



SHORT HISTORY PRIZE

WINNING ENTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Prahnan Mechanics' Institute (est. 1854) is a non-profit community organisation which operates a lending library specialising in the history of Victoria. The PMI Short History Prize was run in line with the PMI objective to encourage and facilitate historical research. Entrants were invited to submit works relating to '*a history of a place or an aspect of a place in Victoria*'. This award was announced on 24 October 2011 as part of the PMI's History Week activities. Thanks to all entrants for your valued contributions.

The recipient of the 2011 PMI Short History Prize is ...

Dr Peter Mansfield of **Geelong Historical Society** for the entry ***Able, gifted, trustworthy and disloyal: the political fortunes of Henry Bournes Higgins, MLA for Geelong, 1894-1900***

*Peter Mansfield has written a well-considered and well-composed essay on Henry B. Higgins and his increasingly uncomfortable role as parliamentary representative for the people of Geelong in the Federation era. Higgins is known to Australian history as a lawyer, intellectual and reforming judge on the High Court and has been the subject of biographical study including John Rickard's excellent book *H.B. Higgins: the rebel as judge*. Peter Mansfield's essay places the focus on the local while not losing sight of the bigger picture and is a good example of local history of the highest standards.*

Peter receives a certificate, PMI voucher and \$500. The Geelong Historical Society also receives \$500.

The following entrants were Commended:

Ellise Angel *From rags to riches: A story of changes in a country school; Lavers Hill P-12 College*

Ellise Angel is commended by the judges for her nicely told account of 'Changes in a country school'. The community that she studies, Lavers Hill, was very much a world of its own for much of its history, and the author has provided a good portrait of the school while being aware of its place in the wider world.

Ronald J Gunn *Life as a country boy*

Ronald Gunn's 'Life as a Country Boy' is commended by the judges as a fresh and lively account of his childhood which will strike a chord with many of his older readers while evoking a past era to his younger eras.

Commended entrants receive a certificate and a PMI voucher.

The Committee, staff and members of the PMI are very grateful to the **Professional Historians Association** for its provision of the panel of judges and for the kind consideration of the judges:

Dr Judith Buckrich is an honorary Research Fellow in Melbourne University's History Unit and the author of many books about significant Melbourne people, places and institutions.

Dr Andrew Lemon is a professional historian and author of many books, particularly relating to aspects of the history of Victoria. He is the President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, the Victorian Racing Club historian and a former editor of the RHSV's Victorian History Journal.

Ms Emma Russell is principal historian at History@Work and has worked with many historical societies and local history collections across Victoria, mostly within the realm of significance assessments. She has published several histories, most recently that of Fairfield Primary School and its community, and also has an interest in memoirs and medical history.