

Genealogy Computer Group
Special Interest Group of NZSG

Chairman's Report, June 2015

I am pleased to present this annual report to members.

As was the situation in 2014, membership continues a gradual decline. Nowadays there is an expectation that one can compile a complete family history easily and simply, using only genealogical resources on the Internet which are available at home or through our public libraries. It might be thought that GCG has outlived its usefulness but members tell me they find our sub-group meetings always manage to provide a new way of tackling a problem or a timely reminder of resources not checked that assist us in getting over and around those brick walls which inevitably hinder our research.

It is with regret that I have to report that the Waikato sub-group has closed: their members migrated to SeniorNet.

The magazine is our first line of communication with members but our editor, Richard Griffin, struggles to find interesting and useful articles to fill it. There is a dearth of articles from local authors. Some brief write-ups by presenters at local sub-group sessions would be most welcome. The toughest job for any sub-group committee is thinking of topics that may be of interest to their local members and then finding speakers who can offer that type of presentation. Ideas from one sub-group might prompt others to add that topic to their year's programme.

It is realised that most speakers now use PowerPoint or a similar program for their presentations and having spent the time to produce these it seems an imposition to request another version as a text document with illustrations. However, it doesn't have to be the speaker who prepares the report: anybody in the audience can write a few lines for the magazine.

We continue to provide a cheap "round-robin" service for Family Tree magazine and the CD-based 'Internet Genealogy'. Member's contribution to onward postage of each issue has been increased in line with NZ Post charges.

Our financial state remains healthy and your committee is always open to suggestions by which we can use our resources to benefit members. This led to the concept of Road Shows at which GCG subsidises the travel costs of a selection of speakers with a variety of topics. This can extend to funding a one of our GCG speakers even when only a few members meet in one another's homes. Funds are available to satisfy further requests.

There have been only two Road Shows this year, at Cromwell in May and for the South Canterbury Branch in Timaru in October.

GCG was invited to participate in a Family History Fair Alexandra Park, Green Lane, Auckland in August but space allocations were inadequate and lack of sponsorships caused the idea to lapse.

Our website at www.gencom.org.nz was maintained with relevant information on new and updated software, links to sub-groups and useful URLs. Space is available on the site for sub-groups to add their own material. Suggestions from members for enhancements of the web site are always welcome.

I thank all the committee members for their contributions during the year. Jan Gow and Chris Bayley (Secretary), Bryn Smith (Treasurer), Rex Wood, I would also like to thank the GCG sub-group convenors and their committees for their work throughout the year. The programmes they arrange are a vital key to sustaining members' interest. Let me not forget to include thanks to our Editor, Richard Griffin, for his work

behind the scenes in pulling together enough interesting information to fill each issue of GenCom News, Neville Thomas, our Webmaster, and Garry Bell who keeps our Round-robin functioning.

Some members of the GCG committee are offering themselves for re-election – although not necessarily in their current roles. I am ineligible for re-election as Chair of our Genealogy Computer Group. One or two more people would help us keep the show on the road: the tasks are not onerous and there are only a few meetings each year. Volunteers are always welcome!

David Bryant