



Southeast & Winnipeg Branch Manitoba Genealogical Society

e-Zine

March 2021

News and Events from the Southeast & Winnipeg Branch, MGS

Deadline for the next Issue is Sunday April 4, 2021

Many thanks for all your contributions. You have made my job so much easier. You can submit articles of 1-2 pages, either research oriented or personal. I'm starting to collect shorter stories and letters on **what to tell future generations about life during the Covid pandemic**. See Kelly Southworth's Contributed Article below. I hope to include some in the May e-Zine and possibly in later issues. I'm also looking for brief snippets (interesting web sites, etc.) for the section on Snippets. All contributions are welcome. Please keep them coming.

Apologies to anyone who got 2 copies of last month's e-Zine. I'm still getting used to the new mailing system.
Sheila Woods – Editor

See our web page at <http://www.mbgenealogy.com/southeast-and-winnipeg-branch>

[Contact the Branch](#)

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News

Using Zoom for Branch Presentations

You can join Zoom meetings through your web browser. Zoom works best with these browsers: Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, or Chromium Edge. Zoom will also work, but not as smoothly, on Internet Explorer or Safari.

If you use an iPad where the internet browser is Safari and you experience difficulty joining a Zoom meeting, you may wish to download Google Chrome specifically for your iPad. Just go to the App Store and look for Google Chrome.

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Yahoo Users

We have had a problem delivering invitations for Zoom presentations to email addresses ending with yahoo.com and yahoo.ca and are trying to rectify it. We sincerely apologize for the presentations in January and February that you may have missed! If you have an

About Us

Southeast & Winnipeg Branch Educational Activities are open to all!

Most Monday-night events are free to Branch members.

Guests may attend any in person Monday night event for a \$5 fee.

At present, our remote presentations are open to Branch members only.

To be a Branch member you must be an MGS member or associate member. Your \$15 Branch fee entitles you to attend **Monday Night Genealogy events free!

The Branch occasionally offers Workshops on Weekends. These are open to all and the cost varies, depending on the length and nature of the workshop.

Events are advertised in the Branch e-Zine, available to all members, and posted on the [MGS Calendar](#)

Watch for announcements! Your Executive 2020-2021

President:	Kelly Southworth
1st Vice-President:	Sheila Woods
2nd Vice-President:	Maureen Corkal
Secretary:	Kathleen Kristjansson
Treasurer	Gloria McNabb
Past President:	Virginia Braid
Councillor:	Bob Allebone
Councillor:	Barbara Becker
Councillor:	VACANT

alternate email address that we can use for Zoom invitations and the e-Zine, please [contact the Branch](#).

Web Page Committee

The web page committee consisting of Kelly Southworth, Sheila Woods, Bob Allebone and Deb Clark is looking at all aspects including content, messaging, arrangement and style. We are working on the current platform with a view to moving to the new platform when MGS makes its move. If you have any thoughts to contribute, please [Contact Us](#).

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Resource Centre Still Closed

Even though Winnipeg Region's Covid restrictions have been eased a bit, the MGS Resource Centre is still closed. Many services continue remotely, including access through MANI and our KOHA catalogue, as well as Zoom presentations both from our Branch and from MGS through the Stay at Home grant.

For the latest information, check the MGS web page at <http://www.mbgenealogy.com>

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MGS Calendar

All our Monday evening programs and executive meetings will be posted ahead of time, highlighted in pink, on the MGS calendar at <http://mbgenealogy.com/calendar/>

Executive meetings are normally held on the last Monday in August and the first Monday of each month from October to June. All Branch members are entitled to attend. The next executive meeting will be held remotely by Zoom on April 5th at 10:00 AM. Please let us know if you wish to attend, or have an agenda item that you would like us to discuss.

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2021-2022 Program

We have a full slate of programs planned for March through June 2021, and we would like to have our 2021-2022 program in place by the end of May. If you have any ideas for topics or speakers for September 2021 through June 2022, or would like to give a talk, please let us know. It is likely that the earliest ones will have to be delivered remotely by Zoom, and some in person presentations at the Resource centre may also be broadcast over Zoom. To support both the educational and social functions of the Branch, we are aiming for one regular presentation and one "12 Heads" evening per month. Some "12 Heads" might focus on sharing stories and others on helping each other.

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March Programs

Note: Invitations will be sent to all current Branch members. If you have not received your invitation 36 hours before the presentation, please check your membership status and contact the Branch **well before the meeting** at se-winnipeg@mbgenealogy.com You can check your status by logging into MANI and clicking on "My Account" and then "Account Info". Scroll down to see your Branch Memberships.

Monday, March 8 (Web Presentation)

Exploring Our DNA Matches

Sheila Woods

Sheila will start by introducing three web sites with tools for exploring DNA matches: Ancestry, My Heritage and GEDmatch. She will briefly mention 3 types of DNA, then concentrate on Autosomal DNA which is the type used for finding cousins and building trees. She will explain how DNA is passed from parents to child. Then, using screen shots, she will illustrate the various tools offered by the three web sites.

Sheila took an Ancestry DNA test in 2016. Since then, she has had family members tested and has uploaded the raw DNA files to several other web sites. She is no expert, but has learned a bit about genetics from working at a cereal breeding station for many years.

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Monday, March 22 (Web Presentation)

The Wooden Walls of Britain

Wayne Smith

Wayne and Beverley Smith retired to High River, Alberta ten years ago, from Winnipeg. Both are active and avid golfers and curlers. Beverley's passion is genealogy.

Both are members of the Alberta Family History Society, and past members of MGS. Wayne occasionally attends the meetings, but generally drives Beverley in from High River then sleeps in the car.

Wayne's interest in Navies, Naval battles and pirates began one summer many years ago. They were camped on a remote spot. He was out of reading material, and in desperation turned to one of Bev's "bodice rippers". This thriller featured a time travelling pirate, and lusty women in both the past and present. The Hornblower series and others followed. He was hooked on stories of the sea.

Questions from Mary Bole about the British Navy during the 1700's (Mary had a couple of ancestors named Dibdin – one a privateer captain, the other a widely read poet of naval issues) led to a presentation to the AFHS on "The Wooden Walls of Britain – from the Spanish Armada – to the Napoleonic Wars" a couple of years ago.

Wayne is not an expert, just an enthusiast. This presentation captures the British Navy, the ships, the sailors, the battles and the contribution to present day language. All intended to be light and fun.

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Upcoming Presentations

Southeast & Winnipeg Branch Programs

February – March 2021 at 7:00 PM

Monday Night Programs May Be Changed Without Notice.
Until further notice, all programs will be conducted remotely via Zoom.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Type</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
March 8	Presentation	Exploring Our DNA Matches	Sheila Woods
March 22	Presentation	The Wooden Walls of Britain	Wayne Smith
April 12	Presentation	Was Granny a Commercial Girl?	Kelly Southworth
April 26	Presentation	My English Family History Research Journey	Greg Cave
May 10	TBA	TBA	TBA
May 24	AGM	In Search of the Far Fur Country	Kevin Nikkel
June 14	12 Heads	Our Ancestors' Summers	Kelly Southworth

At the moment, presentations are open to Branch members only.

Watch the **e-Zine** for detailed descriptions, programming changes, and other educational opportunities. Or check postings at MGS Resource Centre and on the [MGS Calendar](#). Programs will be conducted online until further notice.

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Past Programs

February 11 (Web Presentation)

My Research Discoveries on Métis Family Genealogy

Gloria Gill McNabb

22 participants logged in on Zoom to hear Gloria give an account of her extremely thorough and well-documented research into her husband's Métis ancestry.

She first explained how to apply for membership in the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF). The requirements are to self-identify as Métis, to show an ancestral connection to the community, to be accepted and to provide an official genealogy. You can use the genealogy of a family member (if they give permission) and provide proof of your relationship to that relative. Gloria's husband provided his father's genealogy done by the St. Boniface Historical Society, and his and his father's birth certificates. Membership costs \$10.00 (more if you live outside Manitoba) and must be renewed every 5 years. Children over 18 must apply separately. You don't need to live in Manitoba but you must demonstrate a historical connection and ancestry with the Manitoba Métis Community. This is all explained on the MMF web site at www.mmf.mb.ca/membership.php

Then she dug deeper into her husband's Métis family. She told us of the resources she used and what she found there. She started with the McNabb line.

The Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA) – Biographical Sheets has a page for Dr. John McNab who entered the service in 1779. It contains a timeline and a list of his children. There is also a page for his son Thomas who married Mary, a Saulteaux woman, in 1827. Gloria also obtained a copy of John's Servant's Contract from the HBCA after consulting the name index online. All these resources may be found through HBCA's main search page at https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/search_hbca.html For reference, she also showed a map of HBC trading posts.

Going further back, Gloria found the baptism record for John McNab, son of John, in Aberdour, Fife on November 2, 1755 on Scotland's People (<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>). This is a pay site that uses credits (buy 80 credits for £20 and use 6 credits per document).

A Google search for John McNabb 1755 Scotland turned up several resources. The book "A Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants to Canada Before Confederation, Volumes 1 & 2" by Thomas Whyte is available at MGS and the Winnipeg Public Library (WPL).

The University of Aberdeen has a page "Material Histories – Scots & Aboriginal Peoples in the Canadian Fur Trade" at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/materialhistories/> If you click on "Artefacts and Stories", John McNab's biography is listed first and it contains a portrait of John McNab.

Gail Morin's book, "Métis Families" available on CD in the MGS library, lists the descendants of Thomas McNab (1782-1866) and Mary Jane Saulteaux. He was the son of John McNab. Gloria added some background on Gail Morin.

The Glenbow Library & Archives at the University of Calgary contain a number of collections for Métis research. Warren Sinclair's Métis Genealogy Collection (<https://glenbow.ucalgary.ca/finding-aid/warren-sinclairs-metis-genealogy-collection/>) contains a pdf of the descendants of John McNab. The Charles Denney Fonds (<https://searcharchives.ucalgary.ca/charles-denney-fonds-and-metis-genealogy-files>) contain handwritten documents which must be requested.

The book "Genealogy of the First Métis Nation" by D.N. Sprague & R.P. Frye contains linked tables of Métis families in the Red River Settlement from 1820 to 1900 by parish and is available at MGS and the WPL.

Digitized Métis Scrip Records at Library and Archives Canada may be found by going to <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/metis/metis-scrip-records/Pages/find-scrip.aspx> The scrip records provide information on birth dates and parents of the applicant.

Other Métis resources she consulted were the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research (<http://www.metismuseum.ca/collections.php>), Mothers of the Resistance – 1869-1870 – Red River Genealogies (<https://resistancemothers.wordpress.com/>) and Red River Ancestry.ca (<http://www.redriverancestry.ca/>) The Gabriel Dumont Institute has a Biography & Essay Collection and The National Métis Veterans' Memorial Monument. Gloria extended her research to other branches of the family and used resources not restricted to Métis research. Some of these were census records including 1827-1843 and 1870, voters' lists, Manitoba Vital Statistics, Ancestry, Find-a-Grave, Memorable Manitobans at the Manitoba Historical Society, Newspaper Archive, and Anglican Baptism, Marriage and Death transcriptions at Library and Archives Canada. (St. John's Cathedral was built in 1822 and replaced 3 times. The first marriage in its records took place in 1820.)

She visited Calgary in the summer of 2019 to share her work with family.

Gloria keeps all her printed records in protective sheets in binders. These include Family Group Sheets, Research Logs and original documents. She also keeps her research on her computer and well backed up.

One participant described her presentation as "Fantastic" and the rest agreed. (Thanks to the speaker for helping me with this writeup.)

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February 22 (Web Presentation)

Monthly Hooks: Getting Grandchildren into Family History

Oriole Veldhuis

23 participants logged in to watch Oriole's presentation. First she talked about her own journey into family history following a promise she made to her father. Her research into her family's shameful secret about the mysterious Mrs. Vane took Oriole to Germany, Austria, and England. She uncovered the truth of Elise Harrer's life and that led to her writing her award-winning book, "For Elise". Then she spoke of opportunities everyone can take to help our families learn and share family history. She has written a number of short stories, like "Mother's Pink Popcorn", that she turned into illustrated booklets. We can take children to places where history happened, like her father's birthplace. Use props like a picture of your elder as a child and ask what he/she remembers of that day. Take advantage of special events such as birthdays and funerals to share memories. At one family reunion, 4 families paddled down the Assiniboine River from Treesbank Ferry to the Stockton ferry. You, like Oriole, can make scrapbooks of your elder's life. Oriole's 100th birthday booklet for her mother went to relatives, but the large one stayed with her mother so she and the staff and visitors at the Glenboro Care Home had many conversation starters to elicit more memories. The message to pass on is that ancestors are real people.

Most of the presentation concerned a special 2020 calendar that she created because of Covid19 isolation and no Christmas gift shopping.

First she had to plan:

- format (wall calendar)
- what to include (Canadian holidays, phases of the moon, months before and after)
- include birthdays and anniversaries
- week starting on Sunday
- font and size (a sans serif font is clear, but Times New Roman is a time tested favourite)
- appearance of each page (pictures and text, arrangement- borders straight and level)

Some cautions to consider:

- copyright of pictures
- permission for pictures if not your own
- accuracy of information
- keeping font consistent:

She decided to have it printed by local City Press on Isabel Street, and was thrilled with the result. She suggested the following topics to discuss with the printer to prevent unwanted surprises.

- type and colour of paper
- how many (25)
- price
- what and how to provide for the printing: pictures, PDF of pages, etc.
- specific instructions
- having a proof before printing

Then Oriole concentrated on her calendar, showing each of the 13 pages (January 2020 to January 2021). The first 4 months featured Elise's Harrer family. January was set in the 1640's in Graz, Austria's first capitol, where the Harrers originated. It featured a castle, a city hall, a coat of arms and a document of the award of knighthood. February, in Germany, showed a large photograph taken by Oriole of a forest walk near the town of Stockach where the Harrers lived from before 1700. It was the forest where families hid during an invasion from the north and survived to find their town completely burned. She included a small inset photograph of her distant cousin Roland Harrer and his lovely wife Dorothea. March featured the old town of Radolfzell with a painting of a house. Oriole included a picture of herself seated on a bench gazing out at the peaceful Lake Constance thinking of past hardships. She included a stage coach, because Elise's father was a postal official in the Grand Duke of Baden's government after the 1820s. April had Heidelberg

events: the portrait painted by Elise and used for her book's cover, Percy and Elise's wedding photo, Heidelberg Castle and a statue of Prince Rupert. May concerned Percy's family, his grandmother, his artistic mother Mary Ann Alabaster, and a scene of the Red Hill south of Shrewsbury, England. Oriole had followed Mary Ann's footsteps climbing the hill during the time Percy was on holiday in Germany. From that holiday came the child that took Elise away from her family to London.

In June she moved to her mother's Clark family. John Clark (1768-1803), born in Banffshire, Scotland, came with British forces to defend Upper Canada from American invasions. His son John (1790-1880), after being widowed twice, married 16-year-old Charlotte Boissey whose French ancestry went back to 1642 and the founding of Montreal. July's slide dealt with Caspar Boucher, followed by son Pierre, and his struggle to keep the Three Rivers settlement from being destroyed. He travelled to Paris to beg King Louis for support. August showed John Clark's son, Alexander (1818-1896) heading west with 21 family members in 4 covered wagons in 1879. They stopped in Manitoba, but the land he wanted was already taken so they continued west. They were the first white family to reach Fort Walsh. They saw a lone buffalo, but did not succeed in shooting it. Oriole included her picture of a re-enactment of a battle at Fort Walsh taken on her visit there.

September dealt with Alexander's wife, Sarah Jane Ake's ancestors reaching back to early American History. A successful farmer, Samuel Wardwell, was accused of witchcraft. At first he lied and said he was a witch to avoid the gallows, but being a sincere Quaker, at his trial he told the judge the truth, that he was not a witch, to save his soul from Hell. All the people who admitted to witchcraft were later released from prison unharmed. October showed her grandparents Nelson Clark and Sarah Waddington, travelling north to Meadow Lake by covered wagon to obtain land for children. She showed their little house. Successful in gaining both Sarah and Nelson's homesteads they returned to Manitoba. Ruth, Oriole's mother, having missed out on years of schooling, went with her younger siblings to Treesbank School. Her report card with high marks for grade 6 shows her age as 21.

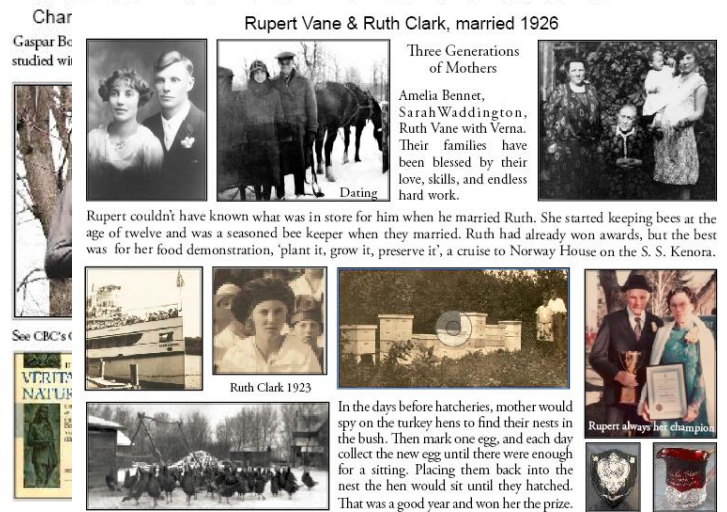
November, showed the courtship of her parents, Rupert Vane and Ruth Clark, 3 generations of mothers, Ruth's beehives, and Boys and Girls Club demonstration for which the team won a trip on the S.S. Kenora to Norway House. We see Ruth's trophy winning flock of turkeys. Before the days of commercial hatcheries she would follow the turkey hens to their secret nests, go back later, leave one marked egg, keep the daily egg safe until the mother was ready to sit, then return them all to the nest for the turkey hen to hatch.

December featured various relatives: Oriole's great Uncle Herbert Frank Steer killed in World War I, Saint Marguerite d'Youville, and Yannick Bisson who stars in Murdoch Mysteries.

Finally, January 2021 showed life during the pandemic, when Oriole collected sewing machines and guided her three youngest grandchildren in sewing masks they would have to wear at school.

Participants then had a lively discussion of ideas about sharing their stories with younger relatives. Most involved books with stories, pictures and family trees, but there were novel ideas like using pictures of ancestors for playing cards, and maps showing locations where ancestors lived. (Thanks to the speaker for helping me with this writeup.)

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Contributed Articles and Snippets

[Bob Allebone: Finding your ancestors who lived in Canada after the year 1921](#)

[Kelly Southworth: How will our COVID-19 experiences be understood by future generations?](#)

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Finding your ancestors who lived in Canada after the year 1921

Bob Allebone

Why might this be a brick wall? Because ... the most recent Canadian Federal Census available to the public is for the year 1921. The 1931 Canadian Federal Census won't become available to the public until 92 years later, that's the year 2023.

Note: The Canada Federal Census of 1921 is available by using [Ancestry.ca](#) or the website of the Library and Archive Canada, but is not accessible on the Family Search website.

For some of the years after 1921 there are four possible search tools that can be used to find the location of and facts about your ancestors who resided in Canada after the year 1921.

Canadian Prairie Provinces Census for the year 1926 ... online and searchable

- Access to this census is not provided by *Ancestry*. Even if you search under the *Ancestry* "Card Catalogue" and enter "Manitoba" as the search title, this Prairie Provinces Census of 1926 will not appear because Ancestry does not hold this database.
- However, the 1926 Canadian Prairie Provinces Census is available through the ***Library and Archives Canada*** at this link ... with free access.
<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1926/Pages/default.aspx>
- It is also available through the Family Search website. The search function in Family Search may be easier to use. There is no charge to acquire a Family Search account.
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/3005862>

Canada, Voters Lists, 1935-1980 ... online and searchable

- This database is a powerful resource for easily searching for a Canadian resident who was enumerated prior to a federal election during the period 1935 to 1980.
- This database is available within the ***Ancestry Library Edition*** that can be accessed on each computer at the MGS Resource Centre. Use is available at no charge to MGS members when the MGS Resource Centre is open.
- A ***Library Edition*** of the ***Ancestry*** software has also been made available by the Winnipeg Public Library to any member [you must have a library card] of the Winnipeg Public Library and is accessible for free if you have internet access on a computer or tablet.
<https://wpl-dbs.winnipeg.ca/login?url=https://ancestrylibrary.proquest.com>
- An individual personal subscription can, if you wish, be purchased from ***Ancestry.ca***. There are three different levels of subscription with an increasing cost depending on the extent of databases you wish to have access to. We recommend you "test drive" one of the Library Versions of *Ancestry* mentioned above before you purchase a subscription and you also investigate on the *Ancestry.ca* website the difference between the subscription levels. The Library Edition of *Ancestry* is similar to a **World Deluxe Membership**

although unlike an individual *Ancestry* subscription a family tree cannot be created and retained on the Library Version. However, you can view family trees created by Ancestry subscribers.

<https://www.ancestry.ca/cs/offers/subscribe?sub=1>

- To find **Canada, Voters Lists, 1935-1980**, log-on to Ancestry.ca. Click on <Search>. A drop down box appears. Click on <Census and Voters Lists>. Then, look under “Featured Data Collections”. Or if you have an individual personal subscription to Ancestry and you have logged-on to Ancestry, you may use this direct link:

<https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/2983/>

- This database contains searchable voters lists created for federal general elections in Canada during the years 1935–1980. Lists are organized by polling district within each province and from there by polling station number and address. These voters lists varied over the years, but they typically included name, post office or street address, and occupation. They sometimes indicate marital status for women in lieu of occupation.
- This database includes voters lists from across Canada for the following general election years. Those marked by asterisk have been indexed. Others are available for browsing only.

1935*, 1940*, 1945*, 1949*, 1953*, 1957*, 1958*, 1962*, 1963*, 1965*, 1968*, 1972*, 1974*, 1979, 1980

City Directories ... paper and searchable online

- In many cities across Canada directories were compiled from the work of employed canvassers who gathered information when possible about the name, address and occupation of each business owner, home owner or employed tenant on every street and avenue of the city. These compilations were sold in large bound books primarily to sales people to assist them in marketing their products. These city directories are wonderful substitutes for a census if you believe you know the city in which your ancestor lived.
- The MGS Research Team is aware of the existing city directories across Canada, if you require assistance. You will also find many by means of a Google search.
- ***Henderson Directories*** – Manitoba addresses and residents from 1876 to 1908, and Winnipeg home and business addresses and residents from 1908 to end of publication in 1999. These are available at the MGS Resource Centre in large bound books. Access to these large bound books is free to MGS members. Digitized *Henderson Directories* for Manitoba, Brandon and Winnipeg plus some cities in Saskatchewan and Alberta can be found at this link for free ... although they are somewhat tedious to search on-line.

<http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/henderson.html>

If you wish to access the *Henderson Directories* for Manitoba or Winnipeg, you may find the easy tactile use of the large bound books at the MGS Resource Centre to be preferable.

Digitized Archived Newspapers ... on-line and searchable

- This is often the desired step forward for many family genealogists allowing them to move beyond the limitations of genealogical software which may focus primarily on births, marriages and deaths. Use of archived newspapers has the potential to uncover important events in the life of the person between birth, marriage and death that can help your family tree tell the real story of family members.
- Mention of an ancestor can often be found in an article, advertisement, news story, birth notice, marriage notice or obituary appearing in a newspaper, thus providing the residence village, town or city of the person. If you are lucky, information about the person’s actual address, date of birth, date of marriage, names of other relatives, occupation, civic involvement, sporting interests and maybe

involvement in any criminal or civil trials may also be found. If you are very lucky you may find old photos of the person you are searching for, especially marriage photos. Archived and searchable newspapers are a valuable tool for family genealogists.

- The two leading databases of archived newspapers are **Newspapers.com** which is owned by *Ancestry.com*, and **NewspaperArchive.com**. One is not better than the other. However, genealogists typically have a preference for one versus the other based on the extent of archived newspapers for the area in which most of their ancestors lived. The coverage of newspapers by each archival firm is different and the manipulation of created newspaper clippings is somewhat different. Neither has good coverage for the Atlantic Provinces. Each one has its own relatively short learning curve.
- **Newspapers.com** has two levels of membership: *Basic* and *Publisher Extra*. The enhanced version of *Newspapers.com*, that is, the *Publisher Extra* version is recommended since the coverage is far superior to the *Basic* version. For those with ancestors from Montreal, the *Publisher Extra* version of *Newspapers.com* is recommended since it includes the Montreal Gazette with newspapers archived from the year 1757 to the present. The fee for *Newspapers.com* is paid in U.S. dollars. The cost in Canadian dollars for the *Publisher Extra* version is roughly \$100 Canadian dollars every six months, but a discount is sometimes available for the initial period. Before you purchase a subscription check out at this link the newspapers available in the areas you wish to search and especially the years of coverage. <https://www.newspapers.com/browse/>

Newspaper years available under the *Basic* subscription are shaded blue and white, and years available under the *Publisher Extra* version are shaded beige and white. Understand what is available before you subscribe. Although *Newspapers.com* is owned by *Ancestry.com* you don't need an *Ancestry* subscription to acquire a subscription to *Newspapers.com*.

- The Manitoba Genealogical Society has one subscription to **NewspaperArchive.com** which is accessible on one of the computers at the MGS Resource Centre. Use is available to MGS members at no charge. This is an international version of the software and includes extensive Winnipeg Free Press newspaper archives from 1872 to the present! *NewspaperArchive.com* is a valuable tool to research ancestors who lived west of Montreal in Canada (especially Manitoba), or many other countries.
- A Canadian version of *NewspaperArchive.com* has also been made available by the Winnipeg Public Library to any member (you must have a library card) of the Winnipeg Public Library and is accessible for free if you have internet access on a computer or tablet. Its coverage though is only for selected newspapers in Canada. <https://wpl-dbs.winnipeg.ca/login?url=https://access.newspaperarchive.com/ca>

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How will our COVID-19 experiences be understood by future generations?

Kelly Southworth

We are family historians—always searching for the stories of our ancestors' lives. One day, future family historians will be looking for our stories. Are we leaving them behind?

I am not talking about writing a full autobiography. If you want to, great. Go for it! For many of us, finding a single letter written by an ancestor is reward enough. So I would like to suggest that we all write a letter to future generations of our family, perhaps those who will be living in 2120, outlining what we want them to know about what it was like to live through the COVID-19 Pandemic. I know most of us would like to forget and move on, but we are living through historic times. Our future families will want to know what we felt, did, experienced, and how we coped.

In an article by Stephanie Levitz of the Canadian Press on December 2, 2020, she describes the efforts of Canadian archivists to capture and preserve the story of this pandemic. The article notes that the ephemeral

nature of where many of our experiences are taking place makes collection difficult: “social media posts come and go; news headlines change hourly; and new sources of information and disinformation appear or disappear.”

The language of the pandemic, ‘social distancing’, ‘lockdown’, and ‘circuit breaker’ is one aspect; while memes, cartoons, signs, and videos are another. Even the painted lines on sidewalks and the arrows in grocery-store aisles are a new aspect of our lives. Homemade masks, toilet paper hoarding, and distilleries producing hand sanitizers are more of our new world order.

Anthony Wilson-Smith, President and CEO of Historica Canada likens the effort to record memories for posterity to the work of capturing the memories of WWII veterans. He believes what people will ask in the future will be the same as what we currently ask veterans: how did it feel; what was it like? Will our stories be like the war stories of our fathers and grandfathers so many of us heard—only the light-hearted moments?

Please take the time to write a letter to future generations, telling your story of the pandemic of our times. It can be lengthy, in bullet points, as a poem, however you like. Include some pictures—perhaps a photo of you making or wearing a mask; or a copy of a favourite COVID-19 joke; an article cut from a newspaper; be creative. And don’t hesitate to share some of the fears, the hardships, the uncertainties, the frustrations, as well as the hopes, and the laughter.

Make arrangements to share with family: send them the letter; leave it with important family papers; include it in your family history files. Record your thoughts with audio and video by all means, but also write them. We know the written word can survive technological changes!

And, if you would be so generous, send them to the e-Zine to share with other members, and have them published for posterity! Who knows, 100 years from now, a future relative may search an on-line database (or whatever will be the equivalent then) and find an indexed reference to your letter. Imagine their joy as they read of your experiences, in your own words.

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Snippets

Irish Research Links

Even if you use FamilySearch, Ancestry or FindMyPast to locate your Irish records, the lists and maps can give you a geographical context.

Civil records of births, marriages and deaths, indexed and with images. Non-Catholic marriages start in 1845. Births, deaths and Catholic marriages start in 1864. This is where to find the most up-to-date records. It doesn’t require an account, but you have to give your first and last name and agree to their conditions.

<https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/civil-search.jsp>

List of civil registration districts by county (includes map). Some districts span 2 or more counties. These are used in civil and census records.

<https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/Ireland-civil-registration.html>

Catholic parish records, mostly from the 1850’s to about 1880. This site includes an interactive map showing parishes by county or diocese.

<https://registers.nli.ie/>

Census 1901 and 1911 (free access, good indexing). If you use “More search options”, be sure to use the Search button at the bottom of that column.

<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/search/>

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