

## **Minutes of the Search Room User Group meeting held on Wednesday 9 October 2013 in meeting room 2, New Register House at 14:00 Hours**

### **Attendees**

Dee Williams (DW, NRS & chair), Kirsty Bowie (KB, NRS), Alison Lindsay (AL, NRS), Iain Ferguson (IF, NRS), Bruce Bishop (BB, SAFHS), Alison Fordyce (AF, NSS), Val Wilson, (VW, ASGRA & Genealogist), Ken Nisbet (Genealogist), Gill Amos, NRS, Janet Bishop, ASGRA.

### **Apologies:**

Dr Irene O'Brien (IOB, Chair SCA & senior archivist), Lloyd Pitcairn (LP, Genealogist).

## **1. Previous Minutes of 19 June 2013**

1.1 The content of the minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

## **2. Items Arising From Previous Minutes**

Item 2.1.3 At the last meeting it had been agreed that DW would pursue the inclusion of events related to births, deaths or marriages detailed in Kirk Session records to Old Parish Registers (OPRs). Existing OPR indexes linked to Kirk Session records had been identified and images established. The indexes and associated images now needed to be loaded on to the database. This work was pending due to other commitments but it was hoped it would be progressed in the next few months.

Item 2.1.4 The revamp of the instruction manuals in the search rooms. See item 4.

## **3. Centre Software**

### **3.1 Enhancements Since June 2013 & Planned Releases**

3.1.2 Work is ongoing by the IT team to release the 1920 valuation rolls in October 2013.

### **3.2 Performance Issues**

3.2.1 Support for Windows XP, which is the operating system used for the ScotlandsPeople network, will be withdrawn during the Summer of 2014. NRS therefore require to move across to Windows 7. This change should result in the problems with use and appearance of some websites being resolved. No date for the change over was available yet.

3.2.2 Planned improvements include changing the application such that the Java message that appears for the first image view is removed from view to the users of the system.

3.2.3 Intermittent system outages continue to occur at different times of the day and the root cause has yet to be established. The genealogists reported that there had been problems for the users in the Centre daily for a two week period, which resulted in slow start up and failures. NRS IT will continue to investigate why the problems occur.

#### 4. Centre & Historical Search Rooms

4.1 The use of the computer by the police in the Dundas search room was discussed. Customers are still sometimes disturbed because of the number of police standing at the terminal. Police Scotland are in the process of considering a more strategic approach for their investigations and it was hoped that a response would be received over the next few months. A notice has also been put at the terminal reminding users that only one person should be at the terminal.

4.2 The refresh of the instruction manual such that it covers all search rooms was ongoing. IF will provide an update at the next meeting.

**Action:** IF to report on progress of search room guide refresh

4.3 The upgrade of the lighting in the Dundas search room had resulted in an extremely low overall lighting level. It was agreed that the lighting levels would be checked and action taken as appropriate.

**Action:** NRS to review lighting levels in Dundas search room

4.4 Signage around the Centre is due to be re-vamped.

4.5 The genealogists confirmed that the customer lockers near the entrance of General Register House can get very busy.

*Dn. Notice to be erected in locker area to inform customers that additional lockers exist located outside the Dundas search room*

4.4 NRS propose to improve the customer reception for the Register House campus. The customer experience with the existing arrangements was discussed.

#### 5. Records

5.1 The release of the 1920 valuation rolls was planned for Monday 28 October 2013. The release of the 1885 valuation rolls would take place during 2014 but no date was yet agreed.

*Dn. The 1920 valuation rolls were released 28 October 2013*

#### 6. Local Family History Centres (LFHC) Update

5.1 The Highland Archive at Inverness planned to offer a link to ScotlandsPeople on 14 October but a link at Perth is not expected until 2014.

*Dn. The centre at the Highland Archive in Inverness opened 14 October 2013*

#### 7. Any Other Business

7.1 The genealogists reported the fact that the toilet paper had been inserted the wrong way round causing the paper to shred over the floor. This has been reported to the staff.

7.2 The magnet installed on the disabled toilet doors to prevent them swinging open when not in use was deemed a success.

7.3 VW reported a problem with seat D40 because it wasn't possible to save an image directly to a USB stick. NRS agreed to look into the problem.

*Dn. Since the meeting checks were carried out and the problem has not re-occurred*

7.4 The accuracy of the indexing of the Old Parish Registers for Peebleshire during the late 16<sup>th</sup> century was questioned. It was suspected that some of the events had been missed.

*Dn. Since the meeting staff have checked the indexes and found no errors*

7.5 The ongoing project by ScotlandsPlaces to use the 'crowd sourcing' to index some of their records was highlighted.

7.6 VW reported a problem with the Peebleshire OPRs. NRS agreed to check the indexes for these records and amend as necessary.

*Dn. Since the meeting checks have revealed that there appears to be only one page for a 1636 record that had an error.*

7.7 BB reported that SAFHS had published an inventory of graveyards and burial grounds in Scotland. They had also published the pre-1841 population lists for Scotland that included confirmation of whether poll or hearth tax records had survived.

*Dn. ScotlandsPeople included a feature on their Facebook page on 1 November 2013 for the burial index*

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

8.1 The date of the next meeting was planned for Wednesday 22 January 2014 at 14:00 in meeting room 2, NRH.

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4 November 2013