Victorian Collections

Museum Victoria

2011

Image: Museums Australia (Victoria)

Supporting Local Stories

Victorian Collections is a free, easy to use, online cataloguing system that is available to all types of collecting organisations throughout Victoria, including community museums, galleries, historical societies, keeping places, sporting clubs, church, military and other service groups.

Local history collections are spread across the state, with an estimated 1.5 million objects cared for by volunteer-run organisations. There are over 740 heritage collecting organisations in Victoria, about two-thirds of which are located regionally. With collections established and managed by volunteers, these organisations hold a wealth of significant cultural material, however many do not have training in museum practice. Victorian Collections assists users in learning cataloguing, research and computer skills.

Over the past three years, Victorian Collections has enabled volunteers and staff from 260 community organisations (including historical societies, RSLs and sporting clubs) to digitise their collection information. Many hundreds of users have been trained in collection digitisation and documentation methodologies during the course of one hundred workshops held throughout the state.

These users have added around fifty five thousand cultural artefact records, including forty thousand images, and have begun to provide high-level descriptions of their collections. These numbers grow daily. This project focusses on increasing skills, knowledge and professional standards in collections documentation for small museums. The technology, whilst also important, is one aspect of the project where people are at the centre.

Recently, arrangements have been made for Trove searches to harvest Victorian Collections records. Target audience/community: community museum volunteers, tourists, local communities.

Demonstrating innovation in: facilitating community engagement, including culturally and linguistically diverse and veteran's communities; enabling online, local communities to upload and make available key elements of their collection; cross-jurisdictional collaboration; use of collection-level descriptions.

[Source, Meeting of Cultural Ministers, Digital Technologies Working Party Report Attachment 2 'Projects Demonstrating Excellence in Digital Innovation' June 2015]