

It is my pleasure to report on behalf of the 2025/26 Committee.

Meetings were held online monthly apart from our recess month of January.

The work undertaken in 2024 to produce the new constitution, restore WestPride's charity status and manage our GST obligations has set the groundwork for us to achieve Deductible Gift Recipient status this year.

Our other major achievement were:

- Entered in partnership agreement with Murdoch University
- Development of Distributed Collections Agreement
- Adoption of the Declaration Form (integrity measure)
- Appointed Srishti Gupta to vacant treasurer position
- Progressing transfer of Facebook page to new administrator

As we expand the catalogue and make records public, the demands for information are increasing. To that end we have created accession and privacy policies to ensure that we maintain the highest standards of usage. I want to thank the Committee for working together and providing their experienced information to create these important documents.

With this administrative work being the focus of the Committee, the core work of the archives continues.

The Catalogue

Rebuilding the catalogue commenced in 2022. The original Gay and Lesbian Archives database had been lost but with the use of paper records and the rediscovery of data on a CD we were able to rebuild a new database of some 2900 records.

Since that preliminary work, we have now increased the number of catalogued items to over 11,500. In addition, we have digitised 1650 items including paper audio and video materials. We currently have another 530 items awaiting digitisation at two digitisation centres.

It may appear that the number of object records added this year is lower than previous years, but this reflects the volunteer work is now focussed on Gay Games research. Hundreds of records have been compiled and will be added to the catalogue.

The collections, where appropriate, are gradually being made public through the *Collections WA*, an online database for non-profit collecting institutions operated by the WA Museum. Currently there are 14 collections online totalling 2901 records. CWA records are automatically linked to the NLA *Trove* database, in addition CWA records are directly discoverable from any browser.

Projects

National Library of Australia, Community Heritage Grants SA and PNA

Following the successful National Library of Australia Significance Assessment (SA) in 2024, which gave us National Significance status, we commenced the second stage of the process. This was a full examination of the archive to assess its preservation needs (PNA). Our consultant Stephanie Baily produced an excellent report and based on this we are now able to apply for up to \$20,000 for archival needs annually. The first application is currently with the NLA Community Heritage Grants team and we expect that to be determined in early October.

Connections 50th

We had a visit from Tim Brown and Scott Telfer and were able to exchange information for Connie's 50th. We look forward to further cooperation.

WAAC

We commenced working at WAAC in July 2023 and have now completed 56 boxes of records, magazines, posters and digital assets. Partnering with WAAC has been an excellent cooperative project with not only the prospect of creating distributed archives but also the recruitment of volunteers. I especially want to thank our dedicated volunteers Amy O'Regan, Laura O'Regan and Maya Ammon for their work in bringing this project to a successful conclusion.

PrideWA

We have been actively supporting PrideWA, first with a large cataloguing project in 2023 which was added to the database in 2024. This year we have been cataloguing additional material and that will be ready for data entry later this year.

Digitisation

Committee member Jo Darbyshire has finalised the collection of *Grapevine Magazine* consisting of 280 editions over 20 years and has negotiated to have them digitised and placed online by GALE, who has digitised thousands of newspapers and journals, and more than 175 million pages of primary sources. WestPride will also receive a digital copy and a share of any funds generated by research requests.

A second project funded through an Australian Museums and Galleries Association Grant (AmaGA) is in progress with thirty-seven 5 inch audio tapes being digitised at UWA digitisation centre. The John Burbidge collection of cassette tapes is also being digitised.

In house, we have digitised VHS tapes including the Gay Games of the early 1980s and Pride Parades of the 1990s and a tape made from an 8mm movie dating from 1977 showing an International Women's Day March and the Women's Liberation Centre.

Community Outreach

Community outreach to regional LGBTQIA+ organisations in Broome and Albany was made this year. I travelled to Albany for the 10th Annual Pride Month which was very enjoyable. I was fortunate to have three community members record an oral history for the archives. Locally, I gave presentations to Prime Timers, the WAAC staff and the UWA Guild History panel.

Gay Games Research

We made a successful grant application in June to the Department of Communities for our Gay Games research project. Much work has already been undertaken, and we have been fortunate to have Dee Farrell, team Perth Legacy Director working closely with our research team. Many thanks to Jo Darbyshire who took the lead in writing the application ably assisted by Gerard Foley and bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Other Projects

In April we loaned banners for a Freedom Centre workshop, and in June Andrew Duirs joined the organisation and is undertaking oral histories.

Technology

Our hardware is currently limited to one laptop and screen, with a second laptop and digitisation camera on loan. We do require more hardware resources, and as part of the DoC grant we will purchase a high resolution multipurpose scanner.

All our digital archival and administration records as well as our database is stored in the cloud, with a subscription to Microsoft 365. Our local database has been programmed to export collections to CWA so records and images can be uploaded electronically.

We have completed the WestPride Archives website which is linked to Collections WA, it also has our policies available for download. And a donation portal to *GiveNow*.

We have purchased a digital recorder to commence making more oral histories.

Volunteers

Through our partnering program with WAAC we have recruited four younger volunteers who have been regular contributors to the archive. In addition, we have three older generation members. All our volunteers are well qualified as librarians and other degrees and bring a range of experience to the work. Our grant funds has now made it possible to provide a small stipend and pay parking to our volunteers. The intergenerational working environment has made the work even more interesting and is a huge bonus for WestPride and I sincerely thank all our volunteers for hundreds of hours of enthusiastic work.

Murdoch University

Last year we partnered with MU to have a combined stall at Fair Day which resulted in new donations of banners, costume and documents. Thanks to Em Readman who organised the facility and I hope we can continue this partnership. Em also organised a very successful Drag Bingo fund raiser.

WestPride and MU library staff are meeting regularly to discuss archive management issues and ensure a smooth working relationship. Based on the PNA, MU has agreed to provide larger shelves to accommodate our costume collection. I particularly want to thank all the library staff who have provided the optimum working environment including Internet access and archive management advice, and special thanks to the Special Collections staff Claire Fletcher and Dawn McLoughlin for their assistance in achieving an excellent outcome for WestPride.

Research grants to encourage greater academic use of the archives are under discussion with MU, and we expect an announcement in the next few months.

Membership

Membership has increased from 19 last year to 35 this year

Overall, 14 new members joined (79% increase) and 1 member withdrew

Member age groups – 19-35 years increased from 7 to 13 (83% increase), now largest age group – all other age groups remained steady.

Member postcodes – fairly evenly spread around Metro area – biggest growth in Metro East (from 2 to 6 – 200%), biggest decline Metro Inner (from 8 to 5 – 37% decrease). Smallest metro regions are Greater Fremantle and Metro South (3 each).

Other Metro regions fairly steady, only country region is Batavia Coast, steady at 3 – Possibly we should emphasise regional growth focus for next year.

Thank You

In October 2024, I was elected to the position of Convener and took on the role of Acting Treasurer, having commenced work at the archives in May 2022. I was relieved of Acting Treasurer responsibilities in June by our new volunteer Srishti Gupta.

I will be stepping down as Convener this year but will be assisting with technical aspects and provide additional database training.

I have made mention of some special people of have contributed so much over my time as Convener, committee members Gerard Foley, Nigel Chatres Neil Buckley, Gary Martin Em Readman and especially thank our secretary Bruce Baskerville for not only completing his secretarial duties but also untiring work with Government, the ATO and ACNC and my co-convener Jo Darbyshire for her dedication and outreach that has enhanced the lesbian collections. Thank you to all donors and other contributors and I would like to add Natalie Evans at AMaGA WA Branch and Joel Leather at *Collections WA* all of whom have generously assisted us in providing advice and support.

I believe the organisation has settled many challenges over the past three years and is in a good position with the addition of younger committee members and volunteers and can be a major asset to the Western Australian LGBTQIA+ community

Graham Grundy,

Convener

August 2026