

## NZSG Kapiti Branch Committee Report to members, 2017/18

Kapiti Branch has enjoyed another active year, with membership peaking at 196 by year's end, one third of which are NZSG members. Our AGM in May welcomed two new committee members, Ian Barbour and Gerard Denton, while Hilary Cunningham stepped down from her role as convener. The position of convener has remained vacant for the year, and a rota was created to share those duties. Donna Bridgeman was co-opted on at our first committee meeting in June, and with the commencement of Daytime Meetings in the New Year, Sonia Coom was also co-opted onto the committee to take charge of those meetings.

Our evening branch meetings attract a core of 50 or more members, and we have used a mix of our own resources and outside speakers for these meetings. In *May*, we held a SIG "speed dating" session, where representatives of 7 Interest Groups described the purpose and operation of their groups (LNI Irish, Greater London/English, Maori, Australian, DNA, Legacy and RootsMagic); *June* saw a discussion of DNA success stories amongst our members; in *July* we had a talk from National Library's Fiona Gray; in *August* we had a Q & A session; *September* featured our own Frances Braddick's tale of tracking down cousins; in *October* local author Eleanor Bensemann described the process of writing and publishing her father's biography. The calendar year finished in *November* with our usual social event. We started off 2018 with our popular "Here is the news" in *January*, with favourite clippings from newspapers contributed by members; Flora Feltham, Digital Archivist at the Alexander Turnbull Library gave advice in *February* on how to manage our digital data; Gerald Twiss covered the ins and outs of creating charts in *March*; and the year ended in *April* with an entertaining musical journey through the Sheet Music Archive from its creator and archivist, David Dell.

The APFHC continues to get good use, with its enviable resources of access to Ancestry, Find My Past, The Genealogist, the NZ Gazette, various CD images, a host of microfiche and a slowly increasing book collection. Members of the public (and many of our members) have much to thank Bev Chappell for, as she continues to organise and regularly front the Wednesday morning public help sessions at the APFHC. At this point, we will repeat the plea for more of our members to put their hands up to join Bev's list of helpers for these sessions – the task is not onerous, and it gives you a chance to improve your own skills as you assist other new genealogists to begin their journey.

Other activities have included a combined lunch with the Otaki Branch to celebrate the NZSG's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in August, and a tour of the National Library ably organised by Kathy Callaghan. John Glover continues to lead our School Admissions Project, which involves about 20 members, including some members of the Waikanae Family History Group. Records collected and transcribed include Paekakariki, Raumati Beach, Waikanae Primary, Paraparaumu Beach, St Patrick's, Kenakena and Kapanui Schools. We continue holding monthly Australian Interest group meetings, and two-monthly Legacy, RootsMagic and DNA group meetings, the latter of which moved to the KCC for 2018 due to its growing popularity. Throughout the year, Donna Bridgeman, with the assistance of Kathy Callaghan, has maintained the Kapiti Genealogy Facebook Group, which serves as another point of contact for both members and non-members.

A range of new initiatives also commenced during the year. Our local Branch Irish Interest Group was reactivated after several years in recess, and had its first meeting on 31 October. Another project, led by Ian Barbour, culminated in a series of 4 "Back to Basics" workshops being run for our members in October/November. These workshops were limited to 6 participants, each with a buddy as mentor. They were well received, so will be repeated in 2018. In January, Sonia Coom initiated a monthly informal daytime group for members to share and collaborate on their research. This group has provided a welcome alternative for those who don't like venturing out in the evenings, or simply prefer the more informal problem solving/sharing approach of the meetings. Currently the meetings are held in the Baptist Church

hall at Waikanae. Last, but certainly not least, a very successful Irish Research Day was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March, organised by an enthusiastic and capable committee of Bernard McManus, Donna Bridgeman, Sheila Jolley, Gerard Denton and Denice McCarten, assisted by Michael Gaffaney and Sharon Allen. The Research Day attracted 43 participants, and featured two guest speakers (Graeme McVerry, and Geraldene O'Reilly) along with the Joe Cassin Travelling Library under the custodianship of Jenny Martin and the LNI Irish Special Interest Group.

Overall, another busy and successful year, thanks to our committee of 10, and our many ex-officio helpers who make sure that our venues are set up and refreshments provided, and keep the various Interest Groups ticking. And, of course, thanks to you the members who continue to support Kapiti Genealogy.

22 May 2018

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Denice McCarten (Secretary)

Lorna Henderson (Treasurer)

Ian Barbour

Donna Bridgeman

Ian Brooking

Beverly Chappell

Sonia Coom

Gerard Denton

Sheila Jolley

Bernard McManus