

Archives Report

We have a family saying when things get busy.... "I've been rushed off my sling backs" and it's been rather like that this year. The calendar shows a large number of red dots, which indicate that researchers have been in, and when matched against the work diary, there is no doubt that the archivist never goes home without learning something new.

A week spent with Judith Bright, the National Anglican Archivist in the summer holidays enabled enormous inroads to be made on the Diocesan Correspondence. Discussion between archivists over the arrangement and description of a collection is an important part of informal PD and we certainly did that.

For part of the year an additional eight hours a month proved to be most beneficial. Many items were boxed, creating more robust protection for the future, and the odd misplaced item that was scooped off the floor in Hereford Street and then languished in the container, has found finally its way to the correct shelf.

The opportunity to be part of two days meeting with Vestry Members and Wardens in Christchurch and Temuka created more connections with people in the Parishes who look after and cherish archives in their local area.

Diocese and Church Property Trustee staff have continued with their wide variety of requests, as indeed have the public. This is where the archives become more than books that sit on shelves. They are there to be used; to answer questions, to bring family information together, to untangle trusts, to produce building plans and to sometimes make surprising links with people and places in both the past and the present.

The end of year lunch was held at The Habit, formerly part of the Community of the Sacred Name. It was pleasure to include Edwin Boyce the Diocesan Manager in the group, but it was also a chance to farewell to Prue Purser and Lorraine Owen as they left for other parts of New Zealand and family commitments. Their work on the photograph collection and hours of transcriptions have added enormously to the ease of access to the Parish and Confirmation Registers.

Lynette Moore, Colin Watson and Sarah Lees-Jeffries have moved onto another important piece of work. Their current task is working their way through Parish Marriage Registers, recording the actual locations of marriages. For all is not what it seems inside the covers. Clergy have taken marriages across parish boundaries and parish boundaries have of course changed and recorded events are not quite where it would always be expected. It has already proved useful to researchers chasing families on the West Coast which is where the project started.

When I started writing this report it was at the beginning of lockdown. The impact of that decision will be reported next year.