

Managing Heritage Collections

Useful Resources and Contacts



Elmore Historical Museum
Image Julie Millowick

Useful Resources and Contacts for Managing Heritage Collections

The following information provides an overview of some of the key Australian collection management resources and useful contacts. Please note that the quality and management of the information and links provided are the responsibility of the relevant organisations and may be subject to change at any time.

Heritage Victoria

<http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Home.aspx>

The Victorian State Government's principal cultural (non Indigenous) heritage agency, Heritage Victoria administers the Heritage Act 1995 and maintains the Victorian Heritage Register which lists the State's most significant heritage places and objects. These can be searched on the Victorian Heritage Database.

Heritage Victoria identifies, protects and interprets Victoria's most significant cultural heritage resources. It advises private owners, local and State government, industry and the general community on heritage matters. Heritage Victoria's aim is to make heritage identification, protection and management accessible and easily understood.

- **Victorian Heritage Database**

<http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/vhd/heritagevic>

This fully searchable on-line database contains information on Victorian Heritage Places and Precincts, including statements of significance, physical descriptions, historical information, builder, architectural style, photographs and heritage overlay number.

- **Heritage Victoria Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance**

<http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Registration/Criteria-for-assessment.aspx>

Criteria adopted by the Heritage Council on 7 August 2008 pursuant to Sections 8(1)(c) and 8(2) of the Heritage Act 1995.

- **Community Collections Training**

Funded by Heritage Victoria and managed by Museums Australia (Victoria). Supports custodians of community based heritage collections with free practical training and advice. The training is offered on a regional basis and includes workshops in significance assessment, collection management, preventive conservation and interpretation. To check eligibility and to find out about "on demand training" please refer to the Events and Training Section of the Museums Australia (Victoria) website: <http://www.mavic.asn.au/events-training/>



- **Management Plan for Heritage Objects and Collections**

A management plan establishes the significance and condition of an object or collection and provides guidance for the ongoing interpretation, management and maintenance. A copy of the **Heritage Victoria Management Plan for Heritage Objects and Collections – Interim Guidance** document is available from the Heritage Victoria website:

http://heritage.vic.gov.au/admin/file/content2/c7/Management_plan_for_objects_collections.pdf

Department of Sustainability and Environment

Guide to grants and assistance for heritage conservation in Victoria, January 2009

http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/admin/file/content2/c7/DSE_Heritage_Funding_Guide_Jan_09.pdf

Museum Standards and Management Information

- **Aboriginal material culture**

The following information sheets have been developed by Museums Australia (Victoria) and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria:

Information for Victorian museums with Aboriginal collection items information sheet

This information sheet has been created for Victorian museums who are custodians of Aboriginal material culture. The information sheet explains aspects of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and provides answers to frequently asked questions about Aboriginal objects in museums. The information relates to artefacts such as stone tools and wooden shields rather than artworks. The information is written with particular reference to Victorian Aboriginal objects. The information sheet is available at:

http://www.mavic.asn.au/assets/Info_Sheet_16_Aboriginal_Collection_Items.pdf

Resources for Victorian museums with Aboriginal collection items information sheet

This information sheet has been created for Victorian community museums who are custodians of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The information relates to artefacts such as stone tools and wooden shields rather than artworks. The information is written with particular reference to Victorian Aboriginal objects.

The fact sheet lists sources of information to assist Victorian museums meet their legal and ethical obligations, meet recognised museum standards, and to make Aboriginal cultural heritage and history more accessible to Aboriginal communities and the wider population. The information sheet is available at:

http://www.mavic.asn.au/assets/Info_Sheet_17_Resources_Aboriginal_Collection.pdf

- **Cataloguing**

The Small Museums Cataloguing Manual 2009 (4th edition)

The industry-standard reference for community museums wishing to start or develop their collections cataloguing. This essential practical tool is free to download from the Museums Australia (Victoria) website:

<http://www.mavic.asn.au/services/small-museums-cataloguing-manual/>

- **Collection and Museum Management**

Museums Australia (Victoria) is the Victorian Branch of Museums Australia, (the national association for the museum and gallery sector) and provides professional services for the Victorian museum community. MA (Vic) manages the Museum Accreditation Program and an Events and Training Program.

The MA (Vic) website includes important and useful information on all aspects of collection and museum management such as links to:

- Technical Information Sheets

- Museum Accreditation Program templates and guidelines:

MAP Forward Plan, MAP Collection Policy and MAP Interpretation Policy

Museum Methods, 2002

This Museums Australia guide covers all aspects of small museum management. Copies can be purchased through Museums Australia. A sample document from each of the chapters in the publication is available at: http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector_info_item/11

Be Prepared – Guidelines for small museums for writing a disaster preparedness plan, 2000

These guidelines have been produced to coordinate a national approach to caring for, and promoting access to, Australia's heritage collections. These guidelines enable the museum sector to write useful Disaster Preparedness Plans. The guidelines can be downloaded at: http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector_info_item/2

- **Digitisation**

The National Library of Australia manages the Digitisation of Heritage Materials program and standards and is available at: <http://www.nla.gov.au/preserve/dohm/>

The Collections Australia Network website includes a section on digitisation and digital preservation which lists information and resources that assist in the effective preservation of digital data: http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector_info_item/56 . The site includes a link to: ***Capture your collections – A digitisation course for remote and regional museums and galleries*** http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector_info_item/10

- **Exhibitions**

Museum's Australia (Victoria) has published a step-by-step guide book on how to develop, manage and deliver exhibitions. ***exhibitions: a practical guide for small museums and galleries*** by Georgia Rouette is available through the Museums Australia National Office.

- **National Standards Guidelines**

The National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries - Version 1.0

Includes reference to current industry practices resources, and museum development and accreditation programs. The document is available on the Collections Australia Network website: http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector_info_item/107

- **Preservation**

Guidelines for Commissioning Conservation Treatments

These guidelines have been developed by the Australian Centre for the Conservation of Cultural Material and are available at:

http://www.aiccm.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=38&Itemid=37

Directory of professional conservators working in private practice

This Directory is managed by the Australian Centre for the Conservation of Cultural Material and is available at:

http://www.aiccm.org.au/index.php?option=com_civicrm&view=Profiles&layout=search&Itemid=88

reCollections

A set of practical guidebooks written by practicing conservators intended to provide a sound guide for the preventative care of cultural items. It has been designed for use principally by non-conservators who are working with Australia's cultural heritage. The guidebooks are also a teacher-friendly resource which can be used in professional development workshops. Please note that active conservation treatment of cultural material should only be undertaken by, or on the advice of, a trained conservator. ***reCollections*** is available on-line at:

<http://archive.amol.org.au/recollections/>

Preservation Needs/Collection Risk Assessments

A Preservation Needs Assessment documents the condition of a collection and the environmental conditions, and prioritises its preventive and interventive conservation needs. The Australian Institute of Conservation of Cultural Materials ***Preservation Needs Assessment Template*** is available at:

http://www.aiccm.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=48&Itemid=48

- **Significance Assessment**

Significance 2.0 a guide to assessing significance of collections

Hard copies are available for purchase from the Collections Council of Australia and on-line copies are also available at: <http://significance.collectionscouncil.com.au/>

Some Useful Links

Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

<http://www.aboriginalaffairs.vic.gov.au/>

AVV is the Victorian Government's key agency for advice on Aboriginal affairs. It provides advice to the Victorian Government on Aboriginal policy, planning and delivers key programs. AAV works in partnership with Indigenous communities, government departments and agencies to promote knowledge, leadership and understanding about Victoria's Indigenous people and also administers legislation that promotes Aboriginal cultural heritage. The AVV website includes information on Aboriginal cultural heritage the Aboriginal Heritage Act, 2006 and the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register. The VAHR was established by the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and is an important administrative tool for the successful management of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Arts Victoria

<http://www.arts.vic.gov.au>

Arts Victoria is the State Government body which advises on, and implements arts policy. Arts Victoria is part of Victoria's Department of Premier and Cabinet and is charged with making the arts available and accessible to all Victorians and with supporting and developing Victoria's artists and creative industries.

Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM)

<http://www.aiccm.org.au>

The AICCM is the professional organisation for conservators in Australia. This site includes a directory of AICCM members in private practice and a list of conservation product suppliers. The listed companies provide conservation-quality material for storage and display of collection material, or specialist services such as fine art transport and crating.

Collections Australia Network (CAN)

<http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/>

The CAN website is a portal intended as the public gateway to collecting institutions across Australia including small to medium regional institutions. CAN provides access to nationwide information on Australia's cultural heritage including news and useful tools and links to resources and people working in the sector. Members of the public can also access an individual institution's own CAN website to explore its specific content, including: collection descriptions and objects; exhibitions and general events.

Collections Council of Australia

<http://www.collectionscouncil.com.au/home.aspx>

CCA is Australia's national peak body representing the shared interests of archives, galleries, libraries and museums. The organisation was initiated and is supported by the Cultural Ministers Council. Has published and manages Significance 2.0.

Culture Victoria

<http://www.cv.vic.gov.au>

Developed as part of the Victorian Cultural Network (VCN) project, the CV website is a collaboration between State agencies and is managed by Arts Victoria. CV enables Victorian cultural organisations to bring their collection objects and resources together in the form of stories from over 700 collecting and cultural institutions.

Federation of Australian Historical Societies

<http://www.history.org.au/>

The FAHS is the national peak body representing the interests of approximately 1,000 historical societies and approaching 100,000 members throughout Australia. The FAHS lobbies governments on issues affecting historical societies, produces a range of guides and training materials which are available on the website such as: the *FAHS Heritage Handbook: a guide for historical societies*, 2002, *Heritage tourism in Australia: a guide for historical societies*, 2008 and *Publishing history: a guide for historical societies*, 2006. The FAHS also runs the Australian Historical Societies Support group and publishes an e-bulletin and a newsletter.

Interpretation Australia Association

<http://www.interpretationaustralia.asn.au/Default.aspx?TAG=IAA.Web.Public.Home.AboutUs>

IAA is a national membership-based organisation dedicated to the advancement of the profession of heritage interpretation. IAA was formed in 1992 to share issues and ideas, improve professional standards and raise the profile of heritage interpretation as a profession. It currently serves more than 400 members in Australia, New Zealand and other countries.

Koorie Heritage Trust

<http://www.koorieheritagetrust.com/>

A not-for-profit Aboriginal community organisation that aims to protect, preserve and promote the living culture of Aboriginal people of south-eastern Australia. The Trust cares for a diverse range of artefacts, artworks, crafts, oral histories, books, manuscripts, historical material and photographs and houses four gallery spaces, a permanent interactive exhibition and a retail shop that sells authentic products.

The Trust also offers art workshops, educational programs, accredited training, cross-cultural training, cultural tours and touring exhibitions. The Trust provides a range of programs and services to the Koorie community and the general public including assisting community members trace their family history; youth projects designed to connect with Elders and culture, and an extensive research library dating back to the 1800s.

Museum Victoria

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/>

Museum Victoria is responsible for the State's scientific and cultural collections, providing visitor access, activities and events at four venues: Melbourne Museum, Immigration Museum, Scienceworks and the Royal Exhibition Building. Museum Victoria cares for more than 16 million items which are organised into three major collections: Science, Indigenous Cultures, History and Technology. The Museum also oversees a wide range of research programs, the continued development of the collections and manages education and research based websites.

Museums Australia

<http://www.museumsaustralia.org.au>

The national organisation for the museums sector, committed to the conservation, continuation and communication of Australia's heritage. MA is a non-government, non-profit body, which promotes and advocates on behalf of museums and galleries and supports the people who work in them. Membership and publications are some of the things that are provided by MA.

Museums Australia (Victoria)

<http://www.mavic.asn.au/>

MA (Vic) is the Victorian branch of Museums Australia — the national association for the museum and gallery sector. MA (Vic) provides a range of professional services for the Victorian museum community which include: Advice on museum matters; information resources; grants for museum projects; networking; professional development; seminars and workshops. MA (Vic) manages the Museum Accreditation Program (MAP) and represents and provides programs for over 500 members from across the State. The MA (Vic) website contains useful information on all aspects of managing cultural collections including a wide range of information sheets which can be downloaded from the website. MA (Vic) has also developed a variety of publications including the on-line version of the *Small Museums Cataloguing Manual*, 2009 (4th edition).

National Gallery of Victoria

<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/>

Since 1861, the National Gallery of Victoria has been displaying art works for the enjoyment of the community. The Collection is split between the Ian Potter Centre; NGV Australia at Federation Square home of Australian art, and NGV International at St Kilda Road which is dedicated to the Gallery's international artworks.

National Library of Australia (NLA)

<http://www.nla.gov.au/>

The NLA's role is to ensure that documentary resources of national significance relating to Australia and the Australian people, as well as significant non-Australian library materials, are collected, preserved and made accessible either through the Library itself or through collaborative arrangements with other libraries and information providers. The website includes the NLA's on-line resources including e-Resources and Discover Australia's Collections. The website includes a link to the publication: *Preserving Australia's Documentary Heritage: A Starter Kit for Community Groups* <http://www.nla.gov.au/services/starterkitcommunity.pdf> . The NLA also manages the Community Heritage Grants program which includes grants for significance assessments of collections.

National Exhibitions Touring Service Victoria http://www.netsaustralia.org.au/state_vic.htm

NETS Victoria is the peak body for visual arts touring in the State of Victoria and partners with organisations to develop and tour innovative exhibitions that engage with a diverse audience. NETS Victoria provides opportunities for audiences to access the best contemporary Australian art, craft and design. NETS Victoria also administers the annual Exhibition Development Fund Program which assists in the development of new exhibitions for tour. Professional touring advices and support is provided to the sector at no cost. This website also includes useful resources and links.

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Heritage Victoria
Level 4, 55 Collins St,
Melbourne 3000

GPO Box 2392, Melbourne,
Victoria 3001

Phone: (03) 8644 8800
Fax: (03) 8644 8811

Email:
heritage@dpcd.vic.gov.au

Web: www.heritage.vic.gov.au



Oral History Association of Australia Victorian Branch <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~oralhist/>

The Victorian Branch of the OHAA publishes a state newsletter, *Rewind* and holds meetings three times a year featuring guest speakers or panel discussions. State and regional OHAA conferences are held from time to time and a National Conference is held every second year. The website includes: a register of OHAA Victorian members who are available to undertake oral history projects, order forms for purchasing OHAA publications such as the *Oral History Handbook*, 2006 (5th edition) and links to oral history related websites.

Professional Historians Association (Victoria) Inc. <http://www.phavic.org.au/index.html>

PHA (Vic) works to support professional historians and acts to raise the profile and value of history and historians in the community in order to achieve excellence in the discipline. PHA (Vic) members' benefits include professional development seminars, an Employment Service which publicises current work opportunities, a bi-monthly newsletter, a Code of Ethics and a scale of fees.

The Employment Service circulates information to accredited professional historians on a weekly or fortnightly basis. This service allows employers wishing to engage the services of an historian to publicise the job quickly and without cost among practising professional historians. PHA (Vic) can provide potential employers with information and advice on a range of matters free of charge including advice on commissioning a history, a guide to preparing a brief and a scale of fees and estimates of the probable costs of employing an historian.

Public Galleries Association of Victoria <http://www.pgav.org.au>

The PGAV represents and supports a wide range of public art galleries across Victoria. This network includes public galleries, art museums and contemporary art spaces across regional and metropolitan Victoria. The PGAV facilitates communication and information exchange between members and other peak bodies; and its staff manages a members-only online forum, organise workshops, forums, social occasions and other opportunities for networking as well as promotion of the network of 47 galleries. The PGAV also administers the Robert Salzer Foundation grants for major acquisitions.

Public Record Office Victoria <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/>

PROV is the archives of the State Government of Victoria. It holds records from the European settlement of Port Phillip district in the mid-1830s to today. PROV manages these records for use by both the government and people of Victoria. As the archival authority for the State of Victoria, PROV undertakes activities such as; records care and management, maintaining and promoting recordkeeping standards and provision of training and advice. PROV also manages an exhibition and publications program, the Archival Support Program, Local History Grants and seminars.

Royal Historical Society of Victoria <http://www.historyvictoria.org.au>

The RHSV is a community organisation committed to collecting, researching and sharing an understanding of the history of Victoria. The website includes information on the RHSV lecture series, publications, the Victorian Community History Awards, Local History Online - a collection of Victorian online local history resources including online collections of the RHSV and the RSHV Affiliated Societies Database. The RHSV is a member of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies.

State Library of Victoria <http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/>

The major reference and research library in Victoria, responsible for collecting and preserving Victoria's documentary heritage and making it available through a range of services and programs. Services include professional conservation advice for publicly and privately owned material which is provided through Information Guides and a Conservation Inquiry Line. The Guides are available on-line at: <http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/services/conservation/guides/index.html>

The University of Melbourne Archives <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/archives/>

The UMA collects, manages and provides access to the historical records of the University, Victorian business, trade unions and other labour organisations, community and cultural organisations, as well as the personal papers of many individuals prominent within them.