



## NEXT SOCIETY MEETING

**Monday, September 8, 2025**

**Topic:** The *D.R. Eaton* Tragedy: Researching Three Nova Scotian Brothers Who Were Lost at Sea

**Speaker:** Amber Godfrey

**Location:** In-person and Zoom (register on website calendar)

**Time:** 7 – 9 pm

## FUTURE MEETINGS

**Monday, September 15, 2025**

**Topic:** Chit Chat Session

**Hosts:** Linda Murray and Kelly Southworth

**Location:** Zoom (link on website calendar)

**Time:** 7 – 8:30 pm

**Monday, October 20, 2025**

**Topic:** Start, Search, Discover: Genealogy Essentials

**Speaker:** Christine Hayes

**Location:** In-person and Zoom (register on website calendar)

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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.

**Editor:** Amber Godfrey

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

# President's Message

## Gordon Lane

I hope you all had a great summer and managed to get some work done on finding those elusive ancestors. Our intrepid gravesite volunteers carried on their work over the summer and we now have 362 cemeteries and over 260,000 memorials on the *Alberta Ancestors* websites. Thanks to Ron Gilmore's efforts to promote AFHS, we were mentioned in local newspapers, this time in the *Airdrie News* and the *Western Wheel*.

Ancestry has just released a new tool in the Gallery area of a Person record. If you upload a picture of a handwritten document, you can have the AI tool on Ancestry transcribe it for you! It is not 100% accurate, but a lot of the hard work is done for you. I have a long, poorly-written letter from my wife's grandfather that I am going to try it out on.

I work in the building where our new Resource Centre is located, so I often pop in to say hi to everyone. Unfortunately, "everyone" always seems to be just the volunteers who operate the Resource Centre. It would be great to see more visitors utilizing it. The place is bright, spacious, and packed with books, computers, printers and scanners to carry out your research. There is even a small kitchen to brew a cup of tea or coffee! All the comforts of home without the distractions.

The Resource Centre has been visited by other genealogy and history related groups which some of our members belong to, so it is getting some use. I can understand in winter with the dark nights and the poor driving that people would prefer to use Zoom for their meetings, but I believe everyone who has been to an in-person version of our Society meeting enjoyed it more than a Zoom meeting. When people talk face-to-face they have conversations about many topics and often learn new things they didn't even know they needed to know!

Saturday, September 6 is our End-of-Summer Event that our Director (Events and Education) Sharon White has organized. It will be held at the Resource Centre and also in the Atrium of the building. Drop by between 3 and 6 pm and you are invited to bring a friend, but please RSVP by September 2.

Our first Society meeting after the summer break is on Monday, September 8. Amber Godfrey will be presenting *The D.R. Eaton Tragedy: Researching Three Nova Scotian Brothers Who Were Lost at Sea*. The meeting will be both in-person and on Zoom.



## Disappearing History

Kelly Mitchell

Historical icons that are slowly disappearing from the Canadian landscape, these giant buildings could once be found everywhere on the prairies. They were spaced six miles apart because that was as far as a team of horses pulling a wagonload of grain could travel before having to change teams. Grain elevators symbolize the rich agricultural heritage of the prairie provinces, but they are being torn down and replaced by huge grain terminals across the Canadian Prairies.



An example can be found at Sharples, Alberta. In 1923, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) built a spur line in Alberta from Drumheller through Knee Hills Creek Valley to Carbon. Sharples is at the halfway point between the two. The Parrish & Heimbecker (P&H) grain elevator was built in July of 1923 and is still standing in 2025 (but probably not for much longer). A second Alberta Pacific Grain elevator was built in 1927 but was almost immediately taken over by the Alberta Wheat Pool (a farmer-owned co-operative).

By the 1940s, Sharples was booming and the elevators were handling 100,000 bushels of grain per year. A handful of small homes were built for the folks working in the area. The rail line moved grain and coal, but over time the coal business started to dry up, and in 1982 the trains stopped coming. The Wheat Pool Elevator was torn down and the railway tracks were removed. The only evidence that a rail line was there are cement pillars where the track ran across the Knee Hills Creek.

The P&H Grain Elevator has stood in solitary splendour since the 1980s and has become a well-photographed view of the not-so-ancient past. In 2022, it celebrated its 100th birthday and it is on the Alberta Register of Historic Places. Unfortunately, the structure has been deemed dangerous, and the rumour is that it is due to be demolished later this year. It is owned by the Alberta Trailnet Society and there is talk about developing the former railbed into a recreation trail, similar to the Kettle Valley Rail Trail in British Columbia.

At one time, there were over 1,700 grain elevators in Alberta but now only about 150 original wooden ones remain. Several have been turned into museums, including a working museum in Spruce Grove and the Canadian Grain Elevator Discovery Centre in Nanton.

If you would like to see more pictures of the elevator at Sharples, you can view photos taken by Chris Doering over the years on the *Off the Beaten Path with Chris & Connie* blog.

<https://www.bigdoer.com/67026/exploring-history/parrish-heimbecker-sharples-alberta>



*The Proud Elevator*

The prairie grasses blow, under a bright blue sky.  
Tall on the land, the elevator stands.  
Proud and grand, symbol of days gone by.  
Proof of prosperity, once held by a small town.  
Now, a ghost of their former selves.  
Still a thing of beauty, out on the open prairie.

*Photographs and poem by Kelly Mitchell*

## Special Interest Groups

**SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs) are a major benefit of being an AFHS member.** The small-group setting is the ideal place to expand your knowledge and share your own family history challenges. SIGs provide the opportunity to ask questions, obtain help from more experienced researchers and get to know other AFHS members.

If you are an AFHS member and would like to be added to a SIG distribution list or if you would like to attend a SIG meeting as a guest before joining AFHS, please contact [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca)

**SIGs are now being held in three formats: in-person only, Zoom only or a hybrid version of both.** Check the calendar on our website for up-to-date information or email the SIG leader. The SIGs do not meet during July and August.

SIG GROUP	NEXT MEETING	TIME	CONTACT
BASICS	Saturday, November 29	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:basics@afhs.ab.ca">basics@afhs.ab.ca</a>
CELTIC (Irish/Scots)	Saturday, September 27	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:celticsig@afhs.ab.ca">celticsig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
DIGITAL GENEALOGY	Saturday, September 13	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:familygenes@afhs.ab.ca">familygenes@afhs.ab.ca</a>
DNA	Sunday, September 14	12:30 – 2:30 pm	<a href="mailto:dnasig@afhs.ab.ca">dnasig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
ENGLISH/WELSH	Saturday, September 20	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca">englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
FAMILY TREE MAKER	Saturday, September 6	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca">ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
LEGACY	Tuesday, September 23	7:00 – 9:00 pm	<a href="mailto:legacysig@afhs.ab.ca">legacysig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
ONTARIO	Monday, September 22	1:30 – 3:30 pm	<a href="mailto:ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca">ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
WRITING	Friday, September 12	9:30 – 11:30 am	<a href="mailto:writing@afhs.ab.ca">writing@afhs.ab.ca</a>

The AFHS Resource Centre is located at **Suite 251S, 8500 Macleod Trail SE** and all in-person SIG meetings are held there. Members are encouraged to stay after meetings, when possible, to browse the collection!

Our collection 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 either print or digital formats. As a **FamilySearch Affiliate Library**, visitors can now view additional FamilySearch digital records at the AFHS Resource Centre that they can't see at home. We also have a subscription to the Canadian newspapers on Newspaper Archive.

## SIG NEWS

Our members can watch recorded sessions of past Society and SIG meetings and view 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.

- The Family Tree Maker SIG will be focusing on the new software release, FTM 2024, over the next few months. Older versions will also be discussed as needed.

- At the English/Welsh SIG in September, Kelly Southworth and Steve Henley will offer analysis and help for photos that SIG members submitted over the summer.
- *Records & Resources for Ontario Durham Region research* presented by Nancy Trimble and Stephen Wood will be the focus of the September Ontario SIG meeting.

### Resources on Canada's Home Children

Linda Murray

Do you have an ancestor who was a Home Child? It is estimated that over ten percent of Canadians today are descendants of these young immigrants. September 28 is now recognized as British Home Child Day in Canada. It is a day to honour the contributions of the Home Children to Canada, to acknowledge the hardships that many of them endured, and to educate Canadians about their story.

According to Library and Archives Canada, over 100,000 children were sent from Britain to Canada between 1869 and 1939. When they arrived in Canada, they went to receiving homes run by agencies like Barnardo's and Quarrier's.

The intent of this juvenile emigration scheme was to provide many orphans and destitute children in Britain with more opportunities and a better life. Many of the children were placed in rural areas. Although some children were treated as members of the family, others were neglected, abused and treated as unpaid servants.

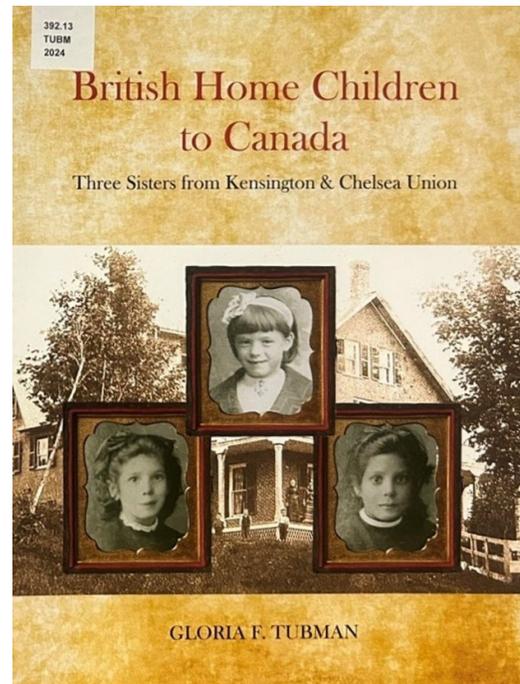
Most of the children who arrived in Canada were between the ages of six and sixteen. Many siblings were split up, and their attempts later in life to reunite with their families were sometimes blocked by the organizations who had arranged their emigration. Many Home Children did not even know their own identity and were sometimes refused information that could have helped them.

The legacy of Home Children in Canada has been recognized by the Government of Canada through Library and Archives Canada and Veterans Affairs Canada. Many thousands of Home Children signed up to fight in both World Wars. In 2010, Canada Post issued a commemorative stamp to honour Home Children.

There are many books written about the history of Home Children and how to research their origins. You can search the AFHS catalogue with

the call number 392.13 to see all the titles in our collection.

AFHS has recently added eight new books on Home Children.



*A Genealogist's Guide to Researching British Home Children* by Gloria F. Tubman

*British Home Children to Canada – Three Sisters from Kensington and Chelsea Union* by Gloria F. Tubman

*Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869 – 1924* by Joy Parr

*The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada* by Kenneth Bagnell

*Marchmont : Distributing Home, Belleville, Ontario, 1870 – 1925* by James S. Gilchrist

*Orphans of the Living: British Home Children in Canada* by Lori Oschefski and Patricia Skidmore

*Promises of Home: Stories of Canada's British Home Children* by Rose McCormick Brandon

*Quarriers Story: One Man's Vision That Gave 7,000 Children a New Life in Canada* by Anna Magnusson

### What Happened to Rosalie?

Amber Godfrey

When a teacher at a Calgary high school found a letter in the school files dating back to World War II, she shared it with CBC News. It was a poignant story about an 18-year-old soldier in the Canadian navy, a former student of the school, who was writing back to a female classmate and reminiscing about his school days. Tragically, he was killed only a few months later, when his ship was attacked and sunk by a German submarine.

But I wondered about the other side of the story. What had become of the girl who received the letter, Rosalie Cummings? The teacher had checked the yearbooks at her school but only found that she wanted to be a nurse. So with just her name and a few other clues, I decided to find Rosalie.

The first thing I did was build a tree for Rosalie on Ancestry. Then I checked the 1931 Canada Census and found her family in Calgary. Gordon and Donna Cummings had two children: Donna R., age 2, and a son John, age 11 months. With the same name as her mother, Rosalie chose to go by her middle name by the time she went to school. Her father Gordon was working as a superintendent for a grain company.

Since the teacher who found the letter had searched the print collection of Western College High School yearbooks, I checked the collection on Ancestry called *Canada, Selected School Yearbooks, 1901-2005*. I did find yearbooks from the same school in Calgary but only for the years 1932 – 1935, before Rosalie's time. There are school yearbooks in this collection from most Canadian provinces and many Alberta communities.

I did find Rosalie Cummings in a listing for Mount Royal College from 1947 in the same collection. There was a picture and list of things like Ambition: Nurse in China and Pastime: Giggling, hoping for a letter. Sounds like her!

I found a border crossing record from January 25, 1952 that showed Rosalie flew to the Seattle-Tacoma Airport and was continuing on to Honolulu, Hawaii, to work at the Kapiolani Maternity & Gynecological Hospital. Her occupation was R.N., and her last permanent residence was listed as her parents' address in Calgary. She was traveling alone

and planned to become a permanent resident of the United States. The record also showed that she was 5' 6" tall, had a fair complexion, brown hair and hazel eyes.

An even bigger surprise is later that same year, in October 1952, her name was in the newspaper for an application for a license to marry Kenny Tosaki, a resident of Hawaii of Japanese descent. While anti-Japanese sentiment continued after the Second World War, Japanese residents of Hawaii had fared a little better than their mainland counterparts. They made up over one-third of the workers on the island, and most weren't forced into internment camps during the war.

The couple married and had four children, one girl and three boys. Sadly, Kenny died suddenly in 1968 at the age of 51. He was cremated and his ashes were scattered at sea, according to the newspaper obituary I found in the *Honolulu Star Bulletin*.

Rosalie seems to have kept in touch with her family in Canada. Her father died in 1993, and in his obituary in the *Calgary Herald*, it mentions that one of Rosalie's sons and his wife were living in Calgary. Rosalie died in 2017 at age 88 in Hawaii. She has a gravestone in the Banff Cemetery, alongside her parents' stones. There is an entry and picture of the gravestones on Alberta Ancestors, thanks to our wonderful volunteers!

Although her story was not without tragedy, Rosalie did have a long, fulfilling life. She achieved her dreams of becoming a nurse and living somewhere exotic. She also married, had a family, and kept in touch with her own family back in Calgary.



## CALGARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Family History Coaching

In-person at Central Library

*Calgary Public Library*

September 27, 2025 1:00 – 3:00 pm

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

\*all times listed are in MDT

\*events are free unless \$

### Manage Large Writing Projects Through Optimistic Start, Muddled Middle, and Triumphant Finish

Virtual

*Legacy Family Tree Webinars*

September 10, 2025 9:30 am

<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar/manage-large-writing-projects-through-optimistic-start-muddled-middle-and-triumphant-finish>

### Scottish Indexes Conference

Virtual

*Scottish Indexes Conference*

September 13, 2025 12:00 am

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

### A British Home Child May Be Your Ancestor

Virtual

*Ontario Ancestors – Oxford County Branch*

September 15, 2025 5:00 pm

<https://oxford.ogs.on.ca/events/a-british-home-child-may-be-your-ancestor>

### Use AI to Research Your Family Photos

Virtual

*Québec Genealogical eSociety*

September 18, 2025 3:00 pm

<https://genquebec.com/en/webinars-0>

### Discovering Old Land Surveys in Deeds and Probates

Virtual

*Legacy Family Tree Webinars*

September 24, 2025 12:00 pm

<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar/discovering-old-land-surveys-in-deeds-and-probates>

### Past Meets Future 2025 Conference

In-person \$

*Saskatchewan Genealogical Society*

September 27, 2025 8:00 am – 3:30 pm

<https://saskgenealogy.com/2025-conference-past-meets-future>

### Using AI to Translate and Manipulate Foreign Language Documents with Natalie Webb

Virtual

*Ontario Ancestors*

October 2, 2025 5:00 pm

[www.ogs.on.ca/october-webinar-using-ai-to-translate-and-manipulate-foreign-language-documents-natalie-webb](http://www.ogs.on.ca/october-webinar-using-ai-to-translate-and-manipulate-foreign-language-documents-natalie-webb)

### Edmonton Family History Fair

In-person

*Alberta Genealogical Society Edmonton*

October 25, 2025

Times still TBD, free to attend

<https://www.edmontongenealogy.ca/edmonton-family-history-fair>

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## 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 most valuable resources - the **AFHS Resource Centre**! While our collection has an emphasis on materials pertaining to Alberta and Canada, we also have basic genealogy books and information from around the world. AFHS is a **FamilySearch Affiliate Library**, which gives you access to FamilySearch records you can't view at home. 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>. Our site features over 350 cemeteries and more than 260,000 names.

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 the **AFHS Society Meetings**, contact Marion at [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca).

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## AFHS RESOURCE CENTRE

**Suite 251S, 8500 Macleod Trail SE  
Calgary, AB T2M 0J8**

### Fall/Winter Hours

Thursday, 10 am – 2 pm

Friday, 10 am – 2 pm

Saturday, Noon – 4 pm

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



## 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't'ínà, 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.