

Newsletter



**Te Awamutu
Branch**

No. 290

February 2018



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 most welcome. There is a \$2 door charge for casual visitors.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 6th February. Waitangi Day. Club members, Christine Ball and Mary Gadsby will be presenting to the club.

March Meeting: Tuesday 6th March. Rowan Miller from the museum will be speaking on 'Recording oral history'.

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

Editor: Robyn Taylor 871 7603
Email: roblyntaylor@wwwweb.co.nz

Club News!

Welcome to the February 2018 newsletter.

From Sandra

I hope you are feeling as refreshed and as energised as I am - although the 'Energiser Bunny' effect has to be put down to iron tablets and shots of vitamin B12 that I didn't realise I was lacking in!

A much needed month off work has seen me spending a lot of time in the local library - not only because of the quiet environment and free wifi, but because of the air conditioning! In between trips to Gisborne, Auckland and Palmerston North, had I spent my free time at home I would have done nothing but eat and sleep.

Instead, I have been spending a lot of time on FamilySearch playing with my Gillgren One Name Study and taking advantage of the recent release the Swedish Household Examination records, including the original scans. For those who have never explored these records, they are the equivalent of a mini census, updated every five years by the local Lutheran pastor and recording movements in and out of the parish, as well as births, marriages and deaths of local parishioners. These are a MUST for those with Scandinavian heritage.



Twenty years ago I wound my way through film after film looking at these same records. Now they pop up as record hints alongside names on the Gillgren branch of my tree on FamilySearch.

One of the biggest challenges with Scandinavian research is being able to identify the parish of birth of your ancestor before their name was formalised in the mid - late 19th Century. For example, my maiden name of Gillgren was derived from a small village called Gillstad, near Lidköping just south of Lake Vanern. My great grandfather (and his siblings) adopted the surname of Gillgren on moving from Gillstad to Stockholm in the 1870s. My great grandfather was baptised as Johan Andersson, his father was Anders Svenson. Anders father was Sven Pehrsson and Sven's father was Pehrs Svenson. And that was only on my paternal line! The same patronymic naming pattern applied to my great grandmother's side of the family as well.

Globally, the Swedish surname of Gillgren originates from 6-7 non-related lines, most of them taking their name from other small villages also starting with Gill, such as Gillberga. So as part of my one name study over the holidays I have been joining the dots on those non-related lines, as well as my own line. One of the greatest challenges for those with Scandinavian ancestry, especially those whose ancestors emigrated to another country, is bridging the gap between the New World and the Old World, and in particular to the parish they were baptised in. Hopefully my time on FamilySearch over the holidays will make it easier for others to now make those connections.

So if you have Scandinavian ancestry and have not yet explored the Examination Records on FamilySearch, then get started. You may be pleasantly surprised at what pops up. Note: MyHeritage also has an extensive collection of these Household Examination records on their website. You can view their records for free at a local Family History Centre, our nearest one being Templeview

February meeting

We have a "double dip" at our February meeting. Not only will Christine Ball present her "My Shetland Island Ancestors" but Mary Gadsby will do her "Hanright Ancestors" presentation she was originally scheduled for back in December.

March meeting

Rowan Miller from the museum will be talking to us about Recording Your Oral History. And of course there is a hidden objective behind having her as a speaker. Those of us involved with the Building History project are looking for help to assist in the recording of people associated with key buildings in town. So as well as benefiting yourself, we are hoping some of you will volunteer for this project. Let Sandra know if you are interested.

Transfer of fiche to Te Awamutu Museum

Linda and Bruce have now delivered the cabinet of fiche to the museum and they are now available for the public to view at the museum.



Charles Stevenson, farmer of Arohena

Born 1896, Waitati, Otago. One of 13 children born to Ann and John Stevenson. Fought in WW1, 22nd reinforcement, Otago Infantry Regiment

We have been contacted by a 90 year old Te Kuiti woman who has been cleaning out "The unfinished history of her step father, Charles Stevenson." As Charles is not a direct ancestor of her own children, she wants to find a suitable home for her research. She has passed it onto the branch on the understanding that we would find an appropriate home for it. Before we promote it in the NZSG magazine we are giving our own members an opportunity to claim this man if he is part of your family.

Upcoming EVENTS

Regional meeting – February 24th

The Te Awamutu Branch is hosting the Regional Meeting in the St John Ambulance Hall on Saturday 24th February from 10.00am until 2.00pm.

Helpers are needed to assist with setting up from 9.00am and members are asked to provide a plate please.

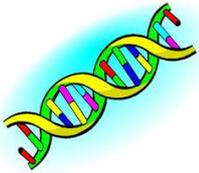
Our heritage building display, along with maps and an audio/visual presentation will also be on show.

Visit to the library at Waikato University

We have received an invitation to join South Waikato Branch NZSG at the university library along with other Waikato and Bay of Plenty groups. This is on the 17th February. Opening hours will be 11.00am until 6.00pm.

If you are interested in attending please let Christine Ball know before February 10.

DNA Support Group Meeting



There are three DNA support group meetings planned for 2018:

11th March, 10th June and 16th September

If you haven't yet been tested then now is a good time to get it done.

Legacy users' Group

Venue: 5 Toi Place, Rototuna, Hamilton

Contact: Bruce/Trish Cron. Email: brucecron@gmail.com, ph. 021 407 478

Sunday, February 4 from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Are you making the most of Church of England parish register resources?

Adapted from an article by Stuart A. Raymond in the January 2018 Family Tree magazine (www.family-tree.co.uk)

Originally introduced to help the landed gentry trace their descent and prove their right to property, the established church, the C of E has been required to keep records since the medieval period. While we are familiar with the usual birth, death and marriage registers, there is a wealth of other records that may help your research.

Increasing numbers of transcripts and indexes to parish registers are being digitised on websites such as <https://familysearch.org> (free) and subscription sites such as FindMyPast (<http://findmypast.co.uk>), The Genealogist (www.thegenealogist.co.uk) and Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk). FamilySearch also hosts the

International Genealogical Index (IGI) and although not comprehensive or error free, it is still a useful index of baptismal and marriage registers. Those who began their research before the days of the internet will remember that the IGI was the “go-to- getting-started” resource.

The C of E was also responsible for preserving transcripts of parish registers. These copies of the parish registers, known as **Bishop Transcripts** or BTs, were sent to the bishop every year and were preserved in diocesan registries. It is always worth comparing them to the parish registers to see if there are any divergences. They are also a useful substitute if the original registers have been lost. Their availability and location can be checked in Jeremy Gibson’s *Bishops’ Transcripts and Marriage Licences, Bonds and Allegations* (6th edition).

Not only did the church register marriages but it also exercised legal jurisdiction over marriage disputes and sexual matters. If your ancestors were guilty of fornication, refused to attend church or pay rates then they may appear in the church **ecclesiastical records**. The courts also heard disputes over matters to do with tithing, defamation and the allocation of seats in church. Broils about seating were the bane of bishops’ lives and the depositions made by both parties and their witnesses have been digitised. A vast collection for the Archbishopric of York for the period 1300-1858 is available on www.hrionline.ac.uk/causepapers

Death could be a costly business and **church warden accounts** often recorded payments for hiring the parish byre, ringing the knells, and/or digging graves. Legal jurisdiction was exercised not only over burials, but also the estates of those it buried. Death meant probate (and a potential source of parish income) so in the medieval period the church introduced the practice of making written wills in order to safeguard any legacies that might be made. For genealogists, the most useful document is the will, which is likely to name all the testator’s surviving children and spouse. Probate inventories list the goods of the deceased and provide an insight into our ancestor’s material lives. Executors and administrators (for those who died intestate) were also required to enter administration bonds in the probate court so they could be held to account.

Although the majority of wills were proved in the Archdeaconry courts. If the testator had goods in two archdeaconries then jurisdiction went to the diocesan Consistory court. The prerogative courts of Canterbury (PCC) and York (PCY) exercised supreme probate jurisdiction. These wills can be viewed at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/wills-1384-1858

Researching wills is also made easier by Findmypast’s database of Published Wills & Probate Indexes 1300-1858 (<http://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/england-and-wales-published-wills-and-probate-indexes-1300-1858>). This brings together numerous (but not all) will indexes and is the beginning of a project to digitise various will collections. Welsh wills have been digitised by the National Library of Wales where they can be freely downloaded (www.llgc.org.uk/discover/nlw_resources/wills)

Bishops also had responsibility for regulating a number of occupations and midwives, surgeons and school masters all required a bishop’s licence to practice. If your ancestors were members of the clergy, then check out the Clergy of the Church of England database 1340-1835 at <http://theclergydatabase.org.uk> which provides much of the biographical information required by genealogists. Ancestry also has a database of Crockford’s Clerical Directory 1868-1932 at <https://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/db.aspx?dbid=1548>. A fuller selection is available on a subscription site Crockford Online at www.crockford.org.uk

Unfortunately, not all parish records have survived, but if they have then they are well worth exploring in more depth. Most of the surviving records from the 16th century are copies made at the end of that century when the government decided that records ought to be kept on parchment rather than paper. More records survive from the 17th century, although the Civil War resulted in the destruction of many. There was a brief period between 1653-1660 when marriage became a civil matter and registers were kept by a lay official.

Cemetery's website will tell the odd stories of its 163-year history

Adapted from an article posted onto Stuff by Illya McLellan, January 24, 2018

Masterton's historic Pioneer Cemetery is getting a physical face-lift but also getting a website that will help researchers access information and read interesting and odd stories from the cemetery history.

Wairarapa Archive historian Gareth Winter said the plan for Masterton's 163-year-old Pioneer Cemetery was to create a website that gave access to raw data but also told some of the more interesting and odd stories from the cemetery's past.

"Over the years I have written a lot of articles about the strange stories behind the headstones at Pioneer Cemetery," Mr Winter explained.

"So we thought we would establish a more detailed site that tells some of the more oddball stories as well as data.

A group aims to give Masterton's Pioneer Cemetery a more thorough database and also a website with the interesting stories.

"Something that people might not know is that cemetery databases are generally the most popular part of NZ council websites, because of serious researchers, but also because of people looking for where loved ones are buried," said Mr Winter.

"We aim to make it so that people can contribute their own stories directly to the site."

The Pioneer Cemetery in Masterton is undergoing a refurbishment in the real world as well as being modernised online.

Roddy McKenzie, Trevor Martin and Roger Hoar formed the Pioneer Cemetery Preservation Group in 2014 and linked up with the Masterton District Council and Mr Winter in order to, not only beautify the cemetery but also try to stay in touch with history.

Mr Martin said there was interest in the cemetery from all over New Zealand and further afield.

And Mr McKenzie said it was a real community effort.

"We don't really have funding for any of it so the help of council and other groups is important," he said.

New Zealand Society of Genealogists general manager, Barbara Haughey said it made sense that council cemetery databases were popular because they were vital in gathering evidence but also helpful for people looking to pay respects.

"If someone has a death certificate one of the easiest ways to find out more about it is to access a council website so they can find the headstone and further their research and verify family histories," she said.

A lot of stories passed down were found to be untrue and more detailed digging found out the truth behind the tale.

"The New Zealand society of Genealogists has about 60 branches throughout the country that work on a local level to compile data, often in conjunction with councils, which helps make their cemetery databases more accurate," Ms Haughey explained.

"This information ends up coming back to the main office and strengthening the central database.

We have genealogists here who have been working 30 or 40 years.

They are the experts – they have an amazing knowledge of things," she said.

