

Newsletter



**Te Awamutu
Branch**

No. 286

September 2017



Te Awamutu Website: www.teawamutu.net/genealogy
New Zealand Society of Genealogists Inc:
www.genealogy.org.nz

Meetings are held at the **St John Ambulance Hall** on Palmer Street, Te Awamutu, at 7.30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month – February to December.

Visitors are most welcome. \$2 door charge for casual visitors.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 5th September. Photographs and what to do with them – digitising, cataloging, metatagging etc.

October Meeting: Tuesday 3rd October. FamilySearch – exploring the Wiki, Maps and other goodies.

Convenor: Sandra Metcalfe
Email: sandra@metcalfe.co.nz

Secretary: Christine Ball
Email: ash.chris@xtra.co.nz

Treasurer: Linda Howarth 871 7115
Email: blhowarth@xtra.co.nz

Newsletter: Robyn Taylor 871 7603
Email: robryntaylor@wwweb.co.nz

Club News!

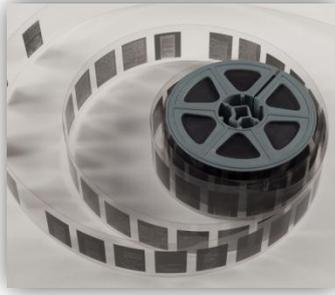
Welcome to the September 2017 newsletter.

A huge thank you goes to all of those who helped with the library display in the first week of August. The committee was thrilled at the outcome and plans to do something similar next year. As a heads up for Family History Month 2018, we are already planning a Land Research seminar for a weekend in August next year. We also plan to have another public display at the library. If you have ideas on ways to improve what we did this year then we'd love to hear from you. Please email your thoughts to Christine Ball at teawamutu@genealogy.org.nz Constructive feedback on anything we do, including ways to improve our monthly meetings, is always welcome.



Our September meeting will focus on a potpourri of useful tips and hints to do with photographs. A couple of our members (not experts but enthusiasts who are only one step ahead of most in their learning) will share their expertise in scanning, using meta tags, cataloguing, importing photos into family tree software programs and sites to find "out-of-copyright" photos on the internet. There will be a brief handout available covering the key points. Please feel free to bring your own devices to the meeting if you want to practice what you've learned.

You will remember that from August 31, 2017 microfilms from FamilySearch will no longer be available to order from Salt Lake City. This is to be celebrated because it means more exciting times ahead! From



September 1, films that have been ordered from Salt Lake City in the last five years, and not affected by copyright issues, will be able to be read in your own home via FamilySearch.org. By 2020, the remainder of the films in the vaults at SLC, not affected by copyright issues, will become available. A whole tranche of new records is due to be released in the next few days and that is a cause for celebration. At our September meeting Sandra will give us a quick overview of how to access these unindexed films. It will also be covered in more depth at our October meeting when the focus is once again on the treasures to be found in FamilySearch.org



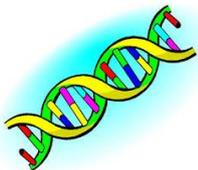
Family Research Centre, Panmure

Following our last highly successful outing, a further visit is planned for late October / early November, depending on demand. If you are interested please let Christine Ball know as soon as possible so we can work out a mutually suitable date. Options are, either the 28th October, the 4th November or 11th November.

Legacy Users' Group

Venue: 5 Toi Place, Rototuna, Hamilton
Contact: Bruce/Trish Cron. Email: brucecron@gmail.com, ph. 021 407 478
Sunday, **October 1st** from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

DNA Support Group Meeting



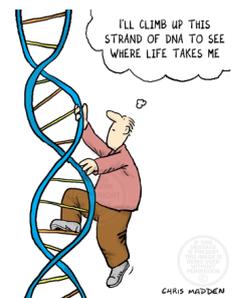
The next meeting will be on 3 September, 1pm-4pm at the St John's Ambulance Hall. The final DNA support group meeting for the year will be on Sunday 26 November (tbc) These support meetings are best suited to those who have already been tested and who now want to explore different ways of analysing their results.

For those who are new to DNA and the exciting possibilities it offers genealogists, Linda and Sandra are taking a beginners sessions at Te Kuiti on Sunday 17 September. You are most welcome to travel down with them if you wish to attend.

A common misconception about receiving DNA results is in thinking that the company will be able to give you a list of people and your exact relationship to them, and that's not the case. Results are not given in absolutes, they are based on the mathematical probability of how close a shared ancestor is to you and another individual within 25 generations, and it's up to you to do the research to figure out how you may be related.

Your data is only compared with the other people who used that specific company, and every new test that comes through that company is another potential match, but you can also download your raw DNA data and upload the results to the sites Ysearch.org (Y-DNA), Mitosearch.org (mtDNA), or GedMatch.com (atDNA), and this gives you a wider results base from all different companies.

The great thing about DNA testing is that the science and technology are still growing and expanding. It's only been within the last decade that we've been able to have this tool widely available.



FREE 18th century online resources

Sourced from *Who do You think You Are?* magazine. Issue: 128

London Lives 1690-1800

www.londonlives.org

Includes Old Bailey proceedings, workhouse records, hospital, guild and coroners' records

Locating London's Past

www.locatinglondon.org

Place names and Rocque's map of London, dated 1746

TNA Apprenticeship Registers 1710-1811

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Free to download and browse

Internet Library of Early Journals

www.bit.ly/bodleyILEJ

Almost 20 years of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Includes life events, bankruptcies, as well as promotions in the army, navy and the church

Scotland's Places

<https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk>

FREE access to Land Tax or Valuation Rolls, records of other taxes such as Window Tax, Male and Female servants' Tax and Carriage Tax

British Library India Office Records

<https://indiafamily.bl.uk/ui/lorIntro.aspx>

Free access to 300,000 births, marriages and deaths

The National Library of Ireland

www.registers.nli.ie

Free access to Catholic registers for all Ireland. Not all date back to the 18th century but some, including Dublin begin from 1740



Confirmation Bias

aka “making assumptions and reaching the wrong conclusion”

(adapted from the article “How to Avoid Genealogy Pitfalls” in the August 2017 Who Do You Think You Are Magazine)

When looking to overcome brick walls in your family tree, it is all too common to “think within the square” and try and find a solution that “fits. The temptation to grasp the most likely possibility is strong, simply “because it makes sense.” This is called “Confirmation Bias” and is the tendency humans have to seek out evidence that support our beliefs and theories. Instead, we tend to dismiss, or not look for anything that goes against our existing beliefs.

But if we are serious about our role as family historians, we should also expect that our research should stand up to critical scrutiny. We need to train ourselves to think outside the square, and to consider all possibilities, no matter how far-fetched they may seem.

There are 10 useful techniques that will help you overcome confirmation bias:

1. Work with other researchers who are tracing the same line.

- a. Be prepared to find some of your preconceived assumptions are incorrect.
- b. View being challenged as an opportunity, not a threat. It will either validate your research, or allow you to correct it if you are wrong. Either way, you win!
2. Systematically plot your findings in the form of a timeline or article.
 - a. Does your hypothesis make sense?
 - b. Have you followed the hatches, matches and dispatches trail?
 - c. Having a child when aged under 10 years old or over 50 was not common – despite what you may find on some Ancestry public trees!
3. Submit your findings to peers to critique.
 - a. Does what you've written stand up to independent scrutiny?
 - b. It is always useful to have a fresh pair of eyes look at your research
4. Contact other historians and seek their opinion about something you are not sure of, especially if is in their area of expertise
5. Stick to your guns. Search out evidence for whatever your gut tells you is most likely.
6. On the other hand, also gather evidence for improbable scenarios.
 - a. What other, more persuasive theories can you come up with that could be equally valid?
 - b. Pay attention to unexpected surprises. Look for further evidence that they could be right.
 - c. An idea may seem unlikely only because you don't fully understand the context of the period you are researching. Never assume anything!
7. Stop looking and try instead to understand the entire period where you've hit your brick wall.
 - a. Extend your research laterally.
 - b. Try writing a biography of a "brick wall ancestor" or a close relative of theirs.
 - c. At the very least, you will gain a much better understanding of how different family lines fit in and allow you to extend your research beyond your normal sources
8. Search for surname variants.
 - a. Use Surname Atlases to identify variants.
 - b. Note: Peter Fletcher has a library of surname dictionaries and is happy to answer any queries about the origin of your name and its variants)
9. Where a surname is not spelt consistently, use wild cards when searching online ('*' or '?') so that multiple names are included in the results.
 - a. Select search options to include surname variations, but with an exact match on the first name
 - b. Narrow your search down to specific parishes and try searching on just the first name in a defined parish and date range
 - c. Cross reference different online sources, eg use Ancestry, FindMyPast, FamilySearch and The Genealogist etc to look for the same person.
 - d. These often have different record sets, or in the case of records in common, the indexes may have been built differently
10. Where possible, view the original registers, copy images, registers, transcribed indexes and bishop transcripts
 - a. Build a picture of siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins. Search these as an alternative route to the target ancestor
 - b. Check potential matches to your person of interest. Follow up marriages, offspring, deaths, burial and census returns to see if they can be ruled out
 - c. Consider other records such as Poor Law records, wills, apprenticeship records etc

And above all, train yourself to think outside the SQUARE.