



NEWSLETTER

NO. 51, DECEMBER 1990
Genealogical Society of Victoria
Mid-Gippsland Group
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LIFESTYLES

Genealogists enjoy addiction

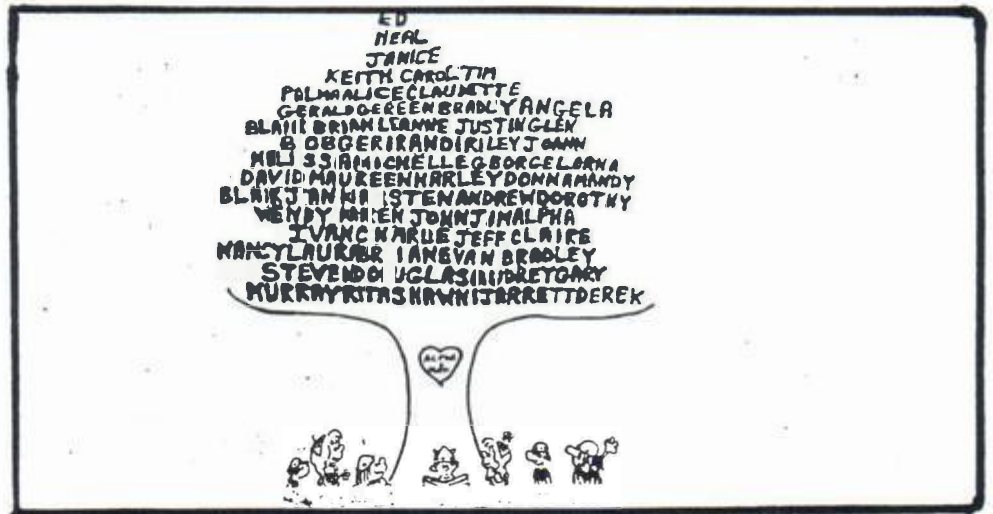
by Donna Spencer

Lloydminster Meridian

Genealogy is a bug that bites and doesn't let go, says family tree fanatic Edith Cunningham. "It's fun. I'll spend days on it," she says with an enthusiastic grin. Cunningham will often spread her pedigree sheets - charts of her family tree - out on the table in the morning. Before she knows it it's 4:30 in the afternoon. She's been tracing her family's roots for the last 15 years and has gotten back as 1066. One of her ancestors was chief bowstringer for William the Conqueror. "When you study William the Conqueror in history in school, it can be boring," explains Janet Newman, another stricken with family tree fever. "But learning it through genealogy, it has a whole different meaning." Newman fingers a copy of a letter her Irish great-grandfather sent to her great-grandmother before their marriage. She had been sent to Canada because both sets of parents disapproved of their courtship. The letter spoke of his undying love for her. The couple eventually reunited and married but Newman's great-grandfather was disowned by his father. "When you find things like letters and diaries it makes your ancestors real people, not just a name and a date," says Cunningham who has in her possession a book of poems by a distant uncle. The challenge to tracing a family tree, explains Cunningham, is to find the paper trail and follow it. Death, birth and marriage certificates, newspaper files, old photographs and immigration records provide the pieces to the puzzle of where and who she came from. When the paper trail ends, Cunningham and Newman find a new path to follow with help from the Lloydminster Genealogy Society, the Saskatchewan Genealogy Society and other like societies around the world. Cunningham and Newman will often make contact with an overseas genealogist who will provide them with enough names and dates to fill an entire branch of their family tree. "It's a very personal and individual hobby," says Newman of her addiction to genealogy. "You can go as fast or as slow as you want and you can spend as much money as you want on it." The two women have scouted local graveyards and municipality record books for their family roots. They're done a lot of digging by phone and by mail. But both know that if they need more family history, they will eventually have to go overseas, Cunningham to England and Newman to Ireland and Germany. Genealogy is becoming more popular as records are becoming more and more available, says Newman. "I'm hoping to get some records from Romania as the political situation there is changing." Genealogical societies are popular in New Zealand, Australia, England and the United States and they are also springing up in European countries as well, she adds. The 14-member Lloydminster Genealogical Society meets every fourth Monday of the month at the Lloydminster Public Library.

The Geneologists Disease:

- WARNING: Geneology pox (very contagious to adults)
- SYMPTOMS: Constantly needing names, dates and places. Patient has a blank expression and is sometimes deaf to spouse and children. No taste for work of any kind except looking through records, libraries and courthouses. Has compulsion to write letters, swears at the mailman when he fails to leave letters and frequents strange places such as cemeteries, ruins and remote desolate country areas. Makes secret midnight calls, hides phones bills from spouse and mumbles to self a lot. Has a far away look in eyes.
- CURE: NONE.
- TREATMENT: Medication is useless, but disease is not fatal. Patient will get progressively worse. Patient should attend geneology workshops and subscribe to geneology magazines.
- REMARKS: Usual nature of this disease is the sicker the (unfortunately, cannot be completed due to the failure of photocopying.



BURIALS AT THE WALHALLA CEMETERY

by Yolanda Reynolds

The burial register for Walhalla Cemetery began in 1880, but from early statistical information, it is estimated that there were approximately seventy burials which occurred before then and were not officially recorded in any cemetery records. During and after the decline of the Walhalla Township, from about 1912 onwards, there were periods of time when details of interments were neglected or completely omitted, more so as time went on. In most cases, these burials can be confirmed through a death certificate. To date, I have information on approximately 80 persons who died in Walhalla or district, but are not listed as burials in the Walhalla cemetery records, yet presumably, they were buried there. These burials can be confirmed by their death certificates, obituary notices etc. In an attempt to "complete" the Walhalla cemetery records, I am compiling a list of persons who were buried there, but not included in the cemetery records. I would be grateful for any information relating to any death or burial in Walhalla or the surrounding district, at any time.

Mrs Y. Reynolds, Secretary Walhalla Cemetery Trust,
50 Summerlea St, Trafalgar Vic 3824.

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belleck china.

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Compiled for the Mid-Gippsland Group of The Genealogical
Society of Victoria, by the Newsletter Committee.

Mrs. Karen Healy and Mrs. Laraine Ramselaar.