



British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa Newsletter

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Another Successful BIFHSGO Conference! Jean Kitchen

The Annual Fall Conference, held 19-21 September, attracted a robust attendance of 268 registrants this year. It focussed on England; as well as including sessions referring specifically to Devon, Essex, Liverpool and Yorkshire. The event included a lecture streamed in directly from the U.K., a BIFHSGO first.

The Friday pre-conference seminars, which included sessions on DNA, U.K. research techniques and LAC resources, were well attended as always. The Marketplace and the Research Room saw steady attendance throughout the weekend.

Historian Jennine Hurl-Eamon delivered the annual Whiteside memorial lecture, entitled "The Girl I Left Behind—The Eighteenth-Century British soldier in Love." There were three streams of concurrent sessions this year, covering such varied topics as analyzing DNA results, finding elusive records, Home Children, immigration periods, Irish emigration, running surname or lost cousin projects, and using Facebook for genealogy.

Numerous volunteers assisted with all aspects of the logistical support, and their help was gratefully acknowledged by the Board and the Conference Planning Committee. Due to the months-long hard work by the planning committee and the on-site volunteer participation, BIFHSGO achieved another successful conference!

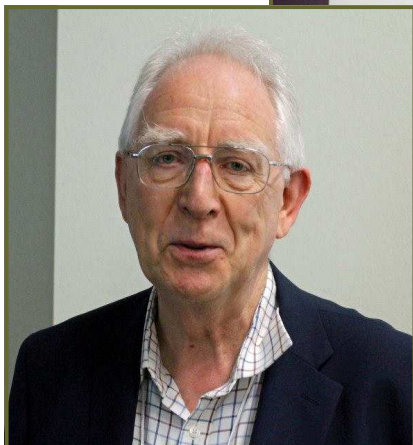
Note: Handouts for the workshops that were offered at Conference are available in the members only section of our website:

<http://www.bifhsgo.ca/members.php>

Your BIFSGHO
Conference
Committee



Conference Photo Album



Monthly Meeting Saturday October 11, 2014

Before BIFHSGO 9:00 am to 9:30 am

The Importance of the Chaplain to the Catholic Soldiery, a presentation by Dr. Niall Keogh.

Dr. Niall Keogh will give an overview of the Chaplains of all the Irish battalions and concentrate on some of the Jesuit ones. For many of the Catholic soldiers in the British Empire in the Great War, the most pivotal officer in their lives was the Chaplain.

About the speaker: Dr Niall Keogh is a graduate of University College Cork. Previously he has worked in the National Library of Ireland, in 2004-7 he taught in Moscow and St Petersburg State Universities, in 2007-10 he taught in Beijing Foreign Studies University, in 2010-12 he taught at NUI Maynooth and arrived in Ottawa in 2013. His research interests include Irish diplomatic history, Irish military history, international relations and the history of the Irish diaspora.

Discovery Tables 9:30 am to 10:00 am

James Lynn will host a table for Irish research and Ann Burns will play Sean O'Duill's presentation about Irish Marriage or Death Customs in the 19th century.

Monthly Meeting 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Ann Burns will talk about the ***Three Terrible Choices*** open to tenants on the Fitzwilliam Estate, during the Great Famine in Ireland: stay on your rented land and hope not to be evicted, go to the workhouse, or accept the landlord's offer of assisted emigration to Canada. Not all Irish tenant farmers had these options. This is the story of the Coollattin Estate, which occupied 90,000 acres, 20 percent of County Wicklow. The Fitzwilliams were arguably the best of a bad lot and representative of only a few of the landlords across Ireland at that time. They were more benevolent than many. Almost all Irish families suffered untold losses from the famine even when they survived. Separation from family was often permanent. This presentation will include a review of the conditions faced either by staying or by leaving and a short film re-enacting the scenes in Ireland in the late 1840s when families chose whether to stay or to leave in search of a better life in Canada.

About the Speaker: Ann Burns has been actively working on her family history since retiring about 10 years ago. The inclination had been there for several years before that. The final impetus to move genealogy research up the 'to do' list was finding the names of her three times great grandparents on the death certificate of their son Edward. With a stroke of luck following a query on a Rootsweb mailing list, she located the Townland where they lived and some records of the family in Coolross. Since then Ann has been to Ireland 6 times, mostly spent visiting with newly-discovered Byrne relatives and listening to a lot of family stories. The most moving story was found last year at the *Canada Come Home Gathering* at Coollattin. That is the story she is going to share during this talk.

**OUR LIBRARY PICKS FOR THE MONTH
OCTOBER
ASSISTED IMMIGRATION TO ESCAPE THE GREAT FAMINE OF IRELAND
READING SUGGESTIONS FROM THE BRIAN O'REGAN MEMORIAL LIBRARY**

1847 Famine Ship Diary : the Journey of an Irish Coffin Ship by Robert Whyte. c1994, CALL#304.841 WHY

Across the Waters : Ontario Immigrants' Experiences 1820-1850 by Frances Hoffman.c1999. CALL#304.8713 HOF.

Alphabetical Index of Assisted Emigrants from Kent to Sydney 1844-1859 by Keith Williams. c1993. CALL# BIFHSGO Fiche 001062.

Assisting Emigration to Upper Canada : the Pitworth Project 1832-1837 by Wendy Cameron. 2000. CALL#325.3420713 CAM.

Destination Canada : a Genealogical Guide to Immigration Records by Dave Obee c2010. CALL#929.371 OBE.

Emigrants and Expats : a Guide to Sources on United Kingdom Emigration and Residents Overseas by Roger Kershaw. c2000. CALL#325.241 KER.

Narrative of a Voyage to Quebec and Journey from Thence to New Lanark in Upper Canada by John McDonald. [Scottish emigration] c1978. CALL#325.3410971 MCD.

Passage to the New World : Packet Ship and Irish Famine Emigrants, 1845-1851 by Davis Hollett. 1995. CALL#971.04 HOL.

The Great Migration : the Atlantic Crossing by Sailing Ship since 1700 by Edwin C. Guillet. 1963. CALL#304.871.GUI.

The Brian O'Regan Library is located in the 3rd Floor Reference Room,
City of Ottawa Archives, 100 Tallwood Drive, Ottawa.

Hours Tuesday to Friday 9 am to 4 pm, Saturdays 10 am to 5 pm.

BIFHSGO volunteers are on hand to assist your research.

www.bifhsgo.ca for all BIFHSGO Library holdings

Twenty years of **Anglo-Celtic Connections**, from 1995 – 2014, are available to read on our website in the Publications section at: <http://www.bifhsgo.ca/clist.php?nm=108> All of the issues, with exception of the past year, can be viewed by members and non-members. Issues for the past 12 months are available in the **Members Only** section. You can browse the issues by reading the titles of the articles. It is also easy to search the titles by keyword. Simply hold CTRL on your keyboard and press F.

Kirsty Gray in Ottawa Special Event

Sunday, November 2
2:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Woodroffe United Church Banquet Hall
207 Woodroffe Ave



UK Rockstar Genealogist Kirsty Gray will deliver two lectures:

- **Searching for Names: Challenges, Pitfalls and the Downright Ridiculous**
- **Solving Problems Through Family Reconstruction.**

About the Speaker: Kirsty Gray's first involvement in family history came at the tender age of seven years with her maternal grandfather's tree in hand. Obsessed with her great-grandmother's maiden name of Sillifant, Kirsty began a one-name study on the name in 1999, publishing tri-annual journals on the surname for more than ten years.

Kirsty took up genealogy professionally while training to be a teacher in 2002. Running Family Wise Limited, Kirsty 'finds people' and has conducted research for private individuals, solicitors, academics and companies worldwide.

As an author, Kirsty has written for many international publications on various topics for beginners to more advanced levels. She has written two books on genealogy, *Tracing Your West Country Ancestors* (2013) *Tracing Your Industrial Ancestors* (due 2015).

Don't miss this special event!
Co-sponsored by BIFHSGO and Ottawa Branch of OGS
\$10 per person, payable at the door.
Light refreshments are included

"Learning never exhausts the mind"

~Leonardo DaVinci

An Historic Event

History changes all of us. I think of my grandmother, who at 92, had gone from horse and cart to watching man land on the moon. From washing clothes in a “steamie” to owning her own washer and dryer (which by the way was only for show as she never believed in using the dryer, preferring to hang everything out on the “line”) There are defining moments in everyone’s life. Most of us can recall exactly where we were and what we were doing when the news came to us that JFK had been assassinated, when Diana Spencer was fatally injured in a tunnel in France, when the first missiles struck in Afghanistan.

This past month saw two historic votes taking place in Scotland. The first, and less advertised, was to allow women to golf at the famed Royal and Ancient Golf Course. History has been made. Women are now allowed. The second vote, and one with far greater implications was the referendum on Scottish Independence. Politics aside, this was an amazing event to witness. It really was a privilege (not afforded to many countries) to watch democracy in action. The entire democratic world was in awe at watching the process unfold as the people of Scotland exercised their democratic right and voted for the future of their country.

Think about the importance of being a witness to history in the making. All of the emotions of this referendum vote were the same that our ancestors also felt at various times in history—generally when battles were taking place. Think about their raw fear. Fear of change, of losing their way of life, of possibly losing their husbands, sons, brothers, fathers. Just like the fear of the NO camp in this referendum. Think about the men's excitement for change and a new way of life that propelled them forward knowing they were fighting for what they believed in so passionately. Just like the excitement of the YES camp in this referendum.

The Scots are a hail and hearty lot. They will all adjust to the outcome. As my cousin said, "...in the end, we are all friends. Yes and No alike. Now we can put politics aside and get back to moaning about the fitba games" However, as British Isles descendants, we need to really drink in the historic importance of this referendum. And, as with all of the other life altering historic world events we have lived through, it is important that we document our thoughts, feelings, fears, excitement, not on social media where it becomes lost in the fervour, but in our journals, in letters, in diaries so that OUR descendants may know how this historic moment affected us on a personal level.

Just when I think I have learned the way of life, life changes.

~Hugh Prather

News from the Federation of Family History Societies

Recently, BIFHSGO received an e-mail from the FFHS regarding changes to accreditation of professional genealogists and researchers. Here is the e-mail we received:

Professional Genealogists put to the Test

The Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (AGRA), the body representing professional genealogists in England and Wales, has recently announced radical changes to both its Membership and Associateship criteria.

All applicants wishing to join the association will now have to attend an interview and in most cases will also be asked to undergo practical tests. The new rules also attach greater importance to formal qualifications and ongoing learning.

Under the new procedure, prospective Members and Associates will have a "face to face" discussion with AGRA's Board of Assessors to determine their genealogical knowledge and business approach. Membership candidates may be set a research assignment, while Associates will be asked to demonstrate basic genealogical skills.

The Board has been deliberating for some time how the application process could be improved to keep pace with the changing nature of the field. Rising interest in family history has resulted in many more people entering the profession, drawn from a wider range of backgrounds. Potential Members will still be required to submit a portfolio of completed client work, as before, but the Board has come to the conclusion that this alone is no longer a sufficient basis on which to select Members.

Said Geoff Swinfield (member of the Board of Assessors): "AGRA plays a key role in setting standards within the profession. If AGRA is to be relevant in the future it must give its Members the opportunity to demonstrate that they meet the exacting standards which fit them to offer their services to the fee-paying public."

The new criteria also take into account the growing availability and importance of formal qualifications within the genealogy profession. The Board feels that anyone setting out to become a professional genealogist with genuine commitment should already have, or be actively studying towards, a qualification in genealogy; this has therefore been made part of the minimum requirement for acceptance into the Associate scheme. Membership candidates who hold certain higher level qualifications, currently from IHGS (the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies) and Strathclyde University, will have the added advantage of being exempt from some of the entrance criteria.

In recognition of the importance of ongoing learning within this fast-changing profession, all candidates will be expected to provide evidence that they are engaging in continuing professional development.

These changes will ensure that AGRA Membership remains a hallmark of quality for professional genealogists practising in England & Wales, and that the Associate scheme attracts committed and able candidates with the potential to progress to Membership.

The new criteria take effect from 1st September 2014. Documents describing the new criteria in detail can be found by following the "membership application" link on the Join AGRA page of the website:

www.agra.org.uk/

New Genealogy Records Online

ScotlandsPeople has released the 1875 Valuation Rolls for Scotland:

<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>

Relatives of adopted adults can now trace their family history:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/relatives-of-adopted-adults-now-able-to-trace-family-tree>

England and Wales National School Registers are available on FindMyPast:

http://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-Records/national-school-admission-registers-and-log-books-1870-1914?_ga=1.232392607.1809017480.1411908437

Birmingham Rate Books are available on Ancestry:

<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?htx=List&dbid=4954>

Ancestry adds Immigration and Settlement Correspondence from:

<http://search.ancestry.ca/search/db.aspx?dbid=3709>

FindMyPast releases Fermanagh Baptisms, Marriages, Burials:

<http://www.findmypast.ie>

New Web Portals for Genealogy Research

The Irish Archives Resource links 34 archives: <http://www.iar.ie/>

Index to Scottish transcriptions of some some interesting resources such as paternity cases and asylums are available on the new Scottish Indexes:

<http://www.scottishindexes.com/>

Changes to Access:

RootsIreland has moved from a pay as you go credit system to a subscription system. Subscriptions are for one, six or twelve month periods.

