

**Saturday, May 8, 2021**

**A Russian Revelation: A Family Shaped by Significant Historical Events**

10:00 am to 11:30 am

Feature talk

When **Marianne Rasmus** began her family history research journey, she knew little about her maternal grandparents' ancestry. They were an unlikely match, although both were immigrants; one came from Newcastle, England, the other from Orenburg, Russia. In 1927 her grandfather, who died when she was an infant, left his father and siblings behind in Newcastle and came to Canada—sadly, he never saw his family again. Her grandmother died before Marianne knew the important questions to ask about her grandmother's childhood, immigration from Communist Russia, and adjustment to life in Canada. With conventional resources either unavailable or difficult to access, and starting with only a handful of names, Marianne reveals the process and sources used to discover a heritage she knew nothing about. She shares how historical events in both Canada and Europe affected her grandmother in a life-altering fashion, and how, despite historical events destined to separate family members, DNA has helped to shed light on long-unanswered questions.

**About the speaker**

Born and raised in Vancouver, **Marianne Rasmus** spent most of her life in BC, experiencing life on Vancouver Island, in BC's north and in the Fraser Valley. But when the opportunity for a midlife adventure came, Marianne and her husband, Bill, took the plunge and moved to Ottawa in 2013.

After reluctantly taking Canadian History as a “filler” course in college, Marianne discovered an interest in history she never expected. That interest took on new meaning, and some might say became an obsession, when she began her family history journey in 2008, and started to uncover long-forgotten stories in both hers and her husband Bill's family trees. Since becoming a member of BIFHSGO in 2014, Marianne has been active in the society; she has served on the Conference Planning Committee, is currently the Board Treasurer, and is a facilitator for the British Colonial America SIG.