



ROOTS & BRANCHES

Alberta Genealogical Society

*BRINGING THE PAST
TO THE PRESENT
FOR THE FUTURE! ©*

Website: www.abgenealogy.ca/wetaskiwin-branch

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SEPTEMBER 2022

VOL. 20 #3

EXECUTIVE

President: Alice Hoyle
Vice President: Lorraine McKay
Secretary: Pam Cooke
Treasurer: Leroy Koop

BRANCH MEETINGS

Third Tuesday of the Month.
Except July, August, December
**In person or Zoom to be
determined monthly**

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ROOTS & BRANCHES

is published three times a year by and for the members of Wetaskiwin Branch of AGS. It is emailed to members and posted on our website.

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LDS FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

Thursdays: 10:00 am - Noon
Thursdays: 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm

BRANCH LIBRARY

Closed until further notice
due to City Archives closure
If research is required contact
wetaskiwin@abgenealogy.ca

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS Alice Hoyle

Fall always seems to signal new beginnings: new school year, new schedule of activities, etc.

One would hope that it also signals the beginning of the end for the pandemic, but recently I have noticed an upswing in Covid numbers in this region.

As I ponder what this means for social gatherings, and what this means for events that are scheduled later this year, I find I am no closer to any answers. Perhaps this is how our ancestors felt when the influenza epidemic of 1918+ happened. They must have wondered "why is this happening" especially since the world had just gone through a world war.

Our world is constantly changing: now, more than ever it's important to record the events and in addition, our thoughts and feelings about what is happening. Our descendants will appreciate reading or hearing about what events made an impact on our lives.

I feel I would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to Queen Elizabeth II: she dedicated her whole life to the institution she was put in charge of and in my mind she did her 'job' with grace, class and wisdom. May she rest in peace.

I hope you have had a good summer and that your summer plans included some family time and some family investigative work.

~~~~~

*"Luck ..... is what happens when  
preparation meets opportunity."  
— Seneca*

## EDITOR'S CORNER

Sharon Aney

It is not the voices of our enemies we shall remember. It will be the silence of our friends.....

Cowardice asks the question –

*Is it safe?*

Expediency asks the question –

*Is it politic?*

Vanity asks the question –

*Is it popular?*

But conscience asks the question –

*Is it right?*

There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because it is right!

~~~~~

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBER, BOB MAYNARD!

Bob Maynard: Life & Letters will be on display at the Millet & District Museum until Spring of 2023.

For more information see Page 6.
please visit www.milletmuseum.ca

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## MEETING PROGRAMS

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**MAY 2022** - held via Zoom

Two Videos by Amy Johnson Crow:

1. PERSI – “Periodical Source Index” at the Allen Public Library – finding millions of clues in its Index, and how to get the source document.
2. Avoiding Common Mistakes in Genealogy

## JUNE 2022

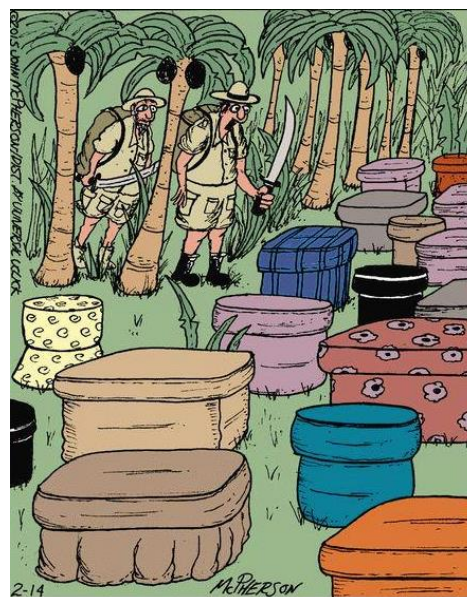
Finally we were able to meet in person!

We shared plans for the summer months. Many were family gatherings:

- Pam’s family will gather in Ontario to inter the ashes of her mother who passed away at the age of 101 in 2021.
- Carole and her siblings will gather in Manitoba as a small replacement of the family reunion which was called off in 2020, hoping to reconvene in 2024.
- Lorraine has relatives coming from Germany. One of the activities she has planned is to have Pam lead them on a tour of the Jr./Sr. High School in Maskwacis.
- Rudy has a full household, as a son and family have moved in with them until their new house is built.
- Bob is happy that his brother is beginning the procedure to immigrate to Canada. He continues to digitize historic family letters.

Other members plan local activities, gardening and family get-togethers.

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**“Great Scott, Ingrey, it’s
the Ottoman Empire!”**

THE WOMEN OF ASPENLAND

Wetaskiwin & District Heritage Museum
<http://www.wetaskiwinmuseum.com/>
Information compiled in 1996

MARJORIE (MONTGOMERY) BOWKER



Though born in Prince Edward Island, Marjorie was raised in Wetaskiwin from age four. She obtained all her schooling there, finishing in 1934. She won medals in grades eight and eleven.

Marjorie graduated in 1939 from the University of Alberta with degrees in Arts and Law, and practised with an Edmonton law firm. During the War, she carried on her husband's practise in that firm.

In 1966, she was appointed Judge of the Family and Juvenile courts of Alberta, the first woman to hold that position. Marjorie served in that capacity for seventeen years, retiring in 1983. Throughout most of her time as Judge, she conducted circuit court in Wetaskiwin once a month.

After her retirement, Marjorie wrote several books on public issues, all of which were national best sellers. All were of current concern at the time: "On Guard for Thee", (free trade) 1988; "The Meech Lake Accord", 1990; "Canada's Constitutional Crisis: Making Sense of it All", 1991; as well as a booklet on "Canada's National Referendum: What is it All About?", 1992.

She has received many awards, including the Order of Canada in 1990 (the highest civilian honor to be accorded to a Canadian) and three honorary doctorate degrees, including one from a Womens University in Korea. On November 18, 1995, she was honored at a ceremony in the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa as one of Canada's pioneer women judges, an honor bestowed by the Canadian Judicial Council.

Marjorie Bowker receiving Order of Canada
from Governor General Ray Hnatyshyn, 1990.



Her husband, Wilbur F. Bowker, QC, now retired, was Dean of Law at the University of Alberta for twenty years. He was also awarded the Order of Canada in 1990. Their three adult children are all in the healthcare field; two are in Ontario, one in Edmonton. They have seven grandchildren.

Added Obituary August 23, 2006 recorded the passing of Marjorie Bowker in Edmonton at the age of 90 years. It recorded the following honours subsequent to the Women of Aspenland tribute:

- In 2002 she received the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal.
- At Edmonton's Centennial celebration in 2004, she was honored as one of one hundred "Edmontonians of the Century".
- In 2005, on the occasion of Alberta's 100th birthday, she was a recipient of the Alberta Gold Medal.

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## LOVE LETTERS

Bob Maynard

Bob has inherited about 900 letters and 200 photographs that his mother had saved. He is in the process of digitizing and transcribing them, as the original paper is becoming delicate. He shares with us "love letters" written by his dad, William David Maynard, to his mom, Alberta Mary Haffenden. At the time of the first letter William was living in west London, England , and she in east London.



Wedding photo. June 15, 1940.

William David Maynard marries Alberta Mary Haffenden

On an unspecified date in 1939:

*My darling Girlie,  
Many thanks for the lovely weekend spent with you. As you see I have got back safely. I had to walk from Kentish Town Sunday evening . I got home about 12:45, as I had to wait at Brixton for about half an hour. The last bus had gone to Camden Town, so had to go to Charing Cross, change there. Never mind darling! It was worth it.*

*I feel rather tired this evening so I am sure you will excuse me if I don't write as good and as much as I should like. Think I told you all the news over the weekend, but I know you expect a letter Wednesday. Viv and Gwen got back safely. Also Dad wants me to tell you he is keeping all right. He has been out for a ride on my bike this evening. It made a change for him. He likes cycling. All the gang are keeping fit.*



*Now darling, I suppose the arrangements are the same for Saturday. I will be at Fenchurch Street as arranged. So roll on Saturday.*

*Darling, I am longing to see you again. I wish we could have more time together, we don't seem to have half enough. I won't be satisfied until we can always be together, so I hope that one day soon comes. I long to be with you always. Please keep your eyes open for a nice little flat.*

*Please excuse the mistakes now. I must close. So, good night, darling. And God bless you and keep you safe until we meet.*

*Yours as always with fondest love,    Lots of kisses.    Bill*

Ten years later, on May 28, 1949, Bill wrote to his wife from Sekondi, Nigeria, Africa, where he had been working for about a year as a building inspector. After a page of commentary on family affairs, he continues with another love letter:

*I long for you to be at my side. I love you, my sweet, and will never fail you. I am doing this for you and the boys, and hope that I do not regret it. It is a great wrench to be away, but time is going on, so we will look on the bright side. Roll on, soldier!*

*Cheerio my own darling wife. Wish we were together at the moment. God bless you and the boys, and hope you're safe.*

*All my love to you!  
With love always,    Bill*

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"BOB MAYNARD LIFE & LETTERS" - Millet & District Museum Announcement

The Millet & District Museum is proud to have this opportunity to honour one of our own volunteers, Bob Maynard. Bob has been a genealogist since inheriting his mother's collection of letters and photographs in the 1980's, and is a long-time member of the Genealogical Society of Alberta, as well as genealogical societies in both Wetaskiwin and Leduc. He is a Director of the Millet & District Historical Society and a regular presence at the Museum, volunteering in the archives - or wherever else we need him. Bob brings dedication, quality, and humour to everything he does.

This exhibit highlights many fascinating stories from Bob's childhood in Nigeria, and his efforts to preserve his family's history. Although originally planned to have only one case, this

display contains three cases of mixed media; letters, photographs, documents, artifacts, and videos.

What can we say? A good story deserves to be told and told well! The **first** case uses maps, photographs, and artifacts to highlight the unique culture of Nigeria, such as thorn carvings, and the complex history of West Africa under the British government. The **second** case focuses on the history of the Maynard family through family records, photographs, and letters. The **final** case features various sources, media, and processes used for tracing genealogy and preserving archival materials, such as fragile letters and glass plate negatives.



Queen Elizabeth II in Nigeria with the kings of the tribes.
Bob's parents and Bob were in the crowd just behind the kings.

The fight for archives is nothing new. Digitization of records provides more access to records than ever before and yet public interest is waning. Archives are under ever increasing pressure to digitize their collections and to work with lessening funds, space, and staff. This exhibit serves as a timely educational tool into the processes behind and the importance of preserving history. Eye catching photographs and Nigerian artifacts, paired with heartwarming letters detailing family life, connect us to the past, reminding us that all people, all over the world, across all of history share similar emotions and experiences. It is important we preserve the letters, documents, photographs, and artifacts which help maintain this connection to the past.

We invite everyone to join us on **Saturday, October 15, at 1:00PM**, at the Millet & District Museum (5120 50st). Entertainment, refreshments, and tours to follow. Admission by donation. Come join us in honouring an amazing volunteer and genealogist, learn more about Nigeria, and support the preservation of history in Alberta.

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## PEROGY POWER!

By Sharon Aney

As I have watched the assault on Ukraine over the past months I am more appreciative of my Ukrainian heritage.

My Baba, Agatha (Stoyka) Nakoneshny, was a small woman, only about five feet tall. While raising her family in Saskatchewan during the early twentieth century, she needed nourishing and filling meals for the twelve growing and hard-working people around her table. Among the staple crops in her gardens were potatoes and onions ... essential ingredients for the food she had learned to cook in Ukraine. She made perogies!

When, as a child, I knew her in the late 1940's she always wore a print dress and apron, and had a babushka tied with a knot under her chin. I loved to peek over the edge of her table to watch her make perogies. From a bowl of dough she would take a bit and form it into a ball about the size of a walnut. Once a series of balls lay in rows on the tea towel, she flattened them into small discs and piled them into a stack of six or eight. Then, one by one, with her rolling pin, she rolled each disc into a circle about two inches in diameter. She placed a spoon full of seasoned mashed potato onto it, folded the dough in half and pressed the edges together, making a seal, and thus forming the perogy. The perogies were then cooked in boiling water, drained, topped with fried onions and a dollop of sour cream. They often became a meal in themselves.

As I grew up, and moved away from home, I discovered that my Ukrainian friends had had much the same experience. Many a hungry student spent her last few dollars at month end for a bag of potatoes, some flour and onions, and produced once again, her Baba's perogies.

Baba must have felt that she travelled to the end of the earth in 1904 when, with \$4.00 in her pocket, at 19 years of age, she left her village in Ukraine to come, alone, to Canada. What would she have thought of her great-granddaughter, Diane, at the same age, about 90 years later making perogies as a treat for other young international travelers at a hostel in Australia?

Since Alberta and Saskatchewan have large populations with Ukrainian ancestry, perogies have been a common and popular dish at community dinners. It was not surprising that the demand grew. Church groups, service groups, facility groups, etc., largely, but not only, made up of women, had "perogy making bees" to mash and roll and pinch and freeze perogies.

My sister's small town church group in Saskatchewan makes about 300 hundred dozen perogies each week. Besides keeping sufficient on hand for dinners that they may cater in their own hall,



roll and pinch!

the output is sold to caterers, restaurants and individuals. The men are involved too, taking on the heavy lifting of large utensils in the commercial kitchen. They, too, have learned how to





And thus, these communities in large cities and small towns were able to build community halls, maintain churches, ensure the financial stability of their organizations, etc. In 2022 "Perogy Suppers" have been a popular and profitable means of fund-raising to support Ukraine, its people under attack and its refugees.

Food for the body. Nourishment for the soul!

Of course, it did not take long for commercial producers to place perogies into the frozen food sections of our grocery stores. I was amazed to find them for sale in Utah!

118 years after my Baba's arrival in Canada, we are a much more cosmopolitan society. The combined experiences of travel, television cooking shows, food magazines and well stocked grocery stores enable us to cook up any style of ethnic food we wish. Our palates have tasted sweet and sour, acid and bland, the world's treasure of spices, flavourings and sauces.

Still ... Baba's perogies remain the same: a potato mixture (with fried onions, salt and pepper, possibly cheese) wrapped in dough, boiled and served with a topping. But now .... when you boil up your next batch of perogies, you might consider using toppings and sides beyond the familiar ... to provide a taste of many cultures.

For example:

- |                                         |                        |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Sauerkraut and bratwurst              | for a German dinner    |
| • Meatballs and tomato sauce            | for an Italian dinner  |
| • Mushroom/wine sauce and roast chicken | for a French dinner    |
| • Sweet and sour pork                   | for a Chinese dinner   |
| • Teriyaki beef and extra sauce         | for a Japanese dinner  |
| • Taco seasoned meat and salsa          | for a Mexican dinner   |
| • Roast beef and cooked cabbage         | for an English dinner  |
| • Barbequed steak and bacon bits        | for an American dinner |

But the **best** is still .....

- Fried onions, a dollop of sour cream & garlic sausage .... for a Ukrainian dinner!



In 1993, GLENDON, a village in Alberta north of St. Paul, unveiled its roadside tribute to the perogy.

The town's Giant Perogy, complete with fork, stands 27 feet tall, weighs approximately 6,000 pounds, and is considered one of the "Giants of the Prairies," a collection of massive sculptures that can be found across this geographic region of North America.

Plaque outside a church in Manitoba recognizes a donation from "The Perogy Ladies"



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Making Connections

An In-Person Genealogy Conference
Presented by Alberta Family Histories Society

October 1, 2022 | Calgary Alberta
Dave Obee | Jill Browne | Kim Zjalic

Register now

afhs.ab.ca



BONE ANALYSIS PROVIDES WINDOW INTO LIVES OF MONTREAL'S IRISH POTATO FAMINE MIGRANTS

After 2 years, lab finds signs of malnutrition, disease in bodies
buried in mass graves

[Rowan Kennedy](#), [Erika Morris](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jul 19, 2022 4:00 AM
Rowan Kennedy is a journalist at CBC Montreal



Bio-archeologist Marine Puech said the analysis of the remains helps give a voice to Irish people. (Rowan Kennedy/CBC)



After analyzing bones found during work on a light-rail station in Montreal, an archaeological lab is revealing new details about the lives of Irish migrants who died there in 1847.

The 2019 archeological dig in Pointe-Sainte-Charles — where the Irish fleeing the potato famine were quarantined and, if they did not survive, buried — revealed 14 bodies including seven adults, three

teenagers, and four children. After two years of analysis, preliminary results were presented to the Irish community, who found them moving and "incredible," according to Victor Boyle, president of the Montreal Irish Monument Park Foundation.

Fractures, bacterial infections, chronic diseases and signs of malnutrition provide a window into the lives of Irish migrants in the mid-1800s, said bio-archaeologist Marine Puech at the Ethnoscop lab in Boucherville, Que. Puech says most were from rural southwestern Ireland, and the lab was able to pinpoint their time of death to between August and September of 1847.

Ethnoscop has had the bones for two years now. After cleaning them and collecting soil samples, they were able to estimate sex and age of individuals and identify pathologies.

The results showed unspecified stress and diet deficiencies like iron as well as notable lead levels. Some diseases, like typhus, don't leave marks on bones. But traces of malnutrition were found, which likely weakened people and made them more susceptible to illness.

Victor Boyle, president of the Montreal Irish Monument Park Foundation, said the lab results have made the remains feel more like people, not just bones. (Rowan Kennedy/CBC)
Irish migrants fleeing the famine faced poor conditions at home, said Puech, and once on the ships, things did not improve. The vessels were often so full that it wasn't uncommon for more than 200 migrants to be in close quarters in humid summers — conditions that could easily have spread typhus. Many died at sea or shortly after arrival.

"It's incredible. First they found coffin remnants, artifacts, then bones. But even as bones, they were just bones," said Boyle. "But to be shown at the laboratory, these bones being assembled as a full skeleton, hearing what their diet was, what part of Ireland they were probably from, now there's a person lying on that table."

Since the site was well-known, only a few steps away from the Black Rock monument marking a burial site for approximately 6,000 people, workers at the Réseau express métropolitain (REM) knew they would find remains. The bodies were found in coffins that had been arranged to save space, often piled one on top of another.

The rail workers made sure to stay engaged in a dialogue with the Irish community while performing their excavations, said the REM's deputy director of environment, Elizabeth Boivin. "We have to take special care," she said. "It's a very sensitive matter."

Montreal's Irish community has insisted for years that bodies were interred in the area, but the REM excavations led to the first exhumations, said Boivin. "I've never worked like this, so close to the community," said Puech, who is happy to be "giving voice to people."

The labs were surprised by one finding: two of the individuals most likely didn't come from Ireland. The remains will soon be sent to a lab in Trois-Rivières where the DNA will be sequenced in the hopes of finding living descendants.

"Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars."

— Norman Vincent Peale

The Saga of David Alexander Fairfield + Mary "Mollie" Jane Small

by Leroy Koop



On April 11, 2022 a request was received through the branch website from Judy H. It stated:

"I'm looking for my father and aunt's death certificate. They drowned in the Belly River near Wetaskiwin on about July 14, 1926. I'd also like to know where they are buried. I suspect it's in the Wetaskiwin Cemetery. Their names are: Fairfield, David Alexander
Fairfield, Isabel----"

At first glance, with a father dying in 1926, it appeared our client must have been around 100 years old, having been born before 1926. The request, the way it was worded, would indicate that the two drowning victims were brother & sister or brother and sister-in-law. Furthermore, the river Belly River was unfamiliar to me and I have lived in the County of Wetaskiwin since 1978.

But a genealogy researcher continues on.

The lists of buried souls in the two Wetaskiwin Cemeteries failed to contain any Fairfield names. The AGS Surname Database did reflect a David Alexander Fairfield (about 39) and an Isabel (about 10) buried in the Wainwright Cemetery.

Now I thought it had become necessary to determine where Belly River was located. Using GOOGLE maps it was determined that the mouth of the Belly River was on the Old Man River northwest of Lethbridge. Furthermore, on current roads, it would take 5 to 6 hours to drive from the Belly River mouth to Wainwright. A search on the internet indicated that the Belly River area was known for fishing, camping, hiking trails and that the river originates in northwestern Montana at Helen Lake, near the base of Ahern Peak in Glacier National Park. So, although Belly River area was a good spot for fishing, it was a long way to travel from Wainwright to Belly River in 1926.

But a genealogy researcher continues on.

A newspaper article in the Wainwright Star, July 21, 1926, found on the PEEL website, was the first eye opening of a very sad story. David Alexander Fairfield and his daughter Isabel were victims of accidental drowning on 13 July 1926¹. Isabel, 10 years old, was playing on the family raft used to travel across the Battle River to the village of Fabyan, 11 km northwest of Wainwright on Hwy 14. Isabel fell and slipped into the water. Father David saw it happen and, although he couldn't swim, jumped into the river to rescue his daughter. The river was just too deep. Two gentlemen on the other side of the river saw what was happening and came across to try and help. The two bodies were finally pulled from the river with a long pole. Father and daughter were still clinging to each other.

A real tear jerker, even now as I write this article.

But the sadness continued in the newspaper article. The wife of David and mother of Isabel was "at present unfortunately a ward of the government at Ponoka". More research and conversations with Judy H. revealed that Mary Fairfield nee Small, the wife and mother, had suffered a head injury back in Scotland, falling down a mine shaft while delivering lunch to her father, a coal miner. Because of severe headaches Mary was admitted to the Ponoka Hospital about 1921 where she passed away on 28 Feb 1940².

The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death² for Mary Jane Fairfield attached to the Death Registration² in 1940 states that Mary's "immediate cause of death was intestinal obstruction due to Carcinoma of the Sigmoid Colon". Also, under "other morbid conditions" are listed "Pulmonary Tuberculosis and Catatonic Schizophrenia". Nowadays the word catatonic is not affiliated with only one specific illness. Today, although a lifelong condition, the catatonic symptoms are treatable.

Three other children of David and Mary, ages 8 to 12 were left behind without a parent to look after them. Although by this time, as further research proved, David had three brothers who also lived in Canada by 1923, no family members took over the care of these orphans.

David Alexander was born on 27 Jan 1884³ in Gilnahirk, Belfast, Down, Ireland to David Fairfield Sr. and Margaret Ann Dunlop. David Jr. married Mary "Mollie" Jane Small on 20 Jun 1913⁴ at 191 Currie Street, Edmonton, the home of David's brother, James. Mary was born on 18 Oct 1889⁵ in New Cumnock, Ayrshire, Scotland to James Small and Isabella Killan.

Despite their short life together David and Mollie's family has grown from those three young orphaned children to include 4 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren, 9 great-great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-great-grandchildren.

David and Mollie, I consider it a privilege to have been given the opportunity to research your ancestors for your descendants. I just wish it had been a happier story. David and Mollie, may you rest in peace.

Sources:

¹David's Death Registration was obtained from the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

²Mary's Death Registration and Medical Certification of Cause of Death was obtained from the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

³David A. Fairfield's Birth Registration was located using Ancestry.com and IrishGenealogy.ie.

⁴David and Mary's Marriage Registration was obtained from the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

⁵Mary "Mollie" Jane Small's Birth Registration was obtained through ScotlandsPeople.

Information on the 1901 and 1911 Censuses of Ireland were available on the National Archives of Ireland website.

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## **VOLUNTEER RESEARCH:**

Alice Hoyle

In March of 2021 I was contacted by Shannon Y. regarding family members who were buried in various locations in the Wetaskiwin area. Shannon lived in Manitoba. She advised she planned to travel to Alberta when Covid restrictions were lifted.

Based on the information Shannon provided, I was able to give her grave locations for some of the relatives she was researching. Unfortunately, one of the locations where she had discovered that some of the family members were buried was in a small community cemetery that was no longer there.

When Shannon advised me the land location of the above cemetery, I realized it was on a quarter section next to people my husband and I knew so I phoned this person to see if he could give me any information about the little cemetery. I was advised that the headstones had disintegrated, and the current person farming the land is farming over the place where the people were buried. Sad news for Shannon.

Other burial locations were: the old Wetaskiwin cemetery, and the Catholic cemetery. I gave her the plot/lot numbers for the old Wetaskiwin cemetery where family was buried. I asked our branch member, Sharon for information on how to access the Catholic cemetery, which I understood to be locked to the public. Sharon was able to determine who to contact for cemetery access, if and when Shannon Y. came to Alberta.

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Shannon and her husband travelled to Wetaskiwin to view the graves at the Catholic cemetery. Sharon was able to provide access to the cemetery, and Sharon and I met with them. We enjoyed hearing of their journey to Alberta and Saskatchewan, in their quest to touch base with the localities their ancestors once called home.

It was very interesting to hear about the research Shannon and her husband have been doing. What a great way to start off the autumnal genealogy year.

