



# NZSG New Plymouth Branch Newsletter



Number 320

March 2018

**Branch Library:** Open free to members. A small charge to visitors.  
**Opening Hours:** Monday: 10 am to 12:30 pm  
 Wednesday: 12 noon to 3 pm  
 Saturday: 10 am to 12 noon

## St Mary's



Next meeting: 7:30 pm Tuesday 6 Mar 2018

## Puke Ariki

Puke Ariki is our great regional museum, right here in New Plymouth. It has an extensive store of local historical records and artefacts. Much of this is very valuable for genealogists researching history in the Taranaki area.

For our March meeting, Katherine Mercer from Puke Ariki will tell us about the resources that they hold and how these can be useful to genealogists like us.

## Puke Ariki

**Convenor:** Bruce Bellini 758 0130  
**Secretary:** Jackie Sewell  
**Treasurer:** Lea Bellini 758 0130  
**Committee:** Lorraine Austin  
 Judy Berntsen  
 Jill Jackson  
 Annette Larsen  
 Bev Mulqueen  
 Neville Richards

New Plymouth Branch  
 c/- Bruce Bellini  
 98a Queens Road  
 New Plymouth 4312  
**Meetings:** 7:30 pm, first Tuesday each month  
 at branch rooms, Moturoa Shopping Centre  
 access off Whiteley Street carpark  
**Email:** [newplymouth@genealogy.org.nz](mailto:newplymouth@genealogy.org.nz)  
**Website:** [www.genealogynp.com](http://www.genealogynp.com)

### **Last Event: Taranaki Cathedral Church**

Last month, our group had the privilege and chance to take a tour of St. Mary's church graveyard. This graveyard and cathedral are a very important part of New Plymouth's heritage story, plus St Mary's is the oldest stone consecrated church in New Zealand. The graveyard contains some of the city's significant people from its early settlement, so respect for the memorials is important. The burial grounds officially closed in 1861 but family had prescribed right to use their plot for 100 years.

Thirty six people turned up for the very informative tour led by one of our members, John Pickering. John has been instrumental in the restoration of the gravestones. I have huge admiration for John's work in repairing the gravestones and surrounds, researching its occupants and history of the plots, and contacting descendants of those that lie there. A labour of love, and a lot of hours spent.

The lych gate originally built by the Weston family in 1919 had recently started subsiding and cracking, requiring restoration in 2017 (and now provides shelter for the odd homeless person!) There is a policy for ongoing maintenance and floodlights have been installed. A new Garden of Remembrance has been added for the burial of ashes, and the damaged gravestones have all been repaired. In some cases this has meant backing the headstones with stainless steel to hold them together. A costly exercise.

Over the years, many crosses and headstones had been wilfully smashed by vandals. Robert Hughes' grave now sports a beautifully restored black railing around it. This railing was buried six inches below soil level and dug up and lovingly restored and painted. Small iron crosses were found under the church hall and these have been painted and head a row of previously unmarked soldiers' graves. There are currently 89 gravestone markers but subsurface sonic density imaging has shown 39 extra burial sites. There are also bodies buried under the church building.

The costs of restoration over \$30,000 have been met in various ways. John searched for, and contacted, many living descendants of the people in the churchyard and most families contributed to the repairs. New Plymouth District Council Heritage Trust has also given money. Donations from other sources have also helped.

The War Graves Commission also contributes on a yearly basis for upkeep of the soldiers' graves. Some soldiers' headstones have been erected by the NZ Govt. and others by shipmates.

Where the writing on the graves is now very hard to read, "recumbent desks" (plaques) bearing the original wording have been placed at the foot of the graves. Correction of spelling errors like reference to "Maoris" cannot be made.

What interesting stories John had to tell of the graveyard's occupants! Thank you, John, for all your time and effort. This historic churchyard will continue to tell its story for generations to come.

Annette Larsen

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### **Convenor's Report**

I wish to record my thanks to John Pickering for the wonderful evening we had last month at the St Mary's Churchyard. You will see a report on our visit elsewhere in this newsletter.

Those of you who are members of NZSG will have received your voting papers for election to the NZSG Board with the latest magazine. Jillian Williams, who is the convenor of our Hawera Branch, was originally co-opted onto the NZSG board, and is standing for election this year. Jillian is currently the Taranaki Regional Representative on the NZSG Board, having taken on this roll from Peter Gibson. I have worked with Jillian for several years and in my opinion she deserves our support. Please take the time to vote in this important election – the closing date is fast approaching!

Bruce Bellini  
Branch Convenor

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### **Taranaki Herald Staff Photographs**

I have copies of the Taranaki Herald staff photographs from 1901, 1906, 1909 and 1927. Do you have forebears who worked there then?

I am happy to email copies to anyone who is interested.

Bev Mulqueen  
[mulqueen1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mulqueen1@xtra.co.nz)





### Library Roster: March

Monday 10 am to 12:30 pm  
Wednesday 12 noon to 3 pm  
Saturday 10 am to 12 noon

Sat 3 Marilyn Armistead  
Mon 5 Annette Larsen  
Tue 6 Branch meeting  
Wed 7 Elly Harrison  
Sat 10 Karen Crowe  
Mon 12 Closed: Taranaki Anniversary  
Wed 14 Mike Merrick  
Sat 17 Lea and Bruce Bellini  
Mon 19 Lorraine Austin  
Wed 21 Jill Jackson  
Sat 24 Neville Richards  
Mon 26 Charles Le Breton  
Tue 27 Committee meeting 7pm  
Wed 28 Fay Eaton  
Sat 31 Mike Merrick

For those new to genealogy and/or want help knocking down those brick walls, this is an excellent time and place to have our experts help you. Our helpers can show you what is available in the library and how to go about finding what you are looking for.

### Computer Group Meeting

A meeting of the genealogy computer group will be held at 1:30pm on Sunday 18 March 2018.

We will be talking about images – the different formats like jpg, png, svg, gif and others. And we'll explain the differences between these, and when you should use which image format.



### Empty Printer Cartridges

Please bring your empty printer cartridges in to the branch rooms. These can be either ink jet or laser cartridges, but **we can only use HP or Canon types of cartridges.**

These will be recycled to generate some income for the branch.



### Library News

Magazines received;

Family Tree (Mar)

Genealogist (Feb)

Who do you think you are (Mar)

Newsletters received;

Balclutha, Canterbury, Dunedin, Feilding, Gore, Hawkes Bay, Hutt Valley, Kapiti, Nelson, Otaki, Palmerston North, Porirua, South Canterbury, South Waikato, Wairarapa, Wellington

If you would like an email copy of newsletters from another branch, please contact Peter Hewett. Many of the newsletters are also available from the NZSG website.

[www.genealogy.org.nz/branches--area-contacts\\_55](http://www.genealogy.org.nz/branches--area-contacts_55)



### Newsletter

If you have any comments or suggestions for the newsletter, please contact Peter Hewett at [peter.hewett@gmail.com](mailto:peter.hewett@gmail.com).

