



ORAL HISTORY NSW

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2023

Since 1979 Oral History NSW has been a dynamic community where practitioners and those new or returning to the industry can come together and learn, discuss, share, and improve the practice of oral histories and issues relating to respectfully and ethically recording people's life stories and experiences to the highest standards.

This year Oral History NSW was pleased to welcome 46 new members across NSW and the ACT. Throughout the year as we held our regular online drop-in sessions, we were delighted to meet new faces and returning members alike for stimulating discussions, encouragement, and inspiration as you shared with us the projects you were working on, questions and advice, and the individual reasons you are drawn to oral history.

We continued with our popular program of introductory seminars, full day *Capturing Memories* workshop online, and our advanced *Mastering the Recording* workshop. Many thanks to our committee and presenters who work together to deliver and facilitate these sessions both in person and online.

This year we also received a record number of requests from organisations for specially commissioned workshops and seminars – again many thanks to the Oral History NSW committee who were determined to meet as many of the requests as they could, on top of their own work and life commitments. From Albury, Mosman, Penrith and in between, five additional workshops were delivered with positive feedback from attendees.

We launched our [register of oral history practitioners](#), intended as a helpful resource for different aspects of oral history work, with many thanks to committee secretary Laura Anderson for her efforts and perseverance in putting the register together. The register will be reviewed and updated regularly, and we encourage members of Oral History NSW to add their details to widen the pool of resources.

During the AGM we will announce the winner of our annual Community History Award – created to acknowledge the work of individuals or community groups who are recording the histories of their communities.

Oral History NSW encourages our members to share their work with us and other members through our regular [newsletter](#) and [Facebook](#) page, and explore the many resources on our [website](#), including our blog, grants and awards.

I am pleased to report that over 100 editions of our regular e-newsletter *Network News* are now preserved and available online via the National eDeposit (NED) scheme, discoverable via [Trove](#) to researchers around the world. NED is a collaboration between Australia's nine national, state and territory libraries, responding to the major challenge of capturing and preserving the digital documentary history of Australia for the future.

None of these achievements would be remotely possible without the Oral History NSW [committee](#), consisting of eight dedicated and enthusiastic people I am proud to work alongside, who volunteer their time, energy, and expertise. Together this group truly reflects the diverse professional backgrounds and special interest areas that represent our wider membership. Their continued generosity of spirit and passion for supporting the betterment and discourse of oral history practice and community is really what allows Oral History NSW to thrive.

I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to Vice President Scott McKinnon, Treasurer and Membership Andrew Host, Secretary Laura Anderson, Public Officer and Network News editor Alexandra Mountain, and committee members Eureka Henrich, Shirleene Robinson, Margaret Leask and Emma Ramsay.

A special thanks to departing committee member and former President Dr Shirleene Robinson AM. Since joining us in 2018, Shirleene's tireless advocacy for recording people's experiences with the utmost empathy and kindness, as well as her unwavering support of our activities has always been appreciated, and we look forward to continuing our shared work and support of the wider oral history community together.

Finally, our members are spread across the ACT, Regional NSW and metropolitan Sydney – and our priority is to reflect and support this membership in our future activities, highlights, and communications. We encourage you to get in touch with your projects, [feedback and suggestions](#), and we thank you for the continued support and inspiration of your work and for being such a dynamic part of Australia's oral history community.

Maria Savvidis
President, Oral History NSW



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