



Kapiti Branch

June 2004

Convenor's Comment:-

In the May newsletter, I suggested that those of you who are not members of our National parent the NZ Society of Genealogists might consider doing so. A scan of their website was suggested to help you in that choice. It has been drawn to my attention that there may be a misunderstanding among some, about the relationship of the Branch to the parent body. Having just celebrated our 20th Birthday it is appropriate to spell this out. When 15 or more NZSG members are meeting regularly, they can, after an Inaugural Meeting, apply for affiliation as a Branch or Special Interest Group. NZSG Council considers this and if approved then that group becomes an official and registered entity. Thus in May 1984, there were sufficient local NZSG members expressing interest for approval by Council to establish the Kapiti Branch. And so here we are 20 years later, with a membership of 125 and growing!

Branches are subject to rules laid down by the national body and one of my responsibilities is to ensure these are observed. They cover, for example, election of office bearers and committee - they must be NZSG members, nominated by NZSG members, and voted upon by NZSG members. The rules also lay down inter alia, Officer portfolios responsibilities, the conduct of committee and monthly meetings, financial records, and the holding of the Annual General Meeting. We have to keep an attendance record and submit an annual report to Council. One of the rules of engagement is that if you are not a member of NZSG, membership of a Branch does NOT give membership of the national body. In fact the rules state "...Branch members who are not members of NZSG are encouraged to join the Society after attending three or four meetings". Hence my encouragement message!!

So in sum, membership of a branch and membership of NZSG are separate but complementary. One spins off the other. Local resources and activities complement those which are available from the parent organisation.

On a different tack, members will be aware that there is a Kapiti Genealogy Computer Group, separate from the Kapiti NZSG Branch and which has been in existence for some 10 years. In the intervening years ownership and use of computers among members has changed vastly. The PC has become almost a standard household item and many Branch members use this tool to help them in

their research. The Branch activities increasingly recognise this at our monthly meetings, electronic dispatch of our Newsletter and the establishment of our own website. There have been discussions for some time as to whether the Computer Group should merge with the Branch. These have included constructive meetings over the past few weeks between the respective Convenors and Committee representatives. Your Committee welcomes these discussions and recognises the value of a special interest group enhancing the use of computers in genealogy. As a result a merger proposal was put to the June meeting of the Computer Group and I will report on the outcome to you at our June monthly meeting.

Clive Palmer

Notices:-

Research Day. Palmerston North Branch is holding a Research Day on Saturday, 14th August 2004 between 10am and 4pm at the Leisure Centre, 569 Ferguson Street, Palmerston North. This is supported by a busload from the NZSG Family History Centre in Auckland, bringing down research material, books, fiche, maps, CD Roms. Interest Groups involved are Australia, Channel Islands, Cornish, East Anglia, Greater London, Midlands, North-West and North-East England, Southern England, Isle of Man and Huguenot. There is a door charge of \$10. BYO lunch. This is a great opportunity for the Wellington-Manawatu area. Anyone interested in car pooling?

Empty Printer Cartridges Several other Branches collect used and empty Printer cartridges for re-cycling, as a modest but useful form of fundraising, with the added virtue of also being a practical conservation measure. Kapiti Branch now proposes to do likewise, and so would welcome any empty inkjet or bubblejet cartridges - e.g. Canon, Hewlett Packard, Lexmark or Epson. Please give any that you may have lying around to Derek Griffis at any of our Monthly Meeting evenings. Thank you

The Hidden Irish Ulster/New Zealand Migration and Cultural Transfers Conference is to be held in the Hunter Council Chamber, Victoria University of Wellington, 29th - 31st July 2004. Scholars have been brought from both New Zealand and Ulster, with keynote speakers Malcolm Campbell, Keith Jeffery, Fintan Mullan, Sean O'Connell and Jock Phillips and several others. Registration between 5pm and 6 pm on the 29th, presentations between 9am and 6 pm on the following two days, finishing with a Conference dinner at 8pm on the Saturday. Conference enrolment @@ \$195; (students and unwaged \$120); One day attendance (either Friday or Saturday, please indicate) \$110 and \$60 for the dinner on Saturday night. Further information can be found on their website:-

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/stout-centre/events/conferences.aspx>

June is Heritage Month Have you noticed our display upstairs in the Paraparaumu Public Library?

Reports:-

:Recent Additions to our NZ Fiche Collection held at Paraparaumu Library

- (1) NZ Cemetery Records 8th Supplement 1998 (NB the 9th Supplement is expected later this year)
- (2) NZ Marriages & Deaths 1961-1990 (No fiche exist for dates after 1990). NB Maori Births Deaths & Marriages 1911-1961 have just been ordered, and are expected shortly. This is the full date range, as prior to 1911 Maori Marriage registration was not compulsory (and Maori Births & Deaths not until 1913), and after 1961 Maori registrations were integrated into the one general system.

Ivan Johnson Meeting in Wellington

In the end Deborah Shuker and myself were the only two from Kapiti who went to Wellington on the 9th of June to hear the post NZSG Conference speaker, Ivan Johnson. He gave an excellent talk, but his subject was a surprise. "Church crawling in England" was not about the records found in parish churches as we expected, but mainly about church architecture, starting with Anglo-Saxon , through Norman, Gothic, Perpendicular, Tudor-Stewart, Georgian to Victorian. His address was illustrated by slides which his wife, Gail, had taken and she was in charge of the projector. Some of it was very confusing, as earlier buildings had later styles imposed, and, in some cases, the original building had been completely demolished, especially during Henry VIII's reign and the demolition of the monastries. Then the Victorians copied earlier forms, just to confuse the issue.

In amongst all this serious business, came little glimpses of earlier customs. In previous times weddings, for example, were not preformed in the church itself, but a simple service was held at the porch - the vicar standing under cover, while the couple stood outside and it was just too bad if the weather was wet. This was often witnessed by a church warden. Ivan had one delightful story of a couple who asked the vicar to marry him, while he was over on the other side of a river, fishing. Apparently he agreed and tied the knot then and there. Ivan made the comment that he hoped that vicar remembered who the couple were, and the record in the register was filled in correctly.

He also spoke on burial customs. Apparently there was only one parish coffin and one church coffin. So the parish coffin brought the body to the lych gate, where it was then transferred to the parish coffin. After the service, the body was then taken out of the parish coffin and buried. So both coffins were recycled. At the end of his talk, Ivan spoke of bell ringing. His father had been a ringer, and there was a slide to show him with the bell-pull in hand. This interested me as a my 3 X great-grandfather had been one in Yorkshire, and I saw the plaque in his

church where he was named for one of the team that rang 5040 changes taking 2 hours and 50 minutes on 6th March 1825. So the talk ended with the sound of bells, rung French style, (clanging together), Russian (bell-pull tied to the clapper) and finally the English way ringing changes.

Articles:-

The Town Destroyer

Fire at Sturminster Newton 1729

In the 18th century, disastrous fires were common in Dorset because of straw thatched roofs and chimneys little higher than the thatch. The height of the outside part of the chimney often depended on what stone was left from building the house. The inside chimney was also of stone, but to keep smoke from pouring out from cracks and through the poor quality mortar, the chimney interiors were lined with thick wood. This was fine as long as the wood liners were wet and new, but fires were seldom out and as the wood liners dried, so it would slowly begin to char and then smoulder. It could be re-lined, but this was costly and time consuming, so even if a fire appeared to be out, the wood liner could still be hot and faintly red - a fire in waiting. Fire grates were large and the commonest form of quick heat was furze (gorse) faggots and for cooking skillets were used well basted with lard.

13th June 1729 was a hot day with a stiff wind blowing. A cook in a local inn set the skillet on top of blazing faggots and the lard ignited. Flames from the grate engulfed the kitchen and a shower of sparks flew up an already smoldering chimney. Minutes later the whole thatched roof was blazing furiously.

With the gusty wind and houses with thatched roofs huddled close together, the blaze quickly spread and soon the whole of Market Place was filled with dense acrid smoke. Debris and blazing timbers fell everywhere. People had to escape as they were - nothing could be saved. With fearsome rapidity, the fire then spread to all the neighbouring alleys on both sides of Market Place.

There was no Town Fire engine and the only water had to be carried from either the Row, the pump in Market Place, Church Lane or Greencroft Spring by the Church. As houses were ablaze in both the Row and Market Place, people were helpless.

All the traders were self-employed and they could only stand and watch as their shops, homes, and with that the town's prosperity, were rapidly reduced to ashes. Many were overcome by smoke and many were burnt. There were two doctors in the town, Dr. MARVIN, who himself lost everything in the fire, gave immediate first aid to the fire victims. He was quickly assisted by Mr. NOOTH, who came from Broad Oak. To add to the misery, the town was also in the grip of a typhus epidemic caused by lice and an outbreak of scabies.

Even the Parish Church did not escape. Houses in Church Lane were burnt and the dense heat damaged the roof tiles of the Church so badly that it was cheaper to

completely re-roof the church than attempt to replace the damaged tiles.
(Thanks Deborah, for this)

New Zealand Barmaids (by Derek Griffis)

A century ago a campaign was building up in New Zealand to prevent women from serving as barmaids in hotels. Prohibition was on the rise, and Temperance women were at the forefront of this campaign to remove women from what was otherwise, at that time, exclusively male territory. It seems ironic today to think that the women activists of a hundred years ago, were fighting to achieve exactly the opposite of what women activists of today would consider to be their just right. What comes around goes around, and we might reflect for a moment on what people one hundred years in the future, might think of our attitudes on the various contentious issues of today.

The campaign prevailed, and the Licensing Act of 1910 required all existing barmaids to be registered, as no further females were to be allowed to take on this occupation. The position of those registered was thus protected and, with the passing of the years, inevitably, their numbers dwindled. Close female relatives of the publican were allowed to serve behind the bar but, in practice, they were rarely seen in the Public Bars. On occasion, unregistered barmaids did come to the attention of the authorities and, incidental to a totally unrelated private project of mine, I have seen the prosecution entries of the publicans appear in the Criminal Register Books. As might be expected, by the 1950s barmaids were rarely, if ever, to be seen in New Zealand pubs. From 1908 to 1952, women were not even allowed to be publicans, although certain exceptions were made for widows and divorcees. When I arrived in this country as a new immigrant in 1956, I recall that on the rare occasions that I myself ventured into a public house (I am almost teetotal, but not absolutely), it was into 100% male company, the place thick with smoke, everyone standing as there were no seats, and closing time 6pm. It was 1961 before the law changed, and even then barmaids had to be at least 25, and it was to be several more years before the change became obvious.

To anyone having a greater interest in this subject, I particularly recommend that they read the excellent article written by Sue Upton a few years ago (see "The New Zealand Genealogist" of May/June 2001, pages 162 & 163 - a copy is on open shelf in our Branch Resource area at the Paraparaumu Public Library). To return now to the registration of those barmaids back in 1910. The names of the barmaids so registered, were printed in the 1911 New Zealand Police Gazettes, pages 359-361, and page 432. A supplementary listing of names was printed about two years later. A couple of years prior to Sue Upton's article, back in 1999, for some long-forgotten reason I created a private index of their names. Perhaps I had a trough of time between other activities, and wanted something useful to do with my time - who knows? who cares? My index was created from the names listed in the

Barmaids Register held at Archives New Zealand in Wellington (Agency: L, Series: 18, Item Reference: 1), and includes addresses, or hotel names and location - none of which appear in the Police Gazette listings. The Register itself does not give any more information than

I have indexed. There are 1270 entries in that index of mine, although a few are as a result of cross-referencing ladies under both their maiden and married names. My index still exists on my computer. If any Branch member would like me to check out a name for them, they are welcome to contact me direct (phone: 293 1092, or, email: griffisnz@@ihug.co.nz).