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Phillips DNA News

www.phillipsdnaproject.com

April 2011

Volume 3 Issue 4

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Please submit news articles or ideas for articles to the editor. Questions about Genetic Genealogy can always be sent to the editor.

Project News

It's April, the month of All Fools Day, Palm Sunday, Passover, Good Friday, and Easter!

At the beginning of March, all DNA project administrators received the following message from Family Tree DNA:

We are excited to announce that we have updated our Y Chromosome Phylogenetic Tree to reflect new haplogroup sub-branches!

Family Tree DNA, in partnership with the YCC, periodically reviews known SNPs in order to evaluate those that meet the requirements to be added to the haplotree. The SNPs that passed this review are now included in the haplotree and considered for deep clade testing.

Along with this update to the tree, we have implemented some changes in the ordering process for deep clade and SNP testing:

- *We now offer a universal deep clade test for \$89. This will identify a customer's terminal SNP for any haplogroup.*
- *If a customer has pending results for a deep clade test, they will automatically be tested according to the new tree.*
- *If a customer has never ordered a deep clade test, they will have the option either to order the universal deep clade for \$89 or order individual SNPs from the tree.*
- *We will no longer be offering a deep clade extension product. For customers interested in upgrading to the new tree, it may be more economical to order the universal deep clade for \$89 if there are 4 or more new SNPs available to them (each SNP is \$29 individually). If there are less than 4 new SNPs available for a customer, they will not be offered the universal deep clade test and should order the SNPs individually from the tree since this is the most cost-effective option. Newly available SNPs are shown on the haplotree in orange.*

The major change to the Phylogenetic Tree is Haplogroup R1b1b2, which has become R1b1a2. Unfortunately, the majority of the men in our Phillips DNA project belong to this sub-haplogroup, so many of the men in our project have been affected. I wish I could tell you this

is an April Fool's joke, but it is not. However, it is important to keep in mind this is just a name change, nothing more. When I first got involved with the DNA project five years ago, R1b1b2 was called R1b1c. Then it got changed to R1b1b2. Now it has been changed to R1b1a2.

Since the Phylogenetic Tree will always be subject to change as new markers are discovered, it is probably a good idea to begin using a simpler designation for your sub-haplogroup, as recommended earlier by the Y Chromosome Consortium (YCC). Here is how their recommendation works. Take the major haplogroup designation - for example, Haplogroup R - followed by the designation of the Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) marker that defines the most downstream branch to which your Y-DNA belongs - for example, L21. Then all you have to remember is that you are R-L21. You won't have to bother with memorizing a new string of numbers and letters each time a change is made to the Phylogenetic Tree. Of course, if a new SNP is discovered and you test positive for it, you will want to begin using the new SNP for the name of your sub-haplogroup, along with the letter of your main haplogroup.

Featured Phillips Story

An Amazing Genealogy Story

By James Phillips, Family Group 20



1902 picture taken at the Phillips home
North of Princeton, Indiana

I'm James Phillips and a member of Phillips Family Group 20 in the Phillips DNA Project. I've been involved in genealogy research seriously for well over thirty years. Sadly, all trails in my Phillips family end with my great-great-grandfather, William Henry Phillips, who was a volunteer in Company H of the Ohio 51st regiment, registering in Roscoe, Ohio in Coshocton County. Many researchers have tried and failed to find his parentage. Through DNA testing, I was able to establish a match to the family of Richard and Francina Hart Phillips who migrated to Coshocton County, Ohio from old Hunterdon County, New Jersey but still have been unable to determine Henry's father.

Through the years of research, I have always been fascinated by the stories I've heard and read on all sides of my family tree. Certainly, there are plenty of gruesome newspaper articles of

lightning strikes, ancestors being impaled on pitchforks or thrown under trains or horses, as well as shifting of children in households, probably due to economic times and death or illness of family members. I've told many of my friends of the most fascinating story to arise from my research which only a genealogist might fully appreciate. I'd like to relate that story here for you.

In 1980, after I received my bachelor's degree from Indiana University, I moved to California to take a job with a college friend who had his own business. I lived in the Bay Area and eventually moved into the city of San Francisco, working in a hospital pharmacy. During that time, through my church, I became acquainted with a woman, Claire, whose family had come to America to escape the civil war in Lebanon. She lived with her mother and sister and through the years, they treated me like family and she remains one of my dearest friends to this day.

In 1984, I decided to travel, backpacking through Europe, the Middle East, and northern Africa. I was gone most of the year. During that time, a man that Claire had met previously returned from New York to San Francisco. He was a graduate of Syracuse University and had lived in San Francisco a few years before I met Claire. In November, I received a letter in Egypt with news that she had accepted his proposal for marriage. There was no way I would miss her wedding, so I traveled on to Tel Aviv, Israel and flew back home in time for the wedding. Through the years after their marriage, Dan and Claire were like family to me. We celebrated the birth of their two sons and every special occasion, including Claire's citizenship.

I decided to apply for graduate school in physical therapy and had to take quite a few pre-requisite courses of sciences. During that time, Dan and Claire always encouraged me and took pride in my accomplishments. We were all very happy when I was accepted into a graduate program although it entailed a move to Indianapolis, IN. Dan told me that he had some family in Indianapolis so he had been there often. I remained in Indianapolis after I received my master's degree. Certainly I missed Claire's family and tried to get out to California for visits every few years.

One night in the winter of 2008 I came home on a Friday night and there was a mysterious message on my answering machine. It was Dan and he told me that his mother was going through some of his grandmother's things and he was pretty sure that they involved me. I had never met Dan's grandmother so I was completely baffled by this comment. I wasn't able to get through to them that night but called the first thing the next morning. When he answered, Dan relayed the following story to me.

His mother had found adoption papers in his grandmother's belongings which showed that her mother, Margaret, was originally a Phillips who had been raised in Princeton, Indiana, my home town. A tragic turn of events happened in 1908 and Margaret's father and two brothers had died of tuberculosis. She and two sisters were put into a children's home by their ill mother, Myrtle. She had intended to retrieve the children when she recovered. During the time, a wealthy couple from Indianapolis offered to adopt Margaret and the offer was accepted.

As Dan was speaking, I knew the entire story. He was calling only because he knew I was from Princeton and he wondered if somehow his family could be my Phillips family. I was able to fill in the blanks as I knew every detail of the story. My great-great-grandparents had lost three sons and two grandsons to tuberculosis in 1908. My great-great-grandfather was ill and there were two other grandchildren living in the household so there was no room for more. Three of their granddaughters were placed in a children's home. Margaret was adopted by the Indianapolis family, Edith was adopted by a family in Winona, Indiana while Rachael was eventually reunited with her mother. I even had a photo taken in 1902 which showed Dan's grandmother and her sister Rachael with their parents and extended family.

I cannot tell you how amazed we were that our great-grandfathers were brothers and that I actually was a blood cousin to the family that treated me so much like true family for so many years. I had even had contact with one of Dan's aunts about five years before discussing the Phillips family but had no idea of her relation to my friend. This remains one of the most amazing stories I've run across in my genealogy research.

Guest Columns

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? LIVE IN LONDON

By Emily Aulicino, <http://genealem-geneticgenealogy.blogspot.com/>



Although attendance at the Fifth Annual Who Do You Think You Are? Live conference in London at the end of February was not the record-breaking venue of 2010, there was a steady stream of attendees.

Family Tree DNA had a larger lecture hall and filled it with three days of presentations. Each day at the opening presentation, Max Blankfeld asked the group who had tested. The vast majority had not which shows the interest as well as the work to still be done on getting more people from the UK to test.

It has been said by some friends I know in England that one reason the English are not as enthusiastic about DNA testing is because they know from where they came. Although it tends to be true that most English have not ventured as far and wide as their counterparts in America, I have found in the last three years I have attended that the interest in DNA testing focuses greatly on learning if perceived cousins are truly cousins, if uncles and nephews are related by blood and all sorts of relationship issues. There are also cases of a person with a unique surname wishing to know if he or she is related to a person in another country with the same unique name. Those issues surfaced in people I tested both last year and this year.

Whatever the case may be, the majority of helpers at the booth this year felt that the level of knowledge among those electing to test had risen since last year. I had two people who had flyers from last year as they were hesitant then to test, but needed no convincing this year. I also noticed that I swabbed more people requesting the Family Finder test than any of the others.

There were many, many presentations (149 in three days!) on various aspects of genealogy geared to the novice as well as for the well-seasoned researcher. Many addressed a range of topics on DNA. Besides Bennett Greenspan and Max Blankfeld of Family Tree DNA providing information on the basics of DNA testing for genealogy, the National Geographic's DNA project, how we have migrated around the world, and the new frontiers of DNA with the Family Finder test, the following presentations were given.

Geoff Swinfield, Professional Genealogist and Family History Researcher, provided insight into finding our ancestors with his presentation, I'm stuck! How can I find my lost ancestors?

Chris Pomery, published author, addressed the use of DNA for genealogy in his presentation, Combining traditional and genetic genealogy: lessons from leading surname projects.

Brian Swann, the European Coordinator for England and Wales for the International Society of Genetic Genealogists (ISOGG), covered DNA recruiting and testing on both sides of the Pond and 21st century tools for the genealogist.

Katherine Borges, director of the International Society of Genetic Genealogists, covered DNA Success Stories.

Dr. Turi King, from the Department of Genetics at the University of Leicester, spoke on Surnames, DNA and Family History, addressing, among other things, the Viking influence upon the genetic make-up of the British Isles.

On Friday, the conference opened at 10:00 and this year we did not stand in the long queue outside, but were able to go through the vendors' door, thanks to passes from Family Tree DNA and ISOGG, since all of us were helping at one booth or the other. As usual, some of us helped swab testers at the Family Tree DNA booth while others manned the ISOGG booth (International Society of Genetic Genealogy).

Again this year, the ISOGG booth organized free testing for males with a specific surname. Family Tree DNA administrators who wished to test people for their projects were willing to pay for a 12 or 37 marker test for men who have the surname that fit their project. This year 115 surnames were made available which was many more than last year. Free tests were given to males with the surnames SPEARMAN, PHILLIPS, TOWNSEND and two MCDONALD.

ACCURACY OF GENEALOGY INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET

The following article is from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyrighted by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>.

Today I read an online message from a reader of this newsletter in which she bemoaned the quality of genealogy information found on the Internet. She went on at some length to say that the information found online is full of inaccuracies, is posted by people who don't know what they are doing, and that "genealogy information found on the Internet should never be trusted."

I was sympathetic to what she wrote until that last part. NEVER be trusted?

I will be the first to agree that there is a lot of inaccurate SECONDARY information on the Internet. But let's not overlook the fact that the Internet also brings us images of ORIGINAL source records as well.

Want to see the record of your great-great-grandparents in the U.S. Census? Click with your mouse and look at the IMAGE of the original entry without leaving your home. Want to see a naturalization record? IMAGES of many of them are available online. Would you like to see granddad's World War I Draft registration form that lists information about parents? The IMAGE of the original document is available online. Want to see an obituary? Several online services provide IMAGES of the newspaper obituaries. And how about the Southern Claims records, many of which were never available before on microfilm? IMAGES of each record are now available online.

Yes, the Internet certainly is a mix of good and bad news, but let's not condemn everything. Looking at images of original source records on the Internet makes us better genealogists than those of us who used to be limited only to transcribed (secondary) sources. We have much more information available today than ever before. Some of it is good information, such as IMAGES of original records. Other information found online is questionable, such as secondary information contributed by someone else. Let's not condemn everything simply because some of it is bad.

We do have an education problem. We need to educate newcomers as to what information is immediately believable versus what information requires independent verification. This education process must be active on all genealogy sites, including this one, and must continue

forever as new genealogists join us. However, I will suggest that this requirement for education should not stop us from looking at images of original records.

There is an old saying that pops to mind, something having to do with babies and bathwater.

Looking forward ten or twenty years, I suspect that eventually all of us will focus primarily on images of original records, as found on the Internet. As millions and millions of additional images come online, the references we all enjoy will continue to improve. I see that as a great advance in genealogy scholarship.