



Volunteer Position Description

Job Title

Writer/journalist/editor (volunteer)

Who we are

The **Royal Historical Society of Victoria** is an active not-for-profit, membership-based (over 1300 members), collecting organisation that operates as Victoria's largest historical society and as a peak body for ~340 affiliated societies. We manage a range of activities including a bookshop, public events, an exhibition gallery, room hire, membership subscriptions, a large member-based group insurance scheme, the Victorian Community History Awards, Holsworth grants, History Month, seminars webinars and workshops, outreach activities outside Melbourne and the publication of various books, journals and newsletters. We support commercial and private research.

Our collection

Our collection of Victorian history began in 1909 and has absorbed over the years other collections, notably the Royal Geographic Society of Australia (VIC) and part of the Genealogical Society of Victoria's library. It has been through many iterations but now it is a mostly paper-based collection with a small number of objects and paintings. The two most significant parts of the collection are its manuscripts and its images collections (glass negatives and slides, postcards, photos, maps, transparencies, albums, stereographs etc).

The bookshop

The RHSV runs History Victoria Bookshop, which focuses on the history of Victoria. It is both a bricks and mortar bookshop and on-line. We have a diverse selection of books that is particularly strong in Indigenous History. Many of our niche books are not found elsewhere. We also sell second hand and antiquarian books. The bookshop has doubled its sales over the last 5 years and we would like to see this growth continue, indeed, we'd like to see the growth rate increase. There are many opportunities for innovation and ideas.

The opportunity

The RHSV currently has various platforms through which we contact members and friends and we'd like to expand this.

Currently we have:

- The *Victorian Historical Journal* (VHJ), our flagship publication, a peer-reviewed biannual journal (print and digital)
- *History News* (HN), our main newsletter which is digital and print. 6 bi-monthly issues per annum.

Both the VHJ and HN are managed by the RHSV Publications Committee, a dedicated group of volunteers.

Staff generated communications include:

- *Old News* a fortnightly What's On – digital format only - for our 1300 members.
- *RHSV Dispatch* – this is a digital bulletin aimed at our 100+ volunteers and staff to increase their awareness of what is going on across the whole organisation and to break down the silos – the Monday volunteers don't know the Wednesday volunteers and the Publications Committee don't know about the work of the Collections Committee etc. We also like to give staff and volunteers behind-the-scenes news before it is released to the public. This bulletin should be monthly but has fallen over recently and we like to revive it.

And then there are two new ebulletins we'd like to get off the ground

- A bookshop ebulletin – probably monthly and is focussed on new books, reviews, staff picks, secondhand treasures, awards etc
- A heritage advocacy ebulletin. We have a very active Heritage committee which is constantly engaged in battles to preserve our built and cultural heritage. We'd like to give their work more prominence through a 6 monthly or 4 monthly ebulletin.

So we'd like a volunteer with some experience and skills in this area to revive the RHSV Dispatch and establish the bookshop bulletin and the heritage bulletin. We don't envisage that they'd have to write *all* the copy but they'd make sure they were getting contributions from staff and other volunteers. Careful editing, thinking about tone and audience etc

Responsible to: Rosemary Cameron, Executive Officer.

Duties

Under general direction undertake a range of tasks related to ebulletins including:

- Resurrecting a monthly ebulletin aimed at our 100+ staff and volunteers. Commissioning, writing, editing and fact-checking submissions, scanning and editing images, creating graphics, creating the ebulletin in Zoho and then sending out.
- Creating a monthly bookshop ebulletin aimed at our 1300 members. Commissioning, writing, editing and fact-checking submissions, scanning and editing images, creating graphics, creating the ebulletin in Zoho and then sending out. A Christmas version of this ebulletin will go out to our entire mailing list – some 9300+
- Creating a 4 or 6 monthly Heritage Advocacy ebulletin aimed at our 1300 members and 8000+ extras on our mailing list. Commissioning, writing, editing and fact-checking submissions, scanning and editing images, creating graphics, creating the ebulletin in Zoho and then sending out.

Create a timetable for the year to enable you to tackle the above 3 ebulletins.

Don't forget, the staff are here to help you, train you and guide you.

Skills & knowledge required

- Very good oral and written communication skills (essential).
- A qualification or working towards a qualification in professional writing or journalism (desirable)
- Experience as a professional writer or journalist (desirable)
- Strong proficiency in using computers – even if you haven't worked with our particular software you will be able to learn quickly.

- Proficiency in using Microsoft Office, particularly word.
- Experience in using WordPress or confidence to learn how. You will be working mostly in our Zoho CRM database but also in the backend of our Wordpress website. We use Canva to create simple visuals for use in our ebulletins. If you are tech-savvy this is all easy to pick up and we'll train you.
- Web searching skills (fact-checking).
- Attention to detail.

Time Commitment

We prefer volunteers to commit to at least one shift per week (a shift might be 4 – 7.5 hours) on a regular day. Having said that, we understand that our volunteers do need flexibility and that we are happy to accommodate when we can.

Much of this work can be done from home however, if you are like us, you will enjoy coming into the Drill Hall and interacting with your colleagues and picking up essential news. It's more fun to be here than at home!

Conditions

This is a part-time volunteer position that is ongoing. We support volunteers with training and skills development where desirable.

Office hours are 38 hours per week with the office open from 8:45am – 5pm, Monday to Friday.

The office closes for 2 weeks over Christmas/New Year.

Location

Royal Historical Society of Victoria @ 239 A'Beckett St, Melbourne VIC 3000. Our home is an unusual 1938 heritage-listed Drill Hall close to Queen Victoria Market and about 150m from Flagstaff Station.

Applications

Please email Emily Maiolo (Administrator) at office@historyvictoria.org.au with a copy of your Volunteer Expression of Interest, or fill out the online form here: <https://www.historyvictoria.org.au/support/become-a-volunteer/>

Enquiries should be directed to Rosemary Cameron, RHSV Executive Officer
rosemary.cameron@historyvictoria.org.au | +61 3 9326 9288

Applications close

This is an ongoing recruitment process