

THE Y-DNA PROJECT

July 2017

Report from Elizabeth O'Donoghue/Ross, the Society's Group Administrator

As I indicated in my January report, I am shifting to a semi-annual report rather than the quarterly reports I posted in the past.

The O'Donoghue Society and our Y-DNA Project participants deserve an active management team to process the data from the test results and keep the project pages, both at the Family Tree website and the Society website, up to date. I am actively seeking interested parties to consider pitching in and helping with some of the tasks involved.

There are various needs, such as contacting new participants to welcome them and obtain their family history, checking for new results coming in and amending the spreadsheet when necessary, updating the information pages at times, compiling the periodic reports, etc. None of these items are individually onerous, but it would be very helpful to me if I had a hand or two to share the responsibility. Eventually, the time will come when I will no longer be in a position to head the project (hopefully a very long way away) and if other co-administrators are already in place to help fill the gap, this will insure the project will not suffer and will continue to grow and prosper. We really do need your help! I hope that some of you will consider joining me at some level of participation. Perhaps you might assume responsibility for the genetic group to which you belong, for example. You can email me directly at elizabethod@eircom.net or contact Rod at rod@odonoghue.co.uk if you have any questions or ideas.

Over the last six months, we've had another BIG Y test come in that has helped flesh out the 'B. Eoghanacht Raithlind/Mór-Ross C - Z253' group. Rod has tested to A494+, and Kevin Donahue, through the BIG Y test, has tested to A496+ (and a number of other equivalent SNPs) a step downstream from Rod. Further downstream testing could clarify if Rod matches Kevin at his same level, establishing a surname-specific branch for their subgroup.

Last year Tim Donohue ('Building San Francisco - Visionaries and Laborers' in the April 2017 Journal issue) had tested the BIG Y and identified his own branch - BY114654+ - to separate his Donohue line from other nearby groups of other surnames under DF5. Tighe has recently tested an R1b-FGC5780 SNP Pack that was specifically designed to include almost all of the SNPs of those groups, and he matches Tim at nearly all of his 'private' SNPs, suggesting a rather close relationship, even though they haven't yet identified a common ancestor. They now have their own surname-specific group.

Tighe's family history places his ancestors most recently from Clare, after being banished from Kerry to the Burren during the Tighe Wars – see my article on 'Captain Right' in the Jan 2004 Journal (limited to member access – a good reason to join the Society if you haven't already!).

Through Family Finder, Tim found a match with a female with an O'Donoghue lineage in her family. Though Tim wasn't previously aware of where his own family originated, his female match did know where her family originated – in Clare.

She contacted a male Donohoe cousin who tested to see how he matches. Frank (Abie) tested his Y-DNA and at 37 markers he matches Tighe exactly, Tim at a genetic distance of only 1, and John Roger (the other gentleman in their cluster [now deceased] whose family are also from Clare) at a GD of 2. He is now upgrading to 111 markers to drill down more on how close the connections may be. These gents are all obviously descended from those O'Donoghues who made the forced exodus to Clare at the end of the 18th century – 'To Hell or Connaght'. Tighe's family history has tied them all together and given them a history of which they were not previously aware.

We've had eight new members join us since the last report. Several of them have only tested autosomal DNA and do not display in the Results spreadsheet, but they are related to O'Donoghues in one way or another. For those who have STR tested, their haplotypes places them in various groups from 'B. Eoghanacht Raithlind/Mór-Ross A - DF25>S6185' to 'C. Cavan Group A - M222' to the 'E. Uí Dhonnchadha of the Déisi Mhumhan?? - L226' to the 'I. Haplogroup I' group.

If someone in the group who has tested autosomal DNA would be interested in joining me as an admin and getting involved with those in the project who have tested aDNA and helping them explore those relationships, that would be a wonderful addition to the project. As I pointed out above about Tim Donohue's success through a Family Finder match, there is potential there. I'm just not the one to be of much help.

The most recent upgrade to 111 markers for a gentleman in the Eóganacht Cashel/Glens group has helped us identify that his ancestors shared a common ancestor with Geoffrey of The Glens. This can be determined by the unusual value of 13 at DYS485, present in the 69th marker in the list. As I mentioned in the January 2017 report, the SNP testing that has been done, be it through individual tests, SNP Packs or the BIG Y, has demonstrated that the level of kinship amongst the various tribes is broader than we had initially thought. This is typical across all Irish surnames, and the larger the group the wider the variations.

Some surnames have only one eponymous ancestor. This can be both a blessing and a curse, insofar as the variations, including different haplogroups altogether, can make things rather complicated when trying to research the clan history. In the case of our surname O'Donoghue/Donohoe, we continue to find more historical tribes mentioned with a spelling variation of our surname (I believe Rod added a few more just recently in our Historical Origins link on the Society website) so there are more options for us. The greatest difficulty is when the matching gentlemen don't know where in Ireland their family originated, so it can be difficult to assign a possible tribe to them. We have seven different clusters for which we have not yet identified their probable tribal grouping. If any of you have any thoughts, particularly if you are in one of those unidentified clusters, do please share. You may be aware of something we have missed.

As the number of results increase, we have more to work with to discover our heritage.

*A reminder - if anyone sees mistakes or omissions in any of the text we have about the project or on the Family Tree website, please let me know. Suggestions are always welcome.