

Word and Light

St John's Anglican Parish, Otumoetai



Theme: Family History

Pentecost 2020

About this Magazine

This Magazine is called *Word and Light* because our parish church is dedicated to St John the Evangelist. At the beginning of the Gospel of John, there are many powerful images. Two of these are *Word* and *Light* and they are woven together. Jesus as the *Word* of God echoes the story of creation. Jesus, the *Light* of the World, is the one who shines in the darkness. We hope that the words and images in this magazine will bring some light to your life.



Themes for Word and Light

The theme for the next edition will be **Music**. Photos will be welcome. Please send your contributions to Lynda, the Parish Administrator, or the Vicar **by 22 June**. Remember that, to keep readers' attention, your articles should not be too long.

A theme for our July/August magazine will be *Tales of Winter—the Good, the Bad & the Ugly*. You can send your contributions any time. We will send another reminder in late June.



Mrs. Jones got a little too used to watching online worship from home.

Vicar's Voice

Dear Friends

This edition of our Magazine makes for fascinating reading. There are some wonderful stories here of how several of us came to be in New Zealand and our forebears before us. I know, too, from conversations that others of you have interesting stories too.

I can see that there has been a great deal of research and story telling over the years. Many of you have made connections with current members of your families in other parts of the world – as Sue Genner says, family history is about connection and that's what the church family is about too.

Pentecost is the ultimate celebration of the church family – it celebrates both the Holy Spirit and the Christian Church. On the fiftieth day of Easter, the Holy Spirit is sent by God to empower the Church to perform the mission which the risen Christ entrusted to it. The risen Lord is no longer present to the Church in the body of his flesh; the Church is now to be the new body of Christ, filled with his life through the gift of the Spirit and so we are called to live out what we proclaim.

We have had a somewhat unusual family life as a church for the past two months or so. We have kept our connections, however, worshipping via Zoom and talking on the telephone. We have supported each other in many ways.

All being well, we will be able to meet again to worship in our church building before long. That will be good for all of us, especially as we will be able to share the sacrament of Holy Communion. We will be reunited in a family celebration.

With every blessing

Sue



George Death 1831 - 1910 by Helen DÁth

My great grandfather George Death was the second son of George Gooch Death and Mary Ann Sturgeon, born at Rattlesden, Suffolk on Friday 3 June 1831. Old George was a butcher, and a small land owner.



Mainly due to the Great Agricultural Depression in the 1860s-70s, over 200,000 agricultural labourers fled their villages for the colonies. Though it must have been a very difficult decision to leave family and friends and their homeland, my forefathers were very wise to emigrate when they did. Their agricultural background and education stood them in good stead. They were not afraid of hard work, were innovative and adventurous; they were canny with money and seemed to have a natural bent for administration.

Besides my great grandfather George, four of his brothers, his parents, two uncles and their families and an aunt, all emigrated to New Zealand, but all on different ships at different times. George had a rough voyage. He sailed on the *Hastings*, departing from London 4 June 1856, the day after his 25th birthday. The 596 ton vessel carrying 51 passengers, encountered boisterous weather with considerable damage. They put in to the Cape for repairs and finally arrived in Wellington after a 132 day passage, on 14 October. George then joined his elder brother Henry to work on his farm at Waiwhetu, near Lowry Bay.

On 10 December 1857 he married Philipi Jane Poad, second daughter of Thomas Poad and Sarah Runnalls from Callington, Cornwall. The Poads had arrived on the third ship to emigrate to New Zealand – the *Duke of Roxburgh* in January 1840.

As were the rest of the family, George and Philipi were prolific breeders and had 14 children! The first three were born at Waiwhetu. Then life became much more interesting!

At the time of his marriage, George was employed by brother Henry as an omnibus keeper – they were always very close and worked together in partnership for some years. The Omnibus was a coach driven by horses and ran between Taita and Wellington. During this time, George followed the work on the construction of the Hutt/Wellington railway. It is reputed he sold sly grog to the railway workers earning the name of Devil Death!



Henry also owned a hotel in Manners Street named *Coach and Horses*. In the photo it's the centre building with the long roofline – two buildings away from Perrett's Corner. This was almost on the waterfront in those days! In 1864 George took over the hotel which he administered for the next three

years. Two more children were born there, including my grandfather Harry. While Philipi was occupied with pregnancies and a growing family, George organised everything else – he personally did all the buying, down to the linen and kitchen crockery, and even took care of the children's clothes!

Then – disaster! Family stories included the scandal which resulted in George leaving the hotel. We were told he had a misunderstanding with some soldiers when the constabulary had to be called in. Years later, I found this substantiated report in *Old Wellington Hotels* (by Pat Lawlor) – “*The Coach and Horses – this was in Manners Street in the very early days. The only detail on record is that an Irish regiment of the time took umbrage over some alleged wrong done to them by the proprietor. They retaliated by smashing the windows of the hotel and doing other damage*”.

A year later (1865) found both George and Henry farming in the Rangitikei. Most of the land was still a wilderness covered with bush, scrub and flax. George persevered and put his land under cultivation, making a name for himself with his success.

By 1884 he had amassed 1,380 acres, then worth £6,500, as well as sawmills and threshing plants! For fifteen years the family lived in the Upper Tutaenui district and named their home *Pine Park*.

In 1885, George sold that property and moved to *Lake Farm* at Waverley. The beautiful old home has fifteen rooms and was recognised as one of the finest residences between Wanganui and Hawera. I have visited this lovely place several times over the years – and was shown all over the house. My father was born there in 1902. George had purchased several other farms along the coastline which he left to his sons to run. During his years in Rangitikei and Taranaki, George devoted much of his time to public affairs – County Council, Road Boards, School Committees, and as a Justice of the Peace.

In 1901 George changed direction and purchased 9,000 acres in the Waikato known as Hora Hora Estate (near Karapiro). This was also handed over to some of the boys when George and Philipi retired in Auckland – to 86 Dominion Road – now part of a motorway. He died 8 June 1910 from “Epithelionia of the bladder” (ie cancer).

What an astounding achiever! 9,000 acres – a far cry from 45 acres in Suffolk in 1856!



What's in a Name? Or a Load of Old Cobblers

by Graham Toomer

“TOOMER” Occupation : the TOOMER: “TOOM” to take wool off the cards. Of St OMER.

My Father: Donald Lancelot TOOMER

St Omer was a monk sent to the Pas De Calais on the River Aa between Calais and Dunkerque (Dunkirk) in the 7th century to mend the Heathen ways of the locals who had been slipping back and neglecting their religious duties. He worked hard and gained the respect of the locals building many small Churches in the area and an Abbey at Sithu which became St Omer. The area was all swamps and marsh so he and his followers drained them and established

gardens to provide food for the Abbey. These have been maintained to this day making the region a major market gardening centre.

With the S dropped off the front, St Omer became Tomer just as St Aubin became Tobin, St Edmund became Tidman and poor St Audrey became Tawdry.

Over now to Somerset/Dorset (part of old Wessex) where “Toomer Farm” came to exist just out of Henstridge between Shaftesbury and Sherborne. Henstridge gets a mention in the Domesday book. In 1066 when Harold got done over by Willie the Conq all the lands in the area were confiscated and doled out to all his mates as reward for backing the winner and someone from St Omer got the bit now called Toomer Farm. It is still there today as a working farm and B&B.



In 1633 an article written about Toomer farm states that Richard De Tomer’s children John and Ediith died without children. Tomer came by Alice their Aunt and heir, in marriage right unto William Carent whose posterity at this day own Toomer (note the change in spelling). The Carents were wealthy land and London property owners but disappeared probably due to the Plague and the Great Fire of London. The farm has not been in Toomer hands since. The transition from Tomer to Toomer is a result of the dialect of the area at the time. There is a town just west of the Salisbury plain and south of Bath called “Frome” – it is pronounced Froome, thus Tomer became Toomer.

My earliest recorded relly is my Great Great Great Grandfather Gabriel Toomer (born 1752 in Glastonbury). He and all the family following him were bootmakers (cobblers). My G G Grandfather Henry brought three of his sons including my G Grandfather Ephraim to New Zealand on the ship Caroline Coventry in 1869 and settled in Christchurch.

Henry Toomer and sons set up in the boot manufacturing business by 1872 and were exporting by 1874. In 1877 they reorganised into the Excelsior Steam Boot Factory. They won a contract tender to supply 40 pairs of boots to the Fire Brigade but that didn't do them any good as the factory burnt down shortly thereafter. In 1878 they built "Toomers large boot factory of suitable and boldly conceived design" situated in Lichfield Street. They employed between 70 to 100 workers. This building was still standing after the Christchurch earthquakes but was structurally unsound and had to be demolished.

Henry set up the Toomer Factory Brass Band supplying instruments and uniforms. This later became the Toomers Excelsior Brass Band and later the Skellerup Woolston Champion Brass Band. He and his sons became variously JPs, City Councillors and Presidents of Bowling Clubs. They were benefactors of many clubs and schools donating prizes and sponsoring competitions. New Zealand went into depression in the 1880s and the Toomers went bust. The sons including Ephraim did get back into the boot business in the 1890s but by the early 1900s had had too many parties and high life and were hit by workers strikes throughout the boot making industry. They all went bankrupt.

My Grandfather Charles Oscar moved up to Wellington in the early 1900s and opened a Shoe Store at Miramar Junction across the road from the old Rongotai Airfield. I think I was about 7 when Dad and I walked across the road and he got us a ride in a Tiger Moth. Mum didn't know about it until we got back. The new Wellington airport was built about 10 years after that.

The boot trade virtually stopped with my Grandfather due to change from boots to shoes as streets became paved and less muddy, and the importing of shoes from England. My father had learnt the trade in the shop as a boy but there was no future in it so he and his three brothers all went into trades, my father as a Fitter and Turner. He always had leather in his shed at home and repaired all my family's shoes.

THE MURPHY SIDE

My Mother: Kathleen Zita MURPHY

On my mother's side the earliest recorded relly is William John Murphy of County Cork Ireland, Farmer. That's it!! No record of his birth, death, marriage, wife's name!!!! He was my G G Grandfather.

My G Grandfather was John Murphy (very unusual name in Ireland?) – born in Cork 1836. He came to New Zealand in 1856 aged 20. He married Elizabeth Hodder in 1865. John was a farmer near Featherston in the Wairarapa for 66 years. The road they lived on was called Murphys Line – he was well known and respected in the community. They had, believe it or not, 14 children of which only twins born 1887 died within a year. John and Elizabeth's fourth born was my Grandfather Thomas Henry Murphy who married Hellar (Ella) but known as Lily Trass. The Trass family owned two large sheep farms near Masterton – and still do. Thomas (also a farmer) and Lily had seven children and my mother was born in Manaia, south Taranaki where they were farming at the time. They also farmed at Cheltenham, north of Feilding ,but retired to Wellington where Dad and Mum met. They moved to Lower Hutt where I was born and there met Mary. Nuff Sed.

We decided after driving through Cork in Ireland on a tour that we wouldn't try to find any rellys of our John Murphy. Every second business was MURPHY Butcher, MURPHY Transport, MURPHYS PUB (of course), J MURPHY Baker etc etc. On that same tour we were having dinner in our hotel in Killarney and were talking to the waitress who asked if we had any Irish connection. Oh yes I said my Mother was Kathleen Murphy. She replied well I am Kathleen Murphy too. Beware, beware they are everywhere.



A War Time Romance by Brenda Harrison

My Dad joined the air force in World War 2 and became a bomber pilot stationed in Britain and other places. On his leave periods Dad and his friend Jack would fly over to Northern Ireland which was neutral territory in the war. One night they were walking along the

darkened streets of Coleraine in Northern Ireland and literally bumped into my Mum and her aunty who were going for a walk. Dad asked them if they knew of a place that sold hot chocolate. The two women took them to a local café and the rest as they say is history. Both men later became engaged – Dad to Mum and Jack to her aunty. Sadly Jack was killed in the war and Mum’s aunty never married.

The photo of Ryan and me was taken in the exact spot where Mum and Dad’s engagement photo was taken after Dad proposed.



They returned to New Zealand on a troop ship after the war and Mum became a New Zealander which she said she never regretted. I was their first born and Dad said I was named Brenda because he remembered looking over a bridge one day while serving in the Middle East and a truck towing a tanker had my name in large letters on the side of the tanker.

Friendships Across the Years by Mary Toomer

Carole Lindsay and I had been friends in Guiding for over twenty years before we found out that our great grandmothers, Maria and Eliza Woolley, were sisters.

Samuel Woolley had intended to emigrate to Canada along with his wife, Maria, his five daughters and two sons. However arriving at the London Docks he found there was no immediate sailing so was directed to the 767 ton sailing ship “Ajax” leaving for New Zealand on the 5 September 1848. On arrival at Port Chalmers, Otago on 8 January 1849 they were separated from their fellow passengers and directed to a stockade where they were left to fend for themselves as they were English and the other immigrants had been sent out to settle by the Lay Association of Scotland. Eventually Samuel and

family went by long boat up the coast to Waikouaiti where they were carried through the surf to the beach by the Maoris. At first Samuel worked for other settlers but by the time he died in 1890 he owned the Railway Station Hotel and a number of properties in the area.

Samuel's daughter, Eliza married Thomas Allcock on 3 September 1863 and they ran an accommodation house and sold meals and bread to the miners who were on their way to the Dunstan gold mines. Their daughter, Clara (my grandmother) married William Mudge on 11 June 1902. Clara and William had met whilst Clara was riding her horse on Waikouaiti beach and William was on a day trip from Dunedin.

William's father, also named William, had arrived in New Zealand from Tavistock, Devon in 1874 and set up business as a bespoke tailor with up to 10 staff making clothes for sailors and uniforms for ship officers. William's fiancé, Priscilla Roach, arrived 2 years later from Lanlivery, Cornwall and they were married a week later on 6 February 1876. Their son William also became a tailor and in 1904 went to England to gain his qualification as a bespoke tailor. While there he spent a lot of time with his grandmother, Priscilla's family and with his cousin, Silvanus. Unfortunately after that the contact was lost.

When my parents, Jean and Silvanus Gordon Mudge MVO (Member of the Royal Victorian Order) were on their big OE in 1964 father inquired at the Lanlivery Post Office if there was any one in the area with the name Roach. The Post Mistress suggested they put a notice on the notice board. Later that day Meta and her daughter Margaret arrived at the place my parents were staying. Meta was the granddaughter of Charlotte, Priscilla's sister. A friendship was formed and Meta and my father wrote for some time.

Margaret and I also started writing to one another and have been for more years than Margaret and I care to remember. While staying with Margaret and her husband David they took us to where the Roach family had lived and also where they worshipped at Lanlivery. David took us on a walking tour of Lostwithiel, an ancient

town, near Lanlivery, first chartered in 1198. A small brass band was playing and it transported us back in time. When we got back to the house we told Margaret that we had seen a place for lease and we thought that when it ran out we would take over the lease.

Margaret got very excited at this until we told her that the engraved stone on the building stated that “Walter Kendal has the lease for 3000 years from 29 September 1652”. Graham reckons when Margaret and I get together we never stop talking so perhaps the lease would not have been a good idea even if it was viable!

And then we have the Craig family. My maternal grandfather, Samuel Craig, came out with his brother Robert from Ayrshire, Scotland arriving in Port Chalmers in 1906. Another brother, John arrived in 1912. Samuel was a gardener who had done his apprenticeship in Stirling, Scotland. He eventually moved to Christchurch and married my grandmother, Ellen Mary Reid (always known as Nellie). Great-grandmother, Jeanie Craig, declared she had given three sons to New Zealand so the youngest son, Hugh never came out. My mother, Nellie Jeanie McGill (Jean) Mudge was a prolific letter writer and would spend most Sunday afternoon writing to her many cousins in Scotland. Cousin Jean in Greenock had a daughter, Elizabeth who was a Guide so I started writing to her and in 1987-88 Elizabeth came out to stay with us for five weeks. We had huge fun as my sister, Lesley and family from New Plymouth also came for a week and every day had a theme, ie: Scottish day and, New Zealand day. The first day Elizabeth was here we spent the afternoon helping load tents on a truck heading for the Guide Jamboree – Elizabeth felt quite at home!

Another cousin my mother wrote to was Nancy and we have made great friends with her daughter, Ann and her husband Alan. Their



son, Nick came to stay first and later brought Beckie. Ann and Alan have stayed with us a number of times including a surprise visit for our 50th wedding anniversary. We have visited them in Congleton and then in Appleton, England and have

enjoyed wonderful walks together on the moor and dales and a hilarious day getting lost in the maze at Chatsworth. We have also attended both their daughter, Gillian's wedding and Nick and Beckie's. When we got the group photo from Nick's wedding we could name 36 people – not bad for two people from the colonies!!

The Woolley, Allcock and Clara and William Mudge families all worshipped at St John's Anglican Church, Waikouaiti and are buried in the graveyard there. The Bishop's Chair in the church is dedicated to Thomas Allcock.



All these families have three things in common – a faith, community commitment and a love of family. Carole, Margaret, Ann and I all have grandchildren the same age. I would love to think with modern technology they too will carry on the family friendships that have added such a great dimension to Graham and my lives.

Keeping it in the Family by Beryl Dent

My Great Grandmother started the Mothers Union in the old hometown. She lived till well into her nineties. One of her daughters, my Father's mother took over from her. She also lived well into her nineties. At her funeral she left the church under MU banners!

I kept the family tradition by being NZ Mothers' union president in the 1990s. I'm still a lone member.

The Turbotts and the Turners

by Evan Turbott & Rosemary Turner-Waugh

Evan's forebears arrived in Auckland's Waitemata Harbour in 1865 on the emigrant ship "Ganges" after a 92-day voyage from Cobh, then named Queenstown in County Cork. We were farm

labourers, almost certainly illiterate, living and working in and around the village of Clogher, County Tyrone, in Ireland. James and Catherine Turbott made the journey with their already large family of children, settled and farmed in the Tuakau/ Pukekohe area and lie buried at the Alexandra Redoubt, a local landmark and one-time military bastion for the securing of British control of the Waikato River waterway.

The Ganges' passage from Ireland to New Zealand, and the ship itself, make notorious history. The vessel had made one earlier emigration trip here, carrying English immigrants from an English port. This was an unremarkable voyage accompanied by a predictable number of passenger deaths (usually 1 or 2) but the experience of my people (Evan's) was to be very sadly different. For some reason or another the ship was loaded with twice the number of passengers it had carried before and illness caught hold in the cramped and airless conditions. The first death occurred before the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope was reached and human loss continued unabated until anchor was dropped at Auckland. Of the 474 government assisted people on board 54 children and 2 adults had died, mainly from bronchitis and whooping cough.

This was a scandal even in those tough times. The NZ government of the day carried out an investigation, as did the authorities in London, and as consequences the master and his medical officer never sailed again and the ship was taken out of the emigration service.

My (Evan's) grandfather was the last of the long line of Catherine's and James' children. He was born in New Zealand which makes me a third generation New Zealander. I have my grandfather's Maori phrasebook published in 1908. Not only my people but many others of the Ganges survivors settled in the Pukekohe area and when a Ganges reunion was organised just a few years ago (luncheon and speeches at the Pukekohe RSA) Rosemary and I, along with one of my brothers and his wife, joined another 350 happy and fairly Irish NZers in remembrance.

Rosemary is a fourth generation New Zealander. Her ancestors John and Mary Turner arrived significantly earlier than Evan's. They were each 19 years old, from Loch Fyne in Scotland, and sailed on the ship the Bombay Merchant out of Glasgow, reaching Port Nicholson (Wellington Harbour) after 113 days at sea. It is recorded that a church service of thanksgiving was held the moment the ship's company and passengers set foot on the Petone Beach. One can imagine such a service being held upon each ship's arrival and that the thanksgiving would have been heartfelt indeed. One new New Zealander on the beach at Petone was moved to write:

“A land whose beauties importune the Briton to its bowers;
To sow but plenteous seeds and prune luxuriant fruits and flowers.
Cheer up! Cheer up! Your course then keep with dauntless heart
and hand; And when you've ploughed a stormy deep then plough a
smiling land.”



Family History: what's it all about? by Sue Genner

I am one of four children. My maternal grandmother died when my mother was only 8 years old. Both of my paternal grandparents died when my father was 13 and finally my maternal grandfather died when my eldest sister was a baby approximately 4 years before I was born. As Dad was English my early experiences of 'family history' were at occasional extended family gatherings with Mum's side of the family, the Martins. She was one of eight children and when her mother died the children went to the Anglican Children's home. Her family had moved around a lot both before and after she was born so there was no one place that seemed strongly associated with Mum's family. At those Martin whanau gatherings, after some imbibing my uncles would take great delight in topping each other's stories of 'life in the home'. It wasn't quite Monty Python's 'when I were young' sketch but you get the idea...

In spite of the very limited family history I had or perhaps because of it I always had an interest in it and played with doing the family tree. I was fifty before I made it over to the UK. Dad also was one of

eight so I had a pile of English cousins I had never met – names on Christmas cards and old black and white photos. I went to stay with my cousin, Linda in the little village of Whitten just out of Ludlow in Shropshire. Dad had grown up in the next village, Knowbury. I walked in the door to meet this strange woman about 5 years older than me and I immediately felt at home – she was family, we were connected. We visited the house where Dad grew up and the graveyard where my grandparents, some aunts and uncles and my great-grandparents were buried. I felt rooted with a sense of place that I hadn't even known was missing. We had an extended Genner family gathering and I met Dad's surviving brother and sister and I could SEE their resemblance to Dad – it was so poignant to see his features on their faces.

I finally understood – family history is not about names on papers on family trees or on the backs of old black and white photos – it's about connection. That's what church family is about too. God is our father, Jesus, our brother – we share a family connection. We accept and welcome and embrace each other because we are family. This has come home to many of us during this pandemic lockdown. Church is not a building. Church didn't stop because we couldn't go to a building. Church continues because it is family and relationships and we continue to connect with each other. Church is being brothers and sisters together, caring for each other.



Our New Zealand connections by Sue and John Beverly

Sue visited New Zealand before John did. In the late 1990s, she stayed with our good friends Dinah and Richard whom she had known since the early 1980s. Little did we know then just how important New Zealand was to become in our lives. We both travelled here together for the first time a year or so later. That was the first of many happy trips which have seen us travel over large parts of the country.

John's connections go back to his paternal grandparents who travelled to New Zealand in the first decade of the 20th century. The

family is Scottish – maybe originally from Yorkshire – living in rural western Aberdeenshire in and around the small village of Rhynie. The family business is that of joiners/builders/undertakers and both grandparents were from large families. John does not know why they emigrated to New Zealand presumably with a bag of tools – or indeed returned to Scotland a few years later – but his father was born in the Christchurch area in 1909 and his birth was registered in Sydenham.

Although John was always aware of this, he did not investigate his own NZ status until recently. His father did not travel outside the UK, except for war service, until fairly late in life and he never mentioned any idea of returning to NZ. A few years ago, prompted by a conversation with NZ visitors to a National Trust house where he was a guide, John contacted the NZ High Commission in London who referred him to Wellington.

John supplied them with documentary proof of his father's birth in NZ, his parents' marriage certificate and his own birth certificate showing his birth in 1947 i.e. before 1948 when NZ nationality law changed. He was born a New Zealand citizen in his own right! He received a certificate of NZ citizenship and passport very soon thereafter. On the back of this, Sue obtained a Permanent Resident Visa but only after producing a substantial dossier and at some cost.

We did not know then that we would be able to find a way of living here in NZ, even though we had long harboured the desire to do so having become very fond of the place during our travels. Eventually the opportunity came along and we are absolutely delighted to be here in Otumoetai and to be able to be part of St John's church.

There is a further mystery about the Beverly's in NZ. In the foyer of the Department of Physics at the University of Otago in Dunedin there is a clock, invented in 1864, by Arthur Beverly, watchmaker, mathematician and astronomer. Having heard about the clock, we saw it when we visited Dunedin in 2019. Sue took the photos you see here.



We understand that Arthur was born in 1822 in Alford, Aberdeenshire and was the son of farmer. Alford is just over the hill from John's father's family home where he still has cousins but the historian in the family was not aware of Arthur and so we do not know how or if he fits into the family.

Arthur was educated at home and by a local shoemaker in the evenings. He was apprenticed at 14 to an Aberdeen

watchmaker and optician, where he made a reputation as a lensmaker. In 1852 he sailed to Australia and after time in the goldfields moved to Melbourne to work as a watchmaker, moving on to New Zealand in 1858, where he set up a business in Dunedin.

Arthur's clock is believed to be one of the longest running science experiments in the world. The clock was first exhibited in the 1865 New Zealand Exhibition hosted in Dunedin. Having never been manually wound, the clock is instead driven by temperature and atmospheric pressure variations. When Arthur died unmarried in 1908, not only did he bequest the clock to the University, but he also left an estate of £57,000 which since then has funded scholarships, and supported staff and teaching in the Department of Physics. The 'Beverly Chair in Physics' has been associated with the Department since this time.



Early Settlers by Lynda Wallace

My great great great grandmother Mary Fairbrass was born in Chartham, Canterbury, Kent in 1820. With her daughter Elizabeth (born 1837) she came to NZ accompanied by her brother Thomas and his wife Mary, on Slains Castle, which arrived in Wellington on 29 January 1841. Soon after her arrival she married William Reeve who had come from the Chatham Islands hoping to choose a wife from amongst the immigrants on the Slains Castle.

William was born in Orford, Suffolk in 1814 but became a seafarer at a young age, originally whaling in the Bering Sea and off Alaska but then on a trading brig (Ann & Mary) which brought him to Port Jackson (Sydney) in February 1838. The Ann & Mary then sailed to Wellington but found there was little chance of trading so headed for the Chatham Islands – then a major whaling station – the ship foundered in May 1839 and subsequently the crew settled there. William later settled on South-east island, growing potatoes and rearing pigs to sell to the whalers. It was to there that he brought his new bride and step-daughter. From the Chatham's, William tended his land but responded to the call of the sea often. At one stage he went on a whaling trip to Tahiti hoping to move the family there but was appalled that it was in French possession.

In February 1846 Mary, William & Elizabeth moved to the 6 acres of land William had purchased (for £60) near Wellington – the present site of Johnsonville. It was there that Mary and William's 10 children were born. Their second child Harriet Thursay Reeve, my great great grandmother, was born in August 1849. At the time of her birth William was in Melbourne seeking gold (to no vain).



William & Mary gifted half an acre of land so that a school could be established in Johnsonville Road – the site of the first state school in NZ, opening in 1867. In 1869 Mary and William moved to land they had purchased in Foxton where they farmed. Their 4th son Arthur took over the farm when Mary and William “retired” to Wellington.

Mary died in August 1901 and William in February 1907. At the time of William's death the remaining family consisted of 5 sons, 4 daughters and 250 grand and great grandchildren.

A sequel to Big Teddy's story in last magazine

by Suzanne Franklin-Gard'ner

The day before we went into Level 2, Teddy's message was a farewell to 'walkers' saying how much he enjoyed his time each day but it was now time to go into hibernation.

Here is an extract from 'Bob's Bulletin', the newsletter for residents at Bob Owen's:

Thursday last week there was a gathering of a couple of dozen residents to farewell Big Teddy and Claire's Bears before they went into hibernation...it was noted how much pleasure we all got from seeing what the Bears were up to and Big Teddy's new message each day. Thanks to all who contributed wise thoughts...a bag of chocolates was presented to Suzanne and Claire with best wishes from everyone.



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We have been unable to divert the Office phone.

You may **phone** Lynda on 576 9845 but please note that this is her home phone number. Please make your calls between 8.30am and 1.30pm which are Lynda's usual working hours.

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