

The New Zealand Genealogist

Pipiri June 2026

Vol 57 No 409

53 were present
members were elected to office:
President: Mr Ray Harrison;
Vice-Chairperson: Mr Stan Smith;
Immediate Past Chairman: Mr Stan Smith;
Treasurer: Miss Marie Corser;
Secretary: Mrs Anne Mee; Cemetery Archivist: Mrs Beth Colwell;
Miss Una Melville; Bruce Campbell;
Messrs Tom Jory, Peter Isle, Elizabeth Rigby.
Pauline Parker, Elizabeth Rigby.
Messdames Betty James, Pauline Parker, Elizabeth Rigby.
Messdames Betty James, Pauline Parker, Elizabeth Rigby.
Messdames Betty James, Pauline Parker, Elizabeth Rigby.

in Adelaide, I decided to see whether I could
they had at least two children, my great-grandmother Mary
Eliza found the Archives Section of the State
to be most helpful. First they produced
names listed in alphabetical
in brackets (e.g. 53)



was divided into
of the Patea River; NEW MUNSTERS
area as far north as the Patea River; NEW MUNSTERS
These divisions were of geographical significance only
when the Colony was divided by Royal Charter into two provinces,
with its own political institutions: New Leinster was merged with
Ulster and the Patea River remained the boundary between the latter
New Ulster.

by the New Zealand Constitution Act (U.K.) of 1852 the colony was
divided into six provinces: Auckland, New Plymouth, Wellington, Nelson,
Taranaki and Otago and a semi-federal system of government was set up
with its own political institutions: New Leinster was merged with
Ulster and the Patea River remained the boundary between the latter
New Ulster.

GOWANS -
MURRAY, descended from JOHN BERRY, Commissioner
barrister, born 1833 in the British Army and
Colonel in the British Army and
of Albury, N.S.W. Died Levuka, Fiji 1899.
BERRY, descended from JOHN BERRY, Commissioner
Australia and later Commissioner of Lands in Fiji. His
BERRY and he had at least two sisters, JANE and AMELIA (above) at
brother. He came to Fiji about 1869.
BERRY - a sailor who married a native woman 21.10.1858 and
large family including MARY, JAMES PARKER and JOHN.
BERRY - plantation owners. Arrived Fiji about 1843.
BERRY - plantation owners. Arrived Fiji about 1843.

New Zealand Society of Genealogists

Te Rangapū Kaihikohiko o Aotearoa

Family history - Preserving our past for the future





Auckland Family History Expo

New Venue – New Date – More Exhibitors –
More Opportunities

9 - 11 October 2026

Join us at the historic King's College
for a weekend of family history!

Close to the train station and with plenty of parking!

www.genealogy.org.nz/AFHExpo
www.facebook.com/AFHexpo

New Zealand Society
of Genealogists, Inc.



Te Rangapū Kaihikohiko
o Aotearoa

Contents

Obituaries	52
<i>Pauline Weeks</i> Far more than a conference—immerse yourself in genealogy at Congress	54
<i>Simon Young</i> Our Society's whakapapa: A newcomer reflects on the New Zealand Society of Genealogists	56
<i>Sarah Hewitt</i> Belonging to the NZSG	58
<i>Lorraine Wilmshurst</i> Outdoor Pursuits	59
<i>Kevin Miles</i> Growing up in the household of a trade unionist	60
<i>Bruce Ralston</i> British societies and groups in New Zealand	63
<i>Brenda Saunders</i> u3a clubs keep 'third agers' learning, laughing and living	64
<i>Monika Prasad</i> Five decades of Probus in New Zealand: friendship, purpose and community	65
<i>Bobbie Amyes</i> Rifle shooting—the non-participant	66
<i>Zoe Pullman</i> FAQ about the new cloud-based NZSG Digital Genealogy Archive	68
<i>Yvonne Milbank</i> Horopito Motors	72
<i>Eric Walton</i> Luck favours the prepared mind: finding my 4x great-grandfather, William Scott (1765–1858)	74
<i>Avril Ash</i> From Bressay to Otago: A Murray History Between Isles	79
<i>Sven Grewel</i> Tracing your German ancestry: a guide for New Zealanders	83
<i>Mikhal Stone</i> Recording parents' lives	84
<i>Bryn Smith</i> Should you trust AI transcriptions?	86
<i>Jan Sherwood</i> FamilySearch Full-Text Search	89
<i>Adam Samson</i> The Wellington tram network	90



Regulators

Board Report	51
September 2026 Theme	55
Services to NZSG Members	70
NZSG Record Collections	71
NZSG Shipping Collection	78
What's new on the NZSG Website	89
Book Reviews	92
Members' enquiries and notices	94
Branches and Interest Groups	96
Inside back cover: Branch and Interest Group Services	

Cover Photo:
NZSG Magazine
Team July 1972, at
Glen Eden
Methodist Youth
See pg 55 for
details



ISSN 0110-4012 (Print) ISSN 3021-5994 (Digital)

© COPYRIGHT New Zealand Society of Genealogists Inc. and Authors. Researchers and teachers may reproduce articles for private use provided that the source is acknowledged.

DISCLAIMER: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of NZSG Board or staff. NZSG Board reserves the right to remove or amend any advertisement or article but is under no obligation to exercise editorial control. No content may be reproduced, published or transmitted in any manner without prior written consent of NZSG Board or copyright holder. The availability of information through this journal does not constitute a recommendation by NZSG to enter into any transaction or follow any course of action. Any decision that you make must be based solely on your own evaluation of your circumstances and objectives. NZSG recommends that you independently verify the accuracy, currency or reliability of any information made available in advertisements and articles and upon which you intend to rely.

The Mission of the **New Zealand Society of Genealogists** is to provide educational opportunities and research resources for the development of knowledge, skills and practice in family history, genealogy and whakapapa for members and the wider community.

Being a member, you get to be part of a community of amazing people with access to a wealth of information that members have put together for nearly 60 years. You can contribute to that information, either by writing articles about your own research, or helping with projects such as indexing school records in your area of interest. You will get direct help with your own research from other members or by joining one of our online or in-person courses. Or you can help other members with their challenges. It is all about sharing your passion and knowledge with people who get it, and as a bonus, making new friends!

Benefits of Membership include:

Become a better researcher
Save money on your research
Help preserve resources

Discover new resources

Share your research and skills

See our Services and Benefits page for more information

How to become a member

Applications to become a member can be made online at www.genealogy.org.nz or may be made in writing. Application forms are available from NZSG Membership Department, PO Box 14036, Panmure, Auckland 1741 or by emailing membership@genealogy.org.nz.

Membership Category		Subscription
Ordinary	Open to any one individual (one journal, one vote)	\$115.00
Joint	Open to any two persons living in the same household (one journal, two votes)	\$160.00
Student	Open to people 12–25 years (one journal, one vote)	\$35.00
Institutional	Open to any library, institution, museum, facility, corporate body, family history organisation or group that is supportive of the objects of the Society and which is willing to assist the Society to promote these objects (one journal, no vote)	\$185.00

Subscriptions are for 12 months from the first day of the month in which payment is received.



This month's theme:
Unions, Clubs and Societies

Upcoming themes

September 2026
Miners and Mining

December 2026
Wellington region

March 2027
Local finds

June 2027
Schools and Schooling

Criteria

1. Relevance: related to people and their society; genealogy, family history, whakapapa, research, documentary sources, application, biography, genealogical technology etc.
2. Length: Feature articles 1800 to 2700 words (2–3 pages) plus images, short articles 500–900 words plus images.

Editing

The Editorial Team reserves the right to edit articles to meet standards and for readability, but if substantial changes are required the Editor will consult with the author.

Members' area

Members may submit queries on Contact Sought, Information Wanted, Information Offered, Trader and Reunion notices. Please do not abbreviate your enquiry. The first instance of any surname should be in capitals. There is no limit the number of entries you may submit, but your full name, email and membership number must be included with each entry.

Advertising

Contact the NZSG [National Manager](mailto:national.manager@genealogy.org.nz) for information about rates, specifications and conditions, or find details on the [NZSG website](http://www.genealogy.org.nz) with other details about *The New Zealand Genealogist*.

Style Guide

You must refer to our Style Guide before submitting an article. This is available on our website:

[genealogy.org.nz/NZG-Editors-Notes/11168/](http://www.genealogy.org.nz/NZG-Editors-Notes/11168/)

Submission of copy

Submissions can be made in electronic format emailed to editor@genealogy.org.nz. Include your name, contact details and membership number.

Copy deadlines

Regular contributions, advertisements and feature articles submitted for consideration must be received by the Editor by the following dates:

Issue	Last date for consideration
March	17 January
June	17 April
September	17 July
December	17 October

BOARD REPORT



Winter is upon us again. Always a good time to stay in and do some family history!

We would like to thank the members who took the time to provide feedback on the proposed Strategic Plan 2026–2030. The consultation process provided valuable insights for further discussions. While not every suggestion will necessarily result in major changes to the final document, your perspectives have helped us refine our implementation priorities.

We are currently surveying members on our website. It has had many changes over the last few years. A link has been provided to members via email. Please take your time to give your feedback.

Family History Month in August will see events around the country and online. If you have an event happening, do not forget to let our webmaster and e-KIT Coordinator know.

The Auckland Heritage Festival will see our Auckland Family History Expo take place at King's College, Ōtāhuhu. We are expecting a diverse array of communities, exhibitors and speakers to help those new and not so new to genealogy.

Planning for the 18th Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations (AFFHO) Congress on Family History continues. We have had a big response to our Call for Speakers and will release information on speakers shortly. We are pleased to be sponsored by Ancestry.com (celebrating 20 years in Australasia) and financial services company Findex. Registrations will open in June.

On a personal note, as my term on the Board nears its end, I would like to thank everyone for their support. We have made great improvements to our Society in the last few years. By embracing technology, members no longer need to say 'everything is in Auckland' as our resources can be, and are, accessed from everywhere in the world. We still need to spread the word and get our membership numbers up, but our resources are world-class. It has been an honour to serve as your Chairperson.

If you have any thoughts to share with us, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Our strength comes from our members.

Sarah Hewitt
NZSG Chairperson



**Need help with your sources?
Check out Skills/Research Skills
www.genealogy.org.nz**

Board of Directors

Sarah Hewitt (Chairperson)
Melanie Middleton (Vice Chairperson)
Trisha Dunn
Bryce Johnson
Brian Bernon
Glenn Stewart
Simon Young
Garry Phillips

NZSG Manager

Julian Pinfold
T: 09 394 9549
E: nzsgmanager@genealogy.org.nz

Library Coordination Group

Volunteers
T: 09 394 9545
E: librarycoordinator@genealogy.org.nz

Membership Administrator

Kelley Miller
T: 09 394 9546
E: membership@genealogy.org.nz

Accounts Administrator

Don Cortesi (Volunteer)
T: 09 394 9547
E: accounts@genealogy.org.nz

Projects Coordinator

E: nzsg.projects@genealogy.org.nz

Webmaster

Jan Sherwood
E: webmaster@genealogy.org.nz

Auditor - Dellow Financial Services

Honorary Solicitor - Harold Kidd

Editor

E: editor@genealogy.org.nz

Production Team

Jan Sherwood (Editorial Lead)
Sue Dinsdale
Jenny Robertson
Pauline Weeks

Published by

The New Zealand Society of
Genealogists Inc.
PO Box 14036, Panmure,
Auckland 1741
159 Queens Road, Panmure,
Auckland 1072

General enquiries

T: 09 570 4248 Ext 1



Jan Gow (1939–2026)

Jan GOW (née MacDONALD) passed away on 6 May 2026, aged 86. She was born in Wagga Wagga, Australia 10 December 1939, but grew up in Qirindi. She met David Gow on board the *Straithaid* liner in January 1961, and they married at St Matthew's Church, London, in October 1961. Children Geoffrey, Alan and Carrie came along after Jan and David settled back in New Zealand in 1963.

Jan became 'Hooked on Genealogy' in 1981 when she won an airfare to the United States. At a friend's suggestion, she spent her first five days in Salt Lake City. As soon as she returned to New Zealand, she found the NZSG Auckland Branch meeting and was asked to join the committee at her first meeting. This began Jan's long association with NZSG and all things genealogy.

Jan's service to genealogy was immense. She was the NZSG Treasurer and President, a Life Member, and held various appointed positions and served on different NZSG committees. She was Convenor of the Genealogical Computing Group, and had involvement with Irish, Scottish and London Special Interest Groups. She ran the Legacy User Group meetings at the FRC for many years and always got a good crowd. Jan also started the NZSG Panmure and St Heliers branches. She was still Convenor at the St Heliers branch until her health began to fail, and they acknowledge the huge amount of work she did for the branch over the years.

In addition to her NZSG involvement, Jan was a past Board Member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, a past Vice President and Council member of ARANZ (Archives and Records Association of NZ), and a past Council member of AFFHO (Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations).

Many will remember Jan through Beehive Books, her one-stop genealogy shop founded in 1987. For decades she was a familiar presence at conferences, always at the Beehive Books table with advice, software and her trademark sparkle. Jan also created and led the well-known Hooked on Genealogy tours to Salt Lake City and the United Kingdom beginning in 1992, returning year after year with groups of New Zealanders eager to learn, research and share in her joy of discovery.

Through her research, tours, teaching, bookshop and generous guidance, she helped countless people discover their family histories and reconnect with their roots. Her



Jan Gow
9 February 2022 at St Heliers Branch
closing ceremony and celebration

knowledge, patience, and enthusiasm inspired many within the genealogy community both in New Zealand and abroad.

Kathy BISMAN says her best recollection of Jan was her willingness to attend branch research days/weekends, not just in the Auckland area, but further afield. She could fit so many boxes in her car and was always willing to answer questions on many varied topics. She was also an after-dinner speaker at the research weekends. Kathy thinks her best topic was 'Research, Record and Recall it'. She still did the same topic after computers came in and would discuss which programs were available. She certainly moved with the times.

Anne BRADY remembers when she was fortunate enough to go (twice) on Jan's 'Hooked on Genealogy' tours. Her backpack still carries the ID label she gave tour members, and the small,

soft daily pack is still in use, carefully designed to be the perfect size for genealogy folders needed for the day. She said Jan went the extra mile with these tours, taking three preparation classes in the months leading up to departure, so that everyone would have their research up-to-date and know exactly what they needed to research.

Jan was awarded the Queen's Service Medal in 2011 for services to genealogical research, recognising decades of leadership, innovation, and tireless commitment to helping New Zealanders discover and preserve their family histories. Her contribution to family history research in New Zealand was extraordinary, shaping organisations, resources, and generations of researchers. She was also made a Fellow of the Society of Genealogists (UK), recognising her tireless global ambassadorship of genealogy.

Jan's energy, generosity and dedication have shaped our genealogy community. She will be sadly missed and long remembered.

Jan's daughter, Carrie, has added: 'With the children being geographically dispersed, there really isn't an ideal place to send cards, but people could perhaps post messages on Mum's Facebook page or on genealogy pages of societies and clubs they are members of. We are thinking of holding a memorial on the Thursday before the Auckland Family History Expo in October, and we will share details with various people once we know more.'



Alan Tunncliffe (1947–2026)

Alan TUNNICLIFFE passed away peacefully on 10 April 2026, aged 78 years. He was well known in the genealogy world, especially in Canterbury.

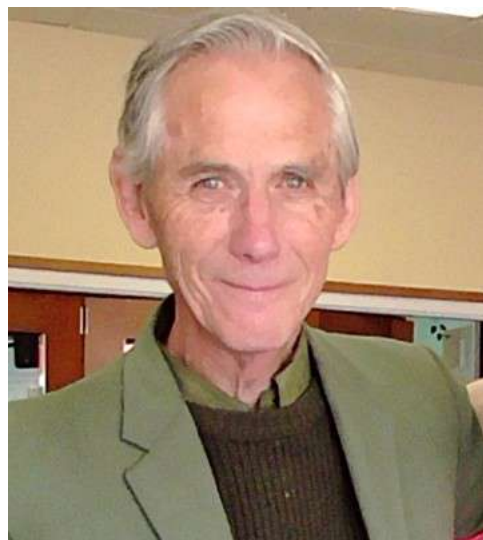
Alan's interest in genealogy started in his late teens when he spent many hours scouring old history books and copying trees or drawing pedigrees of royal and noble families of Britain and Europe. In August 1967 he came across the Otago-Southland volume of the Cyclopedia of New Zealand and found a photo of a man he knew to be his grandmother's grandfather. He immediately began questioning his mother about her family and started drawing up a family tree of sorts. He then realised he was 'one of those people' (a genealogist).

Alan joined the New Zealand Society of Genealogists in the early days, being member #245. He was a foundation member of the NZSG Canterbury Branch in 1968, the NZSG Riccarton Branch in 1986 and the Canterbury Genealogy Society in 2022. He was also a member of the first Auckland Branch in 1970, and of the Invercargill Branch in the early 1970s.

William SCHOCH, Convenor of Riccarton Branch, says losing Alan in their 40th year adds greatly to their loss. He served in many roles during his 40 years in Riccarton Branch, including Librarian, Convenor, Projects Officer, Programmes Coordinator and Newsletter Editor.

Alan was a dedicated genealogist whose life's work connected families across the world, bringing together relatives separated by generations and distance.

In Alan's words, he has now become 'one of our leaves fallen from the family tree'.



Alan Tunncliffe 2018
Photo courtesy of David Lees

Mavis Millar (1932–2026)

The Porirua Branch committee sadly advises the passing of Mavis MILLAR on 17 February 2026 at the age of 93.

Mavis was one of our longest-serving members, having joined the Porirua Branch in 2008, and was NZSG member #7632. Mavis began genealogy in 1984, after being inspired by reading some letters from England written to an ancestor after his wife had died, which made her ancestors come alive.

In her working life, she was a teacher at Mana College and, besides genealogy, Mavis's interests included playing the trombone. She was a master mariner and circumnavigated the North Island with her husband in their yacht.

She was a member of the Salvation Army, where her funeral was held on Friday, 20 February. Mavis only stopped coming to meetings in the middle of last year, when she moved into the rest home in Tawa.

Thanks to Graham GIBB and Joan CONROY for providing background information about Mavis outside of Porirua NZSG.



Mavis Miller

18th AFFHO Congress on Family History Across the Tasman

Natural Allies & Strong Connections

11–14 February 2027, Wellington, New Zealand



Far more than a conference—immerse yourself in genealogy at Congress

Pauline Weeks

For anyone passionate about tracing family stories and uncovering the threads of the past, the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations (AFFHO) Congress represents far more than just a conference. It is a rare opportunity to immerse yourself in the very heart of genealogical discovery.

The next Congress will be the 18th AFFHO Congress, being held in Wellington, New Zealand, from 11–14 February 2027. Organised by the New Zealand Society of Genealogists (NZSG), the Congress will take place at Rutherford House at the Victoria University of Wellington with the theme 'Across the Tasman: Natural Allies and Strong Connections'. Sub themes include: voyages, finding women's stories, uncovering First Nation's stories, DNA, AI technology and some surprises with unique presentation topics.

Bringing together leading genealogists, historians, archivists and fellow researchers from across Australasia and beyond, the Congress offers invaluable access to cutting-edge research methods, emerging technologies and rich historical resources that can transform the way you approach your own family history.

Beyond the lectures and workshops, it is the chance to connect with a vibrant community of like-minded individuals—sharing insights, solving research challenges, and sparking new ideas—that makes attending the Congress an especially rewarding and inspiring experience for any family historian.

Past NZSG President, Robyn WILLIAMS, who was President of AFFHO 2015–2023, says: 'The key benefits of attending

Congress are to learn about new developments in the fast-moving world of both genealogy and technology. It is an opportunity to meet others with the same interests and to talk with peers about all matters genealogical.'



**Past NZSG and AFFHO
President Robyn Williams**

Robyn attended her first Congress in Christchurch in 1997 and has attended every Congress since, and Wellington will be her 11th Congress. She was part of the organising committee for the Congress held in Auckland in 2009 and is also on the organising committee for the 2027 one. Her tip for attending Congress is to 'enjoy the Congress, soak up all the information, and be ready to be challenged'.

AFFHO is the highest body representing family history societies throughout Australia and New Zealand. Since its establishment in 1978, the organisation has provided coordination, support and advocacy for groups dedicated to family history, genealogy, heraldry, and related fields.

The organisation's mission is to promote, preserve and foster the study of family history, genealogy and related subjects throughout Australia and New Zealand. It achieves this by supporting member organisations with resources, networking opportunities and educational programmes. AFFHO also advocates on behalf of the family history

community when challenges arise that affect access to records or the preservation of historical resources.

Another important goal is raising public awareness about the value of genealogy. Family history research not only helps individuals understand their own origins but also contributes to preserving cultural heritage and illuminating the social history of communities across the region.

Among AFFHO's most significant activities is its Congress. Since the first gathering in Melbourne in 1977, AFFHO Congresses have been hosted by family history organisations throughout Australia and New Zealand. Locations have included major cities such as Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth, as well as Canberra, Darwin, Launceston and Norfolk Island. New Zealand has also hosted several Congresses, including events in Hamilton, Christchurch and Auckland.

The host organisations reflect the breadth of the genealogical community across the region. Among those that have organised Congresses are the Society of Australian Genealogists, Genealogical Society of Queensland, Heraldry and Genealogy Society of Canberra, South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society, Genealogical Society of Victoria, Western Australian Genealogical Society, Tasmanian Family History Society and the New Zealand Society of Genealogists.

'Being held in New Zealand for the first time since 2009, it is a unique opportunity for New Zealanders to attend on their home ground', said Robyn. 'So I encourage you all to come along to Wellington next year.'

See the AFFHO Congress website affhocongress.org/ for more information on attending, speaking or exhibiting. We are also proud to acknowledge our two platinum sponsors—Ancestry and FINDEX.

Pauline Weeks
E: Pauline.weeks@gmail.com



The FINDEX logo, consisting of the word "FINDEX" in a bold, white, uppercase, sans-serif font, centered on a black rectangular background with a thin red horizontal line underneath.

The Magazine Team

Taken at the Glen Eden Methodist Youth Centre in July 1972, this photo of *The New Zealand Genealogist* Magazine Teams shows:

Back row: Marjorie Blackburn, Peter Hunter, Margaret Webster, Lucy Marshall, Rhoda Fields Muriel Wells-Green, Colleen Main

Front: Helena Jackson, Alice Loose, Jane Marshall (child)



Theme for September 2026 Issue — Miners and Mining

Our theme for the September 2026 issue of *The New Zealand Genealogist* is 'Miners and Mining'.

From Māori mining for pounamu, obsidian and adzite through the gold rushes and coal mining at Denniston to modern hydroelectricity projects, New Zealand has a rich history of digging into the ground.

Do you have a family member who was involved in the mining industry? Did they immigrate for what was under the ground in New Zealand?

What was life like as a mining family? Do you have a story to tell?

Make sure to look at the tips on submissions on our website genealogy.org.nz/NZG-Editors-Notes/11168/ before submitting your article.

Send your submissions to editor@genealogy.org.nz by 17 July 2026.

Our Society's whakapapa: A newcomer reflects on the New Zealand Society of Genealogists

Simon Young

When I joined the New Zealand Society of Genealogists in 2024, I thought I was joining for the records. Like many people coming into genealogy today, I assumed the work was primarily about access: databases, documents, tools. The world had changed, after all. So much of what once required hours in an archive could now be done from a laptop. What I did not expect was that the most important thing I would find would not be data. It would be people.

A table in Waitākere

The moment came quietly. I was sitting at a Branch meeting in Waitākere, not far from where the Society itself began. Around the table were people with decades of experience. Some were deep into their own family histories; others were there simply because they enjoyed helping. Someone raised a research question. Then another. Within minutes, the whole table was involved—offering suggestions, recalling sources, testing ideas. There was no sense of competition, only shared curiosity. It was, in its own way, quite ordinary. And yet it was not. That was the moment the penny dropped for me: genealogy might be done individually, but it works best collectively. Better, together.

Beginnings in West Auckland

That realisation, it turns out, is not new. The New Zealand Society of Genealogists began in 1967 with a small group of people in West Auckland, led by Lucy Marshall, whose vision helped shape the Society we know today, and who passed away in 2020. Like many of us today, they were grappling with the challenges of researching family history—limited access to records, slow communication, and the sheer difficulty of piecing together fragmented information. Their

response was simple and profound: they chose to work together.

Reflecting later on those early years, Lucy Marshall observed that many of the first core members were practising Christians, 'used to co-operating at a local level'. She believed this probably shaped the group structure they created, and their approach of 'open entry'—much like a church—rather than 'members only' club or society meetings. Out of that openness came reciprocal research, new friendships and practical tasks for everyone, 'from printing labels or sorting envelopes to helping with the monthly dispatch of the magazine'.¹

That choice matters. It tells us that NZSG was never designed to be closed or gatekept. It was designed to be a place of welcome—a place where knowledge is shared, where people gather around a common interest, and where belonging can grow before formal commitment. While NZSG is, of course, open to members of any—or no—religious belief, that simple community spirit and desire to share the good news with one's neighbour animates NZSG to this day. That is our whakapapa.

The world of 1967

To understand the significance of that beginning, it helps to step back into the world of 1967. New Zealand was a different place. In many ways, it was still an outpost of the British Empire, although legally and administratively it had been a stand-alone country for 20 years. Information moved slowly. Research required letters, physical travel and patience. Community life was more local, more face-to-face. Churches, clubs and societies played a central role in how people connected.

At the same time, those traditional structures were beginning to shift. Church attendance was starting to decline. Social patterns were changing. People were looking for new ways to connect, to belong and to make sense of their place in the world. In that context, genealogy offered something powerful. It connected people to the past. It gave meaning to identity. And, through societies like NZSG, it created new forms of community.

The world of 2026

Fast forward to today, and the landscape looks very different—and yet, in some ways, very familiar. We now live in a world of unprecedented access. Millions of records are available online. DNA testing has opened entirely new avenues of discovery. Research that once took months can now be done in minutes. And yet, something else has changed. Our lives have become more individualised, more digitised. We spend more time interacting with screens than with people.



Olive Duck, Peter Hunter, Alice Loose and Margaret Webster, Lynmall, Auckland, 11 September 1969

Connection is constant, but often shallow. There is, increasingly, a quiet desire for something else. People want to sit around a table again. They want to talk, to listen and to share stories. They want to belong to something that feels real. In that sense, the conditions that gave rise to NZSG have not disappeared. They have returned, in a different form.

More than records

It is easy to describe NZSG in terms of what it does. It provides educational opportunities. It supports research. It preserves and shares knowledge about genealogy and whakapapa for members and the wider community. All of that is true—and important. But it is not the whole story.

People do not come to genealogy purely for information—they come because they are searching for connection. They want to understand where they come from, how their story fits into something larger and how the past shapes the present. That is not just an intellectual pursuit. It is emotional, relational and, at times, deeply personal. And yet, as a Society, we have often told our own story in a very different way. We are excellent at recording detail. We are less comfortable expressing meaning.

The power of whakapapa

In te ao Māori, whakapapa is not simply a record of descent. It is a way of understanding relationships—between people, places, and time. It connects past, present, and future in a continuous thread. Owen Eastwood, author of *Belonging*, puts it this way. '[Whakapapa] represents a powerful spiritual belief—that each of us is part of an unbroken and unbreakable chain of people who share a sacred identity.'² That does not just mean our blood relatives. Eastwood should know: he has worked with the England football team, the Command Group of NATO, and the South African Cricket Teams to help them lift performance through connection with their whakapapa.

For NZSG, our whakapapa is clear. We began with people choosing to work together. We chose openness over exclusivity. We chose sharing over holding knowledge tightly. Those are not incidental details. They are defining characteristics. They explain why the Society has endured. And they point toward what we must continue to be.



Stand at Lynmall, Auckland, 11 September 1969

Continuity and change

Every organisation faces the challenge of change. For NZSG, the pressures are familiar: evolving technology, changing member expectations, and the need to remain relevant in a rapidly shifting world. But there is also continuity. The desire to understand family stories has not diminished. The need for guidance, support and shared knowledge remains strong. The human instinct to gather and connect is still there. What has changed is how these needs are expressed. Where once the challenge was access to records, now it is often making sense of abundance. Where once the Society was a primary gateway to information, it is now something more subtle—and more valuable. It is a place of interpretation, a place of support, a place of community.

Returning to first principles

Looking back at our beginnings in West Auckland, there is a clarity that feels remarkably contemporary. We remain a small group of people, working together, an open door for newcomers, a shared commitment to learning and helping. That model still works. It is what I saw in Waitākere. It is what continues in branches across the country. It is what makes the Society more than the sum of its resources. In a world where so much can be done alone, NZSG offers something different: the opportunity to do it together.

Telling our story

As genealogists, we understand the power of stories. We know that facts, on their own, are not enough. It is the narrative—the connections, the context, the meaning—that brings them to life. Perhaps the same is true for us as a Society. We have a rich history. We have dedicated members. We have made significant contributions to preserving and sharing knowledge in New Zealand. But there is an opportunity to tell that story more fully. Not just what we have done, but why it matters. Not just how we operate, but who we are. In doing so, we make it easier for others to see themselves in the story—and to become part of it.

Looking ahead

As a newcomer, I do not have decades of experience within NZSG. But perhaps that distance offers a small advantage. It allows me to see the Society with fresh eyes—to recognise both its strengths and its potential. What I see is something worth preserving and worth growing. A Society grounded in generosity, a community built on shared curiosity, a whakapapa that continues to shape its future. The tools will continue to change. The world will continue to shift. But the core idea, the one that began in West Auckland in 1967, remains as relevant as ever. Better, together.

Simon Young

E: SY.Director@genealogy.org.nz

References:

1. Marshall, Lucy. In Parker, Vivienne M (comp.). *Forty Years On... The Development of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists, 1967–2007*. New Zealand Society of Genealogists Inc., 2007, pp2–3
2. Eastwood, Owen. *Belonging: The Ancient Code of Togetherness*. Quercus, London, 2021, p18

Belonging to the NZSG

Sarah Hewitt

What is the best way to find out about a society? Volunteer! New volunteers often tell me or other Board members how much they have learnt regarding the NZSG by helping out.

How did I start volunteering for the NZSG? I wrote an article for *The New Zealand Genealogist*. It was about blogging and I was not even a member yet. I had joined a branch but not our national society.

Writing may not be your thing. I moved onto presenting to my branch—on using newspapers (my equal favourite records with probates). You may not have done Toastmasters so there is some help on the NZSG website in the Big Gateway. Ask your committee for a link.

My next step was a bit scarier. Working with Kilbirnie Branch members Mary WOOD and the late Gerry McGLINCHY, we produced the *Getting It Right* resources. Director Gill KNOX secured some funding from the Wellington Masonic Club, and Director Mary SHADBOLT, who had the education portfolio, set us to work.

This led to helping with other education resources and coming up with ideas on what we could do. This education group, led by Director David JACK, produced many of the resources you will find under Research Skills on the website.

I am a bit of a serial committee member, so it is not surprising that I eventually joined my branch committee. The committee was in the middle of the task that no committee likes doing—finding a new venue. We prevailed and found the golden goose venue (space, kitchen, storage) before our old venue was demolished (currently being turned into a skate park).

And then suddenly I was on the Board. For my first year, I had the Education portfolio and continued the work that had been started.

And then, even more suddenly, I was Chair. Now, if you want to end up knowing just about everything there is to know about a Society, this is the job. Fortunately, we can only have one Chair at a time.

What have I learned so far by volunteering for the NZSG?



We have great resources collected over decades by amazing people, many of whom are still actively contributing to our Society. Our people are passionate about family history and happy to share their skills and knowledge. We are a Society which is a group of people who come together to make something happen.

So, have a think about how you might like to help. We have volunteers doing (take a deep breath here): research enquiries, running the Library, transcribing records, overseeing projects, contributing to collections, overseeing collections, overseeing our technology, running our accounts, running various services to help you access records, participating in focus groups, helping at work days, running branches and interest groups, running classes and information sessions, writing articles for our journal, proofreading our journal, doing the layout of our journal, preparing e-KIT, organising events across the country and being on the Board. Location is not an issue. We are all over the country and the world helping. You could be too!

Sarah Hewitt

E: sarahmhewitt@yahoo.com.au



Volunteers helping the NZSG

Above: Volunteers at the Family Research Centre (FRC)

Below: Staying dry and helping people at the Paeroa Games 2026



Outdoor Pursuits

Lorraine Wilmshurst

Many of us have grown up with sports teams and clubs dominating our lives and the news. Most came from our association with our countries of origin or family participants. Today we have many of these and variations on them as sports and abilities have specialised.

Sixty years ago, when leaving school, friends suggested I join them on a Sunday for a walk/tramp in the hills and so began my association with the outdoors and a way to escape the city and return to the country where I had grown up.

The 1920s and 1930s in New Zealand saw groups of people form walking/tramping clubs. They were not restricted to males only. The Alpine Club, for example, encouraged women and girls to join. It was a time when sporting pursuits were limited due to the Depression, but there was a need for physical exercise. All that was required to participate was a pair of walking shoes and a coat in case it rained. The cost was for your transport on either a tram, bus or train, depending on where the trip was going.

The Tararua Tramping Club is the oldest tramping club in New Zealand, founded in July 1919 in Wellington. This was followed by the Otago Tramping Club in 1923 and the two Christchurch Clubs, Christchurch and Peninsula Tramping Clubs, in 1932.

When I joined in the 1960s, the tramping club met at the 'saw' shop in Gloucester Street, and from there we boarded a bus and headed into the foothills. Most of us did not have cars and were reliant on parents or friends dropping us off at the meeting point.

The bus would take us to the start of the track, and off the group went for the day. On our return, our wonderful bus drivers would have a thermette boiling and a cup of tea ready for the hot and thirsty trampers.

This changed over time as members gained their own transport and offered rides to the others. To pursue longer

trips or access more wilderness areas, four-wheel drive vehicles were hired, and the cost was split across the participants. This enabled members to tramp in remote areas.

Like all pursuits, training was provided by experienced club members or mountain safety experts. Training included what gear was available and how to traverse rivers, mountain slopes and snow conditions.

Over the years, wilderness tramping facilities have also changed. The Forest Service had huts and fly camps that trampers used. Clubs built their own huts on conservation land, and the Department of Conservation (DoC) added more huts. Many of these huts were free to use, or a small donation was required. Today most of these huts come under DoC and have to be prebooked prior to your trip.

The clubs mentioned in this article still exist today. Things have definitely changed from those early days when an organised walk from the end of the tram route up Harry Ell track was encouraged. With social media, it is easier to contact like-minded people and have an enjoyable day out in the mountains.

Lorraine Wilmshurst
E: malcwilms@gmail.com

Sources:

1. Tramping – Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand
2. Barnett, Shaun and Maclean, Chris. *Leading the way—100 years of the Tararua Tramping Club*. Tararua Tramping Club, 2019
3. *The First Fifty Years: 1932–1982, the Peninsula Tramping Club*
4. Hunter, G G. *Peninsula Tramping Club turns 75: 1932–2007*. Peninsula Tramping Club, Christchurch, 2002

**Members of the Peninsula
Tramping Club, Charteris Bay,
1933**





Growing up in the household of a trade unionist

Kevin Miles

My father, Frederick Alexander MILES, born 1913, grew up in Newtown, Wellington. His father had a drinking problem and was evicted from the house when my dad was young. My grandmother, according to the *Police Gazette*, pursued him for failing to pay maintenance. He never forgave his father, and I am sure the effect on him was lifelong (although it did not affect his own drinking).

His childhood was hard, but he gained Proficiency at age 14 at Thorndon School and then obtained a job as a messenger boy for the Post Office. In his later teens, he was accepted for an apprenticeship at Manthel Motors as a motor mechanic, and at age 18 passed his theory exam at technical night school. In 1934, after 10,000 hours training, which took five years, he qualified. As was the practice at the time, his employment was terminated (so another apprentice could be trained). He was fortunate to then gain employment with Len SOUTHWARD, at his garage in Wellington.¹ Len worked Dad hard but trained him to be a very good mechanic. Dad did say about Len that 'he never asked anything of his mechanics that he could not do himself'. He also gave Dad his first car, an Austin Seven. It was broken down in the garage. Len told him that 'if he could fix it, it was his'.

Frederick married Ellen (Nell) Gertrude PORTER in 1936, and they rented a house in Northland Road. They had met when Mum was 17 but waited until Dad could provide a bedroom suite and kitchen table and chairs (which took

three years of saving). In 1939 my sister Pat was born. Around that time, Mum's father insisted they live with him in Newtown. However, he was a difficult man. To avoid this situation, Dad applied for a job at Bailey Motors in Hastings. They shifted in 1940, Bailey Motors paying for the shift and organising a house to rent. Later they were able to purchase that property, 705 Queen Street East, Hastings.



***Hastings house about 1942,
my parents and eldest sister. Miles family collection***

Image above:

Labour Party Debutantes Ball 1954

L-R Jim Edwards MP, Ted Keating MP and Mrs Keating, Mayor of Hastings (William Bate), Mrs Miles, Walter Nash, Mayoress of Hastings (Mrs Bate), Frank Kitts MP, Mrs McMahon, Girls' Chaperone. Miles family collection

In 1943 Dad enlisted and served two years and 197 days. Of that, one year and 78 days were in New Caledonia. He served as a sergeant in the Light Aid Detachment, New Zealand Army Ordnance Corps, 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force. He suffered a back injury, which brought him back home to recuperate. Mum was unwell, and Pat had glandular fever, so the family doctor arranged that Dad should take a job in an essential industry. Tomoana Freezing Works employed him as a fitter and turner. He worked building, repairing and maintaining the freezing chambers. In 1947 my sister Noelene was born and a year later Dad qualified as a Certified Motor Engineer.

During that period, Dad was very involved with the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes (the RAOB or Buffalo Lodge); they were similar but had no connection to Free Masons. A fraternal organisation, it was originally started in 1822 at the Harp Tavern, Drury Lane, London, by stagehands and technicians. They focused on fellowship, ritual and mutual support. He became a member of the Hastings Lodge No. 38 on 20 September 1947. There were four significant medals in ranking, the Primo and Knight being the second and third. The medal in the photo from 1953 gives no indication of function. The photo shows the Primo Medal, which records he was raised to the 2nd Degree on 24 May 1950. This certified his Primo Medal and meant he was qualified to be a Leader in the Lodge. He received a bar on his Knight's Medal at the same time. The final inscription on the back of the Knight's Medal, which is 9 carat gold, records 'His service to the cause and the regard for him as a man's brother'. The date is 29 June 1955. I do not think he continued with the Lodge when he moved to Wellington.



L-R Buffalo Lodge medals 1. Waiter 2. Attendance 3. Primo 4. 1953 Medal 5. Knight. Miles family collection

He was also an active member of the Labour Party and the Engineers Trade Union movement. He became the Union representative of the Engineers Union at Tomoana and his best friend, Ken MELLING, was the Carpenters' Representative at Whakatu Freezing Works. In 1953 I was born. In 1954 Dad was President of the Labour Party in the Hawke's Bay, and in the elections that year the two candidates, James (Jim) EDWARDS (Napier) and Edward (Ted) KEATING (Hastings), were both elected with slim majorities. Walter NASH personally thanked my father for his work when he attended the Labour Party Debutantes Ball and said 'if they had realised in Wellington how much effort was being put in, in the Hawke's Bay, they would have provided more resources'.²

In 1956 he gained the position of East Coast Organiser for the Trade Union in a secret ballot. At the invitation of the National Secretary, we shifted, as the union wanted a full-time organiser, domiciled in Wellington. We lived in the building that housed the union office downstairs and our family lived upstairs at 123 Abel Smith Street.

Later in 1956 Dad was invited to the May Day Celebrations in China in Peking (Beijing). Trade Union delegates from many countries of the world attended to celebrate the Great Leap Forward of Chairman Mao ZEDONG. Dad got to meet the Premier Chou EN-LAI and toured the industrial area bordering North Korea, saw the new bridge being finished over the Yangtse River (a river that American engineers, at that time, had said could not be bridged), and visited schools and educational institutions.

In 1959 Dad was on the Management Committee of the Wellington Trades Council. What followed that year was to change our lives, involving a court case in the High Court



Peking (Beijing) May Day Celebrations Tiananmen Square, Wattie Soper (Southland) and Fred Miles. Miles family collection

and a case in the Arbitration Court. A document that was circulated at the time resulted in a libel court case. A J (Tony) NEARY took a case against Fintan Patrick WALSH, the President of the Trades Council, for £10,000 and against the Management Committee for £3500.^{3,4} The court proceedings made headlines in late October through to the middle of November 1959. Neary won the case. Dad never forgave Walsh. He believed that the committee was set up to try and get rid of Tony Neary.

Also in 1959, Dad's position came up for re-election. The national secretary (Mr J NEALE) sent out a circular to members prior to the ballot suggesting communists were trying to take over the union. This appeared to be designed to affect the vote. Apparent irregularities in the voting and various accusations led to the Arbitration Court action. Dad had gained 900 votes, but it was not enough to get re-elected. In the court case he was asked if he was a communist, which he denied, and if being thought to be a communist would affect his election chances. His reply was 'absolutely'. Mr Justice TYNDALL added it 'would be known as the kiss of death'. Effectively we lost the home and car, and he was unemployed. The court case decision was reserved, and it was not until nearly three years later the Judge ruled that he would not declare the 1959 results void but as another round of elections were due, he considered the union would run those elections correctly.



Walter Nash with my parents
Miles family collection

In December my parents, with the help of a Returned Serviceman's loan, managed to purchase a small bungalow in Mantell Street, Seatoun. Dad went back to being a motor mechanic and fitter with the Wellington City Council. I saw little of him during the 1960s as he left for work very early and came home late. He worked six days a week and on Sundays often worked on friend's cars or socialised with his friends. In 1962 he completed his New Zealand Trade Certificate in Fitting, Turning and Machining.

He gained the position of Foreman and moved into the Council's Cleaning Department in the late 1960s where he was responsible for the purchase of all new vehicles. He became a Senior Foreman and finally moved to become a Vehicle Inspector who was responsible for policing abandoned vehicles, their removal and disposal. During this time, he was involved with the Seatoun RSA, becoming its President, and the Wellington Working Men's Club, where he belonged to the Bowling and Fishing Sections.

He passed away in 1990 at the age of 76. We were never close and although I enjoyed his company when we had family holidays and family events, he was never one to engage in things I was interested in. I played soccer not rugby. He was very dogmatic in his views, so as a teenager I often took the opposite point of view (which was unhelpful). However, after his death, I began to discover much more about his life and realised he was a very hard-working man who did have strong principles. He believed passionately in the rights of workers. He believed a good father put food on the table, a roof over our heads and he never laid a hand on any of us (Mum was the disciplinarian). He did not understand my desire to go to university, but in the end was proud of me for my own achievements (although he never spoke to me about them). Some of his convictions rubbed off on me. At Victoria University I was on the Student Union Executive as Environment Officer in 1973 and became National President of Ecology Action in 1974. At both Manawatu and Horowhenua Colleges I was Chairman of the Branch of the Post Primary Teachers' Association for most of my teaching career.

Kevin Miles
E: kmiles.swright@gmail.com

References

1. Len Southward, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Len_Southward
2. Walter Nash, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Nash
3. Neary, Tony and Kelleher, Jack. *NEARY: The Price of Principle*. Harlen Publishing, Auckland, 1986
4. Fintan Patrick Walsh, teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/4w4/walsh-fintan-patrick

British societies and groups in New Zealand

Bruce Ralston

My grandfather's father was a Cornishman, William DANIEL, who came to Hawke's Bay in the 1870s. His children maintained some contact with his family, who mostly moved to other parts of the world—South Australia, Colorado, California. One or two siblings stayed in Cornwall around Penzance. William's son John, known as Jack, visited his Cornish cousins when on leave during The Great War.

Jack kept his connection with his Cornish origins by joining the Cornish Society of New Zealand. I remember the society's magazines coming in the post during the 1960s.

Over time I have noticed references to other New Zealand societies or groups with a focus on counties and countries within the British Isles. Today there are still a lot of Caledonian societies throughout the country. I think the Cornish Society is still going. And there must be Welsh and Irish societies.

What I would like to develop is a better understanding of what groups operated, when and even why. I wonder what records still exist under beds or in institutions. The records may explain what the objectives of the group were and who were members.

Just to give some sense of what groups existed, an exploration of Papers Past has been rewarding. Meetings were often advertised and reported. A major function seems to have been fellowship and entertainment. At times of conflict some groups worked to support county regiments and home civilians. A lot were local to our main centres; few were national.

In 1875 'natives of Perthshire, Forfarshire, and Kincardineshire' met and agreed to form an association called the Perth, Angus and Mearns Association, 'having for its object the cultivation and maintenance of friendly intercourse amongst the natives of these shires resident in

COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS.

A general meeting of the Lanark, Renfrew, and Dumbarton Shires Society of Otago was held at Murray's Private Hotel on the 19th ult. There was a large attendance, Mr Macgregor presiding. The following office-bearers were elected: —Mr Macgregor, President; Mr James Whitelaw, Vice-President; Mr William Brown, Treasurer; Mr James Barr, Secretary. Directors: Messrs Thomas Calender, John Thomson, Alexander McNeill, William Wright, and D. H. Miller. After the election of office-bearers had taken place, a considerable number of names were handed in as mem-

Meeting of Lanark, Renfrew and Dumbarton Shires Society, Otago Daily Times, 10 May 1875, p2

Otago and the other Provinces of New Zealand, to afford assistance to persons belonging to these shires in quest of employment, and to give temporary relief to those who, from sickness or any emergency, may stand in need of such aid, and to afford reliable statistics through their Secretary respecting the Colony to persons desirous of emigrating'.¹

At the same time, the Lanark, Renfrew and Dumbarton Shires Society of Otago was formed.² Some others were formed during the nineteenth century.

During the twentieth century, a range of societies was formed and reformed: Yorkshire, Men of Kent and Kentish Men (there is a difference!), and many more.³

At the Yorkshire Society Christmas party in December 1937 'guests present were representatives of the Men of Kent and Kentish Men's Society, Society of Dorset Men of New Zealand, New Zealand Cheshire Society, Northumberland and Durham Society, and the Royal Society of St. George'.⁴

The Auckland Ulster Association existed during the 1930s, as did the Westmorland and Cumberland Society.

The Manx Society was formed in March 1939 and was present at the first birthday party of the Gloucester-Somerset Association, along with the Kentish Association, Devon and Cornwall Club, Yorkshire Society, Midland Counties Association, Lancashire Society and Welsh Society.⁵

At the end of year meeting of the Ulster Society in 1939, the following societies were represented: Yorkshire Society, Devon and Cornwall Society, Men of Kent and Kentish Men, Welsh Society, Birmingham and Midland Counties' Association and the Manx Society.⁶

If you have any knowledge of any of these, or probably the many others, do let me know. My intention is to build a record of which organisations existed when, where and even why. Did they produce newsletters and magazines? And are there any archives, especially if they are of genealogical value?

And if there are any such organisations still operating, are they natural allies of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists? Could they be participants in genealogical expos and conferences?

Bruce Ralston
E: bruce.ralston@outlook.com

References:

1. *Otago Daily Times*, 12 April 1875, p2
2. *Otago Daily Times*, 10 May 1875, p2
3. *Dominion*, 2 April 1927, p5
4. *Evening Post*, 16 December 1937, p7
5. *New Zealand Herald*, 8 August 1939, p3
6. *New Zealand Herald*, 11 November 1939, p18

u3a clubs keep 'third agers' learning, laughing and living

Brenda Saunders

It was just 37 years ago that Dr John STEWART founded the first New Zealand u3a club at Remuera in Auckland. Now, this community-based organisation is thriving with 88 groups or clubs nationwide providing lifelong learning, friendship and activities for active aging. We serve people 55-plus in their third age, who are retired or no longer working full-time. Our motto of Learn, Laugh, Live symbolises our members' approach to life.

The u3a movement started in France in the early 1970s and has quickly developed a global footprint. It has a significant presence in countries like the United Kingdom (over 1000 groups), Australia (around 300 groups), and New Zealand (88 groups).

Initially called the University of the Third Age, u3a has dropped the word 'University' to better recognise its non-academic approach to learning and its non-affiliation to accredited universities. Members do not need to have attended a university or tertiary institution to join u3a. They enjoy not having exams or tests to sit—just the pure enjoyment of learning new skills and information.

u3a clubs are secular and managed by volunteers who are elected by members. They embody the values of collaboration, democracy and inclusivity.

Our clubs meet monthly to hear expert speakers on an enormous range of topics. Recent speakers have included:

- Dr Gavin ELLIS, former editor of the *NZ Herald* and media researcher
- Professor Allan BLACKMAN, Professor of Chemistry at the Auckland University of Technology
- Jenny LYNCH, a former editor of the *NZ Woman's Weekly*
- Mary KISLER, a distinguished art historian and curator at Auckland Art Gallery (Toi o Tāmaki)
- Captain Hayden SMITH on the environmental work of Sea Cleaners

The u3a Auckland Network is a voluntary association of independent u3a clubs across the Auckland region. It organises an annual event for its members to celebrate lifelong learning and promote friendship. This year's event will take place in July 2026, and its keynote speakers will be Dame Wendy PYE on 'Teaching the World to Read', and renowned economist, Shamubeel EAQUB, on 'A Society Worth Having'.

Our members come from all parts of society. They share their collective life skills and knowledge with other members through interest groups, which are a hallmark of u3a.

Interest groups are growing all the time and reflect our modern society. For example, they may include such topics as AI for every day, aviation and aerospace, current affairs discussions, gardening, geology, New Zealand history, poetry and writers, music appreciation, day trips, hiking, art, antiques and, of course, genealogy—the list goes on.

Many members have an interest in genealogy, and their research often forms the basis of our monthly talks and presentations. Some u3a genealogy groups run on a virtual basis rather than physical groups, as that enables convenors to focus on a member's particular interest in, for example, Irish, Canadian or New Zealand family history.

Brenda Saunders
E: u3abm@outlook.com

Sources:
u3a website – www.u3a.nz



U3A interest group in action



**Student Memberships available
for the student genealogist
aged 12-25!**

Five decades of Probus in New Zealand: friendship, purpose and community



Monika Prasad

Social engagement is important for everyone's wellbeing, but it is particularly important as we enter our later years and leave the security and structure of the workforce behind. Having an active social life provides both mental and physical health benefits, warding off loneliness and depression and increasing longevity. Probus Clubs offer a wonderful opportunity to reinvent retirement for those who have left their work lives but still crave engagement, purpose and companionship.

Social clubs like Probus provide a vibrant community of like-minded people who come together for fun and friendship. Probus promotes mental and emotional wellbeing by fostering a sense of belonging and purpose. The shared experiences and mutual support within Clubs help retirees navigate the significant life transition with confidence and enthusiasm.

Members meet monthly and stay active and involved through a wide variety of activities that meet individual needs. From coffee catch-ups and cinema groups, to day trips, walking groups and overnight tours, Club activities are as varied as the Probus Clubs themselves.

What they all have in common, however, is the opportunity to meet with fellow retirees regularly, to maintain healthy minds and active bodies, to expand interests, and to enjoy the fellowship of new friends.

In 2024 Probus in New Zealand proudly celebrated its 50th anniversary—a significant milestone that recognises five decades of friendship, connection and community. Proudly this year Hunter's Hill Probus Club in Sydney, Australia, also celebrated their 50th anniversary in February 2026. To promote our messages to the widest possible audience, we have been fortunate to secure the support of well-known media identity Heather EWART who has enthusiastically accepted the role of the Probus 50th Anniversary Media and Spokesperson.

Since the first Probus Club was established in New Zealand in 1974, the movement has grown into a vibrant network enriching the lives of thousands of retired and semi-retired people across New Zealand and Australia.

From its beginnings, Probus has been founded on a simple but powerful idea—that retirement should be a time of connection, curiosity and enjoyment. Originally sponsored by Rotary, Probus Clubs were created to help people maintain friendships, interests and a sense of purpose beyond their working lives. Fifty years on, that vision continues to resonate strongly.

Across New Zealand today, Probus Clubs offer far more than regular meetings. They provide welcoming spaces where friendships flourish, knowledge and experiences are shared, and new interests are discovered. Through guest

speakers, outings, travel, interest groups and social activities, Probus supports lifelong learning and encourages members to stay active and engaged.

Equally important is the role Probus plays in supporting wellbeing. By fostering inclusion and reducing social isolation, Clubs help members remain mentally, socially and physically connected. In communities throughout New Zealand—whether in cities, towns or rural areas—Probus contributes to a strong sense of belonging and community spirit.

Reaching five decades is a testament to the dedication of the many volunteers who have contributed their time and energy to sustaining and growing Probus Clubs across New Zealand. It reflects the strength of an organisation that continues to evolve while remaining true to its core values of fun, friendship, and fellowship.

So, if you are looking to turn your retirement into an adventure filled with learning, connection and growth, Probus offers a compelling path forward.

To find your local Club, visit our website or call us:

Website: probussouthpacific.org/

Phone: 0800 1477 6287

Monika Prasad

E: monikap@probussouthpacific.org



Bowling group



Rifle shooting—the non-participant

Bobbie Amyes

Growing up, I knew my father was a rifle shooter. How could I not, when on occasions you had to step over him as he sighted his rifle on the dining room floor, a grown man sprawled across the main floor area with a rifle in his hands and a wooden board with the target design leaning against the wall. Or the fact that all my cousins knew that Uncle Bob would not be at their weddings as Uncle Bob would be at rifle shooting, just Auntie Issy and Bobbie would be there.

Rifle shooting in the years I grew up was a man's world; women were not part of it. The clubhouse was a 'no-go' area for children and women. As kids, our soft drinks were passed out through the clubhouse window. Yet for all this male-dominated space, suddenly women took over. Yes, at least once a year during the big summer shooting season, the kitchen area would be full of women. The wives would prepare sandwiches and other food to take up to the mound for the men's morning and afternoon tea, lunch or just something to refresh them between the competition rounds. The women brought in handy funds for the club, especially during an international shoot.

Gradually, this sexist world changed. While it never occurred to me that I might take this up as a sport, daughters and wives made their way into this world, and finally, one of them made it to the top New Zealand prize, the Ballinger Belt. While many rejoiced at the involvement of women in the sport and being part of their club, a few diehards were still offended that women should enter their territory. One such male took a photo of one of our champion female shooters and stuck it in the men's toilets. There is a saying about karma, and this gentleman got his!

So, as a non-participant in this shooting world, how do I know about it? Coming from farming stock and spending school holidays on my grandmother's farm, I certainly knew about shotguns. Duck-shooting was part of the May Holidays, where whichever one of my male cousins was working on the farm would be out at the crack of dawn to shoot any unwary duck who dared to remain in the vicinity. Then there would be the plucking of the feathers, removal of the intestines, etc. Rabbit shooting also involved preparation of the kill for eating, but possums were a different order. This was the one shooting event that I was there to witness. With the orchard being close to the house, I was on one occasion allowed to accompany one of the cousins trying to catch a pesky possum or two that were decimating the ripening fruit. So shooting was part of rural life—it was done for a purpose, for food or to rid the farm of pests. Shotguns and bullets were just part of the scene, around and in plain sight in the relevant season.

So back to the man sprawled across the dining room floor—my dad, Bob GRIMWOOD, or to give him his full name, Andrew Robertson Grimwood, got into rifle shooting at an early age. He definitely did not grow up in a farming world, as his family were city folk, in Dunedin and Lower Hutt. So, how he came to be interested in rifle shooting is not known, but while he was at secondary school, Wellington College, during Old Boys' sports day, he was in the student shooting

team against the Old Boys in 1924. We have a cap from his Wellington College time, and it has been suggested that it might have been awarded for rifle shooting, as a matching cap is in the College Archives belonging to Claude FISK, 1923–1926, and their only connection is rifle shooting.



Left: Wellington College Cap 1924

Below: Article from Wellington College Archive—Rifle Shooting 1924

SHOOTING.
The shooting match between teams of twelve, representing the Present Boys and the Old Boys respectively, was won by the Old Boys by the slender margin of four points—511 against 507. The eight best scores on either side counted in the final total. The Old Boys' team included such crack riflemen as Captain Marshall, President of the Dominion Rifle Association, and Messrs. Ballinger and Prendeville. The team scores were as follow:—Old Boys (511): Prendeville 66, Bertram 62, Hislop 65, Marshall 66, Hester 62, Fenton 64, Withers 61, Hogg, 65. Present Boys (507): George 65, Heal 67, Ellis 66, Kirk 61, Wright 62, Aplin 62, Grimwood 62, Hazelton 62.

So why in the middle of a massive recarpeting of our house, would I pause to write about rifle shooting? Okay, our house is not massive, but three floors and lots of furniture. It is the fact that as we have moved furniture around, lots of Dad's shooting memorabilia has come to light. Firstly, the camphor chest had to be emptied so it could be moved.



Petone Rifle Club Blazer and Hat



Above: New Zealand Representative Blazer 1979 & pocket badge 1975

Right: New South Wales Rifle Shooting Association wine glasses 1978



There were his Petone Rifle Club blazer and hat, and his black New Zealand National representative blazer from 1979 and the Silver Fern patch from his previous jacket from 1975, all safely preserved since we packed up their home back in 1999. The chest had to be moved, but not the glass cabinet next to it. Here sit six wine glasses from the New South Wales Rifle Association, duly labelled with crossed rifles, date and red flower.

Moving to the last floor, the lower bedroom area and study means venturing into the paperwork. So we have

established Bob was a rifle shooter from his teens, probably kept it up in the Territorials before the war, sporadically during his Air Force years in WWII, and may have kept it up as he moved around Air Force stations post-war, but we know that after our move to Lower Hutt in 1954, he joined the Petone Rifle Shooting Club based on the Seddon Range, Upper Hutt. He moved from being a C Grade shooter to B then A. He travelled with teams overseas both as a shooter and in managerial roles. Bob took on another role, press officer, making sure that rifle shooting made it into the daily papers, especially during the big international matches. Paper Past has yet to reach his era of publicity in its digitisation programme, but obviously he was good enough at his job that he had a photo and a half-page spread about his involvement with Rifle Shooting (*Evening Post?*). In his later years he worked for the National Rifle Association.

But that is not what was lurking in the downstairs cupboards—there were three booklets in an envelope that stated they were to be kept together. These were the books he helped write and produce on the history of Rifle Shooting in New Zealand. With them was a copy of the speech he wrote at the time about the research, and what he could uncover and what had eluded him. These may have been written in his later years while he worked for the National Rifle Association

So, having committed one of the ultimate sins of a researcher by not providing the references and just hinting at where rifle shooting and my dad crossed paths, please forgive this non-participant of a rifle shooting heritage. Photos of the heritage will have to suffice. My last find was a reminder from those airline shoulder bags featuring rifle shooting logos. I had cut out a logo to keep. I must be a genealogist who has inherited a lot of memorabilia!

Bobbie Amyes
E: bamyes@xtra.co.nz

Right: Bob Grimwood in black New Zealand Representative Silver Fern Blazer with Petone Rifle Club hat





FAQ about the new cloud-based NZSG Digital Genealogy Archive

Zoe Pullman

What is the purpose of the digital genealogy archive?

There are two. The first is to create a secure digital repository for all the hard work that members have done re-searching their family history and genealogy. Having a copy of your files backed up off-site ensures that they are safe from natural disasters and technological disasters alike. The second purpose is to give people the option of sharing that research with others. By indexing the names of individuals you have researched for the Kiwi Collection, other members will be able to see that research has been done, request copies of related documents and potentially collaborate with you.

What are the benefits of using One Drive cloud-based storage?

Think of One Drive as a digital filing cabinet that lives on the internet instead of inside your computer. It is a service from Microsoft that keeps your photos and files safe and accessible from anywhere. Instead of saving a file only onto your physical device (like your phone or laptop), you send a copy over the internet to a secure computer server, known as the 'cloud'. Because your files are stored online, you can access them from anywhere, they do not take up room on your actual device and, if your device breaks, your files are still sitting safely in that 'cloud' filing cabinet.

Is it a good option for off-site back-up of my files?

Yes. It should not be your only copy but rather be considered part of your '3-2-1' filing system (three copies of your work, in two different formats, with at least one of them off-site).

What sorts of files can I put in my One Drive folder?

Any files relating to your family history and genealogy research are welcome. Formats could include pdf, word processing (.doc), Excel or other spreadsheets, PowerPoint or similar presentations, scans or photographs in jpeg, png, or tiff format, GEDCOM files and so on. The only requirements are that they be clearly and consistently labelled, and do not contain information about living people, in accordance with New Zealand privacy laws. You must include a GEDCOM file that relates to the people named in your files, so that it can be used to create an index of names.

Do I have to create an index of names myself?

No, we have removed this requirement based on feedback

from members. The NZSG Digital Genealogy Curator will now use your GEDCOM file to create the index. We generally add names to the Kiwi Collection twice per year, so you will have plenty of opportunity to update your GEDCOM before we do so, if you have added more names to your research.

Do I have to label my files a certain way?

No, there is no expectation to reinvent the wheel or re-label your files in a certain way, as long as you have followed a consistent labelling convention that can be relayed to the Digital Genealogy Curator. If you are starting from scratch, we have put some labelling suggestions in the 'how to' instructions on the [NZSG website](https://www.nzsg.org.nz) to help you.

Is there a limit to how much I can save in my One Drive folder?

Yes. Each member will not be able to upload more than 1GB of content, so you will need to prioritise what is most important to back up. Suggestions include items that are irreplaceable or hard to find such as scans of family letters/diaries/bibles, family photographs, items that are not digitised anywhere else, or files where the current location of the original is unknown. Lower priority should be given to documents that are already freely available online. To extend the storage space available to you, we are incentivising the addition of certificates in a separate sub-folder (giving you another 0.5GB), so that they can be added to our Certificates Collection. A full list of items that could be added to this sub-folder is outlined in the 'how to' instructions on the [NZSG website](https://www.nzsg.org.nz).

Can I keep adding to and updating the files in my One Drive folder?

Yes, you can add more at any time, provided you stay within the 1 GB limit (plus 0.5GB for Certificates, which go in the sub-folder labelled for this purpose). You can save over existing files or folders if you have a newer version to add (version history is automatically saved) or label them differently if you prefer. Files can be deleted, downloaded, renamed, moved, copied etc. by right-clicking on the file or folder.

Do I have to have the names in my research indexed for the Kiwi Collection?

No, you can opt-out of this on the Submission Agreement

and simply use your One Drive as a place to back-up your files. You can also decide whether you want to know when others enquire about or request to see your research or would prefer the NZSG Digital Genealogy Curator to respond to queries on your behalf. There are also options on the form for what you would like done with your research files in the event of your decease, or if you are no longer a financial member of NZSG. Basically, you are in the driver's seat when it comes to decisions about all the hard work you have done on your family history and genealogy.

Why can't I include research on living people?

To adhere to NZSG standards and to fulfil the obligations under the New Zealand Privacy Act 1993 (which was amended in May this year). Both your research files and your GEDCOM files should only include individuals who were born/baptised more than 100 years ago or are deceased, with the date of death given. All genealogical database programs have an option to exclude living people when exporting a GEDCOM. If you are not sure how to do this, please ask for my help.

I added my research to the previous digital genealogy programme that was running several years ago. Is it still there?

Yes, all members who used the previous version of this digital archive system have had their research submissions safely backed up. By now you should have received an email from me with the option of leaving your submission as is in the digital archive or transferring the files into the new One Drive system. If you have not had an email from

me, please do get in touch.

What should I do if my collection of genealogy research files doesn't meet the criteria outlined above, and/or is much larger than 1 GB?

This system has been created to suit the average NZSG member and may not be a suitable storage solution for all members, or for all of your genealogy research files. Please feel free to email the NZSG Digital Genealogy Curator so that we can work together to find a digital archive solution that meets your needs.

Can I submit files to the digital genealogy One Drive that belonged to a deceased family member?

Yes, if they were an NZSG member at the time of their death. We require the permission of the executor of their estate (i.e. the executor would need to complete the Submission Agreement form).

How do I sign up to use the NZSG digital genealogy archive?

Simply fill out the Digital Genealogy Request Form and Submission Agreement available on the NZSG website and send it to the NZSG Digital Genealogy Curator by email. Please keep in mind that I am volunteering for this project from the United Kingdom, so kindly allow me 2-3 working days to respond to your request.

Zoe Pullman

E: digitalcurator@genealogy.org.nz

Update coming in July!

Looking for an easier answer to your family history questions?



- Access the NZSG Kiwi Collection from your online PC, tablet or smartphone
 - Over 16 million records, with more being added regularly
 - Annual (\$50) and monthly (\$20) subscriptions available exclusively to NZSG members
- www.genealogy.org.nz/kiwi

Services and Benefits for NZSG Members

Supporting genealogy and family history in New Zealand

All NZSG members support the Society to make resources more accessible through projects and liaison with national organisations. Major achievements include access to birth, death and marriage registrations, improved content access to government records, and the creation of nationwide transcriptions, such as cemetery and school records.

The New Zealand Genealogist

We produce four issues per year of our award-winning journal, published since 1970. You access it online, including most back issues to 1977. The Editor welcomes articles for publication. Information on submissions is earlier in this journal and on our website.

Keeping in touch

Our newsletter, *e-KIT* (electronic Keeping In Touch), is a regular email full of up-to-date Society and genealogical news. *e-KIT* is available on our website, along with *The BIG Picture* (news for Branches and Interest Groups). Find them both [here](#).

Those on Facebook can follow our [Facebook page](#). Members can join our [Forum](#) and our Google group [Memlist](#) to keep in touch with current events, information and assistance.

Courses and online groups

Our [Introductory Course](#) is available online or at our Family Research Centre (FRC). Information on these is on our website under NZSG Services.

Online groups enable our members to get together, wherever they are in New Zealand or the World. One of our more popular ones is our [Online DNA Interest Group](#) (ODIG).

NZSG Library

The Library is based at the Family Research Centre (FRC) in Panmure, Auckland. The FRC is open to the public. Members receive a substantial discount on entry fees.

The Library is open Monday, and Wednesday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm, with late nights on Wednesday and the first Friday of the month. Check the website for opening hours around holidays.

See our website for the Library Catalogue and details on borrowing or using our Research Service.

FRC research service

We provide research guidance to members if you are unsure where to search next for that elusive fact about your ancestor or family member. We can also look up any of the resources if you are unable to visit the FRC.

E: researchservice@genealogy.org.nz.

Other research/purchasing services

We have a number of other services which you might find useful. Full details of how to access these is on our website under Services.

Membership discounts

Members receive a discount on access to the Family Research Centre (FRC) and for some NZSG sales products. Other member discounts will be listed in the member-only section of the NZSG website and promoted in *e-KIT*.

Reciprocal access

Members can request a letter of introduction for reciprocal access to Australian genealogical libraries, including the Society of Australian Genealogists in Sydney and the Genealogical Society of Victoria. Contact the Membership Administrator with details of your visit and your membership number

E: membership@genealogy.org.nz.

On our website - www.genealogy.org.nz

The NZSG website is the hub for information about the NZSG, both for the public and for members. Here you will find background, events and contact details.

Members and the public can:

- Access the NZSG Library Catalogue
- Access the member/public tier of the Kiwi Collection
- Access our Resources on Getting Starting and Research Skills, including *Getting It Right*, a guide on how to cite your sources and information on copyright
- Find their local Branch or Interest Group
- See what's happening in their local area
- Purchase products and services from the NZSG Shop (some are not available to non-members)
- Watch our monthly presentations on many different aspects of the NZSG and researching your family

Members can login for a range of online resources and services:

- Access to information on NZSG Record Collections
- Access Kiwi Resources and Kiwi Guides—help for researching in New Zealand; and our Overseas Resources for researching further afield
- Free access to historical newspaper databases for Great Britain and other countries through Gale Newspapers
- Free downloads of digital records on 'Discovery' at The National Archives (London)
- Submit entries to the online Register of Members' Interests
- Receive free assistance through the NZSG Research Service to search Library collections
- Receive assistance to search New Zealand land records (charges may apply)
- Subscribe to all the records on the Kiwi Collection

NZSG Record Collections

Members have collected a considerable amount of information over the years and made it available to other members. Information from the NZSG Record Collections is available to full NZSG members only, without charge (except for the Kiwi Collection). Access to the collections is a major benefit of your NZSG membership.

Full details on all our collections and how to access and contribute to them are available under Collections on our website www.genealogy.org.nz. Members are welcome to contribute new or updated material.

Access to some collections is through Research Services E: researchservice@genealogy.org.nz.

Certificates Collection

This collection was set up as a repository for certificates that members had obtained, but found to be unrelated to their research. We now accept certificates and miscellaneous documents of any kind whether they are related or unrelated to your research. We welcome further contributions.

Certificates can be accessed either through our online email service or through our postal service. Details on how to access these are available on our website. An index is included in the Kiwi Collection.

First Families

First Families is a collection of information about families, where the family emigrated to New Zealand before and including 1901 and where partners were married in New Zealand before and including 1901.

An index has been compiled from family record sheets, contributed by both members of the NZSG and non-members. Each family record sheet includes the names of three generations and their spouses where known. It can include parents who may not have come to New Zealand, thus bridging the gap between New Zealand and the country of origin.

Surnames can be searched by members in the database accessible on the First Families page on the website. An index and images are also included in the Kiwi Collection.

Pre-1856 New Zealand Marriage Records

This is a collection of New Zealand marriages that took place before compulsory civil registration. The collection contains over 28,500 entries from sources including civil registration entries, church records, newspaper notices, family and social history publications, Māori Mission records, Bible entries, ministers' diary and journal entries and submissions from NZSG members to name a few.

Access is through Research Services or by subscription to the Kiwi Collection. Contributions can be made through a form available online which can be emailed or posted to us.

Pedigree Registration

This is a collection of Pedigree Registration forms submitted by members. Every surname on the forms is indexed. These names appear in the Kiwi Collection.

An online search request form is on our website. A contribution form can also be found there. Please note the submission requirements.

Funeral Service Sheets

One of our newer Collections, Funeral Service Sheets are collected by members all over the country. An index is included in the Kiwi Collection. Access is through Research Services.

NZSG (Griffis) Illegitimacies

This collection is a name-searchable database involving illegitimate births in New Zealand between 1877 and 1950 that were available in public records, either at local court houses or National Archives. Virtually all of these records have now been transferred to Archives New Zealand.

The database includes details of the child (if named) the mother and the father, the location of the event, the record type and repository. Query results provide basic information only. Researchers are encouraged to go back to the original source record for fuller details.

Access is only to records more than 100 years old and is through Research Services or by subscription to the Kiwi Collection.

New Zealand Cemeteries

We have produced cemetery transcriptions for approximately 1400 cemeteries nationwide, for burials from 1812 through to 2020. Most municipal cemeteries are included, but a significant proportion of this collection includes private cemeteries, Māori Urupa and remote burial locations. Access is through Research Services or by subscription to the Kiwi Collection.

Obituaries Collection

This collection includes contributions from members nationwide from sources such as national and regional newspapers, club newsletters and periodicals. An index is included in the Kiwi Collection. Access details are on our website.

School Records

These records are a valuable resource for family historians because they not only put families together in local communities, but allow us to trace their movements from place to place. The NZSG has been transcribing and indexing school APW (Admission, Progress and Withdrawal) records from their earliest beginnings and over time has accumulated records for almost 2000 schools nationwide dating from 1858 to present time.

An index is available on the Kiwi Collection. Access is through our NZSG School Records Officer— see website for current details, or by subscription to the Kiwi Collection.

Kiwi Collection

The Kiwi Collection is our major database of more than 16 million New Zealand sources, including indexes to many of our collections, as well as images for an increasing number of datasets. The Kiwi Collection is an online, subscription-based service available exclusively to NZSG members. See the online shop for details on how to subscribe.

Shipping Collection Project

Launched in May 2024, this collection aims to collect information on every voyage to, from and around New Zealand up to 1920. The project will be conducted over four phases to ensure as much information as possible is collected.

See our website for more information on progress.

Small museums in New Zealand: Horopito Motors

Yvonne Milbank

Starting in 2016, there was an interesting series of television programmes called *Heritage Rescue*. In each programme, a group of experts visited a small-town New Zealand museum, with the intention of turning what, in some cases, was a jumbled clutter of old artefacts into a modern-day well laid out museum with uncluttered displays clearly labelled with signage and storyboards. They met with the museum volunteers to hear their ideas and to find out what was a major historical aspect of their district's history. The presenters then arranged to talk with some of the locals to find out more, looked for artefacts in the museum relating to the theme and used their own expertise to create a major display. Also, with the help of local volunteers, they refurbished at least part of the museum and generally tidied up the artefacts, putting like with like, and 'rehousing' the multiple duplicates of some items.

Although my husband and I did not watch all the programmes in the three series that ran, we did watch quite a few, and it inspired us to visit some of them as we travelled to different parts of New Zealand, visiting family and friends.

Having driven past many times in our trips up and down the North Island, we decided early in 2024, on a nostalgic trip back to the Waimarino area, that we would call into 'Smash Palace' for old times' sake. Officially called Horopito Motors, it is a sprawling car wreckers' yard and several large buildings on a property in the middle of the North Island. It is not a museum in the usual sense, but still very much a large collection of motoring artefacts and part of New Zealand's history in more ways than one.

In the 1960s in our youth, we knew it as Horopito Motors—just an ordinary car wreckers' yard out in the country on the way to National Park (now called Waimarino) from Ohakune and Raetihi. Bill COLE, the owner, taught wrestling at the Raetihi Police Youth Club, which my husband attended. Bill's daughter, Barbara, and her future husband at the time Colin FREDERICKSEN, attended the same school as us, although they were younger by a couple of years.



Some of the older cars in the yard

Barbara and Colin later married and took over the business from her father. They have now owned it for over 40 years and their daughter and her husband also work there. A truly family business.

In the 1970s, when we were living in Palmerston North, we owned an Austin 1800 and later a Morris 1800. These cars had weak window winders which tended to snap in half unexpectedly. On our way back from Hamilton, after seeing my sister and her family, we stopped at Horopito Motors to see if we could pick up a second-hand window winder. We were welcomed by Bill Cole. When we said what we wanted, Bill handed my husband a screwdriver and pointed us way down the back of the yard in the direction of where he knew there was a wrecked 1800. Off we headed with our two young children in tow. Sure enough, we discovered the wreck, so my husband unscrewed the appropriate window winder and we headed back to the office to return the



A replica of Mini used in the film Goodbye Pork Pie

screwdriver and pay for the winder. Bill, directing his comments to my husband greeted us with 'I think I know you'. Further conversation went on to sort out the correct family. Bill then mentioned that he had sold my husband's father a pushbike about 1935, and he went to his old-fashioned card filing system where it only took him about three looks to find the receipt. This was approximately 40 years later.

Moving on to the 1980s, the sprawling car wreckers' yard became part of the scenes for New Zealand films *Goodbye Pork Pie* (1981) and *Smash Palace* (1982). In the second film, Horopito Wreckers was renamed Smash Palace and is often still called by that name today. The yard also appears near the end of a more recent movie *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (2016) where a shootout occurs in Horopito's incredible jungle of car wrecks.

On our latest visit, who should be the first person we meet but Barbara Fredericksen, now one of the owners and the daughter of Bill Cole, the original owner. Of course we had to have a chat.

We paid our gold coin donation to have a look around and did just that. The outside yard is huge, with cars, trucks and trailers. It has a rough metal or grass path around it and vehicles seem to be grouped by age. They are stacked on top of one another, some complete, some with parts removed. All are in various stages of rusting. We saw some trucks with company names on—reminders of yesteryears, and versions of cars we or our parents once had.

Going inside one of the large sheds we find ourselves in a workshop, as Horopito Motors is a current business for repairs, warrants of fitness and the AA callout for breakdowns, punctures, flat batteries, lost keys and changing tyres. The garage is open seven days a week and the wrecking yard six days with the tow-truck on-call 24 hours.



It is providing an essential service in the area, not only for locals but also for visitors. Being in the position it is, at the start of the Old Coach Road cycle and walkway, and near Tongariro National Park, which includes many wonderful bush walks and Mount Ruapehu ski fields, but few auto repair shops, no doubt they are kept more than busy, with some of it urgent.

As well as the current auto repair business, it is the 'only vintage car dismantlers in Australasia' and as we head inside a two-storey building, we find it laden with shelves and shelves of various old car parts. Believe it or not they have not catalogued their stock—there is far too much which has been collected over about 90 years. The staff instead rely on their memories.

The part that the *Heritage Rescue* team played was to arrange for one of the buildings to be cleaned out, with the help of locals, and turned into a museum of the old cars and film memorabilia. Colin Fredericksen promised his father-in-law, Bill Cole, that they would create a museum and every vehicle that goes into it will be driveable. Quite a promise to keep. However, it seems Colin has so far kept it and, with the help of the *Heritage Rescue* team, some of his favourite car restorations are displayed in the museum. The development of the museum is ongoing. It is well worth a visit, even if you are not a car enthusiast. I suggest wearing sturdy footwear and take a walking stick if you are unsteady on your feet so you can enjoy this amazing piece of New Zealand history.

Yvonne Milbank
E: ymilbank@xtra.co.nz

Sources:

- Karauria, M. 'Smashing place to hold a reunion', *Whanganui Chronicle*, 25 March 2011, www.nzherald.co.nz/whanganui-chronicle/news/smashing-place-to-hold-a-reunion/WAKWIO63UCOVJMOQMJJ5VHI23Y/
- Nealon, S. 'Car yard a slice of New Zealand film history', *TV Guide*, 7 August 2015, www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/tv-radio/tv-guide/70932535/car-yard-a-slice-of-new-zealand-film-history
- Visit Ruapehu. Horopito Motors Wreckers, www.visitruapehu.com/see-and-do/all-activities/smash-palace

Images left (from top):

(top) In the museum with film posters on the walls

(middle) A small part of the parts section

(bottom) The cars stacked on top of one another



Luck favours the prepared mind: finding my 4x great-grandfather, William Scott (1765–1858)

Eric Walton

Last year, while visiting Europe, we decided we would visit the north of Ireland in the hope of finding out more about my SCOTT forebears. I knew something of my Scott family because of the family history published by a cousin, Elsie BURCHALL, in 2002.¹

My great-grandmother (my maternal grandfather's mother) was Rebecca Scott. She was baptised at the Donoughmore Presbyterian Church, County Donegal, on 26 April 1848. The Presbyterian Church register recorded that she was born on 31 March 1848, but unfortunately, the townland of birth was not recorded. However, I think it is most likely that she was born at Castlefin. Elsie's family history records that Rebecca was born on 27 July 1850. I believe that the year 1850 was calculated from the age given on Rebecca's New Zealand death certificate, but I have no thoughts about the origins of the day and month.



Rebecca Scott (1848–1887)
Walton family collection

Rebecca's parents were Robert Scott (1814–1890) and Rebecca Scott (1820–1890). Rebecca's maiden name was also Scott, which added complications to searching this part of the family. Robert and Rebecca emigrated here in 1876, so their New Zealand death certificates provided information about their parents. Robert was the son of Robert Scott, a farmer, and Mary STEWART, and Rebecca was the daughter of John Scott, a manufacturer, and Matilda ALLISON.

The family appears to have moved from Castlefin to Londonderry around 1855/1856. Rebecca's sister, Elizabeth Scott, was the last child to be baptised at Donaghmore on 24 September 1854, and her sister, Margaret Jane Scott, was the first to be baptised in the First Derry Presbyterian Church in Londonderry on 7 June 1857. The register of the First Derry Presbyterian Church also recorded that a Robert and Rebecca Scott had twins born in 1863, namely, Catherine and Charlotte. This was new information and not included in Elsie's published family history. My feeling was that these girls were part of my family because both my mother and mother's niece had conceived twins.

Viewing the church register and confirming the family connection was one of the things I wanted to achieve while in Ireland. I found Charlotte's death registered in May 1864, but nothing for her sister Catherine.

Also, while in Ireland, I wanted to find out as much as I could about Robert and Rebecca's parents and siblings. I found the deaths of Rebecca's parents before I departed from New Zealand. Rebecca's mother, Matilda Scott, died on 9 November 1872 in Raphoe, County Donegal, which is about nine kilometres north of Castlefin. The registration of her death stated that Matilda was 84 years old, married, a merchant's wife and that the informant was John Scott, occupier. The word 'married' suggested Matilda's husband was still alive when she died. A search for John Scott's death after 1872 was unsuccessful. A subsequent search of the Londonderry newspapers was enlightening; the *Londonderry Sentinel* of 16 November 1872 reported: 'Scott—November 9, at her son's residence, Raphoe, Matilda, wife of the late John Scott, aged 84 years.'

The informant who registered Matilda's death was her son John rather than her husband John. Her death was registered twice, the first entry cancelled because it was dated 16 October 1872 in error, the second time was on 29 March 1873. However, in the first entry, the place of death was given in more detail, namely, William Street, Raphoe.

Returning to the newspapers, there was a death recorded in the *Londonderry Sentinel* on 18 October 1861: 'October 15, at his residence, William-street, Raphoe, Mr. John Scott, senior, aged 64 years'. This death was not registered as this was before civil registration started in Ireland on 1 January 1864.

I traced John Scott Jnr and found that he had married Matilda ORR in 1849. They had four children and the family immigrated to Philadelphia in the United States. I have DNA matches to a number of his descendants.

The only other item I had about my Scott family was the biography of Joseph Scott, Rebecca's oldest brother, which appeared in *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand*.² It stated that Joseph was born in Castlefinn [sic] in 1844. Unfortunately, this could not be confirmed as the key pages are missing from the Donaghmore Presbyterian Church register. The last paragraph of Joseph's biography stated: 'His grandfather, William Scott, was the first to start cloth weaving and giving out shirts to be made, in Londonderry, Castlefinn, and other places in the North of Ireland'.

This made no sense to me. I knew that William Scott was not his grandfather but could well be his great-grandfather. Given that his mother's father was a merchant, I suspected William was his maternal grandfather's father but thought nothing more about it.

Fast forward to being in the United Kingdom. Our plan was to fly from London to Londonderry, overnight there, pick up a car and drive to Belfast, visiting a few places of interest along the way. However, before we got to London, my partner realised he had not booked a rental car for Ireland. A flurry of activity followed, and if we really wanted a car, it would have been in the order of £2500 a day because the British Open golf tournament was on in Portrush, County Antrim. We decided a train from Londonderry to Belfast would be fine and booked the tickets for something like £20 each.

While in Londonderry, I still wanted to visit Raphoe, so we hired a taxi and off we went. It was a pretty little town, and I would have liked to spend longer there and talk to some of the locals, but we did get to see William Street.



William Street, Raphoe
(author's photo)

Back in Londonderry, we still had some time before the train departed so we walked around the city taking in the sights, learning about the Troubles, and by chance, happened into the Tower Museum. Two exhibitions were on, one on the Derry Girls television series and one on the history of Londonderry. While wandering about, I happened

upon a display about the Londonderry shirt industry and below it was a sign mentioning William Scott. A light bulb moment—this had to be my forebear. I rushed back to the entrance with lots of questions about William Scott, fully cognisant that we had a train to catch.

Shirt Nineteenth - Twentieth Century

Derry's shirt industry began in the 1830s when William Scott set up a small weaving business based on hand sewing and outworkers. Outworkers were people who did the work in their own homes. The company supplied the raw materials. However the invention of the portable sewing machine in America in 1845 changed this industry, leading the way to the factory system.

William Tillie and John Henderson brought the first sewing machine to Derry in the 1850s. They went on to build one of the largest factories in the city.

Display caption at the Tower Museum, Londonderry (author's photo)

While in Belfast, I had previously scheduled some time at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland with one of the researchers from the Ulster Historical Foundation (UHF), but with a quick change of plans, we went hunting for William Scott. The newspaper archive delivered gold, not in the early 1800s, but in the early 1900s. The great-nephew of William Scott, Samuel Scott (1851–1838), had written a biography of William and how he got into making shirts but also provided information about the early Scott family, tracing it back to the time of the Ulster Plantation in the early 1600s. Samuel's narrative was serialised in three parts and appeared in the *Londonderry Sentinel* on 12 June, 19 June and 3 July 1920. Some comments and feedback were received, which he responded to, and then ultimately published as a booklet in 1928.³ A copy was found in the Linen Hall Library in Belfast, and I read it from cover to cover in one sitting. It is unlikely I would have ever found Samuel Scott's writings as it is way outside the expected timeframe; casting a wider net can be very productive.

A shorter, and perhaps more accessible, biography of William Scott also appears in the online *Dictionary of Irish Biography* and largely draws on what was written by Samuel Scott.⁴

So, who was William Scott, the shirtmaker? He was born on 12 March 1765 in the townland of Balloughry, County Londonderry, and was the youngest of the three sons of David Scott (1715–1785), a farmer. He was apprenticed to a Mr GILMOUR, a weaver in Artillery Street, Londonderry. Around 1790 he became a master weaver and set up his own business in Weaver's Row. In that same year, he married a distant cousin, Rebecca Scott, of Foyle Hill. In his booklet, Samuel Scott states 'he was happy in his family relations, and children came to him speedily and numerously'. A letter from a granddaughter to her cousin in 1897 indicated that they had 20 children, but many died in childhood. Samuel recorded the surviving children, namely: John (my 3x great-grandfather), James, David, Joseph, William, Thomas, Robert (who apparently died as a young man), Elizabeth and Rebecca.

William Scott was a committed Presbyterian. At 23, he was ordained an Elder in the Secession Presbyterian congregation, which worshipped in an old meeting house off Fountain Street. Later in life, and in conjunction with

another Elder, he was instrumental in the establishment of the Fourth Derry Presbyterian Church in Carlisle Road in Londonderry.

In 1829 a steamer service was established between Londonderry and Glasgow. William travelled regularly on it to sell his cloth in Glasgow. William's wife and daughters were fine needlewomen and in the early summer of 1831, William asked them to make a dozen shirts, which he took to Glasgow to sell. This was the time when men were moving to the cities, away from their families and the women who would have normally made their clothes. The firm William GOURLIE and Son in Glasgow saw an opportunity and purchased them and followed up with a series of repeat orders.

William Scott appears in the 1831 census fragment for Londonderry. He was at Weaver's Court; his family consisted of two males and five females, six were Presbyterian and one a Roman Catholic. Two doors down were Robert Scott and his family (six males and four females), all Presbyterians. Was he William's son?

Evidently, the selling of shirts created quite a bit of interest with the friends and neighbours. One of them, a draper, had a brother in Melbourne, Australia, and that brother placed a large order for shirts. The fulfilling of this order commenced in the spring of 1832, with the help of some additional seamstresses. Success followed and the business grew. For the next 10 or 12 years, William Scott was the only person making shirts in Londonderry.

Orders increased to such an extent that 'stations' were established in the rural areas surrounding Londonderry. Expert seamstresses were placed in these stations to teach the local women the requirements of the work. Precut shirts were distributed for making up and the finished shirts inspected and then the women were paid. Stations could be found in Milford, Ramelton, Raphoe, Castlefin and St Johnston in County Donegal; Tirkeveeny and Claudy in County Londonderry; and Strabane in County Tyrone. Horse-drawn carts were used to transport the goods to and from these stations.

In 1840 William Scott moved his business to larger premises, into what had been the Old Military Hospital in Bennett Lane (now Bennett Street) in Londonderry. By that date, William Scott and Son (he was in partnership with his son James) employed 250 weavers and over 500 women sewing the shirts, paying approximately £500 a week in wages. Demand was worldwide, and approximately 250,000 hand-sewn and hand-finished shirts were leaving the William Scott and Son's Londonderry warehouse each year.⁵

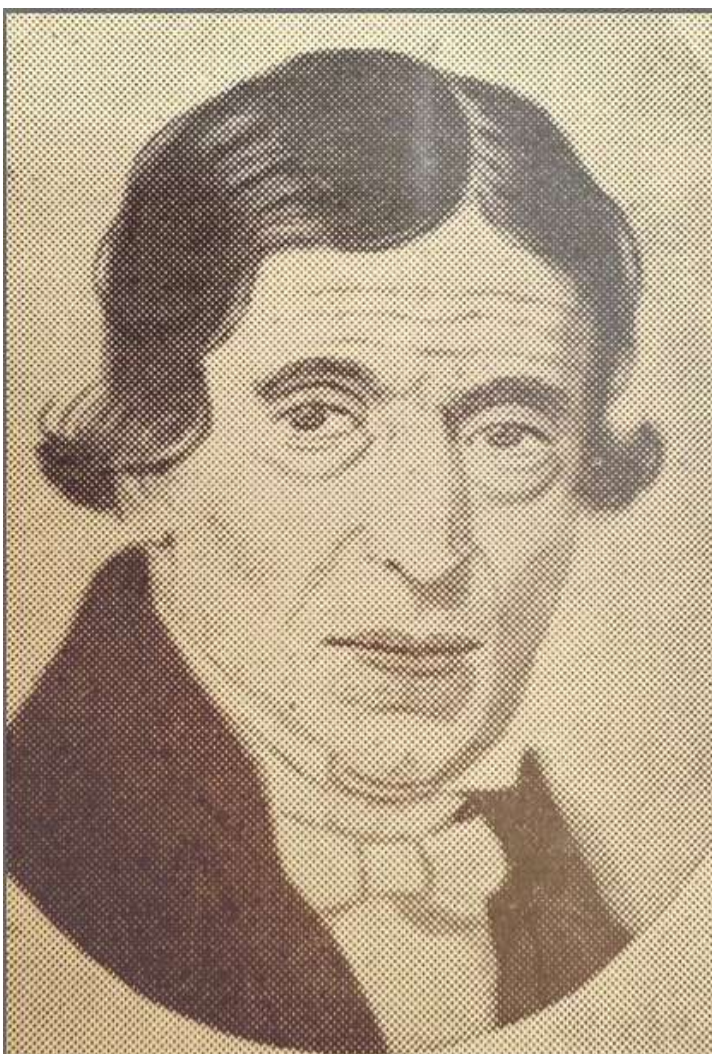
In 1845, when William turned 80, the Sabbath School at the Fountain Street Presbyterian Church, where he had been the Superintendent for many years, presented him with his portrait 'painted in oils by a London artist'. Despite my best efforts, I have yet to determine whether this painting still exists. However, an engraving of the portrait became the frontispiece of Samuel Scott's booklet. It also appeared in the 12 June 1920 article in the *Londonderry Sentinel*.

William Scott started making shirts when he was 66 years old and he retired in 1850 when he was 85. He moved to

Burt, County Donegal to live with his son James, who had also retired. James had bought a farm (Bridgetown) and that property, or at least parts of it, are still owned by descendants of James Scott.

The business of William Scott and Son continued after William's retirement but ultimately failed because they did not adopt the factory system. The shirt industry in Londonderry flourished until the 1920s, when it was estimated that 18,000 people were employed, and Londonderry was the main shirt supplier to the United Kingdom, Europe and the British Colonies.

William died on 26 May 1858 at the age of 93 years. He is buried in the graveyard of St Columb's Cathedral in Londonderry. His headstone is of simple design, with just the inscription 'William Scott, 1765-1858' (a photo of it can be seen on The Fountain Heritage Facebook page).⁶ I understand the headstone could be found near the gateway from the city wall to the Cathedral, but this is not where he was buried. The headstone was moved during alterations (reported by Samuel Scott, so some time ago), and his grave is near the memorial to the Apprentice Boys. Unfortunately, I knew none of this until I reached Belfast and did not have the time to return to Londonderry and see it for myself. However, very recent correspondence from a cousin in Ireland said it is going to be lifted and mounted on



William Scott (1765-1858).

From Samuel Scott's booklet (courtesy of the Linen Hall Library, Belfast, Northern Ireland)

the wall near the gateway to the city walls. I very much look forward to seeing it on a future visit. William's wife, Rebecca, died on 27 September 1835 but I have not been able to find where she was buried.⁷

Samuel Scott's writings also take the family back to the time of the Plantation of Ulster in the early 1600s. According to him, the family traditions said that the first Scott ancestor to arrive in Ireland was Thomas Scott. He came with his wife and children, a disbanded man-at-arms of the then Earl of Buccleuch of Brankstone Castle (now Branxholme Castle), Teviotdale, Scotland. Thomas was granted leases to land in the townland Magheribeg (Maghera Beg), County Donegal (with John PURVEYANCE, John HARPER, Hugh LOKARD and John BROWNE) but because of disagreements about who was the rightful lessor, the Scott family moved to the townland of Ballougry (Balloughry) near Londonderry. Samuel stated that Thomas's son Robert appears in the muster roles of 1631, resident of Ballywoodry (Balloughry), with sword and pike. The family farmed there for approximately 170 years until William Scott's brother, Robert, moved the farming operation (with his brother John) to the townland of Glenderowan (Glenderowen) in County Londonderry in 1790.

Checking this account is not straightforward because of the limited number of records. Robert Scott and family appear in the 1831 Londonderry census fragment for Glenderowen. He and his brother John are buried nearby at the Glendermott Old Cemetery, and on their headstone it states that they were both born at 'Ballougry' and died at 'Glenderowan'. There is also a headstone in the same cemetery for Samuel Scott (who was the grandson of the above John Scott), his parents and siblings.

There is a John Scott recorded in 'Ballougry' in the parish of Templemore in the 1740 list of Protestant Householders for Ireland and, according to Samuel Scott's account, he was the father of David Scott (1715–1785), and therefore, William Scott's grandfather.

Going back further becomes more difficult. However, Hill's 1877 account of the Plantation of Ulster records that 'on the 1st of May 1613, James Coningham, or Cunningham, sett [sic] out a large quantity of his lands to the persons whose names are underwritten'..... 'the quarter called Magheribegg, to John Purveyance, John Harper, Hugh Lokard, Thomas Scott, and John Browne'.⁸ Hill also reports that these men 'had not taken the Oath of Supremacy and so that the letters patent, as they relate to the lands let to these settlers had become null and void'. This indicates they lost their land because they did take the Oath of Supremacy rather than difficulties created by disagreements between lessors.

In his booklet, Samuel Scott says that Thomas does not appear in the Ulster muster roles of 1630. In Hunter's book, however, which published the Ulster muster roll, there appears a Thomas Scott in County Donegal, linked to the Barony de Boyleagh and Bannagh and the Earle of Annandall was the undertaker.⁹ The footnote for Thomas states that he 'leased part of Magheribegg quarter of the estate of Sir James Cunningham, 1 May 1613 (Hill, Plantation, p507)'. Interestingly, Hunter lists a total of five SCOTs on page 137: John Scot younger, Alexander Scot, Thomas Scot,

George Scot, and John Scot. A footnote states that the men are drawn from two families, the first, John and John Scot younger (father and son), and the second, Thomas, Alexander, and George (probably father and sons). Perhaps John and Thomas were brothers?

I then looked in Hunter's book for James Scots in Counties Donegal and Londonderry.¹⁰ For County Donegal, there are two; one linked to the Barony of Rapho and the undertaker was 'The Lady Conningham, widow of Sir James Conningham'. He was recorded as having a sword and snaphance. The second is also linked to the barony of Rapho and the undertaker was Robert HARRINGTON, Esquire. He was recorded as having only a sword. For County Londonderry, there is one James Scot, linked to Sir Robert MacCLELAN. He was recorded having a sword and pike.

Given that the townland of Balloughry is in County Londonderry and the weapons match, could this Robert Scott be Thomas Scott's son? More research is required.

While in Belfast, I did manage to check the records of the First Derry Presbyterian Church for Catherine and Charlotte. There was only one Robert and Rebecca Scott family in the records, so Catherine and Charlotte are without question my relatives. Catherine died on 29 January 1864, aged three months. She was buried at Killea, which is about eight kilometres south-west of Londonderry. Though she died in 1864, the year that civil birth and death registration started in Ireland, her death was not registered.

I was keen to find out more about William Scott's other children and their descendants. While meeting with the people from the Ulster Historical Foundation in Belfast, I was fortunate to be given a draft of a paper written by William ROULSON about Rebecca Scott, the poet of Castlefin, which has since been published.¹¹ Rebecca Scott (1838–1907) published a collection of poems in 1880; she was a daughter of Joseph Scott (1808–1858), who was a son of William Scott, the shirt-maker.¹² I also found a 'Letter to the Editor' published in the *Derry Journal* of 26 June 1970 written by a Mrs Jean Vera WILLIAMS from Te Aroha seeking information about the Scott family. Her husband's great-grandfather was James Scott (1800–1871), the son and business partner of William Scott. James' son James (1842–1919) was the person who immigrated to New Zealand.

I have been using DNA to confirm relationships and identify additional Scott relatives. Many are in the United States, as many Ulster Presbyterians immigrated there in the eighteenth century, but this is a work in progress!

Before my trip to Ireland, my branch of the family knew nothing of William Scott. If we had rented a car while there, and not walked around Londonderry, I believe we would still know nothing of him nor the wider family I have since discovered.

Eric Walton
E: ericwalton08@gmail.com

References:

1. Burchall, Elsie M. *The Irish Inheritance of the Scott, McConnell, Anderson & Hurley families*. Privately published, Auckland, 2002
2. *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand*. Volume 5, Otago and Southland provincial districts. Cyclopaedia Company, Christchurch, 1905, p573
3. Scott, S. 'William Scott, Founder of the Londonderry shirt trade'. *Londonderry Sentinel*, Londonderry, 1928
4. Lunney, Linde. 2015. Scott, William. Dictionary of Irish Biography www.dib.ie/biography/scott-william-a9753
5. Lunney, *ibid*
6. www.facebook.com/FountainHeritage/posts/336735726970275/.
7. Lunney. Dictionary of Irish Biography
8. Hill, George. *An historical account of the plantation in Ulster at the commencement of the seventeenth century (1608–1620)*. McCaw, Stevenson & Orr, Belfast, 1877 p507. An online archive copy can be found at archive.org/details/historicalaccoun00hill_0/page/507/mode/1up
9. Hunter, R J. *Men and Arms: The Ulster Settlers, c 1630*. Ulster Historical Foundation, Belfast, 2012, p137
10. Hunter, p130, p134, p89
11. Roulston, William. *Rebecca Scott: Poet of Castlefin*. Journal of the Donegal Historical Society, 2025, pp87-92
12. Scott, Rebecca. *Echoes from Tyrconnel; A collection of legendary and other poems*. Londonderry, 1880. An online archive copy can be found at archive.org/details/echoesfromtyrco00scotgoog/page/n6/mode/2up

NZSG Shipping Collection



Two years ago we decided we needed a major project for our members and to expand our records. The choice was Land or Shipping. Our members unanimously chose Shipping. When we first put out the call, over 200 people answered our questionnaire about how they could help with the project. We currently have 130 people working on the project—a small team in Australia and the rest in New Zealand. Our membership officer, Kelley, in Auckland, manages the allocation of work. Jan and Gordy, in Christchurch, are in charge of the master database, which is a massive job. We have several branches around the country that work in groups and we even have a retirement home group made up of non-genealogists.

We are currently in phase 2 of the project, which is collecting voyages—not just ship names, as many ships made multiple voyages. Our team have been systematically reading every newspaper published to find any reference to shipping. We have been through all the records held in our library and catalogued what is useful for the shipping collection. We are pulling together all the information contained in microfilm, microfiche, CDs, books and websites that we can find. Branches are checking their own libraries, local museums and branch collections and providing lists of what they have available. We are sourcing shipboard diaries and published family histories. Any reference is recorded in a spreadsheet with pre-set headings, so everyone is following the same process. Some articles found include the captain's name and passengers—others may just be a mention of cargo arriving. We are including all voyage references—from around the world, to and from Australia and coastal shipping around New Zealand.

To date we have 230,000 voyages in the database. We are now moving into phase 3 of this project where we aim to find out what other information is available about each voyage. We are hoping to release the records for the decade 1840–1849 at the AFFHO Congress in Wellington in February 2027. There are currently 20,113 voyages in this era.

How can you help?

Please check your family files and let us know if you have any of the following for voyages arriving in New Zealand from 1840–1849. You may have documents you can scan to us, or you may have a website reference or book name. All information welcome.

- Passenger lists
- Shipboard diaries
- Captains and Surgeon reports
- Ship photographs/drawings
- Website and Book references
- Ephemera—tickets/menus—pretty much anything relating to the voyage

Please email Kelley at shippingcollection@genealogy.org.nz

If anyone would like to join us in this massive research project, we would love to have you on board. More information, including a Volunteer Agreement, can be found here genealogy.org.nz/NZSG-Shipping-Project/11427/

Jan Sherwood and Melanie Middleton
E: shippingcollection@genealogy.org.nz



From Bressay to Otago: A Murray History Between Isles

Avril Ash

In the late nineteenth century a widow and her two surviving children emigrated from a small rural island in Shetland to Dunedin, New Zealand. This article analyses their lives in Shetland, the 104-day passage taken, their lives in New Zealand, and the records that exist to document this.

Bressay is a remote, inhabited island off the coast of mainland Shetland. Helen (Ellen) Hunter MURRAY was born on 23 June 1855 in Mail, Bressay, Shetland, and will henceforth be referred to as Ellen Murray.¹ This was the first year for statutory births, deaths and marriages registration in Scotland. Her parents are listed as Andrew Murray, a 29-year-old sailor from Bressay, and 32-year-old Helen HUNTER, also from Bressay. As per the birth record, this is the couple's fourth child.

Tragically, six months after her birth, Ellen Murray's father, Andrew Murray died on Bressay on 6 January 1856 at 29 years old due to a psoas abscess.² In the 1861 Scottish census, Helen Hunter appears in Bressay, aged 37, working as an agricultural labourer, still widowed. Also in the household is her son Peter, aged 12, daughter Ellen (Helen), aged five, and a widowed aunt, aged 65, also working, named Elizabeth NICHOLSON.³ Ellen Murray's sister, Margaret, aged nine, is recorded at the home of her grandmother Jane Murray, a knitter, living at Gremista on Bressay.⁴ Her eldest sister, Jane Murray, aged 13, is also living on Bressay, working as a domestic servant in the home of Simon ANDERSON.⁵

Margaret Murray died the following year on Bressay in April of 1862, aged 10, due to measles.⁶ After the very early deaths of her father and sister, this reduced their family

unit to just Ellen, her mother, Helen Hunter, and her two remaining siblings, Jane Murray and Peter Murray.

The 2022 population of Shetland was just under 23,000, as per the National Records of Scotland.⁷ In the 1860s, the population spiked, and held 35 per cent more than it does today, reaching greater than 31,000 inhabitants.⁸ This caused Shetlanders to endure great hardships, as being a remote island posed its own challenges, paired with limited land for crops, harsh winters, as well as economic and industrial changes. Some islanders migrated from the remote islands to mainland Shetland to seek work. Over the next century, the population nearly decreased by half due to migration. The population of Bressay was near 1000 in 1841, and down in the 200s by the middle of the 1950s. In modern times, it is around 350.⁹

Shetlanders migrating to New Zealand is a very well-documented phenomenon, particularly in the 1870s to mid-1880s.¹⁰ New Zealand was a familiar place to many Shetlanders, as seafaring was a common occupation that led to travels to New Zealand. Passage was often paid, especially targeting destitute women, particularly as Shetland during this time had a higher proportion of women and extreme poverty.¹¹

Those who remained in Shetland would have likely heard many reports of positive news from New Zealand. One such excerpt from an 1875 edition of *The Shetland Times* offers an insight and answers many questions Shetlanders had and addressed reservations and fears (see next page).¹²

It is likely the family travelled across Bressay Sound and departed from mainland Shetland to travel to mainland

Image above:

Photograph of Bressay, overlooking Lerwick, Mail to right of centre (Avril Ash, 2023)

NEW ZEALAND.

Wellington, N.Z., Sep. 27, 1875.

SIR,—So many of your countrymen and countrywomen have come to this land, that you will no doubt be glad to publish a letter about New Zealand and the prospects for Shetlanders in it.

I continue to receive a great many letters from the Islands about emigration, and I begin by answering some of the objections which I have learnt are made to it in Shetland.

1st, The Climate—No part of New Zealand is too hot for the Shetlanders. The general character of the New Zealand climate is that of the British Isles; and no inconvenience or loss of health is to be apprehended from settling in any part of the country, north or south.

2d, The Maories—All fear of the Maories has now passed away. Unless in Taranki, and in some parts of the Province of Auckland, few are to be met with. There are many wealthy, well-dressed Maories in New Zealand, who have adopted our customs to a great extent, and who are as peaceful as the Shetlanders themselves. Two Maori chiefs—well-dressed gentlemen—were lately boarding at the house of one of the families from Lerwick.

3d, Some have written home doubtful reports of the colony to Shetland. Of course they have. It is a mistake to suppose that money is to be picked up in New Zealand without work; and those who go to the colony with that idea will find themselves sadly mistaken; but labour in the colony meets with excellent remuneration, and opportunities offer in great numbers to the man who is capable of seizing them, of making himself independent. A man can give no just opinion of the colony until he has been at least a year in it.

4th, Some have not written home—Of course there are people even among the Shetlanders forgetful of home ties, and some write but do not put a proper address upon their letters, or commit them to careless people who neglect to post them.

5th, Some have said that the New Zealand government must have some deep sinister views and intentions, otherwise they would not give free passages to emigrants. But it pays the New Zealand government to bring out people free. An adult emigrant brought into the colony costs the government about £17 for his introduction; now the money to carry on emigration is borrowed in London at 5 per cent, £17 at 5 per cent. is 17s a-year, that it is calculated that an adult emigrant will pay at an average more than 30s a-year to the government in way of taxes upon what he consumes, so that after all a considerable profit is realised by the government through his introduction. If a Shetlander will neither smoke, nor drink, his taxes will come to little; but if he saves he will be sure to buy land with it from the government, and thus

Scotland, in order to reach Glasgow, to then travel onwards for New Zealand.

While the 1861 census reflects who remained of the Murray family still residing in Bressay, Shetland, the next record is transcribed, stating that Ellen Murray (Helen Hunter Murray), Jane Murray, and Helen Murray, from Bussey (Bressay), Lerwick, Shetland, travelled aboard the SV *Robert Henderson*.¹³ This passenger list is derived from the *Otago Gazette*.¹⁴

The SV *Robert Henderson* departed Greenock, Scotland, on 10 September 1870, and arrived in Dunedin, New Zealand, on 23 December the same year. The maiden voyage of the *Robert Henderson* made record time of 79 days from Greenock, Scotland, to Otago, New Zealand, about 15 years earlier.¹⁵ The 1870 voyage the Murray family embarked upon lasted 104 days, leaving Scotland, rounding the Cape of Good Hope, Africa, and finally arriving at New Zealand.



A photograph negative of a painting of the Robert Henderson, David Alexander De Maus, National Library of New Zealand

Unsurprisingly, records do not seem to exist of their travels to mainland Scotland in order to depart from Glasgow, however this would have consisted of one or more trips by boat to reach the mainland. In modern times, this takes 12 hours by ferry, although in the mid-to-late 1800s, this would have been a journey in itself. Upon their arrival in Port Chalmers, later records detailed below show the family had initially settled in and around Dunedin.

Ellen (Helen) Hunter Murray, married John Smitt (Smith) DUNNET in July 1879 in New Zealand, about nine years after her arrival. She was 24 years of age at this time.¹⁶ John Smith Dunnet was also an islander, though originating from further south than Shetland. He was born on 2 January 1855 at St Catherine's Place in Kirkwall, Orkney. He was the sixth child to parents William Dunnet, a 34-year-old tailor from Orkney, and 31-year-old Isabella GUILLON.¹⁷ Ellen Murray and John Smith Dunnet had a son in 1880 named John Sinclair Dunnet and a daughter the following year in 1881 named Ellen Isabella Dunnet.^{18,19}

Only a couple of years later, Ellen's husband, John Smith Dunnet, died in 1883 aged 28, as evidenced by the cemetery record of his gravestone.²⁰ A death record from

*Excerpt from The Shetland Times 27 November 1875
about life in New Zealand*

1893 shows Ellen Murray [Dunnet] died aged 39.²¹ A gravestone entry on Find A Grave in the Northern Cemetery in Dunedin, New Zealand, has no photograph attached.²² A date of 30 December 1893 is provided, which corresponds with the death index and birth record. A further search will provide a cemetery record depicting the inscription of their shared gravestone.²³

NORTHERN CEMETERY, DUNEDIN.

SECTION 5

354.
Plan: Block 74 Plot 13 DUNNET
Stone: Erected by Ellen I.M.O. her beloved husband who d. 29 Mar. 1883 aged 28 years; also Ellen wife of the above who d. at Kelso 30 Dec. 1893

Cemetery record of John Smith Dunnet and Helen Murray

A search for marriages within the New Zealand Historical Births, Deaths and Marriages index for Jane Murray gives 16 results, and as mothers' maiden names or ages are not available, it would prove somewhat difficult to determine in this manner. As an alternate approach to narrow results, a gravestone of a Jeannie Murray STRANG exists, mentioning her birth in Bressay, Shetland, and her death in Wellington, New Zealand, on 26 April 1888, aged 39.²⁴ This grave would align with an 1876 marriage record of Jane Murray and Robert Strang in New Zealand.²⁵

Jane Murray and Robert Strang are found referenced in the New Zealand Historical BDM birth index. A daughter named Ellen Mary Hunter Strang was born in 1877, and a son named John James Strang was born in 1886.^{26,27} Further information may be gleaned from ordering such records, as well as further research to determine the events throughout the remainder of their lives, and whether they survived and remained in New Zealand.

While censuses were conducted in New Zealand much more frequently than in Scotland, these records contain little information in comparison, as their purpose pertains to population census data, rather than personal information. An alternative option would be the Electoral Rolls in New Zealand, which are available via Ancestry from 1853 until 2010, which more than covers the individuals outlined, keeping in mind that New Zealand women obtained the right to vote in nationwide elections from 1893.²⁸ A John Smith Dunnet appears on three electoral rolls from 1880–1884 as a freeholder in Lumsden, working as a constable.²⁹

Peter Murray is not listed on the aforementioned transcribed copy of the passenger record from the SV *Robert Henderson*. Regardless of this, it is very clearly evidenced that this same Peter Murray had most certainly lived and died in New Zealand. It is possible he may have been mistakenly not included in the passenger list transcription. However, it is not entirely possible to rule out that he may have emigrated at a later date, though he does not seem to appear on other passenger lists. Peter Murray was working aboard a gold mining dredge and tragically drowned alongside another man when their boat capsized at Sandy Hook on 3 April 1883.^{30,31}

An article from the *Otago Daily Times* mentions Peter Murray's widowed mother, who had also just received news only days ago of a son-in-law's death. It further mentions he was unmarried.³² This widowed mother, the same Helen Hunter born 9 August 1823, and baptised 6 September

1823, is found in a New Zealand death index record, having died 27 February 1919 aged 95 years.^{33,34}

Helen Hunter's gravestone does provide her year of birth, however it does not depict her date of birth on 9 August 1823 nor her baptism on 6 September 1823, though it does provide us with a death date of 27 February 1919, along with her death notice in the *Oamaru Mail*.³⁵ It also tells us that she had lost her father in the Arctic Circle when she was just a young teenager in 1837. This provides some reassurance as to her motivations for emigration, 'a woman of courage who sought a better life for her family.'³⁶ The flag adorning her tombstone is the Shetland flag.



This micro-level view of a family's migration and settlement from one remote island to another, that is quite nearly its antipode on the opposite side of the globe, offers a striking insight into a late nineteenth-century journey. While one of many families that ventured to New Zealand from Shetland, it would be intriguing to gather data about how many families moved from Bressay. Records are available widely online for births, marriages and deaths, as well as newspapers, passenger lists, electoral rolls, wills, census, anecdotes and other documents which can offer some insight to genealogists to trace migratory trails. Records of life in Shetland and other challenges, as well as known connections through seafarers, and Shetlanders seeking a better life, can all assist genealogists to understand likely motivations of migration and gain a deeper understanding of hardships endured and what life may have been like.

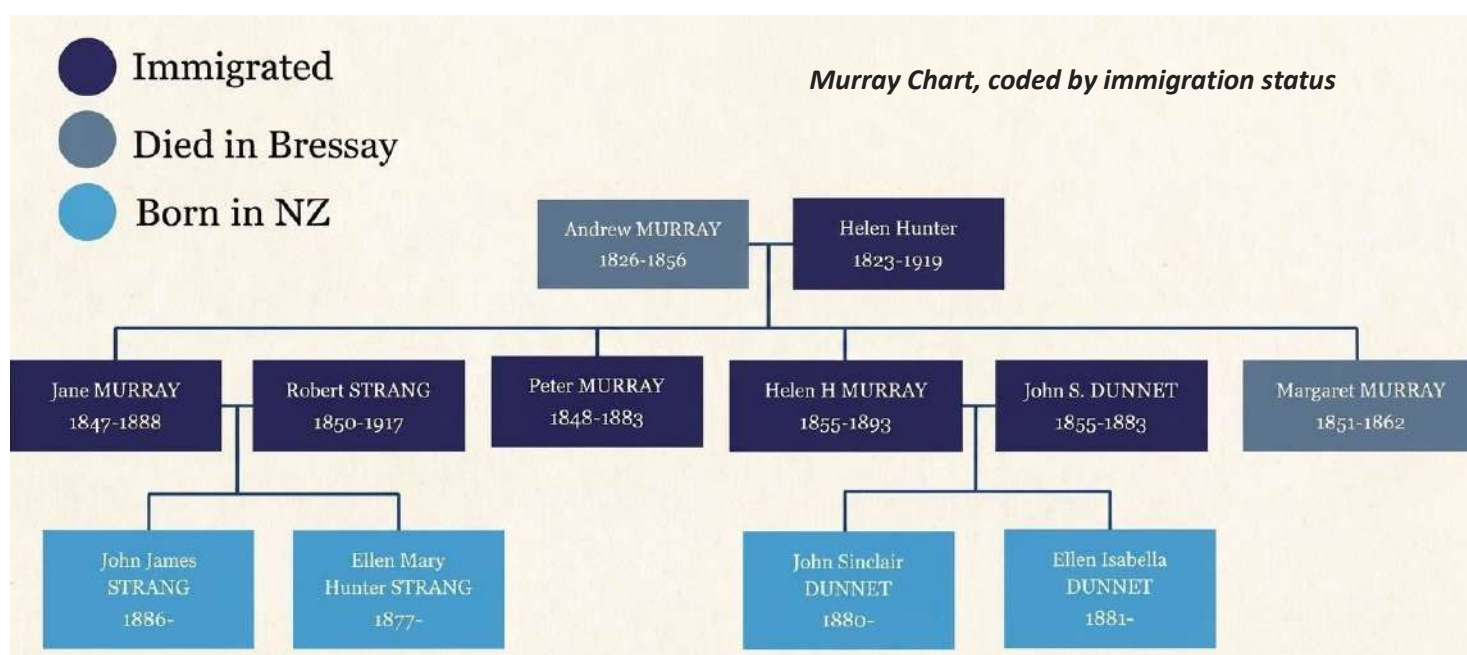
Avril Ash

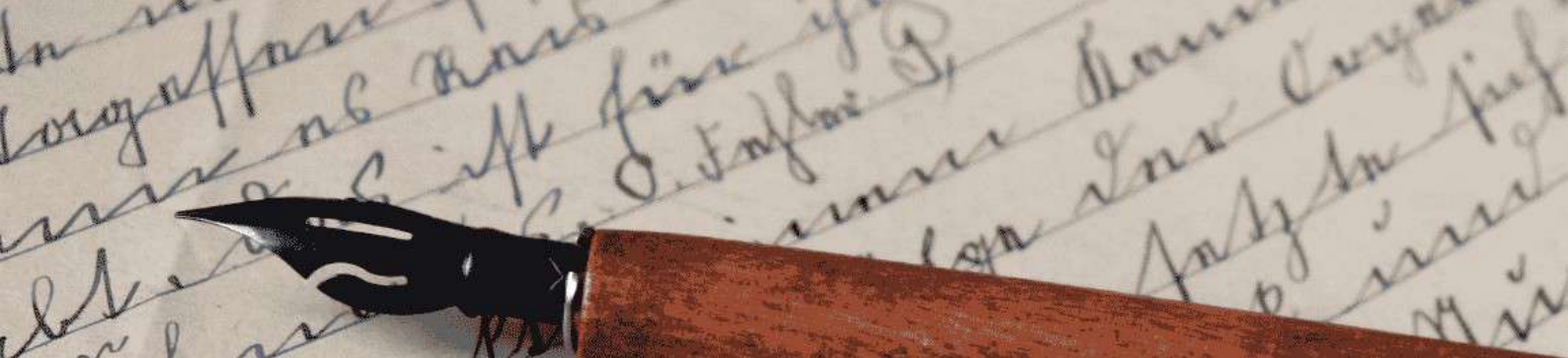
E: avrilash@qualifiedgenealogists.org,
avrilesch@gmail.com

References:

1. Births. Scotland. Mail, Bressay, Shetland. 23 June 1855. Helen Murray. 001/17 www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk
2. Deaths. Scotland. Mail, Bressay, Shetland. 6 January 1856. Andrew Murray. 001/11 www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk
3. Census records. 1861. Scotland. Mail, Bressay, Shetland. 7 April

1861. Helen Murray. 001/11/9 www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk
4. Census records. Scotland. Gremista, Bressay, Shetland. 7 April 1861. Margaret Murray. 001/12/11 www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk
5. Census records. Scotland. Setter, Bressay, Shetland. 7 April 1861. Jane Murray. 001/12/16 and 001/12/17 www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk
6. Deaths. Scotland. Bressay, Shetland. 24 April 1862. Margaret Murray. 001/1/16 www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk
7. National Records of Scotland. Shetland Islands Council Area Profile, 2022 www.nrscotland.gov.uk
8. Bennett, D. 'Why Shetland's empty islands were abandoned'. BBC News, 2020 www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-54810450
9. Editors of the Gazetteer for Scotland. Bressay from *The Gazetteer for Scotland*, 2022 www.scottish-places.info/features/featurefirst1096.html
10. New Zealand Government. 'The immigrants of the great migration'. Govt.nz, 2024 teara.govt.nz/en/history-of-immigration/page-9
11. The Wellington-Shetland Connection. ArcGIS StoryMaps, Wellington, 2020 storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8fd90c3f540f4857b1b83517e0bc1d02
12. *The Shetland Times*, 27 November 1875. Letters to the Editor—New Zealand, p2 www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk
13. Denise and Peter 1999–2003, copied from the *Otago Gazette*, 1870, SV Robert Henderson freepages.rootsweb.com/~ourstuff/genealogy/RobertHenderson.htm
14. National Library of New Zealand. (1855–1876) *Otago Provincial Gazette*, Dunedin, New Zealand: Printed for the Provincial Government by D Campbell. natlib-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=NLNZ_ALMA21199369260002836&context=L&vid=NLNZ&lanq=en_US&tab=catalogue
15. Taggart, Patricia. *The Robert Henderson*, 2001 freepages.rootsweb.com/~patricia/genealogy/RobertHenderson.htm
16. Marriages. 1879. BDM Index. New Zealand Government. Registration 1879/2171. www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/
17. Births. Scotland. Kirkwall, Orkney. 2 January 1855. John Smith Dunnet. 021/12 www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk
18. Births. New Zealand. BDM Index. 1880. John Sinclair Dunnet. Reference 1880/7666 www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/
19. Births. New Zealand. BDM Index. 1881. Ellen Isabella Dunnet. Reference 1881/14164 www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/
20. Cemetery Record 1893. New Zealand. Dunedin, Otago. Dunnet, p34. New Zealand Society of Genealogists Incorporated. New Zealand cemetery records 1800–2007 www.ancestry.co.uk/
21. Deaths. New Zealand. BDM Index. Dunnet. Registration 1893/6471 www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/
22. Monumental Inscriptions. 1893. Ellen Hunter Murray Dunnet. Dunedin, New Zealand. ID 224130592 www.findagrave.com/memorial/224130592/ellen_hunter_dunnet
23. Cemetery Record. 1893. New Zealand. Dunedin, Otago. Dunnet. Page 34. New Zealand Society of Genealogists Incorporated. New Zealand cemetery records 1800–2007. www.ancestry.co.uk/
24. Monumental Inscriptions. 1888. Jeannie Strang. Bolton Street Cemetery. Wellington, New Zealand. ID 171298867 www.findagrave.com/memorial/171298867/jeannie-strang
25. Marriages. New Zealand. BDM Index. 1876. Marriage Search. Registration Number 1876/535 www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/
26. Births. New Zealand. BDM Index. 1877. Ellen Mary Hunter Strang. Reference 1877/9326 www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/
27. Births. New Zealand. BDM Index. 1886. John James Strang. Reference 1886/8143. www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/
28. RNZ. Women, The Vote and Equality | RNZ, 2018. www.rnz.co.nz/collections/women-the-vote-and-equality
29. Electoral Roll 1880–1881 New Zealand. Hokonui. John Smith Dunnet, p16
30. *The New Zealand Herald*. 3 April 1883. New Zealand Telegrams. Dunedin, p5 www.newspapers.com
31. 'A Sad Accident'. *Dunstan Times*. 5 April 1883, p3 www.newspapers.com
32. *Otago Daily Times*. 19 April 1883, p5, Accidents and Offences www.newspapers.com
33. Births (OPR). Scotland. Bressay, Shetland. 6 September 1823. Helen Hunter. 001/20/6 www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/
34. Deaths. New Zealand. BDM Index. 1919. Helen Murray. Reference 1919/2108 www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/
35. *Oamaru Mail*. 28 February 1919, p3, Death Notice, Helen Murray paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/OAM19190228.2.11?items_per_page=10&query=%22helen+murray%22&snippet=true
36. Monumental Inscription. 1919. Helen Murray née Hunter. ID 224131058 www.findagrave.com/memorial/224131058/helen_murray





Tracing your German ancestry: a guide for New Zealanders

Sven Grewel

Starting your search: gather clues and decipher records

For New Zealanders exploring German roots, the first step is to start with what you already have. Family photographs, letters, ship manifests, or naturalisation papers may hold the initial clues you need. Even a single name, an approximate date or a vague place of origin can become a valuable lead. Begin by interviewing older relatives, collecting family stories, and documenting every detail—no matter how small. Many German immigrants to New Zealand arrived with little, but their traces often remain in local records, churches and community organisations.

One of the earliest challenges is deciphering the handwriting in historical German records. Until the mid-twentieth century, many documents were written in Kurrentschrift or Sütterlin, scripts that can seem impenetrable today. Fortunately, these scripts follow consistent patterns, and with practice, you can learn to recognise letters and words. Free online tutorials and printable guides from genealogical societies offer step-by-step help. If you are stuck, forums like Genealogy.net or Facebook groups focused on German genealogy are filled with volunteers ready to assist.

Navigating German and New Zealand archives

Once you have gathered names and dates, German archives become your next resource. Church records are often the only way to trace ancestors before 1876, when civil registration began. These records document baptisms, marriages, and burials, but access varies: baptism records are restricted for 110 years, marriage records for 80 years, and death records become accessible after 30 years. Many records remain in local parishes or regional archives, but a polite enquiry—often in German—can yield copies for a small fee. For example, the Evangelical Church Archives and Catholic Diocesan Archives hold millions of records. If your ancestors were Jewish, the Arolsen Archives or Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People may be relevant. If these local contacts do not have the records you need, they can at least direct you to the right place to look next.

After 1876 civil registration records became the primary source for births, marriages and deaths. These documents are more structured but remain subject to privacy laws. Death records often include precise birthplaces, helping you

trace your family further. From 1876 onward you may find duplicate records in both church and civil registries, allowing for cross-checks. Requesting copies is straightforward: contact the Standesamt (civil registry office) in the relevant town. Many German states offer online requests, and civil records often list occupations, residences and parents' names—details that open new research avenues.

For New Zealanders, immigration records and ship passenger lists are invaluable. German settlers arrived in the mid-nineteenth century, often through organised migration schemes. Many came from Hamburg, Bremen or Pomerania, while others were part of religious groups like the Herrnhutters or Lutheran missionaries. They settled in Canterbury, Wellington and Manawātū, where German communities thrived. Archives New Zealand and FamilySearch hold digitised passenger lists and naturalisation records, often detailing names, occupations, and origins. These records may include birthplaces or previous residences, pointing you to specific German locations. Local museums, such as the Canterbury Museum, also hold unpublished records that can provide unique insights.

Another useful tool is the Ortsfamilienbuch (local family book), which compiles genealogical data for entire villages. Not every town has one, but those that do can save months of research. Many are available through German archives or societies like CompGen, with some digitised. If your ancestors came from Prussia, Bavaria or Württemberg, check regional resources. For those from East Prussia, the Verein für Familienforschung in Ost-und Westpreußen offers specialised support.

It is worth noting that German migration to New Zealand was not always direct. Some ancestors may have first settled in Australia, the United States, or even Russia before arriving in New Zealand. If your research stalls, exploring records from these intermediate locations—such as the Volga German communities or German settlements in South Australia—might reveal new connections.

Do not overlook New Zealand's naturalisation records and census data, which often include birthplaces and arrival years. The Papers Past website, maintained by the National Library of New Zealand, holds historical newspapers,

obituaries and community notices. German-language newspapers, like the Christchurch Deutsche Zeitung (1865–1918), published family announcements that may mention your ancestors.

Overcoming challenges and next steps

Genealogy is a journey, not a race. While many German records are digitised, Germany still lags behind countries like the United States of America or United Kingdom in online accessibility. Not all archives or church registers are available digitally, so direct enquiries to local parishes, regional archives or German genealogical societies are often necessary. For example, the Hamburg State Archive holds vast collections, but you may need to hire a local researcher or visit in person. Organisations like the New Zealand Society of Genealogists can help navigate German sources. If your German is not fluent, consider using translation tools or hiring a professional genealogist.

The most important advice: Just start. Pick one document—a birth certificate, a ship manifest, or a letter—and note what you know. Proceed step-by-step. Your family's history is waiting, and you may find not just names and dates, but living relatives or stories that reshape your understanding of the past. For example, one New Zealander tracing Pomeranian roots discovered a cousin in Germany with family photos and letters dating back to the 1840s.

Sven Grewel

E: info@ahnenkontor.de

www.ahnenkontor.de

Instagram: @ahnenkontor

NZSG European Interest Contact: Kathy Bisman

E: ResearchEuropeanIG@genealogy.org.nz

Recording parents' lives

Mikhal Stone

A friend of mine used digital technology in a really interesting way with her parents to co-create a memoir of their lives. Others might benefit from learning about her work.

Chris DUGGAN's parents were in their 80s and still quite with it, so she thought the time was right. Businesses advertising on social media offered to collect and publish their story for a lot of money. But Chris did not think her parents could concentrate for the hours of interviews it would take, and knew that recall can be poor under pressure.

For her birthday the previous year, Chris had bought her mum a diary with prompts, with the idea that her mum could take her time and write in it when she wanted. But the diary was never used, and in hindsight, her mum was not in the habit of writing out her thoughts like this. Great in theory but not in practice.

And then Chris saw an ad for a business that would send the subject questions for them to record their answers, then make the audio file available using QR codes www.lifetales.com/. Chris creates QR codes as part of her work, so she decided to try doing this herself.

The first step was to teach her mum and dad how to record themselves talking using their phones' built-in app (e.g. Voice Memo, Voice Recorder, Recorder). Then she showed them how to find the audio file and text it to her.

Next she needed to sort out the questions to ask. She asked the free ChatGPT, 'What questions are good to use if writing a memoir?'. She got 50 ideas, which she eventually whittled down to 20.

Then, for almost a year, Chris texted her mum and dad a question every fortnight and asked them to record a response. Her parents each got the same question, and she

wanted a response from each of them ('no longer than two minutes, mum'). They tended to carefully write out their answers and practise reading it with each other before recording and texting it back.

When she received the two texts, Chris asked AI to transcribe each audio file. The free ChatGPT will only perform five tasks a day, so she needed to transcribe regularly.

At the end of the year, when Chris had answers to all her questions, she asked ChatGPT to combine the word-for-word transcriptions into a flowing story. She took that story back to her parents to correct any errors and make sure they were happy with it.

Chris found relevant photos and made the QR code for each audio file. Then, over one day, she assembled the final product. Using an A4 Snapfish book, Chris spread the story over 20 pages. On each page she put one part of the story with the relevant question and photos around it with separate QR codes for her parents' responses. Readers could then look at the text and images and listen to her parents telling their story.

Together, Chris and her parents created a lovely memoir of their lives for her family to treasure.

Useful Links

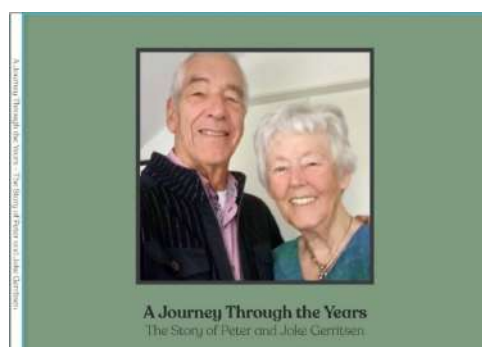
- How to record and send voice memos on an iPhone www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e5x8-bd3zE
- How to make a QR code myqrcode.com/create
- The free AI Chris used chatgpt.com (when you search for ChatGPT, some of the listed options are not free)
- Snapfish www.snapfish.co.nz/store/home

Mikhal Stone

E: mikhal@actrix.co.nz



Two page spread



Left: A Journey Through the Years cover

Right: First job fixed



Oral History Prompts

Mikhal Stone

When I asked ChatGPT for memoir questions I got 50. I whittled them down to the ones I would use, below. Chris's memoir questions will have been slightly different.

Suggested ChatGPT prompt: 'Please list questions to use when writing a memoir'

ChatGPT Response: Writing a memoir is really about asking yourself the right kinds of questions—ones that unlock memory, emotion, and meaning. Here is a structured set you can use as prompts while writing: Describe not just what happened, but the thoughts and emotions and details that bring it to life.

Early Life and Background

- What is my earliest memory?
- What was my childhood home like (sounds, smells, routines)?
- Who influenced me most growing up?
- What beliefs or values did I inherit from my family?
- What was it like with my siblings?
- What was school like for me?

Turning Points

- What employment or jobs did I do, and what was best about it?
- When did I experience failure, and how did it shape me?
- What risks did I take—and what happened?

Relationships

- Describe my relationship with my significant other—how we met etc.
- Who are other important people in my life story and what part did they play?
- Did I lose anyone important—and how did that affect me?
- What was my relationship with my parents like and how did it change?

Conflict and Challenges

- What did I learn from pain or hardship?

Joy and Meaning

- What moments brought me the most joy?
- When did I feel a deep sense of purpose?

Beliefs and Lessons

- How have my beliefs changed over time?
- What advice would I give my younger self?

Reflection

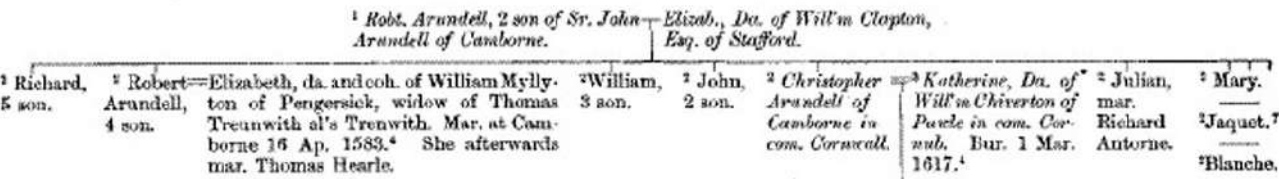
- What have I forgiven? What haven't I?
- When did my life change direction—and why?

Should you trust AI transcriptions?

Bryn Smith

ARUNDELL OF MENADARVA.

Arms:—Sa. 6 swallows 3, 2 and 1 arg., bar sinister.



Robert Arundell tree, Vivian, 1887

I have been tracing the various branches of my family in Cornwall. I have the supposed marriage of Robert ARUNDELL of Trerice and Menadarva, Cornwall, to Elizabeth CLOPTON, daughter of William Clopton of Stratford. I wanted to confirm, if possible, that the correct Elizabeth married my Robert.

On Ancestry I found the Will of William Clopton, d 1558, the supposed father of my Elizabeth. The opening part was in Latin, with the main portion of the Will in Secretary Hand. This appeared to be very difficult to decipher with any accuracy.

I needed to transcribe the Will to see if there was any mention of my Elizabeth, so I thought I would try out various AI systems to test their capability. I gave the following instructions to each of the test AIs: 'You are an expert genealogist and transcriptionist. Transcribe this deed and put anything you can't read in square brackets with question marks or your best guess. Preserve the original line lengths in the document.'

I first used ChatGPT chatgpt.com. It did what appeared to be an excellent job, managing to transcribe everything on the page with no [] or ?. Here is the transcription line-by-line.

In the name of god amen

The fourthe daie of Januarie in the yere of oure lorde god a thousand fyve hundred fyftie and eighte betwene the howre of eight and nyne

of the forenoone I William Clopton of Castelyns in the Countie of Suff[olk] Esquier beyng of perfecte memorie

thankes be gyven to almightie god doe ordaine and make this my laste will and testament in manner and forme folowinge, that is to saie

Firste I bequeathe my soule into the handes of Almightye god my maker and redemer trustinge by the merites of the deathe and passion of his sonne Jesus Christ to have remission of my synnes and life everlasting, and my bodie to be buried where it shall please almightie god to appoynte, and my goods I wholly gyve and bequeathe in manner and forme as hereafter followeth, First I will that my debts shalbe paid and my buriall honestly don, and I gyve to the poore people of Stratforde twentie shillings to be distributed amonge them by myne executors. Item

I gyve and bequeathe to Anne Clopton my wyfe the one halfe of all my goodes and Cattells whatsoever they be, after my debts and legacies paide. Item I gyve to my sonne William Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my daughter Dorothe Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my sonne Edmund Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my sonne Thomas Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my sonne George Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my sonne John Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my sonne Walter Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my



Part of Clopton Will, p1, Ancestry.com

sonne Robert Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my sonne Laurence Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my sonne Richard Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my sonne Edward Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my daughter Mary Clopton twentie poundes in money. Item I gyve to my daughter Elizabeth Clopton twentie poundes in money. All which legacies I will shalbe paide to every of them at suche tyme as they shall come to thage of one and twentie yeres or elles at the daie of their mariage which of them shall first happen. And yf it fortune any of my said sonnes or daughters to decease before they come to thage of one and twentie yeres or before mariage, then I will that his or her parte so deceased shall be equallye devided emongest the residue of my sonnes and daughters then lyvinge. And of this my last will and testament I make and ordaine Anne Clopton my wyfe, and Edmund Clopton my sonne, myne executors, and I appointe my brother George Clopton overseer of this my last will and testament.

Looks great on a quick glance, however I soon noticed several glaring errors: It gave William's wife's name as Anne—it is actually Elizabeth and there does not appear to be a wife mentioned in the Will. It had got the place wrong and appeared to introduce some children I knew nothing about. Also, this transcription appeared to finish off the Will naming executors, whereas I knew there were two more pages to go. I couldn't follow their transcription against the original. Hmmm?

Next, I tried Claude claude.ai, using the same instructions. Its transcription was:

1. In the name of god amen
- 2.
3. Whereas there of the aduisor of oraces [?] Strangeyer Landes be fourthe dayes of Januaryen, the
4. [...] & Eiglonde of mannij and Sealande defendor of the faithe, &c. I Willm Clopton Esqulier, person
5. in the Countie of waref Esquire beinge sicke in bodde, and of p[er]fecte mynde and memorie
6. thankes be geven to almightie god, make my laste will and testamente in manner and [for]me
7. [for]me hereafter followinge: That is to say firste and principally I bequeathe my soule
8. to the [merci] [?] of god allmightie my redemer, and my body to be buried in the [Churche]
9. Wissen the p[ar]ishe Churche of [...] afore upon alsor, I geve my wille shull deuse, and bequthe
10. [to] Willm Clopton, my sonne all that my manner of Clopton of Shore of and bridge towne all
11. and all that chapell waye in them Clossos de una de la bridg to towne all
12. Tenements, and hereditaments in Clopton aforesaid, and wh[at]so e[ve]r I haue to doe to doe my body
13. wentis and re[ve]rsions and p[ro]fetes all and singuler the p[re]mises all shalbe seased [...] of
14. to himge in them Clopton de, and bridge towne, and Streetforde upon avon, in the saide Countie
15. of ware. To haue and to holde the saide manor Landes tenements and all other the

16. p[re]mises with all singuler their ap[er]tenements, unto the saide Willm Clopton, my sonne
17. and to the heires male of his bodye lawfully begotten. Provided allwayes and upon condicon
18. that the saide Willm Clopton, and the saide heires male of his body shall well and truly pay
19. or cause to be contented, and paied all suche somes as are hereafter be menconed and ex-
20. pressed in this my p[re]sent testamente and laste will. And also for default of suche payment
21. and [?] also of breache of any covenante to be p[er]formed out of all [?] of the [...] or p[re]misses shall
22. eniteled to my sonne Timothie faithfully to be deducted [?] to [?] and [...] [?] for and the [...] to
23. them as it maye be convenient, be p[ro]vided, and had of the issues and p[ro]fetes of
24. the saide manor Landes tenements and other the p[re]mises with therapp[er]tences
25. or by any other meanes or wayes within the tyme and space of a levyn yeares wholie
26. after the deceas of me the saide Willm Clopton the elder. And all [?] paym[en]ts of rent to cont
27. that the saide Willm Clopton, my sonne shall take upon him to be my executor & shall
28. the my p[re]sent testamente and laste will testamente within a monthe next after the deceas
29. of me the saide Willm Clopton the elder. And for default of suche office of the bodie of
30. the saide Willm Clopton my sonne for default or breach of payment of the saide somes
31. and debt at forge day set and tymes the[re]after menconed, the[re]in I doe make give, and
32. bequeathe all my saide manor Landes and tenements and all other the p[re]mises all
33. all and singuler their ap[er]tenements, unto Timy Clopton my second sonne Timothe Clopton
34. and to the George Clopton, my former daughter, and to the heires of the said Laurens [?] and of
35. begotten. Provided allwayes, and upon condicon the saide Timie Clopton Elizabeth

Transcription Notes from Claude:

- Square brackets [...] indicate illegible or uncertain text
- Abbreviated words are shown as p[re]mises, p[er]fecte, etc.
- This is a sixteenth-century Will from Warwickshire
- Key locations mentioned: Clopton, Bridge Town, Stratford upon Avon
- Primary heir: William Clopton (son)
- Contingent heirs: Timothy Clopton, George Clopton, Elizabeth

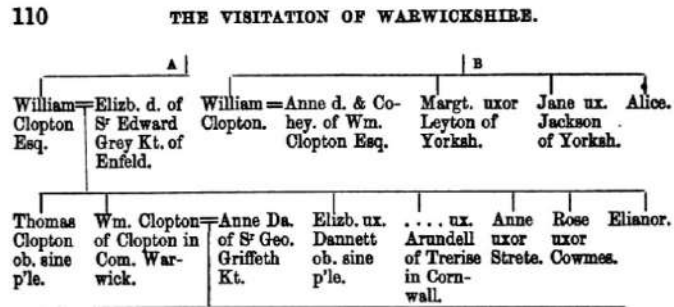
This appeared to be a much more accurate transcription and I could follow the original line-by-line and, with some creative imagination, work out what a lot of the misspelt words and abbreviations actually were. It also gave a summary of what it deduced. The place names were as expected from other documents. 'Countie of waref', for example, is County of Warwickshire, which I was expecting. There is no mention of the time of death, or of supposed sons Edmund, Thomas, John, Walter, Robert, Lawrence or Richard that ChatGPT seems to have invented. There are some names Timy, Timothe, Laurens which appear to be mistranscriptions.

My third test used Transkribus app.transkribus.org, which has been developed specifically for document transcriptions. Transcription is available for various styles of writing. The one I have used is specifically for Secretary Hand, which is what my Will was written in. The Transkribus result is:

In the name of god amen the fourthe daye of Januarye in the
secende yere of the Raigne of ower soueraigne Lady Elizabethhe by the grace of god Quene
of Englonde ffraunce and Irelonde defendor of the faythe &c. I William Clopton of Clopton
the Countie of warr esquire beinge sicke in bodie, and of perfecte mynde, and memory
thankes be geven to almightie god make my last will and testamente in manner and or forme
herafter followinge, that is to saye first and principally I bequeath my sowle
to almightie god my only maker and redemier, and my body to be buried in the yerthe
within the parrishe Church of Stratforde apou aven. Item I will giue and bequeth
to william Clopton my sonne all that my Mannor of Rion Clyfforde and bridgetowne
with the appurtenances in Ryon Clyfforde and bridge towne, with all and singuler my lands
tenementes, and hereditrmentes, medowes moores fedinges pastures wooddes vnderwooddes
rentes, and revercons and sriices with all and singuler theire appurtenances situat lyinge &
beinge in Ryon Clyfforde, and bridge towne, and Stratford upon aven in the saide County
of Warwic. To haue and to holde the saide Mannor Landes tenementes and all other the
premisses with all and singuler appurtenances unto the saide William Clopton my sonne
and to the heires of his bodie lawfully begotten. Provided allwayes and vpon condicion
the saide William Clopton, and the saide heires of his body shall well and truly pay
or cause to be contented, and payed all suche legaces as herafter be mencyoned and
declared in this my present testament and last will in manner and forme followinge
And shall also lykewyse paye or cause to be payed unto all suche person or persons herafter
named, to whome I am lawfully Indebted unto. All suche debtes as I do owe unto
them as it maye be conveniently Received, and had of the issues and proffittes of
the saide mannor Landes tenementes, and other the premisses with appurtenances
or by any other meanes or wayes within the tyme and space of eleven yeres nexte
after the decease of me the saide William Clopton the elder. / And also vpon condicion
that the saide William Clopton my sonne shall take vpon him to be my executor & prove
this my present laste will and testamente within 11 moneths next after the decease
of me the saide William Clopton the elder. And for defalte of suche issue of the bodie of
the saide william Clopton my sonn, or for defalte or lacke of payment of the saide legnch
and debtes at suche dayes, and tymes as be herafter

mentioned, then I doe will onie, and
bequeath all my foresaide mannor landes tenementes and all other the premisses with
all and singuler appurtenances unto Ann Clopton Elizabeth Arundell Elinor Clopton
and Rose Clopton my four doughtern, and to the heires of theire bodies Lawfully
begotten Provided alwayes, and upon condicion the saide Anne Clopton Elizabeth....

In this version, sons George and Timothy have vanished and the correct daughters Ann, Elinor and Rose have now appeared, with Elizabeth Arundell (née Clopton) who is the person I was wanting to prove belonged with this family.



Clopton tree, William Camden, 1877

I have transcribed the other pages of this Will and am now able to read the original document side-by-side with the Transkribus transcription. I am satisfied that Transkribus has got it correct and now have to work on other old Wills in my tree.

The point to take away from this exercise is that you must not grab the first AI you come across and believe that it is giving you correct information. Take time to check that what you are given matches with what you already know and that it correlates with the original.

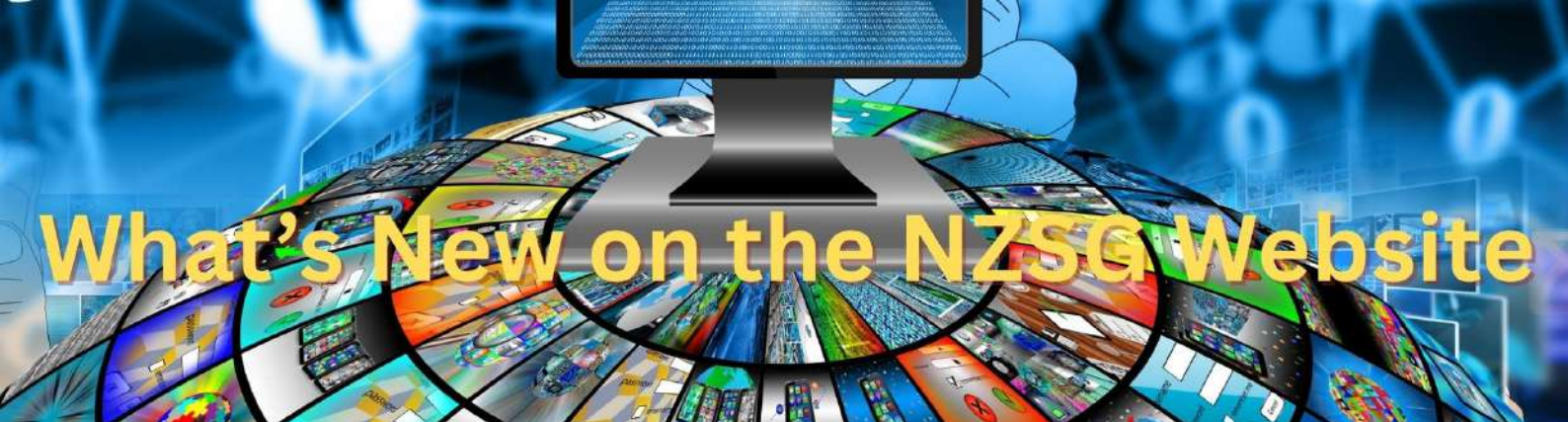
In summary:
ChatGPT invented people and events when it could not decipher the text
Claude made a good attempt, but got a few things wrong.
At least it did put unknowns in brackets as I asked
Transkribus performed exceptionally well, enabling the original document to be read alongside the transcription

See how you get on reading the original document.

Bryn Smith
E: bryns@xtra.co.nz

Sources:

- Vivian, L C. *The Visitations of Cornwall 1530, 1573, 1620*. William Pollard & Co., Exeter, 1887
- England & Wales, Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills, 1384–1858, Probate PROB 11/43/118. Ancestry.com, Provo, UT, USA, 2013
- William Camden, C K. *The Visitation of the county of Warwick in the year 1619*. Mitchell & Hughes, London, 1877



What's New on the NZSG Website

Kiwi Resources

In preparation for the next [Kiwi Collection](#) update (coming in July!), we have added a lot of content to help you with context and further sources of information when you find records in the Collection. You will now find links to relevant resources in the Kiwi Collection Source/Help files.

Remember to login so you can see everything!

There is a new page on [Local Government](#). In addition to property records like building consents, our local councils also issue permits, do works, run cemeteries and may even hold records of local community organisations.

Our [Medical Records page](#) has lots of new content. We've added information on hospitals, doctors, nurses and disability. There are many record sets on the Kiwi Collection which list nurses.

[The Law](#) has been expanded to include information on law enforcement, jury service and prisons. We would like to thank Christine CLEMENT for her contributions to this page.

New sections in [Transport](#) include aviation and roads. We have also added more general transport resources.

Do you have a teacher in your family? The [Higher Education page](#) now includes teachers' colleges. And if you have a religious minister in your family, there is some information on theological colleges.

We have added Funeral Directors and Undertakers to the [Cemetery Records](#) page. We do hold some funeral director records which you can find in the Kiwi Collection and access through the [Research Service](#).

Are you descended from an alien? The [Citizenship page](#) has had more content added to cover what happened to aliens and you could stop being an alien.

The [Local Kiwi Resources](#) now cover all of the South Island. Our Branches are always a good source of local information so remember to reach out to them to find out more. The rest of the North Island will be available soon.

Ethics and Best Practice of AI Use in Genealogy Research

On our [AI page](#), we've added information on the Coalition for Responsible AI in Genealogy (CRAIGEN). They had an interesting panel discussion at this year's RootsTech which covered their guidelines. If you use AI, it is worth a look.

Broken links?

If you find a link that doesn't work, please let our webmaster Jan know. You can email her at webmaster@genealogy.org.nz.

Is there something we have missed?

If you have any resources or topics you think we should add to the NZSG website, please email education@genealogy.org.nz. We are always looking for new items to add.

FamilySearch Full-Text Search

Jan Sherwood

FamilySearch Full-Text Search was announced at RootsTech 2024 and was initially only available as a prototype in the FamilySearch Labs section. Recently it was moved from Labs and is now available on the normal drop-down menu under 'Search'.

FamilySearch Full-Text Search is a tool that lets you search almost 2 billion historical records (including handwritten ones) that have not been indexed yet. It uses AI to read and interpret text directly from document images. If you are not sure about your ancestor's name, you can try a place, date, event or other detail that might be connected to them.

By using FamilySearch Full-Text Search, you can gain early access to unindexed records. Also, in many projects, only a

small portion of the document has been transcribed and indexed—often just a name and date. Full-Text Search scans the entire document, searching every word contained in the record, including any notes, so it can be used to uncover names, dates and details that standard searches can not find. This makes it particularly valuable in relation to wills, which are often only indexed by the testator's name and not the beneficiaries.

Video tutorials and RootsTech sessions are available to watch on YouTube. Find out more about Full-Text Search at www.familysearch.org/en/search/full-text/

Jan Sherwood
E: jansherwood62@gmail.com

The Wellington tram network

Adam Samson

For decades, the only way to get around Wellington was by tram. The Wellington tram network connected the growing city and provided reliable public transport for everyone. At its fullest coverage, the network stretched from Karori in the west to Seatoun in the east and from Wadestown in the north to Island Bay in the south. It is no exaggeration to say that it was vital to the lives of Wellingtonians of the time.

The first trams to run through Wellington were operated by a private company from 1878. They were steam-powered, consisting of a passenger car being hauled by a small engine. Wellington was the first city in the southern hemisphere to operate a steam-powered passenger tram service. The steam trams were not very popular and faced public pushback as they were loud, sooty and frightened horses. As a result of this, the network was overhauled.

In 1882 steam power was replaced with horse power as all trams became horse-drawn. This was much better received. From the early 1900s, the tram network began to be electrified, with the first electric trams running in 1904. This allowed Wellington to expand as its population grew in the early twentieth century. The tram network made outlying suburbs such as Kilbirnie and Island Bay, previously considered remote and semi-rural, more viable by providing a direct link to the central city that was quick enough to allow regular commuting.

The Wellington City Council purchased the tram network in October 1900 so it could be electrified and extended. The Tramways Department was established to manage the network. They were responsible for managing the lines and trams themselves and, along with the Electricity Department, powering the overhead tram lines. In 1948 the Tramways Department was renamed the Transport Department as its duties had expanded to cover diesel buses, sightseeing bus services and the Kelburn cable car.

The increase in personal cars and public buses saw the end of Wellington's trams, and in 1964, the last tram ran through Wellington. It was the last electric tram network in New Zealand. On 2 May 1964 crowds gathered in Wellington to see the last journey of the last tram. The tram made the trip from Thorndon to Newtown Zoo, driven by Mayor Frank KITTs with 'Newtown or Bust' and 'End of Line' written on the side. Wellington's public transport became dominated by buses, but the effects of the tram network can still be seen. Modern buses take the same routes, the roads to Wellington's suburbs were built for trams, and the Mt Victoria bus tunnel was originally used by trams.

Records of both the Tramways Department and the Transport Department are held by Wellington City Archives and available for research. Records include material that cannot be found elsewhere. Documents created by the Tramways Department, Transport Department and the City Engineer's Department include journals published by the Tramways Department, employment registers, contracts, reports, maps, plans and brochures. There is also a great deal of correspondence regarding tram services, fares, advertisements, work done on tracks and, of course, complaints. Trams were a favourite subject of photographers throughout their service, and City Archives has many photos of them at work in Wellington.

These records are all indexed in our online repository, Archives Online. Items that have been digitised can be viewed online; items that have not been digitised can either be requested for digitisation or viewed in our reading rooms. Towards the end of this year, the collection will be

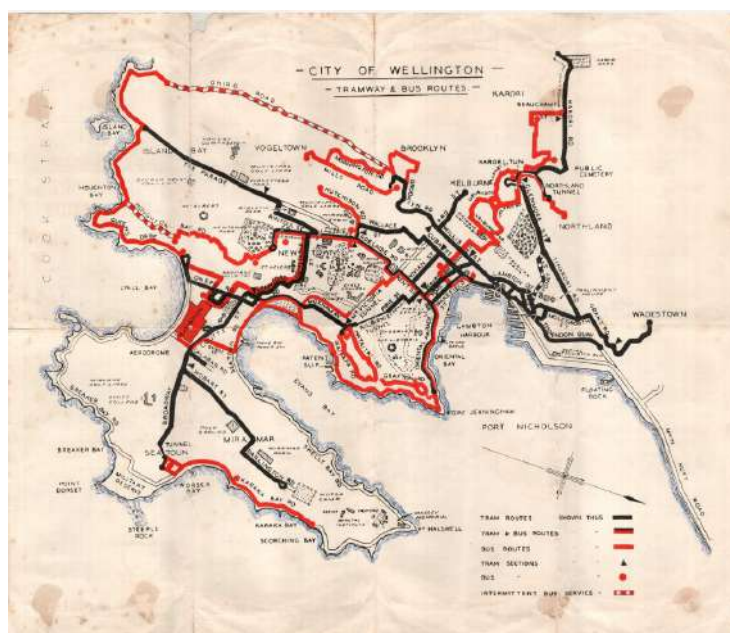


Image above: Wellington from Brooklyn showing electric tram route archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/nodes/view/871119, Wellington City Council Archives, BN001-349

Image left: City of Wellington, tramway and bus routes archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/nodes/view/155698 (page 2) Wellington City Council Archives, 00699-79

undergoing a massive move to a new collection store in the new Wellington City Council building on the corner of Harris Street and Jervois Quay. During this period there may be times that parts of the collection are inaccessible. Updates will be shared on our social media channels and our quarterly Archives Newsletter.

City Archives can be contacted for research assistance at archives@wcc.govt.nz and (04) 801-2096 or by visiting Tō Tātou Pōneke on the second floor of Te Matapihi Ki Te Ao Nui.

Adam Samson
Wellington City Archives
E: adam.samson@wcc.govt.nz

References:

1. *Ngā Kā Rēra i Te Whanganui-a-Tara, 1878-1964, Trams in Wellington, 1878-1964*. Wellington City libraries. www.wcl.govt.nz/heritage/stories-and-guides/heritage-resource-guides/trams-in-wellington-1878-1964/
2. *The History of Trams in Wellington*. Wellington Tramway Museum. www.wellingtontrams.org.nz/gallery
3. Lawes, J W F. *Wellington Tramway Memories*. R B Alexander, Wanganui, 1964. wellington.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/5453

**Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council**
Me Heke Ki Pōneke



Image right:
Wellington City Corporation Tram Barn,
Thorndon [archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/nodes/
view/9609](http://archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/nodes/view/9609),
Wellington City Council Archives, 00137-12



Image left:
NZ Tramways: last New Zealand tram run
Thorndon terminus to Newtown
archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/nodes/view/125415,
Wellington City Council Archives, 00340-986

Book Reviews

JAYCEE – Developers of people; Builders of communities

By Graham and Susan Butterworth

Published by Ngaio Press, 2007

JAYCEE is a book by two of New Zealand's most experienced professional historians. It is the first serious study of the service club phenomenon that was so important in the first four decades after World War II. In its heyday, Jaycee was one of our liveliest service organisations, with members who were both 'developers of people' and 'builders of communities'.

The organisation contributed impressively to the social infrastructure of New Zealand after World War II and later, e.g. soldier rehabilitation, Birthright, blood banks, Outdoor Pursuit Centre, driver education, mental health, etc. Almost every community has amenities built or aided by the Jaycees. The organisation's role in training leaders in politics, local government, sporting and community groups and business is less well known, but many parliamentarians, including a Prime Minister, a Governor-General, mayors, councillors and community and business leaders learned project management, leadership training, public speaking and meeting procedure in a Jaycee chapter. MPs names are listed in the book, along with the names of over 1000 Jaycee members.

Jaycee was also an international movement, known as JCI and operating in over 100 countries, that looked to foster world peace through democracy, trade and international brotherhood, the New Zealand Jaycee's Milk Biscuit and Project Concern programmes being outstanding contributions. New Zealand Jaycee boxed far above weight in the international body, taking a strong lead in the Asia-Pacific region.

Jaycee comprised young men (until 1973, when women became members). Aged between 18 and 40, membership

was open to all races, creeds and occupations. It was present in almost every city and town in New Zealand. There were even Jaycee chapters in several New Zealand prisons. The movement attained a plateau of around 6400 members during the 1960s but went into steady decline after 1972. Today it is no longer effective. While a few of the reasons for the demise of Jaycee are specific to that organisation, the authors point to important social factors and likely outcomes which are more general and relevant to the overall voluntary sector. They go beyond the normal life cycle of rise and decline common to many groups.

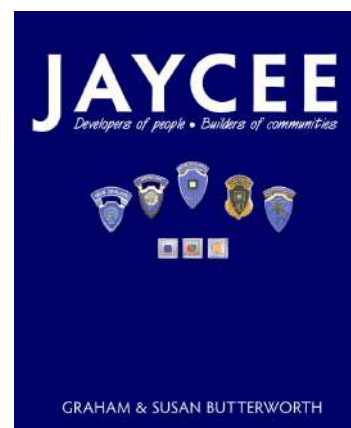
This readable and well-illustrated hardcover book remembers the fun times and the more serious times, while making an important contribution to New Zealand's social history and the international study of service organisations.

The authors have done the Jaycees proud with this history.

A limited number of copies of *JAYCEE* are available for the cost of post and packaging from Geoff Cole
E: geoff.cole@xtra.co.nz

Reviewed by Geoff Cole (NZ Jaycee President 1982; JCI Senator)

FRC shelf label: NZ.ORG.JAYCEE



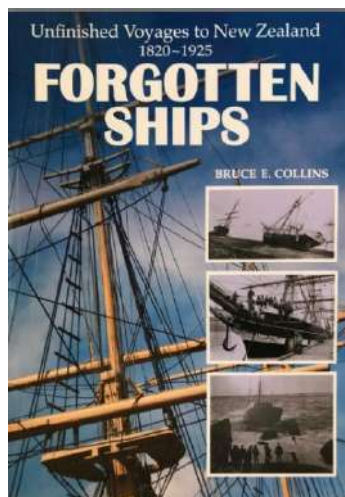
**Inspired by what you've
read? Have a story to share?
Send it to:
editor@genealogy.org.nz**

Forgotten Ships: Unfinished voyages to New Zealand 1820–1925

By Bruce E Collins

Publisher Otago Maritime Society, 2018

While documenting many of the unsuccessful voyages to New Zealand, *Forgotten Ships* contains a surprising amount of general information. Some of these topics are the type of cargo, navigational instruments, statistical information and types of ships sailed. Collins had already published six



books by the time of writing this and had amassed considerable information on ships, crews and their voyages.

Chapter 1 details some dozen ships that sailed between 1820 and 1859. An example would be *The Mahomed Shah*, a wooden barque of 590 tons, which was registered in London. Information includes a passenger and crew list. The ship foundered because of a fire below deck. One can

imagine the passengers huddled on deck in their night attire with no food or water, waiting to see if the fire burnt itself out. Eventually, everybody was rescued with the arrival of the brig *Ellen*. The ship burnt out after several days.

Chapters 2–5 deal with succeeding decades, while Chapter 6 covers 1900–1925. By 1900 the type of ship and its technology had changed, which resulted in fewer missing ships and shipwrecks. World War I also meant a change in the number of immigrants. Antarctic exploration was also occurring.

The author has listed a lengthy bibliography which includes not only books and articles, but newspapers, museums and institutions, primary sources and official records as well as websites. Individual references are given for ships that are dealt with in detail. Forgotten ship names are indexed. The layout of this book, the style of writing and the information given make this a fascinating read.

Reviewed by Margaret McGavin
FRC shelf label: SHP.WRECK.NZ

White Rag Burning: Irish women committing arson to be transported

By Dianne Snowden

Publisher Forty South Publishing Pty Ltd, 2018

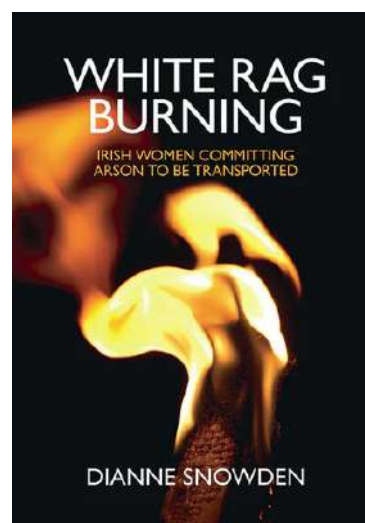
The motives of women committing arson in order to be transported (1941–1853) is depicted very clearly here—they were not eligible for migration schemes. While some of those schemes paid fares, others did not. However, they were all looking for fit, healthy and respectable women who were potential wives or were able to work in dairy or domestic duties. Conditions in Ireland were abysmal in many areas due to famine, and at times workhouses were turning people away. In some places, prison food was superior to that provided in the workhouse.

These arsonists were mainly between the ages of 18 and 25 years. More than half were illiterate, and most were listed as Roman Catholic. Geographical location appears to have played a part as Cork, Kildare, Tipperary and Wexford recorded the most arson trials. Nearly 20 per cent of the women received life sentences, and just under half received a sentence of seven years. The prison life they were sent to was harsh.

The book shows clearly that marriage was a means of survival. While some women reappeared in court, others

were married for long periods. Some lived as common-law wives. Many had other issues, such as alcoholism, to deal with. However, some survived to live long and fruitful lives.

This book started off as a PhD thesis at the University of Tasmania. The extensive glossary, endnotes, bibliography and index take up some 60 pages. Information provided by families of these women, in addition to the author's research, provides a clear and fascinating picture of the lives of these women in both Ireland and Australia.



Reviewed by Helen McLaren
FRC shelf label: AUS.TAS. CONVICT

Members' enquiries and notices

This section is free to members for enquiries of a genealogical nature but is not available to non-members. Please be precise and state clearly what you want to know. For submission guidelines see the front of this journal. Where no details of a query are given it is presumed that the inquirer would be grateful for any information. When someone has taken the trouble to write to you with reference to your request for information, please acknowledge their letter whether the information they have shared is of use or not. It is customary to repay their postage.

Sampler—information wanted

This sampler does not appear to relate to my family. It was given to me by an English-born great-aunt who may have acquired it in a second-hand shop, either in Auckland or England.

The framed sampler is special in that it includes three names, two dates of birth, and other dates. It also has a place—Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia.

Alexander THOMSON—1865

Mary Honour Mills Thomson—born 15 March 1818

Louisa Thomson—born 24 October 1854 in Newcastle, New South Wales

Initial research reveals that the Thomson family may have originally come from Devon to Australia. Mary's husband was named Alexander. He had a grocery business at Redfern, near Sydney, where he died in 1887. His widow died in 1904 aged 86, also in Redfern. A niece or nephew with the surname CHAPMAN (of New South Wales) was present at Mary's 1904 funeral.

If a reader can help with information about the sampler, please contact me.

Helen Belcher

E: helmarc55@gmail.com



Photographs found

I found these photos in cleaning up my late partner's family history stuff and simply do not know who they are or how they came into the house. I am certain we never discussed it. It is a real mystery. From the dress, the images seem to date from early twentieth century.

If anyone can name them, or would like them, I would be happy to pass them on.

Jenny Robertson

E: jennyandmax@xtra.co.nz



Photos looking for a home

I have been given these photos and would like to find the owners/relatives who would appreciate them. The only details I have are Frank Eric WALSH, born in Timaru 1913, died 1994. His first marriage was to Zelia May BECKING-SALE. Full stop—that's all I know. These photos have absolutely no relevance to me, so I would like to pass them on.

Editor's Note: Gaye, have you tried Memlist, local branch, local museum, Rootschat etc.? Please send to NZSG if no luck elsewhere.

Gaye Simms

E: gaye.simms@gmail.com



Send your enquiry or notice to
editor@genealogy.org.nz

Branch News



Dunedin Branch—project completions announcement

The Dunedin Branch Committee of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists is very proud to announce the completion of several major Branch projects, resulting in more than 560,000 records being forwarded to the NZSG Kiwi Collection.

Otago Nominal Index (ONI)

The Otago Nominal Index (ONI) was established in the early 1990s as a joint initiative between the Hocken Collections and the NZSG Dunedin Branch. The project originated from the vision of the late John PERRY (NZSG Dunedin Branch member) and Stuart STRACHAN (Hocken Library).

Leadership of the indexing work was undertaken by the late Noel READ, a dedicated Dunedin Branch member, who coordinated a committed team of volunteers to create a comprehensive index of personal names contained in documents held by the Hocken Collections, Dunedin. Special acknowledgement is due to Jenepher Read, who worked alongside her husband, Noel, from the project's inception through to its completion. The project was ultimately completed under the guidance of the current Dunedin Branch Project Officer, Joy PEARSON.

Initially, ONI focused on indexing electoral rolls, jurors' rolls, street directories, and Police Gazettes up to 1876 for the Otago and Southland regions. Following the successful completion of this phase, the scope of the project was expanded to include additional Hocken Library records and to extend coverage beyond 1876.

The full Otago Nominal Index is available on the Hocken Library website: www.otago.ac.nz/library/hocken/oni/

We are also pleased to advise that 540,280 ONI entries have now been forwarded to the NZSG for inclusion in the Society's Kiwi Collection.

This achievement represents nearly four decades of dedicated volunteer effort. We extend our sincere thanks to the many Dunedin Branch members who have contributed to this remarkable project over the years.

Dunedin Cemetery, Emerson Street, Concord, Dunedin Transcript of Headstone, Burial, and Newspaper Index (2011–2025)

This project commenced in October 2024 and is now complete. Each burial plot has been allocated a dedicated page containing:

- a headstone photograph
- a headstone transcript
- the burial record from the Dunedin City Council
- an index to the death notice in the *Otago Daily Times*

The completed work comprises 878 pages, with an index of 2762 entries, covering burials at the Dunedin Cemetery from 2011 to 2025.

The project has been saved as a PDF file and is available on an NZSG Dunedin Branch laptop, which members may access on Sunday afternoons from 2–4pm in the Genealogy Room (third floor), Dunedin Public Library.

A copy of the index has also been forwarded to the NZSG for inclusion in the Kiwi Collection. The index has been printed and will shortly be available as part of the Branch library holdings. The index records:

- surname
- Christian name
- year of death
- block number
- plot number
- page number of the entry

For research clarity, the index has been subdivided into:

- names appearing on headstone inscriptions
- names in Dunedin City Council burial or cremation records
- names appearing in *Otago Daily Times* death notices

Spelling variations between sources are common and have been retained as recorded. While the transcript primarily covers 2011 to December 2025, there are:

- a small number of entries from early January 2026, noted during final checks
- earlier death dates where ashes were interred after 2011

The cemetery will be reviewed annually, with new entries added to both the PDF and a revised index.

All records were transcribed by Heather BRAY, and all photographs were taken by Kevin Bray. Special thanks are extended to staff at the Dunedin City Council for their assistance in verifying burial details.

Index to Names Appearing on Otago and Southland War Memorials and Honour Boards

This index records the names of individuals appearing on war memorials and honour boards throughout Otago and Southland. Entries include both soldiers and nurses.

Inclusion in this index does not indicate whether a person was killed, served overseas, or served solely within New Zealand (for example, in the Home Guard). In many cases, it is difficult to determine precisely who a particular memorial or honour board was intended to commemorate. Some memorials note that an individual 'gave the supreme sacrifice', yet historical records show that some of those named later returned home unharmed.

Researchers are encouraged to consult the following sources for more detailed service information:

- Auckland War Memorial Museum—Online Cenotaph www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph
- Archives New Zealand www.archives.govt.nz/
- National Army Museum www.armymuseum.co.nz/collections/family-history/
- Papers Past (National Library of New Zealand) paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/

Individuals may appear on multiple memorials under different name variations. For example, Edward John BAKER may be recorded as E. J. Baker, J. E. Baker, John Baker or Jack Baker.

The index covers commemorations relating to the following conflicts:

- Afghanistan War
- Boer War (South African War)
- Chechnya War (1996)
- J Force
- Korean War
- Malayan Emergency
- Māori Wars (1864)
- Vietnam War
- World War I
- World War II

This index was transcribed by Heather Bray, who extends her sincere thanks to the many genealogists, friends and family members who photographed or transcribed memorials across Otago and Southland. While every entry has been checked, accuracy cannot be guaranteed for material provided by others.

This is an ongoing project. While it is believed that all war memorials within Otago and Southland have been identified, it cannot be confirmed that all honour boards have been located. Some remain inaccessible, removed from display, or stored in unexpected locations. Any additional honour boards identified in future will be documented as addenda.

A copy of the Index has been forwarded to the NZSG Kiwi Collection. This index was published in honour of Anzac Day, April 2026.

Heather Bray
NZSG Dunedin Branch Secretary
E: dunedin@genealogy.org.nz

Whanganui Branch: Service people commemorated at Heads Road Cemetery, Whanganui Volume II has arrived—more lives remembered

Last year, Whanganui Branch published *Service People Commemorated at Heads Cemetery Volume I*, which was very quickly taken up. Now, we are pleased to advise that *Service People Commemorated at Heads Road Cemetery Volume II* is available for purchase, and we also have a reprint of Volume I available.

This project started several years ago when then Convenor, Penny STEWART, brought the idea for a project to the Branch Committee. The concept, as many do, has since grown in dimension. What began as a project to identify the graves of service people has grown into a compilation of biographies of the lives of those who served, from the Crimean War to World War II. The project coordinator (who

prefers to fly under the radar) has been known to mutter under her breath, 'If I had only known what I was getting myself into...'. A huge learning curve has taken place in deciding how to acknowledge research sources and copyright, to finding resources which support the research of service people from the early settler soldiers through to more modern history. The stories are fascinating and varied.

These volumes bring together the stories behind headstones and commemorations at Heads Road Cemetery, Whanganui, one of Aotearoa New Zealand's oldest public cemeteries. Early on, a decision had to be made to break the biographies into three volumes, as the book would

otherwise have been a real doorstop. In total, there are more than 262 biographies, with Volume I including 87, and Volume II including 94 biographies. Our project team includes those who write the biographies, editors and reviewers of the biographies, those who have researched the copyright and referencing requirements and our project coordinator, who has doggedly researched and discovered so many service people who would otherwise have been lost to history.

One story which struck a chord with the coordinator was the biography of Benjamin Frederick James EDWARDS (1844–1905). Benjamin was a colour-sergeant in the First Waikato Militia Regiment and was at the battles of Kirikiri (22 July 1863), Meremere (October 1863) and Te Ranga (21 June 1864).¹ In the early hours of 10 June 1886, Mt Tarawera erupted. This is the eruption that destroyed the famous pink and white terraces, leaving a crater more than 100 metres deep, which eventually became the new Lake Rotomahana. Rescuers, including Benjamin Edwards, went out four days after the eruption and were able to rescue nine people from Te Ariki and Moura, nearby settlements to Lake Rotomahana. The *Auckland Star* noted: 'The expedition was attended with very great risks, and was successful in saving nine Maoris [sic] who would otherwise in all human probability have perished miserably.'²

These biographies are not just lists of names and dates. Each story is carefully researched and told, revealing lives shaped by, and shaping, New Zealand history. Across the volumes you will encounter:

- Men and women who served in the Crimean War, Indian Rebellion, New Zealand Wars, South African Wars, WWI and WWII
- Volunteers and conscripts whose lives connected Whanganui to regional, national and global events
- Stories of family, courage, tragedy, resilience, and service beyond the battlefield
- A range of individual contributions to the development of Whanganui and its surrounding region.

Volume 1 (Surnames A–G) set the benchmark with accounts ranging from recipients of the New Zealand Cross (one of the rarest military medals in the world), to a witness of the Mt Tarawera eruption in 1886, and includes politicians, mayors, councillors, publicans and individuals whose names now live on in Whanganui streets and suburbs. Many of the stories relate to unassuming community members remembered mainly by family and friends.

Now available: Volume II (Surnames H–M)
Volume II continues this useful work, uncovering even more stories for researchers, and anyone interested in New Zealand's past. Each entry adds another piece to the wider genealogical and historical picture.

This project represents the dedication and collaboration of many members of the Whanganui Branch. The Branch extends its congratulations to all contributors, and to those continuing the work on Volume III, which is close to completion. Volume I is available for borrowing at Whanganui District Library | Te Whare Pukapuka o Whanganui, and at Alexander Library | Te Rerenga mai o te Kāuru for reference, and Volume II soon will be.

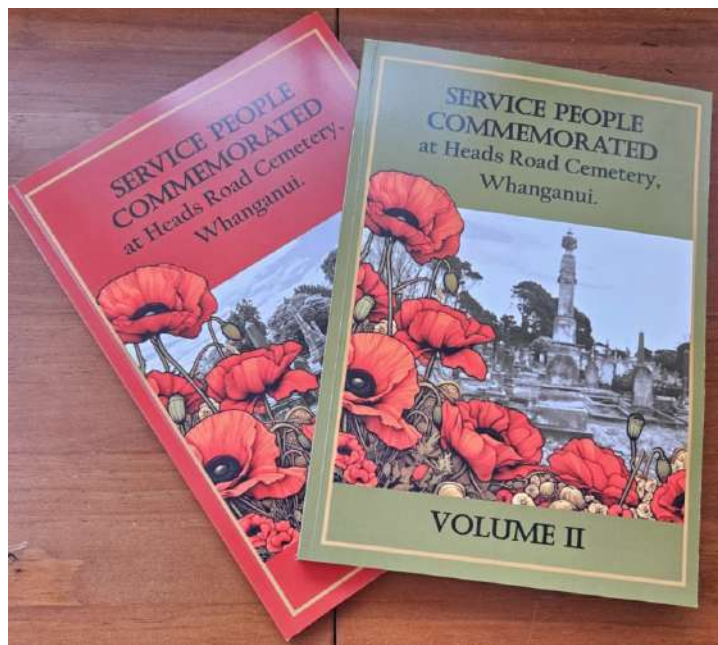
Orders for Volume I or II, or requests for the index of biographies and a sample biography, can be made by emailing Whanganui Branch NZSG at whanganui@genealogy.org.nz. An invoice with payment details and postage costs will be sent and books will be distributed after payment.

Current branch members: \$70 per volume, and non-members: \$77 per volume.

NZSG Whanganui Branch
E: Whanganui@genealogy.org.nz

References:

1. *Service People Commemorated at Heads Road Cemetery, Volume I*, Whanganui Branch NZSG, H & A Print, Whanganui, 2025, p127
2. Papers Past, *Auckland Star*, 21 June 1886, p2



Find your nearest Branch
under *Connect* on our website
www.genealogy.org.nz

Feilding genealogists celebrate in style

On Tuesday 17 February 2026, members, partners and guests of honour gathered at the Coach House Museum to celebrate 40 years of a genealogy group in Feilding.

We had the pleasure of the company of New Zealand Society of Genealogists Chairperson, Sarah HEWITT from Wellington, Manawatu District Mayor and Mayoress, Michael and Joan FORD, and four members of the NZSG Palmerston North Branch.

The evening began with a meet-and-greet at 6pm. At 6.30 pm we enjoyed a delicious two-course buffet meal, interspersed with Convenor Ian WIGHTMAN giving a brief history of the group from 1986 to becoming an affiliated branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists in 1989. Initially, interested Feilding people used to go to Palmerston meetings, until they were asked to form their own group in Feilding. Celia GEARY, a life member of the branch and the instigator of a group starting in Feilding, was asked to do the honours and cut the 40th birthday cake. Then, much to the surprise of the recipients, Ian and Marilyn Wightman and Trish WHITE were presented with branch life memberships.

With that, dessert was served, along with tea and coffee, and the cake was cut ready to distribute. This concluded the formal part of the evening, but anyone wishing to have a tour of the Feilding & Districts Community Archive was able to do so before they left.

During the evening, Janet DOYLE, branch librarian and newsletter editor, had put together a slideshow created from photographs taken between 2003 and 2026, providing members and visitors a 'dip into the annals of history', with some old memories of branch projects and trips.

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped us celebrate our 40th birthday in style.

Trish White
Secretary, NZSG Feilding Branch
E: feilding@genealogy.org.nz



*From left to right:
Sarah Hewitt presenting life membership to Ian and Marilyn Wightman
Ian Wightman and Celia Geary cutting the 40th anniversary cake
Ian Wightman and Sarah Hewitt presenting Trish White with life membership*

Te Awamutu Branch cenotaph project

In June 2023 the Te Awamutu Branch embarked on writing up the stories of the lives of the 58 soldiers on our local WWI Cenotaph, located in Anzac Green in the centre of town.

We wanted to put names and identities to the initials carved in stone, and to find their parents and siblings, schooling, extra-curricular activities and employment, along with their enlistment, where they trained, ships they sailed on, where they went overseas, battles they fought in, sicknesses, injuries and eventually how they died.

We found some individuals died where they lay and were later buried and memorialised in cemeteries, while others were interred in graves with headstones.

We are now into the third year of the Te Awamutu Anzac Green project, and each year we have presented our findings to the public at the local library. The local RSA has agreed this project needs to be actively promoted as part of their annual Anzac activities. For the last two years, we have also contributed to the morning Anzac service at Kihikihi, telling the stories of soldiers commemorated on that town's local cenotaph.

There are two more years to go to the finish line for the Te Awamutu Anzac project, with a further 26 stories to be told, including four extra soldiers recorded on the Te Awamutu Roll of Honour, but not on the local Cenotaph.

As the project team leader, I have personally learned a lot in the past three years. We have gathered an invaluable resource of information, photos, maps and other documents, along with key research websites. One of those key websites that has proved to be invaluable for our research is the Online Cenotaph:

www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph

The project has been a moving, and sometimes a very emotional, experience. Tears have been shed on many occasions at the tragedy of so much lost potential, especially young men who thought they were off on an exciting adventure, only to find out the horrors of war within days of being on the battlefield.

Their stories need to be told. We will remember them.

Linda Howarth, Project Leader
E: TeAwamutu@genealogy.org.nz

Editor's Note: The Military page on the NZSG website has a lot of useful links for further research available to members: genealogy.org.nz/Military/11399/



*Image above: Te Awamutu WWI cenotaph
Image right: Te Awamutu RSA Roll of Honour*





Online DNA Interest Group A FREE benefit of NZSG membership

Sandra Metcalfe on behalf of the ODIG Planning Committee

Target testing and the DNA Coverage Estimator

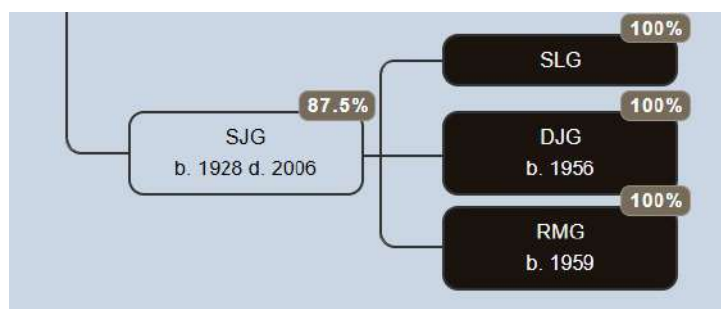
In this edition of *The New Zealand Genealogist*, we explore targeted DNA testing and the free Coverage Estimator on DNA Painter (dnapainter.com/tools/coverage).

Each year, genealogists spend thousands of dollars on DNA tests without first considering who else in their family has already tested. For those managing a family DNA project, this can lead to duplication rather than progress. Knowing who to test—and when—is critical.

As a general rule, if both parents are living and have tested, their children do not need to. However, if one or both parents are deceased, testing all siblings can deliver substantial benefits, particularly when working with more distant DNA matches.

Coverage in practice

Image 1 shows a deceased father whose three children have all tested. The Coverage Estimator calculates that, together, they represent approximately 87% of their father's DNA.



Coverage for SJG

On a larger scale, Harriet, the mother of the deceased person mentioned above, had ten children, all deceased and none of whom had taken a DNA test. However, 20 of her descendants (from grandchildren through to 2x great-grandchildren) have tested. Collectively, they cover an estimated 93% of Harriet's DNA.

By contrast, a smaller family highlights the impact of limited testing. Annie had three children and six grandchildren. Current testers represent only 45% of Annie's DNA. Although Valerie's three children have also tested, they are excluded because their mother has tested.

If Jean—identified as the Next Tester?—were to test, coverage would rise to 59% of Annie's DNA. If Cynthia, Annie's only other surviving grandchild, also tested, coverage would approach 65%. However, because Cynthia's

son has already tested, Jean is considered the higher priority (see image over the page).

A strategic tool, not just a calculator

The Coverage Estimator is one of the most conceptually powerful tools in genetic genealogy, yet it is often under-used. Developed by Jonny PERL with input from Paul WOODBURY and Leah LARKIN, it allows users to build or import a family tree, identify which descendants have tested and calculate the percentage of an ancestor's DNA represented by those testers.

It is best understood as a decision-making tool for maximising genetic representation. Rather than passively waiting for useful matches, it enables genealogists to take a targeted approach—identifying the individuals whose DNA would add the most value.

This shift—from passive DNA collecting to strategic, targeted testing—can significantly improve research outcomes. It also provides a compelling way to encourage reluctant relatives to test: few can resist being told they are the most important person to unlock a particular ancestral line.

Five key uses

According to Paul Woodbury, the Coverage Estimator can be used to:

1. Estimate an ancestor's DNA coverage within a single database
2. Prioritise genetic cousins for collaboration
3. Identify relatives to invite for testing, or to upload their results to other platforms (such as FamilyTreeDNA, Living DNA or GEDmatch)
4. Estimate how much DNA an ancestor shared with a genetic cousin
5. Estimate how much DNA an ancestor shared with a deceased relative

The latter two applications require additional tools within DNA Painter—namely the Centimorgan Estimator and the Distinct Segment Generator—and are beyond the scope of this article.

- Building a coverage strategy
- A proactive testing strategy allows you to:
- Build a coverage model for a specific ancestor
- Identify gaps in descendant lines
- Focus on genealogical 'brick walls'
- Coordinate multi-person DNA projects
- Support surname and one-name studies

Limitations to keep in mind

While powerful, the Coverage Estimator has limitations:

- It is based on expected inheritance, not actual recombination. Percentages (~50% from each parent, ~25% from each grandparent, ~12.5% from each great-grandparent) are estimates.
- It assumes shared data access. If relatives test on different platforms and results are not uploaded or shared, coverage is effectively fragmented.
- It does not fully account for pedigree collapse or multiple relationships, which can skew results.

For these reasons, the tool should be viewed as a strategic planning aid, not proof of genetic inheritance.

To gain the greatest benefit, descendants should ideally test within the same database—or upload their results to a common platform—and make their data accessible for analysis.

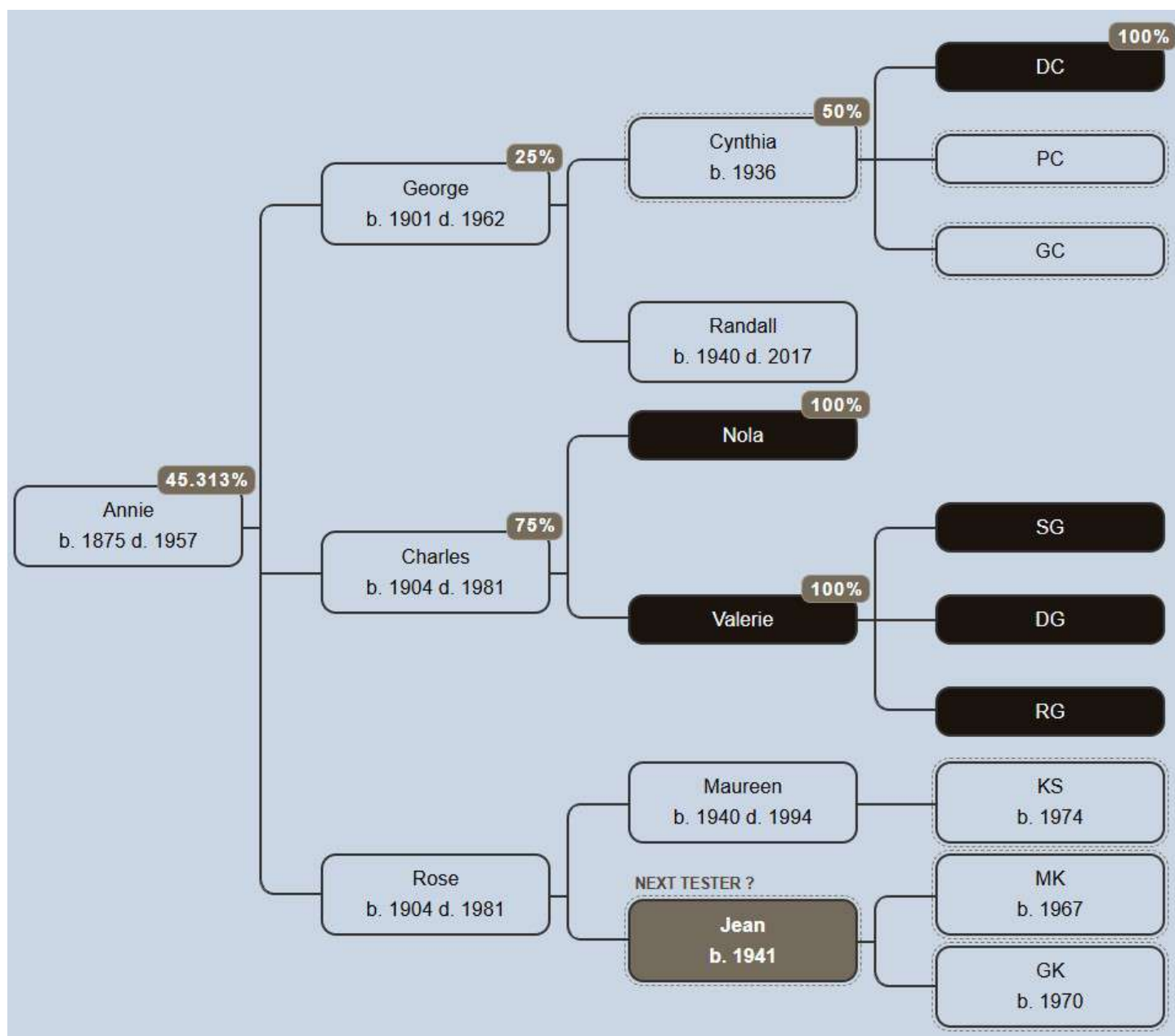
Further learning

Additional DNA resources are available through the ODIG Classroom. Under the DNA Coverage topic in the Classroom, you will find videos and articles, including material from Paul Woodbury on combining the Coverage Estimator with other DNA Painter tools.

Readers may also wish to revisit ODIG articles published in *The New Zealand Genealogist* from March 2025 onward.

ODIG registration and support

To register for ODIG, or for further information on accessing the Google Classroom, visit the ODIG section under the DNA tab on the NZSG website. For assistance, email onlinedna@genealogy.org.nz.



*Coverage diagram for Annie
showing the difference a smaller family can make*



Irish Interest Group



1926 Irish census returns, Republic of Ireland

On the Irish Interest Group webpage genealogy.org.nz/Branch-details/11084-s1100100/ under RESOURCES, view Accredited Genealogists Ireland, where their news bulletins have been uploaded. From an *Introduction to Irish Census to Getting Ready to Search the 1926 Census* was released by the National Archives of Ireland on 18 April 2026. Their *How to Search the 1926 Census* guide outlines what is new in the 1926 Census, including more precise birthplace data, detailed occupational information, language ability and agricultural holdings; how to search Form A effectively, including the NAI's new asterisk feature identifying the correct household; how to use the integrated Ordnance Survey map to locate townlands, streets and institutions. Why consulting original images matters—for example, the guide notes that while a transcript listed Hanna Sheehy SKEFFINGTON as 'Church of Ireland', the original return shows she recorded 'No Church'.
nationalarchives.ie/collections/genealogy-website

The enumerators of the 1926 census—An Garda Siochána

Founded in 1922, the Garda Siochána replaced the Royal Irish Constabulary and became one of the most visible symbols of the Irish Free State. Colloquially known as 'the Gardai', they served as the enumerators for the 1926 census, covering most of the country. In some areas, they were supported by civilian staff. They were responsible for delivering, explaining, assisting with completion if necessary, collecting and returning completed census forms. While some households remained wary of uniformed authority and sensitive questions, public reaction appears to have been generally cooperative. Garda involvement likely improved coverage and completion of the returns. Susan McKEE MA (Extracted from *Irish Roots* No. 137 first quarter 2026).

Free State Ireland 1926 census RTE commentary

www.facebook.com/RTEOne/videos/a-snapshot-of-ireland-100-years-ago-our-first-census-as-a-free-statedermotbannon/1607061327223429/

Ireland's census returns 1901, 1911 and surviving extracts

The National Archives of Ireland census returns 1901 and 1911 and surviving census extracts 1821–1891 are available at nationalarchives.ie/collections/

Northern Ireland census returns

While the 1926 census returns for Northern Ireland (six counties) are believed to have been destroyed, you can obtain some contextual information from the statistical reports that are available on Northern Ireland Statistic and Research Agency (NISRA)
www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/1926-census-reports

The Irish Imperial Service Policing Palestine and Administering the Empire, 1922–1966

This book explores Irish participation in the British Imperial project after 'Southern' Ireland's independence in 1922. Building on a detailed study of the Irish contribution to the policing of the Palestine Mandate, it examines Irish imperial servants' twentieth-century transnational careers and assesses the influence of their identities on their experience at the colonial interface. The factors that formed Irish enlistment in Palestine's police force are examined, and the impact of Irishness on the personal perspectives and professional lives of Irish Palestine policemen is assessed. Irish policing is placed within the broader tradition of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC)-conducted imperial police service inaugurated in the mid-nineteenth century. Author Seán William GANNON is Irish Research Council Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Centre for Contemporary Irish History at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.



The Irish Imperial Service Policing Palestine and Administering the Empire, 1922–1966

Seán William Gannon



County Clare

The Kilrush and District Historical Society (KDHS) is organising the Kilrush Genealogy Conference 2026. From the Great Famine 1845–1852 to the 1926 census, to be held in Kilrush Co. Clare, from Friday 9 to Sunday 11 October 2026. Bookings now open www.kdhs.ie

County Tipperary

Tipperary Studies is hosting an innovative Archive of 3D photogrammetry models documenting 37 graveyards of Tipperary. Check out their recent Posts and Archives. Back issues of their monthly lectures are available online at <https://tipperarystudies.ie>

County Limerick and County Tipperary

The Population of a Rural Pre-Famine Parish: Templebredin, Counties Limerick and Tipperary in 1834 by Fergus O'FERRALL. The Appendix to this article records the

population return of the parish of Templebrehin, August 1834. The Appendix reproduces Fr. MAHONEY's census exactly as it appears in the manuscript surviving in Archbishop's House, Dublin, including his notes at the beginning and end of the return. 'The following is the population return of the parish of Templebrehin, a part of which is in the county Tipperary and the barony of Clanwilliam. The other part in the county Limerick, Barony of Coonagh, taken by persons deputed by me in August 1834. (Signed) Thomas Mahoney, P.P. Pallasgrea & Templebrehin.' Details provide a total of R.C. inhabitants - 734 males and 754 females listed by head of house listed in following townlands: Killeene na Galive, Cloughaready, Garrydoolis, Coolnadow, Coolgrene, Knockallgan, Templebrehin, Ballynagrena, Tearmana, Ballyneety, Knockravilla, Knockandoolis, Clonbrog. If you require a copy of this article e-mail IrishSIG@genealogy.org.nz

Ireland's National Biographical Dictionary

The dictionary of Irish biographies (DIB) is an authoritative reference work of nearly 11,000 lives for scholars of Irish history, society and culture. It tells the island's life story through the biographies of men and women born in Ireland, north and south, who came to prominence either at home or overseas, and the noteworthy Irish careers of those born outside Ireland. Featuring comprehensive, scholarly biographies encompassing every sphere of human activity, ranging from the earliest times to the twenty-first century, the DIB is an indispensable work of reference for anyone interested in Ireland's past.

www.dib.ie

Irish Roots

Irish Roots magazine No. 137 first quarter 2026; among the articles in this issue are:

Irish Genealogical Research Society marks their 90th Anniversary; *An Ode To Ballyphehane Co. Cork* by Sinead O'RIORDAN; *Handling Unexpected DNA results* by Donna

RUTHERFORD; *Helpful IGRS Genealogical Tips*; *Local Sources for Family History Research County Laois* by James G RYAN; *Surnames of Co. Laois* by Seán O MURCHADHA, *Research your Irish Ancestry at the National Library of Ireland*; *Unlocking The 1926 Census of Ireland* by Susan McKee; *Kilmacurragh, Co. Wicklow and The Great War: 1914-1918* by Pat DARGAN; *Australian Irish Connections—On Which Ship and When Did Your Irish Forebears Arrive?* by Jennifer HARRISON; *The 1926 Census: The First Census Of The Irish Free State* by Zoe REID. Check out their news items, *LATEST FROM THE BLOG*. *Irish Roots* is also available in digital format—www.irishrootsmedia.com



Geraldene O'Reilly, Convenor, Irish Interest Group
E: IrishSIG@genealogy.org.nz

Website: genealogy.org.nz/Branch-details/11084-s1100100/

Looking for records overseas?
Have you had a look at
our Overseas Resources?
They're to help you when your
research takes you out of
New Zealand.
Look under Resources on our website

 www.genealogy.org.nz/

Branch and Interest Group Services

NZSG has over 50 Branches and Interest Groups throughout the country.

You can find your nearest group on the [Branches, Interest Groups & Area Contacts page](#) on our website.

HĀWERA

The SOUTH TARANAKI BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX consists of school admission records; newspaper birth, death and marriages; Anderson's memorialist records; funeral sheets. Request by surname. Send SAE and donation to: Jill Williams, Fairfield Road, Hāwera 4610 or email peter.williams@xtra.co.nz or julesmar@xtra.co.nz.

HAWKE'S BAY

HAWKE'S BAY BIOGRAPHICAL RECORDS. This is a surname index. Please provide Christian and surname/s, date range and what type of record you are seeking. Contact can be made through the Hawke's Bay Branch webpage www.genealogyhawkesbay.org.nz or by emailing HawkesBay@genealogy.org.nz. Alternatively, mail can be posted to c/- 200 Pakowhai Road, Frimley, Hastings, 4120. Donations are appreciated.

IRISH INTEREST GROUP – LOWER NORTH ISLAND

We hold education and research days locally, and across the Lower North Island region on request by branches and groups, and can also provide presentations and a helpdesk at genealogy events. Enquiries to Irish.LowerNI@genealogy.org.

NELSON

A database of half a million entries covering the wider Nelson area, from indexes and books in our library, Ancestors Attic. Includes pre-1856 marriage index, including Māori, passenger shipping lists 1840–1914 to and from Nelson and from the UK and Australia. E: nelson@genealogy.org.nz or PO Box 1879, Nelson 7040.

NORTH SHORE

Lookups for births and deaths c 1940 to date from *The New Zealand Herald*. Email request to northshore@genealogy.org.nz, or to Dennise Cook, Research Officer, North Shore Branch NZSG, PO Box 89045, Torbay, Auckland 0742. A small donation to the branch will be welcome, depending on results.

OAMARU

Oamaru Cemeteries CD Headstone Transcriptions. For both the Old and New Cemeteries. The Old Cemetery records have been updated. Cost \$25 including p&p. Enquiries to Oamaru@genealogy.org.nz.

PALMERSTON NORTH

Our SETTLERS DATABASE 1870–1900 contains 3,000 names or family groups. Cemetery headstone transcriptions; BDM newspaper clippings; school admissions transcriptions—20,000 and growing; funeral cards. Enquiries to: palmerstonnorth@genealogy.org.nz. Include what you already know. A small donation is requested.

PAPAKURA

The PAPAKURA AND DISTRICTS BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX includes Alfriston, Ardmore, Ararimu, Clevedon, Drury, Karaka, Kawakawa Bay, Maketu, Ramarama, Slippery Creek, Springfield and Wairoa South. Enquiries welcome, mail service only with SAE and donation to NZSG Papakura Branch, PO Box 72–993, Papakura 2244. E: papakura@genealogy.org.nz.

TE AWAMUTU

Booklets of MEMORIAL INSCRIPTIONS FOR ST JOHN'S and ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCHES including full transcriptions from cemetery and church interiors, plans, histories and index. Also digital images of inscriptions from both cemeteries, lookups for local school admission registers (varying dates) and local newspaper family notices (1911–1974). Enquiries to teawamutu@genealogy.org.nz.

WELLINGTON ARCHIVES RECORDS REQUESTS

While Archives New Zealand have suspended their digitisation programme, NZSG Kilbirnie Branch is available to do lookups for the Wellington Reading Rooms. Please provide the R reference from Archives NZ's Collections Search. A small koha is appreciated. Enquiries to Kilbirnie@genealogy.org.nz.

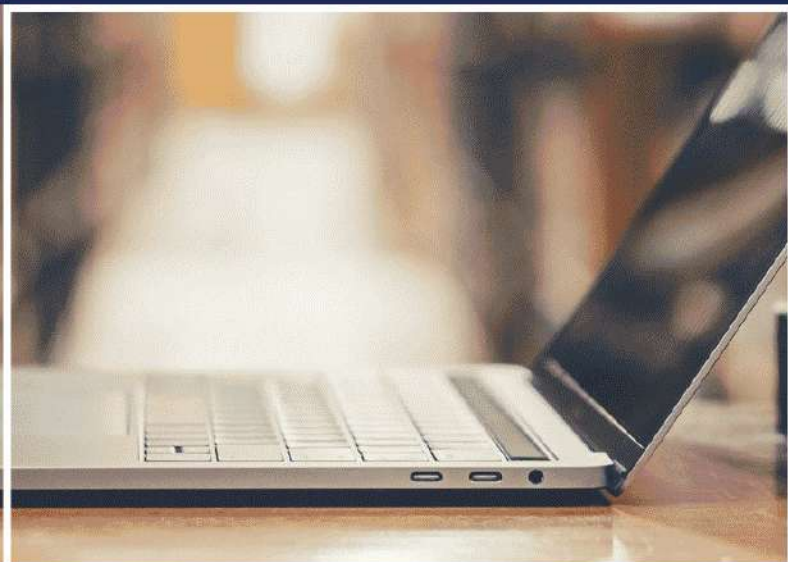
Contributions from branches and interest groups are always welcome in the journal—especially if you can pass on useful information from your area that may assist other members. Events, projects, new repositories and services, ways you have engaged in the community and given something back. Contact the Editor, E: editor@genealogy.org.nz

Get value out of your membership!

Look up anything in our
Library Cat(alogue)



Access Gale Newspapers
or free downloads from
Discovery (UK Archives)



Need to access a database?
Research Services is
only a click away!

NZSG Certificates Collection

The NZSG's collection of over 130,000
Certificates is available
via email or post.



These are all free to members.
But there is more! Login and explore
www.genealogy.org.nz