



BCGS NEWS

FEBRUARY 2024 • VOL 9 | ISN 02 • ISSN 2817-8750

**FEBRUARY MEETING:
WEDNESDAY 14 @7PM**
COVER DETAILS ON PAGE 2



FEBRUARY 2024
VOL 9 · ISN 02

UPCOMING
EVENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

[FEBRUARY MEETING](#)

[BOD NOMINATIONS](#)

[WELCOME NEW MEMBERS](#)

[CALENDAR](#)

[ZOOM CHATS](#)

FEATURES

[CDN Letters Project](#)

[Library Admin](#)

[DNA Research survey](#)

[Meet the Member](#)

[Genealogy Gems](#)

[Meg McLaughlin](#)

[Postcard Feature](#)

MONTHLY CHECK-INS

[e-Journal](#)

[Veterans 2023 Book](#)

[United Empire Loyalists](#)

[Newsletter Deadlines](#)

[Fundraising](#)

[Surrey Library](#)

ALL UNDERLINED ITEMS
ARE CLICKABLE AS LINKS



Auto Rally's were popular in the early 1900s.
On the Cover: 2011-010.1797 - Auto rallies finally arrived
[at] Prospect Point 1905. City of Vancouver Archives:
AM1576-S6-12-F47-: 2011-010.1797. This page; 4203C
Vancouver Public Library Historical Photographs on Flickr

FROM THE PRESIDENT

EUNICE ROBINSON #112, PRESIDENT@BCGS.CA

A few days ago, I received a letter in response to one that I wrote to a very distant relative 4 years ago! It seems my letter fell behind a piece of furniture which was recently moved. But the return letter was fantastic. My 'cousin' filled in many of the questions I had asked, which confirmed my research suppositions. So the old saying "better late than never" was very appropriate in this case. She also asked several questions – most of which I could answer, but a few remain mysteries. We now have emails flying back and forth.

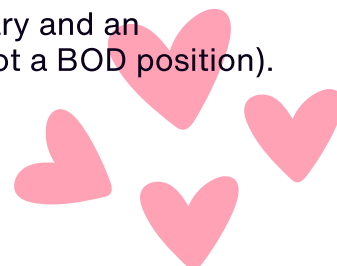
Researching one's family history is often the waiting game, isn't it? We can only hope that when we do hear back, it will be worthwhile. Do you have any outstanding correspondence that you haven't answered yet? Perhaps your correspondent is anxiously waiting for your reply.

As February is Heritage Month, what plans do you have for celebrating your heritage?? Perhaps you'll take in a webinar or seminar or two. There are so many to choose from, including RootsTech. Check out our BCGS website for more information, or the calendar of events in this newsletter.

Other 'big days' are February 14th – Valentine's Day, which is also our February BCGS meeting! And Family Day on Monday February 19th, the perfect day to drag out the family history and share with the family!

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at our March meeting. Interested in serving on the Board of Directors? We are looking for a Society Secretary and an Administrative Secretary (which is not a BOD position).

See you at our February meeting
– Happy Valentine's Day.



COFFEE CHATS

Click here to go directly to the page

WELCOME

TO NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

Ronald T Waller, Chemainus #6015

Victoria Den Ouden, Kelowna – #6019

Doug Johnstone, Vancouver – #6020

Colleen Hill, Delta – #6021

Joanie Donovan, Vancouver – #6022

Amanda Christmas, Kelowna – #6023

Lori Thibault Winn, Gibsons – #6024

Lorne Palmer, Vancouver – #6025

Jason Thompson, Deroche – #6026

Tina Zwicker Robson, Qualicum Beach – #6027

Roberta Francis, Gabriola Island – #6028

Teena Weech, Cranbrook – #6029

Adrienne Chan, Vancouver – #6030

Geri Turner, Delta – #6031

BCGS Winter Seminar with Gordon McBean

This morning we were treated to two very interesting presentations by Gordon McBean, an active and long-time member of the Manitoba Genealogical Society and presenter.

The first was *“Railways in My Tree and in My Blood”*. This one told the story of how important the railroads were to the development of Canada, and how many railways there were. Gordon comes from a railway family, as does his wife, and shared photos and stories from his archives, as well as shared sources to search. Gordon provided an excellent handout with lots of sites and books.

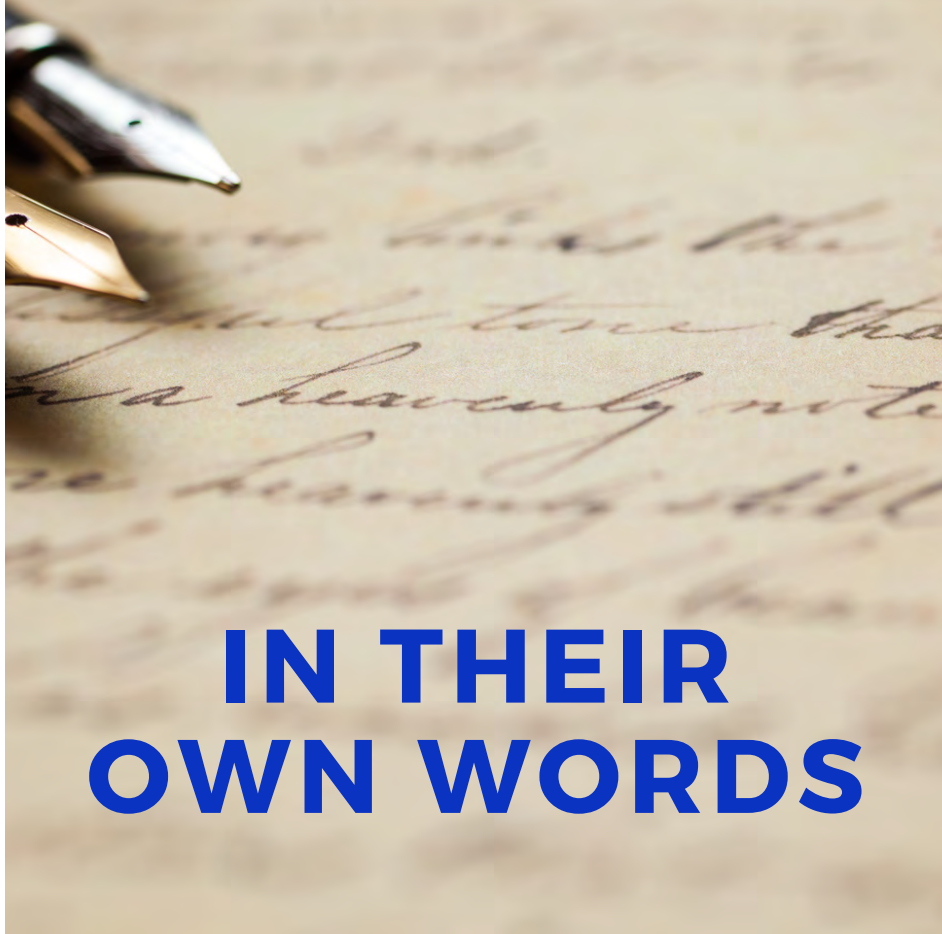
The second presentation was *“They Came Through Ontario”*. Again using his own research to illustrate the records that he has used to locate his family story in Ontario, Gordon showed that family history research can be quite challenging. Now thanks to extensive digitizing of records, you may find the records locally or from the comfort of your home.

Many thanks for sharing your knowledge and experience with us, Gordon.



MEETING NOTES

FEBRUARY



IN THEIR OWN WORDS



**WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 14TH**

Members will receive Zoom invitations to our monthly meetings, so watch your email inbox for the Zoom link, meeting number and password.

If you don't receive the email by the day before the meeting, please contact info@bcgs.ca for assistance.

A free Zoom account is needed to join these meetings.

GUEST SPEAKER—DR. STEPHEN DAVIES



Our speaker for February will be Dr. Stephen Davies, who is the Project Director for The Canadian Letters and Images Project. His talk is entitled *"In Their Own Words"*. He will speak about *"the culture of the letter"*, what wartime correspondence can, and cannot, tell us about the Canadian war experience. His focus will be specifically on the First World War.

Stephen is a member of the Department of History at Vancouver Island University. The Project is an online archive of the Canadian War experience. Perhaps you have a letter that you might wish to donate to this project.

More about the project on [page 15](#)

Second NOTICE of CALL for NOMINATIONS for the BCGS Board of Directors

The March meeting & AGM will be held on Zoom on Wednesday, 13 March 2024, at 7:30 pm.

In addition to the regular meeting, elections will be held for the positions of:

- **President**, 2024/2025 term
- **Two Vice Presidents**, 2024/2025 term
- **Society Secretary**, 2024/2025 term
- **Administrative Secretary**, 2024/2025 term
- **Treasurer**, 2024/2025 term
- **One Director**, 2024/2026 term
- **Two Directors**, 2024/2027 term

We are grateful that several of our current Board members have agreed to stand for positions on the Executive Committee. We are in particular looking for a **Society Secretary, Administrative Secretary** and the three **Director** positions.

We need proactive participation from more of our members, to provide inspiration and guidance about the future endeavours of BCGS. Will you stand for nomination?

Nomination forms are available on the **BCGS website**.

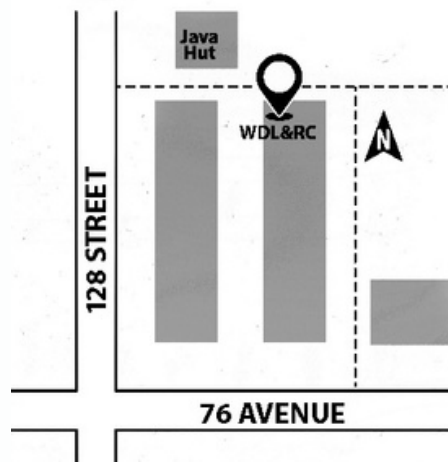
Contact **Eunice Robinson** if you would like further information about any of these positions.

By resolution adopted 13 March 2019, nominations will not be accepted from the floor during the meeting.

Welcome to the LIBRARY!
Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays—10am to 3pm.

\$5 per day for non-members

The library is closed all holiday weekends and if there is extreme weather. Please call to confirm hours **604.502.9119**.



Unit 211, 12837 76 Ave, Surrey - No parking in fire lanes. You must park in a designated BCGS parking stall or on the street. If in doubt, check with the library host on duty.

Library Administrator Position

We are looking for a volunteer administrator for the BCGS Library.

Duties include:

- **Oversee library activities** including personal contact with the library volunteers, computer tech and catalogue team.
- Have **basic computer skills** for using the library email account, Microsoft Word and Excel for updating documentation and forms.
- **Work with others** as needed, such as the Web Team, Facilities Management and Project Facilitators (eg. Findagrave and Newspaper Indexing).
- **Attend monthly Zoom Board of Directors** meetings as an ex officio board member with voting privileges.
- **Promote the library through events** like Begin with Books, and writing short pieces for the library section in the monthly newsletter.
- Orientation and support is available from the previous library administrator.

THE AGING FAMILY GENEALOGISTS AND LONG-LOST RELATIVES STUDY

Why am I interested in this study?

A rising number of adults are searching for previously unknown genetic relatives using DNA testing/databases, online historical public records, and family stories. On a personal level, my motivation for this study originated with my own fascination to identify my maternal grandfather, who was previously unknown to my mother. After years of research and DNA test searches, I was able to solve my family mystery and it was a happy ending. I was also able to reunite my mother with some long-lost relatives prior to her passing. Since then, I have learned that many other people have had similar experiences and many interesting stories to share. Thus, as a sociology/gerontology professor, I believe that the study insights will be very helpful to others, such as hobby/leisure groups or anyone wanting to learn more about this topic.

To learn more or to take the survey go to:

<https://www.sfu.ca/gerontology/research/agegen2.html>

Introducing Celia Lewis, #5183 née Gillespie, born in Vancouver BC

MEET THE MEMBER

SUE SULLIVAN, #4887 NEWSLETTER GAL

Celia is such an interesting person! If you take up a conversation with her you will understand why I say this. She also volunteers for the BCGS and teaching others about genealogy—a true wealth of information.

ABOUT YOU

Career/Profession: I have a B.Sc. Nursing, plus an MA (Counselling Psych), both from UBC, so I've been a nurse in the VON (home nursing) in Ontario, Vancouver public health and the UBC Psychiatry Unit. Later, I was one of two BC Provincial Coordinators for the home & community-based rehabilitation program for children & teens all over BC who experienced recent brain injuries.

Special skills, interests & hobbies: Typing/shorthand (so helpful), vegetable gardening, knitting, crochet, and reading constantly - I usually read 25 or so books each month. I have a strong interest in whales and sea life, particularly humpback whales & glass sponges!!

ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH—

How old were you when you became interested in family history? About 60 years old - about 5 years before I retired. I decided I needed an activity after retirement which would put me in contact with friendly positive people, and provide me with a brain-stimulating activity (research).

Why did you start researching? I grew up with a very difficult and emotionally-abusive mother, and I wanted to know more about our family ancestors outside the challenging nuclear family of mine.

What are a few of the surnames you research?

GILLESPIE, KUHN, ORMSBEE, RULAND, PETTYGROVE, TERWILLIGER, BUELL, GRAVES. With of course, so many variant spellings!

What are a few of the geographic areas you research?

United States (particularly Washington state, and New York state), England, Ireland, Germany, a bit of Scotland—all ancestors were Northern European.

Which branch of your tree is your favourite and why?

No favourite branch—as long as I'm finding interesting records, stories, maps, newspaper articles etc., then I'm happy!!

Who is your most stubborn Ancestor and why? My 2nd great-grandmother **Sophia RULAND** who married F.W. PETTYGROVE in New York City. They immediately moved to the western side of the US, settling soon afterwards in Port Townsend, Washington state. I know nothing about her except for the basics (censuses, death). Even her obituary was about her husband! Sigh.

ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BCGS—

What led you to the BCGS and when did you become a member? I wanted to join to learn more, hopefully find some new friendly people—I enjoy groups! I used to teach 12-week classes for parents of young children, parents of teens, and classroom teachers, and I began teaching genealogy classes in my local community centres after a few years, which I enjoyed a great deal and continued until about 6 years ago. I came to many meetings and eventually joined BCGS about 2005 or thereabouts, with some encouragement from the then-President.

Have you ever volunteered for the BCGS and in what capacity? I've been a **Library volunteer** which I loved—first working with Marvin Millis on the 1st Tuesdays, all day. I've written reviews of new books for the Newsletter for a few years. Later, I added in volunteering for the Newspaper Project (BMDs in the Classified sections). I continue to **teach genealogy classes** for the BCGS for a small honorarium, using my personal class designs and handouts. Eunice and I often teach these classes together—which is great for students, as we use very different styles and methods. For the past year, I've been learning about cataloguing donated used or new books for the library. I also **write a column** for our Newsletter, "Genealogy Gems & Oddities in our Library."



What do you like best about volunteering? I get to play in my favourite sandbox: libraries, plus reading/learning new things. I enjoy working on a project with others, as well.

Have you ever used our Library and what did you go there to look for? I LOVE our library—we have a fabulous selection of books and journals which support genealogy research so very well!! Every year I take out at least a dozen books, let alone reading some book sections while I'm in the library for various volunteering purposes. In one year, I monthly took out 4-8 issues of the journal of the New England Historical & Genealogical Society (NEHGS), since both my ex-husband and I go back to that area in early settlements. I found so much relevant and useful information!! These days, I'm looking for more clues in books in different states, as well as in different countries.

Did you experience any great discoveries at the library?

Absolutely! I was able to find more information about my 1663 New Amsterdam ancestor and his large family (11 sons, 1 daughter!!) - **thrilling!** I have also found my 2nd great-grandfather's land on a large map of the Lennox & Addington Ontario region. **And more:** learned fascinating countryside context of my paternal grandparents area in Northern Ireland, details of my ex-husband's family line in County Cork (back to Cromwell's army), photos of a pub and information about it for my daughter's husband's ancestors. Details that may never be digitized.

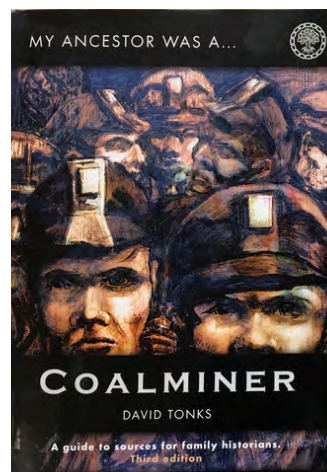
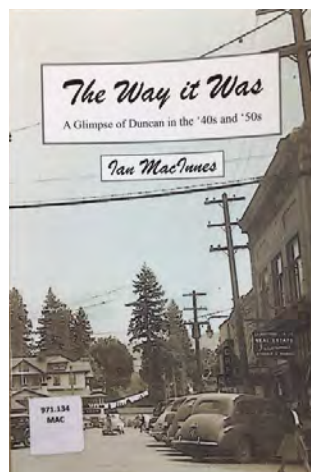
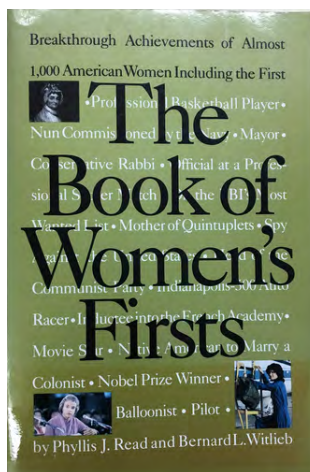
Who would you like to hear about next?
Send a suggestion to newsletter@bcgs.ca



Library Volunteers Needed

A couple of volunteers have retired—if you think this may be a fit for you, contact library@bcgs.ca. Shifts are either morning 10 am to 12:30 or afternoon 12:30 to 3 pm. The following positions need to be filled: the **First** and **Third Saturday** of each month and the **Fourth Thursday** of each month.

New Books in the Library!



Magazines, distractions and family trees

MEG MCLAUGHLIN, #3847 GENEALOGY BLOGGER

I have a weakness for reading material, acquiring it as well as borrowing it. Over time, it starts to add up. Books can be shelved, at least theoretically, until there are so many of them that there isn't enough shelf space. But it's the magazines, those slim but glossy holders of information that look so promising, but are hardly ever read, that are my real *bête noire*. That's not the case when I pick them up, of course, but when I try to fit in time to read them.

It was a magazine that sparked a conversation with the cashier at a local store. When I placed the latest issue of *Smithsonian* on the counter, her eyes scanned the cover where one of the headings was "Tracing a Lost Ancestry".

"Are you into genealogy?" she asked.

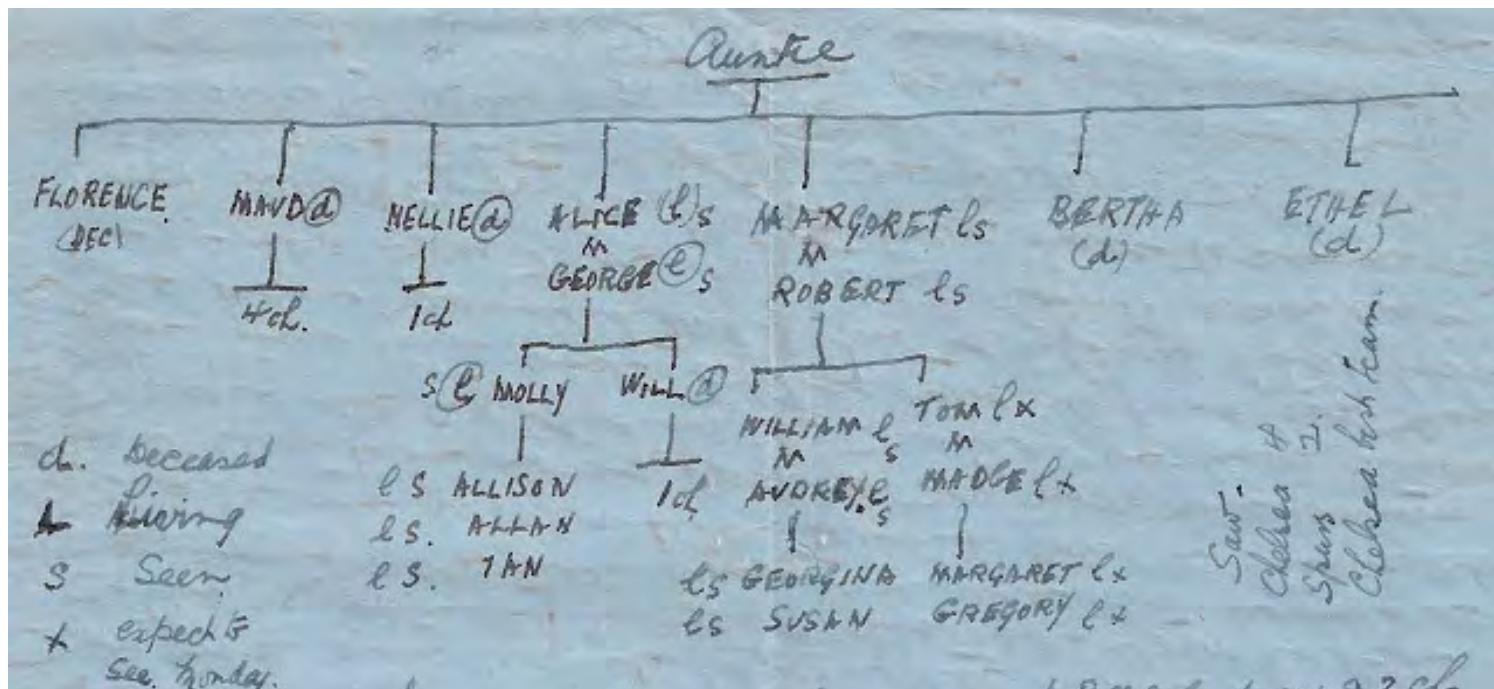
I said I was and questioned if she was too. Turns out, her husband had just retired and had been bitten by the family history bug. She said he had done his family and hers and some other people's as well. That made me consider how different searching for information is these days than when I started out. When she asked, I told her I had been researching for 30 years, but really, I fudged that number a bit because it was more like 35 years.

I added that I had been to Salt Lake City and she said her husband wanted to go there and to England, too. She looked impressed when I said I'd visited both places. As I walked away with my magazine, I thought it was interesting that a family historian who had just picked up the practice would still want to visit the repositories in person even though so much information is online these days. Although I did spare a thought for the accuracy of her husband's research if he had already done work on so many different genealogies.

The playing field must be so much different for novice family historians in the 2020s with so much information available online that it would be hard to know where to start. If it were me, I think that I would have a hard time every time the new and shiny became available. A case in point was when I recently started work to expand my US family lines while diligently filling in my family tree. This



Some of my basement bookcases are getting a bit crowded



The sketchy family tree my grandfather included in the letter to my mother

time I was determined to fill in those descendants to give me a leg up when trying to confirm how my DNA matches fit in. It was going well, if haltingly, when a post on *Genealogy à la Carte* caught my eye. MyHeritage was allowing free access to their Australian records for four days.

With that news, I dropped everything to look up information on my Australian family. Well, that part of my family that I had filled in a lot of the blanks for anyway. That research started out with a letter my grandfather wrote to my mother while he was in Australia which contained a sketchy family tree. It became the lead into an interesting story. Helpfully, I had written a series of blog posts about the McKay family and had followed their movements between Dorset, Malta and India. I had mapped that out through William McKay's military records and the births of William and Henrietta's children in the various places they were stationed.

I was able to find a few of the McKays on the MyHeritage Australian databases but the search

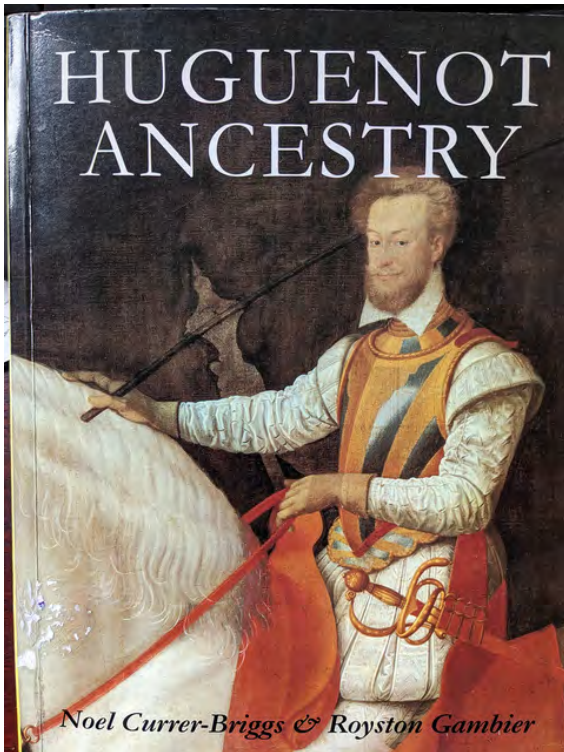
also reminded me that I had accessed a lot of information on this family on Ancestry and FindMyPast, as well. With all of the research I've already done and a list of the children, I should add this additional descendant information to my family tree. It would have been so helpful if I had done that as I went along discovering new branches of my family. Doing it now is a reminder of all that I have found. I wouldn't give up those eureka moments of the long slogs through microfilm and all of the places I have explored in person. So I'm glad I started when I was younger and my knowledge could grow along with the plethora of resources that keep expanding. I learned as I went along, through my own efforts and the assistance of the genealogists around me. For it is when we come together that we learn. I wish all of the newer genealogists out there the joys of discovering the community of fellow enthusiasts as they delve deeper into the records.

Meg writes about history and genealogy in *A Genealogist's Path to History* at <http://genihistorypath.blogspot.ca/>. Read more about her findings in her blog.

GENEALOGY GEMS & ODDITIES

at the **BCGS LIBRARY & RESEARCH CENTRE** BY CELIA LEWIS, #5183

Do you have Huguenot ancestors? They were French Protestants—mainly in the Calvinist tradition of Protestantism. In the 16th-17th centuries, they were severely persecuted to the point of massacre, by the Catholic majority. This book is ideal for the relative beginner in researching Huguenots.



This wonderfully illustrated and detailed book provides information on the history before many of the Huguenots were able to escape, mainly to Britain, North America and South Africa. The Introduction Section encompasses history from the early French Kings [1515], continuing to those involved in the Wars of Religion 1562-98, to the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve, and the life and death challenges Huguenots faced.

But more than the history of the Huguenots, are several sections of Planning a research project, British Research Sources, Research in France, the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland. These helpful details will encourage the reader to start immediately in researching their Huguenot families. Also, there is a 4-page Chronology from 1455 -1905 at the back of the book, followed by a detailed Bibliography.

Not only is there a helpful Index, but there is a 5 page index of "Some Leading Huguenot Families and Their Descendants" based on Samuel Smiles' work on Huguenot refugees [Smiles, S., The Huguenots, 1866, 1876 and 1880].

This book is highly recommended for the beginner in Huguenot ancestry research: the historical context is included, the details of the conditions Huguenots lived under, the places they immigrated to, the resources to use in research, and more. And only 150 pages!

The cover is a detail of a portrait of Henri IV, France

284 CUR—HUGUENOT ANCESTRY
by Noel Currer-Briggs & Royston Gambier

**Send articles and photos to newsletter@bcgs.ca
April is the next Newsletter. Deadline: Tuesday March 27**

BCGS Newsletter Team
newsletter@bcgs.ca,
Sue Sullivan Editor/Designer
with Sharon Clayton,
Margaret Sharon
Pub Review Team:
Sherry King, Jo-Ann Blomquist,
Sally Funk.
Publishing Team:
Sheila Albrecht
Judy Galpin
MAILING ADDRESS
PO Box 88054, Lansdowne Mall
Richmond, BC V6X 3T6
Library Phone: 604-502-9119

Articles, photos, illustrations and images have been submitted by volunteer authors. The material in this newsletter may be reprinted unless otherwise noted. Please give appropriate credit to the original source. Feel free to pass on the newsletter to anyone who has an interest in genealogy and/or genetic genealogy.

2024	DEADLINE	PROOFERS	RELEASE	MEETING
March*	F15	6	15	13
April	M27	3	8	10
May	A23	1	6	8

*E-Journal

Smithers, BC

BY JANICE KIDWELL,
#5033

The black and white post card has the wording Smithers, B.C. on the front. Also, on the front is the wording Photo by Louis Studio. On the back is the wording: Canadian Post-Card Co Ltd., Toronto -3. There is neither a message, nor a postage stamp on the back. As well, the dates 1954-56? is shown, written in ink.



The people of Smithers gratefully acknowledge that they live, work and play on the unceded traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation. The Wet'suwet'en have lived here for countless generations. Their rich culture is seen and heard throughout the valley, the land that they have known and loved longer than memory can recount.

Smithers is located in northwestern British Columbia approximately halfway between Prince George and Prince Rupert. Nearly 6,000 people live within the Smithers town boundary, but nearly 20,000 live in the Bulkley Valley and rural communities serviced by it. As a service centre, Smithers offers many more amenities than you might expect for a town its size.

Communities west of Smithers include Witset, New Hazelton, Kitwanga, Terrace, Kitimat, Port Edward and Prince Rupert, while to the east are Telkwa, Houston, Topley, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake, Fort Fraser, Vanderhoof and Prince George.

From its position in the Bulkley Valley, Smithers is set against the backdrop of Hudson Bay Mountain to the west and the Babine Mountain range to the east.

Smithers is named for **Sir Alfred Waldron Smithers** (1850-1924), a London financier and chairman of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. With the railway, the town immediately began to grow. "A new building is erected every day in Smithers!" boasted one promotional advertisement. Heritage buildings such as the train station, constructed in 1918, and the Central Park Building, constructed in 1925 as the provincial government office, speak to Smithers' role as a regional centre and its place within the rail history of British Columbia. Nearby Evelyn is named for one of his daughters.

The story of the Town of Smithers begins in 1913 with the coming of the railroad. The federal government in Ottawa was eager to extend its trade and transportation routes across the continent, and plans were well underway for a railway that would extend from Manitoba in the east to the current city of Prince Rupert on the west coast. In 1913, after two unsuccessful attempts to establish its divisional point between Prince George and Prince Rupert, the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (GTPR) turned its attention to the unassuming bit of swampy land below the towering Hudson Bay Mountain.

By 1914, the Smithers Tribune and the Smithers Review opened. There were also, two banks, three churches, a three-storey hotel, stores, a telephone system and an electricity supply store. Services comprised of six rooming houses, five restaurants, four general stores, doctor, dentist,

drugstore, hardware store, sawmill, planing mill, two lumber yards, plumber, sheet iron worker, sign works, three contracting firms, two laundries, two poolrooms, livery stable, meat market, shoe shop and two real estate firms.

After the 1914 Telkwa fire which destroyed 13 downtown buildings, many businesses relocated to Smithers, a community of 125 permanent buildings and 700 people.

Commerce & Population

The Seymour Lake Lumber Company, having a 15,000-foot capacity per shift mill, was producing 10,000 feet of lumber daily to keep up with the building boom. Swampy land with canvas tents and shacks became what the Omenica Miner described in October 1913 as "the best district in British Columbia."

The rail line continues to serve as an important transportation corridor for Smithers' mining, agriculture, forestry and tourism economies.

The Forestry Industry has been the most important employer with two large sawmills in the area. Dairy Farming, the Cattle Industry and Mining exploration are also significant.

In 1921, Smithers was designated as the first incorporated village in British Columbia. Development of local mineral and agricultural resources were encouraged and a steady economic growth was realized. Pioneer settlers made Smithers their home because of the fertile valley soil, abundant mineral riches and coniferous forests. Following World War II, many Europeans - especially Dutch and Swiss families immigrated to Smithers. In 1967, Smithers moved from the status of village to incorporated town.

Public Institutions & Amenities

J. Mason Adams was the inaugural postmaster 1913-14. He operated the first drug store in Telkwa. The Smithers Citizens Association, formed in December 1913, provided leadership, but could not levy taxes. Miss Mary K. Downey was the initial teacher at the school established in April 1914. Donations provided a \$15,000 community hall. In 1920, the premier opened the two-storey hospital, which provided 15 beds.



During the Depression, the basic rural road network was built, the golf course opened in 1931, the airfield in 1933, a fire truck was purchased, the Bulkley Valley District Hospital (staffed by the Sisters of St. Anne until 1969) opened in 1934, and the Dominion Experimental Farm in 1938. In 1944 Highway 16 was completed to Prince Rupert. In 1967 Smithers became a town with J.F. MacDonald being the first mayor. A decade later, the museum moved to the Central Park building, allowing the library to expand. In 1976, the province moved the regional office from Prince Rupert.

From the 1940s, many small independent bush mills supplied the two local planer mills. The population increased from 1,204 in 1951 to 2,487 in 1961, 4,570 by 1981, and peaked at 5,624 in 1996. In the 2021 Census of Population conducted by Statistics Canada, Smithers recorded a population of 5,378.

Transportation

Smithers Airport: Air Canada, Central Mountain Air, charter airlines, and helicopter companies, VIA Rail's Jasper-Prince Rupert makes a scheduled stop three times a week in each direction. BC Bus North became the replacement operator when Greyhound cancelled this route.

Recreation

Smithers is known for its world class skiing and fishing - in particular for steelhead. Other popular activities include soccer, volleyball, hockey, baseball, downhill mountain biking, cross-country skiing, hiking, quadding snowmobiling in the surrounding mountains, paragliding, or mountain biking down Hudson Bay Mountain. The Bulkley Valley Regional Pool and Recreation Centre opened in 1990. Smithers have a Public Library as well as the Bulkley Valley Museum.

Culture

Smithers and the Bulkley Valley have often been described by non-residents as the somewhat culturally unique to the rest of Northern British Columbia. Many factors contribute to the composition of society in Smithers, including the arts and industry smoke stacks outside of town from mills and mining.

In 1970 Smithers adopted an "alpine theme". Main Street was adorned with alpine-style rooflines, red brick sidewalks and a wood sculpture called ALPINE AL, who plays the alhorn! Alpine Al, located at the entrance to the main street has become the guardian of Main Street and the official mascot, and logo, of the town. The current statue, erected in 2016, is seven feet tall, carved by chainsaw and made of 1,000-year-old red cedar.

Residents of Smithers have a strong environmental ethic. In 2006, over 600 residents took to the streets to voice their opposition to a proposed coalbed methane gas field near Telkwa, which they claimed would threaten local water quality, landscape integrity and wild salmon populations. Likewise a proposal by Thompson Creek Metals to develop a molybdenum mine to extract the Davidson deposit on Hudson Bay Mountain near the town was vigorously opposed over a period of years before TCM abandoned the project.

Smithers and the Bulkley Valley are home to many musicians, including Juno-Award-winning Alexis Puentes. The biggest assembly of musical talent happens during the annual Mid-Summer Music Festival in late June. Over the years, the Mid-Summer Music Festival has seen some famous acts like Spirit of the West and the Barenaked Ladies and has drawn audiences and participants from all across North America.

The Della Herman Theatre, named after a longtime resident and former school board official, is the primary venue for shows and performances,

though several pubs and even open fields serve as secondary performance venues. Numerous organizations including the Bulkley Valley Community Arts Council operate to keep music and other artistic activities vibrant.

Despite its small population, Smithers has produced several notable professional ice hockey players, musicians, artists, politicians, actors and more who were either born in Smithers, born elsewhere and raised in Smithers or were from the outlying communities of Smithers.

Brothers Joe Watson and Jimmy Watson: **Philadelphia Flyers** in the 1973-74 and 1974-75 seasons. Jimmy Watson was a five-time **NHL All-Star game** selection and played for **Team Canada** at the **Canada Cup** in 1976. Joe Watson - two-time NHL All-Star. Both are members of the Flyers Hall of Fame. In their active years, the Watson brothers held an annual hockey school that included the "mid-summer" hockey game.

Brothers Ron Flockhart and Rob Flockhart, Alan Kerr, Dan Hamhuis, Michael Wall, Ron Homenuke, and Adam Kingsmill - ice sledge hockey players.

Other notable people are: Dean Brody, country musician, Peter Capak, Astrophysicist, Robert Chaplin, artist and publisher, Lisa Conway, musician and sound artist, Alex Cuba, musician, Nathan Cullen, federal politician, Tobin Frank, musician with the Canadian band Spirit of the West, Andrew George, Jr., chef and publisher, Ruth Hamblin, professional basketball player in Australia (formerly WNBA), Gina Holden, actress, Daniel Imhof, professional soccer player at VfL Bochum (Germany), Susan Juby, novelist, author, Alicia Kaye, Canadian triathlete, Dan Mangan, musician, Robin Mathews, poet, political activist, playwright, teacher, essayist, Graham Roumieu, author and illustrator and Antje von Seydlitz-Kurzbach, Canadian Olympic rower.

Movies and Television

- Disney's *Eight Below*, starring Paul Walker and Jason Biggs, was partially filmed there.
- The film *The Grey*, starring Liam Neeson and Dermot Mulroney, was partially filmed there. It was mostly shot in Vancouver.
- The film *The Mother*, starring Jennifer Lopez, was partially filmed there.
- The Comedy Network show, *Alice, I Think*, is set in Smithers; however, it is not filmed there, aside from location shots.
- Smithers was referenced in the show *How I Met Your Mother* (Season 7, Episode 6 - Mystery Vs. History).

Sources

- <https://www.rdbn.bc.ca/departments/economic-development/regional-information/area-profiles/municipality-profiles/smithers-profile>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smithers,_British_Columbia
- The Encyclopedia of British Columbia. Edited by Daniel Francis. Harbour Publishing Ltd. Madeira Park, B.C., Canada ISBN 1-55017-200-X. 971.1'003
- <https://tourismsmithers.com/plan-your-visit/about-smithers/>



Please send your story and pictures to:
Journal@bcgs.ca

The next Deadline is February 15th

LYNNE FLETCHER, #5353—E-JOURNAL EDITOR

There are many ways that we remember our family members who served in the Military.

These include family pictures, newspaper articles, Remembrance Day services, our BCGS Veterans book and mountains.

Working with the articles for the next edition of our Journal reminded me of the geographical places in Canada that have been named for a serviceman or woman who died overseas. I have learned that MacDonald Bay on the west coast of Gil Island in BC has been named after Sergeant Albert Ernest MacDonald. The sergeant had enlisted in Victoria in 1939, but died overseas in 1945.

Another of the **Holten soldiers** that **Janice Kidwell**, the Holten Canadian War Cemetery Project committee leader, has been researching has a mountain peak named for him. Canadian Army Warrant Officer Frank D. Putnam died overseas in 1945, and Putnam Peak in the Purcell Mountains north of Creston has been named to remember him.

Is there a mountain or lake named after a family member? Do you have a special way that you honour and remember someone who served in the military? Share the story of their service with our members.

TOTALS for 2023: \$1247

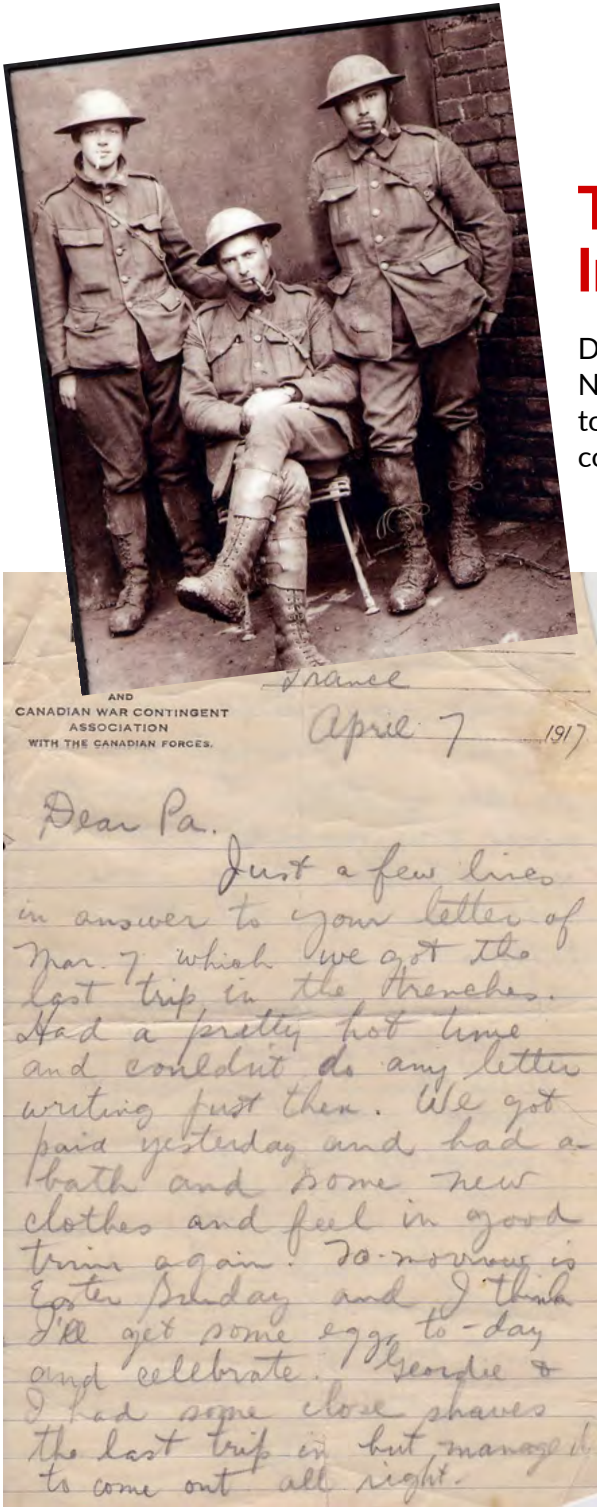
How many glass bottles, milk bottles, and bags containing more bottles & cans can we divert from the landfill in 2024?



TAKE YOUR DONATIONS TO THE RETURN-IT DEPOT CLOSEST TO YOU

This is the easiest method to contribute to the society. Thank you to all our members all over BC who are supporting the BCGS.

Please return your bottles, cans, etc. in clear plastic bags to your nearest Return-It Centre. Print a deposit label on their machine, using the BCGS phone number **604-502-9119**.



The Canadian Letters and Images Project

Dr. Stephen Davies teaches history at Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo. In 2000, he founded the Canadian Letters and Images Project to help his students learn about individual Canadians who served their country from the South African War to the Korean War, and beyond.

Dr. Davies says, “The letters are a powerful teaching tool because they put a human face to war. When you are teaching about large battles, where you have 10,000 or 20,000 casualties, the numbers become so large that they become meaningless.

When you can reduce that down to single individuals... you get a sense of the loss that one life entails. Then extrapolate that 20,000 times and you realize the richness of what we’ve lost.

More than 35,000 letters, images, diaries and other original materials have been sent to Dr. Davies for scanning. After digitization, original documents are returned to the families who sent them.

BCGS members who contributed their families’ war stories to our 2023 Book of Remembrance project may also want to participate in the Canadian Letters and Images Project.

<https://www.canadianletters.ca/content/about-us>

Contributions can be sent to:

Dr. Stephen Davies

Department of History, Vancouver Island University

900 Fifth Street

Nanaimo, British Columbia V9R 5S5

(250) 753-3245 ext. 2131 • letters@viu.ca

Databases available for you at the Cloverdale Library

UK 1921 CENSUS!

There is now free access to the UK 1921 census through our FindMyPast subscription! When using FMP in our department here at Cloverdale Branch, you can now search and view/save/print the original images at no cost. (Finally!)

BRITISH NEWSPAPER ARCHIVE!

There is also free access to the British Newspaper Archive (BNA)! When in our department here at Cloverdale Branch, you can go to the BNA website and actually set up your own account for BNA, free and with full access. Because it is your own account you will be able to bookmark and save your selections, print, share, etc. You can come back and use your account in the branch anytime.



Cloverdale Library Hours:

Monday to Thursday

9.30am to 8pm

Friday 9.30am to 5pm

Saturday 10am to 5pm

Sunday 1pm to 5pm

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR MOST PROGRAMS: [FAMILYHISTORY@SURREY.CA](mailto:familyhistory@surrey.ca)

PUBLISHING YOUR MEMOIRS OR FAMILY HISTORY

DO YOU WANT TO PUBLISH YOUR WRITING BUT ARE NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

FREE

TUE, FEB 13
10:30am-12pm

Registration required.
Phone for more information
604-502-6449.

Join us for an overview of publishing options, terminology, and what you need to get started.

Presented by Andrea Lister, the principal of Absolutely Literate, specializing in editing, research, writing and design. She is a former editor of British Columbia History magazine.



Ocean Park branch
12854 17 Avenue
604-502-6304
surreylibraries.ca



HISTORICAL PHOTO DETECTIVE: ROADSHOW



FREE

FRI, FEB 23
10-12pm

Registration required
604-598-7328 or
familyhistory@surrey.ca

Old photos are full of clues if you know how to read the evidence. Join The Photo Detective, Maureen Taylor, and learn how to date and place old photos. You can submit your own photos for analysis in this ONLINE Roadshow-style program (10-15 photos will be chosen).

OUR PARTNERS:



MUSEUM OF SURREY



Online Program

surreylibraries.ca



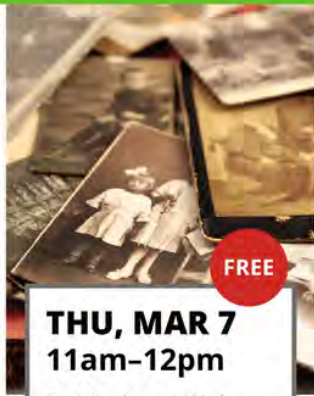
GENEALOGY: TOP TIPS FOR RESEARCHING YOUR GERMAN ANCESTORS

What are the top methodologies for researching Germans?

What are the most helpful types of records/documents and where do you find them?

Beginners get answers to get started and seasoned researchers a double-check and inspiration to move forward!

Presented by James M. Beidler, author of several books on researching German genealogy, columnist, and lecturer.



FREE

THU, MAR 7
11am-12pm

Registration required

Email for registration
familyhistory@surrey.ca
or call **604-598-7328.**

In partnership with:



Online program

surreylibraries.ca



RESEARCHING PRISON & COURT RECORDS



FREE

THU, MAR 14
10:30am-12pm



Registration required.

Call **604-598-7328** or email
familyhistory@surrey.ca to register.

Prison and court records can tell you a lot about your ancestors and their lives, from legal battles to criminal activity. We will cover records like petty theft to illegal poaching to declaring someone's husband dead. Countries: England, Ireland, Australia, and Canada.

Presented by Andrea Lister, who has been writing, editing, and teaching about sharing history for more than two decades. She works as a freelance editor and researcher.

Cloverdale branch
5642 176A Street
604-598-7320
surreylibraries.ca





= Online Zoom meeting



= In-Person Meeting

FEBRUARY - MARCH - 2024 CALENDAR

Sunday–Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>NEWSLETTER RELEASE</p> <p>SURREY LIBRARIES discover-connect-inspire</p> <p>Feb 13, Publishing Your Memoir 10:30am</p>	<p>Chinese Genealogy Chat 10am</p> <p>14</p> <p>Meeting 7pm</p>	<p>EJOURNAL DEADLINE</p> <p>15</p> <p>Eastern Europe Chat 7pm</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Kindertech at the BCGS Library 10am</p> <p>SURREY LIBRARIES discover-connect-inspire</p> <p>Genealogy Orientation 10:30am</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>FAMILY DAY HOLIDAY</p> <p>Monday Feb 19 Family Tree Maker Chat at 3pm</p> <p>Tuesday Feb 20 Advanced DNA Chat at 7pm</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Canadian Prairies Chat 7pm</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Historical Photo Detective 10am</p> <p>SURREY LIBRARIES discover-connect-inspire</p> <p>Fun Family History 2:30pm</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>Indigenous Roots Tuesday February 27 Chat 10:30 am</p> <p>Writers Group Tuesday Feb 27 Chat 6 pm</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Find A Grave Chat 7pm</p>	<p>MARCH 1</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Intro to DNA Monday March 4 Chat 1 pm</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Top Tips for German Ancestors 11am</p> <p>BC Chat 7pm</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Family History DNA 2:30pm</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>Monday Mar 18 Family Tree Maker Chat at 3pm</p> <p>Tuesday Mar 19 Advanced DNA Chat at 7pm</p>	<p>Chinese Genealogy Chat 10am</p> <p>13</p> <p>Meeting 7pm</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Prison Records 10:30am</p> <p>Ireland Chat 7pm</p>	<p>15</p> <p>EJOURNAL RELEASE</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Kindertech at the BCGS Library 10am</p> <p>SURREY LIBRARIES discover-connect-inspire</p> <p>Genealogy Orientation 10:30am</p>
<p>Monday Mar 18 Family Tree Maker Chat at 3pm</p> <p>Tuesday Mar 19 Advanced DNA Chat at 7pm</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>England Chat 7pm</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Fun Family History 2:30pm</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>Indigenous Roots Tuesday Mar 26 Chat 10:30 am</p> <p>Writers Group Tuesday Mar 26 Chat 6 pm</p> <p>TUES - MAR 26 APRIL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Scotland Chat 7pm</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>HAPPY EASTER</p> <p>MARCH 31</p> <p>Tuesday Apr 1 Intro DNA Chat at 1pm</p>	<p>APRIL 3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Scandinavia Chat 7pm</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>



Zoom Coffee Chats

Also known as Special Interest Groups [SIGs]

If you would like to be included in a chat, please visit the [BCGS website](#) or email the address below to register. Not sure? Check the [BCGS Website Calendar-of-events](#).



CHINESE COFFEE CHAT

Wednesday, Feb 14/Mar 13, 10-11 am

With Linda Yip

RSVP hello@past-presence.com



TIPS & TRICKS COFFEE CHAT

Thursday, Feb 29, 7 to 9 pm

With Eunice Robinson

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



EASTERN EUROPE (INCLUDING GERMANS FROM RUSSIA) COFFEE CHAT

Thursday, Feb 15, 7 to 9 pm

With Eunice Robinson

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



BRITISH COLUMBIA COFFEE CHAT

Thursday, Mar 7, 7 to 9 pm

With Janet White

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



FAMILY TREE MAKER COFFEE CHAT

Monday, Feb 19/Mar 18, 3 to 4:30 pm

With Sharon Syrette

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



IRELAND COFFEE CHAT

Thursday, Mar 14, 7 to 9 pm

With Eunice Robinson

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



ADVANCED DNA COFFEE CHAT

Tuesday, Feb 20/Mar 19, 7 to 9 pm

With Terry Hartley, Jim & Kathleen Graham

RSVP terhart1@gmail.com



ENGLAND COFFEE CHAT

Thursday, Mar 21, 7 to 9 pm

With Sandy Cunliffe

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



CANADIAN PRAIRIES COFFEE CHAT

Thursday, Feb 22, 7 to 9 pm

With Judith Ueland

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



SCOTLAND COFFEE CHAT

Thursday, Mar 28, 7 to 9 pm

With Eunice Robinson & Lorraine Irving

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



INDIGENOUS COFFEE CHAT

**Tuesday, Feb 27/Mar 26,
10:30am to Noon**

With Aboriginal Genealogy Association

RSVP coffeechat@bcgs.ca



**Would you like to facilitate a
Coffee Chat? Contact Eunice
coffeechat@bcgs.ca**



Shirley Anne Dargatz, UE
 24 FEBRUARY, 1937 - 31 DECEMBER, 2023

Thank you so much Shirley, for your devotion, energy, enthusiasm and leadership all these years.

Shirley was President of the Chilliwack Branch UELAC from 1997-2018. She served with distinction and has been honoured by our association and the community at large. Her Loyalist ancestor is John Thornton UE



Shirley did nothing in half measures.

Accolades so well deserved include the following:

- Shirley was a teacher for 35 years
- 1993 BCTV Dogwood Award
- 1997 Chilliwack Woman of the Year
- 2000 University of the Fraser Valley's "Betty Urquhart Award"
- 2007 Phillip E.M. Leith Award for Outstanding Volunteerism from the UELAC Pacific Regional Branches
- 2012 UELAC Lord Dorchester Award from the UEALC
- 2012 Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal in 2012
- In 2013 Shirley was instrumental in working to achieve a declaration of "BC Loyalist Day" from the then Lieutenant Governor of BC, Steven Lewis Point. *(She had been his teacher in high school)*
- The branch continues to do excellent genealogy work for families Shirley knew in the Chilliwack area wanting to trace their heritage back to those Loyalists who came to Upper and Lower Canada following the end of the American Revolution
- She had a deep passion for learning history and her Loyalist Roots To say nothing of the time she gave to Carman United Church and the Chilliwack Retired Teachers Association.

What a dynamo! We have been richly blessed.

if you wish to read her full obituary, click here: <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/en-ca/obituaries/chilliwack-bc/shirley-dargatz-11608046>

These four UELAC Pacific Region Branches are here to help you discover your Loyalist history. Chilliwack • Victoria • Thompson/Okanagan and Vancouver

Find us at www.uelac.ca/branches/

