



This summer sees Series 2 and 3 of popular observational documentary series Heir Hunters return for the second time to BBC ONE for an eight week run from 12th July. The show follows the work of a number of different probate research companies as they attempt to track down the unwitting beneficiaries of estates worth thousands of pounds.

When someone dies you would expect that their worldly possessions would go to their nearest and dearest but if the deceased had no known relatives and there was no last will and testament then it goes to the Government, unless the "heir hunters" step in.

Heir Hunters follows probate research firms' investigators as they race against the clock and the competition to track down long lost relatives and bring them the news, both good and bad. Combining elements of fortune hunting, genealogy and ultimately life-changing moments, there are different stories covered in each episode, including a man who left a million pounds narrowly escaping a pauper's funeral and a very unusual and shocking discovery that a close relative had invented the atomic bomb.

Heir Hunters Series 2 and 3 will transmit on BBC ONE from 12th July at 9.15am

Series 5 is currently in production.

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For more information please contact Lucy Plosker or Dan Lloyd at Avalon on: 020 7598 7222, lucyp@avalonuk.com or dani@avalonuk.com



Notes to Editors:

It is made clear in every programme that some of these companies charge commission. The amount of commission varies greatly according to the complexity of a case, and is not disclosed in the programme as this is a confidential matter for the heir and the company.

Heir Hunting requires tactical skills, ingenuity, creativity, tenacity and a host of other aptitudes to track down errant beneficiaries potentially worldwide.

People are marrying less and often live with a partner who has no legal rights of inheritance. If you live with a partner who has not made a will chances are if they die their living relatives would collect any assets unless jointly owned.

Children in a typical modern family unit can have different parents due to previous relationships and marriages of their current parents. Tracing children's births often reveals unknown fathers, bringing some claims to a dead stop as certified proof of relationships is needed when making a claim on intestate estates.

The charges made by Heir Hunters vary from case to case with some charging flat fees and others, where the value of estate may be unknown can be charged on a commission basis by a percentage. When a percentage fee is charged it is based on the estimated value of an estate, time spent researching it and resources required to prove the case - more complex and foreign cases drawing the greater percentages but these would cover the costs of probate lawyers and barristers as many foreign cases need to be proven in court.

Heir Hunters are fulfilling a vital need in ensuring monies are reunited with next of kin rather than end up with the state for the sake of skill and ingenuity in tracking down rightful heirs. Their business is speculative and they only get paid if heirs are found and a case successfully proven to the right authorities – many cases come to nothing.

Heir Hunters include Fraser and Fraser, Hoopers, Celtic Research, Elliot and Whitme, Cat Whiteaway and Census Searches Ltd.



SERIES 2 BILLINGS:

Following the work of probate researchers as they search for heirs of people who have died without leaving a will, leaving thousands of pounds unclaimed can often mean a windfall of thousands of pounds. A knock on the door could be about to lead to a fortune – follow the action as sometimes tragic news is broken and people lives changed. The series also explores the social history behind the stories discovering why families lose touch plus could there be money coming your way? We list estates still to be claimed. For more info visit <http://www.bbc.co.uk/heirhunters>

Episode 1: Hilliard/Edwards – TX 12th July

The heir hunters have to break some tragic news and after an unexpected windfall a pensioner goes on the trip of a lifetime flying in a helicopter for the first time.

Episode 2: Chambers/Axen – TX 13th July

Taking gambles in their investigation of a £60,000 estate pays off for the heir hunters. And an appeal for help on a case they simply cannot solve.

Episode 3: Atkins/Eberall – TX July 14th July

The heir hunters re-unite a fragmented family and how a man who left a million pounds narrowly escaped a pauper's funeral.

Episode 4: Bestwick/Penney – TX 15th July

The heir hunters struggle with a missing clue and two beneficiaries discover a family link to one of the most shocking events of the 20th century – they discover that a close relative invented the atomic bomb.

Episode 5: Higgins/Brinkerhoff – TX 16th July

The heir hunters track down beneficiaries to a £75,000 estate and Lady Teviot resolves the mystery of the GI bride.

Episode 6: Heath/Alban – TX 19th July

The heir hunters lose time making wrong decisions on a £200,000 investigation and a new lead re-opens an old case where a one armed body found in a burned out house is finally identified – and leads to a story of an adopted family and family secrets.

Episode 7: Bevan/Smith – TX 20th July

Emotions run high for one lucky lady when she inherits part of a £200,000 fortune and a knock on the door from heir hunters enables a lonely pensioner to find his long-lost cousin.

Episode 8: Atkinson/Weatherill – TX 21st July

The heir hunters uncover a family secret and a gravestone unveils some vital clues.

Episode 9: Bevan/Flynn – TX 22nd July



A pensioner who was orphaned in the Blitz age 5 was bought up in a Welsh orphanage, but a call from an heir hunter leads to a discovery that she does have living family. She meets her relatives for the first time and finds her mother's lost grave. The heir hunters also investigate a case worth over £100,000.

Episode 10: Fisher/Bowley – TX 23rd July

The heir hunters unravel the mystery of a man who left home as a teenager and was never heard from again. A miner whose tough life down the mines lead to his early death from lung disease – years later he is awarded posthumous compensation which brings a surprise windfall to his relatives.

Episode 11: Hicks/Struebig – TX 26th July

The team maps out a family tree that reaches right across the globe and a cousin learns the sad news of her relative's death.

Episode 12: Smith/Stirling – TX 27th July

How not writing a will meant one woman's money going to the very person she didn't want to inherit. And the sad case of a man who was kept a family secret after he was born illegitimate.

Episode 13: Viney/Stawinoga – TX 28th July

The story of a tramp who lived on a roundabout but left behind thousands of pounds but no will – Can the Heir Hunters track down his relatives? And the heir hunters re-visit a family tree they investigated over twenty years ago.

Episode 14: Rivers/Higham – TX 29th July

A £600,000 value on an unclaimed estate puts the team in a spin and the families of two brothers who were separated at birth meet for the first time.

Episode 15: Belby/Todd – TX 30th July

Cousins who are married to each other receive a double windfall and an heir discovers a relative she never knew she had.

Episode 16: Evans/Crowley – TX 2nd August

A man who won the Pools leaves behind over £200,000 but no will and the heir hunters encounter a hurdle that threatens their work.

Episode 17: Powis/Glassware – TX 3rd August

Snow threatens to halt the investigation and an unusual collection of glassware found in someone's garage boosts the value of the estate.



SERIES 3 BILLINGS:

Episode 1: Fernandez & Cobb - TX 4th August

On today's programme...Fraser and Fraser travel to India looking for clues to unlock the hidden past of a woman who died alone in the UK. Could Lily Fernandez have been born in Jamalpur in North East India? International Manager Georges Delarue is sent to investigate – can he find her next of kin?

And heir hunter Cat Whiteaway is in for some surprises when she tackles the case of Queenie Cobb who died in the East End of London in 2001.

Episode 2: Barber & Glissing – TX 5th August

Once again the heir hunters attempt to link people with money they stand to inherit from long-forgotten relations. This time around the team investigates an apparently worthless case that takes a surprising twist, and the harrowing tale of a Holocaust victim.

Douglas Barber died in 2008 aged just 58. At first sight his case seems ordinary enough, but as the Fraser's team moves into action, his family history becomes murkier. Every piece of documentation seems to raise more questions. But when his estate is revealed to be worth a hefty £400,000 the pressure mounts to locate his descendants and find out how he came to be so wealthy.

Meanwhile, Derek Rodbard of Heirtrace is attempting to track down the descendants of Holocaust victim Gustaf Kestner. As Derek strives to find the rightful inheritors, he discovers that some of Gustaf's heirs may have escaped war-torn Europe thanks to a remarkable escape network set up by Nicholas Winton, an English stockbroker based in Prague. But how many made it through? And have any survived to finally reclaim Gustaf's estate?

Episode 3: Gibbs & DeKeyser – TX 6th August

On today's programme Fraser and Fraser try to find relatives for Brian Gibbs, a man who thought he had none, by taking a wild shot in the dark. And for Hector Birchwood of Celtic Research, the hunt is on to find relatives of a glamorous, anti apartheid activist, Ethel DeKeyser. She died in 2004 aged 77, leaving an estate estimated to be worth £250,000.

Episode 4: Wymess / Lloyd & Haydon – TX 9th August

On today's programme, Fraser and Fraser come across a family affected by one of the greatest killers of the 20th century – Spanish Flu. And 'football crazy' Fraser's case manager, Bob Smith delves back into football history as he uncovers the estate of Trevor Haydon. Haydon's dad Jimmy Haydon, was a professional footballer for Bristol Rovers and a local superstar. During the 1920's he was one of the club's longest-serving players, making 318 appearances for the team.

Episode 5: Evans & Phythian – TX 10th August

On today's programme Fraser and Fraser is faced with the emotional story of a family that loses everything. And in the hunt for heirs on the Phythian case – Hoopers end up across the sea in Canada and discover a family caught up in one of the worst shipping disasters of the 20th Century.



Episode 6: Harman & Higham – TX 11th August

On today's programme one man inherits a life changing amount of money from someone he didn't even know existed. And we revisit with Lord Teviot, the story of the Higham brothers separated at birth and expose the secret double life one of them led for over 40 years.

Episode 7: Hack & Thompson – TX 12th August

On today's programme Fraser and Fraser has a tough day on the case of Joan Hack who died in North Wales in 2002, leaving an estate estimated to be worth £200,000. But Frasers aren't the only company interested, as the probate companies race to reach Joan's heirs first. And Fraser's also tackle the case of a free spirited academic who died leaving a Paris flat.

Episode 8: Martin & Aldrick – TX 13th August

On today's programme when it comes to valuing an estate, has Fraser and Fraser over estimated it this time?

And on the case of Arthur Aldrick, we revisit the case solved by Hector Birchwood of Celtic Research to try to discover more about this mystery man who died leaving a £350,000 estate. One of his heirs, Lucy Wiseman, investigates her distant relative's past and looks back over Arthur's life. She discovers he had a secret career, which helped hasten the end of the Second World War.

Episode 9: Armer & Dembinska – TX 16th August

Heir Hunters is on the trail of people entitled to inherit money from long lost relatives who died without making a will. The latest installment features a desperate race against time and the poignant tale of a Polish princess.

Ronald Armer died in 2008. A young man during the Swinging 60s, he embraced the freewheeling spirit of the times. In later years he settled down to a quiet existence in the affluent Lake District, where property prices are some of the highest in the UK. Ronald's estate could be worth over £1 million, but finding relations proves a real challenge and Fraser and Fraser soon learn that a rival is already ahead of the game.

At the end of her life, the grandly titled Princess Olga von Dembinska lived in the affluent area of Westminster. But her tale proves to be an epic one involving the tragic twists and turns of Polish history, the cataclysmic events of the 19th and 20th century and a desperate attempt to reclaim a lost inheritance. As the Fraser's team strive to find any relatives and determine the true size of her estate, will they be able to separate fantasy from reality?

Episode 10: Knight & Curtis – TX 17th August

Seeking out the rightful heirs to people who have died without leaving a will is rarely easy. And this time around the heir hunters face some of their toughest cases yet.



Pearl Knight turns out to be a mystery lady. As documentation proves difficult to find and every avenue of investigation ends up a dead-end, the Fraser's team begins to wonder whether her marriage to Hugh is all it seems to be.

Cyril Curtis died aged 80 in Great Yarmouth. A quiet and reclusive man, his life seemed unremarkable. But as the Hooper's team set about its work of tracing his heirs a shadowy family secret is soon unearthed. But how will his descendants respond to the news that they not only stand to inherit a substantial sum of money...but also some unexpected additions to the family circle.

Episode 11: Twigg & Cullum – TX 18th August

More tales of mystery and imagination from the series dedicated to hunting out the rightful heirs to unclaimed estates.

When bachelor Alan Twigg died aged just 68 he left behind a property and savings worth over half a million pounds. But finding his heirs proves a real challenge until a vital clue that leads the team at Fraser and Fraser into the glamorous world of transatlantic sea voyages and the luxurious liner Queen Elizabeth. But could the last-minute discovery of a secret will scupper all their hard work?

When Baron Carl Franz Eduard Von Eudeni died in 1994 he left an estate of £200,000 but no family and no clues as to his former life. Initially Hoopers investigation focuses on Austria, but in a wholly unexpected twist, it's soon revealed that the 'Baron' was actually born the son of a street entertainer and grew up in the far from aristocratic surroundings of Shoreditch.

As the investigation gathers pace, more startling revelations come to light. The 'Baron's' real name, his colourful career as a 1950s holiday camp entertainer, his brush with a life-threatening illness and the real reason behind his extraordinary talents and need to create multiple personalities for himself.

Episode 12: Wren/Olszewski – TX 19th August

On today's programme – on the case of Kenneth Wren, a man whose lost contact with his brother gets some shocking news. And Frasers investigate the Polish case of Jan Olszewski, a man who made a life in Britain, but for fifty years never revealed the true details of his past. The hunt for heirs to Jan's £53,000 estate, sees Fraser's Polish International Manager – Christoph Barski on the research trail near Krakaw.

Episode 13: Lee & Allen – TX 20th August

On today's programme, has Fraser and Fraser met their match? Chasing leads all over the world can Frasers get the crucial breakthrough on the £300,000 case of Elfie Lee that has already taken two years worth of research?

And we reveal the story of underwear millionairess, Dorothea Allen, who lived an intriguing double life that kept all the heir hunters guessing, about who she really was.

Episode 14: Luty & Casson – TX 23rd August

On today's programme - Fraser's race to research the estate of David Luty, who died in Leeds in 2008. But have they got the right heirs to £70,000 estate? And Saul Marks of Celtic Research investigates the case of East End pensioner Sylvia Casson who died aged 97. In tracing heirs to



her £35,000 estate Saul uncovers the story of Sylvia's wartime experiences and also more troubling for Saul, a will.

Episode 15: Greatrex & Dick-Larkam – 24th August

The Heir Hunters hit the road again as they seek out people entitled to inherit money from long-forgotten relatives.

Peter Greatrex died aged just 57, having spent nearly all his life in Birmingham working for Severn Trent Water. Nothing remarkable in that. But as the team at Fraser's dig deeper they soon uncover a complex web of family connections and the moving story of a child separated from her dad for over 30 years.

83-year-old Julia Dick-Larkam died a lonely widow in 1998. To all intents and purposes, Julia's maiden name was Marklove, but it soon transpires that she was actually given a whole new identity by the Coram Foundation, a remarkable charity founded in the 18th century dedicated to the care of unwanted and abandoned babies.

As the Fraser's team investigates further, it unearths the terrible hardships that led Thomas Coram to set up his founding hospital and traces the extraordinary success of England's oldest children's charity.

By why was Julia abandoned by her mother back in 1915? And as the team tracks down her heirs, how will they respond to discovering that they had an aunt they never even knew existed?

Episode 16: Crook & Coope – TX 25th August

The latest in the series dedicated to finding the heirs of people who have died without leaving a will.

Albert Crook died aged 69 in February 2008. He never married, had no children and had worked nearly all his life as a farm labourer in Cheshire. By all rights, his estate should be a small one, but Fraser and Fraser soon hears rumours of £100,000 in assets and a mysterious suitcase full of cash. With such a prize on offer, the pressure is on to find Albert's rightful heirs and discover just how a lowly paid labourer could amass that kind of wealth.

Heir Hunters' Hoopers also has to unravel the perplexing case of who owns a Victorian school site worth £800,000. With the school planning to move out, the site should revert to the heirs of the original benefactors – Victorian philanthropists, Reverend Charles Belli and Octavius Coope. But finding the heirs means delving back through a 100-year-old trail of wills and even having to seek a High Court ruling. If things don't go well, the heirs won't receive a penny and the school's plan to move into a new home will be in tatters.

Episode 17: Millar & Hornung – TX 26th August

The Heir Hunters are on the trail of families entitled to the estates of people who have died without a will. Often that can mean a windfall of thousands of pounds.

Ronald Millar died aged 80. After a shocking incident four years before his death, Ronald became a recluse, his only contact with the outside world coming through volunteers who helped him with shopping. But he left behind an estate worth £30,000 and the Fraser's team is soon in a race against time to find any descendants.



At Heirtrace in Suffolk, Derek Rodbard is working to trace the descendants of people killed during the Holocaust – the systematic genocide of the Jews by the Nazis. Focusing on Ernst Hornung, a Jewish professional who was killed leaving a still unpaid life insurance policy, he soon discovers a son, Otto. But for Otto, the money is of secondary importance.

As Derek delves deeper, a tale emerges of incredible courage and tenacity. Of a family determined to maintain its unity despite being torn apart by events, and of a Swedish diplomat's extraordinary efforts to save the lives of 100,000 people.

Episode 18: Read & Yale – TX 27th August

Roy Read (76) worked tirelessly for stroke victims at Age Concern. Sadly he ended up living on his own and dying at his home, without family or will. For someone who had given so much time to others, it was sad that there was no one there for him at the end. Roy Died in Haringey on the 17/04/08 leaving an estate estimated to be worth £300,000.

After an initially difficult start to try and find details for Roy's father, Fraser and Fraser discover he was illegitimate and that his father had been the local milkman. With this clue uncovered, the team are able to trace Roy's entitled heirs.

Sonia Bowers didn't know that she had a half-uncle named Kenneth Fraser Yale until she was contacted by Hector Birchwood of Celtic Research. Kenneth died in a Glasgow Hospital on the 05/04/2007, aged 79. He left an estate valued at £8,000. On learning about her half-uncle's death, Sonia was keen to find out as much as possible about him; especially because her own father had never mentioned Kenneth. Sonia travels to Glasgow to meet the hospital staff who are the only link to Kenneth's past.

Episode 19: Bett & Hart – TX 30th August

Another episode in the series dedicated to finding the heirs to unclaimed estates that can run into millions of pounds.

In today's programme, two cases involving adoption test the Heir Hunters investigative skills to the limit.

Christopher Bett died leaving an estate worth £100,000. As he was adopted after his mother died, his adoptive parents are legally seen as his blood relatives. Soon it's all hands to the pump for Fraser and Fraser, as the race to track down surviving heirs picks up pace. But competitors are dogging their every move and, as Christopher's family tree takes the shape, an already overstretched team is forced to spread the net even wider. Next stop Australia.

Meanwhile, in the sleepy Sussex town of Burgess Hill, heir hunters, Lord and Lady Teviot investigate the tale of Daisy Hart. She died in 1996 leaving an estate of £12,000 and, after some intense sleuthing, Lord Teviot begins to believe that Daisy may have been an illegitimate child 'given away' by her natural mother. As the investigation progresses, it sheds light on an age in which illegitimacy was seen as a sin and leads to a bittersweet discovery for Daisy's family.

Episode 20: Shepard/Hubbard – TX 1st Sept



On today's programme Heir hunters Hoopers encounter a man who left £35,000, but spent his last 40 years sleeping rough. And the entire Fraser's team work against the clock to find heirs to the valuable estate of Irene Shepherd who died aged 87, in Redditch, in 2008. From their initial enquiries they discover that Irene had owned a property worth an estimated £200,000.

Episode 21: Williams & Hanafy – TX 2nd Sept

On today's programme, Fraser and Fraser track down a relative on the case of Anthony Williams but it leaves them uneasy. And Fraser and Fraser uncover the mysterious life of Joyce Hanafy involving a trail of lies, glamour and espionage that ends with Fraser's finding heirs to her estimated £1million pound estate in Egypt.

Episode 22: Watkinson & Clark – 3rd Sept

On today's programme the Fraser and Fraser's team find themselves up to their armpits in heirs on the case of Widow Hilda Bentley Watkinson who died in Poole, in 2008. And there's a surprise in store for one heir, on the case of Bertha Clark, when Heir Hunter Cat Whiteaway reveals that Bertha wasn't as poor as her relatives had thought.