

PHA NSW & ACT

Professional Historians Association

NEW SOUTH WALES AND AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



Annual Report 2017-18

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

Website – www.phansw.org.au Email – phansw.history@gmail.com

Contents

Contents

Introduction	1
Membership of the 33rd Committee 2017-18	3
Reports	4
Chair's Report	4
Secretary and Public Officer's Report	6
Treasurer's Report	7
Membership Officer's Report	8
Public History Prize Report	9
Continuing Professional Development Program Report	11
Blog Report	13
Website Report	14
PHA (Professional Historians Australia) Report	18
PHA NSW & ACT Representative on RAHS Library Committee Report	19
Records and Archives Officer Report	19
Mitchell Library Consultative Group Report	20
NAA Consultative Forum Report	21
Delegate to History Council of NSW Report	21
State Archives Advisory Group	22

1. Introduction

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.

2. Membership of the 33rd Committee 2017-18

Chair	Mark Dunn
Deputy Chair	Nicole Cama
Secretary/Public Officer	Birgit Heilmann
Treasurer	Nicole Cama
Membership Officer	Patricia Curthoys
CPD Officer	Lisa Murray
Member and PH Prize Officer	Minna Muhlen-Schulte
Member and PHAus Delegate	Michelle Richmond
Member PHAus Delegate Alternate	Mark Dunn
Member, Blog Editor	Francesca Beddie
Administrative Officer	Naomi Malone

3. Reports

3.1. Chair's Report

The following report of the activities of the Professional Historians Association NSW & ACT is prepared in accordance with Clause 24 (2) (b) of the Constitution of the Association, being that the business of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) will include reports on the activities of the Association during the last preceding financial year.

2017-18 has been a busy and productive year for the Committee. As you will see from the reports following from committee members and those members who sit and represent us on other committees, boards and working groups, the PHA NSW & ACT continues to represent our members and our members' interests.

Much of this current calendar year has been spent organising the Professional Historians conference at the State Library of New South Wales. We are indebted to the State Library for hosting us and their ongoing help and assistance with the arrangements, in particular Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville and Senior Project Officer, Melissa Brooks. The conference is an important outlet for members to showcase their work, the challenges they face and the problem solving that comes with working as professional historians, not only from NSW & ACT, but across Australia. The response of members to the call out for papers was exciting and reflected the range of work we are all involved with. We were lucky enough to secure some external sponsorship for the event, with major sponsor the State Library of New South Wales being joined by PHAus, the Centre for Applied History at Macquarie University and from GML Heritage.

Over the past 12 months or so, we have been co-ordinating the national jobs bulletin for all PHA committees, taking in job opportunities from around the country to publish in our regular newsletters, and providing this information to the other states as well as our own members. We would welcome any feedback on this service from members. Are you seeing jobs from other states or have you managed to get work through the service? The stronger this service is, the better we are able to promote history and historians across all states, as well as giving our members more opportunities for a variety of work.

In the coming year we are also hoping to work with PHAus, and the committees of the other states, to produce a national calendar of events for members. The idea would be that if members were travelling, they could consult the calendar and see if there were events, talks or programs they might want to attend. The hope is that reciprocal membership benefits would then be enjoyed and more interaction with other states achieved.

One of the best outcomes of the year was the increase in the numbers of students entering our Public History Prize, which is reported on in more detail elsewhere in this report. The outreach of the PHA to the next generation of historians is enhanced by this program, and we are getting good feedback from both the students and their lecturers. This year it was particularly good to see students from the major Sydney universities, as well as from Newcastle and Canberra.

The prize this year was awarded as part of the History in July event. Attendance numbers were down this year compared to previous years; however those who could make it were rewarded with an entertaining and informative lecture from Dr Shirleene Robinson on her oral history work with the LGBTIQ community and the opportunities oral history brings to tell difficult and hidden histories. The combination of the prize and History in July is a format we will continue, as it allows for those students who attend to see the opportunities for working in history beyond academia, and for this alone it is worth making the effort to come along and mingle.

Effort is central to the success of the PHA, and I would like to thank all those members who continue to represent us on boards and committees. These are Michelle Richmond (PHAus), David Carment (PHAus Appeals Committee), Judith Godden (PHAus Advice Committee), Christine Yeats (Honorary Librarian), Stephen Gapps (History Council of NSW), Michael Bennett (State Records Advisory Group), Terry Kass (National Archives of Australia Consultative Forum), Christine Yeats (RAHS Archives & Records Management Committee) and Joy Hughes (Mitchell Library Consultative Group).

I would also like to thank the members of the 33rd committee for 2017-18: Birgit Heilmann, Nicole Cama, Lisa Murray, Michelle Richmond, Francesca Beddie, Minna Muhlen-Schulte and Patricia Curthoys. The committee has worked above and beyond this year with the

organisation of the conference and the ongoing administration and running of the PHA itself. A particular thank you to Birgit Heilmann, who after two terms as Secretary for the Association, is stepping off the committee. Birgit has worked tirelessly in the role and has made my job as Chair that much easier. Thanks also to our Administrative Officer, Naomi Malone. Naomi took over the position from Nathan Esler towards the end of 2017 and has worked hard in a job that is vital to the ongoing success of the Association.

I would also like to thank all our members. Your attendance at events, response to surveys and call-outs, contribution to the blog, tweets and re-tweets, Facebook likes and general support is invaluable. Thank you.

I look forward to working with the committee for 2018-19 and with all our members in what promises to be another exciting and fulfilling year for the NSW & ACT PHA.

Mark Dunn, Chair, August 2018

3.2. Secretary and Public Officer's Report

Most of my time in my second year as Secretary/ Public Officer I helped prepare for the National Conference. I also continued to be first point of contact for any enquiries and assisted the Administrative Officer with sending out the National Jobs & Opportunities Bulletin and MC newsletter, as well as updating the website.

Unfortunately, the committee didn't find the time to restructure the PHA NSW & ACT website as the conference planning was the priority. This will hopefully be tackled in the upcoming year. In the meantime I encourage all members who want to be able to be contacted by the public, professionals and media to include their email address in their member's profile on the website. This would improve direct communication and eliminates the PHA as a middle-man for forwarding emails. Please contact the Administrative Officer, Naomi Malone, if you have any questions in regard to updating your profile.

Earlier this year we started using the internet platform *Mailchimp* for sending out the Jobs & Opportunities Bulletin and MC newsletter.

I successfully suggested in the last committee meeting, 24 July 2018, that it would be beneficial to direct general enquiries to our Administrative Officer as the first point of contact. This will free up time for the Secretary role to concentrate on other projects.

I would like to thank all Committee members, Mark Dunn, Nicole Cama, Patricia Curthoys, Lisa Murray, Minna Muhlen-Schulte, Francesca Beddie, Michelle Richmond and Administrative Officer Naomi Malone, for their hard work in this year. I will not stand for election again and wish the new Secretary/Public Officer an enjoyable and productive term.

Birgit Heilmann, Secretary and Public Officer, August 2018

3.3. Treasurer's Report

PHA NSW & ACT Income and Expenditure report (1 July 2017-30 June 2018)	
Income	
Membership subscriptions	\$11,100.00
Copyright Australia	\$2,010.78
Sub total	\$13,110.78
Ticket sales	
History in July 2017	\$440.00
SLNSW catalogue workshops	\$270.00
Trove workshop 25 November 2017	\$337.50
Christmas Party 2017	\$240.00
Centre for Applied History conference sponsorship	\$1,000.00
PHAus conference contribution	\$2,000.00
Sub total	\$4,287.50
TOTAL INCOME	\$17,398.28
Expenditure	
Admin	
Administration Officer	\$3,180.00
Office/stationery expenses	\$317.55
Insurance	\$482.93
ACPHA levy	\$3,955.00

RAHS rent	\$1,310.00
Governance (Fair Trading)	\$209.82
Oral History NSW conference advertisement	\$500.00
Bank fees	\$29.50
Overpaid membership fees (members paid twice)	\$665.00
Sub total	\$10,649.80
Events	
History in July 2017	
Catering	\$1,260.00
Drinks	\$235.95
Mark Tedeschi speaking fee	\$300.00
Sub total	\$1,795.95
Christmas Party 2017	
Catering	\$630.00
Sub total	\$630.00
2018 Conference	
ArtHouse Hotel deposit	\$625.00
Welcome to Country (Chicka Madden)	\$385.00
Sub total	\$1,010.00
Total events expenses	\$3,435.95
Memberships and Prizes	
History Council of NSW	\$250.00
Public History Prize	\$500.00
Sub total	\$750.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	
	\$14,835.75
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	\$2,562.53

Accounts

The PHA NSW & ACT ended the financial year 2017-18 in a good position, with total surplus of \$2,562.53 with the closing balance of accounts on 30 June 2018 being \$25,386.66.

Membership renewals

The PHA NSW & ACT had a total of 118 members as of 30 June 2018.

Nicole Cama, Treasurer and Deputy Chair, 31 July 2018.

3.4. Membership Officer's Report

There has again been a steady stream of inquiries about membership throughout the year, including requests for dual membership by members of other state associations.

Since the last AGM the following ten members have been admitted:

1. At the Professional level: Alinde Bierhuizen, Ray Christison, Naomi Malone (by upgrade from Associate level), Martina Muller, Madeline Shanahan (by transfer from PHA VIC and as a dual member with PHA VIC) and Margaret Van Heekeren.
2. At the Associate level: Kate Blake and Eduardo Ugarte.
3. At the Graduate level: Aliza Chin and Lucy Irwin.

The Committee has also encouraged Professional Associate and Graduate members to consider upgrading their memberships but with little success. We will continue to remind these members of that possibility. My thanks to the Committee, and particularly to Birgit Heilmann, our Secretary and Nicole Cama, our Treasurer, for their support and assistance. Thanks also to Naomi Malone, our Administrative Officer and to Cameron Adams, our e-mail/ newsletter subscriptions administrator, for their assistance.

Patricia Curthoys, Membership Officer, August 2018

3.5. Public History Prize Report

The 2017 Public History Prize attracted nine submissions. The 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.

The submissions were of varying quality and drawn from both undergraduate and masters projects as well as an abridged honours thesis. Topics explored included environmental history, the role of women in WWI conscription, philanthropy and industry, the Maralinga nuclear testing, archaeology and community history.

The judges were the current chair of PHANSW & ACT, Dr Mark Dunn and PHA Executive Committee member and blog editor Francesca Beddie.

Following on from last year it was decided that the award would be presented at History in July to encourage nominees to take advantage of networking with professional members and seeing the keynote speaker. About 50 guests attended History in July on 18 July 2018.

The 2017 Public History Prize was awarded to Debbie Waddell for her essay, 'To flush or not to flush?: Can an artificial channel help save the Tuggerah Lakes?.' The Judges noted that the entry was 'a well written and argued essay, which used evidence from environmental history to build her case. Debbie showed a tolerance for the fact that the past is different, with different attitudinal benchmarks, so needs to be handed sensitively but nevertheless can inform public policy decisions.' Debbie's essay was part of her Bachelor of Arts undergraduate degree at Newcastle University.

The judges also highly commended Chloe Haywood-Anderson for her digital history - 'Erko Archives: The Erskineville Public History Projects.' The Erskineville Public School History Project, Erko Archives was created by a Macquarie University Modern History student as part of Macquarie's PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) program in public history. Chloe was awarded a ticket to the Professional Historians Association National Conference on 30 – 31 August 2018 but had to decline due to work commitments.

Entries: Public History Prize 2017

Chloe Haywood-Anderson - Erko Archives: The Erskineville Public History Projects

Madalyn Grant - Graffiti on the Colossi of Memnon: Significance Assessment

Lucinda Fretwell - "equals of men" or just their "mothers, wives, [and] sisters"?

Women and the 1916 and 1917 conscription referenda'

Jessica Urwin - 'Physicist in the Fields of Thunder': Ernest Titterton & Britain's Empire in 1950s Australia

Matthew Barton - Pattern of the National Type: Australians, the Beach, and the Rise of the Lifesaver in the Interwar Period

Cathryn Brett - The Space Between Practice and Rhetoric: An examination into the ideological motives of Maitland female philanthropy

Sally Murray-Walsh - “Foremost I am female”: The Untold Stories of Newcastle’s Women of Steel.

Debbie Waddell - To flush or not to flush?: Can an artificial channel help save the Tuggerah Lakes?

Nicholas Pitt - Scales of Waste: An Exploration into the Reclamation of Sydney Harbour

The PHA NSW & ACT committee made a concerted effort to increase the number of entries in 2017 by promoting the prize via social media on Twitter, Facebook and the PHANSW blog as well as widening the types of departments contacted at universities, to capitalise on the interdisciplinary way in which students are being taught history. The timing of the Public History Prize is confusing. While not awarded until July 2018, with contributions received at the beginning of the year, this is in fact the 2017 prize. The committee considers it would be better to align the prize with the year in which it is presented.

Minna Muhlen-Schulte, Public History Prize Officer, August 2018

3.6. 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.

The two-hour TROVE workshop held on 25 November 2017 in collaboration with the Royal Australian Historical Society at History House proved popular. There were 31 bookings, with

30 attendees: 11 PHA members; 5 RAHS members; and 15 non-members. Ticket prices were \$20 members (PHA/RAHS); \$25 non-members, and included morning tea, with bookings managed by the RAHS and revenue split between the two organisations. Royal Australian Historical Society Senior Vice President and PHA Member Christine Yeats shared her knowledge and upskilled members on making the most out of TROVE, with a focus on advance searching, lists and the most recent addition, *Government Gazettes*. The presentation slides were shared with attendees after the event.

The Christmas Party in December 2017 at History House was well attended. Members were asked to pay a small fee of \$10 to partially cover catering costs.

A hands-on computer workshop on the upgrades and changes to the State Library of NSW catalogue planned for Thursday 22 February 2018 sold out quickly and a repeat workshop was scheduled one month later, on 22 March. The three-hour workshop, led by librarian Andy Carr and his colleagues, was held in the computer lab at the State Library. 16 members at each workshop were given practical advice and work-arounds when using the new catalogue. This member-only event had a \$10 ticket price, managed through Eventbrite. A blog piece provides a few more details about the event:

<https://www.phansw.org.au/getting-the-most-out-of-the-state-library-of-nsw-catalogue/>

History in July was held on Tuesday 17 July at History House, at which the Peter Tyler oration was delivered by Dr Shirleene Robinson and the Public History Prize presented. This event was a convivial affair for old and new members. Dr Robinson presented an informative review of her oral history research and practice with the LGBTIQ community. A summary of the oration, penned by our energetic blog editor Francesca Beddie, was published on 24 July: <https://www.phansw.org.au/tyler-oration-capturing-the-lgbtqi-voice-through-oral-history/>

Attendance at History in July was down on previous years; it was a member-only event this year as the past couple of years have been over-subscribed by stakeholders. Members were asked to pay a small fee of \$10 to partially cover catering costs. While networking was a positive part of the evening, the executive will re-consider widening the invitation to key stakeholders again next year.

Last year we agreed to host the biennial Professional Historians Australia national conference in Sydney. The executive committee has spent much of 2018 focussed upon organising the two-day conference for members and the associated gathering of national representatives. The event is being held at the State Library of NSW on 30-31 August in the lead up to History Week. The program of speakers is locked in, some sponsorship secured to assist with costs, and registrations are open. Ticket prices are:

Full registration PHA member \$150

One day only PHA member \$80

Full registration Public – Non members \$210

One day only Public – Non members \$110

The ticket price includes lunches, morning and afternoon teas, and evening networking drinks on the Thursday evening. Conference attendees are also able to secure a discounted price for the NSW Premiers History Awards on Friday night. We are anticipating 100 registrants for the conference.

The PHA (NSW & ACT) acknowledges and thanks the RAHS for its ongoing support, especially providing the venue at History House for a nominal rent. It is a welcoming and convenient space for our events and executive meetings. Due to planned renovations in the forthcoming months, the Executive Committee will be investigating other appropriate spaces to hold our events.

CPD events currently being negotiated for 2018-19 include:

- State Records NSW catalogue and finding aids
- National Archives catalogue and findings aids
- State Library of NSW picture research
- media training

The Executive Committee always welcomes ideas from members about what skills they wish to develop or event opportunities. You can contact the CPD events coordinator at phanswevents@gmail.com

Lisa Murray, CPD Events Coordinator, August 2018

3.7. Blog Report

In the 2017/18 financial year, 30 posts were published on the PHA NSW & ACT blog. Entries reflected the wide range of subjects our members are working on, from history tourism and the story of fishing, to war and commemoration. The blog also reported on various exhibitions and introduced members to the readership. It provides an avenue for members to publicise their work and to engage in contemporary issues from the historian's point of view. The website report gives more information on the blog's readership.

To assist authors we have created a page in the members' section of the website: <http://www.phansw.org.au/members-section/pha-nsw-blog/> This includes a link to the blog's editorial policy and guidelines.

Francesca Beddie, Blog Editor, August 2018

3.8. Website Report

The number of unique visitors to the PHANSW website in 2018 began comparably to the bumper year of 2017 (see Figure 2), with over 5000 in January and 4000 in February, but has declined over the rest of the year (thus far), with a steady average of around 3500 visitors per month between March and July (see Figure 1). While down on 2017 figures, and in some cases cut by virtually half, these remain slightly higher than those of 2016 (which regularly had visitor numbers below 3000 per month right across the year). It is hard to say why there is a decline in unique visitors this year, but a look at the average imaginary visitor to the site might tell us something about what happens when they do visit. The statistics and graphs in this report for 2018 have been produced using the server log analyser software *Awstats*.

The average 2018 visitor was based in the United States and accessed the site using Firefox on a Windows machine. This visitor found the site via Google searching for the 'pha nsw blog', checked out the 'Conference 2018' page, downloaded a copy Bethan Donnelly's 2008 essay 'Villawood Migrant Hostel' (this is consistently the most downloaded document on the site every year), and dropped by the blog to read 'Histories of the Red Cross' by Ian Willis.

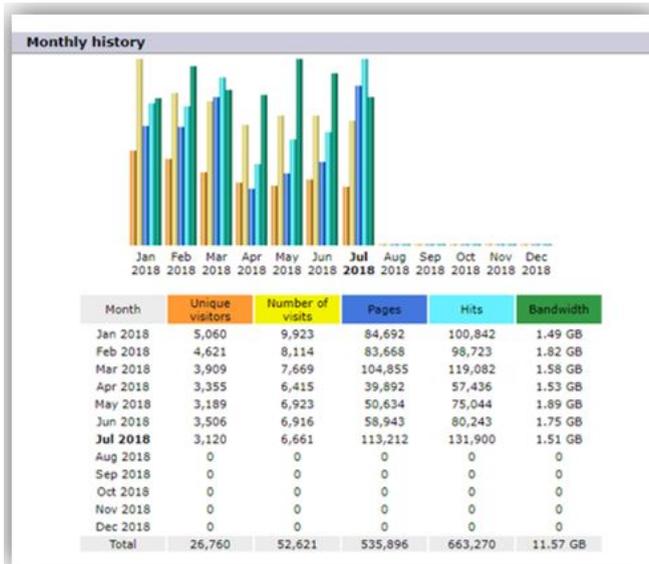


Figure 1: January to July 2018 data

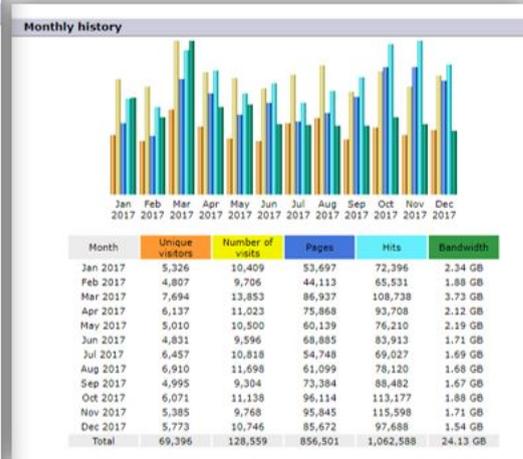


Figure 2: 2017 data (for comparison)

Awstats produces graphs across the year January to December, not the financial year, hence I have included two graphs above (all of 2017 and the first six months of 2018). As a reminder, the two most important statistics to look at in the above graphs 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 refers 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 us, 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 last half of 2017 (see Figure 2) kept up the trend reported in the Annual Report in August 2017, with consistently high numbers of visitors each month right across the year. The busiest month for site traffic in the second half of the year was August, with 6910 unique visitors (the second highest number for the whole year – perhaps something to do with Annual General Meeting time). In the first half of 2018, January has proved to be the busiest month thus far, with numbers dropping thereafter. The busiest day in the busiest month was 29 January with 622 visitors, two to three times that of most other days. I checked to see if

perhaps a blog or the aftermath of Australia Day drove up visitor numbers – a possibility might be Francesca Beddie’s blog, ‘What the history of Australia Day can tell us about the date’ (published 20 January 2018). Different documents can have an impact on the behaviour of visitors to the site – for instance the month of July 2018 shows that the ‘Marking Time’ conference program is giving the Public History Prize winners a challenge, currently the third most downloaded document that month after Bethan Donnelly’s and Sarah Gregory’s winning papers.

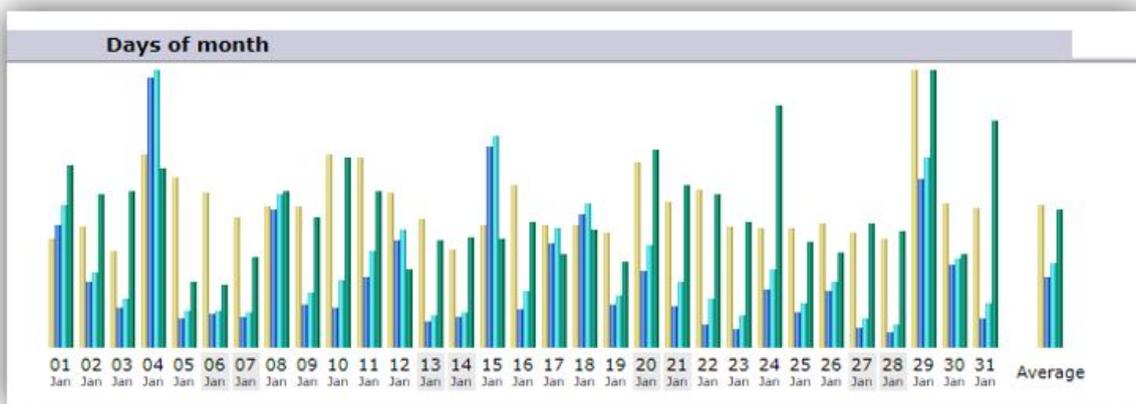


Figure 3: Traffic for January 2018 (yellow denotes unique visitors)

There is, however, no stopping the blog as it continues to dominate the site. Some of the standouts, aside from the previously mentioned blogs, include: ‘Anzac Day 2018: the final year of the WWI centenary commemorations’ (Francesca Beddie); ‘Five minutes with Iain Stuart’; ‘Oral history in a global world’ (Minna Muhlen-Schulte – with her ‘Five minutes’ also popular); ‘Modernist designers in Sydney: Eva Buhrich’ (Nicole Cama); ‘Army, empire, natural history and a forgotten couple’ (Brian Walsh); ‘Public Service: the role of history and historians in government’ (Rosemary Kerr, which was also high in 2017’s list and is from 2013, showing blogs can indeed have a long life); ‘Celebrating public education’ (Pauline Curby); and ‘Getting the most out of the State Library of NSW catalogue’ (Lisa Murray).

In terms of downloads, all the Public History prize winner documents remain very popular, as does the Sept/Oct 2009 issue of *Phanfare*, (subtitled ‘History and Planning in New South Wales’). Others include Peter Tyler Oration transcripts from History in July, with Ann Curthoys’ ‘History in the Howard Era’ (2006) and Bridget Griffen-Foley’s ‘Broadsheets and

Broadcasts: History in the Australian Media’ (2009) continuing to rate highly. The main newcomer to downloads is the ‘Marking Time’ conference program, currently the 10th most downloaded document for the year. Other notable downloads include professional documents for members, like the Recommended Fees and Membership Renewal forms, and of course the CVs of our member historians.

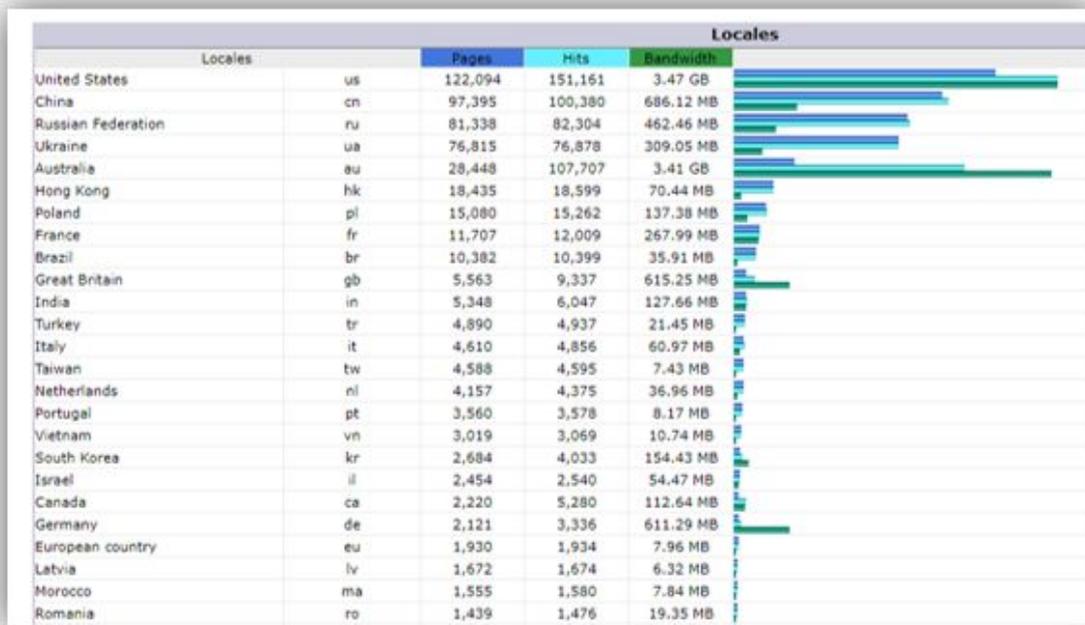


Figure 4: Origin of visitors to the site, 2018 January-July (top 25 only)

Figure 4 above shows the top 25 country of origin statistics for 2018, January to July. While there is some variation from month to month, the top visitors usually come from a combination of the United States, China, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Australia, which is consistent with previous years.

In all, the second half of 2017 was excellent for the number of site visits, but the momentum has not been sustained in 2018. It remains to be seen if events like the ‘Marking Time’ conference and future blogs encourage new and regular visitors to www.phansw.org.au for the remainder of the year and drive the numbers back up again.

Christine De Matos, Webserver Manager, August 2018

3.9. PHA (Professional Historians Australia) Report

During 2017-18 Professional Historians Australia held four general meetings, with our AGM and major face-to-face meeting still to come in Sydney on 1 and 2 September 2018. This meeting will be hosted by PHA (NSW & ACT) and follows on from the two-day national conference also hosted by PHA (NSW & ACT) on the 30 and 31 August 2018.

As of 31 December 2017, the total number of PHA members was 478 down from 502 members in March 2017. The size of the PHAs ranged from PHA (Vic & Tas) the largest at 201, to 13 in the Northern Territory.

Professional Historians Australia produces two publications: the e-bulletin, *Historia*, and the journal, *Circa*. *Historia* focuses on news and events of interest to PHA members and stakeholder groups around Australia and is sent out on a quarterly basis – in March, June, September and December. Sonia Jennings is the editor of *Historia*, assisted by Richard Trembath. Sonia would like to step down as editor and is looking for a replacement. PHA's journal *Circa* was published in June 2018. Chris Cheater (PHA Vic & Tas) took over as editor in 2016 and is assisted by an editorial board. All editions of *Circa* and *Historia* are available on line at the Professional Historians Australia Website <https://www.historians.org.au/>

The redeveloped national website is completed and Professional Historians Australia would like to implement a more centralized Professional Development Program and Public Relations Program for our organization. We are aiming at having a national events calendar on the website and also a place to share good new stories from all states and territories.

Professional Historians Australia have been re-examining membership criteria to take into account the changing nature of degrees being that many are not strictly history only based. The National Standard for the Accreditation of Professional Historians in Australia Preamble has been adjusted to reflect this.

Professional Historians Australia have also streamlined membership categories across all states and territories. The categories are now Professional, Associate, Graduate and

Professional retired only.

The National Employment Bulletin continues to be subsidized by Professional Historians Australia. Overall it has been very well received.

The capitation fee for each state was raised by \$5 to cover the cost of annual expenses as of May 2018.

Professional Historians Australia will elect their new committee at their September AGM but until then committee members and positions remain the same as in last year's annual report. Jill Barnard (Vic) is President, Alan Davis (NT) is Vice-President and Website Manager, Sue Graham-Taylor (WA) is Secretary, Carmel Black (Qld) is Treasurer and Michelle Richmond (NSW & ACT) is Accreditation Secretary.

Michelle Richmond, PHA (NSW & ACT) Delegate, August 2018

3.10. PHA NSW & ACT Representative on RAHS Library Committee Report

Meetings of the RAHS Library Committee have been placed on hold, pending the start of the History House building project. The Committee will be re-constituted after the building work has been completed.

Christine Yeats, PHA Representative on the RAHS Library Committee, August 2018

3.11. Records and Archives Officer Report

Paper records

The PHA NSW&ACT filing cabinet is still housed at History House. This will be temporarily relocated while the History House building project is underway. It contains paper-based records required for current administrative purposes. The boxes of records identified permanent retention are waiting to be transferred to the SLNSW.

Digital records

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

Action plan 2018-2019

The focus of the 2018-2019 action plan will continue to be the ongoing management of the paper-based records stored at History House.

Christine Yeats, Records and Archives Officer, 7 August 2018

3.12. Mitchell Library Consultative Group Report

There have been three meetings of the Mitchell Library Consultative Group with another to be held on 15 August (prior to AGM). The meeting on 17 September 2017 was addressed by the newly-appointed State Librarian Dr John Vallance who has restored us to 'readers', no longer 'clients'; he was aware that 90% of library users are there for the free Wifi and not using the library's collections, nevertheless having catalogues in full working order was an absolute priority. He has since introduced to the Dame Marie Bashir Library displays of new publications including every title reviewed in important serials such as *The Times Literary Supplement*, *New York Review of Books*, etc. His wish to display more of the library's treasures to the public will come to fruition when the new galleries are opened on 6 October. However there is still no physical evidence of provisions for disabled access first raised by the committee in 2014 (subsequent options rejected or deferred by City Council and Heritage Office concerns).

While there have been improvements in the online manuscripts and pictures catalogue, many have been just restoration of what was there previously and had been lost. There are still major issues to overcome. The subdivision plans due in February 2016 are coming online. The presentation and result of the survey by external specialist 'ThinkPlace' of an extremely small number of readers was underwhelming. Further surveys are currently being undertaken by the Library's 'Digital Channels Leader'. The library's contribution to Trove has included many important sources and it has acquired additional significant e-resources (substantive list circulated to members last September).

In May the library began 'Launch into Library Research' a series of full-day seminars on topics, family history (May), using maps for historical research (July) and researching your

bestseller (12 September) and encourage readers to suggest other topics of interest.

The National Library of Australia has been awarded \$16.4 million (spread over four years) under the Australian Public Service Modernisation Fund (PSMF), part of which will be used for the digitisation of the Australian Joint Copying Project microfilms. In the meantime Andy Carr and his team have created a finding aid for the AJCP which lists the microfilms affected by vinegar syndrome, those that are still available, and what AJCP content is available electronically. Refilming of the microfilms of Mitchell Library's significant FM4/- series is continuing.

Renovations to Dame Marie Bashir Reading Room are complete; the Donald and Myfanwy Horne Room and new Sir William Dixson Research Library have been completed and opened.

Joy Hughes, PHA NSW & Act Representative, Mitchell Library Consultative Group, August 2018

3.13. 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 forum also hears about recent NAA exhibitions and outreach activities, and is able to provide user input into NAA operations. The Forum met three times in the last year on 8 August and 5 December 2017 and 1 May 2018.

Opening hours of the Sydney search room remain at 9.00 am to 4.30 pm, Wednesday to Friday. The opening of the search room for researchers on Saturdays has been suspended since demand was too meagre to warrant continuation of that service. Pro-active digitisation of records continues, mainly for heavily used series. The series involved include the Post Office files (SP32/1) when staff capacity is available. The National Archives of Australia takes a leading role encouraging the preservation of digital records created by Federal government agencies.

Terry Kass, PHA Representative, August 2018

3.14. Delegate to History Council of NSW Report

In March 2018 the History Council of NSW (HCNSW) elected new General Councillors. PHA NSW & ACT Representative Stephen Gapps was also later elected a member of the Executive Committee. The committee and council members can be found here; <http://historycouncilnsw.org.au/about/general-council/>.

The Council's Annual Report for 2017 can be found at <http://historycouncilnsw.org.au/about/>. In 2018 HCNSW Executive Officer Nicole Cama stepped down and Catherine Shirley was employed.

In 2017-18 the HCNSW continued to develop its signature event History Week; secure ongoing funding with Create NSW; monitor history issues in the community; and explore new ways of engaging with the public. The HCNSW website and social media continues to develop and thrive and is a prominent presence in the history sector.

In 2018 the HCNSW expanded its programs, hosting the Speaker Connect program beyond History Week. This program connects history professionals with community organisations across NSW. More professional development opportunities were offered and the employability seminars aimed at students and emerging professionals introduced in 2017 continued in 2018. Feedback on these seminars has been very positive.

The HCNSW has increased the offers of programs in regional areas, in particular collaborations with Central West Libraries and support from Orange City Council for their Readers and Writers Festival. Much of the work of the Council can be found on the website. Programs and Events can be found [here](#). The theme for [History Week 2018](#) is *Life & Death*.

A change to the structure and meetings of the HCNSW was implemented in early 2018 to increase engagement of the General Council on strategic initiatives. Thus far this seems to have been embraced by council members and working well.

Stephen Gapps, PHA NSW & ACT Representative, History Council of NSW, August 2018

3.15. State Archives Advisory Group

The State Archives Advisory Group held four meetings during the 2017-2018 financial year. An important development is the new Integrated Collection Management System (ICMS) which will renew underlying infrastructure and systems. The new system, which is due to go live in February 2019, will include:

- Primo - discovery and delivery solution (ie new front-end catalogue)
- Rosetta - Digital Asset Management and preservation, and
- Axiell Group's Ad Lib - a preservation system and software to manage the archive collection.

PHA members will be able to participate in testing the new system, particularly the Primo component. Once the new system is in operation, it is recommended that the PHA organise a CPD session to familiarise members with its new features.

The State Archives also conducted an informal reading room review early in 2018. PHA members provided several useful suggestions including signs asking readers to keep discussions to a minimum; relocating the map catalogue to make it more accessible; additional space around the two digital cameras and modification of the digital cameras for larger documents and maps; and the presence of a dedicated archivist in the reading room to answer more detailed questions from experienced users. It is unclear at this point how many of these suggestions were adopted.

State Archives also conducted a Net Promoter Survey of the 7,000 subscribers to the Now and Then E-Newsletter. Over 1,200 subscribers responded and the overall result was positive, although there were continued complaints about the location of the reading room. There was a neutral response to the website and a positive response to the quality of staff service. The previous survey, conducted in 2014, gave similar results.

Michael Bennett, PHA NSW & ACT representative, State Archives Advisory Group, August 2018.