



October 2025 NEWSLETTER

MEETING: Johnsonville Bowling Club, 34 Frankmoore Avenue, Johnsonville 7 FOR 7:30 PM

WEDNESDAY 22 Oct 2025	WEDNESDAY 19 Nov 2025	WEDNESDAY 18 Feb 2026
<i>Helpful tools for searching NZ historical records</i> By Luke Howison (Note: on the 4 th Wed of the month to coincide with Wellington Heritage Festival)	<i>Christmas Party</i> <i>Family History Bingo</i> <i>Please bring a plate to share</i>	<i>From papers to people: a search to know my birth family</i> By Brian Sheppard

Pre-meeting Discussion Group, 17 Sep, 6:00-7:15pm, Johnsonville Bowling Club

CONVENOR'S CORNER

Greetings members



Thank you for the wonderful response to the call for stories of signatories. Hearing from a range of our members makes our newsletters varied and interesting, and it also gives the writers pleasure and satisfaction.

In September we heard from Prue about how she finally found her mother-in-law's birth family through DNA. DNA has certainly made demolishing brick walls easier, whether it's a birth family or a crime. But I would never say that its essential – there are dangers as well.

Currently my personal project is very interesting as it involves whakapapa. My client (a family member) has a Māori grandmother and would like to learn more. It's a new area for me and a great learning curve. There are very few documents but many many DNA matches. I saw a DNA group presentation by Alan Cobcroft recently which explained a method for dealing with Polynesian ancestry, where there will be very large numbers of DNA matches. (If you are using DNA, and aren't yet a member, do check out the [Online DNA Interest Group \(ODIG\)](#))

However, most DNA matches do not have linked trees nor have sources attached to them. My need for documentary evidence is being sorely strained when faced with oral history. However, people have made connections back to the people who came on the original waka. How amazing. I think I will need to find someone more familiar with the process than I am. Is anyone else on this journey and would like to chat?

In the meantime, don't forget our next meeting is on 22 October with Luke Howison who will be demonstrating his various websites. I hope to see you there.

Geraldine Needham-Girven,
Convenor, Wellington Branch

Signatories of the Suffrage Petition

This month we focus on stories of signatories - relatives who signed the Suffrage Petition. *"The 1893 women's suffrage petition was the third of three petitions to the New Zealand Government supporting women's suffrage. It resulted in the Electoral Act 1893, which gave women the right to vote in the 1893 general election. The 1893 petition was substantially more extensive than the 1891 petition, which had around 9,000 signatures, and larger still than the 1892 petition, which contained some 20,000 signatures. The third petition was the largest petition presented to Parliament at that point, with nearly 32,000 signatures. The petition was signed in various parts of the country by women, aged 21 or older, who signed their names and addresses. At least 20 men also signed the petition"* (1893 Women's Suffrage Petition, Wikipedia)

Mary Player 1857/8 –1924.

By

Julia Millen



Mary Josephine Player

On the Wellington section of the 1893 NZ Suffrage Petition, my great grandmother Mary Josephine Player, is recorded as no. 337, living in Majoribanks Street, Mount Victoria, Mary (nee Crampton) was born (1857/58?) in County Kilkenny, Southern Ireland. She was brought up in the Catholic faith and literate but had very little formal education. Aged 16, in Waterford, Mary signed on as a domestic servant for an assisted passage to New Zealand on The Woodlark which arrived in Wellington in 1874. In 1877 she married Edward Player, a storeman, in St Mary of the Angels, Wellington, and during the next ten years the couple had seven children. My grandmother, their eldest child, married George Macdonald Henderson in 1903.

To supplement her husband's income, Mary Player worked as a midwife, and became involved with political issues for women, especially domestic servants. In 1894 she founded the Women's Social and Political League and, partly because of their actions, the following year The Department of Labour formed a Women's Branch. Mary continued her efforts to improve conditions for women; one of

her successful campaigns was the establishment of women's restrooms in Wellington city.

The death of her husband in 1905, left Mary and her younger children homeless. From that time, she took on domestic work which would provide accommodation for herself and the younger children. In later life she lived with her married daughters. As remembered by my mother: 'We kids knew that when Grandma arrived there would soon be another baby in the house.'

Mary Player died in 1924 at the home of her youngest daughter, Winifred, in Atawhai, Nelson. The coroner's verdict was: 'Suicide by drowning while suffering from mental depression caused by serious internal ailment.' Mary is buried beside her husband in Karori cemetery.

Sarah Ushaw (1864-1956) – A Free-Spirited Life.

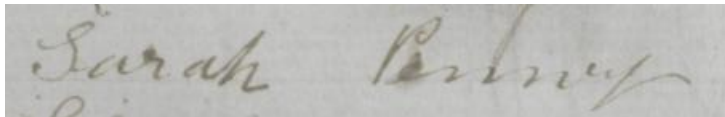
By

Max Kennedy

Sarah Ushaw was born on September 12, 1864, in Hutton Cranswick, Yorkshire, England. Her family emigrated to New Zealand when she was just a baby, arriving in Auckland on June 2, 1865. They settled in various locations in Northland, including Oruru, Oruaiti, and Mangataraire. Sarah's early life was marked by the challenges of adapting to a new country and the loss of her father in 1877 (when Sarah was 12).



Sarah Ushaw



Sarah Penney nee Ushaw's signature on the suffrage petition

In 1880, at the age of 16, Sarah married George

Penney in Whangaroa. They had 11 children together, although two of their children, Ethel and Emily, did not survive into adulthood. The family lived on a farm in Kaeo and later moved to Ōhaeawai, where they ran a coach transport business and bred horses. Sarah was known for her excellent horsemanship and played a significant role in the family's business.

A significant moment in Sarah's life came in 1893 when she signed the Women's Suffrage Petition in Kaeo. This petition played a crucial role in the passage of the Electoral Act 1893, which granted women the right

to vote in New Zealand. Sarah's involvement in the petition demonstrated her commitment to women's rights and her role in the movement for gender equality. It played a crucial role in New Zealand becoming the first self-governing country to grant women the right to vote.



Left to right- Sarah PENNEY (nee USHAW) with children, Ralph and Myrene PENNEY, circa 1909. Sarah used to drive these cream ponies at the Bay of Islands Shows (reference from Naomi CHESTER)

After George dies in 1918, Sarah continued to run a boarding house in Whangarei. She later married Charles Mercer in 1923 and moved to Auckland. Sarah lived a long life, passing away in 1956 at the age of 92. Her legacy includes her contribution to the women's suffrage movement in New Zealand and her dedication to her family and community. Sarah's life story is a testament to her resilience, determination, and

commitment to making a difference in the world.

Compiled by AI (Co-Pilot) from "Coaches and Horses" by Max Kennedy.

Two sisters-in-law who signed the petition.

By Geraldine Needham-Girven and Jo Ager

Jo Ager and Geraldine are both researching the Butcher family as Jo and Geraldine's husband are 3rd cousins once removed.

Annie Butcher nee Burrows (by Jo Ager)

'A Butcher' of Waikari signed the Suffrage Petition at the bottom on page 254. My Great Grandmother Annie Sarah Butcher nee Burrows lived in Waikari, North Canterbury from about 1891 until her husband, Edward Butcher, died in 1917. Annie and Edward's 10th child, Grace (my Grandmother) was born in Feb 1892 in Waikari, North Canterbury and their 11th and last child, Vera, was born in 1895 also in Waikari, North Canterbury so we feel that the 'A Butcher' that signed on page 254 of the Suffrage Petition in Waikari in 1893 is our Annie Butcher aged 42.

My sister and I wrote a biography for Annie and submitted it to Archives. This is the link to her on the Suffrage Petition <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/suffragist/butcher>. Annie's daughters would have been too young at the time to sign the petition.



Annie Butcher nee Burrows

In 2018 I registered to take part in the 'Suffrage in Stiches' project. It aimed to "recreate the suffrage petition and women's stories from the last 125 years through textile stories, conversations and community connections". Approximately 546 people around New Zealand registered to create a panel in fabric the same size as a petition page featuring a person who signed the petition and including the page number. It also had to include 46 'items' (objects, stitches etc) representing the other 46 people who signed the



Annie Butcher nee Burrows

petition. I have attached the panel I created using the green and cream curtain fabric that served as the backing. The curtain fabric was from Annie's Granddaughter's house (Hinemoa Butcher).

I used buttons as the 46 items for the other people who signed the petition. Some of the buttons were sewn on by family members (myself, my sister, my two sons and Annie's Granddaughter, Mary Ager, who was 101 when she sewed the button on). All the panels were displayed at the Wellington Museum in August 2019. They have since been on display in other parts of New Zealand.



Suffrage Panel for Annie Butcher

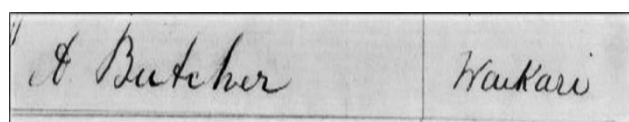
as a watchmaker. In 1885 Edward established his own shop, The North Canterbury Watch and Clock Co. in Rangiora. Annie had four more children in Kaiapoi. In 1891 Edward sold his watch shop to take up farming and the family moved to Waikari where the last two children were born. Annie was 42 when she signed the Suffrage Petition in 1893. In 1905 Edward built a house on a property at Weka Pass. They lived there until Edward died in 1917. Annie moved to Cashmere Hills, Christchurch alongside where she lived with her two unmarried children until she died in 1926 aged 75. She is buried with her husband Edward in Waimairi Cemetery in Christchurch.

'Harriette Butcher' of Kaiapoi signed the Suffrage Petition on page 258. Annie's husband, Edward Butcher, had an older brother, Henry Robert Butcher, who lived in Kaiapoi, North Canterbury around 1892. Henry was married to Harriette Butcher nee Fairburn. See the next item for more information about Harriette.

I feel very proud to have these two ladies among my ancestors who signed the Suffrage Petition.

Butcher: Sheet No 254, Waikari, Canterbury

Annie Sarah Burrows, eldest of ten children, born 28 July 1851, London, England. At age 29, she married Edward Butcher on 4 October 1870, Kent, England. They had 11 children, five of whom were born before the family emigrated from England to New Zealand on the ship *Hurunui*, arriving in Lyttleton on 6 December 1879. Annie and Edward lived in Kaiapoi where Edward worked



Annie Butcher's signature on the petition

Harriet(te) Butcher nee Fairburn (by Geraldine Needham-Girven)

Harriet Fairburn was born in Watton, Yorkshire, England on the 8th of April 1841. She died in Kaiapoi, Canterbury, New Zealand on the 5th of November 1934. She is buried in Clarksville, Canterbury, New Zealand.

She was the youngest daughter of Dorothy (nee Waldby) and Thomas Fairburn. Although the family story is that Thomas Fairburn was the parish tax collector, all census records show his occupation as castrator.



Harriette Butcher nee Fairburn

Harriet was educated in Ripon and York and trained as a teacher. On 7 April 1861, she appeared on the census as H.F., born in Watton, a student of the York and Ripon Diocesan Training School for Mistresses. After two years of study, she achieved a first-class result in her final examination in February 1862. She taught in various church schools until 28 December 1869 when she married Henry Robert Butcher, a currier of High Wycombe at Watton church.

They lived at High Wycombe, Maidenhead and Beckenham-in-Kent until 1884 when they sailed for Kaiapoi on the SS Doric. They had 6 sons, Henry, Thomas, William, Charles, John and Arthur. However, John died at the age of four and a half years in 1882. The other five sons all came to New Zealand.

In Kaiapoi, Henry and Harriet built a house and started wool and fellmongery works. However, they also bought a Wool-Brokers, Wool-Scourers and Fellmongers business in Napier, Hawkes Bay, which was managed by their eldest son, and 48,000 acres near Waiotapu, Bay of

Plenty, which was managed as a sheep farm by their third son.

During her life Harriet's interests were with her home and family. She travelled with her husband to his sheep station and spent many winters with her son in Hawkes Bay. She was a very capable sewer and knitter and did a great deal of fancy work. She was a member of the Kaiapoi Croquet Club from its inception.

She was one of 25,000 women who signed the Suffrage Petition, which led to the creation of the Electoral Act 1893 which enshrining in law the right of all adult women to vote. She signed her name as Harriette Butcher. Less than two months later, 109,461 women enrolled to vote in the 1893 election, including Harriet.

She was very quick and nimble, and her brain remained very active until her death at the age of 93. When her husband had died in 1933, they had been married 63 years. She was survived by four sons, eighteen grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

I am also very proud to have learnt about these two pioneering (in more than one sense) women who must have been very strong people.

Eliza Burns (formerly Lester, born Kennard)

Signatory to the 1893 Suffrage Petition

By Karen Shaw

Eliza Burns was 59 when she signed the 1893 Suffrage Petition. At that stage, she was a successful business woman who had her own dressmaking shop in King Street in Dunedin.



Eliza Kennard and daughter

Eliza was born Eliza Kennard in 1834 in Kent, England. She was the eldest child of William Kennard, an agricultural labourer, and Maria Baker. It was as a girl of 4, along with her parents and her 2 year old brother William Kennard, that Eliza left England. The Kennards arrived in Sydney, Australia in 1838, along with a new baby who had been born during the voyage. That baby was Alice Kennard, my great great grandmother.

Two years later, in 1840, the family left Sydney and arrived in NZ, landing on the beach at Waikouaiti north of Dunedin. This was early on in settler history and the next baby born in the family was Thomas Baker Kennard, who throughout his life, was known as “the first white boy born in Otago”. Eliza’s father was bonded to work for entrepreneur John Jones establishing a farm in the area. The children had an interesting childhood with basic

accommodation, lots of freedom, very few conveniences and little formal schooling to speak of. Eliza’s parents stayed in the Waikouaiti, Goodwood, area for the rest of their lives and had 12 children in all. They went on to run a small farm and an accommodation house.

In 1852, when she was 18, Eliza Kennard married Thomas Lester and during the 1850s, they had five children, although one died in infancy. Sadly, her husband died in 1859, leaving Eliza widowed at 25. In 1861, aged 27, she married again, to Edward Burns. They had a son the following year.

Eliza brought up her own five children, one of her granddaughters, and her nephew, the son of her sister Alice. Alice’s children Clara and William Morris (aged 8 and 5) were sent home from Australia in 1866 due to the death of their mother. Her grandparents raised Clara, and William was raised by Eliza. William was my great grandfather.

Eliza Kennard/Lester/Burns lived to a great age, dying in 1927 at the age of 93. She had arrived in NZ the year the Treaty was signed, had raised her children, helped with many other children, and had run her own dressmaking business. She had watched the women around her work alongside the men as they arrived off the ships and settled into a new way of life. It is not surprising then, that she felt strongly about giving women the right to vote.

BDMNZ. With Those Who Came First (1990) by Beryl Maultby. Papers Past. Electoral Rolls. Itm.howison.com. Archives NZ. Passenger Lists. The First White Boy Born in Otago, by J Herries Beattie.

Clara Neil (born Morris)

Signatory to the 1893 Suffrage Petition

By

Karen Shaw

When Clara Neil signed the Suffrage Petition in 1893, she was 35, a wife, and a busy mother, living on the Goodwood Road, near Palmerston, north of Dunedin.

Clara Louisa Morris was born in 1858 in Otago, the daughter of Alice Kennard and Alonzo John Wells Morris. Alice and Alonzo were my great great grandparents.



Clara Morris and daughters

Clara's mother Alice Kennard arrived in NZ as a 2 year old. She landed with her English parents William and Maria Kennard at Waikouaiti north of Dunedin in 1840. Clara's grandparents the Kennards stayed in the Waikouaiti and Goodwood areas all their lives and had 12 children. Like many English immigrants, they were agricultural labourers who arrived hoping for a better life. They eventually owned a small farm and an accommodation house. Clara's father Alonzo Morris arrived in NZ in around 1850.

Clara's parents married in 1853 when her mother was just 14. They had five children, but only three survived; Alonzo junior, Clara and William. Clara and her siblings had a fairly nomadic childhood, moving around Otago, with Alonzo mainly working as a bushman. In 1865 the family moved to Melbourne, but sadly, their mother Alice died. In 1866 Clara and William aged 8 and 5, sailed back to NZ. Their father and older brother stayed in Australia and they never saw them again. Clara went to live with her grandparents at Goodwood. Her brother William was raised by their Aunt Eliza Burns nee Kennard. William was my great-grandfather.

In 1878 when she was 20, Clara married James Neil. James was a farmer and a neighbour of the Kennards at Goodwood. James and Clara stayed in their home on Goodwood Road and had eight children, although two died as infants. Clara died in July 1895, one month after delivering her last baby and was buried in the Palmerston Cemetery. She was only 37. James died in 1907 and was buried with Clara and their deceased children.

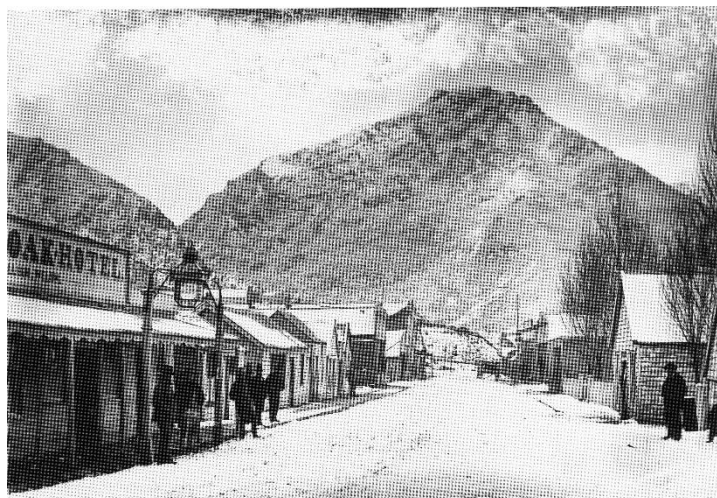
Bdmnz. Itm.howison.com Papers Past. Archives NZ. Electoral rolls. Kiwi Collection. With Those Who Came First (1990) by Beryl Maultby.

Sarah Ann Bennetts (formerly Brown, born Frederic)

Signatory of the 1892 Suffrage Petition.

By Karen Shaw

When Sarah Ann Bennetts signed the Suffrage Petition, she was living in the Arrowtown, Lake Hayes,



Arrowtown 1880, postcard from Lakes District Museum

Frankton area. She signed up as living in Franktown, as Frankton was then known. She was married with 4 adult children and had every good reason to defend the idea of votes for women. Sarah Ann was my great-great-grandmother. She signed the 1892 Suffrage Petition (which preceded the 1893 petition) and I am very proud of her for doing so.

Sarah Ann Frederic was born in 1837 in St Vincent in the Caribbean. She never recorded her mother's name and recorded her father with one name, Frederic, a stone mason. In short, she was descended from enslaved people. The British enacted the abolition of slavery in 1834 but replaced it with a system of "apprenticeship"

which lasted until 1838. During those intervening 4 years, enslaved people were "free" but were still required to complete an "apprenticeship" with their original owners and masters. This then was the period during which Sarah Ann was born.

According to Sarah at age 18 (1855), she married John Brown, who later died. What occurred during the next few years, and whether this was in St Vincent, in NZ, or somewhere in between, has not been determined. We do know she arrived in NZ in around 1861 or 1863, and that in 1869, in Queenstown, she married William Bennetts. William was born in 1833 in Cornwall, and at age 8 he was already recorded as a copper miner. He emigrated first to Australia and then arrived in NZ in 1854.



Queenstown, 1880, postcard from Lakes District Museum.

William started out mining on the Tuapeka goldfields and then moved to the Shotover River up at Skippers. Sarah's stated occupation was nurse.

Sarah Ann was clearly mixed race, as the family noted she had dark skin, and she was referred to in the District as "the Spanish lady". All her descendants have DNA from West African countries, and some have matches to St Vincent families, but that is a story for another day.

Sarah Ann and William were married for nearly 30 years. They had four children, all born around the Wakatipu District during the 1870s. We know that William owned several sections in Queenstown but unfortunately became bankrupt in 1877 and the sections were sold. As William was a gold miner and farm labourer, the family moved around a bit, but lived mainly in the Arrowtown District, Frankton and latterly at Lake Hayes. Sarah died of cancer in 1897 aged 60 and was buried in the Arrowtown Cemetery. William died in 1904 and was buried in Dunedin.

Papers Past NZ. Electoral Rolls. Births, Deaths, Marriages. Ancestry DNA. British Colonial Slave Registers. Itm.howison.com. Bennetts Family History by Kathie Hill.

The following is a write up of the talk given at the Wellington branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists' September meeting. Prue has worked on family history since 1981.

Where is Sheila's family?

By Prue Theobald

You may be asking who is Sheila? Sheila is my mother-in-law. Sheila was born Sheila Aynsworth 26th August 1930 in Hammersmith, London to a Violet Gladys Aynsworth as per her birth certificate. Sheila was adopted 5 December 1933 by Robert and Emma Graham who lived at 20 St Johns Road, Southall in Middlesex, England. They had been fostering her I think from a baby.

My husband, Mick and I have been to England on a few occasions. My first trip in 1981 is when I met in person Mick's parents Sheila and Kenneth Theobald. I also met his five siblings, not all alive today. Mick is the oldest of his siblings, the others are Keith, Karen, Tina, Anita & Colin. Of these Karen, Anita & Colin have since passed on, as well as their mother and father.

For another trip in March 1989, Mick and I decided to go and live in England with our two boys, Chris & Paul, so the boys could get to know their Nana and Grand-dad Sheila & Kenneth; plus all their uncles, aunts, and cousins of which there were a number at that time. There are a lot more cousins now!

Mick and I have travelled back to England a few times since returning to NZ in 1991. Sometimes these were for family funerals, so sadly making time to do London research didn't rate high on the list of jobs. Sheila had indicated that she would like to find her birth mother, so on one of our trips up to London to visit St Catherine's house she came with me, but we didn't know where to start back then.

Sheila's adoption papers, and the original Birth Certificate show that Sheila was born at 59 Bridge Ave in Hammersmith, London. Her birth mother was Violet Gladys Aynsworth, a Drapers Saleswomen. It gives her address as 68 The Grove, Hammersmith. Sheila's adoptive parents were Robert and Emma Graham.

The story goes that when they had Sheila living with them for a few years, Emma tried to contact Sheila's mother Violet, to let them adopt Sheila, but she was hard to contact back in the day. But eventually Sheila was adopted on 5 December 1933. It is known that Violet did pay some maintenance for the first few years.

I looked at the street address and found that, but no matching names for 68 The Grove, Hammersmith, London, or 59 Bridge Avenue, Hammersmith. I tried to follow her occupation, and find a draper's shop in the location, but no luck there. I tried different takes on the name with hyphenated, Aynsworth-Robinson, no luck there. Also, other similar combined names; Ainsworth, but never Answorth. The research was on going but was not making any headway.

A niece of Mick's, and a granddaughter had also done some research also, so we shared each other's family trees on Ancestry. We both tried to find a Violet Gladys Aynsworth for some years. I would look into the Census records trying to find a Violet Gladys Aynsworth on several occasions only to hit brick walls. The only documents were her birth certificate and the adoption papers. Always spelling Aynsworth like so, I didn't think to drop the Y in Aynsworth. I may have come up with a hit, or not, who knows?

All the research had to be done online for places and names in England. I asked Ann Ball of the English Interest Group and the wonderful knowledgeable people there, but nothing new came to my attention.

Then along came DNA!

Mick and I took our first DNA tests on Ancestry around 2015, and later with My Heritage in August 2022. The Ancestry site did show a match, but I didn't look at it, thinking it was down the father's line.

I then asked Mick's sister Tina to DNA test in August 2023 with My Heritage and when the results came through, I realised that there was a match down the maternal side. This is what we were looking for. It was a breakthrough! We had a hit! There was a match with a Clare with nearly a 1000cm match, so what was going on here? Was it the same father maybe?

I emailed Clare who lived in Swindon, England. From there, conversations were via email. Then we did face time, along with one of her sisters, Daphne. It took them a bit to work out the time difference and which service to use, either WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger.

Clare shared a copy of her mother's birth certificate Gladys **Answorth**. We now had another spelling. Gladys was born in a workhouse in Hastings on 30 July 1925. Gladys's adoption papers named the father as Donald Answorth-Jones, Deceased. This made her five years older than Sheila. Clare shared photos of her mother Gladys, and we could see similarities. At last, a window into another family member for Sheila.



Gladys

With this information, Gladys's family had been working on a whole different set of names. And on this front they too had been hitting brick walls. They had employed a genealogist to do research for them and had made a timeline, which they shared with me. They couldn't find a Donald Answorth-Jones, or just an Answorth-Jones. I think they had been researching back in early 2000's.

It took some time for the adopting family, the Crouches, to finalise adoption papers due to their inability to find Violet. It came to a case of urgency, as Gladys needed an operation and they needed permission to operate. So, the adoption went through so that could happen. Finding the different spelling opened up more avenues for me to research. I then found Violet's family in the 1911 census, and going back further also.

They and I have gone back down Sheila's mother's mother's line plus her father's line. I have done research on Violet's siblings including the half siblings. As Violet's mother Clara was first married to a Wilson, the two older girls have a different surname. This also suggests that Clara and Frederick (Answorth) didn't marry. I have tried to find a marriage certificate for the 2nd marriage and so far

nothing. I have found baptisms for both Violet and Claudia.

Mick and I planned to travel to the UK and Europe in 2024, to visit his family and visit our grandchildren and our son. So, we arranged to meet up with the Five Swindon First Cousins on Saturday 28th September in Swindon. They are Jennifer, Barbara, Daphne, Valerie and Clare.

With that date in mind Mick and I planned our trip to suit. The girls recommended a hotel just outside of Swindon called the Premier Inn North Cold Harbour. They booked a room in the pub next door, which is also where the hotel did the breakfast and other meals. So come Friday 27th Sept we headed off in the hire car to Swindon. Sadly, neither Keith nor Tina, nor nieces and nephews were able to make it with us. So just Mick and I.

Then Saturday 1pm came and I got a text to say the new cousins were next door waiting for us. So over we went to be met by some lovely ladies. All have married and have families of their own. Jennifer, Barbara, Daphne, Valerie and Clare. The girls had prepared whiteboards with stickers showing their families. They had also created photo boards. Mick and I really appreciated all the work that they had done to show us.

All I had was on my Laptop which I had taken to show what I had done and also various photos of the Theobald family. We talked for about three hours and it didn't feel that long. Then one of the girls took the oldest one home and came back, and we all sat in the bar, with more talking while sipping on a few wines as you do.

I have found the Wilson marriage certificate, from her first marriage. That is Violet's mother Clara, who was the mother of all six girls. Clara was married to George William Wilson on 11 September 1897. They had two girls. Ada in 1899 and Clara in 1900. Violet was born 31 January 1902, with Father Frederick William Answorth.

It would appear that Violet's mum Clara died sometime before the 1921 census as Frederick states he's a widower. He's raising the six girls, but some are out working. Violet is working as a draper's assistant. The younger ones are still at school. I have to some degree build up a picture around Violet. There are six girls all up and it appears that only one of them, Lilian Wilson appears to have married and had children. The others have married too, but don't seem to have had children.

We now have the Death Certificate of Violet and her Probate details. Violet Gladys Answorth died on the 26th October 1978 at St Martins Hospital, Canterbury, Kent. I would love to know why she was living there at that time.



Sheila

But wait, there's more! DNA is ever giving and we have another match!

Up pops a DNA match with a Dianne 473 cm. Where is this link to the Theobald family tree? And it's on the maternal line whoopee! In Dianne's tree there is an interesting link. Her grandfather is the link to Gladys and Sheila. Dianne has shared her research with us. Her Father is Gordon Answorth; and his Father is Lionel Joseph Barton. Lionel is also the dad of Gladys and Sheila. WOW. Gordon Answorth, son of Lionel & Lily Barton, Lily's birth name is Barker.

In the 1911 census Lionel and Lily had two children. Then in the 1921 census there is still Lily with Lionel and four children. Lily disappears after 1922. Then in the 1930s, Lionel & Lily were living at 12 Caithness Road, Hammersmith. Lionel was born on 17 June 1886 in Dover. In 1900 Lionel enlisted in the army as a boy soldier. In 1936, Lionel's sister Mabel was living in the same household.

Using Find my past, I continued my research of Lionel earlier this month at the Library. I came across a 1939 register and Lionel Barton is married and working in the Home Office Whitehall, Westminster Abbey, City of Westminster, London. In the same register the household at 2 Mall Villas, Hammersmith in London has Lionel as a disabled pensioner and married. Lionel says he was born in 1881, so a difference of dates there. The household also includes Mabel Davis (Barton) a machine operator, single and born on 28 Feb 1915. Mabel was Lionel's sister.

The question remains as to why they adopted out Gladys and Sheila when there were four other children to Lionel? 1930's depression? Who knows. It will remain a mystery.

The Dreaded Yellow Flag

By Martin Garcia

Imagine travelling by sailing ship for over three months to New Zealand and then being told you could not land at your intended destination for several more days. The modern-day equivalent of a flight delay pales by comparison. Yet that was the situation faced by my Swedish great-grandfather, Peter Anderson, in January 1876 when he arrived in Wellington Harbour on the *Shakespeare*.



Buildings on Somes Island. Roy Clark, WNTV 1, New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation : Photographs of Somes Island, 1914-18. Ref: 1/2-038618-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22800044

The *Evening Post* reported the arrival: "The ship Shakespeare arrived in this harbour early this morning. She left Hamburg on the 8th October, and thus has made the voyage from port to port in 108 days. She brings Government immigrants to the number of 390 souls ... Unfortunately, she has sickness on board, and the dreaded yellow flag was seen flying at the main-truck [the top of the mainmast] as she came up the bay."¹

Peter and his fellow immigrants disembarked at "the Quarantine isle" in Wellington Harbour, Matiu Somes Island. Emil Rohdies, a German sailor on the *Shakespeare*, wrote in his diary that the immigrants "had to clean themselves in every respect and had to stay so long, till they were collected by the people who needed them for work or for their businesses. The emigrants lived on this island in a big house, specially built for the purpose, called 'Hospitale'."²

The immigrants were fortunate to find ready-built shelter on the island. Although designated a quarantine station in 1869, it was not until after the 1872 arrival of the ship *England* that a purpose-built station was

¹ Evening Post, Volume XIII, Issue 19, 24 January 1876, Page 2 at Papers Past <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/EP18760124.2.4> accessed on 21 August 2025.

² Althenn-Mims, Heike : Papers relating to the voyage of the Shakespeare, MS-Papers-5086, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, cited in Ofsoski Family History at <https://ofsoskihistory.com/emigration/> accessed on 21 August 2025.

constructed on the island. The *England* carried smallpox and its passengers had to endure makeshift accommodation.³

The European immigrants who were isolated on Matiu Somes Island were not, of course, the first residents on the island. Ngāti Ira, who occupied the land around the harbour in the eighteenth century, used the island as a refuge and built a pa there. "Matiu retained this status as a refuge in the early nineteenth century when many Taranaki people fled south to escape inter-tribal warfare."⁴

Taken for use as a Crown reserve in 1841, Matiu Somes Island was used as a quarantine station for arriving



German internees on Somes Island. Hart, Roger :Photographs of Somes Island and other subjects. Ref: 1/2-112228-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. records/22401714

passengers until the 1920s, for quarantine of animals until 1995, and as an internment camp for "enemy aliens" during both world wars.⁵ Matiu was returned to Taranaki Whānui following the 2008 Treaty settlement and is now governed by the Matiu/Somes Island Kaitiaki Board and managed by the Department of Conservation.

There are forty-five known burials on the island, 37

of which are immigrants who arrived in the 1870s. A memorial erected in 1971 lists most of their names. The NZSG Hutt Valley Branch has helpfully listed their names and the ships they arrived on at https://sites.rootsweb.com/~nzlhvrsg/matiu_somes_burials.html

Sadly, a week after passengers from my great-grandfather's ship, the *Shakespeare*, disembarked on Matiu Somes Island, Julianna Szczodrowski (née Krakowska) and her one-day-old unnamed baby died and were buried there. Julianna and her husband Anton were Polish immigrants "fleeing Prussian-partitioned Poland". Barbara Scrivens, in her excellent website *Polish History New Zealand* surmises that Julianna "probably gets more visitors to her gravesite than any other early Polish settler in New Zealand."⁶

³ *Matiu/Somes Island human quarantine station*, 2001, Department of Conservation

⁴ Buchanan, Rachel, 2011, *Re-making Memory on Matiu and Other "Settlement" Sites*, Memory Connection, Volume 1, Number 1, © 2011 The Memory Waka, p.288, at <https://memoryconnection.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/RachelBuchanan1.pdf> accessed on 21 August 2025.

⁵ Matiu / Somes Island at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matiu/_/Somes_Island accessed on 23 September 2025.

⁶ Polish History New Zealand: Who's Behind the Name at <https://polishhistorynewzealand.org/whos-behind-the-name/> accessed on 23 September 2025

Editorial

In the November Newsletter, **I would like to publish stories of Family history tours undertaken by members.** Have you taken a tour in New Zealand or offshore to investigate family history, to visit sites of family importance or meet newly found relatives? Share your experiences with others.

Pls send your stories to wellington@genealogy.org.nz by the end of October.

Max Kennedy

Irish Interest Group (Lower North Island)

10:00 AM Sat, 1 Nov 2025

Tawa Union Church Lounge
6 Elena Place, Tawa

November Education Day. "Everything you wanted to know about Irish research but were afraid to ask"

Scottish Interest Group (Wellington)

01:30 PM Sat, 8 Nov 2025

Tawa Union Church Lounge
6 Elena Place, Tawa

End of Year meeting with a guest speaker

English Interest Group (Wellington)

The group meets from February to November on the 4th Saturday each month, from 2:00pm to 4:00pm in private homes. Contact: annballnz@gmail.com

DIRECTORY Committee



Convenor	Geraldine Needham-Girven	021 180 5166
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KILBIRNIE	PORIRUA	HUTT VALLEY	KAPITI
Thursday 02 Oct, 10:00 am	Wednesday 08 Oct, 7:30 pm	Thursday 16 Oct, 7:30 pm	Tuesday 28 Oct, 7:30 pm
Gabor Toth – An Update on Wellington City Council Libraries access and information available for genealogists.	Sarah Hewitt - New Zealand Land Records	Lynette Shum - Navigating the narrative: The SS Ventnor legacy	Anthony Dreaver, Kapiti US Marines Trust - US Marines in Kapiti, 1942 – 1944
Matairangi Room, Ākau Tangi Sports Centre, 72 Kemp St	Helen Smith Room Pataka Art + Museum, Porirua	Senior Citizens' Rooms, Forsyth Barr Building, 45 Knights Road Lower Hutt	Coast Community Church, 57 Hinemoa Street, Paraparaumu

Education Day

10.00am – 3.00pm Sat 1st November 2025

Tawa Union Church,
6 Elena Place, Tawa

\$10 members /
\$18 non-members

By National Library of Ireland on The Commons -
R.I.C. group with County Inspector Hetreed, No restrictions,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=51462513>

Irish
Interest
Group,
Lower
North
Island



Tracing your ancestors in the Royal Irish Constabulary and other Irish police forces.

A Zoom presentation from Dublin by Jim Herlihy on the Royal Irish Constabulary and its records, plus presentations by three of our members who have RIC ancestors.

Book online: <https://www.trybooking.com/nz/ZXU>