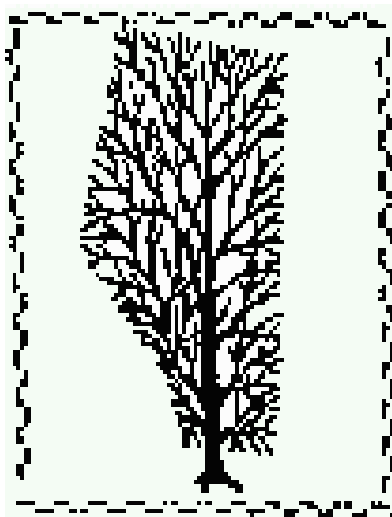


**YESTERDAY'S FOOTPRINTS**  
**Alberta Genealogical Society**  
**Lethbridge and District Branch**  
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**NOVEMBER 2010**  
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## Editor's Corner



If you want to submit articles, genealogy humor, interesting websites you want us to print feel free to contact us. You can drop off your submissions to our resource centre or phone (403) 328-9564 or send e-mail to [lethags@theboss.net](mailto:lethags@theboss.net). Susan Haga, Newsletter Editor

### Lethbridge A.G.S. Branch Hours

Resource Centre Hours: Tues., Wed. & Fri 1:30–4:30 p.m. Meetings are 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. September through June. Our library will be closed July & August & Dec. but can be open upon request. See our web site at:

<http://lethbridgeags.theboss.net/Exec.htm>

**Address: 1:28; 909 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North.**

**Phone: (403) 328-9564**

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

On Thursday, October 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Ken and Bev Rees came and gave a class on the Legacy program. On Thursday, Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. we will hold our International dinner at Winn Evans and Mike Tomaszewski's at 77 Fairmont Park Landing South.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Doug McLeod
Vice President	Susan Haga
Treasurer	Pat Barry
Secretary	Phyllis Burnett
Membership	Pat Barry

#### BRANCH COMMITTEE

B. M. & D.	Phyllis Burnett & Eleanor McMurchy
Cemetery	Phyllis Burnett
Librarian	Phyllis Burnett
Publicity	Jacque Bly
Researchers	Phyllis Burnett & Eleanor McMurchy
Computer	Phyllis Burnett & Doug McLeod
Newsletter Editor	Susan Haga
Web Master	Doug McLeod
Past Presidents	Susan Haga, Eleanor McMurchy, Pat Barry, Phyllis Burnett, & Winn Evans
Advisory Group	

### Membership Dues

For regular individual or family (Includes 1 Branch)--\$50.00. Seniors (65+) individual or family (Includes 1 Branch)--\$45.00

## President's Message

I am sure that everyone has hit a brick wall at one time or another. I have hit one brick wall this past summer in my genealogical research. All we can do is just keep plugging along and maybe we will have an "eureka" moment.

For those who took a trip away from home this summer either for relaxation or for genealogical research, my hope is that the trip was successful. Judith and I toured the Maritimes, which we enjoyed very much. We visited all of the provinces, a number of historical locations, and of course, geocached.

One of the places we visited was the Hall of the Clans in Cape Breton. Their main focus is on the highland clans. They teach Scottish music and the Gaelic language. Another highlight was the visit to Pier 21. This is a fantastic historical place.

I have learned (as I am sure anyone who has gone to Salt Lake City or else where) to plan ahead when visiting a place for genealogy research. We stopped at the museum/archives in Nova Scotia to research my son in laws family. Although I had e-mailed my request to them, they were not prepared for our visit. Unfortunately what info they could find, I already had. In fact it was exactly in the same format that I had. We were unable to find any primary sources.

Back to the present – for those who were not at the monthly meeting – issues of 'Yesterday's Footprints' from 2005 to the present are now on our web site. As our web master has left for Nova Scotia for the next two years, I am taking over the job. Being a complete newbie at doing web sites, please bear with me as I attempt this job. If you have anything you would like on the web site, please let me know.

Our International Dinner is slated for the 18th of November. It is a pot luck affair, with people bringing a dish from the country of their ancestors and to share genealogical stories...more information to come.

A reminder of our AGM and election of officers is in Feb 2011 – All members are encouraged to attend. As we do not have a meeting until Jan 2011 and incase we don't see you at the dinner, my wife and I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. President, Doug McLeod

### Lethbridge Family History Center Hours

The Family History Center will be open Mondays 9:00 a.m. –5:00 p.m., Tuesdays-Wednesdays 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. and Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. and Saturdays 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

"I don't know who my grandfather was, I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be." Abraham Lincoln

**Hillcrest Mine Explosion, Canada's Worst Mining Disaster: Do you have a family connection? By Belle Kovach**

Canada's worst mining disaster occurred at 9:30 a.m. June 19, 1914 at Hillcrest Mines, Alberta, a small hamlet located in the Crowsnest Pass, in the Canadian Rockies. Of the 228 miners on shift at the time, 189 were killed. This statistic makes it Canada's largest mine disaster.

A special section of the Hillcrest cemetery was dedicated to 150 of the victims, buried in two mass graves. Others were interred in private plots in Hillcrest, small towns throughout the Crowsnest Pass and region, and some were returned to Nova Scotia courtesy of the CPR.

The men, who were victims of this explosion, had come to work in Hillcrest Mines from many areas. Very few of them arrived before 1900 when the Crowsnest mines were opening. Many had just immigrated to Canada. This makes it difficult for us to find information about the men – the majority arrived after the 1911 census. Some locations they arrived from were Nova Scotia, England (northern), Scotland, Wales, Italy, Germany, France and countries in Eastern Europe, Poland, Ukraine, Russia etc. They were escaping depression in their own countries. The onset of the First World War two weeks later consumed public interest and victims of the disaster were never properly documented. For more information about the disaster see: <http://coalminersmemorial.tripod.com/hillcrestminedisaster.html>

As the Hillcrest Mine's Disaster Committee prepares for the approaching 2014 Centennial Commemoration, a short biography of each of the 189 victims is being prepared. In order to facilitate this task we are searching for the descendants of these men to help with our research. We are finding that only a very few of the families remained in the area. Some returned to their home countries, others moved into mining communities in British Columbia, and still others got as far away from mining as possible. As there was no social support available in those days, most of the widows, who were young women with children, soon remarried.

If you have any information about and of these early miners or their descendants please contact Belle Kovach at [bellekov@jrtwave.com](mailto:bellekov@jrtwave.com).

**HILLCREST MINES EXPLOSION – 1914**

Ackers Peter	25
Adlam Herbert	24
Albenese Dominic	32

Albenese Nicholas	24
Anderson Robert	40
Andreaschuk Jacob	37
Androski George	36
Armstrong James	35
Bainbridge Sidney	39
Banlant Andrew	39
Banyar Steve	39
Barber James	52
Bardsley Thomas	36
Bennett Fred C.	30
Bingham Fred	35
Bodio Virgilio	23
Bolinski John	31
Bostock Frank M.	32
Botter Etalleredo	31
Bowie John S.	37
Bozzer Pietro	25
Bradshaw James	46
Brown John	30
Brown Thomas W.	34
Brown William	39
Buckman Albert	25
Caielli Antonio	33
Camarda Joseph	33
Cantalini Peter	33
Cantalini Sam	23
Carr Henry	42
Cassagrande Carlo	24
Catonio Antonio	31
Catterino Basso	23
Celli Vito	26
Chabillon Emil	34
Chabillon Leonce	24
Charles Charles S.	24
Charlton Sam	33
Ciccione Eugenio	21
Cimetta Antonio	24
Clarke John	32
Clarke Leonard	34
Coan Charles S.	35
Corkill Thomas	41
Coulter Fred C.	30
Coulter Robert	38
Court Thompson	23
Cullinan Dan	38
Davison John	44
Daye Prosper	21
Demchuk George	24
Demchuk Nicholas	22
Dickenson Matthew	25
Dugdale Andrew	24
Dugdale Robert	27
Elick Charles (Wasil)	49
Emery David	30
Eveloir Everard	32
Ewing James	24
Fedoruk Peter	29
Fines William	23
Flougere August	34
Fogale John G.	25
Fortunato Luigi	25

Fortunato Vincenzo	31	Murray David Sr.	46
Foster John	25	Murray David C. Jr.	26
Fox William	19	Murray William	22
Francz Gustaf	38	Murray Robert	21
Frech Frank M.	33	Myrovich Steve	52
Gallimore William	30	Neath William	25
Gardina Emil Ermaele	28	Oakley Joseph	44
Gasperion Antonio	25	Padgett Arthur	23
Gianoli Carlo	19	Pagnan Edward	28
Gramacci Antonio	21	Parnisari Carlo	20
Gray James F.	40	Parnisari Guiseppi	19
Guido Ylio	21	Payet Leon	32
Hansford Ralph	30	Pearson John	18
Harris David G.	22	Penn James	46
Herber John	46	Penn Robert W.	23
Heusdens Alphonse	26	Petrie Alex	17
Hicken George	28	Petrie James	26
Hillman William	24	Petrie Robert	25
Hnacnuk Philip	22	Porteous Alex Jr.	37
Hood John	25	Porteous James	31
Hunter Hugh	45	Pounder George	36
Iluk Wasyl	24	Quigley James S.	40
Ironmonger Charles	19	Quigley Thomas	34
Ironmonger Samuel	23	Raitko Steve	23
Janego Mike	36	Rawlyk Bernard	22
Johnson Carl	33	Rawlyk Fred	39
Johnson Fred	23	Rees Albert	22
Johnson William	19	Robertson George	37
Kane Pat	41	Rochester Joseph H.	19
Kinock Peter	37	Rochester William	28
Kipryanchuk Mike	32	Rossanese Eugenio	25
Kohar Petro	19	Rosti Luigi	26
Kosmik Chris	34	Sands John	29
Kostyniuk Dan	29	Sandul John	21
Kurigatz Fred	22	Sandulak Daniel	28
Kuzenko Nick	29	Schroeder Charles	33
Kwasnico Fred	23	Silva Alfred	35
Kwasnico Wasyl	32	Skurhan Mike	50
Labonne Frank	37	Smith Robert	28
Legarde Antoine	37	Smith Thomas	37
Malanchuk Steve	32	Somotink Peter	39
Marchetto Ulderico	28	Southwell Albert	31
Marcolli Guiseppi	24	Stretton Edward	39
McIssac Rod	23	Tamborini Alberti	23
McKay Angus H.	21	Tamborini Baldo	19
McKinnon John B.	30	Taylor Thomas	42
McKinnon Steve	34	Thaczuk John	22
McNeil Pius	28	Thomas Deo	29
McQuarrie John A.	28	Trump William	46
Megeney Nicholas	54	Turner Thomas	31
Meiklejohn Adam	40	Turner William	35
Melok John	23	Tyron Mike	18
Miller William	27	Vendrasco Fred	26
Miller William G.	22	Vohradsky Joseph	25
Montelli Dominic	27	Vohradsky Vince	26
Moore William	25	Walker David J.	35
Morley William	39	Wallis Rod	22
Morrison Alexander	38	Wilson Thomas L.	41
Morrison Nick	23	Zahara John	20
Mudryk John	33	Zamis Luis	27
Muir Robert	54	Zapisocki Wasyl	22
Muirhouse Fred	47	Zaska Michael	21

## **50 Best Genealogy Brick Wall Solutions**

### **Names**

Names are often the first brick wall that people researching their ancestors stumble upon. Here are some suggestions to work around name brick walls.

**1. Maiden Names** - Most countries have some kind of national identification number. In the U.S. they are called Social Security Numbers; in Canada they are called Social Insurance Numbers. Most countries also allow genealogists to search the application forms for these records if the record is older than a specified cut-off date (usually several decades, it varies by country). These applications always list the mother's maiden name. This is one of the few places on official records where maiden names are found.

**2. Maiden Names Again** – Another extremely useful place to find a woman's maiden name are in court documents. Divorce cases, property disputes, immigrant change of name, applications for guardianship of a child, etc. all required a woman's maiden name. It should be noted that in early court documents (pre-1900 in the US), a woman was often represented by her husband, father or uncle.

**3. Middle Names** – Names are more fluid than most people realize. It is not unheard of for people to start showing a preference to refer to themselves on official records by their middle name. This can happen even once a person reaches middle age. Always cross check archival records by first and middle names.

**4. Common Family Names** – Trying to trace the genealogy of a family with a common surname can often be a challenge. It often comes down to probabilities. For example, wading through page after page of listings of Smiths is not an enjoyable chore. One way that you can tilt the probabilities in your favour is to look at the names of all the immediate family members. Initially, focus your research on the person in the family with the least common first name. This will increase your chances of finding a successful match and also hopefully speed up the search process.

**5. Short Family Names** – People with short family names often mistakenly think there is little likelihood of a misspelling of their family name in old records. After all, how could you misspell an easy family name like Ball. For example, there is a distinct possibility that a family name that ended in a double letter, like the double 'l' in Ball at one time could have had an 'e' on the end of the name. Ball becomes Balle, Tall becomes Talle, Mann becomes Manne.

**6. Aliases** – In historical records, people used aliases all the times. A couple of common aliases: using the middle name as a last name, using the mother's maiden name as a last name and anglicizing a non-English family name.

**7. Naming Conventions** – Most families and many cultures have naming conventions for first and middle names. It is worth asking family members if they know of any naming conventions in the family. Knowledge of naming conventions can often be used to determine the names of the parents and grandparents. For example, it was common in Victorian England that the first name of the first male child was named after the father's father. The second male child was named after the mother's father. The third male child was named after the father. The first female child was named after the mother's mother and the second female child is named after the father's mother and the third female was named after the mother. You can use this information to take a reasonable guess as to the first names of the parents and grandparents if you know the names and order of birth of all the children.

Of course, this naming convention had a downside. Children of the period often died at childbirth or at a very young age. It was not uncommon for the name of a parent or grandparent to be recycled or reused and given to the next child that was born. To put this another way, if you have an ancestor with a large family and two of the children have the same name, this tells you two things: the first child likely died before the second child was born and the name has great significance to the family.

**8. Surnames Beginning With a Vowel** – Most genealogists are familiar with the need to check spelling variations of family names in old records. People tracing American ancestors need to become familiar with Soundex (see what is Soundex and How Does Soundex Work). However, there is a special case for family names that begin with the vowels a, e, i, o, u and y. These names are often misspelled in records by people adding a consonant in front of the vowel. The most common consonant added to a family name in this kind of situation is an H. So a name like All becomes Hall, Illier becomes Hillier, etc. The reverse is also true for all names that begin with H. Consider searching the family name with the H removed.

### **Geography**

**9. Search by Village** – Most genealogists get fixated on searching for their ancestors by name. They will then get frustrated when they cannot find a match even after having tried multiple spelling variations on the name. Have you ever thought

about searching for someone by another attribute? For example, if you know your ancestor came from a small town or village and you know the approximate date of the record you are looking for, consider performing a search by the village name for that date range. Small villages do not produce that many records. A quick read of the records that pop up for the village may produce some interesting surprises.

**10. Street Names Change** – Over time, villages grow into towns and towns grown into cities. At least that is how most people envision the past. Actually, towns rarely grow into cities. What usually happens is that several towns close to each other merge to form a city. When this happens, new cities have a problem. There are too many streets with the same name. In other words, there are overlapping street names across the merged towns. Every town has a main street, an elm street, a church street, etc. but a city can only have one main street, one elm street and so on. That means many streets in the former towns have to change their names. Therefore, for example, never assume the church street that is listed on your ancestor's record is the same church street today. The best way to check the location of a street name is to consult an old map of the region before the amalgamation and formation of the city.

**11. Local Histories** – Local histories can be an invaluable source of clues as to what happened to family members. Local histories typically talk about major events in the region that could have impacted the lives of your ancestors. For example, a major drought or a major flood could have forced your ancestor to move. Military conflicts, disease and social influences can also play a major role in migrations. Often, if there a mass exodus of people leaving the region, the local history will give some clue as to where they went.

**12. Changing Jurisdictions** – Regional and county lines change over time. So do state, provincial and country lines. Genealogists are often tripped up by this fact. When searching for old records in local county libraries and county courthouses, make sure you have the correct county for the time period in question. We can not stress this one enough.

**13. Towns and Occupations** – During the industrial revolution (and even today), certain towns were associated with certain industries. Often the associations were very specific. For example, in England there were towns that specialized in making just gloves. This trait can sometimes be applied to entire cities. For example, Detroit is still associated with the automobile. If the trail of an ancestor has gone cold and you think your ancestor

may have moved somewhere else, consider doing a bit of research on the history of the town. It is possible that the town specialized in one industry. This can give a clue as to the occupation of your ancestor. It can also be used to make a reasonable guess where your ancestor may have moved. The most common reason people move is to look for work. Find out other towns that specialized in the same industry as the town where you last traced your ancestor. You may find that your ancestor has moved to one of these towns

### **Local Resources**

**14. Local Grade Schools** – If your ancestor comes from a small town or village, you may want to consider writing to the local grade school. Creating family trees is a popular educational lesson for young school children today in many countries. You might find a teacher who is willing to take up the challenge of helping you find a local ancestor. As well, the children in the local grade school are the living descendants of the people from the region. It is quite possible that one of the parents would know something about the person you are researching.

**15. Schoolhouse Records** – Schoolhouse records are a resource often overlooked by genealogists. Schools always kept detailed class rolls. Schools also took class pictures, which is an excellent way to find photographs of your ancestors when they were children. Schoolhouse records can also be used to confirm dates for an ancestor. Children often went to school for several years. Thus, it is only necessary to find your ancestor listed in just one school year to be able to make a reasonable estimate of their year of birth. Therefore, always try to determine where your ancestor may have gone to school and then see if the schoolhouse records are still available. Typically, old schoolhouse records are located at the local archives.

**16. Poorhouses** – Poorhouses go by various names in various countries and over different periods of time. However, they always share one common trait of providing welfare and living assistance to those in need. Since this assistance comes at a financial cost, local authorities always recorded and documented who received the aid. Check with local poorhouses to see if any of your ancestors are in the records.

**17. Electoral Rolls** – Electoral rolls are often kept at the municipal or city level to allow local authorities to know who is registered to vote. As well, electoral rolls are often updated on a set schedule (typically every four or five years), usually at a higher frequency than census records (which are typically every ten years). Looking

through electoral rolls is a good way to narrow down the date range to find out when somebody died or moved out of a region.

**18. Neighbourhood Church/Synagogue** – Most local religious organizations also kept annual rosters of their active members. Often, these rosters list the full name of each individual, (sometimes) the date of birth, and place of origin. Besides providing such information, these records also provide an excellent date range for determining when someone moved or died.

**19. Vanished Church/Synagogue** - During times when government records were sparse or nonexistent, records from religious organizations often provide the best proxy for ancestral information. Churches and synagogues are an excellent place to find records of births, marriages and burials. Do not be discouraged if the church/synagogue of your ancestor has been torn down or disbanded over the years. This does not mean the records have disappeared. Often the records were passed to successor institutions in the region or the records were moved to regional offices. Always check out this possibility.

**20. Old Phone Books** – In the absence of census information, old phone books can be an invaluable resource. Phone books were usually published once a year. Tracking down old phone books, however, can sometimes be a challenge. Usually the best place to look is the national library of the country. They often maintained the most complete collection. Sometimes major city libraries also maintain old phone book collections of the city and surrounding region.

**21. Neighbourhood Address Books** – Old neighbourhood address books that are sorted by street address can also be a valuable source of information. Old address books (the predecessor of the modern phone book) often listed useful information such as the occupation of the resident. Recent immigrants to a city often want to live near relatives who had already established a presence in the city. A reading of who lived within two blocks of your ancestor can often produce several previously unknown aunts, uncles and cousins.

### **Migration**

**22. Port of Entry** – This is a fun one for people looking through passenger ship manifestos to track down ancestors arriving in Northeastern United States or Eastern Canada. Consider this possibility: they may have arrived by ship in the other country. People migrating to Eastern Canada could have arrived in Boston or another port on the Eastern US seaboard. Similarly, ancestors in the Northeastern

United States may have first arrived in Montreal or another Eastern Canadian port and then travelled to the U.S. To understand why this may have occurred, it helps to think like your ancestor. Border guards at the Canada/US border were only formally started in May 1924. Before this time there was usually not even a guard at the border. Thus, crossing the border was not an impediment like it is today. Given that your ancestor's choice of ships was often limited, they would have planned their migration route based on cost, convenience and accessibility.

**23. Migration Home** - First generation migrants to a new region or country often get homesick for 'the old country'. When looking for ancestors where the trail has run cold in the ancestor's later years, consider the possibility that they may have moved back to the region where they were born or where their parents were born. This is more common than most people realize.

**24. Migrating Family Unit**– When a family migrates long distances (and especially across an ocean), don't assume that all the children migrated with the parents. Check the age of the children at the time of migration. Older children may have stayed behind. This is a fact that is often overlooked when tracing ancestors.

**25. Land Records** – If your ancestors migrated to farmstead, then they most likely received a land grant. Always check federal and state government land grant records.

**26. Place of Birth** – One of the great challenges of genealogy is dealing with conflicting information from different sources. For example, a common problem is having two documents showing two different places of birth for the same individual. It is a well known fact that immigrants often change their name when they move to new countries (see [Why Immigrants Change Their Name](#)). For example, immigrants moving to English-speaking countries often try to anglicize their family name. However, it does not necessarily end at just a name change. Recent immigrants over time will sometimes also want to mask their place of birth and make it look like they were born in their new country, not their old country. Often this is done to fit in better in their new society. Bottom line – people often changed their place of birth after they had been in their new country for several years.

### **Death**

**27. Mortuary Tables** – When estimating the age of death of an ancestor (narrowing down date ranges is often a necessary first step before digging into archives), try to find a mortuary table for the country of your ancestors. The internet contains

historic mortuary tables for several countries. If you cannot find one, consider contacting the main government statistical agency for your country. Alternatively, consider contacting a life insurance company. Life insurance companies use mortuary tables to calculate policy premiums. You can use mortuary tables to estimate a reasonable age at death. A word of caution: use historic mortuary tables, not current mortuary tables. People live much longer these days.

**28. Mortuary Records** - Mortuary records at funeral homes often list the full names and place of origin of next of kin. Typically this will mean that mortuary records often have the full names and origin of the parents of the deceased. This is an excellent way to find out names and places of the previous generation. It always pays to look at the mortuary records in a funeral home.

**29. Funeral Sign-in Books** – Funeral sign-in books are those books that all visitors are asked to sign when they go to a funeral. They are usually given to the family at the end of the funeral. If you can gain access to a funeral sign-in book, it can provide a wealth of information about your ancestors. Funerals are typically attended by family members both close and distant on the family tree. This is a great way to get leads on missing branches of the family.

**30. Walk the Cemetery** – A simple, but effective, genealogy brick wall solution for ancestors that came from small towns is to take a walk through the local cemetery. This is a good way to look for clues by reading the inscriptions on the tombstones. Most cemeteries are divided by religion. You can save yourself much time if you know the religion of your ancestors.

**31. Neighbors in the Cemetery** – Families often buy several plots in a cemetery. Usually these plots are located next to each other. When you are visiting the grave site of an ancestor always take photographs of the neighboring grave sites. They could be your relatives. Sometimes this is not obvious at the time but it can become more apparent at a later date. For example, two sisters could buy neighboring family plots. In this example, the sisters have both married and have different last names. They may not look like they are related when you glance at the tombstones.

**32. Newspaper Stories** – Most genealogists think to look in newspapers for death announcements. However, local newspapers should also be used for researching stories on death. Any ancestor who did not die of natural causes will likely have received a write-up in a local newspaper story. For example, ancestors who died in a war are often written up, as

well as people who drowned or died in mishaps or accidents. This is always worth checking, especially if your ancestor came from a small town.

### **Family**

**33. Family Bibles** –One hundred years ago most people were either illiterate or barely literate. The typical household had only a handful of books. One of these books was almost certainly a family bible (or other religious text depending on the religion of your ancestors). For many people, it was the only book they would ever read. It was also the place where many people would write down important information. Like the names and birthdays of family members. Spend the time asking your relatives if they have an old family bible. Check the blank pages on the inside front and back covers and you may make an incredible family discovery.

**34. Existing Family Trees** – In most families there is usually one person (often a distant relative) who has spent the time and energy to put together the family tree. It is always a good idea to ask around the family to see if a family tree has already been created. However, one often overlooked resource for family trees are the local libraries near where your ancestors lived. Especially in small towns, a collection of published family histories in local libraries will often touch on some part of your family tree.

**35. Picture in a Frame** – So many clues can be gathered from looking at old family photographs that there are entire books devoted to the subject. There is, however, one simple exercise that should always be done with old family pictures that are framed. Take the photograph out of the frame and examine the back of the image. People often write notes on the back as to where the picture was taken and who is in the photograph. Don't miss this simple exercise when looking at old family photographs.

**Family Jewellery** – Family jewellery provides a precious memento of our ancestors. It can also provide some valuable clues. Always inspect family jewellery (especially rings and bracelets) closely with a magnifying glass. Check for engravings of names and dates on the inside. Also check for stamps and other marks of the jeweller. This can be used to date the age of the jewellery.

**36. Skip a Generation** – Most people build their family tree by starting with themselves and working backward. This works well until it doesn't work. When it doesn't work well is when you come across an ancestor who seems to have treaded lightly on this earth. Some people cannot be found simply because they never wanted to be found.



People trying to escape debts, trying to escape businesses that have gone sour and trying to escape questionable (sometimes criminal) activity all had an incentive not to be found. Even people who were never married or were married but never had children can often be difficult to trace. The solution: skip a generation. Try researching their parents first. Often a detailed knowledge of an ancestor's parents can often shed light on what happened to their children. You might even find your missing ancestor turning up in unexpected places, like a funeral sign-in book when one of the parents died.

**37. Widows Remarrying** – Except for the last couple of decades, economic necessity usually required a widow with children to remarry fairly quickly. Often a woman would remarry within three to four months of the death of her late husband. As well, women usually picked the church where they were married. These two facts can be used to your advantage. One way to trace the marriage of a widow is to start with the local church records from the date of the wake of her late husband and read forward on a day-by-day basis. Don't be surprised to find a wedding within six months. This trick also works backwards. Start on the wedding day of the widow and go backward in time a couple of months and you will probably find the details on the death of the previous husband.

**38. Elderly Parents** – Elderly parents (and the widowed) often went to live with one of their children. Always consider this possibility when you lose track of someone later in their life.

**39. Shotgun Weddings** – A shotgun wedding is a wedding where the bride is already pregnant. Families rarely like to talk about shotgun weddings but the reality is that shotgun weddings are common. When trying to estimate the date of birth of a child from a wedding date (or visa versa) do not assume there is a minimum nine-month gap between the two dates. It could be much shorter. The child could even have been born before the wedding date.

**40. Wills** – Wills are a golden source of information for genealogists. Wills are always written by the deceased so they contain accurate spelling of names, correct dates, correct addresses and a list of the property owned by the deceased. As an added bonus, wills typically list all of a person's aliases as well as immediate family members such as siblings. Always ask family members if they have any old wills of your ancestors or spend the time tracking down the will at the local probate court.

**41. Adopted versus Abandoned** – When researching your ancestors, it is important to understand the difference between adopted and abandoned. Adoption is when someone who is not kin assumes the parenting of a child. It has been practised throughout history, but it only became a common phenomenon in the 1920s or later (depending on the country). Prior to this, most children were abandoned. Abandoned children usually ended up in orphanages and were often placed out as indentured servants or apprentices for certain trades. Oddly enough, abandoned children are usually easier to trace because they were wards of the state or a non-profit organization. To account for the funds needed to feed and maintain these children, ledgers were normally kept giving details of the children at orphanages and poorhouses. Adoption records can often be much more difficult to obtain and genealogists (not to mention the adopted children themselves) are often at the mercy of local legislative regulations. It is difficult to ascertain what percentage of children were historically adopted/abandoned (families rarely want to admit such issues), but adoptions in most countries today run from 1% to 3% and the numbers were almost certainly much higher one hundred years ago.

**42. Relatives Raising Children** – A very common variant of adoption/abandonment is relatives raising a child. Sometimes genealogists come across a child in a family with a name used in another branch of the family. Consider the possibility the parents are raising a relative's child. Another possible variant that could occur is when sisters adopt children who are related to one another (typically the adopted children are brothers and sisters). Finally, when looking at old census records that list servants in a household, pay particular attention to the names of the servants. They could be distant relatives.

**43. Search Sideways** - When you get stuck and have trouble tracing the parents of your ancestors, consider taking a different path. You may have inadvertently stumbled upon an ancestor who was the black sheep of the family and did not have much interaction with the parents. Take a closer look at the brothers and sisters of your ancestor instead. Go back down a generation if you have to. This may ultimately lead you to the parents.

**44. Contact Distant Living Relatives Through the Grave** – In the internet age, here is an oddly strange and obscure way to contact distant living relatives that can actually produce results. If you track down an ancestor to a particular grave site in an old graveyard, pay attention to how well maintained the grave site is relative to the

neighboring grave sites. If the grave site is better maintained than other grave sites in the cemetery then this is a good indication that someone with a connection to your ancestor is likely maintaining the area. Consider leaving a message at the grave site with all your contact details. However, this is not e-mail, so don't expect a reply within a week. It will likely take months (or never) before someone replies. Make sure you leave the message in a well-sealed container and firmly attach it to the gravestone. Also, inform the cemetery staff to make sure they are okay with the procedure and to make sure they do not throw your message out.

**45. Retirement Homes** – Retirement homes (especially those run by non-profit organizations) would often have to take on senior citizens with no money. In order to cover their costs, they would often attempt to track down family members. Part of this process involved interviewing the senior citizen to try to establish family connections. These records were often kept by the retirement home..

**46. Family Timelines** - One obvious genealogy brick wall solution is to check key family dates across generations to look for inconsistencies. For example, children cannot be born after their mother has died or more than nine months after their father has died. Similarly, children cannot be born if the mother is too young or too old. A simple rechecking of dates in this manner can help eliminate erroneous data and can also be used to narrow down estimated date ranges. For large, complicated families, consider building a family timeline to check for consistency across dates.

**47. Family Recipe Books** – Family recipe books are almost as common as family trees. Oddly enough, there can be a connection between the two of them that can be exploited by an astute genealogist. For example, one of the biggest hurdles that genealogists can face is when an ancestor has migrated to a new country and anglicized their name. Trying to find out where they came from can often become an involved exercise. Here is a novel approach. Look through the family recipe book. A number of (say) Polish recipes would suggest that your ancestors came from Poland. Even within a country, certain dishes can be very local in origination. Do a bit of research on unusual dishes or dishes that use unusual ingredients and you may be able to narrow down your search to a particular area of a country. Military Records

**48. Military Medals** - Always check to see if your ancestors earned any military medals and ask family members if you can see the medals. Several nations (including Britain and many Commonwealth countries) engrave the name of the

recipient, their rank and unit on the edge of the medal. You can often use this valuable information as a starting point to contact the appropriate military authorities (or national archives) to gain access to full military records.

**49. Underage Soldiers** – Underage soldiers are a common problem during periods of large scale conflicts and mass conscription (such as World War I and II). When tracing a male ancestor, try to determine how old they were when major military conflicts broke out in the region. If they were 14 or older, then they may have signed on as soldiers even if they were not of legal age. Most armies were happy to take any warm body and would often turn a blind eye to such activity. Unfortunately, underage soldiers (who obviously lacked proof of age) would often sign on under an alias.

**50. Military Pensions** – Military pensions are granted to veterans and widows of veterans. If you have an ancestor that was between the age of 15 and 40 during a major war, consider the possibility they may have been a soldier even for a very brief period of time. In some conflicts (such as the US Civil War), pensions were granted to soldiers after only a couple of months of service. Contact the appropriate authorities to see if they may have received a military pension. In most countries, military pension records are very complete and contain everything from birth certificates to information on next of kin to details on military engagements.

#### *General*

**51. Original Documents** – Always check the original document. Transcription errors occur all the time when old records are digitized. For example, in order to keep costs down one major firm (Ancestry.com) does most of their transcription work in China. English is not the first language of these transcribers. Reading old handwritten text is a difficult task even for native English speakers. Therefore, expect some errors.

**52. Network** – The internet provides many opportunities to network with other genealogists. Consider joining a family association or group that specializes in your family name. The internet is not just a great place to find online ancestral records; it is also a wonderful place to hook up with other people who are also interested in researching their ancestors. (“Genealogy in Time Newsletter” by MissingLink Software Corporation, Ottawa, Ontario Canada—Sept 2010—submitted by Eleanor McMurchy)

“People will not look forward to posterity who never look back to their ancestors.” Edward Burke

## 15 Fantastic Sites for Tracing Female Ancestors

Here's a list of 15 fabulous web sites for finding female ancestors (listed in alphabetical order).

1. American Women's History: A Research Guide

<http://frank.mtsu.edu/~kmiddlet/history/women.html>

This site provides citations to print and Internet reference sources, as well as to selected large primary source collections.

2. BehindtheName

[www.behindthename.com](http://www.behindthename.com)

Want to learn the meaning of your female ancestor's first name, or its origin and variations?

3. BellaOnline: The Voice of Women Genealogy Site

[www.bellaonline.com/siteGenealogy](http://www.bellaonline.com/siteGenealogy)

Genealogy Editor, Tina Sansone writes informative articles on a variety of genealogy topics from Book and Product Reviews to Beginner's Genealogy.

4. Cyndi's List: Female Ancestors

[www.cyndislist.com/female.htm](http://www.cyndislist.com/female.htm)

Cyndi's List currently contains more than 282,000 links for family history, with more than 170 links for female ancestors.

5. Discovering Women's History Online

<http://library.mtsu.edu/digitalprojects/womensgustirt.php>

This database provides access to digital collections of primary sources (photos, letters, diaries, artifacts, etc.) that document the history of women.

6. Distinguished Women of the Past and Present

[www.distinguishedwomen.com](http://www.distinguishedwomen.com)

This site created by Danuta Bois, and featuring 5,282 links to 1875 women keeps growing. You'll find biographies on writers, educators, scientists, and etc.

7. Fearless Females: 31 Blogging Prompts to Celebrate Women's History Month

[www.theaccidentalgenealogist.com/2010/02/fearless-females-31-blogging-prompts-to.html](http://www.theaccidentalgenealogist.com/2010/02/fearless-females-31-blogging-prompts-to.html)

Many readers enjoyed participating in this daily blogging event to celebrate Women's History Month in March. Each day was a different prompt to honor a female ancestor.

8. National Women's History Museum

[www.nwhm.org](http://www.nwhm.org)

The official web site of the National Women's History Museum located in Alexandria, Virginia. You'll find educational resources, such as self-guided tours, biographies, and lesson plans and quizzes (for teachers).

9. Notable Women Ancestors

[www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nwa](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nwa)

A free web site by genealogist Susanne "Sam"

Behling, hosted on RootsWeb offers an interesting database of female ancestors organized alphabetically or by categories.

11. Oral History in the Perry Library (Women's History and Issues)

[www.lib.odu.edu/special/oralhistory/womenhistory](http://www.lib.odu.edu/special/oralhistory/womenhistory)

This site offers an alphabetical listing of oral histories in the Perry Library collection that pertain in whole or part to women's history and issues.

12. Prologue: Women & Naturalization Records

[www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1998/summer/women-and-naturalization-1.html](http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1998/summer/women-and-naturalization-1.html)

"Any woman who is now or may hereafter be married..." Women and Naturalization, c. 1802-1940, by Marian L. Smith. This article examines why women are not represented in early US naturalization records.

13. The Library of Congress American Memory Project

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=Women'sHistory>

The American Memory collection provides free and open access to historic documents, maps, photos, audio and video. The site has 7 collections dedicated to Women's History.

14. Top 10 Places to Find Maiden Names

[http://genealogy.about.com/od/surnames/tp/maiden\\_names.htm](http://genealogy.about.com/od/surnames/tp/maiden_names.htm)

Genealogist Kimberly Powell's detailed article on ten record/resources to consult to track down a female ancestor's maiden name.

15. Women's Rights National Historic Park and Museum

[www.nps.gov/wori/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/wori/index.htm)

In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and four other women invited the public to the First Women's Rights Convention to discuss expanding the role of women in America. At the end of the two days, 100 people made a public commitment to work together to improve women's quality of life. This official web site of the Women's Rights National Historic Park and Museum located in Seneca Falls, New York, has stories, photographs and history detailing the participants of the First Women's Rights Convention, plus information on planning a trip/visit to the museum, special events and much more. (Lisa A. Alzo, Internet Genealogy--Oct/Nov 2010)

### Surgeons' Journals for Peter Robinson Ships 1825 (England to Canada with Irish Settlers)

There is a new database online that will be of interest to those seeking ancestors who arrived in Upper Canada in 1825.

The new project is the extraction of names from Surgeons Medical Journals which were kept during the voyages of 8 ships sailing from England to Quebec carrying impoverished Irish settlers.

There are medical journals for 8 ships and they contain a great deal of information. Olive Tree Genealogy's project contains extracted details of the voyage, the names and ages of each passenger treated by the surgeon, the date they were put on the sick list, where the ship was at the time and the date they recovered or died. Births of children are also recorded as are deaths, sometimes with details as to the exact time and location. Go to web site:

[http://www.olivetreegenealogy.com/ships/canada/Peter\\_Robinson.shtm](http://www.olivetreegenealogy.com/ships/canada/Peter_Robinson.shtm) or use the shorter URL <http://bit.ly/a3ERA4>

The medical journals are not passenger lists, they are the Sick Bay journals kept in great detail for the sick and dying (and pregnant women in labour). You will want to consult these extracts if you think your Irish ancestors were on board the following ships:

- Surgeon's Journal of the Transport Ship John Barry between 22 April to 25 July 1825
- Surgeon's Journal of the Transport Ship Amity between 5 April to 9 July 1825
- Surgeon's Journal of the Transport Ship Elizabeth-- 4 May 1825 & 21<sup>st</sup> July 1825
- Medical and surgical journal of the Regulus transport ship for 7 April to 13 July 1825 by Matthew Burnside, Surgeon
- Medical and surgical journal of the Fortitude Emigrant Ship for 28 April to 1 July 1825 by Frances Connin, Surgeon
- Medical journal of the Brunswick, emigrant ship, for 5 April to 27 June 1825 by John Tarn, surgeon.
- Medical and surgical journal of the Albion Convict Ship for 4 April to 4 July 1825 by John Thomson Surgeon

The surgeons' journals contain much detail both on the illnesses of each passenger and on the journey itself. Some surgeons recorded their thoughts about certain passengers so they are a very interesting read. Each journal extract is also linked to Sue Swiggum's list of passengers for those 8 ships as found in other resources.

### **FamilySearch Expands Online Learning**

FamilySearch now offers 81 free lessons on FamilySearch.org, enabling people anywhere in the world to access family history expertise any time. The topics range from basic research to training on specific record types and can be beneficial to both beginners

and experienced researchers. Most of the classes come from research consultants in the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, but FamilySearch is also now working with partners to broaden the pool of expertise.

For example, FamilySearch worked with the Mid-Continent Public Library in Independence, Missouri to record and post 12 classes. These classes are available on both FamilySearch.org and the Midwest Genealogy Center's site. Such collaboration benefits everyone involved, according to Darin Hakes with FamilySearch Community Services. Midwest Genealogy Center librarian Janice Schultz agrees that partnering with FamilySearch increases their reach. "The online classes allow people to attend no matter where they live," Schultz said.

### **1926 Census of Ireland**

The Genealogical Society of Ireland is pleased to confirm that the Statistics (Heritage Amendment) Bill, 2010- the Society's Bill to have the 1926 Census of Ireland released is published and awaiting to be introduced at Second Stage in Seanad Eireann.

The Bill is sponsored by Senator Labhras O Murchu (Fianna Fail) and has the support of many senators on both sides of the House. See: <http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bill28/2010/3610/b3610s.pdf> (Michael Merrigan, General Secretary—Genealogical Society of Ireland— [www.familyhistory.ie](http://www.familyhistory.ie))

### **Genealogy Resources at University of Calgary and CPL**

Jerremie Clyde, the history librarian at the University of Calgary kindly provided a list of the genealogy resources at the U. of C. I had requested information for a Genealogy 101 type presentation I gave recently at the Faculty Women's Club at the U. of C. Jerremie gave permission to share this information. See <http://www.luxegen.ca/genealogy/genealogy-resources-at-the-university-of-calgary/>

See Christine Hayes handout on genealogy and family history resources at the main branch of the Calgary Public Library. Check out the following blogging post <http://www.luxegen.ca/genealogy/doing-genealogy-at-calgary-public-library/> (Joan Miller—Dist-Gen—posted Oct 10, 2010)

"In all of us there is a hunger, marrow deep, to know our heritage – to know who we are and where we came from. Without this enriching knowledge, there is a hollow yearning. Alex Haley--Roots