

Hawkes Bay Earthquake
Tuesday 03 February 1931
10.46:47am



Hawkes Bay Earthquake

Commonly referred to as the
Napier Earthquake
but is more correctly the
Hawkes Bay Earthquake

How many actually died ?

31 March 1931 - official death toll
(including 15 deaths in hospitals) **260**

05 November 1931 - death toll **261**

1932 - two more deaths made official **261 or 263**

1931 – one death – hospital removal **262 or 264**

1934 - four more deaths made official **262 or 268**

1944 - one victim died from injuries received **269?**

How many actually died ?

1957 - New Zealand Disasters book **256**

1980 – ‘The Shock of ‘31 – The Hawkes Bay Earthquake’ book **258**

1984 – New Zealand Encyclopedia book **256**

New Zealand Disasters And Tragedies - On Line Memorial - Dedicated to the

256 (257) (258) (259) (261) (268)

people who lost their lives in the H Bay Earthquake



Now what ?

Collected all the names –injured and killed from every source possible

- newspaper reports
- books
- family trees
- cemetery records
- burial records
- memorials

Began a database though an old fashioned card index might have been easier



Now what ?

Compared the names collected against

- 1928 and 1931 Electoral Rolls
- Wises Postal Directories
- World War One Military Files
- United Kingdom records
 - census
 - BMD's
 - UK Outbound Passenger Lists
- Australian records – ancestry and certificates
- Scotland's People for certificates



Now what ?

What had others done ?

- Work compiled and researched by Irene Lister, Faye Sherriff and Bev Wallace for the Hawkes Bay Branch of the NZ Society of Genealogist March – June 1983
- Hawkes Bay Museum and Art Gallery
- Napier Library
- Mrs 'Hawkes Bay Genealogy' – Lily Baker
- got on the phone and/or email



Cemetery Records

- Used both burial records and headstone /monumental inscriptions - they can vary
- The ancestry cemetery database was an immense help – much simpler than running up and down rows and rows
- The 256 total included 161 in Napier, 93 in Hastings and 3 in Wairoa
- But what about the hospital deaths later ?



Cemetery Records

- Wairoa had three deaths
- Only two burials could be found ?
- An email to the Wairoa Council found that the Chinese greengrocer reported in newspapers as Lim Kit or Lim Kee was buried as Lim Ying.
- His headstone is in Chinese characters.



Cemetery Records

- Hastings – 93 deaths
- Two ‘unknowns’ buried 03 February 1931
- Four unidentified victims made official in 1934
- Emails to the Hastings Council corrected burial records against birth/marriage/death spellings as well as dates
- Death registration matched against the burial record and headstone if there was one



Cemetery Records

- Napier – 161 deaths – included Taradale, Greenmeadows, Westshore and Port Ahuriri
- Park Island, Old Napier and Taradale Cemetery were used for burials
- 13 unidentified victims buried at Park Island in the Community Grave – 8 later identified
- Five certificates purchased for ‘unknown’ deaths at Napier on the 03 February



Cemetery Records

- Five official missing persons in Napier
- Four of them appear to have existed and are traceable in other records
- However one does not appear to have existed at all - Ellen McEvery



The Hospital Deaths ?

- What about the hospital deaths
- Were they included in the death total – some, all or none ?
- Sent to Waipukurau, Palmerston North, Wanganui, Hawera and Wellington and possibly elsewhere
- Regular reports of condition recorded in newspapers



The Hospital Deaths ?

- Purchased numerous death certificates of 'possible' victims – those listed as being removed from earthquake zone to hospital and died within the next three years
- One victim - listed as serious 25 February 1931 – died 08 January 1933. Burial at Waipawa noted as victim of 1931 earthquake. Not recorded on Hawkes Bay Museum's Casualty List.



Help Needed

- Information on the casualties who died out of the area, sometimes dying much later.
- DEATHS – SKELTON - On March 3, 1931 at Wellington Hospital, from injuries in Napier earthquake, Henry Skelton, of Taradale, Napier (65th Regiment) father of Mrs. Clover, Onehunga, and Mrs Harpham, Honolulu; aged 91 years.



How Many ?

- Still not confirmed on the total deaths from the Hawkes Bay earthquake
- An approach has been made to Hon. Peter Dunne as Minister of Internal Affairs
- Christchurch - as of 8 September 2011, New Zealand Police had formally identified 177 deceased, and released the names of all 181 victims. Four victims could not be formally identified



Mystery Solved

- Sister Ignatius of St Joseph's Convent School, Greenmeadows was killed in the collapse of the building
- She was 24 years old and was also recorded as Mary Walsh or Welsh
- Her father was thought to be a farmer at Dannevirke



Mystery Solved

- A Roman Catholic Walsh was buried in the Dannevirke Settler's Cemetery – Barbara Lumsden Walsh died 1909 aged 33 years
- A check of the marriages found she had married James Walsh in 1901 (née Pratt). Papers Past showed they had married at St Patrick's Church, Masterton
- A check of the births of children for a Barbara Walsh showed
1907/2947 WALSH Mary Deeley
Barbara Lumsden James



Mystery Solved

- Mary Deeley Walsh's birthdate was 15 January 1907
- She did not appear to have married or died as Mary Deeley Walsh.
- An email was sent to Catholic Archives who put me on to the Religious Order of Our Lady of the Missions



Mystery Solved

- They had quite a bit on Sister Ignatius but knew very little about her life before joining the Sisters.
- They knew her father was Mr J Walsh of Dannevirke, and that she had died at the Greenmeadows Convent School
- One thing they did have was that Sister Ignatius birthdate was 15 January 1907



Mystery Solved





Some Names

ANISY Antonio (Bodey)

Also recorded as ANNISY, AINSLEY, ANISY,
HENNESSEY and Anisy BODDEY

Birth registered as Antonio ANISY born 31 Mar 1909
Greymouth – son of Assad and Eva Marion (Mary)
ANISY

Attended St Bede's, Christchurch as
Bodey Anthony ANISY

From 'Faith of Our Fathers: The History of St Bede's
College 1911-2011.



Some Names

EVERS-SWINDELL Arthur Wilfred Denys

Also recorded as Denis/SWINDELL

Born 1913 – son of Arthur and Felicia Octavia Marie Evers-Swindell (née Heaton) of New Plymouth.

Sibling of Garry Owen (1915), Felicia Alice Marianne (1917) and Frederick Hornby (1919 – KIA 1943)



Some Names

ELTRIDGE Martha Ann (Mrs (née AYRES)

Also recorded as ETHERIDGE and ELTHERIDGE

Born 1883 Connington, Hampshire, England to Henry
and Sarah Ann Ayres (née Minney)

Married Owen John (Piggott) Eltridge 1909 at
Huntingdon, Huntingdonshire, England

Arrived Sydney NSW in 1912 on board *Zealandia*

Mother of Gladys (1910 UK), Gertrude 1913 (Vic,
Aus), Dora 1916 (NZ), Frank (c1919 NZ) and Elsie
(c1920 NZ)



Some Names

WILLIAMS Lydia Catherine (Miss) (Kate)

Born 07 April 1841 Manutuki – said to be the first white child born in Poverty Bay.

Daughter of Bishop William and Jane Williams (née Nelson).

Bishop Williams was the first Anglican Bishop of Waiaapu

Kate Williams, with two sisters, conducted the Hukaroro School in Napier, for many years

QUESTIONS?

