



Doncaster and District Family History Society

Protocols for Sharing Genealogical Research

These guidelines are intended to help members of the D&DFHS get the most out of opportunities to share their research and help others in their search.

In circumstances where you may be:

- contacted by other members of the Society asking you to share research about your common ancestors via the “members interests” lists,
- contacting distant family relatives, or
- are using any of the websites that enable you to share information, these guidelines should help you avoid any problems occurring.

If you are approached for information

- Be a little cautious. You may be happy to help others and share what you have found, but the saying “all give and no take” can apply. You may be doing all the giving and get nothing back in return. If you are happy with that, there will be no problems. You also need to remember that others may only have the same information as you, but that can reassure you that your research is accurate and that you have not missed anything
- If your new contact offers to do research for you, make sure you understand what they are offering to do and whether or not they expect payment for their time or expect you to cover their expenses. Most genealogists will be happy to help another researcher, especially one looking into the same family, but some may be researchers looking for business. It is better to make the relationship clear from the outset than have an embarrassing discussion over unexpected requests for money.
- Ask where they have got their information from, who have they spoken to and where have they searched. This will help you gauge the accuracy of anything they offer you but will also give you a feel about their openness and honesty.

If you want to approach others for information

- Be ready with, and offer to share, your family tree. This will go a long way in gaining the confidence of the person you have contacted by showing openness and a genuine interest in their family
- Be prepared to offer more than you may get in return and then you can ask for the information you require.
- Remember that everyone may not be as interested as you are. You may be contacting people who are really are not interested in family history (hard to believe I know!) or they may know about sensitive issues that they will be reluctant to share.
- Remember that family stories are often one part fact and nine parts fiction. Express gratitude for any information that you have been given and then go away and check it with original sources.