

GUIDE TO MANAGING HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Developing a significant collection

Places of Deposit

The Public Record Office of Victoria (PROV) collects the archives of the State Government of Victoria and has records from early European settlement in the 1830s. The PROV stores State Government records that are to be kept permanently in special repositories at the Victorian Archives Centre in North Melbourne (main repository), Ballarat, Geelong and Bendigo.

The PROV however does not keep all State Government records.

Records not kept by the PROV but considered significant to a local community may be kept at a certified Place of Deposit (POD). PODs are community organisations that have been assessed by the PROV and are considered to have the storage facilities and standards to provide safe storage for the materials and are prepared to provide public access to the records.

A full listing of PODs plus information about the program can be found on the PROV website - <http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/communitycollections/deposit.asp>.

Museums Australia (Victoria) Accreditation

Museums Australia (Victoria) introduced the Museums Accreditation Program (MAP) in 1993 to provide a framework for reviewing museum and gallery practices against recognised industry standards. Any collecting organisation, including historical societies, can participate in MAP. Organisations initially apply for Registration and then undertake the accreditation process. Organisations are assessed through completing a series of assessments and by peer review.

In the past all organisations – large or small – completed the same paperwork but from October 2007 volunteer run organisations will prepare for accreditation using a revised museums accreditation workbook concentrating on benchmarks considered most important for sustain small collecting organisations.

Undertaking the accreditation process requires a great deal of work on the part of the members of the organisation but the benefits are the compilation of a set of policies and procedures resulting in a greater understanding of the management of the organisation and a sense of achievement in knowing that the organisation is following best practice in the management of the collection. Funding bodies also tend to look favourably on applications from accredited organisations.

Further information about MAP can be located at the Museums Australia web site - http://www.mavic.asn.au/museum_accreditation_program.