

Clan MacKenzie Society of Canada Mackenzie/McKenzie Surname DNA Project

in Association with
Family Tree DNA, of Houston, Texas

We invite all male Mackenzies (however the name is spelled) to join in this exciting new project to help connect your family tree to other close family Mackenzies through the analysis of you DNA y-chromosome.

The cost is US\$99 per person.

Candidates for this project will be required to provide their name and an email address so that feedback can be provided and so contact with other close kin is available.

Because of the CONFIDENTIALITY aspect your results will not be publicized, except, that your name and email address will be passed on to others who share your Y-chromosome. Once you are able to contact each other then, of course, it is then up to you to decide how much information on your family tree you wish to pass on. THIS IS A GENEALOGY PROJECT and has nothing to do with identifying paternity issues.

WHAT IS THE Y-CHROMOSOME?

All males are born with one y and one x chromosome. Women are born with two x chromosomes. The y-chromosome is passed UNCHANGED (except for a mutation about every 500 generations) from father to son only. Therefore if two people share the same y-chromosome then it is reasonably certain that they both descend from a common male ancestor and since this project only involves people with the name of Mackenzie then it becomes a near certainty that they are related – and that is what genealogy is all about. Two people sharing their family trees with each other might endeavour to discover where their respective families connect. That may not be possible, as the common male ancestor may have lived several hundred years ago.

How does the analysis work?

You will be sent a sampling kit and will be asked to (painlessly) scrape the inside of your mouth and send the result to Family Tree DNA, who will process the result through the University of Arizona. You will be advised of the result. The analysis will measure the findings against others of the same name against 12 markers. You will be advised of the names and email addresses of others with the same 12 markers (or even 11 markers), as they are likely descended from the same male Mackenzie ancestor as yourself. It is possible at a later date to request purchase further analyses based on a 25 or even a 37 marker test and this will confirm whether or not the relationship is recent – say within the last 500 years. Your DNA will be stored for 25 years at no extra cost.

What about the Ladies?

Unfortunately since females do not have a y-chromosome this project cannot involve them personally. So Mackenzie ladies should, in such circumstances, contact a near male Mackenzie relation to undertake the test: a brother, father, male cousin, etc.

How do I proceed?

Send your name and address to the Project Coordinator, Alan McKenzie, Lieutenant to Cabarfeidh for Canada at alan@mkz.com. If you do not have email but wish to participate then write to him at 580 Rebecca Street, Oakville, Ontario, Canada L6K 3N9. If, however, you are in a hurry, then complete the QUICK START form. We would encourage males to order Y-DNA37 as it traces back the straight male MacKenzie line.

<http://www.familytreedna.com/group-join.aspx?Group=McKenzie>

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You will be sent the necessary instructions, and can be invoiced, or you can pay by secure credit card. Full confidentiality will be preserved by all parties.

For more details on DNA, the y-chromosome, and Family Tree DNA look up the following website at www.familytree.com

This Invitation is being advertised in all countries where there is a Clan Mackenzie Society. We anticipate, from our initial enquiries, that this Project will be a huge success, and will answer a lot of questions about the name of Mackenzie in the Highlands of Scotland.

BACKGROUND of the Mackenzie/McKenzie Surname DNA Project:

This project originated as a family project in the USA and the details of this project can be seen at the following web site: <http://theellisons.net/dna/index.htm>

Subsequently the Clan MacKenzie Society in Canada decided to try to initiate a worldwide Mackenzie/McKenzie DNA Project and the owners of the original project kindly agreed to integrate their findings with those of the Clan Mackenzie Society's DNA initiative, and we thank the family accordingly and congratulate them for having made an important start in tracing the ancestors of their McKenzies via their DNA.

This Project hopes to enlist hundreds of Mac/McKenzies worldwide and process their yDNA and provide the first major DNA database of the MacKenzie Clan. This will be achieved by placing announcements in all of the newsletters of the MacKenzie Clan Societies in the world; these include the societies in Scotland, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. We anticipate that some 2,000 members of these societies will generate a significant number of volunteers. From this database we anticipate that there will be a number of major families sharing the same yDNA.

HISTORY:

The Mackenzie clan comes from the Highlands of Scotland and as one of the largest clans they dominated a wide area comprising nearly all of the County of Ross and Cromarty, overflowing into Sutherland and Inverness-shire. The Clan experienced several waves of emigration and this project seeks to identify family groups who are likely related through their yDNA results. The names of MacKenzie, McKenzie and McKinzie are the same name. Other names, such as Kenzie, Kinzie, Kenny, Kinnie, McKennie, etc., are derived from the same surname and genealogists with these various name are encouraged to participate and check the validity of this assumption and help prove their genealogical heritage.

This is what the historian Skene wrote in the 19th century:

“It has been shown, that from the earliest period down to the end of the 5th century, that part of Scotland which extends to the north of the Firths of Forth and Clyde, was at all times inhabited by a single nation termed by the Romans at first Caledonians and afterwards, Picts . . . We have proved that the northern Picts occupied the whole of the Highlands as late as the end of the 9th century; we have shown that they spoke the same language, and bore the same national name as the Highlanders did; and lastly, we have traced the Highlanders as in possession of the Highland districts, up to the very

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period in which we had previously found these districts inhabited by the northern Picts. These facts then supported as they are by evidence of no ordinary description, leads us to this simple result, that the Highlands of Scotland have been inhabited by the same nation from the earliest period to the present day.

This observation is of critical importance to us as genealogists. Since there was no known major immigration to the Highlands of Scotland of any consequence (except, perhaps, the Celts from Ireland), anybody who is a Mackenzie and can trace his or her recent ancestors to the Highlands can be reasonably assured that he (or she) is kin to not only other Mackenzies but probably to all Highlanders. Furthermore, that kinship is likely to be stronger with those clans who lived in or near Mackenzie territory such as the clans Matheson, MacLennan, MacRae, Fraser, Ross, Munro, Urquhart, etc.

Consider the following arithmetical calculation as a proof. Let us assume that a child is born when its parents are, on average, 28 years of age. Each child must, of course, have two parents, four grandparents, eight great grandparents, sixteen great great grandparents and so on doubling with each generation. By going back five generations (or 140 years) each child has thirty two ancestors. If, however, we go back thirty generations, i.e. to the year 1146 we each of us have the staggering total of 1,073,741,824 ancestors! How can we have had so many ancestors when such a number exceeded the population of the world for 1146? Furthermore, it is unlikely that the population of the Highlands would have been as high as even 100,000 in 1146.

It means, of course, that each of our ancestors in that era must, at best, have been a common ancestor about 10,000 times on average (1 billion divided by 100,000). Therefore it is clear that if we take two random Highlanders they too are going to share common ancestors 10,000 times going back to 1146.

SURNAMES IN THE PROJECT:

Mackenzie, MacKenzie, McKenzie, McKinzie, etc. (See note above)

REQUIREMENTS:

Since a Surname Project in essence traces members of a family that share a common surname, and since females (a) do not carry their father's Y-DNA, and (b) acquire a new surname by the way of marriage, in order to be relevant to the Surname Project, the tested individual must be a male; and that he wants to check his paternal line (father's father's father's...). The test to be ordered is either the Y-DNA12, Y-DNA25 or Y-DNA37. Females who are keen to check their Mac/McKenzie ancestry should look for a brother, father, uncle or male cousin with the Mac/McKenzie surname to be tested. Females may also order a test for themselves, which will be the mtDNA or mtDNAPlus, but the results of this test cannot be tied to the Surname Project.

QUESTIONS:

Not sure if this is a situation that applies to you? Want to obtain additional information? Contact the Project Coordinator, Alan McKenzie, Lieutenant to Cabarfeidh, Clan MacKenzie Society, Canadian Chapter, 580 Rebecca Street, Oakville, Ontario, Canada L6K 3N9. email: alan@mkz.com Phone: 905-842-2106

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DNA Project – An Update

Just over one year ago, in October 2004, the Mackenzies started a DNA project for all males with the name of Mackenzie/McKenzie etc. Members of the Clan MacKenzie Societies around the world were invited to participate and have the y-chromosome of their DNA analyzed. The y-chromosome passes from father to son only. Thus two people named Mackenzie sharing the same y-DNA are able to discover by communicating with each other to see if they are closely related. Since October 2004 96 Mac/McKenzies have joined the project and 80 results are in so far. These results are posted on the following web page: www.clanmackenzie.ca/Links.html ~ MacKenzie DNA Update. You will see that many results are posted for different members for 12, 25 or 37 markers. The regions on the web site, which shows a number of Mackenzies batch-highlighted with a colour indicates that this group share a most recent common ancestor. Each member is automatically advised by e-mail when they get a match and the respective members then contact each other and try to discover a relationship through the exchange of paper family trees. To date we have had a number of excited members who have discovered relationships previously unknown. The relationships may be very recent – the last three or four generations or may be much more distant in time – like 400 or 500 years. The more matches that are recorded the more likelihood of a close relationship. I have 34 out of 37 matches with my own 4th McKenzie cousin. This tallies with the odds that we relate at that distance.

The DNA program is an additional resource for genealogy. In particular it is helpful to those many members of the clan living in countries far from the Scottish homeland and where they are unable to obtain a reliable source back to Scotland.

Family Tree DNA of Phoenix AZ, who runs these projects for over 7,000 names, are receiving DNA samples from new subscribers at the rate of over one thousand a week. Many members have discovered people with a matching DNA who are not named Mac/McKenzie. In asking the question why this is, it is important to realize that Gaelic-speaking Highlanders were very late in adopting English-style surnames. Although there are many Mackenzies recorded going back to the 1400s, nevertheless as recent as only 300 years ago masses of Highlanders had Gaelic surnames (which no longer exist) and started to adopt clan surnames, either because they lived on clan lands or they believed they related to the Mackenzie chiefs. There is the famous case of Fraser tenants being asked to change their name to Fraser in exchange for a boll of meal.

We have reached the point where we now have a usable database of Mac/McKenzies and we need to make this even more useful by expanding the database by recruiting many more members. The process is simple and painless involving scraping the inside of both cheeks with a small toothbrush type

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implement for two samples of DNA. These are then examined at the University of Arizona, which processes many tens of thousands of these samples. The cost varies according to whether one wants 12, 25 or 37 markers. 12 markers costs US\$99 plus \$2 postage if the person is in the USA. One can also request an mtDNA (mitochondrial DNA test), which examines the x-chromosome passed on by the mother to both son and daughter. Ladies may participate in this also but it does not provide much help with genealogy since a woman's surname does not pass on. Dr Bryan Sykes of Oxford has written a book to show that all women in Europe descend from just seven women between 18,000 and 100,000 years ago. He calls them the "Seven Daughters of Eve".

We need more male Mackenzies to join the DNA Project. You must have a Mackenzie or variation surname, you must be on e-mail, otherwise we cannot communicate frequently as the results pour in. If you want to join and need more information I suggest you go to www.familytreedna.com for further information. If you join directly tell them you are joining the Mackenzie surname project otherwise the cost is considerably higher. OR; contact the MacKenzie DNA Project Coordinator: Alan McKenzie, Commissioner and Lieutenant to Cabarfeidh, Clan MacKenzie Society, Canada at alan@mkz.com - phone: 905-842-2106.

We are already one of the major names connected with Family Tree DNA. Join and help us and yourself build a large and meaningful database for Mackenzie genealogists.

Many thanks,

Alan