

# Horowhenua Family History Group Inc

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Location: Te Takere Heritage Room 10 Bath Street Levin

**SUBSCRIPTIONS are now due. \$30.**

**HFHG bank account.38-9008-0466762-00. Name as reference  
or cash to Treasurer.**



Levin Post-office 1903

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**Thompson  
House  
Monday 28<sup>th</sup>  
July 2025  
1.30pm  
SGM-Members  
What journeys did  
your ancestors have  
coming to NZ?**

## COMMITTEE

|                 |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Kevin Miles     | 021 1364 075 President |
| Brian Bernon    | 027 286 4186 Secretary |
| Prue Theobald   | 021 2010 052 Treasurer |
| Sharon de Boer  | 021 739 247            |
| Michael Holland | 021 2010 052           |
| Ian Meyer       | 06 368 0602            |
| Cathy Holmes    | 021 338 227            |
| Lynn Williams   | Librarian              |

Please keep your contribution brief.

Choose a few examples that may have  
interesting facts about the journeys.

**NB-Special General Meeting at start**

## August 25th Meeting

Members: What are some of your solutions to  
brick walls? Bring some ideas to share  
or bring a specific problem that you are  
trying to solve

## HOROWHENUA HISTORICAL SOCIETY meeting 20<sup>th</sup> July 2pm Thompson House



Anthony Dreaver New Zealand Order of Merit June 2024

A former History teacher at Horowhenua College Anthony helped  
found the local Historical Society.

His talk will refer to the three early definitive Historical books of the  
Horowhenua-"Te Hekenga" Rod McDonald,"My First Eighty Years"  
Helen Wilson and Anthony's book "Horowhenua"

## June Meeting Report

Maggie Gaffney- "All Aboard for a New Life"

An extremely well attended meeting. Thanks to Cathy and  
Prue for promotion of the event.

Maggie based her presentation around quotations from a  
diary by Thomas KEIR, a young man who journeyed aboard



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the Mermaid to New Zealand. This sailing which left Gravesend in November 1863, arrived in Lyttelton on 16 February 1864.

As well as the Keir family, three members of a young BURKE family, Maggie's forebears, were also aboard. Quotations from Keir's diary gave a sense of what the passengers experienced in their everyday lives onboard the ship.

Maggie also canvassed a wide range of other information about our ancestors and their journeys to New Zealand, examining why they came, what immigration schemes were available to them and what life was like onboard. She talked about the information emigrants were given prior to the journey, such as lists of what to bring, and described the conditions in steerage and life aboard ship.

"The only articles with which an emigrant cannot be overstocked are boots; New Zealand is a rainy country, and there being a great deal of out-door work, boots are destroyed more quickly there than in any other country in the world." Excerpt From: William Stones. "Hints to Emigrants", New Zealand, (the Land of Promise) and its Resources, 1858. p65

Maggie illustrated her points with photographs and excerpts from documents. She discussed how one passenger was given the role of 'schoolmaster', and that lessons were given to the children during the voyage. Maggie showed several examples of inaccuracies in the passenger lists, one example being that Martin Burke was listed as being from Fifeshire, whereas he was born in Ireland then lived mostly in Perthshire.

Maggie had valuable suggestions for where to look for more information about our ancestors' arrivals, including: family stories, death records, obituaries, the Cyclopedia of New Zealand, gravestones, passenger and crew lists, and the Log of Logs. She drew attention to the NZSG Shipping Project and the information it is collating. If you are interested in reading more from Thomas Keir's diary, Maggie has set up a website about the 1863-64 Mermaid journey.

<https://mermaid1864.org/>

The last entry Maggie has transcribed, for February 17th 1864, has the image that she showed of the Bridle Path they took uphill out of Lyttelton into Christchurch. <https://mermaid1864.org/17-february-1864/>

Maggie noted at the end of her talk that Thomas Keir, the diarist, had gone on to be Mayor of Rangiora. There is a very interesting heritage item about the house he erected, which is on the Waimakariri District Council website:

[https://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/136351/HH016-FORMER-KEIR-HOUSE-62-IVORYSTREET-RANGIORA.pdf](https://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/136351/HH016-FORMER-KEIR-HOUSE-62-IVORYSTREET-RANGIORA.pdf)

Maggie also talked about a booklet by Christine CLEMENT, Migration to New Zealand: a guide for family history researchers. This shows on WorldCat as being held at Feilding Library, and at National Library in Wellington.

The pdf of her presentation is available from  
[mghistorical.com/levin2025/](http://mghistorical.com/levin2025/)



## Jocelyn Whitehouse

Jocelyn 1948 aged 21



In July last year Helen Hawkins gave an excellent presentation on the Whitehouse and Jillett families.

Her mother attended the meeting. During August the library set up an exhibition on the Levin Little Theatre. Jocelyn visited and I had the pleasure of talking to her about researching her involvement. Reading the June Kapiti NZSG newsletter I asked Helen if I could use it in our newsletter. She kindly agreed.

My mother, Jocelyn Whitehouse, was born on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1927 and she passed away on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2025.

At a recent Kapiti Genealogy 'Show and Tell' meeting I took along various memorabilia to do with Mum's life. In particular, I spoke about her life as an actress in both professional and amateur productions.

My mother's mother, Cecily Tabor Gregory, was a dance teacher and was a keen producer of musical theatre. During the second World

War – (1939-1945) Cecily was paid by the government to produce musical theatre in different towns around New Zealand. Cecily's father had acted in vaudeville type shows when Cecily and her sister were growing up. Mum learnt to dance and on occasion was called upon to take part in her mother's shows.

When Mum was aged twenty-two, she auditioned for a position with The Community Arts Service (CAS), which was a part of the Continuing Education Department of Auckland University. The audition was successful. Mum learnt her lines began touring around towns all over the North Island. I think I recall her saying that she played the daughter in *Pygmalion* around 120 times. I showed a scrapbook showing numerous reviews of the show. In some towns local persons were recruited for walk-on parts, which caused much hilarity.

Near the end of 1951, Mum was awarded a government bursary to study drama in London. She decided to go to Trinity College. I showed the second half of the scrapbook which was full of congratulatory telegrams and newspaper cuttings about her plans. I then showed a second scrapbook. This time there is a cutting from the Wanganui Star titled, "Changed her Mind."

Mum had met my father; Noel Whitehouse -a returned service man who had just begun working at a law firm in Levin.

Mum and Dad were married in Wanganui on January 3, 1952. Mum moved to Levin and in 1953 the first of my three brothers was born. I am the second child; born in 1955.

Jocelyn and Noel Whitehouse 1952 in the play



In 1952 Mum joined the Levin Little Theatre and was immediately involved in a production called: "*Two Dozen Red Roses*". One of my earliest recollections is going to the Regent Theatre to see my mother playing the part of Wanda in the Musical, *Rose Marie*. It was a big production, and I showed the album that was produced and the programme and various newspaper clippings about the show. Many more shows followed. Sometimes Mum was on the stage, but at

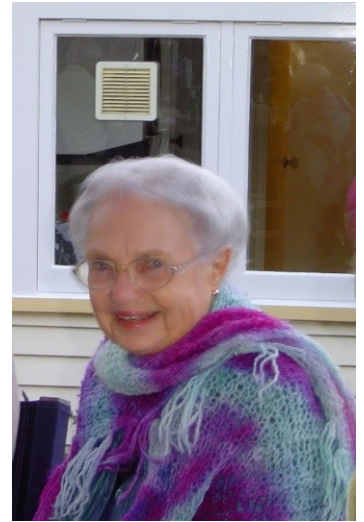


other times she was the director. There were mainly living-room comedys but also a number of shows for children.

At some point Mum was president of the Levin Little Theatre. This, in addition to being involved in other organisations for example, Plunket, Guides, Save the Children and Local Radio Reading Service. In the mid-1970s Mum began teaching speech and drama. Michele A'Court was one of Mum's pupils and Mum loved following her career on stage, in television and as a writer. In November 1980, Trinity College awarded Mum her ATCL in teaching drama. And in 2010, Mum was awarded a Queen's Service Medal for service to the theatre.



It was around that time that Mum and Dad moved to a villa at the Masonic Village. Here Mum joined the resident's committee and quickly found herself in charge of finding entertaining films for the film afternoons held once a month. RIP Mum.



**Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō**  
Library July Exhibition

**Heritage Room**

**Our Lives, Our Stories, Our Papers**

Volume 1      2 July 2025 - 28 July 2025      Price: Free  
Editor - Kiri Pepene

**Read All About it!!! Horowhenua in the news!**

Our Lives, Our Stories, Our Papers will be focused on community Newspapers that have been published in the Horowhenua. The oldest being the Manawatu Herald which started publishing in Foxton in 1878. A glimpse at our district newspaper history.



The Manawatu Herald(Foxton 1878)



Horowhenua Chronicle 1910



Former staff of the Chronicle meet for a reunion on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July organised by Linda Fletcher

## 5

An entertaining presentation of the many publications which recorded the events and lives of our district.

Original type setting blocks from the Manawatu Herald.



Coming in August

The Story of the Mangahou Dams and their social history. The first Government built power station built in New Zealand and the oldest still running.

### **CAN YOU HELP**

We have a collection of indexed volumes of articles from Levin Newspapers in the Heritage Room. To help continue this process volunteers are required on either a Tuesday or Thursday morning 9.30-11.30. Two or three people are needed to assist Carol Dyer. Please let Kevin or Carol know if you are prepared to help.

### **MyHeritage**

540 Million Historical Records Published in May 2025 MyHeritage added records across 16 collections from U.S., U.K., Germany, Finland, Sweden, and Spain. These include tax records, passenger lists, marriages and deaths, and newspaper extracts-many with images Remember you can use the My Heritage Library edition at home. Log into the library using your card number and password. Look at online resources, Genealogy, My Heritage. You will then have to log in again.



## FAMILY HISTORY DAY

**30 August 2025**

Sharing and Preserving Your Family History

Johnsonville Community Centre

28 Moorefield Road

10am – 4pm (Doors open at 9:30)

Free Entry

Various speakers will present on the various ways to share and preserve your family history, with some updates on what's new in the genealogical world

Exhibitors include:

NZSG Interest Groups covering Māori, Australia, England, Ireland, Scotland and DNA National Library etc etc

Great raffle with prizes from The New Zealand Society of Genealogists, Greater Wellington NZSG Branches, Ancestry and MyHeritage

- The NZSG Virtual (Audio-Video) AGM was held on Microsoft Teams on Saturday 28 June 2025 at 10.00am. Two new Board members were appointed at the AGM. Simon Young (#30216) from Auckland and Garry Phillips (#27614) from the Hibiscus Coast.
- NZ Genealogist - September Issue theme is 'World War II'.
- On 31 March 2025 total membership was 3114 financial members. [2025 Annual Report]. Membership subscriptions from 1 August 2025 will be: Ordinary-\$115; Joint- \$160; Youth-\$35; Family History Organisation-\$110; Institutional-\$185; Commercial-\$ on application
- The next Congress of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations will be hosted by the NZSG in February 2027 as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations.

WhoDoYouThinkYouAre August 2023 **“Off the beaten track”**

Some more unusual sites to check out.

# 5 SPECIALIST ARCHIVES

Laura shares five archives that have helped the show uncover some remarkable stories



**CAIRD LIBRARY**  
a National Maritime Museum, London  
w [tinyurl.com/rmg-caird](https://tinyurl.com/rmg-caird)  
Explore mariner ancestors' lives using the Caird Library's exceptional research guides. Find diaries, logbooks, illustrations, ship plans, photos and personal papers as well as thousands of secondary sources using its online catalogue.



**HISTORY OF ADVERTISING TRUST**  
a Norfolk  
w [hatads.org.uk](https://hatads.org.uk)  
The records here include the Butlin's Heritage Collection where we found programmes and images that illustrated comedian Emily Attack's grandparents' careers as Redcoats. It also contains staff information and correspondence.



**NATIONAL FAIRGROUND AND CIRCUS ARCHIVE**  
a Western Bank Library, University of Sheffield  
w [tinyurl.com/sheff-nfca](https://tinyurl.com/sheff-nfca)  
This is one of the world's leading repositories of records about travelling entertainers, which *EastEnders* star Larry Lamb visited on *WDYTVA?* to learn about his great grandfather who owned a menagerie.



**THE ANGUS LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE**  
a Regent's Park College, Oxford University  
w [theangus.rpc.ox.ac.uk](https://theangus.rpc.ox.ac.uk)  
Here you'll find more than 70,000 items from Baptist history, including records of newsreader Sophie Raworth's ancestors. Some 5,000 missionaries are named on its website too.



**THE POSTAL MUSEUM ARCHIVE**  
a London  
w [postalmuseum.org/collections/the-archive](https://postalmuseum.org/collections/the-archive)  
Some Postal Service employment records are available on Ancestry ([bit.ly/anc-post-off](https://bit.ly/anc-post-off)), but even more can be discovered in this archive, which houses pension records and staff magazines.

The Circus archive interested me as my great grand father joined one as a strongman! I've seen a photo but can't find it any where.

**Direct digitisation- Taranaki Daily News**

National Library has been carrying out a direct digitisation pilot with Puke Ariki in New Plymouth. You can find records for issues of the Taranaki Daily News that are not yet on Papers Past. You'll need to know an approximate date to start looking for what you want though: these files are hosted on the National Library site but are not searchable like Papers Past.

1954- 1960: <https://bit.ly/TDN54-60>

1960-1975: <https://bit.ly/DN60-75>

Porirua NZSG Newsletter

**Dunedin's Northern Cemetery Biographies**

Dunedin's Northern Cemetery has a great website that includes the ability for people to submit biographical information for the people interred there which is then added to the cemetery database. They currently have 790 records with biographical information added.

<https://www.northerncemetery.org.nz/>

Porirua City Council is seeking the public's help on a project to memorialise former Porirua Hospital patients in unmarked graves. More than 1,800 people are buried in Porirua and Whenua Tapu Cemetery who were former patients of the Porirua Mental Hospital. All of these people lie in unmarked graves and as part of the recommendations from the Royal Commission of Inquiry into abuse in care the Government has set up a fund for headstones for patients buried in unmarked graves throughout the country.

As part of this project, we are releasing a list of all the people known to be buried at Porirua Cemetery and Whenua Tapu Cemetery who are confirmed firstly as being patients of the Hospital and secondly are still without a headstone.

The hospital was once the biggest Asylum in the country and working towards naming every single patient buried with us is a huge step to restoring the mana and dignity of those individuals who died while in the hospital's

care. Please contact

[cemeteries@porirua.govt.nz](mailto:cemeteries@porirua.govt.nz)

Further to the item above about unmarked graves of Porirua Hospital patients, Emma-Jean Kelly has written about Finding your family member in the New Zealand asylum system archives.

<https://kellyogradydronfamilyhistory.com/finding-your-family-member-in-the-new-zealand-asylum-system-archives/>

<https://archive.org/>

– a treasure trove of old books and documents that can shed new light on the lives (and death) of our ancestors.

<https://worldwide.espacenet.com/>

– an archive of over 150 million patent documents, including three I discovered from a relative of mine who was inventing between 1910 and 1913. Some records go as far back as 1790 – a goldmine for anyone with inventors or engineers in the family tree

**FamilySearch Expands Full Text Search Functionality**

Family Search have been testing and improving full-text searching of certain record sets for over a year and have now made it available in the all-collections search on the signed-in FamilySearch home page and in the FamilySearch Catalogue.

To access full-text searching in the all-collections search there are two steps you must take.

1. Firstly perform a search as normal from the [home page](#). This won't include full-text results, but when you are taken you to the search results page you will now find a list of search filters on the left hand side of the screen. One of these filters is Full-text search.

2. Select that Full-text search filter to activate the full-text search. This will open up the full-text search results in a separate window. You can read more information on this on the [FamilySearch website](#).

## Whanganui Historic Rates Records Database 8

The Whanganui District Council now has an online searchable

[Historic Rates Records Database](#) containing transcribed details from property rolls (rate records) of the Wanganui Town Board 1862-72, the Wanganui Borough Council 1872-1923 and the Wanganui City Council 1924.

## Family TreeDNA and WikiTree Announce Collaboration

Family TreeDNA have partnered with WikiTree to allow Family TreeDNA users to share their WikiTree ID and tree with their matches. As WikiTree is a global world tree that everyone builds and edits this would seem to be a bit different from linking DNA to a private tree.

More information on the

<https://blog.familytreedna.com/connect-wikitree-dna-matches/>

Kapiti NZSG Newsletter

## DNA Matrix tool at DNAPainter

Jonny Perl who developed all the wonderful tools at his DNAPainter.com website has done it again.

Want to see at a glance how all those cousins of assorted flavours that you can see from your mutually shared matches, match each other? Read Jonny's blog post about his new addition to our toolboxes.,

<https://dnapainter.com/blog/shared-dna-at-a-glance-the-new-dna-matrix-tool/>

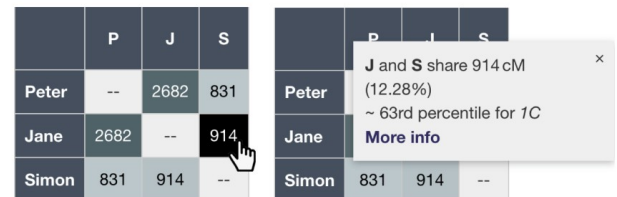
The blog post mentions his free-to-watch presentation on Legacy Webinars, the free period has expired, so you will need to have a membership to this site – often heavily discounted.

If all the people you want to compare are on either FamilyTreeDNA or GEDMatch, the data can be copy/pasted from their respective matrix tools. For Ancestry and MyHeritage the shared match data needs to be input manually, or if you have a spreadsheet already, manipulated into the format of the template provided to import them. Very useful if you have match data on different testing companies.

As usual with DNAPainter tools, they always go at least one step more in usefulness – sort by column, rearrange / add / delete rows, provision for comments. different shading options to highlight certain aspects are able to be included.

## National Collection of Aerial

**Photography** The changes at Historic



|       | P    | J    | S   |
|-------|------|------|-----|
| Peter | --   | 2682 | 831 |
| Jane  | 2682 | --   | 914 |
| Simon | 831  | 914  | --  |

Environment Scotland have also resulted in a change of website for the [National Collection of Aerial Photography](#), which has around 30 million images, some of which go back to the 1920s. They're not restricted to Scotland, or even to the UK – there are aerial photos from around the world (many taken by the RAF during World War 2).

## Ancestry NEW COLLECTION

New South Wales, Australia, Valuation Books and Miscellaneous Books, 1871 1966 Discover property valuation records for Penrith, New South Wales, Australia from 1871 to 1966.

Learn about property ownership, rents, and more. Find details on your ancestor's street address, owner's name, and the type of property they owned or rented. Explore the history of land valuations in New South Wales and the impact on the local community.

## Findmypast add Incoming Ships'

**Passenger lists** At one time it was simple – if you wanted to look up records of passengers arriving in the UK you went to Ancestry, but to search records of passengers leaving the UK you went to Findmypast. Then, in 2013 Ancestry added the Outward passenger lists – but only recently have Findmypast reciprocated by adding the more than 16 million records in the Incoming passenger lists held by The National Archives.