



Stratford Branch

New Zealand Society of Genealogists.

www.stratfordgenealogy.homestead.com

March 2013

Stratford Community House.

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Convener's Comment

Our volunteers and indexers had a well-earned break December-mid January and I dealt with several research requests from new Zealand and overseas which were received during that period.

It didn't take long for the Rooms to be busy again from mid January. Our three laptops are busy when the Rooms are open Tuesdays and Fridays. Lesley and I are open most Saturdays from noon-2pm to assist with research. We have begun indexing more schools, Maureen and I have finished photocopying Church records and she is indexing them.

We decided to take advantage of fine February weather and have a Cemetery ramble at Kopuatama Cemetery for our February meeting. Some of us met for a picnic tea and we were met by others before the ramble began. Six members were given the name of a notable family buried there and asked to research them to give a 5-minute talk. I had plans in case the weather wasn't suitable. I visited the Cemetery several weeks before the ramble, located the graves and took photos. I

made a Power Point with the photos plus scanned photos of the family and we would have had a "virtual ramble" if it had been wet. It was a very successful occasion and we will plan to repeat it next year, with hopefully some different members taking responsibility for researching families.

Carol



Branch Meeting—Wednesday 13th March starting at 7.30pm.

WHO AM I?

Please bring a photo of yourself as a baby or pre-schooler. Keep it covered and give it to Carol. We will have fun trying to match the photos with current members. If you can't attend the meeting, but have a photo to share, please contact Carol.

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



Web Sites

*Do remember to save used 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 .*

www.hharp.org Searchable database by name and date of children admitted to four major UK hospitals.

www.britishpathe.com Over 90000 historic clips covering events from 1902, searchable by keyword.

www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com. a free online guide to Irish family history research designed to help you to find your heritage.

<http://archive.scotsman.com/>
'The Scotsman' Digital Archive is available online here.

www.historygeek.co.nz - a new website of old postcards and photos, and other pictorial ephemera relating to past times in NZ.

<http://deaths.stuff.co.nz/obituaries/stuff-nz/> - Obituaries online - active since 11 Feb 2013.

<http://geneamap.kiwicelts.com>.—Murray Lynn reports he has added all of the orphanages and similar places (eg. Industrial Schools) he can find to geneaMap

PAPERS PAST:

Note—Otago Daily Times is now digitised up to 1920.

A little hint for using PapersPast for those who may not have tried this site before—on the first screen, enter the name of the person you are researching. Don't choose an area or publication. This will bring up all mentions of the name entered, whatever newspaper they are in. Very useful where news items are not in local papers, or the local papers have not yet been digitised.

NOTE—Rooms will be closed

Sat 23rd March and Friday 29th March.

NOTES from Regional Meeting:

NZSG-The First Steps Towards a Strategic Plan

VALUES

S	Support
E	Empowerment
R	Respect
V	Vitality
I	Integrity
C	Collaboration
E	Excellence

VISION

To be New Zealand's centre of excellence for family history.

MISSION

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.

LEGACY FAMILY HISTORY PROGRAMME

Sharyn Guthrie from New Plymouth will be holding classes on 17th March, 12 May, 14 July, 15 September, 17 November. Contact her at sharyng@xtra.co.nz to register your interest and for further details.

APRIL MEETING

DID ANY OF YOUR MALE ANCESTORS GROW A BEARD OR MOUSTACHE?

Bring a photo of that ancestor and tell us about him.

LATE APRIL

The president of NZSG, Michelle Patient will be visiting Taranaki and each Branch. More details to follow.

MAY MEETING Branch AGM

Snippets



Census Details:

What kind of information can one expect to find in the ten-yearly British censuses?

1801-1831: Statistical enumerations that are of little genealogical use, other than providing some background information for a certain area.

1841: The first useful census, listing individuals, addresses, and whether born in country of residence. Adult ages are rounded down to the nearest five years.

1851: This recorded correct ages, birthplaces, relationship to the head of the house, occupations and whether a person was blind, deaf or dumb.

1861: As 1851, but this Census had additional questions on whether the house was inhabited or uninhabited, and marital status.

1871: Similar to 1861, although the last column asked about further medical conditions.

1881: The census asked the same questions as 1871.

1891: Further questions on the number of rooms occupied, whether Welsh or Gaelic was spoken (in Wales and Scotland only) and whether people were employed.

1901: This had questions on the property's condition, and whether a person was working at home.

1911: This was the first census where the head of the house filled in the household schedule.

What a pity we can't find the same information in New Zealand!

Members Interests: it seems to me that we do not use our newsletter as fully as we should in our research! I propose that we do a list of 'names of interest' each month, just to see what might pop up out of the woodwork! To start the process, the following are names of interest to me:

BUCKLEY—descendants of John & Mary (nee FITZPATRICK)

MILLER—descendants of Arthur Windus & Rachael (nee JONES)

KINLOCH—descendants of Edward Brockbank & Sarah (nee ROBERTS)

DUXFIELD—descendants of George Joseph & Marion Fearnley (nee KINLOCH)

Maureen (contact at armstrong21@slingshot.co.nz)

100 YEARS AGO—1913

(From the archives of the Hawera Star)

A young man swallowed his false teeth and was admitted to hospital. He underwent an operation, the teeth were located two-thirds of the way down. The patient was able to return home after the operation.

A local resident had a hen which built a nest in a tree and hatched out six chickens. Unfortunately the brood fell from the lofty place to become the prey of the domestic cat, which killed all but one.

March Quiz: (answers next month)

- 1. When did the ferry 'Wahine' sink in Wellington harbour?**
- 2. When did capital move from Auckland to Wellington?**
- 3. Who designed the Beehive?**
- 4. Which city was considered in the 19th century to be the commercial capital of New Zealand?**

Answers to January Quiz:

- 1. This farm was purchased in the early 1880s in partnership with his brother.**
- 2. Sir Peter Buck graduated from Otago University Medical School in 1904, and from 1905 to 1909 he was Native Health Officer. Among many other achievements he became MP for Northern Maori & Minister representing the Native Races.**
- 3. A fungus that is a prized delicacy in China. In the mid 1880s its export brought £70,000 per year to our economy, thanks to Chew Chong.**
- 4. Captain Edwin Music flew a Pan American Airways flying boat from Honolulu to Auckland on 26th Dec 1937. He was killed on a later flight when the plane he piloted exploded in mid-air.**

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. At the moment I have February newsletters from Blenheim, Canterbury, Dunedin, Hawkes Bay, Hutt Valley, Matamata, Riccarton, South Canterbury, Southland, Wanganui, and Wellington. We also usually receive Christchurch, Gore, Inglewood, North Canterbury, Wairarapa and New Plymouth (which is available on their website.)

As we have had no firm suggestions yet for a competition this year, I decided to use the back page to print some of the research mentioned in Carol's notes on the front page!

MR JAMES WATSON MCMILLAN

James Watson McMILLAN was born in Dunedin in 1872, son of Elizabeth and William McMILLAN. By the time he was 21 it seems his father had died, and in the 1893 Electoral Rolls James was living with his mother at the family home on Arthur Street, Dunedin. He was employed as a warehouseman at that time.

James went to the Boer War, and on his return he married in 1902, Emma Mowbray FASTIAR, born 1878, daughter of Annie and Walter Aristire FASTIAR. James and Emma had 3 sons that I can prove, although the Stratford Primary School records also list a daughter, whose birth record I have been unable to find as yet. She must have been born after 1913. The eldest son, Hector, was born in 1903, followed by Ian Fastiar, born 1905, and then Brian Watson, born 1911 in Stratford.

The family appears to have moved to Stratford about 1910 as on the 1911 Electoral Rolls, James is listed as a plumber and electrician, and they were living in Hamlet Street. They may have lived in Wellington for a few years.

James was elected Mayor of Stratford for the first time in 1917. He appears to have been a somewhat controversial Mayor, as I have a newspaper report about something he did that was not at all popular at the time, and caused a lot of fuss. However, he seems to have survived that one, as he remained Mayor till 1929. In 1928 he put his name forward as a Labour candidate for parliament, but this was unsuccessful.

Sadly, in August 1927 his eldest son, Hector committed suicide, apparently having suffered what was possibly a nervous breakdown, the newspaper reports said 'from over-studying'? Hector appears to have been a brilliant scholar all through his schooling and was very highly thought of by his teachers.

James's erstwhile rival for the mayoralty, Mr Percy Thomson, presided from 1929 until 1933, when there was a very exciting election campaign between them. The original voting, in May 1933, had them tied for first place, so the decision was made on the toss of a coin. James won, and began at once to weed out people he did not want on his council. Within days a petition was raised by 12 local people to have the decision overturned and the election re-run. The Courts decided that they must return to the previous status quo in the interim, so Mr Thomson came back to power and promptly reinstated all the people Mr McMillan had fired. A month later the new election was held, and Mr McMillan won by a majority of 200 odd, whereupon he once again fired those he had fired before! Having survived this challenge, James continued as Mayor until 1938. His wife, Emma died in 1935.

James McMillan was a leading light throughout his years in Stratford, not only as Mayor. He was a key member of the Boer War Association in Stratford and also the RSA; a long-time member of the Stratford Racing Club Committee; a founding member of the Stratford Aero Club, where his youngest son, Brian Watson McMillan first learned to fly. Brian joined the Royal Air Force in 1937 and was posted to the North-West Frontier of India, where he stayed until 1944. During WW2 he rose in the ranks to Wing Commander, and was awarded the DSO, DFC and AFC. Before leaving New Zealand he was a noted skier, winning the national downhill and long distance skiing titles in 1936—the McMillan Skiing Cup is named after him. He competed for New Zealand in Australia against a USA team in 1937. While in India he won the Ski Club of India championship twice. After the war, Brian and a group of pilot friends formed an airline service, and he was pilot of an airliner that disappeared over the Bermuda Triangle in 1948. His name is entered on the family headstone in Kopuatama Cemetary.

James Watson McMillan died in 1953. I have been unable to find an obituary for him, but there must have been one in the local papers. Most of this information came from Paperspast, with confirmations on Ancestry.com, BDMHistorical, Cenotaph, and various of our CDs and records.

Maureen

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.

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