

New Plymouth Genealogy

ISSUE No 51

Total Membership 131

August 2026. *In this Issue:* Len & Heather Jury's wonderful contribution for the future - Memories in a suitcase - Next month's Meeting - What is GEDminer - DNA and Facebook News - Memories from Patea - Editors quiz for you to identify some Taranaki photos - From our Archives - The back page.

Preserving our history through the generosity of two of our members



A \$20,000 donation to support the digitisation of heritage resources has helped to unlock rare Taranaki History with 178 issues of the Taranaki Gazette now available online. The official records from 1853 to 1861 can be accessed through the new Plymouth District Council's Puke Ariki Website.

Len and Heather Jury funded two digitization projects through the Taranaki Research centre – part of Puke Ariki. It also supported the digitisation of the Taranaki daily news from 1946 to 1953.

The Taranaki research centre hoped that future community support would help preserve the remaining issues of the Taranaki Gazette from 1862 to 1876.

Hi everyone

Wow! It's the end of July and the start of August already – where has this year gone?



August is Family History Month, and we are holding an Open Day at the rooms on the 8th August from 10am. So come along and see just what is available at our rooms to help you grow your family tree.

Our next meeting on the 4th August, our member Craig Roberts is giving a talk on researching overseas in Malta. If you are like me and only have English, and New Zealand and maybe a bit of Australian, then this talk should be interesting. Many of us don't have places like this to research, so have no idea how difficult this could be, and what sort of records are available to the Genealogist in that part of the world.

And of course, as it is Family History Month bring along your old family photo's so that we can all see who you are researching.

Our meeting on September 1st will be a demonstration of our Taranaki Biographical index. Graeme Jury has been working on a huge update for months and he will show us what the TBI can now do.

The October meeting will be me giving a talk about how you can find information on old Land Deeds and Crown Grants.

Have a great month researching and growing your tree

Gail Tanner

Convener

OPEN DAY—Genealogy Rooms Moturoa Saturday the 8th of August 10am to 4pm.

Open Day at our rooms. There will be several of us there with our computers and you will be able to ask for help with your genealogy. This is anything you would like some advice on - where do I research - what records are available, I want to write a story and need help - any questions on DNA. Use the library, see what resources we have and get lots of help!



Society Library: Open free to members. A \$5 charge to visitors. Opening Hours: Every Monday and Saturday: 10 am to 12 Noon Other Times by appointment

Meetings: 7:30 pm, first Tuesday each month at society rooms, Moturoa Shopping Centre — Access is off the Whiteley Street car park.

Email: newplymouthgenealogy@gmail.com **Website:** www.genealogynp.com

Scenes from a "Memories in a Suitcase"



It was a great night with lots of laughs and the memories evoked from the suitcases gave us all lots to think about & recall past experiences with some of the objects.

It was just a bit disappointing that the two presenters precluded the audience sharing their own associated memories which I know a lot of us were dying to share



THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Craig Roberts



Talking about tracing his family roots in Malta

7.30 pm starts Tuesday August 4 NP Genealogy rooms Moturoa



Chairperson: Gail Tanner 027 376 0630

Secretary: Sally Morch

Treasurer: Lois Lovell

**Committee: Lorraine Austin Peter Hewett
Sharyn Guthrie Glenys Krutz Russell Smith**

Newsletter Editor: Hamish Guthrie

Sub Editor and contributor Sharyn Guthrie

Genealogy is like playing hide and seek: they hide, we seek!

In case you hadn't heard



GEDminer -

What is it? The news is all good - Its tool for your family tree

A new tool has been released, available at <https://gedminer.com/>, that can analyse your family tree and suggest avenues for more research, or issues you might want to correct. Note that you only upload your information onto your browser, not onto the Gedminer website itself. The tool is completely free, but you can make a donation if you wish, via Ko-fi.

To use it you need to export a GEDCOM file of the tree you want to check, then upload it via your browser. After you select a home person, it will then give you a Health Score for your tree, that includes ratings for Completeness, Sourcing and Consistency. You don't make any changes on the GEDminer website itself- you go back to your own tree to do that.

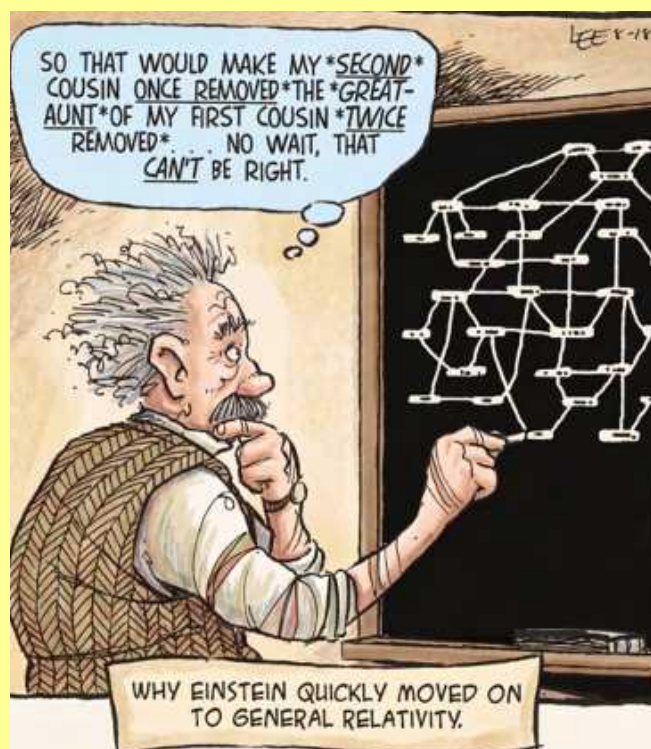
Member Request from Neenah-Grace Carrington. I am the great great granddaughter of Octavius and Alice Carrington. I am searching for family members to connect with them as my children have become extremely interested in their family history especially in New Plymouth.

You can contact Neenah at neenahgracecarrington@gmail.com

Library Duty



Sat 1 August Karen Crowe
Mon 3 August Charles Le Breton
Sat 8 August **OPEN DAY**
Mon 10 August Lorraine Austin
Sat 15 August Lea Bellini
Mon 17 August Annette Larsen
Sat 22 August Jeff Grange
Mon 24 August Graeme Jury
Sat 29 Aug Liz & Grahame Bingham
Mon 31 August Sally Morch
Sat 5 August Karen Crowe



Genealogist: Disturbs the dead and irritates the living.

DNA CORNER



Unfortunately our DNA Interest Group meeting for July had to be cancelled as I ended up unexpectedly needing to go to Hamilton.

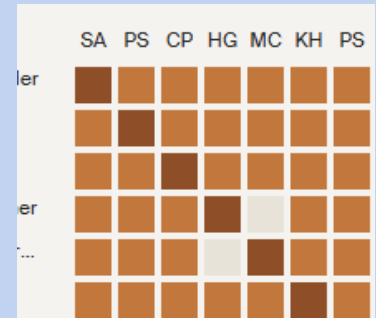
Our next meeting will be Sunday the 16th of August.

I plan to help you make sure that your DNA is linked to your tree, show how to edit relationships and will be looking at the new Beta ThruLines on Ancestry.

Please come along if you want to learn more about DNA or have questions of your own that we might be able to help you with.

Email: sharynjguthrie@gmail.com

Sharyn



FACEBOOK

Our Facebook group has been having some interesting questions and comments from several people related to various aspects of Genealogy. Are you related to the BROOKING family in New Plymouth as someone is trying to find information about them.

Do you realize how many people read Facebook and use it to help them in their research? It can be an amazing resource.

Sharyn

BETA THRULINES ON ANCESTRY

ThruLines uses information from linked family trees to show how you may be related.

To do this, ThruLines compares the tree linked to your DNA results and looks for other trees with the same names, dates, places and relationships to help suggest connections.

Not only do Trees need to be linked to DNA results, they also need to be set to **Public** or **Private and Searchable**.

The new Beta version of ThruLines is great, it shows you multiple people at once and makes it easier to view a line of matches.



Sharyn

1939 War Breaks out – “Memories from Patea”

MARGARET MILLS



It was just 70 years since the end of the Land Wars and most long-established families had family members who had taken part. I didn't understand why Pākehā kids didn't play with Māori kids and sat in different rows of desks at school, and why they got the strap for speaking their own language.

The local hall doubled as a movie theatre and halfway down there was a rope across it. Behind the rope were rows of chairs for Pākehā of all ages and in front the Māori of all ages sat on backless forms. There were two barbers in town, one for Pākehā and one for Māori. Only in the local public hospital was there no separation. At primary school we had a history text book called *Our Country*. Its opening sentence began 'Our country's history began in 1840'... Later it referred to the New Zealand Wars of 1845 to 1872 as 'putting down rebellious Māoris'.

One day, in the school holidays in 1939, Marge asked Mum if she wanted to go to a patriotic parade; this was in the opening days of WWII. Mum said that she wasn't interested and I wouldn't want to go either. Wrong, of course I wanted to go! She said she didn't want me to go, that sort of thing wasn't suitable for little girls.

I had to kick up a huge fuss before I could go. This day was different. The shops were closed, the whole town was out on the street and the mood was jubilant. The parade was led by the brass band. Next came Boer War veterans looking stately in their shabby uniforms and riding on their immaculately groomed horses. The crowd cheered. The men threw their hats in the air. They were followed by returned soldiers from the Great War, some of them marching in uniform. More of them were on crutches limping along. Some had only one leg, some were missing an arm or an eye or were hideously scarred. I noticed that some of the women were crying.

My Auntie Marge said The women were crying because so many of them had lost a father, a husband or a son to war and were likely to lose someone to this new conflict. Most young men, she said, are desperate to find adventure and believe that they are invulnerable. She also said she thought this new war might be even worse than the last one.

For a long time after the parade nothing much seemed to happen except that a lot of the town's young men disappeared and came back for the odd weekend to strut around the town wearing khaki uniforms. They were at a place called 'camp' which Aunt Marge explained was at Waiouru.

Things changed slowly. The first big change in our lives came with rationing and the issue of ration cards. The basics of the standard New Zealand diet had its foundations stripped from it, meat, butter, sugar and tea. Meat was eaten at every meal. Butter was slathered on toast, hot scones and potatoes. Poultry wasn't considered to be meat and most backyards had a run. 'Chickens' were baby hens and we ate the adults which were called poultry. Similarly lambs were baby sheep and we ate hogget (a year-old sheep) or mutton. This, of course, was rationed. Sausages now had a lot more bread in them than pre-war. All our meat was sent to the Mother Country which most adults still called 'home' even if they had never been there or were third generation New Zealanders. Clothing was the next to be rationed as all our wool was going 'home'. Then the wardens came round demanding all our aluminum pots to send 'home' to make Spitfires. Petrol was also rationed but very few workers had cars.

In 1941 when the Japanese entered the war, trenches had been dug under the macrocarpa hedges which were on three sides of the school grounds and we had air-raid drills two or three times a week. The kids were divided into groups of six according to where we lived, with the oldest in charge with the duty of shepherding the little ones home. If we heard an aircraft we were to jump into a ditch beside the road and we practiced this regularly. The air raid drill had us running out of class and diving into the trenches.

Blackout curtains became compulsory and wardens walked around at night with their hooded torches. The smallest glint of light meant an instant fine. Blackout material was free. More and more black dresses were seen on the streets as the casualty lists in the daily paper grew longer. When the telegraph boy turned into a street collective breaths were held until he turned into a driveway. Then a huge feeling of relief was followed by pity and something almost like guilt. Tears flowed freely.

Continued next page

How well do you know Taranaki?



What and where is this?



Who is this?



Where is this?

The editor will award a luxury Chocolate Fish to the first correct answer—all other correct answers will go into the draw for 2 more chocolate fish. Email your answers to the editor at : hamishg1@gmail.com Entries close August 31 2026

1939 memories from Patea —-continued

Coal was now rationed. Clothes that weren't on the rationed list became very hard to find. Old sheets and curtains became dresses and pillow cases. Flour came in cotton bags which, when the stiffening and the labels were washed out, were very fine cotton, perfect for making underclothes and baby clothes. Luckily Mum had learnt the necessary skills as a child on the farm, where money was always in short supply. Many women became experts at dyeing.

We kids had to play our part in the war effort, too. Paddocks with a boundary on a road were fenced by barbed wire or gorse hedges, both of which had sharp spikes which pulled wool out of any sheep that rubbed against them. We kids had to gather this wool and take it to school where we learnt to use a spindle to spin it. Then we knitted it into scarves or socks, depending on the knitter's ability. We also learnt to make camouflage nets. A frame for this purpose was in every classroom and it took a very long time to make a net.

The worst job of all was picking ergot. This was fungus that grew on the grains of cocksfoot, a grass that grew plentifully along the roads and any waste spaces. It was slow and painstaking work best done by little fingers. The grains were small and we had to take a matchbox-ful to school on Monday mornings. Obviously this could spoil your weekend unless you were a very fast picker. Those who didn't have a full matchbox had their names read out at assembly because they were letting our gallant soldiers down. What was it for? We were told it was processed into a substance that stopped bleeding and prevented infection. I have learnt recently that it is actually a hallucinogen and an abortifacient. I also learnt that the government was paying for the stuff. You have to ask who got that money? What did the government actually want it for?

By now households were expected to donate sheets for bandages. The teachers tore them into strips and we girls had to roll those strips up. When we had a roll of a certain diameter we had to tie it up with string so that it couldn't unroll.

I learnt about men called profiteers. They were wicked men who had somehow managed to avoid being called up and who made money from the war. There was something called the 'black market'. On the black market you could buy stuff that was rationed, especially petrol, but all sorts of other stuff as well. Nearly everybody in town knew who the black marketeers were, probably even the police, but they were never arrested. Nobody would do them in because you never knew when you might need them.

Waiheke novelist Margaret Mills – extract from North & South

"My family tree doesn't fork, it just keeps going in a very tight circle. "



Open Day Saturday 19 September 1998

Knox Church Hall Fitzroy



Noeline Hosking & Karen Crowe



Hamish Guthrie



Merv Smith

Sharyn Guthrie

Shirley & David Thomson



Noeline Hosking

Betty Lark Karen Crowe Roger Weston



The originals of the Barrett St hospital which I posted last month were mislabelled —the picture above will give you a better view of the original layout. Big thanks to Vivienne Jones

SUBSCRIPTIONS WERE DUE BY 7 JULY 2026

*If unsure of amount or bank account, go to our website
(www.genealogynp.com) and details are on the new member form*



Auckland Family History Expo 2026

Have you thought about heading up to Auckland for the Family History Expo. It's being held at the King's College, in Otahuhu from the 9th to 11th October 2026. It starts on the Friday and then it's all day Saturday and Sunday.

The NZ Society of Genealogists will be hosting the 18th AFFO Congress on Family History at Rutherford House Victoria University Wellington February 11-14, 2027. Presentations, New Resources, workshops and 100's of Genealogists to network with.



Scotland's People have added to their Virtual Volumes section the records from 262 congregations that broke away from the Church of Scotland in the 18th and 19th centuries. All the congregations included here later rejoined the Church of Scotland. The records include minutes of the kirk sessions, which were local church courts, which settled disputes and punished bad behaviour in their congregations. www.Scotlandpeople.com

Library News Magazines received: **Who Do You Think You Are** (July)

Family Tree (July)

Newsletters received; Canterbury, Feilding, Hawera, Kapiti, Mosgiel, Nelson, Palmerston North, Papakura, Riccarton, Southland, Wellington and Whanganui.

If you would like an email copy of newsletters from another genealogy society or branch, please contact Peter Hewett
Email: newplymouthgenealogy@gmail.com



NO NEW MEMBERS THIS MONTH



The Back Page

Hi everyone—we are now well into the 2nd half of the year and have experienced one of the coldest nights in the province for quite a few years—hope you are all managing to stay warmone way or another 🤪

PLEASE DON'T FORGET OUR OPEN DAY

Saturday the 8th of August 10am to 4pm.
There aren't many times when you have a collection of knowledgeable people—plus the odd Guru—all there ready to help you with YOUR particular query. It's also a great opportunity for you to bring along a friend who is a potential Genealogy convert to see what it's all about. Open days don't happen very often—DON'T MISS THIS ONE!

You will note that on page 6 there is a wee competition to test your brain cells on historic, and maybe not so historic, Taranaki pictures. Do give it a try and email me your solutions. This collection shouldn't be too hard, however I have a few more difficult ones on hand to try you in the future—and who knows you may even be a winner!

The fish will be presented at the September meeting.

Last month I put out a plea for any old NP Genealogy Soc. photos that you may have ...alas so far I've received nothing. 🐟

Please do have another look there must be some old memories out there somewhere.

Comments and suggestions are always welcome - my email is hamishg1@gmail.com or 027 608 3074 Till next time Hamish



The kind of ancestors you have is not as important as the kindness of their descendants.