

THE Y-DNA PROJECT

Quarterly report from Elizabeth O'Donoghue, the Society's Group Administrator

The end-of-year discount at Family Tree for new participants seems to be becoming an annual event – I hope it continues. Rod reminded everyone on his mailing list of the offer, and we have had a number of individuals join the ranks in the last month or so this year, as we did last year. Hopefully we will see the results in the next quarterly report. There may be a discount offered again in the spring for upgrades, for those of you who are considering doing so. We will let you know.

We have several upgrades to higher markers in the Glens tribe and a new member of the Breifne Group A.

Up to now, two members of our project did not have a haplogroup predicted, so I asked Family Tree to give them the free Y-Hap-Backbone test, which they have committed themselves to offer in such cases. The results came in early November and they now have a haplogroup assignment in the first spreadsheet A of our 'Results'. They only provided the basic R1b1b2, but at least that is definite.

I also asked them to review the results of our Glens member, Brian O'Donoghue, since some of his values seemed quite disparate from the rest of the tribe. The more members that joined, the more unlikely it seemed that the numbers were accurate. Some time back, Joe Donohoe did the same for a participant in the Breifne Group A, to discover an error in the processing. The same had occurred for Brian. His accurate figures and corrected TMRCA's are included in the new spreadsheets.

The 'Walk the Y' testing that has been going on has identified a previously undiscovered SNP in an individual with the Irish Type III haplotype. A number of people with that haplotype have been testing for this new L226 SNP, and so far it seems exclusive to those with that modal. One of the members of our Type III group has received results for the L226 test and he is positive. A member of the Glens and the Mór tribe have also ordered the test, and they are both negative.

This being the case, those who are Irish Type III almost certainly cannot be genetically related to the Eoghanacht tribes within the suggested timeframe. As more information becomes available, I will continue to update you with the results being discovered. It is possible that the traditional genealogies were fabrications to engender a sense of continuity between the tribes or to elevate a tribe rising in power to equate with the lineage of the senior ruling tribes. There are other instances of such constructs – for instance, the tradition of the three Collas that Joe Donohoe discussed in his recent report. His research shows that it is unlikely that all the tribes supposedly descending from the three brothers did so (see Joe's BCP Report 5 Part 7 on the main page of the yDNA Project link).

Practically speaking, the likelihood of the tradition of the Eoghanacht descending from one man – Eoghan Mór – is questionable. As it is, the three Eoghanacht tribes

in our project – the Cashel/Glens, the Raithlind/Mór and the Ruis Airgit (tentatively attributed to our group of Irish Type III men) all have different identifiable modals.

Whether it's likely that they have a common ancestor in the timeframe that Eoghan Mór is supposed to have lived is difficult to say. There continues to be so much debate on the Rootsweb DNA list to which I subscribe about what mutation rates, variances, etc. should apply to calculating TMRCA, that I have little confidence in attempting to compare the haplotypes myself in a serious effort to identify when our different Eoghanacht tribes have a common ancestor. It might possibly be before their ancestors were even *in* Ireland, but then again, it may prove to be possible that one Spanish/Scythian Milesian is the common ancestor. (The connection of the large cluster of Mór members who share a value of 12 at DYS392 with individuals in Romania has been covered in an article in the Oct 2006 Journal.)

If it is determined that these different groups all have different SNP's delineating them, however, that reduces the likelihood that they have a common ancestor in at least several thousand years. An example of that difference is our Donnachie participant, who matches a group of men that I had initially included in the Mór tribe. But he is in a different subclade than the Glens and Mór tribes – with an SNP of U152 vs the Glens and Mór and Ruis Airgit's L21 – so there is no tribal connection there. None of our other apparent matching O'Donoghue participants have had an SNP test to confirm if they truly match Mr. Donnachie or not, so until we get more information, we can't be clear if their apparent STR haplotype match is accurate.

Since there are several participants who have SNP results by now, I have added a column in Spreadsheet B to indicate the results if anyone has been tested beyond the basic R1b1b2. Some participants have had Deep Clade tests done before the newer SNP's were discovered, so they would need to order additional tests to confirm their current position on the Haplotype.

I have reorganized the spreadsheets somewhat and have amalgamated Spreadsheets B & C into a new Spreadsheet B, which contains three worksheets – one for the Glens/Mór Eoghanacht, another for the Cavan, and a third for the other tentative tribal assignments and the remainder of the participants, in Unidentified Clusters, Unaffiliated, and those in haplogroup R1a and I. The Results page is updated to reflect these changes.

Thanks to the positive feedback I received regarding the inclusion of a worksheet with genetic distance in the TMRCA spreadsheets, I've retained them this quarter. I welcome any feedback or suggestions to improve the content and information for your understanding and research.

Happy New Year to you all.