

New Plymouth Genealogy Society Incorporated

Newsletter



Number 49

May 2026

Society Library: Open free to members. A small charge to visitors.

Opening Hours: Every Monday and Saturday: 10 am to 12 noon
Other times available by appointment

2026 AGM

The fifth annual general meeting of our society is at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 5 May. The formal notice of meeting was sent to members with the April newsletter. Please come to the AGM so that we make up the quorum. (You won't get a job if you don't want one.)

Nominations are open for committee members. We also need a librarian to oversee our library.

Our society relies on volunteers to keep things running. There are lots of ways to help, so please contribute if you can.

Documents for the AGM (such as annual report and financial statement) are distributed to members with this newsletter.



Next meeting: 7:30pm Tuesday 5 May 2026

Brick Walls

Following the AGM, Sharyn will give you some ideas of how you might be able to break through those brick walls that we nearly all have in our family history.

Later in the year you will have a chance to bring along your own brick walls and ask our members if they have any ideas to help you specifically.



Chairperson: Gail Tanner 027 376 0630
Secretary: Sally Morch
Treasurer: Sharyn Guthrie
Committee: Lorraine Austin
Jeff Grange
Peter Hewett
Glenys Krutz
Lois Lovell
Russell Smith

New Plymouth Genealogy Society Inc
c/- Gail Tanner
122 Wairau Road
New Plymouth 4314

Meetings: 7:30 pm, first Tuesday each month
at society rooms, Moturoa Shopping Centre
access is off the Whiteley Street car park

Email: newplymouthgenealogy@gmail.com

Website: www.genealogynp.com

Last month: NZ Military

Our April meeting had a military theme, with a talk by Graham Chard. Graham is a decorated military veteran of Taranaki, Te Whanau-a-Apanui, Scottish, and English descent. He served in the RNZAF for 40 years, with deployments as a peacekeeper to Bosnia, East Timor, Bougainville and Afghanistan.

He has a wide range of community service across the New Plymouth District. He is a New Plymouth District Councillor, President of the New Plymouth RSA, served on the Kaitake Community Board. He is an executive member of the New Plymouth Club and Vice chair of the Okato Community Trust.

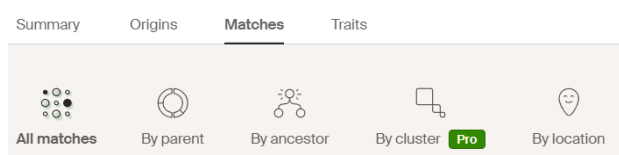


Graham talked about his life in the New Zealand military, and on his various ventures after his military service.

DNA Interest Group

Next meeting: Sunday 17 May at 1:30pm

At the next meeting I plan to go over the many features and aspects of Ancestry DNA. For anyone with their DNA at Ancestry, you will find there are many features that can help you understanding DNA and how it works in genealogy as well as help for using the Ancestry web site itself.



Come along and join in – bring your laptop or tablet if you have one and make sure you can log in to your own or others DNA results that you look after so that you can look at these parts of the website as we talk about them.

Remember we are there to try and help answer any questions you may have.

If you have any other queries or suggestions for topics to cover please email me – sharynjguthrie@gmail.com.

Sharyn Guthrie

Chairperson's Report

The end of April and almost May – where has this year gone already! But with winter coming you have no excuse not to bury yourself in your research and find those missing ancestors.

If your desk looks anything like mine, there's a bit of sorting, filing and tidying to do before you can start. If you're like me, you have multiple research questions that you are trying to sort out and answer all at the same time. Even with good intentions of staying on the track of one ancestor and finishing what I can about them, I inevitably find myself going off in the wrong direction having found someone more interesting to follow up.

This is my last Chairperson's report before our AGM on 5 May. Please come along and support your committee and maybe put your hand up to be more involved. It's a great way to learn what we do and how we do it, and to contribute to our great society.

There are also other ways to help without being on the committee. We have a rotation of volunteers that open our library to the public on Monday morning and Saturday morning. It's a great opportunity to learn what we have and how to use it. And we are always keen to add to the roster.

We are about to lose our two fabulous librarians Marilyn and Lea – both have been involved in our society for many years and have decided it's time to hand over the reins of the library to someone new. They have done a wonderful job of making our library easy to use, and a credit to our society.

We are growing every year, new faces, new ideas and improving things as we go. If you are interested in helping out in the library or coming on the committee (as the AGM is only a week away), let me know, or talk to a committee member.

Have a great week, see you at the AGM on Tuesday 5 May 7:30pm. After the formalities, Sharyn is giving a talk on Breaking Through Brick Walls!

Gail Tanner
Society Chairperson

Beginning Genealogy Course

This course is being presented by Gail over a series of weekly sessions. It covers the basic things that you need to know and do when getting your genealogy work organised.

When: 10am each Thursday

There is a \$2 door charge.

Please email Gail to book your place.

Raffle: DNA Test Kit

Special Raffle: Don't forget to bring some money to purchase a ticket in our normal monthly raffle (\$2 a ticket or 3 for \$5).

Plus for our special raffle of a My Heritage DNA kit that is running until the May AGM. These tickets are \$5 for 1 or \$10 for 3.

The raffle tickets are for sale at our genealogy rooms in Moturoa.

If you have already done a DNA test, it is well worth getting tests done by other family members (siblings, cousins, parents, etc). More DNA information is always helpful to find and confirm links and relationships.



Image created using AI - NotebookLM

Librarian Needed!

After taking special care of our library for many years, Marilyn and Lea are going to retire from their librarian roles. So this position is open and we need one or more members to take over as librarian.

Thanks to the work done over the years, the library is well organised so the job is not onerous. Training and support will be provided. A lot of the work is done by volunteers, so the librarian role is more one of coordinating.

If you are able to help, or even provide some part time support, please contact Gail or any committee member.

A big thank you to Marilyn and Lea for their work over many years to get our library into the tidy and organised state that it is now.

Online Cenotaph to be upgraded

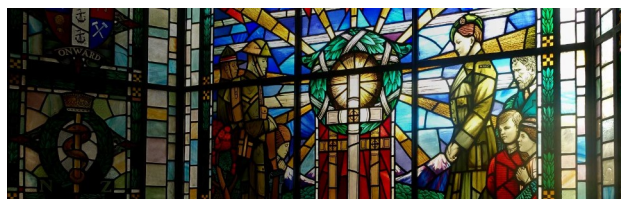
The [Online Cenotaph](#) is a database of 270,000 records of New Zealand military personnel, operated by the Auckland Museum.

It all started over 30 years ago, when volunteers transcribed museum memorials and other military records, and made them available online. The database has grown over the years, with a major expansion for the centenary of WW1.

The website is a valuable resource for family historians around the world, and is also used by academic (such as for medical research). The website enables the public to upload information and images. Donors can also leave their email address and this has helped people find relatives that they didn't know.

But it is now over ten years since the website running the Online Cenotaph was last upgraded. The backend is heavily loaded and lacks features needed for modern internet functions. A major upgrade of the website is planned, utilising funds from a lottery grant.

The current website is still available in the meantime, and it remains a valuable resource for New Zealand research.

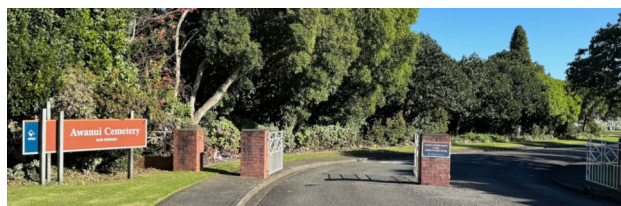


Awanui Cemetery Headstone Transcriptions

The headstone transcriptions for the Awanui Cemetery are now complete and are available on our website. The services area is still in progress.

<https://genealogynp.com/cAwanui.html>

Our project team has a long standing project to transcribe headstones from local cemeteries. The project began in the early 1980s. Recently, the transcriptions have been updated and we have taken photos (which are available on the research computers at our rooms, or by email).



Library Roster: May 2026

Monday 10 am to 12 noon
Saturday 10 am to 12 noon

Sat 2 May Karen Crowe
Mon 4 May Charles Le Breton
Sat 9 May Russell Smith
Mon 11 May Lorraine Austin
Sat 16 May Lea Bellini
Mon 18 May Annette Larsen
Sat 23 May Jeff Grange
Mon 25 May Graeme Jury
Sat 30 May Liz & Grahame Bingham
Mon 1 Jun Charles Le Breton
Sat 6 Jun Karen Crowe

Facebook Group

Do you have Irish ancestry? Have you looked at the 1926 Census of Ireland – the Irish Free State? This census is not for the six counties of Northern Ireland but was the first census after the partition. It is free to search. Sadly the 1926 Northern Ireland Census done at the same time was pulped for paper in World War II.

If, like me, all your Irish ancestors had come to New Zealand in the 1870s and 1880s or to Britain or USA, you may think it doesn't have anything of interest for you. However, your ancestors siblings and parents and grandparents may have stayed in Ireland and you may be able to find descendants of them.

Plus one of the questions asked was related to the Townland where you were born, vital information in Irish research. Maybe your family came from somewhere you aren't sure of and your family name may still be in the area and you may find your Townland name.

There is ongoing work being done on this census so make sure you come back to it later to see what has been added.

Sharyn Guthrie

Internet Connection

The internet connection for our society rooms is generously sponsored by Primo.



Primo has supported us with internet connectivity since 2017. Please consider Primo for your internet service and for mobile phone plans. Ring them on 0800 123 774 or visit their website:

primo.nz

Library News

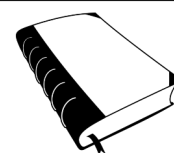
Magazines received;

Family Tree (May)

Newsletters received;

Ashburton, Canterbury, Dunedin, Fielding, Hamilton, Hawke's Bay, Hutt Valley, Kapiti, Matamata, Mosgiel, Nelson, Otaki, Palmerston North, Papakura, Papamoa, Porirua, Riccarton, Southland, South Waikato, Wellington, Whanganui

If you would like an email copy of newsletters from another genealogy society or branch, please contact Peter Hewett.



Newsletter

If you have any comments or suggestions for the newsletter, please contact the editor (Peter Hewett) at newplymouthgenealogy@gmail.com.