

# Owning the Past

*Historical Societies  
in South Australia*

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# OWNING THE PAST

## Historical societies in South Australia

### Executive summary

This survey has been carried out by the

History Trust of South Australia in response to:

- the growth of the historical society

movement in recent years;

- the inclusive nature of the Trust's own brief "to foster an informed awareness of South Australia's rich and distinctive history and to undertake and encourage the preservation of the evidence of that history through its museums and other programs";

- a sense of the importance of historical societies as agents for establishing popular ownership of their past and therefore of their identity"

and as a way of assessing the needs and

aspirations of the historical society movement.

Following this, the most comprehensive

survey yet carried out of South Australian historical societies, and wide consultation among the relevant agencies, the Report concludes flaat:

- while valuable work is being done by the agencies currently active in the field, support for local history taken as a whole need@; greater co-ordination, and more resources;

a lack of capacity to liaise directly with voluntary historical groups has meant that many of them are isolated from sources of advice and assistance and are often unaware of what advice and support is available;

there is little co-ordination or co-operation between societies: such co-

ordination is urgently needed to sustain levels of activity in the smaller societies;

- a lack of resources has led to significant deficiencies in the level and kind of

support and advice currently available, particularly in the dissemination of information and financial support for the activities of voluntary groups,

The Report therefore RECOMMENDS"

1. The establishment of a Community History Committee to

a) administer a Project Grants Scheme (see below)

b) ensure the co-ordination of advisory and other services to the State's voluntary historical groups

2. The establishment of a Project Grants Scheme to enrich and revitalise voluntary historical activities. The aim of the scheme would be to fill the gaps in the current system of provision of advice and financial assistance identified by the survey and encourage greater regional co-operation between

societies.:

3. The appointment of a Community History **Field Officer** to

@

a) disseminate information and advice on behalf of all agencies and bodies serving voluntary historical groups

b) under the direction of the Community History Committee, liaise with relevant agencies to ensure the co-ordination of advisory and other services to voluntary historical groups

4. The incorporation of the following specific duties in the Community History Field Officer's duty statement:

a) develop policy for the voluntary historical area for consideration by the Community History Committee

b) carry out ongoing research on the

needs of voluntary historical groups Director and the effectiveness of the Project Grants Scheme

d) administer the Project Grants Scheme under the direction of the

Community History Committee

e) carry out regular field trips to voluntary historical groups in order to advise on and where possible facilitate the development of voluntary historical activities

liaise with all agencies involved in providing services to voluntary historical groups and communicate relevant information to those groups

on these services

g) develop and manage, with other agencies and officers of the History Trust, a regular program of seminars, conferences and workshops on aspects of the work of voluntary historical groups

h) assist with the review of *The local museum* for redevelopment and upgrading to cater for voluntary historical activities generally

i) disseminate information on activities within the historical community in South Australia.

5 and 6. A **process of** further

consultation with relevant agencies and the societies on the recommendations of this Report, the results of which should be summarised and forwarded to the Minister for the Arts and Local Government.

Additional costs implied by these recommendations are summarised in the attachment.

Brian Crozier

Special Projects

## **COST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Project Grants Scheme \$50,000

Salary, Community History  
Field Officer (CU2, inc. oncosts) \$38,000

Administrative costs, inc.  
secretarial, transport, phone,  
postage, accommodation,  
publications,  
other contingencies \$10,000

TOTAL" \$98,000

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# INTRODUCTION

## A History of Historical Societies in South Australia

### WHY A SURVEY?

This survey has been carried out by the History Trust of South Australia in response to:

- the growth of the historical society movement in recent years;
- the inclusive nature of the Trust's own brief "to foster an informed awareness of South Australia's rich and distinctive history and to undertake and encourage the preservation of the evidence of that history through its museums and other programs";
- a sense of the importance of historical societies as agents for establishing popular ownership of their past and therefore of their identity;

and as a way of assessing the needs and aspirations of the historical society movement,

### HISTORICAL

#### SOCIETIES IN SOUTH

#### AUSTRALIA

Voluntary historical societies in South Australia, as in other parts of the country

generally, should be seen as part of a broader spectrum of historical and heritage organisations which has grown considerably in size and complexity over the last forty years, and particularly, as far as historical societies are concerned, over the last two decades. This growth has not previously been documented in any significant detail, nor have the needs and potential of this new area of cultural activity been analysed before in any depth.

Before about 1950, historical societies in South Australia were both few in number and general in their interests. The field was originally covered by the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (South Australian Branch), founded in

1885, which listed among its objects 'the collection and publication of historical records of geographical interest, and of more community detail in our memoirs of notable men of Australia'. Specific recognition of the historical concerns previously catered for by the

Royal Geographical Society was achieved with the foundation of the South Australian Historical Society in 1926 (following the establishment of the Royal Australian Historical Society in Sydney in 1901 and that of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria in 1912) which set out "To encourage research" and "To prepare and discuss papers on any topic of historical interest." Unlike its companion organisations in other states, however, the South Australian Historical Society died around 1930 or 1931.<sup>1</sup>

By 1950, there were still only four societies carrying out historical activities in the State, the Anthropological Society of South Australia (founded in 1926), the Sporting Car Club of South Australia (1934), and the Pioneers Association of South Australia (1935) as well as the Royal Geographical Society which had formed an Historical Division in 1947.<sup>2</sup> From the 1950s on, however, the field began gradually to grow. Of the societies currently active and of which it has been possible to discover foundation dates, six trace their origins to the decade 1950-59.

These include the National Trust of South Australia, established in 1955.

The National Trust was the focus of most of the growth in this area before the mid-1970s. By 1962, it had achieved a membership of about 1000, which grew to 7500 by 1975. The National Trust now

has some 55 branches throughout the state)

Meanwhile, the interests of the Trust have shifted discernibly over the last ten years towards built heritage, a trend symbolised by the development of its revised Register of Historic Buildings in 1974, and leading to the emergence of the Trust as a major contributor to the growth of the heritage movement.

At the same time, there began a massive surge in the numbers of voluntary historical societies, distinguished by their specific focus on the history and heritage of local areas. Of the societies currently active, the first local historical society to be established had been the Lobethal

Historical Society (1954)<sup>4</sup>, though this remained the only strictly local society founded in the 1950s. The following

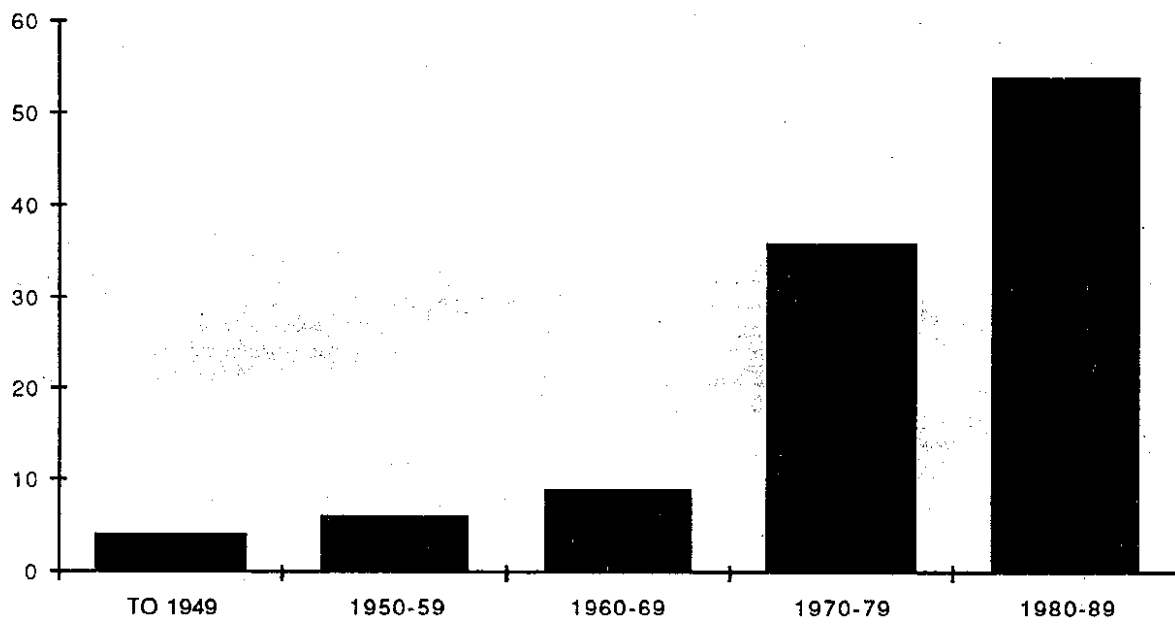
decade saw the establishment of a further nine societies, including six local groups.

The surge in numbers of voluntary historical societies, however, was most marked from the 1970s, with the foundation of no less than 36 between 1970 and 1979. The trend has continued in the 1980s, with the establishment of another 54 societies since 1980. These figures relate only to societies currently active of which the foundation dates happen to be available: there are a further 39 societies believed to be active for which the foundation dates have not been forwarded to the History Trust. In 1989, there appeared to be at least 148 voluntary historical societies active in South Australia, including not only local historical societies, but also groups based on other specific interests, such as the genealogical societies, railway preservation societies, societies based on specific areas of employment, oral history societies and one group catering specifically for the interests of formally trained historians working outside the tertiary institutions.<sup>5</sup> Including the National Trust and the South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society, the combined membership of historical societies in this state is about 17,000.

### NOTES

- 1 A. Stimson, "The South Australian Historical Society, 1926-1930", Historical Society of South Australia Newsletter 78, September 1988.
- 2 See Brian Samuels, "State level voluntary organisations involved in preserving and promoting South Australian history: an historical chronology" (available from the History Trust of South Australia).
- 3 National Trust of South Australia, annual reports, 1957-1988.
- 4 This was in fact relatively late in national terms, the first such society in New South Wales having been established in 1920. See Gall Griffith, "The historical view from the Royal Australian Historical Society", *Locating Australia's past*, Local History Co-ordination Project, Kensington, 1988.
- 5 The growth of the history sector in Australia "The IS described historical in whole elephant", Australian Historical Association *Bulletin*, vol.59-60, Aug.-Nov. 1989.

**NUMBERS OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES  
ESTABLISHED IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA TO 1989**



# THE VALUE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

## CATEGORIES

Essentially, three main categories of voluntary historical society have been revealed in this survey:

- general societies such as those which originally represented popular historical interests, such as the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia. The Historical Society of South Australia should also be included

under this category;

local historical societies, devoted to

discovering, interpreting and preserving the evidence of the history of their local areas. These represent a distinctive feature in the development of the history and heritage movement during the last

twenty years;

special interest groups, concerned with particular specialised topics, such as historical vehicle preservation, family history, the history of particular areas of employment or particular social or ethnic groups, oral history, and the promotion of the writing of history by qualified historians.

## HISTORICAL IDENTITY

Overall, however, the voluntary historical society movement, broadly conceived, is the expression of a search for historical identity. In this its interests differ from those of History as it is understood in the

tertiary institutions, which despite a number of important recent

developments,<sup>6</sup> remains a system of liberal education and intellectual training in terms of its teaching, and in its research is concerned chiefly with national and international, rather than state or local,

issues<sup>7</sup>

It is interesting to compare this with a representative statement of aims by one of

the societies surveyed for this report, the

Waikerie District Historical Society:

*To provide and preserve an oral, written and pictorial history of Waikerie and surrounding Council areas;  
To promote an interest in the community in district history and to make available*

*to the community information gathered...<sup>8</sup>*

Essentially, voluntary historical societies derive their strength from their assertion of a common historical identity among their members, expressed through a pursuit of the historical roots of a common, specific area of interest. This may be, in the case of local historical societies, the history of a local district, or, with genealogical societies, the histories of specific families, or with the specific historical concerns defined by identity with other types of social group, such as ethnic communities,

or with particular forms of employment or

modes of transport. In this way, membership of an historical society and participation in its activities enables a group to "own" its past and use its knowledge of that past to extend its own

sense of identity independently of what Donald Home has referred to as the "public culture" (the culture expressed through public, mass institutions), and of the systems by which this is propagated.<sup>9</sup>

## ALTERNATIVE KINDS OF ORGANISATION

Voluntary historical societies also provide

.@ful examples of alternative kinds of organisation arising from a more general • range of concerns than is expressed in any of the larger and more formal heritage bodies. The current survey has revealed societies concerned not only with historical research, preservation, interpretation and discussion, but also with art and craft, with building preservation, with "living history", and with the history

of cultural forms such as dancing and folk songs. In this way, the range of activities encompassed by an individual society may not be matched by any single formally established and funded heritage body. This may provide difficulties in classification, but it may also provide new perspectives on ways of dealing with historical materials and issues.

## PRESERVATION AND

## RESEARCH

Voluntary historical societies (with local museums) contribute massively to the

preservation of the evidence of South Australia's past, perhaps carrying a greater load in terms of the sheer bulk of their holdings than any other agency in the state, apart from the State-funded Mortlock Library and Public Record Office.

They also generate considerable bodies of research into local history, which is both intrinsically important and provides detailed case studies for research of a more general kind.

## CULTURAL TOURISM

Apart from the natural and geographical features of a place, its identity is defined by the evidence of its past, and this sense of historical identity possessed by its

inhabitants. Even in places known for their natural advantages, the tourist experience is enhanced by a sense of their history.

This is a point that has been clearly understood by a number of local Councils, which have, like Mitcham and Burnside,

to name only two, produced walking tour leaflets in association with local historical groups. Other places like Robe, Burra, Loxton and Terowie, among others, have worked hard through a variety of means and with little external assistance, to

develop the heritage resources of their areas for tourism. Some idea of the isolation in which this work is sometimes carried out is given by the comment of the Terowie Citizens Association on the potential role of the town's heritage in reviving its fortunes. Speaking of the Association's sizeable photographic collection, the Heritage Co-ordinator,

Marina Gray, said, "Its historical value is totally unrecognised by but a few. All work carried out is done by local effort and fundraising. This makes the task of preservation and restoration look fairly formidable." <sup>10</sup>

There is indeed a growing sense in the tourism industry of the potential of local heritage resources to boost local and

regional cultural tourism. One result of this has been "Tourism and Australian multicultural heritage", a course generated by the History Trust of South Australia and the School of Tourism and Hospitality of the Adelaide College of

TAFE. Originally devised to concentrate on the Barossa Valley, the course represents a recognition of the value of local cultural heritage, tracing the

relationship between settlement patterns, land use and historical development, in order to define a sense of place. The course organisers have recognised the general relevance of this by renaming the course "Tourism and Australian heritage", under which title it will be taught from

1990. The Barossa Valley will remain as a case study, making the point that the heritage of any area is distinctive of it and represents a large measure of its attractiveness for the visitor. Historical societies were key sources of the raw material for this course. In the same way, the current survey shows that they are key sources for both the raw material for interpreting the heritage of a district for the visitor and of the finished

product, in the form of such things as heritage trails and guides, signage and larger scale local historical publications.

In this sense, the resources and productivity of historical societies are assets for the state's cultural life as well as for its tourism industry. They deserve

support on both counts,

#### NOTES

6 See Crozier, "The historic@ community", op.cit.

7 See, for example, Professor R.M. Crawford, speaking in 1984, on the original aims of the University of Melbourne School of History as he reconstituted it in the 1930s: "Turning out historians was an acceptable by-product of the main task, which was to equip one's pupils for a more interesting life and train them to act with some independence of mind and a readiness to consider evidence, in whatever field of activity they went into." (Quoted in *Making history*, ed. Stuart McIntyre, McPhee Gribble/Penguin, 1985,

p.45, from an address by Professor Crawford for The History Institute, Victoria in 1984.). It is interesting how appropriate this remains as a statement of the aims of many academic departments of History in 1990.

8 Waikerie Historical Society, survey return.

This is not to say that academic departments of History are not interested in local history or that they have not recognised the importance of it as a popular concern. Individual departments have indeed recognised it and are doing important work in it, and the level of recognition is growing, but this has happened as result of the growth in the historical movement itself, which has in this way influenced the development of academic interests.

9 Donald Home, *The public culture: the triumph of industrialism* (Pluto Press 1986), see esp. ch.1. See also Beverley Kingston's comment on local history: "Local history, like all history, is about identity, significance, and, ultimately, power and control." ("The use and function of local history", in *Locating Australia's past*, Local History Co-ordination Project, Kensington 1988, p.4).

10 Letter to the State Historian, Susan Marsden, 17/6/88.

# CURRENT SUPPORT FOR LOCAL HISTORICAL GROUPS

Essentially, the services available to voluntary societies are listed below. (Current financial assistance for each is shown in brackets where relevant: where no specific financial assistance is given this is indicated by \*).

\*

## HISTORY TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- **advice and financial support** for collections management and display presentation: from the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program, available to accredited and provisionally accredited local museums, including a number run by historical societies

(\$100,000)

- historical information service: supplementary to that available from the

Mortlock Library of South Australia

and including the production and distribution of historical leaflets and

booklets \*

- **material submitted to the Historical Society of South Australia Newsletter** \*

- **calendar of events** \*

- **advice to individuals and groups** on historical activities \*

- **judging for historical awards (such as the Family History award for schools and the Oral History Association "Voices of the Past" award for schools)\***

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

## AUSTRALIA

- information exchange (through the Newsletter) \*

- publication of research on South Australian History: in the Historical Society of South Australia *Journal* (\$2000 assistance from History Trust

towards total cost of \$7,000)

- occasional conferences and workshops\*

historical walks (for members and others)\*

regular lectures \*

## PUBLIC LIBRARIES BRANCH

### BRANCH

- advice on management and development of local collections: from the Public Libraries Branch Local History Projects Officer, working through local libraries and groups associated with them.

- seminars on management of local

history collections from the Public Libraries Branch Local History Field Officer, working through local libraries

and groups associated with them

- assistance in integrating heritage

- ..... material (including oral history) into

Community Arts events: from the

Branch's central Community Arts Officer, working through local

Community Arts programs encouragement of local aboriginal

communities to use aboriginal heritage material (particularly oral history) In local libraries: from the Branch's two Aboriginal Project

Officers

## OF SOUTH AUSTRALIANA

### AUSTRALIANA

- archival resources and secondary

- workshops on local and family history \*

- advice on oral history: from the Oral History Officer \*

seminars on oral history: offered by the Oral History Officer at metropolitan and country locations through the Oral

History Association. (The Oral History Association also sells publications on aspects of oral history and promotes oral history in schools, notably through its "Voices of the past" competition) \*

## SOUTH AUSTRALIAN

### GENEALOGY AND

### HERALDRY SOCIETY

- **genealogical library s@vi@**

- **quarterly journal** \*

- monthly meetings \*

- research services \*

- **publication of research aids** \*

- workshops and (through the Workers Educational Association) courses on genealogical methods

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## RECORD

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OFFICE OF SOUTH

## AUSTRALIA

• ::

archival resources, including local

"

Council records and State Government records \*

- workshops on local history and collection management \*

- advice on transfer, storage and conservation of original local history records of State and local government origin \*

Other agencies are available to provide

specialised advice and assistance. These include the State Heritage Branch (advice on care of historic buildings, and financial assistance for the care of buildings on the State Heritage Register), the State Conservation Centre (conservation of

historic material), and the National Trust (advice on museum oriented activities).

The Archivists' Association of Australia run annual workshops on archival organisation. Workshops are also run by the Australian Library and Information Association Local Studies Group, which also offers inspection tours of repositories

for members and friends.

# ISSUES

From the preceding summary of programs supporting volunt@ry historical activity it is dear that while different bodies operate programs which are well-conceived within their own briefs, the range of support services available as a whole appears fragmented and under-resourced. The survey, and research into services available, support this view and reveal a number of specific issues,

## NEED FOR CO-

### ORDINATION BETWEEN AGENCIES

There is presently no mechanism to develop an integrated range of services for voluntary historical groups,

## NEED TO GUARD

### AGAINST

#### DUPLICATION

There is a considerable risk of duplication, especially in the areas of seminars, workshops and publications: seminars and workshops are provided or planned by virtually all the agencies listed above, and while efforts are made to involve members of a range of agencies in these events, there is no mechanism to ensure that resources are maximised or to integrate the programs provided. The area of publications would similarly benefit from greater co-ordination between agencies,

## NEED TO PROJECT EXISTING SERVICES

### AND ADVICE

## OUTSIDE ADELAIDE

The survey has revealed that many societies are isolated from sources of advice and financial support. One area in which there are particular problems is in the production of publications. Another, less expected but nonetheless important for the long term health of voluntary historical societies as organisations, is in

the development of appropriate programs of activity to give a sense of momentum and continuing interest.

At the same time, there are indications that the societies are not fully informed of the sources of advice and support that are available. In this connection we should note that the dissemination of information of common interest to the societies is largely through the Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia, but that the Society receives no assistance in carrying out this role.

Th@ Newsletter (and the *Journal*) are made available to the voluntary societies by agreement between the Historical Society of South Australia and each society for the local society to receive the central society's publications (Newsletter aJad/or *Journal*) on payment of the appropriate affiliation fee. The survey indicates that just 15 societies, or about 20% of those which responded to the survey, are affiliated with the Historical Society of South Australia in this way and therefore @c@ive its publications, including the Newsletter and the advice it contains. It is likely that the percentage of the total number of societies in the state affiliated in this way is much smaller.

The Public Libraries Branch has taken the welcome step of appointing a central Local History Project Officer, working through the local history collections in local public libraries and with a central Community Arts Officer and Community Information Officer, but there is still no means of advising voluntary historical groups directly, and across the whole range of their activities, and across the whole range of services provided by the different agencies in the field.

Similarly, the Museums Officer of the History Trust has a responsibility to visit and advise local museums under the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program, but the fact that the National Trust has been making efforts to appoint its own Museums Officer to complement the work of the History Trust's officer is ample indication that there is no spare capacity in the History Trust position to extend this responsibility to voluntary historical groups,

## NEED TO DEVELOP

### POLICY ACROSS

#### THE RANGE OF VOLUNTARY

#### HISTORICAL

#### ACTIVITY

At least three Government departments (Arts, Environment and Planning and Local Government), as well as the History Trust, the Historical Society of South Australia, the National Trust, and the South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society have an interest in the development of policy with regard to voluntary historical activity, and there is a clear role for the Department of Tourism as well. However it is not at present possible for any one body to take responsibility for the field as a whole.

It is now time to recognise the integrity of local history as an area of activity its own right and provide a mechanism to develop policy for it.

### NEED TO RECOGNISE COMMUNITY

#### HISTORICAL

#### ACTIVITIES AS A FIELD OF CULTURAL

#### EXPRESSION

There is considerable sympathy in the Department of Local Government for the notion that community cultural development, including the encouragement of historical and heritage-oriented activities, is a more valuable concept than community arts development, which has not generally been seen as catering for such activities. The issue has also been recognised by the Department for the Arts.

The appointment of a central Community Arts Officer in the Public Libraries Branch dealing, in part, with history and heritage,

and work with the Local Councils  
Project Officer and a Community Liaison

Officer. may be seen as evidence of this refreshing attitude in the Department of Local Government, which is responsible for the Public Libraries Branch.

At the same time, while many Councils have done less than they might in this area, the appointment of local history officers (under varying titles) at the local Council level in six Council areas (Mitcham, Burnside, Brighton, Munno Para, Salisbury and Penola,) and the continuing

archival and historical work of the Adelaide City Council are most encouraging and should be promoted by any central program of support.

However, there remain large gaps in the provision particularly of financial support for heritage projects. For example, enquiries regarding assistance for the production of local histories from groups in places such as Port Augusta and Port Pirie in recent months have been forwarded to the History Trust for response, and enquirers have had to be told that no assistance, however minimal, is available for this kind of project.

It would also be helpful to support the work of the Mortlock Library and the Oral History Association in advising on the conduct of oral history projects,

## **NEED FOR GREATER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN SOCIETIES**

The survey did not attempt to assess the degree of co-ordination and co-operation taking place between societies, since the importance of the issue was not immediately obvious. However, it is clear from comments made in the survey that achievement of some degree of "critical mass" (a membership of at least 20) is important for the long term health of a society, since it is difficult to sustain a level of activity high enough to maintain the interest of members with less.

With 27 societies (of a total of 85 for which information is available) reporting memberships of less than 20, it is clearly important to encourage co-operation and co-ordination between societies with shared participation in at least some of their activities. Efforts made in this direction by the Enfield Historical Society in recent years need to be taken up and other societies encouraged to emulate them.

## **NEED TO MAXIMISE**

### **OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT**

An injection of central government funds is needed to deal with these problems, but there is also a need to encourage the development of those sources of support that already serve the societies (in some cases with considerable generosity), including local business, parent institutions, and particularly local Councils.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

As we have seen, support for voluntary historical activities from the agencies currently active in the field is when seen as a whole, unco-ordinated and under-resourced, and is meagre compared to what is available in NSW (see Appendix 5), even allowing for the difference in population between that State and South Australia. In addition, many voluntary historical groups are isolated from sources of advice and financial assistance and indeed are not aware of what advice and support is available. And there is little co-ordination or co-operation between societies, many of which have

memberships too low to sustain a program of activities adequate to retain the interest of the members they have.

At the same time, despite the involvement of considerable numbers of people in them, voluntary historical activities have been largely excluded from existing sources of support for the arts. Not only have the participants in voluntary historical activities been denied adequate support for their role in defining and developing a sense of the historical identity of their communities: the State has also failed to identify and develop the cultural resources held by these groups. The significance of these resources is becoming increasingly apparent with the growing recognition of the potential of cultural tourism for South Australia. The following recommendations are made with these issues in mind.

## RECOMMENDATION 1

### Community History Committee

It is RECOMMENDED that a broadly-based Community History Committee be established on the model represented by the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program as a committee of the History Trust of South Australia.

The role of the Committee should be:  
- to administer a Project Grants Scheme (see below)

- to ensure the integration of advisory and other services to voluntary historical groups

Like the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program Committee, the Community History Committee would report to the Board of the Trust and be administered by the Trust.

The Committee should be chaired by the Director, History Trust or his nominee, and include among its members relevant History Trust staff and representatives of relevant organisations.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

### Project Grants Scheme

It is RECOMMENDED that a Project Grants Scheme be established to provide assistance for voluntary historical activities.

The scheme would be administered by the Community History Committee. Its aims would be :

to fill the gaps in the current provision of advice and financial support for voluntary historical activity

- to facilitate greater co-ordination between agencies and between societies

to encourage a greater level of support for voluntary historical activity at the local and state level,

#### Target groups

The scheme as proposed is not based on the assessment and accreditation of groups or societies, but rather is aimed at supporting specific projects. It is not intended to duplicate the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program: societies eligible for support under that program should not be eligible for support under the Project Grants Scheme for projects fundable under the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program.

At the same time it should not be limited to historical societies (however defined) but be directed to assist appropriate voluntary historical activity by groups assessed as competent to manage the funds provided and achieve the outcomes proposed for their projects. It should

therefore be open also to genealogical groups, specialist societies and ad hoc groups, as long as they meet agreed basic criteria, which should include the relevance of their projects to local, regional or State history.

Relationship to existing funding agencies

The aim of the scheme would be to supplement or increase, not replace, existing sources of support by judicious use of provisions for matching grants. In particular, it is hoped that the scheme will

lead to greater participation in aspects of voluntary historical activity by local government, local business and regional tourism associations.

#### Outline of the scheme

The Community History Committee should feel able to vary the scheme, the aims and focus of which may well change over time, and should in any case be subject to periodic review. However, the outlines of the scheme as proposed are as follows:

#### Categories of grants

*ACTIVITIES:* the survey revealed the following major areas of activity by voluntary historical societies: historical research (57 societies), talks by visiting speakers (49), care of historical objects (49), care of archives (48), assistance with historical research (47), talks by local (42), historical excursions (38), historical walks (27), historical re-enactments (14), mounting displays (12), and architectural restoration (9).

These and other activities by local historical groups should be supported by grants towards:

- extraordinary costs beyond the means of the applicants
- the provision of services that are of benefit to a range of societies or groups in the voluntary historical movement.

In general, grants should be limited to specific projects, and could support (for example):

- **the purchase of equipment** (such as microfilm readers, filing cabinets, photographic copying facilities)

- **the acquisition of** research material

- **the cost of** small training programs in relevant skills such as archival maintenance, the conservation of historical objects and buildings, and the copying of historical photographs

- **the cost of marking and interpreting** historical walking trails (grants to be given on a matching basis to encourage

equivalent contributions from local Councils, local business and regional tourism associations)

At the same time, support should be provided to assist the development of co-

operative and regional historical programs, such as :

- regional and state conferences

- regional and state newsletters

- regional programs **of visiting** speakers

- co-operative research programs

**PREPARATION OF HISTORICAL PRODUCTIONS:** as recorded by the survey, the scale of activity among voluntary historical groups in the preparation of historical publications is considerable:

- 28 societies produce their own newsletters

- 11 full length books have been published in the last two years by societies repoding to the survey, with a number more in various stages of production

- 9 societies issue their own journals

- 41 societies are responsible for a wide range of other publications, including

pamm , hi,tonga1

disseminate information on activities

in

- no less than 57 societies listed historical research as an activity of their members, making this the single largest area of activity among the societies surveyed, while there are signs of growing interest in other types of historical production, such as oral history.

- it provides a key point of focus for historical societies' activities

- it generates material of considerable economic value in terms of its contribution to local cultural tourism.

Specific categories of grants to assist with historical productions by voluntary groups under the Project Grants Scheme should include:

**the production by consultants of feasibility studies of proposed major**

projects to be used to generate assistance from other sources, such as local Councils and local businesses. To maximise local "ownership" of these projects, feasibility studies produced in this way should be encouraged to design the proposed projects as the

responsibility of local teams, in which professionals are used as resource people, providing advice and co-ordination;

assistance with **production costs of**

major projects: this should include assistance with the cost of publication of

written research, and the cost of making available the products of other types of research programs, such as oral history, videotaped productions and so on. Where possible, this assistance should be given on a matching basis to encourage equivalent support from local sources and to maximise the use of available funds;

assistance **with production costs and design of tourist-oriented material** (walking tour leaflets, guidebooks, **collection guides etc**): to be given on a matching basis to encourage equivalent support from regional tourism associations, local Councils and local business, whose contribution should include access to design services and distribution.

### RECOMMENDATION 3

guides, guides to collections, guidebooks, educational materials,

handbooks, facsimile productions, and

so on

It is, RECOMMENDED that a

**full-time Community History Field Officer be appointed.**

The Officer's primary role will be to:

- disseminate information and advice on behalf of all agencies and bodies serving

## RECOMMENDATION 4

### Other Duties of the Community History Field

#### Officer

It is RECOMMENDED that **the**

following list **of specific duties of the Community History Field Officer be included on that officer's duty statement:**

- develop policy for the local historical area for consideration by the Community History Committee

- carry out ongoing research on the needs of local historical groups and the effectiveness of the Project Grants Scheme

- service the Community History Committee

- administer the Project Grants Scheme under the direction of the Community History Committee or its nominee

- carry out regular field trips to historical groups in order to advise on and where possible facilitate the development of voluntary historical activities

- liaise with all agencies involved in providing services to voluntary historical groups and communicate relevant information to the groups on these services

- develop and manage, with other agencies and officers of the History Trust, a regular program of seminars, conferences and workshops on aspects of the work of voluntary historical groups

- contribute information to the Historical Society of South Australia Newsletter and relevant publications of the History Trust

assist with the review of *The local museum* for redevelopment and upgrading to cater for voluntary historical activities generally

### Community HistoryField

**Officer** within the historical community

South Australia.

## RECOMMENDATION 5

### AND 6

### Consultation and Submission

The importance of this material is clear:

- it represents an invaluable contribution to historical knowledge of both local districts themselves, and as a series of case studies in regional, state and national history

voluntary historical groups

- under the direction of the Community History Committee, liaise with relevant agencies to ensure the co-ordination of advisory and other services to voluntary historical groups,

This Report is the result not only of the most comprehensive survey of South Australian voluntary historical societies yet carried out, but also of wide consultation among the main agencies providing services to those societies, and agencies providing these services interstate,

It is RECOMMENDED that the Report and its recommendations be circulated for formal endorsement by the relevant agencies and that representatives of voluntary historical groups be invited to comment on it at a forum hosted by the History Trust of South Australia in 1990.

It is further RECOMMENDED that the Report be then forwarded to the Minister for the Arts and Local Government with a summary of the results of this process of consultation.

Brian Crozier

## **COST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Project Grants Scheme	\$50,000
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Salary, Community History Field Officer (CU2, inc. oncosts)	\$38,000
--	----------

Administrative costs, inc. secretarial, transport, phone, postage, accommodation, publications, other contingencies	\$10,000
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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$98,000</b>
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## HISTORY TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA SURVEY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

### QUESTIONNAIRE

Please feel free to go on to an additional page if required, and to add any further information about your Society which you feel is relevant.

A1 What is the name of your Society?

A2 Please give two contact names and addresses for correspondence with your Society.

1.	2.
phone: work home	phone" work home

A3 When was your Society established (if it lapsed and restarted, please give the relevant years)?

B 1 How many members does your Society have?

D 0-20  
D 21-50  
[--1 51-100  
[-q 101-150  
[--q 151-200  
IN 201-250  
D 251-300  
[--q more than 300 (please specify) .....

B2 How many active members does your Society have (for example, how many attended the last Annual General Meeting?)

B3 Can you give an estimate of the percentage of your Society's members in the following age ranges:

10-20[ ]%	21-30[ ]%	31-40[ ]%
41-50[ ]%	51-60[ ]%	70+[ ]%

C1 How often does your Society meet?

	General meetings	Committee meetings
once a week	D	
once a fortnight	[--]	D
once a month	[-]	[[]]

less than once a month (please specify)

General meetings

Committee meetings

C2 What activities has your Society carried out in the last 12 months?

[ -1 ] talks by visiting speakers [ -- ] talks by local speakers [ [] ] historical walks  
[[3] care of historical objects  
f-1 care of archives  
[ - ] historical research  
[ -- ] assistance with historical research  
architectural restoration  
[[3] historical re-enactments  
[ -- ] other activities (please specify)

C3 What are the Society's main activities?

D 1 What publications has your Society produced in the last 2 years?

D2 What publications produced by the Society are still in print?

E1 Where are the Society's meetings normally held?

	General meeting	Committee meeting
the Society's own premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
premises made available by the local Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
private home(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

-General meetings

Committee meetings •

E2 If the Society does not meet in private homes, are its premises

loaned

leased or rented

owned by the Society

occupied on some other basis (please specify)

F1 What historical assets does the Society own or care for?

[--] historic buildings (please specify)

[-'1] collection of historical artefacts (please give a brief general description of the nature and size of the collection)

[-] archives, including photographs (please give a brief description of the nature and size of the collection)

F2 If the Society owns or cares for an historic building, who meets the cost of maintenance?

[-1] the Society

[V-I] other (please specify)@

F3 If the Society has a collection of artefacts or archives, where are these stored?

[V-] the Society's own museum/archives

[--1] private home(s)

[VI] other (please specify)

F4 If the Society has a collection of artefacts or archives, is the collection indexed?

yes  no

F5 If the Society has a collection of artefacts or archives, has it received professional advice within the last 5 years on the storage and conservation of the collection?

yes

if 'yes', when?

no

F6 On what terms are the Society's historical assets made available?

building:  regular visiting hours (please specify)  
 by appointment

is an admission fee charged?  yes  no

artefacts"  regular visiting hours (please specify)  
 by appointment

on payment of a fee  yes @ no

archives"  regular visiting hours (please specify)  
 by appointment

on payment of a fee  yes  no

F7 Does the Society normally maintain displays based on its historical assets?

yes  no

F8 Does the Society carry out historical research on request?

yes D no

F9 If 'yes', is a fee charged for this service?

yes            D no

G 1 What is the Society's main source of financial support?

D membership fees

FI fundraising activities

[3 admission charges

F-I local Council subsidy

F-I sponsorship (please specify)

other (please specify)

G2 What kind of support in kind does the Society receive from:

local Council (eg provision of meeting venue, storage facilities, rate assistance, secretarial-assistance, postage, access to copying or publishing equipment, assistance with purchase of equipment)

local business

individuals

other

H1 Is your Society affiliated with the State Historical Society of South Australia?

D yes             no

H2 If your Society is not affiliated with the State Historical Society of South Australia, is it considering affiliation?

D yes            D no

(Section I: please attach additional pages if required)

- I 1 What are the main problems that face your Society (such as membership, premises, collections etc)?
- I 2 What would you say are the Society's most urgent needs? (If money, money to do what?)
- I 3 Do you have any general comments to make regarding your Society's present situation and prospects?

Please advise the History Trust of South Australia (Institute Building, 122 Kintore Avenue, Adelaide 5000) of any changes that take place regarding your Society's contact person or address.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return it to:

Dr. Brian Crozier,  
History Trust of South Australia,  
Institute Building,  
122 Kintore Avenue  
ADELAIDE SA 5000

by 2 August 1989

## APPENDIX 2

### THE SURVEY

#### Background

The History Trust of South Australia's survey of South Australian historical societies was initiated in early July, 1989, and covered some 148 societies

(including the National Trust and the South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society).

Following wide publicity, especially in the rural press, responses were received from 90 societies to the initial questionnaire and a reminder letter three weeks later. With

information already to hand (largely from a circular letter sent by the State Historian,

Susan Marsden, in June 1988), information was available for some 107

societies, or 72% of the number originally surveyed. This can be viewed as a most satisfactory rate of return.

A copy of the questionnaire appears at Appendix 1. Briefly, however, the survey covered the following areas:

A: society's name, contact names and addresses, date of establishment

B: membership: number of members (within ranges), number of active members, percentage of members in

given age ranges

C: activities: frequency of meetings (Committee and general), activities carried out in the last 12 months, main

activities

D: publications

E: location of meetings

F: the society's historical assets

(buildings, artefacts, archives) and the conditions under which these are

maintained and made available.

G: sources of support (financial and in

kind)

H: affiliation or otherwise with the

Historical Society of South Australia

free comment: problems, needs, general comments on the society's

present situation and prospects,

#### Summary of responses

##### A: SOCIETY'S NAME, CONTACT NAMES AND ADDRESSES, DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT

A list of societies which responded to the survey appears below (Appendix 3).

The following summary of foundation dates by decade gives a good indication of the rate of growth of the historical society movement in South Australia (bearing in mind that the information refers only to societies for which information is available):

pre -1950	4
1950-59	6
1960-69	9

1970-79	36
1980-89	54

Foundation dates not known: 10

##### B: MEMBERSHIP

Respondents were asked "How many members does your Society have?" (Q.B 1) and were given a series of ranges within which to answer. Responses are

summarised thus:

0-20	28 societies
21-50	21 "
51-100	19 "
101-150	5 ""
151-200	2 "
201-250	4 "
251-300	2 "
more than 300	8 "

Societies recording more than 300 members are:

Australian Cricket Society 354

Australian Railway Historical

Society (SA) 460

Historical Society of South

Australia c. 500

National Trust of SA c. 8000

North Adelaide Society 420

Pichi Richi Railway

Preservation Society 650

Pioneers Association of SA c.1000

SA Genealogy and Heraldry Society

c.4000

These figures indicate:

- the predominance of the National Trust and the Genealogy and Heraldry Society in terms of numbers, though historical societies are comparable in aggregate at c. 6000.

- the relative strength of the transport historical societies

Rural groups predominated among the societies recording memberships of 0-20.

Active members as estimated by the respondents comprised roughly 1/3 of the total, on average.

The high average age of their members was a problem for many societies. Information provided by the survey is perhaps too impressionistic to quantify, but it is worth noting that under a later question 12 societies nominated this as an

issue. Age appears as an aggravating factor for those societies whose responsibilities, especially in the maintenance and conservation of

buildings, outrun their resources (see below).

##### C: ACTIVITIES

###### Level of activity

As a way of determining the level of activity among the various societies, respondents were asked (Q.C1) to indicate the frequency of their societies' meetings (both Committee and general). Not all responded, and the nature of their types of

organisation was very variable, so that a comprehensive summary is not presented here. As a general indication, however, it is clear that most societies meet roughly once a month, with many meeting bi-monthly or at the rate of three to six times per year.

###### Types of activity

Respondents were asked (Q.C2) to indicate their societies' activities during the last 12 months on a list of options, and

to indicate any activities not included on the list.

Societies listed their activities on the list of options as follows:

	no. of societies
historical research	57
talks by visiting speakers	49
care of historical objects	49
care of archives	48
assistance with historical research	47
talks by local speakers	42
historical excursions	38
historical walks	27
historical re-enactments	14
architectural restoration	9

Other activities listed by more than one society were:

mounting displays	12
work on museum	5
lobbying to preserve old buildings	5
preparation of publications	4
family history research	4
managing historic buildings	4
marking historic sites	3
commemorative services	3
Christmas pageant	2
conferences	2
train tours	2

Activities listed by one society only were:

election campaigning  
map of historical tours of local area  
school local historical studies  
oral history  
school award scheme  
workshops (oral history)  
cemetery transcription  
family reunion  
newsheet  
fashion parades  
dancing classes/performances (historical styles)  
costume making  
Village Fair  
culinary group  
Collectors' Fair  
building memorials  
advice to Council and public  
annual "chinwag" (reminisces)  
dancing  
museum visits  
monitoring State Heritage listings  
open days  
antique bottle show  
promotion of folk art  
manufacture and sale of souvenirs  
genealogical assistance  
development of heritage park  
monitoring of historic sites  
charity fundraising  
book sales  
fundraising for museum

Asked to indicate their societies' "main activities" (Q.C3) a number of societies offered (most valuably and interestingly) a statement of mission. Those that responded in terms of the activities that occupied the greater part of their societies' time and resources stressed the following (note that only activities cited by more than one society are listed here):

operation of museum	9
establishing and adding to archives	8
meetings	6
restoration of artefacts	5
research and publication of books and articles	5
mounting displays	4
family history	3
managing historic buildings	3
guided tours	3
preservation and restoration of vehicles	3
seminars	3
organising local tours	2
collecting memorabilia	2
oral history	2

As a general note on this section it is worth pointing out that these lists are probably indicative of the range of activities undertaken by the societies, but less so of their major preoccupations (for example a considerable number of societies indicated at section D of the questionnaire that they produced newsletters, but few of these listed newsletters as activities under this section.)

#### D. PUBLICATIONS

Respondents were asked two questions relating to publications: "What publications has your Society produced in the last two years?" (Q.D1) and "What publications produced by the Society are still in print?" (Q.D2).

Despite the rather severe limitation represented by the two year limit, the first of these questions produced an impressive list of publications, the more so given the limited resources available to most societies in terms of time and money to produce this material. What is clearly demonstrated by the survey is the commitment of a great many societies to publications of different kinds, and the very great efforts made by them in this area.

A full collated list of publications is given at Appendix 4. Briefly, however, they may be summarised here in terms of the numbers of societies responsible for different kinds of publication:

- newsletters  
28 societies
- books  
11 (from 10 societies; a number of other societies indicated that they intended to publish books of their own in the near future)
- journals  
9 societies
- other publications  
41 societies (these publications include: pamphlets, articles, historical walking tours, guides, guides to collections, guidebooks, educational materials, handbooks, facsimile, productions, etc.)

The importance of this material is obvious. Local history, while intrinsically interesting from a human and regional standpoint, also provides important case studies for histories with a broader focus,

At the same time, a striking feature of the list of publications produced by the voluntary societies is the proportion of material produced as guidebooks, whether as booklets, walking tour guides, or pamphlets. Without being able to compare

the amount of such material produced by the societies with guides produced by other sources, it is clear that local historical societies are major producers of printed information for visitors to their districts.

No assessment of the extent to which this material is made available to tourists is possible from the information produced from this survey, but while a few councils, such as Mitcham and Burnside, have assisted their local societies with the production of tourist information guides, there is little indication that the significance of local historical societies for regional tourism has been fully appreciated by local or central government bodies. Nor does there appear to have been any systematic attempt made to provide structures and incentives for the improvement of standards of research, writing or production of historical material by voluntary historical societies.

#### E: LOCATION OF MEETINGS

Respondents were asked "Where are the Society's meetings normally held?" (Q.E1) with a choice offered of

- the Society's own premises
- premises made available by the local Council
- private homes
- other.

They were also asked (Q.E2) "If the Society does not meet in private homes, are its premises

- loaned
- leased or rented
- owned by the Society
- occupied on some other basis"

About 1/4 of societies which responded to the questionnaire (24 of 90) owned their own premises, while a further 18 met on premises made available by the local Council, and 25 held at least their Committee meetings in local homes (one or two noted ironically that they were sufficiently small for all their meetings to be deemed general meetings; in the case of one group comprising two members of one family, there were difficulties in deciding whose premises they were meeting in, the Society's or a private home). Apart from these a wide variety of meeting places was cited, amounting probably to whatever venues were available.

In general, a number of societies appear to be relatively well provided with meeting places (though in many cases these venues are historic buildings for which adequate resources may not be available for maintenance by the society). At the same time, many others lack these facilities: some 17 societies cite the lack of an adequate venue for meetings and/or exhibitions (see below).

## E THE SOCIETY'S HISTORICAL ASSETS

Respondents were asked a range of questions under this heading:

- F1: What historical assets does the Society own or care for? (choice given: historic buildings, artefact collection, archives, including photographs)
- F2: If the Society owns or cares for an historic building, who meets the cost of maintenance? (choice: the Society, other)
- F3: If the Society has a collection of artefacts or archives, where are these stored? (choice: the Society's museum/archives, private home(s), other)
- F4: If the Society has a collection of artefacts or archives, is the collection indexed?
- F5: If the Society has a collection of artefacts or archives, has it received professional advice within the last 5 years on the storage and conservation of the collection?
- F6: On what terms are the Society's historical assets made available? (ie by appointment, during regular hours, on payment of a fee)
- F7: Does the Society normally maintain displays based on its historical assets?
- F8: Does the Society carry out historical research on request?
- F9: If "yes", is a fee charged for this service?

Questions F6 to F9 were included in the survey with a view to the possible preparation of a guide to historical resources available from the local societies and the terms on which this material is available: they are not strictly relevant to the statistical objectives of the survey per se. They are noted here as an indication that this information has been collected, but it will not be summarised in this report.

The situation as far as the extent of the historical assets held by the societies is concerned, and the degree to which the societies are able to maintain them, is summarised as follows:

buildings: 34 societies are responsible in whole or in part for the maintenance of historic buildings, of these 18 carry out responsibilities at their own cost. While this is feasible for the larger societies, there are obvious problems for some of the small rural societies, which in a number of cases face the added difficulty of the advancing age of their members, as well as a critical lack of members and finance,

The Terowie Citizens Association, for example, with a membership in the 21-50 range, of whom 10 are described as active, and of whom about half are over 60 years of age, is responsible for the maintenance of a bank, two stores, a cottage, "three small buildings" (including a smithy), a railway station platform and two associated buildings. For doing this, the Association appears to receive no assistance at all, apart from the use of a section of parkland which it crops to raise funds,

artefacts: half of the societies responding to the survey (43 of 90) held collections of artefacts which varied widely both in size and character.

The History Trust of South Australia has been able to gain a reasonable idea of the nature and scale of the larger and more significant artefact collections held by voluntary historical societies by means of the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program, under which assistance and advice are available for the curation and display of major local historical collections. Nonetheless, there does not appear to have been any general assessment of historical collections held by voluntary organisations, and many smaller collections await professional advice, let alone financial assistance. Of the 43 societies reporting collections of historical artefacts, 22 indicated that their collections were not indexed, and 23 that they had received no advice on professional conservation of their collections during the last five years,

archives: 76 societies reported archival holdings, including what are evidently a number of large collections. Societies dealing in historic vehicles are prominent here once again, with large archival collections held by the Australian Railway Historical Society (SA), the Australian Electric Transport Museum (SA), and the Civil Aviation Historical Society (SA and NT). But large bodies of material are also held by voluntary historical societies, such as the Clare Regional History Group, the Glenside Hospital Historical Society, the Kapunda Historical Society, the Kimba and Gawler Ranges Historical Society, the North Adelaide Society, the Rocky River Historical and Art Society, the South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society, the South Australian Police Historical Society, the Terowie Citizens Association, the Waikerie District Historical Society, the West Torrens Historical Society, the Williamstown and District Historical Society, and the Historical Society of Woodville.

In a number of cases, local historical societies have been given responsibility for local government records. At the same time, they have generated collections by their own activities, including taking photographs, recording their own proceedings, making oral history

recordings and so on, as well as by collecting paper-based material relating to their local districts. Photographs are prominent in these collections, with photographic holdings being reported by no less than 54 societies. The survey specifically invited respondents to report photographic collections and this no doubt triggered a reasonably comprehensive response. At the same time, the fact that 7 reported collections of oral history material suggests that there may be more which was not specified in the survey returns.

Once again, many of these societies appear to be faced with considerable difficulties in maintaining their collections, with 37 societies noting that their collections remain unindexed, and 32 that they have received no professional advice on the management of their collections in the last five years. Of the 16 societies listed above as having collections of notable size, 6 have memberships of less than 20, and four appear to receive no external support for their activities.

## G: SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Respondents were asked (Q.G1) to indicate what financial support their societies received (from membership fees, fundraising activities, admission charges, local Council subsidies, sponsorship, or other sources), and (Q.G2) what support in kind they received from the local Council, local business, individuals or other sources.

financial support: 61 societies reported being wholly dependent on funds raised by themselves, through membership fees, admission charges or fundraising activities. As suggested above, the significance of this appears to depend on the extent of the society's responsibilities for the maintenance of historical assets, whether buildings, artefacts or archives.

The extent of Council support as reported in the survey was extremely variable. In general, support from local Councils appears to come largely in kind (see below). Nonetheless, 12 societies indicated that they received financial subsidies from this source, suggesting that in some places at least the principle of local government responsibility for historical societies is well established, though the survey did not ask societies to indicate the size of the subsidy received.

As far as financial assistance from individuals (other than membership fees) is concerned, only three societies referred to donations of this kind, though there were some general references to donations, and, as mentioned above, to fundraising, which no doubt includes contributions from individuals. One of the donations noted was in the form of a legacy, which may well be an avenue

worth exploring in the search for financial support for these societies.

Central government support (either federal or state) was mentioned by 15 societies, in the form of grants from the History Trust (to four societies with museums provisionally accredited under the Museums Accreditation and Grants scheme and \$2000 to the Historical Society of South Australia), State Jubilee 150 grants (two societies), Australian Bicentennial Authority grants (three societies), support via parent organisations themselves funded by the state (such as the State Dental Service's support for its Heritage and History Committee and similar support provided to the Royal Adelaide Hospital's Heritage and History Committee), the Community Employment Program (one society), and the South Australian Recreation Institute (one society),

In respect of state funding of historical societies as summarised above, the survey reveals a pattern of support which is sporadic (of the sources of project funds listed above, only the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program and the Recreation Institute are still in existence). It is also unco-ordinated, and of benefit to only a few of the many societies,

Other sources of financial support listed include fees from a television series, display fees, one-off grants from the West German Government, income from publications (nine societies), surplus from management of congresses, investments (two societies) souvenir and book sales (two societies) and a subsidy from the Uniting Church.

The survey did not ask societies to report the amount of funding received from these various sources,

support in kind: the greatest amount of support in kind is reported as coming from local Councils, though it is clear from the survey that Councils vary widely in the amount of assistance provided by them. This variety is reflected in the comments of the societies in response to this question, which range from warm appreciation to biting irony. Overall, some 39 of the 90 societies responding to the survey report assistance from their local Council. While this in some ways is a satisfactory figure, it does not indicate the extent of this support, which in some cases amounts to no more than assistance with photocopying, or the equivalent,

In a number of cases, Council assistance was provided via the local library, which is clearly a pivotal institution for many groups. Types of assistance listed included: provision of accommodation (5 societies), provision of a meeting venue (14), access to photocopying (16), archival and other storage (12), building maintenance (6), assistance with postage

(4), grounds maintenance (3), rate relief (9), secretarial assistance (3), assistance with the purchase of equipment (3), use of Council machinery or other equipment (2).

Help given by Councils referred to by only one society in each case included: track maintenance, provision of roadside signs, tracklaying (through the RED scheme of the 1970s), supply of a training ground, provision of a restoration area, site works, insurance, road maintenance, erection of memorials, subsidy of the cost of functions and assistance with publications. In this context the employment of a part-time historian by the Mitcham Council stands out as a particularly valuable and effective piece of assistance and one which seems to have been a success with all parties,

As with financial assistance, assistance in kind from local business was generally disappointing. 10 societies reported receiving this kind of help, though in most cases the help given appears to have been small, including cut-rate photocopying, access to venues for book sales, and so on. The exception is Waikerie Historical Society, which seems to have formed a fruitful and mutually rewarding relationship with at least some local businesses, from which it derives a display venue, photographic services, assistance with the purchase of office equipment, the donation of business records, and secretarial assistance.

Given the voluntary nature of historical society activities, there is a sense in which everything achieved by them which is not the result of external assistance, whether in cash or in kind, is the result of a donation in kind by individuals, if only one of time and effort by the societies' members. However, it may be worth indicating where individual assistance noted by the societies is exceptional for some reason, as an indication of the sources of help which have been identified by some societies, and that others may not have thought of. Types of assistance in this category received by various societies included skilled labour (graphic design), the provision of furnishings, a sign, display books, goods for sale, commercial advertising, secretarial help, postage, shop staffing, museum staffing, cataloguing, guest speakers and the loan or donation of historical material.

Other sources of support in kind listed in the returns were: tertiary institutions (to 3 societies based on such institutions), local progress associations, churches (to 3 societies based on them: churches concerned were the Roman Catholic Church, the Uniting Church, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints), parent organisations (including the Civil Aviation Authority, the Highways Department, the SA Dental Association, the SA Police Department, the SA Gas Co., and the Education Department central administration),

schools and local school regional authorities (4 societies received limited assistance in kind, one, Loxton District Historical Society, worked for some time with art education officer shared with the local school, responsible for providing educational services in respect of the Loxton Historical Village, though the position has now been lost).

#### H: AFFILIATION OR OTHERWISE WITH THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Historical Society of South Australia has a degree of responsibility for the historical society movement as a whole, symbolised by an annual Government grant of \$2000, channelled through the History Trust of South Australia. In practice, this is not sufficient to enable the Society to provide a level of service which would enable it to assert its general responsibility. Its annual grant is therefore used as a partial subsidy for its *Journal*, which as the main vehicle for the publication of South Australian history, performs an important service to the historical community generally in this state. While some assistance to historical societies is available on an ad hoc basis from a number of Government agencies, the annual subsidy of the Society's *Journal* represents the sole area in which the State Government recognises the historical society movement as such.

In assessing the extent of affiliation with the Historical Society of South Australia, societies were asked (Q.H1): "Is your Society affiliated with the Historical Society of South Australia?" (choice: yes, no), and (Q.H2) "If your Society is not affiliated with the Historical Society of South Australia, is it considering affiliation?"

The low perceived level of responsibility of the Society for South Australian historical societies is reflected in the low number of those surveyed which reported affiliation with it: 15, though a number (23) indicated (perhaps prompted by the questionnaire) that they were considering affiliation. Some confusion with provisional accreditation under the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program was indicated, while a lack of awareness of the possibility of affiliation may have been reflected in the number of societies which failed to answer the question.

#### I: PROBLEMS, NEEDS, PRESENT SITUATION AND PROSPECTS

This section was aimed at obtaining free-form comments on the societies' overall condition, needs and state of morale. Respondents were asked (Q.I1): "What are the main problems that face your Society (such as membership, premises,

collections etc?"; and (Q.I2): "What would you say were the Society's most urgent needs (If money, money to do what?)" and (Q.I3): "Do you have any general comments to make regarding your Society's present situation and prospects?"

The distinction between problems and needs was in practice sometimes blurred. Nonetheless, it is still useful for most purposes. Five areas stood out in the responses as problems facing the societies:

- "not enough members" was noted as an issue by 10 societies. This was often linked with the need for new @ members, mentioned by 11 societies, including 2 of those citing a lack of membership generally: under "needs" no less than 24 cited a need for more members

- "not enough time" to carry out the Society's work was mentioned by 10 societies, in terms which showed that the elderly are not always the core of local historical societies, women with domestic responsibilities being also prominent among the societies' active membership

- "lack of local support" was mentioned by 7 societies

- "nowhere to mount exhibitions" was noted by 4 societies, and was perhaps part of a wider accommodation problem, with a further 2 societies citing the lack of a central meeting place as a problem, and 14 pointing to a need for a permanent meeting place and display area under the next question (Q.I2, "needs").

- other issues raised by smaller numbers of societies:

members' lack of interest (3 societies)  
low public profile (2)  
reliance on the same core of individuals (2)  
lack of patrons, leading to financial difficulties (1)  
high storage costs (1)  
"Australian National policies" (1)  
lack of equipment (1)

Under the heading "needs", no less than 40 societies noted a need for additional funds, for a diverse range of purposes:

to establish a museum (8)  
for publications (7)  
for restoration of artefacts or buildings (5)

for building maintenance (5)  
for copying, including photographic copying (4)  
for paid curation and archival management (4)  
to provide shelter for large objects (3)  
for visiting speakers (2)  
for storage, curation (2)  
for display equipment (2)  
for mounting displays (2)  
to meet operating costs (2)  
for railway track maintenance, upgrading (2)  
for storage building/shed (2)  
for administration and development (1)  
for upkeep and maintenance of machinery (1)  
for a fireproof room (1)  
for a casual paid attendant (1)  
for expansion (1)  
for consumables, such as oral history tapes (1)  
for acquisition of more (family history) records (1)  
for safe storage (1)  
for archival materials (1)  
for storage, copying, photography (1)  
for a venue for folk events (1)  
for curation, acquisition (1)  
for volunteer travel costs (1)

Other needs (not necessarily financial) listed were:

more members generally (as noted above) (23)  
permanent meeting place and display area, premises (see above) (14)  
more active members (8)  
storage space (6)  
furniture (2)  
a central home in Adelaide for historical societies (2)  
skilled assistance with activities (2)  
building improvements (1)  
to upgrade displays (1)  
more display area (1)  
paid person to organise displays/curation (1)  
indexing (1)

In assessing the needs and problems of voluntary historical societies, it is also important to recognise areas of strength which have not been cited as areas of need, but which would clearly repay assistance. Thus while actual financial assistance to produce a book was mentioned as a need by only one society, publications are clearly an area of strength which would justify assistance (an impression supported by the numbers of requests for help in producing publications referred from time to time to the History

Trust). Other problems cited by the societies may relate to morale, such as lack of membership and lack of community support. Apart from this the survey identifies collection-related issues and accommodation as significant concerns.

Most remarks under "general comments... regarding your Society's present situation and prospects" reiterated those made under "problems" and "needs". Most expressed optimism concerning the future of their Society, though the need for new and younger members was a frequent theme. Four societies expressed gloom concerning their future prospects if this problem was not resolved,

Comments by a number of specific societies are worthy of repetition in this report:

The Folk Federation of Australia (SA): expressed the need for Government recognition of "folk" as an art form, noted work being done at the national level for the establishment of a national centre for the collection and preservation of the evidence of folk culture. Noted that no action had so far been taken in response to the Inquiry into Folk Life in Australia (1986).

Glenside Historical Society: the Society was "unwell" due to the lack of an enthusiastic Director to attract new members.

Highways Department Northfield Depot Historical Group: need for more funds for restoration if the interest of members is to be retained.

Terowie Citizens Association: (letter to the State Historian, Susan Marsden, 17/6/88): noted a serious need for tourism to revive the town, and the important role of heritage in this. Referring to the Association's sizeable photographic collection, the Association's Heritage Co-ordinator, Marina Gray, says, "Looking at the negatives of our town, perhaps the major thing and one that affects most projects today is the lack of finance. Up to this year, only \$5000 of Government assistance has been given to the town. Its historical value is totally unrecognised by but a few."

"All work carried out is done by local effort and fundraising. This makes the task of preservation and restoration look fairly formidable."

## APPENDIX 3

### SURVEY

### RESPONDENTS

Responses to this survey were received from the following:

Adelaide Historical Bottle Club Inc.  
Association of Professional Historians  
Aurora Heritage Action Inc.  
Australia and New Zealand History of Education Society  
Australian Electric Transport Museum (South Australia) Inc.  
Australian Railway Historical Society (S.A. Division)  
Australian Society for Sports History (S.A. Group)  
Australian Theatre Historical Society Inc. (in N.S.W.)  
Barossa Goldfields Historical Society Inc.  
Barossa Light Horse Historical Association Inc.  
Barossa Valley Archives and Historical Trust Inc.  
Barossa Valley Machinery Preservation Society  
Blanchetown Heritage Society  
Boomerang Steam and Traction Preservation Society Inc.  
Brighton Historical Society Inc.  
Brinkworth Historical Society  
Burnside Historical Society Inc.  
Campbelltown Historical Society Inc.  
Cape Homers - Australia Inc.  
Carl Linger Memorial Committee Inc  
Catholic Diocese of Port Pirie Historical Society  
Civil Aviation Historical Society (SA/NT Division)  
Clare Regional History Group Inc.  
Coomandook, Peake and Districts Historical Society  
The Cummins Society Inc.  
Early Settler's Cottage  
Echunga District Historical Society

Ennabathurst and District Historical Society Inc.  
Folk Federation of S.A. Inc.  
Fort Glanville Historical Association Inc.  
Georgetown Heritage Society  
Glenside Hospital Historical Society Inc.  
Happy Valley Historical Society  
Heritage Arms Society Inc.  
Highways Department Northfield Depot Heritage Group  
Hindmarsh Historical Society  
Historical Society of South Australia Inc.  
Historical Society of Woodville  
History Teachers Association of South Australia  
John McDouali Stuart Society Inc.  
Institution of Engineers, Australia - Engineering Heritage Branch  
Kangaroo Island Pioneers Association Inc.  
Kapunda Historical Society  
Karoonda and District Historical Society  
Kensington and Norwood Historical Society Inc.  
Kimba and Gawler Ranges Historical Society  
Lobethal Historical Society  
Loxton District Historical Society  
Lyndoch and District Historical Society  
Marion Historical Society Inc.  
Milang District Historical Society  
Miteham Historical Society (Mitcham Village Arts and Crafts Society)  
Mount Gambier Heritage Society  
Mount Gambier Local History Group  
Mount Horrocks Historical Society Inc.  
Mount Pleasant District Historical Research Group Inc.  
Murray Bridge and District Historical Society Inc.  
North Adelaide Society Inc.  
Oral History Association of Australia (South Australian Branch)  
Penola History Society  
Peterborough and Local Districts History Club  
Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society Inc.

Pirramoora Historical Society Inc.  
Port Adelaide Historical Society Inc.  
Port Augusta Family History Group  
Port Broughton Historical Committee  
Port Pirie Family History Centre of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints  
Queen Adelaide Society Inc.  
Quom Friends of the Library, Local History Group  
Riverland Family History Group  
Rocky River Historic and Art Society Inc.  
Royal Adelaide Hospital Heritage and History Committee  
Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (South Australian Branch) Inc.  
Sagasco Historical Group  
Salisbury and District Historical Society Inc.  
Society for the Study of Labour History (Adelaide Branch)  
South Australian Dental Service Heritage and History Committee  
South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society  
South Australian Historical Aviation Museum Inc.  
South Australian Police Historical Society Inc.  
South Australian Women's History Taskforce  
Terowie Citizens' Association Inc,  
Torrens Valley and District Historical Society  
Uniting Church Historical Society  
Victoriana Society of South Australia Inc.  
Walkerley District Historical Society  
West Torrens Historical Society Inc.  
Williamstown and Districts Historical Society  
Wudinna-Le Hunte Historical Society  
Yankalilla and District Historical Society Inc.  
Yorke Peninsula Family History Group  
Yorketown Historical Society

## APPENDIX 4

### PUBLICATIONS BY

## SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL

## SOCIETIES

List includes publications less than two years old and publications still in print. Periodicals no longer in print indicated by \*. (Classifications at times uncertain due to insufficient information.)

Newsletters (by name of society: monthly unless indicated)

Adelaide Historical Bottle Club  
Association of Professional Historians  
Aurora Heritage Action  
Australian Railway Historical Society  
Australian Society of Sports History (twice yearly)  
Australian Theatre Historical Society  
Barossa Light Horse Historical Society  
Barossa Valley Machinery Preservation Society  
Booleroo Steam and Traction Preservation Society (occasional)  
Brighton Historical Society  
Campbelltown Historical Society  
Enfield and District Historical Society  
Folk Federation of South Australia  
Historical Society of South Australia  
Historical Society of Woodville (quarterly)  
John McDouall Smart Society (quarterly)  
Kensington and Norwood Historical Society (frequency not specified)  
Marion Historical Society (bi-monthly)  
Mt. Pleasant District Historical Research Group (quarterly)  
North Adelaide Society (quarterly)  
Oral History Association (N-annual)  
Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society (quarterly)  
Port Adelaide Historical Society (quarterly)  
Society for the Study of Labour History  
South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society (quarterly)  
South Australian Police Historical Society (occasional)  
Riverland Family History Group  
Yorke Peninsula Family History Group

Journals (by name of society)

Australia and New Zealand History of Education Society (twice yearly)  
Australian Society of Sports History (twice yearly): *Bulletin*  
Australian Society of Sports History (four times yearly): *Studies in sports history*  
Australian Theatre Historical Society (KINO: quarterly)  
Cape Homers - Australia

Henley and Grange Historical Society (annual)

History Teachers Association (twice yearly)

Historical Society of South Australia (a@n@a)

Karoonda and District Historical Society  
Torrens Valley and District Historical Society (twice yearly)

### Books

"Book", Australian Railway Historical Society.  
*Across the mighty Murray* (300 pp, author, date not given), Murray Bridge Historical Society.  
*Biographical index of South Australians 1836-1885: bicentennial bulletins*, South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society.  
*Historic Terowie*, W.W. Besanko (reprint: photographic record), Terowie Citizens Association.  
*Prince AlfredCoUege*, R.M. Gibbs, Uniting Church Historical Society.  
*A tall cedar in our Lebanon: Primitive Methodism*, A.D. Hunt, Uniting Church Historical Society.  
*Pictorial history of West Torrens* (1980: since reprinted), West Torrens Historical Society.  
*Grain amid granite*, E. Franklin and E. Heath (Gillingham, 1986), Wudirma Le Hunte Historical Society.  
*Under Mt. Lofty*, Pam Range and Rob Martin, Mt. Lofty Districts Historical Society, 1987.  
*To find the way: Yankalilla and district, 1886-1986*, Yankalilla and District Historical Society.  
*Fresh evidence, new witnesses*, eds. Mary Hutchison, Margaret Allen, Allison McKinnon, Women's History Task Force.

### Other

Australian Electric Transport Museum (South Australia)  
*The Tramway Museum*, 56 pp., 1982. Facsimile of Critic version of *Adelaide's trams*, 1909.  
Barossa Valley Archives and Historical Trust  
\* "German Placenames of South Australia"  
"Brief History of the Barossa Valley".  
Blanchetown Heritage Society  
historical walk pamphlet  
Burnside Historical Society  
Burnside Heritage Study (leaflet, with Burnside City Council)  
Walking tour guides:  
no.1 Rose Park  
no.2 Knightsbridge

no.3 Village of Burnside  
no.4 Waterfall Gully

Carl Linger Memorial Committee

"Song of Australia" (new edition and arrangement with historical information ON the author), 1972.

Catholic Diocese of Port Pirie Historical Society  
articles in diocesan newspaper, *Witness*.  
Civil Aviation Historical Society (SA/NT) articles in print

"The Vimy story"  
"People, planes and Parafield"  
"History of New Guinea Airways Ltd" plus 3 smaller articles unspecified.

Clare Regional History Group  
brochure  
guide to collection

"Paths to glory" (reproduction of 1939 articles on local cemeteries)  
"Clare cameos" (collection of oral history stories).

Cummins Society

"Historic Cummins" (booklet).  
Echunga District Historical Society  
\* *Echunga Community Times*: special edition Jan. 1989 of family history articles by descendants of pioneers; another special edition planned for November on history of sport in the area.

Enfield and District Historical Society

"Memories of yesteryear"

Fort Glanville Historical Society

guidebook (updated)

Glenside Hospital Historical Society

"1870-1970: commemorating the centenary of Glenside Hospital".

Hindmarsh Historical Society

handouts on Hindmarsh area (not specified)

Historical Society of South Australia

facsimile of *Register*

Historical Society of Woodville

"Guide to the Brocas Museum"

"Walk through Woodville"

"Women in munitions"

History Teachers Association

"Aboriginal history"

"Contact history in South Australia"

"PES Australian history"

*Green and gold* vol.1

*Green and gold* vol.2

\* *Women in history*

Institution of Engineers Australia-

Engineering Heritage Branch

"Iron, water and gold: aspects of our engineering heritage in the Gawler-Barossa area", D.C. Kemp et al, 20.9.1987.

"River and rail", Bock et al, 16.10.1988.

Kapunda Historical Society

"Illustrated guide to Kapunda"

Kimba and Gawler Ranges Historical Society

"One teacher schools of the Kimba district"

"The Pioneer House book"  
Lobethal Historical Society  
brochure  
Lyndoch and District Historical Society  
"The discovery and exploration of the  
Barossa Range by Col. William Light"  
"Some notes on the names Lyndoch  
and Barossa"  
"History of the Lyndoch  
Baptist Church"  
"Wind, water and steam mills in the  
Lyndoch district"  
Marion Historical Society  
"Historical highlights of Marion"  
(pamphlet)  
Milang and District Historical Society  
• "Alexandrina's shores" (1981 )  
Mitcham Historical Society (Mitcham  
Village Arts and Craft Society)  
10 pamphlets in book form on walks in  
Mitcham area.  
Mount Gambier Heritage Society  
"The Mount Gambier heritage walk" (5  
brochures)  
"The Mount Gambier lake walks" (5  
brochures)  
(both funded by Australian Bicentennial  
Authority)

Mount Horrocks Historical Society  
.. Recipe books:  
.. "Jams, pickles, chutneys and preserves"  
.. "Soups"  
.. brochure on J.A. Horrocks of  
.. Penwortham  
.. "Pictorial History of Watervale" (1846-  
.. 1886)  
Oral History Association  
.. Oral history handbook" (second edition  
.. 1985)  
Penola History Society  
.. \* "Doctoring in Penola", Dr. Ron Jarvis  
.. (in *Penola historical selections IV*)  
Peterborough and Local Districts History  
.. Club  
.. "Petersburg to Peterborough", Anita  
.. Woods.  
Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society  
.. "The story of Pichi Richi Railway".  
Pinnaroo Historical Society  
.. Printing Museum brochure  
Queen Adelaide Society  
.. booklet on Queen Adelaide (1982).  
.. Rocky River Historic and Art Society  
.. facsimile reprint of 1932 Jubilee  
.. booklet.

Royal Adelaide Hospital Heritage and  
History Committee  
annual reports in Royal Adelaide  
Hospital *Annual reports*.  
Royal Geographical Society of Australasia  
(South Australian Branch)  
see separate list published by the  
Society  
Salisbury and District Historical  
Society Inc.  
"John Street, Salisbury: a pictorial  
history".  
South Australian Dental Service Heritage  
and History Committee  
annual reports in South Australian  
Dental Service *Annual Reports*.  
Terowie Citizens Association  
"I remember", Marina Gray  
Uniting Church Historical Society  
"New Guinea Methodism in war and  
peace", R.S. Brown  
"Wesley, conscience and war",  
N. Young  
"The Bible Christians in South  
Australia", A.D. Hunt  
"In Stow's footsteps", J. Cameron  
"Popular revivalism", D. Hilliard

## Models for assistance

There are a number of possible models for

the assistance of voluntary, local and family historical projects which have been taken into account in drawing up the recommendations of this report,

### MUSEUMS ACCREDITATION AND GRANTS PROGRAM

The History Trust of South Australia's Museums Accreditation and Grants Program includes a full-time Museums Officer to administer a fund of \$100,000

which is used to promote higher standards of curation and display among local and specialist museums. Grants are made to museums which have been "provisionally accredited" on a range of criteria emphasising standards of conservation,

registration and display,

Larger grants are made to museums which have been fully accredited, of which there are now two, both approved in 1989. The program is supported by a quarterly

magazine, *The local museum*, and by frequent field trips by the Museums Officer.

### NATIONAL TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A distinguishing feature of the National Trust, compared with voluntary historical

societies, is its relatively centralised structure. At the cost of some tension between the Adelaide office and the branches, this facilitates the receipt of

substantial corporate sponsorship, the central development of policy and programs of assistance and advice to local branches, as well as the co-ordination of events across the Trust, such as Spring Heritage Week.

### COMMUNITY HISTORY PROGRAM

The Community History Program began as the Local History Co-ordination Program

under the NSW Council of the Australian Bicentennial Authority and the University of New South Wales Department of History. The University and the Department of History have since continued it, renamed, as a program of assistance to community history. The Community History Program provides:

- workshops on the writing of history: topics include researching, writing, publishing and using evidence.

## Workshops

are planned with community consultation and indeed are initiated by community groups. Partnership with community groups is a key principle of the Community History Program. In the case of workshops, therefore, the process involves the community group's invitation to the Program to mount the event, consultation by the Program with the group on the needs of the event, the

proposal of speakers to the group and inclusion with these of a local speaker if possible,

- publishing advice: the Community History Program offers a limited editorial service and advice on finding a publisher, together with workshops on "Desktop publishing for community historians",

seminars: the Community History

Program hosts country and city seminars for authors who have moved beyond the initial stage in historical work. Special "social history days" are held on topics such as women's history, crime, ethnicity, work and religion. Seminars

are also held for professional people working with community historians, such as librarians, museum curators, archivists, conservators, teachers and local government officers.

The Program is supported by a bimonthly newsletter, *Locality*, and by permanent publications of which there have been two so far, a *Style manual for local historical manuscript preparation and Locating Australia's past: a practical guide to*

*writing local history* (NSW University Press, 1988).

For schools, there is also a "Visiting Historian" program under which historians visit schools and discuss new

developments in history with teachers and students. The Visiting Historian program is supported by a supplement for schools in *Locality*, "Making time",

### ROYAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Royal Australian Historical Society receives funding under the Literature and History program of the NSW Department of Arts. These funds are applied to meet the salary of the Field Officer, the Field Officer's travel expenses and part of the salary of a Librarian/Researcher.

Out of its own funds the Society employs an Executive Officer, Administrative Assistant, Junior Secretary and part-time Bookkeeper.

The Society is also supported by subscriptions from its 3000 members and 252 affiliated societies, it owns substantial assets in the form of History House (133 Macquarie Street, Sydney) and earns some \$70,000 p.a. in rents. It is under considerable Government pressure to realise the market value of History House (c.\$15m) and use the funds to lease other premises and support additional programs.

The Field Officer contributes two sections to the monthly magazine of the Society, *History*, on current developments in particular categories of local history, such as conservation, family history, local libraries, editing and publications, with a second section dealing with news from the societies. Field trips by the Field Officer can cover such things as evaluating the particular needs of a society; working to raise its status in the community by media

appearances; and providing advice on its organisational structure, its interpretation of its historical material and its dissemination of information.

The Field Officer also tries to liaise

between the local society and bodies such as schools and Councils to promote greater co-operation. The Field Officer reports to and services the Society's Affiliated Societies Committee, which meets bi-monthly and helps to allocate grants to affiliated societies from funds provided by the Department of Arts and from the Catherine Livingstone Bequest (for North Coast societies only: currently under review).

Apart from field trips by the Field Officer, the Society runs a variety of programs for the benefit of the public, its members and its affiliated societies. These include:

Technical Information Service: a

monthly series of leaflets on aspects of voluntary historical activity based on a series issued by the American Association for State and Local History. The series has now reached 21 (September 1989) and is acknowledged as a successful and valuable innovation in this country. Topics covered include audio-visual production (no.5), researching old buildings (no.4), using directories in local history research (no.10), marketing local history publications (no.16), research tools for local and family historians (no.19) and material culture studies for the local community (no.21).

workshops, seminars and lectures: the Royal Australian Historical Society offers

- lectures of general appeal;

training seminars (about two per year) on topics such as valuing antiques, the interpretation and care of family photographs, and researching migrant community history;

**conference/seminars in** local districts on topics relevant to those districts (two are proposed for 1990: one on Hunter Valley history and the other on nineteenth century food and drink);

- **interpretative** excursions to historic sites, including buildings;
- an annual lecture co-sponsored with the Historic Houses Trust of NSW (the 1989 lecture dealt with women associated with the Trust's houses).
- four workshops were given in Sydney in the past year and one in the country (in conjunction with Charles Sturt University and the Riverina Archives). To ensure maximum availability of the best speakers the Society aims to fly them to and from the workshop venues.

affiliated society grants: the Society administers a small sum from the Department for the Arts (\$13,000) for grants to its affiliated societies to assist publications and research. These funds

in 1989 were distributed in sums generally of about \$500 (with one grant of \$1,000) to societies for such things as photographic research, cemetery transcription, copying of historical photographs, microfilming, and preservation of historical photographs research. In 1989 cheques for sums from \$150 to \$1,000 were formally

distributed by the Minister for Arts (Mr Collins) at the Society's Annual Conference.

publications: the Society's Technical Information Service leaflets and *History* have been mentioned above. Apart from these it produces a quarterly *Journal* and occasional publications including conference proceedings and, as a special project in 1989, a *Survey of local government records*. The Society acknowledges that deficiencies in its ability to market its publications restrict its activities in this area. It is currently negotiating with University of New South Wales Press concerning publication of the proceedings of the 1989 conference of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies in a volume uniform with the Community History Program's *Locating Australia's past*.

Other programs recently considered by the Society include:

- an editorial and desktop publishing service :
- an expanded program of publications of primary material
- a "discovery learning centre for

Australian history", with an emphasis on local history, including advice to teachers on local history resources and methodology, inservice teacher training and programs for gifted students and school holiday programs

- a centralised electronic database of local history archives incorporating videographic technology.

## NEW SOUTH WALES DEPARTMENT FOR THE ARTS

As part of the same Literature and History program which supports the RAHS, the NSW Department for the Arts administers grants for the production of written history, with separate allocations in 1987-88 to the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, the Parramatta Historical Society, and the Society of Australian Genealogists.

## UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom has an extensive system of support for local history. Most counties have a County Local History Committee, fully funded by the County, with its own staff, publications and support services. While the level of support has in most cases been greatly reduced in recent years, special purpose grants are also available from County Councils, the Development Commission and charitable trusts. Following the Blake Report (1977) a National Association for Local History (now the British Association for Local History) was established, with heavy representation from academics and other professionals.

The UK system of administration and support for local history was studied in detail by Ioan Hunt, Councillor of the Royal Victorian Historical Society and President of the Woody Yallock Historical Society, near Ballarat, under a Churchill FeUowship in 1988.