

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
Minister for Women



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ART CRITIC BIOGRAPHY WINS PREMIER'S HISTORY AWARDS

The Allan Labor Government is celebrating Victorian history with the *2024 Victorian Community History Awards* taking place in Melbourne today.

Described by judges as “an artwork in itself”, *Letters to a Critic: Alan McCulloch’s World of Art* by Rodney James, took out the main prize at the awards in Southbank. Minister for Government Services Natalie Hutchins congratulated Mr James and the 10 other winners of the award.

Art curator and writer Rodney James received the 2024 Victorian Premier’s History Award for his detailed examination of McCulloch, one of Australia’s longest-practising art critics who championed emerging artists and promoted a new awakening in modern art in Melbourne in the 1960s.

Another art history, *Victoria’s Earliest Porcelain Works: Art Pottery, Crockery and Insulators* by Gregory Hill, was awarded the History Publication Award, while a 15-part podcast seeking to fill a gap in the historical record of the Vietnam War by Alexandra Pierce, *Women, Conscription, War*, was the Oral History winner.

Other winning works included an exhibition about Heidelberg schools dating back to 1851, a journal article about Healesville migrant doctor and ASIO person of interest, Arthur Deery, by historian Phillip Deery, and Bendigo Military Museum’s *Faces of Peace* video project about local peacekeepers.

Histories of Victoria’s maritime heritage, the architecture of the Albert Park village precinct, the Jewish community living in the Ballarat goldfields, a community park in Inverloch, and Yallourn Technical School also won prizes.

Presented by Public Record Office Victoria with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, the Victorian Community History Awards celebrate historians and community groups committed to preserving and sharing stories of the past.

Quote attributable to Minister for Government Services Natalie Hutchins

“Congratulations to the winners of the 2024 Victorian Community History Awards. The dedication of local historians not only preserves Victoria’s history but tells us more about who we are and will inspire future generations.”

Quote attributable to Public Record Office Victoria Director and Keeper of Public Records, Justine Heazlewood

“This outstanding group of award-winning historians, community groups and museums have shared stories from across the State including art histories, local histories, school histories, and women’s histories. We’re continually impressed by the calibre of entrants for these Awards and this year was no exception.”

Quote attributable to Royal Historical Society of Victoria President Richard Broome AM

“It was a pleasure to present this year’s Victorian Community History Award winners at a fantastic ceremony held in Melbourne earlier today. From more than 140 entries, our judges have selected another incredible batch of works, from publications to oral histories, exhibitions and video series. Well done to everyone awarded today.”

Quote attributable to Member for Albert Park Nina Taylor

“It’s brilliant to see so many varied histories represented in these winners, and as the Member for Albert Park, I’m thrilled that our local history is being preserved and celebrated as well.”

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Full list of winners below:

- Victorian Premier's History Award - Letters to a Critic: Alan McCulloch's World of Art by Rodney James
- Collaborative Community History Award - Wallace Avenue Community Park Inverloch: A Short History by J.M. Anderson
- Local History Project Award - Albert Park. Bridport St and Beyond by Middle Park and Albert Park History Group
- Small Organisation History Project Award - Knowledge is Power: A History of Yallourn Technical School 1928-1993 by Graham Goulding
- History Publication Award - Victoria's Earliest Porcelain Works: Art Pottery, Crockery and Insulators by Gregory Hill
- Small History Publication Award - River to Bay: Victoria's Maritime History by Carole Wilkinson and Prue Pittock
- Digital Storytelling Award - Faces of Peace, Video Storytelling Project – Central Victoria's Peacekeepers, Peacemakers and Peacebuilders by Bendigo Military Museum
- Community Diversity Award - The Pioneering Jews of the Ballarat Goldfields by Keira Quinn Lockyer
- Oral History Award (presented in collaboration with Oral History Victoria) - Women, Conscription, War by Alexandra Pierce
- History Interpretation Award - 'Back to School': A History of Local Schools in Heidelberg 1851-2000 by Heidelberg Historical Society
- History Article Award - 'A Community in Crisis: Dr Deery and the Healesville Hospital Dispute, 1961-62' by Phillip Deery for the Victorian Historical Journal, vol. 94, no. 2, 2023

See prov.vic.gov.au for more information.