VIC Branch Newsletter
July 2019

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Designing the Archive Conference—Full Program released!

The moment you have been waiting for has arrived! The full program for Designing the Archive 2019 with over 160 speakers from 40 countries is now online. Register before 31 July 2019 to ensure you get the early-bird discount.

Take a look at the website for more information, because as well as in-conference workshops, various Special Interest Group meetings and the ICA Indigenous Matters Summit, six Designing the Archive-themed workshops are on offer:

- Designing the user-centred digital archive (full day)
- Research data management 101 meets the archivists!
- Telling stories of value: activating the value of culture for archives
- The barriers to and benefits of managing your information as a business asset
- How can archives contribute to the United National Sustainable Development Goals 2030?
- Developing an Integrated disaster plan

There’s more exciting opportunities than can be listed here so make sure you have a look at the conference website!

Quick word from the Editor

Wominjeka, welcome to the July newsletter. The committee is gearing up for the Annual General Meeting and elections in August—it’s not too late to nominate. Remember that Student Members and Concession Members are eligible for election to the Committee. After the new committee is elected the first activity will be planning events for the coming year. Do you have ideas or suggestions for events or speakers you’d like to see? Please pass your ideas on to the committee and we’ll see what we can do about making it happen. If you have ideas for events or newsletter articles, the committee is always keen to hear them. Send them to asavic@archivists.org.au. See you at the AGM!
An important document that reveals aspects of the history and heritage of the Melbourne suburb of Heidelberg is now on display at the Heidelberg Historical Society’s museum in the Old Heidelberg Courthouse.

This document is made of 213 squares of cotton fabric, decorated with hand-made lace and embroidery, and framed by a substantial embroidered frill. It carries 139 legible names of people and businesses connected with Heidelberg and its Presbyterian Scots Church in the 1890s, and many sets of initials. The document is a redwork Signature or Autograph quilt. People contributed 4 shillings per square, in aid of the church.

My GLAM career has given me insights into many types of movable cultural heritage but until this year I had not worked closely with a quilt, or with community history research. As a volunteer with the Heidelberg Historical Society, my projects have been focussed on collection storage, condition reporting and significance assessment.

In June 2018 the Society received the quilt by donation from the current Scots Church in Heidelberg, now part of the Uniting Church in Australia. I put up my hand to co-curate the Society’s exhibition with two other members. None of us is a quilter but we all have extensive museum experience. Following several months of intensive research by members and friends of the Society, the quilt is now on display as the central object in an interpretive exhibition.

Almost too large for display in the former Courtroom, the quilt presented some fascinating challenges. We quickly decided to display it flat on a large tabletop (as a document) rather than as a wall hanging or as a bedspread. This decision was based on the lack of evidence in the fabric itself that it had been designed as a hanging or used as a bed-cover.

Another reason for flat display was to enable visitors to scrutinise the text and stitching on each square from a reasonably close vantage point.

Our research into the Presbyterian connections was kindly assisted by the Archives and Heritage Centre of PLC Melbourne and the Uniting Church in Australia’s Victorian Archives. Thanks to Australia’s digitised newspapers and Trove’s search tools, we were able to solve various puzzles presented by names on the quilt. We now know why so many names are from Williamstown and how a drapery business in Prahran became connected with this Heidelberg fundraiser. We also know the identity of most of the self-styled ‘Busy Bees’ who coordinated the design and making of the quilt, and who ‘signed’ its final square in February 1896.
The exhibition interprets some of the connections that existed between families, groups and networks at the time and tells the story of a church in crisis, desperately in need of fresh support from a divided congregation. Mrs George Cumming of Williamstown, born Annie Smith of Templestowe, possibly sent a message to her former congregation via her square: it includes the Latin motto *Nil Ardu(u)m* ('Nothing is difficult') and an illustration that we interpret as a phoenix rising from the ashes.

Questions remain, however, about many of the people represented on the quilt, partly because we lacked the time to research every name prior to launching the exhibition in May, and partly because some names and initials have (thus far) defied our attempts to match them with individuals from the period. A website (designed in-house by a member of the Society who is a skilled IT professional) accompanies the exhibition and allows a world-wide audience to assist our research by contributing their own findings as comments on each square.

In addition to researching the quilt as documentary evidence of community history, we were also keen to research its place in the context of the history of quilt-making. I delved into books and websites from the UK, USA and Australia to discover that the Heidelberg quilt was probably inspired by signature / autograph quilts being made at the same time in both hemispheres.

In 1890s Melbourne, the Busy Bees could have seen autograph quilts made by other church and charitable groups, including by Presbyterians in East Melbourne, Fitzroy, Moreland and Northcote. Comparable quilts survive from Lancefield (at the Romsey Lancefield Historical Society museum), Sunbury (at the National Museum of Australia), and East Melbourne (now held privately in South Australia).

Members and friends of the Heidelberg Historical Society with expertise in quilt-making, embroidery and lace-making all helped us understand how this quilt had been designed and made. As a result, we have been able to list the quilt with the National Quilt Register which has been revived by the National Wool Museum.

*Heidelberg’s Busy Bee Signature Quilt 1895-96* is on show through to April 2020 (but note that the museum closes from December to mid-February).


Margaret Birtley is an Individual Member of the ASA. She joined the association in 2005 when appointed CEO of the Collections Council of Australia Ltd but has been a keen advocate of the Archives domain throughout her long career, first as a medievalist, then in the Museum and Gallery domains, and more recently administering the History Council of Victoria and consulting to a wide range of collections in the GLAM sector.

Margaret’s website is [www.margaretbirtley.com.au](http://www.margaretbirtley.com.au) and she can be contacted via phone on 0418 814 957 or via email: mb@margaretbirtley.com.au
July Event Review—Social Justice within GLAM

In July we welcomed four panellists to discuss social justice within GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums): Caroline Beatty from Libraries, Monica Cronin and Amber Evangelista from Museums, and Michaela Hart from Archives. Each speaker gave a unique perspective on the role of social justice and diversity in their work and personal lives.

Caroline is one of the founding members of Librarians for Refugees. She encouraged us to consider whether actions are ‘Not racist’, or ‘Anti-racist’. We should take a stand with our actions, but this doesn’t always mean go out and protest - there are many ways of influencing change. This could be as simple as providing free library or museum passes for refugees to introduce them to their new community. For those inclined to protest, she recommended good Greek yoghurt and swimming goggles to counteract the effects of pepper spray.

Monica and Amber started by asking “Where are the women?” The answer—missing from history and archival collections. They critiqued the ‘Great Man’ theory and the still dominant philosophies of Thomas Carlyle—who believed that history is a biography of great men only, ignoring the role of women, people of colour and minorities. In the 200 years since Carlyle, this is something that has not changed. We need to make conscious choices to bring diverse roles and voices into our collections.

Finally, Michaela discussed both the stories that are, but more importantly, aren’t included within archival collections. As a member of Archivists Against History Repeating Itself, she questioned what changes need to be made to capture that which is currently missing, and how to encourage workplaces to prioritise this. Michaela also encouraged people to seek ways to incorporate their values into their workplace policies or training, encouraging people to get involved where possible in diversity committees if your workplace has them., and including a more diverse representation of people in training videos.

The Q and A session further explored the line between professionalism and personal views, and the best ways to negotiate this. In the world of social media and actively sharing your personal views in your personal time, how can this impact on you as a professional? There was concern from the audience that their full beliefs couldn’t be expressed in case this would negatively impact them in the future.

Thank you again to all the speakers and everyone who attended the event.

An audio recording of the event is available here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ekho7FZeUNjr9D020OfsgBL91f3P3vhj/view?usp=sharing

Useful websites:
http://www.archivistsagainst.org/
https://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/library/Programs/Food-For-Fines
https://www.facebook.com/librariansforrefugees/
ASA Vic Branch AGM—Wednesday 7 August

You are invited to attend the Victorian Branch Annual General Meeting from 5.00-7.00 pm on Wednesday August 7. The venue is Victorian Archives Centre, 99 Shiel St, North Melbourne.

Preceding the meeting there will also be a presentation from Asa Letourneau on the PROV Map Warper, an image and map geo-referencing service that stretches historic maps to fit on present day real world map coordinates. More information can be found at [mapwarper.prov.vic.gov.au](http://mapwarper.prov.vic.gov.au)

**Program:**
- Drinks and nibbles from 5:00 pm
- Presentation from Asa Letourneau - 5:30-5:45 pm
- AGM - 5:45-6:30 pm

To save on paper the agenda and previous AGM minutes will not be printed for meeting attendees, but you can find them here: [www.archivists.org.au/documents/item/1298](http://www.archivists.org.au/documents/item/1298)

In accordance with branch rules, all positions are available for nomination. You are warmly encouraged to apply and become involved in your branch. Positions up for election are: Convenor, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Coordinator, and Committee Members.

Elections to offices are open to all members, but the position of Convenor must be filled by a Member with current and financial Professional Membership Status.

**More information about nominating:**

Members can nominate themselves at any point up to the election and members can nominate for more than one position, but will then need two different people to support the nomination.

The current Secretary will act as Returning Officer until the AGM, where a non-nominating person will be appointed. Early nominations can be submitted to [asavic@archivists.org.au](mailto:asavic@archivists.org.au)

A nominating person must get support from the majority of the room.

According to Branch rules, the Convenor must be an individual member, and other members of the Committee must be individual members or the delegate of a corporate member.

If more than one nomination is received for any of the positions, other than Committee Members, the AGM will appoint a returning officer and an election will be held via a secret ballot with separate ballots for each position. Ballots will be called in this order: Convenor, Secretary, Treasurer and Communications Officer. In a tie, the returning officer must give a casting vote.

If there are no nominations for positions and the current Committee do not wish to continue, the matter must be put to the AGM. Nominations and election can take place within the AGM.

You will receive an annual report on the activities of the Branch and a copy of the Branch’s financial statements for the preceding year and list of all Branch members will be tabled.

Email the Branch Secretary about any items you would like added to the AGM agenda or if you have any questions not covered here. Registration details will be sent through to your email.

The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM) invites you to register for the National Conference 2019: ‘Making Conservation’. Bringing together over 150 professionals from conservation and allied fields, the conference seeks to provide a platform for academic papers and discussions on a wide range of issues relating to sustainability, innovation and connectivity within the conservation and wider heritage industries.

This conference will include two and a half days of presentations, an afternoon of tours, a panel discussion on conservation education, welcome drinks and an evening soiree. Plenty of opportunities to create networks, foster learning and introduce new techniques and developing areas of interest.

**Info/register:** [https://aiccm.org.au/civicrm/event/info%3Fid%3D45%26reset%3D1](https://aiccm.org.au/civicrm/event/info%3Fid%3D45%26reset%3D1)

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**Curator and historian Dr Sophie Couchman will give a keynote address, Doing it for ourselves - transcription projects.**

At the event, the Nick Vine Hall Awards for the best genealogy/family history society journals or newsletters in 2018 will also be presented.

Visit [www.familyhistorymonth.org.au](http://www.familyhistorymonth.org.au) to see what other events are in store across August.

**RSVP by the 26th of July.**


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**Victoria Branch event—Wednesday 7 August 5-7 pm—AGM**

ASA Vic Branch warmly invites you to the Annual General Meeting, where financial and membership reports for the year will be tabled and elections for officers will take place.

As well as the meeting, guest speaker Asa Letourneau will be talking about PROV ‘s Map Warper project, an image and map geo-referencing service that warps historic maps to fit on present-day maps.

The venue of the meeting is Victorian Archives Centre, 99 Shiel St, North Melbourne.

If you have questions about nominating for an officer role, please contact the Secretary on asavic@archivists.org.au. For more information and to register, please go to: [https://www.archivists.org.au/events/event/vic-branch-2019-agm-and-guest-speaker](https://www.archivists.org.au/events/event/vic-branch-2019-agm-and-guest-speaker)

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**National Family History Month Launch**

**2 August, Victorian Archives Centre**

The Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations (AFFHO) invites you to the launch of National Family History Month August 2019 at the Victorian Archives Centre in North Melbourne.

The launch includes a short presentation by Celia Blake, Regional Manager South & Director Victoria and Tasmania, National Archives of Australia, and Justine Heazlewood, Director and Keeper of Public Records, Public Record Office Victoria.

Curator and historian Dr Sophie Couchman will give a keynote address, Doing it for ourselves - transcription projects.

At the event, the Nick Vine Hall Awards for the best genealogy/family history society journals or newsletters in 2018 will also be presented.

Visit [www.familyhistorymonth.org.au](http://www.familyhistorymonth.org.au) to see what other events are in store across August.

**RSVP by the 26th of July.**


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**Victoria Museums & Galleries Forum—15 October—Melbourne**

A one-day event dedicated to discussing trending topics in the museum and gallery sector with this year’s theme the Healthy Museum.

The Forum aims to demonstrate how museums and galleries can create a healthier, happier future for both our sector and the wider public by addressing current issues such as wellbeing, sustainability and inclusivity in the sector.

The event will consist of a morning plenary session and two afternoon sessions, a lunchtime networking event and post-forum drinks. Bookings are now open with registrations starting at $150 for students, more speakers to be announced soon.

ASA VIC Branch Information

2018-2019 VIC Branch Committee

Co-convenors
Imogen Telfer i.telfer@unimelb.edu.au
Nicola Laurent nlaurent@archivists.org.au

Secretary
Susannah Tindall asavic@archivists.org.au

Treasurer
Rachel McNaughton

Communications Officer
Suzy Goss suzygoss@gmail.com

Elected Committee Members
Constance Thurley-Hart Saribel Minero
Nik McGrath Mike Jones
Fraser Faithfull

Previous Minutes and Newsletters of the Vic Branch

At the VIC Branch website you will find:
Annual Reports to Council
AGM Minutes Rules
Meeting minutes Newsletters

Did you know that donations to the ASA are tax-deductible?

Donations to the ASA go to support:
- Awards
- Scholarships
- Courses
- Publications

Enquiries on how to donate:
Michelle Lillico (ASA Treasurer)
treasurer@archivists.org.au

Donate to the ASA and support your community!

Do you have a GLAM event for the ASA VIC Branch newsletter?

Contact us with the full details at asavic@archivists.org.au

The newsletter is emailed to you in the last week of every month except in December.

To meet deadlines, content must be received by the 15th of the month to be considered for inclusion.

Ngoon godgin, thank you, to all of our generous contributors.