

CHINOOK ARCH

December 2020 Volume 2 Issue 10



ALBERTA FAMILY
HISTORIES SOCIETY

1980-2020

Society Meetings

Our Next Society Meeting: Monday, December 14

LOCATION: Via Zoom

TIME: 7 to 9 pm

Topic: Christmas Traditions

Members sharing their Christmas traditions via Zoom with a 5-10 minute presentation. Contact programs@afhs.ab.ca to let Christine know you will be participating.

Upcoming Meetings

All held virtually using Zoom until further notice. Contact SIG leaders to receive an invitation link to the meeting.

DATE	GROUP	TIME	TOPIC
Sat., Dec. 12	Digital Genealogy SIG	10 am to noon	Discussion of internet sources
Mon., Dec. 21	Board Meeting	7 to 9 pm	
Sat., Jan. 2	Family Tree Maker SIG	10 am to noon	

Next Society Meeting

Monday, January 11

Topic: British Home Children

Speaker: Nola

Nola's grandmother was sent to Canada in 1897 as a twelve-year-old to work as a domestic servant as one of the British Home Children so this is a topic very dear to her

Member Benefits:

- Society events and activities
- Our member-exclusive email news bulletin *The Windsock* & newsletter *Chinook Arch*
- Full access to our Society's resources and library with lending privileges
- Opportunities to participate in our Special Interest Groups
- Gain new friends with similar research interests and have fun!

www.afhs.ab.ca/membership

Message from Jim Benedict, Webmaster

How to Check Your Membership Status and Payments

Want to check the status of your AFHS membership? That is now easy to do on the Society's website. You can review whether or not you need to renew, your expiry date, payment transactions and personal profile.

Start by logging in to the website at afhs.ab.ca, then use the menu to open the Membership dropdown options.

These are: Renew, My Profile, My Subscriptions and My Payments.

Renew takes you directly to the Renewal page. Scroll to the bottom to "Renew Now."

My Profile is the personal information the Society has on file. This is stored securely on our website's backend, and only you, the Membership Coordinator and the site Administrators can see your personal information. The information stored here is what AFHS uses to communicate with you. You can update your personal information, but please do not change your membership number. You will need to contact SIG leaders to inform them if your email address changes as they maintain their own distribution lists.

My Subscriptions is where you can see your current and past memberships with the Society going back as far as 2016. You can also see whether you have an individual or family membership. The top line should say YES under the column ACTIVE. Otherwise, check the date in the EXPIRES ON column to the right as you might need to renew your membership. If you are close to a renewal date, the option to Renew will appear to the right of the expiry date and you will be able to click here to start the renewal process.

My Payments is a list of all your payments including the amount, method of payment and current status.

We hope this tip will be a quick way to confirm your membership information and status. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our Membership Coordinator, Heather Grant, at membership@afhs.ab.ca



Ancestor Anecdotes

Not Just A Christmas Photo Amber Godfrey

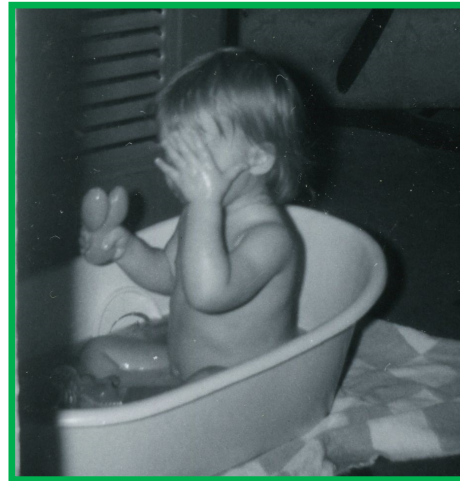
While scanning old family photos, like so many of us are doing these days with more time on our hands and less activities available outside the home, I noticed that many photos were taken at Christmas. These holiday photos often included other family members and friends who dropped by to visit. In fact, I just saw a photo of my first Christmas and realized that it was my paternal grandmother holding me in her arms.

This may not seem strange but my Nana, which is what we called her, lived in Manitoba and I was in a small town in Northern BC. My grandfather had died many years before and on a visit to Manitoba to see family, she had re-connected with a childhood neighbour and they ended up marrying.



I asked my Mom about it and she just said, "Oh yes, she wanted to meet you." I was the youngest of her five grandchildren at that time, and the other four, my aunt's children, lived nearby. So from what my Mom could remember, Nana got on a Greyhound bus and travelled across two provinces in December to see us. Without the evidence in that photo, the story might have been lost.

When film and developing was more expensive, cameras were often only brought out for family gatherings. In fact, my mother was such an avid picture taker that my younger cousin and I learned how to disappear as soon as we saw her head to get her camera. As you can see, I was not a fan of having my picture taken, from a young age! Now, of course, I treasure all those photographs.



Tips When Scanning Photos:

- Be sure to scan the back of any photos with writing or stamps on them. This can help you figure out who is in the photo and possibly when and/or where it was taken. Use this as a clue only. The accuracy of the label depends on who wrote it and when it was written.
- If a photo has a printed date on the front or back, it can give you a clue about when it was taken but remember that this was the date the pictures were developed and sometimes it could take months for a film to be finished and developed.
- Look at the background of the photo for clues to when and where it was taken too. A Christmas tree is a simple clue while a birthday cake with the celebrant behind and lit candles can indicate the month or even year (if you can count the candles and know their birthdate!).

Special Interest Groups

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs) are the ideal place to share your family history. The small-group setting allows for the exchange of information and suggestions on further avenues to pursue.

All SIGs are being held using Zoom for now and the groups do not meet during July and August. Check our website calendar for up-to-date information or email the SIG leader.

CELTIC SIG (Irish/Scots)

Meets every month on the fourth Saturday 10 am - Noon
celticsig@afhs.ab.ca

DIGITAL GENEALOGY SIG

Meets every month on the second Saturday 10 am - Noon
computergroup@afhs.ab.ca

DNA SIG

Meets every month on the third Sunday 1:30 - 3:30 pm.
dnasig@afhs.ab.ca

ENGLISH/WELSH SIG

Meets every month on the third Saturday 10 am - Noon
englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca

FAMILY TREE MAKER SIG

Meets every month on the first Saturday 10 am - Noon
ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca

LEGACY SIG

Meets alternate months on the last Sunday 1:30 - 3 pm
legacysig@afhs.ab.ca

ONTARIO SIG

Meets alternate months on the fourth Monday 1:30 to 3:30 pm
ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca

Legacy SIG Diane Duncan

In November, 18 people attended the Legacy SIG meeting. At our meetings we explore the many possibilities in the Legacy computer program that we use to record information about our families. The group includes both beginners and experienced users, and we all learn something new during these meetings.

Legacy Family Tree has a free trial version of the program available at legacyfamilytree.com. Most people who try the program upgrade to the deluxe or full program once they try it out. It is not expensive, and free updates keep the program current. When a major rewrite of code happens, it is available for users to buy for a nominal amount.

There is a wealth of information in the program help files to support Legacy users. Also, Legacy Family Tree Webinars website offers helpful videos for the program and other genealogy topics at familytreewebinars.com

Our group sessions complement the information available on Legacy's website. At each meeting, we highlight one aspect of the program in a presentation and also have a question and answer session at the end. Due to the COVID restrictions, our meetings are currently being held using Zoom. In addition, one-on-one assistance is available. If this group interests you, please contact Diane Duncan, Legacy SIG Leader at legacysig@afhs.ab.ca

Researchers in the past kept paper records of their work but we are quickly moving away from this to using more digital records. Some of us use online family trees to record our research but websites come and go or change their priorities and our tree may disappear. Also, depending on how the website is set up it may provide only limited access for others.

Many of us are finding that, aside from a few choice family photos and documents, no one in the next generation wants to store our paper records. Searching print documents is time consuming and makes answering queries from other researchers more difficult.

Digital tools, like Legacy, are able to address these issues. You have control over where and how your research is saved and you can easily look up information to share it with others in paper or digital form.

DNA Discoveries

Finding A Friend's Birth Family Using DNA Anne Lennox

A good friend of mine (Ross, age 65) was adopted at birth in central Canada. He did not know who his biological parents were until very recently.

After his adoptive mother died in 2009, Ross received a file of information about his birth and subsequent adoption. At the time, he had a very busy career as a CEO of a major Canadian organization and put the information away to look at later. For many years, the files remained forgotten.

Organizing his filing cabinet during the recent COVID-19 lockdown, he came across his adoption records and original birth certificate. He thought perhaps now was a good time to visit the past. Through this information he discovered his biological mother's name, but not his father's name. By researching his birth mother's name he discovered her newspaper obituary online. It listed the names of all of her other children and the name of her late husband.

That is when Ross decided to use Ancestry DNA and the Ancestry website to finally discover more about his birth family. The results were very positive. Suddenly he found an entirely new, and very large, family tree. His research is still ongoing.

It appears that Ross has numerous half siblings (his father married three times) and maybe even a full sister, still living in the city where he grew up. We have not found out much about his biological mother yet, but there are many on his father's side with whom he can now connect.

I will leave it to Ross to give us some insights from his experience:

I initially thought it would be important to learn more about my birth family from a health-challenges perspective. What had I inherited genetically? It turned into a fascinating study of nature versus nurture.

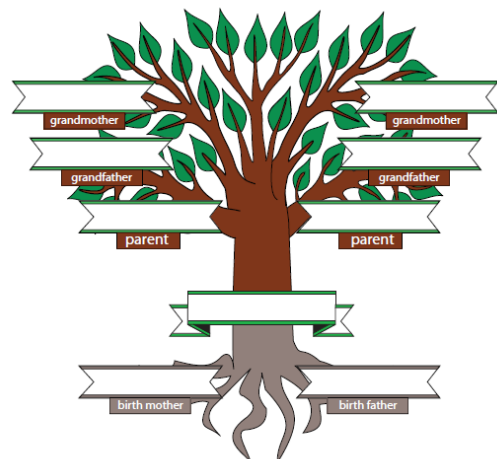
I looked at my two family trees, the birth tree and the adoption tree, and realized I was looking at one person and two paths. How different a person would I be if I hadn't been adopted (my biological father died when I was 12 and he was 74)? Would I have been able to afford higher education, for instance, which in turn gave me the most exciting of careers? Would my widowed mother have required support? What about my other siblings? My adopted parents and extended family were incredible. I am who I am today because of the love and support they provided.

I have come to realize through this journey that I am who I am not just because of DNA but because of how I was raised and nurtured. Many adoptive people want to look at old photos of their birth family and see a resemblance but, for me, that hasn't been the case.

On my birth tree, I see potential for family but do not know anyone—yet. On my adopted tree, I see my journey and the people that helped me along the way. I have a personal relationship with every single name. I am reconciling and coming to terms with these feelings.

My journey of discovery is recent. I am savouring every step and I continue to learn an awful lot about myself. I consider myself very fortunate.

FAMILY TREE



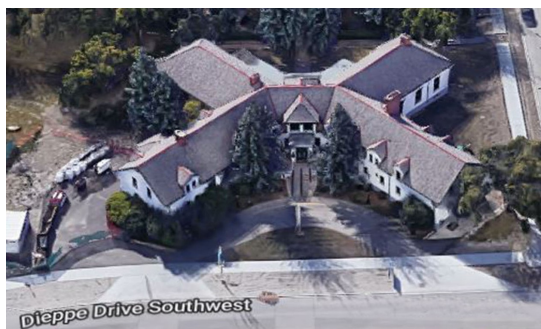
Calgary Connections

The Officers' Mess in Calgary Wayne Shephard

We live in an area of Calgary called Currie. It is named after the barracks that were built in 1933 to house the Canadian military.

During World War II, the armed forces members gathered for training and eventual posting to the theatres of battle around the world. Each service had their own area. My father was initially stationed here after he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1943. My father-in-law enlisted in the Canadian Army here in 1941.

Today the Officers' Mess has been renovated and converted to a boutique hotel and eating establishment called **The Inn on Officers' Garden**. Here is a photo of how the building looks today.



You can read about some of its history in my blog post at *Discover Genealogy*.

www.discovergenealogy.blogspot.com/2020/11/the-officers-mess-in-calgary.html

We have a more personal family connection with the Officers' Mess. Since our fathers were only regular soldiers, it is doubtful that either of them was ever in the building. But, during the war years, my mother-in-law, Jessie McKay, was the chief cook at the Mess. It was a job she was very proud of and, from all reports, very good at.

In order to get to work every day, Jessie had to take at least two Calgary Municipal Railway streetcars from her home in Hillhurst to either Marda Loop or Killarney. The trip would have taken over an hour each way.

In one of our family albums, there is a picture of Jessie with some of her cooking and serving staff, however, we do not know the names of any of those in the photo. She has been gone now for many years so we cannot ask her. This is an enhanced and colourized version of that photo. Jessie is on the right end of the group. You can also view a copy of the photo at my blog.



One important thing I would like to do in my family research is to find out who was pictured with Jessie in that 1943 photo, and perhaps who else worked at the Officers' Mess. I am trying to get information from various sources, but the task is difficult with so many decades having passed.

If anyone had relatives who worked at the Officers' Mess during the 1940s, know any people who did or recognize anyone in the picture, we would love to hear from you.

If you can help, please drop us a line at wshephard@shaw.ca.

Upcoming Events

Great Moments in Genealogy
***British Isles Family History Society of
Greater Ottawa***

December 12, 2020 8 am

www.bifhsgo.ca

Researching British Home Children
***British Isles Family History Society of
Greater Ottawa***

January 9, 2021 8 am

[www.bifhsgo.ca/eventListings.php?
nm=127#er538](http://www.bifhsgo.ca/eventListings.php?nm=127#er538)

Tips for Interviewing Relatives
American Ancestors

December 17, 2020 1 pm

[www.americanancestors.org/education/
online-classes](http://www.americanancestors.org/education/online-classes)

Genealogy Basics (6 week course)
Gale Courses - Calgary Public Library

Free online with your library card!

January 13 - February 10, 2021

[www.calgarylibrary.ca/read-learn-and-
explore/digital-library/gale-courses](http://www.calgarylibrary.ca/read-learn-and-explore/digital-library/gale-courses)

**Genealogy on the Fly: Using Apps to
Enhance Your Research**

Vivid-Pix (free class)

December 18, 2020 6 pm

www.vivid-pix.com/liveclasses

Art and Science of Quebec Genealogy
Quebec Genealogical Society

January 15 - 17, 2021

www.genquebec.com

Using the FamilySearch Catalog
FamilySearch

January 4, 2021 10 am

[www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/
Family_History_Library_Classes
_and_Webinars](http://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family_History_Library_Classes_and_Webinars)

RootsTech Connect 2021
FamilySearch

Free virtual conference!

February 25 - 27, 2021

www.rootstech.org

**Maximizing the Library and Archives
Canada Website**

***Detroit Society for Genealogical
Research***

January 9, 2021 8:30 am

[www.dsgr.org/eventListings.php?
nm=106](http://www.dsgr.org/eventListings.php?nm=106)

**Check for more conferences and
virtual webinars at:**

Conference Keeper:

www.conferencekeeper.org/virtual

Family Search:

www.familysearch.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Recruitment and Nominations Committee Chair and Members

With 2021 being only weeks away, it won't be long until our next Annual General Meeting and Election of Directors in April.

The position of Chair of our Volunteer Recruitment and Nominations Committee is currently vacant. Now is the time for you to consider stepping forward for this position or as a committee member. These volunteer positions require a limited time commitment but are so critical to the future of AFHS.

For more information or an informal chat, please get in touch with Peter at member-relations@afhs.ab.ca

Social Media Helpers

The Communications Team is looking for volunteers to help create content for Facebook, Instagram and our website News page. We're hoping to add "Wayback Wednesday" (Alberta or Calgary history) and "Family Friday" posts (featuring the family of a member). For each of these, we are looking for an image with a short description (about 5 sentences). If you have an image but need help with the writing, we have a volunteer who would provide assistance. If you would like to be a regular or occasional contributor, please contact Marion communications@afhs.ab.ca

Digital Journal Project

We would like to create a new members-only page on our website to post digital journals and newsletters from other societies. Please contact Marion communications@afhs.ab.ca if you could help contact organizations and help set this up.

Library Hours & Opportunities to Connect

AFHS Library & Office location:

712 - 16 Avenue NW Calgary

Library Open Hours

Closed until further notice



Get in Touch with us!

Email: info@afhs.ab.ca

Website: www.afhs.ab.ca

Phone: 403-214-1447

Facebook: Alberta Family Histories Society

Instagram:
[abfamilyhistoriessociety](https://www.instagram.com/abfamilyhistoriessociety)



Chinook Arch

Watch for our newsletter distributed by email monthly, on the Saturday before AFHS meetings, from September to June. Paper copies are available at meetings and at the AFHS Library.

We are looking for short articles and copyright-free pictures. Favourite relatives, fond family memories, great research tips and tricks, new genealogy technology you love or any related topics are accepted.

Editor: Amber Godfrey

Email: chinookarch@afhs.ab.ca