

President's Report for March 2025 MC Meeting

A very warm welcome to 2025 at Newcastle Family History Society!

I am sure by now everyone has long since forgotten their Christmas/New Year break and already launched into their usual busy schedule. Hopefully, this will include plenty of time for family history pursuits.

This year promises to be a bumper year at our Society. In June we will celebrate our 250th Journal issue – what an amazing milestone! We have been fortunate over the years with a succession of gifted and dedicated editors ably supported by a team of skilled members keen to ensure our Journal is of the highest possible quality. The number of contributions has also grown significantly over the years, bearing witness to the importance members place upon recording and sharing their family history for the future.

Our many Special Interest Groups got off to a good start for the year in February with members keen to recommence their studies in company with other like-minded people. If you have not yet taken advantage of the opportunity to attend one of our SIGs you will be pleasantly surprised by what our Society has to offer.

Our podcasting initiative has grown to new heights this year with a number of new series being recorded over the Christmas break which are gradually being released on a monthly basis. We are grateful for the keen interest and leadership shown by our IT Manager without whose expertise this venture would not have been possible. Those who have participated by researching, writing podcast scripts and then recording them are also gratefully acknowledged for the time they have devoted to the preservation of our history.

Newcastle Family History Society's commitment to education continues with our annual Beginners' Courses and Orientation Sessions coming up in the first quarter and, later in the year, we will revisit how best to use Microsoft Word for our family history work. I will certainly be refreshing my skills by attending this course!

Our very first *Female Convicts of the Hunter Valley* one-day Seminar will be held on Sunday, March 2nd bringing some knowledgeable speakers to our area. We also have a new NFHS website dedicated to the female convicts of Newcastle and the Hunter <https://femaleconvictsofthehunternvalley.com.au/home/> and a new closed Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/9063259613752959> which you may care to visit. All three of these also contribute to the ongoing education provided by the NFHS.

As always, the year will be punctuated by interesting guest speakers, themed open days and events, and a selection of excursions for our members and friends.

I look forward to seeing you on many occasions throughout the year.

Yours, in the pursuit of family history.