

New Plymouth Genealogy

ISSUE No 53 **Total Membership 114**

November 2026

In this Issue

Last Months meeting, we need your help, Voting day 1893, December Xmas Party, DNA, Facebook, The story of Jean Sandel, Chocolate Fish Quiz and winners, From the archives, Xmas Raffle, For your information, "The Back Page" - Plus assorted funnies & general info.



Crown Grants—who gets them? Well nobody who went to last months meeting—however they were very important. Our talk at the October meeting was about Land Grants and was in two parts. Gail spoke first about Land Grants – what are they, how do you find them and who got them. Russell followed showing us what he had found for his wife's family related to land in Hamilton that had been given to the men in the Waikato Militia.

We need your help

Our society has done some wonderful things through the years – we have all learnt lots and family trees have grown from little twigs to giant Oaks. None of this would have happened if it wasn't for a dedicated band of people who have run our group ….the committee.

This coming May we will be having our AGM and we will need to form a new committee to run us through 2027 - sure some of the current committee will stay on but we also need some new faces, plus new ideas, and maybe allow some who have given so much to gracefully retire?

This is your chance to give a little bit back – and help New Plymouth Genealogy to carry on the great work into the future.

If you would like to know more have a chat to one of the current committee members. Please give it some thought – we want New Plymouth Genealogy to be around for a long time and flourish – with your help. we'll achieve this



Hi everyone,

All of a sudden we are coming to the end of October and Christmas is creeping up on us again. We've left it late this year to notify you, but we are once again having our Christmas Raffle, so please bring along something to put in the basket!

That also means that the AFFHO Conference is only 5 months away. Sharyn and I are already booked to go to Wellington to see what all the fuss is about. It should be educational and we also get to catch up with other Genealogy Friends from around the country and the world. Plus we will get to visit NZ Archives in person.

Last meeting I gave a talk on Crown Grants – something I was keen to learn more about. I'm glad I did. Russell finished the night telling us about what happened with his family - hope you enjoyed it and learnt something from it.

The meeting this month Sharyn is helping anyone who wants help with their Brick Walls – so if you have a question you just cannot find an answer to, bring along the info and we'll all help you to figure it out.

The next meeting after this one, will be a Pot Luck Xmas lunch. It will be held on the Saturday 5th December, at 11.30. There will be a quiz, so put your quiz hats on.

In February we usually have a Cemetery Visit. Alas , last year it was cancelled because of the wet weather, so hopefully it will be finer this year. We have decided to try Okato Cemetery again.

See you at the meeting – come and get that brick wall knocked down

Gail

P.S. Remember two of the most important rules of Genealogy – Always!! Scroll Down! And read everything on the page! That bit of information you are missing could be in the last line, right at the bottom!

December Christmas Meeting

Instead of the Tuesday night meeting, there will be a pot luck Christmas Lunch and Quiz at the rooms starting at 11.30 am Saturday the 5th Dec 2026. Bring a plate of yummy finger food for a shared luncheon, plus we'll draw our big Xmas raffle.

Society Library: Open free to members. A $5 charge to visitors. Opening Hours: Every Monday and Saturday: 10 am to 12 Noon Other Times by appointment 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

Voting Day in New Plymouth 1893

The first time that women were allowed to vote



THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Breaking through YOUR Brick Walls – this is for YOU



Sharyn is going to facilitate this meeting – let's see if our members can offer suggestions of ways to break through YOUR brick wall.

Tell us where you are stuck – be specific – I'm trying to find the parents of my great great grandmother, I can't find my grandfather in Ireland etc.

Give us the information you do know – e.g. name, date of birth, place of birth, marriage details etc. Plus add what and where you have researched already.

"MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS"

7.30pm Tuesday November 3 NP Genealogy Rooms Moturoa



Chairperson: Gail Tanner 027 376 0630
Secretary: Sally Morch
Treasurer: Lois Lovell
Committee: Lorraine Austin Peter Hewett
Sharyn Guthrie Glenys Krutz Russell Smith
Newsletter Editor: Hamish Guthrie
Sub Editor and contributor Sharyn Guthrie

Raffle winner—last meeting:

Peter Harris

Gene-Allergy: It's a contagious disease, but we love it.

Incase you hadn't heard……





Library Duty



Sat 31 Oct Lea Bellini

Mon 2 Nov Charles Le Breton

Sat 7 Nov Karen Crowe

Mon 9 Nov Lorraine Austin

Sat 14 Nov Russell Smith

Mon 16 Nov Annette Larsen

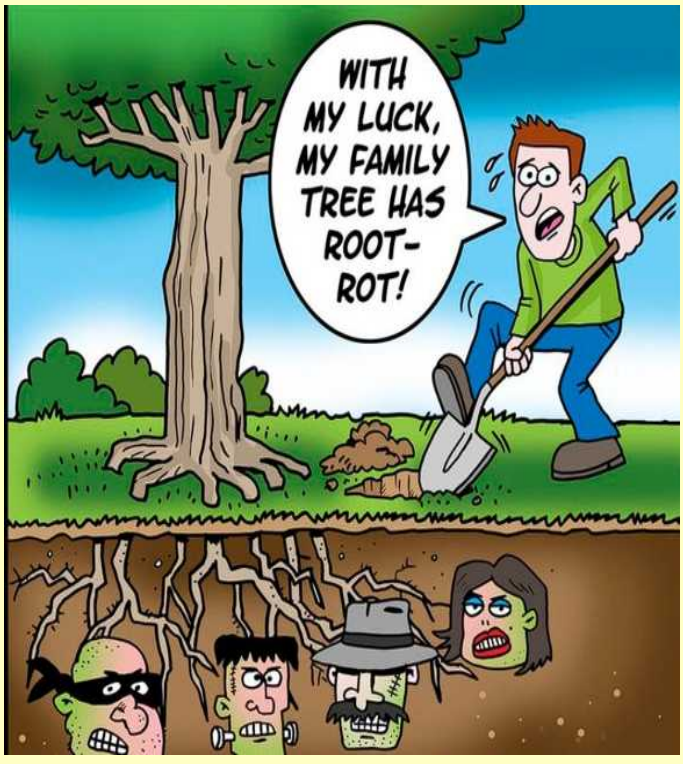
Sat 21 Nov Russell Smith

Mon 23 Nov Graeme Jury

Sat 28 Nov Jeff Grange

Mon 30 Nov Sally Morch

Sat 5 Dec Karen Crowe



"I'm not stuck, I'm ancestrally challenged."

DNA CORNER

At last month's meeting we covered the following.

Ancestry: they have introduced breaking down your Ancestral regions into your grandparents origins.

This update is still in the process of being rolled out and not every kit has it yet. In the future you will be able to identify which grandparent it is as you can do with the Parent 1 and Parent 2 identification.



How does this help you? It can be helpful if you have distinct differences in where your heritage comes from and it is easy to differentiate between your lines.

In the future, we are expecting that we will see this upgrade moving into helping you sort out our DNA matches as well.

In the meantime, have a look at your own DNA and any others you manage. Read the help files that Ancestry supplies to help you learn more.

My Heritage: We also looked at My Heritage and its latest change which is the ability to correct any relationships that show up in your DNA matches incorrectly.

Fixing it is easy – roll your mouse over the 'Probable relationships' words and a little pencil will show (see yellow arrow). Click on this and you can edit the relationship. Answer the questions and then Save. It will then show you the correction.



FACEBOOK

We have a lot of Facebook members - but hardly anyone posts an item! There are lots of stories/happenings that you could share. See if you can make at least one post this month. And **PLEASE**—if you read a post and its something that interests you, put a **LIKE** in the box otherwise its terribly discouraging for those who **DO** post.
Putting a like on a post is **NOT** going to tie you into a spam algorithm.

"My husband calls cemeteries ancestor farms."



The story of Jean Sandel

Jean Mary Sandel was born at Kaiti, Gisborne, on 26 December 1916, to Mary Jessie Gow and her husband, Arthur Sandel, a licensed surveyor. The family soon moved to Taumarunui. From there Jean was sent to board at New Plymouth Girls' High School: she was dux in 1932 and 1933, and in the latter year was head girl and the recipient of the cup for excellence in work and sport. She was also the first girl at the school to gain the Royal Life Saving Society's diploma. In 1933 she sat the matriculation examination and gained a Junior Scholarship.

The following year she began studying at the University of Otago Medical School. She completed the five-year course with ease, writing her thesis on the state of health of King Country Maori. She completed her MB, ChB in 1939, winning the Senior Scholarship in medicine and the highest prize, the Travelling Scholarship. The Second World War prevented her from taking up these awards, and she spent the war years as a surgeon at Wellington Hospital. In 1946 she began four years' postgraduate work in England where she broke new ground as a female surgical registrar in London and became an FRCS in 1947 – the first New Zealand woman to do so. Her presence, personality and femininity endeared her to staff at many London hospitals.

On her return to New Zealand late in 1950 she joined the staff at New Plymouth Hospital. One of two surgeons employed by the Taranaki Hospital Board, she rapidly established a reputation for her ability and diligence; by 1964 she was the leader of the surgical department's staff of eight. The two operating theatres at New Plymouth Hospital lacked many modern facilities and the building of a new hospital became a major focus for Sandel. She was delighted when Taranaki Base Hospital opened in 1972 with seven operating theatres.

Not much over five feet in height with steady brown eyes and dark hair, Jean Sandel had no pretensions and would often operate standing on a box so that her taller – usually male – assistant would not have to endure a stooped back throughout a long operation. She was a steady and meticulous operator: patience and stamina, combined with technical skill and knowledge of surgical anatomy, were hallmarks of her work. In her later years she became interested in cardiovascular surgery and pioneered this type of work for provincial hospitals.

In the administrative office Sandel allowed surgical staff to comment on roster arrangements she had drawn up; in spite of this genuine consultation, the end result was usually as Jean had predicted. In the wards she was a strict disciplinarian with resident doctors and nurses. Her industry, clarity of thought and fearless determination required, and resulted in, the highest skill and care from all staff. Sandel was a devout Presbyterian, and her Christian principles meant she willingly performed more emergency duties than required and attended her patients at all hours. She encouraged her staff to write articles for journals, and co-authored an article for the New Zealand Medical Journal in 1967. In 1957 she had become a fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

Sandel actively encouraged young women to further their academic studies through her involvement with the New Zealand Federation of University Women and the local soroptimist club, by lecturing and tutoring nurses at the hospital and by speaking at graduation ceremonies. Tending the garden that surrounded her century-old black and white cottage, golf, bridge and watching rugby and cricket were her chief leisure pursuits, although in her later years much of her time was devoted to caring for her aged parents. She never married. When working at the old hospital she was known to sneak away to Pukekura Park to watch cricket matches from the grassed terraces. A match commentator would hang a white towel out of the commentary box if the hospital needed her urgently and she would scurry back up the hill.

Ill health, which required regular radiation therapy, marred the last years of Jean Sandel's life, yet she continued to meet her surgery obligations. She was found dead in her bedroom on 4 November 1974; she was 57 years old. Her memory is perpetuated at Taranaki Base Hospital by a garden and an operating theatre named in her honour, and in the community by a window in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church and a memorial wing in Chalmers home for the aged.

Biography of Jean Sandel

by Victor Hadlow

Sourced from
Te Ara the Encyclopaedia of NZ



Links and sources—Bibliography

Obit. Daily News (New Plymouth). 5 Nov. 1974: 1

Obit. New Zealand Medical Journal 81, No 537 (April 1975): 359–360

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How well do you know Taranaki?



This person won a Citizen award in 2019—who is it?



What street in New Plymouth is this? Photographed in 1910

The editor will award a luxury Chocolate Fish to the first correct answer—all other correct answers will go into the draw for more chocolate fish. Email your answers to the editor at : hamishg1@gmail.com Entries close November 30 2026

Last month's answers



Voting day 1893 –the first time that women could vote



Gold & Silver Medal winner - Dave Baldwin—Bowls



Nancy Blackstock





Vivienne Jones

Eventually, all genealogists come to their census.

Xmas Party 2022









We want to make this a special one - but we need your help!! Please bring a suitable contribution to the next meeting, or any other time that our rooms are open. Prizes include a My Heritagge DNA kit plus two vouchers for a litre tub of Hamish's famous home made icecream, in the flavour of your choice! The raffle will be drawn at the Xmas Party.

For Your Information



CHRISTMAS HOURS FOR OUR ROOMS

Last day for the library open to members and the public is Monday the 14th of December. Opening again on Monday the 18th of Jan 2027. If anyone is visiting and would like access, please email us at newplymouthgenealogy@gmail.com and we will see if someone can come and open up for you. Please remember that Peter, who looks after this email address, will also be on holiday!

Legacy Family Tree Webinars - https://familytreewebinars.com/

Learning Paths— Follow a Learning Path hand-picked by our expert speakers — the best webinars on a topic, in the right order, leading to a certificate of completion, or create your own personalized learning path. Examples -



Foundations in DNA

5 WEBINARS · ~6 HRS · 1 CERTIFICATE



English Military Ancestors

6 WEBINARS · ~6 HRS · 1 CERTIFICATE

Library News Magazines received:

Who Do You Think You Are *(Oct)* ***Family Tree*** *(Sept—Oct)*

Newsletters received:

Canterbury, Feilding, Hamilton, Kapiti, Matamata, Mosgiel, Nelson, Palmerston North, Papakura, Papamoa, Porirua, Riccarton, Southland, Wellington & Whanganui

If you would like an email copy of newsletters from another genealogy society or branch, please contact Peter Hewett
Email: newplymouthgenealogy@gmail.com



No new members this month

The Back Page

Hello and welcome to the beginning of some warmer weather - on some days at least. I have managed to circumnavigate the curse of changing technology , this newsletter is still processed on MS Publisher, next year I'll try another platform when my brain is a little more refreshed.

Don't forget the big Xmas raffle— have a dig around and see what you can find to contribute, and don't forget to buy a ticket or 2, you might win something rather special.

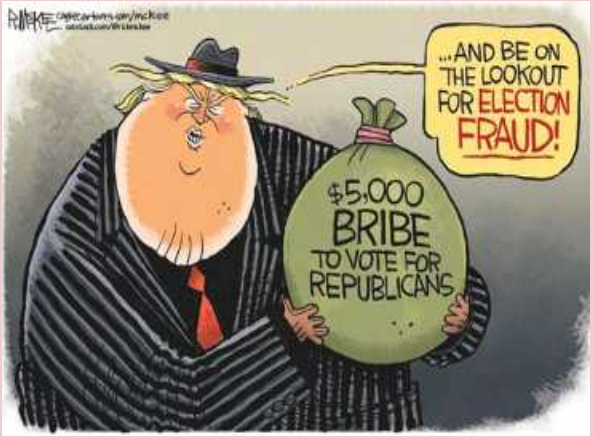
On the front page there is a piece about committee service—please do give it some thought and put your name forward to help our society grow into the future

This month's chocolate fish contest is "Easy Peezy" you should be able to work them both out—do give it a try on page 6. I have a really good stock of fish so I'm looking forward to a heap of winners!

Suggestions are always welcome, you can contact me on 027 608 3074 or hamishg1@gmail.com

Till next month

Hamish



Genealogists: The only people who are excited to read obituaries.