



Friends & Foundation *of the* Rochester Public Library

115 South Avenue ~ Rochester, NY 14604 ~ 585.428.8325 ~ ffrpl.org



Nancy Bloom in the Local History & Genealogy Division of Central Library, holding a copy of the newspaper articles that started her down the genealogy path.

“I realized I was from Rochester, too” – Digging Up Hidden Family Roots at the Central Library

To Nancy Bloom, discovering her family genealogy was more than a hobby – it gave her a sense of being rooted in Rochester.

After retiring from Pfizer, Nancy and her husband decided that they wanted to bring their children closer to their grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins in Rochester. They moved from Groton, Connecticut, the site of Pfizer’s research headquarters, to Pittsford, just minutes away from her husband’s extended family.

Nancy’s father, who grew up in Buffalo, had mentioned that he thought his family had a connection to Rochester as well, but he had no further information. That passing comment set Nancy on the trail. First stop: the Local History & Genealogy Division of Central Library.

“I was amazed by the resources and the depth of knowledge of the librarians,” Nancy said.

On a librarian’s hunch, before diving into the Library’s databases, Nancy went through a very thick manila folder of old newspaper clippings catalogued under “B.” The next-to-last clipping was a death notice for her great-uncle, Isaac Bloom, the son of Falk Bloom – Nancy’s great grandfather! “I had always thought that my great-grandparents lived and died in Eastern Europe, but the article mentioned that Isaac had come to this country as an infant with his father, Falk.”

“When I read the article, I started to cry,” Nancy said. “I realized I was from Rochester, too.”

Further research with Local History directories and databases allowed Nancy to create a family tree and discover that Falk Bloom and the family had lived on Kelly Street, in the same vicinity as Nancy’s husband’s family. The families may have even known each other.

She also found and visited Falk Bloom’s grave in Mt. Hope Cemetery, a profound experience. “In a real sense, I had roots in Rochester,” she said, “and an immediate connection and sense of responsibility for this community.”

Having caught the genealogy bug, Nancy researched her husband’s family tree as a gift to her mother-in-law for her 90 th birthday. She created a photo book with maps of where the family had lived, pictures of census and marriage records and even the names of the boats that brought her mother-in-law’s family to America. She hopes to repeat the process for her own mother in honor of her upcoming 90th birthday.