

British Women's Overseas Club to go into recess

The Hastings British Women's Overseas Club is to go into recess at the end of this year.

The club was founded early in 1946 by Mrs Vera Mason with the object of welcoming the British wives of New Zealand Servicemen to the country. Mrs Mason was a war bride of the 1914-1918 war.

During recent years the club has also helped many post-war immigrants settle down in their adopted country.

The members voted at the 29th anniversary and annual meeting of the club to go into recess. Members felt that the aims and purpose of the club has now been more than fulfilled.

The president, Mrs Anne Mason, paid tribute to the work done by the committee, who will continue in office until the end of the year. A suitable farewell function is to be arranged for November 26.

Club formed to help UK settlers in NZ in recess

The Hastings and District British Women's Overseas Club — formed 29 years ago to help British war brides and immigrants settle into their new environment — will go into recess tonight.

The club was founded by Mrs Vera Mason, who at present is in Cranford Hospital.

Mrs Mason recognised the need for the club after a chance conversation with a "lonely" British sailor's wife. The two women began talking to each other while travelling by bus between Hastings and Napier.

In April, 1946, the inaugural meeting of the club was held in the Hastings City Council's chambers and more than 200 women attended.

The president of the club,

Mrs Kenneth Mason, who is no relation to the foundation president, says since then the club has "helped hundreds and hundreds of women.

"We literally helped the new arrivals in any way we could. We offered them the hand of friendship and helped them settle in.

"I arrived in Hastings 20 years ago and I will never forget the help the club gave me. I became ill soon after we arrived and members looked after my family.

"Through the club I made a large circle of friends.

"Often some of the women didn't know anyone in New Zealand or only their in-laws. Friendships made through the club have continued through the years," Mrs Mason said.

Earlier this year the club decided to go into recess.

Mrs Mason said new immigrants contacted the club only once or twice after they arrived. Members were now mainly older women.

Tonight the club will hold its final Christmas and wind-up dinner in the Wesley Hall, Hastings St.

"We are going to have a great re-union with 56 women attending" said Mrs Mason.