

Alberta Family Histories Society Speakers Bureau

INTRODUCTION

Alberta Family Histories Society has several members who provide quality presentations on a host of genealogy topics. The purpose of this document is to introduce our roster of speakers and their most popular topics which they are willing to share with interested organizations. These presentations can be delivered in person (if within a reasonable driving range) or via Zoom (to anywhere in the world). Most of these presentations are free of charge, but some of our professional genealogists charge a small fee. Each presentation also includes a handout that allows audience members to access the various reference sources.

OUR ROSTER

1. Jim Benedict
2. Ron Gilmore
3. Amber Godfrey
4. Bev Smith
5. Christine Hayes
6. Pat Jette
7. Tara Shymanski
8. David Tyler
9. A team of AFHS volunteers

Each of these presenters has an intense interest in genealogy, along with unique backgrounds which help shape the topics that they love to share.

JIM BENEDICT



Jim was born in 1944 and raised in Calgary, Alberta, where he and his wife, Joan, have a son and two grandchildren. As an electrical engineer, Jim's career kept him busy with major projects, travel and later involved building a software service company over the past 30 years. But then he inherited the trunk-full of family photos and the dog-eared family history book. He thought this would only take a weekend of computer entry to record and preserve. Some thirty years later, the project continues.

Jim is a member of the Guild of One-Name Studies, where he serves as a team leader on their members' study preservation project, which involves 250 surname studies, and has been honoured as a Guild Master Craftsman. He is also a member of the Alberta Family Histories Society, where he currently serves as their webmaster and has previously held the position of president.

PRESENTATIONS:

Tombstone Tourism in Calgary

A virtual walk-through of Calgary's cemeteries and some notable "residents." We have heroes, villains, business giants, gunslingers, cowboys, soldiers, Titanic Survivors and the World's Tallest Man!

Data Mining for Ancestors

Another presentation on Calgary's cemeteries focusing on early cemeteries and some notorious characters.

What's In a Name? Inspector Brisbois of the N.W.M.P

An interesting review of the characters involved in the settlement that is now known as Calgary, and how Calgary got its name, as well as some earlier versions.

Twelve Golden Rules of Genealogy

If you follow the 12 Golden Rules for doing your family research, there will be much more satisfaction for you in this wonderful hobby of ours.

RON GILMORE



Website: [RVG Genealogy – Family History Sharing](#)

With a degree in Electrical Engineering and a master's degree in mathematics, Ron worked for industrial giants such as General Electric and IBM before transitioning to a consulting career, assisting large organizations cope with installing and leveraging information technology. His work took him across Canada, USA and Europe.

Now, he is enjoying a journey of discovery in genealogy. His focus is Ireland, Scotland, England, France/Germany and some rather entertaining family history sagas.

Ron belongs to four genealogical societies in California and is a past president of the Alberta Family Histories Society. He has shared his presentations with genealogical groups in Canada and USA.

PRESENTATIONS:

Ireland's Griffith's Valuation (Intended Audience: Intermediate)

A one-hour "How To" presentation that illustrates three specific examples of how to access these online tax records, which cover the period between 1847 and 1864, where no census records exist (due to the catastrophic fire during the Irish civil war of June 1922). Understanding how to attack the much-tangled Irish land jurisdictions will help anyone interested in Ireland. Attendees should be able to search on their own at the end of this session, which includes a live search example.

Beginning Genealogy (Intended Audience: Beginner)

A 45-minute presentation that I developed for a men's charitable organization seeking to introduce them to the notions of genealogy, the "Why" of this incredibly popular hobby, with some live examples. Basic Best Practices are introduced with references to software, websites, DNA, genealogical organizations and sources of information. In this session, I provide a best practice set of structures for storing documents and digital files. As part of the presentation, I also include samples of many aspects of Family History, far beyond simple birth, marriage and death dates. Genealogy has many fascinating dimensions.

Ireland's Tithe Applotment Records (Intended Audience: Intermediate)

A 45-minute presentation that provides examples of "How To" access these highly contentious land tax records, which were intended to provide funding for the Church of Ireland. Everyone was taxed! Even if they supported another church. The records cover 1823 to 1837 (i.e., just prior to the Great Famine), where no census records exist.

Hands On Ireland (Intended Audience: Beginner)

A one-hour presentation aimed at the beginner level of Irish research. This session catalogs an 18-day trip to Ireland with deep dives into the archives, first in Dublin and then in Belfast. Included are the Dublin side visits to Trinity College, the Guinness Brewery, and the new high-tech Epic Museum dedicated to the Great Famine. In Belfast, we also toured PRONI and the nearby Titanic Museum. We visited a country church and had the warden open the church safe to capture pages and pages of family records. We were invited in for tea at the country home where my grandmother and my father were born. Finally, we became tourists for a few days with a trip west to Connemara on the coast before returning to Dublin, stopping at four castles along the way.

Truncated – An Abbreviated Family Tree

A one-hour genealogy tour of the story of my own maternal grandmother's life journey, beginning as one of the so-called "British Home Children". Abandoned near Glasgow, Scotland, at 6 months old and eventually scooped up by an organization shipping "waifs and strays" to Canada and Australia as labourers or indentured servants. This long-hidden family story holds images of societal shame, endless numbers of pregnancies, grinding poverty and an early death. Not a "How To" and not intended for anyone who might be squeamish or sensitive. Yet, the story thankfully contains a series of genealogical research successes.

Murder and Consequence – A Family Story

A one-hour presentation of a family tragedy wherein two female family members were found guilty of a grisly murder and sentenced to death circa 1841 in Northern England. Details of the initial research into this saga are presented as we follow one of the women who is transported to Van Diemen's Land (now known as Tasmania) — a British penal colony. The tale of the ship's journey is totally reminiscent of "The Mutiny on the Bounty". The story collides with some major world history events and personalities that resonate up to the present day. This session is not a "How To" and is not intended for anyone who might be squeamish or sensitive.

Hansard – A Hidden Trove (Intended Audience: Intermediate)

A "How To" on accessing the federal and provincial legislature records of the jurisdictions of the Canadian and English governments. While much of the information in the country's legislative reports has been digitized, some remain available only on paper, and others are relatively new (e.g., Nunavut). Some records reach back to 1900, while others only begin in the 1970s. Some have advanced search mechanisms, while others require you to know the exact date for your search to be effective. Check these records for famous or infamous ancestors, major world events and key players in history.

Man on a Motorcycle (Intended Audience: Intermediate)



Armed with nothing more than a single old black and white photo of a man on a motorcycle surrounded by a group of gentlemen dressed in 1920s attire, I began a three-year journey of discovery about one of my ancestors. There was no writing on the photo, yet the man looked slightly familiar. The saga ends with this man being shot to death while trying to run a blockade in Northern Ireland. An interesting research process that will display a host of Irish record sources.

Ireland's Pension Records (Intended audience – Intermediate)

An introduction to the little-known pension records in Ireland. These records are now available online and can serve as a strong support to genealogists. In 1908, the British government introduced legislation to provide highly modest pensions to the senior citizens of the UK. For the extremely poor agrarian population of Ireland this was a Godsend as anything was better than nothing. Irish citizens applied vigorously for this small stipend. However, most folks were lacking proof of birth documentation and so an audit process was implemented. This process used the extant 1841 and 1851 Ireland Census records which were still available at that time. The disastrous fires in the Four Courts buildings during the Civil War in June of 1922 destroyed those records. However, the auditor's reports survived, providing a secondary source to the census records of that period. This is a "How To" presentation.

The Teacher Goes Off to War (Intended Audience – Beginner)

A presentation of the WWI enrolment of my grandfather. An immigrant from Ireland who settled on a remote homestead in northern Saskatchewan to take up a teaching position, Thomas McCracken Gilmore signed up to the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) and was trained as a machine gunner. He leaves behind his wife and four children, the youngest a

mere infant. Landing in war-torn France, Thomas fought in the famous battle of Vimy Ridge and then the grinding misery that was Passchendaele. He is haunted by terrible nightmares and is gassed three times near the end of the war. After his hospitalization, he returns to Canada pretty much an invalid, unable to work. Sadly, the soldiers brought back with themselves, the terrible Spanish Flu which takes his wife within weeks of his return. The children are taken in by neighbours. Thomas recovers and eventually returns to teaching yet is haunted by a restlessness that sees him moving each year to a new teaching jurisdiction. Finally, he retires to teaching and ministering on northern native reserves. A tale of life in an era we can never understand. We have some 60 letters he wrote from the trenches as well as his diary containing poems and names of colleagues.

Thom's Directories of Ireland (Intended Audience – Intermediate)

Ireland has a host of somewhat obscure record sources. One of the most interesting in Thom's Directories. This series of annual directories of Ireland can provide some truly helpful information for genealogists. Content includes:

- British Foreign and Colonial Directories
- Parliamentary Directory
- Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage Directory
- Naval and Military Directory
- Statistics of Great Britain and Ireland
- Government Offices' Directory
- University, Scientific and Medical Directory
- Law Directory
- Ecclesiastical Directory
- Banking Directory
- Postal Directory
- County and Borough Directory
- Lieutenancy and Magistracy of Ireland
- Post Office Dublin City and County Directory
- Listings of landowners of 1,000 acres upwards
- Several hundred pages detailing various state officials
- Civil, military, and religious officials
- Listing of clubs, societies, and institutions

Whew! That is a lot of material. The series originated around 1836 and continued up until 1945. Some years are missing and content varies slightly by supplier. The presentation will describe the sources, their content and many examples of "How To" navigate.

Ireland's Dog Licenses (Intended Audience – Intermediate)

Ireland has a host of somewhat obscure records. One of these interesting collections are the records of dog licenses. The country began licensing dogs around 1810 and these

records are now available online. Dogs were broadly acquired for pets, security as well as livestock management and the island has some truly unique breeds. This presentation provides some background on the records as well as “How To” examples of searching the available sources.

AMBER GODFREY



Amber Godfrey is an amateur family historian whose love of family history started in childhood, listening to family stories shared by her parents, grandmothers and extended family. She received a Family History kit for Christmas when she was twelve, and that started her on a family history research journey that continues to this day.

After finishing college and working in various office jobs, Amber realized that she could combine her love of books, research, and her interest in computers by working in libraries. She graduated as a Library Technician and worked in public libraries in BC for nearly twenty years. When she moved to Calgary, she was hired by the Calgary Board of Education to work in school libraries. Now that her family has moved back to BC, she is currently searching for her next job.

Amber plans to remain a member of the Alberta Family Histories Society and will continue her role as editor of the AFHS Chinook Arch newsletter. While she was living in Calgary, she also volunteered at the AFHS library and helped with their Family History Coaching program at Calgary Public Library.

In 2024, she submitted a presentation idea to the Nova Scotia Genealogy Virtual Conference and was chosen as one of the presenters. Amber is passionate about sharing stories of ordinary people who led interesting lives, especially women, and she hopes to do more presentations for groups in the future.

PRESENTATIONS:

FamilySearch's Full-Text Search Feature Is a Game Changer in Family Research

Being able to do a full text search of probate and land records on FamilySearch has completely changed the way that family historians and genealogists are able to use these documents. Indexing on the major research websites usually covers only the main person in a document and these types of records are full of names – spouses, children, parents, siblings, other relatives, FAN 8 (Friends, Neighbours and Associates) and more. I will show you how to search the records efficiently and give examples of the kind of information you can find within them. I've found detailed wills and estate inventories, guardianship records

for minor children, deeds with very specific boundary descriptions and much more! Join me on a journey back in time!

Canadian Her-Story: The Hatmaker, The Story of Sarah A. Shaw

Born in 1836 in Hants County, Nova Scotia, Sarah A. Shaw was a spinster who ran her own successful business and helped empower women and girls. Even though Sarah lost her business and her home when "The Great Fire of 1897" tore through Windsor, Nova Scotia, she persevered. Sarah left a detailed will with bequests to many, mostly female, relatives when she died in 1918 – the same year some women in Nova Scotia achieved the right to vote. The inventory of her estate included shares in a steel company, a merchant ship, the Nova Scotia Underwear Company and a Church School for Girls. Her obituary credited her as "an active worker for the Church of England." It also gave her cause of death as "a gradual breaking up of the system." Since she attained the age of 83 years, that may well be the truth! Join me in learning about the life of this fascinating woman.

The D.R. Eaton Tragedy: Researching Nova Scotian Mariners

Merchant captains and their ships faced unimaginable hardships in the 1800s, including the threat of hurricanes and other storms at sea and unscrupulous suppliers and gangs on shore. When the Shaw brothers set off in the fall of 1878, they had no idea that their routine voyage to deliver wheat and timber to Europe would end in tragedy. Their ship, the *D.R. Eaton*, had been built in Eatonville, Nova Scotia, by brothers D.R. and C.F. Eaton and was launched in October 1877. It was declared to be a "ship of the first order for strength and durability." So how did this brand-new vessel disappear completely, never to be heard from again? Captain Harris H. Shaw, his wife, and their young daughter, along with two of his brothers and twenty other crew members, simply vanished. Follow my journey as I use a variety of sources to help tell their story.

Canadian Her-Story: The Scottish Sisters and CPR's Luxury Hotels

At the turn of the twentieth century, women were expected to marry, have children and run their households. But Annie and Jean Mollison defied these expectations. They remained lifelong spinsters and went on to expertly manage most of the Canadian Pacific Railway's luxury mountain resorts. Their work ethic, good business sense, and freedom from family demands allowed them to excel in a male-dominated industry. But how did these intelligent and refined young ladies end up working for the CPR at a time when a woman's place was supposed to be at home? Their lives were documented extensively in the newspapers, magazines and books of the time, which allows me to reconstruct the story of their lives. Join me to learn about the fascinating story of the Scottish Sisters and the CPR!

Canadian Her-Story: Madame Curious, The Story of Dr. Diana Loranger

Diana Loranger's father nicknamed her "Madame Curious" as a child, and she lived up to the name. After starting to collect rocks at the tender age of 3, she became the first woman to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in geology in Canada. Diana went on to earn her doctorate in micro-paleontology in 1961, becoming Dr. Diana Loranger. Succeeding in a field dominated by men required intelligence, grit, and determination... like when she completed a 15-mile hike over strenuous terrain devised by her male colleagues to defeat her. Not only did she finish the hike, but she also made it to the office the next day, while many of the men did not! She never married but lived a full and exciting life. Diana was an accomplished golfer, held a private pilot's license, rode horses, played a variety of sports, including golf and tennis, repaired her own cars, travelled the world, went fossil hunting with friends, and built her own log cabin in the Alberta foothills. Newspapers, journals and other sources help me tell the story of a woman determined to survive and thrive, when so many expected her to fail.

BEVERLEY SMITH



Bev started tracing her family information before the Internet and was lucky enough to contact folks from an earlier generation. Now, with all the resources available online, she is enjoying the search for extended family, DNA matches and resources that support her earlier findings. She finds, "It is fun helping others locate records, guiding new genealogists, and making friends along the way."

She has learned so much from her affiliation with Alberta Family Histories Society and Manitoba Genealogical Society. She continues to learn from webinars and conversations with others.

Bev has acted as facilitator with Special Interest Groups, taught Beginner classes and introduced others to Family Tree Maker software. Her areas of interest include Canada, the United Kingdom, and the USA.

PRESENTATIONS:

Deep Dive into the Census Pool: A long look at Online Census in Canada, USA, and England/Wales

Agricultural Labourers in Great Britain: A common occupation found listed on the Census

She's Not Just A Dash: Difficulties in tracing female ancestors

It's All About the Stories: How a newspaper find unlocked an ancestor's adventurous life story (with co-presenter Wayne Smith)

Wooden Walls of Britain 1580-1815: How Britain's seafarers have influenced our English language (with co-presenter Wayne Smith)

CHRISTINE HAYES



From a young age, Christine was the kid who perched quietly nearby, eavesdropping on the conversations of grown-ups and wondering about the people behind the names. Years later, after taking a job in the genealogy department at the public library, those names she'd heard resurfaced in census records—and she was hooked.

Christine spent the bulk of her career helping people trace their ancestry. She believes that storytelling is the bridge between past and present, and that preserving family history is the most powerful way to keep our collective memory alive.

Christine now serves as the Program Committee Chair of the Alberta Family History Society, where she continues to work with genealogists looking to find family and discover the lives of those who went before.

PRESENTATIONS:

Start, Search, Discover: Genealogy Essentials for All Explorers

Every family tree starts with a tale—sometimes epic, sometimes eccentric. In this session, we'll chart a path from curious beginner to seasoned sleuth, sharing the twists, turns, and surprising discoveries that make genealogical research feel more like time travel than homework.

Something from (nearly) nothing

It all began with a postcard and one curious researcher. By the end? A family story stretching across the continent. This session guides explorers of all levels through the thrill of discovery and the joy of connecting dots across generations.

Finding your family in Wild Rose Country

This session will guide you through the essential records and research tools to unearth and uncover the stories of your Albertan ancestors.

From Cholera to COVID: Epidemics That Altered Ancestral Paths

Take a deep dive into how disease shaped the lives—and legacies—of our ancestors. This session explores how historical outbreaks influenced migration, fractured families, sparked resilience, and left hidden clues in the records we uncover today.

Using Cookbooks as Genealogical Resources

Cookbooks—especially community and family ones—are surprisingly rich sources for genealogical research. They don't just share recipes; they capture a moment in time, they preserve names, traditions, and social ties that might not appear in official records.

The Historian's Toolkit: Reconstructing Lives from Fragmented Records

This session will help genealogists move beyond names and dates and toward rich, reconstructed narratives of ancestral lives. We will explore historical research methods that will breathe life into our family stories. Learn to wield tools like timelines, regional histories, occupational records, and newspaper archives to help reconstruct the everyday realities of our ancestors.

PAT JETTE



Pat Harumi Jetté (née Hiraoka) grew up in Winnipeg. She is a third-generation descendant of Japanese ancestry on her paternal side and a fourth-generation descendant on her maternal side. She's a member of AFHS and the "Family Tree Maker" Special Interest Group (SIG). Her primary focus is researching her Japanese ancestry and her husband's French heritage.

She has taken "Basic Level" courses from "The National Institute of Genealogical Studies in partnership with the Professional Learning Centre, Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto. She describes herself as a "learning as you go" genealogy hobbyist!

PRESENTATION:

Second World War in Canada: "The Japanese Canadians"

This presentation depicts my Japanese ancestors who immigrated to Canada and established their family livelihood and friendships.

Through a sampling of personal photographs and paper trails that reveal their experiences before, during and after the Second World War in Canada. Many of the researchable sources are now open to the public.

TARA SHYMANSKI



Website: [Shymanski Genealogy Research – digging up your family roots](#)

Tara caught the genealogy bug at 17 after listening to family stories and hasn't stopped since. That passion led her to earn a history degree and a Certificate in Canadian Records from the National Institute for Genealogical Studies.

She's a specialist in Ontario, Quebec and Canadian research, with solid experience in American and English records, too. Tara is known for her enthusiasm, love of teaching, and her knack for digging up those obscure sources that others might miss.

Her husband Rob says she might be a *little* obsessed with genealogy—but she still makes time to go hiking and camping with him in the mountains.

PRESENTATIONS:

Connecting with our Roots: How Family Stories Shape our Lives – NEW

Unearthing family stories creates a bond between you and your ancestors. Hearing stories about my mother's childhood changed my perception of her. Learning ancestors' stories, whether by hearing them from relatives or discovering them through research, teaches us about our ancestors and helps us understand their lives. This session will explore the psychology of researching family history. By researching family history, we learn how their decisions have shaped us. Learn tips for talking to relatives to learn family stories and how to gather stories from the research we do.

10 Strategies to Accurately Build Your Family Tree – NEW

How would you feel if you discovered that the family you had researched for years weren't your ancestors? Eager genealogists sometimes build an inaccurate family tree. This session will provide 10 strategies to reduce the risk of making this mistake. You will feel confident building your family tree as you use these strategies. This presentation will benefit new and not-so-new genealogy researchers.

Finding Clues in Historical Documents – *NEW*

Are you getting every bit of information from historical documents that you uncover? As high school students, we read books and learned to analyze them. In genealogy research, we have the fun of examining historical documents and analyzing them to find clues that lead to further research. Sharpen your analytical skills in this session. Learn to determine the facts and evaluate clues to decide where to search next to confirm the information that the clues revealed.

Genealogy Resources for the Canadian Prairies – *NEW*

A look at the usual websites and unexpected resources for finding your family on the Canadian Prairies. Discover where to find data and social history.

How to Find North American Passenger Lists

Are you missing a key genealogy clue because you haven't found a passenger list? Do you know the exact date your relative set foot on Canadian or American soil? Our ancestors came to North America by ship, but finding them on passenger lists can be frustratingly difficult. This session covers how to discover the immigration date of an ancestor, where to find passenger lists for arrivals in Canada or the United States, and some tips for finding hard-to-find ancestors.

From Census to Civil and Church Records

Learn how to gather information from census records, analyze it, and then find other records that either support or refute those facts. Extracting information from census records is vital to finding more records. Learn how to calculate birth, marriage, and death dates, how to infer information and how to create a database to organize facts. Discover where to look to find government and church records that will have more accurate facts on your family. Follow the Franklin family from the 1921 Canadian census in Saskatchewan to Ontario and England as you learn to use census, civil, and church records to complete your family tree.

Analyzing Census Records Using Spreadsheets

Spreadsheets make analyzing census records easier. Learn to create a spreadsheet and manipulate data to reveal actual and implied information from census records.

The Art of Slow Genealogy

Are you a genealogy tortoise or a hare? The hare rushes to find new documents, but genealogy tortoises create more accurate and thorough family trees by using a detailed research log. This step-by-step method suggests ways to slow down, cite your sources, and read and analyze records. This process results in a more accurate family history.

Genealogy from Home

We get into the rut of searching only our favorite websites. But there are many digitized records on the Internet on various websites. This lecture will examine sites in Canada, Britain, and the United States that contain online records. As well, we'll look at websites that teach genealogists where to find even more records on the Internet.

8 Tips for Beginner Genealogists

Are you interested in becoming skilled at genealogy fundamentals? Do you want to know how to decide if that record is your ancestor? Following these 8 tips will help you trace your family tree proficiently and accurately.

Finding Records on FamilySearch

Have you ever tried browsing through records on the FamilySearch website? How do you know what's available and how to find them? Searching the indexed records is the easiest way to look for ancestors. But there are thousands of digitized records that haven't been indexed. Taking the time to browse or scroll through them is worth the effort. You'll learn where to find them and tips on making the browsing a bit easier. This lecture will explore how to locate both indexed and non-indexed records to maximize the use of the FamilySearch website.

Genealogy Basics

Learn to do genealogy like a seasoned researcher. Follow these basic tips, and you'll research your family confidently and efficiently. Are you interested in becoming skilled at genealogical fundamentals, such as organizing facts and sources, finding records, and evaluating the documents you find? This presentation will teach you how to be proficient at tracking your family.

Breaking that Brick Wall

You found your ancestors but can't determine where they came from. This information-packed presentation offers a methodical approach that results in thoroughly reviewing and analyzing your documents and examining records that may help break through that brick wall. We'll explore various techniques and strategies to organize and carry out research. Following this system results in a more accurate family history, which will help you break down your genealogical barriers and may take you back another generation.

Using Canadian Land Records for Genealogy Research

Genealogists don't always realize the value of land records. They were kept from the beginning of settlement in Canada, and many still exist. This lecture will examine why you should examine land records, what genealogical information can be gleaned from them, and where they are located. We will look at actual land records to discover information of value to family historians. We'll also look at different sites and databases that contain these

records. I will explain the intricacies of finding some of the records and review the new online database for Ontario land records.

The Value of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives for Genealogists

The bankruptcy of the Hudson's Bay Company has brought to light the value of its over 300 years of records. Their records are now housed at the Archives of Manitoba. This presentation explores the genealogical value of Hudson's Bay Company records, detailing their history, archival holdings and digitized materials. It highlights resources like servants' contracts, biographical sheets, post journals and vital records, offering invaluable insights into ancestors involved in the fur trade, despite limited genealogical documentation in early Canadian records.

Using Social Media for Genealogy

Social media can be intimidating for some of us, but the lure of connecting online with living relatives is tempting. Discover the value of social media; what it is, what platforms are available and how they work; and what a great tool it is for family historians!

Researching in Canada

This information-packed presentation guides researchers through internet sources available for research in Canada. We'll examine the Collections Canada website, various provincial archives, and Ancestry and FamilySearch websites. Attendees will learn about the available resources on each of these websites and how to easily and quickly find the information they need.

DAVID TYLER



Born in Dartford, Kent, England, David secured an Honours degree in German and French from the University of Kent. He followed with postgraduate work at King's College, London. David then taught languages in schools in England with exchange visits to Germany, Austria, France and the Czech Republic.

After joining the LDS church in England, he served in various capacities focusing mainly in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. He has been to more than 30 countries and worked with at least 15 different languages. In 2001 he emigrated to Canada and worked as a contract translator, now retired. He became a naturalized Canadian citizen and is now resident in Wainright, Alberta.

David spent a year at the LDS mission on the International Floor of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City where he was trained in family history research by professional

genealogists specializing in German, French, Italian and Dutch research. David has shared his presentations on many areas of family history research throughout Alberta and B.C.

PRESENTATIONS:

Most of David's presentations are concerned with research in various countries. The content is adapted to the specific country, beginning with the absolute need to know the exact place of birth of the ancestor and tips on how to find it, as well as a date and the ancestor's religion. Usually, the next things are the history and geography as it affects genealogy, the administrative jurisdictions, using maps and gazetteers to find the birthplace, a look at immigration and settlement, and emigration, especially to North America. But the major part of every presentation is a review of what different records are available for the country, (church records, censuses, civil registration, military records, court records, newspapers, cemetery records, society records, online message boards, etc.), and what information can be obtained from each of them, the various repositories where the records are kept, and how they can be accessed, whether online or by other means. Additionally, the presentation will address reading the languages the records are written in and how to extract just the information we need from them.

For some countries certain aspects will have greater emphasis. In Ireland, for example, emigration and settlement will play a bigger role, whereas for Germany or Poland, how to use the gazetteers will be more prominent, because they can give you not just the ancestor's village but exactly where he went to church when there is not a church of his denomination in the village. How available and/or useful a particular record source is, varies enormously.

Presentations typically take just over an hour, but some (England Beyond the Basics, for example) take considerably longer because of the amount of material to cover. Each presentation includes a comprehensive set of notes.

- Basic German Research
- Border changes in Europe 1815-1945
- England
- England beyond the basics
- Finding records that are not online
- Military records
- Poland part 1
- Poland part 2
- Reading German records
- Reading German Gothic script
- Reading Latin
- Reading Old English handwriting
- Research in Alberta
- Research in Australia
- Research in Austria

- Research in Austria-Hungary
- Research in Canada
- Research in Eastern Europe
- Research in Finland
- Research in France
- Research in Germany
- Research in Hungary
- Research in Ireland
- Research in Italy
- Research in London
- Research in New Zealand
- Research in Norway
- Research in Prussia
- Research in Russia
- Research in Scotland
- Research in Sweden
- Research in Switzerland
- Research in the Czech Republic and Slovakia
- Research in Wales
- Researching Germans from Russia
- Sources – Myth and reality
- Using North American records to trace your European ancestors
- Using censuses to kick-start your English research
- Why history is a vital research tool
- You CAN read foreign language records

SESSION FOR SERVICE CLUBS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to the above presenters and their topics, Alberta Family Histories Society has a team of volunteers who will do an introductory presentation for service clubs, seniors' groups and other organizations. **Build Your Family Tree** covers three topics: Why do Genealogy, How to Start Your Family History, and a brief description of AFHS and our programs. It takes about 50 minutes. A donation to AFHS is appreciated.

ARRANGING FOR A PRESENTATION

Contact us via our Society phone number 403-214-1447 or drop us an email at info@afhs.ab.ca. We will get back to you and work through the arrangements to find an appropriate time and location. Some sessions may only be available via Zoom, while others could be in person. Most of the presentations have an associated handout with reference sources.