

Stratford Branch

New Zealand Society of Genealogists.

www.stratfordgenealogy.homestead.com

October 2013

Stratford Community House.

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Branch Contact-

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Convener's Comment

On Saturday Lesley and I joined some members of Hawera Branch to meet with two ladies with a passion for recording the history of Polish settlement in New Zealand.

Did you know that the first Polish visitors to New Zealand were almost certainly two sailors who were crew members on "HMS Resolution" with captain Cook in 1770's?

The two Polish descendants, Karola Wilczynska and Barbara Scrivens are developing an on-line oral history project that seeks to provide a place where Polish history can be shared. Ultimately the web site will be a place where Polish heritage can be remembered, celebrated and honoured. The development of Central Taranaki in the last 140 years would have been very different if Polish migrants had not settled in around Midhirst and further north to Inglewood, and it is hoped that the stories of some of those settlers will be included. It is planned to have the website on-line in May 2014.

If you have Polish ancestry and would like to find out more about this project, please contact me.

Carol

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Branch Meeting—Wednesday 9th October starting at 7.30pm.

We will be reviewing our first 2 1/2 years at the Community House. We would love to share comments from members as we plan for the future.

NB: The Rooms will be closed on Sat 5th Oct and Sat 12th Oct.

Branch Rooms

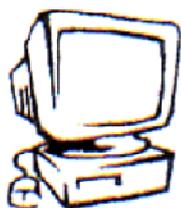
The Stratford Branch Rooms open

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

<http://welshnewspapers.llgc.org.uk/en/home>
National Library of Wales has started digitising their newspapers and currently 4.5 million articles from 1804-1919 have been digitised and are freely available on their website.

<http://www.scottish-monumental-inscriptions.com> website where you can order a CD at low cost for many of the villages of Scotland. The information includes an index, a full inscription and a photograph of each headstone.

www.dustydocs.com—combines online records of all English BDMs for each parish.

www.lr.org/about_us/shipping_information/

[Lloyds Register of Ships online.aspx](http://www.lloydsregister.com/lloyds_register_online.aspx)

This part of the Lloyd's Register website provides a list of links to digitised copies of Lloyd's Register of Ships from the earliest one (1764-66) up to 1899. Not every year is covered. Most of them appear on the Google-Books website with others on the Internet Archive.

Latest additions to Papers Past (September 2013):

[King Country Chronicle \(1906-1920\)](#)

[Mount Ida Chronicle \(1869-1926\)](#)

[Oamaru Mail \(1876-1920\)](#)

[Timaru Herald \(1901-1920\)](#)

www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz—re migrants.

A paper that may be of interest is *Migrants to New Plymouth 1840-1843* by Raewyn Dalziel.

www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/1991/NZJH_25_2_04.pdf

Research Methodology:

Have you ever wondered if you have done enough to prove that you have made the CORRECT conclusions about your ancestors. **ALWAYS, always list your sources**—so another researcher can follow how you arrived at your conclusion.

Proof is sometimes difficult to define. With each piece of information, evaluate whether it is an original or a secondary source.

The marriage certificate is an original source, because you know the bride and groom were both present, you hope they were both sober, and telling the truth to the best of their knowledge. The marriage can be confirmed by either baby's birth certificates or death certificate. (*Be aware that sometimes details were 'fudged'!*- Editor)

However birth certificates are suspect depending on who the informant was. Had the father been in the hotel for a few hours? Could he remember where the mother was born? Paid agents often registered births which increases the chances of the information being incorrect, especially in spelling & birth places.

Death certificates are frequently suspect because the person with all the information has just fallen off the perch. Your chances of an accurate certificate is increased if the spouse is the informant.

• **Always try to confirm each date or names with two sources.**

• **Keep a comprehensive dated log book**

(from Gore Oct Newsletter)

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. Does anyone want these magazines? If not we will dispose of them in the next month or so. Contact Maureen if you have any suggestions.

(Phone 762 8837, or email armstrong21@slingshot.co.nz)

Humour Spot— (from South Taranaki Star 25th Sept 2013)

Paddy took two stuffed dogs to the Antiques Road Show.

"Ooh," said the Presenter. "This is a very rare set, produced by the John's Brothers Taxidermists, who operated in London at the turn of the last century. Do you have any idea what they would fetch if they were in good condition?"



"Sticks," Paddy replied.

(from Southland Group Newsletter)

Gibb Family Research enquiry

Anyone descended from Jesse & Sarah Ann Gibbs, Charles Jeremiah Sparrow, William & Ann Tuffery or Daniel & Jane Thomas who all settled in Invercargill in the 1870's, also seeking contact with Joanne Stephens, daughter of Marjorie Stephens nee Gibb who was living in Otagara around 1987. Contact Southland group if you can help..

<http://www.nzsgsouthland.com/>

Snippets



A Different Slant on an Old Theme

Mum used to cut chicken, slice eggs and spread mayo on the same cutting board with the same knife and no bleach, *but we didn't get food poisoning*. Our school sandwiches were wrapped in wax paper in a brown paper bag, not in ice bag coolers, *but I can't remember anyone getting e-coli*.

The term cell phone would have conjured up a phone in a jail cell, and a pager was the school PA system.

We played sport, and also did PE ... and risked permanent injury with a pair of Dunlop sandshoes (only worn in the gym or the sports ground) instead of having cross-training athletic shoes with air cushioned soles and built-in light reflectors. *I can't recall any injuries but they must have happened because they tell us how much safer we are now ...*

Flunking sport was not an option ... even for stupid kids! There were not many fat kids.

Speaking of school, we all said prayers and sang the National Anthem and got free school milk for strong bones and teeth, and staying in detention after school caught all sorts of negative attention. *We must have had horribly damaged psyches*.

We were allowed to play "Bullrush" in the school playground and our Mums often had to sew our shirt buttons back on afterwards.

I thought that I was supposed to accomplish something before I was allowed to be proud of myself.

I just can't recall how bored we were without computers, Play Station, Nintendo, X-box or 270 digital TV channels.

Not a single person I knew had ever been told that they were from a "dysfunctional family". How could we possibly have known that we needed to get into group therapy and anger management classes! How did we ever survive?

"FAMILY JAZZ"

A story of 3 musical FOX generations, Rodger FOX, jazzman and trombonist, accompanied by his jazz quintet. 7:30pm, Friday 15th November, Hawera memorial Theatre. Tickets \$20 at South Taranaki -SITE, High St Hawera.

100 YEARS AGO—

These days there's a lot of talk about the potential for tolls to help pay for various roading improvement projects throughout New Zealand. If it ever does happen in Taranaki, it won't be anything particularly new—because at one time the region was the country's epicentre of road tolls.

Toll gates were all over the place, and the Taranaki Herald archives hold a photo that was probably published about 1907 of one at Waipuku between Tariki and Midhirst. This appeared in the papers in response to the controversy about proposed toll gates for Waimate West County. The *Herald* editorial pointed out that Taranaki County had sealed roads because of tolls.

The first toll gates were set up late in the 19th century, and the system was abolished in 1925. The only reminder now is Rahiri Cottage at the northern entrance to Egmont National Park, which was built as accommodation for the gate keeper. *(From the newspaper Archives, printed in The Taranaki Daily News, 7th Sept 2013)*

Quiz: (answers next month)

1. Who were the two surveyors who began surveying the Whangamomona Improved Small Farm Settlement in Taranaki?

2. Who was Mr Joseph McCluggage?

3. What was the name of the reef on which the ferry 'Wahine' foundered in 1968?

4. Where was a Wurlitzer organ played during intercessions at the movies?

Answers to last month's Quiz:

1. The first ski club at Ruapehu was formed in 1913.
2. The weight of the gold nugget found at Donnelley's Creek in 1909 was 2807gms.
3. The first cable links between New Zealand and Australia were in 1902.
4. Electric lighting was installed at New Plymouth in 1906.

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—Blenheim, Canterbury, Gore, Hutt Valley, New Plymouth, Riccarton, Southland, Tokoroa, Wairarapa, Wanganui, Wellington for September. We also get Christchurch, North Canterbury, Hawkes Bay, Inglewood, Matamata, and occasionally others such as Pukekohe.

THE HISTORY OF St JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH/SCHOOL BELL, STRATFORD

The bell was made in London by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. The date 1861 on the bell is the date that Mears & Co became the Master Founder at the Foundry and is not necessarily the date that the bell was cast. However, in 1865, a new Master Founder was appointed so the bell was cast between 1861 and 1865. It is not known if it was used somewhere else before it came to Stratford and the date of its arrival in Stratford is not documented.

Around the top of the bell is the Latin inscription "*Regina Angelorum Ora Pro Nobis*" which translates as "Queen of the Angels, Pray for us". In the centre are the Latin initials "*HIS*" (*Iesus Hominum Salvator*), which translates as "Jesus Saviour of Mankind". On the reverse side is the letter "M" (Mary). Around the base are the words "Mears and Co, Founders. London 1861". When the second Church was built in 1894, it originally did not have a bell tower, so it could be assumed that the bell was in storage for a number of years.

27 January 1897 was the opening date of education at St Joseph's School and Sister Mary St Clement recorded in her diary "*At 9:30am, the School bell rang*". However, there is no evidence, written or photographic that it was the bell manufactured by Mears and Co. It is recorded that the Parish priest, Father Treacy (1901-1912), made alterations to the Church, including a bell tower, but the date the bell was installed is not recorded. At some stage the bell was moved from the Church to the School. Pre 1932, the bell rope and lever arm were removed to prevent unauthorised ringing out of School hours.

1932-1939 the bell hung in the gable end of the porch on the south side of the School. Because it was near her room, Sister Mary St Hilda seemed to be the official bell ringer and used a two metre long pole with a hook attached, which was pushed against the clapper. The bell was removed from the old School building, maybe when the new School was opened - certainly long before the old School building (by then a Parish Hall) was destroyed by fire in 1986. After many years in storage, it was restored by Geoff Grierson in preparation for the School's Centennial.

On Saturday 27 January 1997 at 9:30am, exactly 100 years since a bell was first rung to signal the beginning of education at St Joseph's School, Stratford, the bell was rung again by the Centennial Committee Chairman, Brian Jeffares, Principal Ron Lawrence, representatives of the Mission Sisters, former pupils and new entrants Kevin Wilton, Ellie Jones and Daniel Jordan. The bell was also a focus at the Centennial Celebrations in March 1997.

In 2010 the bell was removed from the garden and once again was put into storage, but in 2012 the Board of Trustees agreed that the bell should be on display and it was decided that it should be re-sited inside the Administration Building. Geoff Grierson modified the stand to suit its new location. After more than a century, the bell shows the effects of much bruising and battering but continues to ring with a fine tone.

Acknowledgment: Jack Jeffares "St Joseph's, Stratford 1897-1997".

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.