



## **SPRING COURSES PROGRAMME LAUNCHED**

Good News - The Society has finalised the schedule for its new, extended, spring courses programme.

This time there are 16 short courses taking place from February right the way through to the end of May and there seems to be something for everyone.

We are keeping some old favourites on the schedule (such as the DNA courses) and adding some new ones such as Andrew Kane's talk on the 1718 emigration and Sandra Ardis' comprehensive look at school records in Northern Ireland. Other new courses include one on using maps (by Ann Robinson) and using Google for family research (by Anne Johnston).

You can find full details here <https://www.nifhs.org/resources/courses/> and don't forget to book early to avoid disappointment as many of the courses fill up fast!

Martin McDowell, standing back left,  
the Society Education Officer,  
leading a previous Family Finder Course.



Our Courses main aim is to inform in an enjoyable way, but they also give the opportunity to meet other people with the same interests and share information. Do come along. We would love to meet and help you.

## **OLD RECORDS FOUND**

There was a nice little story in the BBC news the other day about a set of priceless Church records that had been stolen from Derrylin Church in Fermanagh. They were found abandoned in bog land on the Offaly/Kildare border and have since been returned - with the congregation being told on Christmas Day. You can read the full story here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-46910895>

## **ARCHIVE.ORG**

Have you tried out the joys of this website - <https://archive.org/> ?

At first glance it doesn't necessarily scream out genealogy but spend some time browsing and you'll find free access to Scottish directories and gazetteers, army and navy lists, local histories, Canadian trade directories, American university alumni lists - to name but a few.

It will take some time to get used to the site but it well worth it. Try going to the European Libraries section first, find your way round that and tackle the rest. Good hunting!



## REPRESENTATIVE CHURCH BODY LIBRARY

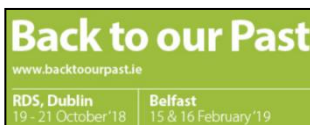
The bad news is that the RCB Library Church of Ireland House, Church Ave, Rathmines, Co. Dublin, Ireland will be closed on Fridays from February onward. The good news is that this will enable staff to concentrate on the RCB's project to digitise its collection of Church of Ireland parish registers.



Many of you will already be aware that some parish registers are available online at [www.ireland.anglican.org/arp](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/arp) and [www.ireland.anglican.org/genealogy/registers](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/genealogy/registers). The project is a work in progress so if the record you need isn't available now, it would be worthwhile to keep on checking.

The project to digitise all the editions of the Church of Ireland Gazette is ongoing. Another 16 years of editions, from 1934 - 1949 have been uploaded. This means that editions from 1856 - 1949 are available to view at <https://esearch.informa.ie/rcb>.

## BACK TO OUR PAST GENEALOGY SHOW 2019 at BELFAST



Don't miss Back to Our Past in Belfast which will be in the Waterfront Hall on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February.

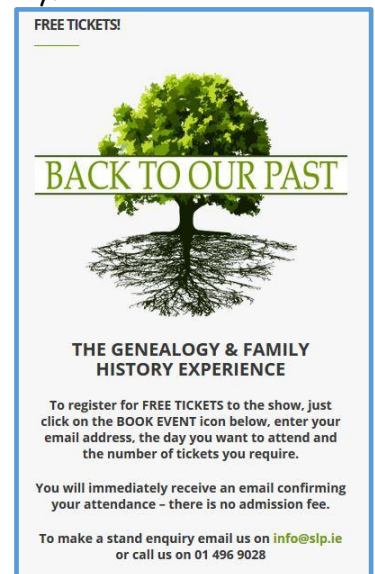
It will be the same format as last year - one main hall for exhibitors and two lecture halls for talks, one for DNA and the other for family history. Twenty-four talks in total will be provided and as before, the North of Ireland Family History Society is well represented with talks by some of its members e.g. Mike McKeag, Andrew Kane, Jonathan Gray, Alan Rosborough and Martin McDowell.

On the event website at <https://backtoourpast.ie/> you will find the Schedules of the Talks and [a link to tell you how to register for free admission tickets!!](#)

If you would like to volunteer to help on the NIFHS stand at the show, then please as soon as possible contact Kathleen Morrison at [bookings@nifhs.org](mailto:bookings@nifhs.org).

If you missed last year's show and want to see what all the fuss was about then you can view a short montage of photos compiled by our publicity officer Maeve Rogan here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6B5fibGu920>

If we can persuade Maeve to do another photo montage this year, perhaps you will feature!



## OTHER GENEALOGY SHOWS

**Family Tree Live - Alexandra Palace, London 26th-27th April 2019.**

This event is sponsored by the Federation of Family History Societies and Family Tree magazine.  
<https://www.family-tree.co.uk/ftre/show/family-tree-live/>

**The Genealogy Show - NEC Birmingham 7th-8th June 2019.** This show hopes to build on the success of Who Do You Think You Are Live which ran in the NEC for a number of years until 2017. According to their website this event will be a great opportunity to network, learn and have fun.

<https://www.thegenealogyshow.uk/>



## **NEW JERSEY DEATH INDEX**

Reclaim the Records are still working with the New Jersey State Archives to obtain all of the death indices from 1901 onwards in the state of New Jersey. So far digitised records from 1901-1903, 1920-1929 and 1949 -2000 and a searchable database from 2001 - 2017 is available online at [www.newjerseydeathindex.com](http://www.newjerseydeathindex.com) .

## **SOCIETY AGM 2019**

Traditionally the Society AGM was always held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of May, but from this year, there will be a change. From now on, the Society AGM will be held in September and this first Autumn AGM will be hosted by the Lisburn Branch on Saturday 21st September at Seymour Street Methodist Church Hall, Lisburn.

Further details will be given out in due course. We hope all members will try to attend as this annual meeting is a good chance learn about the Society activities and of course, to meet other members.

## **40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOCIETY**

The Society had its beginnings in a family history group formed in Bangor in 1979 with 51 Members. Over the years, as the interest in genealogy has grown at home and abroad, the group expanded by creating a dozen or so other Branches in the North of Ireland to form the Society, which now has well over a thousand members. Approximately half are local Branch members and the rest are Associate members from all over the world.

The first season of meetings was 1979/1980. Over the years since, the Society has organised several Day Events to mark our Anniversaries e.g. memorable highlights include the following:- in 1994 we had a great time at our 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Day in Magheramourne, in 2000 we enjoyed our 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Day at the Airport Hotel, Antrim and in 2004 we organised several Anniversary Lectures at Queens University followed by a special 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Day.

So, to celebrate our forthcoming 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the NIFHS Council has started planning a series of events. It is hoped these will take place during our 40<sup>th</sup> branch year (which will be from September 2019 to August 2020) and also culminate in a special all-day event in June 2020. Watch this space for further news!!!

## **NORTH OF IRELAND DNA PROJECT**

As you will be aware the North of Ireland Family History Society has a very active DNA project and with people finding more and more connections through DNA, sales of new kits are exceeding our wildest expectations. Thanks to discounts provided by Family Tree DNA, more people within Northern Ireland are now testing their DNA. FTDNA have now rebranded their test kits in boxes which have made them a very attractive Christmas and birthday present!



As more and more people are testing, we are all finding more cousins which will help us all verify and extend our family trees. The Family Finder test is now available through the society at \$69 (£53), a discount of \$10 on the normal price. Discounts are also available on Y-DNA and MT-DNA tests as well. What could you discover?

If you want to test or have got a question about DNA please let us know on [dna@nifhs.org](mailto:dna@nifhs.org)



## LESSER KNOWN RECORDS

We all know that many priceless documents were lost in the destruction of the Irish Public Records Office in Dublin in 1922. The interesting thing is that some crucial records may still survive in another form and here is an example of just that.

On a recent visit to the Public Records Office in Belfast, our Education Officer ran into one of our members who was examining a set of records at PRONI that he didn't know existed. The majority of early wills (pre-1858) were destroyed in the aforementioned fire however what isn't as well known is that some researchers managed to transcribe a lot of this material pre-1922.

At PRONI eight volumes of genealogical notes and abstracts from wills can be found at D950/1/93 - D950/1/100 in their catalogue and are available for consultation in their reading room.



**Sir William Betham** was primarily interested in genealogical information and spent a lifetime collating information from manuscripts held at the time in Dublin Castle.

He compiled 34 volumes of indexes and sketches of family trees based on early wills which are held by the National Archives of Ireland. Some of Betham's records have been digitised and each volume has a full index at the back. They can be accessed on the National Library of Ireland website at this link:-

<http://catalogue.nli.ie/Search/Results?lookfor=Wills%2C+New+Series&type=AllFields&filter%5B%5D=authorStr%3A%22Ireland.+Genealogical+Office%22&view=list#recordvols000541374>

An index to Betham's records and other records held at the Ireland Genealogical Office has been compiled by McAnlis in four volumes and it can be accessed on the National Library of Ireland website in PDF format at this link:- <https://www.nli.ie/en/heraldry-catalogues-and-databases.aspx>

### **Dr. Francis Crossle**

People may also be interested in the work of a father and son team who also transcribed records. Dr. Francis Crossle and his son Philip wrote 200 notebooks which The SELB Irish and Local Studies Library in Armagh now hold. These focus on the Newry area and cover records from 1620 to 1804.

**Gertrude Thrift** has also left behind a valuable legacy. She created a collection of 150,000 abstracts including detailed family trees and pedigree charts.

### **Find My Past**

The records of Betham, the Crossles and Thrift have all recently been added to Find My Past and perhaps could help you break down some very old brick walls in your tree!

<https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-Records/betham-genealogical-abstracts>  
<https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-Records/crossle-genealogical-abstracts>  
<https://search.findmypast.com/search-world-records/thrift-genealogical-abstracts>

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