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Branch Network Highlights

Auburn

- Represented by Leonie Moore
- Update on Courthouse Restoration Grant
- Two members with 50 years service of volunteering – 100 years of service combined

Barmera

- Represented by Helen Barney
- Still grappling with impact of floods – previous museum located within SA Water owned complex and had to rapidly move their collection (three x forty foot containers). Renmark branch have temporarily stored some of the container, as have local businesses. Currently in talks with Berri council for a premises on the main street.

Burnside

- Represented by Chris Perriam
- Successes – Open Days & Private Tours
- Halloween Kids Event, Community Grant from Burnside Council
- Accepted of Davenport Chair & Bishop Short Furniture for the collection, relevant to the house
- Challenges – increasing membership and revenue

Burra

- Represented by Chris Reed
- Success: sharing learnings on Burra passport with Moonta Branch, World Heritage listing
- Challenges: succession planning, building maintenance & repairs

Central Yorke Peninsula:

- Represented by Stephen Thomas
- Received a local council grant for repairs to foyer and entrance area of museum building
- Run town and cemetery tours, run ‘mini museum’ at the Maitland Markets
- Next year – interactive open day including old engines running, blacksmithing and draught horses

Clare:

- Represented by Millie Nicholls
- Challenge – local council not proactive in built heritage
- Good relationships with local Lions Club.
- Good success with History Trust SA MaC grants that have helped revitalise museum, also joined Children's University which has increased younger people visiting
- Ongoing challenges attracting new volunteers but positive about the future

Coromandel Valley:

- Represented by Trevor Conlon
- Reviewing leasing Wynne's Bakehouse and Gamble Cottage with two different councils (Mitcham and Onkaparinga)
- Bulk of activities around Watchman's House with regular morning teas
- Also working on historic precinct area for a holistic visitor storytelling experience, getting that acknowledged by councils
- Good relationships with seniors groups visiting sites via bus
- 70+ five year olds visiting the museum next week

Gawler:

- Represented by Gary Iremonger
- Acknowledged outgoing longstanding Chair and Treasurer David & Marilyn Tucker, 20 years of service
- Success: History Festival Event, 50-60 people in attendance
- Challenges: School visits and general visitation

Goolwa:

- Represented by Anthony Presgrave
- Success: Inland Rivers National Marathon Register, promoting people who have done a major voyage down the Murray-Darling River System. Consolidating archive of town history, especially business and family history. Scanning photograph collection and documenting land titles within the towns.
- Slowly developing museum side of activity, including rotating displays
- Challenges: succession planning, there is a committee but focus on providing information to all branch members so meet as a branch rather than a committee
- Sharing resources with local group who are interested in promoting the history of Goolwa branch

Jamestown:

- Represented by Merv Robinson

- Success: upgrade of Goods Shed as part of Silver 2 SeaWay Project
- Challenges: ownership of the land title that the museum sits on

Kadina:

- Represented by Gerry Guerin
- Success: interaction with South Aussie with Cossie increased visitation, good relationship with local author regarding promotion. Maintenance group have several successful restoration projects on the go.
- Engagement with Moonta Writers Group and local primary school
- Challenges: only 10 tours in the last 3 months. Want to curate an oral history collection, getting costume volunteers and creating hands on interpretative experience

Kingston SE:

- Represented by Alison Stillwell
- Two facilities to manage, which are incredibly challenging. Museum is “leaning on the lighthouse’s success”
- Focus on engaging the community, creating experiences rather than waiting for people to come to the museum.
- “Diamond Jubilee” event invited community members to share their stories, award past volunteers
- Held “Lighthouses of Australia” event
- Undergone significance assessment of the collection, supported digitisation of local newspaper and launched appeal for lighthouse restoration and interpretation centre.
- Invited local school staff to host meetings inside the lighthouse as an engagement tool.

Minlaton:

- Museum continues to attract visitors and larger groups, particularly the Captain Harry Butler Room
 - o Marked centenary of Captain Butler’s death with an Open Day
- Particular interest in local genealogy and community history enquiries
- Purchased stand alone branch computer, with large amounts of digitisation completed by the history group
- History group have collected information particularly on local businesses
- Renovated and upgraded museum shop and front entrance

Moonta:

- Represented by Graham Hancock
- Major change – move from Moonta Historical Information Service building to main Moonta Mines Museum to Site
- Have 100 volunteers registered on Better Impact
- Record results of # visitors to the Moonta Train, still strong results from Sweet Shop
- Pressure of World Heritage Site to increase standard of presentation at Moonta Mines
- Increased positive relationship with Burra Branch
- Challenges: ongoing historic building relationship

Mount Barker:

- Represented by Beverly Hoepner
- Working on Mount Barker History Post Project – research of figures centred around the cemetery, people from all walks of life. QR codes and website incorporated into the story project, including audio.
- Grants from History Trust SA, and council
- Fundraising – John Dunne Family Crypt, project nearing completing. \$50,000 has been raised to restore and renovate grave.
- Challenges – advocacy project to protect land in Mount Barker from development.

Naracoorte:

- Represented by Tony Hill
- Success: selling Rolland Street school, relocated shelter from this site to the museum site at the Sheep's Back. Taking bookings for children's parties in the shed.
- Challenge: volunteers (currently have under 16). Focus on succession planning – long standing volunteers are limited in capacity and potential to lose institutional knowledge through health.

Port of Adelaide

- Represented by Philip Winter
- Focus as an advocacy branch – promoting best work amongst State Heritage building owners and Renewal SA.
- Successfully lobbied for several sites to have State Heritage Listing, though some unsuccessful advocacy campaigns
- Committee focusing on green heritage
- Upcoming focus on Hart's Mill Precinct, marked for housing

Port Pirie:

- Represented by Vicki South
- Silver 2 SeaWay project – significant capital upgrades including café space, refurbishment of ladies waiting room, railway station building.
- Branch has pulled together to reimagine their displays and finish off works from refurb project.
- Generating income from buildings in town, including Sampsons Cottage, converted to long term rental.

Renmark:

- Represented by Ann Ryan
- Renmark was first regional branch – founded in 1956
- Engage through ‘work for the dole’ to maintain property and complete works
- Future project – relocate heritage property called ‘Bangalore’ to museum site

Robe:

- Represented by Valerie Monaghan
- Received \$20,000 grant for Old Police Stables, with \$150,000 remaining to finance the project. Buildings were handed to NTSA in 2018
- Relaunched walking tours
- Working with Australian National Maritime Museum on Dutch shipwreck, receiving grant from Dutch Embassy. Included a five day course in Sydney upskilling on maritime museum management.

Strathalbyn:

- Represented by Warren Doman
- Manage Police Station and Courthouse buildings
- Inherited 100 year centenary collection of Strathalbyn town. Opened museum in 1974.
- 50 Year Celebration events for the museum
- Alliance with Steamranger Railways, running Highlander Train and catering morning tea at the museum.
- Took part in Transport Festival in collaboration with Steamranger Railways, nearly 300 people through the museum in two days
- Invested in solar panels which have provided a good return

Streaky Bay:

- Represented by Carol Lydeamore
- Celebrated 45th anniversary this year.
- AGM turned out a great attendance and new supporters.

- Good relationship with cruise ships and tour buses helping keep visitation high.
- Received grant from Streaky Bay Council, and donations from local op shop and hotel.
- Challenge: ongoing insurance costs (how do we insure, what do we insure)

Tea Tree Gully:

- Represented by Gill Starks
- Involved in Stage 3 of Tour Down Under, won prize for 'best dressed community property', monthly cash grant as prize
- "Heritage on Sunday Events" - 2740 visitors this year. Themes include 1920s shopping, Dr Seuss and Spring Gardens
- 23 schools have booked in this year, with 970 children visiting with more to come.
- 48 volunteers that encourage teamwork, offer their gift of time and inspire others
- Vision to be one of the most recognised museums in the state, and to provide a social and safe place for volunteers

Victor Harbor:

- Represented by Rick Norman
- Committee of eight, strong relationships with local council and History Trust
- Shop staffed by volunteers, open 6 days per week. "Alternative visitor information centre".
- Acquired timber from old Victor Harbor Causeway to Granite Island, built seating in courtyard
- Collaboration with Steamranger Railways to open in the evening when they run their Christmas Lights train
- Consultant Kevin Jones conducted survey to track visitor behaviour, working through recommendations including upgrading signage
- Introduced Square POS in the shop, increased reporting capacity and volunteers and treasurer alike are very happy.
- Given a display from the National Maritime Museum in Sydney telling the story of the *South Australian* shipwreck – SA's oldest shipwreck. Will be a permanent fixture when its life in Sydney is finished. Coincides with aim to expand Indigenous history, starting to consult with Ngarrundjeri people to be more inclusive.

Willunga:

- Represented by Marian Floyd
- Renewed lease of Waverly Park Homestead for three years, given stability for Heritage Art Program
- \$10k grant from History Trust for art racking system

- Received loan item from National Gallery of Australia, displaying Kathleen Salvia painting.
- Set up own website with History Trust Grant, including digitisation of records and stories.
- Donation of artefacts from Department of Environment, including artefacts from the *Tigris* Shipwreck. Looking to put on an exhibition next year.
- Busy fundraising program – heritage walks, school visits, quiz nights and more
- Next year – building shelter at the Basset Boys school for community garden, and replacing old storage shed and turning into exhibition place featuring bakers cart restored by Millicent Branch.

Yankallila:

- Represented by Margaret Macilwain
- Immediate task is to build membership to support advocacy in the district
- Complete local heritage register, how to advocate for deconsecrated churches and influence of housing development on local heritage

Operations Manual Review

Overview hosted by Simon Ambrose, CEO

- Overview of elected Governing Council, and elected Executive Committee consisting Chair, Deputy Chair and Chair of Audit Finance & Governance (aka Treasurer)
- Other committees are Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage, Members Branches & Regions Committee, Nominations Committee)
- Entirely volunteer Governing Council
- State Office team of 9, with a handful casual employees at larger branches
- Branches are an essential part of the way NTSA functions – but branches must also look at their succession plans, capacity and core business to thrive and survive
 - o We have to clearly consider the future of some branches who do not have the population base and resources to continue into the future
- Branch committees
 - o Terms of tenure is designed for regeneration, based on the same principles as Governing Council (4.1.4)
 - o It asks branch leaders to consider the future of their branch and responsible action
 - o Recognising the fact that many, many people are involved in branch leadership for years and decades, with often a strong familial link. This is not undertaken lightly, but it is appropriate to establish the protocol of renewal.
 - 4.1.4.2 As of 1 January 2024, Branch Committee Members with more than four (4) years tenure will be deemed to have four (4) years tenure for the purpose of clause 4.1.4
 - In practice, this means ‘four years grace’ to finalise term or seek renewal
 - We know the reality ‘on the ground’, hence the 4.1.4.1, where branches can apply for extension. These will be considered by Governing Council with absolute integrity.
- We are establishing branch-specific email addresses (eg robe.treasurer@nationaltrustsa.org.au) to help in changeover between roles, information handover
- Establishing induction for roles (eg “How to Be a Treasurer)
- Property Management
 - o If a branch is responsible for a lease, the lease has to be signed by NTSA State Office as the authorising entity (as branches are not legal entities on their own)

Discussion on this issue:

“Why does National Trust push renewal when it endangers institutional knowledge, and people who are enjoying the role?”

- Response from Paul Leadbetter:
 - “This is purely for Committee leadership. There are also extensions in place because we know that in many communities, there are finite numbers of people who want to do the work.:

“Can you be re-elected after a term ends, or go for another role?:

- Answer (Simon Ambrose & Paul Leadbetter): “In the current protocol, it is the same as the Governing Council with a limit of eight years. But there **is** a provision to extend this on a term-by-term basis, upon application to Council. This only applies to Branch Committee, not membership of branch.”

“What happens if you can’t get committee members? Will some of our museums fold?”

“What about the opportunity to re-nominate after your term? Would that be a compromise?”

“No incentive for people to do the work if people are forced out after eight years, losing lived experience and in some communities there is a finite number of members”

Responses:

- Millie Nichols:
 - “If you look around the room, how many of us will still be here in 40 years regardless of the rules? This change needs to be managed positively.”
 - “In my town, if you want to join the RFDS committee, you have to fight to get a place. Because it’s fun – we have to make being involved in the National Trust more interesting, engaging, we have to also recognise that someone being in a position for 30 years can be off putting for younger people.
- Simon Ambrose
 - We have to plan for renewal. There are ways forward, including applications for extension, which Governing Council is happy to give. But we are asking Branches to think about what renewal looks like.
 - Please don’t be overly alarmed, there is a grace period and opportunities for extension. But we do have to set structures that encourage future planning.

- We need to communicate better to the communities we reside in what we need, and what will happen if we are lost.
- We understand that this can be confronting. We have to start establishing frameworks, but eight years isn't set in stone – please remember there are extensions.

Volunteer Registration

- Short presentation by Colleen Schirmer
- 1st and 15th of each month, Colleen runs reports across three databases showing how many people have been registered (Branches, State Office, Moonta)
- As of the 20th October, 407 volunteers registered
 - o 233 registered for branches
 - o 97 at Moonta
 - o 77 in State Office/Conservation
- We know there is a time lag between registering, filling in WWCC etc.
- We currently don't know how many volunteers the organisation has, as they have never been registered.
 - o We estimate close to 1000, but we don't even have lists of names for each branch.
- Ultimately, the elected Councillors are responsible for every volunteer. They are the elected governing body and if there is a volunteer who is not registered and undertaking work on NTSA behalf, and have an accident, the onus falls back on Governing Council and CEO.
- It is a matter of responsible, proactive organisation structure that we register every volunteer team member so they can be looked after, recognised, covered and more.
- This is an absolutely vital for us to be able to responsibly look after our volunteers.

Discussion:

Question: “We need firmer guidelines on how to count volunteers for insurance – at what point in time do we count people?”

- Taken on notice to consider in next insurance renewal.

Question: “What if a branch doesn't pay any insurance?”

- Branch bills are offset by # of members vs # volunteers. Branches are not penalised for being successful.

Finance Manual Overview

Overview hosted by Simon Ambrose, CEO

Important to note that we submit one quarterly Business Activity Statement (BAS) to the Australian Tax Office, comprising of the combined activities of all branches. This is collated by the Finance Team (Victoria, Debbie, Jimmy) and overseen by Governing Council Audit, Finance & Governance Committee.

Addition of Cash Management procedure, including POS and cheque management.

Comments from Victoria Pavliv, Finance Manager

It's a reality that for a long time, we didn't have a clear picture of NTSA finances and responsible officers (CEO, Governing Council) didn't know what they were signing off on.

The move to Xero has been a huge opportunity to combine information and get a real sense of the finances of the organisation.

The system has been designed to be clear, basic and accurate and not impose burdens on branches. It is getting us a much better understanding of our real financial position. There is still some work to go, but we've made huge strides thanks to the input from all of you.

We are committed to transparency, so if you have questions about where your finances sit, please call us and ask questions.

Donations

- Current policy is that State Office should be responsible for providing tax deductible receipts, so we can appropriately record and provide info to ATO
- Our DGR status (Deductible Gift Recipients) is incredibly valuable to the organisation and we have regularly been audited by the ATO to make sure we are upholding our obligations
- Question:
 - o What if a member of the general public comes to the branch to donate?
 - o Solution, in 8.2.5 - branch gives temporary receipt, State Office can issue formal tax receipt.
 - o State Office needs name, contact phone, postal address to issue receipt

Grants

- Any grant **application** must be submitted to State Office for review
- This is because we are one legal entity and we must be aware of our liabilities

GST

- Per quarter, the ATO pays back approximately \$15-20k per quarter payable to NTSA as a whole – this is spread between 45 branches and State Office
- Some branches have more GST owed or owing due to their activities
- Up for discussion: giving the amount of work State Office due to collate financial obligations and reporting for the organisation, State Office keeps GST owing in lieu of a management fee.

Discussion on this issue

- What about when branches pay invoice where there is GST on it?
- What about when a branch owes GST?
 - o Many branches currently owe GST, and are invoiced
- Alternative suggestion – if a branch is currently getting a refund on GST, it is largely because they don't have enough income to cover the GST in the first place. Would a management be fairer?
 - o State Office taking that on notice to consider more deeply, but this does invite complexities (on what basis do we charge?)
- Is there a minimum amount of income you have to lodge to be eligible for GST?
 - o Yes, it's about \$75,000. We lodge as one legal entity, however.
- Use of Xero – can we have access to that software at a Branch level?
 - o Currently, State Office enters details of transactions into Xero in a consistent manner and it generates very reliable reports.
 - o If a branch has *capacity* to use Xero, this is possible. However, **one** chart of accounts must be used and there are costs associated.
 - o Additionally, State Office needs the source documentation of transactions to fulfill statutory ATO and audit requirements
 - o We are very happy to do training with branches that have the capacity to run Xero.
- Question: for those branches that don't meet the threshold, can we record them as a sub-entity in which case GST isn't applicable?
 - o Something State Office can and look into with tax experts
- Question: what about GST payable on grants?
 - o We can understand why this isn't desirable. As we've indicated today, this is an ongoing process we need to consider. Grants could be an exception, but this is a work in progress.

Other finance questions:

- What about when the end of the month falls on a weekend, and there is delay?
 - o There is a reasonable test, as this will happen often. However, as much information as we have early helps us get things processed faster.
- Can NTSA produce a template for branches for receipts and information?
 - o Yes, we can, but it is sufficient to send only proof of transaction and basic explanation. We aren't expecting branches to be experts in the chart of accounts so we only need basic information about the type of transaction to help us allocate it.
 - o We are also working on a portal for documents and reports that treasurers can have access to

Insurance

Background on asset insurance provided by Simon Ambrose, CEO

- Governing Council is starting to talk about the appropriateness of our asset insurance, especially vis a vis collections and buildings.
- Example of Strathalbyn:
 - o A building that is valued at ~\$1 million, with many items that may not be found anywhere else associated with Strathalbyn.
 - o How do you put a value on that? Even if you have a great digital record, you couldn't replace it.
 - o Principle should be to be practical – collection items that we know the value of are probably worth insuring, but not in every instance. You are also insuring against the loss of income for some items.
- Most of the insurance costs around building and contents imposition is born by a branch.
 - o Therefore branches should start asking themselves questions about what would they want to do in the worst case scenario? What is in the collection that is irreplaceable to South Australian history?
 - o What is a branch prepared to insure or not?
 - o Insurance is calculated based on what branches report as well.

Discussion Questions:

- How does co-insurance function under our current policy?
 - o State Office will investigate with our broker.
- Some branches are under the impression that we have a blanket policy for all buildings.
 - o This is not the case. Our properties are each insured separately (eg what happens to Beaumont House doesn't affect the insurance at Renmark).

- From a practical perspective, why insure if the loss of artefacts were to wipe out a museum? Who would benefit from insurance?
 - o We are also looking against insuring loss of income, responsibility to clean up.
- Opportunity for branches to look at what stories they tell that are similar to their NTSA neighbours, in particular around farm machinery and household items.

Other insurance questions –

- Is the payout for personal accident insurance for volunteers over 80 years old \$10k or \$25k?
 - o Answer:
 - Age 65-80 capped at \$250,000
 - Age 80+ capped at \$10,000
 - o The premium for Personal Accident insurance in 2024 was \$500 less than in 2023. The same categories of people and types of caps applied both years – the main difference in calculation is correctly accounting for number of volunteers...for example, no longer insuring 108 Ayers House Volunteers.

Questions on Other Topics

6.2.4 - Volunteer Guides

- Part of the role of Regional Operations Manager (Laura). Laura has a strong background in tourism and walking tours, and whilst not a local subject matter expert can help develop stronger programs.

Role of tourism within museums – how does it fit?

- Cultural heritage tourism is a vital part of Australia's visitation, and museums are a huge part of that. There are a huge amount of people on the roads looking for unique experiences. We need to position ourselves better to take advantage of this.

Role of History SA (History Trust) vs NTSA?

- History Trust of South Australia is a government department. NTSA is an independent, member driven body that is not reliant on consistent government funding. We generate our own income.
- History Trust is incredibly important to our work, particularly through their small grants program and museum accreditation activity

- There is an MOU being drafted for information sharing and positive working relationship between the two organisations
- Acknowledging name confusion, and confusion of clarity of mission
- One of the opportunities for National Trust to differentiate is our strength in the regions

Volunteer Registration Clarification

- If a volunteer already has a valid WWCC or police check, they only need to provide their current one, not undertake a new one.

State Office Staff

- Sending out a new contact list of staff
- We are also creating standard emails for branches (eg burra.chair@nationaltrustsa.org.au) that will be able to access a portal of information in a singular, secure place.
 - o This is being rolled out in the next month or two.