

**Kapiti Branch  
New Zealand Society of Genealogists  
May 2023**

**CONVENORS ANNUAL REPORT**

While I note there are still covid cases in our community and that some of our members have contracted this dreaded virus we have finally had a year where covid has not disrupted our actives to any great extent. So it has largely been back to business as usual for our Branch with its many activities being enjoyed by our membership.

Our membership has remained quite stable at around the 180 mark with several new members having replaced some resignations and the passing of a few of our long term members.

The sudden passing in June of Stephen Sherring, our evening meeting raffle man, was very sad with Stephen being in action at our monthly meeting in the month of his death.

The increase in our membership fee to \$30 helped cover the ever increasing costs we have incurred for room hire and other sundry costs. So a big thanks to you all for coming on board with this increase last year.

Our monthly evening meetings have generally been well attended. External speakers included David Hadfield talking on Octavius Hadfield, Jan Bolwell and Kate Jason-Smith very aptly acting out their WW2 family history stories, and Rowan Carroll delving into the New Zealand Police Gazette.

The use of our own membership included Lorna Henderson covering off the range of genealogy software available to us, Kevin Thompson and Martin Wright describing their respective family stories, Gary Aitchison presenting a one man play on his family military history, and Helen Hawkins illuminating her Jillett family connection to Kapiti Island whaling. For a couple of meetings we have had members contributions which have been very interesting and well supported on "Here is the News" and of more recent times the fabulous and very moving speakers on Anzac day with family war stories.

Presentations were made at the August meeting to Deborah Shuker, who relinquished her role as convener of the Australia Special Interest Group after many years, and to Judy Olsen who stepped down after many years of service as the supper organiser for the Branch meetings. Well done both of you!

We have now introduced a roster system for supper duty and we are very appreciative of those who have volunteered. I must say I have enjoyed meeting, and the banter, with the supper duty volunteers as they go about providing you with that cuppa and biscuits.

The Day group, usually the day after the evening meeting, has carried on the theme of the evening meeting with presentations made by our own members where the evening speaker has not been available. The Day group is an important activity meeting the needs of those who cannot get out of an evening. We hope to grow attendance at the Day group with some specific promotion in the winter months.

The two monthly DNA group continues to draw interested parties from both within our membership and others from the lower North Island area. DNA is now a mainstream tool for genealogy that is still evolving with a lot to be learned and shared.

The Irish Interest Group meets at the Paraparaumu Library monthly. The group regularly has eight members attending and topics vary depending on what queries members may have. RootsIreland is the most used site, but Ancestry and Find My Past play their part in helping with queries.

The RootsMagic user group has now switched to Zoom to reduce costs. The year saw the release of a new version of RootsMagic with some interesting new features to explore.

Monthly "How to.." short online members only sessions covered a wide range of topics over the year: exploring FamilyTreeMaker, four sessions on the different aspects of Family Search, Scottish Kirk sessions records, two sessions on understanding your DNA matches, finding criminals and exploring newspapers.

The Lower North Island NZSG Groups get together three times a year to share ideas and generally understand what other branches are up to. We have a committee member attend these sessions which are of mutual benefit to all branches.

Our winter Back to Basics four week program was very well attended and I am sure a fun learning time for those who attended. We are currently establishing the level of interest in the B2B program so we can make a decision whether we run it again this coming winter.

Just a note that there are still five copies of the very well compiled book on our branch history written by Clive Palmer available at \$30. Noting also that the book is available on line on our website and at the Library.

As advised and updated to our members via our newsletters, the NZSG have been progressing changes to their rules. These have now been voted on and passed by NZSG members and as a branch of the NZSG we have included in our AGM the formal process of our own branch adopting these changes. Your committee has been actively involved in making submissions on these changes and are very pleased with the final outcome.

Your committee will now consider any further implications these changes will have on our branch and you will be fully informed as we progress these matters.

I want to highlight a few members that certainly go that extra mile.

Ian Brooking is always there when we need him, attending to any computer requirements and updates at the Alison Procter Library, being a committee member and an absolute stalwart in "doing everything needed" for the evening meetings. Ian's skills are wide and varied and a very valuable member.

And I also want to make mention of "our Lorna". Lorna's knowledge (that leaves me for dead) and her commitment to all the activities she facilitates is outstanding.

And Sheila for the Newsletter. I know Sheila has to deal with endless issues, like getting information late, for the Newsletter yet she gets the job done month after month.

We need to give our annual thanks to Bev and her team with their weekly commitment to the Wednesday public Help sessions, and keeping the library under control.

And as always, our thanks also to the many volunteers both in the front and behind the scenes who help to make everything run smoothly for all of us.

Your committee has continued to meet monthly with almost on all occasions having full attendance. You can be assured all issues are debated and discussed in a lively open manner with the objective being always what is in the best interests of our membership.

It is very pleasing to note some new names having been put forward for your committee, and not wanting to circumvent the voting process, welcome!

In summary a pretty good steady year following the two years of covid disruption. We look forward to a good year ahead where I am sure we will see growth in our membership as we seek to meet the needs of those interested in genealogy.

I thank you all for your continued support, without which our society would not be the success it is.

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 (acting)

Kapiti Branch NZSG