

ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES, 2019-2020

CONTENTS

1. FROM THE CHAIR.....	2
2. THE YEAR IN SUMMARY.....	3
3. MEMBERSHIP.....	3
4. GOVERNANCE AND BOARD ACTIVITIES.....	5
5. PUBLIC FUND COMMITTEE	6
6. ADVOCACY	6
7. SOURCES OF SUPPORT	6
8. COMMUNICATIONS	7
9. ADMINISTRATION.....	8
10. MAJOR PROGRAMS.....	8
11. FRIENDS PROGRAM	10

1. FROM THE CHAIR



The past year is one that none of us will forget for the tragedies and challenges to which our communities have been exposed. At a state and national level these have included severe drought and devastating bushfires, followed by the coronavirus pandemic. As with all times of crisis, these have reminded people of historical precedents and parallels as well as confronting us with the deadly consequences of our interaction with our environments.

One minor consequence of the pandemic was that the History Council of Victoria, like other institutions, was impelled to conduct much of its business online. We were fortunate that technologies have evolved to the point where gatherings large and small have been of high quality, evident in our *Making Public Histories* seminar – now webinar – program. At the time of writing, I am about to participate in the first such webinar. It has a timely theme, ‘Public Monuments—Contested Histories’, and has attracted an audience of around 300 from Victoria, the other Australian states and territories, and also the United Kingdom. A recording will be uploaded to the HCV’s YouTube channel. These technologies will also enable us to offer an online *History Roadshow* program to regional VCE students later in 2020.

It is perhaps no coincidence that a year marked by climatic and epidemic crisis should have been one of agitation about the meaning of the past in the contemporary world. The social differentiation in the experience of the pandemic in part explains the power and passion of Black Lives Matter protests and the heated debates about the memorials to those seen to be responsible for or involved with slavery in particular. Issues of heritage were especially pointed in Australia with the destruction of Indigenous cultural sites by mining companies.

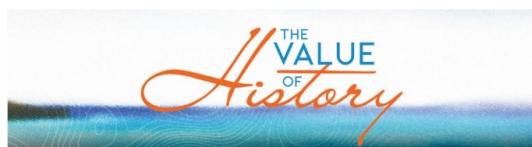
We share a deep conviction about the vital importance of an historical awareness in our lives, in everything from individual and community identity to the quality of our public culture and decision-making. So we have been dismayed by the deliberate identification by the Federal Minister for Education of university humanities courses as irrelevant to the world of work and for which students should pay much higher fees.

These and other issues have kept the Council busy! We are fortunate to have a Board of committed individuals drawn from cultural and educational institutions and heritage bodies; history teachers and curriculum advisors; academic and professional historians; and other organisations. We have taken steps to strengthen our links with other History Councils in New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia.

It has been a year of transition for the Council as our longstanding Chair Dr Liz Rushen was succeeded by Emeritus Professor Graeme Davison before he in turn needed to step away in March. Fortunately, both these outstanding individuals will continue their close involvement with the Board.

We have been delighted to welcome Alicia Cerreto to join Executive Officer Margaret Birtley with a view to succeeding Margaret in November. Alicia brings special skills and a wealth of experience from her work with the Professional Historians Association and elsewhere. There will be a later time to mark Margaret’s extraordinary contribution to the Council, which has laid the administrative and financial basis to enable us to deliver a variety of activities and has sustained the commitment of us all to the value of historical literacy in public life.

Emeritus Professor Peter McPhee AM
Chair



2. THE YEAR IN SUMMARY

Highlights of the HCV's activities during from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 included:

- the launch of the Value of History statement in October
- the Annual Lecture, delivered by Emeritus Richard Broome AM in October
- the development of a shared calendar for Women's History Month in March
- the appointment of Alicia Cerreto, Deputy Executive Officer, as part of a staffing succession plan

Ongoing programs include the HCV Friends, the *History Roadshow* program for VCE students (with funding from the Department of Education and Training), the *Making Public Histories* seminar series in partnership with Monash University and the Old Treasury Building, and continuing sponsorship of the Historical Fiction Competition organised by the History Teachers' Association of Victoria for students in Years 9 and 10.

The pandemic has presented particular challenges for the HCV because so much of its work has involved face-to-face engagement. The HCV's robust website has been developed to provide current and relevant information. The Board and staff have been actively planning ways to deliver programs remotely, later in 2020.

The HCV continues to work collegially with the other History Councils in Australia with a focus on shared advocacy on issues of nationwide importance.

The HCV extends special congratulations to Dr Judith Smart AM, a long-standing member of the Board, whose distinguished service to history and historians was recognised by the award of Membership in the Order of Australia on Australia Day 2020.



History Roadshow presentation at Federation University Australia (Churchill campus) by Associate Professor Adrian Jones OAM, a past Chair of the HCV.

3. MEMBERSHIP

In November 2019, the Board appointed Emeritus Professor Peter McPhee AM FAHA FASSA as an individual member of the HCV.

Employment changes led to the resignations of two members:

- Martin Green resigned as the representative of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) with effect from 12 July 2019 and is succeeded by Dr Annette Shiell.
- Kitty Owens resigned as the representative of Australian Museums and Galleries Association (Victoria) with effect from 20 November 2019 and is succeeded by Sarah Morris.

Several changes occurred when organisational terms of appointment concluded:

- Adjunct Associate Professor Rob Hess completed his term as the representative of Victoria University on 22 May 2020.

- Dr Kathleen Neal completed her term as the representative of Monash University on 22 May 2020.
- Victoria Hall completed two terms as the representative of the Department of Education and Training on 8 June 2020. Her successor is Penny Addison.

The Board thanks those whose terms have concluded for their generous contributions of time and expertise.

Following a review of the way the HCV engages with the tertiary education sector, the Board invited three universities to serve as members for a three-year term:

- Deakin University has appointed Professor David Lowe FASSA as its representative.
- La Trobe University has appointed Dr Yves Rees as its representative.
- Monash University has appointed Dr Susie Protschky as its representative.

The Board is the governing body of the HCV. Its membership corresponds with the full membership of the association. At 30 June 2020, the Board members were:

Representatives of member organisations

Organisation	Representative	Start date
Australian Broadcasting Corporation	Michelle Rayner	13 Jul 2005
Australian Museums and Galleries Association (Vic) (AMAGA Victoria)	Sarah Morris	19 Mar 2020
Department of Education and Training	Penny Addison	9 Jun 2020
Heritage Council of Victoria	Professor Andrew May FASSA	10 Aug 2018
History Teachers Association of Victoria (HTAV)	Bronwyn Cook	22 Nov 2018
National Trust of Australia (Victoria) (NTAV)	Dr Annette Shiell	20 Feb 2020
Museums Victoria	John Patten	2 Mar 2017
Professional Historians Association (Vic/Tas)	Katherine Sheedy MPHA	1 Feb 2005
Public Record Office Victoria	Tara Oldfield	23 Nov 2016
Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV)	Dr Judith Smart AM FRHSV	10 Feb 2009
State Library Victoria	Tim Hogan	1 Mar 2017

Representatives of other organisational members

Organisation	Representative	Start date
Old Treasury Building	Margaret Anderson FFAHS	21 Jan 2016
Deakin University	Professor David Lowe FASSA	28 May 2020
La Trobe University	Dr Yves Rees	3 Jun 2020
Monash University	Dr Susie Protschky	10 Jun 2020

Individual members

Name	Start date
Emeritus Professor Graeme Davison AO FAHA FASSA FFAHS	7 Nov 2018
Emeritus Professor Peter McPhee AM FAHA FASSA	21 Nov 2019
Dr Liz Rushen MPHA	14 Feb 2013

4. GOVERNANCE AND BOARD ACTIVITIES

The Members met for the AGM on 19 September 2019 at Tasma Terrace, kindly hosted by NTAV.

The Board of the HCV met formally in the three ways during the year: in person at Tasma Terrace on 18 July, 19 September and 21 November 2019, by video conference on 19 March and 21 May 2020, and via online consultation during the period from 8 to 18 May 2020.

At the September Board meeting, Dr Liz Rushen declared her intention not to seek reappointment as Chair, having served in the role since March 2016. The Board thanked her for the major achievements of her term: a major reform of the Rules (including introduction of the Board Charter), the inauguration of the Friends program, and completion of the HCV's involvement in a major publishing project.

The Board appointed Emeritus Professor Graeme Davison as Chair from 20 September. At the March meeting, he advised his resignation from the Chair. The Board accepted this with regret and understanding, and expressed appreciation for his successful leadership, notably at the Annual Lecture, the end-of-year gathering, and at a Board planning day held in February. The Board appointed Emeritus Professor Peter McPhee as Chair from 20 March.

Executive Board positions as at 30 June 2020 were Emeritus Professor Peter McPhee (Chair), Dr Liz Rushen (Deputy Chair), Katherine Sheedy (Hon. Treasurer). Margaret Birtley is the appointed Secretary. These people served on the HCV's Executive committee, with Tim Hogan and Dr Judith Smart elected to the committee by the Board, and Emeritus Professor Graeme Davison participating by invitation.

Many Board members serve in small teams to advise on key areas of HCV activity. Additional experts are appointed to assist where appropriate. The Executive committee organises the Friends' program while other committees guide the Public Fund, fundraising and the HCV's social media and website communications. Committees also plan the Events program and the *History Roadshow*. The HCV acknowledges the invaluable support and input of the Board, its committees and the Executive Officer.

The *Making Public Histories* seminar series is organised by a partnership between HCV, Monash University and the Old Treasury Building. The Board's representative on the partnership committee was Dr Kathleen Neal. Administrative support for the seminar series is provided by the Executive Officer.

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. Board members also lead events such as tours and seminars.



The Board continued its sponsorship of the Year 9 and 10 Category of the Historical Fiction Competition organised by the HTAV.

Board members Bronwyn Cook and Tim Hogan served as the judging panel.

At left: Mingqiu Dai, The Mac.Robertson Girls' High School, pictured with judge Tim Hogan at the presentation ceremony arranged by HTAV on 18 October 2019. Mingqiu was Runner Up in the Year 9/10 category of the competition.

5. 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 comprising Boyce Pizzey OAM, Dr Charles Fahey and Dr Geoffrey Robinson.

6. ADVOCACY

As the peak body for history in Victoria, the History Council makes submissions on current issues. In doing this, the HCV Board is guided by its Advocacy Policy and by the *Value of History* statement that was developed co-operatively by the HCV and the History Councils of New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia.

During this year, the HCV contributed the following:

- To Creative Victoria (30 August 2019), suggestions for the development of Victoria's next creative industries strategy, *Creative State 2020+*.
- To the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (30 August 2019), offering comments on VCE History Draft Study Design for 2021-25.
- To the Editor, *The Age*, advocating better protection of Indigenous heritage sites. This letter from HCV Chair, Professor Peter McPhee, was published on 17 June 2020.
- *A Humanities education: what's the point?* - an article by HCV Chair, Professor Peter McPhee (published on the HCV website, 23 June 2020)
- *Australia Needs More Humanities & Social Science Graduates* - a call to action in response to the Australian's government's proposal to more than double the cost of a university education for students in History (published on the HCV website, 25 June 2020). The HCV wrote on this topic to the Minister for Education, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP, and also contacted the Shadow Minister for Education and Training (the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP) and the five cross-benchers in the Senate.

7. SOURCES OF SUPPORT

The HCV enjoys generous in-kind support from the employers of its members and from many of the organisations represented on its Board. The RHSV hosts the HCV as a tenant at reasonable rates. The NTAV, Old Treasury Building and State Library Victoria have kindly hosted the HCV's Board, general and committee meetings. In February 2020, Public Record Office Victoria kindly hosted a planning day at the Victorian Archives Centre for the Board and several invited historians.

Monash University, Old Treasury Building and the HCV collaborate effectively to plan and deliver the *Making Public Histories* seminar series. The School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies at Monash sponsors the Old Treasury Building as the venue partner for face-to-face seminars. In response to the restrictions caused by the pandemic, Monash has confirmed its ability to host webinars using its Zoom account. Monash University Publishing kindly supplies books as gifts for the speakers at each seminar and helped to sponsor the Annual Lecture.

The Department of Education and Training has funded the *History Roadshow* for VCE history students since 2006 through its Strategic Partnerships Program. Current funding is for the triennium 2018-2020. The *History Roadshow* program enjoys the support of many schools in regional Victoria. The HCV is especially appreciative of the venues (whether secondary schools or the regional campuses of universities) that serve as hubs for their regions by hosting face-to-face tours.

State Library Victoria sponsored the Annual Lecture on 2 October 2019 by generously waiving the hiring fee for the Village Roadshow Theatre.

The HCV is grateful to the many historians who contributed their time and specialist knowledge to

the HCV's programs, including the *History Roadshow*, the *Making Public Histories* seminars and the Annual Lecture. The presenters at these events are acknowledged in section 10, below. Appreciation is 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.



History Roadshow presentation at Federation University Australia (Mt Helen campus) by a costumed Dr David Waldron.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

The website is the HCV's primary means of communication. It has been especially useful in conveying the HCV's response to the pandemic, by enabling rapid updates on HCV news and by suggesting ways in which HCV supporters can be historically productive despite social-distancing requirements. In that regard, the HCV was pleased to endorse *A Journal of the Plague Year: An archive of COVID19*, a global project initiated by Arizona State University on 13 March 2020 and partnered by the Melbourne History Workshop.

Women's History Month was revived in March 2020 by the RHSV with support from several interested organisations. The HCV website hosted a public calendar for scheduled events including a mix of online and face-to-face activities. Unfortunately, the pandemic forced the cancellation of many events but their legacy is preserved on the HCV website and the calendar is open for promotion of future Women's History Month events.

Content on the website is additionally promoted via email and social media. The HCV began engaging with social media through Twitter in June 2015 and five years later has 1,663 followers. HCV staff members are normally the author of tweets, including 'live tweets' from HCV events such as the *Making Public Histories* seminars and the *History Roadshow* tours. The HCV's Facebook page is used to promote its news and public events.

The HCV has continued to improve both the content and the distribution of its free and occasional E-news bulletin. At the end of June 2020, the E-news mailing list contained 1405 addresses. 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 twelve occasions this year: on 2 July, 11 July, 17 September, 30 September, 27 November and 24 December 2019, and on 4 February, 3 March, 23 March, 21 April, 28 May and 25 June 2020. An archive for the E-news has been established on the website.

All HCV Friends receive the E-news bulletin. They also receive the Friends 'Alert' email which was published six times during the year.

9. ADMINISTRATION

The Board is assisted by its part-time (0.2) Executive Officer, Margaret Birtley AM, who also represents the HCV at each of its public events. On 19 May 2020, the Board appointed a Deputy Executive Officer, Alicia Cerreto, also on a part-time basis (0.2).

Bookkeeping services are provided by Resolve UBM Business Management Services.

10. MAJOR PROGRAMS

The HCV's range of programs aims to ensure that key audiences are targeted effectively.

Making Public Histories

The *Making Public Histories* seminar series often attracts an audience with specialised interests and expertise. Three seminars were offered in 2019. Plans for the seminars in 2020 were postponed because of the pandemic, and the series will resume in webinar format from July 2020. The topics and presenters in 2019 were:

Tuesday 9 July: 'Dark Sides of Sport: Historical perspectives on match-fixing, bribery and corruption'

Participants: Roy Hay, Deakin University; Dr Mathew Turner, Deakin University; Dr Rob Hess, Victoria University; Amanda Smith, presenter of *Sporty* for ABC RN (convenor).

Tuesday 13 August: 'The Past, Present and Future of Victorian Indigenous Languages'

Participants: Associate Professor Alice Gaby, Monash University; Leonie Stevens, Monash Indigenous Studies Centre; Professor Alistair Thomson, Monash University (convenor).

Tuesday 12 November: 'Ephemera as historical sources'

Participants: Dr Annette Shiell, Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria; Rebecca Carland, Museums Victoria; Richard Aitken, historian, curator, and writer; Mandy Bede, President of the Ephemera Society of Australia (convenor).



Presenters at two of the seminars held at the Old Treasury Building in July (above) and August (right).



History Roadshow

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

- 6 September 2019, hosted by Federation University Australia (Mt Helen), Ballarat
- 9 September 2019, hosted by Deakin University, Warrnambool
- 11 September 2019, hosted by Federation University Australia (Churchill), Gippsland
- 12 September 2019, hosted by La Trobe University, Bendigo

Sessions were delivered in subject areas relating to the curriculum and matching local demand. In 2019, these subjects were Ancient History, Australian History, Global Empires, Revolutions (American, French and Russian) and Twentieth Century History. A general session on Career Pathways was included as part of each tour. The *History Roadshow* program is evaluated and reported regularly to the Department of Education and Training.

The academic presenters were: Dr Anne Beggs-Sunter (Federation University Australia); Dr Charles Fahey (La Trobe University), Dr Ruth Ford (La Trobe University); Marilyn Hoysted, Ned Johnson (Centre for Adult Education); Associate Professor Adrian Jones OAM (La Trobe University); Elizabeth Morgan (Girton Grammar School); Dr Yana Ostapenko (Monash University); Professor Joe Siracusa (RMIT University); Dr Richard Trembath; Dr David Waldron (Federation University Australia).



History Roadshow presentations (left) by Marilyn Hoysted at Federation University Australia (Churchill campus) and (right) by Professor Joe Siracusa at Deakin University (Warrnambool campus).

Since health restrictions were imposed in March 2020, excursions have not been possible and VCE students have spent considerable time learning remotely. The HCV is preparing for remote delivery of a modified version of the *History Roadshow* during the second half of 2020.

Annual Lecture

The 2019 Annual Lecture was presented by Emeritus Professor Richard Broome AM, FAHA, FRHSV, of La Trobe University.

Professor Broome is President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Chair of its Publications Committee, and Patron of the History Teacher's Association of Victoria. He has authored fourteen books.

Professor Broome's lecture was entitled 'Living on Mallee Country - Deep Time to 1900'.

With support from State Library Victoria and Monash University Publishing, the event was held at the Village Roadshow Theatre on 2 October 2019.



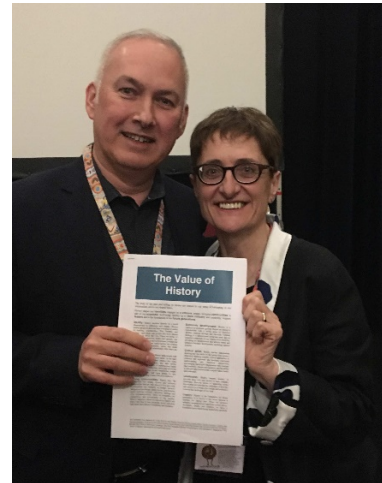
Collaboration with other History Councils

The HCV collaborates with the History Councils in NSW, SA and WA on matters of shared interest.

As illustrated here, the Councils' collaborative *Value of History* statement was announced by HCV Board member Professor Andrew May and Professor Joy Damousi, President of the Australian Historical Association, at the AHA's national conference, held at Toowoomba, Queensland, in early July 2019.

Each state subsequently conducted its own launch activity. The Victorian event was hosted by Emeritus Professor Graeme Davison as part of his opening remarks at the HCV Annual Lecture on 2 October.

The *Value of History* statement has become an essential element in the HCV's advocacy strategy. A copy is provided to each student attending a *History Roadshow* event.



11. FRIENDS PROGRAM

The HCV Friends program aims to offer current and future supporters a way to engage with and demonstrate support for HCV while receiving tangible benefits in return for an annual subscription fee. These benefits and opportunities are communicated when relevant through the occasional 'Alert' bulletin that is sent to each Friend by email.

During 2019, groups of Friends participated in the following special events:



On 14 September 2019, Dr Liz Rushen (then HCV Chair) and Jenn Burgess (President of the Heidelberg Historical Society) welcomed a group of HCV Friends to a private viewing of *Heidelberg's Busy Bee Signature Quilt 1895-96*, a social history exhibition at the Old Heidelberg Court House.

Margaret Birtley, the HCV's Executive Officer and a voluntary co-curator of the exhibition, introduced some aspects of the quilt and spoke about its history.

On 5 December 2019, Friends and members of the Board celebrated the year's end at Community Hub at the Dock with presentations about the new Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network by its Chair, Dr Jackie Watts OAM, and (at right) Maj Gen (Ret) Mike O'Brien, an HCV Friend and a member of the Network's Board.



The HCV encourages everyone to become a Friend in order to help our association to advocate for history and to educate Victorians about the value of history, and looks forward to post-pandemic times when face-to-face gatherings will again be possible.