18th AFFHO Congress on Family History

Congress Clarion

Welcome Haere Mai!

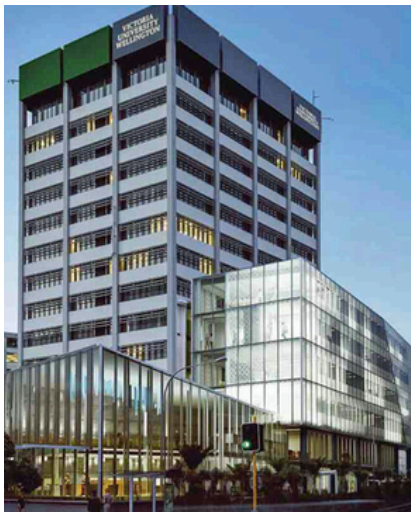
A warm welcome to the Congress Clarion which will bring you up-to-date information about the event over the next few months. We are resurrecting the name from a 2009 congress newsletter, when New Zealand ran its first event in Auckland.

The event is being organised by the New Zealand Society of Genealogists and we are very much looking forward to hosting our family history family. Organisers are working hard to bring you a great three days between 11 and 14 February 2027, when family historians can experience a one-stop genealogy shop.

Do come! Getting together with other genealogists is always fun – we love to mingle and discuss our families and tease out problems in our research. But the congress also offers the rare opportunity to hear and meet expert speakers, and to learn about new techniques and resources. For many it will renew their enthusiasm for the search.

Lay of the land

The conference venue is Victoria University's Rutherford House, in the Wellington CBD. It was named to commemorate New Zealand's most famous scientist, Baron Rutherford of Nelson, (1871-1937) whose research laid the foundations of modern nuclear physics.



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50th

A milestone!

This congress is a special event as it marks 50 years since the first event was held in Melbourne in 1977.

AFFHO launched after this gathering of family historians from all over Australia and New Zealand decided that the growth of interest in family history meant that an umbrella type organisation should be formed. The Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations was successfully launched in 1978, with 16 genealogical, heraldry, family organisations and government bodies joined together in one Federation.

Register now!

October 2026

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Expert Speakers

It is a great line-up. Keynote speaker for Wellington is Jonny Perl, a genealogist, DNA enthusiast and web developer based in Wales. He is the creator and founder of dnapainter.com. which helps people interpret the results of their DNA tests.

Dr Catherine Bishop will explore the extraordinary lives of ordinary women in Australia and New Zealand's past, revealing the tricks (and traps) of records linkage and digital research across time and place. Julia Bradshaw's presentation will highlight forgotten women on New Zealand's goldfields and Charlotte Macdonald is talking on the British Army down under. These speakers will also take part in a panel discussion on finding our women ancestors.

There are masterclasses too. Genealogists Andrew Redfern, and Fiona Brooker are running a hands-on session that reframes AI as a thinking partner for family historians. Find more information on **our speakers** and **masterclasses**.

Strong interest – register soon

About 500 family historians have already put their hand up to hear more about the congress and many have already registered.

The full three-day Congress is NZD$395 during early bird registration which lasts until 14 November when it rises to NZD$495 (cheaper for our Aussie friends!). It's worth getting in early. You can also book for one or two days.

The **masterclasses** are limited to 30 people a session and keynote speaker Jonny Perl's DNA workshops are already sold out. The congress dinner will seat 250 so book early for that too.

With registration comes a welcome event and morning and afternoon teas throughout. One-day and two-day options are also available. **Register now!**

There are also **discounts** available on flights from Australia and Wellington hotels.

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The 18th AFFHO Congress on Family History is brought to you by:

AFFHO

New Zealand Society of Genealogists, Inc.

Te Rangapū Kaihikohiko o Aotearoa

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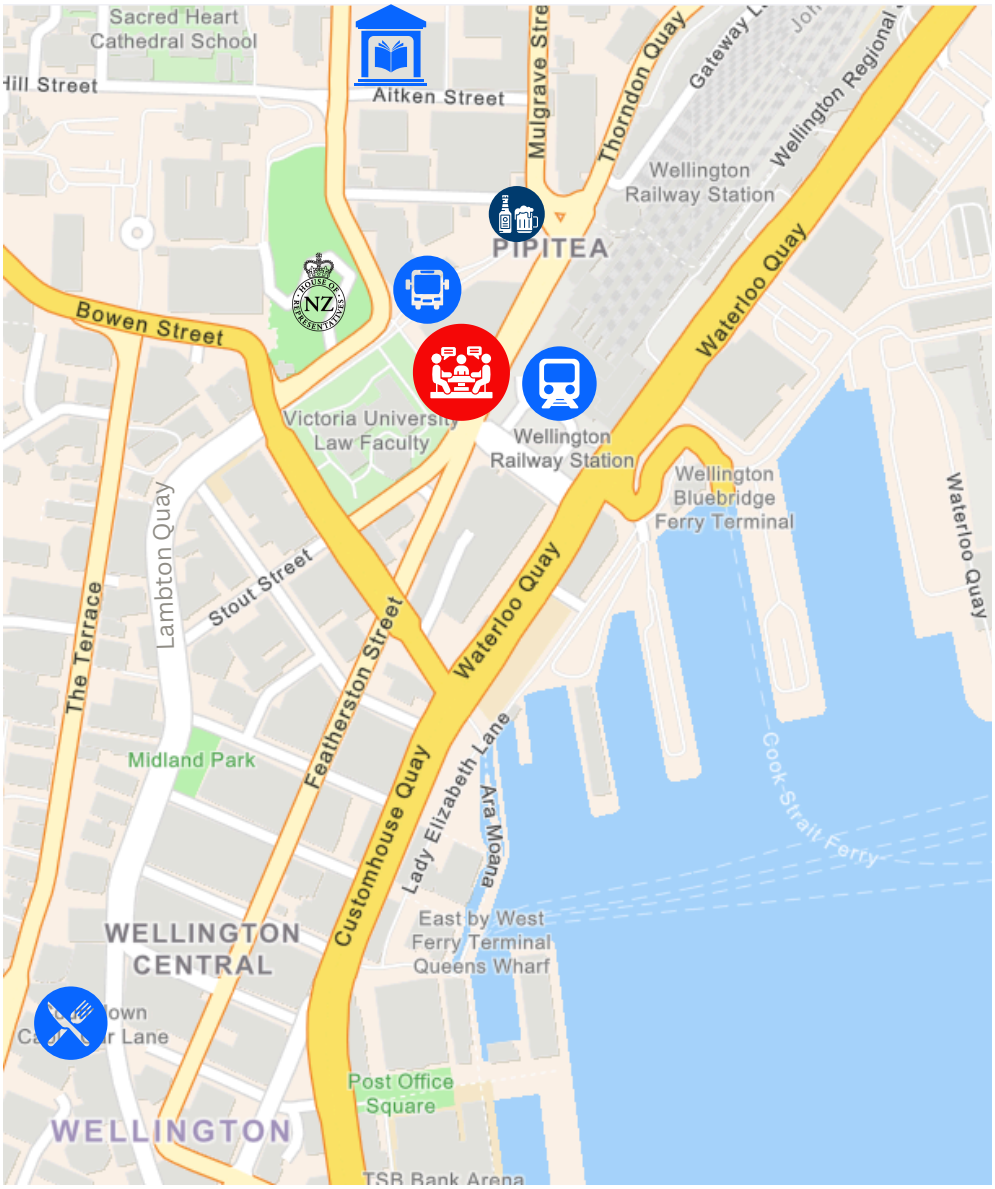
Our central location!

The congress venue is in the thick of things! The building is over the road from the train station and has a bus hub at its door. A quick stroll will take you to the oldest pub in Wellington, The Thistle Inn, built in 1866, which also claims to be the oldest surviving bar in New Zealand still operating from its original site.

Nearby is the oldest wooden building in the southern hemisphere and Parliament is a block or so away. Just up the road is the National Library and Archives New Zealand, both important to family historians and which attendees will be able to tour.

Rutherford House is also an easy walk to Lambton Quay, on one of Wellington's key shopping streets and to the many eating places around this part of the city.



Rutherford House Bunny Street

Train Station

Bus Station

James Cook Grand Chancellor

National Library /Archives New Zealand

Parliament

The historic Thistle Inn

October 2026

Wellington – the world's coolest little capital – awaits!

Lonely Planet gave us the coolest little capital title for its vibrant creative culture. It is also known as windy Wellington we lean into the motto with wind sculptures and a sign boasting it on a bluff at the end of the airport runways. We do tell tourists not to bother with umbrellas!

It's a compact city with a temperate climate and built around a stunning harbour. There is a lot to see and do – so if you are visiting do extend your stay. It prides itself on great food and hospitality – New Zealand wine is pretty good too.

Features like the tour of Weta Workshop, home of Lord of the Rings, riding the cable car, visiting Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand and Zealandia wildlife sanctuary have proved very popular with visitors to the city.

The fate of many umbrellas in Wellington