**A word from the President**

The winter months are a great time to catch up on family history research – and it may be that there are others in your community who are thinking the same thing. So it is also a great time to promote your society and to let everyone know what is happening and how you can help them research and tell their family stories. Participating in National Family History Month 2014 is an excellent way to tap into national and local publicity. Please read the letter from Shauna Hicks, Volunteer Co-ordinator of NFHM 2014, to find out more.

It is only a few months now until the next Australasian Congress to be held in Canberra at the end of March 2015. There is plenty of information on the Congress website <www.congress2015.org.au>. Also on the website you can register to receive the newsletter and register for Congress itself. Don’t miss this opportunity to hear some wonderful speakers and to meet up with like-minded family history researchers.

The AFFHO AGM was held in April and the Council for 2014 was elected. There was only one change – Martyn Killion will represent the interests of NSW on AFFHO. Remember that the AFFHO Council is elected to represent your interests. If there are issues that you would like raised or that you want to share – AFFHO is a tool that you can use.

At the AGM I expressed my thanks to the outgoing Council and to the other volunteers who do so much to ‘keep the wheels turning’. Thank you to each and every one of you for contribution to AFFHO and for the support you give to me.

Happy researching to all.

Cheers

Kerrie Gray
President

**Competition**

Have you entered your ancestor’s story in the competition about someone special in your family tree who served with the armed forces during the First World War? There are some great prizes to be won.

Entries close on 30 June 2014. Full details and entry conditions are available on the AFFHO website <www.affho.org> and in the Australasian Really Useful Information leaflet.
John Winterbottom, O.A.M.

John Winterbottom was a foundation member of the Wagga Wagga & District Family History Society from 19 October 1983, and retains his membership to this day. He was awarded Life Membership in October 2013. He has also been a long-standing member of the Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society, and was secretary from September 1994 to September 2012.

On Australia Day 2014, John was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia. John believes that history is about people, and he worries that social networking sites are pushing us further and further away from each other.

John played a pivotal role in the development of the Wagga Wagga & District Family History Society. He has held various offices, including Honorary Archivist, Editorial Committee, Cemetery Projects Officer and Committee member from 1983 until 1997. He has for many years been a regular volunteer Duty Officer for the Tuesday afternoon and Friday evening shifts, imparting his vast knowledge and experience for the benefit of members and visitors. He has also been heavily involved with fundraising activities for our Society.

John produced a card index system, of many thousands of entries from a large number of regional newspapers and other material, which has provided important and vital links and cross references for historical and family history researchers since it was installed in our Society’s rooms in 1983. It provides links to the Regional Archives held by Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. There would be barely a week go past where the index is not used for research.

As Cemetery Projects Officer, John was influential in encouraging the recording of cemetery information, a vital ingredient of family history research, enabling our Society to reproduce that information in book form for a large number of local and regional cemeteries.

His organised Cemetery Walks and Talks in his inimitable style were absolutely enthralling.

John has made an outstanding contribution to local and regional history, from regular radio talks and interviews, to regular newspaper articles and series, to adult education through the Wagga Wagga Regional Library. His brand of storytelling could always accommodate a dry sense of humour and many people have been enlivened by his repartee in such conversations.

Several newspaper series in which John has been involved are worth recording. Together with local historian, Sherry Morris, John has put together a Weekender page, “From Our Past”, in the Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser over a long period, and for many years also contributed a column with snippets from 100, 50 and 25 years ago, all the result of scrupulous attention to detail in his research.

Clan Munro-USA

Clan Munro-USA have posted on their website <http://www.clanmunrousa.org> their genealogical data base consisting of the genealogical material covering the various spellings of: Monro, Monroe, Munro and Munroe and the septs’ associated with clan Munro: Dingwall, Fowlis, MacCullich, MacCullich, McCullish, Vass and Wass.

Click on the website, scroll down to mid page and click on Genealogy online. Then insert the information required under Search in the upper left hand corner.

The data base is composed of the genealogical collections generated by American Genealogist Allen Alger and the late Scottish genealogist R.W. Munro. It consists of over 80,000 entries dating back to the 12th century. The data base is a free download available to anyone interested.
Leading citizen Kenneth Eldridge was recently named Tweed Shire’s Citizen of the Year during 2014 Australia Day celebrations in Pottsville. He is pictured above-with his award.

A retired teacher with over 40 years’ experience, Ken is still a role model for youth from all walks of life. As well, the Murwillumbah resident gives voluntary service to organisations such as the Orchid Society, Uniting Church Murwillumbah and Probus and, until recently, was president of the Tweed/Gold Coast Family History and Heritage Association. A Life Member of the Orchid Society for his services over 50 years, Ken was involved in all aspects of the Society, including cultivation, exhibiting and conservation. He also served as president.

A preacher and youth leader at his church and, on occasion, conducting the prayer at the start of Council meetings, Ken has written histories of the Murwillumbah Uniting Church, the Orchid Society and the Eldridge Family. He also is a member of the Philharmonic Choir.

Congratulations to Ken Eldridge.

News Corp Australia and the State Library of New South Wales partner to bring our ANZAC history to all Australians

News Corp Australia and the State Library of NSW have announced a partnership that will see the two organisations work together to bring to all Australians for the first time the evocative and often confronting war diaries of diggers who served in World War I.

The partnership is part of a broad ANZAC centenary program that will see also see News Corp:

- Encourage modern day diggers to share their stories at war working with the Australian War Memorial (AWM) to capture a contemporary view of war
- Produce a library of rich and comprehensive materials that become an ultimate resource for high-schools around the country to access and contribute to.

At the end of World War I in 1918, the State Library of NSW embarked on an extraordinary collection drive for Australian soldiers’ war diaries, and received diaries from soldiers across the country. Many of these diaries have never been seen by the general public.

Today, over 1,100 WWI diaries and letter collections exist in the Library alongside maps, photographs, artwork, books and objects from the battlefield. The collection is a priceless resource that sheds light on what it was like for men and women on the front line.


Here & Then: The British Newspaper Archive’s brand new mobile app

You can now view fascinating historic articles, images and adverts from The British Newspaper Archive through your iPhone for free.


The Geoff Riggs Award for the Best Website

The Irish Genealogical Research Society <http://www.irishancestors.ie/> has won the Geoff Riggs Award 2013 in the Medium Society category. Their web manager is Nick Reddan, member of HAGSOC and member of the NSW&ACT Association of Family History Societies. Congratulations to Nick.

See further report on page 4

England and Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1853-1943

The WA Genealogical Society is offering for sale, its microfiche holdings of the UK National Probate Calendar 1853-1943

These microfiche fill four shoeboxes and their combined weight is approx 20 kilos. If you are interested, please contact the Librarian <librarian@wags.org.au>

The asking price is $100 plus transport/postage.
WA Genealogical Society ANZAC Centenary Project

In this, the opening year of the Centenary of the First World War, the West Australian Genealogical Society (WAGS) has embarked on a project to honour the men of the 11th Battalion, 3rd Brigade, AIF which was raised in Western Australia within weeks of Great Britain’s declaration of war.

Most Australians, have at some time, seen the iconic photograph of the original officers and men of the 11th Battalion spread over the side of the Great Pyramid near Mena camp, Egypt in January 1915 prior to their departure for the Gallipoli Campaign.

Our Webmaster, Chris Loudon has divided a digital copy of this photograph into grids and numbered each man, thereby enabling their features to be enlarged and their position in the image to be easily identified. As a result, it is hoped to identify as many of the men in the photo as possible by 10 January 2015, the centenary of the day on which the photograph was taken. In addition, the site will record the stories and honour the sacrifices made by the men of the 11th.

Until now it has been almost impossible to see the faces of the men in the photograph. We think you will find it exciting as to what our Webmaster has been able to achieve and urge you to have a look at the website <http://11btn.wags.org.au/>.

Would you like to participate, either by liking our Facebook page or publicising the project in any way possible or by identifying or providing any information about any of the men in the photograph? Any assistance and support would be greatly appreciated.
Hello

I am the voluntary national coordinator on behalf of AFFHO (Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations) and I am writing to invite you to be part of National Family History Month August 2014. It is a great opportunity to spread the word about the value of researching family history and of understanding the social context within which our ancestors lived.

NFHM has been very successful in past years and we would like your help and support to make it even more successful in 2014. It is held during the month of August with hundreds of events organised across Australia.

How can you be part of National Family History Month?

There are many ways that small and large organisations can become involved. You can hold a special event to celebrate during the month; invite a guest speaker to your August meeting; or advertise the month in your society newsletters and magazines; have a history walk or have a library open day. All genealogy and family history societies who add an event to the NFHM web calendar and promote their event as part of NFHM will be eligible to enter the draw for some fantastic prizes donated by our sponsors. This year we also have prizes for individuals as well as a category for online events.

Visit our website www.familyhistorymonth.org.au to add your genealogy or family history event. Our publicity campaign will encourage people to go to the NFHM website for information. This will in turn assist in promoting your local events and you may even gain some new members. Our website receives thousands of hits from people searching for events in their local area and some people travel long distances to attend some events.

Do not miss this great opportunity to market your local genealogy and family history events and to help make this a truly national event and a great success for everyone.

AFFHO was established in 1978 to act as an ‘umbrella’ organisation to pursue the interests of family historians on a wider base than was possible with individual societies. Our objective is to coordinate and assist the work of organisations interested in family history, genealogy, heraldry and allied subjects at an Australasian level.

National Family History Month is the major annual event on AFFHO’s calendar and has received broad support from some of Australia’s leading government and non government organisations. We are grateful for this support and to our major sponsors and prize sponsors who also promote NFHM month through their own communication channels.

Attached is a flyer that you can place on your noticeboard and use in promoting NFHM.

Yours sincerely,
Shauna Hicks

Anguline Research Archives

Anguline Research Archives is running a campaign to open historic registers. They say that almost 100 years ago a Royal Commission on Public Records appointed to inquire into and report on the state of the public records and local records of a public nature of England and Wales stated in their report:

“We see no good reason in principle for forbidding searchers to take copies at their own risk. The existing restriction rests merely of financial grounds and we think that it should be removed.”

There is now a petition online at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/62779>.
Be part of National Family History Month in August 2014!

It is a great opportunity to learn about the value of researching family history and of understanding the social context within which our ancestors lived. There will be hundreds of events held throughout Australia.

Join in the fun and excitement of National Family History Month. The 2014 launch is again proudly sponsored by the National Archives of Australia and will take place in Canberra at the start of National Family History Month.

- Start tracing your family tree
- Organise your family photos
- Write your life story
- Interview and record a relative's life story
- Visit government archives
- Browse the genealogy section of your local public library
- Visit your local genealogy or family history society
- Have a family reunion
- Visit areas of family significance
- See what genealogy magazines are on sale at your local newsagent
- Log on and explore family history sites on the internet
- Enter the draws and competitions to win some of the fantastic products from our prize sponsors - see the Sponsors and Supporters section of the website for details

For lots of great ideas visit www.familyhistoryweek.org.au to see what family history events are in your local area.

Major Sponsors in 2014

Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations

Australian Government

ancestry.com.au

FamilySearch