President’s message

In the first week of August, the annual National Family History Week was held in Australia and a Family History Month was held in New Zealand. AFFHO provided financial support for the Family History Fair in New Zealand. Once again Lesle Berry, coordinated the Family History Week in Australia. She has attracted significant financial support from FamilySearch, Ancestry and FindMyPast. Over the week there were 120 events registered on the web site and other events also took place that were not registered. The Week was launched on the 29th July at the joint PROV, National Archives facility at North Melbourne by Hanifa Deen, who has published a number of books relating to the influence of the Afghan cameleers in Australia and took the opportunity to launch her latest book, Ali Abdul v The King: Muslim stories from the dark days of White Australia. At the launch Lesle’s contribution to establishing and driving the Week since 2006 was recognized by the Federation with a Certificate of Appreciation and cheque. The winners of the Nick Vine Hall Award for the best family history journal was also announced.

The winners of the Nick Vine Hall Award were:
Category A (societies with less than 500 members)
First Prize – Footsteps, Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society
Second Prize – Spreading Branches, Narre Warren & District Family History Group

The plaque to the winner will be presented to Port Macquarie at the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies 2011 Annual State Conference at Inverell later in September.

There were no entries submitted for Category B.
On the 30 June Don Grant passed away. An obituary outlines the significant contribution that Don made to family history over many decades appears elsewhere.

I have circulated to all member societies a request for nominations to the Australasian FH Meritorious Service Award, with a response back by 30 September. Every three years the Federation recognizes the contribution made by a family historian from Australia and New Zealand. This is usually a contribution that extends beyond their own region or family history organisation, but to the broader community. Give some consideration as to whether you know of anybody that fits this description. The Award is presented at the Congress in March 2012.

That brings me to the forthcoming 13th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry, to be held in Adelaide between 28 and 31 March, 2012, at the Adelaide Convention Centre. There is a great line up of speakers from overseas and Australia. There is an early bird registration price for those who register by 30 November. Prices have been kept to the Melbourne Congress price, which was in 2003. More details can be found on the Congress web site at www.congress2012.org.au.

Andrew Peake President

**News and Notices**

**History Queensland**

History Queensland’s next six monthly meeting will be held on Saturday, 5 November at the Queen Alexandra Conference Centre, 347 Old Cleveland Road, Coorparoo. Hosted by the Genealogical Society of Queensland, the meeting will start at 10:00am, with guest speaker Annabel Lloyd, City Archivist at the Brisbane City Council Archives.

**National Family History Week in the west**

During National Family History Week, WAGS promoted family history in a number of ways.

WAGS PR Officer, Liana Fitzpatrick, had radio interviews with Eoin Cameron on ABC 720AM and with Jenny Seaton on Curtin 100.1FM. We had an article and photo in a couple of community newspapers and also featured in the Weekend Ideas section in the Saturday issue of The West Australian newspaper. This additional publicity meant that more people were aware of NFHW and resulted in good attendance at all our events.

The State Library of Western Australia (SLWA) had a series of talks and tours for three days from Tuesday to Thursday, 2–4 August. WAGS Genealogy Centre volunteers were on duty from 9:00am to 3:00pm each day and helped a number of people with their research. WAGS had a display in the Genealogy Centre; we gave away many membership forms and brochures and talked to people about family history and promoted our Open Day.

The WAGS Family History Open Day was held at our premises in May St Bayswater on Sunday 7th August (10:00am – 4:00pm). It was a fantastic day; all units were a hive of activity and many visitors were amazed at all our resources. All our Special Interest Groups had displays and our Bookshop

Leslie Berry being congratulated by the President, Andrew Peake, for her contribution to National Family History Week.

Hanifa Deen launching National Family History Week.
did a roaring trade. There was a special display to promote the Census and to encourage people to say yes to question 60.

It was a busy week but as there were a lot of WAGS volunteers to help, it went very smoothly. 44 people joined WAGS and apart from these new members a number of people took membership forms with them and many have joined since.

Above: Life Members
Standing (left to right): Martin Pinnell, Alan Campbell, Lyn Coy, Stella Short, Brian Croker.
Sitting: Loreley Morling, Val Croker.

Above: WAGS Presidents
Standing (left to right): Ian Scott, Liana Fitzpatrick, Graham Bown (current president), Mary Rogers, Brian Croker.
Sitting: Martin Pinell, Lyn Coy.

Vale – Donald William Morrison Grant 1932-2011

It is sadness that we record the passing of Don Grant. Over recent years through age and ill health, Don been less noticeable in the Australian family history arena. However, he probably more than any other individual in Australia has significantly influenced the family history scene.

Don was 21 when he joined the Genealogical Society of Victoria (GSV). At the first meeting he attended he joined the Society and was simultaneously co-opted as Secretary. At the time he and Niel Gunson were the only members present who were under the age of 70! The Society went into recession from 1956-60, until its revival in 1961 with Don still in the role of Secretary. In 1962 he was elected as a Fellow of the Society. At the 1966 elections he was appointed Vice-President, and he retained this position until February 1972, as well as being the Honorary Publications Officer from December 1967 through to 1972. However, in February 1972, Don resigned from the GSV Council over misunderstandings involving his connection with and professional integrity in the commercial family history partnership, Genealogical Research and Publishing. There was much unhappiness over the events that led up to his resignation. However, the outcomes led to considerable changes in the family history landscape.

In late 1973, Don together with Peter Foard became joint convenors of the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies (AIGS), and he became the Institute’s first President. The Institute started out to involve itself in the academic and training aspects of genealogical studies although over the years has gradually become a more general family history society. Don was President from 1973 to 1981 (whilst also editing the Institute Journal, The Genealogist in his spare time) and from 1999 to 2002 and was appointed Fellow of the Institute. During his time with the AIGS Don established the Alexander Henderson Award in 1974 with the aim of fostering excellence in the production of printed family histories. In 1977 he chaired the Organizing Committee of the First Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry in Melbourne, an event which continues every three years in Australasia.

Out of the 1977 Congress was established the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisa-
Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations

AGP
Death Notice

Grant - Don (1932-1911)  The Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations wishes to pay tribute to Don’s contribution to family history with his primary role in the establishment of the Federation; founding member of the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies and the Australasian Association of Genealogists and Record Agents and chairing the organising committee of the First Family History Congress in 1977.

In Loving Memory of

Donald William Morrison Grant

1st May 1932 ~ 30th June 2011

St Thomas’ Anglican Church, Bunyip
Friday 8th July 2011 ~ 11.30 am

His family history role has been recognized by the Institute for Heraldic and Genealogical Studies with a Fellowship and as a Registered Genealogist. In 1982 the AIGS made Don the first Fellow of the Institute in addition to being made an Honorary Life Member. The Victorian Association of Family History Organisations established in 1997 an annual lecture in his honour. The Council of the AIGS decided shortly before Don passed away to initiate an annual Don Grant Award, beginning in 2012. This Award will be as prestigious as the Alexander Henderson Award and it will be presented to the best book submitted in that year that is an ‘historical biography with a family history focus’.

Don’s contribution to family history has been immense. He was instrumental in the foundation of AIGS, tri-annual Australasian Congresses, AAGRA and AFFHO. And this is not to take into account the help and assistance he has provided to countless family historians starting to explore their family history. Don’s high standards, his integrity and his passion for genealogy and heraldry are legendary in family history circles, but also his humility, friendliness, approachability and willingness to help.

Over 100 people attended Don’s funeral at Bunyip, Victoria – many representing organizations in which he had been involved with over the years.

COPY DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
1 December 2011
Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Review into proposed changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Regulations.

The Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations Inc is the peak body for family history and related societies in Australia and there are approximately 60 members throughout Australia, many of which are located in New South Wales.

In the short time available we have circulated a precis of the Regulatory Impact Statement and Draft Regulations and have received comment from both New South Wales members as well as members from other states.

The general opinion is in support of Option 3.

Members have made some additional comments, within the context of support for Option 3.

- The view was that children need to be identified with their biological parents – the socially accepted family structures may change but for medical and other reasons it is the right of a child to have recorded their biological parents – their life may depend on knowing this at some stage.
- The fees in Part 3 are too high, particularly in comparison with the Victorian ‘uncertified image’ for $17.50 which is suitable for genealogical work. The introduction of an ‘uncertified image’, produced electronically, would be a great advantage.
- It is hoped that the use of Transcription Agents will continue to be available under the new Regulations.

May I also take the opportunity of congratulating the Registry on the availability of the BDM Indexes on the internet. However, we were concerned earlier in the year of the removal of the ‘wild card’ in limiting searching in the data base. The...
REAL-LIFE HARRY POTTER FOUND IN CENSUS RECORDS

Findmypast.co.uk discovered real-life wizard in the 1911 census in John Watkins Holden—conjuror of the 19th and 20th centuries

With the last instalment of the Harry Potter film series, leading family history web site, www.findmypast.co.uk, discovered that wizardry may not just be the stuff of fiction after discovering a real-life wizard in the 1911 census of England and Wales.

John Watkins Holden had been born in Worcester but was lodging at a house in Bournemouth at the time of the 1911 census. Holden, aged 68, recorded his occupation as *Wizard of Ye Wicked World*, stating that he was working in the magic industry and that at this point in 1911, he was on tour. Amusingly, Holden also revealed that he was *very much married* when asked about his marital status.

Wizard Holden has also been found in a number of earlier censuses, showing that he had at least 40 years’ experience in the world of sorcery. He appears in the 1901 census as a ‘Society Entertainer’, but in the 1891 census he was recorded as a ‘Conjuror’. Going back another decade to 1881, John was recorded in the census as *The Queen’s Magician & Wizard of the Wicked World*. 

It is time to start planning 2012 events and they can now be added to the website.