwest Mounted Police for use in the Riel Rebellion of 1885.

Thomas married after leaving England, but again sources conflict. Family lore has Thomas marrying in Leavenworth, Washington U.S.A. In fact, the record found at Alberta Archives has Thomas marrying **Nancy Lewis**, daughter of **Richard Lewis**, in Calgary, Alberta on January 5, 1893. Witnesses of the marriage were C. Lewis and Caroline Lewis. Nancy was recorded as a spinster.

At his marriage, Thomas was recorded as a rancher from Mitford, Alberta. Recent records find Thomas working as a sheep rancher, but this is not confirmed. Nancy's family came from Whitechapel, England aboard the *S.S. Sarnia* arriving at Québec City February 5, 1889. Born in 1870, It was said that Nancy was the only girl in a family of seven. She may be the Nancy Lewis listed in the Canada census of 1891 in the Territories, Sub District Calgary.

FAMILY RESEARCH CONFLICTS continues on page 21

FAMILY RESEARCH CONFLICTS continued from page 20

This Nancy Lewis is recorded as mother to a girl born February 27, 1890, but no father is mentioned. This girl was named Pearl and was cared for by Nancy's sister-in-law Caroline Lewis and is found on the 1891 census as Chas and Caroline Lewis's child. Pearl could not be found on the 1901 census.

After their marriage, Thomas and Nancy moved to Vernon B.C. where they had four children with the fourth child recorded born 1908 in Vancouver, B.C. The local Vernon newspaper writes that Thomas Phillips and family had come to settle in the city from Cochrane, Manitoba. This appears to be an error that probably should have read Cochrane, Alberta. Thomas is listed in the paper as a garbage collector and in 1894 advertising he had agriculture equipment, animals, house and barn with five acres for sale. Now, there is a gap in research from the Phillips life in Vernon B.C. in 1894 to life on Lasqueti Island on the B.C. coast beside Texada Island. There was a weak mention of Nancy living in the Whonnock area close to the Stave Lake dam construction. Thomas and Nancy's fourth child, Thelma, was born in Vancouver in 1908. A photo was acquired with Thomas's son Tommy seated on a porch of a house on Cambie Street with his two children Helen and my dad, Maran, but I do not know if this was where the family moved after Vernon. Family lore has Thomas and Nancy divorcing in 1909, but no records have been found. One family story has Thomas George Phillips moving to the Headquarters area just north of Courtenay on Vancouver Island. It was said he worked in the quarry there. This may be where he learned to be a powder king. This is the term given to those men who did the dynamite work at the quarry and mines.

The 1911 census has Thomas Phillips as a lodger in Nanaimo with all the right data and later the 1911 census has Thomas in North Bend camp near Yale B.C. Was he a powder king in this location of the C.P.R. tunnel construction?

Alda Mason picks up the Phillips family in her book *Lasqueti Island History and Memory*. She mentions early in her book that Thomas and Nancy Phillips came to the island with their four children in 1911. My question here concerns a family claim of a divorce in 1909. Thomas's son Tommy built a log cabin for the family in False Bay on the island. At this cabin, Nancy was said to handle her expenses by baking and cooking for the crews working for the St. Joseph Mine that opened in 1911 and the cannery where Thomas Jr. was a mechanic foreman. Nancy married Alfred Smith and they had two more children. I have found no record of this union. It was said that Alfred was a brutal man and by 1916 left the home. Nancy then reverted to the Phillips name. Nancy and Alfred Smith can be found on the Atlin- Comox 1911 Canada census.

Thomas George Phillips sent his youngest girl, Thelma, a photo card with him in an army uniform. There seems to be no family story related to this photo card. There is also a second photo card in a metal box retrieved from the attic of Grandpa Thomas Phillips that contains other family history papers. On the back of this card there is a note of a photo location of the Colonial Room. I have not found this location yet. The box is guarded by the wife of my last living uncle in Deep Bay. Thomas is sitting in a wooden chair. On his collar you can see the medical insignia and on his sleeve can be seen a medic's cross. There are no Canada tabs on his shoulders, so he did not go overseas during WWI. He may been in the militia, but I still have not found any record. It is said that those files do not exist anymore. He did have a son in Vernon by the name Jack who died in France.

Thomas Philip Phillips soon found a bride on Lasqueti Island, Violet Anderson, and married her in Vancouver on December 18, 1918. They discovered each other one day as Violet walked barefoot in the Anderson field. Thomas built a second house for his bride on Lasqueti Island. I have a photo of this home. given to me by a cousin.

FAMILY RESEARCH CONFLICTS continues on page 22

FAMILY RESEARCH CONFLICTS continued from page 21

What has unfolded with all this searching is that the information on *Ancestry* and other sites is as good or wrong as the data entered! Can we really get at the true family story when using these sites? It is not my intention to question the relatives' memories and no longer need to get the complete picture. The ghosts remain in the closet. As a footnote, recent research of my Phillips family points to a Thomas Phillips as a head gardener at the Stoneleigh Abbey until his death in about 1813. Of course this information has been disputed by two relatives who followed a different line of research after the 1828 birth of Thomas George's father. Well, here we go again!

PRESERVING YOUR LIBRARY SIX-WEEK MEMOIR WRITING COURSE	facilitated by Carol Matthews
	free for seniors 55+
when Tuesdays, 1:30 pm – 3 pm November 10, 17, 24 January 19, 26, & February 2	offered by Nanaimo Family Life Association
where your house! join via zoom	register 250-754-3331 (203) s_burton@nflabc.org

Currently the registration for the memoir course is fully booked, but you can place your name on a waiting list. For further information about this writing course for seniors, see [Nanaimo Family Association](#) for details.

**NEED HELP VISUALIZING YOUR RESEARCH?**

Our society has 12 generation blank pedigree charts on sale at each meeting. These charts are ideal for beginners and "seasoned" genealogists who prefer to consult a paper visual rather than a smaller on-screen version.

Here's Sharon Davison displaying her hard work! Talk to Sharon about how the chart helps her research. See Jocelyn Howat to purchase one.

Future Guest Speakers

Our plans for meetings in 2021 are still tentative due to the health situation. Members will be contacted once dates, topics, and speakers are confirmed. We will also inform members of the evening's format if changes from "normal" such as seating or "Zoom" presentation are needed.



Monday, January 18, 2021

ZOOM SPEAKER KAREN INKSTER VANCE TABLETOP STORIES

Whatever your family background, chances are you can find dozens of stories around food: struggling to find it during times of hardship; hunting, fishing and gardening; canning and preserving; cooking and baking with passed down recipes; eating together at family gatherings.



Monday, February 8, 2021

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND

BEYOND GENEALOGY: MAKE YOUR PERSONAL STORY COME ALIVE! ZOOM SPEAKER GUY PROUTY

Prouty, PhD. is a personal historian, film maker, and archaeologist. He will speak on historical documentaries as well as printed and bound storybooks.



Monday, March 15, 2021

ZOOM SPEAKER TERRY ROGERS THE CANADIAN MARITIMES

Terry and Margaret Rogers have been genealogists for more than forty years and have travelled extensively in the Maritimes to research ancestors in all of the provinces and areas included in this talk. Terry's talk will appeal to those who are starting their research or those in need of a refresher on what is available.

- Where to start your research in each Maritime province.
- A refresher on both the low hanging research fruit for the Canadian Maritimes and some of the more obscure but useful resources available.
- The major influxes of immigrants in each province, when they happened, and where to find the best records for each.
- The major emigrations from each province, when they happened and where many of the people went.
- An outline with web links will be provided.

Our Memories of Those We Knew

We continue to enjoy these short pieces about people who were part of our lives. If you haven't already done so, we're inviting you to share your memory of the earliest born relative whom you knew personally. What do YOU remember about the earliest born person you knew?

ROBERT MARSHALL by NFHS Member Lorie Heshka His Granddaughter



Robert and Elisabeth Marshall née Nethery

The oldest ancestor that I knew personally was my grandfather, **Robert Marshall**. Robert was born October 22, 1875, one of ten children, to **William Marshall** and **Eliza Nethery Marshall**. The family farmed in the townland of Coolavanagh in County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. This area is just a few miles south and west of the town of Omagh along the Dooish Mountains.

MEMORIES

Robert's oldest brother, George, inherited the family farm, therefore Robert needed to look elsewhere to make a living. He emigrated to Indiana in the United States and worked with horses on two different farms believed to belong to his mother's family, the Netherys.

In 1912 Robert moved to Canada setting up his farming operation near Strongfield, Saskatchewan. The next year he married my grandmother, **Elisabeth Nethery**, on August 5, 1913, at Moose Jaw. Elisabeth came from the same area in County Tyrone.

We lived about three hundred miles from my grandparents' farm. Of course, that was a very long distance in those days, so we didn't see them often. My grandfather would send money occasionally and my mother and we three kids would take the train to visit them.

I have only a couple of vague memories of my grandmother as she died in 1957 when I was five years old. Grandpa hired a woman, Annie Kalcitz (sp?), after Grandma died. Annie made the flakiest danishes I have ever tasted!

I wish I could say I was close to my grandfather. I wish I could say he was nice, but not so. For one reason he was seventy-seven years old when I was born, and having three rambunctious kids descend upon his home couldn't have been easy. He chewed and had a sluice bucket that was always close to him. If we were running around, as kids do, he'd yell at us not to kick his sluice bucket.

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When I knew him, Grandpa could no longer climb the stairs to his bedroom, so he slept on the couch with a shotgun and a bottle of whiskey next to him.



In 1958 my aunt asked me to be her flower girl. The wedding was in Saskatoon about seventy-five miles straight north of the farm. Grandpa drove us to the wedding. He would have been eighty-three at the time and I guess he never was a good driver. I remember the car resembled what we call the PT Cruiser today.



Grandpa's house and car

Grandpa was a strong supporter of John Diefenbaker and met him more than once. Through the years when we were visiting, the dam at Lake Diefenbaker was being built within a few miles of the farm and we watched it progress.

My grandfather eventually moved to the Sherbrooke Nursing Home in Saskatoon dying there the summer of 1970 at the age of ninety-four.

HARRIET LUCRETIA OWENS

by NFHS Member Stephanie Williams, Her Granddaughter

MEMORIES



I was really lucky to live near my grandparents so I knew them well. My grandmother, **Harriet Lucretia Owens**, was born in Woodruff, Arizona in 1882. Her family were one of many families who were sent to colonize or build up towns in Arizona by their church leaders. They were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. When she was a teenager, Harriet became very sick and the family made the arduous trip back to Utah. She recovered after about seven or eight years and it was there she met my grandfather, a Canadian visiting his relatives in her little town. They fell in love and after marriage they decided to move back to Vancouver where he was offered a job as a logger. From Vancouver they ended up on Lasqueti Island for another job and they stayed there for the next forty years. So, we lived near them there and also when we moved to Nanaimo they followed us. They had a large family and my mom was the eldest. My grandmother was a large part of my life until 1961 when she passed away.

Nanaimo Family History Society Meet My Ancestor Contest 2020



Nanaimo Family History Society members are invited to enter a "Meet My Ancestor" contest. Entries must be submitted by **midnight, December 31, 2020**. Cash prizes of \$100, \$75, and \$50 will be awarded to the authors whose entries, in the opinion of the judging panel, best meet the contest criteria. The prizes will be awarded only if we receive at least four entries. All entries will be published in future editions of *Ancestry*.

A Choice of Topic

This year NFHS has a variety of topics from which to choose. Length of papers should be approximately five hundred to one thousand words (about three to five double spaced pages).

1. Pre 1900 Rogues and Rascals!

Yes, they lurk in most of our families. Write about them and share their stories. What did they do? Why? How did the family react? What happened to these people?

2. Home is Where the Heart Is!

Describe a place (village, car, house, room, tree-house, lake, a rocking chair) that you loved as a child and the family or person you associate with it. How does that person fit into the family tree?

3. The Secret!

Write about a secret that you have discovered in your family tree that no-one in the family knew. You can elaborate on the family's reaction, or tell the story and describe how you came to your discovery.

4. The Explanation!

Describe a situation or tell a short story — then explain the real story. (For example — "my grandpa was always very quiet, didn't talk, and he walked with two canes. We children were afraid of him." Then tell what you found out about his history — it may have been a horrible accident or a war story or polio.

CONTEST CRITERIA

1. The author is a current member of Nanaimo Family History Society on December 31, 2020.
2. The entry has not been previously published.
3. The entry is an interesting, coherent read with a specific focus of genealogical interest.
4. The entry demonstrates the reader's methods of research including any problems encountered and their resolution.
5. The entry includes family tree diagrams **and/or** photograph(s) **and/or** other illustrations **if appropriate**. These visuals are appropriately placed to support the context of the entry.
6. The length of the entry is not more than 1000 words and not fewer than 500 words.
7. The entry includes footnotes and /or sources as necessary.

WEB UPDATES

ANCESTRY (subscription)

[Australia Royal Australian Air Force Personnel Files 1921-1948](#)

[Canada Obituary Index 1800's to current dates_](#) (Lists relatives mentioned and where to find obituary.)

[UK England and Wales Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Parish Registers 1567-1936](#)

[UK Bedfordshire, Workhouse and Poor Law Records](#)

FAMILY SEARCH (free)

[New Brunswick County Register of Births 1801-1920](#)

[Germany West Prussia Roman Catholic and Lutheran Church Records 1537-1981](#)

[Norway 1891 Census](#)

[Ontario Immigration Records, 1862-1897](#)

FINDMYPAST (subscription)

[England and Wales Non-conformist Births and Baptisms](#)

[Canada World War Two Canadian Photographic Collection](#)

[Jamaica Births and Baptisms](#)

[Scotland Monumental Inscriptions](#)

[UK British Armed Forces Soldiers' Medical Records](#)

[UK Coldstream Guards 1800-1947](#)

[UK National School Admission Registers and Log Books 1870-1914](#)

[UK Yorkshire Baptisms](#)

[UK Yorkshire Monumental Inscriptions](#)

MYHERITAGE (subscription)

[Wales Births Marriage Deaths 1538-1935](#)

[Scotland Ayrshire Census and Population Lists 1801-1831](#)

[London Gazette 1665-2018](#) government notices, historical gazettes from London, Edinburgh, Belfast and Dublin

[Warwickshire Burials](#)

MISCELLANEOUS (Free) LINKS

[Almost 4000 Historical Canadian Newspapers on Ancestor Hunt](#)

[BC Historical Newspapers](#)

[BC Free Historical Photographs](#)

[Early Alberta Newspapers](#)

[Best Genealogy Sites for Irish Research](#)

[Manitoba local history books](#)

[Newfoundland Ancestors](#)

[10 Places to Search for Free Family History Books Online](#)

[Images of Canadian Prairie Towns](#)

[Manitoba Ancestors: Parish Records on Canadiana](#)

[Prince Edward Island Probates](#)

[Free Online Canadian City Directories](#)

[Trace Ontario Teachers' Careers](#)

[An English Village How to Find Out About a Place](#)

[Finding WW II Canadian POWS 1715 to 1945 on Findmypast](#)

[Four Steps for Finding Québec Notary Records Online](#)

[New Documentary and Website on the Irish Famine 1845-1852](#)

The links above are **new** links recently spotted by your editor. Remember, though, that sites such as *Ancestry* and *Family Search* are continuously adding to older collections. There is no room here to include all the additions, so remember to periodically re-check the sites you've used before — your editor has frequently found additional information about ancestors whom she began

EDITOR'S NOTES

More and more members are contributing to AncesTree — thank you!! Your contributions and enthusiasm for our journal is inspiring not only to your editor, but also to those who have yet to contribute. And, more importantly, look at the legacy for your descendants with your research and writing!

With writing in mind, please don't forget our contest (details page 26 of this issue). If you haven't started an entry yet, there's still time as entries do not have to be submitted until midnight, December 31st, 2020. These contest entries provide the backbone of future issues of AncesTree.

If you submit to Ancestree and haven't received an acknowledgement from your editor within a day or two, please resend the article.

As always, a special thanks to **Maureen Wootten** and **Jan Nelson** for their editing help!

MEMBERS' MISCELLANY

From Doug Toms

Don't underestimate the value of wills in your research. For some time I was wondering how to obtain UK wills after 1858. Now there is a government website for that. It is at www.gov.uk/search-will-probate and the wills can be ordered online for £1.50 each with online delivery within 10 days. Just check the site first to confirm that the particular probate is available there. I have received some interesting info about my family from the wills. In one case my great grandparents received two significant annuities which allowed them to move to Canada a few months after the probate. In a second case, one of my grandmothers received a large legacy which enabled her to purchase a large family home, buy other properties, and help my father and his brother start up a trucking business.

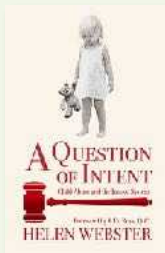
An idea from Ross White

How about an "Ask Genie" page that responds to member questions eg. Can I verify an ancestor's will?

ANSWER: Canadian wills are in the provincial jurisdictions. Check out the provincial archives for a link to will searches. Different countries have varied regulations about wills being in the public domain. See page 3 of this issue for British wills.

New Book Published by NFHS Member Helen Webster

Helen's latest book, *A Question of Intent: Child Abuse and the Justice System* is now available. The book is "the true story of a little girl's dismal life and the events that followed her tragic death. The author had access to the transcripts of the preliminary inquiry and the subsequent trial and appeals, and many related supporting documents. This is the story of a four-year-old who was beaten to death in the name of discipline."



[A book talk hosted by Helen is available here.](#)

From Cate Muir

Not sure about your [ancestors' occupations](#)? Check this link!

The New Year is upon us. As we move into 2021, we look for a new, healthy year with the turmoil of 2020 left behind. May our genealogy quests in 2021 be fruitful, and may our adventures into our ancestors' lives be full of shared stories.



Remember the thoughts of Bilbo Baggins in Tolkien's The Hobbit ... was he into genealogy???

"The road goes ever on and on
Down from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the road has gone,
And I must follow, if I can,
Pursuing it with eager feet,
Until it joins some larger way
Where many paths and errands meet.
And whither then? I cannot say ..."

Nanaimo Family History Society Executive 2020

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