

Remember to
check our
website
[http://
KapitiGen.org](http://KapitiGen.org)
for additional
information on
events, Branch,
Interest & User
Groups, and
any late
changes.

Editorial



Happy Easter

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One or two important things to
note this month.

Our AGM is next month on May
27th. The agenda is on page 4 and
the link to the draft of last year's
AGM minutes will be attached to
the email with this newsletter.

I was interested to read the first
instalment of Rob Thornton's war-
time memories on page 5.
I too was a war baby, but in London
with very different memories of
those years; ones of wailing sirens,
the droning whine of pilotless
bombers, a few seconds of
ominous deadly silence - and then
ground-shaking explosions.
However, we too had home-made
toys - rag dolls and a wooden see-
saw.

Don't miss this month's speaker, Dr
Chris Pugsley on Le Quesnoy. His
knowledge of both World Wars is
amazing and he's a great speaker.

May I put in a strong plea for a new
Newsletter Editor?

I can no longer manage the
computer due to arthritis, so am
reluctantly giving up. It would be a
shame to see an active Branch like
ours without a newsletter. There
must be members who would like
the opportunity to use or expand
their editing skills.

Please let us know. Contact me or
one of the Committee.

In the meantime, do let me have
your impressions of RootsTech.
And did anyone attend the Irish
Education Day? How did that go?

Enjoy the Easter break. Hopefully
we'll see you next Tuesday.

Cheers, Sheila

Meetings this month:
Tuesday evening
April 22nd

Chris Pugsley
'Stories of Le Quesnoy'

Wednesday afternoon
April 23rd

Branch Meetings for April 2025

Evening meeting.

When: Tuesday April 22nd

7pm - meet and greet. Refreshments
7.30 - 9pm, main session.

Where: Coast Community Church

57, Hinemoa Street, Paraparaumu

What:

Dr Chris Pugsley

Stories of Le Quesnoy

Chris will relate stories of Le Quesnoy and look at some of the personalities buried in smaller cemeteries nearby.

Host: Ian Brooking

Daytime meeting

When: Wednesday April 23rd

Doors open 1.30pm, Meeting 2 - 4pm

Where: Waikanae Baptist Church Café, 286, Te Moana Road, Waikanae

What:

Review of evening meeting.

Followed by discussion and research. Have you any interesting war heroes in your family?

Host: Denice McCarten

Branch notices

A warm welcome to our new members: Ailsa Parker and Allan Gill

Please make yourselves known to us and take advantage of the great facilities at the Alison Proctor Family History Centre in Paraparaumu Library.

See pages 8 and 9 for details of Interest Groups and research sessions.

AGM - May 27th

Agenda on page 3 with link to nomination form for Committee members.

If you are able to contribute towards the running of the Branch please consider seeking nomination for the Committee. Your help is needed.

The link to the Draft 2024 AGM minutes is in the email with this newsletter. Please support your Committee by attending the AGM, if you can, and reading last year's minutes before the meeting.

URGENT! Newsletter editor required. Please contact the Secretary, Jenny, if you are able to help.

Membership:

Our financial year ends **31st March**. See panel on page 10 for renewal information, or go to <https://kapitigen.org/membership-2/> for membership details and the online form to join.

Reminders have been sent to those whose subscriptions are now overdue.

Additions to Catalogued Books In APFHC

Two publications have been purchased to expand the Irish Section:

General Alphabetical Index to Townlands, Towns, parishes and Baronies of Ireland
(Based on Census of Ireland for the year 1851)

Mitchell Brian - A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland (2nd Ed) General Publishing, Baltimore 2002

The following books have been donated. Relevant to research on New Zealand residents:

Borrie, WD. Immigration to New Zealand 1854-1938. Australian Nat. University, Canberra 1991

Parker YM. Forty Years On: The Development of NZSG 1967-2007. NZSG, Auckland 2007

Taylor Y. (Editor) New Zealand Role of Honour: New Zealanders who have served their Country in Peace and War 1845-1995. Role of Honour Publications, Auckland. 2007

James Henry McKeich - Tunneller

Member, Bill McKeich, gave the March evening meeting a very interesting talk about his ancestor James Henry McKeich.

Bill's ancestors travelled from Scotland to Australia and ran a Butchery in Beaufort, Victoria.

Archibald, Robert and Walter McKeich came on to New Zealand, where Robert set up a butcher's shop in Lawrence, Central Otago.

James was born 6 May 1876 in Dunedin, the son of Archibald. He worked in the butcher's shop delivering meat to the miners.

James then went to Nhill, Victoria, where he lived with Fanny Hart who had 6 daughters to her husband, who was away working. Albert Hart was contacted by a friend to tell him that James was living with his wife and that she was pregnant with James' child. Albert Hart took his daughters and proceeded to apply for a divorce.

James and Fanny went on to have 3 children. Fanny and Jim moved back to New Zealand where he lived in Roxburgh before working on the Caversham side tunnel and in 1908 the Otira tunnel.

While working on the Otira tunnel one day he heard a lot of creaking and unfortunately was hit by a falling beam and was not expected to live. His son, Walter, was called for and realised his false teeth were partially swallowed and stopping him breathing! After the blacksmith pulled them out he started to breathe again. James remembered that two other men were in the tunnel. After 9 days the two men were pulled out alive. They had been given food and water through a pipe.

The family lived in shanties at Broken River, before the portal for the Otira tunnel. Anyone wishing to go further went by Cobb and Co Coach to the West Coast. James came home one night to find his children outside the shanty and his wife with a bailiff, who was trying to repossess his home. He had bought the shanty for £12 from Robert Semple, who went on to be the Minister of Works, so Robert could clear his debts. When James produced the receipt, the bailiff left.

James' daughter, May, told Bill the house was built of corrugated iron and lined with tongue and groove timber. They had an outside dunny, which contained two toilets, one at a higher level for the adults and one lower for children. One of the hen's laid its egg, every day, between the two toilets.

Fanny and James married on 14 September 1916 in Wellington. Fanny Helen Smith Hart is recorded as a widow, but she was actually a divorcee.

James joined F Company in 1916. He was stationed in Arras, where there were numerous tunnels, which had been built in the Middle Ages. The tunnels were big enough to house 24,000 troops and had bathroom facilities and mess halls. The New Zealand Tunnelling Company named their tunnels, Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland, Blenheim, Dunedin, and Bluff.

In 2008 the Wellington tunnel was opened for viewing.

James also worked on the Havrincourt single span bridge which was, at the time, the longest in the world.

After being discharged, James started working on the Stratford-Taumarunui line (Forgotten Highway Railway system), where there are 24 tunnels. He would probably have worked on tunnels 19, 20 and 21 which were lined with cement. The earlier tunnels 22, 23, 24 were built towards the end of WWI and were lined with bricks made from red clay. The final tunnel was built in 1926.

Northland Waikeikei tunnel was the next project that James worked on – it is the Auckland-Dargaville line. This is now a tourist attraction.

James wanted to go to WWII but the Government sent him to Fiji to build runways.

James died in 1961 at the Levin veterans' home. His headstone is at Maunu Cemetery, Whangarei, with Fanny and Rona their daughter.

Jenny Wilson

AGM Agenda - May 27th 2025

Annual General Meeting Kapiti Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists
Tuesday, 27 May 2025 at 7.30 pm
Coast Community Church, 57 Hinemoa Street, Paraparaumu

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES –
2. CONFIRM 2024 AGM MINUTES
Proposer/Seconder
3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES
Proposer/Seconder
4. ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL 2024 TO 31 MARCH 2025
Proposer/Seconder
6. FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL 2024 TO 31 MARCH 2025
Proposer/Seconder
7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR
Proposer/Seconder
8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE **
Proposer/Seconder
The Committee has the power to co-opt members of the Kapiti Genealogy Group if required.
9. GENERAL BUSINESS

** The Nominees for all positions must be current financial members of the Kapiti Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists.

Nomination forms may be obtained by visiting our website <https://kapitigen.org/communications/>, or from the Secretary@KapitiGen.org.

Completed Nomination forms must be received by hand/post or electronically to the Secretary no later than **5pm Saturday, 24 May 2025**.

Photos from March Meeting



*Bill McKeich at the
March evening
meeting*

*Photos
Bernard McManus*



Rob Thornton Remembers

When I, being a war baby, look back at my young life, I feel that later generations have a lot less going for them in the way of making their own fun. We did not have a lot, and any fun was made by ourselves and not with some shop bought equipment that seems to be the way it is now.

We had a billy cart made from a couple of motorcycle wheels with pram wheels on the front, steered by rope on each end of a board that served as the front axle. It was a very noisy cart, but we got lots of fun out of it.

We made stilts, first from tin cans that we stood on, held under the feet by loops of rope that were hand-held to keep them in place. These later became redundant to stilts made with timber with a block bolted on as a foot plate. Great fun.

Another summer pastime was swimming in the creek below our home. As free-range kids we asked the dragline operator if he would dig out a hole for us in the creek while he was nearby. It was also the fishing pool for eels that were very abundant in the creek. Any that we caught went to a local Māori family that really loved them.

All our meals were eaten at the table and everyone if they were home, sat at the table. Discussion was encouraged but had to cease if Dad had money on a race being broadcast. We lived with the radio going all day.

We had three horses that could be caught and ridden. One named Puss was a huge draught horse. She was ridden with only a bridle as she had no saddle. She was very tolerant, but we knew when she'd had enough because she would go under a low willow tree branch and lose the rider as she went.

I remember the departure of Puss when Dad sold her to a back country farmer along with all the harness and a konaki.

The konaki is a sledge with small solid wheels on the rear and steel staps under the skids at the front. It was used like a trailer around the farm except that it was dragged along the ground by the horse, in our case Puss.

She was normally a quiet horse but one day Dad was using the konaki to move a 600 gallon drum to the bottom paddock and this meant going past the house where there was a large area that had been metaled as a turning area for vehicles.

Well, when Puss got to this area the tank started to rattle and clatter as the konaki went across the metalled area. She spooked and bolted. About 60 yards ahead of her was a closed gate, which would have been opened when she got to it. Not this time, she leapt over the gate and dragged the konaki through it, turning a perfectly good gate to kindling. She galloped on around the paddock until she realised that she was no longer being chased by this thing on the sled. She pulled up and stood as if nothing had happened.

We finished up rolling the tank where it was required, the way it should have been done in the first place. After this episode the konaki was used for wood, logs, hay, and other loads that did not make a noise as it was moved about. When Dad eventually sold Puss the konaki went with her along with all the harness, Swingle trees and chains.

All this gear used to hang on the wall in the buggy shed, but it had never seen a buggy for 30 years. It since housed a car but was still referred to as the buggy shed.

I am sure many members will have very similar memories from their childhood, and this is just a small sample. More next month.

Rob Thornton.

NZSG News

Members of our parent body, the New Zealand Society of Genealogists (NZSG) will have noticed this in the regular e-kit newsletter they receive, or maybe you have already spotted it in your searches of the very useful website for NZ research: NZ Ancestor Search Helper (ash.howison.co.nz)

“Luke Howison’s Ancestor Search Helper now includes the records publicly available on the Kiwi Collection. This tool can search the freely available New Zealand databases all at once. As a member you have access to even more records and as a subscriber over 16 million records.”

Luke is scheduled to be our guest speaker later in the year.

The April Online DNA Interest Group (ODIG) presentation is on Wed 30th April 7:30pm. Those NZSG members already registered with ODIG will automatically receive the link for the Teams meeting beforehand. This month it is a Case Study using the WATO+ tool by Sandra Metcalf and as usual the recording will be available afterwards in the Google Classroom.

Register Errors

Peter Calver, who provides the LostCousins website and a regular newsletter that is always worth reading, has a snippet to bear in mind that a Register you are reading might just be plain wrong. These are not necessarily as obvious as the example he shows. His explanation as to what did occasionally happen and would explain this is worth reading. Certainly we should all hope that this wasn’t a regular practice. <https://www.lostcousins.com/newsletters2/latemar25news.htm>

Roots Tech

This is an interesting recording from 2024 as this year’s equivalent session wasn’t recorded.

A method for solving your puzzles – The Search Party

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/session/brick-wall-ancestors-need-a-search-party/>

Well worth a watch.

Military Prize Records

Have you ever wondered about your ancestors’ military careers in the 18th and 19th centuries?

The Genealogist has announced the release of the Royal Hospital Chelsea: Prize Records from The National Archives (Reference WO 164). This newly digitised collection contains more than one million entries detailing the distribution of military prize money from 1720 to 1899, offering an unprecedented window into the financial rewards granted to soldiers, staff and their families for success in battle.

The collection spans 663 volumes and 1,064,391 records across more than 172,000 high resolution colour images. The documents detail the entitlements to shares in war prizes from campaigns between 1720 and 1899.

Records cover significant wars such as the latter years of the American Revolutionary War, the Battle of Waterloo and the Peninsular War, as well as smaller skirmishes.

Not only do these records contain names of the soldiers, but maylist a relative applying for the prize and an address.

The records are fully searchable by Name of the Applicant and Soldier, Rank, Regiment, Date, Location, War and Keywords.

Monthly 'How to' on Zoom

The next monthly Members Only 1 hour Zoom session is on **Monday 5th May, 8-9pm.**

Topic; Time to have another Q&A session on **FamilySearch.**

If you have a specific question, or puzzle, you'd like us to tackle, email the details with the ID of the person and what is puzzling you to **HowTo @ KapitiGen.org.** We'll tackle it together.

There's always something for all of us to explore and/or learn on FamilySearch,

Pre-registration required, The link has been sent with the covering email to the latest newsletter.

<https://kapitigen.org/online-how-to/>



DNA News

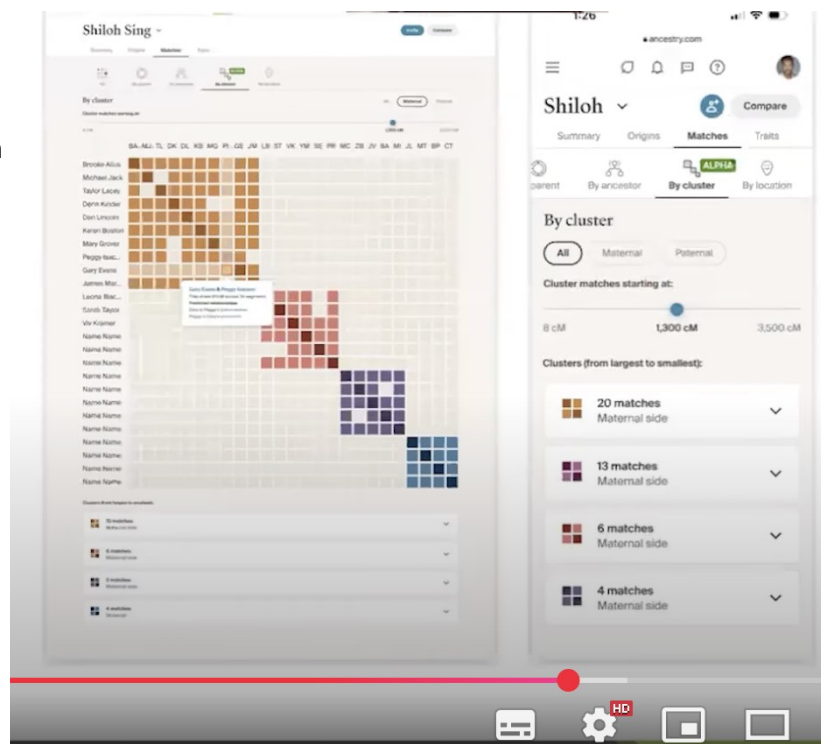
This RootsTech Demo by Kelly Becker "Using Ancestry DNA to Power Family History", at 6:46 minutes in states that we'll be able to see Matches by Cluster: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iwi34dytrGs&t=405s>

This is a visual way of showing you your shared matches grouped into those likely to share a common ancestor. A short cut way of the painstaking work checking the shared matches for each match and assigning your group labels to gain clues for your brick walls and / or mystery matches.

The initial release looks to be clusters at a set range of 65 – 1300 cMs and to be behind a Pro-Tools sub. For my kit on Ancestry that is a whole 50 matches only one of whom I need more clues to accurately place in the ancestral line she has to belong to. If you are working on brickwalls a bit further out you'll have to wait until "later this year" when you will apparently be able to tweak the match range displayed.

A point of difference between this and the AutoCluster tool already available if you are on MyHeritage or GEDmatch seems to be that it is interactive, and has a list view where you can both see and edit your notes on a match. That, and the much larger database of testers on Ancestry.

Ancestry also claims to have tools to cope with endogamy. The impact of these very inter-related communities is usually a large solid unhelpful block, so how this claim turns out in practice will be interesting.



Lorna Henderson

Interest Groups

Irish Interest Group

Next Meeting: Paraparaumu Library Tuesday 13th May 1:30-3:30

Discussion topic: Irish Wills, Probates and Will Calendars

The discussion topic will be Irish wills, what they contain, where to find them and the information of value for genealogists.

Both pre-1858 wills administered by the church and civil wills since 1858 will be covered, including the summaries in Will calendars.

The online collections of the National Archives of Ireland and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland will be discussed.

The discussion will be followed by time for assistance with Irish family history research, using either the APFHC terminals linked to several subscription sites or your own laptop to access a range of free Irish sites.

All welcome, whether new to Irish research or experienced. For information about the group see <http://www.kapitigen.org/programme/interest-groups/irish>

or contact IrishSIG@KapitiGen.org

Graeme McVerry



RootsMagic Users Group

To learn, share, and more about how to use RootsMagic for keeping track of your research and recording your family, are you on our mailing list?

The pre-registration link for the session is sent to those on our mailing list nearer the time.

To be added to the list please see our RootsMagic page at

<https://kapitigen.org/rootsmagic-special-interest-group/>

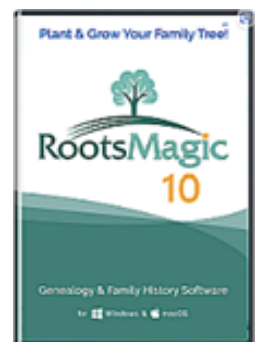
Our next 2-monthly Zoom meeting is on Saturday 17th of May, 2-4 pm.

All welcome. Free to all. Overall theme yet To Be Decided.

New to Zoom? Get in touch beforehand and we'll get you started.

RootsMagic page at <https://kapitigen.org/rootsmagic-special-interest-group/>

Lorna Henderson



DNA Interest Group

Our April meeting touched on a fairly wide range of topics ranging from getting started on Ancestry through to exploring MyHeritage AutoClusters and triangulations.

The next in-person two-monthly DNA session is on **Saturday 14th June at the Waikanae Baptist Church Cafeteria, from 2 to 4pm**, doors open 1:30pm.

Free for Kapiti Genealogy members. Visitors welcome, \$5.

Not a member, why not join? For details, see our membership page

<https://kapitigen.org/membership-2/>

Reminders of all our DNA meetings are sent to those on our DNA mailing list.

If you wish to be added to our mailing list for the DNA group reminders, please check out our DNA interest group page: <https://kapitigen.org/dna-special-interest-group/>

Lorna Henderson



Branch information

Branch meetings:

Evening meeting is held on the fourth Tuesday of the month from January to November.

Daytime meeting is on the following day, usually the fourth Wednesday, from January to November. Attendance is free to members of the Branch, Visitors \$5 to help cover expenses.

Help with Research

Wednesday mornings 10-12am, at the Paraparaumu Library. Open to the public. Volunteers always needed, please.

If you can help, please go to the APFHC in Paraparaumu Library on a Wednesday morning and speak to the person volunteering.

First Saturday in the month 1-3pm.

To book an appointment for individual assistance phone Lorna on 04 293 7771 so you can be directed to the best person who can help you.

Next session **Saturday May 3rd**

'How to' Monthly short Zoom session

First Monday of the month for one hour.

Next meeting is **Monday May 5th, 8-9pm.**

Members only. Free. See **page 6** for details.

Publicity

For flyers of our events, along with other local special events, check out our Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61558732100830>

Reminder about the procedure for returning the key to the Branch cupboard containing the keyboards.

When you sign in at the issuing desk to get the key (see above in next column) **you are responsible for returning it**, even if someone else is still researching when you leave.

Please take the **remaining person** to the issuing desk to get them signed in as the person responsible for returning the key when they leave.



Facilities at the

Alison Proctor Family History Centre

The APFHC is located at Paraparaumu Library. Turn right inside the library entrance to the area containing six computers, microfiche and library. The cupboard on the right hand side of the area contains the red folders mentioned below.

Members need to get the cupboard key from the library Issuing Desk, when you will be asked to sign for the key and show your membership card for the current year.

Computer Password at the APFHC

The APFHC computer password changes regularly: check the red Computer Help folder in the top drawer.

Please sign the red signing-in book found in the top drawer.

Keyboards are in the lowest drawer.

Replace the cover on the computer when you leave and lock the keyboard in the cupboard.

All six computers have subscriptions to Ancestry, FindMyPast and access to The Genealogist and Roots Ireland as well as free sites like FamilySearch. (Use your own log-in to FamilySearch).

NB. Please do **NOT** sign out of RootsIreland, FindMyPast or TheGenealogist. Please **do not switch off** the printer.

We have a printer if you wish to print a hard copy. Please put 10c per copy in the honesty box on the cupboard door.





Branch Officers

Convenor On rotation

Convenor "at" KapitiGen.org

Secretary: Jenny Wilson

Secretary "at" KapitiGen.org

Treasurer : John Miller

Treasurer "at" KapitiGen.org

Branch responsibilities

Membership:

Lorna Henderson: Phone: 04 293 7771

Membership "at" KapitiGen.org

Programme & Activities:

Ian Brooking

Denice Mc Carten

Programme "at" KapitiGen.org

Librarian: Beverley Chappell

Members: Bernard McManus

Graeme McVerry

Daytime co-ordinator:

Denice McCarten

daygrp "at" KapitiGen.org

Meeting registrars: Evening: Judy Olsen

Daytime: May Redmund

Audio/Visual Support:

Ian Brooking and Lindsay Olsen

Newsletter Editor: Sheila Jolley

editor "at" KapitiGen.org

Trip organiser: Kathy Callaghan

Publicity: Maureen Robb

Computer/Equipment Support: Ian Brooking

Catering: By roster

Raffle: Marion Fitchett

Interest Group Facilitators:

DNA: Lorna Henderson

Irish: Graeme McVerry

IrishSIG "at" KapitiGen.org

Roots Magic: Lorna Henderson

RootsMagic "at" KapitiGen.org

Website: <https://kapitigen.org>

Webmasters: Bernard McManus & Ian Brooking

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61558732100830>

Email links

Throughout the newsletter email links are clickable. Remove the extra @ symbol before sending.

Kapiti Genealogy Venues

APFHC: Alison Procter Family History Centre,
Ground Floor, North West Corner,
Paraparaumu Library

Coast Community Church, 57, Hinemoa Street,
Paraparaumu

Waikanae Baptist Church Cafe,
286, Te Moana Road, Waikanae

Membership -

\$30 for the year 1 April to 31st March. Use your membership card to access our resources at the APFHC in Paraparaumu Library.

New members joining January-March 2025 are automatically financial for the 2025/26 year.

For further details please visit our membership page <https://kapitigen.org/membership-2/>

Payment may be made to:

Kapiti Genealogy BNZ 02-0591-0040791-000.

Please put your phone number in a payee field.

May Branch Meetings
Evening Meeting
Tuesday May 27th

AGM
Plus 'Show and Tell'

Daytime Meeting
Wednesday May 28th