



PAST FINDER

DRAYTON VALLEY BRANCH
ALBERTA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



DRAYTON VALLEY'S FIRST MURDER VICTIM

**Volume 23 Issue 1
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Drayton Valley Branch
 Alberta Genealogical Society
 PO Box 115
 Rocky Rapids, AB T0E 1Z0

Meetings held 7:00 pm
 Third Wednesday of each month
 Except July, August and December
 In the library at Wishing Well Apartments
 5208 – 47 Ave Valley, AB

The Branch library and resources are located at Wishing Well Apartments and are available to members seven days a week from 9:00am to 9:00 pm. The library is on the second floor. Members are given an access code to open the key lock box which will give them access to the building and another key lock box by the library door will give them access to the library.

EXECUTIVE

President-	Connie Stuhl	780-542-9288
Past president	Colleen Andersen	780-542-2787
Vice President –vacant		
Secretary	Bev Wright	780-542-7292
Treasurer	Bev Wright	780-542-7292
Historian	Vacant	
Library	Colleen Andersen	780-542-2787
Newsletter	Colleen Andersen	780-542-2787
Publicity	Miriam Roberts	780-542-2215
Fund Raising	Vacant	
Communication	Vacant	
Parliamentarian	Vacant	

TWIGS, BARK & KINDLING.

I request anyone who will be celebrating 25 years as a member of AGS in the coming year, please notify the executive. Just a reminder that memberships were due December 31 so be sure and renew if you haven't already, thanks. The Branch would like to acknowledge the passing of former member Betty Smythe who was at one time our president. Also, Georgette Towne. Sympathy is extended to both of their families. Betty was very committed to our branch and Georgette was a joy to have at our meetings. We also want to acknowledge the passing of Larry Clark and Peter Goutbeck who were great supporters of AGS and the individual branches.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I trust everyone had an enjoyable Christmas and holiday season, visiting with family and friends.

As we start the new year 2017, we look toward new or updated goals, and I hope everyone has thought of how to progress with their family tree research.

To assist with your research, some members recently visiting the local Family History Centre. In February, Miriam Roberts will be bringing in copies of wills for everyone to view, showing the handwriting and terminology of the times.

On March 11, we are planning a workshop featuring two interesting speakers. The morning is with Lorraine Cathro who has published her family stories with help from family and friends. Her talk is titled Writing Family History with Others: Processes, Rewards and Challenges. In the afternoon, one of our favorite speakers, John Althouse will be presenting A Primer of Prairie Settlement. It should be a great day. Please email or contact me by phone to register. Lunch is included, so registration will give us the number for lunch.

If you have any ideas for activities at our meetings, please let us know. We are always looking for fresh ideas to assist members with their research, whether it is a trip to the Family History Centre, the Drayton Valley Library, or touring a cemetery we would be interested to hear from you. If you know of a local speaker that has a relevant genealogy topic that would be great as well. I look forward to hearing from you!

Take care and I wish everyone success in finding their elusive ancestor this year!
Connie Stuhl

President, Drayton Valley Branch

FRANCE OPENS VICHY REGIME RECORDS

Hundreds of thousands of files on members of the French resistance, communists and Jews hunted by the collaborationist Vichy government in France during World War II are now accessible to the public.

The French government has opened police and legal archives, allowing free access to documents from the regime that collaborated with the Nazi German occupiers between 1940 and 1944, as well as to investigative documents from the post-liberation government. Records stored in a temperature-controlled room in Paris could contain disturbing accounts of Nazi collaboration during WWII. The Associated Press

The opening of these records will not only help the work of historians it will also bring more citizens into the archives' lecture rooms to learn about what happened to their ancestors during World War II.

For instance, families of people arrested under the Vichy regime as well as descendants of collaborationists prosecuted after the war will be able to consult police investigation documents and proceedings of military courts.

WWII archives are kept in different places all around France, depending on their geographical and administrative origin. Many were already available to researchers, but they first had to file complex request forms. Now, anyone can come into the reading room and request files and they will be brought out.

Marshal Philippe Petain's collaborationist government, which signed an armistice with the German occupiers in 1940, remains a sensitive issue in France. Some French people supported Petain's government while others engaged in the Resistance movement led by General Charles De Gaulle. Historians don't expect any major revelations, since the period has already been extensively studied, but hope to gain a more detailed understanding of events.

Source: Sylvie Corbet, The Associated Press & Edmonton Sun

DERELICT CEMETERY AT MASINASIN

Cody & his sister, Samaria Kapcsos were driving in the vicinity of Writing On Stone Provincial Park in southern Alberta when they spotted a gravestone in the ditch. That day they found 3 more stones. Cody worked to restore the old cemetery and with the help of AGS managed to identify all the known burials there. Interestingly, a lady in St. Paul, Minnesota had been looking for her great-great-grandmother who had left South Dakota and no one knew where she had gone, although the possibility that at the age of 89 she had come to family in Alberta was thought of but had nothing to go on. This lady Googled her great-great-grandmother's name and found a picture of her tombstone and the story of the Masinasin cemetery. Never give up your search. This lady solved a decades old mystery. Keep checking back maybe someone somewhere has found an old cemetery or piece of information and it is just waiting for you to discover that it is out there.

Interesting also, Cody Kapcsos noticed gravestones along a pond in his hometown of Stirling, Alberta. Further investigation showed that they had been replaced in the cemetery with new ones and the old stones were being used for erosion control.

Sources; Alberta Farmer & Johnnie Bachusky. Thank you Johnnie for the stories and keep writing. Thank you Cody for all the work in helping us to remember the past.

REMEMBERING THE WAR YEARS

The Branch usually has a veteran or someone who served in the Forces as a speaker for November. This year, member Miriam Roberts, recruited Barb Eckhart to come and speak to us about her experiences during the Second World War. Barb was living in England and was seven years old when England joined the war effort. She distinctly remembers the day. They were away on

holiday and had only been gone a day at the beach when they had to return home. Of course, as a child, this all seemed distant and shouldn't interfere with a holiday. She remembers them coming to cut the railing off the wall in front of the house as metal was direly needed. The children went around the neighbourhood and collected old pots and pans because there "Was a war on you know". Bomb shelters were built in the backyard and her and her sister had to spend the night in it with the elderly neighbours. They curried friendship with the local butchers children and got a bit of meat now and then. Barb said that she had forgotten a lot of the stories until she was asked to speak and while writing it up, the memories came flooding back. She had not thought to write them down, well not many do, and was planning on passing her story on to her grandchildren. Barb taught school for many years in Drayton Valley and enjoys her painting. what a delightful lady with a wonderful story of the war years.

DRAYTON VALLEY'S FIRST MURDER

Colleen Andersen

Dr. Loosmore wrote in his first book "To Trail's End" a story about the first murder in Drayton Valley. Lewis Davis, a cousin to the Starlings, was shot by John Bosserman in an altercation over a suitcase. He was tried and sentenced to 20 years in Prince Albert penitentiary. I have always been just a little bit curious about where he had come from and what happened to his family once he was incarcerated. With help from a Branch member I was put on to Peel's Provinces newspaper collection and was able to download newspaper accounts of the incident. I spoke with a former member about Kansas records and with the use of Ancestry.com was able to find copious amounts of information about the Bosserman family. with the kind assistance of Norma at AGS I received a copy of homestead records and oh, by the way, trial records are here at the Provincial Archives, did I want them? Imagine my shock when they came and the last page is a picture of the murder scene!!!!!!! I made a presentation at our October meeting to try to show how you can take a family and find all kinds of information from cradle to grave. I have not found the death of John Bosserman to date but in my searches I came up with a picture of the murdered man, Lewis Davis. Next step is to write up the story. In your searches, reach out to fellow and former members, there are no dumb questions and if one of us don't know the answer we will try to find you the person that does.

NORTH AMERICAN FESTIVAL OF WALES 2016

Miriam Roberts

When I learned at the beginning of September 2015 in Columbus, Ohio, that the North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW) would be in Calgary in 2016, I decided to invite AGS to consider having a table at NAFOW. Susan Haga volunteered to be present at the table for first 2 days and I agreed to volunteer for the next 2 days.

There were a few people who just glanced at the table, but there were several people from Calgary interested in the information on the display. I explained to them there wasn't a branch of AGS in Calgary, but Alberta Family Histories Society was based in Calgary, they were still interested in AGS and took membership forms. I sent a query to the AGS research team for one of these people. Claudine Nelson of Edmonton has researched this query and has found the death certificate and registration of death certificate. Colleen Andersen is going to look up the land location, and send it to John Hopkins who the search was done for.

A young man by the name of Aled Jones from Calgary stopped to look at the display, as my maiden name was Jones, I casually asked him where he came from in Wales. He said he came from a farm in West Wales, but his family had come from NE Wales. Suddenly I remembered my brother and I visiting a farm in West Wales, I quickly recalled the farmer's name was Philip Jones. Aled looked almost in disbelief, and went to bring his father from the other side of the room. They both believed me when I asked if they were related to the Hooson family who farmed the farm I grew up on. Philip Jones is my second cousin once removed. Sunday morning was very quiet, but I did help a couple from New York State with questions about researching in Wales.

When I knew I was going to represent AGS at marketplace in NAFOW I emailed Martha Davies from Lincoln, Nebraska if she was coming to Calgary if she would bring a copy of "A History of the Welsh In America 1872" translated by Martha and her first husband Philips G. Davies with her to purchase.

As we were packing up to leave on Sunday, Martha presented me with the above mentioned book and 3 other books, "History of the Welsh in Minnesota", "History of the Welsh Church In Jackson, Ohio", translated by Martha, and "History of the Welsh in Procairon District, Wisconsin", translated by Martha and her first husband. A 5th book "The Welsh Who Built Chicago" written by Dilys W.Rana.. The total value of these books was US\$110.81, they are a valuable donation to AGS from Great Plains Welsh Heritage Centre, Wymore, Nebraska.

Later, Martha Davies sent me a binder of newspaper articles she had translated from Welsh to English from the North American Welsh newspaper "Y Drych"- the Mirror. These clippings are mostly from Wood River/ Ponoka area.

While I was at the Market Place I met Michele Henderson who I wrote about in "Use of DNA in Solving Mystery of a Skeleton".

WEBSITES

Miriam Roberts suggests that anyone who uses the free site Family Search sign up for the newsletter. New material is being added to this website all the time and the newsletter will help you keep abreast of those developments. You can always unsubscribe if you aren't getting the information you need. If you have a tree on

this site, you are notified if anyone else who also has the same tree on makes any changes or adds new information. <https://familysearch.org/>

While looking into the Bosserman/Lewis Davis murder story I ran across a great website with 9 million records including BMD from Missouri. Well worth a look if you are researching there. <http://www.sos.mo.gov/mdh/>

<http://www.cyndislist.com/> has been around for 21 years now and is a must go to for anyone just starting out or having been doing this for awhile. I remember when this site started as will many others. It was one of the very first comprehensive go to sites and is still very relevant today. There are over 330,000 links that are kept up to date so you aren't running into websites that have moved or are no longer there.

Family Tree magazine has 60 free forms that you can download from their website <http://www.familytreemagazine.com/freeforms>

IRISH CIVIL REGISTRATION ONLINE

Irish genealogy has never been very easy do to the burning of The Four Courts in 1922. The public record office there received extensive damage and many records were lost. Now we have the website www.irishgenealogy.ie dedicated to helping you search for family history records for past generations. The website is now home to the historic records of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the General Register Office. These records join the Indexes to the historic records of Births, Marriages and Deaths that were already available on the website.

Visitors will be able to search records from a number of on-line sources including the historic Registers and Indexes to the Civil Registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths, the Church Records and others such as the 1901 and 1911 Census and Soldiers wills, to name but a few. There are links to other sites including GRO for Northern Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland. At present are births: 1864-1915, marriages 1882 - 1940 and deaths 1891- 1965. This is not just an index but the actual images are there. You have to apply to use the site due to legislation but it is a one click process.

VIMY RIDGE SOLIDERS 100 YEARS LATER

2017 marks the 100 anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge. 44 members of the 16th Canadian Infantry Battalion, the Canadian Scottish, who died playing a heroic part in the April 1917 Battle of Vimy Ridge, may still be buried in a temporary grave in mine crater CA40. These heroes deserve a proper burial.

On April 9, 1917 the Canadian Corps, 100,000 strong, attacked the German stronghold of Vimy Ridge. The Canadians drove the enemy from the Ridge and achieved the impossible. But the losses were heavy; 10,000 casualties, including 3600 dead.

In the face of withering machine gun fire, manoeuvring between the massive mine craters that lined No Man's Land, the 16th Canadian Infantry Battalion, the Canadian Scottish, attacked, capturing all their objectives. 100 of the 600 men were either killed or later died of wounds.

Canadian burial squads followed the attack, burying the dead in temporary battlefield cemeteries, including mine craters. 44 of the dead of the Canadian Scottish were buried in a mine crater in No Man's Land, designated CA40.

After the war, exhumation squads exhumed 1000s of isolated graves, bringing them into permanent war graves cemeteries. CA40 was designated to be exhumed and moved to Nine Elms, but there is no evidence of any of the men from CA40 there.

Searching all the likely cemeteries in the Vimy region also revealed no evidence of the Canadian Scottish graves.

Military historian and former Commonwealth War Graves commission employee, Norm Christie believes they remain where they were originally buried on the Vimy battlefield in 1917. Of the 44 soldiers, who Norm believes still lay under a potatoe field, 10 are from southern Alberta. Christie has pored through maps, photographs and other documents to determine where Crater CA40 was and he is now in the midst of a fundraising effort to finish the search and have the bodies properly buried. Names of the missing men from Alberta include, Blaik, Milne, Piper, Strickler, Attwood, Baugley and Dickson. Norm updates the site with pictures of the fallen men. They have reached 48% of the \$110,000 goal to date.

Sources: <https://fundrazr.com/campaigns/4zeCb> & Michael Platt *Edmonton Sun*

As you can see on page 10 our annual workshop is in the works. Please sign up as soon as possible so we can get some ideas of numbers attending for lunch and so our speakers know what they need to bring. We have two topics this year, Writing Your Family History and Early Prairie Settlement which are two topics our members have asked for. Gen Fair goes April 21-23 in Edmonton and Alberta Family History Society in Calgary is planning a conference for September, 2017. These conferences and workshops are always informative and give you a boost to your enthusiasm and you get to meet some great people.

21-23 April 2017 | Edmonton, Alberta

"Ye Olde Genealogy Faire"

Alberta Genealogical Society is presenting the **Ye Olde Genealogy Faire** in what promises to be an exciting fun-packed and informative two-day event. Notable authors, historians and specialists will enlighten the audience with presentations on Irish, English, French, German genealogy, DNA technology and more.

Our lineup of speakers:

- Diahn Southard, *Your DNA Guide*
- Gena Philibert Ortega, Author and Blogger *Gena's Genealogy*
 - Kyle J. Betit, ProGenealogist, Irish specialist, WDYTIA
 - John D. Reid, *Canada's Anglo-Celtic Connections*
- Lisa Alzo, Author and teaches online genealogy courses
 - Gary Schroder, Quebec specialist
- Ruth Blair, Author and Blogger *Passionate Genealogist*
- Dave Tyler, Multi-language and Eastern European specialist
 - Peter and Linda Darby, *FamilySearch* specialist
 - John Althouse, Children's genealogy
- Susan Haga, Canadian Resources and Handwriting Analysis
 - Lianne Kruger, Social Media specialist

Conferences are a great place to meet and mingle with the people who "speak your language" and face the same challenges. View the marketplace: the exhibits, the products and services that could make your research so much easier. You will go away with experiences of real lessons learned, dozens of ideas, and innovative solutions that you can use immediately.

Ye Olde Genealogy Fair at <http://www.abgenealogy.ca>

The Drayton Valley Branch of the Alberta Genealogical Society

March Genealogy Workshop

MARCH 11, 2017

9:30 am – 3:30 pm

Clean Energy Technology Centre (CETC)

5400 – 24 Ave, Drayton Valley, Alberta

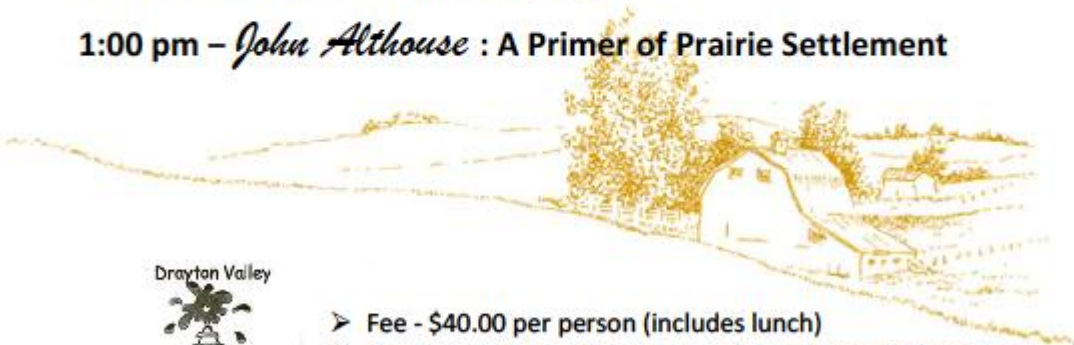


Featuring

**10:00 am – *Lorraine Cathro* : Writing Family History with
Others: Processes, Rewards and Challenges**

12:00 – Lunch (included in workshop fee)

1:00 pm – *John Althouse* : A Primer of Prairie Settlement



Drayton Valley



- Fee - \$40.00 per person (includes lunch)
- **Register by 3 March 2017** : email ags.dvbranch@gmail.com
- Or phone (780) 542-9288
- ****Late registrations to be paid by cash at the door****

