

COMESKEY FAMILY

Comeskey Grove

Comeskey Grove was named after John Walter (Jack) Comeskey (1926-2002). Jack's parents were Gladys Elizabeth (nee Cubdy 1896-1979) and Patrick Bernard Comeskey (1885-1943). Jack grandparents were James and Sarah Comeskey.

Jack's wife was Thecla Constance (nee Strickland 1926-2003). He was the Trust manager for the Comeskey Grove subdivision (1984-1988) development on former land of St Joseph's convent and orphanage. Comeskey Grove is situated on the old St Joseph's Convent farm off McParland Street in Upper Hutt.

Upper Hutt City Memorial Plaques

There are three generations of Comeskey's recorded on the memorial plaques outside the Upper Hutt City Council Chambers on Fergusson Drive Upper Hutt.

Benge and Pratt memorial plaque

James COMESKEY (James wife was Sarah Jane Comeskey)

Upper Hutt District Military Roll of Honour WW1 section

James (James Gerald) and Peter Leo Cuthbert COMESKEY are the sons of James and Sarah Jane Comeskey)

Upper Hutt District Military Roll of Honour WW2 section

Leo James COMESKEY was the grandson of James and Sarah Jane Comeskey)

Benge and Pratt Fire & Explosion

On the night of the 28 March 1914 a fire broke out in the Benge and Pratt store in Upper Hutt. Volunteers under the guidance of local Constable Denis Mahoney began removing goods and equipment from the store while James Comeskey removed the telephone. James being the local Postmaster was responsibility for the telephones as they were government property. He went to remove a second telephone from the Edwards building which was situated next to the Benge and Pratt store. Just after midnight an explosion took place in the Store. James Comeskey died from concussion and shock as a result of the explosion.

Outside the Upper Hutt City Office is a memorial plaque recording the names of the men who lost their lives in the Benge & Pratt explosion.

James COMESKEY

Denis MAHONEY

Evard Edward Henry PELLING

Michael John TOOHEY

William Daniel FLYNN

Virgil Francis MCGOVERN

George William TAYLOR

John Wesley VIVIAN

James Comeskey †

Evening Post newspaper 30 March 1914

Mr James Comesky was 55 years of age and joined the Post and Telegraph Department as a telegraphist in Auckland two days before Christmas 1881. Prior to that date he served twelve years in the Postal Service of the United Kingdom. In 1901 he was appointed Postmaster at Ohaeawai Bay of Island and in 1909 he became postmaster at Upper Hutt. Mr Comesky who was a valued officer of the Department was a well-known bowler. He has left a widow and several children, most of whom are grown up

- 0- **James COMESKEY** born about 1857 Ireland † died 29 March 1914 Upper Hutt New Zealand married **Sarah Jane MCCREADY** born about 1860 Ireland died 29 August 1936 Auckland New Zealand
- 0-1- Patrick Bernard COMESKEY born 06 November 1885 Auckland NZ died 02 March 1943 Upper Hutt NZ married 1919 NZ Gladys Elizabeth CUDBY born 26 March 1896 Wellington NZ died 1979 NZ
- 0-1-1- Leo Bernard COMESKEY born 25 June 1920 Upper Hutt New Zealand † died 05 October 1944 South Pacific **WW2**
- 0-1-2- Bernard John COMESKEY born 23 June 1922 Upper Hutt died 19 August 2003 New Zealand
- 0-1-3- Gerald Patrick COMESKEY born 14 November 1923 Upper Hutt New Zealand died 24 July 2000 New Zealand
- 0-1-4- Donald McCready COMESKEY born 11 February 1925 Upper Hutt New Zealand died 09 December 2007 New Zealand
- 0-1-5- John Walter (Jack COMESKEY born 19 November 1926 Upper Hutt New Zealand died 17 August 2002 Upper Hutt New Zealand
- 0-1-6- James Francis COMESKEY born 26 February 1928 Upper Hutt died 21 December 1986 Wellington New Zealand
- 0-1-7- Mary Elizabeth COMESKEY born 24 April 1930 New Zealand (Sister Justina)
- 0-2- Mary Josephine COMESKEY born October 1886 Auckland NZ died 09 January 1887 Auckland NZ (died young)
- 0-3- Hubert Augustine COMESKEY born 1888 Auckland NZ died 1889 Auckland NZ (died young)
- 0-4- Winifred Vera Margaret COMESKEY born 15 June 1889 Auckland NZ died details unknown
- 0-5- Peter Leo Cuthbert COMESKEY born 09/10 November 1891/1892 Auckland NZ † died 16 September 1916 Somme France **WW1** (never married)
- 0-6- Una Martha COMESKEY born 28 March 1894 Auckland NZ died 1968 NZ (never married)
- 0-7- James Gerald COMESKEY born 20 October 1895 Auckland NZ † died 29 July 1918 France **WW1** (never married)
- 0-8- Daniel Augustine COMESKEY born 03 May 1897 Ashburton NZ died 30 August 1975 Silverstream NZ (never married)
- 0-9- Kathleen Mary COMESKEY born 10 September 1898 Auckland NZ died 1951 Auckland NZ (never married)

James and Sarah Jane Comeskey were both buried in St Joseph's churchyard Upper Hutt. The graves were removed when a new church was built and a memorial plaque was placed on the wall at the back of the church.

Peter Leo COMESKEY 10/2894 Private †

Peter Leo Cuthbert Comeskey rank Private Service number 10/2894 1st Wellington Infantry Battalion. Peter was born 10 November 1892 Auckland New Zealand and was the son of James and Sarah Jane Comeskey of Upper Hutt. His occupation was Linesman employer Post & Telegraph Depot Martinborough address Post Office Martinborough, next of kin mother Mrs S J Comeskey Upper Hutt NZ. Peter enlisted at Trentham on 14 June 1915 and stated that he had previously served with the Upper Hutt Territorials. He trained at Tauherenikau. His physical description was eyes grey hair black complexion dark height 5 feet 11 inches religion Roman Catholic. He served in New Zealand from 14 June 1915 to 09 October 1915 (117 days) and Overseas 09 October 1915 to death 16 September 1916 (344 days). Peter was killed in action in the Fields of France on 16 September 1916 total service 1 year 95 days. His medals [1] 1914-15 Star [2] British War Medal [3] Victory Medal were issued to his mother Mrs S J Comeskey 105 Grange Road Dominion Road Auckland along with the Memorial plaque and scroll. Peter's name is recorded on the Caterpillar Valley (New Zealand) Memorial France.

(Reference Nominal Roll volume 1 & Archives NZ Wellington Service Records AABK 18805 W5530 89/ 0027321)

James COMESKEY 10/3221 Private †

James (also known as James Gerald) Comeskey Private later Lance Corporal Service number 10/3221 1st Battalion Wellington Regiment. James was born 28 March 1895 Auckland New Zealand and was the son of James and Sarah Comeskey of Wellington New Zealand. James enlisted at Trentham on 23 August 1915 single address Upper Hutt occupation Clerk employer Union Steam Ship Company and had previously served with the 5th Wellington Territorial Regiment. His next of kin was mother Mrs S J Comeskey address Upper Hutt. James physical description was eyes brown, hair black, complexion dark, height 5 feet 5¼ inches, religion Roman Catholic. He trained in Tauherenikau. During World War One James received a bullet wound to the head and was killed instantaneously on 29 July 1918 in the Rouen Field of France. Corporal Comeskey was in charge of a party, salvaging rifles. He was transferring rifles from one pile to another. He threw one butt foremost on the pile, exploding the cartridge in the chamber shooting himself through the head. Owing to the conditions of the rifles it was impossible to open the bolt to ascertain whether the rifles were loaded or not. He served in New Zealand from 23 August 1915 to 13 November 1915 (82 days) and overseas from 13 November 1915 to death 29 July 1918 (990 days). His service details are enlisted 23 August 1915 - embarked 13 November 1915 – disembarked Egypt 25 December 1915 – R.M.F. [sic] 13 February 1916 – England 21 March 1917 - Embarked from England 07 April 1918 – embarked for France and Belgium 06 April 1916 to 09 April 1918 – wounded in action 07 June 1917 - killed 29 July 1918. James was reported wounded on 08 June 1917 and was admitted to Hospital in France then transferred 21 March 1918 to New Zealand convalescing hospital Hornchurch in England. He rejoined Battalion on 09 April 1918 Rouen. His medals [1] 1914-15 Star [2] British War Medal [3] Victory Medal were issued to his mother Mrs S J Comeskey of 105 Grange Road Mt Eden Auckland along with the Memorial plaque and scroll. James was buried Gonnecourt Wood New Cemetery Foncquevillers France.

(Reference WWI Nominal Roll volume 1 & Archives NZ Wellington agency AABK series 18805 accession W5530 box 89 record 0027319)

Patrick Bernard COMESKEY 60073 Private

Patrick Bernard Comeskey rank Private Service number 60073 Auckland Infantry Regiment 2nd Auckland Battalion. Patrick was born 06 December 1885 Ponsonby Auckland New Zealand. His parents were James (deceased born Ireland) and Sarah Jane Comeskey (born Ireland) of Wellington. Patrick occupation Coalman registered with the First Reserves in the recruiting district of Auckland. Later he enlisted at Auckland 19 May 1917 as single occupation Blacksmith last employer J Munro Clevedon Auckland next of kin mother Mrs Sarah Jane Comeskey Brixton Road Mount Eden Auckland and later next of kin was wife (married on 30 July 1919 in Upper Hutt by Rev Father Dale) Mrs Gladys Elizabeth Comeskey Henry Street Upper Hutt. Patrick's physical description was eyes hazel, hair black, complexion dark, height 5 feet 5 inches, trade blacksmith and religion Roman Catholic. He trained at Tauhereanikau. He served in New Zealand from 19 May 1917 to 13 October 1917 & 28 January 1919 to 24 December 1919 (1 year 113 days) and Overseas from 13 October 27 January 1919 (1 year 107 days) total service 2 years 220 days. He was discharged on account of wounds received (24 August 1918 France gunshot wound to neck) on active service. The records record further New Zealand service with NZ ACC (T) maintenance section from 18 March 1920 to 03 August 1920 of 139 days and reference to Military Hospital Trentham. There is also a letter from the General Headquarters stating that Patrick services with the Defence Department discontinued as from 14 February 1922. His medal entitlement was British War Medal and Victory Medal. He was discharged 24 December 1912 intended discharge address was recorded as Henry Street Upper Hutt. He died 02 February 1943 at Wellington.

(Reference First Reserves government publication & Nominal roll volume 3 roll 72 page 4 & Archives NZ Wellington WWI Service records AABK 18805 W5530 89 0027320)

World War Two

Leo James COMESKEY 428082 Flight Sergeant †

Leo James Comeskey born New Zealand died 05 October 1944 Pacific killed in action Flight Sergeant Service number NZ428082 Royal New Zealand Air Force 1 Squadron grave Bourail Memorial Panel 6 Bourail New Zealand War Cemetery New Caledonia.

(Reference Auckland War Memorial Museum Cenotaph database)

Leo James Comeskey Royal New Zealand Air Force NZ 428082 rank Flight Sergeant. Medal entitlement 1939-45 Star, Pacific Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45 and NZ War Medal which were all issued to his mother Mrs G E Comeskey Henry Street Upper Hutt.

Flight Sergeant Leo James Comeskey NZ 428082 to parents Mr & Mrs P B Comeskey of Upper Hutt (mother Mrs G E Comeskey Henry Street Upper Hutt) Leo Comeskey was born Upper Hutt on June 25th 1920. He was educated at St Patrick's college Silverstream where he passed his University Entrance and was active member of the Cadet Corps. On leaving school he joined the Civil Service and worked in the Government Life Insurance and also joined the Territorials. Until he enlisted at New Plymouth on July 11th 1942 he was serving with the 15th North Auckland Regiment.

In February 1943 Leo Comeskey went to Canada. He underwent training at Number 3 Wireless School Winnipeg and continued his training in Ansons at London, Ontario. On November 11th he gained his Air Gunners badge and promotion to Sergeant and returned to New Zealand in March 1944. Sergeant Comeskey was posted to Number 1 Operational Training Unit Ohakea for a Gunnery course where he proved a most efficient operator and an outstanding member of the course. AT the completion of the course he was posted to Number 1 Squadron Whenuapai in July and to Guadalcanal in August. He flew as a Wireless Operator Sir Gunner in Venturas and was engaged chiefly in anti-submarine patrols. He was promoted Flight Sergeant in October 1944.

Together with P/O GT Parker, P/OT H Vautier and Sergeants Smith and Rosenberg, Flight Sergeant Comeskey was engaged on an anti-submarine patrol on October 05th 1944. On the return flight the aircraft crashed into the sea on the north coast of Oleruga Island North of Florida.

Bernard John Comeskey 3900 RNZN

Bernard John Comeskey born 23 June 1922 Upper Hutt died 19 August 2003 New Zealand. Bernard enlisted in 12 August 1940 with the CD Signal Coy and was given temporary service number 2/6/147 NZ Army. His later enlisted with the Royal New Zealand Navy and all of his details are recorded in his Navy records.

Royal New Zealand Navy service NZ number 3900 rank Tel. occupation Postman with Post & Telegraph department Heretaunga address Henry Street Upper Hutt religion Roman Catholic parents Patrick and Gladys Comeskey. Physical description height 5 feet 7 inches, hair brown, eyes blue complexion fresh and marks nil. Previous service 12 months in Territorials. Entered service 24 November 1941 discharged 09 December 1945. Served New Zealand Ships & Establishments HMNZS "Gale" in Solomons from February 1943 to November 1943 as Wireless Operator.

24 November 1941	to 14 March 1942	Philomel
15 March 1942	to 23 August 1942	Philomel
24 August 1942	to 31 December 1942	Philomel
01 January 1943	to 16 January 1943	ship Cook
17 January 1943	to 16 February 1943	ship Matai (Gale)
17 January 1943	to 26 October 1943	Cook Gale
27 October 1943	to 02 December 1943	Philomel
03 December 1943	to 19 January 1944	ship Cook
20 January 1944	to 11 February 1944	ship Tasman
12 February 1944	to 28 March 1944	Philomel
29 March 1944	to 29 August 1944	ship Tasman
30 August 1944	to 09 December 1945	ship Cook

His medal entitlement was 1939-45 Star, Pacific Star, War Medal 1939-45 and NZ War Service Medal. He served from 24 November 1941 and was discharged 09 December 1945

Bernard John Comeskey died 19 August 2003 Lower Hutt Hospital aged 81 (born 23 June 1922 Upper Hutt). His occupation was retired builder buried 22 August 2003 Akatarawa cemetery Upper Hutt. Married age 26 Upper Hutt to Shirley Margaret Murdoch and his living issue were 2 daughters aged 49 & 45 and 2 sons age 48 &

42. His parents were Gladys Elizabeth Cudby homemaker and Patrick Bernard Comeskey occupation postmaster.

(Reference RGO NZ death registration 2003 held in NZDF Archives Service file)

During World War Two Bernard kept a diary but it is unknown what happened to it or if it still exists.

Gerald Patrick Comeskey 4215811 Flight Sergeant RNZAF

Gerald Patrick COMESKEY born 14 November 1923 Upper Hutt died 24 July 2000 New Zealand. Gerald Patrick Comeskey Royal New Zealand Air Force NZ 4215811 Flight Sergeant & NZ Army 5/5/1080 NZTS Private Medal entitlement Defence Medal, War Medal 1936-45 and NZ War Service Medal.

NZ Service 05 December 1942 - 17 September 1943

Overseas 18 September 1943 – 23 October 1945

NZ Service 24 October 1945 -13 December 1945

Army records give his description, height 5 feet 6 inches, complexion fresh, eyes blue hair brown religion Roman Catholic, single occupation clerk Chief Ordnance Office Trentham MZ enlisted Wellington address Henry Street Upper Hutt next of kin mother Mrs Gladys Elizabeth Comeskey Henry Street Upper Hutt. Army NZ Service 04 September 1941 - 03 December 1942 then transferred to Air Force.

Donald McCready Comeskey 432156 AC1 RNZAF

Donald McCready COMESKEY service number RNZAF 432156 rank AC1 born 11 February 1925 Upper Hutt died 09 December 1907. Donald McCready Comeskey born 11 February 1925 Upper Hutt Wellington NZ. His occupation Grocers Assistant for F F Hercocock Upper Hutt and next of kin was Mr P B Comeskey of Henry Street Upper Hutt where he was also living residing. His previous service was 6 months with ATC unit and 2 ½ years with HG.

He served from 26 February 1943 and was discharged 21 November 1945.

Donald McCready Comeskey 432156 AC1 Royal New Zealand Air Force

Service NZ 26 February 1943 to 01 October 1945

Served overseas 02 December 1944 to 03 October 1945

Served NZ 04 October 1945 to 21 November 1945

Total Service 2 years 269 days

Discharged 21 November 1945

Decorations Nil

Medals entitlement 1939-45 Start, Pacific Star, War Medal 1939-45 and NZ War Service Medal

John Walter (Jack) Comeskey

John Walter (Jack) COMESKEY born 19 November 1926 Upper Hutt New Zealand died 17 August 2002 New Zealand. John Walter Comeskey 660678 Private NZ Army J force HQ 2NZEF & NZ Tokyo Battalion

NZ Service 05 March 1946 to 28 May 1946

Overseas 29 May 1946 to 05 July 1947

NZ service 06 July 1947 to 07 August 1947

Decoration Nil Medals New Zealand Service Medal, 1946-49 (J Force)