

# CHINOOK ARCH

April 2021 Volume 3 Issue 4



ALBERTA FAMILY  
HISTORIES SOCIETY

## Society Meetings

### Our Next Society Meeting: Monday, April 12

**LOCATION:** Zoom meeting

**TIME:** 7 to 9 pm

**Topic:** Annual General Meeting and Irish Research with Ron Gilmore

The presentation will focus on Irish genealogical records, where they are located and how to access them.

### Upcoming Meetings

All held virtually using Zoom until further notice. Contact [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca) to receive an invitation.

DATE	GROUP	TIME	TOPIC
Sat., April 10	Digital Genealogy SIG	10 am to noon	Evernote/Trees and Branches
Sat., April 17	English/Welsh SIG	10 am to noon	Member recommendations for UK resources
Sun., April 18	DNA SIG	1:30 to 3:30 pm	
Thurs., April 22	Board Meeting	7 to 9 pm	
Sat., April 24	Celtic SIG	10 am to noon	
Sun., April 25	Legacy SIG	1:30 to 3:30 pm	Legacy tips and tricks
Mon., April 26	Ontario SIG	1:30 to 3:30 pm	US & Canada Border Crossings by Nancy Leveque
Sat., May 1	Family Tree Maker SIG	10 am to noon	Family Tree Maker tips and tricks

### Next Society Meetings

**Monday, May 10, 2021**

**Topic:** Using Internet Archive

**Speaker:** Christine Hayes

**Monday, June 14, 2021**

**Topic:** Writing Family Histories

**Speaker:** Michele Buhler

### 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](http://www.afhs.ab.ca/membership)

## AFHS Member Updates

### AFHS Board Update

Marion Peterson - Director (Communications)

#### Leadership Changes

Our Annual General Meeting is approaching, and with it comes our election of Directors. Three Directors decided not to continue for another term. We would like to thank Jasmin Naglis (Secretary), Bev Archer (Treasurer) and Peter McKenzie (Director – Member Relations) for their time, talents and dedication as Directors on our Board.

As well, two key volunteers have stepped down from their positions in the last month. Ann Williams resigned as our representative for the Family History Federation, a role she has held since about 2002. Heather Grant is changing from Membership Coordinator to Volunteer Appreciation.

Thanks Jasmin, Bev, Peter, Ann and Heather!

#### AFHS Reaching Out

COVID-19 has led to some wonderful opportunities to reach out beyond the Calgary region. Guest speakers are being sought by us and others as Zoom offers opportunities for remote speaking engagements. Some examples:

- Our June Society meeting was a presentation about Reading Old Handwriting, done by Larry Gilchrist of British Columbia. A video of this meeting and its handout are available to members in the “Meeting Archive” section of our website.
- Bev Smith and Wayne Smith have recently done talks for Winnipeg Branch, Manitoba Genealogical Society. In exchange, Kelly Southwick has done several presentations for our English/Welsh SIG.
- Ontario SIG has enjoyed presentations by Nancy Leveque and Spencer Linington who both live in Ontario. Their knowledge of the local resources is greatly appreciated.
- Jim Benedict recently presented “Succession Proofing Your Family History” to the Miramichi Branch of the New Brunswick Genealogy Society. As a result, he has been asked to speak later this month to the United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada, Pacific Region and the Saint John Branch of NBGS. He will be doing the same talk for Historic Calgary Week.

If you would like to be on our list of those willing to do speaking engagements, please contact Marion at [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca).

We are also looking for members willing to share a tip during our “Genealogy Minute” at a Society meeting. Christine can be reached at [programs@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:programs@afhs.ab.ca)

## Ancestor Anecdotes

### Trunk of Tears

Heather Williams

The “Trunk of Tears” is an old steamer trunk that my grandmother, Annie Scott Wilkie brought with her from Scotland, all the way to her new home in Garden Plains, Alberta. Sadly, family tragedy would prevent her from using all the things she lovingly packed.

Her steamer trunk was typical of that era. It was constructed of wood slats, possibly pine, a type of canvas that was stained in rust colours and brass-like trimmings on the edges, corners, locks, and the two hinges located at the back. Inside was a full-length tray about two to three inches deep. The top was slightly curved to add to its majesty. Gram’s trunk was 36-40 inches long, 23 inches wide and 24-28 inches high.



The precious items that she carefully stowed in her trunk included damask linens (she worked in a linen factory), some photos, tartan items and mementos of her baby boy who had died a few months earlier. Departure details note that she sailed November 29, 1920 on a ship called *The Pretorian* from Glasgow to Quebec.



Once in Canada, she traveled by train, on the CPR, to Stettler, Alberta. There she and her luggage were probably collected and taken to her final destination of Garden Plains, Alberta.

I call this family heirloom the “Trunk of Tears” because of the tragedies that soon unfolded upon my grandparents. Occasionally, Gram would slide her hand fondly over this “fine piece of furniture,” all the while remembering her precious homeland of Scotland. Gram knew that when she left her home & family in 1920, she probably would never return.

My grandparents first trip to Canada happened in 1911, but they were forced to return to Scotland because of their daughter’s health problems and perhaps Gram’s homesickness too. In 1914, World War I began and there was no returning to Canada while it raged across Europe and made Atlantic ocean crossings dangerous. Finally, in 1920, they decided to return to Canada. Grandpa went first, but while he was on his way to Canada, their 18-month-old son died in Scotland. Gram buried her “wee baby boy” and then headed to Canada to join her husband. Tragedies continued when, in 1925, their beloved daughter Nettie died in Alberta, followed by a serious mining accident where Grampa lost an eye and was never able to return to coal mining.

I inherited my Gram’s steamer trunk and stored many of my own keepsakes inside it - homemade baby quilts, our children’s outgrown clothing. But over the years, it began to show its age. Locks no longer worked, the hinges were broken, it was deteriorating quickly. Our “Trunk of Tears” took its last journey in 2009 to the City of Calgary Spy Hill Landfill, me crying all the way. Even though the physical trunk is now gone, it lives on in pictures, my memories of “a fine piece of furniture” and my Gram’s stories of her homeland.

## 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](mailto:celticsig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **DIGITAL GENEALOGY SIG**

*Meets every month on the second Saturday 10 am - Noon*  
[familygenes@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:familygenes@afhs.ab.ca)

### **DNA SIG**

*Meets every month on the third Sunday 1:30 - 3:30 pm*  
[dnasig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:dnasig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **ENGLISH/WELSH SIG**

*Meets every month on the third Saturday 10 am - Noon*  
[englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **FAMILY TREE MAKER SIG**

*Meets every month on the first Saturday 10 am - Noon*  
[ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **LEGACY SIG**

*Meets alternate months on the last Sunday 1:30 - 3 pm*  
[legacysig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:legacysig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **ONTARIO SIG**

*Meets every month on the fourth Monday 1:30 - 3:30 pm*  
[ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca)

## Ontario SIG

Tara Shymanski

In the March meeting of the Ontario SIG, Marion Peterson shared a suggestion for searching on Ancestry. This is a great way to find what records are available for Ontario – or whichever area you are researching. Using this method makes it easy to find the specific record collection that you want.

When I search, I'm usually looking for a particular record collection. Maybe I want to find an ancestor in all the census records or a birth, marriage, or death record. Rather than search through thousands of suggestions from Ancestry, most that aren't my ancestor, searching in the exact collection narrows down the search – unless I'm looking for Smiths.

You can find records this way with either a personal Ancestry account or using the Ancestry Library Edition.

1. Go to Search – All Collections
2. Scroll down the page to the map (my page lands on United States)
3. Select Canada (or the country you want) - your options are USA, UK/Ireland, Europe, Canada, and Australia/New Zealand
4. A map with the Canadian provinces appears when you choose Canada
5. Select Ontario (or the province you want)

This is the page you are taken to when you choose Ontario:

#### Data Collections

##### Ontario Census & Voter Lists

- ☐ Ontario, Canada Voter Lists, 1867-1900
- ☐ Ontario, Canada Census Index, 1871 **FREE**
- ☐ Durham County, Ontario Census, 1861
- ☐ Wellington County, Ontario Canada 1851 Census
- ☐ Blenheim, Chatham, and Harwich, Kent County, Ontario Census, 1881

[View all Ontario Census & Voter Lists \(12\)](#)

##### Ontario Birth, Marriage & Death

- ☐ Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1938
- ☐ Ontario, Canada Births, 1832-1914
- ☐ Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1948
- ☐ U.S., Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Swedish American Church Records, 1800-1947
- ☐ Ontario, Canada, Roman Catholic Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1760-1923

[View all Ontario Birth, Marriage & Death \(38\)](#)

There are eleven categories, and under each category you can click on **View All** to see the complete list of records available.

This is a great way to see what Ontario records are available on Ancestry. For records you frequently use, you can even create a quick link for it. I encourage you to try this method and see if it works for you.

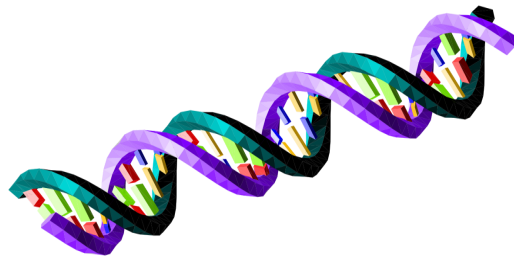
## DNA Discoveries

### How DNA Helped My Genealogical Journey

Bev Smith

Back in 1979, when I took my first how-to genealogical course, the folks around me laughed and said that I'd never succeed with a family name like "Smith." For a few years I was intimidated, until Wayne's cousin sent some names and dates from their aunt. "It's a place to start," I said. Then along came the internet, and my sister-in-law found all sorts of information. Was it correct? There was no real way to confirm it without trips to various archives, which neither of us could afford at that time.

So, let's fast forward to when DNA testing became available. Wayne spit and swabbed to indulge me, as he really had no interest but knew it was important for me to see if all those years of searching were on the right track. You cannot assume that two Smith families that are neighbours are related ... much too risky! I used both FTDNA and Ancestry. And so far Wayne's small matches with trees are showing connections with all but one of the eight siblings that came to Canada with their parents, Thomas & Sarah Smith, in 1830 from my research. Yes, they are small, distant cousin matches, but there is a connection somewhere, and, in a few cases, they had little to go on except the research I had done. We filled in the gaps for each other. Luckily they hadn't relied on other trees on Ancestry but had actual proof, photographs and certificates, to say who their ancestors were.



[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Double-stranded\\_DNA\\_sequence.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Double-stranded_DNA_sequence.svg)

In one example, I found a match that had an unusual surname, just like the one in the list of descendants for one of Wayne's branches, but they had no tree. So I looked for a tree on Ancestry that fit. I emailed the tree owner who turned out to be managing the tree for a friend, plus doing all the research. He asked his friend if the name I had was familiar, and it turned out that she was a niece in Australia. I emailed her and discovered that that she had done a DNA test but was only interested in ethnicity, not genealogy. She did confirm that my earlier contact was her uncle. Mystery solved, and my brick wall was climbed over!

Because some Smith siblings married Cameron siblings, some of Wayne's matches are a bit stronger. They could be from either of the two directions, so I guess the challenge is to see if he's more Smith than Cameron in those cases. I'm not too worried about it. Besides, he falls asleep when they play the bagpipes!

This has been a rewarding exercise, and my advice is to not ignore the small matches, as they could help break down your "brick walls" too.



### Grandma's Boarding House Rosemary Kry

In 1922 my paternal grandmother, Amelia Perrin, opened her house on 4th Avenue SW as a room and board establishment. This was the same year the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology opened, with students requiring a place to stay. How fortuitous!



Amelia's Boarding House 720 4 Ave. S.W. Calgary

The house consisted of three floors and a basement. The basement was simply a cellar hole only large enough to hold the furnace and the coal bin. She had to clear out ashes from the furnace every day. Natural gas didn't come to Calgary until 1930, but the house did have indoor plumbing and electricity.

The main floor had a long, dark hallway, with a moose head hanging on the end wall. To the right side of the hallway, there was a drawing room (living room) at the front, a large dining room in the middle and a kitchen at the back. Grandmother Amelia partitioned off a 6' x 6' room at one end of the kitchen and under the stairs to make herself a small bedroom.

The second floor had a bathroom and four bedrooms with a double bed and sink in each. If my grandmother could rent the four

beds to eight students during the school term (two to a bed) at \$15 each per month (including meals), she had sufficient income to cover the school term and the summer holidays.

The top floor had one small room and a large closet. Originally, her daughters used the top floor room and then later it was rented to a carpenter who lived there for over 30 years.

Grandmother supplemented her income with produce from her own garden, and more produce, eggs, butter and chickens from her husband, who lived on a farm in Didsbury and came down to Calgary every two to three months on the train. She, in return, sent back baked cookies, cakes and pie. In this manner, she was able to provide for her three daughters, herself and, later on, her mother.

Her mother's arrival in 1938 was not a happy occasion. Her presence meant my grandmother could now only rent out three rooms on the second floor. My great-grandmother was also very demanding and would not help with the work of the house. She would outlive my grandmother by three years.

The same students returned year after year. There was a piano in the house, and my eldest aunt quite impressed everyone by playing the latest, liveliest tunes. The students also strung wiring throughout the house, outside and up to the top of the telephone poles to catch reception on their crystal radios.

My grandmother worked extremely hard, including a lot of volunteer work for the Lutheran church she attended. My Dad, her son, always said she did much more than she should have. She was 5' 2" tall and stout, could speak and read German and English, and loved flowers. She died at age 61 in 1942, before I was born. I would have enjoyed meeting her.

## Upcoming Events

### CALGARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

#### Family History Coaching Program

Free online help

**Calgary Public Library/AFHS**

April 24, 2021 1 - 3 pm

<https://calgarylibrary.ca/events-and-programs/programs/virtual-family-history-coaching>

#### THE Genealogy Show 2021

Virtual conference

**THE Genealogy Show**

June 25 - 26, 2021

<https://thegenealogyshow.uk>

### CONFERENCES/WEBINARS

#### RootsTech 2021

**FamilySearch**

Available free online until 2022

[www.familysearch.org/rootstech/rtc2021](http://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/rtc2021)

#### GenFair 2021

Virtual conference

**Wetaskiwin Branch AGS**

April 24, 2021

<https://www.abgenealogy.ca/genfair-2021>

#### Canadian Genealogical Virtual Research Institute

Virtual conference

**CGVRI**

July 18 - 23, 2021

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

#### Irish Lines and Female Finds: Exploring Irish records, female ancestors and genetic genealogy

Virtual conference

**British Isles Family History Society  
of Greater Ottawa**

September 19 - 26, 2021

<https://bifhsgo2021.ca>

#### Scottish Indexes Conference

Virtual conference

**Scottish Indexes**

May 22, 2021

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

#### My Roots, Your Roots, Ontario's Roots: Virtual Conference & Family History Show

**Ontario Ancestors**

June 4 - 6, 2021

<https://conference.ogs.on.ca>

Check for more conferences  
and webinars at:

Conference Keeper:

[www.conferencekeeper.org/virtual](http://www.conferencekeeper.org/virtual)

Family Search:

[www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family\\_History\\_Library\\_Classes\\_and\\_Webinars](http://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family_History_Library_Classes_and_Webinars)

GENEVA (UK events):

<http://geneva.weald.org.uk/doku.php>

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Indexing Past Issues of Our Journal

Have some extra time and looking for a project to help with? We are in the process of indexing the past issues of *Chinook*. Contact Marion [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca) if you want to assist.

### We Need Your Stories!

Alberta Family Histories Society wants to help our members share family stories as well as their family history research expertise. We have a few ways to do so: our monthly newsletter *Chinook Arch*, the very popular #FamilyFriday posts on our Facebook page, "brags" and "Genealogy Minutes" at the monthly AFHS meetings and the opportunity to do a presentation for our society or other family history groups. We are looking for both longer and shorter submissions and provide assistance to edit your submission to make it shine (while keeping your personal style intact). There are a huge number of ways to "give back" to AFHS so please consider contributing something to one of these worthy causes. To get more information on how to submit something to *Chinook Arch*, contact Amber at [chinookarch@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:chinookarch@afhs.ab.ca) and for the other opportunities, contact Marion [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca).

### Requesting Advice For New Genealogists

Christine is working on a beginner's program for Historic Calgary Week and needs your input. She asks the question, "If you could go back in time, what advice would you give yourself to make your future family history research easier?" She plans to tailor her presentation around your responses, so please send them to Christine at [programs@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:programs@afhs.ab.ca)

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## Library Hours & Opportunities to Connect

### Library Open Hours

Closed until further notice

Curbside pickup and drop off now available! See the AFHS website for details.



### Get in touch with us!

Email: [info@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:info@afhs.ab.ca)

Website: [www.afhs.ab.ca](http://www.afhs.ab.ca)

Phone: 403-214-1447

Facebook: Alberta Family Histories Society

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



### AFHS Library & Office location:

712 - 16 Avenue NW Calgary

### 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.

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