

New Plymouth Genealogy Society Incorporated

Newsletter



Number 48

April 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 will be held at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 5 May. The formal notice of meeting is distributed to members with this newsletter.

Nominations are open for committee members.

Our society relies on volunteers to keep things running. There are lots of different ways that you can help. Please talk with any current committee member if you can help or have any questions.

Documents for the AGM (such as annual report and financial statement) will be distributed with the May newsletter.



Next meeting: 7:30pm Tuesday 7 Apr 2026

ANZAC

Our April meeting has a military theme, with a talk by Graham Chard. He is a prominent local figure in the New Plymouth District, known for his extensive community involvement, military background, and political career.

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.



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 Research

At the March meeting, Peter showed some of the resources available for NZ research. This took a practical, back to basics approach, with examples showing how you can get useful information. The resources covered are free, you just need to know what is there and how to make the best use of it.

- The TBI (Taranaki Biographical Index) is our index of the resources in our library. Here you can look up a name and find where it appears. This could be in newspaper BDM notices, PhotoNews magazines, published books, family histories, or many other resources we have.
- The [online historical BDM records](#) has a free search function that can provide useful information. We covered some tricks to get more out of this website.
- [PapersPast](#) has searchable scans of historic New Zealand newspapers, really great if your ancestors appeared in the newspaper.
- The [online cenotaph](#) has records for New Zealand military personnel from all wars.
- Most councils provide searchable records for cemeteries in their area, such as [New Plymouth](#). Also check our [headstone transcriptions](#) as well as websites like [FindaGrave](#), [BillionGraves](#) and others.
- The [NZ Ancestor Search Helper](#) is a free online tool that searches a name in many places at once. This is really effective for searching ancestors.



Chairperson's Report

Its April already and I'm writing this report sitting in Auckland Airport on my way to Whangarei for the wedding of my great niece. This is the family I've only known for about 2 half years. The feeling of connection was instant – even just talking to the phone. They welcomed me in with open arms, and have made my life richer for connecting with them and knowing them.

This experience has made me think about what other people go through when they suddenly find out there is someone out there they didn't know about. My advice is to try and contact them, even if they aren't interested at first. My brother Peter knew he was adopted (his two sisters and brother were as well.) But for a long time he had no interesting finding his birth mother.

My older sisters tried but had no luck contacting him. It took his granddaughter to track me down and contact me. Using Ancestry, she found our mother on my tree, and messaged me. She asked if I knew Mary Constance Raynor – I said she's my mother why's that It went from there. 3 weeks later I was in Whangarei meeting all the local family.

This happened over 20 years since my sisters and I first heard about him. The moral of the story is never give up hope that you will connect with missing family members. Sometimes it just takes one email or phonecall to put families. Unfortunately for my three sisters, they'd all passed before this happened.

Anyway enough about my adventures.

Our meeting next week is about all about Anzac Day. Come and listen to an army vet talk of his experiences.

The other news is that on the 16th April, I am starting the Beginners' Genealogy Course; 10am, Thursday, \$2 door charge. Come and learn with other beginners. Even if you've been doing genealogy for a while, a bit of a refresher can get you restarted.

Have a great rest of April.

Gail Tanner
Society Chairperson

Beginning Genealogy Course

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

Starts: 10am Thursday 16 April 2026

The sessions will be on each Thursday.

There is a \$2 door charge.

Please email Gail to book your place.

Raffle: DNA Test Kit

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

Tickets are \$5, available at the April meeting.

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

DNA Interest Group

Next meeting: Sunday 19 April at 1:30pm

We had a great turnout for the beginners' guide for DNA. I covered the types of DNA used for genealogy, a little biology about our chromosomes, inheritance and how you get shared matches.

Next meeting I will expand on relationships and have a look at some of the Ancestry guidance for these.

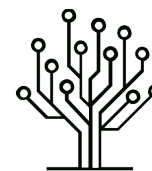
The evaluation form I sent out to the people who often attend the DNA Interest group meetings has been filled in by several people. If you still have it sitting there to fill in then please do as it is helping me see what members needs and wants are. If you would like me to send it to you please get in touch with me.

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

Sharyn Guthrie

RootsTech 2026

RootsTech is the largest genealogy conference in the world. This year, it was held from 5 to 7 March 2026.



If you missed it, you can still access videos from the [RootsTech website](https://www.roots.tech).

It is well worth checking out the videos to learn more about what is possible in genealogy research and how to go about it. Popular topics in 2026 included;

- A beginner's guide to finding ancestors using FamilySearch's AI
- DNA swim school, part 1: floating with one DNA match
- DNA misconceptions
- Civil and parish records in Italy
- Beginning Australian and New Zealand research

New Plymouth 100 Years Ago

On 10 April 1926, the opening ceremony was held for the rebuilt central post office.

The post office was built on the corner of Devon and Queen Streets and was opened in 1908.



Puke Ariki Collection

In 1926, the original timber building was rebuilt in brick with enlarged public counter space, separate sorting and staff rooms, and a dedicated telephone/telegraph exchange.

The old post office and its clock tower were demolished in 1969. The post office in Currie Street was opened in May 1959.

Library Roster: April 2026

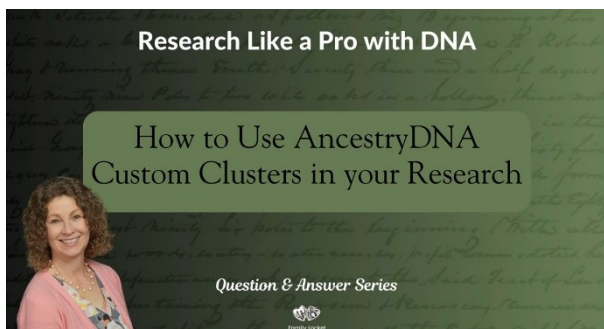
Monday 10 am to 12 noon
Saturday 10 am to 12 noon

Sat 4 Apr Karen Crowe (Easter Saturday)
Mon 6 Apr Charles Le Breton (Easter Monday)
Sat 11 Apr Jeff Grange
Mon 13 Apr Lorraine Austin
Sat 18 Apr Lea Bellini
Mon 20 Apr Annette Larsen
Sat 25 Apr closed – Anzac Day
Mon 27 Apr Graeme Jury
Sat 2 May Karen Crowe
Mon 4 May Charles Le Breton

Facebook Group

We are now up to 308 members in our Facebook group. It pays to keep an eye on our Facebook page and I'd love some more people to contribute to it.

I put up a post about the *Research Like a Pro* podcast and YouTube channel. Diana and Nicole are an American mother and daughter team who have this really great podcast that I listen to regularly. Not every episode is related to resources I use but their methodology and technical expertise is very good and it reminds me often of ways to do things more thoroughly and methodically.



One of their recent talks was about an Ancestry Pro Tools addition to DNA clusters and that is the ability to customize your own. There is a video on YouTube as well as the podcast.

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;

Who Do You Think You Are (Feb)

Family Tree (April)



Newsletters received;

Canterbury, Dunedin, Fielding, Hutt Valley, Kapiti, Matamata, Nelson, Otaki, Palmerston North, Papakura, Papamoa, Porirua, Riccarton, South Waikato, Wellington

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.