



Keeping in Touch

Newsletter for Branches, Interest Groups, Officers and Contact Persons

Issue Number: 67

August 2010

Greetings to all members

The new NZSG Council met at the FRC on the weekend of 7-8 August 2010 and had a very busy but positive and constructive meeting.

Forum

Councillors were available to meet with any members who wished to discuss matters informally on the evening of Friday 6 August, however no members attended. If members wish to speak with councillors at the regular Friday evening Forum before each Council Meeting, they are most welcome to do so. They only need to register their intention with the Office Manager. An indication of any specific subject or issue would also be helpful for compiling a list of topics and allocating time if there are to be more than a few attendees. This is an excellent opportunity for local members to have informal discussions on any NZSG-related topic with their councillors.

Portfolios/Areas of Responsibility

At the beginning of the Council Meeting, President Fiona Brooker allocated portfolios to the Council as follows (alphabetical by surname):

Lynne Blake – Education
Fiona Brooker – External Liaison; Publishing; Promotion
Liz Chandler – Record Collections; NZSG Archives
David Bryant – Information Technology
Joseph Gillard – Research Services; Policy and Procedures
Bob Matthews – Fund Raising
Raewyn Nevin – Family Research Centre; Sales
Roger Washbourn – Projects
Barbara Wyley – Liaison; Website; Magazine

Responsibility for Regions (north to south)

Northland – Barbara Wyley
Auckland – David Bryant; Raewyn Nevin
Waikato/Bay of Plenty – Lynne Blake
Taranaki – Joseph Gillard
Lower North Island – Liz Chandler
Top of the South – Bob Matthews
Canterbury – Fiona Brooker
Mainland South – Roger Washbourn

Executive

The NZSG Executive comprises President, Vice President and Treasurer. In accordance with the rules, the members elected President Fiona Brooker and Treasurer Bob Matthews during the recent Council election, and Council has now elected councillor Barbara Wyley as Vice President.

Council Meeting Dates for 2010-2011

In response to members' suggestions that they meet more frequently in order to deal more effectively with Council business, councillors have decided to schedule six meetings per year from 2011.

Quarterly meetings will still be held at the Family Research Centre (Panmure) in accordance with the NZSG Rules, however the dates for some of these will change. It is Council's intention to hold one of the extra meetings in the South Island and the other in the North Island. The locations for these meetings have yet to be decided, as a number of factors need to be taken into consideration, but they will most probably be advised in the next issue of KIT.

Taking into consideration the Rules and By-Laws, public holidays, school holidays, and AGM & Conference dates - and not forgetting the Rugby World Cup - the 2011 Council Meeting dates will be:

February 12/13 - FRC	March 26/27 - location to be announced
May 14/15 - FRC	August 6/7 - FRC
September 24/25 - location to be announced	November 26/27 - FRC

Some regions may wish to adjust their Regional Meeting dates for 2011 to accommodate the new timetable. Whenever possible it is hoped to hold an informal forum for members with councillors on the Friday evening preceding the Council Meeting (see above). The meeting itself, which all members are welcome to attend, will be held on the Saturday, and, when possible, the Regional Meeting on the Sunday. This would maximise opportunities for members and councillors to meet and discuss matters of interest, for members to become more aware of the business and workings of Council, and for councillors to become more familiar with the special character of each region.

NZSG Annual General Meeting 2010

The AGM was held on the Friday afternoon preceding the Family History Fair, at the Kingsgate Hotel in Hamilton. An account of much of the proceedings can be found in the latest issue of *The New Zealand Genealogist*. Of much interest to members will be the approved \$3 increase in membership subscriptions for joining or rejoining members from 1 August 2010, introduced to cover the 2½% increase in GST.

The new rates are:

Single ordinary subscription	\$67.00	Joining fee	\$15.00
Joint subscription	\$85.00	Joining fee	\$15.00
Youth subscription	\$32.00	No joining fee	

New Zealand Family History Fair 2010

Praise for the NZ Family History Fair held in Hamilton in July has been overwhelming.

Council congratulates and thanks Sandra Metcalfe and her dedicated team for their extraordinary accomplishment in carrying this event off at such short notice, and the members in Branches and Interest Groups around the whole country for supporting their vision so wholeheartedly.

The NZSG Inspiration Centre was indeed inspiring, a testimony to the fruits of decades of genealogists working together for a common cause in their regions, and willing to go to great efforts to share that with the rest of the country. The "trades" exhibits were similarly useful, interesting and helpful. The whole venue was abuzz from Friday morning till Sunday evening, the atmosphere positive and excited, with no shortage of items in which to invest your genealogy dollar.

You can visit the Family History Fair's Facebook page to enjoy photographs of the event, including the NZSG AGM and Friday night's opening ceremony here:
<http://www.facebook.com/NZFamilyHistoryFair>

Branch, Interest Groups and Contacts Meeting

Representatives of Branches and Interest Groups attended a useful meeting on the Sunday morning of the Family History Fair. Notes from the meeting, with some additions as requested at the meeting, have been distributed to all contacts.

Family History Month

August is Family History Month and members throughout the country are preparing and presenting events to promote the study of genealogy and family history in their areas. It's not too late to send details of those events being held late in the month to webmaster@genealogy.org.nz to include on our website. Visitors to our site may become visitors to your event.

If you still require application forms or information brochures for promoting NZSG membership, please contact membership@genealogy.org.nz

Membership Update

Unfortunately a mistake was made with the membership figures in the previous issue of KIT; those published were for 31 December 2009, not 31 March 2010. The report should have stated 6,538. End of March figures are traditionally low, as many members do not renew until well into April, but this figure was still more than 400 above that recorded for the same period in 2009. At 30 June 2010 membership stood at 7,669. Council acknowledges the need to regain ground in membership and will be addressing this issue over the coming months.

Overseas Magazine Circulation Service

If you usually receive magazines on the Overseas Magazine round-robins organised by Marion Towers, and are suffering an interruption in service, do not despair. The computer melt-down which was to blame has been dealt with and service is resuming this week. We apologise for any inconvenience to subscribers.

The Digital Archive for Family History

Negotiations have been underway for many months with the Ted Gilbert Literary Trust, over the Charter and Joint Agreement that officially establishes the terms for the operation of the Digital Archive for Family History. At this Council Meeting, President Fiona Brooker signed the document on behalf of the NZ Society of Genealogists and affixed the Common Seal of the Society to the agreement. The Archive is now set to open for business; watch the website for announcements. Members can also read all about it in the articles published in *The New Zealand Genealogist*, in the March/April and May/June 2010 issues.

Merger of Archives New Zealand and the National Library into the Department of Internal Affairs

At the request of members, Council has developed a position paper on this subject. The paper can be found at the end of KIT. It will be distributed by NZSG to the Minister for Internal Affairs, Nathan Guy, as well as to other relevant ministers, and to other organisations opposing the merger. NZSG members, either as individuals or in groups, are encouraged to write to their Members of Parliament and to the Minister, Nathan Guy, to demonstrate the support of our members for this stand. As it is clear that the merger is going to happen, it is particularly important that we keep promoting the aspects we believe it is most critical to preserve.

(For the background story on this issue, please see the notes preceding the position paper.)

For more details of the current situation, including FAQs, go to:

http://www.integration.dia.govt.nz/integration.nsf/wpg_URI/Agency-Integration-Index

The most useful pages are probably those from the sidebar on the left of the screen - *Background*, and *Questions and Answers*. The latter covers the major issues raised by stakeholders to date, and the official responses to them.

Constitution Review

Members will be aware that both the suitability and the interpretation of some of the Society's rules have been questioned in recent times. In an effort to address some of these concerns and move towards a constitution more in keeping with the current and future needs of the Society, Council has resolved to undertake a review of the Rules and By-Laws.

Council has already approached some people who could be of assistance with this task but is also seeking to identify other members around the country who have the specialised knowledge and/or the experience of working on constitutions, and the interest to contribute voluntarily to a review committee. The geographical location of members is not a hindrance to participation. If you are interested in being part of this committee, or know of someone else who would be, please contact the Office Manager by 20 October 2010. Council will decide on the composition of the committee and finalise its terms of reference at the November Council meeting.

This notice will also be included in the September/October issue of *The NZ Genealogist* to allow all members the opportunity to participate.

Suggestions for rule changes are welcome at any time, but as we are limited under our rules to one rule-change ballot per year, all suggestions being brought forward in the next few months will be referred to the committee to be dealt with as part of the review.

Publications

Thanks to the hard work of many members we were fortunate to be able to release three new CDs at the Family History Fair. These are all being very well received. Thanks to Diane Wilson and her (Chocolate Fish) indexing team for the NZ Combined Electoral Rolls of 1881, 1893 and 1896, to the scanning and publications team (particularly Marianne Cummins and Paul Alpe) for the republication of the October 1882 Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand in a new medium, and to Kilbirnie Branch for their Jim Pearce Index of obituaries from the *Evening Post*, published jointly with NZSG.

Branches are reminded that NZSG is happy to discuss the joint publishing of project material. This enables us to leverage off the publishing and marketing capacity of NZSG to the advantage of both the Branch and the Society. Contact the Office Manager in the first instance if your Branch is interested in discussing a joint-publishing venture.

What's Coming Up?

The next publication will be another from the Chocolate Fish team: the 1911 New Zealand Electoral Roll on CD. Watch the website for the announcement of its publication date.

We hope to have exciting news for you in the November KIT about the next version of the NZSG Index, and further publications. Watch this space!

Membership Lists - a message from our Office Manager

The Membership Secretary in Panmure is happy to provide lists of NZSG members to branches for legitimate NZSG business, such as contacting members to advise of a local

branch AGM or notifying of research days, etc.

Each NZSG member is obliged to read the Privacy Policy, which states that their details will only be used for legitimate NZSG business. Any branches that fail to observe this limitation to the use of the membership lists puts this service in jeopardy, and the Society at risk of legitimate complaints to the Privacy Commission.

As Office Manager I urge each branch that requests that a list of members in their locality be sent to them to be vigilant about its use, and mindful of the consequences of breaching the privacy of those members listed there.

Marianne Cummins
Office Manager

NZSG on Facebook

Everybody else is doing it, so why not the Society?

To increase our visibility to the world, NZSG will soon have a Facebook page. Why not drop by when you're next checking your page on Facebook? Even better still, why not 'like' our page?

You'll find us here: www.facebook.com/NZSocGen



**NZSG AGM and
Conference**

Dunedin

3-6 June 2011

150 years ago, in 1861, after Gabriel Read's discovery of gold in Otago, there was **a golden opportunity** for adventure and the acquisition of wealth. Many of our ancestors took up the challenge to come to Otago to make their fortunes.

They came from all over the world, and most, as they matured, settled and raised families, first in Otago, and later in other parts of New Zealand.

In June 2011, at the NZSG Conference in Dunedin, you will have **a golden opportunity** to find out about those early adventurers and your Otago forebears.

Friday 3 June 2011 7pm - Monday 6 June 2011 3:30pm

The venue, **John McGlashan College**, is a very pleasant environment, with a modern building which has computer rooms, classrooms and other spaces suitable for booths to be set up, or just to sit and chat. There is plenty of parking.

We suggest that those who need accommodation in Dunedin should stay at Quality Cargill's Hotel, or one of the motels close to there in George St.
Buses/minibuses will be arranged for those who can't face a 2km walk from the hotel/motel area to the school.

Prue Turnbull
for the 2011 Conference Organising Committee

Reimbursing Speakers' Expenses

Branches are reminded that speakers are put to some expense coming to address their meetings. The least that they should expect is a reasonable contribution towards their travelling expenses. A card and a basket of fruit are very personal and nice to receive, but they do not put petrol in the tank. Ideally these arrangements would be agreed before your speaker accepts the speaking engagement.

Please refer to the Guidelines for Hosting Speakers circulated with KIT in May 2009, Issue # 61. See also the notes about the reimbursement of speakers' expenses as outlined by Robyn Williams at the Branches and Interest Groups Meeting at the Family History Fair, for ways to handle the reimbursement of expenses in your accounts.

If you would like a speaker from Council to address you about NZSG matters at no expense to the Branch, you need to write to Council in sufficient time for the invitation to be considered at a regular meeting. Otherwise, the visit is informal and the Branch is expected to cover the speaker's travel expenses.

Differential Charging for members and non-members

From time to time we are asked about the legality of charging more for non-members to attend education courses or events, the FRC, conferences, etc., than members are charged. It was thought that such differential charging could be in breach of our obligations as an incorporated society or as a charitable entity.

We have taken advice and can now confirm that this is not the case. Members who pay a subscription are deemed to have prepaid part of the charges of such events or services, and therefore can justifiably be charged a lesser amount for entry, registration, etc., than members of the public who have not paid a membership subscription.

Contacting Council

If you have any concerns or issues you want to raise with Council it is essential that you write to or email Council. Letters should be addressed to NZSG Council, PO Box 14036 Panmure, Auckland 1741 and emails addressed to NZSG Council and sent to office.manager@genealogy.org.nz. Your communication will then be discussed at the next Council Meeting and you will receive a reply as soon as practical after that.

November 2010's meeting details are below. Council Meeting dates for 2011 are included above. You should aim to get your letter or email to Council three weeks before it meets to ensure your correspondence is included on the agenda.

Next Council Meeting

The next meeting will be held over the weekend of 6-7 November 2010. Councillors are happy to meet and chat with members informally at the FRC on Friday 5 November from 5pm. Just contact the Office Manager if you would like to attend.

Keeping In Touch

Please ensure all your members see *Keeping In Touch*. It is one of the most effective ways for members to stay informed about what is happening in our Society.

Best wishes to you all,

Barbara Wyley
Councillor – Liaison

Background to the proposed merger of Archives New Zealand and the National Library with the Department of Internal Affairs

National Archives was established under the Archives Act of 1957. From 1994 to 2000, the State Services Commission moved to combine National Archives and the National Library, motivated by public sector management concerns. Archivists and supporters (including NZSG) successfully opposed this, particularly aiming to protect the statutory authority of the Chief Archivist. Archives NZ was eventually freed from Department of Internal Affairs control.

In 2005 the Public Records Act gave Archives NZ a fresh mandate to oversee the whole of government record keeping – setting standards, auditing, and authorizing all disposals – for greater state sector accountability and efficiency. The power of the Chief Archivist to act equally and independently towards all other Government agencies in the hierarchical state sector has been crucial to its subsequent success, removing the potential for conflict with a parent agency.

Earlier this year the Government announced a forthcoming merger of Archives New Zealand and National Library with the Department of Internal Affairs. The archiving community responded angrily as it had not been consulted about this proposed return to past unsatisfactory arrangements. The move is seen as a giant leap backwards, made without any justification, as both Archives NZ and the National Library are officially assessed as well managed and successful entities.

In March, the Crown Law Office supported their opposition with advice that identified problems in the original policy paper, implying the merger proposal is based on a flawed understanding of the role of the Chief Archivist. It also expressed concern about the employment relationship of the Chief Archivist with a departmental Chief Executive and advised that the Chief Archivist's authority must not derive from, or be subject to, the direction of the Department of Internal Affairs' Chief Executive.

In April, in a letter to stakeholders from Chief Executives of all three entities involved, it was stated that the merger is non-negotiable, but it gave assurances that:

- The statutory independence of the Chief Librarian and Chief Archivist will be preserved, including “protection from improper influence” despite their being employed by the CE/DIA.
- Input will still be sought and heard on operational principles and organizational design through consultation with stakeholders and staff, and on the legislative changes through the Select Committee process.
- There will be minimal if any impact on services during integration
- There will be cost savings through reduction in administrative roles and the integration will be achieved within existing budgets.
- Statutory independence of the National Librarian and Chief Archivist, and existing

The quality and completeness of records available to the public, and specifically to our members as researchers, now and in the future, is dependent on an independent archives administration being able to determine and pursue its priorities under archives legislation, not subject to the prioritising of a government department that shares neither its functions nor its strategic and operational aims. This requires a continuation of the separate Vote for Archives New Zealand, which is already recognized as a successful and well-managed entity.

If economies of scale are necessary in some back-room functions, they could be more easily achieved through purchase agreements for services between agencies or with outside suppliers than through a merger.

We are concerned that the National Library is also involved in this merger into the Department of Internal Affairs, and we are particularly anxious to ensure that the special status of the Alexander Turnbull Library be acknowledged and preserved. As researchers we are outraged that these foremost institutions for New Zealand history, culture and education are being potentially submerged with such undue haste, and without consultation with stakeholders or the general public. There is a fundamental mismatch between the purposes and functions of the National (including Turnbull) Library and those of the Department of Internal Affairs, which bodes ill for the preservation of its unique nature and identity, let alone its ability to compete against more generalized departmental priorities in the contest for funding. National Library also requires its own Vote.

The particular efficiency of both the National Library and Archives New Zealand stems from their skilled specialized staff, whose on-going effectiveness is put at risk through potential job loss in this perceived cost-cutting exercise. The stated aims of coordinating digital information delivery to the public, and advising government agencies about cross-agency digital initiatives, would be better achieved through greater interaction with the Government Technology Services unit than through the whole-scale merger of agencies with such disparate functions.

We urge the government to listen to stakeholders when operational principles and organisational design are being prepared, and when the legislation comes to the Select Committee, with a great deal more good faith than has been demonstrated in coming this far without significant community consultation.

Distribution of Keeping In Touch

KIT is published following each NZSG Council meeting and electronically distributed from the NZSG office. If you have any queries about delivery please contact the Office Manager at office.manager@genealogy.org.nz Current and back issues of KIT can be accessed through the NZSG website.