



# PAPAMOA BRANCH

OCTOBER 2020

The Papamoa branch of the NZ Society of Genealogists meets on the second Monday of the month in the **AIHE ROOM** at the Papamoa Community Centre from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm. (Tohora Room being used for Advance Voting.)

The doors open at 9.30 am. Tea and coffee provided - bring your own lunch

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### NEXT MEETING

- **MONDAY 12 OCTOBER**  
FUNERAL DIRECTOR RECORDS  
GREG BROWNLESS
- **MONDAY 9 NOVEMBER**  
REMEMBRANCE DAY  
SHARING STORIES OF OUR WW2  
WOMEN
- **MONDAY 13 DECEMBER**  
CHRISTMAS MEETING  
HOW WE CONNECT

For Branch Meeting Apologies  
email: [papgen@gmail.com](mailto:papgen@gmail.com)

### HANDS ON HELP

Volunteers are at the Papamoa library to help you with your research on the last Friday of every month

**Next session: Friday 30 Oct 2020**

**from 10.00 am - 12.00 noon**

[betty.ra.atkinson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:betty.ra.atkinson@xtra.co.nz)

### Regional Meeting

**17 October 2020:**

**10.00am - 2.00pm**

**Waihi Museum Gallery**

**54 Kenny Street, Waihi**

**MORNING TEA SUPPLIED**

**— ALL WELCOME**

The museum is open till

3.00 pm so why not

take a friend and

make a day of it ...

### ALMONER

Please notify Shona MacRury of any bereaved or unwell members

Hm: 07 578 1771/Mob: 021 415 701

Email: [s.macrury@kinect.co.nz](mailto:s.macrury@kinect.co.nz)



### Helen Riddell's website tip of the month:

<https://familyhistorydaily.com/free-genealogy-resources/fastest-way-to-scan-old-family-photos-free/>

Learn how to scan photos and a free app for scan, Photoshop, crop etc. pics onto your phone.

## Convenor's Comment



Many of you attended our meeting which was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> September even though we were in Level 2 of COVID-19 restrictions.

I was incredibly pleased to see such a good turnout of 33 people in total which is 39% of our financial membership; I reckon that was excellent under this present climate.

Shirley Beer did an exceptionally good presentation of "What you find in the cupboard". She did an amazing PowerPoint presentation and had lots of photos, letters, and other items of family interest to show us. She is an incredibly lucky lady to have such a plethora of items from families past.

Sheryl Baron also did an excellent presentation regarding an item that she had received some years ago from her Mrs Mum (that is what she called her) as a Christmas present, which has now become a tradition in Sheryl's family. It is in connection with a "Gratitude Plate". It was something I had never heard of before but I found it very inspiring and I think it is a lovely tradition that has been started in Sheryl's family by a gift from her Mrs Mum, who is part of her family although not blood related.

If you were not present on the 14<sup>th</sup>. I am sure these two ladies would be happy to tell you a bit more about where their story started and why.

Not being able to stop and have a cuppa and a chat, did not, I can assure you, detract from a very good meeting and there was lots of chatting being done even though we finished a lot earlier than normal.

Looking forward to seeing more of you at our next meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

*Kate McEwan*

**NZSG 26490**

## Apology

In June 2020, we published a poem with the title "An Ode to Coronavirus" and a photograph of Pam Ayres. I would like to attribute this poem to its actual author, Jan Beaumont of Auckland, New Zealand.

Although Pam Ayres recites it, she did not write it.

<https://checkyourfact.com/2020/05/27/fact-check-drink-lockdown-poem-pam-ayres-jan-beaumont/>

<https://www.rymanhealthcare.co.nz/ryman-news/jans-pertinent-poem-goes-viral>

## A Word From The Editor

It's great to hear our recent branch meetings have been well attended despite the complications caused by COVID and I'm sorry to have missed them. I hope you're all keeping well and like Mark McKinney (see his story page 7), making new discoveries.



Things are really ramping up at Electoral HQ with Advance Voting commencing on October 3 for two weeks in the lead up to Election Day (ED) on October 17. A lot of extra work was created when the election was moved out one month but it's all coming together.

As Post-Election Manager, my role really kicks in on ED and will be very busy for the following three weeks as I lead a team of Process Leaders who organise teams to scan enrolment forms and electoral rolls, sort, validate and process at least 10,000 Special Votes, investigate any apparent Dual Votes, organise the Official Count (when all votes from Advance Voting and ED are recounted) and finally count the two referenda. Then we have to pack up, dispatch, repatriate or destroy everything!

Usually during the elections I'm running a Voting Place so this year is very different although I'm sure once again there will be some very long days ahead. I'm enjoying learning new things and the challenge the role presents but there has been little time for much else although I am training for a five day mountain bike ride in the South Island in December.

For the November branch meeting, we'd like you to share the stories of the women in your family and the various roles they may have had in the Second World War. You can either send me your story or present it at the branch meeting so please let our Convenor **Kate McEwan** know if you can contribute.

I won't be there but I hope you find the story of my (adoptive) mother's experience below, interesting.

Please send me your stories or any items you would like to share with members through the newsletter... *and don't forget to vote!* Advance voting for anyone commences Sat 3 October.

**Fiona McAllister NZSG 26889 Email: [fiona@betterwords.co.nz](mailto:fiona@betterwords.co.nz) Ph: 021 855 603**

## Mary Eising: English Teacher at the Pahiatua Camp for Polish Refugees 1946

While recovering at her parents' home from a bout of pleurisy caused by the cold, damp conditions of the house where she had boarded as a teacher on country service, a young teacher, Mary Eising, spied an advertisement in the Education Gazette. It was for a position to teach English to a group of Polish refugees at a nearby camp.

After the Soviet occupation of eastern Poland in 1939, around 1.7 million Poles were deported to labour camps in Siberia where conditions were absolutely brutal and thousands died. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union two years later, Stalin sent 120,000 of the prisoners to Persia (now Iran), where they lived in refugee camps for up to two years.

In 1943 a US transport ship (*Hermitage*) anchored for a short time in Wellington Harbour, en route from Iran to Mexico. The ship carried 706 Polish refugees and Countess Maria Wodzicka, the wife of the then

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Polish Consul in NZ, visited them. She was friendly with the wife of Prime Minister Peter Fraser and raised the idea of bringing other orphaned Polish children to NZ from Iran for some respite.

Subsequently, Peter Fraser generously offered hospitality to another group of Polish refugees for the duration of the war. After a long journey overland and by sea from Isfahan (Persia), in 1944, on 31 October, 733 Polish children and 105 staff and adult caregivers finally arrived in Wellington on the *USS General Randall*, disembarking the next day. In a well organised, typically Kiwi welcome of the time, hundreds of Wellington school children waving New Zealand and Polish flags farewelled them on their train ride to Pahiatua. Along the way more groups of children lined the tracks, cheering them as they passed, including large gatherings who welcomed them when they passed through Palmerston North and arrived in Pahiatua. It still makes me feel quite emotional to think of how those people, the children especially, must have felt. The horrors of forced marches, terrible hunger, cold harsh conditions in labour camps, the despair of life in refugee camps and the parents and family members who had died, were all now left far behind.



Countess Wodzicka & PM Peter Fraser  
welcome the Poles to Wellington in 1944

On arriving at the newly tidied camp, the refugees were settled into the dormitories which had been brightened with flowers and lovingly made beds; after their past few years it must have seemed surreal. Initially at meal times the New Zealand staff realised many of the children were secreting away food for later—they were so used to not knowing when or where their next meal was coming from and they had to be strongly reassured that there would always be plenty again at the next meal.

Living nearby on the Eising family farm at Makomako, Mum got the job and began teaching at the camp. All lessons were in Polish except English and Physical Education (P.E.). Mum, one of about 10 English teachers, also taught P.E. to the girls and her pupils were mostly intermediate age up. As the students' English improved they were subsequently taught all subjects in English. Mum said it was the best teaching experience she ever had and she taught there for three and a half years, until the camp closed in mid 1949. She made many life-long friends with both staff and pupils and celebrated her 21<sup>st</sup> there in late 1947, with the students presenting her with a lovely cake they had made.

The older girls were called "The Sewing Girls" presumably because they went to work as machinists. They had accompanied their younger siblings who were war orphans; the children who arrived in 1944 were babies from a just a few months old, to young adults aged about 20.

Growing up, the only time I remember eating garlic was when mum cooked wiener schnitzel, which we loved. She would always remind us that the Polish kids would hoard cloves of garlic which they sucked on like lollies. Unfortunately their practice was to store it in their desks (in between sucking on it), so on hot summer days the classroom became rather pungent!

When funding from the exiled Polish government dwindled, the NZ government took over and the children contributed by working in the camp outside school hours, cleaning, gardening and keeping the camp tidy. To help the Poles assimilate to Kiwi ways, 830 billets were organised in the school

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Mum in Polish national  
Costume

holidays in May 1945 and January 1946 with families across New Zealand, who hosted the children for two weeks holiday.

In her memoirs, Mum remarked on what great citizens those refugees turned out to be. Initially their stay in NZ was not intended to be permanent, and while a few did return to Poland, the majority stayed in New Zealand, many marrying Kiwis. While embracing their new Kiwi life they maintained their language, culture and held regular reunions. I remember going to one with mum when I was about five and loving the colourful costumes adorned with multi-coloured ribbons, embroidery and trims. The singing, dancing and stories were beautiful.

In 2014 I took Mum to Wellington for the 70<sup>th</sup> reunion which was the last she was able to attend, as she died in 2018. She ruefully noted how she had outlived many of her students, who despite the love and care they received in New Zealand, had their lives shortened by the hardships and malnutrition they had suffered as children.

We often comment on how small New Zealand is and I frequently find this to be true. One of the Polish children at the camp, Jadwiga (pronounced Yadja) was our neighbour in Mairangi Bay where I grew up and my siblings and I were friends with her children. Her nephew married a friend of mine. Jadwiga's best friend at the camp Zofia, married a man, Richard Bialostocki also from the camp and their son, Adam is a local surgeon who has operated on me several times.



Children in Polish national  
costume at the 70<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary in  
Wellington, 2014.

Mum remained life-long friends with several of her fellow teachers and one, 'Sandy' (Alexander) Henderson, not only shared the same name as my biological maternal grandfather (Alexander 'Sandy' Henderson) but actually lived in the same apartment block as my biological mother. I only discovered this when mum and my birth mum (who was close friends with him and his wife) both went to his funeral!

In addition, Mum's illegitimate grandfather Carl Eissing was born in Prussia (now Poland). When immigrating to New Zealand with his mother Henriette, on arrival their name was misspelt as Eising and so it remained. Funny to think mum should have that Polish connection, but she was very proud of it.

#### References:

<https://wellington.govt.nz/about-wellington/history/history-of-wellington-waterfront/waterfront-stories/polish-children-of-pahiatua>

<http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-PolFirs-t1-g1-g1-t5.html>

<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/page/polish-refugees-land-new-zealand>

Mary McAllister: My Story (2018)

(Continued from page 5)

Mum's other wartime recollections were of having to do compulsory "war work" at night while at Training College in Wellington. She said she hated having to do it and doesn't recall being paid. The first job was screwing screws into headphones for use in tanks, doing the same thing over and over—very boring for a bright mind. The second job was worse; pouring black carbon stuff into carbide batteries. A dirty, filthy job; the black powder went everywhere!

In Wellington at that time, the city was alive with American marines and troops and she and her friends joined the American Services Club which ensured they had busy, exciting social lives. This included making meals, concerts, dancing, showing them the sights, picnics at Days Bay and even horse riding in the hills behind Karori.

Unfortunately on one occasion, a US marine driving too fast in his jeep, knocked her over in central Wellington. Mum was embarrassed, brushed off his concerned offer of help, and hurried away. This was something she regretted in later years, as the knee that was damaged gave her so much trouble it had to be replaced in a painful operation. She always called it her bionic knee.

**Fiona McAllister NZSG 26889**

### **A Message from Bay Venues**

We are very excited to be in COVID-19 Level 1 and to announce that physical distancing and capacity limitations are no longer applicable within our venues and programmes.

As we are all being encouraged to keep track of our movements, all venues will have the Government's NZ COVID Tracer QR code poster available for you to scan and we highly encourage you to do this when visiting our venues.

#### **Hygiene will stay a big focus in Level 1.**

Staff will continue to clean high-touch areas throughout the day alongside our commercial cleaning routines. We will also continue to provide complimentary hand sanitiser at our entrances and encourage personal hygiene best practice:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often (for at least 20 seconds). Then dry thoroughly.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or by covering your mouth and nose with tissues.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Put used tissues in the bin or a bag immediately
- Stay home if you feel unwell

We hope you all enjoy the additional freedoms that Level 1 provides.

If you have any feedback for us please email [feedback@bayvenues.co.nz](mailto:feedback@bayvenues.co.nz)

Take care and stay safe.

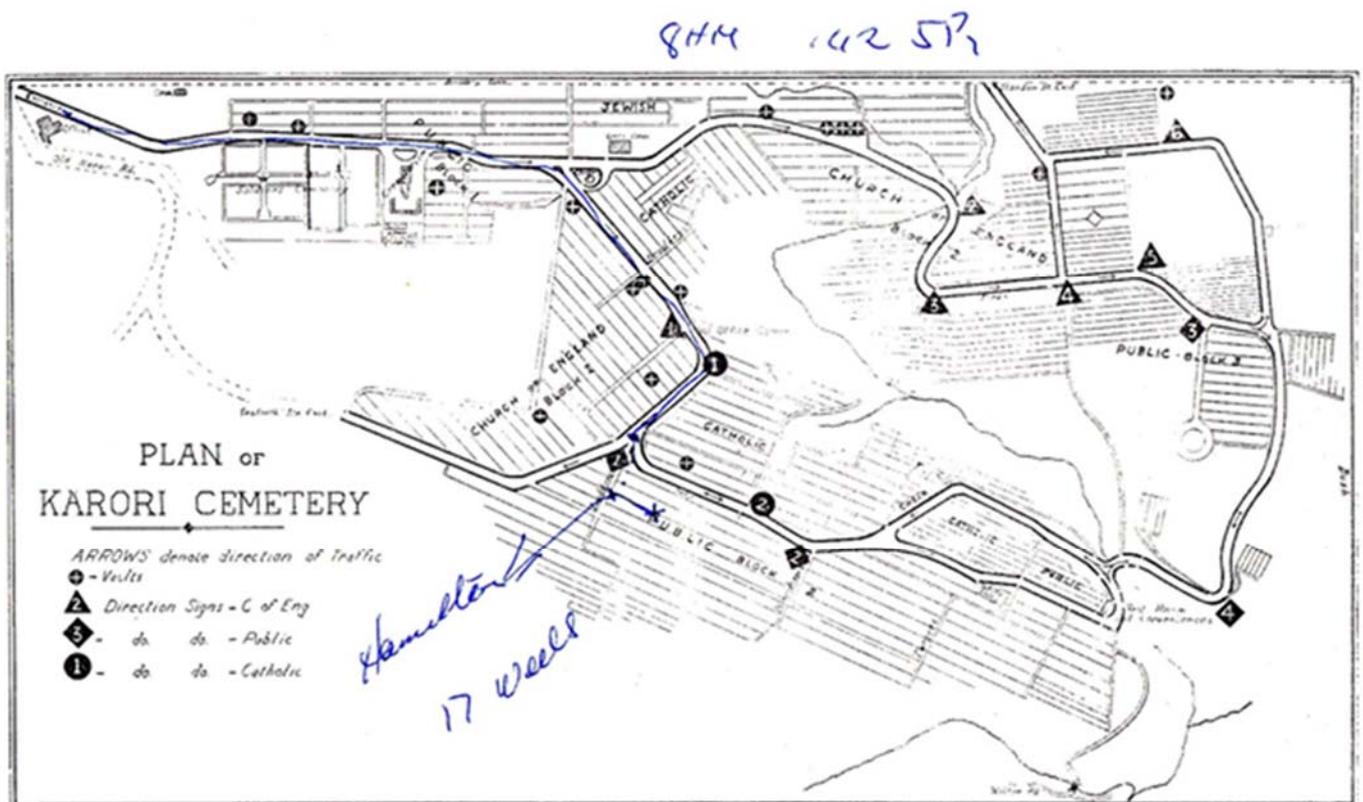
Justine Brennan  
Interim CEO

## Dump? Keep? Investigate?

A valid question; what to do with some of the paper work you come across, when going through a deceased person's papers?

My mother died in 1983 and recently I got the last of her 'paper collection' from my brother, who had it in storage. I thought I seen most of it already, but I did find some new items of interest.

I came across the following and pondered what to do with it especially as there were no names annotated. My mother's family were Wellington-based so it could refer to family member or a friend, and did it really matter?



I could not find any information on the sheet that tied up with the Karori Cemetery web site, but it must have been relevant to someone before 1983. The number at the top I presume was related to a burial site, but it did not tie up with anything I could find. Maybe from an old numbering system? So, junk, keep or investigate?

I found an email address for Wellington City Council Community Services so forwarded to them the image above and the reason for my inquiry. I got a very prompt reply, then another; they could not provide an answer, which was what I suspected. On the following day, a cemetery staff member was dispatched to have a look, then got back to me, with a couple of files (next page), and asked did the

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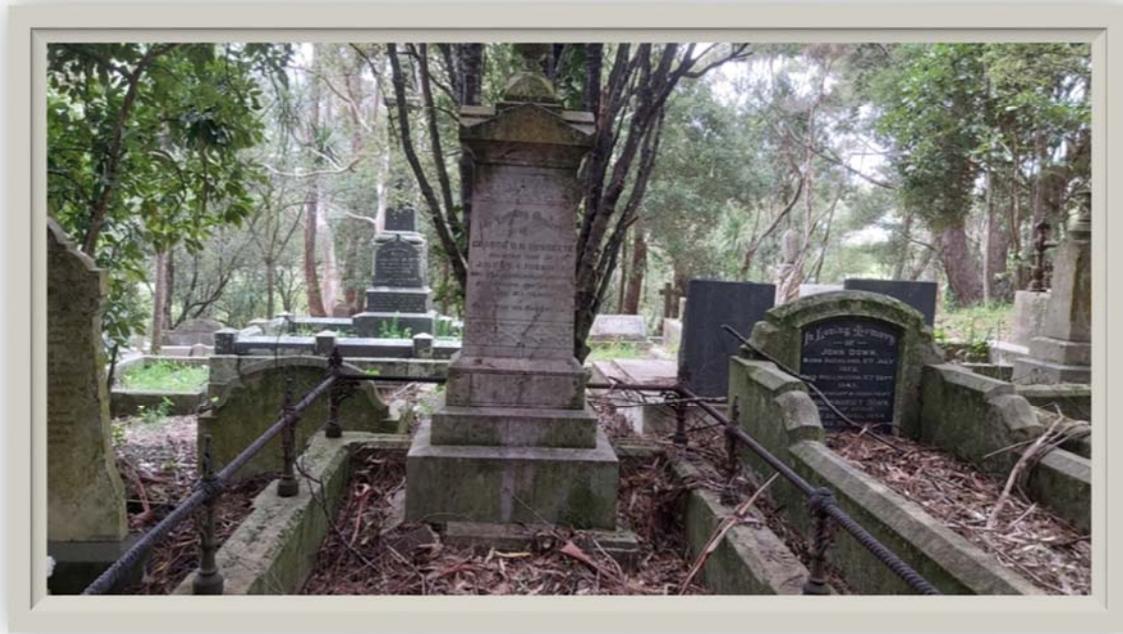
attached, ring a bell. Bingo! My mother's elder brother, who had drowned in the Pukeratahi River, Kaitoke, Hutt Valley on the 26<sup>th</sup> December 1905: George Rignold Fossette.

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL CEMETERY MANAGEMENT

## Selected Plot Summary

<b>Plot</b>	Karori 42 J PUBLIC2	<b>Size</b>	6'0"	<b>Deed No</b>	47853
<b>Purchaser</b>	FOSSETTE J W	<b>Deed Reg No</b>	72 F	<b>Purchase Date</b>	20 Jan 1906
<b>Address</b>		<b>Map Reference</b>	8 HM		

<b>Date</b>	28 Dec 1905	<b>FD/Customer</b>	WILSON J & A		
<b>Name</b>	FOSSETTE, GEORGE RIGNOLD				
<b>Address</b>	64 HAWKER ST	<b>Age</b>	23	<b>Years</b>	
<b>Occupation</b>	Carpenter	<b>Side</b>	NIL		
		<b>Depth</b>	2FT EX		



So, was it luck; the good work by the WCC Community Services – or me taking that one more step, so that now I have some more information for my family tree, all from a piece of paper I could have just as easily thrown away, and all done from the comfort of home?

Will I be so lucky next time? Does it change my perspective of what to keep and what to throw away? Decisions, decisions!

**Mark McKinney**

## Library Update

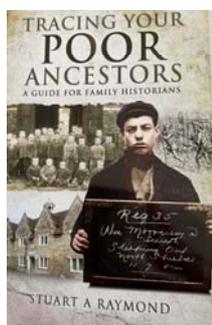
As we are in the Aihe room for the October meeting, the library will not be available but please bring along your returns as usual and sign them back in using the red book.

### Two New Books:

**The National Trust for Scotland:  
Cùil Lodair Culloden**



Tracing Your Poor  
Ancestors:  
Stuart A. Raymond



## Papamoa Genealogy Help



We meet on the third Monday of the month and as the name suggests —we're here to help!

People at all levels of genealogy are welcome. Bring us your brick walls\*

**Monday, 19 October: 1.00 pm—3.00 pm**

**Mako Room at the Papamoa Community Centre**

*For more info phone: Helen Riddell 027 222 1787*

*or Jan Saxton 07 544 4182*

\*(Please be aware this group is not about how to interpret DNA results/matches, as the Papamoa Branch of the NZSG runs a separate group to help with this—see below).

## DNA Support Group Bay of Plenty

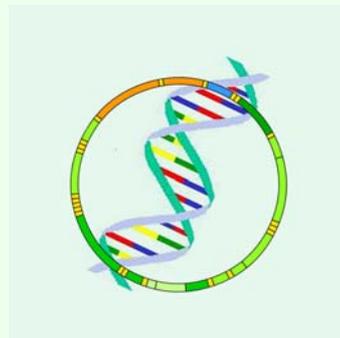
Do you need help interpreting your DNA results?

Next Meeting: **Monday 5 October 2.00 – 4.15 PM**

**Mako Room, Papamoa Community Centre:**

- \* **\$3.00 door charge**
- \* **BYO Tablet or Laptop**
- \* **Please wear your name tag**

Contact Betty Atkinson Phone 0274 475 448 or email: [betty.ra.atkinson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:betty.ra.atkinson@xtra.co.nz)



## Individual DNA Help: Friday 30 October 2020

In conjunction with Hands on Help at the Papamoa Library  
(on the last Friday of the month), Betty has two slots available:

- **10.00 am or 11.00 am**

**BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL**

Contact Betty Atkinson Phone 0274 475 448 or email: [betty.ra.atkinson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:betty.ra.atkinson@xtra.co.nz)

**NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 12 OCT 2020 AT 10.00 AM**

**AS THEY SAY, THERE ARE ONLY TWO CERTAINTIES IN LIFE: DEATH AND TAXES**

*And while we won't quibble over who said a version of it first:*

*Christopher Bullock (1716); Daniel Defoe (1726) or Benjamin Franklin (1789) —  
unfortunately it is true!*

**Funeral Director (and former Mayor of Tauranga), Greg Brownless will be talking to us so we'd like you to think in advance of any questions you have on the topic of the potentially very useful records that funeral directors hold.**

**Please email Shona MacRury with your questions:**

Email: [s.macrury@kinect.co.nz](mailto:s.macrury@kinect.co.nz)



## **Bits and Bobs**

### **Please Note:**

As the Tohora room will be used for General Elections Advance Voting, our **OCTOBER** meeting will be in the **AIHE** room which is at the far end of the corridor that runs beside the library

### **November Meeting: 'Our Women In World War Two'**

- ♦ Can you share a story about a woman in your family and the role she played in WW2? We would really like to have members contributing (not just the committee) - but if you're not comfortable presenting, we can have someone else do it on your behalf—or we can tell her story in the November newsletter

### **December Meeting:**

- ♦ As well as being our Christmas meeting as we wind up for the year, we would also like to explore how so many of us in the branch connect. It may be a blood relationship; having ancestors who arrived on the same ship or emigrated from the same village. Perhaps you or your ancestors lived in the same house as someone in the branch or worked in the same place. There are many ways we connect so start thinking ...