

Riccarton  
Branch

New Zealand Society of Genealogists

# NEWSLETTER



August 2020  
Vol. 35 No. 7

## NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 12 August 2020

The speaker for August is:

**Diane Ferguson**

whose topic is

**“Riccarton Primary School”**

Kia Ora e te whānau, I personally haven't had a lot of time to continue the family search, or to start creating the full picture, lately. However I managed to visit Turanga this week and was pleasantly surprised how much I could find in the hour I had. As more and more whakapapa is loaded to the net, we genealogists are able to piece together a puzzle that is truly rich and meaningful. The staff were busy helping others but they appeared to be passionate and willing to assist so I commend the trip, if you have the time (Tip - make sure your laptop is charged before you go). Lastly, I would apologise and use this as a reminder to all those on the magazine lists to check your boxes post Covid, as I had unfortunately stuck some in amongst my papers and then got busy at work. The mags are a great resource as part of your membership so please see Win to go on the distribution....and move them to the next person when you have finished. I look forward to seeing you all at the next meeting, safe and well. Be kind and careful. Lance

**Meetings:** 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of each month (Feb to Nov) at the Upper Riccarton Library, 71 Main South Road. Visitors are welcome.

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## THE CHRISTCHURCH FAMILY HISTORY EXPO

This exciting event is to be held on Friday-Saturday 14-15 August 2020 10am until 5pm at Turanga library in the Square on Ground Floor, Level 1 and Level 2: talks, exhibitors etc. The 50 minute sessions begin every hour from 10.30am finishing at 5.20pm on Friday and at 4.20pm on Saturday. Usually there are 3 concurrent sessions to choose from. Highlights include the first and last sessions each day which are webinars presented by overseas speakers: John Grenham from Ireland and Curt Witcher from USA.

Other interesting topics are: Skeletons in the Closet; Quick and Dirty DNA; Using Ancestry; Using Death Records; Research Your House; Who's Been Sleeping In My House. See library website for more details.

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### PAPERS PAST UPDATE

Two recent additions are:

- *Marlborough Press* 1860-61, 1865-1883, 1886 [this is a new title]
  - *Matamata Record* 1925-1939 [this extends the earlier issues which start in 1918]
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### FINDMYPAST UPDATE

Christchurch City Libraries members can only access FindMyPast for free on a computer within a library. New databases include:

- Surrey Baptisms, Marriages & Burials [from 100+ parishes]
  - Yorkshire Monumental Inscriptions [from 48 parishes]
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### MAGAZINES ROUND-ROBIN

Win Loach again reminds you that during this sometimes wet winter season it is important that you not only use waterproof protection for the magazines when passing them on (or posting them) but also please do telephone first to make sure that the intended recipient is not absent from home. If you are not already a member of the round-robin then phone Win at 338 4316 to join for one or both of *Family Tree* and *WDYT YA?* magazines.

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### ANCESTRY.COM: MORE GOOD NEWS

**Free access to Ancestry from home via the City Libraries website has once again been extended and is now available until Monday 31 August.**

Recent new databases uploaded include:

- Texas: Houston Historic Holywood Cemetery Records 1895-2008 [this consists of images of burial record cards with personal details of the deceased and often includes newspaper death notices too as a bonus]
  - Westminster London: Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1558-1812; Births & Baptisms 1813-1919; Marriages & Banns 1754-1935; Deaths & Burials 1812-1910.
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### REPORT OF JULY MEETING

Emeritus Professor Geoff Rice gave a presentation on 'Healthy Christchurch 1870-1910' which described the public health conditions. Christchurch had a Health Board from 1876 until 1886 then a gap until the Department of Health was established in 1901. Water works and sewage works were important facilities to combat diseases. The Council employed an Inspector of Nuisances. Geoff is currently compiling a listing of 19th century Christchurch medical practitioners to publish as a biographical dictionary.

**KEN RICE: PART ONE**



Harry Kenneth Lillington RICE (always known as Ken) was born on 9 July 1923 at Taumarunui. He was the younger son in the family of two sons and two daughters of Eric John Guthrie Rice and Dorothy Rice, née Lillington, whom I wrote about in the penultimate article [No. 49] in our series on the Centenary of World War One in the November 2018 issue of this newsletter.

The family moved to Auckland where Ken went to the Seddon Memorial Technical College and became a farm worker. Prior to enlisting in the Royal New Zealand Air Force on 6 December 1942, aged 19, he had completed 9 months of service in the Territorials as a member of the NZ Army Service Corps. He was first stationed at the Waipapakauri Aerodrome Defence Unit, with the rank of Aircrafthand and was allocated service no. 4216075. He was transferred to Whenuapai on 23 March 1943 and few weeks later, on 29 April, to New Plymouth where he was remustered as an Airman Pilot for training on 27 May 1943 followed by the No. 1 Elementary Flying Training School from 24 July. On 12 October 1943, he sailed to Canada for further training as part of the Commonwealth Air Training Scheme from Auckland on board the *Uruguay*.

The ship docked at Los Angeles on 26 October with Ken being one of 167 NZ airmen on their way to Canada. He spent about 9 months there training and gained his Pilots Badge and became a Flying Officer in April 1944.

In July 1944 he sailed to the UK and did advanced flying training. As from 1 January 1945 Ken was stationed at 132 Operational Training Unit based at East Fortune airfield in East Lothian, Scotland. He flew the Bristol Beaufighter aircraft, the same type of torpedo bomber as my father did. 132 OTU was part of 17 Group of Coastal Command. Nowadays there is an aviation museum at East Fortune where a surviving British Airways Concorde aircraft may be seen.

After 4 months there, Ken and navigator Aubrey John CLARKE, a fellow Kiwi, took off on a training flight after 11pm on the night of 2 May 1945 in Beaufighter TF.X NE813. This flight lasted several hours but at 2.30am on Thursday 3 May the plane veered off track at 1,300 feet and flew into a hill at Wester Dod on Stottencleugh farm, situated about 4 miles from Cockburnspath in Berwickshire.

Both Ken Rice and Aubrey Clarke lost their lives. Ken was still only 21 years old and his navigator was 23. Ken's logbook recorded that he had completed 371 hours of flying time. This was only one week before the end of the war against Germany in Europe.

The crash site is about 6 miles south of the coastal town of Dunbar, which is about 8 miles east of East Fortune. East Fortune is about 18 miles east of Edinburgh. About 3 miles south of East Fortune is the town of Haddington and it was here that Ken Rice was laid to rest.

In Memory of  
Flying Officer Pilot  
**Harry Kenneth Lillington Rice**  
4216075, Royal New Zealand Air Force who died on 03 May 1945 Age 21  
Son of Eric John Guthrie Rice and Dorothy Rice, of Mount Eden, Auckland City, New Zealand.  
Remembered with Honour  
**Haddington (St. Martin's) New Burial Ground**



Ken Rice was buried in Grave 32 Section E in the St Martin's New Burial Ground, south of the town centre. He is one of 48 war casualties buried there which include other NZ, Canadian and Australia pilots and navigators.

to be continued