

# Chinook Arch

May 2024  
Volume 6 Issue 5



ALBERTA FAMILY  
HISTORIES SOCIETY  
*Supporting worldwide family history research*

## NEXT SOCIETY MEETING

**Monday, May 13, 2024**

**Topic:** Annual General Meeting & "Murder & Consequences"  
**Speaker:** Ron Gilmore  
**Location:** In-person (Bow Cliff Seniors Centre) and Zoom (register on website)  
**Time:** 7 - 9 pm

## FUTURE MEETINGS

**Monday, May 20, 2024**

**Topic:** Chit Chat – In The Good Old Summertime  
**Hosts:** Linda Murray and Kelly Southworth  
**Location:** Zoom (link on website calendar)  
**Time:** 7 – 9 pm

**Monday, June 10, 2024**

**Topic:** Society Meeting – Volunteer Appreciation Night and Social Time  
**Location:** Bow Cliff Seniors Centre  
**Time:** 7 – 9 pm

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## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Watch for our newsletter, *Chinook Arch*, distributed monthly by email from September to June.

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

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

# President's Message

Ron Gilmore

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is coming up on May 13, 2024. Here we have an opportunity to elect our leadership team for the coming year. You will see some new faces as well as some very familiar folks who continue to contribute in major ways to our society. These will be the people who will lead us next year and into the future. A big thanks to the members who have put forward their names for positions or have agreed to continue in their Board positions. Make sure you attend the meeting, either in person or virtually, to vote!

I will be sharing one of my favorite presentations entitled "Murder and Consequences" which covers a murder in my family and the research that discovered the fascinating saga. The presentation also includes a romp through history as the story touches on the lives of some very famous folks. Be warned, this is not for the faint of heart, but the journey resonates to this day.

We have some exciting news regarding our upcoming Family Roots Genealogy Conference in the fall. Also, congratulations to the attendees of our latest Genealogy 101 course. Your path forward is now fortified with tools and confidence. Our Webmaster has further updates on the expansions of our websites, all designed to enhance our resources. AFHS finances are in good order and will be further supported by our upcoming Casino. A few more volunteers are needed for the casino, so anyone able to help can contact Jane at [casino@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:casino@afhs.ab.ca). And, last but not least, your library continues as our primary resource with new volunteers and new content additions.

Come join us at the Bow Cliff Seniors Centre, Monday May 13, 2024 at 7:00 PM.

## Family Roots 2024 Genealogy Conference

### Roots Are Long & Deep



**Presented by Alberta Family Histories Society  
October 5, 2024 | Hotel Blackfoot, Calgary**

Speakers: Gord McBean and Kendra Gaede

\$70 for AFHS members

\$80 for Non-members

includes

4 Lectures, Lunch & Digital Syllabus

**For more information, please visit our website [www.afhs.ab.ca](http://www.afhs.ab.ca)**

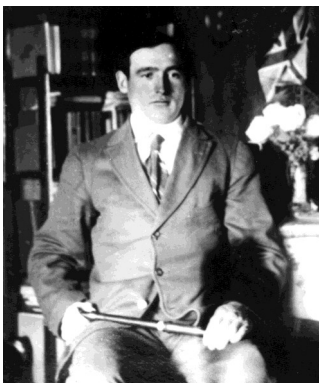


### My Dashing Great-Uncle Willy

Linda Murray

My great-uncle, William Robert (Willy) MARRS, was born November 13, 1892, in Bruce County, Ontario. He was the second child and eldest son of Robert William MARRS and Charlotte Catherine STAFFORD. His older sister, Margaret (Maggie), and his younger brother, John Edwin (my grandfather Ed), were also born in Bruce County. Then the family moved west and settled near Dauphin, Manitoba. Two more children, Albertha (Betty) and George, were born to the family there.

Willy became a farmer like his father. Sadly, he died from influenza only ten days after his 26th birthday, on November 23, 1918. Other than his birth and death dates and one photo, I had no other information about my great-uncle. Then I heard that FamilySearch had probate records online for Manitoba. I went to the probate database and put in all my common surnames. Imagine my surprise when my search brought up a four page will, handwritten on Winnipeg General Hospital stationary, dated November 20, 1918 and signed by W. R. MARRS! Willy's signature was rather shaky, but this was written only three days before his death.



**William Robert (Willy) MARRS**

In his will, Willy named his mother, Charlotte Catherine MARRS, to be the executor and trustee. He left his farm, including livestock and machinery and the money in his bank account, valued at not less than \$18,116.55, to his father, Robert William MARRS, to take care of all his debts. A list of his possessions included an Overland car, valued at \$1000. So, he was a prosperous young farmer at the tender age of 26.

Willy left \$1000 each to his brother John Edwin and his sister Maggie. He also bequeathed his Overland car jointly to his two brothers, John Edwin and George. He directed that his younger sister Betty was to receive \$1,000 at the age of 21. His youngest sibling George was to receive an annual amount of \$200 for his education. If George did not continue his college courses, he would receive \$1,000 at the age of 21.

Willy also left \$100 to his widowed maternal aunt Ida Fair and \$100 to Saint Catherine's Presbyterian Church, to be applied to the present minister's salary. This was the church founded and built by his parents. I know a bit more about my great uncle now. He was generous to his siblings and his widowed aunt. Religion was important to him, as he left money to the church.

I found it interesting that in 1918 he owned an expensive automobile. I couldn't find statistics for Canada but found one source that stated in 1918, only 1 in 13 United States families owned an automobile. I had never heard of an Overland car but found out that they were one of the earliest mass producers of automobiles. According to the American Auto History website, "by 1915, the company had risen to the position of second largest automobile manufacturer in the U.S." I don't know which car my great-uncle purchased, but in 1916, the company introduced the Willys-Knight Model 88, a four-cylinder, seven-passenger touring car in French blue that sold for \$1,285.

I wonder what kind of life Willy would have had if he had not fallen victim to the flu epidemic. I never got the chance to know him but now when I think of him, I will picture him sailing down the country roads in his dashing automobile.

The Canada, Manitoba Probate Records, 1871-1930 includes a searchable index to the estate files.

[www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1987562](http://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1987562)

Probate records are available on FamilySearch for British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

## Special Interest Groups

**SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)** are the ideal place to expand your knowledge and share your own family history challenges.

The small-group setting gives you an opportunity to ask questions and get help from more experienced researchers.

**SIGs are now being held in three formats: in-person only, Zoom only or a hybrid version of in-person & Zoom.** Check the calendar on our website for up-to-date information or email the SIG leader.

SIGs are an AFHS member benefit. If you would like to attend a SIG meeting to try one out before joining, ask for an invitation from:

[communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca)

### **CELTIC SIG (Irish/Scots)**

*Meets on the 4th Saturday  
10 am – Noon*  
[celticsig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:celticsig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **DIGITAL GENEALOGY SIG**

*Meets on the 2nd Saturday  
10 am – Noon*  
[familygenes@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:familygenes@afhs.ab.ca)

### **ENGLISH/WELSH SIG**

*Meets on the 3rd Saturday  
10 am – Noon*  
[englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **FAMILY TREE MAKER SIG**

*Meets on the 1st Saturday  
10 am – Noon*  
[ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **LEGACY SIG**

*Meets on the 4th Tuesday  
7:00 – 9:00 pm*  
[legacysig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:legacysig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **ONTARIO SIG**

*Meets on the 4th Monday  
1:30 – 3:30 pm*  
[ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca)

### **DNA SIG**

*Meets on the 2nd Sunday  
12:30-2:30 pm*  
[dnasig@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:dnasig@afhs.ab.ca)

The SIG groups do not meet during the summer (July and August).

The AFHS Library is located at **712 - 16 Avenue NW, Calgary** and all in-person SIG group meetings are held there. Members are encouraged to stay after meetings, when possible, to browse the collection!

The Library has over twelve thousand print items and many are available to be borrowed for a one-month loan. Electronic resources include computers, a multi-function printer, scanners (flatbed and overhead) and a microfiche reader. Journals from around the world are available to view in-library in either print or digital formats. As a **FamilySearch Affiliate Library**, visitors can now view additional FamilySearch digital records at the AFHS library that they can't see at home.

## SIG NEWS

- Want to learn more about using Y-DNA in your family history research? At the May DNA SIG meeting, Greg Cave will be sharing a Y-DNA case study. \*\*Note that this meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 14 at 7 pm as Mother's Day falls on the usual Sunday meeting date.
- The English/Welsh SIG is honouring Women's History Month by sharing a favourite female relative's story at their May meeting.
- Christine Woodcock will be doing a presentation on Scottish Research in Ontario at the May meeting of the Ontario SIG.
- Our members can watch recorded sessions of past SIG meetings and peruse handouts at the AFHS website. You must be signed in to the website to access them. Go to Resources, then click on Meeting Videos & Handouts.
- To search for specific topics or words on the Meeting Videos & Handouts page, hold down the CTRL and F keys at the same time to bring up a search box, then enter your search terms and press Enter.
- If you or someone you know would like to be a guest at a SIG meeting, send a message to [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca)

### Beware Obituary Scammers

Ron Gilmore

As genealogists, we are very familiar with using the information found in obituaries for research purposes but sadly now we aren't the only ones mining these for information. A recent newspaper article issued warnings to folks who have recently lost a loved one and were planning on placing an obituary in their local newspaper to inform family, friends, and acquaintances.

Typically, when we write an obituary, we include some history of the deceased: where and when they were born, the names of their parents and siblings, where they went to school, who and when they married, their children along with their spouses and names and locations of grandchildren. For genealogists, obituaries have proven to be pure gold when researching families. Now, however, the game is changing.

Newspapers are facing financial challenges with diminishing advertising revenues, such that many are disappearing completely and newspapers still in existence have chosen to charge large sums to publish an obituary. This makes placing an obituary in a newspaper a financial burden on family members that some can't afford. Plus, many newspapers are now burying obituaries behind paywalls so that only subscribers can access them.

Funeral homes now include online obituaries as part of their services, but this may make them more difficult for people to find. In smaller places, it may be easy to figure out which funeral home to search for, but in cities there are hundreds of options. Google does help with this, but you also must wade through many possible options. Obituaries are also only available for a limited time as newer obituaries replace them.

Worse yet is the attack of the scammers. Scammers will latch onto the names of family

members and commit identity fraud by applying for credit cards, renting vehicles or residences, opening telephone accounts, etc. in their names. Families are now warned to avoid providing unnecessary personal details and to watch out for unexpected requests or communications. Scammers may contact family members claiming a connection and fabricating urgent situations that require financial assistance. Thieves may also target homes of family during funerals looking for unused medication and valuable possessions. Shameful!

Sadly, that once great resource for genealogists, obituary information, is now under serious attack. For tips on what information to avoid including in an obituary and while planning a funeral, check out these articles.

Obituary Scams: A Way to Say Goodbye or Commit Fraud?

[www.ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca/news/articles/obituary-scams-fraud](http://www.ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca/news/articles/obituary-scams-fraud)

Obituaries used for fraud (mentions tips for executors and popular scams)

<https://www.edmontonpolice.ca/CrimePrevention/PersonalFamilySafety/Frauds/Identity/ObituaryFraud>

Seniors Guidebook to Safety and Security (Funeral Planning section)

<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/seniors-guidebook-safety-and-security#a10>





### *Calgary's Story at Calgary Public Library*

Amber Godfrey



This wonderful collection of family history and Calgary heritage resources is available free from the Calgary Public Library. You can view in-person exhibits on Level 4 of Central Library. On the website, see historic photos and postcards, take part in a Historic Calgary Escape Room challenge, connect with the current Historian in Residence and watch documentaries and programs on Calgary's history.

#### *Williams & Harris Shared History Centre*

The Centre includes the *Historic Maps of Calgary and Alberta* collection, *Postcards from the Past* (using Biblioboard), *The East Village Story*, *Century Homes Calgary (2012 & 2013)* and collections of photos documenting historic buildings both public and private.

#### *The Fidler Map*

The first recorded map of the Blackfoot traditional territory was created by Blackfoot Chief Ackomokki but was named after the European who transcribed the drawings, Peter Fidler. Watch a short video about the map's story online.

#### *Calgary Public Library's YouTube channel*

View recorded sessions about local and world history, including *Genealogy Tips for Beginners* by our own AFHS member Christine Hayes!

#### *Voices of Calgary*

Learn about the history of flooding in Calgary from 1883 through to the big flood of 2013, view keynote speeches on Calgary history and heritage from the Calgary Remembered conference in 2015, experience stories from community members about their experience during the COVID-19 pandemic using written, audio, and visual mediums, or watch videos from the Newcomer Stories Collection about the experience of recent immigrants to Calgary.

<https://calgarylibrary.ca/connect/calgary-story>

## CALGARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Family History Coaching

In-person at Central Library

**Calgary Public Library**

May 25, 2024 1:00 – 3:00 pm

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

## CONFERENCES/WEBINARS

\*all times listed are in MDT

### Finding the Records for “Impossible” Genealogy – Lessons Learned From a Chinese Genealogist

Virtual

**Legacy Webinars**

May 8, 2024 6:00 pm

<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar/finding-the-records-for-impossible-genealogy-lessons-learned-from-a-chinese-genealogist>

### Family Tree: Merging Duplicate Individuals

Virtual

**FamilySearch**

May 14, 2024 10:00 am

[www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/FamilySearch\\_Library\\_Classes\\_and\\_Webinars](http://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/FamilySearch_Library_Classes_and_Webinars)

### Trusting Your Sources: How Do You Know You’ve Found the Right Record? by Marie Palmer

Hybrid

**Qualicum Beach Family History Society**

May 15, 2024 8:00 pm

[www.qbfhs.ca/category/speakers](http://www.qbfhs.ca/category/speakers)

### ACGS Spring Conference 2024

Virtual

**American-Canadian Genealogical Society of  
New Hampshire**

May 18, 2024 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

<https://acgs.org/product/2024-virtual-spring-conference>

### A Tour of Goldie May’s Genealogy Power Tools

Virtual

**Legacy Webinars**

May 22, 2024 12:00 pm

<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar/a-tour-of-goldie-mays-genealogy-power-tools>

### Ontario Ancestors 2024 Conference

In-person

**Toronto Branch, Ontario Ancestors**

June 14 – June 16, 2024

<https://conference2024.ogs.on.ca>

### Scottish Indexes Conference XXV

Virtual

**Scottish Indexes**

September 7, 2024

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

### Family Roots 2024 Genealogy Conference: Roots Are Long & Deep

In-person

**Alberta Family Histories Society**

October 5, 2024 8:45 am – 3:45 pm

<https://afhs.ab.ca/event/family-roots-2024>

## About Our Society

Alberta Family Histories Society is a registered non-profit organization that welcomes anyone interested in genealogy and family history! For over 40 years, we've helped people grow their family trees and discover the stories of their roots. We have substantial resources about Calgary and southern Alberta but can help you research your roots worldwide. Our website is <https://afhs.ab.ca>.

We learn from each other in a variety of settings – Society meetings, Special Interest Group meetings, workshops and biannual conferences. For up-to-date meeting information, see our website calendar at <https://afhs.ab.ca/calendar>.

Visit one of our best resources - our library! Our collection is broad with an emphasis on materials pertaining to Alberta and Canada. We are a FamilySearch Affiliate Library. Our volunteers look forward to showing you what we have to offer for your genealogy research. You can view a catalogue of our holdings at <https://afhs.ab.ca/library>.

Documenting local historical records is part of our mission. Alberta Ancestors is a special project to showcase cemetery records at <https://albertaancestors.ca>. With 100 cemeteries and nearly 150,000 photographs, it is a priceless resource.

Members have a wealth of opportunities to share strategies, struggles, successes and stories with others who appreciate the challenges of this hobby. One option is for members to share family tree projects and to post stories online as part of our Family Genes website at <https://www.familygenes.ca>.

We welcome visitors, so please drop in at a meeting and introduce yourself. Come see how our services and programs can fit your needs. We hope you will join us either in-person or virtually! To receive a guest Zoom invitation to one of our Society meetings, contact Marion at [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca).

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## AFHS LIBRARY & OFFICE

### ADDRESS:

712 - 16 Avenue NW

### Library Open Hours

#### Spring Hours

Thursday, 10 am - 2 pm

Saturday, Noon - 4 pm

**\*\*closed Victoria Day weekend\*\***

*Check our website calendar for any time changes or closures.*



ALBERTA FAMILY  
HISTORIES SOCIETY

## CONTACT 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



### Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, we would like to acknowledge that the land on which we gather and where we work to preserve the records and family history of those who came before us are on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising of the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani First Nations), the Tsúú'tínà, the Stoney Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw and Goodstoney First Nations), the Métis Nation (Districts 5 & 6) and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.