



Camrose Branch Alberta Genealogical Society

ROOTS AND SHOOTS

Aug 2018

Vol. 15, No. 3

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NEW! CAMROSE BRANCH WEBSITE: www.camrosegenealogy.weebly.com

Murphy's Genealogical Laws

No one in your family tree ever did anything noteworthy,
owned property, was sued or was named in wills.

Upcoming Events

Aug. 10, 2018 – Camrose Public Library program “Genealogy for Youth” – Public welcome – CGS members Deb Trout, Janine Carroll & Joan Conley will be facilitating this program

Aug. 25, 2018 – Clan Gathering/Highland Games, presented by the Flagstaff Scottish Club in Sedgewick, AB – Vendors will include Iron Forgers, Cheese Makers, Soap Makers, Candle Makers, etc. as well as their own local theatre group, dressed up and re-enacting short skirts, etc. There will be Highland dancing, Bagpiping, Scottish Games and much more! Attending so far: Deb, Bev & Joan with her guest... Camrose Branch will have a table at this event.

Thursday, Sept. 13, 2018 – CGS Regular Meeting – 7 p.m. at Camrose Public Library, downstairs meeting room – Topic: “My Family Tree research over the summer”. Please bring your summer research stories.

Saturday, Sept. 15, 2018 – Camrose Genealogical Society - Guest Speaker Wayne Shephard will speak on two topics: “Genealogy and the Little Ice Age” and “Using Parish & other records to determine how natural phenomena affected people and communities” - Camrose Public Library, downstairs meeting room from 1 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (See poster on Page 5)

Thursday, Oct. 11, 2018 – CGS Regular Meeting – 7 p.m. at Camrose Public Library, downstairs meeting room – Topic: “My Standish Reunion 2018 in Ontario” presented by CGS member Joan Conley

Branch News

Camrose Branch will be using Bluejeans in the near future. This is a conference software which does online presentations. CGS Executive believes that this will be a great way for us to reach those members who are unable to attend our meetings and functions. President Deb Trout and Vice President Janine Carroll will host.

Reconciliation Statement below must be read at all AGS meetings in future:

“We wish to acknowledge that the land on which we gather is Treaty 6 territory and a traditional meeting ground for many Indigenous people. The territory on which the City of Camrose is located provided a travelling route and home to the Cree, Blackfoot, and Metis, as it did for the Nakoda, Tsuu T’ina, Chipewyan, and other Indigenous peoples. Their spiritual and practical relationships to the land create a rich heritage for our learning and our life as a community.”

Camrose Branch Website

Check out our new website! It is colourful and informative. Camrose Branch Webmaster Deb Trout has done a fantastic job of organizing the website. We know how hard Deb has worked on this, and it is much appreciated by CGS Executive and members. Thanks, Deb!

Check it out:

www.camrosegenealogy.weebly.com

From Alberta Genealogical Society

Exciting Opportunity

Join our team as Relatively Speaking Editor

The Editorial Team is looking for an Editor to join our team who has:

- the time to volunteer to oversee the team production of four issues of Relatively Speaking each year
- experience in editing and in the software used for the publication of our journal
- can be done by email or video conference
- mentoring provided
- submit a resume: rseditor@abgenealogy.ca

Genealogy GenFair in Camrose was held on Saturday, April 21, 2018

Camrose Branch hosted the AGS GenFair on April 21 from 9:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Camrose Masonic Hall. The theme was “All Roads Lead to Family”. Every second year a one day GenFair is hosted by different branches of the Alberta Genealogical Society (AGS). Attendees came from all points in the province including Fort McMurray, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Brooks and Grande Prairie. All branches are invited to put up a display in an effort to encourage new members.

A nominal fee was charged for attendance; attendees were asked to bring their own lunch; coffee, tea, water and light snacks were supplied by Camrose Branch members.

Guest speakers were Rosella Peterman, a retired land title searcher from Bashaw, and Glynys Hohmann, the team lead for government records.

The door prize was an Ancestry DNA kit. Camrose Branch member Kim Fischbach won the door prize. Congratulations, Kim!

Camrose Branch is reaching out to youth and encouraging them to learn more about their ancestry. Vice President Janine Carroll stated in The Camrose Booster article that “We would like to touch base with teachers who may be working on a curriculum in genealogy. We have a lot of information, including workbooks, that they can download and copy. Members of our Society would be happy to speak to students about genealogy.”

Camrose Genealogical Society has donated several children’s books on the subject of family history and genealogy to the Camrose Public Library. It is the Society’s wish to help school children to become interested in their lineage. The books, purchased from funds given to the Alberta Genealogical Society as part of a Canada 150 grant, were dispersed to local branches.

For more information on the Camrose Branch of the Alberta Genealogical Society, visit our website at www.camrosegenealogy.weebly.com

Photo: Vice President Janine Carroll and President Deb Trout
Camrose Branch, Alberta Genealogical Society



Article and photo courtesy of The Camrose Booster
Photographer Lori Larsen



Picture taken the day the Canadian National Railway tracks reached Camrose

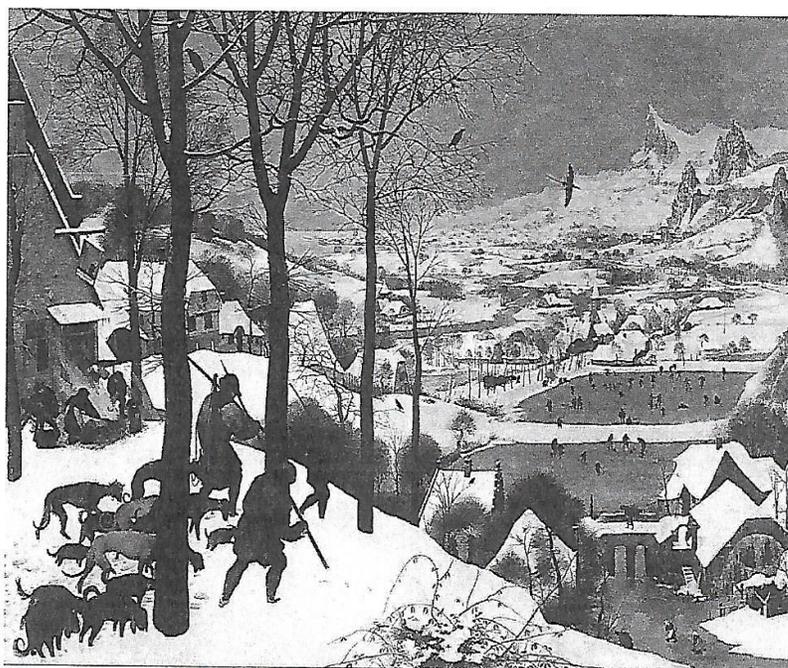
Camrose Genealogical Presentations
September 15, 2018
by Wayne Shephard

Genealogy and the Little Ice Age

Genealogists seek information about their ancestors from as far back in time as possible, but not all researchers will realize some of the most important records we find were created during the time of the Little Ice Age (1300 to 1850 AD). Understanding the physical conditions under which people lived is important in order to assemble the most complete histories of families. The presentation will offer information and perspective concerning studies of the families living during that inhospitable era. Examples of the effects of natural phenomena on people and communities, drawn from resources normally consulted by genealogists, will be shown.

Using parish and other records to determine how natural phenomena affected people and communities

Natural phenomena – including long-term changes to environment, gradual changes to physical habitats, and disasters resulting from rapidly-moving events – significantly affected the lives and livelihoods of our ancestors. Finding information that demonstrates what events occurred and how they impacted people and communities is an important part in constructing complete family histories. This presentation will involve a discussion of what types of information are available, and where it might be found, including: parish records, newspapers and periodicals, commercial data, maps, scientific reports and historical publications.



Hunters in the Snow by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1565 –
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria

New Found Family: A DNA, Ancestry, Facebook success story by Janet Matiisen

My friends, I have got a story to tell you.

This goes on for a bit. Apparently, I've decided to write a novella.

My family is a small, tight group. My sister, Melanie, and I are the best of friends; our parents, Arne and Carolyn, are loving and amazing. Mel's husband, Loren, is the best man I know and their daughters, Arabelle and Lucia, are shining lights in my life. Our aunt Eda (Dad's sister) has been a terrific influence and force in our lives. We have wonderful family on my Mom's side as well: Uncle Grant and Aunt Carlyne, and their sons (and their families), Mike and Kara, Brad and Meredith, and Mitch and Angela. We are blessed to have such a small and vibrant family unit.

Dad was the middle of three kids, Eda is his younger sister, and Hendo was his older brother, each born four years apart in Estonia. The Matiisen family story could be made into a movie – fleeing Estonia in the early stages of WWII to Sweden, and eventually settling in central Alberta, near Eckville. There are a handful of Estonian settlements in Alberta, most prominently near Eckville and Stettler.

Dad's brother, Hendo, passed away in Edmonton in 1987. He had never married. Neither he nor Eda had children, so we have no Matiisen cousins (we thought). Mel and I are two of the last of our Matiisen line.

Fast forward to a few weeks ago, around 11:00 pm, when I noticed a Facebook message from an unknown person. Having a curious nature, I opened it up and started reading. My eyes just about popped out of my head.

“Hello, my name is Michael Kothke. I've found you by way of Ancestry.com, and then through Facebook. In what must seem like an odd message from out of nowhere, it would seem that we're related...”

Wait! What now?

He went on, “... it was not until I was in my 20's that I was told by my mother that my father was a man named Hendo Matiisen, an engineer with whom she had had a brief relationship in the summer of 1967 in Fort McMurray... Apparently, my mother never communicated her pregnancy or my existence to Mr. Matiisen – they immediately lost touch, as she returned to her life as a nursing student in Red Deer, having only been in Fort McMurray on a road trip with a friend. I was born on April 9th in Red Deer.”

Again, what now?

“I’ve never quite known what to do with the information about Mr. Matiisen, particularly while my mother and step-father were alive. They both passed away in 2009 and 2014, respectively. More than this, I’ve never quite known if the information was true. A few months ago, for fun, my wife and I decided to join Ancestry.com along with her parents who were interested in their DNA story. Last month, I checked my results, which, with ‘extremely high confidence’ predicts my relationship to ‘A.M. (managed by Carolyn Matiisen)’ as ‘close family’.”

The message continued on very respectfully and I was quite sure this wasn’t some Nigerian prince looking to unload several million dollars if I would just forward him my banking information.

I started frantically texting Melanie, in all caps, “*ARE YOU AWAKE WE HAVE TO TALK HOLY CRAP YOU HAVE TO BE UP.*” No immediate response. “*WAKE UP AND TALK TO ME WE HAVE TO TALK RIGHT NOW.*” I copy/pasted Michael’s message to her in text form, and she did finally (maybe all of six minutes later) respond. We had simultaneous meltdowns. She’d deleted the message from him without reading it, assuming it was, in fact, a Nigerian prince scam. The message seemed legit, this guy seemed really normal, it was well written and grammatically correct, the dates all lined up, and holy s--t! Now what?

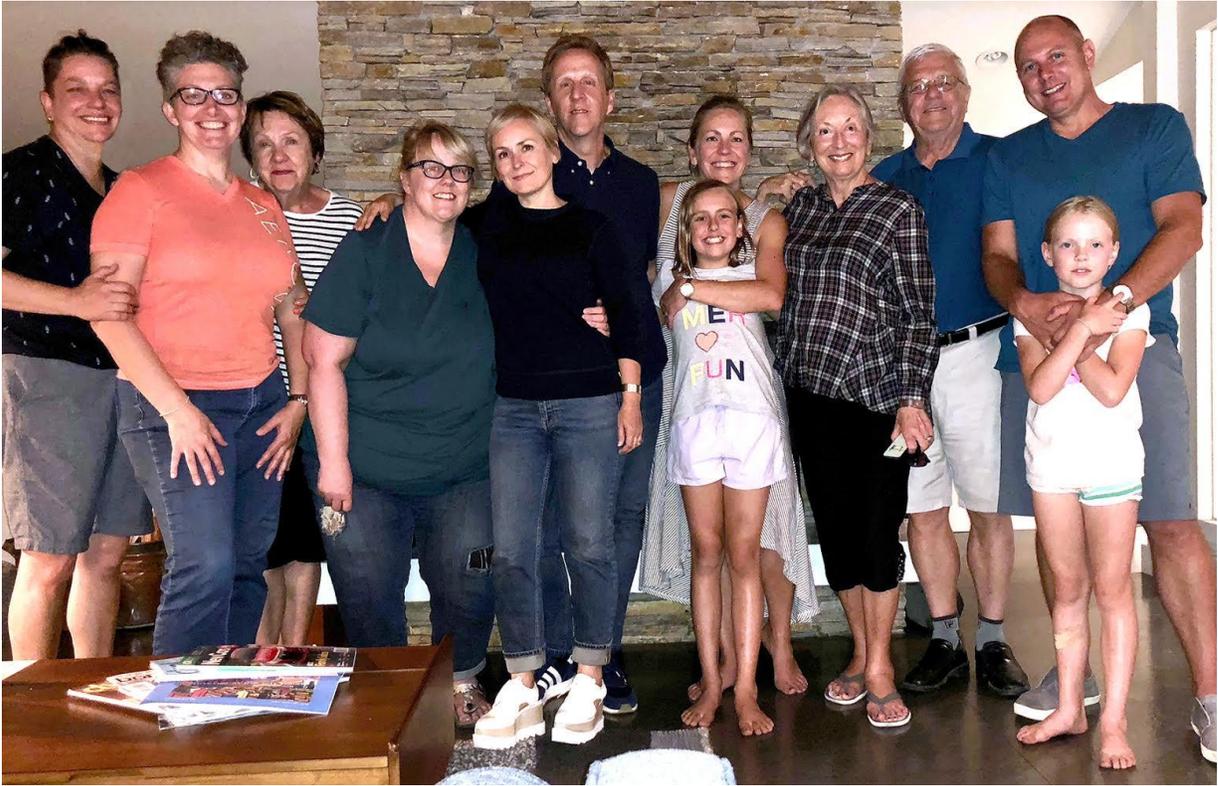
We decided to invite Mom over to Mel’s for spontaneous coffee the next day and show her the message. We would also try to get Eda on the phone at the same time. The next couple of days were crazy. Mom reacted in shock, as did we all, but moved on quickly from shock to excitement. We didn’t contact Eda by phone right then, but Mel talked to her shortly afterwards. We didn’t want to respond to Michael without having all of the family in the know and had a chance to collect our thoughts.

We responded a couple of days later, and that started an avalanche of correspondence. We have a Matiisen cousin!

Fast forward again. Michael said that he and his wife Kathy (they live in Tucson, Arizona) would be in Abbotsford, BC, for a couple of weeks visiting Kathy’s parents, and maybe they could come to Calgary while in Canada. “*OF COURSE WE WANT TO MEET YOU!*” we said.

For the last couple of days, as I write this, they’ve been here and we’ve gotten to know each other. Michael and Kathy are so, so lovely. We also got to meet Michael’s sister, Jennifer, who, as it turns out, lives in Calgary, too! Our hearts are full; our lives are enriched; our family has grown; and we are all so grateful to have discovered each other. We each have said over and over that we wish it hadn’t taken this long to meet each other, but we’re so happy that we have come together.

And here are a few pictures of our very happy family reunion. We can’t stop smiling!



Janet, Lenore, Eda, Jennifer, Kathy, Michael, Melanie,
Arabelle, Caroline, Arne, Loren, Lucia Matiisen



Eda, Michael, Arne Matiiesen



Janet, Michael, Melanie Matiisen



Carolyn, Kathy, Arne, Janet, Michael, Eda
Matiisen

Editor's Note: This gives all of us a little "Hope" that we will discover more family!
Thanks for sharing, Janet and all the Matiisen family!

Are You a Family Historian or a Name Collector?

The following is copied (with permission) from Dick Eastman's blog of June 6, 2018

I have a question. None of my living relatives knows the answer to this question. I have not found the answer to this question in any public records, nor have I been able to find the answer in cemeteries. I have read a few magazine articles and Internet pages about the topic, but none of them have directly answered the question.

The question is... "Why do we study genealogy?"

What makes anyone so curious about his or her family tree? What drives us to dedicate time, effort, and sometimes expenses to go find dead people? What is it inside of us that makes us spend hours and hours cranking reels of microfilm, then we go home and report to our family members what a great day we had?

I must admit that I have asked that question of many people and have received several answers. Some people report that it is simple curiosity... and I tend to believe that is a part of the answer. Others report that it is part of an intriguing puzzle that they wish to solve.

The theory on the puzzle bothers me. First of all, I am devoted to genealogy, but I could care less about other puzzles. I don't do the daily crosswords in the newspaper, I don't put together those picture puzzles, and I do not seem very interested in any other form of puzzles. If genealogy is solely a puzzle, why would I be attracted to it and yet not to other puzzles? That doesn't make sense to me. In short, I think there is more to genealogy than there is to a crossword puzzle.

The simplest and most direct answer for many people is because it is a religious requirement. Indeed, members of the LDS Church are encouraged to find information about their ancestry for religious purposes. And yet, of all the LDS members that I meet at most genealogy conferences, most met their religious requirements years ago but continue to look further and further back. In fact, many of them become so addicted that they help others do the same.

Yes, I can accept that religion is a major motivator, but I believe there is still more. I constantly meet people, LDS members and non-members alike, who keep searching and searching, further and further back. Why?

I do not have all the answers, but I do have an observation or two. I believe that most all humans have a natural curiosity. We are curious about many things, but for now, I will focus on our curiosity about our origins and ourselves.

It seems to me that we are all curious about who we are. When I say, "who we are," that includes questions about our origins. Where did I come from? How did I end up being born where I was? What trials and tribulations did my parents go through in order to give birth to me and my siblings and to raise a family? What did their parents go through to do the same for them? And how about their parents?

All of this is an inverted pyramid. It all comes down to me. Each of us is walking around with an invisible inverted pyramid on our heads. Each of us is visible but each of us is also the result of the many people in the invisible inverted pyramid. After all, each of us is the product of our ancestors. I will point out that there are two different kinds of genealogists. There are name gatherers, and then there are family historians. Let me tell you a story about an acquaintance of mine. This is a true story; I couldn't possibly make this up.

I have known my friend for years. I'll call her Linda, although that is not her true name. I knew Linda before she became interested in genealogy and even helped coach her a bit when she first started. This was many years ago, when I was just beginning my family tree searches as well. At that time, I only knew a little bit more about genealogy than she did.

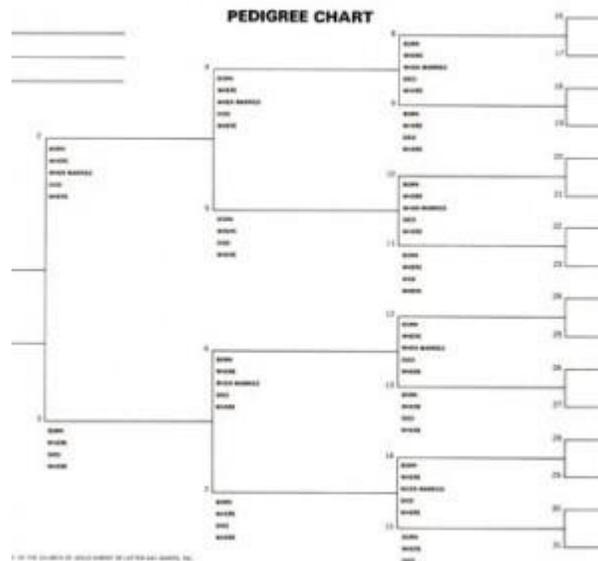
I only see Linda once every few years. Every time that we meet, the conversation quickly turns to genealogy as we bring each other up to speed on our latest triumphs and failures. I always enjoy talking with Linda. She is bright, articulate, and very enthused about genealogy.

The last time I saw Linda, she proudly announced, "I have almost finished my genealogy!"

I was speechless. I am sure I stood there with my mouth hanging open, blinking my eyes. I don't recall anyone else every saying they were "finished" with their genealogy searches. How can you be finished? Every time you find one new ancestor, you immediately gain two new puzzles to be solved.

Linda and I had a rather extended conversation. I'll skip all the details and simply give the bottom line: Some years earlier Linda had purchased a blank pedigree chart that had room to write in eight generations of ancestors, including names, dates and places of birth, marriage, and death.

I suspect you know what a blank pedigree form is. Typically, on the extreme left there is room to write in your own name plus dates and places of your own birth and marriage. (Hopefully, you won't be filling in data about your own death.)



Just to the right of the space for your entry, there is room for data entry for two more people: your parents. To the right of that, there is space for data about your four grandparents. Moving further to the right, there is room for information about eight great-grandparents, sixteen great-great-grandparents and so forth. In the case of the chart that Linda had obtained, there was room for eight generations, a total of 255 individuals. At the time I was talking with Linda, she only had two blanks left to be filled on her form, both in the eighth generation. She had found all of her ancestors through seven generations and even all the eighth generation ancestors except for two. She was working diligently to find those last two.

Apparently Linda's goal was to fill in the eight generations. That was her definition of "finished." I asked her, "What about the people in the ninth generation or even earlier?" She replied, "Oh, I don't care about them."

I was speechless for a moment.

I recovered and then probed a bit further. Linda's ancestry is French-Canadian, and so is much of my own. Most people with French-Canadian ancestry are related. Any two French-Canadians usually can find common ancestors in their pedigree charts. As I looked over Linda's pedigree chart, I found several of my own ancestors as well as those of Celine Dion, Madonna, and probably half of the players in the National Hockey League. Since I was familiar with some of these ancestors and their history, I started commenting on their lives.

"Oh, here is the man who was killed in bed by a jealous husband who returned home unexpectedly and found his wife and our ancestor in an indelicate position."

Linda said, "Really?"

I said, "Here is an ancestor who was captured by the Mohawk Indians and tortured unmercifully."

Linda said, "How do you know that?"

OK, here is the next bottom line: Linda had expended hundreds, possibly thousands, of hours and a significant amount of expense traveling to various libraries and repositories. She even took a couple of trips to Quebec province. Along the way she collected eight generations of her ancestors' names, places, and dates, and NOTHING ELSE.

She did not know anything about the lives of these people; their triumphs, their sorrows, the trials and tribulations they endured to raise families that eventually resulted in the births of Linda, me, and many others. She did not know their occupations, the causes of their deaths, or even how many children each had. I ask you: Is Linda a family historian or a name collector?

If asked, she probably would protest that she is a genealogist. The term "genealogist" isn't terribly specific, so perhaps that is a true statement. But I will suggest that she is not a family historian. She also does not know how she "fits in" with the rest of the world.

Now for my next question: Which side of the fence do you fall on? Are you merely collecting names, or are you studying family history?

The fact that you are reading this article suggests to me that you are probably a family historian, not a name gatherer.

In fact, I believe that most family historians are motivated by a desire to understand how we are ALL related to each other. We all can see the "big picture" in various history books: the Pilgrims, the Mayflower, Jamestown in Virginia, the Dutch in New York City, the waves of immigration from Europe in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and well into the twentieth centuries, the wars, the politicians, the movement westward opening up new lands, and all that. Pick up any good history book and you can learn about the history of our people.

But that book will not answer one question: How do I fit into all of this?

Studying history is a very useful thing, but it is only half the story. The second half is defining where you and your ancestors were involved. Was your family one of the early colonial settlers? Did your ancestors arrive in the waves of later immigration? If so, which wave? Did your ancestors cover the plains in a covered wagon and fight off Indians? Did that result in your being alive today? What would have happened if only one Indian had better aim?

Even closer to the "real you," what values did these ancestors bring with them and then pass on to their descendants? Are you a religious person today because of the strong spiritual upbringing that you had? Are you politically conservative or liberal because of your parents' and grandparents' ideals and morals that they passed on to you?

Are you devoted to education or music or the arts or to homemaking or to other personal interests because of the morals given by your great-great-great-grandparents to their children, and then passed on to their children, and so on and so on?

I believe that much of America's work ethic, religion, and respect for the rights of others is based upon ideals brought to this country centuries ago, and then passed on over the dinner tables and in front of fireplaces for generations.

I believe this is the answer to the question: many of us who are true family historians study our family heritage in order to not only learn about our ancestors, but also to learn more about ourselves.

What motivates your family search?

Reprinted with permission from Dick Eastman's blog of June 6, 2018

EDITOR'S NOTE: on the printed issues of this newsletter, Page 5 may be missing the identification of the picture on the poster. It is "Hunters in the Snow" by Peter Bruegel the Elder, 1565 – Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria...



Have a great summer!

The Annual Summer Get-together
- Sunday July 29, 2018 – New Norway Cemetery Summer Picnic
has happened! Pictures will be included in
the November issue of Roots and Shoots.

"Roots and Shoots" is published quarterly: Feb, May, Aug & November
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