

# Stratford Branch

*New Zealand Society of Genealogists.*

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

November 2013

Stratford Community House.

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Branch Contact-

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## Convener's Comment

The good feelings about having a long weekend were surpassed by the tragedy that was unfolding several thousand metres above us on the mountain. The latest deaths bring the known total of those who are known to have died on the mountain to 82, since the official records began in 1891 and Egmont/Taranaki is known as one of New Zealand's most deadly peaks. At our Branch Rooms we have records of many of those who have been killed on the Mountain. There was an article about one of them, Lance Gibson, in an earlier newsletter this year. Lance died of exposure after helping to rescue others who had got themselves into trouble on the mountain. We should be thankful the members of this weekend's search and rescue teams came off the mountain safely.

Carol

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## NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 7:30pm

Agenda: That the motion be put to the meeting "That Branch representatives sign a two-year renewal of our Tenancy Agreement at Stratford Community House from 6 May 2014-5 May 2016 and that an application for funding of the rental be made to Taranaki Electricity Trust".

The monthly meeting will follow.

Carol Spragg

Convenor

**Branch Meeting—Wednesday 13th Nov starting at 7.30pm with the SGM, followed by the Branch Meeting. Bring along a favourite Christmas Recipe to be shared in the December Newsletter.**

## 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)

**Editor:**

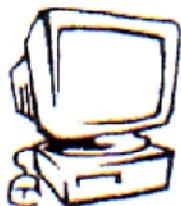
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## Web Sites

### GREAT WAR PROJECT:

<http://northernbankwarmemorials.blogspot.co.uk/>

And

<http://ulsterbankwarmemorials.blogspot.co.uk/>

These sites commemorate bank officials who served in both wars.

<http://blog.findmypast.com.au/2013/07/new-records-royal-naval-division-service-records-1914-1920/>

[www.mlfhs.org.uk](http://www.mlfhs.org.uk)—The Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society.

[http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/1991/NZJH\\_25\\_2\\_04.pdf](http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/1991/NZJH_25_2_04.pdf)—“MIGRANTS TO NEW PLYMOUTH 1840-1843” by RAEWYN DALZIEL of the University of Auckland.

[www.irishlivesremembered.com](http://www.irishlivesremembered.com) for a free Irish e-magazine devoted to genealogy & history.

**50 years ago:** ‘The largest shipment of mail ever to arrive at Port Taranaki—1900 sacks—was unloaded from the freighter *Koromiko* and left by rail for all parts of New Zealand, the Chief Postmaster at New Plymouth, Mr W H Smaill, reported.’

Headlines this week—New Zealand Post is reducing deliveries to three times a week!

### Quiz: (answers next month)

1. What were kerosene tins used for once emptied? (Could be more than one answer to this one!)
2. Who developed Midhirst near Stratford as a private settlement in 1877?
3. What was ‘The Great White Fleet’?
4. When was conscription introduced in New Zealand?

**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 .**

We have a collection of the NZ Genealogist Magazine from 1994 to 2008, mostly complete years with the Indexes. If anyone would like to browse through some of these, please contact Maureen. There are many interesting articles and items of interest in these magazines, and I have found a couple of family connections so far!  
(Phone 762 8837, or email [armstrong21@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:armstrong21@slingshot.co.nz))

### John Pounds 1766-1839 -

A cobbler and pioneer of poor children’s schools  
Following an accident at the Royal Dockyard, disabled 15 year old John Pounds started a new career as a cobbler, later working from a shop in Highbury Street, Old Portsmouth.  
At a time when few poor children received any education, John set up a free school in his workshop teaching poor local children the three Rs, as well as cookery, carpentry and shoe-making. Others followed his lead and before long over 200 ‘Ragged Schools’ were operating across the country.  
After his death in 1839 a group of Portsmouth women continued his educational work with the poor, using a house in Kent Road until it was destroyed during WW1. War Commission compensation was later used to set up an educational trust in John Pounds’ name.  
*Your Family Tree 2012*

### Answers to last month’s Quiz:

1. The two surveyors were Captain Charles FINNERTY and Mr L C SLADDEN.
2. Joseph McCLUGGAGE was the first storekeeper in Pohokura, and later, with his four brothers, in Whangamomona.
3. Barrett’s Reef.
4. Civic Theatre, Auckland.

**100 YEARS AGO**—“Stars Past” from the archives of the Hawera Star.

Eltham Court: for riding a bicycle on the footpath in High Street, Levi Brown was fined 10 shillings; for driving two horses along the footpath in the borough, R Coates was fined 10 shillings; for allowing a cow to wander at large, Ade Peters was fined 5 shillings.  
The Ranfurly Shield, the trophy that Taranaki took off Auckland, was on display at Purser Bros Hawera window.

**Midhirst** is a tiny settlement 5kms north of Stratford, which was originally intended to be the main settlement in the area. This never happened, but, small or not, Midhirst had it's fair share of excitement as the following clips from

Papers Past  
show:

## FIRE AT MIDHIRST

### CROFSKI'S STORE BURNT DOWN.

W. F. CROFSKI's general store at Midhirst was destroyed by fire at 2 o'clock this morning. It is insured for £375, but we have not the name of the company the store is insured in.

28th March 1895 Taranaki Herald

## FATAL ACCIDENT AT MIDHIRST.

### CHILD RUN OVER BY RAILWAY TRAIN.

[TELEGRAPHED BY A CORRESPONDENT.]

MIDHIRST, March 2.—Valentine Short, aged two years, son of Richard Short, who died at New Plymouth Hospital on Saturday night, was run over and killed at Midhirst about one o'clock to-day by a special goods train.

March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1897 Taranaki Herald

## FIRE AT MIDHIRST. SEVERAL PREMISES DESTROYED.

MIDHIRST, May 20.

A fire occurred at Midhirst this morning at 12.30.

A range of shops belonging to Messrs G. and W. Jones, and occupied by Christiansen and Nielson, butchers, White, bootmaker; and the Bank of New Zealand, also an empty blacksmith's shop formerly occupied by J. B. Lawrence, were destroyed.

The cause is unknown.

On the butcher's plant there was a small insurance, but on the bootmaker's none. The owners were uninsured.

Through the strenuous efforts of a hastily-formed bucket brigade, the Midhirst Hotel was saved.

Great sympathy will be felt for the occupants of the destroyed buildings, as all will be heavy losers. A high wind prevented much being done to stop the fire.

May 20<sup>th</sup> 1907, Taranaki Herald

This is just a few of the news items—there were

suicides, mysterious deaths and disappearances, and many more. Small places can be quite exciting places to live!

**STRATFORD CHURCH BELLS: No 2: Holy Trinity Anglican Church—the Disappearing Bell**

Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Stratford was first built in 1889, and an early drawing of the church shows a belfry on the western end of the roof but no mention is made of the bell. It seems to have just been accepted to be there as a matter of course!

In 1899 the eastern end of the Church was extended by adding a transept, chancel, and a vestry. There were no more extensions for about sixty years. However, old photographs from about 1909 show the church without a belfry at all, but the bell is hanging on a frame above the church porch. There is no mention of this being done in the records.

The next mention of a bell is in 1917, when a new belfry was built in the original position, and a new bell, costing £34, was installed. What happened to the old bell??? There is no mention of it. Perhaps it was given to one of the outlying churches in the district—Midhurst, Toko, Cardiff, Tariki? Who knows?

In 1956 there were more extensive alterations of the church, and a photograph from that time has no belfry and no bell! More alterations and additions in 1980 resulted in a lounge, kitchen and narthex foyer. Still no sign of the bell. Has it been residing in the back playground area of the grounds since 1956?

When I arrived in 2006 the bell stood just outside the back door, in a large lych gate type framework covered with clematis vines. When we were preparing to do another extension, this time to the lounge, a couple of years or so ago, we dismantled the whole thing and the bell was moved temporarily to a parishioner's farm shed. On the recent completion of the landscaping after the new extensions, the bell has now come back home. It sits in a purpose-built aluminium frame in a garden beside the church. The covering roof over the bell has been finished with wooden tiles and it looks really beautiful.

I have scoured the surfaces of the bell but cannot find any maker's name, nor any dedications, but it does have a lovely sonorous tone when tolled.

Maureen

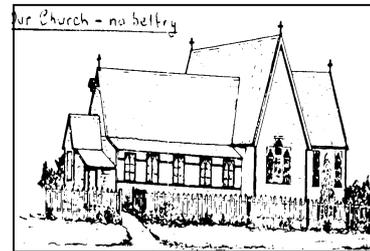
1889



1899



1909



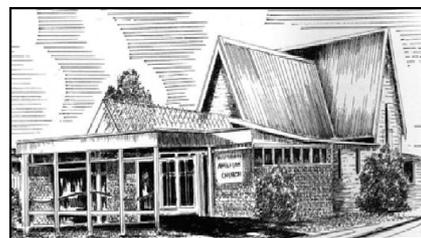
1917



1956



today

**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.