

Genealogy Computer Group

Special Interest Group of NZSG

Chairman's Report, November 2007

I am pleased to present this annual report to members.

NZSG Council has received expert legal advice about the implications of the new Charitable Societies legislation and on resolving the conflict between the requirements for compulsory membership in the Incorporated Societies Act and Charitable Societies providing benefits to the general public. It is strongly recommended that Branches and Special Interest Groups become incorporated societies in their own right, mainly to protect elected officers and members from personal liability claims – but there is no urgency to make these changes. Council has appointed a sub-committee (on which I serve) to investigate the options suggested by the lawyer, look for any unintended consequences, and to provide guidance on the steps required. Indications are that the process will be simple, low cost and require very few changes to the way GCG and its sub-groups operate at present.

It is anticipated that NZSG Rules will be changed at the June 2008 AGM to comply with Charitable Societies registration requirements and this will require GCG to change financial year and the date of our Annual General Meetings. These changes should have no effect on our members: our subscription year will still be the calendar year.

And now for some results:

Membership

Membership Officer: Rex Wood

Once more membership is declining, around 7.5% lower than last year and our sub-groups are reporting a falling off in attendance.

Road Shows

We have participated in two more well-received Road Shows, in Cromwell and Gisborne, and participated in the Expo run by Kapiti Branch. Plans are well in hand for more shows in 2008.

NZSG Conference

We have been invited to have a stand at next year's conference in Christchurch and will be seeking some volunteers to help staff it. There will be no GCG computer room: with the extensive school computer facilities available to conference delegates extra GCG computers would be superfluous.

GenCom News

Editor: Richard Griffin

The magazine is our first line of communication with members but Richard struggles to find interesting and useful articles to fill it.

We are still seeking a replacement editor or an assistant.

Magazine library

Library Officer: Garry Bell

We continue to provide a “round-robin” service for some genealogical magazines. However, the number of computer-related genealogy magazines is declining and the service is not well used. The computer section of Family Tree Magazine is no longer produced as a pull-out and, as many members already have access, it is likely that our subscription will terminate in 2008. The “round-robin” service may also cease.

Financial

Treasurer: Robyn Williams

Our financial state is very healthy and your committee is always open to suggestions for using our resources to benefit members. It is this financial health that has enabled us to put on Road Shows and offer to fund the travel costs of an out-of-town speaker even when only a few members meet in one another's homes.

Another data projector has been purchased for hire by the NZSG to relieve the demand on existing equipment. The committee will consider similar equipment loan or grant applications from GCG sub-groups.

Publicity

A three-fold brochure outlining the structure and services provided by GCG is available. These were distributed at events such as Road Shows, GCG Open Days, and are available at the Family Research Centre.

Website

Webmaster: Neville Thomas

Our website at www.gencom.org.nz was maintained with relevant information, 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.

Administration

Secretary: Penny King

The committee was well supported by our secretary.

I thank all the committee members for their contributions during the year. 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.

All members of the GCG committee are offering themselves for re-election. Ken Vail of the North Harbour sub-group has been nominated as a new committee member. We do need one or two more people to help keep the show on the road: volunteers are always welcome!

David Bryant