Getting Started

Assistance, workshops, talks & tours

If you are not sure how to get started with your research, have hit a wall or just want to find out more, we are here to help.

Our friendly, knowledgeable staff in the Heritage & Research Centre are happy to help you with your research questions. Volunteers from the Rotorua Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists run drop-in research assistance sessions on the 2nd Wednesday of every month (except December and January). Visit our website for further information about the Genealogy group and their activities.

Keep an eye on the events page of our website for workshops introducing Ancestry.com and other research tools.

Tours of the Heritage & Research Centre and talks on specific Heritage topics are also available by arrangement.

Heritage Collections

Rotorua Library Heritage Collections are held in the Don Stafford Room. The Heritage Collections include:
+ Our reference collection of published books on Te Arawa, Rotorua, Māori and New Zealand history and culture.
+ Research notes on local history compiled by Don Stafford
+ Te Arawa notes compiled by Don Stafford
+ Te Rangikaheke manuscripts
+ Ashley Cody’s geological books, reports, surveys and maps
+ Māori Land Court Minute Books: an incomplete set of local and regional minute books.

Who was Don Stafford?

Author Don Stafford lived in Rotorua almost all his life until his passing in 2010. He produced comprehensive, historical books on Te Arawa and Rotorua which are constantly referred to by researchers, students and other interested parties. He generously donated his research notes to the people of Rotorua and these are frequently read in our library. We are honoured to have been permitted the use of Don Stafford’s name for the room that holds our Heritage Collections.

Location
Heritage & Research Centre
Papa Tuarua - Second Floor
Rotorua Library Te Aka Mauri
1127 Haupapa St, Rotorua

Hours
Monday - Saturday: Open during library opening hours
Sunday: Closed
Public Holidays: Closed

Contact
Phone: 07 348 4177
Email: library@rotorualc.nz

Heritage & Research Centre
Rotorua Library offers excellent Heritage & Research services for anyone interested in Te Arawa, Rotorua, Māori or New Zealand history, or genealogy and whakapapa research.
+ Whakapapa research resources
+ Genealogy/Family History resources
+ Heritage Collections
+ Don Stafford Files
+ Archives
+ Kete Rotorua
+ Workshops
+ Talks and tours
Our objective is to provide safe storage of these unique materials and to make them accessible to the public for research, now and in the future.

Accessing archives for research
Archival material can be viewed for research by prior arrangement. For enquiries, please contact our Heritage & Research Team.

What do we collect?
The Archive collects the documentary records of local and community organisations, clubs and businesses and the papers of individuals, where these records are of continuing value to the Rotorua District community.

We accept primarily printed material that is not duplicated elsewhere, but will consider photographs, ephemera, audio-visual recordings and digital items if space and conditions allow. Where digital copies of records exist, we encourage you to upload these to Kete Rotorua rather than depositing them in the Archives.

Donating material
We welcome hearing from community groups or individuals who have material to donate. Details of how to donate material and the terms and conditions are on our website.

What is Kete Rotorua?
Kete Rotorua is an online community archive, a digital library of arts, cultural and heritage resources. This resource was created to capture and preserve your memories, stories and events of Rotorua and the wider Rotorua District. Kete is created by the community and moderated and maintained by Rotorua Library. Kete is for you or your club/organisation to upload documents together in a safe environment which is searchable online.

How can you use Kete Rotorua?
You can search for Rotorua images and history online or register and join the Kete Rotorua community to contribute and share information. We want you to get your personal papers and photographs out from under your beds and join with us to provide this record for future generations. Showcase your art, share your memories and celebrate who we are and how we live.

What can you upload?
You can upload stories, newsletters, potted histories, photographs, audio or video footage, sound-bytes, posters, web links, memories and so much more. Our Heritage & Research Team are happy to assist you with this.

Find, share and create Rotorua’s heritage.
Visit http://rotorua.kete.net.nz/

Do you take photos of local events and developments such as Christmas parades, the Lake Road four laning project, and Kapa Haka festivals on your camera, cellphone or video camera?

Learn about your whakapapa and discover your family history.

Useful library resources

Electronic resources
Access these resources free within the library.
+ Ancestry (Library) and Find My Past
+ Māori Land Court Minute Book index
+ Burial/Genealogy index
+ NZ Gazette Archive

Collections
+ Microfiche and Microfilm Records including historical births, deaths and marriages and local newspapers.
+ Reference: The Family History Reference Collections in the Heritage & Research Centre are owned partly by the Rotorua Library and partly by the Rotorua Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists (NZSG).
+ Lending: Our lending magazines and books contain guides to family and iwi history research as well as local histories, shipping information, war histories, cemetery databases and biographies.

Search the library catalogue or ask the friendly staff to help you access material relevant to your family history or check out the links to useful online sources and tips for beginners on our website.