

Family History Newsletter

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The Family History Group meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm at the Maple Ridge Library.

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Uncovering My Maternal Ancestry

By Annette Fulford

For the majority my family history research I have used information collected by past generations to guide me. This previous research has helped me to uncover a wealth of information on most branches of the family tree, except that of my maternal grandfather about whom little was known – until recently that is.

My grandfather, Istvan BARNA, was reportedly born in Hungary in 1886, but there were no records generated by my family in Canada that correctly identified where he was from other than Hungary. His BC death registration listed his place of birth as Irmahaus, Hungary but I was not able to find it on a map of the country.

It was by researching his brother Mihaly's collateral line that I finally confirmed that the place they were from was Urmenyhaza, Hungary (also known as Urmenhausen in German). Urmenyhaza was the neighbouring village of Zichydorf where my maternal grandmother was born. It is now the town of Jermenovci, in Serbia.

I thought when I received copies of the Zichydorf church records for my grandmother's family that I would finally learn more about

my grandfather, but to no avail. The only mention of my grandfather in these records was a note on my grandmother's birth register saying that she married bachelor Istvan BARNA in 1910 at the neighbouring village of Urmenyhaza.

A year after confirming the relationship of my grandfather and his brother, I received an email from the Zichydorf Village Association of Regina announcing that they now had copies of the Urmenyhaza Church Records on DVD, which could be purchased for a very reasonable price.

I ordered copies of the records on April 15 and received them on May 5, 2008. The Urmenyhaza Church Records came as a 3 DVD set and cover the years 1820-2003. I held my breath as I searched the marriage DVD for my grandparent's marriage entry. Would I find it? The note on my grandmother's birth record indicated that they were married in 1910 so this is the year I started looking.

My grandparents, Istvan BARNA and Magdolna KAUFMANN, were married on April 7, 1910 at St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church in Urmenyhaza! The marriage register indicated that both of my grandfather's parents were deceased when he married. This verifies a family story that he was orphaned at an early age.

Later, I confirmed that his father died when he was only seven years old, but I have not able to find out when his mother died.

Istvan was born in the village on July 10, 1886 to Mihaly BARNA and Katalin KIS. It was exciting to finally learn the names of my great grandparents! The records indicate that Istvan had two brothers, Mihaly and Janos, and one sister, Julis. Janos died shortly after birth, Mihaly came to North America, and it is not known what happened to Julis at this time. Hopefully, with further research I will discover more about her.

Finally, after 16 years of researching my family history I am elated that I was able to uncover my grandfather's family history! I look forward to sharing this information with my own extended family.

Google Book Search

By Andrea Lister

I turned to Google Books to look for out of print books that mention my family that may have scanned into their library and have found it to an unexpectedly rich resource for genealogical research.

Searching for books with Google Book Search works the same as using Google to search the internet. I entered *Ann Wragg* into search box and found several books whose contents matched my search term. Google Book Search can be limited to only return results for which you can get a full view or a full search

which includes a snippet view or no view. I was rewarded with two results for which no longer had copyright restrictions so I was able to download the entire book as a PDF.

I was able to download the *Lower-Canada Reports 1858* and the *Statutes of the Province of Canada* which include the judgment in a court case regarding the estate of John Platt and an Act to authorize a deviation from the laws of Lower Canada regarding the will of Ann Wragg. John Platt and Ann Wragg were my fifth great-grandparents. The documents verified that, in 1858, their grandson George had no children and the married names for two of his sisters.

I recommend giving Google Book Search a try and seeing what you can uncover about your family in their library.

<http://books.google.com/>

Family History Events

Cloverdale Library

5642-176A Street, Surrey offers free orientations the 1st Saturday of every month 9:30 – 10:30 am.

Fall 2008

- **Take your First Steps on the Ancestral Trail** with Brenda Smith, Saturday, September 6, 2008. 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. Fee \$10.
- **Work Life Stories or Fact Fillers? Researching Occupational Records for Family History**, Saturday,

September 13, 10:30 am – 11:30 am. Fee \$10.

- **Start Searching Your Family History - a Beginners' Workshop in 5 Lessons** with Brenda Smith, Mondays, September 29, October 13 & 27, November 24, 2008 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm. Fee \$100.

Classes fill up quickly; if the course is full, put your name on the waiting list for the next available class.

Pre-registration is required – please check the Genealogy section of the Surrey Public Library website www.spl.surrey.bc.ca or call us at 604-598-7328 for further information and updates.

British Columbia Genealogical Society

- **Family History Research Week**, Open House, July 20, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm.
- FREE all week. July 21-26, 2008. 10:00 am – 3:00 pm daily.

For more information, please call the Library 604-502-9119 or see the BCGS. website: www.bcgsc.ca.

Kelowna and District Genealogical Society

- **Harvest Your Family Tree Seminar and Market Place**, with speakers: Ann ten Cate, Bob Ell, Marina Garrison, Sherry Irvine, Dave Obee, Tracy Satin, Brenda Smith, Sylvie Tremblay, Sharon Weber, September 27, 2008.

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~bckdgs/seminar.htm>