

Changes to the GSV – Update 1 – 15 November 2016

I am writing to inform you of two changes that are currently occurring which will impact on the Society and the conduct of our activities and events in the immediate future.

There are a number of family history societies in existence in Melbourne each of which are experiencing a reduction in their membership due to multiple causes. As a consequence discussions have commenced between the GSV, the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies and the Cornish Association of Victoria to explore the viability of establishing a new family history entity. The Societies would combine their resources and establish the new entity. These discussions have only recently commenced and it is anticipated that they will continue for some time. Any changes to the structure of each of the Societies will require the approval of their members and I will keep you informed as discussions proceed.

We have very recently been approached by the owner of Emirates House enquiring whether we might like to exit our lease arrangement prior to the scheduled termination date of the end of November 2018. Council has agreed and the current situation is that we will surrender our lease with effect from 31 March 2017. This is quite soon and a considerable effort will now be required to clean-up and ensure that the premises are left in good order.

Surrendering our current lease will potentially save quite a deal of money in the long-term. We have commenced a search for new premises in the Melbourne City Council area close to public transport. We envisage that the premises will be approximately 150 to 200 sqm in size which is a dramatic reduction from our current floor space of 780 sqm. It is our intention to pay as little as possible and enter a short-term lease. We will place a greater emphasis on conducting events and activities in hired spaces throughout Melbourne and the suburbs. It is important that we find a suitable repository for our library collection and we are in discussions with other libraries and societies to find the best arrangement for the GSV and those parties as well as any new family history society that may be created.

Our program of activities and events during the first few months of 2017 will be severely disrupted. We have cancelled a number of classes and will postpone others. Our website will provide up-to-date information about all events and I recommend that you consult it frequently. Regular updates on the move will be also posted to our web site and these may be found via the 'GSV News' link which now appears on our home page. The regular updates we receive from the owner of the building regarding the renovations being undertaken to the ground and mezzanine levels will also be posted.

Council is committed to ensuring that the GSV, or any successor entity, is viable and continues to provide the resources suitable for members to pursue their family history research. Our move to smaller, more affordable, premises will place us in a more stable and flexible financial position and assist with this process.

Best regards

David Down
President