

**Kapiti Branch  
New Zealand Society of Genealogists  
May 2021**

**CONVENORS ANNUAL REPORT**

Our Kapiti Branch of the NZSG has had another eventful year with Covid shutdowns impacting on our Aug and Sept monthly meetings. However now we continue to enjoy the freedoms we have in New Zealand due to the efforts of the Team of five million. We are so blessed to live in this beautiful country.

Our membership remains around the 200 mark and our financial position is solid.

Our monthly evening meetings continue to be well attended. The impact of Covid limited the number of external speakers. Dawn Chambers spoke on NZ Vintage Postcards and Irena Lowe on Polish Immigration to New Zealand. Peter Cooke gave a very entertaining talk on his book The New Zealand War Dead at our recent April meeting. All other monthly meetings being facilitated by our own members including Lorna, to whom we are forever grateful, talking on Papers Past and On Line Trees. Our traditional Christmas function in Nov was enjoyed by a large number of members .

The monthly day group have continued generally reflecting on the evening monthly meeting theme and facilitating research. Sadly our very able Sonia Coom has moved to Napier, however we are very grateful that Denice McCarten will take over Sonia's role assisted by the daytime team. We thank Sonia for her dedication and support and wish her well.

With the impact of Covid we have embraced "the Zoom meeting" and Lorna now facilitates monthly "how to sessions". Members can register to hook up and learn / participate in these sessions. Selected topics being prior advised.

Our special interest groups, DNA, Irish, Australian, RootsMagic meet regularly either monthly or bi monthly and continue to be well supported.

Looking forward to the new year in addition to our normal special interest groups and monthly meetings we have commenced bi monthly On line Tree workshops facilitated by Lorna.

Kathy Callaghan organised a visit to the National Library, Wellington in November, and is organising another visit this year as well as one to the Salvation Army Archives in Trentham.

Bev Chapel continues, along with some helpers, to lead our Wednesday open help sessions at the Alison Procter Centre at the Paraparaumu Library. We continue to encourage members to use this resource.

We have had a major upgrade and modernisation of our Alison Procter Library computers. KCDC supplied computers surplus to their requirements and our very able Ian Brooking spent many hours installing and commissioning them which are now fully operational.

Monthly newsletters are very ably compiled by our Editor Sheila Jolly. Sheila does an amazing job and is always on the lookout for stories from the membership. Please take the opportunity to share your stories on this forum.

Your very enthusiastic committee meet monthly and I am very grateful for their input and support in my role as Convenor. Committee members are Colin Cameron (secretary) John Miller (Treasurer) Ian Brooking, Lorna Henderson, Gerard Denton, Sonia Coom and Bev Chappell. Denice McCarten being recently seconded given her leadership of the Day Group.

In February the KCDC made the decision to close the Community Centre given mould issues that have been developing over recent years. We were faced with finding a new venue for our monthly evening meetings. Fortunately the Coast Community Church rooms in Hinemoa St, Paraparaumu, were available and we have made a long term commitment to having our meetings there. The facility is comfortable and well heated for those cold winter evenings.

We are very grateful that Clive Palmer (long term member and past Convenor) has volunteered to pull our branch history together into one book. Clive has commenced work with the collecting together of the many records we have. This project has sown the seed to having all our historical branch documents digitised for posterity, a project on the “to do “ list.

The running of our Back to Basics (genealogy for beginners) was impacted by Covid but a new course will be run for four weeks commencing 8th June.

### **A reflection.**

We were brought up learning to “read and write” which stood us genealogists in good stead. You wrote letters seeking information and compiled your hand written family trees... Oh how things have change!

Today we have two major technologies that have changed our genealogy world.

Firstly we have computers now that not only mean we have access to an ever increasing mass of information but also have completely changed the way we record and document our family trees.

We all have to learn and develop our computer skills, our reading and writing education being somewhat redundant.

Secondly we have DNA for tracking of relatives that crosses all boundaries and requires an even higher level of computer knowledge as we seek to understand our test results.

So what does all this mean for Genealogy and specifically our Kapiti Branch. We are very blessed to have within our Branch very highly skilled members who can help us. However for us less tech savvy members we firstly need to embrace the new ways of doing things and commit ourselves to learning these complex new skills. The genealogists journey now includes a very good dose of new, and foreign to some, technologies that can consume and frustrate you but the rewards in having made the changes are sensational. As a group of fellow genealogists we want to help you on your fun genealogy journey.

Our ethos remains

*“Our focus is to meet the needs of our members as they in turn pursue their own passion in family genealogy.*

*We will seek to provide vibrant Branch activities in a welcoming fun environment.”*

and it is our commitment as your committee to make this real for you, our valued membership. As a branch we are here to meet your needs in an informative enjoyable fun way.

Ian Barbour  
Convenor

Kapiti Branch NZSG