



Matamata Branch

matamata@genealogy.org.nz

The *Firth Tower* was built in 1882 by Josiah Clifton Firth on his estate and was used as the Estate Office and as sleeping quarters for single men. It stands on rising ground commanding an extensive view of the surrounding countryside. Other historical buildings are in the reserve and the historical centre there houses the archives of the Matamata district.

August 2019

Meetings held 7.30pm on the third Thursday of the month, Feb - Nov
All Saints Anglican Parish Lounge, Hohaia Street, Matamata

Research Afternoons are held on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month at the Anglican Parish Lounge from 1.30 – 3.30pm. This is an excellent time to come and use our resources as well as get the one on one help and assistance that is often not available at the branch meetings because of time constraints etc. There is no charge for a financial member, but a visitor pays \$2.

August to November 2019 Branch Programme

August 9 - Friday Research 1.30 - 3.30pm

August 15 - No Thursday evening branch meeting

August 17 - Saturday, 9.00am to 12 noon. Beginners workshop & branch meeting.

August 23 - Friday Research 1.30 - 3.30pm

September 13 - Friday Research 1.30 - 3.30pm

September 19 - Branch Meeting: Speaker, **Kevin Tappin** - Computers, technology queries, using external hard drives

September 27 - Friday Research 1.30 - 3.30pm

October 11 - Friday Research 1.30- 3.30pm

October 17 - Branch Meeting: Research and Problem Solving
Group discussion to try and solve your conundrum

October 25 - No Friday research

November 8 - Friday Research 1.30 - 3.30pm

November 21 - Branch Meeting - **Harriet Taylor**, speaker, North American Research

In House News

- **CD Library** - The Branch has several CD's that are available for '**members only**' to borrow and are available at each meeting or research afternoon. You just record which CD you have borrowed and when you have finished using, then return either at the next meeting or research afternoon.
- **Library Books** - The branch library has many books on various topics that are available for members to borrow. Please browse our collection when next in the Lounge. There could be one on a subject you are researching.

- **Ancestry.com** - this is available at the Public Library for members to use during opening hours.

Convenors Report - Maxine Viggers

At our latest committee meeting we planned our programme for the next few months. We hope we are delivering what you as members want. Let us know if you have requests for what you want to hear and learn about at monthly Branch Meetings.

In order to bring new blood and ideas to the Committee I am delighted to let you know that Heather Bond has agreed to be co-opted on to the Committee.

The need for new members and ideas is an ongoing process. We hope the session we have planned for the August meeting on Sat 17th will attract some prospective new members. If you have somewhere to place a poster in a clubroom or shop, please email me and I will send the poster for this meeting on to you. Please consider bringing a friend to this meeting.

Technology moves so fast these days that at times it can be hard to keep up with the changes. When I was in the workforce I was frequently sent on courses (paid for by my employer) to learn about new systems and programs, so change and progress was not a challenge. But for most people it takes time and sometimes courage to take on new technological systems, let alone understand the terminology. So, In September we will be having a speaker who will bring us up to speed on what routers, back-ups, memory sticks, PDFs and hard drives etc are all about. We are using our computers more and more for research and storing our data. To be able to do it confidently will be an advantage.

In October we are planning a research evening which will start with us collectively helping members with their queries, either genealogical ones or technological ones.

Our last meeting for the year will be in November and Harriet Taylor will talk about North American Research (both USA and Canada). Harriet is the co-ordinator of the North American Research Group.

Progress has been made with DIA and later in the year we will have the Matamata Record digitised on Papers Past for the years 1925-1939. This has been a long time in the planning and fundraising. We are currently making funding applications to philanthropic organisations to see if they will assist with the costs.

I look forward to seeing you at the August Workshop.

Board Report from NZSG Director, Christine Young

The last Board meeting was held on the 28th & 29th June with the NZSG AGM held on Sunday 30th.

I attended as an observer as my appointment as a director was not until after the AGM.

Membership - 48 new members and 16 re-joining (Total=64). Membership numbers as at the end of March is 4928. Membership numbers have reached as high as 8000, but a decline in numbers has been happening over the last ten years. This is in line with other Family History Societies.

Auckland Family History Expo 9th to 11th August at the Fickling Centre, Mount Roskill, all those who visit the NZSG stand will be given an NZSG voucher enabling them to free admission for one session at the FRC. The vouchers will have an expiry date of 20th September. Hoping to attract new members to the Society.

Family History Month - The FRC volunteers have also organised a very interesting programme throughout August in the Library, so if you are visiting Auckland there could be something of interest for you to attend. Please look on the NZSG website under Family History Month and the NZSG Facebook page for details on the workshops.

Kiwi Collection V3 - Tony Mort, Director responsible for Technology, Paul Alpe and developers have had a meeting recently. At present 10.25 million records have been loaded to the database with the expected total closer to 10.5 million.

Finance - A budget for this year's income and expenditure, a very conservative one, showed there would be a projected deficit of \$63750.

Magazine - the NZSG has had to bring the publishing of this magazine back to New Zealand for the April and June issues. There have been problems with paying the Chinese publisher for the February magazine. Options are being looked at to pay this account and we are also looking at different options to fund the New Zealand print run.

AGM - good to see members from our region who made the effort to attend. 75 minutes later the formalities were finished, and Sarah Hewitt from Wellington gave a presentation on two further videos she is working on for the 'Getting It Right' series.

Director responsibility for me is marketing, so if any of you have experience in this field, I would be interested to find out more. I also represent the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region.

The next Board meeting is to be held on the 13th & 14th of September. If there are any issues you wish to raise, please let me know. Contact email - cy.director@genealogy.org.nz.

Marlene O'Neil Matamata Branch Member 1997- 2019.

Marlene joined the Matamata Branch NZSG in 1997 and became a Committee member, taking on the role of Secretary later that year.

During the next twelve years of her membership, with eleven spent on the Committee, Marlene held the positions of Convenor for two years, Secretary four years, Treasurer three years.

Marlene was also a popular Newsletter editor during this time, compiling a very readable newsletter full of interesting snippets. She was editor again in 2014.

She was an "ideas" person - many Branch projects were born after she uttered her well-known phrase "I've been thinking"!

Not only did she have the ideas but was fully involved in carrying out many projects, including the indexing of local school and district books; local school admission records; Waterson funeral records; Fire Brigade minutes and Roll books, Waikato Times births and deaths indexing.

Marlene was also our IT person, with her knowledge of computers she compiled and created several CDs - Branch Library holdings, school admission records and the Matamata Cemetery transcriptions CD, after spending many hours transcribing and updating cemetery headstones along with several others from our Branch.

In 2003 when the Branch celebrated its 25th Birthday, Marlene, along with Ainna Tidmarsh, compiled a book of 25 years of Branch history.



Marlene also gave her time in other ways - dealing with Branch research queries, helping at Research days and promotional activities, attending regional meetings, creating members' name badges. Several Christmas meetings were enlivened with a genealogy/fun quiz, with questions sourced by Marlene.

A well-deserved Life Membership of the Branch was bestowed on Marlene in 2009. Marlene was fully involved in the Branch from day one of her membership, until her sudden illness eighteen months ago prevented her further attendance. However, she continued with the completion of her own family history books up to a few weeks before her death on 19th June 2019.

Her contribution has been great, and her presence is missed.

Many thanks to Bev Crabb

Opportunity Shop

This year our week in the shop is from October 29 to November 1 (week after Labour Weekend). A roster form will be available at the next branch meetings for members to put their names on for when they can help. Please consider doing a shift or two during our week. This is a major fundraiser for the branch as some of these proceeds are going towards the digitisation of more of our local newspapers on Paperspast.

Also, donations of good quality items needed to sell.

Waharoa Cemetery Restoration

The first burial was in 1879 and the last burial at this historic cemetery was in 1964 and contains the graves of early settlers from around the Matamata and Waharoa Districts. However, the cemetery had been in a state of neglect for around 45 years after a fire in 1974 which destroyed the wooden crosses that marked many of the graves.

Our Matamata Kiwanis undertook the massive restoration, spraying both weeds and headstones, laying new weed mats and stone chips etc.

As the cemetery had been administered by several local bodies through the year's records had been destroyed. However, Matamata Piako District Council holds a small box file and amongst receipts etc we found a map marking most of the graves. We then matched the graves with the death notices found on Paperspast. There were one or two which were beyond our capabilities i.e. the

map showing "Mrs Jagger's Mother" however Bev Crabb undertook the task and came up trumps with the name Eleanor Leetch.

New wooden crosses with name plates were then constructed and installed at the cemetery completing our project of 18 months.

Thank you to Sally Jenkins and Heather Bond

Are any members interested in contributing an article for future newsletters?
Any topic with a genealogical theme would be appreciated.

Convenor: Maxine Viggers 888 1656

Secretary: Christine Young 888 8327

Treasurer: Jennifer Couch 888 7042

Committee: Mary Cobham 888 7867

Sharryn Currie-Lightbown 022 469 8012

Heather Bond 888 6823

Reminder any contributions to the newsletter would be gratefully accepted.

Please send to Maxine or Christine at matamatagenealogy@gmail.com

Next newsletter - October 2019

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of the Branch or the New Zealand Society of Genealogists Inc.**