



SEPTEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING MEETINGS: COLLECTIVE COMMUNITY HUB, 33 JOHNSONVILLE RD; 7 FOR 7:30 PM

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| <p>WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER</p> <p><i>Finding Ancestors without documentation using DNA matches</i></p> <p>Alison Howell and Kaye Batchelor</p> | <p>WEDNESDAY 18 OCTOBER</p> <p><i>Filling the gaps in Family History using newspapers</i></p> <p>Sarah Hewitt</p> | <p>WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER</p> <p>Christmas Party!</p> |
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Kia ora koutou

I hope you were able to attend in person or by zoom the four Family History Month talks. Well done to Ann and Kaye for a fascinating and informative talk about ‘*What to do when you’ve done your DNA*’. I picked up some very useful tips. Thanks to those of you who supported our branch’s talk by Gábor Tóth. I was in Melbourne, but I understand it was fascinating and his news about the release of the digitised Scholefield papers was very exciting. See the write-up of his talk on p. 2.

Our committee have been busy reviewing our current services: the name and special interest lists (links found at genealogy.org.nz/Branch-details/11084-s1100084/), and our library. What we would really like to know is what you value in the group and what you would like us to do that we don’t do currently. Would you like more opportunity to network, to discuss your research, to have advanced workshops, or something else? Do let us know.

We are also aware that we have had some frustrations with the Collective Community Hub. Whilst a fantastic service, it has been distracting when we are sharing with other groups, some of whom have been a bit loud. We are looking at options.

On a personal note, while I was in Melbourne, I visited the Family History section of the State Library of Victoria. This is a beautiful building and includes its own art galleries – well worth a visit for itself. My husband’s great-great-grandfather spent the 1850s in Melbourne having served his time as a convict in Tasmania and before moving to the Otago goldfields. The family history librarian was very helpful and gave me lots of suggestions for places to research, most of which luckily are online.

I look forward to seeing you at our next branch meeting on Wednesday 20 September to hear Alison and Kaye talk about *Finding Ancestors without documentation using DNA matches*.

Geraldine Needham-Girven, Convenor, Wellington Branch

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'A Quick Pivot: Family History Resources at Wellington City Libraries'

Gábor Tóth

Our August speaker, part of Family History Month, was Gábor Tóth, a Wellington and NZ history specialist for 22 years. He was a very engaging speaker, with a passionate enthusiasm for his work. He briefly explained the sometimes unlikely path he had taken to arrive at his present position. His earliest work experience was in various libraries, with a pivot to a stint in the UK as a photographer for *The Independent*. Back in NZ he was resident librarian for Radio NZ and spent time at Radio Active. He tried his hand at journalism, writing an article for *Salient* on the 'Killing Fields' on The Terrace, now the University playing fields but once the site of The Terrace Gaol. But he was rejected for journalism school. A period of being at a loss as to what to do next ended when he took a position at the Wellington City Council Archives. This turned out to be the perfect place for someone with his exceptional curiosity and tenacity. It was here, with access to a massive resource, that his passion for local Wellington history developed. He became the person people searching for family members came to, and he helped them solve many problems.

The Wellington Central Public Library (WCL) also contains vast resources for research into Wellington history, especially with online databases. Of the local resources Gábor used 'Stones' handy reference street map of Wellington and suburbs' was one of the most helpful and detailed, even giving occupations. Comparing streets year by year can give insights into socio-economic changes, especially in an area like Te Aro.

A remnant of a street name, Argyle, on the side of a building sent Gábor off on a chase to find where Argyle Street had been. For this Thomas Ward's maps of 1891 provided the level of detail needed:

'The map shows a footprint of every building in the city, showing bay windows, verandahs and out-houses. The number of storeys and rooms is shown, the type of structure - whether the walls were of brick, wood or iron, the roof of slate, shingles or iron, and section boundary measurements are given. The height above sea level is indicated and even streetlights and fireplugs are shown.' (archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/nodes/view/2002)

One particularly satisfying search took Gábor from the name 'Ruby Russell' to 'Ruby Wilson' and then to 'Mary Garden' as she was known in Wellington. In 1924 she started 'Mary Garden Creations' at 100 Manners St and soon became Wellington's best-known local fashion label of the era. She was a very successful businesswoman, employing over 100 girls by the early 1930s. Her clothes and her life style were an inspiration to Wellington's young emancipated women. Her two scandalous divorces also kept her name in the news. And yet, this extraordinary woman, who was such a force in Wellington's history, had been completely forgotten until Gábor uncovered her story and wrote it up on his blog: www.wcl.govt.nz/blog/index.php/2021/03/17/the-enigma-of-mary-garden-ready. As he reminded us 'We die twice. First, when we take our last breath. Second, when our name is spoken for the last time.' His WCL blog contains many other fascinating stories about Wellington history, all derived from WCL resources, ranging from a rare book of 1503 to dining out in Wellington in the early-mid-1980s.

In 2016 the **Wellington City Recollect** website was launched, an amazing resource for research into Wellington's history. It describes itself as a 'database of heritage photos, books, maps and related ephemera reflecting the Capital's past' (wellington.recollect.co.nz). In 2019, of course, the Wellington Central Library Building was closed without notice, as it had been discovered to be unsafe as a result of the 2016 earthquake, and everyone had to abandon the building. With no access to material held at the library, family history research became impossible, and other types of projects were taken on. As well, during lockdown, extraordinary new technologies allowed, for instance, paper copies of *City Voice*, which had yellowed badly, to be scanned and made fully searchable.

The big reveal of the talk, however, was that **The Scholefield Papers** have just been put on online. (An excited murmur ran through the audience.) This is an exceptional resource for family history in the Wellington Province.

'This collection of over 6000 pages of original letters and family trees was assembled under the direction of Guy Hardy Scholefield (1877--1963). They were compiled around the time of the NZ centennial celebrations held in 1940.... The papers resulted from the creation of a 'pioneer roll'; the concept being that anyone whose family was established in the Wellington Province up to 1855 would be eligible for inclusion.' ([The Scholefield Papers](#))

Unused for 80 years, this collection is now searchable by name. This was helped greatly by an index created by a team of Wellington Branch members led by Melva Wood and including Trish Ellis. Paul Alpe, a Wellington Branch life member, worked with Gábor to access the index so it could be used. This is clearly going to make research into early Wellington families almost unbelievably easier.

Thank you, Gábor, for a most informative talk and for your many years of making Wellington's history so accessible. We look forward to a possible re-opening of WCL in 2026.

'What do you do when you've done your DNA'

Kaye Batchelor and Ann Ball

As part of Family History Month Kaye Batchelor and I were asked to give a talk about DNA by Porirua Branch. Two years ago we gave a talk about what DNA is and about the different companies that test DNA for genealogical purposes. This year's talk was called 'What do you do when you've done your DNA'. We focussed on the tools in Ancestry and My Heritage.

Before you get your results back, 'Do genealogy'. You'll get the most out of your results if you can build a tree as far back as you can. We stressed that adding dates and places will help you a lot. If you test with Ancestry DNA when you get your results it is important to link your tree and share your DNA with other people. For genealogists this may seem obvious but a lot of people don't do this. My Heritage does this for you.

You will get possibly tens of thousands of matches and the majority of the talk was about how to manage and get the most out of these matches. We covered:

- Grouping matches in order to see who is related to whom
- Searching by name and/or place
- Using the hints that are given by the companies: Ancestry (Common ancestors) and My Heritage (Theory of Relativity)

My Heritage has two extra tools that Ancestry doesn't and Kaye talked about these. They are cM estimator and autoclustering. The cM estimator uses the amount of centimorgans you share with your DNA cousins and can be very useful in helping you to work out how a particular DNA cousin might be related to you. The autoclustering tool groups your DNA cousins into clusters who are related to each other. We also showed some free tools that do almost the same as the My Heritage tools. The first of these was the shared cM tool from DNAPainter.com. This used data from the Shared cM project collected by Blaine Bettinger. The second tool was the Leeds method from danaleeds.com. Using EXCEL spreadsheets this helps you cluster your DNA cousins into groups.

Finally we gave some more tips:

- You might find unexpected results; your grandparent might not be who you expect.
- Be careful how you ask people to test: you might be excited by the challenge but they may not feel the same
- Respect others if they don't want to test. It is not worth losing a cousin over.

And

- Ask older generations to test if you have them
- Ask siblings and cousins to test
- Contact people
- Use other people's trees very carefully
- Keep doing the paper research
- Read blogs and watch webinars
- Ask for help



Porirua convenor Pat Liddell thanking Kaye and Ann
(Source: Murray Foster, Porirua Branch)

Ann Ball

TALKING ABOUT BOOKS

‘The Forensic Genealogist Series’ by Nathan Dylan Goodwin

Reviewed by Geraldine Needham-Girven

Nathan Dylan Goodwin is a writer of three series of books all within the genealogical crime mystery genre. (He has also written non-fiction, on Hastings in WW2.) The longest series is about Morton Farrier, a forensic genealogist who lives in Rye, Hastings, UK. ‘The Forensic Genealogist Series’ consists of 5 books, 2 novellas, and 2 short stories. The first in the series, *The Asylum*, is available on Libby, but none of the rest of the books is in WCL. They are readily available through Amazon, on Kindle and Kindle Unlimited, and there are specials. See here for all the titles:

<https://www.nathandylangoodwin.com/books>

Although the books could be read standalone (each one involves a different case), Morton’s life story develops through the books, and some of the cases are to do with his own family. The first full-length book is *Hiding the Past*. Here is the description given on the website cited above:

‘Peter Coldrick had no past; that was the conclusion drawn by years of personal and professional research. Then he employed the services of one Morton Farrier, Forensic Genealogist – a stubborn, determined man who uses whatever means necessary to uncover the past. With the Coldrick Case, Morton faces his toughest and most dangerous assignment yet, where all of his investigative and genealogical skills are put to the test. However, others are also interested in the Coldrick family, people who will stop at nothing, including murder, to hide the past. As Morton begins to unearth his client’s mysterious past, he is forced to confront his own family’s dark history, a history which he knows little about.’

The stories take you through Morton’s process, using the many research tools available. These have changed over the ten years that Nathan has been writing. Nathan is also searching his own family, and runs DNA workshops, so he seems to know what he is talking about. These are not ‘cosy mysteries’, so there is some danger and violence, but not too much. I thoroughly recommend them.

INTERESTING WEBSITES

LYNN’S WAFFLES: OLD PHOTOS, FAMILY HISTORY lynnswoffles.com/ www.facebook.com/lynnswoffles



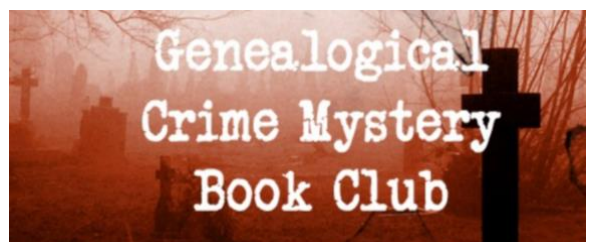
Lynn Waffles describes herself as ‘a Collector of Old Photos & loves finding treasures at Fairs, Fleamarkets & Car Boot sales and of course online during the last few years. I love Family History, researching my own family and the families of old photos I find, it’s wonderful to share them with

everyone on Twitter & Instagram & my Facebook Page and often after I have written about them, a family descendant makes contact & I have been lucky to be able to return them back to their families, such a joy.’

She publishes the stories of the people she has researched in her newsletters, blogs, website and other social media in the hope that she can re-unite the photos with descendants.

GENEALOGICAL CRIME MYSTERY BOOK CLUB www.facebook.com/groups/902684053599239

This is not a website, but a Facebook group which exists for fans of genealogical crime mystery stories. It has been set up by the writers Nathan Dylan Goodwin, M J Lee, Stephen Molyneux, and Wendy Percival. The group aims to promote the growing genre of genealogical crime mystery books and to encourage general discussion around the books, stories and their authors.



Geraldine Needham-Girven

THE LATEST ADDITIONS TO PAPERS PAST NEWSPAPERS (AUG 2023)

- [Greymouth Evening Star](#) (1921-1950)
- [New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian](#) (1851, 1855-1863, misc. issues 1852, 1864)
- [Southland Times](#) (1895, misc. issues 1893-1894, 1896-1905)
- [Temuka Leader](#) (1929)
- [Waipukurau Press](#) (1906-18 July 1936)
- [Wairarapa Times-Age](#) (April 1938-June 1944)

Supplied by Susan Wright

NZ EXPEDITIONARY FORCE FOR WW1: HONOURS AND AWARDS

For those who had ancestors who served in the NZ Expeditionary Force for WW1, the book *Honours and Awards to the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the Great War 1914 to 1918* (Wayne McDonald) references the medals awarded. The book is available online through the National Library: [Honours and awards to the New Zealand... | Items | National Library of New Zealand | National Library of New Zealand \(natlib.govt.nz\)](#). There is a reference list of the medals at the front of the book.

The recipients are listed alphabetically, with their service number beside their name, along with the short description that was written at the time. Their names may not appear in full—my grandfather's middle name is missing, but the service number matches his NZ Army records. If you do not have your ancestors' military records, you may find them in the online database at the Auckland Museum: [Online Cenotaph - Auckland War Memorial Museum \(aucklandmuseum.com\)](#)

I found that my maternal grandfather was awarded the Military Medal (M.M.):

KING, Edward

10/3317

M.M.

Lance-Corporal, 2nd Batt., Wellington Regiment
L.G. 16 July 1918, p8333, Rec No 2054

For conspicuous gallantry in action near Colincamps on the 27th March 1918 during a counter attack by his Company he led his Section with great dash, and during consolidating acted with great initiative in forming a defensive flank, at the same time displaying great personal courage in bringing in the wounded of his Section to a place of safety. On account of casualties he then took command of his platoon, and personally supervised consolidation with fine judgement and ability.

Jill Compton

A MESS(ER) OF NAMES

Following on from other articles about names, I have found a naming pattern that doesn't have any strange names in it but has still been both helpful and exceedingly frustrating. It has also certainly confused the Ancestry hints algorithms.

James John MESSER is my husband's 3x great-grandfather, and he is one of my favourite people in our joint family tree. This is because I've found a lot about him, but there are also so many more questions to answer about his life.

He and his wife, **Louisa Harriett KEEN(E)** had many children and for a long time I didn't research **James John's** siblings or parents.

Then I found he was involved in a court case that seemed to be in almost every British newspaper of the time.

Source: Sun (London) 21 March 1856 (British Newspaper Archive)

THAMES.—*John Messer*, of Nos. 19 and 20, King-street, Commercial road, East, in the parish of St. George, Middlesex, optician and house owner; *James Messer*, landlord of the Duke of York public-house, in Shepherd-street, Oxford-street; and *Robert Walter Messer*, optician, described as being in the employment of Mr. Ross, optician, Featherstone-buildings, Holborn, appeared before Mr. Iugham, on three summonses, issued at the instance of Mr. Valentine Thomas Coombs, relieving officer of St. George-in-the-East, which charged the defendants that they, being the children of James John Messer and Darcy Messer, poor persons not able to work, and the defendants being of sufficient ability to maintain their parents, did neglect to relieve them at their own charge.

The defendants, three well-dressed men, who appeared to have enjoyed the good things of this life, were seated in front of the table; their venerable-looking mother, 70 years of age, was near them in a state of great agitation, and the tears trickling down her cheeks. The father of the defendants, who was supported on crutches, and is 72 years of age, has seen better days, and was powerfully affected.

I already knew his parents were **James John MESSER, Sr**, and **Darcey BIRD** and that he had a brother **John James** but I didn't know about **Robert Walter**.

As I researched their family I found that **James John, Sr**, and **Darcy** were exceedingly efficient in allocating names to their children. None of their children died in childbirth so they couldn't reuse already used names, but they did the next best thing.

Their children's names were:

| | |
|-------------------|--------|
| James John | b 1806 |
| Ann Mary | b 1808 |
| Mary Ann | b 1809 |
| John James | b 1812 |
| William George | b 1814 |
| George William | b 1816 |
| Frances Elizabeth | b 1818 |
| Richard | b 1820 |
| Elizabeth Frances | b 1822 |
| Catherine Alice | b 1825 |
| Thomas George | b 1827 |
| Robert Walter | b 1831 |

The Ancestry hints algorithm can tell the difference between James John and John James but not Ann Mary and Mary Ann and Frances Elizabeth and Elizabeth Frances. This is possibly because some of the trees on Ancestry have got these people confused. Even the Ancestry search engine brings up Ann Mary's instead of Mary Ann's children. After a lot of sifting through records I've managed to find out about the 'hidden' second children. I've also looked for Alice Catherine, George Thomas and Walter Robert but I can't find them. There are some small gaps where they could fit in.

But the big question is—why was Richard short changed? Lots more to investigate here.

Ann Ball

Items of interest from *Who Do You Think You Are*

Issue 202, April 2023

MyHeritage www.myheritage.com has added about 1.8 million immigration records from Israel.

Ancestry www.ancestry.com has added the Welsh National Book of Remembrance for WWI. It contains the names of about 37,000 Welsh men and women who were killed in that war.

FindmyPast www.findmypast.co.uk has added the 1871 to 1921 census records for Gibraltar.

A very useful article on a beginners guide to Irish Research.

A '*Best Websites*' article on Textile and Cotton Workers.

A '*Focus On*' article on Illegitimacy. From the introduction of the New Poor Law in England in 1834, illegitimate children became the sole responsibility of their mother.

On a similar topic, also read the '*Off The Record*' article about bastardy examinations. The way the authorities 'extracted' the father's name of the children would be described as barbaric these days.

A '*Record Masterclass*' article on Female Servants' Records.

A feature on the family history resources in Worcestershire

Issue 203, May 2023

National Library of Scotland [Scotland's News - National Library of Scotland \(nls.uk\)](http://Scotland's News - National Library of Scotland (nls.uk)) has digitised and published four rare collections of Scottish newspapers

Ancestry www.ancestry.com has added two major collections of about 200,000 records from the London borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

National Records of Scotland NRS- balfour-letters love letters between the parents of the future British prime minister

A very informative article with questions and answers about DNA and how to get the most out of your test results.

A '*Best Websites*' article on Heraldry.

A '*Focus On*' article on 20th Century Merchant Navy Records.

A '*Record Masterclass*' article on the 1862 Land Registry Act.

A useful '*Tech Tips*' article on how to combine multiple trees in Ancestry

A feature on the family history resources in Hertfordshire

Compiled by Doug Miller

Other Items of Interest

With both August and September talks about DNA and much interest in general in DNA, Wellington Branch members who are also NZSG members may wish to join the **NEW ONLINE DNA INFORMAL INTEREST GROUP**. Meetings are on the last Wednesday of the month. To sign up, email education@genealogy.org.nz.eKit.

Also on DNA, from the September edition of the NZSG e-KIT:

'NZSG HUTT VALLEY BRANCH DNA – The Branch newsletter has a wrap up on the value of DNA and the resources available to manage those DNA records you now have, after you did a test. Who are these people with names we have never heard of? Click here to read the [Hutt Valley Newsletter](#) for excellent information. And then have a look at [our website](#) for more on DNA.'

From the Porirua September 2023 newsletter: **'MyHeritage INTRODUCE NEW PHOTODATER TOOL'** This does not require a MyHeritage subscription. Just sign-up for free and upload a photo. It uses AI and the results are often close to an actual year. See blog.myheritage.com.

The **FHF REALLY USEFUL FAMILY HISTORY SHOW** will again be online event. It will take place on 17 and 18 November. For more information, see www.fhf-reallyuseful.com.

Ann Ball recommends the wide-ranging and interesting **MONTHLY PRESENTATIONS BY NZSG**, free to non-members: [Monthly Presentations - NZ Society of Genealogists \(genealogy.org.nz\)](#)

AUCKLAND-BASED FAMNET (FAMILY HISTORY NETWORK) produces a monthly newsletter with lots of interesting material, see for example their latest: famnet.org.nz/newsletters/FamNet/September_2023/Newsletter.htm

WELLINGTON BRANCH NEWS

We hope everyone enjoyed and benefitted from the four talks of this year's Family History Month. The Wellington Branch's contribution was considerable with Ann and Kaye giving one of the talks (about DNA; see p. 3) and Gábor Tóth giving another (on Family History resources at WCLs; see p. 2). If you were unable to attend, the talks will be available online at some point in the future. We will let you know when and how.

Our members did very well in the raffle, taking 1st and 2nd prizes: Ann Ball, My Heritage Package; and Virginia Frost, Ancestry UK Package

Other prizes were won by Jo Lewthwaite, Kilbirnie, Ancestry DNA Kit; Cheryl Dreaver, Hutt Valley, 1 year NZSG subscription; and Dianna Mainland, Hutt Valley, 1 year NZSG Branch subscription

Next year it will be the Wellington Branch's turn to organise Family History Month. Any thoughts?

Many thanks to those who contributed an interesting range of items to this month's newsletter: Geraldine Needham-Girven, Ann Ball, Susan Wright, Jill Compton, and Doug Miller. Please consider sending... something. If you think it is interesting, we will as well. It need not be a finished piece of research; asking for help and comments is fine.

The November newsletter will be our Christmas one (how can it almost be Christmas again?). I'm especially keen for Christmas-related material of any kind: photos, recipes, memories, etc. Everyone has something that falls into at least one of those categories. Please send contributions, suggestions, etc, to wellington@genealogy.org.nz

On a personal note: I should be in England on a 2 month holiday. Four days before we were due to leave, while my husband, our daughter, and I were watching TV, my husband turned to us and said 'I think I am having a moment...I am confused...' He had suddenly and almost completely lost his memory. An ambulance ride, 5 hours in triage, and 2 nights in hospital led to a final diagnosis: probably not a stroke—his memory gradually and completely returned—but 'Transient Global Amnesia'. It was frightening, and we cancelled the trip even though it is unlikely to happen again.

It made me think about 'loss of memory'. What we do is try to preserve memories. And they are so fragile. Rodney King's 'Preserving Your Family History When You've Gone' in *The New Zealand Genealogist*, September 2023, pp. 105-107, arrived just in the midst of all this. Thank you, Rodney; I am so grateful for all your practical tips.

One problem I have to do with preservation which perhaps a reader may be able to help with: my photos are stored on my Mac. Unfortunately my careful ordering of them within folders and the titles I have given them, don't carry over when copying into anything non-Mac, including even an external drive. Any ideas?

Christine Franzen, Newsletter Editor

DIRECTORY



Committee

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POSTAL ADDRESS

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EVENING MEETINGS

Third Wednesday of the month
February through November
7:00 for 7:30 pm start
Collective Community Hub
33 Johnsonville Road

COMMITTEE CONTACT

wellington@genealogy.org.nz

BRANCH WEBSITE

genealogy.org.nz/Branch-details/11084-s1100084/

FACEBOOK PAGE

[Facebook.com/NZSGWellington](https://www.facebook.com/NZSGWellington)

WHAT'S ON AT YOUR LOCAL BRANCH?

| KILBIRNIE | PORIRUA | HUTT VALLEY | KAPITI |
|--|--|--|--|
| Thursday, 5 Oct, 10:00 am | Wednesday, 11 Oct, 7 for 7:30 | Thursday, 21 Sept, 7:30 pm | Tuesday, 26 Sept, 7 for 7:30 pm |
| Adrian Humphris <i>Early Kilbirnie/Hataitai/Lyall Bay, and what the Wellington City Archives can tell us</i> Matairangi Room, Ākau Tangi Sports Centre, 72 Kemp St | Special General Meeting and <i>Curly Questions</i> Helen Smith Room Pataka Art + Museum, Porirua | Ed and Margaret Robinson <i>Freemasons Records</i> The Masonic Centre 65 Udy St, Petone | Sarah Hewitt <i>Emma, Winifred and Greta</i> Coast Community Church, 57 Hinemoa St, Paraparaumu |