



ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.

239 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne 3000

Nomination of Helen Boak for an Award of Merit 2024

Helen has been a volunteer with the society since 2014, and in that time the Society and staff have benefited from her organisational skills many times. With a vast collection of material in this collection, she has made sense of old order and reorganised the material so it is visible and usable once more. While this can be seen as a standard 'housekeeping' job, I cannot overstate the extreme importance this work has. I will keep repeating that importance through this citation

Over the years she has worked on our newsletter 'History News' content and sorted out Historical Society Collection of newsletters –and rethought the way they are shelved.

In my first couple of years with the society she took on the gargantuan task of reorganising and cleaning up our network drives. Many would deem this a thankless task, but as I noted before, her sense of order delivered the best outcomes. From an organisational information management perspective this work enables us, information and previous knowledge gained is not lost, we have future proofed our organisational information.

In what seems like an extraordinary segue, her next task was to reorganise our society archive. The archive had to be physically moved out of a flooded area to safety, but that move entailed all of the archive being removed from its storage. That resulted in chaos. Helen began from scratch to sort, order, rehouse and relabel, a job that took a long time. While her work, as always, was carefully considered, she also spoke to our archivist about standard archiving systems to ensure that she was on the right path. Another of her projects that the society will greatly benefit from.

She is thoughtful, has a great sense of humour and a great sense of community. It is of great value to us is that she is very clear about keeping us on track.

Helen has always seen the value of our collection and has put this into action. A couple of years ago we ran an end of financial year fundraising project to conserve an 1866 carved piano front. The piece has been stored away, needing work to stabilise the carving, to be carefully cleaned and finally the frame and glass replaced. On behalf of her son, Andrew, Helen made a donation that enabled us to get all the required work done. The item is now on public display, a great achievement.

She has exceeded the criteria for a RHSV Award of Merit.

Jillian Hiscock

Collections Manager & Volunteer Coordinator

Royal Historical Society of Victoria