



## NEXT SOCIETY MEETING

**Monday, March 9, 2026**

**Topic:** Indigenous Research at Library and Archives Canada

**Speaker:** Jeannie Buchanan Breit

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

**Time:** 7 – 9 pm

## FUTURE MEETINGS

**Monday, March 16, 2026**

**Topic:** Chit Chat Session

**Hosts:** Linda Murray and Kelly Southworth

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

**Time:** 7 – 8:30 pm

**Monday, April 13, 2026**

**Topic:** Investigative Genetic Genealogy: What It Is and How You Can Help

**Speaker:** Marie Palmer

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

**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.

**Editor:** Amber Godfrey

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

# President's Message

## Dorothy Clements

Wow! The past few months have been full of changes for AFHS, including losing our Treasurer, Larry Stone, and having the President resign. On February 6, I agreed to take over as interim President. Sharon White has taken on the Secretary position until the AGM to free me to focus on the presidential duties.

For those of you who don't know me, here is a short summary of my volunteering with the Society. I started off in 2021 by helping Wendy Schultz collect cemetery photos, then began working on the BMD project. Next up was volunteering at the library in 2023. I became Secretary in May of 2024. Then in 2025 I was involved with everything that went with the move – packing and unpacking, cleaning and painting, furniture shopping and assembly. With lots of support from in-person members, I got through chairing my first Society meeting on February 9, 2026.

Through Marion Peterson's mentorship, I think I'm ready for this next challenge. I was planning to put my name forward at the AGM but had no idea I'd be called upon so soon. There are numerous members who have been very supportive, and this has given me the courage to agree to take on the President position.

My goal is to help keep the Society active and exciting. Volunteering has been an excellent way for me to make a purposeful contribution. The social connections I've made with people of similar interest has boosted my mental health and helped build some strong relationships. If elected at the AGM, I hope to bring a few innovative ideas to enhance participation in this wonderful society. If you have any ideas or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Some changes are happening in the building housing our Resource Centre. Another company bought it and has been working on updating the common areas with new carpet, paint and bathroom updates. They will be renaming it to Petwin Atrium Commons, highlighting the beautiful atrium in the middle of the building. We are also working with the new property manager to make sure our space is up-to-date and meets all required codes. This does not affect our Resource Centre which remains open our normal business hours.

By the time you read this, we will have finished staffing our fundraiser at ACE Casino on March 2 & 3 and will be eagerly waiting to hear how much money we raised for AFHS! A big thank you to Jane, our Casino Chairperson, for organizing the event and to all the members (and non-members) who volunteered their time.

Our Genealogy 101 course is coming up on March 28 and there are still spaces available. It will be held at the Resource Centre and is free for members to attend. Non-members pay a fee of \$30 but it is well worth the money. To register, contact Marion at [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca)

Our upcoming Family Roots Conference has a theme – **The 3 R's of Genealogy: Relationships, Research and Resources**. It will be held at the same location as last time, and the speakers will be announced soon. So mark it on your calendar for October 17, 2026!

The presentation from the last Society meeting on *Genealogical Research in British Columbia* by Gord McBean has been posted to the Resources > Meeting Videos & Handouts section of the AFHS website but is only available until **March 10, 2026**. There is also a handout available.

I look forward to seeing you at our next Society meeting on March 9 with a speaker from the Library and Archives Canada talking about Indigenous Research at LAC.

## The Reiners of Youngstown Shelley Lunney

A distant cousin of mine, George Gordon, married Helen Reiner in Youngstown, Alberta in 1923. While researching people for the Youngstown cemetery, I found a story in the *Edmonton Journal* about her parents' 60th wedding anniversary.

Natives of Württemberg, Germany, Gottlieb Henry and Emelia (Hertneck) Reiner were one of the Youngstown area's pioneer families. The couple married in Chicago, Illinois, in 1898. Four children quickly followed: Helen (1900), Wilhelm (1901), Walter (1903) and Albert (1905). Sadly, Wilhelm died in 1904.

Gottlieb decided to return to his farming roots and in 1908 moved his wife and three children to Canada. The family received a homestead between Stettler and Botha in Alberta, but their crops were hailed out for two successive years. Emelia and the children returned to Chicago, and Gottlieb moved to the Youngstown area, 70 miles from the closest railway link in Castor.

He supplemented his farming income by hauling wagon loads of freight from the railway station to Coronation merchants for \$14.00 a trip, and each trip took up to 3 days. CNR construction also provided extra income in 1912 paying a man with a two-horse team \$4.00 daily. In 1912, his family rejoined him. Their family home was a sod shack at first but was replaced in 1914 by a frame house. It was the only one in the area with a furnace and electric lighting plant.

In 1915, their fifth child Nettie was born. In a newspaper article written at the time of her 104th birthday, she recalled attending rural schools, walking through grain tunnels in the fields and occasionally encountering First Nations people.

Albert, with help from his family, took on a second homestead in 1930 near Hines Creek in the Peace River District. They all lived in a one-room shack with no conveniences while they cleared the bush into arable land. Nettie recalled having to haul pails of water up the hill from the creek to the shack and pull roots out of the land

by horse. Supplies were acquired from town on horseback.

In 1941, their former home near Scotfield was disassembled and moved to Didsbury, where it was rebuilt. The house was considered a show place and a community landmark with well manicured hedges and trees bordering the driveway. That same year, Gottlieb retired to Westcott where his son Alfred cared for a rural parish. Gottlieb did return to the Hines Creek farm during the war years. Post-war years saw the couple move to Red Deer, Kelowna, and Oliver, B.C. before finally settling with Alfred in Edmonton in 1957. There were seven grandchildren.

- George and Helen (Reiner) Gordon remained in the Youngstown area.
- Walter was a Private in the U.S. Army, serving in World War II. He married Dorothy Corlett and worked in the automotive industry in Los Angeles, California.
- Albert became a Lutheran pastor and married Hilda Marek of Scotfield. They moved throughout western Canada during his career. He died in Kelowna, B.C.
- Nettie married Rudolf Schlatter and died in Abbotsford, B.C., in 2023 aged 107 years.

Gottlieb died in Drumheller on July 9, 1967. Emelia died in Calgary on December 23, 1967. They are both interred in Youngstown Cemetery.

<https://albertaancestors.ca/memorial/gottlieb-heinrich-reiner-1872-1967>



## 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
CELTIC (Irish/Scots)	Saturday, April 25	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:celticsig@afhs.ab.ca">celticsig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
DIGITAL GENEALOGY	Saturday, March 14	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:familygenes@afhs.ab.ca">familygenes@afhs.ab.ca</a>
DNA	Sunday, March 8	12:30 – 2:30 pm	<a href="mailto:dnasig@afhs.ab.ca">dnasig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
ENGLISH/WELSH	Saturday, March 21	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca">englishwelshsig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
FAMILY TREE MAKER	Saturday, March 7	10 am – Noon	<a href="mailto:ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca">ftmsig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
LEGACY	Tuesday, March 24	7:00 – 9:00 pm	<a href="mailto:legacysig@afhs.ab.ca">legacysig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
ONTARIO	Monday, March 23	1:30 – 3:30 pm	<a href="mailto:ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca">ontariosig@afhs.ab.ca</a>
WRITING	Friday, March 13	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.

- If you are thinking of possibly joining a SIG, you can attend a meeting to try it first. You just need to email Marion to receive a link [communications@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:communications@afhs.ab.ca)
- The Basics SIG is looking for a new leader or leaders. Contact [basics@afhs.ab.ca](mailto:basics@afhs.ab.ca)
- The presentations on *How to Use the FamilySearch Full-Text Search Feature* by Amber Godfrey (English/Welsh SIG) and *My Thompson Family (Peter Robinson Settlers)* by Steve Henley (Ontario SIG) have been posted.
- The March session of the Ontario SIG will be Kathryn Ruddock's presentation *Ontario to Alberta: Discovering Family Histories*.
- The English/Welsh SIG will be learning about our ancestors' occupations in March.
- At their March meeting, the Digital Genealogy and Family Genes SIG will continue their discussion about creating YouTube videos.

### Abort, Retry, Fail?

Warren Peterson

At first, you're excited. A box of 3 ½" diskettes found in the attic, labeled *Family Photos 1996 – Kodak!* Then, it sinks in. You don't have a computer with a floppy disk drive and no software to open 30-year-old Kodak digital image files. Your nephew with the blue hair quizzically examines a diskette before exclaiming, "Is this a coaster? No wait! Is this where the File Save icon came from?"

In the early days of computers and digital cameras, many of us bought into the myth that digital files were future-proof. We now know better. Physical media, other than paper, becomes obsolete within years and can't be trusted to retain data indefinitely. File formats come and go, even within the same family of products. For example, a modern version of Microsoft Word refuses to open a document created in Word 2.0 or earlier. It's a similar story for video or photo files, such as Kodak Digital Photo format (.pcd) files.

*Take a deep breath.* Fortunately, the AFHS Resource Centre has tools for digital archaeology. We recently added a diskette reader and, just like our external CD/DVD player, this unit has a USB cable that plugs into anything with a USB Type A connector.

If your treasures are hiding on a memory card, such as Compact Flash or xD-Picture Card, some of our computers have built-in readers as well as CD/DVD players.

Let's talk more about old files. We are not limited to the capabilities of Windows or Microsoft 365. We have software, such as IrfanView and VLC, that can open, edit and convert an impressive array of photo, video and audio formats.

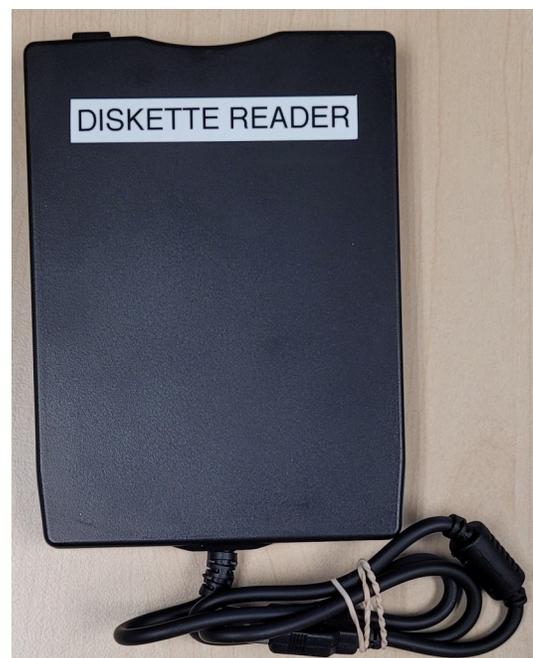
For stubborn problems, our new secret weapon is the re-purposed Linux computer at the computer pod. This machine, our oldest, was recently orphaned by the obsolescence of Windows 10. Linux is not Windows but shares similarities in terms of appearance and function.

It also offers OpenOffice and a vast set of tools and utilities for the brave among us. It's unlikely that the library volunteer on staff will be a Linux expert, but Linux could prove to be "Plan B" for your situation.

Of course, there are problems we can't solve at the Resource Centre. It takes a professional to scrape data from video tapes or failed hard drives. We had a recent contact with a person needing to read diskettes written in 1998. Eyeing the long-term value, we purchased an inexpensive drive. The drive worked fine, but unfortunately, the diskettes contained genealogy backup files unsupported by the application's author. And, equally bad, the main data file was unreadable due to age of this magnetic media. We were forced to concede: this diskette really is a coaster.

Some wonder whether cloud storage is the answer. I believe it's part of the answer and I sleep better knowing I maintain irreplaceable eggs in more than one basket.

My final message is don't wait for the inevitable loss of valuable data. Search through your old digital media. Find, recover, convert and back up those treasures while you still can!



### 1926 Ireland Census Coming Soon!

Ron Gilmore

Get ready! The digital version of the 1926 Census for the Republic of Ireland will be released in April 2026, and it will be free to view. The census was taken on April 18, 1926 and covers 26 counties with over 2.9 million names. You can find more information, and eventually the search page for the census, on the National Archives of Ireland.

<https://nationalarchives.ie/news-and-events/census-1926>

Census records are absolute goldmines for genealogists and can include information on names, relationships, marriages, occupations and more! Many of the Irish immigrants to Canada left family behind, and this census will help find out more about them. The household return for 1926 includes the following columns:

1. Name and surname
2. Relationship to head of household
3. Age (in years and months)
4. Sex
5. Marriage or orphanhood
6. Birthplace (including name of parish)
7. Irish Language spoken
8. Religion
9. Occupation
10. Employer
11. Length of present marriage and number of children born alive
12. Previous marriages and the number of living sons, daughters, step-sons and step-daughters under 16 years of age
13. The total area of all agricultural holdings

### 1926 Census of Northern Ireland

Unfortunately for people whose ancestors lived in the six counties of Northern Ireland, the long-held belief that the 1926 Census of Northern Ireland was destroyed has now been confirmed as a fact following a thorough investigation by the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Their investigation revealed that the census returns were never transferred to PRONI or NISRA and were likely destroyed during World War II, possibly as part of a waste-paper pulping campaign, and without authorization.

This would have been a fantastic historical resource as it was the first record of the Irish population following the partition. However, there is another source that can help genealogists.

The 1939 National Register, which notes all people living in Northern Ireland in September of 1939, has survived and includes each person's full date of birth, not just their age. Following successful lobbying by the Council of Irish Genealogical Organisations (CIGO), this data is freely available to genealogists under the United Kingdom's *Freedom of Information Act*. You can find details of how to make an application in this article on Irish Genealogy Toolkit:

<https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/1939-national-register.html>

You can then apply using the Submit Enquiry form on the PRONI website:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/forms/submit-enquiry>

## Upcoming Events

### CALGARY PUBLIC LIBRARY

#### Family History Coaching

In-person at Central Library

*Calgary Public Library*

March 28, 2026 1:00 – 3:00 pm

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

### AFHS EVENTS

#### Genealogy 101

In-person

(Members free; \$30 for non-members)

March 28, 2026 9:30 am – 4:00 pm

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

#### Focusing on the Migrants: How Genealogy Transformed our Understanding of the Irish in Canada

Hybrid

*BIFHSGO*

March 28, 2026 10:00 am

<https://www.bifhsgo.ca/events>

#### DNA Matches: Getting Answers from Unresponsive Cousins

Virtual

*Legacy Family Tree Webinars*

April 1, 2026 10:45 am

<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar/dna-matches-getting-answers-from-unresponsive-cousins>

#### Family Roots Conference: The 3 R's of Genealogy: Relationships, Research and Resources

In-person \$

*Alberta Family Histories Society*

October 17, 2026 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

<https://afhs.ab.ca/event/conference>

#### Campbell River Genealogy Society 40th Anniversary Conference: Migration Trails

In-person \$

*Campbell River Genealogy Society*

April 18, 2026 9:00 am – 3:45 pm

<https://www.crgenealogysociety.ca/40th-anniversary-migration-trails>

### UPCOMING EVENTS

\*all times listed are in MDT \*events are free unless \$

#### Researching in Northumberland & Durham

Virtual

*Legacy Family Tree Webinars*

March 13, 2026 Noon

<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar/researching-in-northumberland-durham>

#### Red Deer Family History Fair

In-person

*LDS Church & AGS Red Deer*

May 16, 2026 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

<https://rdfamilyhistoryfair.blogspot.com>

#### RootsTech 2026

Check out all the recorded programs available online until 2027!

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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 subscription databases, 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 370 cemeteries and more than 270,000 memorials.

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**

### Winter/Spring 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.*

<https://afhs.ab.ca/calendar>



## 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.