

**Kapiti Branch
New Zealand Society of Genealogists
May 2022**

CONVENORS ANNUAL REPORT

Our Kapiti Branch of the NZSG has had another eventful year. The omicron variant of Covid and the associated restrictions to our lives resulted in our August and March monthly meetings being cancelled. Our online special interest groups carried on and gave us some continuity to Branch activities. A very special thanks goes out to those who soldiered on in providing these activities under difficult circumstances. Lorna for her zoom sessions and Sheila for providing an excellent news letter for us all to keep in touch with genealogy stories during these times.

Our membership has declined slightly to around the 180 mark and we have eroded our financial reserves to a small extent which is covered in our Treasurers report. An increase in our annual membership fees from \$25 to \$30 is expected to get us back to a break even position for the year ahead.

During Covid, as could be expected, there has been a small drop off in attendances at our monthly meetings.

However, firstly I wish to make mention of, and thank Kathy Callaghan for her outstanding presentation "Wendy's story" at our last AGM. Kathy's moving story was certainly a highlight of our evening meetings for the year.

External speakers at our monthly meetings have included Jo Carter, identifying and restoring old photos, Rowan Payne and Kelly Dix from Digital NZ, and Rosemary Marryat talking on her new biography, "A sheep in the eye".

Internally facilitated evening meetings included our traditional Brick-walls, Show and tell, and Here is the News. In addition we had an excellent evening with Lorna facilitating "How have you used DNA to build your tree/break your brick-walls" and Kevin Thompson talking on his Irish ancestors.

The day group generally followed the theme from the evening group with a summary of the topic being presented. Research remains a key activity of the Day group

Our special interest groups continued albeit with some Covid disruption. The groups that meet are the Australian and Irish interest groups. The DNA and Roots Magic groups have meet transferring to online during covid.

The monthly "zoom sessions" on a variety of topics and are steadily growing in popularity.

I would encourage you all to make use of any of these special interest groups, even if the topics are not specifically related to your research you will always learn something and they are fun activities.

Kathy Callaghan's planned visit to the National Library had to be cancelled, again due to Covid, however her visit to the Salvation Army Archives in Trentham did go ahead and was very well attended.

I want to mention and give a special thanks for the tireless regular commitment to our Branch activities. Firstly Sheila Jolley for the excellent work she does month in month out in preparing our newsletter. and secondly Bev Chappell for her absolute commitment every week on a Wednesday in facilitating the help sessions at the Paraparaumu library. I encourage you all to make use of these Wednesdays "help sessions" and if for no other reason to pop in and say hello. Bev and Sheila you are special gems. They, and all of you who so willingly help set up and tidy up at all sessions, continue to allow us to operate smoothly.

Clive Palmer's book on the history of our Kapiti Branch of the NZSG has now been completed and is due back from the printers very soon. Copies of this book are for sale for \$30. In addition there will be a copy available at our library and it will be online via our web site.

As noted during the year, our parent body, the New Zealand Society of Genealogists, had financial woes with their expenditure exceeding their income and with little in financial reserves was leaving them in a perilous position. This brought to the fore their right, under the Constitution, to impose a levy on its Branches. Further the possibility of the NZSG making a claim on our assets (our financial reserves) should it go into liquidation was highlighted. These concerns are not unique to our Branch with many branches around New Zealand facing these same considerations. Our Kapiti Branch made a \$250 goodwill contribution to the NZSG to assist pending them developing a more sustainable outcome.

In response to these issues the NZSG recognise that the Branch aspect of our membership in the Constitution is problematic and have set up a working group made up of members from throughout New Zealand to consult with all associated genealogy groups and come up with proposed changes to their Constitution that would address these concerns.

Your Branch actively supports this approach and once an outcome and amendments are made to the Constitution, likely next year, we will then need to consider and decide our position and the type of relationship we have with the NZSG on an ongoing basis.

We ran our Back to Basics (genealogy for beginners) in June 2021, and we will be running this four week program again this winter. So if you are a beginner, wanting to learn things, or just want to get out and have fun, make sure that you enrol for this program.

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, Bev Chappell and Denice McCarten. Worthy of note is that almost all committee meetings we have full attendance.

In summary despite the disruptions caused by Covid I trust you have all had some relief and enjoyment out of being a member of Kapiti Genealogy and we look forward to a better and bigger year ahead.

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."

Ian Barbour
Convenor

Kapiti Branch NZSG