

On Saturday Leon Daly, Vern Nazzari, Diane Oldman and myself attended the Affiliates Conference in Collie. This is an annual get together of all the Family History Society's in WA. This included Geraldton, Collie, Mandurah, Australind, Albany, Busselton, Esperance and the Western Australian Genealogical Society. However Esperance was not in attendance as they are struggling to maintain their presence and the distance required to travel.

The meeting was held in the newly refurbished RSL hall and we were provided with a very interesting talk on the RSL by their Vice President. He gave us a rundown of the history of the RSL and the people from Collie who fought in the conflicts during the 20th century.

This meeting is designed to exchange our activities over the last year or so and to share ideas about Family History. A large proportion of the meeting is put aside for routine matters. However out of the various reports came some information on where the various Societies are heading in their communities.

All of them, the same as us, are suffering from lack of membership. However out of all that I believe that WE are in a strong position in our community in view of the excellent monthly speakers that we have. As far as I am concerned this will continue and although the details are to be finalised we have some good speakers in the future.

A lot of the discussion in Collie was about the use of technology in our work, particularly with presentations. The distant Societies like Geraldton have been using "webinar" and Skype to be able to reach speakers from around the world. There is a cost with this of course and at this stage we are not considering it.

I am not a complete Luddite with regard to any part of technology, however I strongly believe that it has its place but nothing can take the place of good hard methodical research. The use of pedigree charts and family group sheets, (both of which are available in our library), are the real foundation of our research techniques. Those of you (like me who have been researching for some time, know that nothing can replace the good hard slog of research. Particularly the joy of finding that elusive ancestor, that can be gained in the end. I am sure that you, as well as I, have experienced this in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

The websites that we use as genealogists are growing in number, as are the number of records that are available to us. Ancestry, Find My Past and Family Search, the three main search website, have billions of records available for us. The first two are now working closely with the LDS to ensure that we as researchers have available to us the very latest information.

On a personal note over the past weekend I found a birth for someone on my tree in Kent in 1640. This was not on the LDS

site as you would expect, but on Ancestry. This proves the point that I made above.

Please remember that if you can't find something on one site, try the other, and if it is not there when you look today, it may there tomorrow.

Our next speaker on October 1st is Jenni Ibrahim who is going to talk to us about Irish Ancestry. November is to be confirmed and December is our annual quiz. Get your tables organised for this as the prizes are going to be great thanks to Len Daly and Terry Craig. January will be by Leon Daly and Myself and will be a show and tell on the new smart screen in the meeting room. We haven't finalised the topics yet but they will be very relevant to us as genealogists.

As a last piece of news I have just learnt this morning that Pamela Lydford has indicated her desire to resign as out "Between The Lines" editor. She will relinquish the post in June next year, so there is time yet for us to source someone else. If you have "Microsoft Publisher" skills we would like to hear from you.

Peter Godfrey

20th September 2016.