



---

---

### GRONI MOVING

As some of you may already know the General Registry Office for Northern Ireland (GRONI) is moving out of its long-term home in Chichester Street in Belfast at the end of January and relocating to Stranmillis. Anyone carrying out research at GRONI can access all birth, marriage and death records up until 2016 and therefore when you go to the office you can see many records that are not available online through GRONI's website.

It will therefore be concerning to genealogists that GRONI will not have as many desks available in their new search room as previously. In order to deal with this situation GRONI have made arrangements for four of their terminals to be co-located in the Public Record Office for Northern Ireland (PRONI) which is centrally situated in Belfast (near the Odyssey Complex and Titanic Belfast). This means that anyone seeking to do research can now access old parish registers and up-to-date certificates in the one location.

Charges for accessing the GRONI terminals remain the same whether you go to PRONI or GRONI - there is no charge to enter the search room and the indexes can be accessed free, as is the case online for the historic records. When using the GRONI and PRONI computer terminals you log on to your online account and this allows you access to the more up-to-date records which can be purchased for 5 credits, the same rate as available online. Overseas visitors are reminded that they can currently access all Northern Ireland registered births to 1916, marriages to 1941 and deaths to 1966 through the website at <https://geni.nidirect.gov.uk/>

---

---

### IRISH GENEALOGY.IE

If you haven't been to <https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/churchrecords/civil-search.jsp> recently you are missing out!

During 2016 the website has made available many original certificates for births, deaths and marriages for free! These cover the whole of Ireland, however Northern Ireland is only included up to 1921. All of the early records available from GRONI are available here however some of them have not yet been linked to the index page and it is anticipated that these remaining records will be added during 2017.

You can currently access birth certificates up to 1916 and marriages & deaths up to 1934. As this website has no charges whatsoever it is invaluable to every family historian with Irish ancestors. It is a great way to add new information to your tree or check the information you already have. Make sure you take note of marriage witnesses and the name of the person who registered a birth or death as these can often be family members. And with no charges whatsoever to access the records this site is one to add to your favourites!

Just added is the facility to report errors in transcription and a link to report an incorrect image.



## NIFHS DNA PROJECT



Have you considered taking a DNA test yet in order to work on your family tree? If like many others the answer is 'yes' then you have joined a growing number of people with Irish ancestry who are seeking to make links back beyond paper records. The Society is doing a lot to support people who are seeking to understand their DNA. Regular courses are run in the Honneyman Room at the Society's headquarters in the Valley Business Park in Newtownabbey and these have been supplemented by a monthly interest group which meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month. DNA is also a subject which is increasingly discussed all over Northern Ireland at branch meetings.

The Society also administers a project group for those who have taken a test. As it was started by members of the Ballymena Branch it is entitled 'NIFHS Ballymena' however it is open to all members of the society to join, irrespective of where you live. In order to join you have to have taken a DNA test with [www.familytreedna.com](http://www.familytreedna.com). Joining the project will enable you to identify if you have any DNA links to other members of the society.

To join you should log into your account and click on 'join a project' from the toolbar at the top of the page. Then look at the section for 'Dual Geographical Projects' and you will find us under 'NIFHS Ballymena'.

NIFHS has negotiated a small discount for members of the society who choose to test with [www.familytreedna.com](http://www.familytreedna.com). To avail of the discounted rates please contact one of the project administrators at [education@nifhs.org](mailto:education@nifhs.org)

If you have already taken a family finder test (their most popular test) it is important that you record the surnames of your ancestors so as to allow you the best chance to identify those whom you match. This only takes a few minutes to do and can make a world of difference, enabling you to make firm connections with your matches. To record these names log into your account and click on 'manage personal information'. On the genealogy tab then select 'surnames'. Each surname of your direct ancestors should be recorded here alongside the place where they lived furthest back (see below).

The screenshot shows the 'Genealogy' section of a user's account. The 'Surnames' tab is active, displaying a table of 'Current Surnames' and a form to 'Add New Surname'.

Surname	Location	EDIT	DELETE
Abernethy	Ballycarry, County Antrim, Northern Ireland		
Armstrong	Magheragall, County Antrim, Northern Ireland		
Barr	Ballymena, County Antrim, Northern Ireland		

The 'Add New Surname' form includes fields for 'Surname' and 'Location', and a 'SAVE' button.

Once you have recorded the surnames you should also record NIFHS as an additional surname. The place corresponding to this should be your branch location or 'Associate' if you are an Associate member of the society. By doing this anyone who carries out a search can identify if a kit is being managed by a member of the NIFHS and it gives you an additional link to your DNA cousin. You might be pleasantly surprised to discover that you are related to other society members who you already know!



## SOCIAL MEDIA



If you want to keep up to date with Society news and what is going on in the wider world of Irish genealogy there is no better way than making contact with us through Facebook or Twitter.

On Facebook many of our individual branches have their own pages and groups that anyone can join to see what is going on. If you join one of our groups you will find lots of people prepared to advise and guide you with your research. These groups are helping people every day so if you haven't joined yet you are missing out!

[www.facebook.com/NIFHS](http://www.facebook.com/NIFHS)

<https://twitter.com/NIFHS>

---

## SPRING COURSES PROGRAMME

The NIFHS Course Programme continues to go from strength to strength. After a successful Autumn season, its time to start our new spring programme and the range of courses on offer is more extensive and varied than ever. All courses are held in the Honneyman room of the society's headquarters at Unit C4, Valley Business Centre, 67 Church Road, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim, BT36 7LS.

Courses are competitively priced at a discounted rate for members of £7 for a two hour class, £12 for courses that run for 2x 2hr classes and £15 for courses composed of 3 x 2hr classes.

Courses can be booked by sending an email with your name and membership number to [education@nifhs.org](mailto:education@nifhs.org) and payment should be made at the beginning of the first session of your course.

Here's what is on offer - more information can be found by clicking on the link:

- February 4th - "[Family Finder](#)" - 3 Saturday afternoons
- February 15th - "[Family Finder](#)" - 3 Wednesday evenings
- February 20th - "[Photo Restoration for Beginners](#)" - 1 Monday evening
- February 21st - "[Using Newspapers for Family History Research](#)" - 1 Tuesday morning
- February 21st - "[Family Finder](#)" - 3 Tuesday evenings
- February 28th - "[Technology for Genealogy](#)" - 1 Tuesday afternoon
- March 7th - "[Land Records](#)" - 1 Tuesday morning and afternoon
- March 8th - "[Dublin Archives](#)" - 1 Wednesday afternoon PLUS trip to be arranged if there is interest
- March 9th - "[Starting your Genealogy - Beginner's Course](#)" - 3 Thursday afternoons
- March 14th - "[Emigration to Australia and New Zealand](#)" - 1 Tuesday morning
- March 14th - "[Family History using PowerPoint](#)" - 1 Tuesday afternoon
- March 18th - "[Using Gedmatch](#)" - 1 Saturday afternoon
- March 21st - "[Valuation Records](#)" - 1 Tuesday morning & afternoon
- March 22nd - "[Breaking through Brickwalls](#)" - 2 Wednesday afternoons
- March 25th - "[Researching Military Ancestors](#)" - 2 Saturday afternoons
- March 28th - "[Family Tree Maker: Basics and Benefits](#)" - 1 Tuesday morning



## CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS CONFERENCE



The Causeway Coast and Glens Branch of the NIFHS is hosting a five-day conference from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September. Here's the schedule:

### **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

Welcome event 7pm

### **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

Keynote speaker - Dr William Roulston UHF; Informal session with local genealogists; Introductory talk on Public Record Office of Northern Ireland by PRONI staff; Forum on delegate queries (see booking form)

### **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

Coach trip to Derry/Londonderry; St Augustine's Church; Emigration talk by Brian Mitchell; Walking tour of City Walls; Free time to explore; Visit to Moville Quay emigrant departure point; 1798 Book launch by Keith Beattie

### **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

United Irishmen in Causeway area - Keith Beattie; Round table discussion and storytelling; DNA and Adoption - Sean Traynor; 1718 Bann Valley Migration - Dr Linde Lunney RIA; Heaney's Heritage: Country life in Cos Antrim & Londonderry - Graham Mawhinney; Ulster Dialects - Alex Blair; Conference Dinner with music and talk from Willie Drennan

### **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

Coach trip to Upperlands/Garvagh; The history (and present) of Irish Linen Making - Bruce Clark; Visit to Clark's linen mills; Lunch at Ardtara Country House; Visit to Garvagh Museum for social history talks & demonstrations; Feedback and Farewell Address

The cost of the Conference to delegates will be £315 (**discounted price for early booking £265 if booked by 31 March 2017**). The price includes: -

- All talks and tours on the programme
- Coach travel on Wednesday & Friday
- Entrance fees
- Research assistance by local genealogists
- 4 morning tea/coffee and scones
- 3 lunches
- 2 afternoon tea/coffee
- Conference Dinner on Thursday

Please note that the above price does not include accommodation and that the above schedule could be subject to change. Further details and booking options can be found at

<http://colerainefhs.org.uk/>



## ULSTER HISTORICAL FOUNDATION CONFERENCES



Discover your Irish *and* Scots-Irish ancestors  
with the Ulster Historical Foundation

14-21 June 2017 and 06-13 September 2017



Ulster Historical  
Foundation



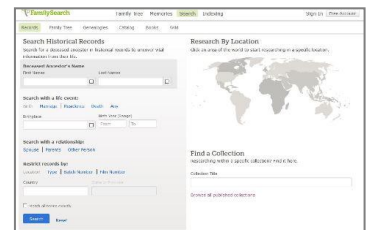
The Corn Exchange,  
31 Gordon Street,  
Belfast,  
BT1 2LG

[www.ancestryireland.com/family-history-conference/summer](http://www.ancestryireland.com/family-history-conference/summer)

[www.ancestryireland.com/family-history-conference/autumn](http://www.ancestryireland.com/family-history-conference/autumn)

## FAMILY SEARCH

Many of you will have discovered ancestors who emigrated around the world and therefore once you have looked at what records are available for Ireland it will be necessary to look at what else is available in other countries. Even if you have looked at some of the sites before it is always useful to revisit them periodically and see what new collections they have recently added.



Family Search is one of the best sites to find information from around the world. It is provided by the Church of Latter Day Saints and is absolutely free for anyone to use anywhere in the world. They add millions of additional records every year which are a combination of indexes and original images. Every week they launch more collections so it would be useful to stop by [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) and see what's available.

Recent highlights launched during January include original images of thousands of church marriages from the US states of Kentucky, Indiana, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Some are even from the 1980s and 1990s so they may be worth a look. Family search have also launched an impressive collection of over 230,000 original images of New Zealand probate records where I found many useful details of family members contained within the wording of the wills. New collections also include nearly 3 million images from Oklahoma school records, indexes to Italian state records, immigration records for Queensland, El Salvador civil registration records and the Ghana census of 1984!



## EDDIE'S EXTRACTS



Family Search isn't the only site to be regularly updated - one of the most useful (and consistent) regarding Northern Ireland is Eddie's Extracts. This site is updated at least once a week with new births, marriages and deaths from historic newspapers. It also provides original obituaries, in memoriam notices and little snippets of news that name specific individuals. For the last while Eddie's Extracts have been updated as so as the new material is from exactly one hundred years ago so it makes for very interesting reading. His site also has a very useful index to all the newspapers that he has made available on his site so it is most certainly worth a look.

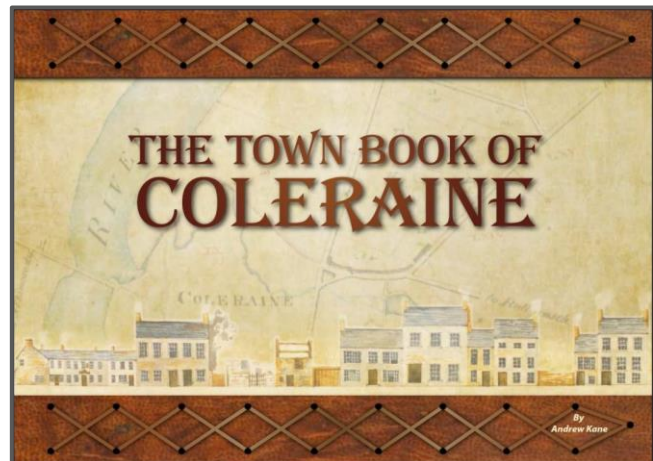
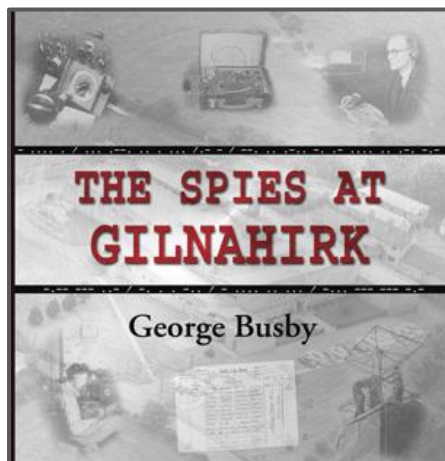
At the moment he is providing information from the Witness newspaper and also reproducing a series of articles he has entitled 'Fifty Years of Belfast Life'. As he has already added part 30 you may have some catching up to do!

---

### GILNAHIRK AND COLERAINE

The North of Ireland Family History Society has a number of members who have published their own books and this illustrious group has recently been supplemented by George Busby (North Down & Ards) and Andrew Kane (Causeway Coast & Glens).

George Busby's book 'The Spies at Gilnahirk' has been published by Cottage Publications. This is a result of over ten years' research and reveals how operations within a series of unassuming buildings in Castlereagh hills, and further afield, contributed to intelligence during the Second World War and the Cold War before the wireless station closed in 1978.



'The Town Book of Coleraine' by Andrew Kane has been published by Impact Printing. It reproduces original material from a manuscript book written in 1816 that provides much information on Coleraine and its inhabitants. The book comes with a useful index and also lists genealogical information from other sources such as names from the rent roll of 1777 and names of tenants in 1738 and 1805.



## WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? LIVE



From Thursday 6-Saturday 8 April 2017 the North of Ireland Family History Society will again be attending Who Do You Think You Are? Live which has, for a number of years, been held in the NEC in Birmingham on a yearly basis. It is billed as the biggest family history show in the world and is attended by people from every continent. As well as a hall full of exhibitors, it also has a packed programme of talks, workshops and question and answer sessions.

It's a great way for the Society to keep in contact with current members and make contact with potential new members. Lots of people drop past our stall to ask questions, renew their membership or purchase some of the helpful books and maps we have on sale. If you fancy helping out for a few hours feel free to contact us on [education@nifhs.org](mailto:education@nifhs.org) to volunteer. Otherwise if you are at the show just to have a look around, make sure you drop by and say hello.

---

### GRO ENGLAND & WALES

Those whose research takes them to Great Britain will be pleased to know that the General Register Office for England and Wales has enhanced the indexes to births 1837-1915, and deaths 1837-1957. Forenames are now recorded in full and mother's maiden name is now listed in all index search results and in the death indexes the age recorded at death is shown. You must register to use the website and searching the indexes is free.

<https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/Login.asp>

---

### FIND MY PAST

Following negotiations with Find my Past we are now able to offer access on one computer in the Research Centre to the world subscription. The newspaper collection 1710-1953 includes millions of articles and notices from newspapers published around Ireland. The Travel and Migration section includes the records of passengers leaving the UK 1890-1960, and under Military, Armed Forces & Conflict the Regimental and Service records begin in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.