



OCTOBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING MEETINGS: THE HUB, 33 JOHNSONVILLE RD, 7 FOR 7:30 PM

<p>WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER</p> <p><i>Calcutta to Auckland: Soldiers of Empire from India to New Zealand, and back</i></p> <p>Charlotte Macdonald</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER</p> <p>CHRISTMAS PARTY</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY</p> <p><i>Tracing a black sheep from Ireland to New Zealand</i></p> <p>Cathy Clarke</p>
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Reminder: No pre-meeting discussion group in October

CONVENOR'S CORNER



Greetings from Quebec. I am very lucky to be able to take an opportunity to go on a Rotary Friendship Exchange to Quebec, New Hampshire and Vermont, where I am being billeted by local people. Montreal and rural Quebec are beautiful – a combination of Canada and Europe. The French Canadians are very friendly. I am learning about the fascinating history of Quebec with the Amerindians, the war mongering English and the French. However, I am not doing any family history! I look forward to seeing you all at our last meeting of the year in November. Happy research.

Geraldine Needham-Girven,
Convenor, Wellington Branch

In this newsletter

p2 Calcutta to Auckland: Soldiers of Empire from India to New Zealand, and back by Ann Ball
p3 What can FamilySearch Offer? By Ann Ball

p5 Uncle George by John Lambert
p7 150 years ago in Wellington by Martin Garcia
P10 Adverse Weather by Max Kennedy

DON'T MISS

“Calcutta to Auckland: Soldiers of Empire from India to New Zealand, and back.”

By
Ann Ball

Presented by Professor Charlotte Macdonald, Professor Emerita of History at Victoria University of Wellington Te Herenga Waka.

Some of the members of Wellington Branch of NZ Society of Genealogists have ancestors who were in the 57th Battalion of Foot (British Army). Wellington Branch has invited Charlotte MacDonald to find out more about what their lives were like.



Figure 1: Calcutta High Court, c.1860 Source: Samuel Bourne Archives, available through Wikimedia Commons

Charlotte writes “Several of the imperial regiments which fought in the New Zealand Wars in the 1860s were stationed in India before being ordered to New Zealand. In this talk I will discuss the links between India and New Zealand in the mid-nineteenth century. What conditions did soldiers and their families find themselves in in Allahabad and Auckland? How did empire continue to connect India and settler colonies such as New Zealand? People flowed back and fore. How do we understand the huge shadow cast by the events of the 1857 Indian Rebellion ('Mutiny')? “

Charlotte is a historian of empires and colonies, with a focus on gender and women. Her research is principally concerned with the British colony of New Zealand in the

19thC. More on this project can be found here: <http://www.soldiersofempire.nz/>

Charlotte is a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand Te Apārangi and has been President of the New Zealand Historical Association on two occasions.

She will be speaking at the October meeting of the Wellington Branch of the NZ Society of Genealogists on Wednesday, 16 October. Come to the Collective Community Hub, 33 Johnsonville Road, Johnsonville, at 7:00 for a 7:30 pm start. There will be coffee, tea, biscuits, and a friendly welcome to visitors. No charge.

Additional UK Military Informaton:

National Archives (UK) did a webinar recently on **Family History: Military History Records**

And the video is now available on YouTube for anyone to see - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-HIzI9Ej9M>

The National Archives has its own YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/@TheNationalArchivesUK> -

What can FamilySearch offer?

By
Ann Ball

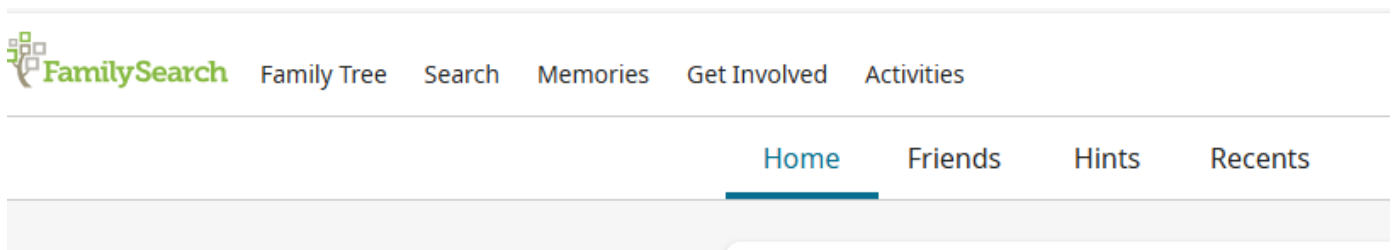
At the September meeting Catherine and Eric Ruth spoke about some new features on the FamilySearch.org website. Catherine and Eric are both members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and are experts on the FamilySearch website.

Eric told us that the Church started filming records in 1938 and their records are organised by “films”. These used to be actual microfilms but are more likely to be files now. There are now billions, many of which are available to search. If you go to this page [Explore Historical Images — FamilySearch.org](#) you can see how many images there are. There were 5,456,343,394 images when I wrote this sentence. There will be a lot more when you read this article. Using this page, you can find collections that are not yet indexed. Indexing used to be done by hand. In 2006 computer indexing began and now AI is helping – and speeding up the process. Approximately 400,000 records are indexed every day.

Not everything can be shared because of legal agreements with the donating repository. In the June 2024 newsletter I wrote about the different levels of access in the article “Ancestry hint eventually breaks down a brick wall”.

Eric also told us about the Get Involved app. This app shows you a one-word sample of handwriting at a time. You are asked to confirm or reject the suggestion. This process will help to train the AI model. It is hoped that, in the future, a sample of bad writing will be able to be transcribed and then that transcription will be available in any language.

Catherine showed us the homepage and showed us each of the tabs. You can tailor the home page to see features such as links to people you have researched recently, notifications and to memories. Memories can be any form of media. Catherine has a link to a recording of her brother who died many years ago. You attach memories by going to the memories tab and uploading the photo or other form of media.



Family Tree

The philosophy of this tree is different from personal trees on Ancestry and other websites or programs because it is a global tree. In the past this has had some criticism because some people add people to the tree without checking whether they are correct. FamilySearch is now putting more emphasis on providing sources to ensure the correct relationships are entered. You can “follow” a person in the tree and get notifications when someone else updates information for that person.

Below is part of the record for Jane SHILTON (my 4xgreat-grandmother). A researcher added two sources after FamilySearch added an original record. I've blanked out his name for privacy reasons, but on the original if I click on the arrow by his name, I can see details of the source he added (including an image if available), and detach it if I know it is wrong. I can also click on his name and send him a message.

Jenny Shilton's Parents and Siblings OPEN ALL

Edward Shilton	Father	M	▼
Sarah	Mother	F	▼

England, Warwickshire, Parish Registers, 1535-1963

Jenny Shilton
England, Warwickshire, Parish Registers, 1535-1963

Source Modified: [SEE CHANGES](#)
November 7, 2014
 FamilySearch

Reason This Source Is Attached: [+ ADD](#)

🔍	1817	Jane Shilton, "England, Warwickshire, Parish Registers, 1535-1963"	November 21, 2018	▼
			👤 KennethWard4	
🔍	1821	Jane in entry for Joseph Toon, "England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975"	November 9, 2019	▼
			👤 KennethWard4	
🔍	1854	Jane in entry for Edward Toon, "England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975"	November 8, 2014	▼
			👤 FamilySearch	

Note: All living people in the tree are automatically made private.

Search

There are different ways to search – records, images etc. Catherine showed us the Research wiki. I can either type in a place name or topic or I can drill down to find a page. Pages look a lot like Wikipedia pages and may give you a list of other websites to investigate.

If you know where to look you can go straight to the catalogue and type in the film number of place name. Catherine said it is useful to use the filters when searching. These mean you can target a specific collection. Catherine told us that Irish Catholic registers are available to view – but have not yet been indexed. Catherine told us that the website is constantly evolving – and they want to know what works and what doesn't. If you find an issue you should go to the help page and click on the GiveFeedback link. Catherine gave an example of finding an issue and then later seeing that it had been resolved.

One way to see new or upcoming changes is to go to the Labs area (<https://www.familysearch.org/en/labs/>). One of the new features is a full-text search which lets you look at all the names in a document. You may find an ancestor who was a witness or someone mentioned in a will – something that is never indexed. I found the burial record of my 2xgreat-grandmother, Eliza Ellen HARGRAVE nee TOON in Atherstone, Warwickshire in 1935. This record hasn't yet been indexed. A great find. And after finding this I went back to the catalogue and found other burial records. It always pays to go back and look again.

Another feature in the Labs area is the "merge Analysis View". It says this feature with help you "understand the nuances of a merge from a tree person's change log". It allows you to see the effect of merging two people before you do it. The page does warn that "viewing some merges may result in feeling of frustration". Catherine told us there are rules relating to merging to try to stop inexperienced people changing the tree.

I learnt a lot from this talk. I must admit I usually go to the records tab straight from the home page and start searching for a film or a place. But investigating my home page after the talk I found a link to an article added by someone 6 years ago that I've never seen. The article is about some possible relations to one of my husband's distant ancestors.

I found this article very hard to write as I kept finding things I wanted to investigate. The article only covers some of what Catherine and Eric showed us. I suggest you go to familysearch.org and see what you can find.

Uncle George

By

Max Lambert



Figure 2; John Lambert and Annie Elizabeth Jeffs.

A week or so after Annie Elizabeth Jeffs, only daughter of Thomas Christopher (TC) Jeffs, married John Lambert in Christ Church, Parkgate, Rotherham, 4 August 1904, the local newspaper, the *Advertiser*, carried a lengthy account of the wedding. Among the list of guests, headed by immediate family and relatives, were the only real out-of-towners - Mr G. Jeffs and Mr and Mrs Streeton from Luton, Bedfordshire. Who were they, particularly G. Jeffs? If you'd seen him at the wedding he'd have had a thatch of white hair or none at all - because he was old and wrinkled and all of 86.

Turns out, thanks to genealogy sites, George Jeffs was the man who cared for TC early in childhood after the death of the youngster's father. TC was barely three months old when James Jeffs died in Devon in 1846 of pleuro pneumonia. Whatever happened to TC's mother Elizabeth, a widow at 25, is not known. But at age five TC was living with George, his late father's slightly younger brother, in Piccott's End outside Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. The 1851 census, taken 30 March that year, tells us this. No sign of Mum on the census form.

Piccott's End remains a small village surrounded on all sides by green fields and reserves though it's just a five minute drive to Hemel Hempstead's town centre.

By 1851 George and wife Martha (née Bryant), married in 1844, had three children of their own - John 5 (an ideal playmate for TC), Mary 4 and Sarah 1 (take note of Sarah) and the brood was to grow to half a dozen. I've no inkling when TC was dropped off from Devon to live with the Jeffs family - perhaps as a baby or a little later - but I have a hunch the youngster stayed on with the couple at Piccott's End for some years.

However, by age 15 in the 1861 census he was living with other people in HH and earning some sort of a living as a greengrocer's shop boy. It's my guess that he maintained close contact with his adoptive parents

and that it was George who taught him all about caring for horses. George, a carter in the 1851 Census, described himself in later census counts as a groom of various sorts and when he quit working said: "retired coachman". TC always called himself a groom, not a coachman, and there is a difference. A groom looks after the horses, a coachman does the driving. By 1871 and probably some years earlier, TC was in London working as a groom himself and soon after that census got a groom's job with Earl Fitzwilliam, the immensely wealthy owner of the Wentworth Estate in South Yorkshire, and moved north with them. That was likely in the autumn of the 1871 "season" when the rich folk quit town and went home for the winter. After that move everything happened quickly. According to slim family accounts, TC often went with the Fitzwilliams on visits to friends in Bawtry Hall, another big private place on the Yorks/Notts border not far from Wentworth. That's where he met Alice Hall, serventing there. They married in Claydon, Notts, in 1873, moved to Rotherham and began a family. Annie Elizabeth was born 10 January 1883.

TC never forgot his kin in Hemel Hempstead and must have maintained contact down the years - after all the mail service was better and cheaper in the "olden days" in the UK than today. TC may even have taken his family on holidays to Piccott's End by train.

Back to George and Martha. Their life in Hemel Hempstead remained unaltered until Martha, three years older than George and an "invalid" at the time of 1881 census, died in 1883, co-incidentally the year of Annie Elizabeth's birth. TC probably ecstatic after three sons, surely would have announced his daughter's arrival in a note, even a telegram, to Piccott's End. In that 1881 census George and Martha were not quite alone - Minnie, 21, youngest of their children, was still at home as "housekeeper".

George, 73, "coachman", remains at Piccott's End, Hemel Hempstead in the 1891 national count but there's no family with him now. Minnie has married and gone. George has a housekeeper, Emma Impey, 42, born interestingly in Dunstable, Bedfordshire, a Luton outlier. On the census form she admitted to deafness. Was it simply co-incidence that Impey was Bedfordshire born or had someone arranged it, perhaps daughter Sarah, married and living in Luton?

In 1901 George, old now at 83, is still where he's been for more than 50 years - Piccott's End. His housekeeper is, I think, the same woman of 10 years ago although her first name is now Annie - either a sister or a census error. Sometime after 1901 George moves ... to Luton to live out his remaining years with daughter Sarah, bless her. She's 50, married to a chap called David Streeton, a house painter. They live at 16 Tavistock St. So these are the Streetons on Annie Elizabeth Jeffs' wedding-guest list.

George and the Streetons got on the train in Luton one day at the beginning of August 1904 and after a trip that might have involved them in one or two changes, stepped off at Masbrough and Rotherham Station for THE WEDDING. Great niece Annie Elizabeth is marrying this young man John Lambert, a grocer. Had George, now 86, met the bride before. Probably, given the wonderful trains of the early 20th century. Anyway, old George has survived to attend the wedding, an honoured and loved guest. When what was sure to have been "a jolly good time", a real family hooley, ended, George and the Streetons went home. George lived another six years, dying at 92 on 20 March 1910 in the Streetons' home. Sarah signed as the informant on the death certificate - "present at the death." She must have been a lovely caring woman. George missed yet another census by a narrow margin of a year and a couple of weeks.

150 Years Ago in Wellington

By
Martin Garcia

Selected snippets from *The Evening Post* in October 1874 reveal some of the challenges of emigrating to and living in Wellington 150 years ago.

The value of land was skyrocketing — “Three acres in Majoribanks-street were ... sold by Mr Duncan for £1050, which not long ago were only valued at £500.” “A man said the only reason why his dwelling was not blown away in a late storm was because there was a heavy mortgage on it.”

The naming of towns was contentious — The Evening Post lamented: “We regret to notice a tendency in this province to adopt the termination “ville,” appended to the names of well-known public men, in the nomenclature of new townships. This horrible Yankeeism is dreadfully offensive to “ears polite,” the absurdity of adding the French word “ville” to such unmistakably English names as Brown, Jones, Robinson, Johnson, or Hunter being palpable. It is to be hoped that these objectionable titles will be altered, and that we may not see any more Johnsonvilles, Huntervilles, Brownvilles, Jonesvilles, or Robinsonvilles on the map.”

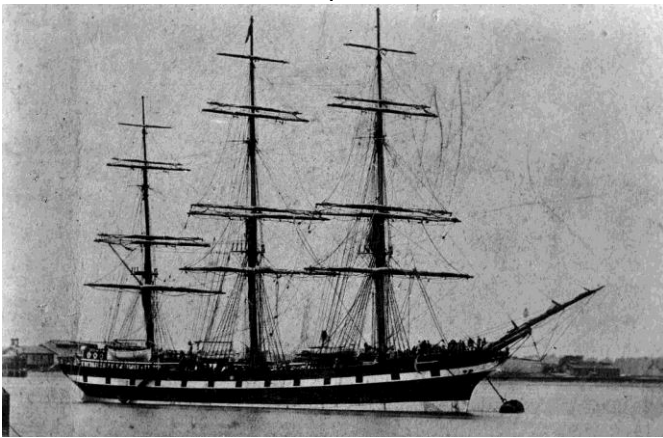


Figure 3: The ship 'Douglas' Ref: 1/2-050311-F.
Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. [/records/22781098](https://records/22781098)

Emigration to New Zealand was being promoted successfully — The Evening Post reported that a leading provincial newspaper declared that nearly all the inhabitants of the counties of Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and part of Middlesex, “were affected more or less with New Zealand on the brain”.

Shipboard deaths were a serious concern — Over 30 deaths of children due to measles or whooping cough occurred on the *Douglas* which arrived in Port Nicholson after a voyage of almost 4 months. More information is at

<https://www.nzpictures.co.nz/shipdouglas1874.pdf>

My wife’s great-grandmother, 20-year-old Marie Rioux of France, was on this voyage.

Non-native birds were being introduced — “The

efforts of our Acclimatisation Society have been very successful in respect of English songbirds, Australian magpies, and Californian quail. The familiar songsters of home are now becoming quite plentiful in this neighbourhood, and so are the magpies, a most useful insectivorous bird. ... Some mischievous boys have recently been detected shooting magpies, and are, we believe, to be prosecuted.”

Wellington College opened at its present location

— The College began in 1867 on Woodward Street as Wellington Grammar School before moving to Clifton Terrace and then to the lower slopes of Mt Victoria where it opened in 1874 with 60 pupils.¹ “The Wellington College Inauguration Fete on Saturday was an entire success from first to last. ... His Excellency the Governor [Rt Hon Sir James Fergusson] presided and delivered one of his usual felicitous speeches None of the speeches were tedious, all being terse, pointed, and appropriate.”



Figure 4: Original Wellington College building as built in 1874. Credit: Wellington College. Goodman, S C (Mr), fl 1975: Photograph albums and loose prints. 1/2-062569-F. Alexander Turnbull /records/22334972

¹ <https://archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/nodes/view/516065?type=all>

The site of a new hospital was under discussion — “The two sites between which the choice of the Trustees seems to rest are the allotment in Pipitea and Hobson-streets, on which the present hospital stands, and the reserve at the back of the Terrace, on part of which the building until recently occupied as the Grammar School, stands.”

Establishment of a free public library was delayed — Ratepayers voted against the imposition of a special rate for the establishment of a free public library. Wellington has had a library since 1850, but it was not until 1893 that a purpose-built public library constructed by the Wellington City Council opened on a site that is now 101 Wakefield Street.²



Flogging was introduced for crimes of indecent assault — “The Judge has now power to order that any offender shall be once, twice, or thrice flogged. The number of lashes to be given must be specified, and must not exceed fifty, nor must the last whipping take place six months after conviction.” Source: Evening Post, Volume X, Issues 192-218, 1-31 October 1874

Figure 5: Wellington City, around Mercer and Wakefield Streets in the late 1890s - The brick building in the centre, with the turret, is the Public Library on the corner of Mercer and Wakefield Street. Negatives of Nelson and Marlborough districts. Ref: 10x8-1022-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. [/records/22719010](https://records/22719010)

<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/evening-post/1874> Text quoted includes spelling, punctuation and grammar as it appeared at the time.

² <https://www.wcl.govt.nz/services/help/history-of-wellington-city-libraries/>

ADVERSE WEATHER

By
Max Kennedy

Do you have a family story about an adverse weather event like a storm or a flood, or a diary that references one? You may like to look up the event to see exactly what the weather was like. Historical weather records for New Zealand particularly in the 1800s are hard to come by. One place to look is NIWA's (The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research) New Zealand Historic Weather Events Catalogue. See <https://hwe.niwa.co.nz/>. They have a searchable database.

NIWA states "This is a catalogue of major weather events in New Zealand over the last 200 years from the 1800s to the present, when significant damage or casualties occurred. The information has been collated from newspaper reports, journals, books and databases kindly provided by various organisations and individuals. For each event we identify the regions affected, the hazards types associated with the event and the resulting impacts".

"Select your search parameters on the left and click search to view a summary of each matching weather event. You can narrow your search by start and/or end date. Pick one or more regions (using the control or shift keys) to include any event affecting the region. Or narrow your search by selecting Hazards or Impacts (using the control or shift keys to select more than one)".


You can also enter keywords to look for in the text e.g "rain snow" will find events containing either rain OR snow while "rain AND snow" will return events containing both".

"Click on the title of a weather event to view the details and visualise the locations affected on the map. Return to the search/summary display to change your search parameters or make a new search at any time".


An example - January 1861 Wellington Storm (1861-01-07)


During the week a gale swept over the North Island that was unprecedented in its severity in the history of the colony. The gale commenced in Wellington on the 7th and hit Manawatu-Wanganui on the 8th. High winds damaged property and crops and there was severe flooding in the area.


Wellington


 At 9:00pm on the 7th the wind picked up and was accompanied by thick drizzling rain.










 The wind increased in violence throughout the night and all of the next day.

 Chimneys were blown down and outbuildings and fences were carried away.

 Crops, orchards and gardens were completely destroyed. The combined losses of the farmers, agriculturists and nurserymen was enormous.

 On the Hutt Road a portion about 100 yards (91 m) was washed clean away by the action of the waves. It put a stop to all traffic between Wellington and the Hutt. This portion had been remade when the great slip took place after the flood in January 1858.

 Ships had to be kept in port.

-  Flooding occurred and formed one vast sea which was miles in extent.
-  On the night of the 10th the river swept over its banks and on the 11th, the road near the Hutt Bridge was under water.
-  Valentines Hotel was inundated to nearly 2 ft (0.61 m) deep and a house further on 3 ft (0.91 m) deep.
-  The flood was within one inch (2.54 cm) of the most disastrous flood that has occurred in that district.
-  Several head of cattle were swept away and drowned.
-  Hay and other crops were destroyed.
-  Fences were carried away.
-  At the Korokoro Stream the bridge was damaged after one of the abutments was swept away.
-  On the evening of the 11th the volume of water was diminishing but it would be some days before the roads were safe for vehicles.

The database covers things like events where people were drowned at sea, tornados, flooding, fog, hail, Lightning, landslide, high wind, heavy rain etc. While records from early dates are understandably less detailed and sparse, it's worth a try. An opportunity to combine weather watching and genealogy!

POSTAL ADDRESS

9 Cashmere Ave
Khandallah 6035

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

wellingtongenealogy.org

FACEBOOK PAGE

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

**DIRECTORY
Committee**



Convenor	Geraldine Needham-Girven	021 180 5166
Secretary/Membership Secretary	Robin Mossman	021 1587848
Minute Secretary	Kaye Batchelor	027 2276734
Speakers' Program	Ann Ball	027 6410646
	Prue Theobald	021 2345621
	Barbara Marriott	021 756 860
Treasurer	Liz Newport	
Newsletter Editor	Max Kennedy	021 46 5483

KILBIRNIE Thursday 03 Oct, 10:00 am	PORIRUA Wednesday 09 Oct, 7:30 pm	HUTT VALLEY Thursday 17 Oct, 7:30 pm	KAPITI Tuesday 22 Oct, 7:30 pm
<i>Reuben Daube & Eleanor Cooper - Researching and Restoring Heritage Houses</i> Matairangi Room, Ākau Tangi Sports Centre, 72 Kemp St	<i>Dawn Chambers : Pandora's Box: a Treasure Trove of Genealogical and Historical Research Data</i> Hapori Room Pataka Art + Museum, Porirua	<i>Vaughan Stagpoole - Mount Street Cemetery</i> Senior Citizens' Rooms 45 Knights Road Lower Hutt	<i>Cathy Callaghan: History of NZ Forestry Company in England in World War 2</i> Coast Community Church, 57 Hinemoa St, Paraparaumu