

PHA NSW & ACT

Professional Historians Association

NEW SOUTH WALES AND AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



Annual Report 2015-16

PHA NSW & ACT (Inc), GPO Box 2437, Sydney NSW 2001

Website – www.phansw.org.au Email – secretary@phansw.org.au

PHA NSW was formed in 1985, and renamed PHA NSW & ACT in 2014, as a professional association for practising qualified historians. It is a founding member of the federal peak body Professional Historians Australia (PHA) (formerly the [Australian Council of Professional Historians Associations Inc. \(ACPHA\)](#))

The objectives of PHA NSW & ACT are:

THE Association works to support and develop the professionalism and status of public historians in the community through:

- I. Leading public historians in the continuing professional development of their skills and practices across a life-long career as a historian,
- II. Facilitating and inculcating an ethos of high standards of professional and ethical practices among public historians,
- III. Promoting concepts of public history and professional practice across the many fields of historical inquiry and diverse forms of interpreting and presenting history to which public historians are significant contributors,
- IV. Advocating public history perspectives in public debates concerning interpretations of history and the keeping of documentary, environmental and other historical records,
- V. Providing potential clients with guidance on engaging public historians for appropriate remuneration, conditions and other considerations,
- VI. Representing members in contractual and employment matters,
- VII. Recognizing the outstanding contributions made by public historians within the field of history and within the broader community,
- VIII. Fostering mutually supportive and co-operative relationships among public historians, being a forum for the exchange and sharing of information and news between fellow public historians, and publishing in any form of technology materials relating to the objects of the Association,
- IX. Maintaining links, formal and informal including through memberships and affiliations, with public and private external bodies engaged in the practice of history in any of its diverse forms, and
- X. Maintaining membership of and contributing to the evolution of Professional Historians Australia Inc, and maintaining and deepening collegiate links with other professional and public historians associations around the world.

Membership of the 31st Committee 2015-16

Chair	Mark Dunn
Deputy Chair	Christine Yeats
Secretary/Public Officer	Stephen Gapps
Treasurer	Nicole Cama
Member (Memberships)	Judith Godden
Member (PH prize)	Birgit Heilman
Member	Carol Roberts (part year)
Member (PHA delegate)	Pauline Curby
Administration Officer	Nathan Esler

Contents

1.1	Chair’s Report	5
1.2	Secretary’s Report	6
1.3	Membership Officer Report	7
1.4	Public History Prize Report	8
1.5	Website and Blog Report	9
1.6	Social Media Report	13
1.7	Professional Historians Australia (PHA) Report	13
1.8	PHA NSW &ACT Representative on RAHS Library Committee Report	14
1.9	Records and Archives Officer Report	15
1.10	Continuing Professional Development Program Report	15
1.11	Mitchell Library Consultative Group Report	16
1.12	NAA Consultative Forum Report	17
1.13	Delegate to History Council of NSW Report	18
1.14	Community Advisory Committee of State Records NSW Report	18
1.15	Treasurer’s Report	19

1.1 Chair's Report

2015-16 has been my first year as Chair of the PHA NSW & ACT and it has been both a busy and productive one, for me and the Committee. It is very pleasing to see that over the last 12 months the PHA NSW & ACT has grown in both number of members and in social media profile. We have had 7 new members join in 2015-16 and one upgrade their membership and have passed 626 followers on Twitter with a growing group of Friends on Facebook as well. This is an excellent progression from even this time last year, when we were approaching 500 followers. Our Blog has also grown stronger with over 100 entries from members on a wide range of subjects. This means our messages are reaching further and to a greater audience than just our membership base.

These growing numbers strengthen our position in representing you, our members, and in making our voice heard regarding the issues that directly affect the Association. On this front, the PHA has, in the past year, made a number of submissions and written letters to a variety of Federal and State Ministers regarding issues that directly affect us as Historians. Hopefully you have seen these in the various Members Circulars that have been sent out over the year, but to remind you these include letters to the then Federal Minister for Arts, the Hon Mitch Fifield regarding federal funding cuts to cultural institutions especially the National Library with the knock on effects to Trove; to State Ministers Berejiklian and Perrottet in regards to changes to the access to the Land and Property Information Services records; and to the Productivity Commission concerning the proposed changes to Intellectual Property Rights and the proposition of 'fair use' rights being introduced under the Copyright Act. In this new year of 2016-17 we have also added our voice to the inquiry into Museums and Galleries and the Powerhouse Museum (MAAS) relocation. It is important for the Association to be heard in regards these issues and to keep the members informed of our work.

As well as our advocacy and our growing social media presence, the Committee has worked hard to streamline processes for the organisation. This past year we have transferred our accounts from St George to the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. Although this was not as simple as we were first made to understand by the Bank, it has been a worthwhile exercise, as it gives the Committee and the Treasurer in particular, access to an easy and quicker electronic banking system. Whereas in the past it was a matter of physically going to a bank branch to authorise payments, these can now all be done online with two authorised committee members. The new system has also made it simpler for members to pay their membership and for us to track which members have paid and when. Our transition to electronic ticketing for events is also well underway and again streamlines the process for everyone. We can see how numbers are tracking for events and those who pay receive a notice and tax receipt from the system. We appreciate there has been some disruptions for members, especially around the membership renewal phase, and thank you all for your patience and understanding, but with this new system it is becoming easier and simpler to administer the Association.

A clearer picture of the membership base has also been achieved through Nathan Esler's work. Nathan as our Administrative Officer has organised the membership database into an easily searched and ordered system which allows us to contact members far more easily.

For the next year I am keen to continue to expand our membership base and our social media

presence. I would also like to explore closer connections to the National body and to our fellow State PHA's. The CPD session we held with Find our Past historians from PHA Vic early in 2016 was a good example of how we might do this. The recent PHA conference in Melbourne, which I was unable to attend, is another example and one that from all reports was a great success. There has been some talk already of NSW hosting the next National Conference in 2018, which is something the new committee can investigate and work towards.

I would like to thank the committee for 2015-2016 and especially those members who have served their terms and are standing down. Christine Yeats, Judith Godden, Pauline Curby and Stephen Gapps have all been an enormous help to me in my first year and have served over and above in their roles as committee members, CPD organiser, membership officer, National PHA representative and Secretary. Equal thanks to the committee members who remain, Birgit Heilmann and Nicole Carma and for their roles as Public History Awards officer and Treasurer. Thank you to Nicole especially for her role in taking on the task of our transfer of banks and the move to electronic banking. Thank you also to Carol Roberts who sadly had to step down from the committee at the start of 2016. Lastly, thank you to Nathan who works tirelessly and often at short notice, as our Administrative Officers. We all appreciate that the job is a big one and a vital one to the ongoing success of the Association.

I would also like to thank those members who represent us on committees and boards, who manage the blog and who contribute to it, to those who attend our social events, our CPD's, the AGM and generally support the association throughout the year. I look forward to working with the new committee for 2016-17 and with all our members in what promises to be another exciting and fulfilling year for the NSW & ACT PHA.

Mark Dunn, Chair, August 2016

1.2 Secretary and Public Officer's Report

2015-16 was my fourth and final year as Secretary. I thank the previous committee members I have had the pleasure to work with and I hope my efforts have advanced the PHA NSW & ACT in some small way.

Perhaps the most successful element of the Secretary's role has been involvement with the National Jobs & Opportunities Bulletin. The numbers of queries about employing historians have increased again in the last year and the breadth and quality of employment opportunities has expanded.

The bulletin is constructed from active job searches by our Administration Officer, who sources jobs nationally. Increasing numbers of requests for historians in NSW & ACT come directly to the Secretary. The bulletin could be even more successful if other PHAs become more actively involved – at present there are few contributions from other states who might have direct employment requests. I certainly hope this service is continued to be supported by PHA and taken up more actively by other states in the future.

Another small achievement has been the expansion of the PHA NSW & ACT on social media, of which I have had some input. When I joined the committee in 2012 the Association's Twitter account had 40 followers. It now has over 600. There are over 100 people engaged with the Facebook group. I believe the growing social media presence of PHA NSW & ACT has directly

contributed to an increased profile among the broader history and heritage community, as well as potential clients and the general public.

During the year I spent time developing some concepts for a new website that would complement a more pro-active external presence of PHA NSW & ACT and one that will be simple for future committees to work with, as well as members. While the concept has been drafted, the time-consuming development of a new website must wait and I will provide support to the new committee in moving this forward. I believe it is critical to PHA NSW & ACT to establish a new, simplified and dynamic website that continues and develops the excellent blog posts as well as provides an important one stop shop to clients seeking professional historians.

Over my terms as Secretary I have seen increased collaboration and connection between states and with the PHA. With the success of the PHA VIC Working History conference in August 2016 and the National Jobs & Opportunities Bulletin, the connections between other states and PHA have been strengthened and bodes well for the future. This highlights the value of furthering these developments and investigating new ways professional historians engage nationally. I hope these developments will continue. I also hope a focus on professional historians relationships with Public History – both academic and in practice – will continue and be further developed.

Thank you to our ongoing committee members, and in particular to our Chair Mark Dunn, for working on PHA matters in our very busy lives. I must also thank Birgit Heilman for her acting-Secretary support during my 3 month overseas absence this year.

Stephen Gapps, Secretary & Public Officer, August 2016

1.3 Membership Officer's Report

The new membership processes continue to work smoothly. The last problem was the cumbersome process of issuing membership certificates. Our PHA representative (Pauline Curby) eventually succeeded in transferring this process to us. As a result, we can now issue membership certificates with virtually no delay. As a bonus, the process is also much cheaper and more reliable.

There has been a steady stream of inquiries about membership throughout the year, though not all decided, or were eligible, to apply. Since the last AGM, the following members have been admitted:

- At Professional level: Dr Janet McGaw; Dr Rowan Day; Dr Jeannine Baker; Ms Rose Cullen; Dr Peter Hobbins.
- At Associate level: Mrs Jacqueline (Jacqui) Newling; Ms Tracey Fiertl.

As well, Ms Anisa Puri successfully applied to upgrade her membership to Professional level. There were no applications at Graduate Historian level. Overall, we are maintaining a steady stream of new applicants, at a similar rate to recent years.

The Membership Officer is now responsible for following up any members who state they will not be renewing their subscription as they have retired, or who contact the PHA about joining the Friends of the PHA. Becoming a Friend appears a popular option for past members but, as

no fees are paid and 'retirement' is now a flexible concept, we need to be vigilant that all Friends remain eligible.

I thank the Committee for their support; Nathan Esler our Administrative Officer for his efficiency and enthusiasm; and Cameron Adams for his amazingly fast response to requests to add new members to our subscription lists. I also thank all members who have encouraged other historians to join the PHA.

Judith Godden, Membership Officer, August 2016

1.4 Public History Prize Report

There were slight changes in the condition of entries which increased the submissions for the prize this year. The 2015 Public History Prize was open to any students (undergraduate, graduate diploma, master studies) in NSW and ACT whose work engaged with the field and practice of professional and public history (both Australian and international).

We received 18 high quality submissions with a mix of more traditional essays and a range of other project types, from an outline for a play, to oral history websites and community website projects. Especially a new undergraduate course at Sydney University, called 'History beyond the classroom' produced many of these public history projects. The course allowed students to explore history in action through working on projects in collaboration with a community organisation of their choice.

This year's judges were current chair of the PHA NSW & ACT, Dr Mark Dunn, and Dr Catherine Bishop, Historical Studies Research Concentration Coordinator at ACU.

For the first time, the prize was awarded at its own event, and not, as in previous years, as part of the 'History in July' event. This format was very successful. About 30 guests, including members, students and guests followed our invitation to attend the Public History Prize Awards Night at History House on 1 March 2016.

The 2015 Public History Prize was awarded to Imogen Dixon-Smith for her essay, 'Keeping up with the times: Complicating understandings of gender at the historic house Meroogal.' The judges, were unanimous in their decision that this paper was the standout in a strong field of entries. "This is an excellent paper, a worthy winner of the Public History Prize for 2015". Imogen's essay was part of her Master thesis in Museum Studies at Sydney Uni. She investigated the way gender is represented at Meroogal, a historic house in Nowra, run by Sydney Living Museums.

The judges also awarded a Highly Commended as a runner-up to Claire Ogle and her project 'Gumine Oral History Archive'. This project was undertaken as part of a Bachelor of Arts at Sydney University. Claire created a website to preserve oral histories of elders in Papua New Guinea alongside some breathtaking photographs.

Entries: Public History Prize 2015

Shayma Taweel: 'A place to heal': memorialising the Appin massacre in the era of reconciliation.
Ian Dehlsen: Anzac Parade and our changing narrative of memory.

Geraldine Fela: Balls and Chains: Reconsidering separatism in the Australian gay liberation movement of the 1970s.
 Cassandra Watson: Callan Park Writers Walking Tour.
 Claudia Howarth: Comedy in Canberra? It's an inside joke.
 Alannah Westcliffe: Crossing the yellow line: how local Tasmanian activism effected state, federal and international change.
 Claire Ogle: Gumine Oral History Archive.
 Joshua Favalaro: Haberfield online: Discovering Australia's First Garden Suburb.
 Davida Ivey: History Capstone Report.
 Imogen Dixon-Smith: Keeping up with the times.
 Kieran Pender: Red Scare On Ice.
 Sara Golru: Redfern Legal Centre - Achievements and Highlights.
 Madeline Fisher: The Chef's Dilemma: A Play.
 Aidan Beiboer: The Civic Theatre - A History.
 Ruby Arrowsmith-Todd: The community media bus, rides again.
 Louise Waugh: Thomas Dix: An invisible individual stick within the historical scholarship of the Newcastle Miners' Association bundle, 1887-1892.
 Adelaide Welling: Willoughby Girls Podcast.

Birgit Heilmann, Public History Prize Officer, August 2016

1.5 Website and Blog Report

Blog report

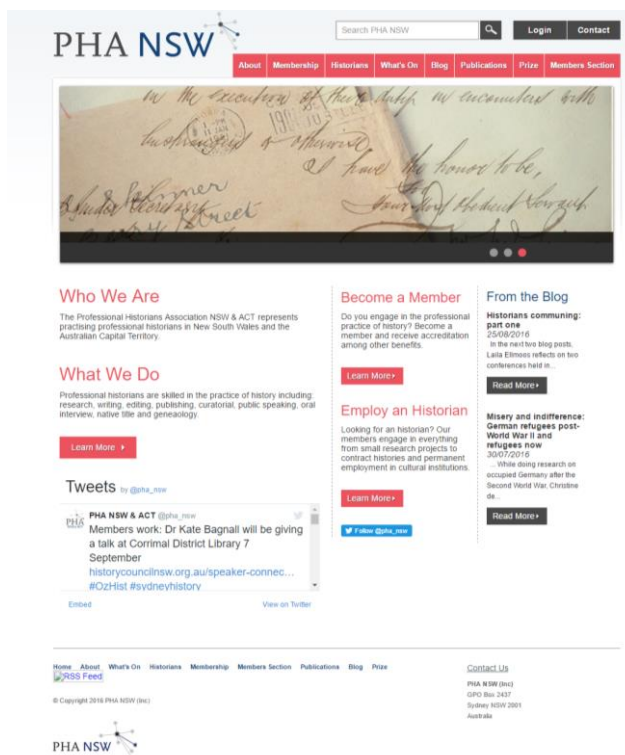
Inge Clendinnen has asserted you can't do history on the opinion pages. True but you can add historical evidence to public debate. The PHA NSW & ACT blog does this. It is a vehicle to showcase members' work to a broader audience, to contribute historical perspectives on current issues and advocate for historical thinking or method. Over the last year, members have written posts on history's intersection with heritage and other disciplines including the visual arts and theatre. They have also provided insights into war, refugees and other topics relevant to the Australian community. They have introduced themselves and their professional interests. They have discussed the challenges of editing collections and engaging audience. The blog has also been used to raise awareness about current issues. The most commented-upon posts were those lending support to Adam Goodes and on the fate of Sydney's sandstone heritage.

But the blog has not yet met its full potential. Social media relies on interactivity. At the moment the blog is episodic and static. It depends on the volunteer editor to commission and nag. Rarely do members offer up copy. One idea for added dynamism would be to broaden the scope of the blog to include contributions from all PHA members in Australia.

For those not wishing to write a post, engaging in a discussion about the issues raised would enhance the vitality and profile of history in Australia. The blog is moderated to ensure that the discussion remains within the boundaries of our remit as a professional association and that the conversation remains respectful as well as relevant.

Francesca Beddie, Blog Manager, August 2016

Website report

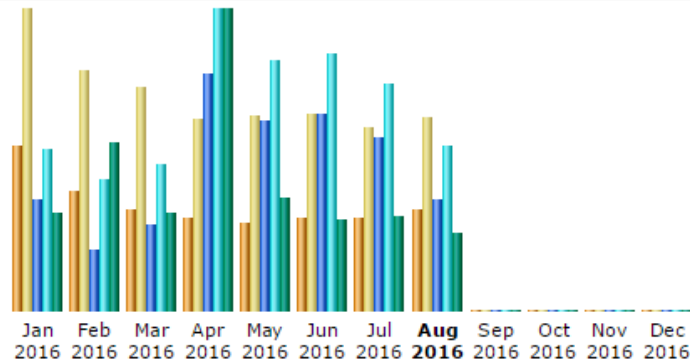


Another year has passed, and the website continues to promote the work of PHA NSW & ACT in tandem with our social media presence.

Who was the average imaginary visitor in 2016? Not too different to last year: Russian (though first few months of the year more likely to be French), using a Windows machine and Internet Explorer (still?) with no discernible pattern for particular days or times. This visitor found the site via Google, stayed for less than 30 seconds, downloaded a copy Bethan Donnelly’s 2008 essay ‘Villawood Migrant Hostel’, and dropped by the blog to read ‘2014 Public History Prize Winner: Nathan Fallon’. The Public History Prize winners are obviously a major attraction.

The stats for 2016, I have to say, are consistently down on those of 2015. The number of unique visitors and number of return visits made by users are at least 1000, if not more, fewer every month. The total number of unique visitors to the site in the same period in 2015 was 38,823 compared to 25,042 in 2016. This may be simply that social media, like Facebook, is a more popular place to keep up with the latest PHA news, familiarity with the site and thus minimal return traffic (eg only for new blog entries), or it may suggest the need for a revamp of the site to encourage users to return. This is perhaps something for a wider discussion.

Monthly history



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2016	4,828	8,829	45,393	65,775	2.45 GB
Feb 2016	3,505	7,036	25,161	53,608	4.19 GB
Mar 2016	2,983	6,531	35,003	59,527	2.42 GB
Apr 2016	2,738	5,607	96,537	123,060	7.47 GB
May 2016	2,577	5,691	77,910	102,398	2.82 GB
Jun 2016	2,745	5,755	80,314	105,178	2.27 GB
Jul 2016	2,698	5,361	70,750	92,646	2.33 GB
Aug 2016	2,968	5,668	45,681	67,114	1.92 GB
Sep 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Oct 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Nov 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Dec 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Total	25,042	50,478	476,749	669,306	25.86 GB

The two most important statistics to look at in the above graph are unique visitors (orange) and number of visits (yellow). The first tells us how many unique individuals used the site, the second how many return visits these unique visitors collectively made. The dark blue relates to the number of pages viewed by the visitors in total. The last two table items (light blue and green) are not particularly useful for our concerns, and 'Hits' is especially misleading as it includes downloads of everything required to view a single page, such as images and java script files.

The blog is still doing well, and its entries literally fill the list of top visited pages every month. Some of the standouts, aside from the previously mentioned Nathan Fallon, include the 'Public Statement' on Adam Goodes (Bruce Baskerville), 'Fractured Families' (Lisa Murray), 'Private Lives Public History' (Francesca Beddie on Anna Clark), 'The Yellow Flag – writing about the plague' (Christa Ludlow), 'Political Amnesia' (Francesca Beddie), 'Remembering isn't enough' (Francesca Beddie) and 'Introducing Mark Dunn'.

The following graph refers to the country of origin for site visitors for the month of June 2016 (top 25 only):

Locales (Top 25) - Full				
Locales		Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Russian Federation	ru	23,815	23,861	36.38 MB
Ukraine	ua	21,134	21,154	99.67 MB
China	cn	13,428	13,582	105.68 MB
United States	us	9,428	11,876	344.01 MB
South Korea	kr	3,452	3,466	14.95 MB
Australia	au	3,261	21,233	1.02 GB
France	fr	1,877	1,958	41.29 MB
Germany	de	522	1,162	93.64 MB
Poland	pl	390	468	42.16 MB
Turkey	tr	365	367	1.77 MB
Israel	il	273	300	3.46 MB
Canada	ca	248	310	21.96 MB
United Arab Emirates	ae	236	256	1.18 MB
Virgin Islands (British)	vg	208	212	5.34 MB
Great Britain	gb	175	410	33.90 MB
India	in	155	412	19.46 MB
Netherlands	nl	137	143	2.71 MB
Sweden	se	100	211	10.36 MB
Estonia	ee	90	90	808.83 KB
Azerbaijan	az	88	88	287.88 KB
Taiwan	tw	80	171	9.73 MB
Brazil	br	79	1,148	39.82 MB
Seychelles	sc	69	69	1.32 MB
Spain	es	49	141	4.99 MB
Romania	ro	48	49	1.32 MB
Others		607	2041	338.78 MB

While there is some variation from month to month, the top visitors usually come from some combination of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and China, though most bandwidth usage comes consistently from Australia.

Most users use a search engine to find the PHANSW via Google or Microsoft Bing, using terms like 'professional', 'historian', 'pha', 'history' or individual member names. Something the statistics don't tell us is how much traffic is directed to individual member profiles. It might be interesting and useful to conduct a survey of members with profiles to find out how much interest and business is coming to them via the website.

I will leave you with the key stats for August 2016, which so far is looking like one of the best months for site traffic since very early in the year. Interesting to note is the difference between the August statistics in my earlier Monthly graph, and in this table below, over a timeframe of no more than one hour while I was putting this report together. I swear it wasn't all me!

Summary			
Reported period	Month Aug 2016		
First visit	01 Aug 2016 - 00:14		
Last visit	25 Aug 2016 - 22:11		
	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages
Viewed traffic *	3,077	5,919 (1.92 visits/visitor)	48,266 (8.15 Pages/Visit)

Christine de Matos, Website manager, August 2016

1.6 Social Media Report

In 2012 the PHA Twitter account had 40 followers, in 2013-14 it increased to 290 follower, in 2014-15 it to 430 and in August 2016 was 618 followers. While Twitter is not actively used by many members to promote their work, the overall profile of PHA NSW & ACT in the history, heritage and museums sector has increased remarkably.

At the recent Working History conference our Twitter feed was lively and interacted with other PHAs and members around the country. It was also an opportunity for members (and others) to follow conference proceedings.

In 2015 there were 40 PHA members using a then closed Facebook group. We opened the PHA Facebook group to create a more dynamic and potentially interactive group for communication between members and with the public. There are now 130 people (PHA and non-PHA members) in the PHA NSW & ACT Facebook group. Members have increasingly taken up posting items of interest, professional development opportunities and links to their work.

Stephen Gapps, Social Media, 12 August 2016

1.7 PHA (Professional Historians Australia) Report

During 2015-16 Professional Historians Australia (PHA) held four general meetings, including the September 2015 AGM and major face-to-face meeting in Hobart, hosted by PHA (Tas). The recent national conference 'Working History' on 19 and 20 August in Melbourne was an opportunity for many members to meet and share their work with an appreciative audience. The preparation and organisation by many volunteers, mostly from PHA (Vic), was outstanding. It is hoped that in 2018 a similar event might be held in Sydney.

As at the membership census date of 1 May 2016 the total number of PHA members was 471, an increase of 28 (more than 6 per cent) nationally over last year's total of 443. The size of the PHAs ranged from PHA (Vic) the largest at 166, to 8 in Tasmania (the PHA since disbanded) and 14 in the Northern Territory.

Professional Historians Australia produces two publications. Pauline Curby has continued to compile, edit and manage the distribution of *Historia* four times a year, with much appreciated assistance from Sonia Jennings of PHA (Vic). PHA's journal *Circa* (Vol 5) was released as a finale to the 'Working History' conference. The winners of the \$500 *Circa* prize and two highly commended articles – both from NSW – were announced. Thanks go to the editorial board for their continued work on this hard-copy, national journal sent to every member across the country.

Review of every page of the national website is almost finalised and the trial of the national employment bulletin is complete. The AGM resolved to continue the bulletin but with some further consideration of its scope and operation.

Professional Historians Australia has seen a changeover of positions as a consequence of two delegates leaving (Pauline Curby (PHA (NSW & ACT) and Judy Nissen PHA Qld), as well as the reduction in numbers by one, with the disbanding of PHA (Tas).

Pauline Curby, PHA NSW & ACT delegate, August 2016

1.8 PHA NSW & ACT Representative on RAHS Library Committee Report

Purpose of the RAHS Library Committee

The purpose of the Library and Archives Committee is to provide strategic support for the management of the RAHS Library and Archives Collection — including acquisition, storage and accessibility — and the residual museum collection (held at History House) and to ensure that the Library Collection Development Policy, Archives Collection Development Policy and the Records Retention and Disposal Policies are implemented.

Membership

The current Committee membership is a mix of RAHS Councillors and RAHS staff, RAHS library users, subject experts and the PHA representative. The RAHS President is an ex-officio member. Christine Yeats currently chairs the Committee.

Meetings

15 September 2015, 17 November 2015 and 8 March 2016. The meeting scheduled for 14 June 2016 did not go ahead.

Summary report on library activities over the past 12 month

Grant funded projects

- National Library of Australia: conservation and housing of the Foster Collection (scrapbooks).
- The City of Sydney: indexing and digitisation of the images relating Sydney from the Sydney Osborne Photographic Collection. The grant also included the cost of uploading these to the RAHS website.

Policies updated and adopted

- Library Collection De-accessioning and Disposal Policy (Retention and Disposal Policy)
- Library Collection Development and Management Policy

Storage of the James Semple Kerr Collection

This material is currently still being stored offsite.

Opening hours

The Library's opening hours were briefly modified in 2015-2016 to accommodate a Monday closure. This is no longer in place and the library is now open Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm (except Public Holidays and between Christmas and New Year).

Library Committee planning for 2016/2017

The following tasks/projects are planned:

- Continuing promotion of the library resources through the *History* magazine, the RAHS website, additions to TROVE and social media.
- Implementation of the Library Collection Deaccessioning and Disposal Policy (Retention and disposal schedule).
- The ongoing rationalisation of the History House basement storage space.

Christine Yeats PHA Representative on the RAHS Library Committee August 2016

1.9 Records and Archives Officer Report

Paper records

The contents of the PHA NSW&ACT has a filing cabinet in History House, which contained material dating back to the last transfer of archival records to the State Library of NSW (SLNSW), was sorted and boxed. Records identified permanent retention will shortly be transferred to the SLNSW. Secure disposal of the records that are no longer required will also take place shortly.

The decision as to the transfer or disposal of the records was taken with reference to the list of records previously transferred to the State Library of NSW and the PHA NSW & ACT Disposal and Retention Schedule (draft).

Digital records

PHA NSW & ACT e-files comprising minutes and agenda are being saved to Google Drive.

Action plan 2016-2017

The focus of the 2016-2017 action plan will be the ongoing management of the paper-based records stored at History House.

Christine Yeats Records and Archives Officer August 2016

1.10 Continuing Professional Development Program Report

The Professional Historians Association (NSW & ACT) Continuing Professional Development Program (CPD) aims to provide sessions that will enhance members' knowledge and skills in key areas.

In 2015/2016 the PHA (NSW & ACT) held the following CPD event:

- 21 March 2016 History an afternoon session Consulting Unplugged: behind the scenes of a small business presented by PHA (Vic) member Sarah Rood, who together with her colleague Katherine Sheedy, has been working as a self-employed historian for 20 years. Sarah shared some of the critical aspects that need to be considered when running a history consultancy. These included: business planning and logistics; building your brand; project and resource management; approach to tendering and costing and the importance of continuing professional development.

Members are encouraged to contribute to the blog with postings about CPD events. These postings offer a forum for discussion and comments arising from the workshop/event. They also allow members who were unable to attend the event to engage in the discussion. Members are encouraged to offer suggestions for future CPD events.

The PHA (NSW & ACT) acknowledges and thanks the RAHS for its ongoing support, in particular for providing the venue at History House.

Christine Yeats, CPD Coordinator, August 2016

1.11 Mitchell Library Consultative Group Report

Since the last AGM there have been only three meetings of the Mitchell Library Consultative Group. Further meetings have been deferred several times by the library's representatives waiting for the new catalogue to be fully operational in order to provide demonstrations. Even staff and the most experienced of catalogue users are encountering a range of problems and the 'migration' of many items including the fully digitised subdivision plans has not eventuated. There is a litany of complaints and readers are urged to report their difficulties to the library's feedback online or by the form available in the reading room. In response to requests from committee members anticipating the new catalogue, a training course on the library's e-resources was offered in February.

Still awaiting news on the successful tenderer of the digitisation of several thousand AJCP and M series microfilms affected by vinegar syndrome, a joint project of NLA, SLNSW and National Archives UK; in the interim National Library copies can be borrowed through SLNSW free of charge. Similarly no further news on the substantial number of the 10,000 microfilms of Mitchell Library's significant FM4/- series also affected by the vinegar syndrome, although staff are establishing a priority list for replacement or digitisation.

It remains a great concern that more than 90 boxes of the Small Picture File (mainly of place) remain virtually inaccessible. The SLNSW is largely responsible for the addition of the *NSW Government Gazette* and *Building* magazine to Trove's 'journal' site. The digitization of the library's 11,000 oral histories has been completed and the Sir Joseph Banks Papers are being re-scanned. Lobbying by the PHA representative has initiated the digital transfer to State Records NSW of Surveyor General Sketchbook estrays held in the Dixon Library.

On 14 July 2016 members of the ML Consultative Group were invited by the State Librarian, Alex Byrne, to attend a special presentation of the proposed building improvements to the Mitchell Library. Plans, perspectives and a brief description of the project are at the following link: <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/news/our-vision#ourvision>. The major elements of the proposal

are:

The Mitchell Library entrance will again become the main entrance; disability access will be by a glass passenger lift up to the portico on the eastern side of the steps and via a ramp commencing on the western side of the steps with a switchback running down to the moat with a special entrance under the steps at basement level that will also accommodate visiting school groups. Both have been designed to have minimal impact on the heritage façade. The state government is providing grants for disability access facilities. At basement level there will be a walkway through to the Dame Marie Bashir Library in SRL and there is provision for a 400-seat auditorium. Alex Byrne also discussed at length proposals for a purpose-built secure off-site repository in the western suburbs, possibly with visitor facilities for those undertaking lengthy searches of serials or multi-volume works.

Despite additional willing staff on the ML Special Collections desk, the loss of expertise caused by the earlier drastic redundancies remains noticeable and lamentable

Joy Hughes, PHA NSW & ACT Representative, Mitchell Library Consultative Group, 24 August 2015

1.12 NAA Consultative Forum Report

The Sydney office of the National Archives of Australia is based at Chester Hill. The NAA provides lists of record series recently cleared for access to members of the Forum at each meeting. The meetings also provide information about recent NAA exhibitions and outreach activities as well as serving as general forums to provide user input into NAA operations.

The National Archives of Australia is currently constructing a new preservation and record storage facility near Canberra, which will be opened shortly. Records currently held at Canberra will be progressively moved to that new storage facility from November 2016 to June 2017. This will affect access to some records during that period.

The Sydney repository of NAA now stores some records from other states such as South Australia due to space limitations in storage facilities in those states. The cold storage facilities at Sydney, which store audio visual materials, have been expanded. Recently, new equipment has been purchased to copy and transfer audio visual materials to safer more stable formats. In addition, the climate controlled storage at Chester Hill has been enlarged allowing more records, particularly paper-based records to now be held in a climate controlled archivally stable environment.

One of the major projects undertaken by the National Archives of Australia across Australia has been the Albany Project. This involved the identification and digitisation of records relating to the personnel who left Australia on the first convoy of servicemen to fight in World War One.

National Archives of Australia is currently testing an enhanced search facility by which researchers can locate records on its online catalogue. Members of Consultative Forums across Australia have been invited to test the new search facility. Once the testing process is complete, this new search interface will be made available to all who can access its website.

Terry Kass, PHA NSW & ACT Representative, August 2015

1.13 Delegate to History Council of NSW Report

In February 2015 the History Council of NSW (HCNSW) elected new councillors. Stephen Gapps (previous alternate delegate) replaced Mark Dunn as the PHA NSW & ACT representative. Stephen was also later elected as an ordinary member of the executive committee. In 2016, Stephen was elected Vice President of the History Council. The Executive and Council members and organisations are;

Tanya Evans President *Macquarie University*; Stephen Gapps Vice President *Professional Historians Association NSW & ACT*; Andrea Fernandes Secretary *Individual Representative*; Richard Neville Treasurer *State Library of NSW*; David Carment Executive Member *Individual Representative*; Heidi Norman Executive Member *University of Technology, Sydney/ Indigenous Representative*; Nancy Cushing Executive Member *University of Newcastle*; Lisa Ford Executive Member *University of New South Wales*.

General Council: Matthew Allen *University of New England*; Jeannine Baker *Macquarie University*; Michelle Cavanagh *Individual Representative*; Mirjana Djukic *St Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Church*; Dave Earl *University of Sydney*; Megan Martin *Sydney Living Museums*; Cassie Mercer *Inside History Magazine*; Mari Metzke *Individual Representative*; Lisa Murray *City of Sydney*; Jenni Stapleton *State Records NSW*; Louise Trott *Australian Society of Archivists Inc.*; Richard Waterhouse *University of Sydney*; Christine Wright *Royal Australian Historical Society*

The History Council saw a change of Executive Officer and worked towards re-establishing more secure funding through the year. A range of activities including co-sponsored events and awards was able to be continued at previous levels. A more pro-active and targeted approach to HCNSW services was developed. History Week 2016's theme 'Neighbours' was developed and promoted, as well as a more engaged and active website and social media presence. The executive monitored several broader history related issues through the year and made relevant submissions in some cases.

A Continuing Professional Development seminar was co-sponsored by the HCNSW and PHA NSW & ACT which was most successful and further collaborative opportunities will be explored.

Stephen Gapps, PHA NSW & ACT representative, History Council of NSW, August 2015

1.14 Community Advisory Committee of State Records NSW Report

The committee has not met since May 2015 so there was nothing to communicate in the 2015 to 2016 year.

Michael Bennett, PHA NSW & ACT Representative, Community Advisory Committee SR

1.15 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's report - Annual report 2015-16

PHA NSW & ACT Income and Expenditure report (1 June 2015-30 June 2016)	
Income	
Membership subscriptions 2015-16	\$14,295.00
Membership subscriptions 2016-17 (up to 30 June 2016)	\$4,825.00
Copyright Agency (CAL)	\$28.72
	\$600.95
Sub total	\$19,749.67
Ticket sales	
Christmas Party 2015	\$310.00
Public History Prize	\$269.00
Way Back When Historians CPD	\$640.00
Sub total	\$1,219.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$20,968.67
Expenditure	
Admin	
	\$863.00
	\$1,192.50
	\$2,252.50
	\$2,862.00
Administration Officer	\$2,862.00
Office expenses (PO Box)	\$277.00
Website domain renewal	\$35.00
Web hosting	\$299.40
Insurance (Armbro)	\$336.99
Insurance (Armbro)	\$336.19
ACPHA levy	\$3,030.00
	\$3,390.00
RAHS rent	\$1,000.00
	\$250.00
Bank fees	\$5.50
Sub total	\$16,130.08

Events	
Speeding through history	\$82.95
Sub total	\$82.95
History in July 2015	
Ottima catering	\$1,175.00
Drinks (Pauline Curby)	\$310.00
Welcome to Country	\$400.00
Certificates/Admin expenses	\$10.20
Sub total	\$1,895.20
Christmas Party 2015	
Catering	\$583.20
Drinks (Pauline Curby)	\$155.70
Sub total	\$738.90
Public History Prize	
Drinks (Pauline Curby)	\$98.20
Food	\$185.19
Admin	\$14.94
Sub total	\$298.33
Way Back When Historians CPD event	
Food (Pauline Curby)	\$39.59
Sarah Rood fees	\$440.00
Sarah Rood travel expenses	\$459.44
Admin	\$5.95
Sub total	\$944.98
Total events expenses	\$3,960.36
Memberships and Prizes	
Royal Australian Historical Society	\$210.00
History Council of NSW	\$250.00
Public History Prize (Nathan Fallon)	\$500.00
Public History Prize (Imogen Dixon-Smith)	\$500.00
Sub total	\$1,460.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	
	\$21,550.44

Accounts

The PHA NSW & ACT ended the financial year 2015-16 in a good position, with total losses

incurred being \$581.77 and the total balance of accounts being \$20,538.35. In view of our healthy financial position, the committee is exploring additional events for its yearly CPD program.

In another area of development and to improve the PHA NSW & ACT's financial processes, one of my first steps as treasurer was to enquire about establishing electronic banking with a two-to-sign function. It was a drawn out process and after discovering St George was not able to service the association, I set up a two-to-sign CommBiz account with the Commonwealth Bank and managed to negotiate a special scaled down fee system due to our not-for-profit status. Since establishing electronic banking, our financial processes have drastically improved, being far more efficient and reliable. In addition to improving payment of invoices, the new system has also improved tracking of membership renewals.

Membership renewals

The PHA NSW & ACT had a total of **113 members in 2015-16**. As there was no previous membership renewal list created, I discovered a great many members missed the membership renewal round. In all, I contacted a total of 51 unfinancial members. As the number was so high, the committee agreed to extend the deadline for membership renewal as there may have been insufficient renewal reminders distributed in the previous round. Of the 51, 25 renewed, 4 became friends of the PHA and 8 resigned their membership or could not be reached. The rest, 14 in total, did not respond to the final reminder.

For the 2016-17 renewal round, I decided to take a different approach to the previous round, and distributed three renewal reminder bulletins. Over the next week or two, I will be contacting outstanding members directly by email.

Nicole Cama, Treasurer, 21 August 2016