

Inaugural appointment of SA's History Advocate and launch of the HTSA Education Website

Elizabeth Ho OAM – Chair History Trust of South Australia

May I express my respects to the Kurna people and especially elders past and present ...

Martin may I thank you for being with us and for your wise and helpful words.

I should start by saying that we do not usually make a History Trust appointment the subject of a gathering celebration.

We value every person and position in our dedicated History Trust team, and it's a great team - but in this case there is some special history to share and a certain measure of excitement.

The long ago forerunner to this role was the State Historian who brought history to the people, spoke in the media, engaged with communities and writers, and supported History Trust projects in a way that said very clearly - History is Alive and Well in SA.

Regrettably, that pivotal State Historian position was extinguished in past budget rounds. So Greg and I have enthusiastically presided over the resurrection of this role phoenix-like from the ashes - and we share great hopes for the new.

It will encompass all that I have mentioned but with a modern twist - a cheer leader for valuing what has shaped us as individuals and as a society – with insights into the truths of our past, conversations about our achievements and our struggles, and more air time for the stories that give South Australia and its landscape a unique identity.

Whether in the media, schools or tourist venues, local libraries, community museums, and on websites - including on the much needed website we have launched today - we hope to see those stories finding new audiences, life and purpose.

We would also love to see students more encouraged to see the potential in history for job pathways to vital roles in the cultural sector.

Curators, history consultants, media history producers, heritage architects, collection creators, archive managers and just plain old historians are becoming thin on the ground, as are conservators, heritage stonemasons and other craft roles that keep history in good shape.

The person who has been entrusted with this mission, Dr Keira Lindsay, can claim impressive experience across radio, TV, social media and a remarkable contribution to publishing.

She carries the message that history is fascinating, sometimes confronting and sad, but also captivating, inspiring, and pride giving. She has worked with everyone from film producers to First Nations advisers in creating history magic for readers, viewers and listeners.

Keira has held various academic teaching and research positions and approaches this History Trust mission with solid practice in both public history and university-level history. While we don't want to appear parochial, we welcome the fact that she taught at UniSA for six years and has regularly addressed primary and secondary school groups and at the other end of the age spectrum, university of the third age students. Among other things, this has given her a grasp of the aspects of the SA story that stand out in the Australian context.

Importantly, Keira is an engaging person who wants others to enjoy the exploration of our history.

That fits entirely with our ten-year goal to ensure that the History Trust is recognised as the leading voice for making the stories of South Australia relevant across the world, for the world.

Part of that relevance is to understand and portray how we fit into wider world and long view history, and we appreciate the breadth of possibilities that Keira may be able to bring to this aspiration.

Keira, on behalf of Trustees, the CEO, and all history friends present - it is with great pleasure that I welcome you as South Australia's History Advocate to the History Trust team - and now let's hear from you.