

# Stratford Branch

*New Zealand Society of Genealogists.*

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

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Stratford Community House.

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## Convener's Comment

Recently, our Branch hosted the Taranaki Regional Meeting of NZSG Branches. Currently there are Branches in Hawera, Inglewood and New Plymouth as well as us. Eltham has their Historical Society and Waitara has a Family History Group.

All of these organisations actively collect and index historical and family history information relevant to their area and are keen to share this with others who have family interests in their area. All are open to the public at some time during the week or weekend.

If you have Taranaki research and haven't visited the organisation nearest to your geographical area of interest, it could be worth your while to visit to gain additional information, and you might be able to add to their resources by sharing some of your family interests.

Carol

Convener

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**the Trocadero Fire**

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### **Stratford news—July 7th, 1892 (Taranaki Herald, Papers Past)**

We had, on Tuesday evening, an exhibition of the phonograph for the first time in Stratford. The hall was well-filled. There was a short explanatory lecture before the machine was turned on, but although the lecturer was clear and explicit enough, I doubt if any of his audience could give any satisfactory explanation of the reason why one series of microscopical markings on a wax cylinder should produce the "Charge of the Light Brigade," and another the squealings of an unhappy Chicago pig. I am quite sure that I can do nothing more than wonder at the miraculous results!

### **Next Branch Meeting—Wednesday 14th October starting at 7.00pm.**

**The programme for this meeting will be:**

**A discussion on the Revised Rules of NZSG  
Members sharing research successes**

### **Branch Rooms**

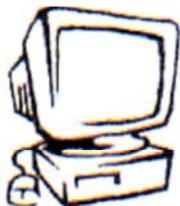
**The Stratford Branch Rooms open**

**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

### [www.locatinglondon.org/](http://www.locatinglondon.org/)

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.

### [www.familydeeds.org](http://www.familydeeds.org)

A lot of free information of content taken from deeds and documents available for researchers. There is a charge if you want a copy of the original document. Website is searchable from the Name Index.

### [www.scotsfamily.com/occupations.htm](http://www.scotsfamily.com/occupations.htm)

A list and description of about 500 unusual occupations found on early records, census returns and gravestone inscriptions in Scotland.

### <http://www.eggssa.org>—Sth African cemeteries

many graveyard memorial inscriptions by province

### <http://bit.ly/AusNotes>

If you have Australian research, use this site

**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 .**

### **Don't Let Mythology Guide Your Genealogy Research!**

August 14, 2015

How can you tell if the information posted by individuals on internet genealogy sites is correct? Some sites have sources but others don't. How do you know what, and when, to believe what you read online??

A good rule of thumb is....*Don't trust anything you find on the internet (or elsewhere) if it doesn't have sources.*

THANKS TO LEGACY NEWS (copied from Tokoroa Newsletter)

### **More Stratford news—July 7th, 1892 (Papers Past)**

We have had 72 hours without rain, and people are beginning to look quite cheerful again, newcomers especially being overjoyed to find that after all the sun does shine sometimes here even in winter! It may be comforting to them to know that wet as the season has been so far it is not the wettest on record. The winter of 1884 the rainfall exceeded this season by about 50per cent.

### **Are millions of entries missing from parish registers?**

In the latest (September) issue of the *Journal of the Society of Genealogists* Peter Razzell writes that:

"according to research on parish register reliability, the number of unregistered baptisms and burials was between a fifth and a third of all births and deaths in parish register period, 1538-1850."

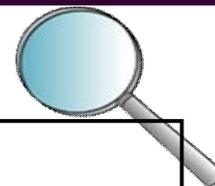
Can this really be true? It seems incredible, yet the author points out that the number of burials recorded increased by 19.6% between 1837 and 1838, around the start of civil registration, and hypothesises that clergymen who had previously been deficient in their upkeep of the registers were concerned that their negligence would be exposed.

At this stage I remain to be convinced - an extract from the [statistics](#) published by the Register General in 1841 you can see that there was a big increase in both baptisms and burials in 1837, followed by a drop in 1838.

Following up on this story I came across a 19th century book, [The Parish Registers of England](#) by John Charles Cox, which is available in Kindle format for a mere 99p. I haven't had time to read the whole book, but it certainly looks well worth skimming through. I came across an expression that I don't remember seeing before - spiritual incest - an example of which would be a godfather marrying his goddaughter. A Google search revealed that this prohibition was introduced by the Emperor Justinian around the year 530 and later extended to cover other relationships.

(from *Lostcousins latest newsletter*)

## Snippets



### 7 August 1908 - First train runs length of main trunk line

The first train to travel the length of the North Island main trunk line, the 'Parliament Special' left Wellington on the evening of 7 August. On board were Prime Minister Sir Joseph Ward and other members of Parliament heading to Auckland to greet the American navy's 'Great White Fleet'.

The train travelled over a temporary, unballasted track in the central section of the still-unfinished main trunk line. It was hauled in turn by locomotives from the Wellington & Manawatu Railway Company, New Zealand Railways, the Public Works Department and New Zealand Railways again. The trip took 20½ hours.

The main trunk line was not formally opened until 6 November, when Ward drove home a final polished silver spike at Manganuioteao, near Erua. Regular services began soon after, and an express train introduced in February 1909 made the trip in 18 hours. *New Zealand History Online*

### Member Query:

I have a photograph of a WW1 soldier that came into my possession through my father-in-law. I have identified the soldier as Harris Morsehead Symons, son of Alfred Morsehead Symons, JP, and Emily Jane Symons, of Kawhia. The unusual name is sometimes listed as 'Morshead', 'Norshead', 'Norsehead' or 'Morshand'. He died in 1917 from injuries received in battle. His father owned a large mill in the Kawhia area.

The photograph is attached to an 'In Memorium' notice. If there is any family still in Kawhia or elsewhere, I would be happy to send them the photo.

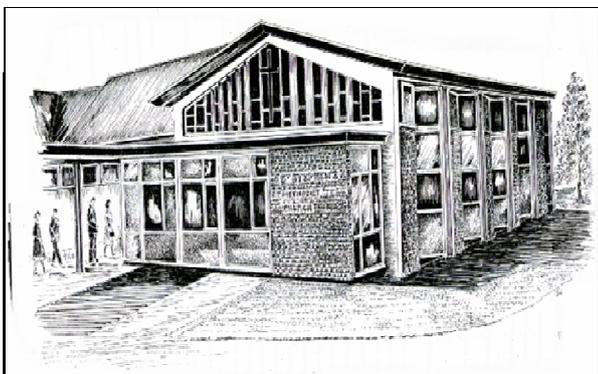
He had a sister Elizabeth Margaret Morshead, and another sister, Doris Annie Hana Te Opokoire, who married Edward John Kynnersley CLEARLY in 1920.

Failing that, I'll send it through to Kawhia Museum for their archives.

Maureen -  
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### St. Stephens Methodist Church Complex Stratford

*(from a sketch by the late Jim Taylor, Methodist Parishioner)*



### St Stephen's Methodist Church Stratford NZ

This Church complex has recently been sold to a local Funeral Director, Brian Darth, who is using it as a Funeral Chapel.

This brings to an end a long history of Methodism in Stratford, and the occasion was suitably celebrated by a Special Farewell Service held recently in the Church, presided over by Rev Peter Barleyman, Central Regional Dean of the Anglican Church, who has been involved with the Management Committee of St Stephens for several years, and by Rev

Tony Bell, Methodist minister. Many former Methodist parishioners attended the service, followed by an afternoon tea and reminisces. The following is a brief timeline of the history of Methodism in Stratford:

**1891** - The first Methodist church in Stratford opened on Sunday 4 January, but was replaced later by a larger building.

**1894** - new Wesleyan Church built on cnr of Regan & Orlando Sts.

**1913** - unification of the Primitive Methodists and Wesleyans

**1915** - combined Methodist church moved to Regan St buildings.

**1962** - new St Stephen's Methodist Church dedicated.

**2009** - a Covenant for co-operation between Stratford Methodist Parish and Stratford Anglican Parish was signed on Feb 1st, and both congregations began to worship together at Holy Trinity.

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.

**LARGE BLOCK DESTROYED;**

9 PERSONS INJURED

(Papers Past, BOP Times 7/4/1911—one of the many fires)

STRATFORD, April 6.

A disastrous fire occurred early this morning, destroying the largest two-storeyed wooden building in Stratford, known as the Trocadero, containing Prebble's private hotel of about 60 rooms, also a row of shops on the ground floor, occupied by the Singer Sewing Machine Agency; A. Roche, boot-maker; Bowater and Co, land agency. The whole building was totally destroyed, with the contents, while the premises of Gould (confectioner), Lane (fruiterer), and Beckett and Roberts (painters and paperhangers), were gutted and damaged by water.

Three persons were injured and taken to the Stratford Hospital suffering from burns. Six others were slightly injured by burning, and two through jumping from upstairs windows.

The condition of Miss K G. Corson (milliner) is critical, and Miss Flora Thompson (telephone operator) is also in a serious state.

**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.