

**FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES INC
PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017**

In most respects the FAHS has continued to operate successfully at a higher level, thanks principally to the enhanced grant that we received under the Community Heritage & Icons Grants. Even though that grant scheme was discontinued in the last budget, the Minister's office arranged for a special allocation that will support us until the middle of 2018. We will continue to speak with the Minister's office in order to try to arrange funding into the future.

The larger grants have enabled increased hours and salary of the Executive Officer (John Davies) and the Outreach Officer (Bernadette Flynn). This has facilitated an enhancement of the public face and outreach of the FAHS. Bernadette continued to edit the *eBulletin* and the *Newsletter*, while also helping John Davies to develop our IT capacities. Bernadette has also been able to arrange further meetings with the Managers/EOs of some of our member societies.

The FAHS survey of societies has continued to supply us with rich information about their activities and challenges. It was partly in response to this that Bernadette was separately commissioned to produce a training guide on succession planning, and we are commissioning another training guide on how to collect and store data that is born digital.

I have made no official visits to our member societies in recent times. This is principally because there have been few opportunities except to the Northern Territory and Western Australia, and I held back from those because I have visited relatively recently and because of the expense. However, I met with RHSQ Council members and others while on a private visit to Brisbane. I remind Council that if you see any opportunity that would benefit the FAHS if I visit, please let me know.

I have been able to attend most of the meetings of the GLAM peak bodies group and to participate in its work to promote the digitisation of Australia's cultural collections. The body has now received two grants for this project, with the second one being used to organise a number of training seminars around the nation. The Project Officer for this is based at the RHSV. Bernadette Flynn has also been invited to be a member of one of the sub-groups working for GLAM Peak.

There have been some changes to the Council membership in the last year. Cath Pearce, Earl James, Judith Smart and Richard Broome have resigned, and I express my appreciation for their contribution. We have been joined by Colin Beard (HSNT), Margaret Anderson (RHSV) and Elisabeth Jackson (RHSV).

My thanks to all Councillors for their time and contribution, and particularly the members of the Executive – Helen Henderson, Nick Drew, Esther Davies, Ian Jack and Ruth Kerr.

Our employees, John Davies and Bernadette Flynn, have continued to make a conscientious and greatly valued contribution to the work of the FAHS.

Looking to the future, and assuming that we are able to renew our level of income, I suggest that it would be worthwhile to appoint a sub-committee to undertake a review of the FAHS operations. We operate at a fairly low level and have not greatly changed what we do over the years. We try add to rather than duplicate the work of our member societies. Is that how we wish to continue? Are we successful in what we do? Are there other things we should be doing? I float this matter for consideration in the coming year.

**Associate Professor Don Garden
President**