

**FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES INC
PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018**

As we expected, 2017-18 has proved to be a rather mixed bag. On the one hand, we were able to continue to employ our two staff, John Davies as Executive Officer and Bernadette Flynn as Outreach Officer/ National and Community History Officer and Curator, and this meant that we maintained a high level of activity and provided a range of services and assistance to the Australian community history movement.

On the downside, the Commonwealth Department's abandonment of the Community Heritage & Icons Grants placed our future in jeopardy. We were able to obtain a smaller top-up grant in 2017 but only after mounting a public campaign were we able to get further funding for 2018-19. However, this was in the form of a Protection of National Heritage Sites grant for which we must produce two thematic papers for the Australian Heritage Council. This is a worthwhile project which it is good for us to take on, but it is not sustainable for us to continue. The uncertainty about our future has necessitated a small scaling back of the hours and salary of the two staff. The achievement of more stable funding must be a major goal for the coming year.

I have met with Ministers Josh Frydenberg and Melissa Price, and with Shadow Minister Tony Burke, to promote the interests of the community heritage movement and to seek funding for the FAHS.

I was delighted to be able to present Fellowships to Prof Graeme Davison and Prof Marian Quartly at a function at the RHSV, and travelled to CDHS to present a Fellowship to Dr Richard Reid and an Award of Merit to Father Brian Maher. In George Town, Tasmania, I presented an Award of Merit to Peter Cox. All were very well received.

I have continued 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.

FAHS produced two new training guides during the year, *Succession Planning* by Bernadette Flynn, and *Collecting and Preserving Digital Materials* by Sophie Shilling, both valuable additions to our catalogue.

There have been a number of changes to Council membership in the last year. Colin Beard, Kay Saunders, Maryanne Pender and Julia Ryan have resigned, and I am very grateful for their contribution. Replacement councillors are Michael Halliday (RHSQ), Craig Bellamy (HSNT), Tim Roberts (RHSQ) and Nick Swain (CDHS).

My thanks to all Councillors for their time and contribution, and notably the members of the Executive – Helen Henderson, Nick Drew, Esther Davies, Ian Jack and Ruth Kerr. I thank and recognise Helen in particular for her many years of service as Secretary and previous to that as President, as she is not renominating for an executive position. She will, fortunately, stay on Council and we will retain her valued expertise.

Our employees, John Davies and Bernadette Flynn, have continued to make a conscientious and greatly valued contribution to the work of the FAHS and we are very sorry that Bernadette has now resigned to take up a new position.

This is my final report as President, having completed the maximum two two-year terms specified by the Constitution. I thank everyone for their support in what has (usually) been a very rewarding role, and wish all the best to my successor.

**Associate Professor Don Garden
President**