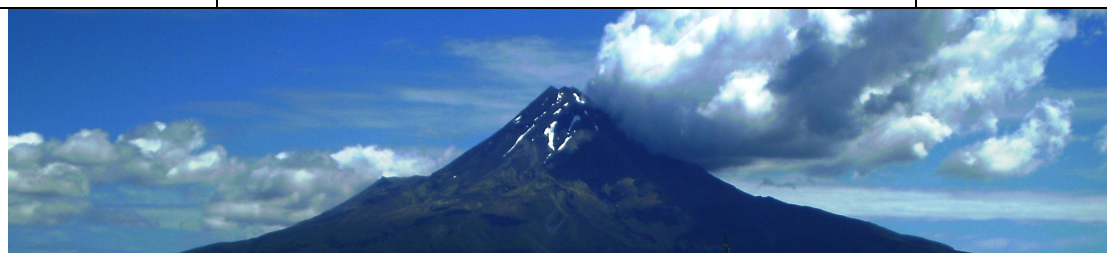




## NZSG New Plymouth Branch Newsletter



**Number 221**

**March 2009**

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**Treasurer:** Lea Bellini Ph 758 0130  
**Secretary:** John Pickering Ph 758 4952

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**New Plymouth Branch**  
**P.O. Box 429,**  
**New Plymouth 4340**

**Meetings:** 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday each month at  
 Branch Rooms 7.30pm, Moturoa  
 Shopping Centre  
 access off Whiteley St Carpark

**Email:**  
[newplymouth@genealogy.org.nz](mailto:newplymouth@genealogy.org.nz)

**Website:**  
<http://www.genealogynp.com>

**Branch Library:** Open free to members. A small charge to visitors.

**Opening Hours: Monday:** 10am to 3pm: **Wednesday:** 12 noon to 3pm

**Friday & Saturday:** 10am to 12 noon

**Computer Group:** meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 1.30pm in Branch Rms except December and January. All welcome- \$2 door charge. **Convenor** - Peter Hewett; **Acting Secretary** - Bruce Bellini; **Acting Treasurer** - Lea Bellini.

### Branch News

**Meeting Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February.** Twenty members gathered at the Te Henui Cemetery Main Gates for a guided tour by Stuart Scarle from the NPDC. The plan of the Cemetery shows it to be set out in blocks with rows in these blocks lettered. However it is somewhat difficult to follow the map as these are no in-ground markers to indicate each block or row.

The group visited the early settler gravesites and saw many well known family names on headstones. The first of these dated from 1867 when burials had to be made in a public cemetery..

Changes in the styles of gravesites over the decades were very noticeable. Earlier plots tended to include many family members and had ornate monumental type headstones. Modern headstones were more simple and set in grassed areas.

**Next Meeting – Tuesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>.** Sharyn Guthrie will report on the January AFFHO Congress using a power point presentation There will be interesting information to be gained from this so please come along. The Branch has bought a copy of the Congress proceedings and this will be available shortly in the Branch Library.

**NOTE:** The Branch Library will be closed on Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> – Taranaki Anniversary Day

## **Branch Programme for 2009**

Topics planned for Branch Meetings in 2009 (dates to be announced) include:

- AGM - in May
- Taranaki Between the Wars.
- Family Treemaker (latest version) demonstration.
- UK Counties night
- Education Officer from Waiouru Army Museum
- Research night

Branch members are asked to give consideration to becoming members of the Branch Committee. Contact a Committee member if you would like to stand for election at the Annual General Meeting in May.

## **NZSG Matters**

**Next Regional Meeting** will be held in Inglewood on May 23<sup>rd</sup> where the representative from NZSG will be Lynne Blake

**Palmerston North Branch** is holding an Open Day on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2009 9.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Kilwinning Lodge Church Street Palmerston North – next to the Abbey Theatre. Guest speakers include Mervyn Dykes (10.30am) – ‘Writing your Family Stories’ and Dr Graham Langton (1.30pm) – ‘Finding Military Records in Archives New Zealand. A variety of Research resources will be available. Cost \$8 pp. Contacts: Anne Carian -358 5293 & Marlene Smith -358 4345

**Levin Branch** is holding a Research Day on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2009 10a.m, to 4p.m. at St John’s Methodist Church Hall, Kent St, Levin. Resources available will include The NZ Gazette Searchable Index, NZSG Version 5 Library Edition, NZSG Marriage Index 1836-1956 and others. Dawn Chamber will be there to help with Pandora’s Box.

Jenny Martin from the Lower Nth Island Irish Interest Group and Pam Brown from Wellington Scottish Interest Group will be coming. Entry fee is \$5pp. Tea and coffee is provided. Bring your own lunch. Contacts: Lois Woodgate- 362 6701 & Lorraine Wright 368 9135

## **From Our Branch Library**

**Some of the articles available in the March issues of Practical Family History and Family Tree magazines.**

### ***Practical Family History***

- Searching the 1911 Census
- Tracing your Forebears in Birmingham & the West Midlands
- How to date old photographs
- Badges of Honour- researching medals
- Look to the future – recording our lives and times for the future.
- Irish ancestry: out of the ashes, first of a two part series.

### ***Family Tree***

- 1911 Census – first impressions.
- 480,000 free online census & parish records
- Crowning glory: secrets revealed by your ancestor’s locks of hair.
- Land girls in the WW1.
- Top 10 records – Birmingham.
- Relatives in Sweden – Scandinavian resources.

## *Of Interest*

### **Dating Old Photographs**

The value of being able to date old family photographs was highlighted recently in comments made by Branch member Michael Butler when he talked to the Committee about the writing of his recently published *The Luxford Saga* a copy of which is to be donated to the Branch Library.

Michael outlined the method by which he was able to use photo-dating techniques to provide positive identification of un-named family members in a number of old photographs. One of the sources of information he used was a book available from the Branch library – *Dating Old Photographs* by Robert Pols published by the Federation of Family History Societies.

In addition Michael checked with local expert in dating old photos Ron Lambert in dating some of his collection of very early photos.

Michael's comments on his use of *Dating Old Photographs* and his research are included here:

'The book contains several dating charts at the back, for dress fashions for men, women and children through the years, plus there were 'fashions' in props and poses, in photographic 'backgrounds' and in the use of furniture. The date ranges given (in the book) are perhaps a little in advance of fashions in the 'colonies' during the early photographic period but it would appear that things caught up very quickly by the end of the 1860s.

Once I could date a photo fairly closely, the rest fell into place fairly quickly. In some early cases, the date of the photo plus the apparent age of the subject meant that there was only one person who could fit the criteria, thereby positively identifying the subject. You do obviously need to establish at the beginning that your subject is in fact a family member. I was fortunate in that a couple of individuals turned up in two or more collections of family photographs. While the photos were all unidentified, the fact that the subject appeared in different collections meant that they were almost certainly family members. The juxtaposition of the subject's photograph in relation to other photos can also be a clue.

As an example one photograph we had was of an unidentified elderly man, perhaps in his late 60s to early 70s. Using the criteria in the *Dating Old Photographs* book, we could date the photographs to the late 1860s, both by the style of dress of the subject and by the background of the photograph itself. The exact same photograph appeared in collections of two family branches that had had no known contact for at least 100 years. One of the photographs was in an album alongside that of an elderly woman (and her photo existed in both of the two family collections). On the back of her photograph were the words 'Mrs William Luxford, senior'. Given all this information, the subject could really be only one person; he is almost certainly the elderly Mr William Luxford who died in Wellington at the age of 74 in 1870. There were no other family members in New Zealand who could meet these criteria.'

*Dating Old Photographs* also has a useful section outlining the development of early photography, the early types and styles such as the Daguerrotype, Calotype Ambrotypes, Cartes de Visite and Cabinets.

Another useful source for learning about the dating of old photographs is *The Practical Family History Magazine* which has regular articles on the subject. These articles go through very much the same process that Michael Butler did, to identify year, age and subject in photographs submitted by the magazine's readers.

Our Branch library has a collection of the PFH magazine dating back over nearly a decade. The Magazine website <http://www.practicalfamilyhistory.co.uk> has a useful index to the PFH magazines if you wish to look for articles in the library's collection

**BDM Historical Records online** - The new website which provides online access to BDM historical records is to be found at [www.bdmhistoricalrecords.identityservices.govt.nz](http://www.bdmhistoricalrecords.identityservices.govt.nz) You are able to search, place and pay for orders on line. Try it now and beat the rush.

## On the Branch Library Shelves

*Taranaki – An Illustrated History* - Lambert R & Henry G. Dunmore Press, Palmerston North. 2000 Edition.

*Taranaki-an Illustrated History* is not simply a collection of historical photos as perhaps the title might suggest. The book recounts the story of people in the Province over a period of nearly 1000 years from the arrival of the first Maori colonists, to the settlement by the Plymouth Company in the 1840s, the subsequent clash of these two cultures and the rapid social and economic changes which followed in the following 150 years.

Published first in 1981, the book has been brought up to date with the inclusion of more recent developments following the changes initiated by the third Labour Government in the 1980s.

For the family historian looking to understand the main forces of war, land acquisition, bush clearing and the development of the dairying and oil industries *Taranaki – an Illustrated History* provides a useful overview.

The book has an extensive Index and the Selected Bibliography provides opportunity for further reading.

### Useful Websites

<http://www.books.google.co.uk>

Michael Butler has recommended this site for down-loading a pdf file of *The Handy Book of Parish Law*. This book is dated 1859, so is in the later Poor Law period, rather than the end of the Parish Commissioners of the Poor. It is interesting for family historians and for those who wonder about the social conditions in the Victorian period.

Enter the website address and then click on *groundbreaking agreement*; then enter *The Handy Book of Parish Law* in the search box; click on *About this Book* and then on *Download pdf*

<http://www.smallandspecial.org>

This site offers access to a database which draws upon the information contained in the Patient Admission registers of the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital in London over the period 1852 to 1914 and also the associated convalescent home, Cromwell House Registers.

Searches can be made for children by name (first and last), age, sex, address and institution admitted to. Other search fields include date of admission, admitting doctor, outcome of treatment and subsequent referrals.

### Notices

#### Polish Genealogical Society Meeting and Guest Speaker

The Society has invited a noted genealogist from Poland - Stanislaus Frymark to be the guest speaker at meeting which begins at 2pm on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March in the Catholic Church Hall located in Standish Street Inglewood. Stanislaus Frymark is an expert on the genealogy of the northern parts of Poland from where many of the Polish settlers in Taranaki originated. Mr Frymark has a large number of church records on CDs for this region of Poland.

The main focus for the meeting will be accessing information which is available for the area with regard to early Polish settlers in New Zealand. There will be time for discussion and a cup of tea.

#### Closure of 'Mercy Centre' in Guildford St, Wellington

Annette Larsen advises that the Mercy Centre used by many members for accommodation while doing research at Archives and National Library, is to be closed down by the Sisters from March 31<sup>st</sup> this year. Alternative accommodation is available at Honda House in Hawkestone St near the National Library. Honda House is run by Rural Women who provide B&B when rooms are not being used by their own members.

**Blessed are our elderly for they remember what we never knew.**

Contributions for the newsletter are welcomed. Email these to [wicky.family@ihug.co.nz](mailto:wicky.family@ihug.co.nz)