

Online help for family history buffs



By STEVEN BURKE

RESEARCHING family history is about to become easier, with Wangaratta Family History Society set to go online.

The group is working to create its own website with the assistance of Echuca based internet expert, Tim Gentle.

Mr Gentle has run a series of "Developing a Winning Website" workshops throughout the North East as an initiative of the Ausindustry Small Business Field Officer program which operates through the North East Victorian Area Consultative Committee.

All attendees at the workshops were put into a draw to win a free website to the value of \$1500 and the winner was Val Gleeson, who donated her prize to the family history society.

Mr Gentle recently met with the group as the first stage of developing the website.

"This is basically a briefing session to gauge what they would like to be included in the website and to plan out what functions it will have," he said.

Peter Sewell from the family history society said the group was still working out whether to include archived information or have the website set up as an initial contact point for those researching their genealogy.

"We have hundreds of photos and 5000 names on certificates," he said.

"Perhaps the community could put their name into the website and submit a form requesting information, which we could then respond to."

And while the group is keeping its aims conservative, Mr Gentle said the benefits of having a strong website could propel the growth of community organisations.

"It is very hard for not for profit organisations to raise money," he said.

"But with a website, they can attract sponsorship and it gives them credibility."

While the website is currently a work in progress, the domain name www.wangaratafamilyhistorysociety.org.au has been registered, with the aim of launching the site during national family history week, from August 4-9.

INTERNET SAVVY:
Tim Gentle shows Val Gleeson how to operate the website as Peter Sewell, Bob and Georgina Cusack put together some ideas.

For the la hearin

