

# Newsletter

Vol. 2 No. 5 May 2009

## From the Director - The Benefits of Long-Term DNA Storage

Every so often, someone will say that there is "no repeat business" in DNA testing. This comment refers to what may very well be the case for many people - that they swab their mouths once and that is the end of it. One test. One payment. One time.

But the people who think that there is no repeat business in DNA testing have not seen my e-mail inbox since Family Tree DNA announced their sale on upgrades (more markers and advanced tests) on May 14th. My inbox has been flooded with upgrade order notifications by my DNA project participants. This form of "repeat business" would not be possible if not for Family Tree DNA's long-term (25 years) storage of DNA samples.

Many DNA companies do not have sample storage, and others offer it for as little as six months to a few years. Some companies charge extra for it, but even this does not insure that you will be able to upgrade the sample at a later date. This is exactly what happened to me with my son's sample at the DNA testing company, Ancestry by DNA (aka DNAPrint).

In 2004, I paid an extra fee for my son's DNA to be stored for 25 years in case I wanted to upgrade his sample for any new tests that were developed. The price I paid [nearly doubled in 2006](#) and was to be paid annually. I am fortunate to only be out twenty dollars since this company [ceased operations](#) in early 2009 and others lost a lot more money than I. The point of this cautionary tale is that consumers should not have to pay for storage when there is no guarantee of future accessibility to the sample.

It is to a DNA company's benefit to offer long-term sample storage for free for what it generates in repeat business. And it is to the consumer's benefit to not have to pay for it. Additionally, the biggest benefit as I described in the [January 2009 ISOGG newsletter](#), is that samples can be upgraded at a later date even if the worst possible scenario occurs. This reason alone is vital for consumers to seek out testing companies with long-term storage. If you have not yet tested, the best advice is to choose a company that offers long-term storage at no additional charge.

-Katherine Borges  
ISOGG Director



*DNA in the Mainstream*  
*recognition and sightings*

## New BBC programme debuting - "The Incredible Human Journey"

A new five-part series, "[The Incredible Human Journey](#)" debuted this month on BBCTwo and on BBC HD. The programme follows Dr. Alice Roberts as she travels the globe examining archaeological and genetic evidence to uncover the origins of the human race. The show has an accompanying [book](#) and [DVD \(European Region 2 format\)](#). A podcast interview with Dr. Roberts is also online. Facebook users can obtain current info and discuss the programme on the [Incredible Human Journey Facebook Group](#) established by ISOGG member, Debbie Kennett.

## U.S. version of "Who Do You Think You Are" rescheduled for Fall lineup

The U.S. version of the popular British television series, "[Who Do You Think You Are?](#)" was originally slated to debut on April 20 but has been postponed until the Fall.



# DNA Success Stories

## Over the Hills

By Adrian Williams

I imagine all genealogists, at one point or another, find perplexing information in secondary source records. I am no different. My grandmother was a Hill by birth. During my research into my Hill lineage, I started seeing some very odd information. While tracking my 3rd great grandmother, Josephine Hill, through the census records, a question kept coming to mind: How in Hades is it that this woman is widowed in every census from 1880 to 1920 and yet every census she keeps having more kids?? And her last name never changes nor does that of her kids! WHAT?!

Well it was also about this time that four simple words, uttered to me by my grandmother many years ago, started to make sense... "Don't dig too deep". Hmmm...and because she passed several years ago, I cannot ask her about these odd findings in my research. Enter her uncle, who is now in his 80's but whose mind is still tack sharp. He knew Josephine...she was his great-grandmother and she lived to the ripe old age of 90.

Now there is some background about Uncle Frank that bears knowing here: he is a highly intelligent man. He graduated from a prestigious university with a degree in Engineering when he was 17. I figured talking with him would open some avenues of research that my average brain was not aware of. When I discussed my findings with him, he quickly enlightened me to the cause for all my research headaches by replying "Oh yeah...Josephine was a hussie. She was never married but she liked to party and all her kids were named after their fathers." Fathers? Plural?? In 1900??? My brain didn't know which to react to first...Uncle Frank's colorful description of his turn-of-the-century grandmother or the revelation that she had apparently birthed six children all by different men. Admittedly, that would explain the very odd names that her kids had. But the main problem I have now is trying to figure out how in the world to track down this mystery paternal lineage. According to Uncle Frank, these fathers were traveling salesman...great. A quick perusal of the public records tells me that Uncle Frank's recollection of the naming convention is likely incorrect as his grandfather's first and middle name (apparently the father's first and last name) is not found.

It's a good thing I know about DNA. And it's a good thing that Uncle Frank is a curious man.

So I get Uncle Frank swabbed...much akin to playing a modern day William Tell...trying to shoot a gnat off the head of a pin from a mile away....with a BB gun. But, why not? We may get lucky....right??

His results came in and at 37 markers...he's matching the Strain family...and matching them exactly...they are undoubtedly kin. But who the heck is this Strain family? It is most certainly not a family name that is known in the area where Josephine was from...could it really be this was a travelling salesman? So I take a look at the Strain DNA project results. They are an old Pennsylvania family that I have never heard of. As I look through their groupings, I stumble upon a real surprise. The group of guys that Uncle Frank matches all belong to a very specific and unique offshoot of the family. A large branch of the family moved

to the same county that my Hills were in, and within a few years, they all left. Except for one family. This family stayed in the county and changed their name to Strayhorn...which was instantly familiar to me as an old county name. At the time Josephine started partying, there were four possible Strayhorn men that could have fathered my 2nd-great-grandfather.

So now, here I am. A couple months ago, I had a great mystery of immaculate conceptions six times over. Then to find out it was not so immaculate, and with the additional likelihood that I would never know the paternal lineage of that family. And now, I have several genetically proven cousins all descended from a very specific family that is unique to the county my family was in.

I have a surname. I have a direction to look in. If it was not for the DNA, I imagine this mystery would have gone to the grave unsolved.

For more DNA success stories or to submit yours, visit:

<http://www.isogg.org/successstories.htm>



# DNA in the News

## DNA in the News

### [DNA may identify sailor 68 years after Pearl Harbor](#)

- The Dallas Morning News - 25 May 2009

### [New theory in skull mystery](#)

- Wairapa Times-Age - 21 May 2009

### [Family Secrets: An Adopted Man's 26-Year Quest for His Father](#)

- Wall Street Journal - 2 May 2009

### [Vast language, gene study unveils our history](#)

- San Francisco Chronicle - 1 May 2009

### [Remains officially declared to be explorer Everett Ruess](#)

- Standard-Examiner - 30 Apr 2009

### [DNA test to prove Bronze Age link](#)

- BBC News - 20 Apr 2009

For more articles:

<http://www.isogg.org/newsarchives.htm>

The ISOGG newsletter is a membership benefit of the world's first society founded for the promotion and education of genetic genealogy, ISOGG - The International Society of Genetic Genealogy. Membership is FREE! Members automatically receive the newsletter to share the latest news and happenings in the world of genetic genealogy.

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