July 2004

Convenor's Comment:-

The major item of Branch news since the last newsletter, is confirmation that the Kapiti Genealogy Computer Group is to merge with us. Members of that group agreed to a merger proposal at a Special General Meeting held on June 14. Planning for the integration of our activities and resources will commence immediately, so that by the time both groups hold their Annual General Meeting in October, we can sign off our new relationship. KGCG Committee members Sue Greene, George Watson, Brenda McDonald and Denice McCarten have agreed to be co-opted to the Branch Committee. The July meeting of the extended committee was devoted primarily to merger issues and we will report on detail in future newsletters. The 2004 Programme of the Computer Group will continue as promulgated.

As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, 85% of Branch members now have a computer and many of those will be using that facility as a genealogy tool. Some have a genealogy software programme such as Legacy, and FTM. What the merger will likely mean in principle, is that we can collectively get the best of both worlds. The Branch will have a "computers for genealogy" special interest group for those who really want the nitty gritty, while others will benefit from access to that experience and better integration of technology use at our meetings. So watch this space! In the meantime for the rest of the year, we are sending a complimentary copy of our Newsletter to KGCG members who do not currently belong to the Branch. I also hope we can start a Computer Corner in the Newsletter - so how about some copy from you buffs!

Our membership continues to grow and at last count had reached 128. Attendance at meetings has been fifty plus of late and we are stretching at the seams in the public library meeting room. Consequently we are looking at an alternative venue where we have more room to move, set up tables for specialist and social activities and better supper facilities.

As we reported in the June Newsletter, our microfiche collection has been extensively upgraded and including NZ Cemetery records, NZ marriage and death records and Maori BMD records. A reminder that our research resources are housed on the first floor of the Paraparaumu Public Library and are available to members during Library opening hours. Present your KCDC Library Card and

Kapiti Branch Membership Card to the Information Desk on the ground floor to sign in and access the key for the microfiche, book and CD collection. There are several microfiche readers available and a PC. Our July meeting will be devoted to the use of these facilities. We have also extended the services available through Kapiti GenForum, our help to member's service. Details later in this edition.

Notices
A Reminder of the Research Day. Palmerston North Branch is holding a Research Day on Saturday, 14th August 2004 between 10am and 4pm at the Leisure Centre, 569 Ferguson Street, Palmerston North. This is supported by a busload from the NZSG Family History Centre in Auckland, bringing down research material, books, fiche, maps, CD Roms. Interest Groups involved are Australia, Channel Islands, Cornish, East Anglia, Greater London, Midlands, North-West and North-East England, Southern England, Isle of Man and Huguenot. There is a door charge of $10. BYO lunch. This is a great opportunity for the Wellington-Manawatu area. Anyone interested in car pooling? Just let a Committee member know.

Kapiti GenForum now includes a search facility, which also takes in the databases of Ancestry.com and Otherdays Irish Ancestry. Ancestry.com has over 1.2 billion records on 3000 databases, the most comprehensive online source for genealogical and local history research available. There is a lot of American material, but the British content is steadily growing, it includes the entire 1891 Census records of England and Wales, and 1871, 1901 data is being added county by county. The wider database is huge and you can get a better picture by going into www.ancestry.com and downloading the full list. Likewise www.otherdays.com gives a rundown on what is available from that specialist Irish site. Resources include BMD records, indexes, census information, gravestone inscriptions, Wills and deeds and directories.

If you would like a search of a particular database, please fill in the Kapiti GenForum form available off our website, or pick one up at our monthly meetings. Please make sure you are very specific about who you want searched and as much other relevant material possible to narrow down the hit list. We cannot undertake general searches in the hope that something might crop up!
Empty Printer Cartridges Are you saving your used and empty Printer cartridges for re-cycling and fund-raising? Derek would welcome any empty inkjet or bubblejet cartridges - e.g. Canon, Lexmark, Hewlett Packard, or Epson. Please give any that you may have lying around to Derek Griffis at any of our Monthly Meeting evenings.

Reports
The NZSG 2004 Annual Conference, held in Hastings 5th June 2004.
156 members were present. The following were elected to Council for the next two years: Graeme Constable (President), re-elected; Gail Tanner (Treasurer)

unopposed; Councillors (7 from 10 nominations): Avis McDonald, Gore; Lily Baker, Hastings; Sue Greene, Otaki; Tony Gillard, Auckland; Brenda Joyce, Tawa; David Bryant, Auckland; Michael James, Oamaru. Fierce debate against a subscription increase, which was put to the vote and won easily. Single $54; Joint $68; Youth $20 and Corporate $96. As the financial year is to change to April 1st 2005 to March 31st 2006 from the Calendar Year, subs will be called for a 15 month period with the option to pay the lot or in a 3 month and 1 year instalment.Many good service awards were presented.On the Horse's Back NZSG Conference

Having been involved at the organization and participant ends of Conferences and Congresses for many years, I have a reasonable basis to judge them. I have to admit to some reservations going to the annual NZSG bunfight - my first. My fears were groundless. The Hawkes Bay Branch did a marvellous job, and the Queen's Birthday weather proved its good climatic reputation, cold with snow on the ranges and nights of wind and hail, but clear days for the most part. I even managed to get some research done and sample some local wine - my brother-in-law is a local grape grower!

The speakers I concentrated on were Ivan Johnson, recently retired Professor of Economica at California State University, born in Lincolnshire, England with 3 excellent presentations on rural England in the 18th and 19th century and searching for your ancestors. He reminded us of the important of Parish records. For about 400 years, between the post-reformation but pre-civil registration, records in England depend almost exclusively on the parish. Rural folk did move to get work, but usually around a reasonably narrow area. Radial or blanket searches systematically widening from a centre parish of known records of an ancestor and particularly during the child raising years of the female, to surrounding parishes, is a useful tool. Until the second half of the 19th century, England was predominately an agricultural country and a large percentage of the population lived and worked there. Knowledge of the class structure and occupations of rural England - mostly working and lower middle classes, is also a useful genealogical tool. Many of the early NZ migrants would have been from these classes as they looked much further afield to better their lot. He also talked about the history of parish registers as the bread and butter of the genealogist.

Tom Brooking, a well-known and provocative NZ historian now based at Otago University and a Scotsman, debunked the oft held view that early Scottish migration to NZ was from the highland clearances - wrong time frame. However, many immigrants from Scotland brought with them awful memories of those years. These formed the basis of the liberal political policies of several early PMs. He also spelt our, with some interesting statistics, the importance of the horse in NZ's early development - in 1954 there were still more working horses than registered tractors and by the 1900s more horses per person than equivalent current car

registration. Sue Greene gave her now well-polished presentation on the NZSG Records Collection and old DSIR colleague, James Watt, a resume of the Shipping Index of NZ's coastal vessels developed by his father. Those vessels played a vital part in shifting and supplying the people of early NZ

Registrar-General, Brian Clarke, gave a very timely update of the balancing act of access to BMD and related information in NZ and a world vastly changed by 9/11 and subsequent events. While the computer has revolutionised sorting, storing and checking personal information, any release of this information to public on-line systems has to be carefully monitored. Identity theft, passport forging and other related frauds are on the increase, using NZ data. On-line BDM records that still has to receive political approval, will probably be delayed until next year for final release and be restricted. Some traditional hard copy access to BMD data will remain, but access to information on living persons will become very difficult. The message to genealogists is get that information now, as even in a couple of year's time it might be very restricted. I'm reminded of a recent report from a lady on a US mail list site, who had to spend $US3000 in legal fees to get hold of her ancestors records in a State that has closed access to records, unless you can prove you are bona fide!

The Conference proceedings are well worth a read and I assume a copy will reach our Library in due course. Conference 2005 is Queens Birthday weekend in Nelson. Perhaps we can organize a block booking from Kapiti and take advantage of travel and accommodation (Clive Palmer)

Wellcome Trust Further for anyone wanting information on medical matters in the U.K., Bill and Eleen Allan has given us the e-mail address for the above Trust, saying that they visited it in London last year and found what they were looking for. It is a multi-storey library and visitors can even send e-mail messages from there! http://library.wellcome.ac.uk
Thanks to Eileen & Bill for this item.

Visit to the National Library
Over 20 members from our Branch went to Wellington on July 3rd to meet with Margaret Hurst for a guided tour of the Family History part of the National Library. She explained that the Library was divided into five sections: Maori - Government Publications NZ/Pacific - International and Family History all housed in the ground floor. She advised us that they provide a 10 page free print-out service, with any extra pages charged at 20 cents per page. Copies of microfiche or film can be obtained at 60 cents a copy.
She also told us that some of the information provided came through the NZSG. The National Library asks for two copies of all published material, not the three copies as previously required. The biography index and shipboard diaries were kept in the Alexander Turnbull Library on the next floor
After her general talk, Margaret took us to the Family History section, with its

notice board, displaying new publications. There was a group of war histories on a table across from these. Then there were shelves with Scottish and Irish material. In the English section material was grouped under counties. There was an Australian section, mainly from Victoria. They have a large selection of CDs and I was fascinated to see they have copies of the 1851 Census' for several (at least) English counties: anyway the north country counties that I am looking at, so you can guess where my next visit down there will lead me. All told, the 3 hours spent there was all too short and over lunch some of the group asked, "Where are we going next?"

Much of the material they hold is indexed on their internet site and it certainly pays to investigate this first before visiting the National Library, as you need to know what areas you want to research before you go.

Articles
The Long Arm of Co-incidence - Derek Griffis
I recently returned from a 3-week holiday in Australia, mostly staying with friends and relations, but on a few nights staying at Youth Hostels. Family History was far from my mind when, on 30th April, my wife and I checked in to the Youth Hostel at Merimbula, on the south coast of New South Wales, close to the Victorian border. As I went to sign in to the Hostel Register, I noticed that the entry above mine in the book was genealogically familiar to me - "A & B.Rutland, Christchurch". ("Rutland" is my second christian name). There were only a few in the hostel that night, so it didn't take long to deduce which of them was my target, and then to bail him up. Yes indeed he was my man, and to say that he was amazed would be something of an under-statement. He was Alan, plus his wife Barbara, and we had been in intermittent communication a few years ago about genealogy, by email, by snailmail, and occasionally by phone, but had never met each-other in person. I am his Third Cousin Once Removed. The odds against such a chance meeting, overseas, off-season, in a small hostel, must be astronomical.

Archives NZ Resources Inquests, Probates & ITMs
Genealogists should know that some of the useful records available for free in Archives are:

1. Probates - unrestricted apart from some post-1921 "Native" records, available in Archives Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin. The last Courts (Nelson, Blenheim, Masterton?) have transferred, or soon will transfer, their early records. I know from getting a one page Will for $30 from Nelson Court that Archives are cheaper, plus you can inspect free! As well as the Will, you may get copies of death certificates, etc. if intestate. I am one of the NZSG team under Rob Aspen indexing the probates in Archives Wellington up to 1950 (including Napier and Palmerston North Courts; Taranaki also now in Archives Wellington has been done?)

2. Coroners Inquests: Justice HO copy in Archives Wellington only and restricted if under 50 years old. Card index to 1905, but annual indexes in Archives post-1905

3. Intentions to Marry: HO copy in Archives Wellington only, not indexed past 1881 but often can be found if likely district known (it is easier to look for the RG number than for a name!) The ITM will usually give the age and marital status, plus often the date of widow(er)hood or decree nisi for those not bachelors/spinsters

If you have the reference details from NZSG transcriptions, why not e-mail Archives NZ for a copy of a Will? For example: Dunedin Archives e-mail is Dunedin.archives@@govt.nz Ask for a quote

Gore Branch Web site http://www.rootsweb.com/~nzlsggb/

For postal, e-mail and website addresses of a NZSG branch: go to http://www.genealogy.org.nz/branch/alphalist.html

Thanks to Deborah Shuker for this information

From Here & There

The July 04 issue from the Canterbury Branch NZSG gives fiche reader tips:- Hi guys, as usual I am a bit behind the times, but two hints in newsletters suggested

1. Using coloured cellophane when reading microfiche, taped over the screen. Different colours for different people and

2. Night driving glasses are also helpful.

The writer purchased a pair of clipon night driving glasses and found them very good. Also when using the computer seems to make viewing more comfortable. A warning though, I read some time ago, opticians do not recommend night driving glasses and consider them unsafe. But who's driving the computer anyway? It's usually the computer doing the driving, me mad, that is! Pat Wright.

Also from the above publication, an item found in the Lyttelton Times, 1909 "All persons born on a British ship on the high seas are registered in Stepney. A large number never saw Stepney" Most interesting. The Christchurch Editor remarks "Is that statement really correct? Without some indication of the author or the writer's position to make that statement it could be but some gossipy, ill-informed hearsay" Who knows?

Palmerston North NZSG June newsletter tells us that the British National Archives Digital Records have posted on the internet for public access more than a million Wills, spanning five centuries. One hundred of these, dating from between 1384 and 1858, have been collated in a special section befitting their famous authors, including William Shakespeare, Jane Austin, Captain James Cook and Napoleon Bonaparte. Shakespeare's is free to download, the others cost 3.50 pounds sterling each.

The Wills are part of DocumentsOnline, which provides online access to the British National Archives' collection of digitized public records, including both

academic and genealogical sources. Searching the index is free, and it costs 3.50 pounds sterling to download a digital image of a document.Visit: http://www.documentsonline.pro.gov.uk/
(This information came to the above Branch through ARANZ Newsletter, April 2004)

Wellington Branch NZSG is right up-to-date with their research. Their June 2004 newsletter has a couple of articles on DNA research and using it in tracing ancestors. The first is about Professor Bryan Sykes, author of The Seven Daughters of Eve and Adam's Curse, A future Without Men. The second gives an example of people using DNA for their research. What next?
Computer Special Interest Group (CSIG)

GEDCOM files, Acronym For: GEnealogical Data COMmunication

Do you want to share your family tree file with friends, family, or fellow researchers? Unless they use the same genealogy software program as you they will not be able to open and read your family file unless you send it to them in GEDCOM format.

All major family tree software programs support the creation of GEDCOM files. Creating a GEDCOM file does not overwrite your existing data or change your existing file in any way. Instead, a new file is generated by a process known as "exporting." Exporting a GEDCOM file is easy to do with any family tree software by following the basic instructions below. You can also find more detailed instructions in your genealogy software's manual or help system.

Generic Instructions for Creating a GEDCOM File:
This works for most family tree software programs
1. Launch your family tree program and open your genealogy file.
2. In the top-left hand corner of your screen, click the File menu.
3. Select either Export or Save as...
4. Change the Save As Type or Destination drop-down box to GEDCOM or .GED.
5. Select the location where you'd like to save your file (make sure it's one you can easily remember)
6. Enter a filename such as someonefamilytree (the program will automatically add the .ged extension)
7. Click Save or Export.
8. Some type of confirmation box will appear stating that your export has succeeded.
9. Click OK.
10. Your file is now ready to share with others.

Once you have created a GEDCOM file you can now easily share it with others via

email, floppy disk/CD, or the Internet.
In simple terms GEDCOM is a standardized method of formatting your family tree data into a text file which can be easily read and converted by any genealogy software program. (Generally it cannot be read as a text file in a word processor.)

At our COMPSIG meeting on the 12 July at 7.30 pm in the Paraparaumu Library, a demonstration will be given on how to create, use and email these files