



ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.

239 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne 3000

John Schauble was awarded a well-deserved Distinguished Service Award two years ago, but the Fellowship Committee now judges his contribution to be of Fellowship quality.

John has made a substantial contribution to the RHSV through his participation on the Publications Committee, which he joined in April 2019, and his work for *History News* assisting the editor and undertaking the considerable work of writing the book notes for each issue, then recommending books for review in the *Victorian Historical Journal*. He has also written reviews, articles and historical notes for the *VHJ*, assisted with proof reading, and contributed to the expansion of the journal's coverage of regional—especially Gippsland and the Dandenongs—history.

John has tertiary qualifications in law, history, politics and emergency management, including an MA in history and philosophy of science. He worked as a journalist from 1983 to 2005, first at the *Sydney Morning Herald*, then at the *Age* and *Sunday Age*, including periods as Foreign Editor and as China correspondent. He then moved into emergency management in the Victorian public service and, after working in policy analysis and strategic services, was appointed successively to senior roles from 2007 in the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner 2007-2010, the Fire Services Commissioner 2010–14, and at Emergency Management Victoria 2014-18. He has also served the community as Bail Justice for the State of Victoria, 2000–18, and as a Justice of the Peace since 2004.

John's other unpaid work during this period included serving as a mentor in the Law Faculty, University of Melbourne, and as a founding member for the Board of the Australia–Indonesia Institute (1989–93) as well as the Course Advisory Committee for the Professional Communications BA at RMIT University (1992–99), a program designed specifically for international students. He reads and speaks Bahasa Indonesian.

Throughout his professional life, John maintained his membership of the RHSV (from 1982) and took the first opportunity on his retirement from full-time work in 2018 to volunteer his services to the society's publications program and committee. His journalistic skills and experience—writing and editing—have been of considerable value to this aspect of the society's work.

John's service includes the fostering of community identity and safety, specifically in the Ferny Creek area in the Dandenongs, where he helped form and continues to convene the Friends of Ferny Creek (2003–) and is president of the Sassafras-Ferny Creek Fire Brigade (CFA member since 1975). He has also researched the history of the area, and among his publications is *The Little School: A Centenary History of Ferny Creek Primary School and its Community* (Ferny Creek, 1995), and *Hills of Fire: A Community's Fight against Fire in the Dandenong Ranges* (Sassafras, 1992). Further publications include notes and articles in the *VHJ*, many focusing on Gippsland's history — “Where are the others?” Victoria's Forgotten 1926 Bushfires' (December 2019); 'Brutal Murderer, Mentally Ill or Political Martyr: The Curious Case of James Seery' (June 2020); 'Young Men in a Hurry: How a Cyclist's Death Defined Early Motoring in Victoria' (June 2021), 'Life after Death: The Coronial

Records of a Lost Victorian Goldfield' (December 2021), and 'A Revaluation of the "Wastelands of the Crown" and the Alpine Road that Never Was' (June 2024). He also wrote the introductory article for the special pandemics issue of the *VHJ* (December 2022) 'Not Without Precedent: Two Centuries of Public Health Emergencies in Victoria', in which he called on research arising from his public service work in emergency management to provide historical context through a 'broad survey of major public health challenges in Victoria since European incursions'.

Other publications include: 'Knighthood in their Profession: How Foreign Correspondents are Selected by Australian Press', *Asia Pacific Media Educator* (1999); 'Message in a Bottle: Culture, Bushfire and Community Understanding', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland*, 115 (2006); *The Australian Bushfire Safety Guide* (HarperCollins, Sydney 2004); (with Graham Dwyer) 'Better Bushfire Safety Decision-making: Making Sense of Complexities and Challenges Surrounding "Stay or Go" and the Australian Fire Danger Rating System', *Australian Journal of Public Administration* (2023); and contributions to the *Encyclopedia of Melbourne* (Cambridge University Press, 2005); *SBS World Guide 1994* (Reed Publishing, Melbourne 1994); *The Oxford Companion to Australian Sport* (OUP, Melbourne 1992); and *The Age Good Food Guide* (Penguin, Melbourne—multiple editions, to 2012).

John's professional work has earned him many prestigious awards including the Fire Awareness Week Community Service Award (Media) 1997, the Australian Safer Communities Award, National winner (communities sector) 2007, a Gold Quill Award for Journalistic Excellence, Melbourne Press Club 1997, and a commendation in the 2004 Walkley Awards for journalism.

The Publications Committee has profited immensely from John's experience and skills, and continues to do so. His recent and ongoing service to the RHSV, together with his long-term contribution to history and to the community, clearly merits an RHSV Fellowship.

Judith Smart AM