

New Plymouth Genealogy Society Incorporated

Newsletter



Number 47

March 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

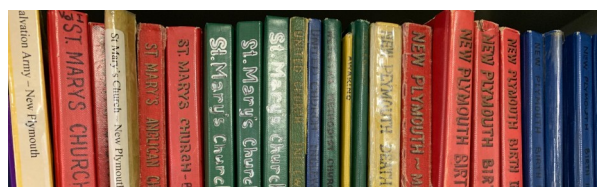
Our Projects

Over the years, our members have compiled a considerable amount of historic information for the New Plymouth and north Taranaki area.

These include cemetery transcriptions, newspaper notices, BDM records and many more. They provide a valuable research resource for our area.

See Lorraine's article in this newsletter for more information.

There is lots more to be done and new volunteers are always welcome. We provide training and support, so all you need is a computer and some time. Just contact Lorraine or any committee member.



Next meeting: 7:30pm Tuesday 3 Mar 2026

NZ Research

This month, we are taking a look at what is available for NZ research. This is a practical, back to basics talk, with examples to show how you can get useful information. Many of these resources are free, you just need to know what is there and how to make the best use of it.

This presentation will include examples of how to use these resources, covering both online websites and some material available in our library.



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: Cemetery Visit Rained Off

We had planned a site visit to the Okato cemetery last month. However, the weather on the day was stormy and very changeable. Unfortunately, the visit had to be called off.

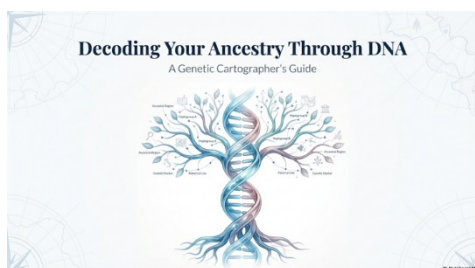
Headstone transcriptions for this cemetery are available [on our website](#). There are photographs of the headstones on the computers in our rooms.

DNA Interest Group

Sunday 22 March at 1:30pm

Last month we went over what are Gedcom files and I demonstrated some of the features on [Gedmatch](#).

After this meeting I made up a questionnaire which I have sent out to those people on my DNA Interest Group list. If you wish to be added to the list, please email me at sharynjguthrie@gmail.com .



In March, I am intending to go back to starting with learning and understanding DNA and genealogy.

If you have any other queries or suggestions for topics to cover, please email me – sharynjguthrie@gmail.com. Remember that our DNA interest group is for you and any help you may want.

Sharyn Guthrie

Raffle: DNA Test Kit

A MyHeritage DNA test kit will be raffled at the AGM in May.

Tickets are \$5, available at the March and April meetings.

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

Chairperson's Report

A bit of sad news to start us off. Judy Berntsen died a few days ago. She was a valued member, committee member and research officer during her time as a member of our group. I didn't know Judy that well, but I'm sure many of you did.

As to the rest of us – hopefully everyone is well and happy and beavering away at their genealogy like I am.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our visit to the Okato Cemetery at the beginning of February. Our host pulled out very early in the day stating the weather, and though we could have visited without her, it was decided to call it off as the weather was too unpredictable. Hopefully we'll get another chance to go out there.

The year is back in full swing. The DNA classes are back on, and I will be starting up some more beginners classes soon.

As you know, each month we have a presentation at our meetings. The presenters put a lot of work into their presentations and hopefully enjoy giving the presentations. If there is any subject you think would be a great subject to cover, come and talk to me. Even if you don't want to do it yourself, I'm more than happy to organise someone else to give the talk.

There's a lot more to our genealogy research, than just names and dates. I've just spent time researching the Crown Grants given out to British Soldiers, and Maori who supported them during the early Taranaki Wars. It was an interesting subject, that I'd thought I should learn, as it is part of our history. There is an alphabetical ledger with all names, and sections, towns etc for the Taranaki area (until recently I didn't know this existed!) at Archives NZ, available to look through online. Me thinks this is a subject for another talk.

See you at the next meeting.

Gail Tanner
Society Chairperson

Our Projects

I am guessing that some of our newer members might not know about the many projects that our society has done over the years.

There is a small group who work behind the scene transcribing data which then gets put onto our TBI at the rooms.

For example, we have just completed transcribing the births, deaths and marriages from last year. All this information is from the Daily News newspaper. This is quite a long process. First the notices are cut out from the newspaper, glued to piece of paper and then transcribed. Recently we have completed 2023, 2024 and 2025 BDMs. You will find these on the east wall, second shelf down. Our BDMs run from 1978 to 2025. There are two years missing – 2002 and 2003.

Also, we have the envelope collection. All interesting historic newspaper articles are put into envelopes by category. Names are added to the TBI. There can be some very valuable information in this section if your ancestor was the subject of one of these newspaper articles. These envelopes are in the filing cabinets on the south wall at the rooms. It is worth taking a look. You may be surprised at what you find.

Another interesting section is the funeral sheets. Good family information can be found in these. You will find them in the red folders on the top shelf on the east wall. We ask members for any funeral sheets they do not want. So if you have any, please don't throw them away. We would like to add them to our archives.

This is only a short list of what we have transcribed. Other examples are headstone transcriptions and school admission records. Please make use of the resources we have in the library. We are open every Monday and Saturday, 10am to 12 noon. There will be someone to help point you in the right direction. It is free to members and \$5 for non-members.

If anyone would like to help with transcribing or checking work, please let Lorraine know. We can always do with more help. It is a great way to help our society while learning more about what records we have.

Lorraine Austin
Project Person

Historic New Zealand Maps

The [mapspast website](http://mapspast.org.nz) has old maps from across New Zealand. Some date back to the 19th century.

With this website, you can pan and zoom to the area of New Zealand that you are interested. Then select the layer for the year you are interested in.

Old maps can be very helpful for understanding historic land records and other documents.

mapspast.org.nz



Moturoa area, 1939

Recent Additions to Papers Past

PapersPast is the online archive of historical New Zealand newspapers, brought to us by the National Library of New Zealand.

This is a tremendous resource for genealogists and family historians. It is worth going back to check your research, as new material is being added. The latest addition is;

- The Press 1990-1995



Library Roster: March 2026

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

Mon 2 Mar Charles Le Breton
Sat 7 Mar Karen Crowe
Mon 9 Mar Lorraine Austin
Sat 14 Mar Jeff Grange
Mon 16 Mar Annette Larsen
Sat 21 Mar Lea Bellini
Mon 23 Mar Graeme Jury
Sat 28 Mar Russell Smith
Mon 30 Mar Sally Morch
Sat 4 Apr Karen Crowe (Easter Saturday)
Mon 6 Apr Charles Le Breton (Easter Monday)

Facebook Group

The New Plymouth genealogy Facebook group now has 305 members.

I've not managed to add very many stories to Facebook recently owing to several factors. However, the Facebook group is for anyone who is a member there to put up stories or ask for help if they are after it. These groups work best when people participate, so don't be frightened, you can post a story yourself anytime.

Sharyn Guthrie

Judy Berntsen

With regret, we acknowledge the passing of Judy Berntsen in February. Judy was a long time member of our New Plymouth genealogy branch and society. She made a valuable contribution in many different roles.

In 2001, Judy and her husband John were instrumental in setting up our current rooms at Moturoa. Judy was on committee for many years, as well as being research officer and membership secretary. She received NZSG service awards in 2010 and 2017.



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;

Who Do You Think You Are (Jan)

Newsletters received;

Canterbury, Dunedin, Fielding, Hawkes Bay, Hutt Valley, Matamata, 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.



Judy at the 2010 Family History Fair