

Australian **Mutuals** History

Highlights 2020/21

To our community,

The Australian Mutuals History has existed since 1985 to preserve and promote the unique and important history of the credit union and mutual banking movement in Australia. It is the only organisation in Australia charged with this responsibility. The Australian Credit Union Archives Trust provides oversight of the archives.

Due to a number of mergers in the industry, there are now fewer Mutuals to fund our Trust. While the merging of these organisations has been a positive change overall, fuelled by the many contributions of the staff and directors of these institutions, it does mean we need to act now to secure our future.

We are calling on our peers to contribute to our organisation and keep this Trust operating.

Contributors enable our professional staff to continue our activities to support the mutual financial services sector, including records transfers and providing access to our collection.

Take a closer look at the important work we've undertaken in the last year.

Want to make a donation?

Reach out to us on 0478 888 441, or by email on enquiries@mycuhistory.com.au

Research

Over the last 12 months, staff have assisted with 24 enquiries from credit unions, mutual banks, and individuals seeking information about credit unions or mutual banks, and access to records held by Australian Mutuals History. With one enquiry, we were able to assist COBA by providing images from the collection. This was used in their *150+ Years of Ingenuity* campaign video.



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Communication and engagement

We regularly communicate with the sector and engage with the broader community:

- In the last 12 months, we have posted 49 articles on the history of individual credit unions and the mutual banking movement in general and on the profiles of many key figures. In 2020, the blog had around 2,945 unique visitors. So far, in 2021, the total is around 3,198 unique visitors.
- "Archives Newsletter" is produced four times a year and emailed to around 800 mutual professionals.
- We promote the collection and connect with the sector via Twitter (@mycuhistory) and at events, including the annual COBA Convention. In 2019, we connected with the ~60 emerging leaders in attendance as part of their mutual history presentation.

Projects

Digitisation of the audio-visual collection

Australian Mutuals History has a unique audio-visual collection, which includes VHS, Betacam, U-matic, DVCAM and 16 mm film. We have so far digitised 60 titles. This critical and ongoing project will help ensure the continuing preservation and accessibility of this unique collection of mutual financial services material.

Making the collection more accessible

We've undertaken indexing projects for two significant collections of credit union magazines – Quest magazine 1967-1973 (NSW Credit Union League publication) and Connexus magazine, 2001-2004 (CUSCAL/Abacus publication). These two projects unlock historical information about credit unions and highlight past issues important to the sector. The indexes will be invaluable for research.

Preserving Digital Annual Reports

Another project centred on us downloading credit union and mutual bank digital annual reports from organisational websites, dating from 2021 and back as far as available. We now hold significant runs of digital annual reports for 129 current and past organisations and a total of over 1000 digital documents available for research.

Website Redesign

Our new website is now live; this significant redesign provides a much better experience for anyone looking to research or experience the history of the credit union and mutual banking industry in Australia. Please feel free to have a look (<https://mymutualhistory.com.au/>) and we welcome any feedback that our peers may have on this exciting development.

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Donations/accessions

Numerous significant donations of mutual banking-related material have been received and processed, including:

- **Kaye Wetzler – former Chair of the Archives Trust and former credit union CEO** – Donation of lapel pins and badges and commemorative plates and plaques.
- **Greg Stevens – current Chair of the Archives Trust and former credit union CEO** – Donation of reports, documents and photos of CUSCAL, Indue, Bankstown Credit Union, Abacus, Maleny Credit Union and more.
- **Mark Worthington – CEO Australian Mutual Bank** – framed posters/artwork of Broadway Credit Union and Blue Mountains Community Credit Union.
- **Horizon Bank** – Donation of material from their own past as well as that of Lysaght Credit Union following the recent merger. Included annual reports, minute books, newsletters, correspondence, photos, certificates, framed items and ephemera.
- **People's Choice** - Annual Report 2021.
- **Summerland Credit Union** - Annual Report 2020.
- **Frank Pinabona** – Donation from Frank Pinabona of Unity Bank of newsletters, brochures, reports and photos from Power Credit Union, Unity Bank, Reliance Bank and others.
- **Woolworths Team Bank** - Donation from CEO. The donation included Annual Reports, Newsletters and AGM minutes.

Building Societies

The Trust's Deed now permits the Australian Mutuals History to collect and preserve historical material on the development of mutual building societies in Australia. We are keen to engage with anyone holding individual building societies collections.

Our professional staff - Amanda Barber, Senior Archivist, and Ben Woods, Assistant Archivist – are available to respond to public requests for information.

Visit mymutualhistory.com.au for more information.