



TOCAH Newsletter Ten

March 2026

People from country Australia want their stories preserved for future generations. Treasury of Country Australian History (TOCAH) Inc. is an association committed to safeguarding endangered country history. Its goal is to build an archive that protects the heritage and memories of rural life, preserving documents from individuals, families, properties, businesses, and organisations across the region.

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CAN YOU HELP

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

Oral History Interviewers
Oral History Transcript Editors
Experts to help with Google Workspace
Archives Experts to help Archive our Collections
Website/Facebook Content Managers
Assistance with TOCAH Operations
Promotion and Marketing Experts

WE NEED INTERVIEWEES

People who have lived in Country Australia
Your stories are important

Please contact: info@tocah.au

Executive Committee

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1. President's Report

Strategic Planning

We've spent recent months planning TOCAH's strategy, reviewing current operations and future goals, opportunities and alliances. The Strategic Plan will be ready soon, thanks to Sharyn Innes and the committee, and we see new directions, alliances and activities in the future.

Google Workspace

In conjunction with our strategic planning initiatives, efforts have been made to enhance the efficiency of TOCAH Committee operations. We have secured not-for-profit access to *Google Workspace* and have implemented its suite of tools for document storage, online meetings, and group communications. Each committee member has been assigned a personal workspace, and shared documents are available to all current and future members, facilitating the development of a comprehensive archive of TOCAH records. The archive is presently in progress, as the establishment of systematic protocols and procedures for the naming and uploading of files and folders necessitates careful consideration and time.

TOCAH Website - www.tocah.au

Stage Two of the TOCAH website is nearly ready, and you'll be notified when it goes live. We have a volunteer for uploading material, but more help and content are needed.

The website will have excerpts of our oral history interviews available, interesting stories from the past, the flexibility of membership payments online, and ultimately the opportunity for you to share your stories. Contributors must sign a Deed of Gift to allow us to publish their stories on our site.

Thank you very much for your continued support of TOCAH and I hope you will join us in contributing your stories and photographs to our collection.

*Jan Partridge,
President*

2. Collections Report

The Collections Group's activities are currently constrained as efforts are focused on developing a Strategic Plan.

Oral History Collection

Interviewing remains ongoing, and discussions are underway regarding potential joint interviewing initiatives with other organizations and the recruitment of additional oral history volunteers. This presents an opportunity to expand the scope of our interview collections and encourage other organizations to establish their own oral history archives. However, at the moment, we are unable to accommodate all individuals requiring interviews and need more interviewers.

We welcome recommendations for groups interested in collaborating with TOCAH on joint interviewing projects. Training in interviewing techniques can be provided for their members. Recently, we received a generous donation of \$2,000, allowing us to acquire more oral history kits and thereby enhance resources available to future volunteers.

Oral History Transcripts

We are now transcribing oral history interviews and plan to share full or partial transcripts on our website. Windows 365 and Microsoft Word have made transcription much faster but editing and indexing are still needed due to issues such as incorrect punctuation, incorrect spelling of names, and uncertainty in the correct identification of Australian places.

To maintain consistent formatting standards across the archives, a *Handbook for Transcript Editors* has been prepared, detailing protocols and procedures for editing and indexing. As transcripts are easily shared as Word documents, we are actively seeking volunteers to support this work. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Print Collection

Our print collection activities continue, with a current emphasis on business cards and phone books. Contributions from your own collections would be gratefully received.

Jan Partridge

Team Leader, Collections

3. Strategic Planning Report, March 2026

TOCAH recently undertook the development of its inaugural strategic plan during a Committee workshop.

The Vision statement has been revised to:

“To seek out, collect, preserve, promote, and share Australian country history.”

This guiding principle will inform all organisational goals and strategies.

The plan identifies five key pillars, each encompassing a broad range of initiatives for the Committee and its Subcommittees to pursue in realising the vision over the next three to four years.

It establishes priorities ranging from the amendment and development of Policies and Procedures to enhanced marketing and communications efforts, with an ongoing focus on collections.

Additionally, TOCAH aims to broaden its organisational impact by engaging new volunteers and pursuing diverse sponsorship opportunities to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Sharyn Innes

Strategic Analyst

4. In Our Collection

Mary Bishop

Kieza, Grantlee (2002). *The Kelly Hunters*, ABC Books, Australia

In 1878, Ned Kelly and his group of young outlaws ambushed a remote mountain camp, killing three policemen and initiating the largest and most costly manhunt Australia had ever experienced. The intense pursuit culminated with Kelly and his gang donning armour, attempting to derail a train, and facing police in a violent showdown in Glenrowan, a small town in Victoria.

Over twenty months, lawmen, soldiers, undercover agents, and Aboriginal trackers searched harsh, frozen mountains for the outlaws. Despite low pay and poor health—some near retirement, others young with families—the officers risked their lives to find those responsible for killing their colleagues.

The search for the Kelly Gang became a contest among senior police, culminating in a famous shootout that cemented Ned Kelly's notoriety in Australian history. *The Kelly Hunters* offers an engaging perspective on this well-known tale.

McHugh, Siobhan (2003) *The Snowy: The People Behind the Power*. Angus and Robinson, Sydney.

The construction of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme from 1949 to 1974 is considered one of the world's most significant engineering accomplishments. For Australia, the project marked a transition toward modernity and served as a symbol of multicultural integration. Supported by over three hundred photographs and based on extensive interviews with many individuals involved, "The Snowy" provides a comprehensive account of this landmark venture, described by Professor Manning Clark as "an inspiration to all who dream dreams about Australia."

Approximately two-thirds of the scheme's workforce of one hundred thousand were immigrants, recently arrived from more than forty countries across Europe. The project offered these individuals an opportunity to rebuild their lives following the disruptions caused by war. Initial tensions between Australian-born workers and newcomers gradually diminished, resulting in a cohesive team that achieved global records in hardrock drilling and earthmoving while maintaining notable racial and industrial harmony. However, the camaraderie among workers was accompanied by significant risk; the hazardous conditions led to accidents which claimed the lives of over one hundred men, documented here for the first time.

Recipient of the NSW State Literary Award for Non-fiction, "The Snowy: The People Behind The Power" presents a thorough and engaging depiction of a monumental undertaking, reflecting a pivotal period in Australia's national development.

5. Print Collection: Phone Books, Business Directories and Business Cards



Two of our members recently took a short holiday around Tasmania. The resultant donation to TOCAH included 2 phone books, 2 business directories, a number of brochures and pamphlets as well as over 185 business cards from a number of places around the island.

Thank you for your time and effort in collecting all these items and bringing them safely back.

Thank You

6. Echoes of the Past

Fascinating stories are to be found in historic records. *We will bring you more of these - but this is one recipe NOT to try!!*

THE DEADLY RAINCOAT

A home-made waterproof coat. *Queensland Agricultural Journal*, Vol. XXVIII, January-June 1912. Parts 1-6, p. 293.

Answers to Correspondents - New Chum Housewife, Cairns. Yes, it is quite possible for you to make a waterproof coat yourself.

Here are two simple recipes, which are given by “*The Farmer and Settler*” (a Sydney paper): —

- a) A really strong mackintosh that will stand any amount of hard wear and remain waterproof to the last is quite expensive to buy, and a reliable method of making one for herself is sure to be a welcome suggestion to any woman whose purse is slender.

First, buy some strong unbleached calico at about 7d. a yard, and get a good pattern of a loose rainproof coat, which can easily be obtained — publications devoted to matters of feminine interest giving patterns. The pattern should be carefully studied before setting to work, as the discouraging experience of many an amateur dressmaker is but the result of lack of attention in this respect. Do not stint the stuff, as it is better to have such a coat too loose than too tight.

When completed, dampen it thoroughly and roll up for a few hours.

Now take 2 lb. of white lead paint ready mixed (at about 4d. per lb.), and to thin it down to the right consistency add to it a pint of raw linseed oil. (6d. per pint). The mixture should be liquid, but do not, however, make it as weak as water.

Apply one coating and lay out the coat on a flat surface for about an hour, then hang it up to finish drying. Repeat the process three or four times, allowing each coating of paint to dry thoroughly before adding another. After this treatment, the coat should be soft, pliable, as well as rainproof, and as durable as if it bore the label of a good house of waterproof makers.

- b) A perfect waterproof can also be obtained by soaking any woollen material for 24 hours in a liquid prepared by adding 1 gallon of cold water to $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. each of sugar of lead and alum.

Once again, we'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to TOCAH and our ongoing development and improvement in the services we offer. We wouldn't have been able to reach this level without your support, and it is greatly appreciated.



Maroochy RSL



Sunshine Mitre 10 Nambour



Sunshine Coast Council