

# Wendy McGuinness: Genealogy/Whakapapa

My ancestors came to New Zealand between 1852 and 1866 in large sailing ships. Many people interested in their genealogy trace their history by ships. In my family's case, my ancestors arrived on ships like the *Māori*, *Winterthur* and *the Gipsy*, and these have become part of our collective history. My ancestors were mostly from England, although two originated from Scotland and one from France. Many found employment and marriage along the way. Sheep and cattle farming was the norm. A few farmers ran small dairy farms of about 20 cows. Many of the immigrants worked on large stations until they gained enough money for a small holding. Land and agriculture were engrained in settler culture.



A model of the *Gipsy*.

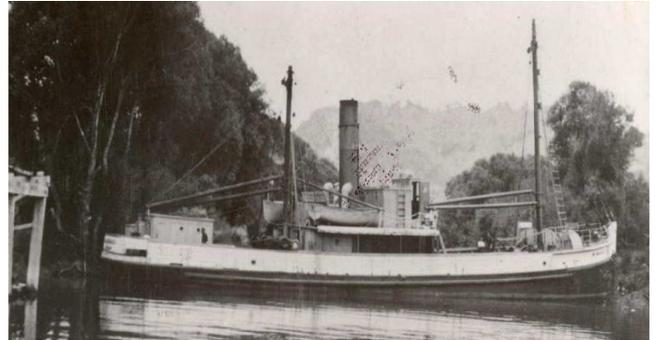
## On my father's side

The first of my ancestors to arrive were from my father's side of the family. James McKenzie, a tailor, arrived in New Zealand in 1853 at the age of 26. In 1854, he was joined by his wife Mary Ann (she was 20) and daughter. Mary Ann had 12 children and died of influenza at age 43. James McKenzie moved to Nelson, but when the Collingwood Gold Rush began he went off to seek his fortune. The other diggers called him 'Lucky McKenzie'. He eventually left Collingwood and was one of the first to stake a claim at Gabriel's Gully in Otago. He has been called a tough man and was described by his son as a gold-digger, farmhand and horse-breaker.

James McKenzie's granddaughter was my grandmother (and had the French connection in our family). She married my grandfather, Thomas Radford. In 1912 my great grandparents met their soon to be son-in-law when travelling from England to New Zealand. He became a farmhand on their farm and my grandparent's romance blossomed. In 1916 he went off to fight in World War I with the Wellington Mounted Rifles and later with the Cameliers in Egypt.

Under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act 1915, my grandfather was one of 3000 soldiers who were settled on Crown land. He acquired a piece of marginal land in a remote part of the central North Island on the banks of the Upper Mokau River. The farm was only accessible by a cream boat, a coal-fired steam boat called the *Cygnnet*. It carried people and any supplies to and from the

remote community. My grandmother bore six children in the family home, with the coal range doubling as an incubator.



One of the original creamboats on the Mokau, called *The Cygnnet*.

## On my mother's side

On my mother's side, my earliest ancestors arrived in New Zealand in 1866 as Albertlanders – members of the non-conformist religious settlement Albertland on the Kaipara Harbour. They worked as dairy farmers, orchardists, in shipping, timber mills, and the Kauri gum trade. My great-great-grandparents Alfred and Mary Ann Neal's first home in New Zealand in 1866 was in a nikau whare in 40 acres of heavy bush in Waitakere, West Auckland. They moved on to live closer to family in a little white wooden house at Port Albert on the Kaipara Harbour in 1873. Later generations of the family moved to the King Country as pioneer sheep and beef farmers.

My great great-grandmother, Mrs Elizabeth Payne, has written of the help and mutual cooperation between settlers and local Māori. They exchanged food and at one time were presented with a canoe to enable them to visit their neighbours.

My great-great-grandfather George Brier (a stonemason) enlisted in the 68th Durham Light Infantry and sailed to New Zealand via the Cape of Good Hope, arriving in New Zealand on 21 January 1865. While travelling to New Zealand and during his time stationed at Pukehinahina (Gate Pa) near Tauranga, he kept diaries which are now held at the Tauranga Library. In these diaries he recorded the day-to-day life of the soldiers: marching and guard duty but no fighting. He left New Zealand for England on 15 March 1866 on the sailing ship *Percy*.

My great-grandfather, Ernest Brier, arrived in New Zealand in 1901. He worked on the Main Trunk Railway as a surfaceman and in the building of the Porootarao Tunnel, south of Te Kuiti. His was one of the earliest of the very few Pākehā families to live in Waimiha from 1907 to 1910. It was a very lonely life for a young family in those days, with the only mode of transport being a jigger on the railway line. In time they were able to purchase a small dairy farm in the King Country.

As was often the case with young New Zealanders, many of my ancestors enlisted to fight in the Boer War, and World Wars I and II. Some returned home; some, sadly, did not.

By the mid-1950s my parents' generation were all farming. I was born in Te Kuiti Hospital in 1958. My parents started with 20 sheep given to them by their parents and developed a sheep and beef cattle farm, ending up with a 2200 hectare farm in the King Country. My parents 'brought in' farms by logging out big trees and then burning off the scrub.



One of the farms my parents purchased, circa 1968.

I was brought up in Otangiwai Valley with four siblings. It was a very basic upbringing, attending a small school in the valley with approximately 50 pupils and two teachers. Often we did not attend school, as we helped on the farm. The concept of kaitiakitanga (guardianship) particularly resonated with me. I remember always being told that we did not own the land but rather were just borrowing it for a time. We were raised to believe in fair treatment for all.



As a farm girl working with my grandfather.

For secondary school I boarded in Hamilton. In my third year of college my parents broke up and I moved with my mother and siblings to Auckland to be close to my mother's parents. We lived in Pakuranga and I attended Edgewater College for my sixth form year, going on to Manukau Technical Institute. I worked as a bank clerk for a number of years before starting a Bachelor of Commerce degree at the University of Auckland. I knew I wanted to work in the public sector when I finished my degree, so after graduating I left Auckland to start a career in the public service, initially working for the Ministry of Trade and Industry. After two years I went back to university, this time to the University of Otago to complete an MBA. By then I had met and married Mark McGuinness.

On returning to Wellington I worked for Electrolux Limited as their Chief Financial Officer. This was a good place to learn how to be an accountant, but it was not long before the desire to return to public policy became too strong. I established McGuinness & Associates and provided consultancy services to the National Library (via PwC) and the New Zealand Treasury. McGuinness & Associates grew to approximately 11 contractors, but was later reduced in size while I focused on raising four children. In 2004 I established the Sustainable Future Institute, which was renamed the McGuinness Institute in 2012.