

Special Assignments Report
Report to the Ryerson Index Inc. Committee Meeting and the AGM Meeting
3 December 2022

Unfortunately, Covid-19 continued to disrupt planned visits to Family History Groups.

Visits were made to the following groups...

- 1. Lake Macquarie FHS Group in April 2022** resulted in a new gathering/indexing group to take up the Newcastle Herald. Two members are gathering back copies for the period commencing with 1958 and moving forward. 5 ladies completed training as indexers.
- 2. Annual Visit to Botany Bay FHS Heritage Day on 14 May 2022.**
Shari Maclean joined me on this occasion, and we were kept busy responding to over 40 enquiries during the day.
I was also privileged to be one of the guest speakers and at least 20 attendees followed up with visits to our table.
As we had lost the services of Tony Middleton earlier in May, it was an opportunity to recruit a local member to take on the role of gatherer of The St. George Leader paper. Margaret Heaton has proven to be a consistently good gatherer and is likely to take on the role of indexer following Julie Ashford's retirement after many years of service.
It was at this gathering the Nepean FHS Representative confirmed a booking for 1 April 2023.
- 3. Illawarra FHS Group at Wollongong on 20 August 2022.**
Usual PowerPoint presentation was made to 35 members. Great interest and questions.
Favourable comments about new elements in Ryerson particularly the Probate Index.
One volunteer, Ros Adams, has come on board as a gatherer of the Illawarra Mercury.
Judith Jansen has been indexing this paper for many years. She started before the RNR was introduced. Unfortunately we have over 40 years of indexing done but very little by way of back up copy as Judith had destroyed all of her early gathering prior to the RNR. Unfortunately she never bothered to take up gathering. Hopefully, we might yet get another gatherer or two.
- 4. Cape Banks FHS at Little Bay on 10 September 2022.**
This invitation originated from my initial contact with the members at the 2018 Batemans Bay State Conference when the Cape Banks FHS won the Dorothy Davis Award. I had been sitting with Dorothy at Dinner on the Saturday night. Dorothy has been a long-time friend of Margaret and mine since our teenage years. It just happened that three members of this Society were also at the table. One has to be patient but eventually an invitation was sent to me to visit this group.
There were 41 members present. Very keen to learn about our product but no offers of help.
- 5. NSW/ACT State Conference at Maitland -Open Day 18 September 2022**
This year's Conference was hosted by the joint Societies from Newcastle and Maitland. It was primarily a Zoom conference.
However, an additional open day was held on the Sunday at Maitland FHS site which was held as an outdoor event.
I had requested a location undercover as I feared a wet day. There was no rain, but a very strong wind came up and my request for covered accommodation paid off as I was privileged to have the use of their isolated Archive building. A great deal of interest was shown by many visitors and participants from exhibitors. No recruits.

RNR and RYERSON GATHERING PROGRAM

This activity is now large and requires careful attention with so many contributors since we expanded our gathering to include Funeral Directors.

Also, since acquiring the responsibility for **all back-indexing** I find that I now have a more complete overview of our various sources and members who gather, index and so on.

The program to complete gathering and back indexing The Age has been a great experience and success.

I congratulate the following members who have participated eagerly.

We will be able to make a statement early in 2023 that The Age has been fully gathered and indexed back to 1943. This was a goal that Peter Kettle and I agreed on prior to Peter's retirement. Many thanks to Peter for the hard work he did with the back indexing program prior to his retirement.

Judith Chivers, Craige Hicks and Shari-Lei McLean have been our main gatherers. They were also supported by Selina Lucarini and Craig Daly.

Shari plus John Kneale were our main indexers with assistance from Sharyn Walsh.

We could do with at least 6 more indexers to work from Trove to complete the indexing of THE AGE back to its origins.

The SMH

Judith Chivers has commenced reviewing the SMH as there are many hundreds of missing pages from the RNR although the paper has been fully indexed. She estimates a finish date about mid-2023.

To achieve our success with tracing copies of both The Age and The SMH, our continued paid subscription to Newspapers.com has been invaluable.

Visitation program for 2023

Nepean FHS Group at Emu plains 1 April 2023

State Conference at Toukley September 2023

Bob Atkins