



Hutt Valley Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists

Evening Meeting: 7.30pm 2nd Thursday, February to December
Day Meeting: 10.00am 3rd Thursday, February to November
Venue: Petone Community Centre, 7-11 Britannia Street
Postal Address: PO Box 31-024, Lower Hutt 5040
Website: www.huttvalleygenealogy.org.nz
Convenor: Alistair Hardy
Secretary: Terry Stock HuttValley@genealogy.org.nz
Editor: Suzanne Cummings sjsc@clear.net.nz

COMING EVENTS (subject to change)

08 Nov: A Wellington Woman in China – Barbara Francis

15 Nov: The Privacy & Official Information Acts for Genealogists - Anita West & Alistair Hardy

13 Dec: Christmas Party "Your year's best find!" - to be contributed by members

Evening meeting Doors open 7pm. Notices begin 7.30pm. Speakers begin about 8pm
(approx 1 hour)

Day meeting Doors open 9.30am. Notices begin 10am. Speaker begins about 10.30am
(approx 1 hour). Please note the library does not open until 10am.

THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

Evening Meeting – A Wellington Woman in China

Barbara, a retired teacher, and personal friend of Agnes (Nessie) Moncrief, will talk about Nessie's letters. Nessie was the YWCA secretary in China from 1930 to 1946 and later on was a resident at the Woburn Home until her death in 1988.

Barbara has written a book about the YWCA in Wellington and her second book about Nessie's letters is nearly at publication stage. The book describes through the letters what life was like in China at the outbreak of WW2.

Morning Meeting - The Privacy & The Official Information Acts for Genealogists

Alistair will talk about the Privacy Act 1993 and Anita will talk about the Official Information Act 1982.

If you know what these Acts are about and exactly what you can find out and how, it will save a lot of time when dealing with those who have the information but are unwilling to let you have it!

GENEALOGY/FAMILY HISTORY HELPERS AVAILABLE AT PETONE LIBRARY

✓ 10am -12pm, Wednesday 28 Nov

If there is anyone else interested in helping please contact Marie Perham. If you are new to genealogy or stuck on something, our team might be able to help you!

THE NZSG SCOTTISH INTEREST GROUP OF GREATER WELLINGTON

Research Afternoon

Sunday 11 November 2012 1-4pm

Genealogy section of the Porirua Public Library, corner of Norrie and Parumoana Streets, Porirua.

Wee charge \$2, all welcome.

NZSG Scottish Interest Group of Greater Wellington penbrown@globe.net.nz

HAPPY EVER AFTER WITH LEGACY- WEEKEND WORKSHOP WITH JAN GOW QSM FSG

- Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th November, 2012
- Lindale Lodge Conference Centre, State Highway One (just north of the railway over-bridge), Paraparaumu North.

Because of limited room, numbers will be restricted to 50 people only. Bookings will be for the whole day only. Therefore, the first 50 people who register and pay will secure a seat. People who have booked for the whole weekend will be given preference. *There will be no door sales.*

- Lectures: \$50.00 for the weekend, \$30.00 for one day.
- Roast Dinner (optional) at the 10 Pin Bowling Centre cafeteria on Saturday 24th November, 2012: \$20.00. (Dinner must be paid for in advance to secure a seat.)
- Payment: *by cheque only* made out to *Kapiti Genealogy* and posted to: Legacy, c/o Lindsay Olsen, 18 Central Park, Paraparaumu, 5032

Bookings for registration and payment must be in by Tuesday, 10th November, 2011. No late registrations will be accepted

- Tea, coffee, fruit juice and biscuits will be provided at each break.
- Bring (optional): Your laptop, power lead and multi-box.

Training sessions will be as follows:

Saturday

- Getting to Know Legacy - Our First 'Date'
- Second Date - Our Dinner Date - but where?
- Double sessions looking at Data Entry and Locations
- Third Date - Weekend Away!! Are we compatible?
- Three sessions on Documents and one on Sourcing

Sunday

- Our engagement - photos, images
- Our marriage - coming together with Publishing, Charting, photos
- Our children - Census searching, Charting Companion, TreeDraw
- His Relatives - DropBox, Families, Cloud
- Her Relatives – TreePad

NZSG THE KIWI INDEX

The NZSG Kiwi Index has been installed on the Heritage computer at the Petone Library. It is the Institutional and Branch version with 5.1 million+ records. This version does not include NZSG Collections and other miscellaneous record types that are on the full version.

The Kiwi Index CD is held in the branch CD collection in the tall grey cupboard opposite the *Evening Post* microfilms. It is not for public use.

To view the Kiwi Index show your membership card to a librarian. They will open the cupboard for you to retrieve your CD of choice. When you are finished ask the librarian to return the CD to the cupboard.

Use of the CD requires the use of a password. This is shown on the CD booklet.

UPPER HUTT CITY LIBRARY RECOLLECT HERITAGE COLLECTION

Link to the Upper Hutt City Library RECOLLECT Heritage Collection. Includes a Newspaper Archive of the Upper Hutt "Leader".

<http://uhcl.recollect.co.nz/>

From the Library's site:

<http://uhcl.recollect.co.nz/pages/about>

"The Upper Hutt Community Archive was set up in 1996 with the support of the New Zealand Lotteries Grants Board and the Upper Hutt Rotary Club. The collection is made up of a wide range of original heritage material, including photographs, newspapers, archives, manuscripts, maps, oral history tapes, and other material relating to the history of Upper Hutt and its people. Materials in the collection have been donated by a wide range of community groups, clubs, church and business enterprises, as well as by many individuals. The Community Archives collection is held at the Upper Hutt City Library and items can be viewed on request."

"RECOLLECT is an online platform for presenting digital heritage collections built and hosted by New Zealand Micrographics Services (NZMS). It has been specifically designed for fostering community participation, enabling heritage organisations to draw on the valuable knowledge, stories, and energy out there in their respective communities to add value to their collections. Constructed using proven open source tools, RECOLLECT is easy to navigate and provides an exciting range of options - such as annotation, geo-tagging, and bookmarking - to enhance the user experience."

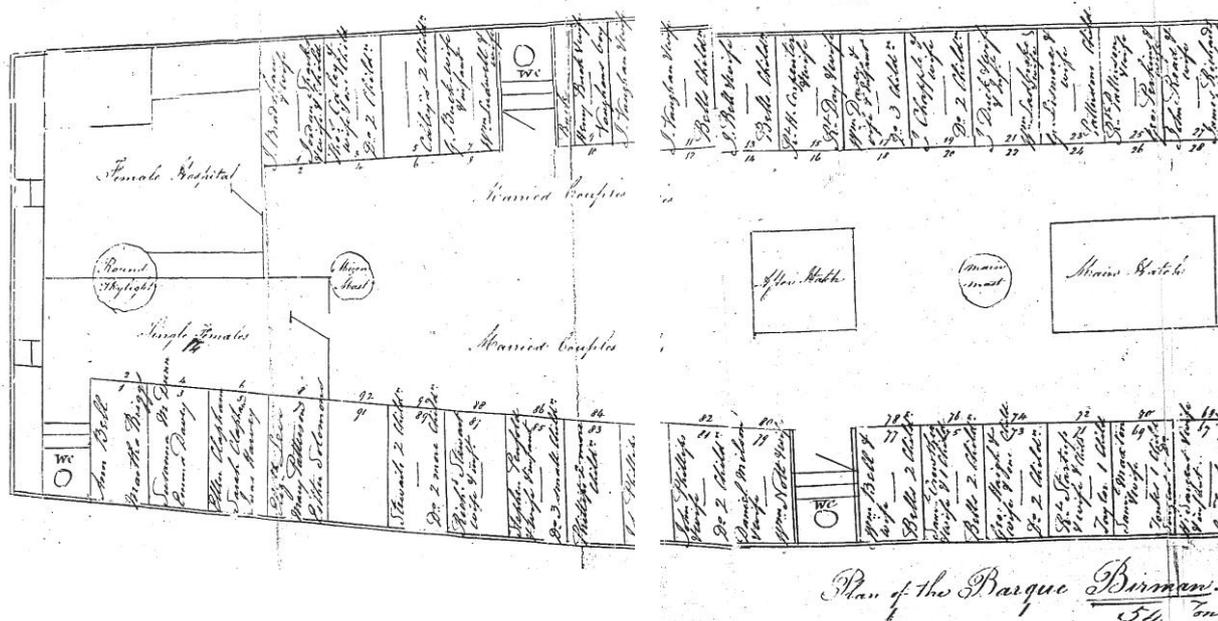
The Upper Hutt's "October 2012 Library News" mentions this new resource <http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=c042f511c837eb900d57b91fe&id=3dd9ff2865&e=ca856f7b4a>

From the NZMS site:

<http://www.micrographics.co.nz/HOME/tabid/187/Default.aspx>

Upper Hutt RECOLLECT goes live

"Our best wishes to the awesome team at Upper Hutt City library who are officially launching the Upper Hutt City Library Heritage Collections on RECOLLECT on 11 October [2012]. This is the start of an innovative and exciting new development for Upper Hutt, aimed at fostering greater community involvement in the development of their local history resources. The development of RECOLLECT has been closely tied to the growth and re-imagining of the Library's digital collections so this is a special event for us too."



IN THE BELLY OF THE BARQUE BIRMAN by Suzanne Sutton-Cummings

Above and on the next page is the plan of the Barque Birman's passengers' accomodation for the sailing from Gravesend on the 13th of October 1841 arriving in Wellington on the 1st of March 1842. Normally these plans were thrown out once the journey was over but for some reason this one still exists.

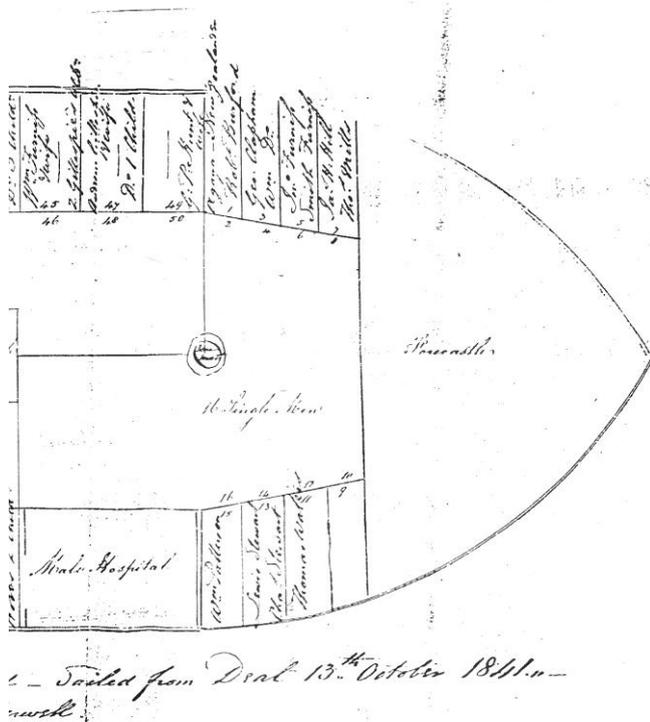
This plan is typical of how the sleeping arrangements were organised. The unaccompanied women were placed at the stern of the Birman in their own area which could be shut off from the rest of the passengers. They had their own WC and were next to the female hospital. The single males were placed at the opposite end of the ship with a partition and a male hospital separating them from the married couples.

Right down the middle were usually tables where the passengers ate their food which was cooked in the gallery. There were three hatches to let in fresh air and being a barque it had three masts. Where ever there was spare space, were also the passengers' belongings.

There were around 230 passengers on board – 53 married couples, 15 single men and 12 single women (over 14 years old), 47 children 7-14 years old, 38 children 1-7 years old and 16 under a year old.

My ancestors, Samuel and Eliza Crowther, from Halifax, Yorkshire, were placed in compartment 76 with their 1 ½ year old daughter next to the Bells who were next to the WC in the middle of the ship near the bottom of this plan (above where it says "Plan of the Barque Birman"). They also had two of the Bell children in their sleeping compartment. The Bells, the Haighs and the Crowthers, all from Yorkshire and were placed together.

There were five births and twelve deaths on this voyage. The first to die and the youngest was a child 30 hours old overlaid by its mother on the 20th of November. Little Jane Crowther, died on the 2nd of December of diarroa and hydrocephaly (water on the brain). The only adult to die at sea was a 34 year old woman who died of phtisis (tuberculosis) taking with her her 3 year old daughter who also died of the same thing.



The other nine deaths were of children aged between 2½ months and 2½ years old and all in the second and third month of the journey. Causes of death also included: acute bronchitis, inflation of the lungs after measles and tabes mesenterica (from drinking milk from cows infected with tuberculosis).

Following are a few extracts which were published in Chambers Edinburgh Journal in December 1848. The first extract is from friends of George and Susan Waters from Bath, looking to bid them farewell. The Waters family were in compartment 30 on the opposite side of the ship to the Crowthers next to an unallotted compartment and near a hatch.

'Making our way as well as we could towards the open hatchway, over piles of packages and through parties of miserable leave-takers, we contrived at length to get down the ladder, into the huge belly of the Birman. Though a few candles glimmered here and there through the enormous length of the emigrant ship, the darkness was at first too great for us to distinguish anything that was not in the immediate vicinity of the hatchway; but as our vision grew by degrees accustomed to the gloom, a scene altogether new to most of us broke upon our view – a scene which one might perhaps seek in vain elsewhere to equal, either in picturesqueness of effect or intensity of interest. The disorder here was even greater than on the deck above. Every kind of receptacle, box, basket, bundle, and cask, of all shapes and sizes, were piled up or scattered on the floor, and amongst them all stood, sat, squatted, or lounged, as best they could, more than a hundred persons, of various callings, of all ages, and both sexes...

Some were clamorous to be shown their particular berths; and others complained of the locality allotted them, far from the hatchway, and in almost total darkness...

By this time Mr W---, whom, with his wife and family, we had come to see, emerged from the gloom, and beckoned me and my party to that portion of the long vault which had been allotted for their use. Two cupboard-looking recesses, about six feet long, and half that in width and height formed the whole accomodation for himself, wife, and family for the next five or six months ...

Some of the berths, situated far away from the light of day, and visible only by the gleam of a dull candle suspended in a horn lantern, seemed to me awfully dismal quarters for a half year's residence, and that party between the tropics. Between the berths, which were on each side of the vessel, was heaped a pile of merchandise and ballast reaching almost breast-high, and extending nearly the entire length of the interior ...

An extract from George Water's letters home soon after arrival:

Had I known the amount of privation and discomfort we should have had to undergo during the voyage, it is very certain we should never have undertaken it. Five months shut up, and half-stifled in darkness – it is horrible to think of; but, thank Heaven, we have survived it all, and got here in safety

The Ship's Surgeon Superintendent had different complaints about the Birman's belly and made a few recommendations:

The water closets 'tween the decks should be as near the Main Hatchways as possible as the stench from their being so far aft as they were in the "Birman" rendered the confined place around them being disagreeable despite all my efforts at cleanliness and fumigation.

There were other problems on board the 'Birman'. The Surgeon in his final remarks stated that he should have had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the health of the Emigrants of whom he was to take charge. Amongst those who died were sick people who shouldn't have boarded the Birman. One even died not long after arriving in Wellington. He also states:

I consider that the character of those of the Emigrants (and particularly those from the country) should be more strictly scrutinised as several of those on board the "Birman" were of the worse description, the husbands having been drunken, idle and disorderly, and their wives having been prostitutes just married for the duration of the journey, and returning to their former avocation immediately on landing in Port Nicholson.

In the female hospital there were two small and one large Births (sic.). I would much prefer having one other large Birth instead of the two small ones. I had two Midwifery cases at nearly the same time and one of the children was lost, by being "overlaid" by the Mother in one of those small Births

I must bear testimony to the goodness and fine quality of all the provisions on board except the "Soup & Bouille" supplied by "Cope & Co, many cases of which were unfit to be used.

He also noted in his dairy that people weren't emptying their pots over board. (Two WCs for over 200 people!). He found it hard getting some passengers up in the morning possibly because some of them had broken into the grog and had hang-overs. There was also a bit of wife-beating which had to be dealt with.

The Birman was headed straight for a sunken reef when arriving in New Zealand but were saved by someone rowing out to warn them. Upon arrival the passengers found that their accomodation had been taken by imigrants who had arrived a few days before them and they were assigned to a filthy rat infested storehouse but were happy to be out of the 'Birman' and able to come and go as they pleased. The weather was atrocious and they were all very disappointed. George and Susan Waters started saving for their fare home.

However after a few years the tone of the letters home changed. The Waters family were building a house. They were healthy, prosperous and very happy. They offering to pay for a friend to come out and help them with their business. Most of the immigrants were of excellent character and quite a number of those families, such as the Tonks family were to leave their stamp on the new colony.

Samuel and Eliza Crowther were among the youngest couples on board at 20 and 18 years old. They had another 13 children after arriving in Wellington and all these children lived to adulthood which was unusal as the child mortality rate was very high. They also made a trip back home with one of their children later on in life. This was also unusal as nearly all the migrants never saw their country of origin again.

Source: Voyage of the Barque Birman, Gravesend–Wellington, 13 October 1841–1 March 1842, Compiled by Bruce Crowther, Te Awamutu. October 1991

This booklet contains all the information that could be found about the ship and the voyage including the Dairy of the Ship's surgeon, List of Messes (rosters of cooks) letters from passengers, the passenger list, deaths and causes of the deaths, births, how the surgeon was paid, published letters and other items.

FROM PAPERS PAST

From the very first issue of the Free Lance Volume 1, 7 July 1900 page 8

There was a bit of a surprise in an Auckland household the other night on account of the sudden return of the Lord and master after twelve or fifteen years of desultory wandering around the world. Matters were a bit complicated by the fact that the wife had married again in the interval, and had married well, her second husband being a man of some property, who had brought up the first husband's children comfortably. The lawyers are worrying out the domestic muddle now, and have offered the wanderer £300 to wander some more and lose himself somewhere. If this offer is refused--and even if it is accepted—the wife will probably put her family right by suing for divorce from the first husband on the grounds of desertion and the firm belief that he was dead when she married again.

Note from the editor: I wonder if his descendants are still trying to find his death. Normally one would look for a death before a remarriage but upon finding his divorce they could still have problems finding him. With £300, and being the wandering sort, he could have ended up anywhere!
