



## TALK TO YOUR FAMILY FIRST!

When you are starting to discover your family history it can be most helpful to obtain information from living relatives. Think of all the things they might be able to tell you about themselves and other members of the family and then write down some questions to ask them.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Ask them about themselves, their parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters. What were their names, their nicknames, and for women their surnames before they were married?
2. Where and when were they born? Married? If they have died, where and when? Where are they buried?
3. Where did they live and when? Can you describe their house? Neighbourhood? Town? Is their house still there? Do they have photos?
4. Where did they attend school? What did they study? When did they leave school?
5. What jobs did they do? As students? As adults? Did they enjoy their work? What did they enjoy about it most?
6. What about hobbies? Sports and other pastimes? Clubs and churches they may have belonged to? Holiday destinations, as children and as adults.
7. Do they have any photographs, keepsakes or documents that may have been passed down the family? Do they have a favourite photo of themselves as a child? A wedding photo? Other events? Would they allow you to copy these for your family history?

### **WHAT TO DO**

Using the questions above as a guide, make up a questionnaire to use when interviewing your family members. Then go talk to them!

### **Things to Think About**

If you have relatives who live too far away to visit in person, you can phone, e-mail, Skype or write to them by regular mail about your interest in family history and ask them how they would like to participate. These days it's possible to talk to people on the other side of the world as if they were in the room with you!

It can also be interesting to get together a group of your relatives, sharing family stories and photographs. You never know what you might find out! Be sure to make notes, sound or video recordings. It's all part of your family history.