

# News & Views

February 2005; 23<sup>rd</sup> Year

Issue 220



## Hutt Valley Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists Inc.

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Evening Meeting 7.30pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, February to December  
Day Meeting: 9.30am, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, February to November  
Research Evening: 6.00pm, last Thursday each month. Library open  
Venue: Hutt Bridge Club, 1 Park Ave, Avalon, Lower Hutt  
Postal Address: PO Box 31-024, Lower Hutt  
Co-ordinator: Sandra Greig  
Secretary: Deb Beban  
Treasurer: Janet Ketchell  
Membership: Dianne Fitzgerald  
Editor: Suzanne Sutton-Cummings sjsc@clear.net.nz

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### COMING EVENTS (subject to change and confirmation closer to the event)

03 Feb: Evening Meeting – Sandra Greig – Tales of Genealogy  
17 Feb: Morning Meeting – Deb Beban – Perils of Genealogy  
24 Feb: Research - The Library is open from 6.00pm until around 9pm for Members' Research  
03 Mar: Evening Meeting - Jonathan Hunt – Memories of #92  
17 Mar: Morning Meeting – Adele Pentony-Graham – Thadophile & Clareville Cemetery  
31 Mar: Research - The Library is open from 6.00pm until around 9pm for Members' Research  
07 Apr: Evening Meeting – Bobbie Aymes – Great Grandma and her sisters or  
Graham Price Convict Ancestor  
21 Apr: Morning Meeting – Diane Fraser – Queensland Research  
28 Apr: Research - The Library is open from 6.00pm until around 9pm for Members' Research  
05 May: Evening Meeting – Warwick Johnston - Hutt History  
19 May: Morning Meeting – Elaine and Ron Keown - Emily's Trunk  
26 May: Research - The Library is open from 6.00pm until around 9pm for Members' Research  
02 Jun: Evening Meeting – Jan Gow [tbc] - Computer Programmes  
16 Jun: Morning Meeting - Kelly Crandle - Taita Cemetery  
30 Jun: Research - The Library is open from 6.00pm until around 9pm for Members' Research  
07 Jul: Keith Griffith - Adoption  
14 Jul: David Lee Smith - Early American History  
28 Jul: Research - The Library is open from 6.00pm until around 9pm for Members' Research  
04 Aug: Vicky Alexander - WOA History  
18 Aug: Malcolm McGregor - Plimmers Ark & Early Wellington History  
25 Aug: Research - The Library is open from 6.00pm until around 9pm for Members' Research

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### EVENING MEETING 3 FEBRUARY - Sandra Greig - Tales of Genealogy

Sandra did a similar talk to this at the Wellington Branch last year. She brought along a basket full of things to do with her family history and talked about them and their 'tales'. It was a very interesting talk. [The story of Sandra's search for her mother-in-law has been shown on television]

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### MORNING MEETING 17 FEBRUARY - Deb Beban - Perils of Genealogy

Our very own Deb Beban will talk about her experiences in genealogy and what to watch out for.

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**Snoopers welcome! Feel free to provide comments & relatives!**

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## COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS FOR SPEAKERS IN REPLY TO A RECENT EMAIL REQUEST

Many thanks to the 5 members who took the time to reply.

Any more suggestions for more speakers or workshops please see, ring or email the Secretary Deb at [dode.beban@xtra.co.nz](mailto:dode.beban@xtra.co.nz) Some comments were:

- Get some more outsiders in as we gave our members a pretty good go in 2004.
  - People's research and how they went about it e.g. using BDMs and what information was found off them and what records were used to expand, proving family stories etc
  - I personally liked listening to a mixture of someone's family history with the methods used to unearth the information.
  - Could I suggest an emphasis on computer skills, sites etc etc. More and more info is coming down the Internet, and not all of it is useful (or reliable). Short cuts, reliable sites and all that without getting into the technical side of things
  - As a thought what do the other groups do for speakers, a tap into their sources at the regional meeting maybe?
  - Would we poll members regarding workshops?
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## LADY TEVIOT WILL BE IN PALMERSTON NORTH

Saturday 19th February 2005

Kilwinning Lodge, Church Street, Palmerston North

10:00am to 4:00pm

\$10.00 each

Lady Teviot has all new subjects

- Baby Farming in the 18th and 19th centuries
- Vaccination in the 19th century in England
- Work House in the 18th and 19th Centuries
- Genealogical Geography

Tea and coffee provided. Bring your own lunch

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## LADY TEVIOT WILL ALSO BE IN MASTERTON!

Sunday 20 February 2005

➤ Afternoon Lectures \$7.50

➤ London Research & GRO \$5.00

➤ All Three Lectures \$10.00

- 2:00pm Wills and Administrators
- 2:45pm Question and Answer
- 3:00pm Afternoon Tea
- 3:30pm Parish Chest
- 4:15pm Question and Answer
- 6:00pm Pot Luck Tea (bring a shared plate)
- 7:30pm London Research and General Record Office
- 8:15pm Question and Answer
- 9:00pm Good Night

Lady Teviot is the current president of the Federation of Family History societies of London. the NZSG is a member of the FFHS. Lady Teviot is a very experienced genealogist specialising in locating and reading of English and Welsh Wills. These lectures are open to anyone with an interest in family history. Please note, however, that space is limited and bookings are essential.

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**Only a Genealogist regards a step backwards as progress**

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## FINAL CALL FOR ORDERS NZSG INDEX VERSION 4

Version 4 of the Index is available to members of the NZSG. Order through the Hutt Valley Branch and the NZSG will make a donation to our funds (for the savings in postage). There are 86 record types and 5,840,094 records in Version 4. This includes all data on Version 3.

Cost: with Trade-in of any earlier version:\$20.00 or No Trade-in: \$60.00.

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## BEGINNERS COURSES IN GENEALOGY IN WELLINGTON AND THE HUTT VALLEY

Onslow College (Phone 477 1118 or email [commed@onslow.school.nz](mailto:commed@onslow.school.nz) )

Term 1 Tuesday beginning 22 February 2005

Term 2 Wednesday beginning 18 May 2005

Rongotai College (Phone 939 3056 or email [brajkona@rongotai.school.nz](mailto:brajkona@rongotai.school.nz) )

Term 2 Wednesday beginning 15 June 2005

Hutt Valley Community Education (Phone 560 1565 or email [hvhs.comed@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hvhs.comed@xtra.co.nz) )

Term 1 Wednesday beginning 9 March 2005

Term 3 Wednesday beginning 24 August 2005

These courses are taken by Rachel Brown who is an avid genealogist. Her courses are interesting and guaranteed to inspire the beginner to explore the many avenues of family history research.

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## THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW *"Irish Interest Group"*

Sunday Feb 6<sup>th</sup> 2005

11.30am – 4pm.

St Giles Church Hall, Cnr. Kilbirnie Cres and Vallance St, Kilbirnie, Wellington.

Guests of honour: Gwen Reiher - Auckland Irish Group and  
Geraldene O'Reilly - Hamilton Irish Group

The intention of this new Group is to travel around between, Wanganui, Palmerston North, Masterton, Wellington and any branches in between. This will make available to all the region, the data collected for research. We have plenty of research data coming down from Auckland and Hamilton.

There will be a joining fee of \$5.00 to help with setting up costs, and a small door charge of \$3.00 at each meeting. There will be raffles, lucky spots, and give-aways at the launch.

So come and join in the fun with us. *You may find your lost ancestor, or even catch that elusive Leprechaun and his pot of gold!*

Contact: Jenny Martin: [jenmartin@paradise.net.nz](mailto:jenmartin@paradise.net.nz)

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## NEW ZEALAND CERTIFICATES - ORDER NOW BEFORE ITS TOO LATE!

Laws will be passed soon and at little, or no notice restricting public access to copies of New Zealand birth, marriage and death certificates. Phone Births, Deaths and Marriages on 0800 22 52 52 for enquiries and credit card orders.

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## GED-COM GUIDES - also available from the branch for those without internet access

On the NZSG web site members can now download the Gen-Guides for all bar one collection. There is a guide on how to use and understand the Strays & More Collection. In the list on the left of the main page if you arrow down you will see Gen-Guides available to download. If you don't have a copy. you can download your copy from the NZSG web site. They are very helpful and always handy to have. All members should have a copy of these guides.

For more information <http://www.genealogy.org.nz/about/memlist.html>

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## SPEAKERS REVIEW

### Evening Meeting 2 December - Barbara Holt - Family Historian

#### Using Illustrations and Photos - A Way to Enliven your Family History

At our November Evening Meeting, we were introduced to George Winder. Our speaker was Barbara Holt, who rushed to our rescue when Jonathan Hunt was unable to attend. George, a member of Barbara's wider family tree, was a most interesting character, full of bright ideas when he was on the Wellington City Council, some of which were outrageous enough to provide excellent cartoon material for his detractors!

However for December's meeting, Barbara used photographs and illustrations of the areas where her family had lived. We again caught up with George. At one stage in his ironmongery career there had been a fire and in one of the photos, the men could be seen drying their clothes at the top of the shop. For many years George leased the site that became James Smiths Corner. This is his business address in the Cyclopaedia of New Zealand 1897 entry [p693] where he claims to have a larger frontage than any other retail iron monger in the city, with six large show windows and a fine showroom. As well the shop photos, Barbara showed some of the houses where George and the family had lived on Mt Victoria.

The new members of Barbara's family we were introduced to were the Orrs. Jane Clement and Thomas Orr were married in 1866; the month old St Paul's cathedral was consecrated. Thomas was a builder and had shifted from Christchurch to benefit from the upturn in the building trade with the Government's shift from Auckland to Wellington. In 1871 Thomas purchased Sections 625 and 626 Tinakori Road, illustrated with a map transparency. The family then shifted out to Tawa [1874-1876] and are mentioned in A. H Carman's "Tawa Flat and Old Porirua" Next, it was back to Wellington to Newman Terrace below the Tinakori townbelt. Later they shifted up to Wadestown itself, where Thomas built the 2<sup>nd</sup> classroom at the school.

Using the houses Thomas built, the homes they lived in, the schools the children attended and the churches the family was involved with, Barbara was able to plot out the family's history. Of interest was a drawing of Woodward Street in the early days. It showed a bridge, a stream and small building, very different from today! In May 1849 the second church of the Terrace Congregational Church was established in Woodward Street after the first, a brick building in Murphy Street, was felt to be unsafe because of the earthquakes. A third larger church was built on the Woodward site, before in 1888 a splendid new church was built on the corner of the Terrace and Bowen Street, a site now more commonly associated with the Reserve Bank. An engraving of the Terrace Congregational Church features in the Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [p404]. Barbara thought that Thomas had been involved in its building.

Barbara finished her talk by shifting to the next generation of Orrs who married and lived out in the Hutt Valley. For these she used mainly photos of their homes.

Reviewed by Bobbie Amyes

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### WEBSITES - contributed by Deb Beban

The Royal Geographical Society entered a new phase in summer 2004 when it opened up its archives to the public for the first time in its 174 year history. Funded by a HLF grant, the Society's new resources include a reading room, display area and searchable online catalogue. Our archives have much to offer those interested in genealogy and history.

The archives consists of

- Over 1 million maps dating from the 15th Century
- More than 150,000 bound volumes dating back to the 15th Century
- 500,000 images in the Picture Library that date from the 1860's onwards
- Various illustrations, paintings and artefacts

A large portion of our archive can be accessed using the online catalogue at <http://catalogue.rgs.org/uhtbin/webcat>

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## WEBSITES continued

### [Herts] Christmas Traditions from the History UK Website

[ENG-HERTFORDSHIRE-L@rootsweb.com](mailto:ENG-HERTFORDSHIRE-L@rootsweb.com)

Mid-winter festivals were observed in Britain long before Christianity reached our shores. In ancient Britain, the Winter Solstice (near December 22) was seen as a turning point in the cold dark months. Rituals were held to encourage the return of the sun and banish evil spirits believed to lurk in the bleakest days. On the last day of winter, also called Yule, a huge log was added to a bonfire and people gathered round to summon the sun by singing and dancing. Houses were decorated with green plants, particularly mistletoe and holly, as a symbol of fertility and rebirth the new season would bring.

Saturnalia, a very popular Roman festival, was held in mid-December. It was celebrated in countries across the Empire, including Britain which was occupied by the Romans from 43 to the early part of the fifth century. The week long party was held in honour of the Roman God Saturn. Revellers enjoyed feasting, visiting family and sharing gifts. The festival offered temporary social freedom for slaves who were excused from work and allowed privileges, such as the right to gamble.

In 596, St. Augustine undertook a mission to bring Christianity to the Anglo Saxons. He and his monks introduced the Christian calendar to Britain, including the Christmas date. The Christian church decreed Christ's birthday be celebrated on December 25, a decision made by the Pope in 336. As Christianity spread across Britain, pagan celebrations were mainly engulfed by or assimilated in to Christmas ritual.

Varied Christmas activities were adopted across Britain.

In England, people ate frumenty (a type of porridge made from corn) on Christmas morning. The recipe changed over time and eggs, fruit, spice, lumps of meat and dried plums were added. The whole mixture was wrapped in a cloth and boiled. This is the origin of plum pudding.

By English tradition, the day after Christmas is called Boxing Day. On December 26, servants and traders called on their employers for tips of money. They would collect their tips in clay boxes and when the boxes were full, they broke them open and spent the contents.

Christmas festivities in Ireland last from Christmas Eve to the feast of the Epiphany on 6th January, which is referred to as Little Christmas. Many Irish women bake a seed cake for each person in the house. It is also Irish tradition to bake three puddings, one for each key day of the Epiphany - Christmas, New Year's Day and the Twelfth Night.

In Scotland, Christmas has traditionally been celebrated very quietly because the Presbyterian Church places no great emphasis on the date. The season is however enjoyed by many Scots. A popular Scottish festive party involved the building of big bonfires which people could gather round for warmth, dancing and to play bagpipes. A time-honoured Scottish Christmas treat is Bannock cakes made of oatmeal.

In Wales, music was vital to the festive celebrations. Christmas morning between 3am and dawn men gathered at churches to sing carols until the cockerel crowed. This was called Plygrain. Taffy making on Christmas Eve was one of the most important festive traditions of the Welsh. Taffy is a special kind of chewy toffee made from brown sugar and butter. It is boiled and then pulled until it becomes lovely and glossy.

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### Royal Geographical Society

[ENG-SURREY-L@rootsweb.com](mailto:ENG-SURREY-L@rootsweb.com)

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### Genealogy-101

<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/genealogy-101>

This email group is for those just beginning their genealogy quest - where to start, where to look, who to talk to, and what to use. This group is NOT for surname queries, but for advice on any of the above issues. If you are stuck on the ground under your tree, or are stuck somewhere in your family tree, this group will help get you up the tree or unstuck!

Remember, the only dumb question is an unasked question! We're here to help each other swing from branch to branch. Come join us and get busy discovering your rich family history and heritage!

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<http://www.usefulwebs.netfirms.com>

A site, which is helpful for mainly newcomers to Genealogy research, which may also help others as well. It has links to only searchable sites for those looking for ancestors in Australia, New Zealand, England, Scotland and South Africa.

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### EARTHQUAKES AND TSUNAMIS IN WELLINGTON - from the Canterbury Library Website

Wellington settlers had experienced their first major earthquake on 16 October 1848, during a strong gale and heavy rain. It was followed by several aftershocks, causing severe damage in Wellington. Three people died when a wall collapsed onto them. The strength of the earthquake is estimated to have measured at 7.1 on the Richter scale, and was centred in the Wairau Valley, in Marlborough.

Six years later on 23 January 1855, Wellington was struck by a second major earthquake at 9.11pm, which is estimated to have measured 8 on the Richter scale. At the time Wellington had a population of approximately 6000 people. The damage was extensive with timber houses as well as brick buildings collapsing. Approximately four-fifths of the chimneys in Wellington fell down.

Brick houses destroyed in the 1848 quake had been replaced by timber houses, but there were still some brick buildings which suffered damage in 1855. One was a two-storey hotel which collapsed, killing the owner. This was the only death in Wellington from the 1855 earthquake. In the Wairarapa three Māori died when a house collapsed on them.

The Government Offices, which housed the Wellington Provincial Government, were completely demolished. In the harbour, the water washed in and out in huge waves every twenty minutes by up to several metres, flooding some of the houses on the beach front.

The centre of the earthquake was in the south-west Wairarapa along the Wairarapa Fault, about 25 kilometres from Wellington, and was felt as far away as Canterbury.

One effect of the earthquake was the raising of the Wellington coastline, causing a noticeable difference in the level of up to 1.5 metres. Large landslips had swept down the sides of the Rimutaka Ranges, and there were gaping fissures in the Wairarapa Plain, some up to 5 metres deep. Parts of Wellington were later reclaimed when swamps partly dried out by the effects of the quake were fully drained and built on.

Another result of the newly-raised land in Wellington was that the shipping basin planned for the city was abandoned and the land used for a cricket ground instead - the Basin Reserve.

It was realised that the wooden buildings built after the 1848 earthquake had stood up to the shaking better than other constructions. When Wellington was rebuilt the main commercial buildings in the city were built of brick because of the fire risk of a wooden building, but most of the homes were rebuilt in timber.

Ansell, Rebecca [Caught in the Crunch: Earthquakes & Volcanoes in New Zealand](#) Auckland, 1996.

Rogers, Anna. [New Zealand tragedies: Earthquakes](#) Wellington, 1996.

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## ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER AND ANOTHER ..... By Suzanne Sutton-Cummings

Having made my name as the family genealogist, I found myself presented with a relative's family tree folder. As she is British-born, all the information she had included British certificates and English census records.

However one man remains a mystery, a certain William Compton who was a violinist and who had run off with a young lady who lived in a town that his music group had visited. Lillie is remembered as a stern old duck who came across as having done everything right. However in the 1901 census she is listed as a widow with a string of (most of her) children and having a visitor. Not long after census day she married this visitor and her marriage certificate lists her as a spinster! Her first 'marriage' has not been found nor has the death certificate of her 'first husband' who should have died around the turn of the century after his last child was conceived.

A breakthrough was found on the 1891 census, which yielded a 25 year old musician listed as married to Lillie with one child and having been born in Scotland. We now have his approximate age and country of birth. The best match in the 1881 census is a 14 year old apprentice living with his boss who was a tailor. This lead me onto the web site <http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk> where I found that I had to buy credits for a minimum of £6.00.

After searching unsuccessfully for this illusive character, I decided that it was time I researched my husband's Scottish family tree. With the information I had, I slowly worked my way backwards and many £££ later I had discovered Cumming without the 's' a few Irishmen and a whole lot of 'Ag labs'.

It is interesting to note that the Scottish birth certificates for the last one hundred or more years have the time of day a child was born, the father's name and occupation, the mother's maiden name and when and where the parents were married. However they do not have the age of the parents like the New Zealand birth certificates do. The Scottish women seem to like adding their maiden name as a middle name which makes death certificates a little easier to sift through especially when you have hundreds of Mary Reids and Sarah Andersons.

I found one couple who appear to have never married for some reason but did not lie on census night about their marital status but were listed as head, *servant*, sons, daughters. All of the children had their mother's surname and their father is not mentioned on the birth certificate I bought, which may have been a strict Scottish way of doing things. Incidentally young Esther, the servant's daughter, was known by her father's surname, even by my father-in-law but had her real maiden name as her middle name on her death certificate and her parents were 'married' on her marriage certificate.

All these little anomalies like the missing 's' and the unmarried servant made the job all the more interesting, even if a little more expensive. For ten pence I got to look at a page of possibilities and for £1.00, I got an instant image of an actual certificate which would have cost many many ££ more a few years ago.

While on the Scotlandspeople site, I could go to the printer friendly version of the lists I had bought, I could then highlight the whole page (ctrl A) copy it all (ctrl C), open a Word page and paste it all onto the page (ctrl V). It means that I have a page with all the lists of information I have bought, to study and play with at my own leisure after logging off.

Finally, having exhausted all possibilities for the Compton and Cumming(s) family trees, with the few credits I had left I thought I would have a look for my gold mining ancestors, Annie Doyle and George William Brown who don't appear to have registered the birth of my ancestor born on the West Coast in the mid 1870s. I did find two people who fit the bill - both born in Aberdeen and missing from Scotland by 1881 when they would have been in New Zealand. Now I need try and find when, where and if they were married and prove they are, or are not, my ancestors.

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### LOST COUSINS.COM

The new Lost Cousins website has launched with the aim of bringing together people with shared ancestors - lost cousins. The site uses the 1881 Census as its core. If you enter the details of your ancestor, and someone else has entered information that matches, the site will send you each an email. Visit [www.lostcousins.com](http://www.lostcousins.com) and see if it can put you in touch with some distant relatives.

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## FINAL NOTE

Any contributions to the newsletters for March need to be received by the editor by the last Thursday in February, the 24th of February 2005.

Thank you Maureen MacDonald for the following poem.

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They think that I should wash and clean, and be a model wife.  
I tell them it's more interesting to study Grandpa's life.  
They simply do not understand why I hate to go to bed...  
I'd rather do two hundred years of research work instead.

Why waste the time we have on earth just snoring and asleep?  
When we can learn of ancestors that sailed upon the deep.  
A hundred years from now of course, no one will ever know  
Whether I did laundry, but they'll see our Tree and glow...  
"Cause their dear old granny left for them, for all posterity,,  
Not clean hankies and the like, but a finished Family Tree

My home may be untidy, 'cause I've better things to do...  
Checking all the records to provide us with a clue.  
Old granny's pulling roots and branches out with frenzied glee,  
Her clothes ain't hanging out to dry; she's hung up on The Tree.

By Mel Oshins

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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