



Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations Inc
PO Box 1394, Canberra, ACT, 2601 Australia
secretary@affho.org

MEDIA RELEASE

2023 - AUGUST IS NATIONAL FAMILY HISTORY MONTH

Theme: Secrets and Lies - Using AI responsibly and handling sensitive subjects in your family history research.

A series of talks, workshops, seminars, and information sessions – many of them free - will be held throughout Australia and New Zealand during August in celebration of National Family History Month.

Having grown from just one week of activities in 2006, National Family History Month now encompasses virtual and in-person activities covering lessons on how to write your family history, research guidance on British surnames, convict, Chinese, and Irish research lessons, visits to archives, and author talks.

Family history societies, libraries, and archives – often closed to the general public – will throw open their doors and offer education, research, and training opportunities for both their members and other interested individuals. NFHM is an occasion for experienced researchers and beginners alike to learn, research, and create.

Rosemary McKenzie, President of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations said “the growth of National Family History Month is a sign of how much family history is growing as an interest for all generations in Australia”.

The 2023 theme is *Secrets and Lies - using AI responsibly and handling sensitive subjects in your family history research.*

Ms McKenzie said “The expansion of advanced technology and consequences of privacy and social media are just some of the modern challenges we, as researchers address”.

NFHM will be launched at **5:00 pm (AEST) Tuesday, 1 August** via a free Zoom talk. University of New England’s Professor of Heritage and Digital Humanities, Hamish Maxwell-Stewart together with family historian and technology enthusiast, Andrew Redfern will discuss the pros and cons of using Artificial Intelligence in Family History research.

NFHM celebrations conclude at **12 noon, Thursday 31 August** at the Metcalfe Auditorium at the State Library of New South Wales. Anita Jacoby AM one of Australia’s most awarded television

producers will share the experience of researching her own family history for her book *Secrets Beyond the Screen* published in 2022, including how to deal with sensitive material in family history research. Copies of her book will be available for purchase on the day.

The events calendar is available at <https://familyhistorymonth.org.au/index.php/nfhm-events-calendar>

Family history continues to grow enormously in popularity. The popular television show *Who Do You Think You Are* is now in its 14th season. Tens of thousands of Australians and New Zealanders of all ages research their family history, supported by family history organisations in each state and territory.

About AFFHO

AFFHO is the umbrella organisation for family history and genealogy societies in Australia and New Zealand. It was established in 1978 to coordinate and assist the work of Australian and New Zealand groups with interests in family history, genealogy, heraldry and related subjects.

Media Contact

Alex Daw

0409 341 821

