A word from the President

AFFHO has had quite a busy year, particularly leading up to National Family History Month in August. It was during those months that the judges of the Nick Vine Hall Award were busy making their decisions so that the announcements of the winners could be made at the launch of NFHM. Our NFHM co-ordinator, Shauna Hicks was extraordinarily busy seeking sponsorships, encouraging societies and promoting events. But – and there is often a ‘but’ – so many societies did not take advantage of the wonderful work being done.

As a society – wouldn’t you like to increase your membership and to let people in your community know about your library and the services and support you can offer? Being part of NFHM helps you do just that. You tap into a national campaign to highlight activities in your local area. Make your society’s New Year resolution be to be part of NFHM2015!

Next year we have Congress2015 in March in Canberra. There is a great line-up of speakers and plenty of other activities available. Congress is an opportunity to learn, to network, to meet other researchers, to recognise the contribution of others and to just have a great time. Check out the website <www.congress2015.org.au>.

The Christmas holiday period tends to be a time for reflection and for friends and family. It is also a great time for family historians to catch up with some of the older generation and to share their stories and memories and to pass on those stories to the younger generation. I wish you all a wonderful, sharing time over the holiday period. Travel safely.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all AFFHO Board members

Kerrie Gray
President
In Queensland in the late 1800s, only men with property received a vote, and in some cases they received multiple votes. Women were not recognised in the political process and had no vote. Much lurid nonsense was expressed at the time of allowing women the right to vote.

In 1894 the Women's Equal Franchise Association (WEFA) sponsored two petitions – one for women to sign and one for men to sign resulting in 7896 and 3586 signatories. Later in 1897 3960 women signed the petition organised by the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. Although these petitions were not immediately successful, in 1905 women were able to vote in state elections.

QFHS was honoured to be associated with the indexing of these petitions, although it was a great challenge for the society’s indexers. While QFHS has indexed from handwritten originals in the past, each of these signatures is unique, and so there was no opportunity to develop a feel for handwriting idiosyncrasies. The QFHS team indexed 378 images covering the three petitions; in total there were 15,442 names which exceeds the official total figure of 15,225; seven people worked on various aspects of the project for well over 500 hours. A range of resources - electoral rolls, BDM indexes and post office directories - was used to solve problem entries.

The index was launched at Queensland Parliament on Tuesday 9 Sep 2014 by The Honourable Fiona Simpson MP, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. The database can be searched on the Parliament website <www.parliament.qld.gov.au/explore/history/suffrage/Signatories> and it is also available on the computers at QFHS Library & Resource Centre.

Article written by Bev Bonning
Photograph 2014 Kevin Haley

Changes To Subscription Site - <www.rootsireland.ie>
The rootsireland.ie website has become a Subscription based service, giving users access to search an index of over 20 million Irish records and to view the details of the records. (Subject to their terms and conditions). They do not have all Irish records on their site but add new records at regular intervals. Check their online sources lists to see what is currently available.

If you have a Pay Per View account with existing credits remaining that you purchased in the last 12 months under the previous service of Pay Per View credits (and previous terms and conditions) you should make sure you use them to search and view records on the site until they are used up.
Copy deadline
for
March
Newsflash:
15 February
Why attend Congress 2015?

Gould Genealogy & History, based in Adelaide, is one of Australia’s leading Genealogy and History stores. They organise many family history events, including Genealogy Cruises, and attend national and international events. In October their blog <www.gouldgenealogy.com> featured Congress2015 and, with their kind permission, some of the blog is reprinted here:

Congress: Why You Should Go!
If you are only going to attend one genealogy event in Australia during 2015, be sure to make it this one:

The 14th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry
Thursday 26 – Monday 30 March 2015
Canberra, ACT

The “14th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry” otherwise known simply as “Congress” is Australia’s largest genealogy conference. Organised by AFFHO (the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations) this event is only held every three years, at a city in either Australia or New Zealand. It’s not BIG in the same sense as RootsTech in the US, or Who Do You Think You Are? Live in the UK, that attract the likes of 10,000-15,000 people, but it is big for Australia. And for anyone that wants to learn everything they can about genealogy, take this opportunity to learn from so many experts.

So WHY should you attend Congress? Let me give you some reasons . . .

1. It’s in Canberra, which is Australia’s mecca for archives! The National Library of Australia, the National Archives of Australia, the Australian War Memorial, the National Film & Sound Archives, the National Museum of Australia, the Noel Butlin Archives Centre . . . need I say more?

2. And for your non-genealogy family who come along to Canberra with you, there’s oodles of things for them to do while you’re busy at the conference <http://www.visitcanberra.com.au/>.

3. It is a four day conference, so you’re not travelling all the way to Canberra for just a day or so of talks. Four days makes it worthwhile.

4. Four days also means that you get to meet, hear and learn from so many wonderful, not to mention world-renowned guest presenters. While many of these are Australian and New Zealand speakers, there’s also a heap of expert presenters from the northern hemisphere who’re making their way to Australia’s capital.

5. There is a wide variety of topics, so there really is something for everyone.

6. Talks are rated for experience for beginner through to advanced.

7. You get to meet, mix and mingle with so many other genealogists, throughout the day, or at the various other social functions that Congress has organised.

8. If you’re attending be sure to register your research interests. You may as well maximise your chances of making a connection with someone.

9. The weather. Although Canberra is notorious for its cold weather, in March you would expect great weather.

10. The $550 price is very reasonable for a four day conference. But if it is beyond your means, or can’t attend for the full length of time, you can choose to just go for a single day for $140.

11. And don’t forget the exhibitors, we’ll be there exhibiting, as will a heap of others.


May you have a wonderful Christmas . . .
and find many of your missing links as a special Christmas treat.

See you in Canberra in March!
As usual the month of August will be totally dedicated to all things family history so make sure it is in your planning for next year. It is easy for societies to participate and there is no need to hold additional events or activities. Simply call your August meeting a NFHM monthly meeting and enter it into the NFHM website calendar www.familyhistorymonth.org.au. Please remember to use this URL and not the previous ‘week’ one.

You can also simply call one of your library open days your NFHM library open day and again enter it into the web calendar. Perhaps make the session free to the public and maybe attract some new members. Of course if you do want to do something special or new that is fine too. Have a look at the 2014 events for inspiration!

Remember to also let your members know about NFHM and the web calendar so that they can attend any other events in your area or perhaps some of the online events which are usually free. Some of your members may not live locally, are travelling in August or are just keen to attend any event which may be within their travel resources.

Our sponsors generously provide prizes for both societies and individuals so please also acknowledge their sponsorship throughout the month and also encourage your members to enter into the prize giveaways. Without the support of our sponsors there would be no NFHM.

All societies who put their events into the NFHM web calendar are automatically entered into the societies prize draw. In 2015 the deadline for inclusion in the societies prize draw will be 30 June 2015 so make sure you meet that deadline as last year there were some great prizes to be won.

NFHM is an AFFHO event and every AFFHO society member should be participating in NFHM as it is a fantastic opportunity to tell everyone how much we love our family history. Many societies reported increased memberships throughout August 2014 which is fantastic and a welcome change from news of declining memberships.

In December I will be making changes to the NFHM website in preparation for 2015 and from 1 January 2015 the website will be ready for you to start adding your events. Details of sponsors and prizes will also hopefully be finalised by then. More information will be in the next Newsflash.

The most exciting news has been left for last. The 2015 launch will be in Adelaide with launch details still to be finalised.

Shauna Hicks
NFHM voluntary coordinator