



## Toronto Family History Centre Bulletin 2015-39

October 15, 2015

<http://torontofhc.blogspot.ca/>

Editor:  
Helen Billing



### FINAL EDITION THE TORONTO FAMILY HISTORY CENTRE BULLETIN

#### ANNOUNCEMENT by Don and Roberta Harris, Directors

With this final edition of our weekly Bulletin, we want to express our profound appreciation to Helen Billing, the editor and publisher of the Bulletin.



At the One World-One Family Genealogical Conference held in Brampton in August and attended by over 300 family history researchers, Helen Billing was presented with the Award of Distinction 2015 for her great efforts to support the progress of family history locally and in other countries. Her contributions have been many. This beautiful engraved plaque was accompanied by the citation which follows our remarks.

The Bulletin was initiated in 2005 by Peter Goddard, an esteemed volunteer at the Toronto Family History Centre; but his ill health made it necessary for someone else to continue, and Helen was that volunteer. She has continued with it on a weekly basis, giving updates on research and, with help from readers and our other knowledgeable volunteers, answering questions or making suggestions for further research.

After eight years of weekly editing, it is time for her to enjoy new challenges and to have more time to travel. Helen and her husband, Alan, are also looking forward to hiking the more-challenging second half of the 900-kilometre Bruce Trail that they have not yet completed.

We look forward to having Helen, often accompanied by Alan, back at the Family History Centre when she will once again be available on Wednesdays to help patrons.

Warmest wishes to Helen from the Directors and Staff Volunteers at the Toronto Family History Centre.

#### ***Citation for Helen Billing at the One World-One Family Conference August 22nd 2015***

*We are pleased to announce Helen Billing as the recipient of this year's Conference award. She is a valiant volunteer at the Toronto Family History Centre located in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints at Don Mills and Eglinton Avenue East.*

*The award recognizes an outstanding staff volunteer of many years of service and a person of exceptional initiative and perseverance in accomplishing what needs to be done.*

*She designed and created a computer system that keeps track of all microfilms, fiche, books and CDs available at the Centre. With some assistance, she entered the more than 10,000 items. On one occasion the Family Search film department requested hundreds of microfilms to be returned but her extra computer system, together with another of the Centre's computer databases, provided the proof that these microfilms should remain permanently at the Toronto Family History Centre.*

*Helen's production of a large number of binders listing each of the resources using Chapman codes, greatly assists patrons in accessing (within minutes) the holdings of the Centre, and determining whether any of the more than three thousand permanent microfilms would meet their needs. She updates the binders frequently and they are easy for staff and patrons to use.*

*Helen designed and created a blog for the Centre which allows the public anywhere to know what resources the Centre has to offer.*

*Helen is editor and producer of the weekly Toronto Family History Centre "Bulletin". This outstanding newsletter is emailed to over 1100 grateful recipients in five countries who appreciate its many helpful features. The Bulletin keeps recipients up to date*

*with what's new and happening locally and around the world in the recording and availability of major website resources. It has a section where researchers ask questions, and suggestions for them are posted; another section has a variety of tidbits of information and detailed articles on research. All past copies of the Bulletin are available on the blog.*

*For 12 years Helen has volunteered in the family history centre for 6½ hours a week helping patrons with their research. In addition, for the last eight years she has spent many more hours each week researching, teaching and sending out the newest information in the Bulletin. This commitment has been given every week.*

*All of the previously-mentioned contributions plus many others show an amazing level of family history knowledge, teaching expertise and genuine love of helping people discover their roots. These are a core part of Helen's personality.*

*It is with warmest affection and appreciation that we are inspired to recognize Helen Billing as the most deserving to receive this award.*

## **In This Bulletin**

- **Announcements** – OGS Toronto Call for Speakers for Quebec Workshop
- **What's New** – FamilySearch (Dorset Parish Registers); Ancestry (US Dutch Christian Reformed Church records, Ottawa Journal BMD Notices); FindMyPast (Britain Electoral Registers, Britain Absent Voters Lists 1918-1921, Staffordshire Marriage Allegations & Bonds, British Newspaper Update); DeceasedOnline (Lewisham London Borough Council complete, 1 million records); Library & Archives Canada (Soldiers of WWI database), 1939 Register (coming soon)
- **Were You Aware...** – DNA Testing - Don't Wait Too Long, Helen's Last Words

## **Announcements**

### **OGS Toronto Call for Speakers – Quebec Workshop**

Toronto Branch is planning a one-day workshop on 16 April 2016 on Quebec family history. Gary Schroder, long-time President of the Quebec Family History Society, has agreed to be the keynote speaker. They are now seeking other speakers with Quebec expertise who would like to be part of the workshop team. The detailed call for presentations is [here](#). The deadline to submit a proposal for this workshop is Saturday 24 October 2015.

## **What's New**

**FamilySearch** has updated or added to the following collections:

- Dorset Parish Registers 1538-1936 – New (1.3 million indexed records with images)
- Isle of Man Parish Registers 1598-2009 – Updated (447,486 records)
- Vermont St Albans Canadian Border Crossings 1895-1954 – Updated (6.8 million records)
- New Zealand Probate Records 1843-1998 – Updated index (329,000 indexed records, 4.5 million images)

**Ancestry's** updates or additions include:

- The Ottawa Journal 1885-1980 BMD Notices – Updated – browse only (nearly one million records)
- Various US Passenger & Crew Lists – Updated
- England & Wales Non-Conformist & Non-Parochial Registers 1567-1970 – Updated (2.5 million records)
- US Dutch Christian Reformed Membership & Vital Records – New (250,000 records)
- England Suffragettes Arrested 1906-1914 – New (1,339 records)
- Ireland Civil Registration Marriages and Deaths Indexes – Updated (from FamilySearch)

**FindMyPast** has added the following datasets

- Britain Electoral Registers 1832-1932 – New (220 million names of voters on 5.4 million images). One can search by name of the voter, but you will need to be specific where you are looking. The results are great for unusual names but patience will be needed for those with more common names.
- Britain, Absent Voters Lists 1918-1921 – New (100,000 names on 20,000 pages)
- North West Kent Baptisms & Burials – Updated (22,000 new records added)
- Auckland, Co. Durham Burials – Update to National Burial Index (18,000 records)

- Staffordshire, Dioceses of Lichfield & Coventry Marriage Allegations & Bonds 1636-1893 – New (327,000 records)
- British Newspapers – Update (3.5 million new articles and 22 new newspaper titles)

See [FindMyPast Record Sets](#) for the complete description of the new records.

**DeceasedOnline** has uploaded nearly a million records for the five locations managed by Lewisham Council in South London, bringing the total number of records for London up to 8 million. Hither Green is the latest addition. The five locations are: Brockley Cemetery (1858-1999), Ladywell Cemetery (1858-1999), Grove Park Cemetery (1935-1999), Hither Green Cemetery (1873-1999), and Hither Green or Lewisham Crematorium (1956-1995). **More records for a significant city in the East Midlands will be added to Deceased Online very soon.**

**Library and Archives Canada** [Soldiers of the First World War](#) database now has 196,469 of 640,000 files available free online. The last box processed starts with the name DUNN.

**1939 Register** is coming to FindMyPast. Those of you with ancestors in England and Wales should keep a close lookout for the release, in the very near future, of the 1939 Register which lists every person with their age and other information. The 1939 Register was used to create identity cards, ration cards and, after the war, National health cards. Sign up [here](#) for updates about the release of the 1939 Register.

### Were You Aware...

#### DNA Testing - Don't Wait Too Long by Linda Reid

As members of the older generation die, some of our ancestral DNA is lost forever. We only inherit half of each parent's autosomal DNA so unless our siblings inherited some of the other half, we may never identify that ancestral DNA. I have been testing as many people of my parents' generation as possible.

Family Tree DNA asks test subjects to do a scraping of the cells inside of each cheek on two separate scrapers. Their advice on how to do it is:

To provide the highest quality sample possible it is recommended that you swab first thing in the morning when you wake up before you brush your teeth, eat or drink anything, or put in any dentures or denture-related products if you happen to wear dentures.

Please note that it is also advised that you swab with one swab on one side of the cheek vigorously for at least 30 seconds and repeat on the other cheek with the second swab. Once you have completed each swab please eject them into the vials provided using your thumb to apply pressure to the stick-end of the swab, and then seal the lid on the vial tightly.

Normally the DNA on one of the swabs is sufficient for one test and they will keep the remaining sample on file for twenty five years. I have done autosomal tests on some relatives and followed up a couple of years later with a Y-chromosome test on some of the men.

My father died before the autosomal DNA test became available and when I requested an autosomal test on the sample from his Y-chromosome test Family Tree DNA said that there was insufficient DNA available. I watched carefully as my mother swabbed for her autosomal test and she remarked "your father didn't rub his cheek nearly this long".

This summer I was reviewing my research on an Irish line and pondering how I could learn more about 3xgreat-grandmother "Catherine", maiden name unknown. Family Tree DNA announced a short sale on the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) test and I realized that I had a sample of her mtDNA on file at Family Tree DNA. My mother's cousin took an autosomal test in 2012. He is descended from Catherine in a direct line of daughter, daughter, daughter and then him, so that he would have the same mtDNA. We all inherit our mtDNA from our mothers but only females pass it on. Because this cousin was in his 90s I decided that I should do the test on his sample now in case there was a problem with it. I ordered the test on August 28<sup>th</sup>. My mother's cousin died on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. On October 14<sup>th</sup> Family Tree DNA emailed me: "We need additional sample to continue testing".

**If only I had done this earlier.**

#### Helen's Last Words

As this is the last Bulletin, I am going to leave you with a to-do list and it behooves you to at least accomplish a few.

## Genetic Genealogy

- Do a DNA test. DNA tests match your DNA with others who have already tested with that company; the higher the matching number of segments or areas of the chromosomes, the closer the match. They are about \$100 each for an autosomal DNA test. I would suggest a FamilyFinder test at [FamilyTreeDNA](#) (\$100USD) or an AncestryDNA test (\$149 CDN). While you may not understand much about the results, these results will be there for future generations, and you can always get help from other genealogists.
- Test as many relatives as you can – an older generation would be great, cousins, second cousins, etc.
- If you do the AncestryDNA test, upload your results to FamilyTreeDNA for \$39 (USD); this will really increase your chances of finding matching cousins.
- Upload all DNA tests to [GEDmatch](#) for more matches.

## Keep Up-To-Date with the Latest Developments

- Read blogs; you can subscribe by email. My general favourites are John D. Reid's [Canadian Anglo-Celtic Connections](#), Dick Eastman's [EGON blog](#), [LostCousin's](#) Newsletter, Elizabeth LaPointe's [Canadian Genealogy](#), and Chris Paton's [British GENES](#).
- Sign up to get newsletters from commercial websites alerting you to new databases. These could include: FindMyPast, DeceasedOnline, Irish Family History Foundation, ScotlandsPeople, & The National Archives.gov.uk.

## For Help with Research Questions

- Always look at the [FamilySearch Wiki](#). It has a remarkable amount of information for a huge number of topics. It is updated daily; so check back often.
- For genetic genealogy, look in the [ISOGG \(International Society of Genetic Genealogists\) Wiki](#).
- Visit your local Family History Centre.
- Look for YouTube videos and webinars hosted by both for-profit and non-profit organizations, like [Legacy Family Tree Webinars](#).

## Get Involved – Don't Just Sit at Your Computer

- Volunteer. You can even volunteer to work from your computer; for example, [FamilySearch](#) is always looking for indexing volunteers and you get to choose a project you are interested in.
- Join a local family history society.
- Attend conferences and workshops. This is your professional development. These will encourage you when you feel you are not getting anywhere.
- Discuss your research with other genealogists. Go to your local family history centre and ASK QUESTIONS.

## Get Organized and Backup Your Computer Files

- Organize your files whether they be paper or on your computer. Unorganized files will probably be thrown out when you are no longer looking after them. Original documents should not be stored in your basement.
- Organize your photographs – Have you a box of old photographs with no identifying names? Winter is approaching; make that box your winter project. [My winter project is the remaining 60 photo albums of my parents – 30 are already done.] Perhaps you have never organized your own photographs; do it this winter.
- Digitize your photos and your paper files. Do the important photos first – weddings, babies, groups, etc. If you cannot scan them there are many companies that will do that for you. Remember to give them helpful file names when they are returned eg. 1908 Marriage Frederick Billing and Beatrice Clark.jpg.
- Backup all your computer files and do this every month. The blogs of both John Reid and Dick Eastman will remind you on the first of every month.
- Store your backed-up files off-site. Give your backup hard drive to a neighbour or trusted relative. Or try cloud backup – I am using BackBlaze, a birthday gift from my son. Fire and flood can happen anytime. If you need a potent example of this, read the last blog of [Hoosier Daddy?](#) published on May 10<sup>th</sup>; Michael had not planned for a water feature in his basement where he has his office and personal library of several thousand books.

## Search Further Afield than Your Computer

- Place your relatives in their time and place. Search newspapers for items about ancestors. Find out what the area looked like 100 years ago. Look for digitized old postcards. Old maps can be found for many places.

- Look further afield than online records for your family. **NOT EVERYTHING IS ONLINE!!!** FamilySearch has millions of films of records that are not digitized and probably not likely to be in our lifetimes. What films are there for your areas of interest? I repeat: **NOT EVERYTHING IS ONLINE!!!**
- Look for local archives. Most places have a local archive and archivists are often happy to help. Even if they cannot find your relative for you, they might give you clues as to where to look.
- Look in your library. The Toronto Reference Library and the North York Central Library, with its Canadiana Collection, have many genealogically related books and other materials. As well, knowledgeable librarians are very helpful. Toronto Public Library has an "[Ask a Librarian](#)" service that has been very useful to people I have talked to.
- Contact libraries in places your ancestors came from with specific questions. Remember the wealth of information the researcher in last week's Bulletin received from Solihull Library in Warwickshire.

### **Write or Record Your Family History**

- Names and dates are nice but they are just a starting place. Do you have stories from grandparents? Have you proved or disproved any fables?
- Write your own memories. Will your grandchildren or grand-nieces be able to imagine what life was like before computers or cell phones or even telephones? Will they be able to imagine that flying one way across the Atlantic cost 10% of a decent yearly salary in the 1950s? Can they imagine having to book a trans-Atlantic phone call for Christmas Day?
- Try recording the reminiscences of other relatives; many cell phones can be used as unobtrusive recording devices. There are lots of ideas on the internet for questions that prompt open-ended answers for family stories.
- Disseminate your information. Share your data, your photos or anything that might be of interest to others.

### **NEVER GIVE UP!**



The blog at <http://torontofhc.blogspot.ca/> will remain active with updates to the resources available at the Toronto Family History Centre. All past Bulletins are available there.

**Last of all, I wish to thank those of you who have corresponded with me over the years and those who have come into the Toronto Family History Centre. You have made my life immeasurably richer and I have learned so much from you.**

**So long,  
Helen**

Toronto Family History Centre Current Opening Hours:

**(Always phone us if you do not have a booking to ensure that we are open.)**

Tuesday 9:30 am to 2 pm (Linda)

Wednesday 9:30 am to 3:45 pm (Ann, Joe am, Leslie pm); 6:30pm to 9:30pm ()

Thursday 9:30am to noon (Don & Roberta); 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm (Don & Roberta)

Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> of each month, 10am to 1pm (Grace & Charlene) For Chinese research

**For a copy of a searchable listing of all films, fiche, CDs and books held at the Toronto Family History Centre in pdf format, click [here](#).**

[FamilySearch - Search](#)

[FamilySearch - IGI](#)

[Hugh Wallis IGI Batch Numbers](#)

[FamilySearch Catalogue](#)

[FamilySearch Film Ordering](#)

[Steve Archer IGI Batch Numbers](#)

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Toronto Family History Centre

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

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