

## **President's Report – March 2021**

I would like to extend a very warm welcome back to all members of the NFHS as we begin our journey into 2021. Last year tested our resilience as we learnt to cope with many unknowns – this year we have that experience behind us, and it sets us in very good stead to cope with whatever comes our way in 2021 and beyond.

We, at NFHS, are most definitely resilient!! Looking back on 2020 we managed to have a very busy and productive year despite the various restrictions placed upon us. We have carefully followed the rules and regulations put in place to protect the health and wellbeing of our members and the general community, but we still managed a fruitful and enjoyable year in very many ways.

This year is already off to a wonderful start. Our February Newsletter detailed an extensive list of courses and activities ready to begin as soon as we returned from the Christmas/New Year break.

Our Special Interest Groups which began last year continue on. Some groups, such as the Scottish SIG, are so popular with members that we were relieved when the number of people permitted in our meeting room increased recently due to the spiralling membership of the group.

Our genealogy courses on Saturday mornings are again very popular. We are currently revisiting the same courses that we began at the beginning of last year. Some members have booked in to do these a second time as a refresher, while others have joined in for the very first time. A significant number of new courses are currently in the planning stage for a little later in 2021. This year we are also offering these courses via Zoom by popular request. It is pleasing to be able to involve members who live a distance from the Mechanics' Institute on such a regular basis.

Library Orientation Groups are also set to begin again on March 27. These are an amazing way to familiarise yourself with the wonderful resources held by the NFHS library. These resources have been built up over many years by a succession of dedicated librarians. Even those of us who have been library volunteers for many years have found resources we never knew existed after attending one of these courses. I have done the 'Print Course' twice now and

on each occasion learnt valuable information. While preparing the 'Digital Course' I also discovered many things I didn't know about our library collection. The two-part Orientation Sessions are part of your membership package – make sure you take full advantage of them by attending if you can.

Our first group excursions of the year are set to take place this month. The ***Hunter River Discovery Cruise*** with Nova Cruises on 14 March booked out almost immediately. We will look to holding another of these later in the year. Our five day excursion to Canberra from 22-26 March has also proven very popular. It will be a wonderful opportunity to visit many places of interest in the nation's capital while enjoying the company of other Society members.

I look forward to a productive and congenial year at the NFHS and I know you do, too. Keep a watch on the Newsletter, website and Facebook Group for up to the minute information and news.