

AMES FREE LIBRARY GENEALOGY CLUB

Who We Are

The Ames Free Library Genealogy Club is a group dedicated to helping each other with genealogical research. The group is free and open to all who have an interest in family history. We meet monthly to use the library's free access to ancestry.com. Research help and access to the New England Historic Genealogical Society databases will be provided by local historian Ed Hands. Now in our third season, the group is adding this monthly newsletter and other features during the year.

Meeting Dates

May 11, 2019

June 8, 2019

Queset House 2:30-4:30

March Meeting

The May Meeting of the Ames Free Library Genealogy Club will take place this Saturday, May 11 at Queset House from 2:30-4:30.

New Files at Ancestry

Remember that Ancestry has two types of files. One type is indexed and results from these files will show up in a general search. The second type haven't been indexed so they have to be located in the card catalog and searched individually. Since indexing takes time there are more unindexed files being added monthly. Here's a list of some files in the card catalog:

1. Kent, England, Church of England Baptism, Marriages and Burials 1538-1914.
2. Trier, Germany, multiple records to 1600
3. U. S. Navy Muster Rolls 1949-1963 (continuing files from 1938-1948)
4. 1891, 1900, 1910 Norwegian Census
5. Cork, Ireland, Marriage License Bonds Index 1623-1750
6. 10,000 Vital Records of Eastern New York 1777-1834



Ancestry ThruLines

Ancestry.com recently rolled out a new feature for those members who have connected their DNA test to a public or private searchable tree that is at least 3 generations long and only have one family member DNA connected to a tree. Called ThruLines it is supposed to match people who claim to be descended from the same ancestor. Ancestry has been doing this in various ways for some time and ThruLines are just a way to make this clearer. Note the words “claim to be” above. This genealogical connection is good only if yours and the other guys tree research is good. A connection through 3 or 4 generations is likely to be good because the research often comes from first hand knowledge. Here ThruLines can help you find long lost cousins who might have a stack of old family photos.

Ancestry has not yet put out a detailed explanation of how ThruLines works so, for instance, we don't really know how it compares DNA matches with family trees. The algorithm may suggest connections through people in a tree who your research has already proven to be not related to you. Some researchers have reported lines connected through step-parents or other spouses that are not biologically connected so it seems Ancestry is still working out the kinks in the system.

One professional genealogist is concerned because ThruLines “encourages people to believe that ancestors are being suggested because DNA has confirmed that a specific ancestor is theirs.” Meaning if Ancestry suggests that you are descended from someone

that your own research hasn't confirmed, you may be related to that person's brother, sister or cousin. If you or Ancestry propagate this false tree online then others will be wrong until the bad tree drowns out the good.

Thankfully, ThruLines don't automatically modify your family tree, it just adds a clickable dot that connects you to the ThruLine page for that person.

Here's a practical example of how ThruLines works. Research indicates that my third great-grandfather was Richard Hands (1801-1849). ThruLines suggests that I “may be related to 3 DNA matches through Richard Hands.” Two of these matches run through Richard's son Abraham-the first family name my father remembered. One of these matches leads to my American branch of the family while the other match leads to one of the stay-in-England branches of the family. These relationships are well known to me through regular research for historical people and contacts with family members, but it also leads to the living Derek Hands who shares 47 centimorgans with me. Clicking on the centimorgans leads to a chart that says that 22% of people who share this much DNA are third cousins something confirmed in the regular family tree. Nothing special from DNA here, but the third line leads through Margaret Hands that Ancestry claims is a half sister of Abraham because a descendent named Gerry Mullock shares 8 centimorgans with me and Ancestry states that this means that the best fit comparing DNA and tree is half 4th cousin once removed. Further research will tell if this is true, but it is an incredibly important suggestion since we haven't been sure whether Richard had one wife named Mary or two. Now it is more likely he had two.