RAVENSTHORPE HISTORICAL SOCIETY (Inc.) ANNUAL REPORT for 2025 PRESENTED TO AGM 21 MARCH 2026

I think it is fair to say that it has been a difficult year for most of us. In particular, the number of us involved in the active governance of RHS has declined to a third of what it was 3-4 years ago. This has put pressure on that few which is not helped by the fact that all of us live out of town which means issues are not always dealt with when they arise and not all the external meetings we should attend are attended. In spite of this, we have got a fair bit done and towards the end of the year we received two very welcome notifications; that the shire had agreed to fund a Tourist Officer to manage the Visitor Centre and Medallion Metals indicated substantial support for three separate projects. These are indicated below.

The activities for the year divide somewhat arbitrarily into the following groupings:

Facilities management, Digital access and technology, Events, Publicity, Curation, Security, Membership, Visitor Centre and Craft Shop, Governance and Research.

Facilities Management The Buffalo Pitts steam engine has been roofed with funding provided by RHFF. The associated proposal to corrosion stabilise and re-paint the engine has not eventuated as the priority tenderer withdrew and an approach to an alternative tenderer has not yet had a response. With bona fide assistance from Colin Hughes the storeroom which was a chaotic mess has been re-organised with shelving along two walls. It now is functional and has freed up a lot of space in the Visitor Centre. We had a working bee and clean-up of the Cattlin Shed and courtyard in August. Following a consultant's report we visited the Railway Station precinct with Shire staff to look at the issue of public liability. We now have a list of items requiring implementation. Two new information plaques pertinent to the Shire's first self-propelled road grader and the Floater Mine are ready for installation at the Precinct. Ann and Derek Williams funded the Floater plaque and are thanked for this contribution. A new sign indicating 'Visitor Centre' was installed as a companion to the 'Museum' sign facing Morgans Street.

Digital access and technology. We subscribed to Microsoft OneDrive as a means to back up data and files; the Shire provided us a lap-top computer for use of Visitor Centre volunteers to provide up to date travel information to visitors.

Events. We held a successful Mystery History Tour based from Hopetoun on 25 May; 24 people with 12 vehicles attended. A highlight was lunch at Springdale Café. We visited Hopetoun Railway Station, Dunn Swamp, Cannery Pool on Jerdacuttup River and the Rabbit Proof Fence at Starvation Bay. There were only two school visits this year. I attended the presentation at Lake King of the re-furbished Hatters Hill 5 stamp battery which was formerly used at Kundip and Ravensthorpe.

Publicity. We had only four articles in Community Spirit throughout the year as well as numerous Facebook postings thanks to Madeleine. Medallion Metals have proposed to fund the production of a photographic coffee table book on the history of Ravensthope/Hopetoun. Chenda Goldfinch is managing this project.

Curation. Enid Tink accessioned objects and Chenda Goldfinch scanned 5 photographs. Medallion Metals have indicated their support for re-locating some of the mining memorabilia from Kundip prior to earthworks for their open pit for gold production.

Security. Medallion Metals have funded two fire-proof filing cabinets for our archival collection.

Membership. Our current total membership is 27 members. The greater majority of members are out of town supporters. While they are of course very welcome and valued we only have five local people consistently involved in the management committee; our constitution requires eight. New members for the year were Chantal Pringle-Gurney, Keith Trees and Shane Scrutton.

Visitor Centre and Craft Shop. We had 5255 visitors for the calendar year 2025. This is up on last year's figure which was 4999. 2023 was 5780 visitors which was our highest ever. Approximately one third of visitors also enter the Museum. RHS welcomes and thanks the following new Visitor Centre volunteers: Anita Schuler, Claire Daniel, Judy Harp, Corey Giles, Jenny Chambers and Jessie Fairhead. Edith Colvin and Sandi Hunter resigned as volunteers and are thanked for their long-standing contribution.

Research. The proposal that RHS edit and publish Keith Quatermaine's magnum opus 'History of Ravensthorpe Mining Volumes 1 & 2' received a substantial boost from Medallion Metals in their offer of financial support. Accordingly members Keith Trees and Don Boyer are working to bring the manuscript up to a standard suitable for publication which Medallion will pursue and fund.

Governance. In keeping with a notice on motion at the 2024 AGM we have amended our Constitution under the Associations Incorporation Act 2015 to:

- Include promotion of tourism as one of our objectives
- Reduce the quorum requirement numbers to four and five for Ordinary and and Annual General meetings respectively and…
- Under 'powers of the RHS management committee' insert 'the Management Committee manage the Visitor Centre for the duration of its occupancy of the Museum building'

In recognition of the growing importance of tourism both to the Shire and RHS we have been offered a seat on the recently formed Ravensthorpe Tourism Advisory Committee whose tasks are to advise the Shire and represent tourism interests. I attended the two meetings held during the year.

I believe RHS has a sound rapport with the Shire of Ravensthorpe and I think we should value and work to maintain that relationship. Cr Sue Leighton represents RHS on Council and is thanked for this contribution.

Andrew Chapman, President, Ravensthorpe Historical Society, 21 March 2026.