

ASA Distinguished Achievement Award, 2007

The Distinguished Achievement Award, formerly known as the Laureate of the Society, is given to a distinguished member of the Society who has been mainly or solely responsible for an outstanding development or achievement in archives work. In recognition of her many archives work achievements and for numerous other services to the profession in Australia, the Council of the Society, on recommendation from the Society's Awards Committee, has enthusiastically resolved to confer the Distinguished Achievement Award of the Australian Society of Archivists on:

Shauna Hicks

Shauna Hicks is a very distinguished example of an Archivist, who through her hard work and professional activities, has promoted the use of archives and increased their accessibility for many clients in Australia. Shauna has demonstrated through her initiative and dedication, a commitment to the cause of archives which extends far beyond her employment as an archivist, and she benefits not only the users of archives, but also distinguishes herself as a mentor and role model for other archivists.

The commencement of Shauna's career in Archives work began in 1981 at the John Oxley Library at the State Library of Queensland where she was employed as a library assistant and in 1982 she became an archives assistant at the Queensland State Archives. As an Archivist at QSA she gained broad experience in the profession in areas relating to Reference, Arrangement and Description and Transfers. In 1990 she returned to the State Library of Queensland working as a Reference Librarian and Archivist.

1994 saw Shauna return to QSA as Manager of Public Access and later Manager, Arrangement and Description. It was because of her experience in both the provision of public access and in the intellectual control of archives that Shauna was seconded, in 1997, to manage the Automation Project which resulted in the development of *Archives One*. She managed the design and implementation of an archives database that, importantly, enables users to access archives for themselves. It is a testament to Shauna's application of her knowledge of archives and users, her hard work and effective management of her team, that *Archives One* has since been adopted by State archives in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

In 1999 Shauna transferred to the National Archives in Canberra working initially on the Collection Review Project and in Records Data, and then from 2000 she managed the Prime Ministers Papers Project. In 2003 she joined the Public Record Office Victoria as Senior Manager, Access Services, managing the full range of reference and public programs activities.

For 20 years Shauna has been an extremely active professional member of the Society and has held various positions, including Queensland Branch Convenor, National Secretary, Convenor of the ASA Membership Committee, Managing Editor, served on the ASA Council for eight years and was Convenor of the 1999 ASA Conference in Brisbane. Throughout this time Shauna also furthered her education gaining a Diploma in

Family Historical Studies from the Society of Australian Genealogists, and a Master of Arts in Australian Studies at Griffith University, awarded in 1996. Significantly, all of these studies were completed working full-time.

Shauna has always recognized the importance of those archivists who specialised in the public face of archives, reference archivists, and those who delivered public programs such as websites, publications, exhibitions and education programs. In 2002 she foresaw the possibility of a Special Interest Group and invited interested members to an inaugural meeting at the 2002 Sydney Conference where the Reference, Access and Public Programs Special Interest Group (RAPPSIG) was born. Shauna was elected the founding Convenor, a role she continues to fulfill, which has included organising Reference and Access seminars in association with ASA conferences. In 2005, Shauna also organised the ASA's 30th birthday seminar on the theme of accessing archives, in Canberra, resulting in the publication of *Made, Kept and Used*, the proceedings of that seminar.

This impressive record of achievement as an archivist and her commitment as a member of the profession might seem more than enough for one person, but Shauna has another sphere of distinguished achievement: passing on her passion for archives to others, particularly sharing her knowledge with family historians who represent the largest group of archives users in Australia. Shauna joined the Queensland Family History Society in 1977 and was appointed their Education Officer in 1983. It is a measure of the high regard she is held in, that in 1999 she was awarded the Queensland Family History Award for services to family history and then in 2000 honoured as a Fellow of that Society. Later, on moving to Canberra and then Melbourne, Shauna joined local Genealogical Societies, and such was her reputation she was almost immediately elected to executive positions in these bodies.

Shauna has distinguished herself as an archivist who has gone to exceptional lengths to promote and advocate the use of archives to the Australian public. She has also ensured that the public 'coalface' part of Archivists' work, reference and access, is valued not only by the public, but also by the profession. Her achievements as a practising archivist and as an advocate for archives have indeed been distinguished, and sustained over a 25-year career. She is indeed an extremely deserving recipient of the Australian Society of Archivists' Distinguished Achievement Award.