

Kapiti Branch  
New Zealand Society of Genealogists  
**Annual Report April 1 2009 to 31 March 2010**

**Introduction**

The year 2009/2010 has been a momentous one for me, having been appointed as a volunteer to the position of Convenor rather than being elected. Progress in Branch activity and in growth of membership has been extensive and in 2010 we can expect there to be continued exciting developments, especially as we now have more than 40 interest/user group meetings happening. Membership peaked at 247 in early 2010, of whom 104 were members of NZSG. While we always have some falloff at the start of a new financial year, I am confident we are heading for a membership of 250.

**Programme of Activities**

A key development has been the start up of several new groups. In addition to the long established Computer Friendly Group, an Irish Interest Group, Scottish Interest Group, Family Tree Maker User Group, Australian Interest Group, and Legacy User Group, are providing a good cross section of small group meetings, teaching members to meet the challenges missing ancestors supply us with. The Kapiti Branch of the NZ Legacy Users Group has met regularly for several years as an independent entity and its integration into the Branch at the beginning of 2010 was most welcome. All these groups are open to members of other branches.

Our monthly meetings, Wednesday morning help sessions and the autumn/winter day time meetings at the Paraparaumu Library are being well patronised but attendance is not yet at a premium. Wednesday morning sessions are open to the public and provide a valuable community service and are a regular source of new members. The regular monthly programmes were well organised with a wide range of speakers and other activities.

Our regular visits to repositories in Wellington continued. We participated in the Senior EXPO in Waikanae during March 2010, resulting in several new members.

In September 2009 a weekend "Getting Started" course was conducted by FRC Educator Lynne Blake and 32 participants went away with valuable information and notes. This course catered for members from other Branches as well.

### **Kapiti Community Centre**

The Kapiti Community Centre provides excellent facilities for a wide range of our meetings and we have enhanced that by purchasing and donating a large screen for the meeting room. This followed a successful application to Pub Charity for \$4900 to purchase a media projector, as our old projector had limited range in the large room and will now be used in smaller settings. We enhanced this with the purchase of a projector trolley for better storage and mobility. A new storage cupboard was purchased which also houses our spare microfiche readers.

### **Alison Procter Family History Centre**

Our relationship with the Kapiti District Council Libraries has seen the extensive use of our facilities in the Alison Procter Family History Centre. Manager Leslie Clague and her staff have to be congratulated for making our participation in the Library facilities so welcoming. The Information Desk is a source of details about our activities and new members often started their enquiries here. During the year the library provided us with a workstation unit for our suite of 4PCs which has much improved the available research space.

Kapiti is fortunate in having this facility which we can only hope many other local bodies throughout New Zealand will follow. Genealogy is probably the most intensive research activity to need library facilities, and although a survey of attendance has not been done here, Kapiti members are prominent, and the same applies at Waikanae and Otaki. My attendance at a function of the Levin Branch last year made me somewhat envious, because the Mayor of Levin described the facilities they are planning for the local Branch in their Library extensions. Levin Branch, now known as Horowhenua Family History Group, will have the best facilities, again recognising the trend that genealogists are creating in the quest for family history.

### **25<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

In May 2009 the Branch celebrated its 25th anniversary with 70 members attending. Guests were Kapiti Mayor Jenny Rowan; NZSG President David Bryant and several former convenors including founder convenor June Pritchett. Guest speaker was Anna Kenna, who gave an updated version of her "Why You Are You" presentation prepared for our EXPO in 2008.

### **YURU**

"Why You Are You" was a branch initiated family history research project for local identities created in 2008. Such was the success of the first series involving Fair Go's Kevin Milne and Radio/TV presenter and producer Anna Kenna that we decided to seek a trademark registration. This will provide a valuable marketing tool and commercial opportunities. Negotiations involving the national body (NZSG) will see our branch acting as the focal point for other branch and countrywide use of the mark. Registration has been promulgated by IPONZ and we await completion of the legal due diligence procedures.

### **National Politics**

Several decisions made by NZSG Council during the reporting year have been widely criticised by members throughout the country and led to the calling of a Special General Meeting (April 30 2010). Your Committee has been active in supporting reconciliation between the affected parties, participating in a facilitation meeting in Auckland, active in a small negotiation group and several Branch members will attend the SGM. There are some fundamental issues involved affecting the future governance and management of the Society, including leadership dynamics, operational ethics and procedures, inadequate communication with members and branches, a need to review genealogy delivery mechanisms and whether the Current Rules and By-Laws adequately reflect the needs of the current national and international environment.

### **Conclusion**

I would like to pay tribute to the Branch committee for their help and encouragement, their wholehearted support for the extra activities, their friendly, cooperative and hospitable approach to new developments. 3 members are standing down this year – Sue Greene, Sandy White and Judy Olsen – and my special thanks to them for their years of service. Without other volunteers who quietly work away at a range of activities – meeting registrar, webmaster, computer management, magazine round robin, Wednesday morning facilitators, supper helpers and others – we would not be able to provide the services we do. Our Help Desk Officer and Life Member Valerie Freeman stood down from her duties during the year and our thanks to her also for many years of loyal service. A Branch to be admired, joined and enjoyed.

Hanley Hoffmann  
Convenor  
(For and on behalf of the Committee)