President’s Message

Another year is drawing to a close and no doubt we are all looking forward to a little bit of quiet time over the holidays – time to read and to research as well as time to catch up with family and friends.

As always, it has been a busy year for family historians with new societies being created, a new Australian magazine hitting the newsagents (*Family Tree Tracker*) and plenty of new records being digitised and released. Don’t we all love TROVE!

This year in Australia we celebrated National Family History Month throughout August – in line with New Zealand celebrations. This was a real success with many more societies participating and events being held. Let’s aim for even more success in 2014 – now is the time to start thinking about how to involve the wider community in NFHM. It is a great opportunity to use the national focus on family history to attract attention at the local level.

I wish you and your families all the very best for the holiday season.

Kerrie Gray
President
Deductible Gift Recipient Status

A number of family history societies have received notification from the Commissioner of Taxation that they may no longer be eligible to claim this form of deduction. In the past many societies set up this arrangement so that members who made donations (particularly to assist purchases for the libraries) could claim these donations when they submitted their tax return.

In future societies and their libraries have to be either a government institution or a registered charity. Many societies have considered becoming a registered charity. However, societies should take into consideration the additional legal and financial burden this will impose upon society management. This is likely to impose considerable governance and accounting costs upon societies and may well out-weigh the benefits of being able to provide this benefit to their members.

Perhaps Societies could consider promoting bequests, both of family history research material and financial or a combination of both. We all know that much research material is thrown out by disinterested family after a person dies. However, research material often needs to be accompanied with some money to cover the cost of sorting the material to make it useable and for future storage.

Outback Burials

Brewarrina on the Barwon is the latest book from the outback burials series.

Monumental Inscriptions, Court House Death and Marriage records 1884-1974 – the book will contain 200 pages of information.

Publication date December 2013-January 2014, cost $50 plus $12 postage.

For more information or to pre-order contact Lola Cormie, 12 Numby Close, Woy Woy, NSW, 2256.

Biographical Database of Australia (BDA)

This not-for-profit Database is now on-line. The initial release contains over 500,000 entries transcribed from Convict, muster, census, baptism, marriage and burial records for most of the population of New South Wales 1788-1828; Tasmania 1803-1811; and many immigrant/convict records 1829-1837.

11,000+ biographies of Australians published 1881-1907

Much is available free including a name search which generates index entries with brief details of all individuals of that name. To view Biographical Reports, users are asked to become a subscriber for $25 per year.

For more information got to www.bda-online.org.au

Jewellery Quarter Research Group

The Jewellery Quarter Research Group is a not-for-profit group of volunteers.

Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter has a world-wide reputation for its manufacturing firms but it also has two cemeteries, both grade 2 listed, namely Key Hill and Warstone Lane.

Both opened in the 1830's and are of national importance particularly Key Hill Cemetery which is the
last resting place of many notable people including Joseph Chamberlain, the father of Neville Chamberlain (Prime Minister) but there are many more. Many families worldwide have ancestors who are buried in these cemeteries.

The Jewellery Quarter Research Group volunteers have recorded the surviving headstones and this database is freely available on the website together with a database of all the nearly 170,000 burials there. They are also keen to hear from any relatives with connections to the cemeteries and will respond to any email requests for help with any research if required. Contact them at post@jqrg.org

They would like to make sure that this information is as widely used as possible. This resource is freely available at no cost. There are further details on the website www.jqrg.org including the beginnings of a new Online Tour project.

Book review

Commonwealth Government Records about South Australia, by Sara King, National Archives of Australia, Canberra, 2013, pp.XVI +239, $19.95.

This publication was launched in Adelaide in October by the Hon. John Bannon, former Premier of South Australia and current Chairman of the National Archives of Australia Advisor Council. John could not have been a more appropriate person to have done so, being a key individual in ensuring that the South Australian branch (as well as that in Tasmania and the Northern Territory) wasn’t closed as threatened by the Minister of time, by lobbying key figures in Canberra, and the decision was reversed.

This publication lists all, or nearly all, records relating to South Australia, in the National Archives under twenty chapters. When the Commonwealth was created in 1901, the new Commonwealth departments commenced creating their own records, but in many cases also inherited records from it colonial government predecessor. In the example of the General Post Office, material dating back to as early as 1866 was inherited, including material relating to the Overland Telegraph and employees who transferred to their new employer. Some records relating to light houses date even earlier than this.

Each chapter has a preliminary description of the material and is then further sub-divided into sections. So in the chapter for Communications there are sections relating to postal and telegraph services; overland telegraph; broadcasting; radio; investigations into radio station 5KA during World War II and Television. In each sub-division there is a series listing of records, date range, call number and location of material (e.g. Adelaide, Canberra). In short, the listing is exhaustive and will meet most researchers needs.

One aspect that quickly becomes apparent is how much material is not located in the state that created the records. Some years ago when the Adelaide branch ‘down-sized’ many records transferred interstate, e.g. bankruptcy records to Perth, defence records to Sydney and light houses to Canberra. What is surprising is the extent. Perhaps it is understandable that Federal politicians from South Australia, should find their records in Canberra, but Tom Kruse, an iconic South Australian who carried the mail from Maree to Birdsville has his records spread over five

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states, Sir Douglas Mawson’s material is in Canberra as is long term premier, Sir Thomas Playford.

The book concludes with an appendix of Commonwealth agencies arranged by administrative function, a very handy guide as government departments change their name so frequently, plus a very comprehensive index.

It has been suggested that such a guide should be electronic, but to my way of thinking there is nothing like having the information in hard copy and this publication serves its purpose admirably, and at a very reasonable price.

Andrew Peake

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**News from the National Institutions**

**Australian War Memorial**

**Change to website: a new search**

During December the AWM will add a new search facility to their website.

The new search will allow you to search all the information on the website from one search box; for example, you will be able to type a name or a topic into the search box and see all the information the AWM has which is related to that name or topic.

Once the new search is live, it will be available from the search box on the top right hand corner of every page and also through the “Collection” tab in the main menu on the site.

For more information, go to [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au)

**National Library of Australia**

**Exhibition: Mapping our World - Terra Incognita to Australia**

This remarkable exhibition brings together some of the world's greatest maps, atlases, globes and scientific instruments, many of which have never before been seen in the southern hemisphere.

Treasured items from some of the world's greatest map collections will tell the remarkable story of how Australia came to be on the map, and will reveal the history and struggle to imagine and document the world; from the earliest imaginings of the earth and the night sky through to Matthew Flinders’ landmark *General Chart of Terra Australis or Australia* in 1814.

The exhibition will take you on a spiritual, artistic and scientific journey, showing how European explorers gradually unravelled the secrets of the south land. Highlights of the exhibition include the magnificent Fra Mauro, *Map of the world*; the remarkable *Boke of Idrography* presented to Henry VIII; an intricate world map by the Benedictine monk Andreas Walsperger (1448); a fifteenth-century Ptolemy manuscript; magnificent and controversial ‘Dieppe’ charts; one of only four surviving copies of Mercator’s groundbreaking 1569 projection and original manuscript charts by Pacific navigators including Louis de Freycinet, James Cook and Matthew Flinders.

For more information go to [www.nla.gov.au](http://www.nla.gov.au)

**Archives New Zealand**

**An announcement - Archives New Zealand’s Christchurch Office returns to normal hours**

Normal fulltime opening hours will resume for the public reading room of Archives New Zealand’s Christchurch office from 16 December 2013. These hours are: 9.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, with last orders by 4.30pm; closed on public holidays.

Our shelving has been rebuilt, and those archives which were in offsite storage since 2011 have now been returned to our building, with the exception of some
little-used holdings. While these will remain offsite there will be no charge to retrieve items from storage and make them available in our reading room. However, if you are visiting our office from outside Christchurch it is still advisable to contact us well in advance to ensure the items you would like to see are available on the day of your visit. Please e-mail christchurch.archives@dia.govt.nz, or ring us on 03 377 0760.

The "Order" button on Archway will be re-activated on 16 December 2013, enabling registered readers to pre-order up to five items for viewing in our reading room. Again, please pre-order well in advance, if planning to visit from out of town.

The Wipers Times

Did your ancestor once read WWI trench newspaper The Wipers Times?

Now available to read on the Forces War Records website is WWI trench magazine The Wipers Times.

Such an unusual and entertaining piece of history, you’ve probably already heard about The Wipers Times after the BBC recently broadcast a drama, penned by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman, on the newspaper and the soldiers behind it. Access this WWI publication on which this popular production was based via Forces War Records — simply log on and read for yourself the paper’s wry in-jokes, sarcastic prose, poems, and satires of the dire military situation.

It all started in early 1916 when British soldiers from the 12th Battalion Sherwood Foresters, 24th Division, stationed in the front line at Ypres, Belgium, stumbled upon a printing press and began producing a newspaper for the troops. And even though it was composed and produced among the mud, the lice, the rats, disease, death, the gas and the shelling — the content was far from depressing. Instead it is surprisingly filled with humour, sarcasm, irony and 'British Bull Dog spirit'.

The name for the paper ‘Wipers’ was actually Tommy slang for Ypres, and it is an insightful document that your ancestor might have read.

A line from one a poem in the paper said: “Through dread of crying you will laugh instead.”

The editions that followed The Wipers Times are also available, including The Somme Times, The BEF Times, The Kemmel Times and The New Church Times are all available to read via the Forces War Records website under the ‘historic documents’ library.

Below is an excerpt:

“The world wasn’t made in a day,
And Eve didn’t ride on a bus,
But most of the world’s in a sandbag,
The rest of it’s plastered on us.”

Log on to Forces War Records and read the The Wipers Times for yourself.