

## **Minutes of the Centre User Group meeting held on Friday 14 May 2011 in meeting room 1, New Register House at 14:00 Hours**

### **Attendees**

George MacKenzie (chair), Dee Williams (DW, NRS), Iain Ferguson (NRS), Sandy Noble (SN, NRS), Alison Lindsay (AL, NRS), Bruce Bishop (BB, SAFHS), Janet Bishop (JB, ASGRA), Alison Fordyce (AF, NHS), Lloyd Pitcairn (LP, Genealogist), Val Wilson (VW, genealogist)

### **Apologies:**

Duncan Macniven (GROS), Gill Amos (GA, GROS), Ewan Steed (Genealogist), Anne Garven (AG, Genealogist & ASGRA), Ken Nisbet (KN, Genealogist),

### **1. Previous Minutes of 14 January 2011**

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

### **2. Matters Arising**

Item 8.13 – Additional signage for the corridor in NRH had been produced and were due to be mounted on the walls.

Item 3.3 – SN reported that he couldn't see any discernable difference for the time taken for to view search results in the Dundas room and General Register House (GRH) and further explained that the amount of search enquiries being made by customers can impact on the speed of service. LP explained that he felt that the DIGROS system was easier to use and therefore it was quicker to search. SN confirmed that there are no plans to change the search methods on the ScotlandsPeople Centre network.

Item 4.1.1 – a lock has been installed around the environmental controls located in the Dundas room so that customers cannot tamper with them.

### **3. Centre Software**

#### **3.1 Enhancements Since January 2011**

3.2 Since the last meeting, the following changes have been made to the software:

- Births, census and RCEs have been migrated from Ingres to the SQL server. These changes will make it easier to refresh data in the future.
- Staff are now able to work on the indexes for the OPR records and correct errors that have been reported. They are also working on Catholic registers and divorces.
- The look and feel of the supervisor software for the Centre has been enhanced, which makes it easier to book evening and weekend visits.
- The 1911 Census was launched on 5 April.
- Customers can now view the 1911 street index for the main towns and cities in Scotland from the main search menu at the Centre.
- The indexes for adopted people have been added to the Centre network.

3.3 There are no plans to switch off DIGROS to customers in the short term. Two computer terminals with access to DIGROS are available for season ticket holders and one computer terminal is available for day searchers.

### 3.4 Planned Changes to the Software

3.4.1 It is hoped that the Catholic registers will be available at the Centre by the end of December 2011.

3.4.2 The missing 1851 indexes and images will be added once the indexing project is complete.

3.4.3 Kirk Session records are currently available at Inverness and Hawick local archives. It is hoped that events belonging to the OPRs will be found once customers start to search through these records in detail. Additional indexes and images will be added to the OPRs if they are reported to NRS.

## 4. Centre Search Rooms

4.1.1 AL explained how she hoped in the future to make it easier for customers to move between the search rooms in the Centre and the historical search rooms. AL went on to explain how work is progressing to make it easier to access maps and plans. Currently, 20,000 maps are in the process of being digitised and once complete these will be made available for free view at [www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk).

4.1.2 AL confirmed that it is possible to visit Thomas Thomson House at the Gyle in Edinburgh on Wednesdays by appointment.

4.1.3 AL reminded everyone that the Kirk Session records are available in the historical search rooms listed as CH2 records. BB talked about various books that he has written that identify many marriage proclamations in the Kirk Session records that do not feature in the OPRs.

4.1.4 LP complained about the noise generated by people walking from the seminar facility down the corridor outside the Dundas room. It was agreed that a door closer should be fitted to the door at the south end of the room to make it quieter.

**Action:** Door closer to be fitted to door at south end of Dundas room

4.1.5 Additional exit signs were requested by the genealogists to stop customers getting lost. IF confirmed that the new café signage included directions for exits.

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

5.1 The tests on the Unified Access Gateway (UAG) system had been successfully completed so work was now underway to purchase and install a UAG system, which will connect up local family history centres to the ScotlandsPeople Centre network.

5.2 DW explained that changes would be required to legislation to allow for the LAs to charge the public to search indexes of the statutory records at LFHCs.

5.3 LP raised concerns at the prospect of council operated LFHCs because he felt that it would make it more difficult for professional genealogists to compete for business. GM confirmed that part of the conditions for being connected to the ScotlandsPeople Centre network was that a local registrar had to be in attendance.

5.4 AF requested a meeting between NHS and senior managers at NRS to discuss the connection of NHS to the ScotlandsPeople Centre network. It was agreed that until a timetable was in place for the installation work there was no requirement to meet.

5.5 The genealogists queried how this work would impact on the number of visitors at the Centre and whether GROS would control usage and costs charged by LFHCs. GM explained how the legislative changes would detail minimum costs to be levied by LAs and that the number of visitors to the Centre are expected to drop following the opening of the LFHCs.

## 6. Any Other Business

6.1 DW explained how around 450 indexes existed in the OPR records that have a surname ending with 'DR'. NRS planned to keep the existing indexes but wanted to create duplicate entries for a more common spelling of the surname. For instance, 'Johnsdr' will have an entry as spelt and there will also be one for 'Johnson', which is a more common spelling. BB explained that surnames with the dottir ending were of Viking origin and that these names were normally restricted to Shetland or Orkney. BB also explained how records exist with the prefix 'Nic', meaning daughter of instead of the usual 'Mac' or 'Mc'.

*Since the meeting DW has checked the registration districts for the list of names ending 'DR' and they do exist only in Shetland or Orkney.*

6.2 Anne Garven, though unable to attend the meeting, had requested that the environmental controls for the Dundas room be checked to ensure that they are not on full recirculation.

**Action:** Check that fresh air is being introduced to the Dundas room

6.3 GM announced that the Centre is opening its garden on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 June as part of Scotland's Garden Scheme. Entrance will cost £3 and funds raised will be shared by Scotland's Garden Scheme and Maggie's Cancer Caring Centres.

## 7. Date of Next Meeting

7.1 The date of the next meeting is Friday 12 August 2011 at 14:00 in meeting room 2, NRH.

**Dee Williams**  
16 May 2011