



May Newsletter



From school holidays to elections, May reminds us that our stories are shaped by time and place.

May always makes me think about timing. I was married in May—47 years ago—because, like many teachers back then, school holidays were in May and that's when weddings happened. The holidays have shifted to June/July, but that link between educational calendars and personal milestones still remains.

It's a reminder of how closely our lives are shaped by the structures around us—school terms, election dates, public holidays. That connection between the personal and the public runs through so many of the records we use in family history.

Today, Australians head to the polls (3 May) while Canadians reflect on their recent election. As family historians, we often turn to electoral rolls and school records, but rarely pause to think about what those documents represent—people participating in society, learning, growing, and adapting to change

Marriage records, too, bear the imprint of their time. Mine isn't all that different from my parents' or grandparents', but the further back we go, the more the forms—and the forces behind them—shift. Political change often alters not just laws but how lives are recorded and remembered. Think of relatively recent moments like the partition of India in 1947 or the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989—transformations that created both paper trails and profound personal narratives.

As you mark your own milestones this May—anniversaries, school achievements, or perhaps Mother's Day—consider how you're documenting them. What stories are you leaving behind? What context are you including?

We don't just trace history—we *are* our history.

Cathie

[Image: 6 May 1978. School holidays. A wedding. My family.]

Featured Course

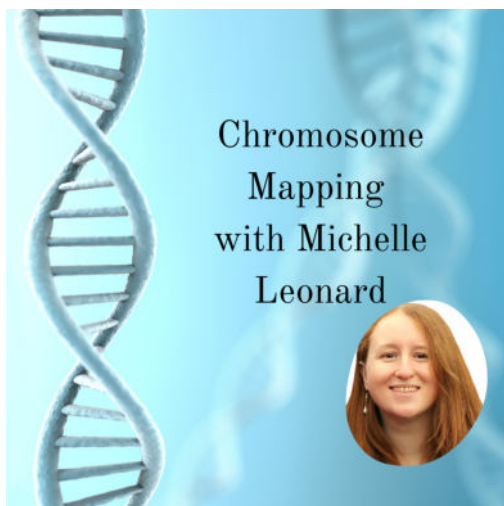


Transforming Your Research with AI

We often hear about using AI in family history—but how do you actually make it work for your research? And which tools are genuinely useful (and affordable)? In this two-part workshop, **Fiona Brooker** and **Andrew Redfern** will show you how to creatively repurpose your discoveries into meaningful, shareable formats—like blog posts, articles, tables, and visual stories. Because the stories we tell today don't just preserve the past—they become part of it.

Dates: 21 and 28 May @ 6 PM Eastern US

FIND OUT MORE & REGISTER



Chromosome Mapping with Michelle Leonard

Map your DNA, unlock your ancestry!

Discover how to turn your DNA segment data into a powerful family history tool with expert guidance from **Michelle Leonard**. In this practical, puzzle-filled workshop, you'll learn how to build and expand your chromosome map using DNA Painter, avoid common mistakes, and apply advanced techniques to uncover new ancestral connections. Whether you're just starting out or ready to level up, this is your chance to master DNA's version of a giant jigsaw puzzle!

PS. This is a very **popular** course!

Dates: 4 & 18 June 2025 @ 2.30 PM
Eastern US

REGISTER NOW!



Exploring Australian Land Records

Unlock the stories behind the land your ancestors lived on. In this practical workshop, **Andrew Redfern** and **Cathie Sherwood** introduce the key skills needed to navigate **Australian** land records—from grants and parish maps to deeds and historical land systems. With expert guidance, case studies, and hands-on activities, you'll learn how to trace property ownership and connect place to personal history. Ideal for all levels, especially if you want to build confidence with Australian sources.

Dates: 26 June, 3, 10 & 17 July 2025
@ 9.30 AM AEST (eastern Australia)

REGISTER NOW!

THE SNAPSHOT
INTERVIEW
With Steve Little & Mark Thompson

13 May
7.30 PM
Eastern US

REGISTER NOW >

 www.familyhistoryacademy.com.au

Coming Up - Mark Your Calendar

Join us on **13 May** for our next exclusive and free *SnapShot Interview* with **Mark Thompson** and **Steve Little**, two leading voices at the intersection of genealogy and artificial intelligence. Co-hosts of the *Family History AI Show* podcast, Mark and Steve are reshaping how we research, interpret, and share our family stories using cutting-edge tools. From segment analysis to story generation, discover how AI is transforming genealogy—and how you can harness it in your own work.

How to Access the SnapShot Interview if you are a **NEW** subscriber

Step 1: Subscribe & Confirm

To access the interview, first [subscribe via our website](#). After subscribing, check your email and **confirm your email address** to complete the process.

Step 2: Register for This Interview

Once your email is verified, you'll receive a **confirmation email** with exclusive **subscriber-only access** to the recordings page. From there, you can also register via Zoom for the upcoming interview with Steve and Mark on **13 May**. Simply click on the REGISTER NOW button! Enter your details for the session, and you're all set!

✔ Subscribers receive periodic emails with a direct link to register for future interviews.

🔒 This two-step process helps prevent spam and ensures you only receive access to the interviews that interest you.

💡 See you on **13 May or 14 May Down Under!**

Already subscribed but didn't receive the confirmation email? Check your spam folder. VPNs and pop-up blockers may also impact on the subscription process. You must confirm your email address to be added to the list.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Bits & Pieces



The London Archives free talk

I am always on the lookout for Irish talks and this one caught my eye.

The London Archives is offering a free talk on *Famine and the Removal of Irish Paupers from London*. The event is offered in-person and online on 8 May @ 12.30 PM (BST).

MORE INFORMATION

New blog post from John Grenham

And while we are on the subject of Ireland, John Grenham has a new blog post about weird Irish forenames and where you are most likely to find them. As always, it is an entertaining and informative read.

READ MORE





Microsoft has taken a major step toward a password-free future by making new Microsoft accounts *passwordless by default*. Instead of traditional passwords, new users will use more secure login methods like passkeys, push notifications, or hardware security keys. This change is part of a broader push to improve security and user experience, with Microsoft also redesigning its sign-in process and renaming *World Password Day* to *World Passkey Day*. Passkeys—now supported by platforms like Apple, Google, and 1Password—use device-based authentication such as Face ID or Windows Hello. Microsoft reports that passkey users enjoy a 98% login success rate, far outperforming passwords. You can read more in [this article from The Verge](#).

READ MORE

A feel-good story to start the month feels like the right way to go—especially when it's about a cute dog. After **529 days** lost in the wilds of Kangaroo Island off the coast of South Australia, miniature dachshund Valerie has been rescued. Her return was thanks to volunteers, clever tracking, and a well-worn T-shirt from her owner used as a scent trail. She's now safe, snuggled up, and heading home.

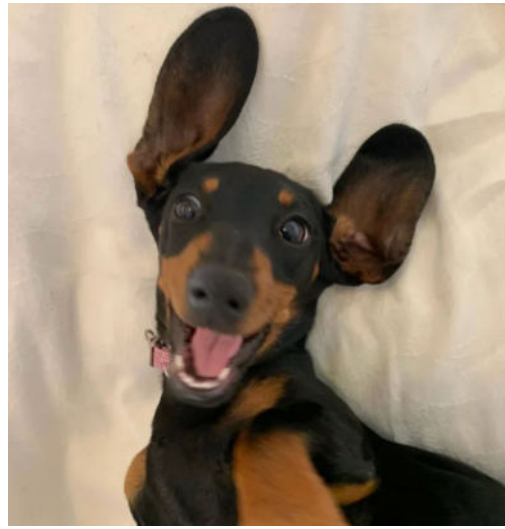


Image: Kangala Wildlife Rescue, Facebook

[FULL ARTICLE](#)

REMEMBER: All Family History Academy courses are recorded and available for 14 days.

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Family History Academy

Capalaba, QLD
Australia



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