

Kapiti Branch

New Zealand Society of Genealogists
www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nzisgkb



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Registered charity no. CC33988



Special December Newsletter, 2011

Editors Corner. –This is a special Christmas edition.

If you have any articles to submit to the newsletter for next year please send them through to Sue Greene email at sueg-97@@xtra.co.nz

Acting Convenor's Comment. –

We have a number of stories to tell so have decided to publish a special Christmas issue. During the last weekend in November the Branch hosted NZSG Council at a number of functions and it was a pleasure to have our elected representatives in town. Those of you who attended the excellent presentation on the Society's facilities and plans for the future would have been impressed with President Fiona Brooker's expose on the Friday evening. Those who did not missed the opportunity to hear of the enormous range of genealogy services provided by the Society. It was a timely reminder too, even for those of us who have been members for some time.

We are going to set aside time at future monthly Branch meetings for short resumes of specific services offered, will invite a Council member to a meeting later in the year, and have asked Fiona for a copy of her Power Point backup that we can make available to you. We will also be putting more information into future newsletters. Remember membership of the Branch AND of NZSG gives you a double whammy access to resources. We had a good turnout of members as observers to the Saturday Council meeting which gave us a clearer understanding of the complexities of running our Society.

You will find background information on the review of the Society's constitution by a special committee (which includes a Kapiti branch member). The draft of recommendations will be posted on the Society's website for NZSG members before Christmas and comments invited. Please keep a check on the site - www.genealogy.org.nz there are many important changes recommended, a major one of which is an additional membership category for branches to meet current legal requirements. Note that the member invitation will be for comments only, not submissions of new material as these closed April 30.

I take this opportunity to again wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a New Year full of broken down brick walls.

Bill McKeich
Acting Convenor

APFHC: - Our research centre Wed morning help sessions finish for the year on **Dec 14** and recommence on **Jan 11 2012**. The Centre remains open during library hours.

Branch Notes. - Programme for 2012_-Your committee is working very hard to put together another programme of interesting speakers for 2012. We are waiting on confirmation from speakers at this stage.

Meetings Coming Up/ Events. - For full details go to the branch web site at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nzlsgkb/> Click on programmes.

Nov 22 final evening meeting: - Show and tell with supper provided by Branch. This was an interesting evening with a variety of stories both ancient and modern about legitimacy, probates, the journey on board a ship of immigrants to NZ, a Welsh miner, findings on Family Search and more. We also heard stories related to objects such as a doll, a postcard, hand tools and a cribbage board.

Computer Friendly Group. Our next meeting will be in February 2012. The programme for the 2012 is complete and will be on the web site soon.

We welcome the following members. - Nina O'FLYNN, Rodney MULHOLLAND

Why You Are You

DAME KATE HARCOURT 2012 YURU GUEST

We are pleased to announce that the 2012 "Why You Are You" Guest is actor, presenter and publicist Dame Kate Harcourt. Dame Kate was born in Amberley, Canterbury and has a fascinating family history, much of which was told in a 1998 play "Flowers from my Mother's Garden" and which is about to be filmed.

She has appeared in numerous New Zealand theatre productions, films and TV shows and has also worked extensively in radio. In 1996 she was made a Dame Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her contribution to theatre. Dame Kate is the mother of actress Miranda Harcourt and **FAIR GO** TV presenter Gordon Harcourt. She is NZ's oldest working actor and was recently awarded first prize in the Best Female Actress category of the 2011 Rhode Island International Film Festival.

Dame Kate has given the YURU producers a huge amount of material which she has researched and the challenge will be to decide how to condense this into the presentation sequence. Her family tree includes ancestors of Australian origin with interesting backgrounds. Research Officer Sue Greene has started putting the jigsaw together and has already found new information. The production team meets with Dame Kate again before Christmas to report on progress, agree on a title for the presentation and plan the next steps.

Presentation dates are yet to be finalised but it's all on to give audiences a sample of this NZ theatre icon's family history at several venues next year. Southwards will be one of them!



Photo courtesy: Angela Vidal Photography

NZSG News

NZSG Draft Constitution about to be released

The review of the Society's Rules and By-Laws is a very significant event and this special edition of the Branch newsletter has been produced to alert ALL our Branch members. NZSG members will have access to the draft on the Society website before Christmas. The recommendations of the Constitution Review Committee set up by NZSG Council will be posted on the Society's website before Christmas and all members will be briefed on the proposals at our January meeting. Members of the Review Committee joined Council at the meeting of Lower North Island Regional representatives in Paraparaumu on 27 November 2011.

These discussions raised a number of issues and are summarised below.

The review process and timelines for member input and voting

- The Constitution Review Committee was appointed by and reports to Council
- The 7 member committee has wide ranging experience from branch, Council and legal perspectives
- It has been working since January 2011 and has taken a clean slate approach
- Key issues addressed include:
 - *to review the current rules and by-laws and office procedures manual with regard to ambiguity, order and appropriate placement of clauses across these documents
 - *to ensure that the rules accord with modern legal and constitutional requirements and practise *to update the objectives to reinforce the charitable and educational role of the Society
 - *to ensure the role and powers of Council are clearly enunciated and unambiguous
 - *to introduce procedures for disputes resolution
 - *to reinforce the pre-eminent role of the Society as the national genealogy provider which welcomes under its umbrella a diverse range of groups, agencies and members who share a common goal
 - *to introduce a new affiliate group membership category which recognises the diverse range of genealogy and family history groups which have evolved at local and regional level and particularly those branches who are finding increasing difficulty operating within the current rules and who do not meet the requirements of registration of the national body under the Incorporated Societies Act.
 - *to enshrine regional networking and meetings in the rules
- Background material has included a review of overseas genealogy organisations and other NZ based incorporated societies
- Members and branches were invited to make submissions by 30 April 2012. Approximately 100 submissions were received roughly in a 50% split between branch and private responses. All have been acknowledged and considered

- The Committee has reported back to Council with its first draft of the new Rules and some further revision has been requested
- The revised draft will be placed on the Society's website before Christmas 2011 and that document will detail why various changes are recommended. Members will be invited to forward comments ONLY in writing to the CRC Convenor by 1 February 2012. No new submissions or rehash of earlier submissions will be accepted. Comments should be on wording and layout.
- CRC will hold its final meeting in Auckland with an open forum at the Family Research Centre on Friday 10 February 2012 and will then review all submissions and comments over the next 2 days
- The final version needs to be reviewed by the Registrar of Incorporated Societies and the Charities Commission before being posted to all members of the Society by end March 2012 for postal ballot with returns due by mid May 2012
- This will allow the new Rules to be registered in time to become operational by the 2012 AGM
- The By-Laws are also being revised and will be promulgated for discussion and approval at the 2012 AGM

Affiliate group membership proposal

- Important reading is a statement from the Constitution Review Committee on the NZSG website November 2011 which covers the legal arguments which have resulted in provision of a new category of membership. ***The bottom line is that the present arrangements do not meet the requirements of the Incorporated Societies Act while non members of NZSG are members of a branch.*** There could be further issues with respect to registration of the national body and branches with the Charities Commission. There has been extensive legal consultation on this issue and the advice is that the Society cannot continue with the present branch structures of mixed membership.
- There has been much angst in recent years with branches who have been at loggerheads with the Society for a number of reasons but in the main unable to maintain a viable group within the constraints of the current Rules. This has led to disagreements, concerns over loss of resources and a feeling of disenchantment. This must be tackled in a constructive and robust way. The legal parameters are very clear. It is also time to find a route to welcome back into the Society a number of independent groups who have been unable to rejoin under present membership definitions.
- The key issues that the CRC have had to address therefore are:
 - How to accommodate those branches who want to remain as branches and maintain 100% of NZSG members
 - How to provide for those branches that feel unable to maintain 100% NZSG membership yet do not want to sever ties with NZSG
 - How to provide for those branches that want to be totally independent of NZSG as far as how they operate, form their committee, conduct their affairs; yet want to remain under the umbrella of NZSG and its networks of activities.
- The recommended clauses provide for an alternative to those existing branches (***which includes Kapiti Branch with less 40% NZSG membership***) who are unable to meet the 100% NZSG membership requirements of the "Branch category of membership" (and those who have in recent years spun off as independent groups), to remain part of the Society,

- maintain their local networks and resources, participate in national and regional activities, yet be independent as far as their membership, rules and local activities are concerned.
- Many branches have over the years become community genealogy and family history groups and providing their members access to a wide range of genealogy providers including but not exclusively NZSG. Most have their own research resources with links to other providers and agencies such as local libraries and genealogy repositories. Membership includes former NZSG members who no longer require those services, those who would find financial difficulties meeting a national fee as well as a local one, those who enjoy the social and collegiate atmosphere of a local group, among others.
- Many branch submissions expressed concerns that they were unable to meet present requirements for all their committee to be NZSG members, a wish to be independent of Council and not be compelled to have all their members belonging to NZSG.
- Some delegates suggested a fee structure that allowed all branch members to be members of the Society.
- The Committee had received submissions on this point but ruled that this was outside its terms of reference because any details of subscription and membership packages was a responsibility of Council to recommend to an AGM. It further noted that such a package would be difficult to police, would put considerable financial demands on branches and individuals which could have a downside on recruitment, and deny some branch members freedom of choice.
- The Committee thus considered it was important to put in place an overarching framework that met legal requirements, resolved the current anomalies of mixed membership, and steered the Society towards a more affiliate/umbrella style organisation. Whatever subscription arrangements that might then be put in place was a matter for Council.
- The framework proposed is based on overseas models and submissions from members and branches. The model proposed enshrines a concept of a Society which welcomes a diversity of groups with a common interest.
- Affiliate groups may participate in regional meetings, networks and activities in the same way they would have as a branch as at present.
- This is a unique opportunity to resolve an ongoing and major structural issue for the Society. To not do so will see some branches close and others spin off as independents. NZ is too small to support a plethora of genealogy groups and unification and networking at regional and national level is a sound use of resources. At worst it could threaten the future cohesiveness of the Society.
- At its meeting on November 26 in Paraparaumu, Council asked CRC to draw up a draft transition framework to cover the governance options and provide organisational templates available for branches who wish to go down the affiliate group path. What choice of structure and protection of locally held resources is a matter for individual branches to work through with guidance from the parent body if required. Transition must be an ordered process within reasonable time limits.
- The next meeting of LNIR is 18 Feb 2012 at which I will report on progress with the final document.

Clive Palmer
CRC MEMBER

Last Minute Additions.

Users of our services in the Alison Proctor Family History Centre at the Paraparaumu Library should note that the 1911 English/Wales Census records now appear on both Ancestry.com and FindMyPast. If you cannot find who you are looking for on one, try the other, bearing in mind that Ancestry is available on all of our computers, whereas FindMyPast is only available on computers (3 & 4)

NZSG AGM

A reminder the NZSG will be holding yet another AGM on the 21 January 2012. For further information go to <http://www.genealogy.org.nz/>

Contact Details.

Kapiti Branch Contact details:

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Lyn Lee, Secretary kapiti@genealogy.org.nz Tel. 293-1610. Lyn is also the branch contact for FamNet.

Lorna Henderson, Treasurer/Membership Secretary lornamoagmail.com Tel. 293 7771.

Full details of other Committee members and their responsibilities can be found on our website.

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