

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

June 8, 2019

Queset House 2:30-4:30

June Meeting

The June Meeting of the Ames Free Library Genealogy Club will take place this Saturday, June 8 at Queset House from 2:30-4:30.

June Meeting

This Saturday's meeting is the last club meeting for this season. We will be taking off July and August and hopefully returning in September.

DNA Matches at Ancestry

Last month we took a quick look at the new Thru-lines feature at Ancestry. This month we will be looking at the new DNA match section of your DNA profile. If you go to the DNA section of the Ancestry website and have taken their DNA test, you can find the drop down menu for "DNA matches." This opens a well organized new page with two drop down menus of its own: "All Matches" and "Add a Filter."

Open the first menu and you will get options more options. One is "All Matches." There are 15 million people who have taken Ancestry's DNA test, and the average test taker finds about 50,000 others who have some degree of matching DNA. In my case I have 38,323 matches so far. That's obviously too many to follow up on easily so the drop down menu gives you other options "Distant Matches"-37,772, "New Matches"-326, and "Close matches"-551. Cont'd Next Page



The 551 close matches seems more doable. Opening that leads to a page that lists all 551 names, Ancestry's guess of how close the relationship is, the centimorgans you share (the basis of their guess), the status of their paper family tree, and whether Ancestry can show a common ancestor. I clicked on "Jeff Hollis" who Ancestry tells me is probably a second cousin. Clicking on Jeff brings up a page entitled "You and Jeff Hollis." This page gives me information about common ancestors and Jeff's unlinked family tree. Unlinked trees are not linked to the DNA results. If it were linked, it would be more likely to show a common ancestor. The bottom of the page would also show last names common to both his tree and mine..

I don't recall ever meeting Jeff, but the last name gave me a clue. Checking the brief unlinked family tree attached to the page shows that Jeff's mother was Dorcas Menear. That unusual name rang a bell. Her husband, still alive and therefore listed as private on the family tree was the son of Ralph Hollis who married my grandfather's youngest sister. Connection found thanks to Ancestry's new feature!

Still trying to organize 551 people is going to be slow work. Ancestry has anticipated this and this is where the filter menu comes in. Clicking on this drop down menu allows you to automatically sort your DNA matches by a number of factors: common ancestors, matches you haven't viewed, various types of tree, people you have messaged, and people you have attached notes to. Ancestry also allows you to create custom color coded filters back under the "all matches" menu.

Custom filters are a way to sort your results. Since common ancestors and DNA matches don't extend much beyond your great-great grandparents Crista Cowen suggests creating eight color coded filters for your sixteen great-great grandparents-one for each husband and wife pairing. Crista also suggests creating a filter or several for things like "This is interesting, research more." Then you can sort all your common ancestors into the appropriate filter box or boxes.

I sorted the hundred or so suggested common ancestors into the appropriate boxes and found some good connections. In my Donovan-Bateman filter I found two people with ancestors in common with me, GW who Ancestry suggested shared Alice Robinson and MW who shared both George Donovan and his wife Elizabeth Bateman. My great grandfather James was brother to Elizabeth Donovan, both children of George and Elizabeth. How does GW fit in? She is a descendant of George Donovan's mother Alice through a half sibling. Tying all three lines together, This confirmed the typically sketchy paper research from Ireland.

Looking at an Ancestry DNA taker named Stephen Brown, I learned the centimorgans suggested we were 4th to 6 cousins but Ancestry suggested no common ancestor. They did note that our family trees both had Browns and Hosfords in them. A check of the Hosfords revealed Annie Gertrude born in 1867 just a year after my ancestor Eleanor. A little regular research confirmed that Annie was a missing sister making father Joseph Hosford and wife Aphra Donovan our common ancestor. Again a clear, but sketchy paper trail was confirmed through this new Ancestry work.