

Nomination of Kay MacGregor, Bendigo Historical Society Inc, for RHSV Award of Merit 2020

Kay MacGregor

Kay MacGregor has completed sixteen years continuous service as Collection Manager and Committee member since she began as a volunteer in 2004.

In 2004 the BHS collection was stored in cardboard boxes scattered across six locations around Bendigo.

Kay joined the Committee and was given the task of locating the collection. She collected all available records, created inventories and set up recording systems.

In 2007 the collection was moved into rooms at the old Bendigo Gaol.

Kay organized induction and training for volunteers for new cataloguing software. She supervised volunteer rosters and organized social activities.

The enormous task of unpacking the collection, cataloguing individual items and repacking the items into archive quality boxes was begun with a small group of volunteers.

In 2011 the collection was moved into the Bendigo Regional Archive Centre.

Kay supervised the move (45,000 items) and set up the storage area and the work area. Large items and furniture were moved into three shipping containers on site.

Over the past nine years Kay has supervised the cataloguing of more than 30,000 items from the BHS collection.

Kay maintains extensive, accurate records of new donations, inward and outward loans, tracking original boxes as they are unpacked, catalogued, items photographed or scanned and repacked into archive boxes and folders and stored.

Kay has successfully applied for many grants to purchase shelving, archive and preservation materials, computers, software and display materials.

She has created and maintains a well-organized progressive workplace at the BRAC. This includes induction and training of new volunteers and initiating new projects.

Kay has been a leader in setting up public displays of BHS collection items including in public exhibition spaces. She has been responsible for setting up static displays for the BHS Front of House facility at Specimen Cottage. She completes extensive research to supplement catalogue data and provides high quality labelling.

As Collection Manager Kay handles most of the enquiries about donations to the BHS collection and liaises with many individuals and groups to determine suitability of donations.

She also liaises with staff from the Bendigo Art Gallery to facilitate loans from the BHS collection for inclusion in their displays.

Kay has facilitated access to the BHS collection for several researchers to assist their projects.

Kay has organized exhibitions, displays and information sessions for many BHS projects plus has been actively involved with other Heritage groups and community projects to provide public access to BHS collections.

Kay has been actively involved with other volunteers in producing DVDs of photo compilations for several events including the 150th Anniversary of the Railway arriving in Bendigo.

Kay is passionate about Bendigo's mining history and has created many photographic records of old mining sites.

Kay currently volunteers at the Nolan Street storage facility for two days each week from 8.00 a.m. – 3.00 p.m. as well as completing many research projects in her own time.

As a BHS committee member Kay played a major part in the campaign to find a home for the Bendigo Historical Society Collection when they were evicted from Dudley House and then from the Bendigo Gaol buildings.

Kay represented the BHS on the City of Greater Bendigo Heritage Advisory Committee for 10 years.

She attended the Bendigo Heritage Representative Groups meetings for 10 years. The BHRG was set up at Kay's suggestion to foster communication and sharing of ideas between the many heritage groups operating in the greater Bendigo area. This group also provided information and feedback to CoGB Councillors about heritage matters.

Kay is also a member of Bendigo Branch of the National Trust and is actively involved in all NT projects.

I believe that Kay's work over the past 15 years demonstrates that she has made a significant contribution to the Bendigo community as a leader within the BHS and in the preservation of a valuable heritage collection that is gradually being organized to allow greater community access.

Nominated by Barbara Poustie

Committee Member Bendigo Historical Society