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**KAPITI BRANCH N.Z.S.G.  
New Zealand Society of Genealogists  
53 Donovan Road, Paraparaumu Beach 6010**

Meetings held at Paraparaumu Public Library  
Rimu Road, Paraparaumu

4th Thursday of months January to November at 7.30 p.m.

*-As this is the Public Library's late night, our section upstairs is open from 7 p.m. until the meeting starts, for members to access our Branch books*

**August 2003**

PROGRAMME Aug. 28th

Sherwood

Young -"The Dictionary of N.Z. Biography" - Police & Criminal Interest

**NOTICES**

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS Beverley Atkinson, Rosaleen Bailey, Steven Bishop and Diana Marvel).  
Membership now stands at 118.

WELLINGTON CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT WAR (WWI) A conference 'Zealandia's Great War' will be held at the National Library Auditorium from 7th to 10th November 2003. It will immediately precede the burial of the New Zealand Unknown Warrior on 11th November. Among the speakers will be Professor Hew Strachan (the Chichele Professor of the History of War), Professor Annette Becker (University of Paris/Hisorial de last Grande Guerre), Professor Trevor Wilson (University of Adelaide) and a range of New Zealanders. John Wilson (Wellington) *Thanks to Hutt Valley Branch NZSG June 2003 newsletter* LEGACY COMPUTER PROGRAMME For any of our members who use this genealogy programme, but are not members of the Kapiti Genealogy Computer Group, you may be interested to know that Legacy users in this Group would like to form a special interest sub-section See Gerald Twiss for details.

**A BRIEF LOOK AT GERMAN HISTORY**

Germany, as we know it today, has changed considerably over the centuries At one time much of it was part of the Holy Roman Empire under Charlemagne. Alsace-Lorraine changed from French to German rule and back to French then German and finally back to French again. Similar changes occurred throughout history in the northern parts of Poland, involving Poland, Prussia, Russia and Austria. The Baltic region of Pommern wavered between Prussia, Sweden, Denmark and Poland, while Holland, Belgium, France, Denmark and Spain vied for other smaller duchies. Austria was a part of the Northern German Confederation which was formed in 1815, but after its defeat by Prussia, another member, it pulled out and has remained a separate nation ever since, apart for a short period in WWII. So you can see that looking for local records and certificates of births, deaths or marriages can involve much detective work. One record could state the person sought was bom in Austria, another, for the same person could give it as Germany or Prussia or even, perhaps, it would appear under the name of the principality or duchy ruling at that particular date. As the Kingdom of Prussia expanded, a period of colonisation took place, with farmers and artisans moving away from the overpopulated areas to the newly acquired territories. Sometimes soldiers who had helped to conquer these lands stayed and married local girls. Such changes in population cause more problems, as rarely did the old records give the towns of origin of the new settler apart from a vague reference to a soldier's regiment, or the notation 'colonist'. This is not the case for most French Huguenots, whose origins were, in the main, recorded.

With each alteration to borders came changes in customs, records, language and religion, causing problems to the researcher. When Denmark controlled Schleswig and parts of Pommern, the patronymic naming system was used, with the addition of son; sometimes occupational names became the surname; perhaps the locality of a person's birthplace was used; or even physical features/personality became the surname. Then wars fought on German territory meant many churches suffered from fire and bombardment and their records, consequently, destroyed.

However, until about 1800 many people were strictly limited by a class system: princes and nobles at the top, ecclesiastics, scholars and scientists in the second, craftsmen and merchants were bound by guilds and bonded farmers and their families in the lower classes. These last were not able to buy their freedom, but, in times of war, they distinguished themselves, their masters might make them freemen. The subject of a prince had to share his religion, except in the Electorate of Saxony where Protestants were allowed to remain so when their Elector, Augustus the Strong, elected King of Poland, converted to Catholicism. But after Friedrich III, who belonged to the Reform Church, became king in 1797, he decreed that this form of religion, although in numbers it was smaller than the Lutheran movement, become the State religion. In April 1834 Lutheran ministers petitioned the King asking for religious freedom, but this was refused and severe penalties were imposed on those who did not conform. At this stage Lutherans seriously considered migration as an alternative, with the prospect of freedom of worship.

Source: *THE FAMILY HISTORY SERIES "How to Trace your German Ancestors"*

## FROM HERE & THERE

Found in the Palmerston North Branch Newsletter- "British Aristocrats More Red-Blooded than Blue". According to Burke's Peerage and Baronetage, almost half are bastards or have cuckoldry in their genes, despite claiming untainted pedigrees stretching back a thousand years. Reuters columnist, Will Hardie wrote in the 106th edition of this august publication that illegitimate lords and ladies will be listed for the first time. Apparently forty per cent of hereditary peers were born out of wedlock, were not sired by their legitimate father, or are descended from bastards, the Editor-in-Chief, Charles Moseley said. The entire article can be found at: <http://webcrawlernews.excite.com/news/r/990517/18/odd-aristocrats>

Did You Know? That until 1922, Ascension Island was technically a Royal Navy Ship HMS Ascension? A small amount of information is given should you wish to do research in this area. (From Family History Monthly, March 2003) [Thanks again, Palmerston North]

Australian newspaper digitisation These archives of the Port Phillip Herald - forerunner of the Melbourne Herald Sun, Australia's largest daily newspaper, are now available online, up to 1880. Another 20 years information will be added in the next couple of months, bringing the online archive up to the Federation of Australia in 1901. Website: <http://portphiUipherald.archiyepublisher.cpm> Click on the link to search.

From Wellington The National Library is building up its collection of censuses of English Counties on CDs. It now has the following:- 1841 Durham, Kent, Lancashire, Norfolk, Northumberland, Yorkshire. 1861 Dorset, Lincolnshire, Middlesex and Nottingham. It also has the 1851 Dublin City Census

## NOTES FROM THE recent REGIONAL MEETING in LEVIN

1. Tim Fletcher, Operations Manager for Identity Services, will be speaking to the Wellington Branch meeting on Wednesday, 25th August 2003 at 7.30 p.m. Short notice, I know, but is anyone interested in going down for it? It will be in the Connolly Hall, Guildford Terrace off Hill Street, Wellington.
2. Note for NZSG Members! Please read your latest "*The Genealogist*" which explains the increase in subscription rates in the President's Report - the last increase was in 1996
3. The NZSG President met with the Registrar of BDM the day before the fees were lowered (slightly) Identity Services will be putting their index on the InterNet and are setting up a Project Team which will include John Yarrell, who is the NZSG WebMaster
4. Workshops/Lectures/Courses on genealogy have been held in the Family Research Centre, Auckland. The good news is that NZSG is currently looking at ways and means of bringing some of these SOUTH OF THE BOMBAY HILLS !!

## A special note from the Convenor

We have only two months to go before our October Annual General Meeting and election of officers. This will be an important event, as many of the current committee members will be retiring then, and it will be time for some new blood. Please feel free to put your name forward for nomination. Remember - no committee = no branch.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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