

CANTERBURY/WESTLAND BRANCH

of the



NEW ZEALAND FOUNDERS SOCIETY INC.



From our President:



Greetings and may 2018 be an inspirational and productive year for us all. Autumn is just about here and often wonder how the founding people of Canterbury/Westland handled the weather - rain, wind, cold and sun. Oh, and no sealed roads or footpaths or motor vehicles.

The Founders Creed: We pledge ourselves to foster, promote and inculcate in rising generations that hardy will and spirit of enterprise, responsibility, work and faith so abundantly possessed by the actual Founders, which has been so important a factor in the life and progress of New Zealand.

We are still a very small group. I do believe that since the inception of the Founders of New Zealand and branches, a number of interest groups and museums have been formed and have and are gathering photos, stories and items of historic interest to that particular area. There are genealogy societies, online ancestry groups, DNA being another fascinating research. Books and magazines have been published and are being published with the early days of New Zealand and the people.

So, where does that leave us? How can we interest people to join our branch?

Can we write up a little story about our forebears to share in our group.

Ray and I are researching our families who came from various parts in England, Cornwall, Scotland, Ireland and Sweden. With many early settlers, very little was kept in the way of letters and photographs. They would have been too busy surviving and making a new life in the colony. Papers Past is a very good website from where we have gathered some interesting snippets of our forebears' doings. Ships and passenger lists also inform us of their journey here. What I often wonder, is why would they leave their home country to come to New Zealand. What information were they 'sold' by the New Zealand Company?

The annual NZ Founders Magazine was left at the Bolton Hotel in Wellington for me to pick up two weeks ago when we were in Wellington for Ray's brother's funeral. Unfortunately, the young receptionists seemed to have misplaced them! No doubt they will turn up soon.

I look forward to meeting with you all soon at our next meeting which is the AGM. A meeting which legally we must have because NZ Founders are registered as a Charity.

Pam Absolum

Branch Committee:

Chairman: Pam Absolum
Secretary: Melville Opie
Treasurer: Ray Absolum
Committee: Alan Airay
John McSweeney

The committee is fortunate indeed, to have John Mc Sweeney in its numbers. John is the only carry-over committee member from the pre-earthquakes era, (being its President at the time of the Branch's recession) and is a great touchstone for his corporate knowledge of our Branch and the Society. John acted as custodian and archivist through the recess and only now, with our feet more firmly on the ground, are we newbies catching up on stored items and getting our minds around the wider aspects of what the branch is about.

NZ Founders Soc., website.

Have you visited our parent body's website? **Ctrl+click:**
www.nzfounders.org.nz/

Canterbury-Westland Branch Facebook site.

President Pam has set up and is maintaining this site wonderfully well with frequent updates. This is a closed group, so available only to invited persons. Let Pam know directly, if you would like to be part of it: [CANTERBURY/WESTLAND BRANCH of the NEW ZEALAND FOUNDERS SOCIETY INC.Z](https://www.facebook.com/CANTERBURY/WESTLAND-BRANCH-of-the-NEW-ZEALAND-FOUNDERS-SOCIETY-INC.Z) (Ctrl+click)

2017 In Review: Since the election of a formal committee at a SGM last August, our Branch has had 3 social events to mark the 2017 year – a conversazione at The Old Vicarage (Halwell); a guided tour of Christ’s College, followed by lunch at the Bunsen café at the old university (Arts Centre); pot luck Christmas dinner, generously hosted by John and Mary-Jean McLauchlan

The first two events were held on weekdays; the first in recognition of the age demographics of our members and that the venue was likely to be less busy than at weekends; the second due to constraints of tour times, only mid-week days being available. It was wonderful therefore, to have John and Mary-Jean host the Christmas afternoon and dinner at a weekend, giving the opportunity for working members to attend.

After our restart from recess due to the Christchurch earthquakes, our membership number is still very much in recovery mode, but gradually building. We are competing with other genealogical groups for members and the recess saw our membership numbers fall. It is incumbent on us all, to actively search for and encourage the joining up of new members.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, 20 March, 2018

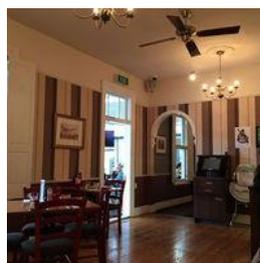
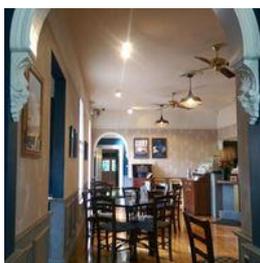
TIME: 2.00pm

VENUE: The Old Vicarage,
[335 Halswell Road](#). (Ctrl+click for map)

BUSINESS:

1. Welcomes and apologies.
2. Minutes of Special General Meeting held 03 August 2017.
3. Election of Officers.
4. Update of the current status of the Branch – President Pam.
Treasurer Ray.
5. Membership.
6. Subscriptions.
7. Other business
8. Guest Speaker - Carolyn Adams. Secretary for the NZ Founders Association
President for the Waikato Founders Branch.

Carolyn will talk: “My Journey in the Founders Association”



Melville Opie,
Secretary.
Ph (03) 3841306

Programme:

In correspondence with Pam regarding this newsletter, she wrote, “I would like to get suggestions from members etc., so will be putting that to the members. Difficult if the few of us have to make all the decisions”. Such fair comment and her proposition comes with this particular item. So, whilst the committee have ideas to work on, it would be nice to have ideas come in from members. Phone or e-mail them in, to Pam (03 3494972; pamsymay@gmail.com) or Mel. (03 3841306; exti419@uclive.ac.nz), in time for the programme to come out this month (March).

A Bit of Local History.

March is Cemetery Month, according to the NZ Genealogist Society. On our Canterbury/Westland Facebook Page, we have also made it Cemetery Month.

Ray and I went to the site of Holy Trinity Church, Avonside where, I remember as a teenager, tidying around the headstone of Julius von Haast. Not only is he buried there but the church cemetery is the burial place of some prominent Cantabrians including:

- Joseph Brittan (1805–1867), surgeon, newspaper editor, and provincial councillor
- James Arthur Flesher (1865–1930), Mayor of Christchurch
- Julius von Haast (1822–1887), explorer and geologist
- Cyril Mountfort (1852–1920), architect
- Benjamin Mountfort (1825–1898), architect, father of Cyril
- William Rolleston (1831–1903), Superintendent of Canterbury Province
- George Warren Russell (1854–1937), Minister of Health during the 1918 flu pandemic



Julius Franz Haast studied geology and mineralogy at Bonn University, from which he did not graduate.

His arrival in New Zealand (1859) was to report on how suitable the country was for future immigration of Germans. Julius' first job was as a geological researcher for Nelson and Canterbury. In 1860 he helped with the development of the Lyttelton Railway Tunnel. Julius became the Provincial Geologist and Surveyor General and along with his friend William Warner (Warner's Hotel, Cathedral Square) he explored Canterbury rivers, drew maps and made studies of minerals and their potential. Haast River and Haast Pass are named after Julius von Haast and the Franz Josef Glacier after the Emperor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Julius first married Antonia Schmitt at Frankfurt, Germany. Although an unhappy marriage, two years later, they produced a son named Robert. Antonia died in 1859.

His second marriage was to Mary Dobson, who was the sister of Arthur Dobson. Arthur's Pass is named after Arthur Dobson.

In 1871, Julius became 'Professor Haast' and taught geology at the then Canterbury College (later University of Canterbury) now the Christchurch Art Centre. He was also the first director and founder of the Museum which opened in 1871 and was designed by Benjamin Mountfort. Holy Trinity Church, Avonside is one of the oldest stone churches in Christchurch which was destroyed in the 22 February 2011 earthquake

Photo Gallery:



Conversazione: Pat Houston, Nancy Gibbs
David Gibbs, Mary Jean McLauchlan, Ray Absolum



Christ's College tour:
Mel and Ray



choir in the chapel



'Flowers' & 'Wallace' windows



Photo op., at the Christ's theatre precinct



Christmas Function: relaxing in the shade
on a piping hot afternoon.



Christmas Function:



< Farm walk >



and putting the world to right



Pam Absolum,
Branch Chairman.
Phone: (03) 349 4972 email: pamsymay@gmail.com
Melville Opie.
Branch Secretary.
Phone: (03) 384 1306 email: exti419@uclive.ac.nz

