Notes of the Search Room User Group meeting held on 21 August 2018 in meeting room 1, New Register House at 13:30 Hours

Attendees
Dee Williams (NRS), Iain Ferguson (NRS), Ken Nisbet (Genealogist), Janet Bishop (ASGRA and genealogist), Bruce Bishop (genealogist), Emma Williamson (NHS NSS)

Apologies: Lloyd Pitcairn (Genealogist), Val Wilson (ASGRA & Genealogist), Alison Lindsay (NRS).

1.   Previous minutes of 27th March 2018

1.1   The notes of the last meeting were accepted.

2.   Centre software

2.1   NRS has continued to rationalise customer accounts such that only one account exists for each email address. NRS has been working with customers to either merge accounts with the same email address or have different email addresses if the customers wants to retain their separate accounts.

2.2   NRS had been working to resolve issues that had arisen in relation to the loading of images and indexes.
Dn. Since the meeting the problem related to the loading of rescanned images has been fixed but NRS are still unable to update index entries.

2.3   An update to ScotlandsPeople was being developed that will change the colour of the text when an index entry has already been viewed. This will make it more obvious to the user that they had already viewed that image. Currently the system changes the entry to 'Viewed' but it doesn't change colour.

2.4   The problem whereby customers cannot save their image reference to an existing timeline will be addressed in the next system update.

2.5   The user group had provided some feedback regarding some of the functions on ScotlandsPeople and the issues raised and the NRS responses (in italics) are listed below:

➢ The system currently doesn't change colour when an image has been viewed.
This will be addressed in the next system update (see item 2.3 above).

➢ It is no longer possible to skip between census years with the system adding 10 years to any age selected.
This was a function of the ScotlandsPeople Centre system. It is now possible to search multiple census years, which wasn't possible on the old system, but the system does not change the age because this would be very complicated if multiple years were to be chosen.

➢ The image cannot be zoomed by simply scrolling the wheel of the mouse.
There is a zoom function, which is selected from the function bar above the image, but the mouse wheel is now used to scroll up or down the image.

➢ The option to change the type of search requires the user to scroll to the bottom of the screen or go back to the main search screen webpage with each type of records listed in a box. The old system allowed the user to simply select a type of record from the left hand side of the screen.
The listing of records down the left hand side of the screen was removed because NRS plans to include many different types of records. There are now maps and plans plus other church records that are available that were not available on the old website. The Highlands and Islands Emigration records and more will eventually be released so the user needs to either scroll down or return to the main screen that gives the options. There are no plans to change this, only to increase the number of boxes that summarise the variety of records available to search.

➢ The search system returns forenames whether it is the first or middle name. Some users would find it helpful if there was a search option that only returned the first forename.
The search system operates in the same manner as the old ScotlandsPeople website. Some people are known by their middle forename rather than their first forename so some customers will benefit from the search results. It is now possible to sort the search results by clicking the top of the column, which should keep the two names search results separate.

➢ Free text boxes don't always register that you have selected them.
NRS is not aware of this being a problem and suggests that maybe the user has not properly clicked into the box.

➢ Names that contain an apostrophe like O'Reilly are not being recognised by the search system when entered into the mother's maiden name search box.
NRS will address this issue when the next system development update is released. In the meantime customers should use an asterix instead, which the system will recognise.

➢ The images of records appear quite far down the screen. Can the standard text at the top of the screen be moved to the bottom?
There were 7 lines of text at the top of the screen when this was reported, which has since been reduced to 6 lines. It is necessary to keep the text at the top of the webpage in order to inform our customers. Generally our customers need to scroll down to view the search results anyway. There are no plans to make any other changes at this stage.

➢ The system has periods when it can be slow to load search results.
As this is an intermittent problem, it is best if customers contact us direct through the 'Contact us' facility on the website when it happens so that we can investigate whether there has been a problem with the service or whether the local internet connection might have caused the problem.

2.6 The NHS users had been unable to find indexes for adopted persons.
This was a system error and has since been addressed by NRS.

Credits

2.7   When ScotlandsPeople relaunched in September 2016, the credits on all existing accounts were given a 2 year expiry date. Thus during September and October 2018 customers will be sent a service message to advise them that their credits are due to expire. Customers will have the option of using up their credits, letting them expire, or if they purchase more then all their credits will be combined and a new expiry date given that will be 2 years ahead of the credit purchase date.

3.   **Search rooms**

3.1   Since June 2018, customers located in the search rooms and public areas can now log into wifi for free.

3.2   Power cuts were experienced on 18th May and 25th June by NRS which impacted on the availability of ScotlandsPeople in the search rooms. For the 18th May it was necessary to close the search room for half a day and on the 25th June the ScotlandsPeople system was down for 40 minutes.

3.3   The season ticket holders have been interrupted by customers trying to sit at their desks. Some visitors are walking through the search room areas to visit the exhibition and then trying to log in to ScotlandsPeople without purchasing a ticket. It was agreed that staff should be more vigilant. If the problem persists then more signage on the desks will be provided.

3.4   Some visitors have been trying to take large luggage into the search rooms. It was agreed that staff should ensure that lockers are used when luggage cannot fit under the customer's desk. If the luggage cannot fit in a locker then it will require to be stored off site.

4.   **Records**

4.1   Maps and plans were launched during June 2018.

4.2   It was hoped to release the Highlands and Islands Emigration at the end of August 2018.
Dn. Since the meeting the launch date for the release of the Highlands and Islands Emigration has been postponed and no new date is available.

4.3   NRS was still working on the 1940 valuation rolls, Kirk Session and Prison Register type records for release on ScotlandsPeople.

4.4   NRS did not have a date when the death/burial records for Mount Vernon cemetery would be released by the Scottish Catholic Archives.

5.   Any Other Business

5.1   None

6.   Date of Next Meeting

6.1   The date of the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 11th December 2018 at 13:30 in meeting room 1, New Register House.

Dee Williams
Head of ScotlandsPeople Service
New Register House
Edinburgh
EH1 3YT

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