

# ABOUT THE NATIONAL HISTORY CHALLENGE

*By Maggie Catterall*

The National History Challenge is a competition for students from Yr 5 to Yr 12 that gives them a chance to be historians. It emphasizes and rewards quality research, the use of community resources and effective presentation. The competition is nation wide, with each State and Territory selecting their State winners. The State winners are then judged at National Level competing against the top entries from across the country. The competition is open with students in Yr 6 competing against students in all levels up to Yr 12. In Victoria the Challenge attracts between 2500 and 3000 students from a variety of schools, Government, Catholic and Independent.

Every year a theme is selected, the students must pose a question and then conduct their research to find the answer. The Footscray Historical Society has been very supportive of this initiative and has always assisted the students with advice and resources and we thank them, especially Catherine, for their support.

St Monica's students first entered the Challenge in 2004 and have been very successful.

The theme in 2004 was 'Australia is a multicultural nation'. Selected students entered 5 categories, and were awarded 2 State and 1 National prize. In 2005, 7 categories were entered for the theme 'Australian All' and every group was successful. Two State prizes, one runner up and 4 Highly Commended were awarded and one State prize went on to win a National Prize. From 2006 we entered all students in Year 6, with students working in groups to conduct their research and complete their presentation. 'Turning points' was the theme and they received 2 State prizes. 2007 saw us win 2 State prizes, 2 Certificates for excellence and 2 Highly Commended for the theme 'Lessons from the past'

State judging has just finished for 2008 for the theme 'Australians meet the world' and we are pleased to announce that our students have won 3 State prizes and 4 Highly Commended. The presentations of the 3 State winners are currently being judged now for National prizes.