

Convenors Report

GCG AGM - 17 May 2025

Our Annual General Meeting of the Genealogical Computing Group was held on Saturday, 15 June 2024 at the NZSG FRC Meeting Room at 1:30 pm.

Since then, the GCG has been busy conducting our open meetings and the Expo. The following GCG public open meetings were held in 2024 and 2025.

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| June '24 | After the AGM Melanie Middleton presented the NZSG Website. |
| July | <p>GCG member Mark McKinney joined by zoom to show the Genealogical database that he has developed himself. Regrettably, Mark had screen sharing issues on his computer and was unable to complete the presentation. Mark will repeat his presentation by coming to Auckland sometime in the future.</p> <p>Also, in July we assisted MyHeritage with a promotional campaign for our members. None of our members took advantage of the promo.</p> |
| August | <p>No meeting, as this was the 2024 Auckland Family History Expo. We estimate that we had near to 1000 visitors. This EXPO was our tenth and had several innovations, least of which was Ancestry 'doggie DNA' by Jason Reeve from Ancestry Australia. Our keynote speaker, Dr Sophie Kay from UK was outstanding. Sophie participates in the TV program 'Time Team'.</p> |
| September | Bryn Smith presented, "Using maps to enhance your ancestor's story". He showed us a range of maps that we can use to discover where our ancestors lived and gave some detailed examples. |
| October | Gai Williams gave us a presentation on ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE and family history. This was quite an eye opener on the capabilities of AI. |
| November | <p>Sunday 10th of November your committee had an exhibitor stall in the "Digital Seniors Expo" at the EventFinder Centre in Wairau Park, North Shore. On hand we had our brochure and NZSG new member packs. We were kept quite busy answering questions from the public about who we are and genealogy in general.</p> <p>For our open meeting we held a "Christmas Special" - free research all day at the FRC with a Christmas lunch provided. GCG paid for the use of the Library for each of our members. The committee was disappointed that the turnout was lower than we had hoped for.</p> |
| February '25 | We had planned to have a Q&A session but instead we had a presentation by Simon Young, one of our members. Simon is studying for a degree at AcademyEX, Khyber Pass, Auckland. During his study he has created an application called "One Ancestor at a Time". |
| March | Alan Cobcroft gave a talk titled "From Gears to Google: The Evolution of Computing". Alan covered the advances in computing through the ages and also advances in genealogical computing. |
| April | We started with a Q&A session. Alan presented some tips and followed on assisted by Bryn with a demonstration of using a mobile phone to cast to a computer for genealogical research. |

I want to thank our committee, Chris Bayley, Bryn Smith, Dorothy Walker, Alan Cobcroft and Marilyn King for their hard work and dedication to keeping the GCG running. Also, not forgetting the many people who have helped us along the way.

I especially want to thank Kevin Crowe for editing GenCom News. Kevin is retiring from editing after the next GenCom and I have offered to do the editing if we do not find a new editor.

In November we discovered that Auckland Libraries were planning to change the format of the Expo. This resulted in an exchange of emails that culminated in a meeting with them in late January. In mid-February Library management advised that they were withdrawing from the 2025 Expo. In a subsequent GCG committee meeting, we decided that it was too risky for the GCG to 'go it alone' to produce the Expo. I advised NZSG Chair of our decision and the NZSG Board advised that they were taking over the running of the Expo. This is now happening with the assistance of the GCG committee.

Following discussion with my family, we determined that I have had too much activity, being active on five committees and I need to cut back. I have decided to concentrate on activity local to my home and to resign from the GCG committee and Expo planning committee. I will continue to be an active member of the GCG.

So, this is my last report as Convenor. I have enjoyed representing you all and I wish my successor all the best to carry the GCG forward.

W. John Soppet (NZSG 10681)
Convenor