

ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES, 2016-2017

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1. INTRODUCTION, BY THE CHAIR



This year has been one of consolidation for the History Council of Victoria as we worked with our new Rules and Board Charter. The main highlight of the year has been the formulation of a Friends program which will be launched early in the new financial year.

Another feature of the year has been our endorsement of the Value of History Statement from the USA. We are planning to develop this as a nation-wide statement in collaboration with the other History Councils in Australia.

We recognise that history nurtures personal identity in an intercultural world and teaches critical 21st century skills and independent thinking. History lays the groundwork for strong, resilient communities and helps people craft better solutions to contemporary issues. And most importantly, history is crucial to preserving democracy for the future by explaining our shared past.

We become more aware of the importance of history in a time that is seeing such astonishing world events. Our *History Roadshow* reminds students that political, social, cultural and economic issues are best interpreted when placed in historical context. As James Grossman, the executive director of the American Historical Association wrote in a recent article¹, history students sift through substantial amounts of information, organise it, and make sense of it. In the process they learn how to infer what drives and motivates human behavior from elections to social movements to board rooms. Historical thinking prepares one for leadership because history is about change — envisioning it, planning for it, making it last. To think historically is to recognise that all problems, all situations, all institutions exist in contexts that must be understood before informed decisions can be made. Such is the value of history.

Dr Liz Rushen
Chair

2. THE YEAR IN SUMMARY

Highlights from the HCV's activities during 2016-2017 include: the continuation of the *History Roadshow* program with funding from the Department of Education and Training; strong attendances at the *Making Public Histories* seminar series and at the *Annual Lecture*; continuing sponsorship of the *Historical Fiction Competition* organised by the History Teachers' Association of Victoria for students in Years 9 and 10; engagement with social media; and communication through seven editions of the E-news bulletin.

The Board accepted an invitation from the Invisible Farmer project to become an official supporter of this landmark study of Australian women on the land.

¹ [@JimGrossmanAHA](#) *Los Angeles Times*, 30 May 2016



The winner, Sam Edwards of Shepparton Christian College (for 'Fire's Rage'), and runner-up, Victoria Thompson of Lowther Hall (for 'Life of a convict: Anne Bellett's Story'), of the HTAV *Historical Fiction Competition* in the Year 9/10 category, pictured with Margaret Birtley (HCV Executive Officer) and Garrie Hutchinson (HCV Board and member of the judging panel) at the presentation event in October 2016.

The HCV coordinated a History Councils Roundtable at the July 2016 conference of the Australian Historical Association, hosted by the Collaborative Research Centre in Australian History at Federation University Australia, Ballarat.



Dr Clare Wright (second from right) chaired the History Councils Roundtable at the Australian Historical Association conference in Ballarat on 7 July 2016.

Official representatives of the four History Councils were (L-R): Dr Liz Rushen (Chair, HCV), Associate Professor Bobbie Oliver (Vice President, HCWA), Emeritus Professor David Carment AM (President, HCNSW) and Dr Susan Marsden (Past President, HCSA).

The Board has revised the Rules and the Board Charter to support a restructure of the Board and Executive committee, and has planned the introduction of a Friends program.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Organisational members

Throughout the year, each organisational member was represented by their appointee.

In late 2016, the Women's Heritage Centre Victoria, an organisational member of the HCV, commenced the process of amalgamating with Her Place Women's Museum Australia Ltd. To give the Women's HERitage Centre Victoria flexibility during this time of change, it was removed from the list of organisations entitled under the revised HCV Rules to appoint a representative member. Dr Judith Smart represented the HCV at meetings of Women's Heritage Centre Victoria, and continues to represent the HCV at meetings of the new amalgamated entity, Her Place Women's Museum.

Following the adoption of the HCV's revised Rules and Board Charter in November 2016, the Chair wrote to the head of each member organisation seeking confirmation of its representative for a new three-year term. Some organisations chose to make a new appointment; as a result, the HCV farewelled Dr Jo Clyne (History Teachers' Association of Victoria), Jen Brook (Museums Victoria) and Andrew Hiskens (State Library Victoria).

The HCV also farewelled Pat Hincks (who retired from the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority in December 2016) and Lauren Bourke (who took maternity leave from Public Record Office Victoria in October 2016).

University representatives

The HCV farewelled Dr Charles Fahey (La Trobe University), Dr Ruth Morgan (Monash University) and Dr Geoffrey Robinson (Deakin University) as members.

In accordance with the new Board Charter, two universities were invited to accept membership for a three-year term: Monash University and Victoria University. Their respective representatives are Dr Kathleen Neal and Associate Professor Rob Hess.

Representatives of other organisations

The HCV invited the Old Treasury Building to accept membership for a three-year term. Its representative is Margaret Anderson.

Individual members

Two people accepted individual HCV membership for three-year terms: Judy Maddigan and Dr Liz Rushen.

4. BOARD

The Board is the governing body of the HCV. Its membership corresponds with the full membership of the association. At 30 June 2017, the Board members were:

Representatives of member organisations

Organisation	Representative	Start date
Australian Broadcasting Corporation	Michelle Rayner	13 Jul 2005
Department of Education and Training	Victoria Hall	10 Apr 2014
Heritage Council of Victoria	Garrie Hutchinson	12 Aug 2015
History Teachers Association of Victoria	Clinton Markwell	21 Feb 2017
National Trust of Australia (Victoria)	Martin Green	12 Jun 2014
Museums Australia (Victoria)	Laura Miles	10 Feb 2009
Museums Victoria	John Patten	2 Mar 2017
Professional Historians Association (Vic)	Katherine Sheedy	1 Feb 2005
Public Record Office Victoria	Tara Oldfield	23 Nov 2016
Royal Historical Society of Victoria	Dr Judith Smart	10 Feb 2009
State Library Victoria	Tim Hogan	1 Mar 2017
Victorian Curriculum & Assessment Authority	Gerry Martin	15 Mar 2017

Representatives of other organisational members

Organisation	Representative	Start date
Old Treasury Building	Margaret Anderson	21 Jan 2016
Monash University	Dr Kathleen Neal	22 Feb 2017
Victoria University	Assoc. Prof. Rob Hess	24 Feb 2017

Individual members

Name	Start date
Judy Maddigan	16 Feb 2015
Dr Liz Rushen	14 Feb 2013

5. GOVERNANCE AND BOARD ACTIVITIES

The Members met for the AGM on 22 September 2016, and for a Special General Meeting (to adopt the new Rules) on November 2016.

The Board of the HCV met in 2016 on 14 July, 22 September and 17 November and in 2017 on 16 March and 15 June.

Board positions as at 30 June 2017 were Dr Liz Rushen (Chair), Dr Judith Smart (Deputy Chair) and Katherine Sheedy (Hon. Treasurer). Margaret Birtley is the appointed Secretary. These people served *ex officio* as the HCV's Executive committee.

Many Board members serve in small teams to advise on key areas of HCV activity. Additional experts are

appointed to assist where appropriate. Committees have guided the Public Fund, fundraising, the revision of the Rules, a publishing project and the HCV's social media and website communications. Committees also plan the *Historical Perspectives* program (including the *Annual Lecture* and the *Making Public Histories* seminar series) and the *History Roadshow*. The Executive committee advised on preparation for the HCV's contribution to the July 2017 conference of the Australian Historical Association, hosted by the University of Newcastle, New South Wales.

When available, a Board member accompanies each *History Roadshow* tour. Their contributions include networking discussions with presenters and participating teachers, and as panelists in the Career Pathways session.



Networking during the *History Roadshow* tour to Geelong, September 2016 are (L-R) Emeritus Professor Peter McPhee AM (The University of Melbourne), Jenny Gibson (Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College) and Jen Brook (HCV Board and Museums Victoria).

The Board continued its sponsorship of the Year 9 and 10 Category of the Historical Fiction Competition organised by the History Teachers' Association of Victoria. Garrie Hutchinson and Laura Miles kindly served as the judging panel.

6. PUBLIC FUND COMMITTEE

To meet its obligations through the Register of Cultural Organisations and as a Deductible Gift Recipient, the HCV has a Public Fund Committee. Its members are Boyce Pizzey OAM, Dr Charles Fahey and Dr Geoffrey Robinson.

7. ADMINISTRATION

The Board is assisted by its part-time (0.2) Executive Officer, Margaret Birtley. The Board was delighted to congratulate Margaret on her award, on Australia Day 2017, of Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM) 'for significant service to cultural heritage, particularly to the museums sector, to education, and to historical preservation'.

Bookkeeping services are provided by Resolve UBM Business Management Services (formerly Wizard Accounts).



HCV Executive Officer, Margaret Birtley, poses a question about career pathways to the panellists at the *History Roadshow* in Geelong, September 2016. Seated (L-R) are Elizabeth Morgan (Nossal High School), Dr Ben Wilkie (Deakin University), Professor Joe Siracusa (RMIT University), and Dr Yana Ostapenko (RMIT University).

8. SOURCES OF SUPPORT

The HCV received *pro bono* legal advice from Herbert Smith Freehills in relation to revision of the Rules and the Board Charter.

The HCV enjoys generous in-kind support from the employers of its members and from many of the organisations represented on its Board. The Royal Historical Society of Victoria hosts the HCV as a tenant at reasonable rates. The State Library Victoria and the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) have kindly hosted the HCV's Board and General meetings.

Monash University and State Library Victoria led the coordination and hosting of the *Making Public Histories* seminar series in 2016.



Panelists at the August 2016 *Making Public Histories* seminar on 'Working History', presented at State Library Victoria as a lead-in event for the national conference of Professional Historians Australia.

L-R: Professor Andrew May (University of Melbourne), Chris Johnston (Context Pty Ltd), Dr Lisa Murray (City of Sydney), Associate Professor Seamus O'Hanlon (Monash University).

Following State Library Victoria's decision to take new directions with its public programs, a different venue was sought for the seminars in 2017. Old Treasury Building kindly offered to serve as the venue partner.



Professor Alistair Thomson (Monash University) speaks about his research at the seminar 'Making Digital Aural History: Australian Lives - An Intimate History' held at the Old Treasury Building in June 2017

Also in 2017, Monash University Publishing kindly supplied books as gifts for the speakers at each seminar.

In October, as part of the History Week festival, the Old Treasury Building provided an elegant setting for the *Annual Lecture* by Dr Anna Clark on the topic 'Locating the past: place and historical consciousness in Australia'.

With light refreshments included, the *Annual Lecture* event enabled effective networking amongst the capacity audience. Melbourne University Press assisted by providing a sales and signing desk for Dr Clark's latest book.



Dr Anna Clark of the University of Technology Sydney delivered the *Annual Lecture* at the Old Treasury Building on 20 October 2016, and signed her latest book at a sales table arranged by Melbourne University Press

The Department of Education and Training has funded the *History Roadshow* since 2006 through its Strategic Partnerships Program. Triennial funding is in place for the period 2015-2017. The *History Roadshow* program enjoys the support of many schools and the HCV is especially grateful to the schools that serve as hubs for their regions by hosting tours.



In July 2016, Leongatha Secondary College hosted the first *History Roadshow* tour to South Gippsland. Here, Elizabeth Morgan of Nossal High School share insights on exam technique with students from the region.

The HCV acknowledges the invaluable support and input of the Board, its committees and the Executive Officer.

The HCV is grateful to the many historians who contributed their time and specialist knowledge to the HCV's programs, including the *Annual Lecture*, the *History Roadshow* and the *Making Public Histories*

seminars. The presenters for the *Roadshow* and the seminar series are acknowledged in section 10, below. Thanks are extended to all speakers, many of whom gave their services pro bono.

The HCV thanks all its supporters and contributors for their good will and assistance.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

The HCV has continued to improve both the content and the distribution of its free and occasional E-news bulletin. In June 2017 the E-news mailing list contained approximately 1000 addresses (an increase of 260 over the year). The E-news bulletin contains not only announcements about HCV events, but also selected information from the history community in Victoria. It was published on seven occasions this year, as listed in this table:

2016	2017
21 September	16 February
13 October	24 April
3 December	12 May
	29 June

The HCV began engaging with social media through Twitter in June 2015. The Executive Officer is normally the author of tweets, including 'live tweets' from HCV events such as the *Annual Lecture*, seminars and *History Roadshow* tours. The Treasurer managed the Twitter account in December 2016 and January 2017 when the Executive Officer was on leave.

Year ending	No. of tweets during year	No. of followers at end of year	Engagement rate over whole year
30 June 2016	154	409	1.1%
30 June 2017	338	913	1.5%



The above message gained 3,325 'impressions' in June 2017 and was the HCV's 'top tweet' for the year.

This message from the *Making Public Histories* seminar in Nov 2016 gained 1,532 'impressions' and was the HCV's 'top media tweet' for the year

10. MAJOR PROGRAMS

The HCV's current range of programs ensures that key audiences are targeted effectively. The *Annual Lecture*, reported above (pp. 8-9) reaches professionals and the general public with interests in history.

The *Making Public Histories* seminar series often attracts an audience with specialised interests and expertise. Five seminars were offered during the year. The topics and presenters were:

18 August 2016: 'The role of history today: in our cities, our institutions and our communities'

Participants: Chris Johnston, Context Pty Ltd; Andrew May, University of Melbourne; Lisa Murray, City of Sydney; Seamus O'Hanlon, Monash University (convenor).

This seminar was held as a lead-up event to Working History, the 2016 national conference of Professional Historians Australia.

16 November 2016: 'Bread and stones: historians using and preserving digital sources'

Participants: Michael Jones, University of Melbourne / Museums Victoria; Owen O'Neill, Public Record Office Victoria (convenor); Sarah Slade, State Library Victoria; Daniel Wilksch, Public Record Office Victoria.

The video of this seminar, kindly recorded by State Library Victoria, is available via the HCV website.

7 March 2017: 'Performing Refugee History: Voices from Contemporary Australia'

Participants: Stephanie Arnold, 'Across the Water'; Michael Green, 'Behind the Wire'; Alistair Thomson, Monash University (convenor).

2 May 2017: 'Reinterpreting Heritage Houses: Re-imagining Rippon Lea'

Participants: Martin Green, National Trust of Australia (Victoria); Graeme Davison, Monash University; Linda Young, Deakin University; Alistair Thomson, Monash University (convenor).

This seminar was presented as part of the 2017 Heritage Festival.

6 June 2017: 'Making Digital Aural History: Australian Lives: An Intimate History'

Participants: Anisa Puri, (President, Oral History NSW); Alistair Thomson, Monash University; Christina Twomey, Monash University (convenor).

Six *History Roadshow* tours for VCE History students in regional Victoria and their teachers were conducted during the year:

- 19 July 2016, hosted by Leongatha Secondary College
- 9 August 2016, hosted by Girton Grammar School, Bendigo
- 17 August 2016, hosted by Ballarat Secondary College
- 1 September 2016, hosted by Catholic College Sale
- 6 September 2016, hosted by Matthew Flinders Girls High School, Geelong
- 23 May 2017, hosted by Goulburn Valley Grammar School, Shepparton

Sessions were delivered in subject areas relating to the curriculum and matching local demand. In 2016-2017, these subjects were Ancient History, Australian History, Revolutions (China, France and Russia)

and Twentieth Century History. A general session on Career Pathways was included as part of each tour.

The academic presenters were: Dr Charles Fahey (La Trobe University); Dr Cheryl Glowrey (Federation University Australia); Dr Rhiannon Evans (La Trobe University); Ned Johnson (Centre for Adult Education); Emeritus Professor Peter McPhee AM (The University of Melbourne); Dr Paula Michaels (Monash University); Elizabeth Morgan (Nossal High School); Greg Naylor (Geelong College); Dr Yana Ostapenko (RMIT University); Professor Joe Siracusa (RMIT University); Dr Darius Von Güttner (University of Melbourne); and Dr Ben Wilkie (Deakin University).

The *History Roadshow* program is evaluated and reported regularly to the Department of Education and Training.

11. FRIENDS PROGRAM

This year, much thought and planning has gone into the development of a Friends program. The main aims of the program are:

External - To offer current and future supporters a way to engage and demonstrate support for HCV while receiving tangible benefits in return for an annual subscription fee.

Internal - To grow HCV's current following, providing demonstrable data evidence of support for inclusion in funding applications, and generating new income to support HCV's operations and activities.

The HCV already has a strong readership of the E-news bulletin, a growing following through Twitter and welcomes new members from its existing audiences: history teachers including school and university staff, professional and academic historians, historical society and GLAM sector staff and volunteers, tertiary history students, journalists and anyone with an interest in history/heritage.

Friends will support the HCV advocating for history in Victoria and sharing history with Victorians through educational programs and lectures. The HCV encourages everyone to become a Friend!

