

The Amateur Genealogist

by Celia Lewis, MA, Genealogy consultant

Genealogical Societies – Superb resources for all of us!

TIP: Your local or national society provides much-needed expertise & resources!

An excellent resource is your regional, local, or provincial Genealogical Society. These societies often have libraries freely available for members, and may provide educational seminars/workshops/information throughout the year. In addition, they may well have one or more professional certified genealogists as members, who can answer your questions and help you move forward. What a boon to the amateur!

Local societies may be recording all cemeteries in a specific area, or collaborating with others in transcribing historical records. Much information is available now because of the willing efforts of volunteers! You could be one of those volunteers, heading out with boots, notepad and camera, traipsing through that old cemetery outside Nanaimo or Oliver looking for readable headstones! Or poring over donated pamphlets and booklets for cataloguing historical information. There are many potential opportunities for you to participate in this exciting research.

By becoming a member, such as of the BC Genealogical Society (www.bcgs.ca), you will also hear about the various resources and educational opportunities that are put on by others. For instance, in October 2008, three local Fraser Valley LDS centres collaborated on a full-day of over 30 FREE workshops, held in Surrey.

Members of one society may be able to take advantage of resources held by other societies as well. Also, when you write or email questions to provincial genealogical societies including the information that you are also a member of the BC Genealogical Society, (www.bcgs.ca) your request is coupled with a perception that you are very serious about your genealogy and history.

Travelling? Research the local genealogical societies and historical archives or museums in the areas you are travelling to/through, and drop by for a visit. Email before you go with questions on best times to visit, charges if any, parking, what is permitted to be brought into the archives, society libraries. Take information on your research names, dates, places, records desired, with you – Be prepared!

Questions? Email Celia@RootsBasic.com

TIP: Take one summary sheet with your current research questions! Focus!

