

Hutt Valley Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists



News & Views

October 2015

Issue 338



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.hutvalleygenealogy.org.nz
Convenor: Anita West
Secretary: Anne Martin HuttValley@genealogy.org.nz
Editor: Helene Philpott bhdk.philpott@gmail.com

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

Members are welcome to contribute to the New & Views, genealogy research, family history stories, 'how to tips', interesting websites, or information sharing.

The first weekend of each month is the deadline for the next month's issue.

Email to Helene Philpott bhdk.philpott@gmail.com



Branch Meeting Programme for October

Thursday 8 October Evening Meeting - Gill Knox and Peter Gibson - *The benefits of belonging to NZSG*

NZSG councillor Gill Knox will talk about the benefits of belonging to NZSG, and perhaps something about the rules review. Gill and Peter will then gladly answer questions about NZSG (rescheduling of presentation originally planned for the AGM night).

Thursday 15 October Morning Meeting - Adam Manterys - *From Poland to Pahiatua*

A presentation on the epic story of how 733 mostly orphaned Polish children and their 105 adult caregivers ended up stranded on the other side of the world towards the end of World War II. They were part of the 1.5 million Poles who had been forcibly deported to Soviet forced-labour camps in 1940. Adam Manterys' father was one of those orphaned children.

Genealogy/Family History Helpers Available At Petone Library 10am -12pm

On duty for: October & November

- Wednesday 7 October – Deb Beban & Lois Bartlett
- Wednesday 21 October – Diane Stinson & Susan Wilson
- Wednesday 4 November – Ian Fyfe & Phillipa Woolf
- Saturday 7 November – Dawn Chambers & Lynly Yates
- Wednesday 18 November – Cheryl Dreaver & Avril Roberts
- **December - No Duties**

For those new to genealogy and/or who want help knocking down those brick walls, this is an excellent time and place to have our experts help you. Our helpers can show you what is available in the library and how to go about finding what you are looking for.

Kiwi Collection can now be ordered:

You need to be a member of the NZSG and to be signed in to the website

http://www.genealogy.org.nz/Sales-News_474.aspx

If the link doesn't get you there, Go to NZSG <http://www.genealogy.org.nz/>

Sign in, Click Shop (near top of page), Drop down to Sales News.

From Poland to Pahiatua

Adam Manterys

On 1 September 1939 Germany invaded Poland, starting World War II.

On 17 September 1939 the Soviet Union invaded Poland from the east and disarmed and imprisoned an estimated 200,000 Polish soldiers retreating from the German front.

On 10 February 1940 the Soviet Union began large-scale forced deportations of 1.5 million Polish citizens. Families were forced from their homes and transported in cattle trains thousands of kilometres to the Soviet forced-labour camps.

As a result by the end of World War II, 1 million Polish citizens had died and 200,000 remained unaccounted for in Stalin's genocide.

On 22 June 1941 Germany attacked the Soviet Union forcing the Soviets to seek alliance with the Western Allies, which included Poland. This led to the Polish Government-in-Exile in London and the Soviet Union establishing diplomatic relations.

The conditions included Stalin releasing the Polish civilians and soldiers from the forced-labour camps and prisons (August 1941) and the formation of a Polish army in the Soviet Union. The released Poles travelled in a mass exodus in the direction of Uzbekistan where the Polish army was being formed. Many died along the way of disease and starvation.

When in March 1942 the newly formed Polish army began transferring to Iran, 43,000 Polish civilians (including 20,000 children) were evacuated with it.

The mostly orphaned children were placed in Polish orphanages in Isfahan, Iran, until their departure to New Zealand.

By 1943 the Poles were still unable to return to Poland because of the war and Iran was unable to sustain such a large number of refugees. So arrangements were made to relocate them, mainly within the British Empire.

In December 1943 New Zealand's Prime Minister Peter Fraser offered refuge to some of the children for the duration of the war.

On 1 November 1944 a total of 733 mostly orphaned children and 105 caregivers docked in Wellington Harbour on board of the USS General Randall.



Date: 1 November 1944

Ref: 1/2-003634-F

Peter Fraser and Countess Wodzicka (far left) with Polish refugee children who have just arrived in Wellington on board the ship 'General Randall'.



Date: 1 November 1944

Ref: 1/2-003632-F

Polish refugees, including boys Stanislaw Manterys (sitting on left) and Petrus (sitting to the right), arriving in New Zealand on the ship General Randall on 1 November 1944.

They were transported from the ship by train to the Polish Children's Camp in Pahiatua.



Date: 1 November 1944

Ref: 1/2-003646-F

Polish refugee children arriving at Pahiatua Railway Station, shows children walking along platform next to train, with New Zealand soldiers standing nearby.

Most of them would remain in New Zealand and they all integrated successfully into New Zealand society, while retaining their Polish culture.

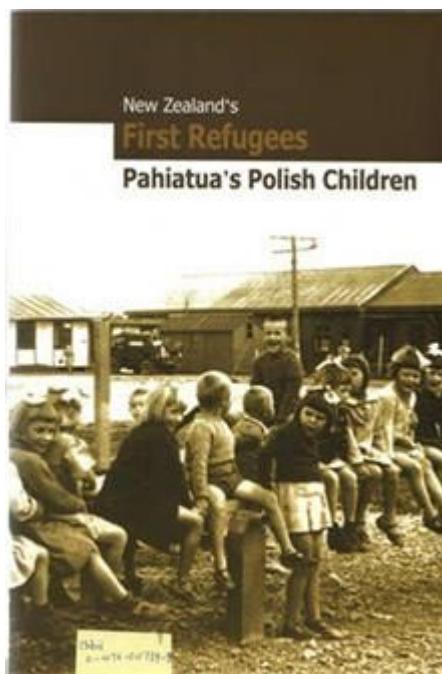
They worked hard, raised families and became actively contributing citizens and New Zealanders, more than repaying their debt to the country that offered them refuge and care in their time of need.

Polish ex-servicemen, displaced persons and relatives (who arrived after the war) established the Polish Association in New Zealand based in Newtown, Wellington, in 1948. The Pahiatua children became the nucleus around which this Polish post-war community in New Zealand developed and continues to this day.

The Photographs included are from the National Library website and were taken by John Dobree Pascoe, 1 November 1944.

New Zealand's First refugees: Pahiatua's Polish Children

This book is currently out of print but can be found on the following website:
<http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm//scholarly/tei-PolFirs.html>



This book developed from a wish to record for posterity a unique episode in New Zealand's history – the arrival of the first refugee group in 1944 and its successful integration into New Zealand society. This group consisted of 733 Polish children (most of them orphans) and their 102 guardians who arrived on 1 November 1944 as invited guests of the New Zealand Government. More than 100 personal stories are included here by the former refugee children, their descendants and New Zealanders who had contact with them in those earlier years. The book was written, produced and published by the former children and their descendants, and is therefore an accurate and inside picture of the group.

Published in Wellington, New Zealand, by the Polish Children's Reunion Committee.

Editor & Production: Adam Manterys

Commissioning Editors: [Stefania Zawada](#) & [Stanisław Manterys](#)

Photo Editor & Archivist: [Józef Zawada](#)

Photos from the library of [Józef Zawada](#) and contributors' private collections

<http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/the-story-of-seven-hundred-polish-children-1966>

This 1966 documentary tells the story of 733 Polish children who were adopted by New Zealand in 1944 as WWII refugees. Moving interviews, filmed 20 years later, document their harrowing exodus from Poland: via Siberian labour camps, malnutrition and death, to being greeted by Prime Minister Peter Fraser on arrival in NZ. From traumatic beginnings the film chronicles new lives (as builders, doctors, educators, and mothers) and ends with a family beach picnic. This was the last film from pioneering woman filmmaker, Kathleen O'Brien.

Hutt Valley Branch Visit to the Great War Exhibition
Thursday 17 September



Archives NZ recently increased fees for their research and copying services.
For a list of the new charges go to:
<http://archives.govt.nz/services/fees-and-charges>

Latest additions to Papers Past (September 2015):

- [Evening Star \(1865-1920\)](#)



Cobb & Co. coach (Anthony Flude)

First Cobb & Co. Coach Service runs to Otago Goldfields

11 October 1861

In its first venture from Dunedin to Gabriels Gully, Cobb & Co. reduced the time for the trip from two days to nine hours.

Cobb & Co. was founded in Melbourne in 1854 by a group of Americans, among them Freeman Cobb. In 1861 its proprietor, Charles Cole, arrived in Dunedin with a luxury American Concord coach, five wagons, a buggy, more than 50 horses, and a reputation for speed and reliability. One week later, the first 'Cobb & Co Telegraphic Line of Coaches' service began a new era in New Zealand coaching.

New Zealand was crying out for a public transport network. Though not the first coach service in the colony, Cobb & Co. quickly became the biggest. Within a few years it had connected many of New Zealand's main centres; the 'Cobb' name was also widely adopted by independent operators who had no link with the original company.

Coach travel was not for the faint-hearted. At the very least, passengers had to endure a queasy rocking motion and a tendency to violent swaying. Male passengers were expected to get out and walk up steep slopes. On rare occasions passengers drowned in swollen rivers or were killed by being thrown off on steep hillsides.

By 1880 railways had reached many areas, especially in the South Island. Speed, safety and comfort – and the fact that you could read on a train – won out, and coach travel gradually declined. Cobb & Co. ran its last stagecoach service in 1923. Small horse drawn taxi services continued for a while at railway stations, until these too were upstaged by modern motor transport.

The Cobb & Co. coaches gathered dust for many years before they were recognised as heritage items and displayed in transport museums around the country.

These days, when New Zealanders hear the term 'Cobb & Co.' they think of a chain of family restaurants established in 1970 by Lion Breweries. Cobb & Co., with its links to New Zealand's transport heritage, provided the perfect brand name. In 2015 there are eight Cobb & Co. restaurants, most of them in provincial cities.

[Source: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/first-cobb-and-co-coach-service-to-the-otago-goldfields-runs-between-dunedin-and-gabriels-gully>]

What's On at Your Local Branches?

Kilbirnie:

Wednesday 4 November – Graham Langton, “*We're not all British, you know.*”
Aliens in New Zealand 1840 - 1970

Time/Venue: 10am The Park Bowling Club, Kilbirnie Crescent, Kilbirnie

Kapiti:

Tuesday 27 October – Brick Wall Workshop

Time/Venue: 7pm Kapiti Community Centre, 15 Ngahina St, Paraparaumu.

Wellington:

Wednesday 28 October – Sheila Williams, *Talking about her Williams Family*

Time/Venue: **5.30pm** Connolly Hall, Guildford Tce, Thorndon

(Note Change of Start Time)

Porirua:

Wednesday 14 October – Annette Gazley, *Salt Lake City and Researching*

Time/Venue: 7.30pm Helen Smith Community Meeting Room, Pataka

Cnr Norrie & Parumoana Sts, Porirua

Arakura School 50th Jubilee 2015 23rd-25th October

Arakura School in Wainuiomata is celebrating being open for 50 Years. There have been a lot of changes since then, and to celebrate we want to invite you all to join with us as we look back on years gone by and talk about old times, old teachers, and be involved in our next steps forward for the next 50 years!

<http://www.arakura.school.nz/50th-jubilee/>

