



Genealogy Newsletter - February 2019

More controversy over the security of DNA database records...

Familial DNA matches have been in the news since the California Golden State Killer was apprehended due to this technology last year. Since then other familial matches have led law enforcement to make other such arrests in outstanding major crimes such as murder and rape, in the States.

Maryland Legislature introduced a bill in January, prohibiting Law Enforcement to use publicly available DNA databases, like **GEDmatch.com**

It will prohibit such searches by law enforcement or others from searching DNA or genealogical databases in order to identify an offender in connection with a crime for which the person may be a biological relative to the individual whose DNA sample is in the database and it is believed this kind of search violates the 4th Amendment of the USA Constitution and Maryland state constitution.

GEDmatch provides DNA and genealogical analysis tools for amateur and professional researchers and genealogists, most tools are free. Registration requires your name, an optional alias, email and password of your choice then, just upload your DNA data from one of the commercial sites, in a 'zip' file. You can also upload your **GEDCOMs** (family tree) or other genealogy ('Genealogy Data') and they will email you with any matches to your Raw Data or Genealogy Data however, if you are interested? Please look at GEDmatch.com Terms of Service and Privacy Policy or look at the review of **GEDmatch** on <https://dnatestingchoice.com> its currently 11th out of the 54 ancestry websites reviewed, it makes interesting reading.

Now, back to 'news' closer to home, **FamilySearch** has added millions of new free historical records this month;

England, Hampshire Parish Registers, 1538 – 1980	2,071,150 indexed records
Wales, Marriage Bonds, 1650 – 1900	26,747 indexed records
BillionGraves Index	121,880 indexed records

BillionGraves Index on the **FamilySearch.org** website is a name index of burial records courtesy of BillionGraves which is an expansive family history database of records and images from world cemeteries, all tagged with GPS locations. Volunteers around the world capture images of headstones in a cemetery and upload them to this site.

Also, **ScotlandsPeople** have made available online images of almost 200,000 births, deaths and marriages. The newly-available records consist of 98,554 Scottish births in 1918, 38,271 marriages in 1943 and 63,311 deaths in 1968. Births in 1918 were at an all-time low since the introduction of statutory registration in 1855

In the October 2018 newsletter, I informed you that from April 2019, a new **Archive Card Scheme** giving access to 42 archive and record offices in England and Wales would be available to replace the existing free **CARN** and **Wales Reader Ticket System** for family historians, regrettably it's been delayed, this means the launch date will be sometime in August/September 2019. Registration and the card will be free to users. Registration will be online and the record offices will issue the cards when users first visit, I will keep you updated...

Finally, the prices of births, marriages and death certificates in England and Wales will increase on 16th February 2019 from £ 9.25 to £ 11.00 at the same time, the charge for the PDF version will rise from £ 6.00 to £ 7.00 **C'est la vie...**