



## **Matamata Branch**

[matamata@genealogy.org.nz](mailto:matamata@genealogy.org.nz)

The *Firth Tower* was built in 1882 by Josiah Clifton Firth on his estate and was used as the Estate Office and as sleeping quarters for single men. It stands on rising ground commanding an extensive view of the surrounding countryside. Other historical buildings are in the reserve and the historical centre there houses the archives of the Matamata district.

## **February 2019**

**Meetings held 7.30pm on the third Thursday of the month, Feb - Nov**  
All Saints Anglican Parish Lounge, Hohaia Street, Matamata

### **February to April 2019 Meeting Programme**

**February 8<sup>th</sup>** - Friday research – 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

**February 21<sup>st</sup>** – Branch meeting. Discoveries from 2018. Bring along any discoveries you have made in 2018 or over the holiday break.

**February 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Friday research – 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** – Friday research – 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

**March 21<sup>st</sup>** – Branch meeting. Speaker, Sandra Metcalfe. Topic – ‘Basic DNA’.

**March 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Friday research – 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

**April 12<sup>th</sup>** - Friday research – 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

**April 11<sup>th</sup>** – Proposed trip to Hamilton Library. Details to follow. (no branch meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup>)

**April 26<sup>th</sup>** - Friday research – 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

**May 16<sup>th</sup> - AGM**

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### **Convenor's Report**

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2019.

We have already held our first committee meeting for the year and are pleased with our planning for the programme for the year.

I would particularly like to draw your attention to the meeting in May. Following the AGM we will be holding a research night as well as having assistance with finding things on the internet. We will have a member able to “Show you how” and if there are any matters related to genealogy sites or your own research you need assistance with bring them on the night. Given that we have internet access at the lounge it will be a “live session”.

Following on from our successful field trip to the Archives and the NZSG library last year we are again planning another field trip. The details have not yet been confirmed but it is likely to be in April and to the Hamilton Central Library Family History section. Note the April meeting falls on the night before Good Friday so we have determined to hold the April meeting on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April.

I look forward to catching up with you at the February meeting.

**Maxine Viggers**  
**Convenor**

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### **In House News**

- **CD Library** - The Branch has several CD's that are available for '**members only**' to borrow and are available at each meeting or research afternoon. You just record which CD you have borrowed and when you have finished using, then return either at the next meeting or research afternoon.

- **Library Books** – The branch library has many books on various topics that are available for members to borrow. Please browse our collection when next in the Lounge. There could be one on a subject you are researching.
  - **Ancestry.com** – this is available at the Public Library for members to use during opening hours.
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Now that we are holding Committee meetings away from our main meetings members may like to receive the minutes. If you would like to be put on the minute's circulation list, please drop Christine an email and she will include you in these.

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### Supper Duties

It has been noted over the past year that a few regular attendees at branch meetings seem to always provide a plate for supper. At February's meeting a roster will be made available for all members to offer at least to do one meeting that they will bring along something for supper and do the dishes afterwards.

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### Obituary

#### Biddy Orr, Branch member 1981 – 2018

Matamata Genealogy Group, as it was then named, had been formed only 3 years before Biddy joined the ranks of enthusiastic genealogists in 1981.

She soon became a Committee member, a position she held for 2 years.

Biddy was an extremely talented craftswoman and one of the crafts she is most remembered for is paper sculpture. When Matamata Genealogy Group organised and hosted the NZSG annual Conference at Matamata Racecourse in 1988, Biddy's family scene of life size people paper sculpture was greatly admired.

Similar paper sculpture scenes were also displayed at the Branch 20<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations. A Branch project that Biddy was involved in, was the name indexing of local district books.

Biddy's genealogy research played a part in her overseas travel over the years.

Some of these trips formed the basis of talks she gave to members, always enthusing us with her ability to track down living relatives.

She also spoke about "How To" with regard to Irish research.

She is remembered by earlier members as always being most helpful to others with their research.

One part of her research culminated in Biddy becoming a TV star!

The Australian Bushranger Captain Moonlight, features in her family tree and having thoroughly researched his life, Bidy decided to make him the topic of her essay to enter in the Branch Essay Competition in 2013.

The competition winners were to be announced at a Branch luncheon held at a local restaurant and the essays read aloud.

After Bidy's reading of her story, a nearby diner (not a Branch member) approached her and said that he was from Australia and had been involved with the publication of a book about Captain Moonlight and was interested to hear of her connection with him.

This subsequently led to Bidy being invited to Australia in 2017 to be part of a TV show about the Bushranger.

Bidy was an example of a family historian who, through her research, brought her ancestors to life.

Bev Crabb.

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### **Notes from November Meeting – 'Basic Scottish Research' –**

#### **Speaker Pam Hamlyn**

Our last meeting for 2018, Pam, a very good speaker, who started with the information you can find on Birth, Death & Marriage certificates. Civil registration began in 1855. You didn't have to declare you were legally married until 1940. Scotland have always had their own legal and education system. Other avenues to follow – Register of Corrected Entries and Statistical Accounts of Scotland, Illegitimate Births and Irregular Marriages. Searching the indexes on Scotland's People is free but to view record you need to purchase a minimum of 30 credits for £7.50. Family Search is also another good source for finding Scottish records. Pam finished her presentation with explaining Scottish family naming patterns.

A very interesting evening that finished with a special Christmas themed supper.

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### **NZSG Hamilton Branch -Diary Dates for February & March 2019**

#### **February**

- Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> Branch meeting, 7pm. Carol Devereaux, NZSG Projects Co-ordinator on Project Indexing.
- Monday 18<sup>th</sup> Branch meeting, 9.30am. Marriages – intention to marry, banns, Registers, wedding photos and stories.
- Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> The Greater London Interest Group at St Andrews Library, 10am to 2pm. Phone (07) 8474272

#### **March**

- Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> Branch meeting, 7pm. Guest speaker, Graeme Mckenzie from Scotland. Topic – **'The Culture and Traditions of the Highland Clans'**. Graeme is Chairman of the Association of Highland Clans & Societies (of Scotland) and Seanachaidh (historian & genealogist) for Clans Mackenzie and MacMillan.

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> Scottish Interest Group meeting at 10am at St Andrews Library.  
Phone (07) 855 3859

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> Irish Group – St Patrick's Day. Phone (07) 260 0041.

If any member would like to attend one of these events please contact Hamilton Branch  
[Hamilton@genealogy.org.nz](mailto:Hamilton@genealogy.org.nz)

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**Graeme McKenzie** will also be giving a talk in Te Awamutu, Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March in the evening, details not yet available.

Thanks to Cambridge Branch Newsletter.

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### **Useful Links**

A great read for beginners with UK and Irish family from the Family History Daily  
<https://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-help-and-how-to/uk-irish-genealogy-guide/>

A good article about how to search names online

<https://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-help-and-how-to/no-name-search/>

An easy but good read for beginner DNA people from the Family History Daily

<https://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-help-and-how-to/what-do-dna-results/>

Thanks to Helen Riddell, Papamoa Branch Newsletter

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### **Funeral Service Sheets**

Are being collected by the Branch and sent to NZSG Family Research Centre for inclusion in a future Kiwi Collection. If you have a spare/copy please bring them to a meeting and they will be passed on.

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### **Family History Centres**

Please note due to dwindling patronage, the Christ of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints Family History Centres (FHC) have reduced their hours. **Higgins Road FHC, Frankton:** closed temporarily. **Fosters Road FHC, Templeview,** usual daytime hours but they no longer open at night. **Hamilton FHC, Sandwich Road,** usual hours: Tues-Friday from 9.30am-2.30pm and Tues and Thurs nights, 7-9pm.

Thanks to Waikato Scottish Interest Group Newsletter.

**Convenor:** Maxine Viggers 888 1656

**Secretary:** Christine Young 888 8327

**Treasurer:** Jennifer Couch 888 7042

**Committee:** Mary Cobham 888 7867

Margaret Sinclair 880 9484

Sharryn Currie Lightbown 022 4698012

**Reminder** any contributions to the newsletter would be gratefully accepted  
Please send to Maxine or Christine at [matamatagenealogy@gmail.com](mailto:matamatagenealogy@gmail.com)

Next newsletter – April 2019

**The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Branch or the New Zealand Society of Genealogists Inc.**