AFFHO had its Annual General Meeting last month and there are some changes in the Council membership which can be seen on the Newsflash panel to the right. I do need to pay tribute to their contribution to the Federation by Pam Valentine and Jeanette Hahn.

Pam has been a member of Council representing the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies since at least 2003 (this is as far back as my copies of Newsflash go). Therefore Pam has been one of the longest serving members who has been on Council. Jeanette Hahn has represented the ACT since 2009 and has been the AFFHO Vice President during that period. She has taken particular responsibility in retrieving mail from our Canberra mail box and also in re-vamping the Requirements and Guidelines for Organising the Triennial Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry. This has almost reached finalisation. Both have contributed significantly to the operation of AFFHO.


I was interested to receive an email from Kelly Cooper, of the Frankston Volunteer Resource Centre. It is worth copying her comments as to often member societies do not explore what is available on the AFFHO website.

I just wanted to let you know that I read your article on your webpage ‘organising a major raffle’. I have searched high and low on the web for this kind of info.

I know all the legal requirements but no-one could tell me the day-to-day steps I need to take to make sure it runs smoothly, especially...
Around the handing out raffle books to members.

Just wanted to say thanks and let you know it was very useful.

These guidelines, and there are 15 of them, are worth revisiting at affiliho.org/info/index.php

The Australian National Family History Week, held between 20 July and 8 August is approaching. Publicity will be distributed to over a thousand local and family societies and libraries shortly. Have you considered what you can do to promote family history in region? Check out the website at familyhistoryweek.org.au for ideas and register your program on the site.

New Zealand is also holding their Family History Fair at the end of the Family History Month on 26-27 August. The venue will be Hamilton and will include seminars, help desks, exhibitors and a net cafe. More details can be found at nzfamilyhistoryfair.org.nz

The NSW Registry has recently eliminated the use of wildcards in surname searching from their website. There is still the use of ? for single letter variants (but does not allow for a no letter search), but multiple letter variants is no longer possible. I recently sent out a plea to all member societies to lobby for the re-instatement of wild card search capability. The NSW & ACT Association has also been lobbying hard as well. The initial response was:

Thank you for your enquiry.
The wildcard search option has been removed from the Registry’s online search database.
This option has been removed to improve the reliability of the search facility for our customers. Wildcard searches were overloading the server, causing the system to crash periodically.
You can still use ? to replace a single character in the search.
If you require any further assistance, please contact us or visit our website at bdm.nsw.gov.au.

Obviously this is still unsatisfactory. I urge you to communicate your dissatisfaction to: bdm-webmail@agd.nsw.gov.au.

The program for the Congress in Adelaide 28-31 March 2012 is now finalised and it is now possible to register on-line at: congress2012.org.au and manually (if you need a copy of the registration booklet email, info@congress2012.org.au) There is a great line-up of international and Australian speakers—check them out on the website.

Finally every society should be promoting, Say Yes to Question 60 on Census Night, 9 August.

Andrew Peake President
News and Notices

President’s Annual Report
2010-2011

For the second year AFFHO had a slow start, with the necessity of finding both a Treasurer and a Secretary. Fortunately we were able to co-opt David Barber of SAGHS to act as Treasurer, but the role of Secretary has remained unfilled, which has put more of a burden upon myself. Inevitably some of the secretarial duties have not been fulfilled as well as they could.

The significant events that have taken place during the year have included:

- AFFHO Newsflash – Graham Jaunay has continued to edit the quarterly edition. They have generally been a 6 page A4 production which have been well received by member societies
- Website – The AFFHO website has continued to be developed. During the year a decision was made to discontinue the Strays Index. This Index had been in limbo for many years and it was decided that it could be better managed elsewhere. QFHS now manages a Strays Index. Peter Applebee continues to be the webmaster.
- National Family History Week – Leslie Berry has continued to Coordinate the Week, held in the first week in August. This year the week was launched in Melbourne with significant sponsorship from the National Archives of Australia and FamilySearch. It was a successful year both in terms of the number of events that were listed on the website at familyhistoryweek.org and financially.
- AFFHO received its seed money from the 12th Congress in Auckland from NZSoG, and also a share of the profit as the Congress made a small profit. Details of this can be found in the Financial Report.
- The 13th Congress will be held in Adelaide at the end of March, 2012. Planning is well advanced and the program has been developed with 13 overseas speakers as well as many from Australia and New Zealand. Details can be found on the web-site: congress2012.org.au
- The 14th Congress to be held in Canberra in 2015 has started planning, with the venue booked as well as the opening welcome. During the year the Council decided to significantly increase the seed funding provided by AFFHO to the organising committee. Congress 2015 was the first to benefit from this support package. An important decision was made by the AFFHO Council to change the process formerly used of calling for nominations to organise the Congress, to that of having a rotation system between Australian states and territories and New Zealand. There will be now some certainty as to who has potential responsibility to run the Congress unless they wish to forego the opportunity.
- The Congress Guidelines have remained unchanged for many years, and it was decided that they need to be updated to reflect practice and changes in technology. This process is nearing completion.
- National Archives of Australia – Early in the
year the Special Minister of State announced his intention of closing the Adelaide, Darwin and Hobart branches of the NAA. AFFHO joined forces with other history related groups in lobbying the Minister, picketing the branch offices and collecting signatures for a Petition to Parliament. Eventually the Minister reversed his decision till a co-location arrangement could be organised. The Adelaide branch will now co-locate with State Records, there will be a similar arrangement in Darwin.

- Nick Vine Hall Award – The winners of the two awards were:
  - Category A – Adelaide and Northern Districts FHG—*The Compass*.
  - Category B – Queensland FHS—*Queensland Family Historian*.

I wish to acknowledge the time and effort given by my fellow Councillors, all of whom have other family history commitments, plus that of the AFFHO Webmaster, Peter Applebee; *Newflash* Editor. Graham Jaunay; and the Coordinator of the National Family History Week, Lesle Berry, all of whom promote family history are in many ways the public face of the Federation.

The success of AFFHO is very much dependent on the good will and work of the AFFHO Council. It is therefore necessary for volunteers to accept appointment to Council and accept positions as Office Bearers.

Andrew Peake
President

**NEW PUBLICATIONS**

*Great Central State: the foundation of the Northern Territory*, by Jack Cross was released in April after some forty years of off and on research on the subject by the author. Professor Cross is well placed to write on this topic and such a book is long overdue. Of course the foundation of the Territory cannot be examined without addressing the role of the host colony, South Australia. Jack Cross writes in a style that makes for easy reading while never compromising on scholarship.

The role of the leaders in South Australian politics and the public service and the methodology they employed to manage South Australia and their relationships with one another, their masters in the mother country and their subordinates within South Australia and the Northern Territory are closely examined to reveal their strengths, weaknesses and vacillations. Queenslanders on the lookout to expand their colony to the west also work hard to stymie the efforts of South Australia.

The much maligned South Australian pioneer, Boyle Travers Finniss and his role in the first failed attempt at settlement in the north rightfully gains a reprieve under the Cross pen. Finniss was the scapegoat for the failed northern capital of Palmerston on the Adelaide River and unfortunately the government did a good job ensuring he alone remained accountable for the bungling well into recent times!

While the book covers a serious topic the writing style is far removed from that of a stodgy history textbook fixated on the European viewpoint. If you buy any book this year, then *Great Central State* should feature high on your list of considerations.

It can be found in most major bookshops for $39.95.

Graham Jaunay