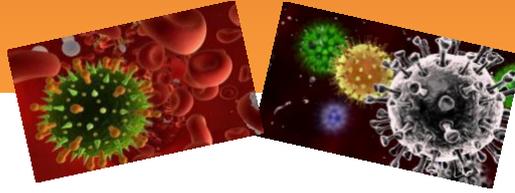


IMPORTANT NEWSFLASH

Research Centre Closure



Botany Bay's Response to the Corona Virus Situation Closure of the Research Centre from Monday 16 March until further notice

As the situation regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus) escalates, the health and safety of Botany Bay Family History Society members and volunteers is paramount as new numbers of COVID-19 cases are notified.

The BBFHS Committee has been in discussion regarding the threat to our members and volunteers as well as directly contacting some of our volunteers for their input. Of 21 people contacted, 18 replied: and of those 18 persons, 14 members have backed the closure of the Research Centre until the end of the month at which time a further assessment can be made. Unfortunately, the closure will mean that various Interest Groups during this time including the DNA IG will not be held as well as the Orientation Day on 21 March. Monthly meetings at Tradies and the Heritage Fair have also been cancelled until further notice.

The decision has not been taken lightly and facts that needed to be taken into consideration included:

- Sanitising of the Research Centre would need to be continually undertaken by our volunteers with all keyboards, mouse and screens cleaned with disinfectant wipes after a person has used a computer
- Similarly, tabletops and door handles would need to be continually sanitised. We share the use of a kitchen and toilets with people not connected to BBFHS and keeping those areas sanitised by BBFHS is simply not possible (sanitising of the Port Hacking Community Centre is not the responsibility of the Council)
- Our membership is made up of people in the age group that is more at risk of contracting COVID-19
- As well as age, those members who suffer from bronchitis, asthma, other lung diseases, hypertension, ischemic heart disease or diabetes mellitus can have degraded organs that are more vulnerable to infection
- As the incubation time takes 5 to 14 days, any member or volunteer could contract COVID-19 but not show symptoms. They would then be putting their family at risk and some of us have partners who fit the criteria mentioned in the above point

Throughout the closure, the BBFHS Committee will be monitoring the situation and any updates will be notified by email and via our website.

In the meantime, social distancing appears to be the best practice when in public places. The NSW Health website suggests, you should:

- Attempt to keep 1.5 metres between yourself and others

- Avoid crowds and mass gatherings where it is difficult to keep the appropriate distance away from others
- Avoid small gatherings in enclosed spaces, for example family celebrations
- Avoid shaking hands, hugging, or kissing other people
- Avoid visiting vulnerable people, such as those in aged care facilities or hospitals, infants, or people with compromised immune systems due to illness or medical treatment.
- And the World Health Organisation suggests that you **wash your hands frequently**
- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
- Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

During this challenging time please stay safe, be kind, and look after the people around you. We are all in this together.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at botanybayfhs@yahoo.com.au if you have any questions.

Jennie Fairs
President
Botany Bay Family History Society