



Newsletter Eight September 2025

Contents

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 President's Report | 4 Deductible Gift Recipient |
| 3 Gympie Rotary Heritage Makers Fair | In Our Collection |
| 4 Annual General Meeting | 5 Wish List |
| | Thank You |

President's Report 2025

[‘In 1952, my parents decided I’d better go bush because of my chronic asthma. At 14 ½, I was off to *Walgarra*, Urandangie. I went by train from Oakey to Brisbane on Saturday, then took the old *Sunshine Express* Sunday evening, arriving in Townsville at 7am Tuesday. Then I took a modern train Townsville to Mt Isa at 3pm, travelling all night to Duchess, where I boarded the “Bouncing Flea”, a steam engine so named because it had only one carriage – until it reached Dajarra.

At Dajarra, they hooked up stock wagons – no more bouncing! Dajarra was then the biggest trucking centre in the world. I spent a night in Dajarra, caught the mail truck at 8pm the next night, then rode all night to *Walgarra*, 12 miles before Urandangie.‘]

Jim Currie, cowboy/gardener, horse taylor, horse breaker, drover, shearer, railwayman, goat and sheep producer, Morven community stalwart.

An excerpt from a TOCAH interview 14th August, 2025

TOCAH volunteers are privileged to be able to interview such contributors to the Australian way of life and record as Jim Currie. It is these accounts of life experience which stand to teach current and future generations about the scope of life, and the gutsiness and persistence of so many who have helped build our modern prosperity - treasures indeed.

∞ ∞ ∞

The year 2024-2025 has been one of consolidation of essential operations; of achieving the milestones of launching our [tocah.au](https://www.tocah.au) website and attaining Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status for financial donations; of increasing interviewing scope and capacity; of broadening collaborations and liaison with other stakeholders in the historical collections endeavour; and of clarifying strategic direction.

Governance:

At the 2024 AGM, the election of very capable young people, Mick Morrison from UNE, and Kate McNicholl, a water project engineer/manager brought diversity and energy to the committee.

It was a real loss to TOCAH when both had to withdraw because of the increased demands of their careers. We thank Mick and Kate for their inputs in their short engagement with TOCAH. The committee now similarly needs diversity of background and perspective to carry the endeavour forward.

The recent procurement of a charity version of Google Workspace enables the development of streamlined committee communications and shared online meetings when and wherever this suits. This is a work in progress for the Committee.

In a milestone achievement, TOCAH was granted Deductible Gift Recipient status by the Australian Taxation Office. <https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/topic-guides/deductible-giftrecipient-dgr>.

Scale of operations:

The launch of the tocah.au website on 13th June was an enjoyable milestone event attended by narrators and donors from many walks of life. It was sponsored by Sunshine Mitre 10 Hardware, Nambour, and held in *The Bunker* which houses their wonderful historical display. This website, which we aim to update regularly, is providing a window for potential story sharers, and for supporters to see the work our volunteers are doing, and it will in future provide more interactive functions.

Evolving from a trial base on the Sunshine Coast, committee members are alert to opportunities to record stories from the diverse lives of men and women from a growing area of Queensland. In forays to Rockhampton, Warwick, Gympie, Kilcoy and the Central West, our interviewers have recorded accounts from a hydrogeologist; auctioneers; a member of an early (1960's) mapping team who met with the Pintupi people in NT in 1961; an early female pilot/Women's Electoral Lobby pioneer; childhood builders of apple boxes and pineapple crates on family farms; educators of isolated children from early years onwards; generational choir members; cattle industry pioneers; an agri-politician; a long term Longreach hairdresser; generational picnic race club stalwarts; horsemen; lifelong dairy farmers and pineapple growers (one played against Roy Emerson in her childhood); servicemen; surveyors; traditional craft people and more.

For every aspect of TOCAH operations, volunteers are needed. It is a feature of volunteering for people approaching, or in, retirement that they need flexibility in their commitment. This makes training, consistency and building momentum a challenge.

Strategic direction:

The recording of oral histories, although only one element of TOCAH's stated Mission, is shaping as the most pressing, timely, distinctive and logical. Whilst the preservation of historical documents is important, the advancing age of many key story holders, the technology available to record quality interviews, and the ever-expanding list of people who have been recommended for interviews are key factors.

Another key consideration is the evolution of the proposed online archive, the skills and time required, the potential ongoing costs and possible implications of AI.

The Committee is in discussion with Gavin Bannerman, Director of Queensland Memory at the State Library of Queensland - who attended one of TOCAH's first meetings and another recently - to explore how we might develop productive collaborations.

Final comments

As I hand over the Presidency at the AGM after my Constitutional 3 years, I sincerely thank our supporters. In particular TOCAH heartily thanks Sunshine Mitre 10 Hardware, Nambour, for their generous sponsorship of TOCAH events and for enabling us to use The Bunker, their wonderful meeting space. Hearty thanks go also to our committed committee members. The committee now needs an experienced, well-connected project manager to advise on strategic direction and the building of a more cohesive TOCAH operation.

Thus, I conclude my report to TOCAH 2025 AGM.
Please accept the President's Report for 2025.
Thank you.

Cynthia Dodd 13th September 2025

I would like to thank the TOCAH Committee for electing me President for 2025-2026. Cynthia has done a sterling job getting us to this stage and we are working to become more active and develop further outreach to other organisations and stakeholders. TOCAH is very grateful for your support, and we continue our oral history interviewing which is so very important in gathering the history of country Australia, and we are working to upgrade our website and Facebook so we can share these stories and excerpts from our other collections on the website.

We are continuously looking for volunteers to help us with our various programs and our website and Facebook, and of course, future interviewees which are so important, so if you have any suggestions, please forward them to us.

Thank you, Jan Partridge

Gympie Rotary Heritage Makers Fair

5 and 6 July 2025, Gympie Racecourse and Show Grounds



A number of our volunteers attended the Heritage Fair and TOCAH had a stall in the 'Domestic Arts' Centre. We were busy and gathered information on 30+ possible narrators and a number of oral history volunteers from the area.

We also talked to a range of other organisations about what we do. There is an upturn of interest in oral history, and we have been asked to attend other Fairs later in the year. We have been invited to the Brisbane Valley Heritage Trail Heritage Day at Esk in late October. TOCAH has also been invited to the Stonehouse Museum at Moore to run an oral history training course.

Jan was asked in March/April if she would interview some master craftsmen at the fair. She interviewed two each day and interviews with people who are passionate about their craft and who have travelled extensively to learn from leading craftsmen around the world was very interesting.

On Saturday, 5 July Jan interviewed Bruce Weier, Master Woodcarver, and Andy Coates, Master Mead Maker, of Pinbarren, Queensland. On Sunday 6 July, it was the turn of Dion Channer, Master Papermaker and Bookbinder, of Glenwood and Devon Campbell, Master Tool Maker, from Shailer Park, Queensland.

Annual General Meeting

The TOCAH Annual General Meeting was held on 19 September 2025 at 'The Bunker' Mitre 10, Nambour. Once again, we thank Tim Lanham and Mitre 10 for providing TOCAH with a great space for our meetings.

The Committee was stood down and we offer congratulations to the following who were then elected:

President Jan Partridge

Vice President Elaine Roberts

Secretary Rhyl Dearden

Treasurer Cynthia Dodd

Committee Members Mary Bishop, Rob Peirce, Janelle Wilkie, Sharyn Innes, Janet Tombleson

Thanks also to Joanne Uhlmann who previously took on the secretarial role with very little notice and did a great job in the process.

Deductible Gift Recipient

Treasury of Country Australian History has now been endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR). This means that all donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

In Our Collection

In Stockmen's Footsteps by Jane Grieve with a foreword by Jack Thompson AM

Jane Grieve, raised on a Queensland farm, was inspired by her heritage and the Australian outback. Determined to forge her own path, she worked with notable Australians like R.M. Williams and Mary Durack to help establish the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre in Longreach. This previously untold story highlights her crucial role and the collective effort involved in creating this significant Bicentennial project.

The Biggest Estate on Earth How Aborigines Made Australia by Bill Gammage

Early European settlers in Australia often described the landscape as park-like, with open woodlands and abundant wildlife. Bill Gammage found this was due to Aboriginal peoples' systematic land management using fire, native plant cycles, and water flow.

His decade-long study reveals a sophisticated approach that sustained food and wildlife year-round, allowing Aboriginal people to secure resources with less effort than Europeans. The cessation of these practices led to overgrowth and increased bushfire risk, challenging the notion that national parks are untouched wilderness.

Wish List

Our business card collecting has been very successful with our collection currently nudging 500. We are always on the hunt for more business cards as we believe that their use is dying out.

Australian Aldine Histories Set: New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia – USB

Original copies of the Aldine histories for New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia are rare and valuable sources, offering thorough records and illustrations of each colony and its notable residents. Written by W. Frederic Morrison over three years, these multi-volume works provide authoritative historical narratives, thousands of regional biographies, and photographs and sketches depicting life and buildings of the era. **\$59.50**

Australian Pastoral & Brands Directories Collection – USB

\$99.00

The Australian Pastoral Directories - this lists stockowners in most states of Australia - a significant resource for those that are looking for their family with pastoral connections in Australia.

Brands Directories - You can find an image of the brand registered, earmark registered, cheek brand, or symbol, name of owner, address of owner, and sometimes the certificate number.

This USB contains

AU0110-1913 Pastoral Directory 1913
AU0110-1923 Pastoral Directory 1923
AU0110-1925 Pastoral Directory 1925
AU0110-1931 Pastoral Directory 1931
AU0110-1935 Pastoral Directory 1935
AU0110-1937 Pastoral Directory 1937
AU0110-1939 Pastoral Directory 1939
AU0110-1954 Pastoral Directory 1954
AU2027 Pastoral Possessions NSW
AU4040-1920 Brands Dir Queensland 1920-21
AU4040-1945 Brands Dir Queensland 1945-48
AU4040-1949 Brands Dir Queensland 1949-52
AU5058-1901 Brands Directory SA 1901
AU5058-1936s Brands Directory SA 1936 Sheep
AU5058-1938s Brands Directory SA 1938 Sheep

Thank You

Ongoing donations and efforts from members, volunteers, and supporters allow for continuous expansion of the collection. These contributions enable the preservation of stories that might otherwise not be documented. Thank you everyone.