



NZSG New Plymouth Branch Newsletter



Number 215

August 2008

Convenor: Annette Larsen Ph 758 3320
Treasurer: Lea Bellini Ph 758 0130
Secretary: John Pickering Ph 758 4952

New Plymouth Branch
P.O. Box 429,
New Plymouth 4340

Committee: Marilyn Armitstead, Judy Berntsen,
 John Berntsen, Michael Butler,
 Karen Crowe, Elly Harrison,
 Marjorie McMahon, Mike Merrick,
 Marilyn Reid

Meetings: 1st Tuesday each month at
 Branch Rooms, Moturoa Shopping
 Centre
 access off Whiteley St Carpark

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<http://www.genealogynp.com>

Branch Library: open free to members and to visitors for a small charge.
Opening Hours: Monday: 10am to 3pm: **Wednesday:** 12 noon to 3pm
Friday & Saturday: 10am to 12 noon
Computer Group: meets every 3rd Sunday at 1.30pm in Branch Rms except December and
 January. All welcome- \$2 door charge. **Convenor-** Peter Hewett **Secretary/Treasurer-** John
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Branch News

Last Meeting

Thanks to Marilyn Armitstead who has supplied this summary of her report to the July 1st Branch meeting on Annual Conference (*From Coast to Coast*) which Marilyn attended this year.

'I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend the friendly, well-run Genealogy Conference, held at St Bede's College, Christchurch over Queen's Birthday.

The direct flight from New Plymouth to Christchurch was a significant factor in this decision and the flight down was under clear skies with picture-perfect scenery. This good weather continued over most of the weekend making it pleasant moving around the venue and for visiting locations.

The programme was comprehensive and it was difficult to choose which sessions to attend. The American speakers Sharon DeBartolo Carmack and her husband James Warren were talented and entertaining speakers and played a large role in the conference including entertaining at the Conference Dinner.

The focus of the main speakers was on communication with other family members and recording family history. This theme also came through in many of the other presentations.

Among the sessions I attended were the following presented by the Guest Speakers:

- If only Our Ancestors had Email, p5
- Flesh on the Bones, p15
- Love Letters, Diaries and Autobiographies, p83
- From Yawn to Page Turner, p193

These sessions were fully documented in the Proceedings and are well worth reading (page numbers listed after the titles).

There was much more to the conference than can be recorded here and I am happy to talk to anyone who would like to know more. It was certainly inspiring and revitalising to attend a conference.'

Marilyn

Note that a copy of the *Proceedings of Annual Conference 2008* will be available shortly at the Branch Library.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 5th August – Sharing Evening - Skeletons, Blacksheep & Heirlooms

Programme 2008.

2nd Sep	Finale and presentation of report on 'This is Your Past' programme.
7th Oct	Lea Bellini, Marjorie McMahon and John Pickering will report to members on their experiences from trips overseas earlier this year.
4th Nov	Different computer programmes & sites for building your family tree.
Dec	Pot-Luck dinner at the Branch Rooms. Date to be arranged.

Sharing Evening Tuesday 5th August Members are encouraged to 'dig up' any family skeletons, bring along any heirlooms or memorabilia, 'unearth' any ancestors - famous or otherwise – all of which may have associated stories you may wish to share with fellow genealogists and family historians. If you would like to share a story - please contact any member of the Committee and let them know so that a programme can be arranged.

Coming Up

The Branch will run the popular **Introductory and Refresher Course in Genealogy** during September this year. Michael Butler will be the Course Tutor. It is planned as a course occupying a two-hour session - 7.30pm to 9.30pm each week - over four weeks plus a further evening at the Puke Ariki Research Centre. The course is suitable for beginners in genealogy as well as for those wishing to refresh their skills. The course timetable is: Mondays. September 15th 22nd 29th October 6th and an evening at Puke Ariki on Wednesday October 15th 7pm.

The cost of the Course (including a full set of course notes) is \$20 payable upon registration on the first evening. Please 'phone Michael Butler 753 2449 as soon as possible to register your interest so that he can have an indication of likely course numbers

From our Branch Library

On the shelves now are the July issues of Practical Family History and Family Tree Magazines with plenty of interesting articles some of which are:

Practical Family History

Finding you forebears in Northumberland
BMD records – back to basics.
Newspaper reports-exploring death records
Brickwall solutions
How to use ... www.workhouses.org.uk
Website focus on the cost of living.

Family Tree

Researching London ancestors before 1841 Pt2
The King's shilling - army recruitment.
Nonconformist records & where to find these.
Manorial rentals records examined.
Missing in 1871 census- finding grandfather.
Scrapbooking your family history

Welcome to New Members: Howard Sinclair, Lloyd Rosewarne, Roger Hawkins and Bob Silk (both rejoined)

Thanks to Lea Bellini for the donation of a copy of 'Fitzroy School 1882-2007' the 125th Anniversary book.

Sought: a copy of 'Goodly Stones and Timber' St Mary's Church New Plymouth, a history by Margaret Alington 1988. Contact Marilyn Armitstead.

Of Interest

A Message Board with a difference – *CuriousFox.com*

Created in 2002, *CuriousFox* is a messageboard which aims ‘to provide a resource for finding and identifying the myriad United Kingdom villages and allowing genealogists, family history and local history researchers to make contact and share knowledge at the village level.’ Additionally the intention was to create an independent site ‘free of banners and endless affiliated links.’

To achieve this, the site is financially independent and not sponsored - relying instead upon a minimal annual subscription of £5UK for paying members (identified on the messageboard by red boxes) while allowing free membership to non-paying members (green boxes). Fee-paying members are able to contact both red and green box entries on the message board while non-paying may only contact other red box entries. However it is possible to upgrade at any time. All contact between members is carried out through the use of a messaging service and this conveniently avoids the use of email addresses. Every UK county, town and village has a messageboard page for the researcher to view or leave a request for information. Once logged on using your name and a codeword you are able to search by place or surname with the added bonus of being able to extend your search to nearby villages.

There is also the facility to download old Victorian maps which may help locate that obscure hamlet which you haven’t been able to locate on a modern map. Modern maps of villages are also obtainable.

The CuriousFox site – <http://www.curiousfox.co.uk> is spam-free and payment online can be made securely through Worldpay or Paypal.

Advantages claimed:

- an ever growing archive of fascinating entries.
- opportunity to contact other researchers at the village level
- increased opportunity to break those “brickwalls”

New release from Ancestry.co.uk – Was your ancestor an early Aviator?

The records of the Royal Aero Club Aviators’ Certificates, now online at Ancestry.co.uk, contain over 28,000 records and 13,000 photographs of the Club’s pilots from 1910 to 1950.



The collection is fully indexed and has original images giving details of early RAeC pilots, their flying lives and exploits. The index cards are searchable and provide information about a pilot’s name, date of birth, rank or profession, nationality, the plane he or she qualified on, where and when. The collection includes the names of the first army and navy personnel to become pilots. While British pilots predominate, there are also early aviators from Europe, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Some of the famous fliers in the collection are John Moore-Brabazon, later Lord Brabazon of Tara; Amy Johnson, the first female pilot to fly solo to Australia and Thomas Sopwith, the designer of the famous aeroplane the Sopwith Camel.

The Ancestry website is <http://www.ancestry.co.uk>. Remember that the site is available free on computers at the PukeAriki Library Research Centre in New Plymouth. Click on Ancestry Library Collection; then ‘List recent databases’; then ‘Genealogy databases posted recently’.

Changes made to the Old Bailey Trials Online

April 2008 saw the addition of 100,000 trial accounts from between 1834 and 1913 in a new version of the free website *Proceedings of the Old Bailey* <http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>. Opportunity has been taken to update many of the technical and historical features of the website while removing some features such as the Bibliography, while Search Associated Records and Map and Place Search functions have not been included in the new 1834 to 1913 trials.

An improved search function allows combinations of terms using name, keyword, crime, verdict and punishment and can now all be carried out from the main search page.

Of interest to many will be the Historical Background pages which have been updated to include material covering the period 1834 to 1913. Additional pages include *London 1834 to 1913* and *Transport* among other topics. The previous Eighteenth Century London section has been rewritten as two – London 1715-1760 and London 1760-1815.

The NZSG Certificates Collection –This is a valuable resource for the researcher and available only to NZSG members.

This Collection has been built up over the years through donations of certificates by members so that today the Collection Index has 582,000 entries cross-indexed from 66,500 documents.

Included in the collection are BDM certificates, documents relating to baptisms, parish records, marriage banns, intention to marry certificates, wills, probates, coroner's reports, war census and shipping records and other miscellaneous records.

A search can be done for an individual or an event. As the names of parents, witnesses, informants, and siblings have been included in the index it is possible for there to be 6 to 10 entries for an event. A request may also be made for a surname printout for up to 8 surnames at a time.

The NZSG Index Version 5 also includes part of the Certificates Collection Index. A request can be made by writing to Mrs Pat McGregor, 20 Riverview Road, Kerikeri 0230 and enclosing an SAE of minimum size 22 x 11cm. For more information about the Certificates Collection and how you can contribute to it, visit the NZSG website <http://www.genealogy.org.nz>, click on Services, then Records Collection, then Certificates.

Book Review *Genealogy Online for Dummies* – Thomas J, Barrat N & Helm M & A. John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, UK. 2007

Don't be put off by the title. This UK edition is co-authored by Jenny Thomas - senior genealogist on the BBC series *Who Do You Think You Are*, Nick Barrat - genealogical consultant for the same series, as well as by Online Genealogy experts Matthew and April Leigh Helm. The book claims to 'focus on genealogy rather than computer technology and the obsessive ins and outs of the Internet'.

While written for the beginner in genealogy the book is also a resource not to be ignored by the more advanced researcher. There is for instance an excellent chapter devoted to getting the most out of searching Census and Parish Register records. This includes a 'Ten Tips' list which it is said will reduce greatly the amount of time you need to spend researching census records and at the same time will maximise your chances of success.

Other chapters provide advice on contacting other family history researchers and setting up your own genealogy website. (From Puke Ariki Library - Genealogy section 929.10285)

Help required with this 'Brickwall' by a Branch member.

Shirley Thomson would like any information about David THOMSON who was born in Scotland in 1905 as David WALLS. After his father's death and his mother's remarriage he took his stepfather's surname. The family migrated to New Zealand about 1912. This included a WALLS sister and a half-brother William THOMSON. David THOMSON was a stage performer in various theatres in the North Island and was in New Plymouth around 1930. He wrote to his sister from New Plymouth mentioning 'Linda and the kids' and various plays he had appeared in. Contact was lost after that. It would appear that he may not have lived in New Plymouth as he does not appear on the electoral roll nor have children born here or on school rolls. A niece in Australia would like to make contact with David THOMSON'S descendants.

Contact Shirley Thomson: 7/15 Telford St, Merrilands, New Plymouth.4312

Genealogy is not fatal, but it is a grave disease.

Wherever there's a will, you'll see an heir loom.

Contributions for this Newsletter are welcomed but need to be sent in before the end of the third week of each month to the Editor at wicky.family@ihug.co.nz