

Notes of issues discussed at the Search Room User Group meeting held on Tuesday 12th May 2015 in meeting room 2, New Register House at 14:30 Hours

Attendees

Dee Williams (DW, NRS & chair), Iain Ferguson (NRS), Gill Amos (GA, NRS), Emma Williamson (EW, NSS), Val Wilson, (ASGRA & Genealogist), Bruce Bishop, SAFHS, Janet Bishop, ASGRA, Alison Lindsay (NRS), Lloyd Pitcairn (Genealogist).

Apologies:

Ken Nisbet (Genealogist).

Emma Williamson was welcomed to the group as the NHS NSS replacement for Alison Fordyce.

1. Previous Minutes of 20 February 2015

1.1 The group accepted the content of the notes of the last meeting.

2. Centre Software

2.1 NRS await legal advice on their proposals to amend the search facilities on the ScotlandsPeople network.

2.2 NRS hope to make the following amendments:

- Remove the five year search restriction for modern day records.
- Allow surname searches of the statutory records using only one letter.
- Include wildcard searches on mother's maiden name and spouse name fields.
- Include a 'both' gender option for all statutory record searches.
- Include dissolution records.

Further feedback will be given at the next meeting.

2.3 Between meetings, NRS had confirmed that the ten registration districts that were dropped during 2014 were as listed below:

Aberdeen	ABERDEENSHIRE (MAUD)	312	2014
Aberdeen	ABERDEENSHIRE (TURRIFF)	314	2014
Aberdeen	ABERDEENSHIRE (INSCH)	318	2014
Aberdeen	ABERDEENSHIRE (ALFORD)	326	2014
Argyll	HIGHLAND (ARDNAMURCHAN)	521	2014
Ayr	EAST AYRSHIRE (MAUCHLINE)	676	2014
Ayr	EAST AYRSHIRE (MUIRKIRK)	678	2014
Ayr	EAST AYRSHIRE (AUCHINLECK)	679	2014
Banff	MORAY (BUCKIE)	290	2014
Banff	MORAY	295	2014
Inverness	HIGHLAND (MALLAIG AND KNOYDART)	238	2014
Moray	MORAY (FORRES)	281	2014
Ross and Cromarty	HIGHLAND (TARRADALE)	199	2014
Stirling	FALKIRK (LARBERT)	483	2014
Stirling	FALKIRK (POLMONT AND MUIRAVONSIDE)	485	2014
West Lothian	FALKIRK	700	2014

2.4 The link to the NRS website doesn't link customers to the ScotlandsPeople Centre web page, however, the web page does allow customers to select the 'visit us' option so the current arrangement will remain in place.

2.5 The genealogists had previously requested that the results for Leith on the ScotlandsPeople network be changed to match the internet. This would entail results for Leith being segregated into Leith North and Leith South.

Action: NRS to establish whether their districts can match those available on the pay-per-view internet website

2.6 The genealogists were still finding that 'websense' blocked access to external websites so were using their own internet access for any additional research required beyond what is available in the search rooms.

2.7 The genealogists asked whether messages generated by the Java viewer could be stopped. NRS to check.

Action: NRS to check Java viewer and whether the on screen messages can be reduced in number

2.8 Some customers had experienced problems with the ScotlandsPeople search system saving old images. NRS to check why.

Action: NRS to check save function for images

3. Centre & Historical Search Rooms

3.1 There have been various problems with public access to the on line NRS catalogue. Order slips have been left in search rooms for customers to request documents until problems with the on line order system are resolved.

3.2 The stand alone computer in the Reid search room, which gives access to the virtual volumes available in the historical search room, has been replaced with a smaller, more modern model. This has created more space for researchers to place their research material on the desk and negated the need to relocate the computer off the desk.

4. Records

4.1 1855 valuation rolls are on track for release around September 2015.

4.2 Military service appeal tribunal records will be released around November 2015 prior to Remembrance Sunday.

5. Estates Review

5.1 No further update was available on the Estates review. NRS still planned to build search rooms and more storage facilities out at Thomas Thomson House but no dates were available yet.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 The storage location of the post 1935 wills was queried? The group asked whether some the documents that have already been digitised that are stored at General Register House could be replaced with other records regularly requested by visitors. The issue would be allocating resources to transfer records, which are already stretched, and then make sure that the records fit on the available shelves. *Dn. AL has since confirmed that post 1935 wills are stored at Thomas Thomson House.*

6.2 DW gave an overview of the timetable of work to retender the service provision arrangement for the ScotlandsPeople website at www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk . The long term plan is to connect all computers located in the ScotlandsPeople Centre and at Local Family History Centres to the new internet version of the website that will be available from 1st September 2016. Thus volunteers and the search room user group will be asked to provide input as the replacement ScotlandsPeople system is developed.

7. Date of Next Meeting

7.1 The date of the next meeting will take place on Wednesday 2 September 2015 at 14:00 in meeting room 2, NRH.

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25 June 2015