



⇌ **BRANCH LINES** ⇌
 Newsletter of the Southland Branch
 New Zealand Society of Genealogists

Issue No. 41 - January 2007



NZSG 40 : Southland Branch 37

This year, 2007, is the 40th year since the inaugural meeting of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists, and this year's Conference in Wellington is to celebrate this anniversary. The Southland Branch is not far behind - currently in its 37th year, having been established in November 1969. The clipping reproduced below appeared in *The Southland Times* ; the caption reads "Mrs Gael Thompson (left), interim president of the Southland Genealogists' Club, and Mrs Doreen Robins, acting secretary."



Mrs Gael Thompson (left), interim president of the Southland Genealogists' Club, and Mrs Doreen Robins, acting secretary.

The organising committee of this year's Conference asked branches to supply a brief of each Branch's history. We passed the task to the only two current inaugural and active members - Margaret Sutherland and Mary Stuart. Their account follows; I am grateful to them for allowing its use here (slightly edited and compressed from the original).

A Pocket History of the NZSG Southland Branch

On the 19th November 1969 the inaugural meeting of the Southland Branch of NASG was held in the UFS Hall, Tay Street, Invercargill. At that meeting (attended by about 90 people, the Invercargill Genealogy Club closed, and the Southland Branch of the NZ Society of Genealogists was founded. Mrs Gael Thompson was elected Convenor, with Mrs Doreen Robins as Secretary and Mrs Bonnie Bryce as Treasurer.(to page 2)



About Branch Lines

Branch Lines is a periodic magazine, issued for the members of the Southland Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists.

The views expressed are those of the contributors, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Branch of the Society.

The position of Newsletter Editor is currently vacant. Aspirants need to be computer-literate, with some knowledge of MS Word : tuition will be given. Please contact the Convenor. Send copy for publication to the Branch Secretary or the Convenor.



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2007 - NZSG is 40 years old

In 1970 Mrs Thompson moved to Hamilton, from where she became the National President of the NZSG. Mrs Ellen Whitehead became the Convenor. Sub committees were formed to Source all genealogical material held by museums, churches, newspapers and libraries in the Southland area. A survey of all cemetery and Trustee Boards which held burial registers were located with the assistance of the Southland District Council.

Birth and Death notices were cut out from the daily newspaper, pasted and bound into volumes by Mrs Jenny McLaren, who later became Convenor in 1974-76. This project continues to this day.

Between 1974 and 1976 Mrs Margaret Sutherland, then Convenor, held morning meetings at her home for young Mums and elderly members to help and start them on family research.

Over the years, resources grew to become impossible for members to take home after each meeting. A very successful progressive dinner was held and raised more than enough money to build 2 large cupboards to house this material and have room for a lot more. Mr Lindsay Jukes built the cupboards. Mrs Mary Miller resigned as Librarian in November 1974 and Mrs Mary Murray was elected - she remains Librarian to this day.

Looking back, the period 1971-1980 was the best years of the Branch. In these years all cemeteries in the Southland area were completed. The organisation by young Mums, getting their offspring to school and kindergarten, packing picnic lunches then off transcribing cemeteries, was a real effort. With larger cemeteries the husbands, wives, children, kites and fishing rods turned many a Sunday into a picnic day.

The typing and checking of the transcriptions was done by Mrs Ann MacGibbon of Eastern Bush, who was Convenor of the Branch 1972-74. After Ann left the district, Mrs Iris Lankshear took over the typing. Iris passed away early in 2006. Our first Secretary Mrs Doreen Robins died at the age of 27 years leaving a very young family of 3.

In 1979, then Convenor, the late Ethna Kennedy, discovered that the Southland Education Office was about to be closed. The Branch was given the opportunity to photocopy the Attendance Registers. Members managed to copy them all before they disappeared. Transcription and indexing was a very long and arduous task that took many years to complete. The Branch was lucky that to have the use of the Computer Suite at Cargill High School to store the indexes onto disks. The indexes were finally ready for the NZSG Conference in Invercargill in 1996. Many members worked on this project, but Mrs Sheena Bulman in particular completed the project.

In 1981 several of our members were awarded Merit Certificates by NZSG : Mesdames Mary Murray, Jenny McLaren, Millie Sanford, Mary Stuart and Margaret Sutherland.

During the 1980's, then Convenor Yvonne Service, Margaret Sutherland and Mary Stuart indexed the Wills held at the Invercargill Supreme Court from 1863-1956 before they disappeared to the Dunedin Archives. It gives the Branch great satisfaction to see all our projects now on the NZSG CD-ROM's.

The Southland Branch celebrated its 25 years in 1994 with an Open Day and dinner. Five South Island Councillors attended the open day and dinner. Mrs Margaret Tomsett was the NZSG President at the time.

The Southland Branch hosted the NZSG AGM and Conference at Ascot Park Hotel in Invercargill in 1996. Vivienne Parker, the then Editor of *The New Zealand Genealogist* organized a train from Auckland, picking up members all the way down to Invercargill. The Conference committee, (Convenor Mary Stuart, Secretary Shirley Walker, Registrar Yvonne Service and Treasurer Margaret Sutherland) could safely say it was a great success. Registered members from Kaitaia to Stewart Island attended. To run a successful Conference and AGM must be the highlight for any Branch.

In 1999 the Branch celebrated its 30th anniversary, with a cake and some humorous items, and now looks forward to the 40th year in two years' time.

By 2001 the Branch had moved into the electronic age by posting its own Internet website, thanks to the present Convenor, Roger Washbourn.

Compiled by **Margaret Sutherland** (NZSG No. 285) and **Mary Stuart** (NZSG No. 328).
(Inaugural Members of Southland Branch NZSG).

Why would you be suspicious if someone claimed his/her ancestor was born on 10 September 1752?
(Answer on page 4)

Branch News

Branch Committee Contacts		Genealogical Computing Group	
Convenor Roger Washbourn	213-0968	Convenor - Roger Washbourn	213-0968
Treasure Greg Blackburn	216-4242	Secretary-Treasurer -	
Secretary Lesley Instone	217-8825	Maureen Townson	218-3600
Librarian Mary Murray	217-6181	SeniorNet liaison –	
Committee Mary Stuart (ex officio)	217-4560	Peter Johnson	216-6850
Helen Hall	217-6185	Committee - members.	
Yvonne Service	213-0254		
Postal address : P.O. Box 1329, Invercargill 9840.			

Branch Projects

The Southland Branch has several projects under way. These are as follow. The co-ordinators' names and Committee members responsible for the projects are given : enquiries should be directed to these people.

1. **Certificates collection** : (Lesley Instone). Copies of Births, Deaths, Marriages certificates are kept locally and sent on to the NZSG Certificates collection. [Not yet indexed.]
2. **Cemeteries** : (Yvonne Service) : updating local cemeteries records. Invercargill's Eastern Cemetery is being progressively updated. When completed, the information is passed to NZSG for addition to the national database.
3. **Schools Admissions** : (Mary Stuart and Helen Hall) : a look-up service is provided for research enquiries.
4. **The Southland Times Births and Deaths Indexes** : Barbara Lilley is recording the current entries and maintaining the paste-up book. Roger Washbourn has completed indexing of a Deaths Index [1971-2000] and a Births Index [1991-2000] : copies are available in the Scottish Hall repository.
5. **Southland Early Settlers Pre-1900 Register** : Lesley Instone collects the completed forms; Roger Washbourn is indexing these as they come to hand. Index to date is available at the Scottish Hall.
6. **Southland Branch Members' Interests** : a local database of Branch Members' surname interests is being built up. Input forms available from the Secretary, and a copy of the index to date is available at the Scottish Hall.



Southland Branch's Website

The Branch has a website which covers the activities of the Southland Branch, and of the Invercargill Genealogical Computing Special Interest Group. The site is updated on a regular basis, and is provided in part so that members of both groups can keep up to date with future meetings. There is a meetings programme, information for new members, a section devoted to other genealogical resources, and links to a selection of genealogical and Southland-oriented pages. The URL or address for the site is

http://www.geocities.com/nzsg_southland/

↑ NB: Underline character.

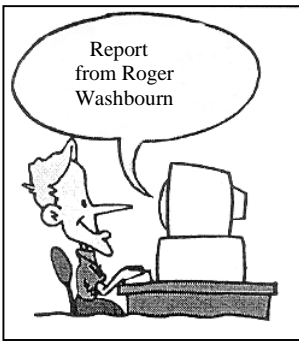
The site has been live since May 2001. A counter on the page shows that it receives around 120 visits per month.

Programmes for 2007 - NZSG and GCG

Programmes for the Southland Branch and the Invercargill Computer Users' Group for 2007 are outlined in this table :

NZSG - date	Programme	GCG - date	Programme
21 February	DNA and Genealogy	22 February	Writing batch files
25 February	Eastern Cemetery Tour	-	
21 March	Invercargill Street Names	22 March	Keyboard shortcuts; USB drives
18 April	Researching in Dunedin	26 April	Cromwell Roadshow Review
16 May	History of Shipping at Bluff	24 May	1841 Scottish Census
20 June	Post-Conference speaker	28 June	GEDCOM
18 July	Local research evening	26 July	Graphical interfaces for genealogy
15 August	Southland Museum Resources	23 August	Photoshop Elements tutorial
19 September	Visit to rural museum	27 September	FamilySearch.org
17 October	AGM. Problems and local research	25 October	(Unallocated)
21 November	BYO supper; local research.	22 November	Programme for 2008

Technology



News from the Genealogical Computer Group

The Invercargill Genealogical computing Group is made up of around 15-20 members who have a particular fascination with computers and genealogy. They meet on the fourth Thursday nights at the SeniorNet Rooms in the Menzies Building off Leven Street. The group has an annual programme of topics, which is planned based on the needs of the members. Attendees pay a very modest \$2 per night to cover room hire and tea/biscuits afterwards.

The parent body, the Genealogical Computing Group, attracts an additional \$15 per year subscription, in return for which members receive a quarterly magazine "GenCom News", an excellent publication packed with up-to-date information, software reviews, and advice.

Over the past year, the group has had sessions on digital cameras and imaging, keyboard shortcuts, Scottish census, web page setup, housekeeping and backing up, and utilities. One of the useful agenda items each evening is a "Problem Corner" where members air their problems, and the collective wisdom of the group attempts to [and often does] solve the difficulty.

If you have a home computer (or if you are thinking of obtaining one for recording your family history, but want some advice), then you should think about joining the friendly group. Speak to Roger Washbourn (the Convenor) or Maureen Townson (Secretary), or any other member, who can tell you more about the group. You do not have to be particularly computer-able to benefit from the group : there is a wide range of experience on hand, and the aim is to help genealogical computing and make it fun.

The Last Page

Directory

Southland Branch, NZ Society of Genealogists Inc.

Postal address
P.O. Box 1329
Invercargill 9840.

E-mail: Southland@genealogy.org.nz

Meetings
Third Wednesday of each month
Burns Room, Scottish Hall, Esk Street,
In the central city at 7.30 p.m.
[Research facilities from 6 p.m.]

Branch website ~
http://www.geocities.com/nzsg_southland/

NZSG website ~
<http://www.genealogy.org.nz/>

Genealogical Computing Group website ~
<http://www.gencom.org.nz/>



Answer from page 2 ~ 1752 was the year when England changed from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. 12 days were 'lost' when the calendar was adjusted because of slippage over the years. In September 1752, Wednesday 2 September was immediately followed by Thursday 14 September - thus 10 September 1752 never was!

THE LAST WORD

'Branch Lines' is currently without a compiler, so it has fallen to the Convenor to assemble this newsletter. It is a summary of facilities available through the Southland Branch, especially when accompanied by the green (for 2007) Information Brochure. You do not have to be a member of NZSG or the Southland Branch to attend any of the programmed evenings - we take all comers, and welcome everyone. If you have any queries, phone one of the people listed on page 3. Details sometimes change however, but the website is kept up-to-date and can be checked for currency. The Committee believes it has an interesting series of speakers lined up for 2007.

Comments and suggestions are welcomed.

Roger Washbourn.
Convenor.
17 January 2007.

