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Three times great-grandfather reveals skeleton in my closet

6...rate tree dating back to 1665.

Allan, a former police officer and university lecturer in computer and business studies, denies that he's an expert genealogist, but I believe otherwise. I have seen him in action. Thanks to his work — all from the keys on his laptop — my tree currently features 507 relatives and 78 photos and documents.

Family tree research has been popular for decades, but the trend seems to have really taken off with the arrival of the Internet. No doubt most people tracing their British roots hope they will ultimately find royalty in their blood, but no such luck for me so far.

I have come to appreciate, however, how my English ancestors were struggling to make ends meet, so in the early 1900s they decided to seek a better life in Canada.

That paved the way for the good standard of living that their descendants, like myself, enjoy today.

I have to admit, though, that a finding on my tree has revealed a skeleton in my closet. One of my three times great-grandfathers was shipped off to Australia for stealing. Allan located several newspaper articles citing this ancestor's shenanigans.

But I prefer Allan's recent finding of a family line in Wakefield that links my tree to his. Yes, we are family. What are the odds?

Progress on my tree continues. It's fast and efficient when Allan goes to work; agonizingly slow when I take a crack at it.

But Allan has convinced me that the roadblocks I have come across are common, and with experience, I will find my way around them.

There's still much work to be done — many family lines that haven't yet been explored...a lot to learn. It's endless really.

I have an introduction on my tree website that includes an acknowledgement of all the work Allan has done.

It reads: *A special thank you to Allan Green for his research expertise and extensive contributions in the development of this tree. Without his leadership and assistance, this project wouldn't be possible.*

I could repeat this as many times as the number of ancestors on my tree and it still wouldn't be enough.

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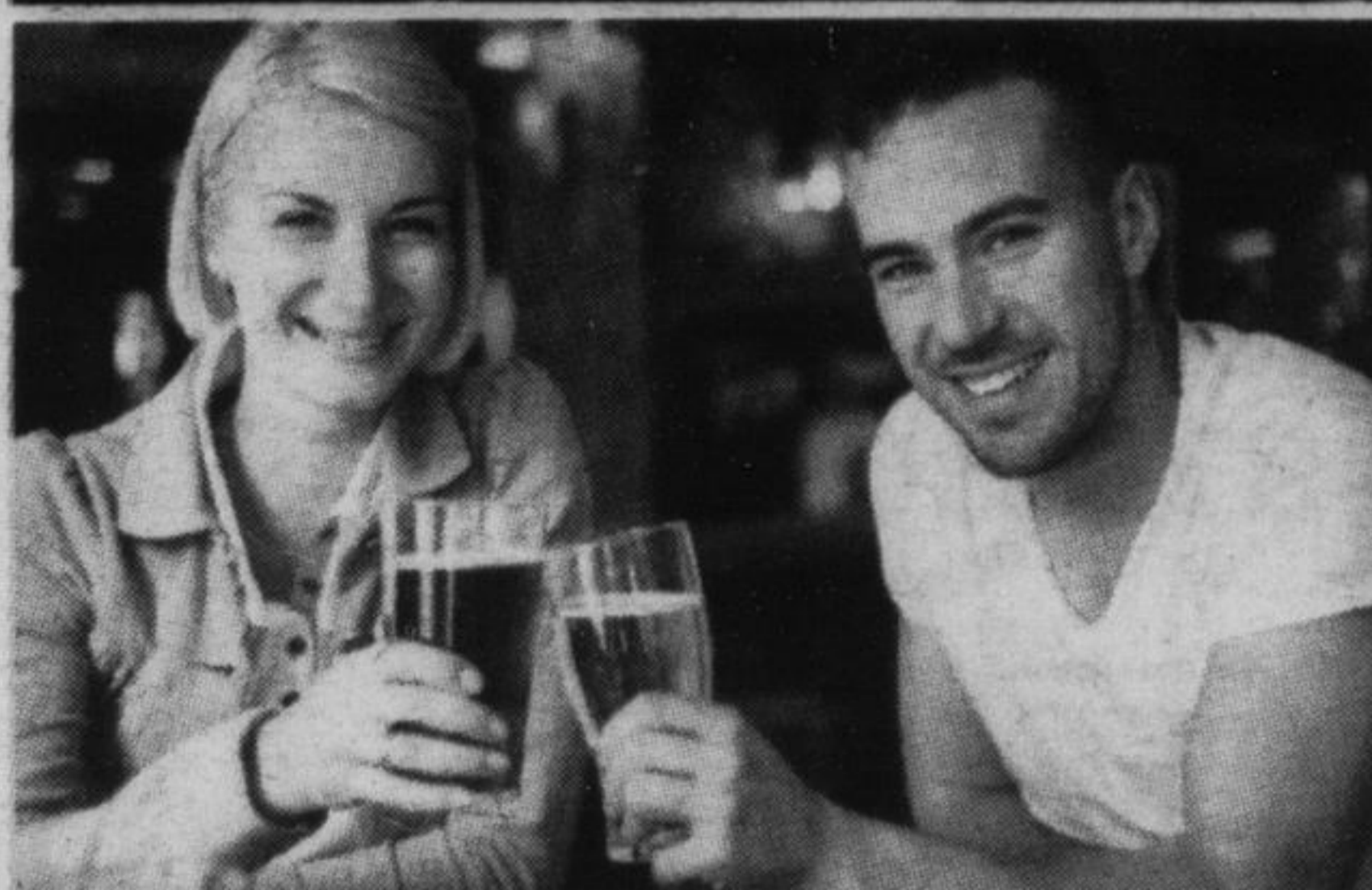
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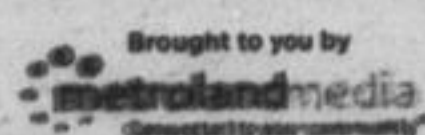
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