

President's Report 2016/2017

by June Edwards

Last year's AGM Oral History Australia (SA/NT) was held on 7 August 2016 at the State Library of South Australia

The committee:

President: June Edwards
Treasurer: Sally Stephenson
Secretary: Madeleine Regan
Membership secretary: Christeen Schoepf.

Committee members:

Tonia Bradstreet
Karen George
Peter Hackworth
Alison McDougall
Catherine Murphy
Annmarie Reid

OHA National Committee: David Sweet continues as National Secretary and Sue Anderson President

Presentation:

The guest speaker was Emma Beech, creator and performer. Members enjoyed Emma's presentation which focused on her artistic perspective on oral history. She spoke about her work with the Australian Bureau of Worthiness, through which she creates residency-made performance works. The Bureau was recently featured in the 50 Creatives Exhibition celebrating the contribution of Flinders University to enriching the cultural life of South Australia. Emma outlined the range of work she undertakes with collaborators that included installation theatre companies Carte Blanche and Group 38 in Denmark, and Last Tuesday Society, Real TV, Patch, Monkey Baa, Playwriting Australia, Open Space Contemporary Arts and Vitalstatistix in Australia.

She talked about the processes involved in developing a forthcoming show, 'Life is short and long' that will feature stories about people in Barcelona, Wirrabara and Port Adelaide.

Emma's wonderful presentation inspired lots of questions from those present.

For more information about Emma: <http://www.emmabeech.com/home/>

Australian history & genealogy expo 2016 *Unlock the Past*

Sally Stephenson, Madeleine Regan, Christeen Schoepf, David Sweet, Annmarie Reid and Tonia Bradstreet set up an OHA display table at the Expo which was a major event for all history, genealogy and heritage enthusiasts. It was held in October 2016 at the Immanuel College, Novar Gardens and was the first national expo in Australia. It was a lot of work and the response to the display table was reasonable. Many people had not thought of using oral history for their own research and presumed members were there to do oral history interviews. There was good interest shown in the oral history presentations so well done Sally, Christeen and Madeleine.

Publicity and marketing

An outcome of the Expo was the obvious need for the Association to update its marketing strategy so a subcommittee was established to develop publicity and marketing to increase the awareness of OHA SA/NT and to make links to kindred organisations.

From a practical point of view it was decided that a new banner, display holders and name badges should be purchased so any OHA SA/NT event would look professional.

Organisations involved with history were identified as possible partners for oral history workshops and letters were sent asking if they would be interested in collaborating with the OHA SA/NT.

David Sweet has organised with students at UniSA to develop an OHA SA/NT communications and marketing strategy for the near and longer term.

The sub-committee was very productive and we are waiting to hear from the organisations which have been contacted about possible workshops.

Oral History Australia National Conference Grant

Moving Memories: oral history in a global world. The conference will be held in Sydney, from 13 to 16 September 2017.

<https://dcconferences.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/ohac17/cs>

OHA SA/NT has awarded a grant to Rachel Harris who is a PhD Candidate in the Department of History, The University of Adelaide. The grant will cover the costs of the 3 day conference registration and dinner. As part of the grant, Rachel will submit an article for the *Word of Mouth* newsletter outlining her conference experiences. Congratulations Rachel.

State Library of South Australia

The OHA SA/NT set up a petition last August in support of the State Library of South Australia to stop the cuts to the institution. OHA members sent letters of protest to politicians and the History Council lobbied the government. The PSA also set up a petition and a well-attended protest rally was held outside the Library. As a result of the lobbying the restructure has been put on hold and is being reassessed. The whole process has been exhausting for the staff. Recently, staff members in the Library have been offered packages and many have decided to leave.

Thanks to those who signed the petition and sent letters to politicians. Allison Murchie deserves recognition for her organised lobbying.

Social media

David Sweet volunteered to set up and manage a Facebook page for the OHA SA/NT which was appreciated. <https://www.facebook.com/oralhistorysouthaustralia>. David attended a facebook workshop which was run by History SA and found that very useful.

NT Archives Service

The NT Archives Service launched an online oral history search facility in 2016 which was a useful aid to accessing their collection. <http://search.nt.gov.au/Coveo/Hubs.aspx?sh=Oral+History+Search>.

Australian Generations Project

There will be a SA launch of *Australian Lives: An Intimate History* by Anisa Puri and Alistair Thomson in Adelaide on 9 September 2017 sponsored by the OHA SA/NT and the History Council of SA

Also, Anisa Puri and Al Thomson have created a web exhibition linked to the book *Australian Lives: An Intimate History* which is called 'From Glory Boxes to Grindr: Dating in Australia, 1945-2015'

<https://gloryboxtoindr.com/>

Value of History Statement

Annamarie Reid was recently at the AHA conference in Newcastle. Whilst there, Margaret Birtley AM, Secretary of the HCV, spoke about an American campaign to promote the value of history. As part of the campaign, interested groups and organisations agree to endorse a statement titled 'The Value of History' and are then encouraged to adapt and incorporate it into their own projects, training materials, mission statements, websites, marketing materials and so on. Margaret is keen to see a similar 'history relevance' campaign in Australia. This sounds like a useful endeavour.

<https://www.historyrelevance.com/#!/endorsers/c1012>

Enquiries/Visits

This year there have been more enquiries from the public asking for oral historians to interview people, from close relatives to a World War Two RAAF veteran, which has been a positive development.

Sue Anderson and I met Lauren Kata from Austen Texas who is an archivist/oral historian. She is travelling around the world and contacting oral historians as she goes to make connections and learn about the profession. It was lovely to meet her.

Committee activities:

Financial matters

Sally Stephenson continues to be an excellent treasurer which is very fortunate for the association. The Treasurer's report will be presented separately. Many thanks.

Handbooks

Catherine Murphy has continued to manage the handbook orders from Kangaroo Island which the OHA greatly appreciates. Sales have continued to be slow this financial year. We have sold about half of the handbooks from our last print run two years ago.

The postage cost is now in addition to the price of the handbook which has been a benefit to the OHA SA/NT.

Membership

Christeen Schoepf is an efficient membership officer and new members have joined throughout the year. The membership renewals for 2017 have been sent out and members are rejoining. Many thanks to Christeen for her efforts.

Secretarial

Many thanks to Madeleine for her excellent work as secretary. Her efficient approach ensures the committee runs smoothly.

Word of Mouth

Alison McDougall produced two excellent issues of *Word of Mouth* which were sent to members via a members' page on the website and was successful with only a couple of people having an issue with access using the password. The change has saved the cost of printing and postage.

It also means *WOM* is now in colour and has the lovely addition of sound bites. The latter addition created praise and interest. Thank you to Sally Stephenson for managing the insertion of these sound bites.

Many thanks to Alison for her continued creative work as editor.

The *Word of Mouth* index prepared by Allison Murchie last year was added to the OHA SA/NT website <http://oralhistoryaustraliasant.org.au/publications/>

OHA SA/NT website

Sally Stephenson has done an excellent job of keeping the website up-to-date so members are aware of future events.

Workshops

12 people attended the *How to do oral history* workshop in November 2016. Karen George and Peter Kolomitsev ran a very successful event.

An advanced oral history workshop was run on 27 October 2016 by Sally Stephenson and Peter Hackworth who did a professional job, very ably assisted by Alexandra Stephenson. The title was *Incorporating oral history recordings into audio and multi-media presentations* and focused on learning how to create resources that add value to the experience of users of museums, galleries, community centres, libraries e.g. a podcast to guide visitors through an exhibition or an interactive display on a tablet to enliven an exhibit.

The workshop appealed to long term members of the OHA and people from museums, archives and community groups who have not attended our workshops before. Watching Peter, Sally and Alexandra helping participants with the technology was nerve-wracking but they did an excellent job.

This workshop was rescheduled for History Month on 1 May but was cancelled due to lack of numbers. The lack of interest may have been due to the number of events being held which were free.

It has been decided to run the workshop again in conjunction with the History Conference on 5 October.

Alison McDougall ran a session on oral history at the *National Uniting Church in Australia History Conference* in Adelaide in June 2017 on the theme 'A Pilgrim People: 40 years on'.

State Library of South Australia

Many thanks to Tonia for her support, especially with workshops, as the OHA SA/NT benefits greatly from its relationship with the State Library.

Country contributions

Thanks to Christeen and Peter for their ongoing support of the committee, their excellent ideas and contributions to workshops and membership.

Digital recorder.

Catherine Manning continues to manage the organisation's digital recorder, so thanks very much.

Lizzie Russell Grant Scheme

No grant was awarded this financial year

Once again thanks to the OHA SA/NT committee members for their continued good work and commitment. Their good work benefits the oral history profession in both South Australia and the Northern Territory. As I am away a lot of the time the committee has taken on more responsibilities which I appreciate very much.