

GSV Annual Report 2012

This year the major activity at the GSV was finding new premises and relocating during a Melbourne Covid-19 lockdown. We successfully achieved this thanks to our dedicated and very hard-working councillors, staff, and volunteers together with ongoing generous support and encouragement from our members. Despite only being open for members to come into the Centre for limited periods between lockdowns, we have been able to increase our resources available to members, to expand our range of educational activities and to further improve our IT capabilities. As summarised below, our financial position is sound ensuring our ongoing viability as a Society.

FINANCES

The Society's audited financial report for the 2020/2021 financial year has been published in a separate document on our website. The financial report shows an overall loss of \$2,907 for the Society for the year ended 30 June 2021, which compares to a profit in the prior year of \$32,026. The small bottom-line loss has largely resulted from the \$14,800 in costs incurred in relocating the Society to 10 Queen St in February 2021. The decline from last year's profit also reflects that the Society did not receive large bequests in 2020/2021 (whereas over \$29,000 in bequests were received in the prior year). However, although there was no substantial bequest income, the Society has continued to receive the very generous and much appreciated support from members' donations. Although the Society had a small bottom-line loss for the year, there was actually an underlying operating profit of \$6,935 (after excluding the non-operating items of the relocation costs and the Government grant for cashflow support). This compares to the operating loss in the prior year of \$17,689. The major factors in this turnaround to an operating profit were the reduction (from March 2021 onwards) in the premises lease cost, a reduction in administration and other costs and the strong support of our members through donations. The financial and other support of our members and careful management by Council and our staff has maintained a sound financial position for the Society, a pleasing outcome in the face of the challenges of the pandemic's lengthy lockdowns and in managing the relocation to new premises in the midst of the pandemic's disruptions.

Stephen Hawke
Treasurer

COUNCIL

At the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 28th November 2020 there were fewer people nominated than positions vacant. Therefore, the people nominated were declared elected as follows: President- Jenny Redman, Vice President- Penny Wolf, Treasurer- Stephen Hawke and Councillors- Janne Bonnett, Claire Johnson, Brian Reid, Martin Lock, Angela CollierGioulekas, David Down and Cherilyn Tillman.

John Blackwood was nominated for the award of a Fellowship of the GSV in acknowledgment of his long-term and extensive contributions to the Society over a long period. This proposal was unanimously accepted.

Certificates of Appreciation and our sincere thanks for their contributions to the Society were awarded to seven volunteers: Peter Cleary, Julie Conroy, John Dulfer, Lynton Ford, Anne Nolan, William Taylor, and Rod Van Cooten.

Following an unacceptable lease offer by our previous landlord, the Council resolved to obtain alternative premises. In October 2020 we formed a Premises Search team consisting of Peter Johnston, Claire Johnson and Michael Rumpff. A property advocate, Matthew Collins, was appointed to identify possible premises and to negotiate the lease on our behalf. Many properties in the CBD and surrounding inner suburbs were inspected and level one, 10 Queen Street, Melbourne was chosen as best meeting our space and budget requirements. A Relocation Project Plan was developed, led by Martin Lock. It set out a timetable for disposing of unwanted items then subsequent removal and re-establishment of facilities at 10 Queen Street by the end of February, when our previous lease expired. Despite another Covid lockdown in February 2021, we completed our move ahead of time, ready to reopen in early March.

Despite a smaller floorspace, we are very happy with the quality and general feel of the new premises. The location is convenient with easy access, close to transport systems and carparking. The extended Covid lockdowns throughout 2021 restricted members from coming in to use the library resources and prevented our setting up the Digital Media Hub as planned. However, with the recent lifting of restrictions we look forward to welcoming members back into the Centre and launching our Hub early in the new year.

This year we have introduced four innovations in line with our policy of increasing the GSV's digital profile. In addition to communicating with members via our quarterly journal *Ancestor*, website, and Blog, we now have an *e-News* distributed via email each month. This newsletter has proved to be a very convenient way to rapidly update members about events and activities, new research resources as well as GSV news in general. Our *Members-Help-Members Forum* enables members to directly communicate with each other and exchange research information. We also now have two new digital products to market: a *Gift Certificate* for members and non-members to purchase as a voucher, gifting a one-year subscription to the GSV, and our *e-Pass*, which enables non-members to purchase access to our online resources with a 6-hour membership. Congratulations are due to the IT team who spent many hours developing these digital innovations, with particular thanks to Tom O'Dea.

Despite the difficult circumstances this year, membership decline was relatively limited, and we welcomed many new members who were appreciative of our Zoom offerings. It has been particularly gratifying that more members are actively participating in running the day-to-day tasks at the GSV. Thank you to all who have come forward to learn new skills or share existing ones. Volunteer organisations like ours depend on member participation for their survival. Fortunately, much can be done online from home these days. Having small teams of volunteers help organise each activity is proving to be an effective way to share the load, whether it be discussion circles, preparing recorded presentations as webcasts, maintaining our website, and indexing documents for our online catalogue. New volunteers are welcome in all our areas of activity. We will provide training if required, and you will meet and interact with fellow family historians.

This year has been challenging for us all, with personal challenges particularly for some. I would like to acknowledge the generous time and efforts of all Councillors, and to thank them for their tireless and patient support.

Three councillors are retiring this year and we shall miss them all.

Vicki Montgomery FGSV has been on Council for 16 years and has made significant contributions, having served periods as Treasurer (2005-2015) and then as Secretary since 2015. She has represented the GSV on a number of occasions at external organisations and is our ongoing representative on AFFHO. Vicki is an experienced researcher and educator and is a Fellow of the Society in recognition of this expertise. Fortunately, she will continue to contribute to the GSV as a member of both the Education and Research teams.

Margaret McLaren has brought her professional approach and people skills to all her roles at the GSV. As Volunteers Convenor, she developed regular training sessions for volunteers to improve specific skills and encouraged recognition of their participation in the administration of the GSV. Margaret also chaired the Scottish Ancestry Group (SAG) for 6 years and will maintain her involvement with SAG in the future.

Michael Rumpff has been a valued member of Council, not least during our recent change of premises. His input to our discussions on the future of the GSV, in particular concerning our financial strategies, is always measured and thoughtful. Michael has coordinated our many Member Societies and our three Special Interest Groups, while also serving as Chair of the International Settlers Group.

COMPUTER RESOURCES and IT SYSTEMS TEAM

The GSV has almost completed its transformation to a cloud-based operation, using Amazon to host the website and over eight million of our files. We have moved, from a few years ago “backing up to the cloud”, to storing all our data in the cloud. We also keep an additional backup on our own local hardware.

The investment of past years in upgrading our network paid off during our move to 10 Queen Street. The fast internet connection combined with cloud-storage allowed the Catalogue, Website and Membership system to be available to members without interruption during the move.

Until recently Amazon was contributing approximately \$2,000 US to the running costs of its cloud storage in support of the Society as a not-for-profit organisation. Unfortunately, this contribution has recently been halved leaving a gap to be funded!

During the year major achievements have been made in improving the smooth operation of the blog, creating forums and online discussion circles.

Covid restrictions lead to IT having weekly zoom meetings to discuss problems and issues with Linda able to participate and contribute to resolving membership issues as they arise.

Developing the Digital Media Hub funded by a very generous response to a request for donations has had to be put on hold until we can reopen the Centre. Supporting zoom meetings has been an ongoing task for the team but an enjoyable one. It is particularly heart-warming to see how popular the events have been and how widespread the participation has been.

We were delighted to successfully create our e-Pass six-hour membership, which gives access to webcasts and back issues of Ancestor plus all the contents of the Home Catalogue. We believe that very few societies offer this.

Such is the complexity of our IT infrastructure that it has taken a team of eight plus our outside support, Audienceware, to keep operations running smoothly.

I would like to thank in particular the following, for giving their time and expertise in maintaining and developing our systems: Rod Van Cooten, Tom O'Dea, Cecil Clarke, David Webster, Claire Johnson, Meg Bate

Peter Johnston
Councillor responsible for IT

VOLUNTEERS TEAM

This year our members have been volunteering in more ways than ever. Research assistants have been rostered for library duty whenever Covid-restrictions allowed and have often been able to assist with other tasks such as Quick Research-lookups for members and commissioned research in general.

The ongoing program of digitising our resources has continued thanks to volunteers working from home. Many of our indexers have worked tirelessly during this period, continuing to index online records for adding to the catalogue. Regular Zoom based meetings with these indexers have ensured the high quality of their work is maintained. During the year we replaced our Volunteers Newsletter with a monthly e-News publication which is sent to all GSV members. The e-News, together with our website and other social media, is proving to be a timely and effective means of communicating with members.

The training sessions provided to volunteers by Rod Van Cooten and David Down have been invaluable in assisting all of us adjust to online meetings. Many volunteers are now assisting with the running of our Discussion Circles by contributing and presenting content, and by helping to host Zoom meetings. This increased involvement is especially evident in the Members-Help-Members Forum and the very popular The Good Oil Circle.

The Society simply could not function without our dedicated volunteers. Their ongoing assistance, giving us their valuable time and expertise, enables us to continue providing the

range of activities we now have for our members. We are very grateful for their commitment to the society.

Margaret McLaren
Convenor

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Web development

Fine-tuning of the website continues in order to give consistency in navigation across all webpages. The top menu now includes our new “Our Collection” giving a consolidated description of what we have, incorporating the new databases.

Updating and revising information pages on the website is an ongoing task. For example, a revised “Collection Policy” and a “Guide to Donating Material” has now been added.

The team has rationalised the number of forms we have on the Research page, improving efficiency. Navigation is being improved with the use of drop-down information in longer pages.

Support social media communications

Blog posts are produced at approximately weekly intervals. These include regular updates about the Society in “From the Keyboard of the President” which supplement the quarterly “Pen of the President” in *Ancestor*. Blogs have proved the most effective way of our advertising for the GSV. After the blog “Family History Matters” is published there is often a rush of bookings for activities and events. The Blog is uploaded automatically into Facebook. The production of the Flipbook version of *Ancestor* each quarter is being undertaken by Cecil Clarke.

Our Facebook site features posts of interest including upcoming events and our following continues to grow. Some of our Discussion Groups now have closed Facebook groups and all our closed groups are proving popular.

Traffic on our “Member help Members” Forum, is increasing. New Forums for Discussion Groups are in the pipeline.

Janne Bonnett
Convenor

LIBRARY AND RESEARCH TEAM

We continue to develop our new database format with more online resources available to view from home. Another article was published in the September *Ancestor*, outlining the improvements made to the terminology used for explaining how material can be viewed.

Fewer than usual books have been purchased as deliveries were compromised with Covid regulations and Post Office services. Many people have used their lock down time to work on publishing their family histories and have donated them to the Society, which is much appreciated.

Many more family history societies are now publishing digital editions of their magazines and where permission is granted, they may be viewed online. The journals continue to be

indexed in our library catalogue and we're very pleased to welcome Alison Armstrong to the journal indexing team. Alison is particularly concentrating on the digital editions. If the journal is not viewable online, we can usually supply a copy of an article through our free Quick Look-Up service.

Our indexers continue working from home on many manuscripts and typescripts previously kept in our filing cabinets. These are digitised then indexed into our databases Milestones (BDMs etc) and the Genealogical Index of Names (GIN - the rest).

Research Services have continued during the lockdowns with staff and volunteers working from home to help both members and non-members with their research queries.

Linley Hooper
Research Library Manager

EDUCATION TEAM

The Society's Education programs over the last year have been conducted digitally due to the lockdowns and restrictions. Our investment in a Zoom Professional licence has enabled us to continue to provide our talks, classes, discussion circles, special research days and other events. The GSV Education program provides information and instruction to members to assist them to research and document their family history.

The Digital Education Team was formed to implement our online programs including a project to develop a Digital Communications Hub at our Centre. This facility will enable the Society to conduct events that include a face-to-face audience coupled with a Zoom audience. An appeal to raise funds to purchase and install equipment was very successful and we pass on our grateful thanks to the donors. The requisite equipment has largely been purchased but State Government lockdowns have curtailed its installation. Many Members have received training in the use of Zoom and are actively assisting with Zoom events.

Digital meetings have been very popular with members with attendances at events greatly exceeding the numbers who previously attended events in person at the Centre. It has proved a bonus for many members who, because of distance or mobility issues, have never been able to attend our events and activities. All our online events have proved popular and additional Circles such as The Good Oil have commenced. Others are in the planning stages.

Many of our Zoom events are being recorded and, with the permission of the presenter, the talks have been converted to webcasts which are available to members on the GSV website. The GSV now has a collection of almost 200 webcasts on a very wide range of topics and more are being added weekly. These files may be streamed and provide a valuable resource to Members.

Our collaboration with other organisations has continued despite the lockdowns. A number of GSV Member Societies have conducted Zoom talks in which they have outlined the resources and skills that they have available to assist with researching ancestors in their local area. These talks have been recorded and the co-branded webcasts are available on

the Member Society's website as well as the GSV website. Our collaborations with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria continues with talks and seminars open to members of both Societies.

David Down

Convenor

ANCESTOR JOURNAL TEAM

Four issues of Ancestor were released on schedule this year in both print and two digital formats. Continuing disruption has meant that the 'What's On' calendar of events has not been able to be included. Instead, we have been providing Zoom links for meetings and referring readers to the GSV website for the latest information.

The style of article titles has been modified this year to provide a clearer font style and consistent use of capitalisation. The style guide and citation procedures for the journal on the GSV website have been updated and revised this year.

The GSV Writing Prize for 2021 received fourteen entries this year and prizes have been awarded. We congratulate both the winner, Susan Wight and the runner-up, Bernard Metcalf. Prizes were again donated by Ancestry.com. We thank our guest judge, Cheryl Griffin, and the President's nominee, Joy Roy FGSV, for their part in the judging process. We were pleased to be awarded the 2021 Nick Vine Hall Award for the best family history journal produced by societies with over 500 members. We have now received this award five times.

We would like to thank Lyn Mitchell for her many years of help with the Members Queries page in *Ancestor*. That page ceased in March 2021, and queries are now dealt with by the online Members Forum.

Finally, we thank all authors who have contributed articles during the year, providing a wonderful record of family history in Victoria and elsewhere.

The Team members have remained the same in 2021: Barbara Beaumont, Bill Barlow, Sue Blackwood, Leonie Elliss, Tina Hocking, Martin Playne (Chairperson), Margaret Vines and Jay Wickham (Creative).

DISCUSSION CIRCLES

Our Discussion Circles continue to provide an informal venue for members to meet and exchange information about common research interests. Members are encouraged to make brief presentations outlining a particular roadblock they have in their research so that others can offer advice. Many Circle convenors provide emailed copies of the meeting presentations and notes to their members including those who are unable to attend in person and these are a valuable resource for future reference. We thank the convenors and

all presenters who contribute their time and effort organising and running these Discussion Circle meetings.

All Discussion Circles are open to GSV members at no cost. Bookings should be made by contacting the GSV administration. Dates and details of Discussion Circle meetings are notified in our monthly *e-News*, in *Ancestor* and posted on the GSV website and Blog.

COUNTIES OF NORTHERN ENGLAND DISCUSSION CIRCLE (CONE)

The CONE Discussion Circle encompasses the counties of England northward from Lancashire and Yorkshire to the border with Scotland. The discussion at the monthly meetings focuses on economic, health and work conditions and the social and familial customs that affected the lives of our ancestors living in the area over the last few centuries. The participants also help each another to overcome problems that are encountered when undertaking their family history research. There is also an emphasis is on discovering what historical records exist and where they may be located.

David Down
Convenor

THE GOOD OIL CIRCLE (TGO)

The Good Oil Circle is a recent addition to the GSV event calendar. Discussion at the monthly meetings include topics that are peripheral to mainstream family history themes but are important tools that assist with our research. We have examined topics such as methods of handling and filing digital documents and images, how to care for family ephemera and to use the items to enhance our family stories, how best to search and use of the digitised documents on the TROVE website and how the family historian can make the best use of maps. The sessions are structured to ensure that all attendees who wish are able to contribute to the discussion.

David Down
Convenor

LONDON DISCUSSION CIRCLE

All meetings of the LDC had to be conducted via zoom this year due to either the premises move or the lockdowns. Nonetheless, a core group have continued to meet, and others have joined when they can to share their finds and their ideas to assist members with their London brickwalls. A wide variety of resources and topics were discussed including cemeteries, quarter session rolls, yeomen warders, pearly kings & queens, John Snow and the cholera epidemic, film archives, Regent's Canal and the City Road Canal Basin at Islington, Cold Bath Square Mount Pleasant, Sun Insurance fire policy registers, death duties, directories, maps and street name changes, early census records and the British Library's King Geo. III collection. Longer presentations included: Coffee Houses and Coffee House

Customers, Huguenots and Silk Weavers in Spitalfields, the Equity Courts and Leather Trades.

Vicki Montgomery
Convenor

SOUTH WEST ENGLAND RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION (SWERD)

SWERD's coverage of the south-west counties expanded to include Wiltshire and Bristol. SWERD has continued as a very active discussion circle with monthly Zoom-meetings. A number of the meetings have attracted over 60 participants. We have had a major focus on how our ancestors moved about in the south-west and beyond, looking at the historic road network and the introduction of turnpikes, canals, and the railway in the counties. Discussion over several meetings then focussed on the migration of our ancestors to Australia, the factors that brought them to emigrate, why they chose Australia and their experiences with the migration process at the departure ports, on the voyage out and on their arrival here. We also discussed protest in the south-west, including the Protestation Returns of 1642, the Swing Riots in Wiltshire in 1830 and Chartism and Reform. Thank you to the many members who provided wonderful presentations over the course of the year, with copies of the presentations and notes provided to all SWERD members (including those who were unable to attend the meetings).

Stephen Hawke
Convenor

BRITISH INDIA DISCUSSION CIRCLE

Our zoom meetings for this circle have continued to attract a small but constant number of GSV members interested in researching their ancestors lives in British India. The later start time of 7.30pm is still convenient for everyone. During 2021 we have covered various areas of research, websites and the addition of more data becoming available. With the announcement that the LDS has completed their major digitisation program it is hoped that more records for India will be available and hopefully accessible at the GSV as an affiliate library.

Mary-Anne Gourley
Convenor

WRITERS DISCUSSION CIRCLE

The Circle continues to support members transform their family history research into written or other shareable formats. They also support the publication of *Ancestor* by writing book reviews, contributing articles, and serving on the editorial team.

This year members have discussed a number of issues including 'Telling women's stories', 'Writing history for text-light media', 'Our Forebears and the Indigenous Population' and

'Writing family history in a different genre'. We have explored the possibilities with creating family history videos and benefited from the expert skills of a professional indexer.

Attendance at the meetings and numbers on the mailing list are both stable.

Penny Mercer
Convenor

VICTORIAN AND TASMANIAN DISCUSSION CIRCLE

The Victorian and Tasmanian Discussion Circle has continued to function well. All meetings were via Zoom and well attended. Two evening sessions were run in response to feedback from members. The year began with members presenting on Convicts in Tasmania: Kaye Sutton, Michael Considine, Meg Bate, Margaret Vines and Cheryle Griffin all presented on this topic, demonstrating the incredible breadth of skill we have in the circle. Margaret and Cheryle's presentations included research and writing skill development. We moved on to Immigration and Settlement with presentations from Patsy Daly and Neil Horsburg. Jane Vanderstoel presented on Maldon where her family has over a hundred years of history, and Penny Mercer took us through her family history in the 1880s land boom. Other members contributed from their research and experience. Our highest attendance for the year, at 80 plus, was Martin Playne's evening presentation on his research into the Campaspe and Port Phillip districts.

As we move forward to 2022 consideration will be given to spreading the workload and possibly implementing a collaborative plan. At our November 2021 meeting we will discuss a new model and plan topics for 2022. Thank you to all members of the Circle for your great discussions and willingness to share your research and expertise to help others. The group wouldn't run without the support of David Down running Zoom and informing us of other events at the GSV. Meg Bate has also provided considerable support. Thank you, David, Meg, and all members.

Gayle Nicholas
Co-ordinator

DNA FOR FAMILY HISTORY PROGRAM

From August 2020 the previous six DNA modules have been expanded and are now presented as a series of bimonthly lectures on Zoom with accompanying emailed hand-outs by GSV member Alan Rhodes. The presentations have been revised and an extra session on Gedmatch was added during this year. These sessions have been very popular with many regular attendees and others selecting sessions as required.

Three webcasts introducing Genetic Genealogy remain available on the GSV website for those considering or having just completed a DNA test.

The DNA Genetic Genealogy Study Group, a self-help group for members with more advanced DNA analysis skills convened by Maureen Trotter, also meets by Zoom each month to keep members up to date with current understandings and techniques.

The DNA member support email, dna@gsv.org.au has been helpful to attendees of presentations and study group.

Convenor
Penny Wolf

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

INTERNATIONAL SETTLERS GROUP

The past year has culminated in a rather momentous change for the International Settlers Group. We continue to attract interest within the Society and finished the year with over 150 members. Once again, we were able to deliver our quarterly meetings featuring high quality speakers from within our Group, and from outside. Possibly the best example was that in May we were able to welcome well known author Eric Kopittke from Queensland, which gives an excellent demonstration of the possibilities of Zoom technology. It was also pleasing to welcome members from afar. We also distributed to members four excellent Newsletters.

Unfortunately, at our recent AGM we were unable to find a new Chairman, which has meant that we have now become a Discussion Circle. GSV members should not detect much change in our research aspirations, except that we will perhaps be more accessible to all GSV members. Meetings will continue to be held via Zoom, although the frequency is still be worked through with the Planning Committee.

Michael Rumpff
Chairperson

SCOTTISH ANCESTRY GROUP (SAG)

The Scottish Ancestry Group has managed the transition into 'living with Covid reasonably well, though missing the regular meetings which bring us face-to-face, both for learning and for social connections. Two 'quarterly meetings' occurred, both on Zoom; at the 2020 AGM, Robert Gribben examined '*Scotland's 57 Varieties of Presbyterian? 'Secessionists, Burgers and Anti-Burgers, Auld and New Licht's –why Scots congregations kept dividing: a short account'*'; and in December, Joy Roy on '*Scottish Women through the ages: Some Notable, Some Ordinary!*' In March, Anne Nolan presented a video on *Prison Indexes* through the website 'Scottish Indexes', by founders Graham and Emma Matthews; June was the month of the windstorm, and the special presentation by researcher and performer of 'the Scottish traditions of song', Fiona Ross, was postponed until November, again on Zoom. At the 2021 AGM, Dr Sue Blackwood described her search for her 5 times great grandfather, James Bate, a preacher with an early Seceder Church.

The usual SAG-sponsored Beginners' workshop was replaced for 2021 by a series of four sessions organized by the GSV Education committee, *Beginning Scottish Family History*; a

welcome package was sent to all new SAG members. Among cancellations was the usual bi-annual seminar which was to be on the topic 'The Impact of religion on Scottish Life'; the speakers have agreed to give their talks separately over the year.

There was a large turnover of Committee members in 2019-20, but the majority were re-elected, co-options were made to expand the conversation and planning. Robert Gribben was chair in 2020-21 and Anne Nolan elected to chair in 2021-2022.

The quarterly newsletter *Thistle* continued to be published regularly, the great majority now being sent electronically; John Blackwood headed a team to produce it in 2020-21; Eric Smith has been appointed editor for the coming year. One new venture was the creation of a Face Book page, thanks to Anne Nolan (see www.facebook.com/gsvscottishancestrygroup/). A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Joy Roy for her continuing long and fruitful service to GSV and SAG.

Robert Gribben
Chairperson

IRISH ANCESTRY GROUP (IAG)

Despite the problems of lockdowns this year, we were able to hold our May meeting via Zoom at which Mary Healy spoke about her book *Hefferman of the Shamrock* which tells of the interesting life, travels and business activities of the Irishman, William Hefferman.

The Group distributed over 300 copies of our newsletter *Blarney* to members, reciprocal groups and others each quarter thanks to efforts of Maureen Doyle and Gwen Hardingham. Irish Research Help days have continued via Zoom.

At the AGM in August current office holders did not renominate and there were no new nominations for committee positions. Gwen Hardingham, Maureen Doyle and Peter Cleary were thanked for their ongoing contributions to running the IAG. Members voted to suspend the IAG for 12 months during which time the group will operate as a discussion circle within the GSV. A small team of members volunteered to organise the new circle and details of upcoming meetings will be on the Events pages of our website.

MEMBER SOCIETIES

Last year I was challenged to see what 2021 might have in store for us. It really comes as no surprise that this year has been a repeat of last year, with lockdowns continuing into the foreseeable future.

Consequently, we have seen our Member Societies continuing to struggle with their existence, although the reduced lockdowns in rural areas have given some a little reprieve. Communication however has predominately been via two means. Zoom meetings are now a commonplace activity. Last year most of us were learning about it, but this year most of us are at least competent. It has been pleasing to receive Newsletters from our Member

Societies, and this is most welcome. Many have chosen to send them as email attachments, an excellent cost-saving decision.

This year we held our annual get-together on Saturday July 3rd, which was set up as a Zoom meeting. A reasonable number of our Member Societies were able to attend, but the inherent restrictions of Zoom meant that our normal social activities were constrained. Normally, the meeting is an all-day affair, but that is far too long for Zoom. However, our Agenda allowed for an excellent presentation from three of the Writer's Group who focussed on assistance in editing and writing for newsletters.

The challenge of 2022 awaits us.

Michael Rumpff

CONCLUSION

This year, my final one as your President, has been another challenging one for the GSV with members not being able to meet face to face or to use research resources in the library for much of the time. However, we remain a vibrant and innovative society thanks to the ongoing hard work and commitment of our staff (Linley Hooper, Meg Bate and Linda Farrow) and our wonderful, dedicated volunteers who are so willing to contribute their time and expertise.

On behalf of the GSV, thank you to all our members for your loyalty and ongoing generous support.

For myself, I have learned so much and it has been a privilege to serve as President of your Society.

Jenny Redman
President