

Research Success

Completed by the Wetaskiwin Branch, Alberta Genealogical Society

The following research stories emanated from members of the Wetaskiwin Branch of the Alberta Genealogical Society. The stories have been gleaned from the branch's own newsletter entitled *Roots & Branches*. Stories are printed with permission, and some editing has been done whenever follow-ups appeared in future newsletters. The member doing most of the research and writing the articles is Alice Hoyle.

Indexed alphabetically by *Surname*, and at the end by *Subject*.

Bedwell, Daveda Jean

April, 2011: I have been contacted by someone named Tina, who is researching her grandmother. The grandmother's name was Daveda Jean Bedwell, born in Pendryl, Alberta on January 8th, 1932. She died October 25, 1993 in Nanaimo, B.C.

She was married approx. 1953 to someone they believe was named William A. Gilchrist. They had 2 children, Marlina and Cliff. Daveda then married Harold Twigge circa 1953-1955 in Victoria, B.C. and had 3 more children, one of which is Tina's mother. Tina's grandmother and Harold Twigge divorced. Daveda then married Henry Stimpson in Victoria, and they had one child. The family doesn't know their grandmother's parents' names. I suggested that Tina request from Alberta Vital Statistics, the certified copy of her grandmother's birth registration, as the parents should be listed there. I looked in the local history book "Packhorse to Pavement" (covers the Pendryl area) and could not see any write-up on Bedwells. This book lists all the quarter sections, and who owned them through the years, so I spent some time looking at all the names. I luckily found property owned by a Todd Bedwell (SW13.45.6.W5); also in the write-up on someone named Tom Street, mention was made about the Bedwell family. I tried researching in B.C.; however the dates she gave me just seem to be beyond the criteria for public access. I did find a Harold C. Twigge in the 1949 Hendersons Directory for Victoria, and I advised Tina of this. Although I checked obituaries for the Nanaimo area, I couldn't find one for her grandmother. I decided to check the AGS Homestead Records: jackpot!! I found 4 homestead records for Bedwells, all in the same area as the above land location for Todd Bedwell. I have forwarded all this information to Tina, as well as advising her how to order the Homestead Records or view the documents herself at the Provincial Archives. I have asked her to touch base with me, once she gets some of this research done. It will be interesting to know what she finds out, as when she initially contacted me she had very little information to provide. Source: *Roots & Branches*, May 2011, #5.

Call to Southworth

CALL/SOUTHWORTH: I had a request for information on the marriage of Elsie Call to John Southworth in Wetaskiwin, July 1911. The request came from someone who wanted to confirm how to get a copy of a marriage certificate, and also wanted to know what data was on the certificate. I was able to provide him with the information he requested, as

well as direct him to the Alberta government website where he could download the necessary forms. Source: *Roots & Branches*, February 2011, #1.

Daly, Daniel Henry

In February, I was contacted by someone searching for an ancestor named Daniel Henry Daly. Mr. Daly worked at the Driard Hotel in Wetaskiwin, and died in 1907. I was able to search the Wetaskiwin cemetery records, and found where he had been buried in the old Wetaskiwin Cemetery, as well as a bit of military information that was noted on the records. I have sent this to the researcher, and she has now asked that I look for any other records available. This is an on-going search, as Mr. Daly isn't mentioned in any area local history books. Source: *Roots & Branches*, May 2011, #2.

Dufva, Albert

Recently, I was contacted by someone wanting an obituary for Albert Dufva who died in 1949 and is buried in the Water Glen Cemetery near Ferintosh. She had the obituary for Mrs. Dufva (Elvira). In doing my research I found that Albert actually died in Vancouver. I gave the researcher all the BC Archives data numbers, etc. so she could request the death certificate if she desired.

I checked the City of Wetaskiwin Archives' obituary file but there isn't one for Albert Dufva (Elvira's is there). I did see on the 1940 voters list that the Dufva family was living at R. R. 2, Wetaskiwin. They obviously moved to Vancouver between 1940 and 1949 when he died. I also found that Albert was drafted in 1918, in Calgary. He was single, 22 years of age, and listed his mother as his next of kin. I sent the researcher all this information along with his regimental number and the information on how she could look up the records. (in the Ferintosh book, Albert Dufva is listed as a local man who served in WWI). The Dufva family does NOT show up in the following local history books: Pioneer Pathways; Gwynne; Bittern Lake; Lewisville; Ferintosh. Source: *Roots & Branches*, May 2013, #14.

Jans, Andrew and Clara

A very new request, just received, is from Germany, requesting information on the Andrew and Clara Jans family who lived in the Gwynne/New Norway area. I will begin working on this and let the researcher, Mr. Krieger, know what I find..... I am pleased to advise that I was contacted by the daughter of Gertrude (Jans) Holt, regarding the information sent to me by Gertrude's German second cousin. I have forwarded the information to Gertrude's daughter, and it is my hope that Gertrude and her second cousin have made contact with each other..... and thanks also to Myrick Rosser, another Wetaskiwin branch member who assisted me with the Jans enquiry. Source: *Roots & Branches*, October 2011, #8.

Jensen, Anton and Christine

Mr. Jacobsen from Denmark is looking for information about his Jensen relatives (Anton and Christine). I found them in the Wetaskiwin cemetery database, and I have taken digital photos of the graves as well as the cemetery entrance, and sent this to Mr. Jacobsen. I then researched the obituary records at the City of Wetaskiwin Archives and found quite a long obituary for Anton Jensen, but unfortunately nothing for Christine. This information has been sent to Mr. Jacobsen. An interesting side note is that one of

Mr. Jensen's daughters was married to Fritz Kirstein, a very well-known butcher in Wetaskiwin for over 40 years! Source: *Roots & Branches*, October 2011, #6.

Johnson, Otto Emile and Mary (Switzer)

Johnson, John and Jacoba/Johanna (Lund)

Search for information on great-grandparents: Otto Emile Johnson and Mary (Switzer) Johnson (her maternal great-grandparents) and John Johnson and Jacoba/Johanna (Lund) Johnson (her paternal great-grandparents). I was able to suggest several websites for her to check, and note that she has posted information on ancestry.ca. I have emailed her to find out what the status is regarding her research as I don't want to duplicate research she has already done – I am still waiting for a reply from her. Source: *Roots & Branches*, February 2014, #19

Knack, Frederick & Elizabeth

A request was forwarded to me by the Zion Lutheran church secretary for research on Frederick & Elizabeth Knack. The CD of the City of Wetaskiwin cemeteries in our library gave dates of burial, (1938 and 1940) and estimated birth dates for both. The church secretary had already contacted the City Archives and found an obituary for Frederick. Using peel.library@ualberta.ca, the site for online newspapers, in Wetaskiwin papers, I found an entry for Frederick's farm auction sale in 1922. There were many mentions in later papers mentioning two daughters as they were promoted through their school grades, but I was unable to find any further information. Source: *Roots & Branches*, February 2014, #20

Kochanowicz

One person contacted me, asking me to refer him to Sharon Aney, a Wetaskiwin branch member, as he saw her article in *Relatively Speaking*, the Alberta Genealogical Society newsletter, and felt they had a "Kochanowicz" connection. From Sharon: "After analyzing his family lore, the information I had received from my researchers in Poland several years ago, and visiting the Polish Genealogy Society of America website and <http://www.familysearch.org> database, I was able to determine that his great-grandfather and my great-grandmother were siblings." Source: *Roots & Branches*, October 2013, #17.

McPayne/ Davis, Mack/Maxwell

Sheridan/ Sherwood, Christa/Christine

Dona C. brought her "brickwall" for the members to discuss and hopefully provide some hints of direction to continue her search. Her difficulty arises with finding the ancestors and origin of her paternal grandparents, Mack/Maxwell/ McPayne/ Davis and his wife Christa/Christine Sheridan/ Sherwood/ Cousins.

I contacted Jean B., a Wetaskiwin branch member, and asked if she was interested in doing some research. I emailed her the information Dona had supplied, and Jean phoned me to tell me she had the local history books for the areas in Alberta where Dona's family lived! Wow, how fortunate was that! Jean has found some information on the Davis family, and this has been forwarded to Dona. Source: *Roots & Branches*, May 2012, #9.

Motuz, Metro

I received a request for information about a Metro Motuz who was born in 1919 in Manitoba. Approximately 1949, after his marriage to Helene Tanguay ended, he moved to Alberta, working in the oil fields. He may have remarried someone with the first name of Alexandra. The Calmar Community Cemetery Association shows a headstone with Metro Motuz, born in 1919 and died in 1974. The researcher is trying to get confirmation that this is the same person, and she would like to find an obituary for them. She also contacted various other sources, and she advised me later that she had been sent an obituary for Metro Motuz – this from the Edmonton paper. A phone call to the City of Wetaskiwin Archives confirmed that the researcher has also asked them for the same information, and they have advised her that there isn't an obituary for any Motuz family member in their records. Our branch member Jean Browse, who assists with research, advised me that there is a Motuz living in Devon – possibly the son of Metro. Jean gave me the person's name and phone number and I have passed this along to the researcher. Further to this, Jean Browse searched the Calmar Local History book and there is no mention there of a Motuz family. Source: *Roots & Branches*, May 2013, #15.

Phippen, William and Dorothy

I had a request for information on William and Dorothy Phippen, both deceased. The researcher wondered where they were buried, and I was able to provide the information that they were both buried in the Old Cemetery in Wetaskiwin, including the plot numbers. He was contacting the City of Wetaskiwin Archives to request their obituaries from their archival records. He has since asked me for more information on his extended family, and he has sent a 3 page document outlining the history of the Phippen family. I have printed the document, and it is now in the family histories section of our WGS library. Source: *Roots & Branches*, October 2013, #16.

Quigley, Ian

In February, our branch received a request for assistance from Ian Quigley. He was looking for information regarding his grandmother and his mother's adoption. This was responded to by Don B. and Claudia M. who were also contacted by Mr. Quigley and they were able to find considerable information. Mr. Quigley's reply was very positive and he praised their helpfulness and was very grateful for the information provided to him. Source: *Roots & Branches*, May 2013, #13.

Strand, Lawrence Wallace and Matilde (Baker)

Mr. Mitchell from USA contacted us, looking for information about Matilde Baker Strand and Lawrence Wallace Strand. I also found their burial information in the Wetaskiwin cemetery database, and took photos as above, and have sent this to Mr. Mitchell. I found an obituary for Lawrence Strand, but nothing for Matilde Baker Strand and this information has been sent to Mr. Mitchell. He asked a very general question: "any information on them or any other Strands would be appreciated". As there were quite a few Strands in the area, I will ask him for more guidance in order that information sent is relevant. Source: *Roots & Branches*, October 2011, #7.

Turner, John Henry Leslie

FROM SCOTLAND TO SASKATCHEWAN, AND ALBERTA

On September 15th, 2015, an email was sent to the Wetaskiwin Branch, AGS, asking for assistance in obtaining information about the Great Uncle of Ruth Close – a man named John Henry Leslie Turner.

The email read as follows:

Dear Sirs/Madam:

I note that you have information on burial places in Wetaskawin (sic). My wife's great uncle died on 8th September 1956 and is buried at Wetaskawin (sic). His name was John Henry Leslie Turner and he was originally from England. (dob: 16/01/1872). John Turner farmed in the Wetaskawin (sic) area around Labarynth (sic) Lake. In addition his father, George Turner, also from England, died whilst on a visit to him and the only information we have is that he died in October! (pre-1913).

My wife and I intend to visit Wetaskiwin on 24th October 2015, and it would be greatly appreciated if we could find out where her great uncle is buried.

With Best Scottish Wishes,
Duncan and Ruth Close, (nee Turner)
Sanquhar, Scotland

I received the above email on the Wetaskiwin Branch email – I knew that our Research Coordinator, Gary Rode, would be busy at this time of year so I decided to just look up the cemetery information and send it along to the Close family.

I checked the cemetery records for Wetaskiwin and found that both John Henry Leslie (J.H.L.) Turner and his father George Turner were buried in the 'old' Wetaskiwin cemetery. I noted the plot designations, and also noted that when John Turner bought the plot for his father George, he also bought an adjoining plot, where according to the City of Wetaskiwin records, a small grave was located. JHL, himself, was buried in a different location when he passed away in 1956.

In addition, I looked in the local history book "Pioneer Pathways" but did not find a listing for the Turners. I also looked in the "Freeway West" book, and struck out as well. Then, I decided to look in the Gwynne local history book, and was amazed to find a 2 column write-up about the Turners! According to the Gwynne book, the Turners took out a homestead: I decided to look at the AGS Homestead Records database, and was thrilled to find several listings for George and/or J.H.L.!

With this information in hand, I sent a lengthy email to Duncan and Ruth Close, advising them of what I had found. I also scanned the write-up from the Gwynne History Book and emailed that to them. In addition, I sent them the homestead data from the AGS website, and gave them detailed instructions about the site: how to search for the records, and how to order the documents if they so wished. Then, because they had advised that they would be in Wetaskiwin, I gave them instructions on how to find the cemetery where the two Turners were buried.

This was only the start of emails back and forth between Duncan and Ruth Close, and myself. They were completely amazed by the information contained in the Gwynne History Book: it was their understanding that J.H.L. Turner had ventured to Canada, and his father came after – actually, it was the other way around. There was such a lot of family information contained in the write-up – information that was completely new to Duncan and Ruth. On September 16th, 2015, they responded to my email from the previous day, telling me that they were “amazed to get such a speedy reply to our enquiries about my forebears”.

As my curiosity and ‘detective traits’ don’t allow me to just leave things without checking out the finer details, I decided to look at the County of Wetaskiwin map to determine exactly where George and J.H.L. Turner had been homesteading. According to the information contained in the Gwynne Local History Book, they had actually owned a minimum of 5 quarters of land – which in the early 1900’s would have been quite astounding!

I checked out all the land locations: I found out that all of the land now lies within the County of Leduc. The County of Wetaskiwin map that we have does not extend beyond the limits of that county, and we did not have at our house, a map of the County of Leduc. Then, I remembered a very old map that we had, showing the land locations and ownership of land extending a considerable distance from the County of Wetaskiwin, in all directions. A magnifying glass and some patience soon produced positive results: I found all the land that the Turners had owned, and was able to get land locations. These land locations matched the ones that had been listed in the Gwynne Local History Book! Success.....

Having found out all this information, I decided to contact the Close family again. They had advised in an email that they were going to visit their daughter, her husband and their children in Saskatchewan prior to coming to Wetaskiwin. It occurred to me that perhaps they would like to drive out to the land where George and J.H.L. lived. When I broached the subject with them, they were quite excited about the prospect of seeing Ruth’s ancestor’s lands.

I set about creating a map of the area where the Turner family had homesteaded; after several attempts I managed to get one drawn that showed the area north of the County of Wetaskiwin where the land was located. Then, I photocopied a map of the Wetaskiwin to Gwynne area from the County of Wetaskiwin map. I made a detailed drawing, using arrows on the maps, showing how to drive from the Wayside Inn (where they were staying) to the various homesteads. Not being satisfied with just the maps, I also typed out more than a page of detailed instructions – advising exactly how to drive to the land locations. I scanned all this information and emailed it to them.

After creating and sending all the above, I began to wonder, “Is all this too confusing – should I just volunteer to pick them up at the Wayside Inn and take them to the land previously owned by George and J.H.L.?” At this point, Duncan and Ruth were already in Saskatchewan, visiting their family. I sent an email to them, hoping that they would be checking their email even though it was addressed to their Scottish address. I advised that, if they wished, I would be happy to pick them up and drive them to the various locations where George and J.H.L. Turner had owned land. Very quickly, they responded

that they would be very grateful to have me drive them there: they had been looking at the maps and the instructions and wondering if they would be lost in the countryside somewhere! 😊

A plan was set: they would phone me when they arrived in Wetaskiwin; I would pick them up at the Wayside Inn and we would spend the afternoon driving out in the countryside.

At our October genealogy meeting, I conveyed the above information to the members: a day or two later, Carole Koop contacted me to advise she would be interested in joining us for the afternoon. The day arrived: we were lucky that the weather was perfect for a drive in the country. We all met at the Wayside Inn, and after introductions were made and a bit of chatting done, we all got into my vehicle and headed east.

Duncan and Ruth were so easy to talk to: Duncan is the President of their local Heritage Society and he has done a lot of volunteer research for people, so they did not need any introduction to the world of genealogical research!

Carole brought her camera and her photographic expertise: as we drove north from the bottom of the Gwynne Hill (secondary HWY.822) we pointed out various interesting sites along the way. At each of the land locations the Turners had owned, Carole took pictures in order that she and Lee could email them back to the Close family once they returned to their home in Scotland. We were delighted at the second location, to see several deer hop across the road in front of us. Perhaps they were greeting the Scottish visitors?

Duncan and Ruth were so amazed to see the land where her ancestors had lived. They were quite surprised that the land holdings were so vast. Carole was able to take a picture of the County of Leduc “address” at the site where J.H.L. had lived after George died, and suggested to them that once they were back home they could use Google Maps to look at the land on a more detailed basis.

Carole had kindly planned for a picnic and had brought some tea, and some of her delicious baking. On the way back we stopped at the Coal Lake campsite and had an impromptu picnic – complete with muskrats swimming beside us, in the spillway from the dam at Coal Lake. We had a wonderful visit with Duncan and Ruth – we all felt like we had known each other for years, instead of hours! 😊

Duncan generously gave me a copy of a book he has written: a history of the Post Office in Sanquhar, Scotland – the World’s Oldest Post Office. It has been continuously operating as a post office in the same location since 1712.

I drove Duncan and Ruth back to the Wayside Inn; they stayed overnight and then proceeded to Canmore, Banff, Lake Louise and the mountain areas before heading back to Saskatchewan to their family.

Thankfully, the weather held for them the whole time they were in Alberta. Once they were home, Lee Koop sent them, via email, a detailed map of the stops we made, along with the pictures of the lands accompanying the various locations. We also had some

lovely pictures of Duncan and Ruth at the campsite, and these were sent to them by Lee and Carole, and myself.

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting Duncan and Ruth, and feel that I have made new friends in the process. I think this is one of the benefits of doing 'volunteer' research, and being willing to donate personal time in order to benefit others.

Although the main research of the Turners has been done, I have to admit that I am continuing my sleuthing, in the hopes that I can shed more light on the mysteries of their lives here in Canada. Source: *Roots & Branches*, February 2016, #1, page 11.

Webster, William Brown and Elizabeth (Chapman)

I have a request from Greg W., Quesnel, B.C. His grandparents were married and had 2 children born in Wetaskiwin in the 1930's. He wondered if there were census records for them in the 1920's and 1930's, and of course I had to reply to him that this was not available yet. His grandparents were: William Brown Webster, born 1905 in Dundee, Angus, Scotland, and Elizabeth Chapman, birth date/place unknown. They married in 1932 in Wetaskiwin. Once again, our branch member Jean Browse came to the rescue: she found information on "Betty Chapman" in the local history book, "Freeway West", and this information was passed on to Mr. Webster. I suggested to Mr. Webster that he could request the marriage information from Alberta Vital Statistics. I also suggested that he look at the Wetaskiwin newspapers online at the Peel Library (U of A) site as perhaps there was mention of his grandparents in the local paper in the 1920's and 1930's. I also did some sleuthing on ancestry.com and found a family tree for the Webster family and I contacted him about that, but haven't gotten a reply back from him as of today's date. Source: *Roots & Branches*, May 2011, #4.

Wolfchild, Sarah

Search for information on great-grandparents: Sarah Wolfchild, married to Orville Hawkins Smith. Orville was buried in Hardisty; Orville was born in 1849 and died in 1931; Sarah was born in 1862 and died in 1911. The researcher knew of a book in which the great-grandparents are mentioned, and I was able to advise him that the book was available to read on the *Ourroots.ca* website. I did find a burial record for Sarah Smith, with the corresponding birth and death years, at the Union & R.C. cemetery in Okotoks. I found the contact information for the cemetery and forwarded that to the researcher. I will continue to search for more information for him. *Roots & Branches*, February 2014, #18

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By Subject . . .

Brightview School and area

In March, I had an email from someone asking if anyone in our branch comes from the Brightview area. She has a picture of Twin Creek School and the students from 1936, and the picture says "Brightview", 1936. Her grandmother was the teacher at the school: Mrs.

Dykeman. She also wondered if there was a history of this school available, and if we wanted a copy of the picture. She also wondered if there was info online about teachers in the old one-room schools in Alberta. I suggested to her that I would ask our membership if anyone was from the Brightview area, and I also suggested that we would probably appreciate a copy of the picture. One of our branch members, Jean Browse, contacted me regarding this: she lived next to the school and had more information that she shared with the researcher! The researcher has since emailed the pictures to me. Source: *Roots & Branches*, May 2011, #3.

Saskatchewan Funeral Cards

I received one request from the U.S. for further information about the Funeral Cards listed on our website. This request was forwarded to our member Sharon Aney, as she has in her possession, the funeral cards from various Saskatchewan locations. Ironically, the person who requested the information was looking for a relative of Sharon's! Yes, it is a small world. Source: *Roots & Branches*, February 2013, #10.

Service Alberta

I also had a request from Florida for information on how to access a death certificate for someone who died in Wetaskiwin in 1907. The woman who contacted me knew that two ancestors died in this area in 1907, and were buried in the old Wetaskiwin cemetery, but she wanted the information from the death certificates. I was able to give her the Service Alberta website applicable for out-of-province requests. Source: *Roots & Branches*, February 2013, #11.

Wetaskiwin Obituaries

One other request was quite interesting: a Swedish man, living in Venezuela, requested information about his relatives who emigrated to Canada in 1910, settled in Alberta (various locations), died in this area in 1956 and 1981 and are buried in the old Wetaskiwin cemetery. After several emails back and forth to him (to determine exactly what he already knew so I didn't spend time duplicating information he already had) it appeared that he wanted information on the extended family; specifically how he could contact them. I went to the City Archives to look at the obituaries....happened to mention to the Archives' staff that this was related to a research request from Venezuela, and guess what.....they also had had a request from this same person for basically the same information and they had already sent the obituaries to him. As we try not to duplicate each other's research efforts, I did not copy the obituaries, but am in the process of compiling a list of sources for current information that he can access via the internet (ie, Canada 411, GenWeb, etc.).....I have forwarded to the gentleman from Venezuela, a long list of possible websites, etc. that he could use to attempt to locate living relatives. I also advised him about the 411canada site and gave him the URL's of various message boards, etc. Source: *Roots & Branches*, February 2013, #12.