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Bill Henson

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1990-91

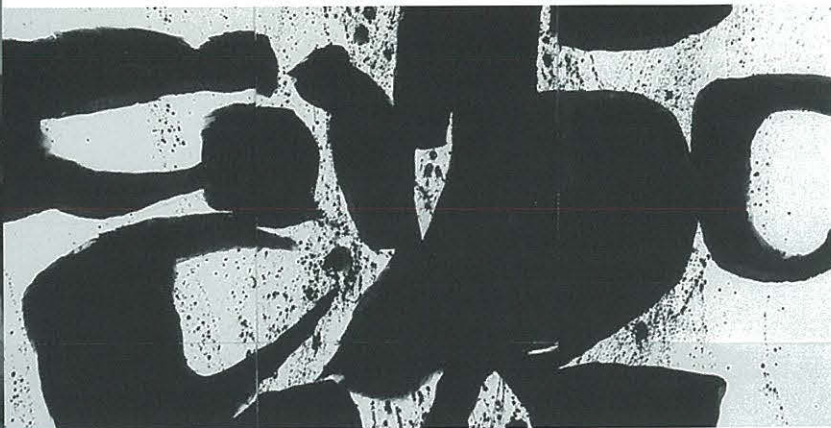
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The Wesfarmers Collection, Perth

From the touring exhibition *Sublime: 25 years of the
Wesfarmers Collection of Australian Art*.

Reproduced courtesy of the artist.

The catalogue for *Sublime* was the winner of last year's MAPDA awards.



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* A fully referenced version of this article is available from the Managing Editor, editor@museumsaustralia.org.au



Museums Australia Magazine
February 2004
Vol 12 No 3

Museums Australia Magazine,
PO Box 266, Civic Square,
ACT 2608
Editorial: (02) 6273 2437
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www.museumsaustralia.org.au

Editor: Roslyn Russell

Design: GRi.D Communications
Print: Goanna Print

Museums Australia Magazine is published quarterly by Museums Australia, and is a major link with members of the organisation.

Museums Australia Magazine is a forum for news, opinion and debate on museum issues.

Contributions from those involved or interested in museums and galleries are welcome.

Museums Australia Magazine reserves the right to edit, abridge, alter or reject any material.

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the publisher or editor.

Formerly *Museum National*.

Publication of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by Museums Australia, its affiliates or employees.

Museums Australia is proud to acknowledge the following supporters of the national organisation:

Australian Government
Department of the Environment and Heritage
National Museum of Australia
Powerhouse Museum
Museum Victoria

Print Post Publication No:
332582/00001
ISSN 1038-1694

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MUSEUMS AND REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

CAROL SCOTT

Regional sustainability in the face of rapid economic and social change has become a major policy for all tiers of government and an abiding concern for those who live in rural and remote areas. Viable regional communities require abundant stocks of social, human and economic capital to survive. The subject of this article is the contribution that museums make to these three types of necessary capital in regional centres.

The material presented here is a section of a wider study exploring the impact of museums on communities and ways to appropriately measure this impact. It sought the opinions and perspectives of those who work in museums, those whose work involves museums and those who are the end-users of museums. The study was undertaken through an online Delphi panel which sought responses to three rounds of questions from two groups. The regional participants in the overall study comprised:

- 1 A panel of people directly employed by regional museums (or working in museums in a voluntary capacity) as well as people working to provide support services for regional museums. The panel involved respondents from Western Australia, Tasmania, South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, including museum directors, a museum Board member, a curator and several people providing support services to regional museums; and
- 2 A second panel of members from the general public who encompassed both visitors and non-visitors, were resident in five different regional centres and represented four cohorts (eighteen-twenty-four-year-olds, parents with children, adults without dependent children and seniors).

Both groups were asked to respond to questions about the impact of museums on the social, personal and economic development of communities. A significant outcome was the value attributed to museums, even amongst those who are non-visitors.

Social capital

Across both panels, respondents indicated that museums contribute to **social capital** through developing a sense of community identity, building cohesion through social inclusion, providing recreational opportunities and conveying the history and heritage of an area

Community Identity and Pride

- Museums are often a reminder of the community's roots that bind the people together ... (Parent visitor)
- They allow a sense of pride to develop insofar as we have something which is unique and valued by others (Senior visitor)
- Museums can create a changed sense of place for the community (Museum worker)

Social Inclusion

- We are encouraged, not only to visit, but to become active participants in 'living' history ie the local historical society is

MUSEUMS CONTRIBUTE GREATLY TO THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALS BY EDUCATING THEM ABOUT HISTORY AND CULTURE IN A VISUALLY STIMULATING WAY

continually following up information regarding our past, and is involved in lobbying for funds to preserve our past in an authentic manner (Senior visitor)

- Museums contribute to the social development of a community if they have committees or a 'friends of' group that are able to have some input into the decision making (Visitor parent)
- Museums can include new groups: school students on work experience and as museum volunteers (Museum worker)

Leisure

- Museums contribute to the social development of the community by offering a place where one can visit when they are four years of age or ninety four, and can continue to learn so much (Visitor 18-24)
- Museums provide another branch to the community, much like sporting clubs, galleries etc. A community needs wide-ranging recreational and educational facilities (Visitor parent)

History and heritage

- Museums give a perspective of history and a sense of where we came from and what we did (Non visitor-adult without children)
- I think that it is important for us to remember the past, as the past teaches us how we got to where we are now. The people and events of the past have shaped us into the people we are today (Non visitor-senior)
- Hopefully museums may remind us also of what has worked or not worked in history so that we may not keep making the same mistakes and improve our social development (Non visitor- adult without children)

Human capital

Participants also felt that museums contribute to human capital through stimulating learning, improving understanding of different cultures and lifestyles and developing personal skills.

Learning and education

- Museums are of value to the individuals who visit them because it would be a rare person who did not find something of interest in a museum ... something from their own past or something they have heard about and are pleased to actually see (Visitor senior)
- Museums contribute greatly to the personal development of individuals by educating them about history and culture in a visually stimulating way (Parent visitor)
- Museums provide an information source of a physical nature which individuals can learn from by their interaction with it (Visitor-adult without children)
- Museums are a graphic and physical way of educating and reminding people of their heritage and history and also of other societies' history and heritage, in a manner that is ... easily accessible (Non visitor-adult without children)
- They can provide windows to art, history and worlds that individuals have no other way of experiencing (Visitor-parent)

OUTLAWED!

- [They provide] availability for our children to learn about our history in our own town (Non visitor-adult without children)

Personal inspiration

- Museums can inspire people to pursue further study (Museum worker)

Development of personal skills

- Museums bring like-minded members of local communities together to work on a common cause, with all the roles and responsibilities involved in running an association (Museum worker)
- Museums develop the skills of their committee members by giving them the tools to develop insights and understanding into their own community, and how to preserve key aspects of these (Museum worker)

Economic capital

Respondents recognised that museums contribute to economic capital through creating work, contributing to the tourism industry and promoting a positive image for a town that adds to its marketability.

- The economy of our community is very much enriched by those who come to visit. Package tours, which include accommodation as well as visits to the museum and other historic sites, are invaluable. The entire community, not just the museum, benefits (Visitor senior)
- Employment for museum staff, merchandise purchased from museums, people indirectly benefiting financially are builders, trustees of the premises and other local business eg. Restaurants, parking, retail shops etc (Visitor 18-24)

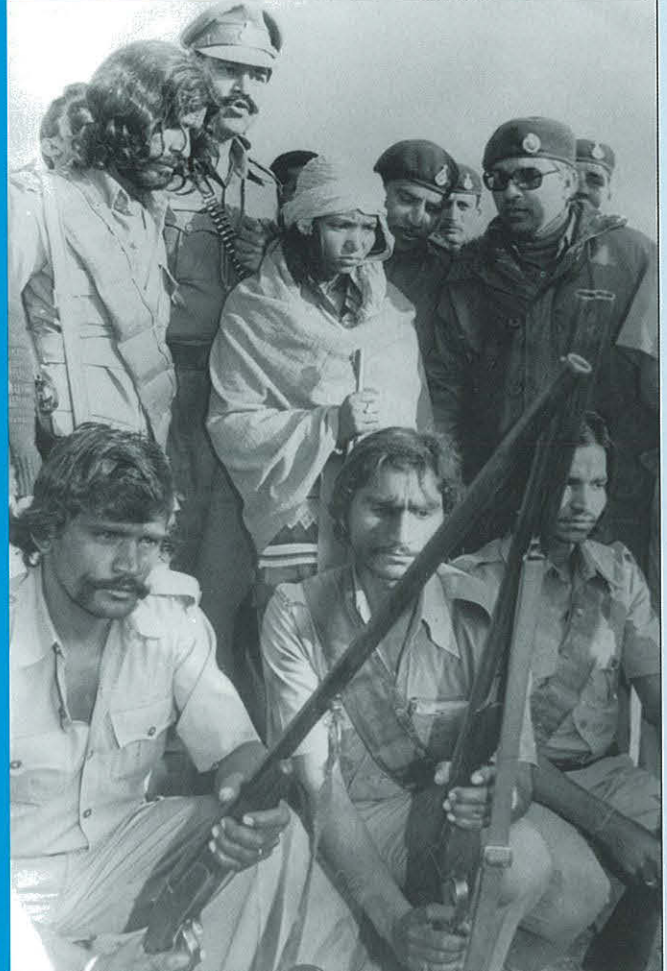
A professional respondent attributed the strong value placed on museums in regional communities to

- The smaller scale of the local museums and the often direct relevance to local people and places enables a much stronger bond to be formed between individuals and the institution. These museums deal in the greater part within their own collections with promoting and analysing aspects of local culture, environment and identity (Regional Museum Director)

But the true value is summed up by a member of the general public, who, in answer to a question about what (if anything) would be lost if museums no longer existed replied:

- We as a community would lose our sense of where we came from. We would lose access to knowledge and culture. Our triumphs and mistakes, as a community would no longer be on display. Our community would be less broad and our options for leisure and learning would be reduced (Visitor-parent).

THIS IS AN ABBREVIATED VERSION OF A PAPER DELIVERED AT THE OUTBACK SUMMIT IN BROKEN HILL, 23-27 OCTOBER 2003 BY CAROL SCOTT, PRESIDENT, MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA.



Phoolan Devi surrenders at Bhind in 1983

Image courtesy Phoolan Devi. Courtesy of the National Museum of Australia

Infamous crims and wild characters are the subject of *Outlawed!* an exhibition from the National Museum of Australia. The fugitive lives of outlaws from across the world are exposed and explored, including everyone from Ned Kelly to Jesse James, Robin Hood to Pancho Villa. Objects, film and interactives bring this study of the evolution of outlaw legends in popular culture alive.

This picture shows Phoolan Devi, India's 'Bandit Queen', after she surrendered at Bhind in 1983. Devi, after her release from gaol, became a member of parliament, and lived during parliamentary terms in Ashoka Road, New Delhi. The night before she was assassinated in July 2001, Stephen Foster, formerly at the NMA and now teaching museums and collections at ANU, visited Phoolan Devi there to discuss the loan of her material to this exhibition.

On show until 26 April 2004 at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra and will then tour to further venues.

COPYRIGHT, DIGITISATION AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

EMILY HUDSON & ANDREW KENYON

Digitisation features prominently in the current activities of Australian cultural institutions. Whether it be making electronic copies of works for preservation purposes or the creation of on-line collections, there are obvious advantages in using an electronic medium for preservation, research and access purposes.

Relevant to all these activities is the law of copyright. It gives copyright owners certain exclusive rights, including the right to make reproductions of their works. Cultural institutions undertaking digitisation activities need to be sure that those activities will not expose them to liability to copyright owners.

In light of recent changes to the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth), the University of Melbourne's Centre for Media and Communications Law and the Intellectual Property Research Institute of Australia have begun work on a two-year project addressing copyright issues facing Australian cultural institutions. The project, *Copyright and Cultural Institutions: Digitising Collections in Public Museums, Galleries and Libraries*, has been instigated and supported by Museums Australia. It is being conducted with the support of the Australian Research Council and six partner institutions: the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Australian War Memorial, National Museum of Australia, Museum Victoria and State Library of Victoria.

Recent changes to the Copyright Act

During the 1990s there was increasing concern that the

Copyright Act was lagging behind technological developments and the huge growth in the use of digital technology and the Internet.

After extensive consultation, the federal parliament passed the *Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Act* ("Digital Agenda Act") in 2000. This legislation made substantial and numerous amendments to the *Copyright Act*. The government recognised that the changes implemented by the *Digital Agenda Act*, being changes at the 'cutting edge of Copyright reform', would need to be reviewed to ensure their smooth operation.

Exceptions for cultural institutions — running smoothly?

Prior to the *Digital Agenda Act*, the *Copyright Act* set out a complicated series of exceptions allowing 'libraries and archives' to make and provide copies of copyright works in certain circumstances ('the Provisions'). The term 'archives' is defined in the *Copyright Act* to include museums and galleries.

In September 1998 the Copyright Law Review Committee, an advisory body established to report to government on copyright issues, published a report recommending that the Provisions be simplified, and various anomalies and inconsistencies removed. These recommendations were based on submissions received from cultural institutions as well as copyright owners.

The *Digital Agenda Act* varied and added to the Provisions, mainly in relation to the circumstances in which cultural institutions could make and communicate digital reproductions of copyright

THE *COPYRIGHT ACT* WAS LAGGING BEHIND THE HUGE GROWTH IN THE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND THE INTERNET.

works. But the changes under the *Digital Agenda Act* did little to simplify the Provisions, or to increase their useability.

The Provisions, along with other generally applicable parts of the *Copyright Act*, circumscribe the scope of digitisation. Where a proposed dealing constitutes an infringement of copyright, and does not fall within the ambit of the Provisions, permission will be required from the copyright owner to carry out that dealing. Determining when such permission is required is particularly complex because the Provisions themselves contain numerous exceptions, qualifications and inconsistencies.

As yet there has been no large-scale study in relation to the operation of the Provisions, although the need for such research has been increased by the recent amendments under the *Digital Agenda Act*.

Digitisation project

The project will evaluate copyright law's influence on the processes of digitisation being undertaken by Australian cultural institutions. It aims to determine whether the current regime furthers the stated policy objectives, which include ensuring:

that cultural ... institutions can access, and promote access to, copyright materials in the online environment on reasonable terms, including having regard to the benefits of public access to the material and the provision of adequate remuneration to creators and investors.

The project will have two significant outcomes: first, the preparation of detailed guidelines for cultural institutions to facilitate digitisation and the appropriate management of copyright; and second, understanding of cultural institutions' practices, enhancing future public policy formation about digital copyright in Australia.

The project will run for two years, divided into four six-month stages:

- Stage 1: investigation and analysis of the current legal rules in relation to digitisation of collections.
- Stage 2: investigation of the practices being adopted within Australian cultural institutions through in-depth interviews and related research with the partner cultural institutions.
- Stage 3: preparation of draft guidelines for digitisation and evaluation of these draft guidelines through further interviews and studies with other Australian cultural institutions.
- Stage 4: finalisation of guidelines and preparation of recommendations for law reform.

We would be happy to keep any interested persons and institutions informed of the progress of the project. Please direct any inquiries to Emily Hudson at e.hudson@unimelb.edu.au

EMILY HUDSON IS A RESEARCH FELLOW WITH THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA, AND THE CENTRE FOR MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE.

ANDREW KENYON IS DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS LAW, www.law.unimelb.edu.au/cmcl

ENGAGING DIVERSITY

KATHERINE RUSSELL

JUDE KELLY STIRRED US ALL WITH HER IMPASSIONED UNDERSTANDING THAT WE, AS EDUCATION AND OUTREACH OFFICERS IN MUSEUMS, WERE THE VANGUARD OF CHANGE AND POSSIBILITY FOR OUR ORGANISATIONS.

In November 2003 Katherine Russell found herself in Liverpool UK, contemplating the myriad issues surrounding the concept of diverse access to museums ...

The forum was the 2003 **engage** (UK national association for gallery education) international conference with the enigmatic title of 'Whose Diversity?: exploring definitions of and responses to diversity'. Held from 30 October – 1 November in Liverpool, UK, the main conference venue was FACT (Film, Art, Creative Technology), a very impressive outfit that stages exhibitions of new media as well as containing a Picturehouse (fact.co.uk). The 200 conference delegates came from all over Britain, one from Norway, and I claimed the prize for the delegate from furthest afield.

The Chair of the first session was Femi Folorunso from the Scottish Arts Council, who began proceedings on a topical note, citing Kenan Malik's TV documentary, 'Disunited Kingdom' which had screened on Channel 4 (UK) late the previous evening. Folorunso 'stirred the pot', as opening chairs at conferences often do, asking delegates to take on the task of demystifying diversity and whether the issue of diversity was creating more enemies than friends. Folorunso saw 'Disunited Kingdom' as obfuscating the issue of multiculturalism but, despite this, the same TV

program was used as an example by a number of speakers at the forum.

The first morning was given over to keynote speakers, who provided a broad framework for the conference in the areas of Organisational Diversity, Audience Development and Curatorial Policy. In the afternoon delegates were transported to case study sessions at different central Liverpool locations. I believe this breaking down of the conference into smaller sessions was absolutely crucial to the task of addressing the complex issue of diversity in museums in any depth. The session I attended, along with thirty other delegates, 'Context and legacies for Social Inclusion', provided an opportunity to see how institutions (in this case a small municipal art museum and the large and multi-site National Museums of Liverpool) approached social inclusion. The session also afforded a platform for both delegates and speakers to 'let off steam', while having a fruitful debate on the small but cumulative triumphs and sometimes evident frustrations in implementing audience development programs in their institutions. The 'Soapbox' sessions held that evening, of which I presented one, gave delegates an opportunity to present work in progress in an informal setting, with loads of encouragement from the audience!

The second and final day of the conference proper began with a rousing keynote by Jude Kelly OBE, renowned theatre director and founder of Metal. She stirred us all with her impassioned understanding that we, as education and outreach officers in museums, were the vanguard of change and possibility for our organisations. Yes, it's tough, yes, we do it for love not money — but the immaterial rewards of the job can be, when you get it right, profound. For most of us Kelly inspired a sense of direction and refocused purpose for the rest of the conference, which then broke into small groups again, this time for workshops. My choice of workshop, entitled 'How can Gallery educators reach out to new audiences?' was the most popular of the six on offer and thus suffered slightly from 'too many cooks' syndrome. Despite this, some interesting issues and strategies were discussed during the group work including: What new audiences do we want to engage?; If you are not providing anything of interest to a group why should they come?; and How can museums, galleries, artist-run initiatives reach out to individuals as opposed to groups? Naturally, there are no definitive answers to these questions and each museum's particular context will determine how they respond to them.

What the workshops — and the conference as a whole — did

reveal was a commonality of purpose across a broad spectrum of facilities, from large public museums through to privately-run artist studio spaces and sculpture parks. The desire to achieve diversity — whether in the workplace or through visitation and participation — was strong, but discussion sometimes got bogged down in defining 'diversity'. Following the workshops, delegates reconvened for the final plenary session, where it became apparent that the debate surrounding 'Whose Diversity?' is an ongoing one. To this end, **engage** (engage.org) has committed to creating an online resource for sharing research and findings. An interesting point was made during the plenary: beware of ignoring your core audiences in the effort to gain new ones. As one delegate observed, it seemed as if people in the workshops were asking permission to go back to people we, as institutions, already engage.

By providing a broad range of presentation formats, from formal papers to soapboxes, 'Whose Diversity?' delivered on its promise to explore 'definitions of and responses to diversity', as well as showcasing a great deal of innovative work going on in cultural facilities all over Britain.

KATHERINE RUSSELL IS A PHD STUDENT IN THE CENTRE FOR CULTURAL RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY.

REMEMBER THE LAST FILM SEARCH?

Guess what we're looking for now?

ROSS HARVEY & ANNE LLOYD

The vulnerability of significant parts of Australia's scientific heritage was forcibly brought to our attention in January 2003 with the destruction of the Mount Stromlo Observatory in the Canberra bushfires. This vulnerability has been reinforced by publicity about the looting of libraries, archives and museums in Iraq. We need to support efforts to preserve important heritage.

The Australian *Memory of the World* Program aims to heighten awareness of the vulnerability of documentary heritage by establishing and maintaining the Australian *Memory of the World* Register (see www.amw.org.au). Documentary heritage is defined as items that are moveable, made up of signs/codes, sounds and/or images, preservable, reproducible and migratable, and the product of a deliberate documenting process. It includes all of the kinds of material found in libraries and archives, including information in digital form. This Register will include a section about lost and missing heritage.

Significant parts of Australia's documentary heritage have been lost or are missing. *Lost* heritage is material whose decay or destruction is reliably documented or can be reliably assumed. *Missing* heritage is material whose current whereabouts is unknown, but whose loss cannot be confirmed or reliably assumed. It is important to record this because such a record is a precursor to the possibility of

Call for nominations

Museums, archives and libraries with significant documentary heritage are encouraged to enter nominations in the next assessment round for the Australian Memory of the World Register. The program for 2004 will be launched on 17 March and nominations must be submitted by 21 May 2004. For guidelines and submission details visit the Australian Memory of the World website, www.amw.org.au

SIGNIFICANT PARTS OF AUSTRALIA'S DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE HAVE BEEN LOST OR ARE MISSING.

virtual reconstruction of lost and dispersed memory.

Ross Harvey, Anne Lloyd and Damian Lodge are compiling a list of Australia's lost and missing documentary heritage for the Australian *Memory of the World* project. We are keen to learn about examples of lost or missing documentary heritage. One way we are doing this is to survey Australian archives, libraries and museums. We will distribute surveys to approximately 600 archival institutions early in 2004, followed later in the year by surveys of libraries and museums. The survey asks four questions:

- Can you identify any significant *Australian* items, collections or materials that you think fit into the definition of lost or missing documentary heritage?
- Do you know the location of documentation about these items, collections or materials?
- Can you identify the last known location of these items, collections or materials?

- Can you suggest anyone else we should contact who can help us to identify Australian lost or missing documentary heritage?

We also request information about specific items you may be aware of: a brief description, an indication of why it is significant (we provide definitions of *significance* in the survey form), last known location, and any other relevant information.

The outcome of this project will be an important list of items, collections or areas for further investigation. These will be publicly available on the web at www.amw.org.au/r/mh/r/mh_rg.htm

We are interested in any information you can provide. Please contact Anne Lloyd: Telephone: 02 6933 2468 Email: anlloyd@csu.edu.au School of Information Studies Locked Bag 675 Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga NSW 2678.

ROSS HARVEY IS PROFESSOR AND ANNE LLOYD IS LECTURER IN THE SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES, CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY.

PALESTINE COSTUME ARCHIVE LOST IN LAX

The Australia-based Palestine Costume Archive has suffered a major loss at the hands of US Security. The January issue of *The Art Newspaper* has reported that exhibition materials for *Symbolic defiance: Palestinian costume and embroidery since 1948*, scheduled to be displayed at the annual conference of the Middle Eastern Studies Association of North America

MATERIALS WERE

TAKEN FOR A SECURITY

CHECK AND

NEVER RETURNED

in Anchorage, were taken for a security check at Los Angeles International Airport's Terminal Four and never returned. *The Art Newspaper* reports that 'A search, which failed to find any trace of the exhibits, has now been abandoned', casting doubt on a proposed 2005 North American tour of an exhibition of nineteenth and twentieth-century Palestinian costumes. The loss of the exhibition materials is a blow to the Palestine Costume Archive and to the display of Palestinian material culture as, according to *The Art Newspaper*, the Archive is 'the only organisation to make exhibitions of Palestinian cultural material available to international museums'.

One of Tait Adams' gouaches from his first solo show in forty years, *Gesture*, which was on exhibition at Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville, in December 2003 and January 2004.
Gouache 100 121x154cm



WEBWATCH

In November 2003 the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) relaunched its website, with additional features and a new look.

NAVA has been the peak body for Australia's visual arts and crafts sector for twenty years. Its website, 'Visual Arts Net' (www.visualarts.net.au) was created in 2000 to provide a gateway for the visual arts sector. New features include a comprehensive business services directory; a publications and research page clearly listing NAVA's resources and research projects; and a section devoted to NAVA's relationship with the media, which includes media releases and other public comments from the peak body for arts issues.

museum studies + cultural heritage

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REGIONAL ROUNDUP

WORKS WONDERS: STORIES ABOUT HOME REMEDIES (NSW)

When was the last time you rubbed Vicks VapoRub on your feet to relieve your head cold? The Powerhouse Museum's new travelling exhibition, *Works Wonders: stories about home remedies* reveals some of the quirky, weird and comforting remedies people have prescribed to cure injury and illness in their homes. Elaborate pharmaceutical tins, jars and recipes evoke a bygone approach to medicine that was far more self-reliant than today's standard trip to the local GP. An interactive touchscreen allows viewers to ask the chemist for treatments for tinea and dandruff, and video screens feature home remedies once common in regional New South Wales. *Works Wonders: stories about home remedies* explores family rituals, emergency preparation, home nursing, the twentieth-century mothercraft movement and the modern-day medicine cupboard, and features therapeutic gadgets, medicine chests, patent medicines and the ingredients of home recipes. The exhibition tours throughout regional NSW throughout 2004 and 2005, in Dubbo, then Leeton, Brewarrina, Lightning Ridge, Moree, Dungog and Newcastle.

Website: www.phm.gov.au



Sinite Parvulos Venire ad Me.

Painted panels above the doorway at the Benedictine monastery at New Norcia, WA

Photograph by Roslyn Russell

MONASTIC TREASURES AT NEW NORCIA (WA)

The Benedictine monks of New Norcia, Western Australia have enriched their community in many ways since their arrival in 1846. As part of their mission to share their work and life with the wider community they established the New Norcia Museum and Art Gallery which now holds one of the finest collections of moveable heritage in Australia.

The collection reflects aspects of life shared with many other areas of rural Australia, coupled with those unique to Australia's only monastic town. Its 10,000 items and 4000

photographs are surprisingly diverse and include paintings by Spanish and Italian masters, gifts from the Queen of Spain and local artefacts. They tell the story of New Norcia's time as an Aboriginal mission, as a centre of the monks' extensive farming activities and as a place of education and culture. One such object is the beautiful Schiedmayer & Soehne harmonium given to the mission in 1932 by the German government as a reward for their efforts to save two German aviators who had lost their way. Ironically the harmonium was

then damaged during an attack by Japanese aircraft.

The heart and history of New Norcia is also preserved in the extensive monastic library of 60,000 books, manuscripts, photographs, oral histories and audiovisual records. The Gallery is open to the general public, and parts of the Library collection are also open to the public, though the core of the original collection is only accessible to monks and their guests.

norciawa@newnorcia.wa.edu.au
Tel: (08) 9654 8056

ART AND LIFE AT HEIDE (VIC)

The social and artistic history of Heide and its founders is on show until the end of 2004 in the award-winning heritage house, Heide 1. The display features highlights from Heide's permanent art collection and the lovely Heide gardens. *Art and Life at Heide* is an exhibition based on works from the original bequest of Heide's founders, John and Sunday Reed. The couple were passionate supporters and collectors of Australian art of the thirties, forties and fifties, and their lives are unfurled through art, archives and photographs. Be enchanted by the activities of a couple who promoted their home (named after the nearby township of Heidelberg) as a place of serenity and inspiration for artists and intellectuals. Among their friends were Albert Tucker, Joy Hester and Sidney Nolan. Nolan painted his famous Ned Kelly series in the Reed's dining room.

Heide Museum of Modern Art,
7 Templestowe Rd,
Bulleen Victoria 3105
Website: www.heide.com.au



The Library. The painting over the fireplace is by Sidney Nolan, *Kelly at the Mine* c.1946
Photograph by Isamu Sawa 2001
Courtesy of Heide Museum of Modern Art

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Asian Tomb Ware: NGV International, Melbourne. Photography: John Collins, 2003

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A VISIT TO 'MUSEUM HEAVEN' — HAMPSHIRE MUSEUM SERVICE

ROSLYN RUSSELL

In August last year I was privileged to be given a tour of the Hampshire Museum Service's headquarters at Chilcomb House, Winchester. It was a real treat — for several hours I was in 'museum heaven'.

The Hampshire Museum Service, a 'hub' for funding regional museums in the United Kingdom, through a government program called Renaissance in the Regions using money raised by the National Lottery, is responsible for nineteen museums. It also provides an advisory service and other assistance to small museums in the region. It is used by 600,000 people — twice the population of the Australian Capital Territory — and 400,000 make personal visits to one or more of the museums.

I was introduced to Stephen Locke, Head of Museums and Archives, and Alastair Penfold, Principal Museums Officer (Collections) by Yinnon Ezra, Director of Culture and Recreation for Hampshire County Council. Alastair then conducted me around the Chilcomb complex, which houses the storage, administration offices, workshops and conservation laboratories for the entire Museum Service. It is certainly a true 'hub' in a physical as well as a metaphorical sense. Curators, conservators and workshop managers described the activities of their areas, and showed me some of the highlights of their collections.

Bill Phillips, who has recently visited Australia on a Churchill Fellowship to examine our methodologies for disabled access to museum collections, is involved with one of the Museum Service's outreach programs, reminiscence therapy for aged care facility residents. He had assembled a number of social history collection objects dating from the 1930s to the 1960s — a hair dryer, cigarette box, shoes and cufflinks — to stimulate memory of past times for older people suffering from dementia.

Conservator Sarah Howard showed me the floodable floor in her laboratory. This had recently been used to wash a patchwork quilt from Jane Austen's house at Chawton, one of the small local museums assisted by the Hampshire Museum Service. Sarah also demonstrated her treatment of fragile textiles and correction of damage to an early flexible-limb doll. Then we were off to the metals and heavy artefacts laboratory with equipment for zero oxygen treatment for fumigation. This is used by the Museum Service for its own artefacts, and also for metal or wood conservation tasks sent to Chilcomb by other agencies.

Hampshire Museum Service has a considerable and diverse firearms collection. I am not usually very comfortable with guns, but these were fascinating. There was a long (and heavy) fowling piece that would have needed two men to lift it up to fire it; and an elegant

MUSEUMS AND SITES MANAGED BY HAMPSHIRE MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES

- Aldershot Military Museum
- Allen Gallery, Alton
- Andover Museum
- Basing House
- Bursledon Windmill
- Curtis Museum, Alton
- Eastleigh Museum
- Flora Twort Gallery, Petersfield
- Gosport Museum
- Havant Museum
- Museum of the Iron Age, Andover
- Milestones, Basingstoke
- Red House Museum
- Rockbourne Roman Villa
- St Barbe Museum, Lymington
- Treadgolds, Portsmouth
- Westbury Manor Museum, Fareham
- Willis Museum, Basingstoke
- SEARCH — education centre, Gosport
- Other museums in Hampshire

chased gun reputed to have been given by Nelson to Byron (at least that is what is engraved on the stock — there is some doubt as to this provenance). Most bizarre of all was a home-made wooden bolt gun that uses a rat-trap as a firing mechanism. This weapon was associated with the Mau Mau insurgency in the 1950s against British rule in Kenya. The metals conservators were also treating two Saxon shield bosses, painstakingly reconstituting them from a pile of corroded flakes.

Curator of Natural History Simon Moore showed us elegantly presented fungi specimens in fluid; and produced some special arachnids for this Aussie visitor: a Sydney Basin Funnel Web spider and a juvenile and an adult Redback, safely encased in Perspex to be used in educational programs.

Chris Palmer and Christine Taylor then did the honours of

the natural history collection, which consists of around 100,000 plant and animal specimens. One herbarium specimen dates back to 1757, a sobering thought for an Australian, although the bulk of the collection was amassed over the last eighty years. Hampshire's substantial taxidermy collection includes a West Indian wild cat from Hayling Island, thought to have come from a colony originally created by escaped circus animals; many birds, including a Rhea, South Africa's equivalent of our emu; and a large insect collection.

Two more treasures were revealed in the textile collection: a brown printed silk pelisse or overdress provenanced to the Austen family and thought to have been worn by Jane Austen herself; and a superb example of raised or 'stump' embroidery depicting Charles II after his restoration to the throne after

THE SERVICE THROUGH ITS ON-LINE CATALOGUE PROVIDES ACCESS TO 130,000 OBJECTS, AND ENCOURAGES RESEARCHERS TO WORK WITH THE REFERENCE COLLECTIONS.

the death of Oliver Cromwell. Seeing these objects close up was a very special experience, especially for a devotee of Jane Austen.

Archaeology curator Kay Ainsworth had selected a tantalising array of objects for inspection: Iron Age and Roman pottery, an intricately worked shrine lamp from the later Romano-British period, and a very special object — a rare stater die used to make coins of that denomination. The British Museum is very interested in this recent archaeological discovery, but as it was found in the area it will remain in Hampshire.

The vehicle workshops were also humming with activity, as staff prepared large exhibits to go on display in the Museum Service's flagship museum, the award-winning *Milestones* at Basingstoke. I felt very honoured to have been given a behind-the-scenes overview of the work of the Hampshire

Museum Service, and to have seen, however briefly, collections of such breadth and depth, largely sourced from just one region of England. The Service through its on-line catalogue provides access to 130,000 objects, and encourages researchers to make appointments to come to Chilcomb to work with the reference collections.

The regional hub funding model used by Renaissance in the Regions is being considered by our National Collections Advisory Forum. As an example of an integrated approach to museums and collections management funded through this mechanism, the Hampshire Museum Service is definitely an interesting model. If you can't visit Hampshire in person, check out the website (www.hants.gov.uk/museums).

ROSLYN RUSSELL IS
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MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA MAGAZINE

THE SOUTH EAST MUSEUM HUB

The UK Government, through 'Resource', has set up a structure of Regional Museum Hubs to spearhead development of museums in the regions, broaden the range of users and develop their educational value.

Regional Museum Hubs are groups of museums which have been selected to provide leadership within the region and Hampshire has been selected to lead the South East Museum Hub, to drive this forward with its partners.

The Government is allocating new funding to support this policy. In the first phase, most of this has been allocated to the North East, West Midlands and South West, but all Hubs are receiving some extra funding, and the South East will receive 2.2 million pounds over the next three years. This will be used to build capacity within the Hub and prepare for what is hoped will be full funding in the next spending round.

Source: Hampshire County Council, *Recreation and Heritage Annual Report 2002-3*, p.17.



Pelisse Dress Coat c1814, said to have been worn by Jane Austen. 'Pelisse' was the fashionable contemporary term for this garment, which was half-way between a dress and a coat, and typically calf-length. It has sometimes been referred to as an overdress, a coat, a redingote, and incorrectly misinterpreted as a dressing gown more recently. The garment is of good quality silk in a twill weave, woven with a small repeat pattern of oak leaves in a golden straw colour on a warm brown ground. On the stylistic evidence of the shape of the bodice and skirt and the size of the sleeve heads, and the ruched decorative trim, it can be accurately dated to c1813-15. It has close-fitting long sleeves, a high standing collar, and is open at centre front with no fastenings, but edged on either side with gold cord. It would have been worn over a cotton gown which would have shown several inches below the pelisse hem, as well as at centre front and at the cuffs (hence no accurate assessment of the height of the wearer can be offered). It is lined throughout with white silk. Photograph courtesy of Hampshire Museum Service

LIVING DANGEROUSLY... IN MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

LIVING DANGEROUSLY CAN MEAN SEVERAL THINGS. IT CAN MEAN TAKING RISKS — MAYBE BETTER DESCRIBED AS CALCULATED STRATEGIES THAT MAY NOT PLEASE EVERYONE — TO REVITALISE AN INSTITUTION THAT HAS BECOME COMPLACENT OR IS SIMPLY NOT PERFORMING TO CAPACITY. OR IT CAN MEAN THE REVERSE: RESISTING CHANGE FOR CHANGE'S SAKE, AND PROTESTING AGAINST THE APPLICATION OF THE DICTATES OF MANAGERIAL AGENDAS, FUELLED BY POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES.

Museums are regarded by some in power as distinctly unsafe places on an ideological level, while many who work in museums and galleries believe that our mission is to disturb rather than to placate our visitors. A museum that takes no risks in its interpretation runs another risk — of blandness and insipidity. Living dangerously in this context can mean taking to the public arena to defend a museum that has incurred the wrath of the powers that be for a courageous or controversial interpretation that departs from a received orthodoxy or a master narrative.

Living dangerously in museums and galleries can mean dealing with an element of physical danger as well. These are not normally seen as physically unsafe places, but situations do arise where danger is a distinct possibility.

The articles in this section each deal with one of these aspects of 'living dangerously'. Ian McShane deals with the review of the National Museum of Australia and the fate of former Director, Dawn Casey, and foreshadows the daunting task facing the new Director when he poses the question, 'How should the National Museum operate as a civic institution in contemporary Australia?'

Ray Edmondson's article on the ScreenSound crisis of late 2003 reminds us that, although the surge of support for the institution has earned it a reprieve from its absorption into the AFC for the time being, that vigilance and an ever-present awareness of danger and threat are, unfortunately, required of all who care about the integrity of our national collections. These are certainly 'living dangerously' in an age of economic rationalism.

Tom McCullough revisits the 1970s, an era when change

was in the air for artists and society alike, and describes the outcome of the installation of a 'risky' artwork at Mildura — in effect an extended metaphor for the career of a 'curator entrepreneur' who wanted to promote artistic experimentation.

Catrina Vignando's article on the restructuring of Craft Australia shows the positive side of taking risks, as she sets out the benefits that flowed when the organisation took the risk of relocating and reorganising its operations.

There are other ways in which museums and galleries and those who work in them can be 'living dangerously'. The requirement that public sector institutions outsource museum and gallery activities such as conservation, interpretation, graphic and exhibition design, audiovisual and multimedia production and other processes has been met for some time now by the appointment of private sector consultants who compete in the marketplace for contracts. Many of these consultants are also members of Museums Australia. They can be seen as 'living dangerously' financially and in terms of their ability to juggle the number of jobs they need to undertake to earn a living. A future edition of *Museums Australia Magazine* may take up the challenge of looking at the issue of consultancy from the points of view of both consultants and clients.

ROSLYN RUSSELL
MANAGING EDITOR
MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA MAGAZINE

IAN MCSHANE

'LIVING DANGEROUSLY' AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA

It can be a dangerous business, running a cultural institution in Australia. As Linda Young observed recently, directors of four major state museums have resigned or been forced out of their positions over the past few years. The former director of the Australian Museum, Professor Mike Archer, is a recent addition to this list, after revelations of the alleged theft by a staff member of collection items brought a critical focus on his broader management style. In December 2003 it was announced that six senior staff members of ScreenSound Australia would lose their positions, following a merger of that organisation with the Australian Film Commission.

DIRECTORS OF FOUR MAJOR STATE MUSEUMS
HAVE RESIGNED OR BEEN FORCED OUT OF
THEIR POSITIONS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

The sudden reversal of that decision by the AFC indicates the capriciousness with which staffing decisions within the industry are sometimes taken.

These episodes have been overshadowed by the controversy surrounding the events that have led to a search for the sixth director of the National Museum of Australia in a little over a decade. Dawn Casey's departure from the National Museum drew national media coverage and evoked considerable public sympathy. It provided another point of attack for critics of what is perceived to be the Howard government's push to install a more singular and orthodox national past in the consciousness of Australians. Provoked initially by the persistence and belligerence of Keith Windschuttle, the 'history wars' literature is now vast, prompting the National Museum's Matthew Trinca to speculate whether history is enjoying a moment in the sun. But whose history? As Arts Minister Senator Rod Kemp remarked, 'I think for too long our history has been ignored, and perhaps a particular version of our history has been promoted to dominate other views'. Is this a sunny moment — or a storm warning?

The Carroll Review of the National Museum of Australia's programs, released in mid-2003, and the Howard government's refusal to reappoint Dawn Casey at the end of a twelve-month contract term, are seen by many commentators (including Casey) as the points at which the history wars have most directly impacted on museums. Casey's own incorporation in the debate was remarkable. In twelve months her public image changed from that of a trusted career bureaucrat to an Indigenous female who, despite

her experience and reputation as an able administrator at the highest level of government, may not be offered a further position in the Australian Public Service. As Linda Young noted, her tenure as National Museum Director invested the position with considerable symbolic power. For most of that tenure she avoided harnessing that power to her (or, indeed, the government's) advantage. However, over the past twelve months or so she has made increasing reference to the circumstances of her background, casting the widespread persistence of those circumstances today in sharp relief. Dawn Casey's own exceptional journey revealed a deeper truth. Another view of Casey's departure locates it within the broader strategy used to manage senior Commonwealth public servants, in which the top level of the bureaucracy has been effectively casualised and moves from contract to contract. Regardless of the merits or otherwise of her treatment by the government, she came to personify the history wars.

The National Museum Council's endorsement of a review relatively soon after opening day, together with the review's narrow focus on exhibitions and public programs, was a further indication of the symbolic importance of the Museum's message, and the urgency perceived in some quarters for its reform. Limited though the terms of reference were, the review team's uncomplicated view of museum processes makes National Museum staff an easy target and limits the longer-term value of the exercise. As much as I delight in quaint references to 'the gifted curatorial hand', the report fails to acknowledge that the unassailable orthodoxy of interpretive planning, the pre-eminence of the architectural vision, and the government's commercial aspirations for the Museum had as much or more influence on the final product as did the curators.

Given the financial implications of the report's recommendations — program changes that might run to a cost of one-third of the initial project budget — taxpayers may consider whether a wider review of the development is warranted. Some issues that might arise in such a review would bear directly on the project, but some would inescapably canvas broader issues of the relationship between governments and their cultural authorities. What were the benefits and costs of fixing the Centenary of Federation as the opening date? Was the peculiar triangulated communication process — between Museum staff, the architect and exhibition designers and their client, the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts — the best structure to produce high quality museum content? Would an independent construction authority, answering to the Museum's Council, better acknowledge the 'arms-length' status of a statutory authority? Or is this status irrelevant as governments bring museums into the centre of their broader policy picture?

The Carroll report can be located within what Andrea Witcomb identifies as an ongoing debate between those who argue that

THE REVIEW EXERCISE, ALTHOUGH COMMISSIONED BY THE NATIONAL MUSEUM COUNCIL, HAS BEEN CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE HOWARD GOVERNMENT'S CONSERVATIVE CULTURAL AGENDA.



museums need to change and those who defend their traditional practices. Most critics have seen the report as a firm endorsement of the latter. Some initial commentary savaged the report over its call for an increasing focus on the nineteenth century and more emphasis on a narrative of achievement and nation-building, at the expense of twentieth century migration and a plural interpretative approach. There was, it needs to be pointed out, no consensus amongst the review team on this issue, with Philip Jones, the team member with the most substantial record as a museum practitioner, declaring a minority view on exhibition themes and their chronological rendering. Subsequent critiques have focused on the deeper problem that is raised, but not resolved, by the report — how does a museum construct a coherent and compelling narrative that gives voice to competing perspectives? How can museum programs resist declaring themselves for either consensus or pluralism, as if a simple choice between the two existed, but draw productively on both impulses?

The critical reception of the Carroll report suggests that the debate referred to by Witcomb has a left/right political axis that may inhibit an understanding of the report's wider context and meaning. The review exercise, although commissioned by the National Museum Council, has been closely identified with the Howard government's conservative cultural agenda. The government has been accused of stacking the Museum's Council to achieve its ends. However, as Don Watson's account of his time in Paul Keating's prime ministerial office suggests, the Keating Labor government's attitude to the Museum may have been more interventionist and radical than its successor. According to Watson, the Keating government worked up, in conjunction with the Museum's Council, an elaborate plan to 'build half [the museum] in cyberspace and put the rest on permanent tour... a project that would have found favour with new information industries and old intelligentsia...fostered a sense of national unity...postmodern in the best way possible - and in all this it was a perfect fit with government policy.' Casting further back would reveal other correspondences between the National Museum's interests and Commonwealth government policy: Hawke's Indigenous policy, Fraser's multiculturalism, even Whitlam's cultural nationalism.

Tony Bennett argues that museums are institutions of civic reform, and that their principal role is to shape cultural practices in a way acceptable to government policy. Witcomb observes that an implication of this argument is that museums do not so much *represent* communities and cultures as *produce* them. Bennett's argument has its limitations, in conflating cultural and governmental practices, and in circumscribing the relationship between communities and museums. Nevertheless, it provides a

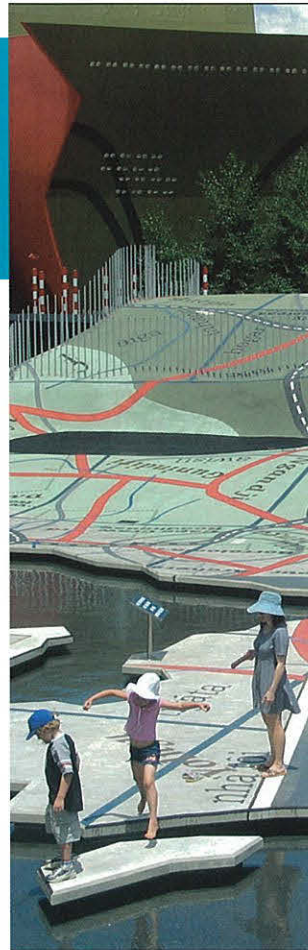
THE CARROLL REPORT IS CLEARLY DISSATISFIED WITH THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM TO THE NATIONAL IMAGINARY.

useful framework for approaching the Carroll report. For perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the Carroll report (albeit one that has received little attention) is its response to the National Museum's success in attracting visitors. In Bennett's terms, national cultural institutions play an important role in creating what Miriam Dixson terms a 'national imaginary', a narrative that defines and holds together a national community. From this perspective, the Carroll report is clearly dissatisfied with the contribution of the National Museum to the national imaginary. But how does the report explain away the popularity of the museum? It does so mainly by criticising the survey methods used by the Museum in assessing visitor satisfaction. The Carroll report deals with the Museum's visitors in a dismissive way: it denies them the validity of their experience on the basis of an erroneous survey. A combination of factors contributed to the National Museum's higher than expected visitor figures — anticipation, clever marketing, the Museum's distinctiveness as a Canberra visitor attraction amongst them. Neither were visitors uncritical of the Museum — particularly its layout and aspects of interpretation. However, in dismissing visitor feedback (and in not seeking its own beyond the formal process of submissions), the Carroll report discounts the role the National Museum's public might play in the review process, and thus of the institution's 'publicness'. In the terms of Bennett's argument, the National Museum has not so much developed an unsatisfactory national story as it has produced an unreformed community of visitors, yet to be schooled in Australian achievement.

The new National Museum Director faces significant challenges in responding to the Carroll report. The report's concern with pluralism suggests that the new Director's most important task will be developing an authoritative national story that in some way consolidates 'mainstream' culture and achievements, embellished by diversity. Such an approach may conform with prevailing political sentiment, but may not assist the Museum to meet broader challenges that lie outside the museological realm. How should the National Museum operate as a civic institution in contemporary Australia? How does it respond to the twin pressures of globalisation and localisation? How can it develop a sense of national community that yet gives recognition to local difference? At what point does a clarion call to rally around a core culture come into conflict with a society in which diversity is the main feature of the 'mainstream'?

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LIVING DANGEROUSLY

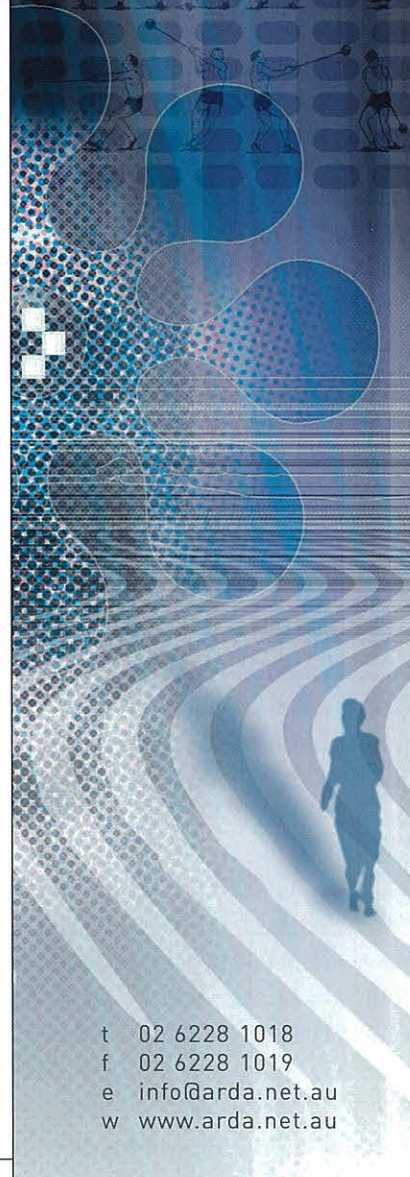
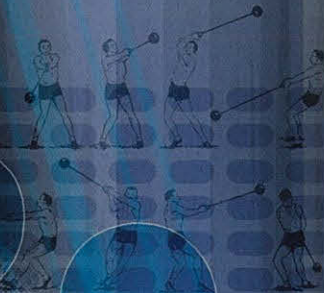


THE NEW NATIONAL MUSEUM DIRECTOR FACES SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES IN RESPONDING TO THE CARROLL REPORT.

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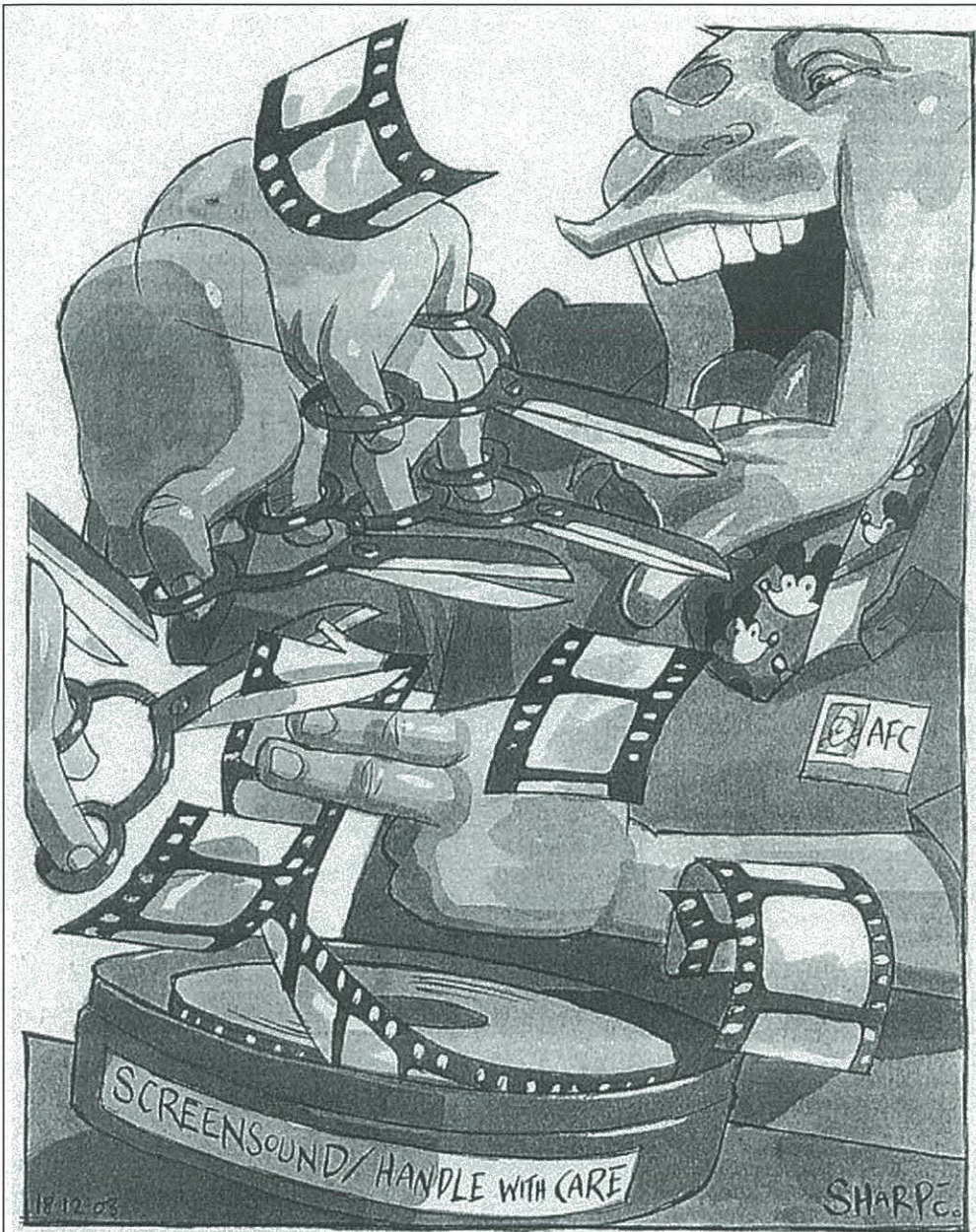
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THE SCREENSOUND SAGA

RAY EDMONDSON



This cartoon commenting on the AFC's treatment of ScreenSound is reproduced courtesy of Ian Sharpe and the *Canberra Times*, and accompanied Ray Edmondson's article.

When the National Film and Sound Archive was separated from the National Library as a new institution in 1984, a twelve-person advisory committee, chaired by historian and film maker Joan Long AM, was set up to develop the grand plan for the new institution. After fourteen months, eighty-odd submissions, various public meetings and workshops, the committee produced *Time in our hands (TIOH)*, a challenging and comprehensive vision for a national audiovisual archive built from first principles. Vindicated by time, the vision has been internationally admired and imitated, and *TIOH* has served as a solid and still valid template for the growth of a national institution which has been a world leader in its field, including in the development of professional policies, philosophy, technical and managerial expertise.

The Australian Film Commission's (AFC) 'Directions' paper on the future of the Archive, now known as ScreenSound Australia, is a horse of a very different colour. Summarily dismissing *TIOH*, it presents a vision for the *destruction* of the institution. The Archive as we know it, with 230 staff, will disappear into the much smaller AFC (sixty staff), its resources plundered to boost other AFC programs and ambitions, leaving a rump operation that will be little more than a collection inventory with technical facilities attached. The *Australian Film and Sound Archive*, as it will henceforth be known, will be reduced to a

THERE ARE SIX WORDS I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD.

'TRUST ME. I'M FROM THE AFC.'

ADVOCACY GROUPS
CONTINUE PROTEST

mere branch of the AFC. And even that may not survive the next reorganisation.

As a blueprint, 'Directions' is a sorry piece of work. It is superficial, often poorly researched and inaccurate, and its author(s) demonstrate limited understanding of archives and archiving principles — and of this archive in particular. It is strong on assertions but weak on supporting data and figures. It is unclear how the new proposals will actually work in practice, but that they will involve considerable staff turnover and dislocation is obvious.

It is biased. Throughout, it conveys a laudatory impression of the AFC's superior knowledge while pointing up the Archive's perceived deficiencies. It has tunnel vision, viewing the Archive through the relatively narrow perspective of the current Australian film industry and screen culture. The Archive's audio dimension gets short shrift, as do broader non-industry responsibilities, collecting older material, and paper and object holdings, to name a few.

AFC CEO Kim Dalton recently pointed out that the paper includes new ideas and changes requested by staff and stakeholders. True, but it also pointedly *ignores* key issues stressed by both. Pleas to maintain the professional autonomy, identity and structural integrity of the Archive as a national institution have fallen on deaf ears. Nor is there a word about the underlying philosophy and

ethics of audiovisual archiving, on which all else should be built, and which the proposed new structure blatantly contravenes. Stakeholders who contributed comments earlier in the review may recognise their constructive criticisms applied to the Archive's disadvantage in ways they never intended.

The AFC, says 'Directions', wants to build trust and dialogue. Why, then, is future stakeholder consultation relegated to a low-level committee meeting once every six months? Or why was the window for comment originally confined to the holiday break when everyone's away, and set to close on 23 January? Why did the AFC pre-empt major proposals in the paper by abolishing eight senior management positions? Only yesterday, after sustained public outcry, was the window opened a little further (to close on 16 February), and staff positions reinstated pending the outcome of the review.

The paper heavily emphasises potential 'synergies' between the Archive and the AFC. Yet none required amalgamation. All are achievable by normal, commonsense cooperation between government entities. So why was 'integration' rammed through with such haste and determination? Those who, like me, trusted government assurances that all would be well have had their worst fears realised. This is no partnership. It is a hostile takeover: a destructive marriage of incompatible bodies, totally different in character and culture. The Archive, although

the larger one, is defenceless. It has no director or council, and last Thursday the AFC purged its senior management in a pre-emptive strike (now, for the time being, reversed). How can it argue for itself in this unequal relationship?

Through no fault of its own, our national audiovisual archive has had a rough time in recent years. A foolish name change — unexpected and unexplained — muddied its identity (screensound is actually a technical term for sound tracks). Now the equally unexplained AFC merger threatens its continued existence. *TIOH* recommended statutory authority status for the Archive, comparable with peer institutions like the National Library and National Museum. Government agreed. But it never arrived. The amended AFC Act, under which the Archive now falls, does not even recognise — much less guarantee — its existence as an entity.

The Archive's public guardians have failed it — and failed all Australians. The fragile heritage of collections, skills and knowledge it protects is now in the hands of non-archivists. Will it be safe? Or can the mistake be undone?

There are six words I can't get out of my head.

'Trust me. I'm from the AFC'.

RAY EDMONDSON OAM IS AN INTERNATIONAL ARCHIVING CONSULTANT, WRITER AND TEACHER. HE WAS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SCREENSOUND FROM 1984 TO 2001.

THIS ARTICLE WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE *CANBERRA TIMES*, 18 DECEMBER 2003

The strong national and international protest triggered by the news on 11 December 2003 that senior staff at ScreenSound Australia/National Film and Sound Archive had been made redundant had its effect. The Australian Film Commission (AFC), who are now responsible for the Archive, were forced by public and Ministerial pressure to rescind their action and apologise to staff. They were also forced to extend the deadline for responses to their new 'Directions' plan from 23 January to 16 February, so that the window for comment was extended beyond the holiday season, allowing a realistic opportunity for response. They were forced to agree that activities and jobs would not be moved out of Canberra.

But this was only a reprieve. Despite its promises the AFC is pushing ahead. It is widely expected that it will implement as much of the 'Directions' plan as it can, once the 16 February deadline for feedback is past. If it does, it will mean the end of Australia's Archive as a recognisable public institution. Its elements will be split up in defiance of ethical norms and drawn into the generality of the much smaller AFC, its scope and purpose greatly narrowed, its profile and autonomy dramatically reduced. Senior staff are still under threat should all this proceed.

Advocacy groups are mobilising and the stage is set for the political debate which will begin after the Senate reconvenes on 11 February. Check the Archive Forum website, www.afiresearch.rmit.edu.au/archiveforum to find out what you can do to defend ScreenSound.

LIVING DANGEROUSLY IN THE SEVENTIES

Living dangerously was not an issue when I took up the job of running the newly built Mildura Arts Centre in 1965. By comparison, life in Mildura was tranquil when I revisited the Ulster Museum and Art Gallery on a Gulbenkian Foundation grant in 1970. My former hometown of Belfast was like an armed camp by then, as the dynamic civil rights activist Bernadette Devlin inspired Ulster voters and our fellow students at Queens University to reject oppressive living conditions for workers of all religions. The explosive Belfast atmosphere certainly did not resemble the rural calm of sunny Mildura.

Likewise, travelling across the USA via the Californian hippie revolution to New York, I felt startled by dynamic feminists like Lucy Lippard and seeing the 1970 artists' strike outside the Metropolitan Museum of Art with banners reading 'Artworkers against war, racism & sexism'.

My seven-month Gulbenkian tour also extended to Europe. Influential European 'artworkers' like Josef Beuys in Germany added to a feeling that Australian life was heading for some dynamic changes. On my return home, I heard echoes of this change in the stage production of the musical, *Hair*, in Sydney in early 1971.

A worldwide interest among many artists and curators in presenting more politically-motivated artworks was reflected in Australia by some interesting younger sculptors and art students. Traditional media such as expensive bronze-cast sculpture or slowly-carved stone and wood were losing favour. Art schools encouraged works made from assemblages of 'found objects', or the making of informal, temporary installations inside buildings or in open landscapes. Large scale 'earthworks' appearing in magazines from the UK, Europe and USA were creating new excitement here, as well as various 'body-artwork' and studio performances (or 'happenings'). Theatrical, ephemeral statements in the arts about political activism provided an outlet for genuinely angry attitudes to the last bitter days of the Vietnam War. Popular music had subversive lyrics, ranging from those of Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan to the Beatles.

Not surprisingly, all these newer kinds of art and ideas also influenced our decisions when organising the fifth Mildura Sculpture Triennial (subtitled 'Sculpturscape73'). Instead of the safe 'institution' of the new Arts Centre buildings and manicured lawns, the venue chosen for 1973 was innovatively set within an adjacent eight hectares of uncultivated bushland bordering the Murray River escarpment. This integration of sculptural installations with a landscape had never before been staged in Australia for any major exhibition. *Sculpturscape'73* therefore was a risk that was not fully understood by me, or by my backers in the Mildura City Council, the Victorian Ministry of the Arts or in Gough Whitlam's new Australia Council for the Arts.

The exhibition invitations attracted a kaleidoscopic range of

responses. There were a few extreme ones like Tim Burns' 'Minefield', from Sydney University's School of Architecture, where Tim was working in their celebrated Tin Sheds. Unfortunately (or fortunately for others) Tim had an accident while setting up his exhibit before the opening. One of his mock anti-personnel 'booby-traps' spontaneously triggered when he was lying near the charge. He was treated at Mildura Base Hospital with a rather badly singed leg, and it was reported to the Municipal Health Officer as a possible public health hazard. Consequently the Arts Centre was ordered to defuse Tim's whole contraption the day before Premier Dick Hamer arrived to officially open the exhibition, or else *Sculpturscape '73* would be closed off to the public!

MY LOYAL ARTS CENTRE CARETAKER
DROVE THE COUNCIL TRACTOR BACK AND
FORTH, DETONATING TIM'S 'MINEFIELD'.
HE EVEN GOT HIS ANKLE BURNED BY HOT
MAGNESIUM IN THE PROCESS.

Naturally I had to give priority to the other 129 works by a total of eighty-five artists in the show. So with Tim's knowledge (if not his blessings), I arranged to scarify the topsoil covering his 400 square metre exhibit site on the scheduled opening day Easter Saturday morning. Poor old Jack Cumming, my loyal Arts Centre caretaker, drove the Council tractor back and forth, detonating Tim's 'booby traps'. Jack even got his ankle burned by hot magnesium or gunpowder in the ground-ripping process.

This was certainly risky work in practice, as well as in terms of museum administration. It was symbolic of the anti-war activism current among Tim's generation in 1973, and it also tried to engage passive museum-users (if necessary by frightening them) when they ignored the artist's signs posted around this displaced 'Minefield'.

Predictably, Tim's quite subversive attempt at *Sculpturscape'73* received far more publicity than most other sculpture exhibitors in 1973. It seemed unfair to many of the best installations at *Sculpturscape'73*, including the superb 'Ecology Well' excavated by the late Ross Grounds and Peter Cole's ironically surreal 'Pool', but the media is usually indiscriminate and highly unpredictable.

Over the years following this event, lots of scandals caused publicity that partly promoted the future sculpture Triennials held in Mildura, but eventually it helped to sour my relations with the local

The sculptor and the bomb

Sculptor Tim Burns' exhibit in a Mildura sculpture exhibition really went off with a bang.

Mildura is still recovering from his 'realistic' school.

In fact that's what his exhibit of 400 square yards of sand was — a real minefield.

Burns, 53, who wears a T-shirt branded 'Time Bomb', used granulated gunpowder in plastic bags as the explosives in the exhibit.

Warning burns to right arm and right leg, Burns said today that one of the charges were set off when he bent his knee and his hand pressed down on one of the 20 charges he had set in the sand.

It was a nice demonstration, Burns, who watched today as children played in the sand that was his 'minefield', said that it had cost him \$10 for pressure switches and gunpowder and about \$200 for the sand.

He said that small electric detonators were fixed to the packets of gunpowder.

They saw the danger signs that Burns had placed around the exhibit, so Mr Bally picked up a large stone and tossed it into the enclosure. There was a loud bang and a cloud of fine sand from the sand.

Just after the Mildura City Council building inspector, Mr Bill Gill, who said today: "Our main concern was that Burns

didn't know how many detonators were left.

Mr Gill decided after a conference with the deputy town clerk, Mr Damien Goss, the director of the Mildura Arts Centre, Mr Thomas McCullough, and Burns that a front-end loader should demolish the exhibit.

FLASH

That Mr Gill and the others realised after photos from Burns who was allowed to trigger the device with a hand-control vice with a hand-control vice.

Mr McCullough said: "It was a nice demonstration."

He said that some of the mines were coupled to batteries and were then wired to other mines to cause delayed action explosions.

"What I created was something that gave people the opportunity of assessing whether they were looking at it was in fact a minefield or a piece of sculpture," Burns said.

Two men have run into unexpected difficulties. The Department of Agriculture has placed a ticket near one of the entries.



TIM BURNS . . . a "realistic" exhibit.

Well hits trouble—
is naturally



Two men have run into unexpected difficulties. The Department of Agriculture has placed a ticket near one of the entries.



TWO men have run into unexpected difficulties. The Department of Agriculture has placed a ticket near one of the entries.

politicians. For me, the physical dangers of Tim's 'Minefield' were prescient of the political minefield that I faced in the next five years of the seventies. I survived working within the visual arts in Mildura, Sydney and Melbourne for a relatively short career. The 1976 Sydney Biennale was broadly based upon Mildura's innovations, before I made my swan song with the large 'Australian Sculpture Triennial' held across two campuses of Latrobe University and PIT/RMIT at Bundoora, Melbourne in 1981.

Bringing experimental artists into any country town, or even into a great metropolis, can be an 'explosive' recipe that makes life quite hazardous for curator entrepreneurs. For me, running risks and sharing in new experiments probably helped balance my more routine work in museums of art and history, although the personal price was far higher than I ever imagined in 1973. Nightmares about the seventies still recur, but I would not have missed that period, or befriending lots of those stimulating artists and colleagues, in exchange for a longer career in a more routine art world.

TOM MCCULLOUGH TSTC (ARTS & CRAFTS), B.ED. (FINE ARTS), GRAD. DIP. MUSEUM STUDIES, RETIRED IN 2003 AFTER SPENDING MANY YEARS IN VARIOUS MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERIES IN BELFAST N.I., MILDURA, MELBOURNE AND SYDNEY. HE ALSO RETIRED RECENTLY AS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE MUSEUMS ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE, MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA (VIC BRANCH).

Courtesy of Tom McCullough

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NEW TRADITIONS FOR CRAFT AUSTRALIA

CATRINA VIGNANDO

When people think of contemporary craft, often they think of finely executed objects that have been produced by hand by skilled craftspeople who have painstakingly evolved their skills over many years of training. Whilst this image is a relevant reflection of contemporary craft practice, there is also an equally accurate but very different image that depicts the craftspeople. This is an image of craftspeople working with digital technologies to both design and manufacture their products, or working with industry and mechanised manufacturing processes to construct what are equally beautiful and substantial crafted objects. While these approaches may seem at odds, they simultaneously represent the breadth and diversity of contemporary craft in Australia and reflect the global tendency of the changes that are impacting on the sector.

The multiplicity inherent in Australian professional craft practice defies a singular definition. Contemporary craft occupies a vast arena that extends from design for production work to commissions to one-off works for exhibition and the collector market. It is this multi-layered nature of Australian contemporary craft that makes it so dynamic and vibrant and sustains the ongoing development of the Australian craft scene. Craft Australia has been celebrating and promoting Australian contemporary craft practice for over thirty years, and in that time the environment for crafts practice has diversified enormously.

As the peak industry body for the professional contemporary craft sector, Craft Australia has been responsive to the changing face of the industry. After an extensive consultative process with the sector held in 2002 and an in-depth analysis of the organisation's operational configuration, a major restructure of Craft Australia took place in 2003.

The outcome is a radical realignment of the organisation that has seen it relocate from Sydney, its home of over thirty years, to new premises in Canberra at the National Press Club in Barton. The restructure, supported by the Australia Council and the craft sector, is a positive strategy to position Craft Australia for the future growth of the industry. The move to Canberra places Craft Australia in a central position — both geographically and symbolically — to effectively meet the national needs of the Australian contemporary craft sector. The National Press Club is also equipped with cutting edge communication tools for national and global link-ups thereby making Craft Australia a hub of information exchange on contemporary craft.

The position in Canberra is also ideal for the international promotion of Australian contemporary craft. Such activities will continue the strong work that Craft Australia has forged in this field through export programs, exhibitions and participation at significant international trade fairs. For over ten years Craft Australia has managed a focused export program to the United

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The Department offers a wide range of learning opportunities to meet the requirements of individuals at all levels of their museum careers. Programmes are delivered both by distance learning (part-time) and through face-to-face, campus-based courses (full-time) enabling students to select a mode of learning to suit their needs and circumstances.

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- one year full-time (campus-based)
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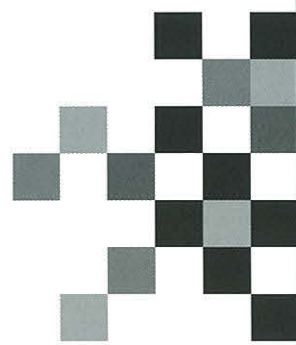
All programmes:

- are underpinned by the department's leading edge research and the work of RCMG (Research Centre for Museums and Galleries)
- reflect the department's commitment to student-centred learning and to meeting the needs of students from diverse backgrounds
- maintain an international perspective and reflect the department's collaborative approach to working within the sector

The Department has been awarded the highest possible score (24/24) for the quality of its teaching and student support by The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and was graded 5 in the most recent Research Assessment Exercise.



University of
Leicester



IN THE 21st CENTURY

States of America and Europe by participating annually in programs such as the Sculpture, Object and Fine Art Fair (SOFA) in Chicago, and Talente and Schmuck in Germany. The success of this concerted program is now evident through the financial returns to the participating organisations and practitioners. In addition, regular collector tours have now been established between USA and Australia, further forging the success of this initiative.

Craft Australia in its new guise will continue to promote Australian contemporary craft internationally to new markets. Such programs will be carried out in partnership with key industry bodies such as Austrade, Ausindustry and the Craft Organisations of Australia. Already such partnerships have led to the planning of an American Collector tour for the middle of this year, and the establishment of a pilot program with Austrade and Craft ACT to train craftspeople for export readiness. This program will culminate with the participants exhibiting at the Birmingham Spring Fair in the United Kingdom in February this year.

From its new central location, in close proximity to the operating quarters of Australian government, Craft Australia is well placed to undertake its new role as the peak advocacy and lobbying body for the industry. Canberra is also an ideal position for undertaking research, which is another of the key strategic goals of the new organisation. This research will assist Craft Australia to better promote and deliver the needs of the sector by examining and

recording the developments, trends and structures inherent to the craft industry.

Strategies to gather and communicate these findings will be managed through the Craft Australia website and the regular presentation of Forums around the country. The current website will be reconfigured as a portal for information on all matters relating to Australian contemporary craft. It will be inclusive of the breadth and diversity of the craft sector by having direct hotlinks to existing organisations and their services, making the website a hub for craft information. The Forums will be a means to engage with the various aspects the Australian contemporary craft sector to gauge the areas of focus, growth, need and development. In essence the forums are a process for both undertaking research and strengthening communication links with the sector.

Craft Australia acknowledges an enormous legacy of research, innovation and adventure in its history. This legacy allows us to move enthusiastically into the future with a new location, a new corporate structure and a redefined set of goals. With over thirty years of history as its foundation, the new Craft Australia, with the support of the sector, is poised to write the new traditions for Australian contemporary craft.

CATRINA VIGNANDO IS GENERAL MANAGER OF CRAFT AUSTRALIA
www.craftaus.com

CLASSIC AND WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL

The Classic and Wooden Boat Festival at Australian National Maritime Museum on 6–7 March 2004 is expected to attract over 18,000 people over two days: to see more than 200 boats on display, from speedboats to work boats; race model yachts; scull a scow or paddle a coracle; and watch demonstrations of traditional maritime crafts — rope-making, coopering, sail-making, timber steaming, ropework, and blacksmithing.

Courtesy of Australian National Maritime Museum



OTHER FEATURES

AH XIAN CLOISSONÉ ENAMEL SCULPTURES AT QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY

Ah Xian's cloisonné enamel sculpture, *Human human — lotus, cloisonné figure 1* (winner of the Inaugural National Sculpture prize in 2001), is the centrepiece of a Queensland Art Gallery (QAG) exhibition of the artist's work. QAG Director Doug Hall describes *Human human* as 'a work whose ambition and complexity are truly audacious ...one of the most significant figurative sculptures of recent years'.

The exhibition consists mostly of Ah Xian's now iconic busts, executed in porcelain, carved jade, lacquerware and, most recently, malachite (a green ore of copper). Preferring to use family and friends as models — apparently the casting process can be quite an ordeal for the sitter who is only able to breathe through small holes in the plaster — Ah Xian's application of traditional Chinese craft techniques to the human figure is done to extraordinary effect. Ah Xian sees the impact of his work thus:

'the human body is absolutely inexhaustible as a subject ...The reason why people are so seduced and drawn to it is not the body itself, but that place where it joins traditional decorative arts, and it is exactly there where the work has its appeal and where it actually succeeds — you pull it apart and it means nothing.'

Sometimes likened to death masks, the embellished heads and the full figure of *Human human*, with their uniformly closed eyes (another legacy of the casting process) convey the serenity of sleep. These magnificent examples of Ah Xian's masterful revitalisation of traditional techniques in contemporary form are on display at QAG until 7 March 2004.

Ah Xian *Human human — lotus cloisonné figure*
Courtesy of Queensland Art Gallery



IN THE LOOP — FEEDBACK ON MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA MAGAZINE



The kitchen in the Red House Museum, Gomersal, Yorkshire, United Kingdom

Photograph by Roslyn Russell, reproduced by permission of Kirklees Community History Service

Masthead

The response to the new masthead design for *Museums Australia Magazine* has been very positive. Readers have commented on the clean, crisp look of the last issue's cover and overall design. We thank our designer, Liam Camilleri of GRI.D Communications for his creative response to the masthead redesign.

International coverage

The article on literary house museums, 'At home with English authors', in the November 2003 issue of *Museums Australia Magazine*, has sparked considerable interest in us in Yorkshire in the United Kingdom.

The Red House Museum at Gomersal, which was featured in the article, took the

opportunity to issue a press release about the coverage it received in *Museums Australia Magazine*. The Editor was contacted, first of all by a reporter from the *Spenborough Guardian*, Cleckheaton, and then by another from the *Yorkshire Evening Post* (circulation 300,000), seeking further comment about the author's

opinion of the Red House Museum and Yorkshire's museums generally. The reporters were also interested in finding out about *Museums Australia Magazine*.

To find out more about the Red House Museum check the website: www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/museums/museum.asp?HID=6

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LOOMING IN ON ART

MADELEINE MCCLELLAND

Cloudy Clearing: a suitcase exhibition of small woven tapestries was opened at Pinnacles Gallery, Thuringowa (twin city of Townsville) last year with a ceremonial 'cutting-down' of a tapestry from a loom set up in the gallery — an appropriate gesture for an exhibition that overturns some long-held perceptions that tapestry is a public art for the decoration of buildings.

This suitcase exhibition brings together ten artist-weavers from all over the eastern states, with varied backgrounds and levels of experience. A perfunctory glance at their works reveals a thematically and conceptually unrelated collection of brightly coloured tapestries, with exciting incongruities to be explored. What this show reveals on further inspection is a group of artists who share a commitment to creating unique tapestry design through technical experimentation. The exhibiting artists are Pam Hutley, Ines Parker, Denise Stevens, Chris Jakku, Dorothy Clews, May McCool, Louise West, Barbara Bracken, Jeanie Adams, and master weavers Susan Martin Maffei and Archie Brennan.

The impetus for this show was a two-week workshop held by renowned New York tapestry artists Archie Brennan and Susan Martin Maffei in the lush rainforests of Paluma in North Queensland. In this fertile environment Brennan and Martin Maffei instilled in these artists their passion for the possibilities of the woven image. Focusing on designing on the loom as opposed to working from cartoons, these master weavers propagated the value of tapestry as art rather than a copy craft, and encouraged the artists to play with unknown areas, subjects and methods.

Over the history of tapestry, weavers have more often been presented with the task of reproducing a painted image in thread than commissioned to create a unique work of art. The paradox is that while tapestry is based on the one technique that allows greatest freedom of design on a loom, it has been limited to the use of cartoons and other artworks for inspiration. As a result, tapestry has been underestimated as an artistic discipline in its own right. Over the twentieth century the need for public tapestry has dwindled, and in Australia remains a marginal activity that receives limited funding for large public works. The skill and creativity of artist-weavers in this exhibition shows how tapestry is increasingly part of an individual

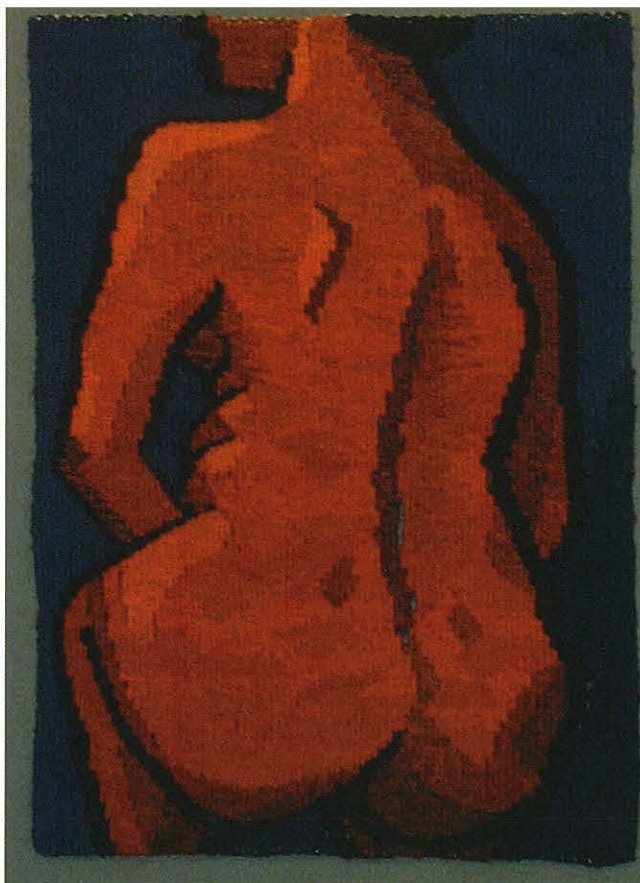
artist's repertoire of skills, used to create works of immense aesthetic and creative impact. As Jeanie Adams explains, contemporary weavers are now really 'painting with thread'.

For Adams, the joy of weaving begins with the threads and ends with the love of the act: 'I can't stop myself collecting threads and various textiles ... A few weeks ago I was sitting in the lounge weaving, while my husband played the piano and my visitor wrote in her journal and I thought, 'I could do this for the rest of my life!'

The tapestry image is constructed rather than layered or marked onto a page. Martin Maffei reflects in her catalogue statement that 'The building of a tapestry, like the cumulative days of life, gathers slowly and progressively one day, one shape at a time. The narrative unfolds. This is the adventure. This is the joy. This is the agony. At the end, this experience is but a recorded memory and you anxiously anticipate the next journey, and begin again.'

Although some artists would be horrified by the suggestion, it is the very 'domesticity' of tapestry that has allowed weavers to push it further towards the realm of art rather than craft. A common feature of works in this show is that they are picture-frame small, made on looms no larger than a door. These works were created in living rooms and small studios. Unlike their historic predecessors that lined whole walls of cavernous rooms, these works only punctuate the walls of a gallery space and call for intimate reflection.

One such delicate and intimate work is Charleville-based Dorothy Clews' 'Crossroads', which is an experiment with dimensions of space, inspired by the view of the landscape from a plane. By attaching four separate digitally designed tapestry sections to the mount the artist has created a work connected only by negative space: 'I rather like the idea of the unwoven area being the crossroad, not the actual weaving'. The emphasis is also on the expressionistic oscillation of colours. Clews explained that she fell in love with tapestry because the woven surface and yarn reflect colour more intensely. While landscape has been her long-standing preoccupation, Clews has been moving recently towards abstract digital design work. Using a computer to play with her archive of designs, Clews is able to focus on the key elements of line, shape and colour. This approach is encapsulated in 'Crossroads', which for



Natural Form II (human figure) by Jeanie Adams. Courtesy of the artist

WEAVERS HAVE MORE OFTEN BEEN PRESENTED WITH THE TASK OF REPRODUCING A PAINTED IMAGE IN THREAD THAN COMMISSIONED TO CREATE A UNIQUE WORK OF ART. AS A RESULT, TAPESTRY HAS BEEN UNDERESTIMATED AS AN ARTISTIC DISCIPLINE IN ITS OWN RIGHT. OVER THE TWENTIETH CENTURY THE NEED FOR PUBLIC TAPESTRY HAS DWINDLED, AND REMAINS A MARGINAL ACTIVITY THAT RECEIVES LIMITED FUNDING FOR LARGE PUBLIC WORKS.

the artist is about an intersection she has reached in her work between abstraction and representation, between flat-woven, conventional rectangles and three-dimensional irregular shape.

Other works such as 'Keith' by Chris Jakku combine old and new in a deceptively straightforward image. Created from a poster of the aged Rolling Stones musician Keith Richards using a monochromatic colour range, this work reverses the flat woven nature of the tapestry technique. Jakku left sections of warp and weft unstitched to create curved vertical contours that define the wrinkles of the face. Using black, white and grey was a self-imposed discipline to help Jakku (who loves colour) to focus on methods and design. This laboriously constructed portrait also introduces to the medium the unfamiliar subject of pop culture, resulting in an innovative tapestry relief, where texture, colour and subject revitalise old practices.

All artists at the workshop worked together on a final project, producing two woven women, *At the Melbourne Cup I and II*, replete with gold and silver threads and even a pair of glittery red woven shoes. Each woven section of these two works varied slightly from the next, according to the different weaving tendencies of each artist, thus revealing useful comparisons between their working methods and providing a metaphor for the collaborative effort of the exhibition. There are few opportunities for the public to see an exhibition of tapestry art in Australia, especially an artist-initiated show such as *Cloudy Clearing* that weaves together the public's threads of understanding of tapestry's potential as beautiful and unique works of art.

Cloudy Clearing : a suitcase exhibition of small woven tapestries is touring from February 2004 to T'Arts Gallery, Adelaide; Lady Denman Heritage Complex, Huskisson NSW; Historical House Museum, Charleville QLD; Noosa Regional Gallery QLD; South-West Institute of TAFE, Warrnambool VIC; TAFTA Gallery 159, Brisbane QLD; Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery, QLD; the Millicent Gallery SA and to further venues.

MADELEINE MCCLELLAND IS AN ARTS CONSULTANT BASED IN TOWNSVILLE.

CAROL SCOTT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FEBRUARY 2004

THIS YEAR WE CELEBRATE A DECADE OF MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA.

This year we celebrate a decade of Museums Australia.

A lot has changed since the Association was formed from an amalgamation of like-minded peak bodies at the end of 1993. It is timely to reflect on the changed context in which museums are operating in 2004 compared with 1994.

In this report, I am highlighting three major issues to stimulate further conversation, discussion and debate about the current environment in which we are working and the challenges that we face for the future.

Re-negotiated relationships

Over the last decade, museums, governments and indigenous communities have worked together with regard to the collection, interpretation and repatriation of indigenous material cultural heritage. Museums Australia was at forefront of these initiatives when it produced the ground-breaking policy *Previous Possessions, New Obligations* in 1993. MA continues its commitment through the recent update and re-naming of the initial policy to *Continuous Cultures, On-going Obligations*.

In addition, the repatriation

from museums to communities and/or the appropriate care of significant cultural material such as ancestral remains and secret/sacred items is being facilitated through the federal *Return of Indigenous Cultural Property Program* as well as through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). The funds associated with these programs are enabling museums and communities to work together to resolve the custody and care of these important items to the satisfaction of their traditional custodians.

Thinking collectively

Following on the work of improving access to the distributed national collection by the Heritage Collections Council, the Cultural Ministers Council commissioned the National Collections Advisory Forum in 2002 to explore the feasibility of establishing an over-arching body to serve the interests of the combined collections sector (museums, galleries, libraries and archives).

In the same year, Museums Australia developed a statement of joint purpose with other peak collections bodies such as the

Australian Society of Archivists (ASA), the Australian Institute for Conservation of Cultural Materials (AICCM) and the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and will work collectively with these associations to facilitate reciprocal memberships, undertake joint professional development programs and lobby for appropriate public policy for the cultural heritage sector.

Sector sustainability and change

Museums are operating in a volatile and changing social environment. Increased leisure options and changing leisure patterns challenge audience maintenance (Lynch, Burton, Scott, Wilson and Smith, 2000). Museums are expected to undertake more and more activities (Kotler and Kotler, 2001) and economic rationalism has resulted in the slow demise of the notion of 'public good' which informed public policy for many years and under which funding was taken, in many Western industrialised countries, to be a given. Economic rationalism has introduced a new world order in which funding is tied

to the demonstration of proofs that an institution's activities are worthy of on-going assistance. In this climate of rapid and imposed change, public institutions

...experience difficulty in advocating or indeed in some cases articulating certain core functions and responsibilities in a way that is sufficiently compelling to secure the funds to resource them (Ellis, 2002: 8).

We know that demonstration of 'impact' will be required to prove that the influence of museums extends beyond the visit to the longer term effects on the community. This will be the basis on which future funding is determined.

Building appropriate relationships with indigenous communities in relation to the care of their cultural heritage, creating meaningful partnerships and strategic alliances across the collections field and advocating for a sustainable future for the sector are three important challenges where the Association is working on your behalf.

CAROL SCOTT
PRESIDENT
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MOVING ON

Peter Andrews, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, has resigned to pursue other opportunities, after completing the upgrade of the exhibitions.

Meredith Blake, formerly the Administration Officer of MA (Victoria) is now Assistant Curator with the Art and Heritage Unit at the City of Port Phillip, Victoria.

Victoria Collings, previously Education Officer at the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, is now K-6 Education Coordinator at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

James Dexter, previously Assistant Director at Museum Victoria, is now Head of Public Programmes at Auckland Museum.

Frank Horwath is the new director of the Australian Museum, Sydney. He was previously with the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, and director and chief executive of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust.

Peter Millward, previously in Education at Melbourne Museum, is now at Auckland Museum.

Robert Swieca has left the Powerhouse Museum after seventeen years to form his own business.

Louise Tegart, who was looking after the Australian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, is now Director of Latrobe Regional Gallery.

THE MARKETING MIX:

Promoting museums, galleries & exhibitions

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ANNE KIRKER

Museum of Brisbane

Three banners carrying the text 'Discover our Past/MoB/ Imagine our Future' hang on the façade of the City Hall to announce the opening of the new Museum of Brisbane (MoB). The ground floor of this iconic building housed the Brisbane City Gallery until the Lord Mayor and his Councillors decided that Queensland's capital warranted a social history showpiece in its precinct. A new director, Alice-Anne Boylan, formerly at the helm of Cairns Regional Gallery, was appointed to steer the program and eighteen-strong staff for MoB. The museum opened on 25 October 2003.

Judging by the inaugural exhibitions, the museum has successfully integrated social history, visual arts and an element of archaeology to celebrate Brisbane's heritage, contemporary culture, and its people. On the occasions I visited soon after the opening, MoB impressed me firstly for the way it honours the indigenous peoples connected with Queensland's capital city. For instance, in the vestibule (called Story Hall), large-scale photographic portraits of twelve members of the Aboriginal Council of Elders are featured with their comments on what this responsibility means to them.

In one of the series of galleries which used to house the popular Brisbane City Gallery, a special exhibition titled *One square mile: Brisbane boundaries* has been curated by Murri artist Richard Bell and Brisbane writer Michelle Helmrich. Here, nine of the fifteen contemporary exhibiting artists have Aboriginal roots. Refreshingly, this distinction is not laboured in the show itself

with, for instance, Judy Watson and Gordon Bennett in lively visual dialogue with Luke Roberts, Lindy Lee and their urban colleagues.

Of the four other opening exhibitions, *Bite the blue sky: Brisbane beginnings*, is the most extensive. This social history project occupies the suite of rooms to the right of the vestibule, formerly not made public. Introducing them is a quiet, restful space, custom-designed to show an unfolding triple screen projection of early Brisbane. With its meandering river and Victorian-style architecture, viewers are reminded of how much heritage has already been lost to developers in this city. Open until 4 April, *Bite the blue sky* explores the identity of Brisbane beginnings from Gondwana times, when the physical environment we are familiar with today was determined, through to contemporary business ventures such as Andrew Petrie Stonemasons, the OMI safety scalpel and Wildfire Studios (electronic games developer). In this vibrant and diverse exhibition, nine themes are covered.

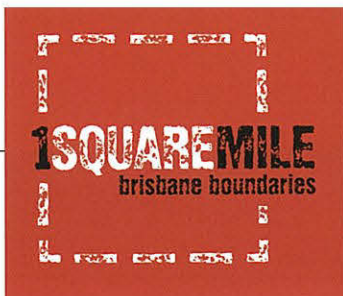
Viewers particularly enjoyed (as I did) the small assemblages of personal items brought to Brisbane by migrant settlers, titled 'Objects from home.' Accompanied by a plasma screen with individuals speaking of their experiences, it was a timely and poignant reminder of the multicultural mix of this city. As with the other themes of *Bite the blue sky*, this display is relevant across generations, with appropriate wall texts, and a subtle challenge to children (and adults!): 'Pack your suitcase —

If you were moving to a new country, what would you take?'

Individuals' stories are effectively used throughout this exhibition, leading in the first instance with Indigenous peoples of Brisbane. Their stories extend to the effect of major events on Brisbane, such as that of George Sullivan, an enlisted soldier in World War I. On a lighter note, there is the impact of rock 'n roll for 'local girl made good', Betty McQuade, who sang at Brisbane City Hall concerts before appearing on television's 'Six O'Clock Rock.' Engaging with the twenty-first century, I envied a youth totally engrossed in playing 'Ty the Tasmanian Tiger', an electronic game lately developed by Brisbane's Krome Studios.

Bite the blue sky was jointly curated by MoB staff members Louise Denoon (formerly of Global Arts Link, Ipswich) and Helen Taylor. As with the guest-curated *One square mile*, the exhibition is accompanied by a well-designed illustrated exhibition brochure, free to the public.

Through the inclusive nature of all the inaugural displays, the Brisbane City Council clearly wishes to engage with a broad audience base, encompassing not only the CBD with its tourists, but suburbs as diversely different in demography as Inala and St Lucia. This is underscored by the display of photographic portraits in the downstairs exhibition space titled *Faces of Brisbane*. Together with the other splendid opening exhibitions and the MoB Store (which stocks exclusively Brisbane-designed homewares and jewellery), it repays several repeat visits.



Courtesy of Museum of Brisbane



Volunteers from the National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame

Picture courtesy of Pauline Cockrill

The challenge for the Council and Boylan will be to sustain public interest in the museum without committing it to a punishing exhibition schedule and the 'Mobile Museum' community program. Given the enthusiastic and talented staff at MoB, the support of the BCC and the abundant goodwill in the Brisbane community towards this new asset, such a challenge will undoubtedly be met face-on.

ANNE KIRKER IS SENIOR CURATOR (SPECIAL PROJECTS) AT QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY.

PAULINE COCKRILL

***Willing & Able: Recruiting, Managing and Retaining Volunteers in Museums and Galleries.* By Nina Bowbridge and Mark Creyton. Fortitude Valley Q, MAQ/RGAQ Partnership Program, 2002. ISBN: 0958641625**

This publication was produced in association with a series of workshops delivered across Queensland in April–May 2002, a joint project of the Training and Professional Development Program of Museums Australia (Queensland) and the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland. Volunteering Queensland was an associated partner.

With the growing focus on volunteers, highlighted by the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the International Year of the Volunteer in 2001, there have been several guides on the subject of volunteer management in the non-profit

sector. I was eager to check out this guide specifically geared towards museums, an area that does not appear to have been addressed in published form before. On first sight, the ring-bound manual gives a very professional and erudite approach indicating the heightened importance volunteers now have in museums and society in general.

The authors, Nina Bowbridge and Mark Creyton, work as educators and facilitators of programs for Volunteering Queensland and are particularly experienced in the field of volunteer programs within non-profit community organisations. The state organisations which sponsored them to produce the manual are to be thanked and congratulated for their work.

Willing & Able is divided into five chapters intended to be read sequentially for logical progress through the various concepts, theories and examples of effective volunteer management. However, the authors suggest that it is also possible to select chapters individually.

Each chapter begins with a diagrammatic model to indicate the structure of the content of that particular section. The chapters are further divided into smaller segments, clearly defined by dot points and interspersed with separate, individually-designed blocks containing 'Useful Tips', 'Time For You To Consider' and handy museum stories illustrating volunteering in action. There are also pages devoted to thought-provoking exercises designed to be photocopied for group involvement, with space for writing notes. There are additional pages designed as handouts, as well as examples of forms and policies.

The first chapter sets the

scene, considering the principles of volunteering. It introduces the key concepts that underpin the *Willing & Able* approach, which the authors maintain is a fresh slant on the subject. Unlike traditional models which focus on merely attracting and retaining volunteers, *Willing & Able* focuses firstly on the role of volunteers in sustaining and developing the museum and secondly on building and supporting the community as a whole. The fundamental principle of *Willing & Able* is that volunteering in museums is a way in which volunteers can engage with the community and make a difference to the place where they live.

Chapter 2, the largest and most crucial section in the manual, looks at planning and developing a rationale for community involvement. It emphasises the importance of building firm foundations for the organisation in the form of statements of principles, mission statements, action plans, risk management strategies, volunteer job descriptions and policies and procedures.

The identification and induction of volunteers from go to whoa is identified in Chapter 3, while Chapter 4 examines facilitative leadership and how to make volunteer programs work. *Willing & Able* emphasises the significance of facilitative, as opposed to the traditional directive, form of leadership as a more effective way of working with people in non-profit community organisations. The final chapter draws all the content together and highlights the need for constant evaluation and adaptation in a successful volunteer program.

This publication is thoroughly researched and full marks must be given for its

clarity and concision. It is essentially a management instruction manual, with deliberate design features (such as clear black and white diagrams and ring binder format) for photocopying purposes.

It certainly lives up to the authors' promise that it will help those involved in establishing and maintaining volunteer groups and programs, but it is perhaps geared more to paid professional volunteer coordinators. Speaking from my own experience in a region where many small museums are run solely by elderly volunteers, I would imagine that many would view the overall approach as too didactic to consider that this book is 'for them'. However it is a practical guide that could be used in a workshop situation with a good facilitator, which is its intention. It is a definite must for the bookshelf for museums and galleries where volunteers make up an essential part of the workforce.

PAULINE COCKRILL IS CURATOR OF THE NATIONAL PIONEER WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME, ALICE SPRINGS, NORTHERN TERRITORY. SHE RELIES ON A GROUP OF AROUND THIRTY-FIVE VOLUNTEERS TO KEEP THE MUSEUM OPEN ALL DAY, EVERY DAY, ALMOST THE ENTIRE YEAR ROUND.

THOMAS GRAHAM

On Doing Local History.
By Carol Kammen.
AltaMira Press; 2003.
ISBN 0-7591-0253-8

One of the challenges local museums frequently face is dealing with collections that

don't have documented stories. Storerooms and exhibition halls overflow, but record cabinets and object files are generally empty. Lengthy research is required to bring the objects to life by exploring the layers of their individual histories. Had these stories been captured at the point of acceptance, our levels of understanding and interpretation would be that much richer. And therein lies the value of this book that chronicles the history of local history in America.

Acknowledged as a classic from the stable of the American Association for State and Local History, this revised edition is relevant to a global audience as it challenges us to think about what local history is, how we explore it and for what purpose. For that reason all local historical societies who run volunteer museums should acquire and read it as it provides valuable insights into the meaning of memory and place, how the nature of historical interpretation changes over time and what we need to do to explore and record inclusive histories.

Divided into seven essays each with its own coda, Kammen's text is a credible voice for the professional expertise and contribution local historians have made, and continue to make, to the archive of historical literature. Over the past twenty-five years, local history in the USA has developed a level of maturity beyond that of simply studying the past to seeking ways to understand how history grows and evolves. They have moved to a point where local historians can treat the past as the past, as opposed to some selective golden era they have to emulate or admire.

Kammen's methodology is influenced by two historians whom she acknowledges specially. The first is the

American Carl Becker, who noted that history is the past itself *and* what happens in the mind of the historian when s/he reflects upon it. In his view historians essentially ask what has changed and what has remained the same. The second is the Frenchman Marc Bloch, who taught that to understand the past we must be aware of the present and of human nature. Guided by these principles the author advocates that to be a good researcher and to be sure of the past one has to weave together the following four threads — thoroughness, a general knowledge of place and period, a contemporary knowledge about place and human nature, and with experience develop the ability to apply an imaginative and intuitive response to the past based on knowledge and time.

Local historians by nature need to be self-motivated and Kammen guides readers with her own twofold motivation: an insatiable curiosity to find things out and an equally strong desire to communicate what she has found. In the process she provides a number of useful tips about researching and presenting local history. Her essay 'Giving Back' discusses the benefits and limitations of presenting the past through various types of printed media, including one of her own specialities, theatrical productions. The author of several successful historical dramas, she adds this additional interpretive tool to the local historian's repertoire, using historical fiction to present the truth about the past when other sources are absent or lacking.

She challenges local historians to expand the fields of their historical enquiry, to move beyond pioneers, the distribution of land, major institutions, and the healthy and wealthy. She encourages inclusive investigation of those neglected or ignored and even

to consider topics deemed controversial. Furthermore, she suggests the shortening of the historical time line to include the more recent past, recording and reflecting upon current events to provide documents with a contemporary knowledge and understanding of the places in which we live. The topics listed for explorations in her final essay 'The Past that was Yesterday' stretch the imagination, looking at local neighbourhoods in a completely new light. Local historians are encouraged to ask questions that provide a more complete picture of the past, one that is more complex and interesting than one that we simply accept at face value from what has survived in our storerooms or archives.

The book is not a detailed manual on the art of doing local history. It does, however, provide a broad set of principles and practical examples to make local historical enquiry more challenging and inviting. As many of our local collections across the country are in need of improved access and care, this work will be a useful source for discussion at monthly meetings.

THOMAS GRAHAM IS EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE MUSEUM OF THE RIVERINA, WAGGA WAGGA.

JOANNA SASSOON

A Museum for the People: A history of Museum Victoria and its Predecessors 1854–2000.
By Carolyn Rasmussen together with 46 specialist contributors. Melbourne, Scribe Publications, 2001.
ISBN: 0-908011-69-5

This is a substantial book of fifteen thematic chapters in four chronological sections with forty-six specialist contributors: an enormous

intellectual and administrative task for the 'editor', who also wrote the narratives which connect and provide context throughout it. The book provides a history of the museums which became Museum Victoria, and the people and collections, and to a lesser extent the exhibitions that made it. One reads the warp and weft of the Museum and its forebears, the ebb and flow of the institution's fortunes and those of its directors, and the passions and products of collectors, curators and volunteer staff. In essence, it tells many stories of people, objects, collections and institutions which are ignited, remembered and retold at moments when they all meet.

This extensive project has its own, hinted-at history; one has to wonder at the additional pressures created by commissioning such a work to coincide with creating a new museum. Some contributors were clearly dealing with restructures which affected their careers within the Museum, while being asked to write about their passions — alluded to by some in welcome and strident critiques of aspects of modern management. Such is the dilemma facing the modern museum manager: how to structure and control the passion and intellect essential to being a good curator? To read so openly what is etched on the hearts and memories of many staff is welcome. It courageously marks the raw experience of moments within institutional life that are usually understood only by refraction in official documents.

There is further courage in this book, in telling stories about what really happens behind the scenes in museums: things that excite the young, send shivers down the curatorial spine, but also have a very contemporary ring,

to the point of having parallels with the present case of the Australian Museum. For example, one vignette describes the discovery within its own stores of the Yarra canoe only when the collections were being prepared for relocation, and that despite its presence in the registration records, it had 'faded from living institutional memory'. (p.25) There is also misdirected kleptomania with the disappearance of over 800 rare butterfly specimens; since recovery, the new labels describe their complex provenance as 'passed through C. Wyatt Theft Collection 1946–47'. (p. 235)

Other vignettes ignite interest in objects and collections: White's birds' eggs, the Sunshine Harvester collection, Australia's first computer, and the essential Museum Library. Like going to exhibitions, these stories can be dipped into as self-contained items, read within the broader narrative of the book, or perused as an indicative catalogue of some of the most special collections. This is one of the strengths of *A Museum for the People*: it is no cabinet of curiosities, but has logic and structure in the whole entity.

In telling the power of accumulation and the effects of being collected, contemporary objects such as the Aboriginal hearse show the capacity of active collecting to reverse past practices. And like many museum histories, there are also stories of its largest objects, the buildings, which reach their zenith in the newest. There is discussion of the design of the glass-walled new building in Carlton Gardens but, not surprisingly, no comment on the practical need for modesty panels on all desks as a result of this architectural fiat. There is however, Jane Carey's interesting discussion of the

institution's invisible glass ceiling (beyond an early female Chair of the National Museum of Victoria) and the role women have played in more lowly positions within the generations of museums. The book has parochial moments: one writer says of the cyclical fortunes in the Museums' past, that 'it would not have been Victoria's Museum if the Director had not also confronted some funding problems' (p.384) — but then, isn't this the story of every Australian museum?

As the experiences discussed move from the past into modern memory, so the writing styles change. Between the formal descriptive contributions are more literary pieces and those imbued with contemporary cultural theory. As David Demant writes, 'we seek to experience our soul in those objects that seem most to symbolise it for us'. (p.342) A contemporary challenge for museums is to continue to provide this object lesson within a world that demands interactivity and virtuality without much concern for context, integrity and honesty. Thankfully *A Museum for the People* is an object with many facets, stories and complexities. Like the objects in the museum, it comes alive in part from its own materiality. The book has much to excite, and provides many ways of gaining information from it. While thoroughly recommended for professional and general reading, its weight (but not its content or tone) precludes it as a bedtime book.

DR JOANNA SASSOON HOLDS AN ARC POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AT CURTIN UNIVERSITY.

LINDA YOUNG

***Every Stitch Tells a Story: Needlework in the Lives of South Australian Women.* Migration Museum, Adelaide. Open until December 2004.**

A small exhibition displaying a mixture of 19th century whitework, ethnic embroideries, contemporary needlecraft and half a dozen mounted costumes could look rather ordinary in today's world of professional museums. But *Every Stitch* is actually about continuities and discontinuities in women's lives, in the past and in the present, in Australia and in the places Australians have come from. Thus it realises the various streams of the Migration Museum's mandate to represent the immigrant communities of South Australia via social history.

The backbone of the show is not the objects but half a dozen sewing groups active in SA (and its NSW outpost, Broken Hill) today. I had no idea women still meet to sew, beyond patchwork classes and the trusty Embroiderers' Guild. So it is eye-opening to discover the further variety of groups: one make clothes for children's organisations; another calls itself 'Stitch and Bitch'; several bring together refugees and national groups; others are contemporary textile artists.

The motivation of the groups and their output is various, but remarkably, the historic items in the show demonstrate how the same drives underlie at least some aspects of women's sewing then and now.

Sewing was a historical necessity for most women, and is still, even in modern Australia, if you need specialised traditional garments. One of the most fascinating items on show is a contemporary adaptation of the Muslim need to drape the body discreetly, realised for a stylish teenage daughter in a flowing



Rotunda Stitches: These women meet to sew clothing and other items which they donate to charity

Picture courtesy of the Rotunda Stitches

red tunic to be worn over tight black trousers.

Mending was standard work in many people's experience but is now little practised, for we have more money to buy new clothes than time to mend old ones. But the evidence of mending survives in every historic costume collection, and in beautifully worked samplers with specimens of patching and darning. Label quotes from participants in the sewing groups raise the question: what values are lost along with mending skills? Somehow 'thrif' has not yet been re-conceived as an aspect of 'sustainability'.

Sewing could also be a necessity as one of the few respectable means for women to earn income, and so it remains today (without the moralistic overtone) for unskilled, non-English-speaking women. It was always a pitiful income — another reality that endures today. Why? It has to be concluded that in being *women's* work, sexist societies have always undervalued, indeed, devalued sewing.

Hence we can read a certain quiet female subversion in the occasions when women gather to sew for reasons beyond the strictures of survival.

For sewing has often been a sociable activity, and even satisfying and creative, depending on the pressure of

necessity. And it still is. Women get together to stitch, once in extended family situations, and now in groups shaped by other conditions.

The Migrant Resource Centre coordinates a number of sewing groups, including the African, Persian and Muslim groups whose work is included in the exhibition. It can be guessed that the opportunity for refugee women to meet under the aegis of a respectable activity creates further satisfactions than are explicitly recognised by the innocent name, 'sewing group'.

But refugees are not the only women who gather under the guise of mere sewing. The 'Stitch and Bitch' title gives a modern Aussie take on what really goes on; as one participant is quoted, the sewing group is 'cheaper than a psychiatrist'.

The aesthetic pleasures of needlework, hand or machine, constitute another bundle of motivations in modern sewing. A list of the Embroiderers' Guild specialist groups constitutes an encyclopedia of traditional techniques, and the products of their work rival the quality of the finest old work. At the same time, the old frameworks of sewing are extended in fabulous ways with modern fabrics, technology and creative vision.

Aesthetics also underlies the use of embroidered soft furnishings as modern

continuations of emigrants' home cultures. Designs that were once worked on robes and caps have shifted onto cushions and hangings as references to old traditions.

The dimension of sewing as an act of love underlies many of the objects on show, but is not explicitly presented. Even in the plain sewing of underclothes, as well as the pretty flourishes of fancywork, there is often a quantum of feminine care for the spirit of the recipient that carries the utilitarian into the realm of the poetic. It has long been diminished as sentimentality, and it is time to rehabilitate it!

Speaking of rehabilitation, the small case labels need enlargement, given the reduced lighting conditions required by a textile exhibition. My middle-aged eyes struggled to read the 12 point labels; they were quite illegible by my very old mother-in-law. Other intergenerational groups of visitors when I was there were recruiting the youngest member to read the texts.

LINDA YOUNG TEACHES ASPECTS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA.

ROBERTA POYNTER
& NOEL KEMP

Prehistoric Mammals of Australia and New Guinea.
By John Long, Michael Archer, Timothy Flannery & Susan Hand. Reconstructions by Anne Musser. UNSW Press, Sydney, 2002; ISBN: 0868404357

At last — a publication that will excite and enthral students and educators on the unique extinct mammalian fauna of Australia and New Guinea, plus background information on the

museum scientists who have worked untiringly and with such passion to give this fascinating study the profile it so richly deserves.

The fact that creatures such as the giant wombats and kangaroos, lioness-sized marsupial predators, primitive whales, and other megafaunal monsters ever existed is often overlooked or indeed unknown to many Australians. Children especially delight in the unusual and the bizarre and this subject is the stuff museum dreams are made of. For fertile and inquisitive young minds, the contents page in itself — with 'hoppers, snippers and rippers' and 'Pouched in reverse and diverse' to 'weird things not so easily pigeonholed' incite the desire to find out more.

To date, few museums in Australia have interpreted this prehistoric wonderland adequately. *Prehistoric Mammals of Australia and New Guinea* should provide the impetus for others to undertake more thorough interpretations, as it has the most informative, current material. It will enable designers and curators to create masterful displays and exhibitions on this subject.

It is hard to keep up with the changing story of vertebrate palaeontology in Australia and New Guinea — new discoveries, new names, old names abandoned, taxonomic threads re-woven. How does one know the latest developments in this dynamic field?

Enter four well-known Australian vertebrate palaeontologists, largely museum-based, who have put their heads and their knowledge together to produce a book which will inform both the enthusiast and the beginner.

The book is profusely illustrated with clear, concise diagrams and charts, a wide

variety of good quality photographs of field work, and even better shots of specimens, both in situ and prepared. Talented biological illustrator Anne Musser's reconstructions of many of these extinct animals is the icing on the cake.

Although the subject is often technical and complex, the format is attractive and readers with little or no previous knowledge will find it a fascinating resource. It cleverly links the popular with the scientific. Younger students, who may be looking for basic information on names, locations and illustrations of some of these awesome creatures, that rival anything the realms of dinosaurs have created for so long, will find it fascinating. Teachers looking for ideas and themes to link with classroom studies will find it a goldmine of information on a subject certain to captivate students' imaginations. It also provides a thorough background knowledge in the relationship between the extinct species and those found in Australia today.

The success of the Pleistocene Megafauna Gallery at the Tasmanian Museum was, in large part, due to the enthusiasm and expertise of palaeontologist Peter F. Murray, who for many years presented workshops for students on extinct mammals. The memory of the wonder is still vivid among their participants, as the mysteries surrounding the discovery of fossil bone fragments were unravelled, and the animals reconstructed and beautifully illustrated.

Curriculum demands that topics are relevant, that they engage learners in the investigation of the natural world and provide the capacity for challenging scientific and technological applications. From a museum educator's

point of view, *Prehistoric Mammals of Australia and New Guinea* has it all.

For students at senior secondary levels, the book details the understanding necessary and the methods appropriate to the collaborative investigation and critical evaluation of scientific methods. The techniques used by scientists in gathering information and interpreting it are covered succinctly, as are the origin of mammals, species concepts and mammalian anatomy, together with information on the pioneers of fossil mammal discoveries.

The Glossary is comprehensive and for those students — and teachers — who would like to extend their knowledge to the more technical aspects, it is an invaluable resource.

This masterful book is a worthy reference for students, teachers and scholars who wish to learn more about the fascinating story of the unique animals that once walked this ancient land.

ROBERTA POYNTER IS ON SECONDMENT TO THE TASMANIAN MUSEUM FROM THE TASMANIAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. SHE SPENT NINE YEARS AS EDUCATION OFFICER AT THE TASMANIAN MUSEUM FROM 1975 TO 1983 BEFORE RETURNING TO TEACH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND TO WORK AS A SENIOR CURRICULUM OFFICER IN LANDCARE EDUCATION.

NOEL KEMP HAS BEEN SENIOR CURATOR OF GEOLOGY AT THE TASMANIAN MUSEUM SINCE 1973. HIS FOSSIL INTERESTS LIE MAINLY IN THE FIELD OF SHARKS' TEETH, BUT HE OCCASIONALLY DABBLES IN MINERALS AND TO A LESSER EXTENT, ROCKS.

NOTICEBOARD

MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA PUBLICATION DESIGN AWARDS 2004

Bring us your best in publication design and communication. The 2004 PDA Awards will be held in Melbourne at the MA National Conference *Food for Thought. Imagining a Sustainable Future* 16–21 May. The MAPDA celebrate excellence in museum publications and are judged across the categories of *Exhibition & Collection Catalogue, Poster & Calendar, Book, Magazine & Newsletter, Corporate, Education, Promotion, Website and Multimedia*. Publications produced between 1 January and 31 December 2003 will be eligible. Winning publications will be automatically entered for the overall Award for Excellence, *Best in Show*.

A special *Food for Thought* Award Category will complement the Conference with a focus on cuisine, plants, utensils, vessels, beverages, café menus and agriculture, produced between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2003.

- Entries close Friday 28 March. Deliver to Gold Treasury Museum, Spring St, Melbourne VIC 3000
- Awards Presentation Ceremony, MA Conference, Tuesday 18 May 10.45am
- Publications will be on show at the MA Conference Trade Exhibition

Sweet Design, Gold Treasury, Interactive Controls Pty Ltd and Mental Media Pty Ltd proudly sponsor MAPDA 2004.

See the MA Magazine insert and visit the Programs section of the Museum Australia website for Entry Conditions and Forms. For information contact Ian Watts by phone on 03 9651 2233 or email iwatts@oldtreasurymuseum.org.au

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS (ICOM) AUSTRALIA

**Call for Grant Applications
from ICOM Australia Members
For travel grants to attend the
ICOM General Conference in
Seoul, Korea October 2004**

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) is an international non-profit organisation of museums and museum professionals which is committed to the conservation of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible. ICOM Australia is one of the internationally recognised National Committees of ICOM whose activities respond to the challenges and needs of the museum profession and are focused on the following themes:

- professional cooperation and exchange
- dissemination of knowledge and raising public awareness of museums
- training of personnel
- advancement of professional standards
- elaboration and promotion of professional ethics

The ICOM Australia Scholarship Fund was established in 1998 and supports the attendance of ICOM Australia members at ICOM meetings, including General Conferences, meetings of International Committees and Affiliated Organisations, or Regional Assemblies. ICOM Australia members (as well as ICOM members in Pacific Island countries, Indonesia, and East Timor affiliated with ICOM Australia) who are intending to participate in the ICOM 20th General Conference in Seoul, Korea from 2–8 October 2004, are invited to submit applications for a travel grant to attend the Conference.

Please contact Dr Ian Galloway, Chairman of the ICOM Australian National Committee (contact details below) for a copy of the Guidelines and Selection Criteria. Applications close

31 March 2004 and the successful applicant/s will be announced at the Museums Australia Conference in Melbourne in May 2004.

Dr Ian Galloway

Chairman, ICOM Australian National Committee, and Director, Queensland Museum, PO Box 3300 SOUTH BRISBANE QLD 4101 AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 (7) 3840 7658
Fax: +61 (7) 3842 9470
Email: anne.dalton@qm.qld.gov.au

CONFERENCES

**Museums Australia
National Conference
FOOD FOR THOUGHT
Museums & Galleries
Feast & Famine
Hotel Sofitel, Melbourne
16–21 May 2004**

**2ND INTERNATIONAL
MUSEOLOGY CONFERENCE
'Technology for cultural
heritage: management —
education — communication'
Myrina, Lemnos, Greece
28 June – 2 July 2004**

The Department of Cultural Technology and Communication (www.aegean.gr/culturaltec), University of the Aegean, is organizing the 2nd International Museology Conference under the auspices of: the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and the Hellenic Ministry of the Aegean. The conference will be organised around three major themes: management, education and communication.

URL: www.aegean.gr/culturaltec/museum/2004
Contact Ms Sophia Bakogianni for further details:
Tel: +30 2251 036637
Email: sbak@ct.aegean.gr

Labour History November 2003

is on the theme of 'Interpreting Working Life and Culture in Australian Museums and Galleries'. For authors and titles of articles check the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History website, www.asslh.com

CORRECTIONS

In Louise Douglas' article 'Public Programs in London's Museums' the website for the Science Museum is cited incorrectly. It reads: www.nmsi.uk.ac. It should be: www.nmsi.ac.uk

Heysen House at Hahndorf, SA, is not open daily, as stated in 'Regional Roundup' in the November 2003 issue of *Museums Australia Magazine*. It is closed on Saturdays. On other days inspection is by guided tour only at 11am, 1pm and 3pm (11am and 2pm in winter). The grounds and shop are open from 10am to 4pm.

COMING IN MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA MAGAZINE

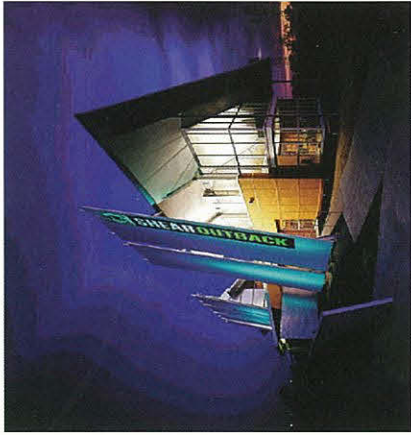
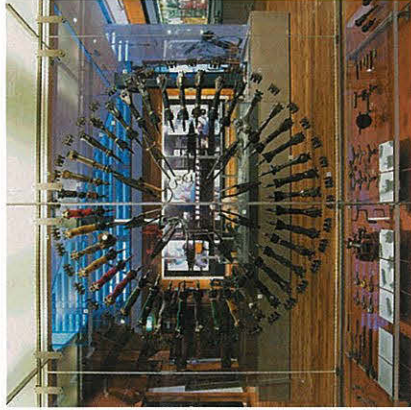
MAY 2004
Museums and
Social Inclusion

AUGUST 2004
Food for thought.
Papers from the 2004
National Conference

click click click

GO THE SHEARS!

Click Systems celebrating the second birthday of Shear Outback: The Australian Shearers' Hall of Fame



Museum fit out by Classic Resources Pty Ltd with Click VIP Hinges and Mono 2D Casefronts
Images courtesy of Shear Outback Ltd and Classic Resources Pty Ltd

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