

## NZSG IRISH INTEREST GROUP AGM 28 MAY 2023

### CONVENOR'S REPORT

The Irish Interest Group 2022-2023 year commenced on 22 May 2022 when at the conclusion of the AGM your current Committee were re-elected for the following year.

Following the AGM at our members' meeting our Guest Speaker was Malcolm Campbell, Associate professor of History at Auckland University presented on *The Murrays of Yarralumla: One Irish Family in Australia and the Pacific*. Fascinated with the Irish language and a keen follower of Irish politics, Murray's life extended through the most intensive period of Irish settlement in Australia and New Zealand. This talk explores the rich history of the Murray family across three generations.

Malcolm Campbell had just published his latest book on the Irish in the Pacific World. *Ireland's Farthest Shores Mobility, Migration, and Settlement in the Pacific World* examines Irish migration to New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific from the eighteenth century to the Irish Revolution. Topics include Irish immigrants' religion, nationalism and popular protest.

As part of our fundraising on 10 July we screened the audio *The Irish Potato Famine (1845-1852)*. This audio was highly acclaimed when it ran at the Potato Famine Exhibition in Dublin in 2019.

The annual Genealogy Computer Group and Auckland Council Library EXPO was held over the weekend of 13-14 August. The Irish Interest Group purchased two tables and at times there was no space to move. Graeme McVerry, a member from Wellington, was once again on hand with his personal books conducting research inquiries. Every year the Irish Interest Group stands have been inundated with people trying to find their Irish ancestors.

The Irish Interest Group purchased three audio presentations from Ancestor Network, Ireland's leading professional and expert genealogists.

At our August meeting we screened **Understanding Irish Placenames** conducted by Aiden Feenick and Dr. James Ryan, two eminent Irish family historians. This audio covered Land Divisions – the places; The Names – the origins; Anglicisation and its results; Standardisation process; Sources of information, along with Books and Maps. From our library holdings we displayed some Irish resources on place names to support areas discussed in the audio.

A variety of topics were presented at our November meeting which was held for the longer time of 10am-4pm.

*Discovering the depth of National Archives Ireland - top tips to take from their records* - presented by Geraldene O'Reilly

*New to Ancestry - DNA Tricks and Tools just released* - presented by John Dowgray

*A Family story from County Kerry given publicity through a BBC TV series Murder, Mystery and My Family* - presented by Dorothy Dowgray

Members were invited to share details of their research finds that could benefit other researchers.

During June committee member Kathryn O'Neil conducted a survey seeking feedback on the needs of our members, the survey being e-mailed to our wider membership. The Survey results were presented at our November meeting. The response was high and Kathryn thanked all those who participated.

The survey results indicated that there is a high level of satisfaction of with the Irish Interest Group meetings content and support provided. One of the identified challenges is how we use technology to connect with members who are unable to attend meetings in person. The technology area is on the agenda for future discussion.

At our first meeting in 2023 held 26 February we screened the second audio purchased from Ancestor Network titled **Irish Church Records** conducted by Dr. James G. Ryan, was presented . We supported this audio by displaying various publications from our Irish holdings on Church records. This included the book *Irish Church Records* edited by James G. Ryan which details records on Quaker, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Catholic, Methodist, Jewish, Huguenot and Baptist Churches.

Building towards our fundraising to hold an Irish genealogy conference in Auckland late February 2024, we screened the film *The Wind That Shakes The Barley* on 14 May. This was an appropriate topic to screen during Ireland's *Decades of Centenaries 2012-2023*. We displayed resources from our Irish holdings in the County series *The Irish Revolution 1912-23*, and publications on the Black and Tans.

Your ongoing support is appreciated, and we thank members who have contributed to our fundraising.

We thank Butlers Chocolates New Zealand for their sponsorship at our recent meetings. We continue to maintain a strong membership with our quarterly Newsletters and regular News Bulletins being e-mailed to our members around New Zealand from Northland to Invercargill, and to members in Australia, Ireland and Canada.

We thank our Treasurer Kathryn O'Neil who compiled our financial reports, and Ron Jackson our Auditor who reviewed and signed them off.

We thank members for regularly attending our meetings with an additional mention of Anne Brady who at various times has stepped up to assist at meetings.

I extend a special thank you to our Committee for their continued support, without it our Group would not function in the manner it does.

A special thank you must also go to Robyn Williams, ex NZSG Executive Board member, who generously contributes her time and expertise to the Irish Interest Group and is always on hand to assist when asked.

Thank you

GERALDENE O'REILLY  
CONVENOR  
NZSG IRISH INTEREST GROUP  
28/05/2023