



The Rotarian Genealogist

AUGUST 2025 | FIRST QUARTER 2025-2026

GOVERNING BOARD

President (2024-2026)

[Luanne Newman](#)

Seabrook, Texas USA

Director A

[Bruce Richardson](#)

Mississauga, Ontario CANADA
Queries/Research

Director B

[Lawrence "Tris" Tristram](#)

Bordon, Hampshire, UK
Webmaster

Director C

[Martha Stuckey](#)

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

Immediate Past President

[Sue Weber](#)

Arnold, Maryland, USA

Secretary

[Susan Beety](#)

League City, Texas, USA

Treasurer

[Michael Fekete](#)

Menomonie, Wisconsin, USA

Program Chair

[Bill Harvey](#)

Omaha, Nebraska USA

Newsletter Editor

[Luanne Newman](#)

FROM OUR PRESIDENT LUANNE NEWMAN

Dear Members,

WHAT A CONVENTION!

Calgary was wonderful and the 2025 RI Convention was stupendous! The Canadian people were so friendly and welcoming. YOUR Fellowship of Rotarian Genealogists presented a booth in the House of Friendship as well as a Breakout session, "Speed Tree Climbing", too. There was often a line of people, awaiting for the four of us to help them at our table. At last count, we have over SIXTY new members! It was so nice to meet some of you that we've not met before. Photos were taken and mounted on the TREE OF ROTARY on the walls of the booth.

Speed Tree Climbing offered our attendees the chance to meet other attendees one-on-one for two minutes to learn if they had any countries, nationalities, brick walls, or more in common.

Have you attended an International Conference? I hope you are able to in the future. Next year is Taipei, Taiwan and I heard future events may be in Hawaii, Minnesota, Chicago, etc. Just go!

Luanne



FORG CALENDAR

01 August Newsletter Published

09 August FORG Family Reunion Meeting via ZOOM
Speaker: Kate Keter "Scottish Genealogy"

01 November Newsletter Published

08 November FORG Family Reunion Meeting via ZOOM



FORG FAMILY REUNION MEETING

"EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SCOTTISH GENEALOGY

(OR AS MUCH AS I CAN FIT INTO THE TIME!)"



KATE KETER

Kate Keter has been researching family trees for over 30 years. What started as a hobby soon became an obsession and ultimately led her to complete an MSc in Genealogical, Palaeographical and Heraldic Studies from the University of Strathclyde in 2016. Since then, Kate has worked as a professional genealogist based in Linlithgow, a small town to the west of Edinburgh, and is also a tutor on Genealogy and Family History courses at the Strathclyde Institute of Genealogical Studies. She is a member of the Association of Scottish Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (ASGRA) and the Register of Qualified Genealogists (RQG).

Kate joined the Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange in October 1999 where she is currently the Club Secretary. She served as Club President during Rotary's Centennial year of 2004-05 and was Governor of former District 10120 for 2013-14. Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (ASGRA).

JOIN ZOOM MEETING

FORG Family Reunion

August 9 2025 19:30 London
1:30 PM Central Daylight Time/US

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4337626224?pwd=elJoLzlPWkRpTTgzY2F3YlFoaztrQT09&omn=86257836644>

Meeting ID: 433 762 6224

Passcode: 20191110

FORG THANKS CONVENTION

BOOTH HELPERS:

GLENN BOWERS
PAM BOWERS
BILL HARVEY
GRETCHEN HARVEY
ESTHER MC CAFFERTY
BUD NEWMAN
LUANNE NEWMAN



AND BEHIND THE SCENES...

SUE BEETY, "TRIS" TRISTRAM, MIKE FEKETE

FORENSIC GENEALOGY: A QUICK SUMMARY

by Yvan Pacas | Student | July 19th 2025 | Calgary, Alberta, Canada



Yvan Pacas

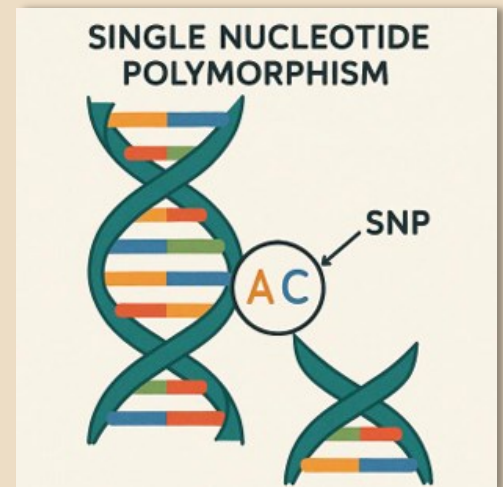
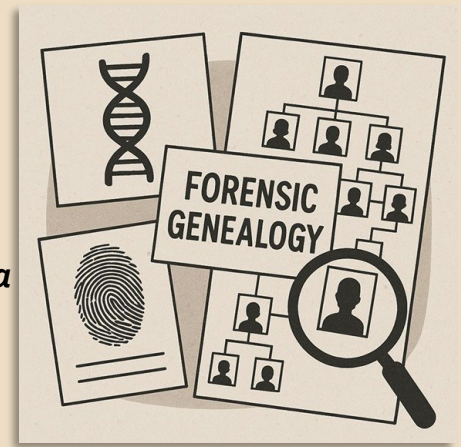
Who am I? Hi! My name is Yvan, and I am currently a 5th year student at the University of Calgary with a concentration in Chemistry. Although that is my focus of study, I have taken many biology courses specifically pertaining to the study of DNA and after meeting some of the Rotarians in the Fellowship of Rotarian Genealogists at the Rotary International Convention held in my hometown Calgary, have become more accustomed to the study of Genealogy. From talking to them, I was inspired to delve deeper into this subfield of biology and specifically how family trees can be used to solve crimes. Learning more about genealogy has allowed me to apply the things I have learned in my biology courses over the years in a different way than lab work as now, I am applying theoretical

concepts to understand a more relevant use of the information I have gathered in my education.

WHAT IS FORENSIC GENEALOGY? Forensic genealogy, better known as FGG (Forensic Genetic Genealogy) or IGG (Investigative Genetic Genealogy) is an emerging new field of study in forensic science that uses dense SNP (Small Nucleotide Polymorphism) data to infer possible distant relationships, exceeding that of first cousins. (Kling, 2021) Both the terms FGG and IGG are interchangeable and relate to the same process of using genealogy to solve crimes.

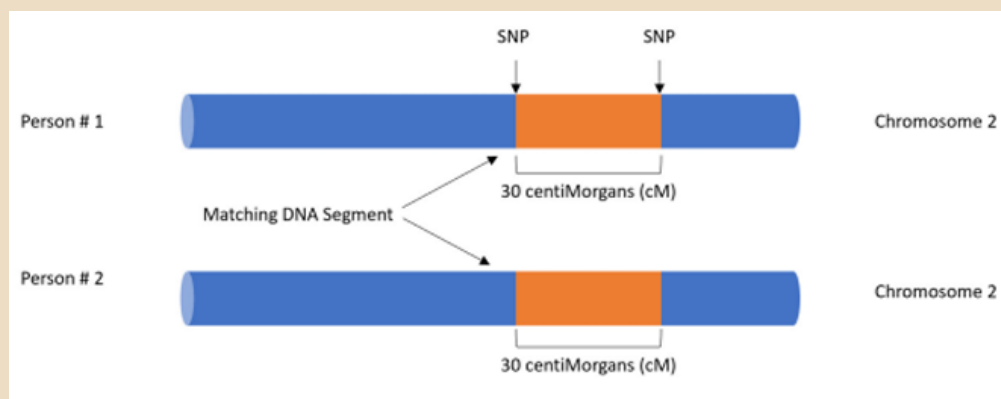
WHAT ARE SNPs? SNPs (Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms) are single base pair (A, T, G and C) alterations in the DNA sequence of an organism in relation to the reference (original sequence) of DNA. These mutations are especially useful in ancestry and forensics for classification of individuals by analyzing their DNA sequences.

HOW FORENSIC GENEALOGY WORKS The process begins with analysis of 600,000 to 1 million SNP markers in an unknown/questioned DNA sample. After this, the data gets digitized **(CONT. ON PAGE 4)**



FORENSIC GENEALOGY: (CONT.)

HOW FORENSIC GENEALOGY WORKS The process begins with analysis of 600,000 to 1 million SNP markers in an unknown/questioned DNA sample. After this, the data gets digitized and uploaded to a genetic genealogy database which contains other SNP data sets to be cross-referenced PAGE 2 against the sample. (Glynn, 2022) After law enforcement uploads the data online, they compare it against all the publicly available SNP data present on the databases and look for any similarities. These similarities are observed in the chromosome of the questioned individual and potential matching candidates.



*Figure 1.
Chromosomal
comparisons
between Person #1
(Suspect) and
Person #2 (from
online database)*

Each segment of DNA is measured in cM (centimorgans) which is the distance between genes on the chromosome. In this specific case above, the SNPs being analyzed exist on different genes on the chromosome hence why the distance between them is measured in centimorgans. The SNPs act as markers to distinguish the relevant region of comparison for analysis. To measure how closely related two people are dependent on the length of the orange region above and that value is the total shared cM (often expressed as a percentage). (Glynn 2022) Essentially if one orange region is 20 cM and the other is 30 cM then the total shared cM is 66.7% meaning there is a high likelihood they are related. The larger this total shared percentage, the more closely related the two individuals are. The reason why SNPs are used is because the specific DNA sequence of bases is more specific as only one base or one small region in the region in the chromosome is analyzed and cross-referenced for the same or similar DNA sequence present in an individual. SNPs allow for high resolution analyses of individuals as more markers on the chromosome can be analyzed as there essentially thousands or millions of SNP regions that can be analyzed.

SOURCES - - -

Ertürk, M. S., Fitzpatrick, C., Press, M., & Wein, L. M. (2022). Analysis of the genealogy process in forensic genetic genealogy. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 67(6). <https://doi.org/10.1111/1556-4029.15127>

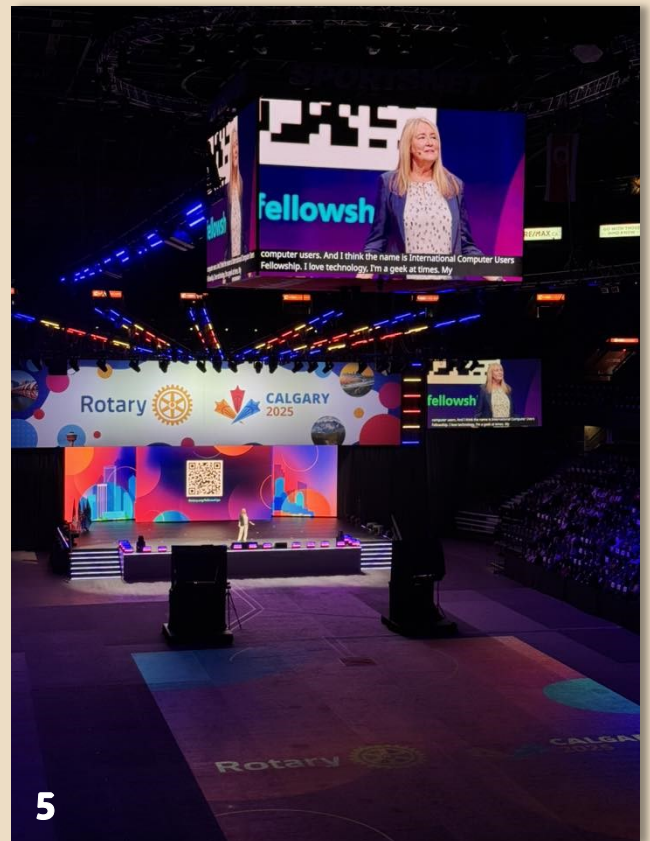
Glynn, C. (2022). Bridging Disciplines to Form a New One: The Emergence of Forensic Genetic Genealogy. *Genes*, 13(8), 1381. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genes13081381>

Kling, D., Phillips, C., Kennett, D., & Tillmar, A. (2021). Investigative genetic genealogy: Current methods, knowledge and practice. *Forensic Science International: Genetics*, 52(52), 102474. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fsigen.2021.102474>

FORG AND ALL AT THE CONVENTION



*1-Calgary International Airport welcomes all!
2-Behind stage, Rotary volunteers line up flags, sometimes going out three times to get all onstage.
3-RI President Francesco Arezzo and Luanne Newman
4 & 5—Luanne Newman speaks about Fellowships and FORG at Sun. General Sessions. 5,000 attendees at each.*



CONT. PAGE 6

FORG AND ALL AT THE CONVENTION

(CONT.)



6



7

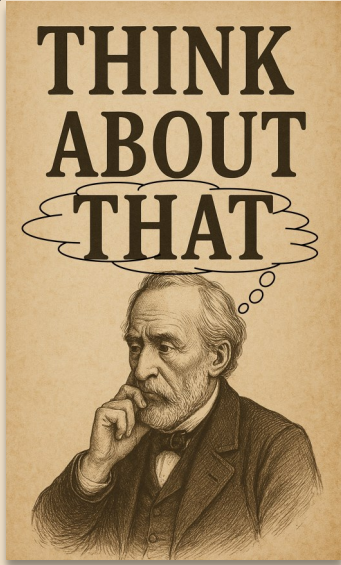
6 - FORG Members and guests wave at all before the "activity" and 7 - shows them in action during a 20-minute Speed Tree Climbing Activity. Each participant had one minute to share: surnames, ancestral towns & contact info, one-on-one. 8 & 9 Different booths of fellowships, clubs, and vendors in the 2025 RI Convention House of Friendship.



8



9



DISCOVERING OUR ROOTS WITH ANCESTRY: A PERSONAL JOURNEY

By Erin Lee

As Rotarians, we often talk about connection—within our clubs, across districts, and around the world. But connection takes on a deeply personal meaning when exploring your own family history. For me, using Ancestry has opened the door to a fascinating journey of discovery, organization, and global connection.

One of the most helpful aspects of the platform has been its ability to organize and present information clearly. The intuitive layout makes it easy to track relationships, timelines, and documents. Even more exciting are the hints it provides—little green leaves that often lead to new relatives, unexpected stories, or even long-lost family photos.

Ancestry has also helped me explore my ethnic heritage far beyond what I was told growing up. Seeing my ancestry broken down into percentages and regions gave me a new appreciation for the rich diversity in my background. And being able to visualize it all on a world map—seeing those migration patterns and ancestral homelands—is truly powerful.

Genealogy reminds us that our stories didn't begin with us—and that we are each a continuation of something profound and enduring. I'm grateful for the tools that help bring those stories to life and for the fellowship of Rotarians who share this passion.



Erin Lee/Richmond
British Columbia CANADA

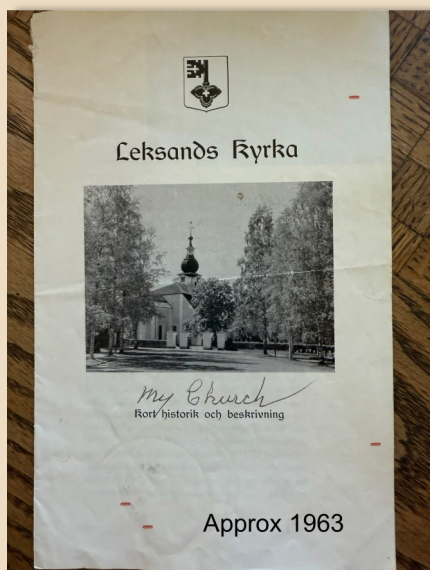
HAVE A STORY OF YOUR OWN TO SHARE?

Your experiences could help and inspire other members who are searching for their ancestral towns, family, and records. Send us your story:

PE@rotariangenealogists.org

THE PHOTOGRAPH WE BOTH CARRIED

By Patricia Erickson Mellard



Old pamphlet from Leksands Kyrka, in Borlange, Sweden.

In the summer of 2023, I excitedly packed a suitcase, my passport, and my grandmother's old address book. I also had a brochure from "Leksands Kyrka" with the words "My Church" on it in my Grandmother's handwriting.

In the address book, between phone numbers and birthday reminders, was an unfamiliar name with an address in Sweden scrawled beside it. No explanation. No mention of whether this person was a friend or a relative. It was the only thread I had to begin my search for my grandparents' family, and I decided to follow it.

I flew from Kansas to Sweden with a determination to find relatives to fill my Swedish family tree. I booked stays at bed and breakfasts in the Dalarna region, the breathtakingly beautiful landscape I knew my ancestors had come from. A place of red cottages, copper pots, and Dala horses.

Armed with the name from the address book, I did what any desperate American would do: I asked everyone. Waitresses. Hotel clerks. Shopkeepers. I showed them the name and address and asked if it sounded familiar. People smiled politely and shook their heads.

I had given up and traveled on when I realized I may have misinterpreted the address in my Grandmother's aged handwriting. I convinced my husband to drive back to Borlange and search for the street one more time. This time we found the house. I heard voices coming from the backyard, so I excitedly went through the gate. Fortunately, the surprised homeowners spoke English. I showed them the page from my Grandmother's book. They sadly shook their heads. I had the right address, but Anna had passed away several years ago and they had purchased her home. My heart plummeted. But wait, they pointed across the street and told me her son lives just a few houses away!

A few minutes later I was sitting on the porch of a Swedish relative, Gunnar Stens, drinking lemonade. Through his limited English and my lack of Swedish language skills, we were trying to decipher how we were related.

As I sat at Gunnar's table, still in awe that I'd actually found a blood relative halfway across the world, I pulled out a 5x7 wedding photo in a brown portrait folder I had carried with me all the



Gustav Carl Erickson & Johanna Matsson, married 8 Jan 1916.

PHOTOGRAPH WE BOTH CARRIED (CONT.)

way from Kansas. It showed my Grandparents on their wedding day, poised and proud.

"This is my grandfather," I said, pointing to the young man in the photo. Gunnar studied it for a long moment, silent. While his wife, who had been quietly listening, suddenly stood up without a word and disappeared into the hallway.



2nd cousin Gunnar Stens & Gunilla with Patti

A minute later, she returned, holding something in her hands. It was the exact same photo in the same brown portrait folder. I stared in disbelief.

I blinked. "No way!" Gunnar laughed. "Yes. That's family!" It turned out my grandfather, the groom in the photo, was Gunnar's uncle, his grandmother's brother.

We all burst out laughing, gazing at the two identical wedding portraits. Not only had I found my second cousin by chasing an address through Dalarna, but we both had carried the same photo through time and continents; never knowing the full story until that moment.

Two sides of the same family. One photograph. And finally, the missing pieces coming together.



The following day, when I stood in front of Leksands Kyrka, the church my grandmother once called "My Church," it felt like I wasn't just visiting, I was coming home.

2nd cousin Gunnar Stens & Gunilla and Leksands Kyrka, in 2023. Photo cred. (all) Patti Mellard.



CALGARY CONVENTION CONVERSATIONS: *EVENT ENJOYED!*

"This was my first convention of any size for Rotary. First time to find out about Fellowships! Lovely to meet Bud and Luanne. Great fun in the breakout session! I have to do my homework on that. I have at least two emails to follow up with. One day at a time. Tonight, I'm organizing my thoughts for our (post-convention) presentation at our meeting on Wednesday. Four members of the Rotary Club of Parksville attended the convention. -Cheers!" - Alexandra Diane Springfield/NanOOSE Bay, British Columbia CANADA

"The FORG booth at the Calgary convention was such a fantastic experience. Meeting Rotarians from all over the globe and hearing their stories about family history is something that must be experienced to understand the impact it has on one. I heard stories that were funny, stories that were poignant, stories that were historically interesting, and sometimes all three. What became clear is that the number of Rotarians interested in their family history is staggering. The more folks we can get to join and actively participate in our fellowship, the more we will be able to help connect fellow Rotarians and others to their own family history.
- Bill Harvey/ Omaha, Nebraska USA

"Being on the Genealogists' booth was truly amazing! The stories motivating people to join FORG were inspirational. Before and after the RI Convention my husband and I met up again with his cousins in Toronto and Calgary; I was able to give a new relative a copy of my research since 1999 of four generations of the recent Canadian/English family - in return it was pure, unexpected joy to be given access to Ancestry by the same relative who had gone so much further back! - Esther McCafferty /London UK

"I was pleasantly surprised at how much fun, and how interesting, the Fellowship genealogy exercise was. I admit that I was reluctant to participate because I felt shy, but I am so glad that I did. Thank you for the opportunity to meet, in a curious way, so many new Rotarians.

I had the pleasure of assisting my sister-in-law, Lyn Kenney, in the R. History Fellowship booth, as she introduced her new book Pioneers: The History of Women and Rotary since 1911. The forward is written by Jennifer Jones. I smiled a lot listening to the stories Lyn shared with booth visitors. Genealogy and history go hand in hand, don't they? For anyone interested in Lyn's book, her email address is lynkenney4@gmail.com."
- Andrea Barkett/Vero Beach, Florida USA

"While arranging for our House of Friendship booth in March, I was invited to speak at the convention. Turns out, two General Sessions on the Sunday of the convention seated 5,000 each and they were my audience! I've never done anything like this. I spoke about Rotary, Fellowships, and, of course, FORG. I found confidence, thanks to those surrounding me....and prayers. RI President Stephanie introduced me with her wonderful family history discoveries. I was honored and grateful for being part of the Calgary convention."

- Luanne Newman/Seabrook, Texas, USA

WHAT IS THE RUDOLPH CONTINUOUS INDEXER?



(Left and above: Actual photos of the Rudolph Continuous Indexer from the Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois USA)

By Matthew Rutherford

Newberry Library, Chicago, IL USA www.newberry.org

One of my favorite pieces of history at the Newberry Library is an object that we have in our third-floor reading room: the Rudolph Continuous Indexer.

From 1894-1911, Alexander J. Rudolph was assistant librarian at the Newberry. In this era, libraries still used book catalogs, namely lists of books in the collection written in a bound index book. This system had worked well for centuries, but as libraries grew, book catalogs were proving less useful. Strict alphabetization, for instance, wasn't possible without re-writing the entire index!

So, Rudolph created a better system: the continuous indexer. The Indexer consists of a glass box chest high containing a continuous chain and frames into which cards could be inserted. A crank on the outside allowed rotation of the frames. Each card represented a book in the collection, and because the cards were removable, they could be re-ordered any time the library got a new book.

Rudolph proudly displayed the Indexer at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, but waiting in the wings was a competitor, an alternate idea also based on the removable card concept: Melvil Dewey and his card catalog. Those of us of a certain age recall using card catalogs in our youths, so we know whose invention ultimately prevailed!

Dewey's card catalog offered several advantages over the Indexer, by allowing for multiple simultaneous users and an unlimited number of cards.

Alas, losing this battle to Dewey didn't sit well with poor Rudolph, and he eventually committed suicide in 1917. The Newberry has perhaps the only remaining example of the Indexer. I like to give it a crank now and then in memory of Rudolph and in tribute to the dedication he and his peers brought to the work of making library materials available to everyone!

ROTARIAN BEGAT ROTARIAN, ETC.

Rotary District 5890 - Legacy Spotlight

District 5890 Rotarian, **Bill Griffin**, grew up the son of a Rotarian. His father, Randy Griffin, joined the Brazosport Rotary Club in 1961 and was elected President in 1966 - 1967. Bill was invited to join the Katy Rotary Club in 1979, moved to the Westheimer Rotary Club in 1983 and later became a charter member of the Sugar Land Rotary Club in 1986. You can imagine Bill's excitement when his own son, **Josh Griffin**, joined Sugar Land Rotary in 2018 and became a third generation Rotarian!

Here is where the story gets exciting. As you know, Paul Harris founded Rotary in 1905. In 1921, the Bryan Rotary Club was founded and became Rotary Club #2021. Bill's wife's grandfather, Dr. Carl Sandstedt, moved to Bryan, Texas in the 1920's and taught Civil Engineering at Texas A&M for over 50 years until his death in 1979. In 1929, he was one of three Engineers who oversaw the construction of Kyle Field and his name is still on a plaque in the stadium (see attached picture).

Last month, we learned that he was also a member of The Bryan Rotary Club when Kyle Field was built. So, in essence, a Rotarian oversaw the construction of Kyle Field!

This also means that Josh Griffin is a Fourth Generation Rotarian, perhaps one of only a few in the world.

- Carol Sandstedt (1920's - ?) – Bryan Rotary Club
- Randy Griffin (1961-1996) – Brazosport Rotary Club
- Bill Griffin (1979 – present) – Sugar Land Rotary Club
- Josh Griffin (2018 – present) – Sugar Land Rotary Club

Reprinted courtesy of District 5890 July 2025 Newsletter. While this Texas Rotarian is not (yet) a member of our fellowship, we wanted to celebrate this story.



RELATIVEFINDER.ORG – A WAY TO CONNECT WITH FAMOUS ANCESTORS

By John Knobloch

I've always had an interest in genealogy, perhaps in part due to my maternal grandfather's research during the 1960s during which he spent many hours at the Newberry Library in Chicago looking into his New England roots. Since first going onto the internet almost 30 years ago, from time to time I would browse online, looking at various websites in what spare time I had between work, family commitments, Rotary committee projects, etc. However, it wasn't until less than two years ago when I began to realize just how much of my family history was so readily available through the internet. That story, which at least I find interesting, is one for another day. However, today I would like to share a site which has led me to some interesting historical facts.



Familysearch.org has been my primary source of information on my family history. I have been fortunate to have found extensive lines of ancestors who came before both of my grandfathers. Please understand that I am not bragging but, with their "Famous Relatives" feature, I have found relationships with presidents, other historical figures, entertainers and more.

The logo for Relative Finder, featuring the words "Relative Finder" in a white, elegant script font on a green rectangular background.

I recently discovered relativefinder.org, which appears to be somehow affiliated with familysearch.org. This is a free service which uses the same ancestor ID system (XXXX-XXX) as FamilySearch. The site allows you to easily find a listing of relatives among various categories of

noteworthy individuals, from presidents to authors, European royalty to astronauts, sports figures to signers of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

But if you have more than one famous relative, have you ever wondered if any of them are related to each other? The "Connect" feature on RelativeFinder can help with this question. I have found some really interesting relationships among historical figures who almost certainly had no idea of any blood relationship with each other.

Remember the hit musical "Hamilton," which centered on the rivalry between Alexander Hamilton (my seventh cousin, three times removed) and Aaron Burr (a ninth cousin, three times removed)? Using RelativeFinder, I discovered that they were twelfth cousins, three times removed, descended from William Douglas (1315-1384) and Margaret Stewart (1355-1417), who also happen to be my eighteenth great grandparents. Lacking modern digital resources, I suspect that Hamilton and Burr never had as much as an inkling that they shared common ancestors. I wonder if they had known of their relationship, albeit distant, might their dealings with each other have been different and perhaps that it might not have ended in such a tragic manner. **(CONTINUED ON PG 9)**

RELATIVEFINDER.ORG (CONTINUED)

In more recent times, we had the election of 1960. John F. Kennedy (my thirteenth cousin, once removed) defeated Richard M. Nixon (ninth cousin, once removed).

RelativeFinder notes that they were eighth cousins, two times removed, descended from Lord Alexander Logan (1590-1663) (my third cousin, eleven times removed) and Lady Janet Martin Marsedeyne (1599-1654) of Scotland. Again, I suspect that neither Kennedy nor Nixon had any knowledge of a blood relationship aside from being members of the human race and that had they known of it, their distant relationship would likely have made no difference in their rivalry or in the election results.

So when you have a chance, I recommend trying out Relative Finder.org, but I warn you, like many things related to genealogy, you might find yourself spending way too much time on it!

- John Knobloch /Naperville, Illinois USA



Lake Louise, Alberta, CANADA. Photo cred: L. Newman 2025

FAMILY RECIPE SHARING

Today's recipe is from:

**Diane Springford, Nanoose Bay, British Columbia Canada,
Rotary Club of Parksville**

TOPSY-TURVY BLACKBERRY CAKE (A FAVOURITE SINCE 1981)

2 cups flour

1 ½ cups sugar

4 tsp baking powder

1 tsp salt

1/3 cup powdered milk

1/2 cup oil

water (a little less than a cup)

2 eggs

1 tbsp vanilla

2 cups blackberries (fresh or frozen)

¾ cup sugar

¾ cup hot water

Sift together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Mix in powdered milk, add oil and enough water to make thick batter. Add eggs and vanilla. Beat at medium speed until well blended. Spread into greased 9" X 13" pan. Cover with blackberries, sprinkle with sugar. Pour hot water on top.

Bake at 375° for 35-40 minutes. When done, berries should be on the bottom.

When using frozen berries, use less **hot** water.

Instead of the powdered milk and water, I use ¾ cup of 1% milk. Other than that I follow the recipe. I usually mix it by hand. -Diane



Let us know

*if you have a
family recipe
that you will
share with your
FORG Friends.*