

# Stratford Branch

*New Zealand Society of Genealogists.*

[www.stratfordgenealogy.homestead.com](http://www.stratfordgenealogy.homestead.com)

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Stratford Community House.

52 Juliet Street

Stratford 4332

PO Box 402

Stratford. 4352.

Phone. 06 765 0913 ext. 4.

Branch Contact-

Carol Spragg.



## Convener's Comment

Today I received the Minutes of the last meeting of Waitara Genealogy Branch, with sadness. Waitara Branch have been struggling to meet the minimum requirement of NZSG Members for Branch status and have had financial difficulties as well. After several meetings and serious soul-searching they have made the decision that they can no longer exist as a Branch. Last Thursday they made the decision that the NZSG Branch would cease to exist as from 31 March.

The positive outcome is that some of the members have been working hard to form the Waitara Districts History and Families Research Group and local research resources will be donated to that Group.

We wish the new Group well.

Carol Spragg.

## Inside this issue:

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**Editor:**  
**Maureen Armstrong**  
**Email:**  
[armstrong21@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:armstrong21@slingshot.co.nz)  
**Phone:** 06 762 8837 or 027  
630 9099

**Next Branch Meeting—Wednesday starting at 7.30pm.**

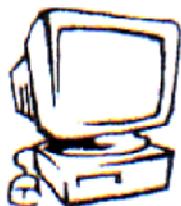
**Lesley is giving a presentation on Wills and how to get information from them.**

### Branch Rooms

The Stratford Branch Rooms open  
Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am – 3pm;  
Saturdays 12 noon -2pm.

Our Branch Newsletter is now available each month  
on our web page-

[www.stratfordgenealogy.homestead.com](http://www.stratfordgenealogy.homestead.com)



## Web Sites

<http://blog.myheritage.com/2013/12/newmyheritage-adds-millions-of-nordic-records>—MyHeritage, have added more than 32 million records from Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, dating back to the early 1600s.

### [www.emelbourne.net.au](http://www.emelbourne.net.au)

This Australian website is based on the original printed text volume, *The Encyclopedia of Melbourne*, which was published in 2005 by Cambridge University Press. However, the website has had additional material added. Excellent for background material on your Melbourne based families.

<http://www.landedestates.ie>

<http://www.nli.ie>

<http://www.proni.gov.uk>

—sites for private estate records in Ireland.

### **BELLS IN ELTHAM**

Eltham could now be called the silent town: only one of the church bells that once pealed out on Sundays and important occasions now remains.

The first church built with a belfry was the Primitive Methodist Church. It was built on the site of the Coronation Hotel in 1893, but in 1900 the church was moved to the corner of London and York Street where it was used as a hall for many years. It was demolished in the 1940s. The church bell was donated to the Methodists of Eltham by the Primitive Methodist Church of Christchurch. This bell vanished long ago.

The Anglican church was built about 1886 on a section donated by Mr George Buckeridge opposite the Eltham Library. This church was moved to the King Edward Street section, and for years after St Marks was rebuilt in 1905-06 it was used as a Sunday School hall. The bell from the first old church is now a garden ornament, and a new bell rings now from the church belfry.

Other bells in Eltham were the fire bell installed atop a steel tower next to the Fire Station in 1905. That bell is now mounted in front of the new Fire Station. The Eltham school had a swing bell which annoyed the teachers as 'bright sparks' took a delight in ringing it every time they passed it. The poor old bell is banished to storage and the pupils today are summoned to class by electronic noise! *Contributed by Roma Jenkins*

**Do remember to save used HP & Canon printer Cartridges and hand them in to the group .**

**They provide an excellent fund raiser. The sales of books on trademe are going well. Thanks to Carol for her efforts .**

**Rootsireland** has announced that the Clare Heritage & Genealogy Centre has now made their first batch of Roman Catholic parish baptisms (for seven parishes ) available online. The parishes covered are listed below:

#### **Parish**

Cratloe 1802 - 1901

Crusheen 1860 - 1900

Ennis 1841 - 1900

Feakle 1860 - 1900

Mountshannon

and Whitegate 1846 - 1900

Parteen 1831 - 1902

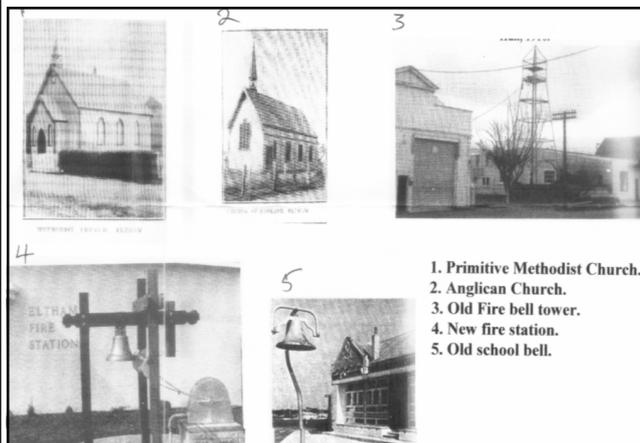
Scariff 1852 - 1900

Further Co. Clare parish records including marriages and deaths, as well as further baptismal records, will be made available online on a phased basis. Please find a list of County Clare sources that are currently online at County Clare Sources List.

#### **Locating London's Past**

This website allows you to search a wide body of digital resources relating to early modern and eighteenth-century London, and to map the results on to a fully GIS compliant version of John Rocque's 1746 map.

*(from Wanganui Newsletter)*



1. Primitive Methodist Church.
2. Anglican Church.
3. Old Fire bell tower.
4. New fire station.
5. Old school bell.

## Snippets



### Irish Catholic records added to Ancestry.co.uk

by jonbauckham, 20 March 2014

Researchers with Irish Catholic ancestors could break down brick walls following the addition of over 700,000 parish records to Ancestry.co.uk

#### Family historians with connections to the Emerald Isle could make new breakthroughs following the addition of four Irish Roman Catholic record sets to the web.

Spanning 1763 through to 1912, the [Ancestry.co.uk](http://Ancestry.co.uk) release features baptism, marriage and burial registers from parishes across the country, as well as the records of over 8,000 confirmations.

Although the Church of Ireland was the established state church from 1536 to 1870, the Irish population remained overwhelmingly Roman Catholic. In 1861, almost 78 per cent of people were recorded as adherents of the faith, with this figure rising to 89 per cent within the space of just three decades.

As a result, genealogists may be able to take their research back further and plug important gaps in their family tree. While Protestant marriages were registered by the state from 1845, the statutory recording of births, marriages and deaths for all Irish citizens – including Catholics – did not start until 19 years later.

The level of detail recorded in some of the documents can also be useful given the absence of 19th-century Irish census records, most of which were destroyed during the Public Record Office fire in 1922.

For example, a typical confirmation register not only features the name of the person that was confirmed (usually a child over the age of 12), but their age, parents' names and current residence.

"These records will be vital to anyone interested in researching their Irish heritage, whether they live in Ireland or are one of the many millions living around the world with Gaelic roots," said Ancestry.co.uk's Senior Content Manager, Miriam Silverman.

"Civil and social discontent in Ireland for hundreds of years made record keeping, especially of Catholics, hard to maintain, which is why this collection opens the door to Irish family history wider than ever."



### 2014 CEMETERY WALK NO. 2 -

#### MARGARET WATSON ROBERTSON (AKA Madge or Marjorie)

Born 1876 Selkirk, Scotland  
Died 1951 Stratford, NZ. She was listed as 'Marjorie Watson' in the records.

Married 1901 to Francis ROBERTSON, son of James W & Catherine W Robertson. Francis was a Stock Exchange Clerk, bn. 1877 Battersea., London. He died in ?

They had 6 children, of whom 2 died.  
Alexander Watson bn. 1903  
m. Sarah Catherine MARTIN 23/7/1930 in Stratford.  
Catherine Isabella bn. 1904  
m. Richard Alexander WILSON 1931  
Jean Marjorie bn. 1910  
m. Lindsay Herbert BARCLAY 1936  
Donald Francis bn. 1911 Mountnessing, Essex (Stock Agent in Hawera) d. 19/6/1941 in Mirimar, Wellington—accidentally shot by William Nelson BAKER, his best friend. He was a Private in a 'Guards Vital Points Unit'. Never married.

The family sailed to NZ on the 'Tainui' from London on 21st August 1914. Their journey out was quite exciting as the war had just begun and they saw a lot of Naval activity, not least of which was their own escort. They were also subjected to rigorous checking by the naval authorities to ensure no enemy spies were on board, and they had to sail with all deck-lights doused and portholes covered over.

The family farmed on Denbigh Rd, Hawera for some time, but by 1928 had moved to Disraeli St, Hawera, where Francis is listed as a labourer., They moved again, to Lake Road, Hawera. And again to Regan Street, Stratford prior to 1938, where Francis is listed as a farm labourer. By 1946 Francis had retired and they moved to Hamlet Street, Stratford.

We cannot find any record of Francis' death.

#### Request for Information:

Has anyone had contact with The Society of Friends **Australia** (Quakers) while researching their family history?  
Please phone Jan Walker 04 567 0532

(From Hutt Valley Newsletter)

We receive copies of branch newsletters from all over New Zealand. If anyone would like to see those we have at the moment, please email Maureen and I will send them on to you. If you don't have email let me know and I will get a copy printed for you. I now have March or March/April for —Canterbury, Dunedin, Gore, Hutt Valley, New Plymouth, Riccarton, Wairarapa, Wanganui, Wellington.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR HOLDING A FAMILY REUNION**—printed here by permission from Michelle Patient  
(Part 2)

We had a small display room so attendees could bring their family treasure to show, we had a volunteer in the room at all times and had white gloves for handling and for some items a "please do not touch" sign. Some items had cards beside them with the item's story. Like a mini family museum.

We were lucky to have a projector, so all the talks were accompanied by power point presentations, so people weren't sitting in a crowded room in warm weather just listening to someone speak (and hence falling asleep).

We had pages available on the day, we asked people to write their family stories on them – what they remembered being told by older generations and we had an interview room where one of our family interviewed all the older members, one to one and recorded the sessions. These were announced as possible source material for a book.

A long time prior to the event we sent out family group sheets and asked them to complete them, with the aim of creating a book down the track, rather than having a book already done in time for the reunion and finding lots of new info as a result of those coming along on the day. Would be a good idea to have a mock up of a book if you plan on producing one and take orders and a deposit towards the end of the day. These sheets also helped find the living members we were not aware of so we could contact them ahead of time.

You can set up a mailing list with google or yahoo or better still facebook and keep them informed on your progress, save \$ on postage and your time, as you only have to send one email or post.

We had an optional day two where we hired buses and did a guided tour of significant places, (houses, churches, cemeteries and places of work). You may find something like this worth doing if there are enough locations in the area you are holding the event. We even produced a pamphlet tour guide on a tri-folded A4 sheet. Later we sent a CD out with all the photos from the day. (You might want to make sure you get two photographers on the day to take random shots as well as group shots of those attending)

Hope this helps, do ask away if you have more questions.

BFN

OOROO

Michelle

*Family History is Cool...pass it on!*

**A BLACKSHEEP, WHITENED - from the internet**

Let's say that your great-great uncle Remus Starr, a fellow lacking in good character, was hanged for horse stealing and train robbery in Montana in 1889.

A cousin has supplied you with the only known photograph of Remus, showing him standing on the gallows. On the back of the picture are the words: Remus Starr: Horse thief, sent to Montana Territorial Prison, 1885. Escaped 1887, robbed the Montana Flyer six times. Caught by Pinkerton Detectives, convicted and hanged, 1889. Pretty grim situation, right? But let's revise things a bit. We simply crop the picture, scan in an enlargement and edit it with image processing software so that all that is seen is a head shot.

Next, we rewrite the text: Remus Starr was a famous cowboy in the Montana Territory. His business empire grew to include acquisition of valuable equestrian assets and intimate dealings with the Montana railroad. Beginning in 1885, he devoted several years of

his life to service at a government facility, finally taking leave to resume his dealings with the railroad. In 1887, he was a key player in a vital investigation run by the renowned Pinkerton Detective Agency. In 1889, Uncle Remus passed away during an important civic function held in his honour when the platform upon which he was standing collapsed.

**Now we give Uncle Remus a distinguished place inside the family tree, not hanging from it.**

**Members' Queries:**

Do you have any brick walls with which you need help? Don't know where else to look?

Well, come along to the Rooms at Stratford Community House, Juliet street, next to the Anglican Church. We are there on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 3pm, and Saturdays 12 noon to 2pm. We'll do our best to help you find answers. We have a lot of local school, Church and cemetery records available, also Electoral Rolls for several years.