



Professional Historians Australia

President's Report 25 September 2022 – 10 September 2023

The 27th AGM of PHA took place on Zoom on Saturday 24 September 2022. The following were elected office bearers for 2022-2023:

President: Lucy Bracey
Vice President: Jeff Hopkins-Weise
Secretary: Helen Penrose
Treasurer: Carmel Black
Accreditation Secretary & PHA Appeals Secretary: Peter Donovan

Web Manager: Fiona Poulton
PR and Publications: vacant
Minutes Secretary: to be rotated
Historia Editors: Sonia Jennings and Dot Wickham (end December 2022), Naomi Malone (March 2023), Deborah Lee-Talbot (current)
Circa Editors: Francesca Beddie and Elizabeth Offer

Roslyn Russell PHA (NSW & ACT) has agreed to continue as PHA's Public Officer in the ACT and on behalf of the organisation, I am thankful to her for continuing in this role.

Financial position

Our financial position has remained strong throughout the year, with three years of pandemic restrictions limiting our expenses.

Total Assets 30 June 2022

Bendigo Bank Savings Account	\$49,867.70
Bendigo Bank Honest History Account	\$1,961.90
Westpac Term deposit	\$8,002.80

At the time of writing, we are still finalising our financial statement for the current financial year. As of **1 July 2023** our accounts show the following balances:

Total Assets 1 July 2023

Bendigo Bank Savings Account	\$63,115.15
Bendigo Bank Honest History Account	\$609.49
Debit Card Account	\$197.34

We were very pleased to have been able to give out seven bursaries this year for the upcoming PHA national conference in Adelaide. Two are funded as part of the Honest History donation and four funded through an anonymous donor to PHA. Additionally, we have used our funds to pay editors for our national newsletter, *Historia*, and our professional journal, *Circa*.

Membership

Membership as of 1 May 2023 saw a total of 545 historians working across Australia. An increase of 28 members from this time last year, across all states and territories. This was broken down to:



QLD: 73
NSW & ACT: 105
VIC & TAS: 255
SA: 52
NT: 11
WA: 49

Paid assistance

PHA is pleased to say that we have continued to fund the compilation of our National Employment Bulletin through the work of PHA (NSW & ACT) administrative assistant. From October – June 2023 we had 13 job bulletins and we hope that many of our members found employment through this.

PHA (Vic & Tas) now has the services of a project officer and the national committee is providing some additional funding for their administrative work with the upcoming national conference.

We hope that in the future we can continue to provide employment opportunities for our members and gain valuable assistance for our voluntary committees, resulting in better outcomes and more opportunities for our members.

National Zoom Account

The national Zoom account remains a benefit to all members and we are pleased to say it has been used by PHA (Vic & Tas), PHA (Qld) and PHA (NSW & ACT) for committee meetings, reading groups and events.

The frustrating issue of a one time passcode for new users has been disabled so it is much easier to use.

Conference 2023 *Other Histories: Other Audiences*

I am very excited about the upcoming PHA national conference hosted by PHA (SA) in Adelaide September 16-17, 2023. This will be the first face-to-face conference since 2018. Thanks to the conference organising team from PHA (SA) as well as PHA (Vic & Tas) for assisting with the registration set up process and the use of Wild Apricot. I am pleased to say that all of the available bursaries have been given out and we are very proud to be able to assist our members in this way. Thank you to Honest History and an anonymous PHA donor for making these possible.

Wilson History Oration

On 8 June 2023, Dr Margaret Cook presented the annual Wilson History Oration titled, *Inundated: Floods, History and High Water*. A recording of the lecture can be viewed [here](#).

This annual online event was established in memory of Dr Bill Wilson OAM (1942-2021), a founder of PHA (NT), president of PHA (2004-07) and later Membership Secretary and Vice President of PHA (Vic & Tas).

Many thanks to the voluntary organising committee for all their efforts in producing such a high quality and professional oration: Sonia Jennings, Kimberly Meagher, Alicia Cerreto, Helen Penrose, Mary Sheehan and Peter Hobbins.

Publications

PHA (Vic & Tas) members Sonia Jennings and Dorothy Wickham (also a Queensland member) stepped down from the roles of editors of our national newsletter *Historia* at the end of 2022. We



thank them for all the work they undertook over the last few years in bringing us this wonderful national publication. I am pleased to report that the editor of the newsletter is now a paid position. We welcomed Naomi Malone (PHA NSW) into the role. She delivered two newsletters before unfortunately having to step down. Deborah Lee-Talbot (Vic & Tas) is our current editor and is doing an outstanding job.

Thank you once again to Francesca Beddie of PHA (NSW & ACT) for the diverse range of book reviews written by members that have continued to be published on the PHA website each month.

The PHA committee also made it a priority this year to rejuvenate our professional journal, *Circa*. Once more we were able to offer some financial remuneration for the editors of this journal and after advertising were delighted to appoint Francesca Beddie (NSW & ACT) and Elizabeth Offer (Vic & Tas) to the role of joint-editors. The aim is to have a new edition out by early 2024.

Advocacy/Outreach/PR

Submissions and feedback

PHA was invited to review and submit feedback on a number of issues throughout the year including the National Budget 2023-2024, the ANZSCO comprehensive review of job classifications for the Australian Bureau of Statistics and changes to the Model Rules for Incorporated Bodies from the Better Regulation Taskforce, ACT.

I am pleased to say that as of August 2023 the proposed preliminary changes included PHA's feedback which was to remove the limiting specialisations of Art Historian, Cultural Historian, Economic Historian and Geographic Historian and replace those with two specialisations: Professional Historian and Academic Historian. The final update and release of the new changes will be made by December 2023.

Details of the proposed update

Existing	Proposed
<p>272411 Historian</p> <p>Researches the history of human activity and prepares accounts of findings.</p> <p>Skill Level: 1</p> <p>Specialisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Historian • Cultural Historian • Economic Historian • Geographical Historian 	<p>272411 Historian</p> <p>Researches, collects and analyses information about the history of human activity, events, cultures and eras and prepares accounts of findings.</p> <p>Skill Level: 1</p> <p>Main Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assembles historical data by consulting sources of information such as historical indexes and catalogues, archives, court records, diaries, newspaper files and other materials • organises, authenticates, evaluates and interprets historical, political, sociological, anthropological and linguistic data • undertakes historical and cultural research into human activity, and prepares and presents research findings • writes articles to be published in academic publications such as journals • analyses and interprets historical information to determine its authenticity <p>Specialisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Historian • Academic Historian

Trove campaign

One of the biggest actions of advocacy this year was the threat to Trove funding. After months of advocacy, PHA as well as historians and researchers around the world celebrated the news that the federal government agreed to provide long-term funding for Trove as well as critical funding for the National Library of Australia. Pete Symons (Vic & Tas) coordinated a change.org petition and represented the issue a number of times in the media.

Many thanks to the Advocacy Sub-Committee which included Sonia Jennings, Kimberly Meagher, Elizabeth Offer, Donna Fearne, Francesca Beddie, Lisa Murray and myself.

Thankyou

I would like to express my immense gratitude and thanks to the PHA committee members for all their hard work and support this year. Each person has taken on and handled their portfolios successfully as well as pitching in above and beyond when various activities and events required it. I recognise that almost every delegate to the national committee also holds a committee role within their own local branch of PHA, making their voluntary



commitment significant. With a conference to coordinate on top of our business as usual, it has been a busy year. I am very grateful for all that everyone has done and continues to do, voluntarily, for the success of our association as well as the support you have all shown me personally in my role as president.

Lucy Bracey PHA (Vic & Tas)
PHA President