



Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations

PO Box 3012, Weston Creek ACT 2611
www.affho.org

AFFHO Council

Kerrie Gray	NSW/ACT	President
Robyn Williams	NZ	Vice-President
Alfred James	NSW/ACT	Secretary
Heather Clarey*	NSW/ACT	Treasurer
Maurice Appleyard	TAS	Councillor
Alan Fincher	VIC	Councillor
Margaret Hickey	WA	Councillor
Rosemary Kopittke	QLD	Councillor
Andrew Peake	SA	Councillor
vacant	NT	Councillor
Heather Clarey	NSW/ACT	Assoc Rep
Jenny Harkness	VIC	Assoc Rep
Helen Turner	QLD	Assoc Rep

*seconded

AFFHO Officers

June Penny	Public Officer; Archivist
Peter Applebee	Website: webmaster@affho.org
Kerrie Gray	2015 Congress (HAGSOC)
Shauna Hicks	Coord Nat. Family History Week
Don Mountain	<i>Newsflash</i> Editor: dmountain@netspeed.com.au
Barry Weeden	Auditor

Current Projects

Save the Census Index of Indexes
National Family History Week (AUS)
National Family History Month (NZ)

Membership

Full membership is open to any organisation based in Australasia, which satisfies the Council that it is primarily concerned with family history, genealogy, heraldry or allied subjects.

Associate membership is open to any organisation which satisfies the Council that it is interested in family history, genealogy, heraldry or allied subjects.

Current members are listed at www.affho.org

President's Message

Welcome to the December *Newsflash*.

You would all know that Shauna Hicks has taken on the role of co-ordinator of National Family History Week (NFHW) and she is considering how we can make NFHW as relevant as possible to all member societies and how we can best take advantage of NFHW activities to spread the story of family history. Family history is the story of our individual families but it is also the story of our nation and its people. As such, and as we all know, it is important that family history be thoroughly and meticulously researched and that it be as comprehensive as possible. We can help achieve this through NFHW activities. Please read Shauna's article in this *Newsflash* and let her, or a member of AFFHO Council, know what you think about the ideas being put forward.

Many members throughout Australia were delighted to have the opportunity to attend presentations by the experienced and highly regarded genealogist, Michael Gandy. Michael's expertise lies in religious records, London ancestry, the Irish in England – just to name a few. He is a former chairman of the Society of Genealogists in London and editor of its magazine, a past committee member of the Federation of Family History Societies, research officer for the Huguenot Society and founding chairman of the Quaker Family History Society. Michael spent a few weeks in Australia, courtesy of arrangements made by the Society of Australian Genealogists (SAG), and was able to travel widely. It wasn't all work for Michael and he was able to catch up with some interesting tourist and heritage sites. We have included a few photos from his visit.

The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra are progressing well with their plans for Congress 2015 and recently put out a call for registration of speaker interest. Full details are available on their site <www.congress2015.org.au>. Register for their free newsletter to keep up to date with progress.

There is good news about Congress 2018. The 15th Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry will be hosted by the Society of Australian Genealogists in 2018. This is great news

Together we can achieve much more!

and AFFHO is looking forward to working with SAG on this event.

I hope that you enjoy this Newsflash and that you are able to share it with all your members.

I wish you and yours a safe and happy holiday season and all the very best for 2013.



Canberra ACT

The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra (HAGSOC) is hosting the 29th Annual Conference of the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies at the Hellenic Club Canberra, 20-22 September 2013.

The theme of the Conference is *Limestone Plains to Marble Halls*. There will be a family history fair on Friday 20 September and the Conference itself will be held on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22. Full details are available at <www.conference2013.org.au>.



Queensland FHS seminar

Saturday 2 February 2013, 9.00 am to 12.30 pm:
Trove and Online Newspapers. Speakers: Shauna Hicks and Sue Reid
For further information go to <<http://www.qfhs.org.au/seminars/semFlyer.html>>.

Welcome to Lake Macquarie

Lake Macquarie Family History Group (LMFHG) is the latest society to join AFFHO and we look forward to a long and positive relationship.

The inaugural meeting of the LMFHG was held on 21 April 1999 and they now have close to 100 members.

LMFHG published *Pioneers & Settlers of Lake Macquarie* in 2006 which was launched by the Mayor of the City of Lake Macquarie, who praised Fay Markwell and her team for their work in the production of this excellent publication. The Group has now finished transcribing the Parish Registers for St Matthews Church of England, Windsor NSW. This major work will provide an invaluable reference for this very historic area.

LMFHG meets at 12.30 pm on the third Saturday of each month (except December). Meetings are held at the Marmong Point Community Hall, George Street, Marmong Point.

For more information about this dynamic Group, visit their website at <<http://www.lmfhg.org.au>>.



Copy deadline for the next issue
is 15 February 2013



Photo courtesy Sue Hilliker

Hazel Bromley from Cape Banks receives the Nick Vine Hall Award, 1st place, Category A from President Kerrie Gray

Congress and Heraldry

Why is 'heraldry' included in the Congress title and is this subject relevant to today's family historian? As we plan for the next Congresses these questions are being pondered. Some Societies, including the Congress 2015 host Society, has 'heraldry' in its title and has a small, but very active, Heraldry Special Interest Group. There are others who think that heraldry has lost its relevance for the modern family historian and that it should be dropped from the Congress title.

Heraldry represents the earliest form of family history. Until the middle ages, in Europe the genealogies of the ruling families were memorised by bards, orators or heralds whose function was to keep these oral records. The heralds knew the sacred blood lines and could settle succession disputes according to the prevailing patterns of inheritance. Other families would only know their relations within living memory (4 to 5 generations) but they would probably know the name of the ancestor in the royal or priestly line from which they came. Often the herald would train his youngest son to succeed him which helped to preserve the records. Literacy was the preserve of priests and heralds, and ensured the survival of genealogical information in chronicles and documents but was also responsible for some fabricated family history.

During the middle ages there were two developments that changed the whole face of family history. One was the development of armory (coats of arms), which we know today as heraldry, and the other was the development of surnames, beyond which most of us cannot trace unless we have a line to a so-called Royal Root.

By the later middle ages so many people had inherited arms, been granted arms by the king, or had assumed arms, leading to abuses, that it became necessary to

establish armorial or heraldic authorities to regulate the use and granting of arms. In England the royal heralds were formally organised in 1484 with the establishment of the College of Arms by Richard III. The heralds made Visitations throughout the kingdom recording the genealogies of the landed families together with details of their arms and most of these Visitations made between 1530 and 1688 have been published by the Harleian Society and are a great source for modern family historians.

With the introduction of non-noble surnames around the thirteenth century it became possible to trace the history of ordinary families from such sources as manorial records. The search was made so much easier by the existence of parish registers from the late 16th century. The first modern family histories, not dependent on the heraldic Visitations, probably only date from the 18th century.

The modern study of heraldry goes beyond family history and looks at heraldry as an art form, the history of armorial bookplates and armorial china, international heraldry, civic heraldry and ecclesiastical heraldry. But heraldry is still relevant for family historians today. Both official and unofficial armorial authorities engage in genealogical research and recording and proving pedigrees down to the present time. Knowledge of heraldic quarterings and impaled shields can be used to identify maternal ancestral lines. Just as every person is generally entitled to their own distinct coat of arms, those writing family histories should know just who is entitled to use inherited arms and who is not, and whether assumed arms are the property of someone else or can be validated heraldically. Far too many good family histories are spoilt by the inclusion of bogus heraldry.



The President and Members of the Council of AFFHO

wish all readers

The Compliments of the Season

and Best Wishes for a

Happy, healthy and Prosperous New Year



National Family History Week 2013 and Beyond!

Shauna Hicks

I was appointed to the position of NFHW Coordinator in September 2012 following the retirement of Lesle Berry after six years in the role. Lesle established the week in 2006 and was the Coordinator for the whole of that time. Over the years the format of running NFHW has not changed very much and anecdotal evidence suggests that it is time for a revamp. Social media is now much more widely used within genealogical circles and could be a key driver of NFHW publicity.

For the November AFFHO Council meeting, I provided a discussion paper and draft strategic plan outlining some of my ideas based on discussions with various people during my travels to genealogical events in NSW, QLD and VIC. The Council agreed in principle to the draft strategic plan and it is now time to seek wider input from the AFFHO members so that it can be considered and incorporated where appropriate.

All feedback, comments, suggestions and other ideas are most welcome as we all want to see NFHW continue to highlight genealogy and family history within Australasia. To start the discussion I will highlight some of the more urgent issues.

Budget

This is almost nonexistent now as the commercial sponsors have indicated that there is not sufficient return to justify their ongoing monetary sponsorship. However all have indicated in kind support through their publicity avenues and so on.

To really attract commercial sponsors (and their dollars) NFHW has to be bigger than ever before so I welcome all ideas that might attract sponsorship, both monetary and in kind.

In the interim, we are looking at a shoestring budget and social media as the most likely means of publicity for NFHW 2013.

A Week or a Month?

This issue came up frequently in my chats with people and everyone was in favour of the event being for the whole of August. However, I am aware that some of the larger organisations have concerns about doing things for a whole month.

There would be many advantages for making this change and in no priority order:

- bring Australia into line with New Zealand who already have a month

- allow smaller societies to participate more (they can use their existing meetings or library days which don't always fall in the first week of the month)
- more attractive to sponsors as the event lasts longer
- some organisations already have a month
- a week is too short to do any exhibitions or displays
- avoids events clashing in major cities
- people could attend more as not just in one week
- any media or public interest raised in week one can be taken advantage of in later weeks
- no need for societies to do something all month long, could still be one event during the month
- other good reasons I haven't thought of!

Some of the disadvantages and again in no priority order:

- a loss of focus as it is spread over a month, losing its meaning and reducing impact
- an obligation or need to have multiple events over the entire month
- a month is too long
- already all kinds of other weeks, months, special days etc
- stretches genealogy and family history society volunteers too much
- special deals made available for societies could not be sustained for a whole month eg free entry to library or use of Ancestry or FindMyPast etc without negative consequences
- other disadvantages I haven't thought of!

This would be a huge change which I suspect will generate a lot of discussion so let the debate begin! The AFFHO Council wants to hear all member societies views on this important question.

Launch of NFHW

My question would be – do we really need a launch at all? Could it be replaced with some type of activity that is simultaneously announced via the website or Facebook page or perhaps even YouTube?

A launch can only be done in one place and in the past this has been Melbourne and this has tended to make people think it is a Victorian event rather than a national event throughout Australia.

Also launches cost money, even with a host venue, and could the limited budget be used more strategically?

Website

At the present time, events can be searched only by postcode but not everyone knows their neighbouring postcodes and sometimes if a person sees an event, even if a distance from them, they may decide to travel to it anyway.

More needs to be done to encourage societies, libraries, archives etc to enter their events, preferably far in advance, so that people can book the dates in their diaries and to avoid any major clashes of events in major cities.

I would recommend a total review of all pages and its overall structure. Any suggested changes should be costed and prioritised with the AFFHO Council approving any changes.

What do you like or don't like about the NFHW website?

Publicity

There appears to be a belief that as it is an August event, people only need to start doing something in June/July. However I believe that publicity for NFHW should be all year round and becoming more prominent at least 6-9 months prior to August. Events don't just happen and to avoid clashes in dates, planning should start at the earliest opportunity.

A press release could be drawn up and given to all AFFHO member societies to use. These could be published in their own journals and newsletters, preferably both March and June issues if quarterly.

There is also a variety of free, social media that could be used to more widely promote NFHW. There is already a Facebook page and a number of people use Twitter during NFHW to let others know of events. Genealogy nings and individual bloggers could also be utilised to help spread publicity.

However, not everyone uses social media so there is still a need for leaflets and posters (depending on budget). Perhaps member societies, libraries and archives could assist by printing out a copy and placing it on their public noticeboards. It may be possible to send out leaflets with some of the in kind sponsors.

Nick Vine Hall Awards

I am not aware of previous years practice but based on the 2012 experience, these should be finalised prior to NFHW and all winners notified, preferably by 30 June and asked to provide a written response to their win, preferably within two weeks of notification. This response could then go on the website, be announced on Facebook and other social media at the start of NFHW. This would be a great way to publicise these Awards more and encourage more entries!

Conclusion

NFHW is a great concept which just needs to be revamped, given a more modern approach and incorporate more support from AFFHO society members and others. Remember all feedback is most welcome. Let's all work together to make 2013 a great year for genealogy and family history!

There is a lot to think about and discuss so the deadline for all comments is 28 February. It would be appreciated if it wasn't all left to the last minute, as the feedback will need to be collated for AFFHO Council to consider.

Shauna Hicks
<shauhick@gmail.com> or you can send your feedback to the AFFHO Council direct.



Online Military Library

Forces War Records (UK) has launched an online digital library of books, newspapers and magazines, some more than a hundred years old. The library holds a huge catalogue of interesting articles. Complete publications of some literature, many from as far back as the first world war, are available. If you are interested in the finer detail of what your military ancestors did during their service, the library will be an additional asset to you. Search the library now at <www.forces-war-records.co.uk>.

National Family History Week

2 to 11 August 2013

www.familyhistoryweek.org.au

Past • Present • Future



Michael Gandy in Australia 2013



Michael with Alan Fincher

Photos courtesy Alan Fincher



At Point Nepean looking across Port Phillip Heads towards Point Lonsdale, with a ship about to go through the entrance to Port Phillip Bay.



Michael with Graham Bown, President of Western Australian Genealogical Society and Liz Kelly, President of the Geraldton Family History Society at the seminar held in Geraldton on Monday, 19 November.

Photo courtesy WAGS



Photo courtesy Sue Hilliker

Kerrie Gray presenting the Nick Vine Hall Award, 2nd place, Category B to HAGSOC President Rosemary McKenzie with Chris Rowan attempting to disrupt the presentation.