



a publication of the Council of Australian Museum Associations

MUSEUM NATIONAL

VOL 1 • NO 2
JUNE 92

*a national museum
an essential part of
Australia's nation building*

partnerships and Australian museums

moral rights and museums

NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT



Deakin University offers a range of postgraduate courses for people working in museums and other cultural institutions. The courses are conducted on the Rusden Campus, Clayton, Victoria.

MUSEUM STUDIES

Graduate Diploma A one-year full-time course providing a comprehensive introduction to museum work. Units include Museum Management, Collection Management, Public Programs, Marketing and Public Relations and Issues in Museology. The course is designed for those seeking promotion within the museum profession and those considering a museum career. It can also be completed on a part-time basis over two years.

Master of Applied Science A two-year full-time or four-year part-time course designed for those seeking a higher qualification in museology. Based on the Graduate Diploma, students also complete a Research Method Unit, a minor thesis and an extensive museum-based internship. Advanced standing for Museum Studies graduates is available.

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Graduate Certificate A one-year part-time course in the theory and practice of public programs in national parks, zoos, historic sites and museums. The course investigates the nature and purpose of interpretation, techniques used, practical skills involved and resources available for assisting interpretation.

Admission Requirements: A degree, diploma or approved equivalent. Some relevant work experience is also required. Special entry scheme is available.

Closing date for applications: 16 October 1992

For further information contact the Department of Heritage and Resource Management, Deakin University - Rusden Campus, 662 Blackburn Road, Clayton, Vic. 3168. Telephone: (03) 542 7429/7444.

School of Creative Arts University of Wollongong

A CONFERENCE ON CRAFT THEORY & EXHIBITION

An interdisciplinary conference to explore, enrich and extend the theories and practices of craft writing and exhibition practice.

Conference • 7th - 9th July
Curators' Forum • 10th July

Conference Registration
\$100 \$50 (con)

Futher information: Sue Rowley

School of Creative Arts
University of Wollongong
PO Box 1144

Wollongong NSW 2500
Phone • (042)21 3991
(042)21 3985
Fax • (042)21 3301



MUSEUMS OF THE WORLD

Fourth Edition
Edited by Karl H Strasser

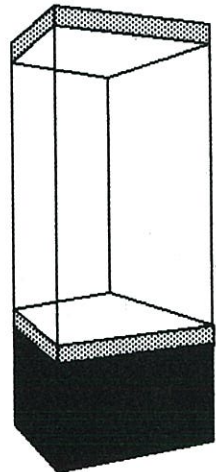
- indispensable information on some 24,000 museums worldwide
- completely updated entries with full descriptions for each museum including holdings and special collections, contact details, library collections and more
- an appendix listing national and international museum organisations with addresses

K G Saur, September 1992. ISBN 3598205333.
704pp. \$420.00 HB
All orders are firm sale and freight free.



Available from D W Thorpe
18 Salmon Street,
Port Melbourne Vic 3207
Ph (03) 645 1511 fax (03) 645 3981
Toll-free orders (008) 80 2284

The CLICK family of
system showcases
Quadrant Ecopak
Voyager Nexus



Has a new member
MUSE

Designed for museums

CLICK SYSTEMS PTY LTD
7 Cato Street
Hawthorn East Vic 3123
Telephone (03) 822 - 7891
Facsimile (03) 822 - 1140



FRONT COVER • George Baldessin, Roger Kemp, Les Kossatz, Mirka Mora and Andrew Sibley. **Tympan**, 1977, Queensland Art Gallery Collection.

Tympan, the collective work brought to life by George Baldessin, Roger Kemp, Les Kossatz, Mirka Mora and Andrew Sibley, is an exceptional example of collaboration, both in conception and execution. The collaboration resulted from a specific proposal for each artist to reflect upon the culture and great cathedrals of France, and their own belief systems and cultural values, utilising motifs from Christian and folk traditions and from their personal visual languages.

The artists deliberately adopted the architectural form of the Gothic cathedral tympanum. Not without significance, a tympanum was the elaborately decorated area above major entrances to a cathedral which carry themes and symbols designed to reinforce the faith of the pilgrims who passed beneath.

Michel Sourgnès • Curator • Contemporary Art • Queensland Art Gallery

CONTENTS

MUSEUM
NATIONAL
VOL 1 • NO 2
JUNE 92

- 2 EDITOR'S DESK...*editorial and letters to the editor*
- 3 A NATIONAL MUSEUM *an essential part of Australia's nation building*
- 4 UPDATE...*policy news*
- 7 REVIEW...*trust the women • can you direct me? Australia's museum directories*
- 10 ARTS LAW...*moral rights and museums*
- 11 INSIGHT...*partnerships and Australian museums*
- 23 NEWSBEAT...*project news*
- 27 ROUNDUP...*the affiliates report*
- 29 NOTICEBOARD...*general information*
- 32 MISCELLANEA

MUSEUM NATIONAL is the quarterly publication of the Council of Australian Museum Associations (CAMA).

CAMA gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Visual Arts/Craft Board of the Australia Council and the Department for the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories.



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

Contributions and Correspondence Hard Copy only

Museum National welcomes unsolicited letters, articles and photographs for consideration. Articles should include brief biographical information about the author and photographs should be clearly captioned and credited. Museum National reserves the right to edit, abridge, alter or reject any material.

The support of all advertisers is welcomed. Publication of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by CAMA, its affiliates or employees.

All correspondence to:
The Editor
Museum National
159 Brunswick St
Fitzroy VIC 3065

Copy Deadlines
January 30 • April 30
July 30 • October 30

Published edition copyright Council of Australian Museum Associations. No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the article's author. Authors can be contacted through CAMA. Signed articles represent the views of the author. CAMA disclaims responsibility for statements of fact or opinions expressed in signed contributions.

Affiliated Organisations

- Art Museums Association of Australia Inc. (AMAA)
- Australian Federation of Friends of Museums (AFFM)
- Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials Inc. (AICCM)
- Council of Australian Art Museum Directors (CAAMD)
- Council of Australian Museum Directors (CAMD)
- Heritage Parks Association (HPA)
- International Council of Museums (ICOM)
- Museums Association of Australia Inc. (MAA)
- Museum Education Association of Australia (MEEAA)
- Museum Shops Association (MSA)

CAMA Council 1991-1992

- Chairman**
Des Griffin
- Vice-Presidents**
Andrew Reeves
Paula Latos-Valier
- Treasurer**
Annette Welkamp
- Daniel Thomas AM
Immediate Past President AMAA
- Carol Serventy OAM
President AFFM
- Merryl Robson AFFM
- Tamara Lavrencic
President AICCM
- Karen Coote
Vice-President AICCM
- Lula Saunders MSA
- David Morgan MSA
- Doug Hall CAAMD
- Peter Cahalan CAMD

- Peter Hiscock HPA
- Don McMichael
President ICOM Aust.
- Tony Martin
Secretary ICOM Aust.
- Margaret Anderson
President MAA
- Mary-Louise Williams
President Elect MAA
- Ian Watts
President MEAA
- Chris Hopkins
Vice-President MEAA
- Museum National Editorial Committee**
- Peter Timms AMAA
- Merryn Gates AMAA
- Hugo Leschen AFFM
- Gina Drummond/
Michelle Berry AICCM
- Janine Barrand MAA
- Kylie Winkworth

Production

Editor: Sue Silberberg
Managing Editor: Susan Faine



COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM ASSOCIATIONS INC.
159 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy VIC 3065
Tel: 03 419 7092 • Fax: 03 419 6842

Museum National is printed on Sanctuary Gloss 118gsm recycled paper by VIP Printing Mordialloc VIC 3195
Tel: 587 2777

Design: Mammoliti Chan, Graphic Ideation
West Brunswick VIC 3055 Tel: 383 4171

Subscription to Museum National is a membership service of some CAMA affiliated organisations. Independent subscriptions and single issues are available at the following inclusive rates:

Individuals	\$9/issue	\$30/4 issues
Institutions	\$12/issue	\$40/4 issues

EDITOR'S DESK

Sue Silberberg

Through its focus on partnerships and Australian museums, this issue of *Museum National* offers readers some interesting working models for consideration and inspiration. Based on mutual respect, resourcefulness and a desire to fulfil the museum's charter, partnerships have been embraced by Australian museums for local, regional, national and international programs in a number of very different disciplines. Partnerships also feature in policy, structure and planning.

I am delighted to advise readers that the Arts Law Centre of Australia is to be a regular contributor to *Museum National*. I would like to encourage you to forward your questions on legal matters so all readers can benefit from the discussion and resolution of what are most probably common concerns.

The enclosed 1992 CAMA Conference leaflet offers a preview of what promises to be a thought-provoking program. Keynote speakers include Robert Sullivan, Associate Director for Public Programs at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History and Tom Stannage, Professor of History at the University of Western Australia, Chair of the Western Australian Task Force for Museum Policy and board member of the National Museum of Australia. The program has been developed around the three themes *Culture and Government; Heritage, History and Contemporary Society and Management – Forward-Up-Down Through Change*. It offers participants a wide variety of speakers, heritage and museum tours and social functions.

Museum National provides the museum community with a forum for discussion and dialogue on policy, issues and projects. To ensure the momentum is maintained, these pages must take readers behind the looking glass to the successes and failures, the difficulties encountered and surmounted and the whys and wherefores. *Museum National* is the only regular publication representing Australian museums. Write, read and be read! If you have an idea but no time to write, a phone call or a brief note can set things in train.

And finally, in the interests of readability, an upright typeface replaces the italics in the body of *Museum National*.

LETTERS

William Fleming • Executive Officer •
Heritage Collections Working Group

On behalf of the members of the Heritage Collections Working Group may I extend our congratulations to all concerned with the publication of the first issue of *Museum National*.

By providing a critical forum of high standard, I have no doubt the national journal will provide an invaluable dialogue between professional concerns and community interests.

Members of the Heritage Collections Working Group would also like to take this opportunity of endorsing the CAMA Board's efforts to form a single association.

It is imperative for museums to forge a strong and united national network – a network which is informed by participation, a sense of partnership, intellectual daring and a social contract to improve the community's access to its cultural heritage.

Commonwealth and State Governments, with the cooperation of the museum community, are playing their part in this partnership, through the programs of the Working Group.

In 1993, the Working Group will present the Cultural Ministers' Council with a strategic plan which will provide an effective and efficient framework for managing Australia's heritage collections (the Distributed National Collection) in the 1992 and beyond.

It is for these reasons that Working Group members look forward with particular interest to *Museum National's* second issue on the topic of "Partnerships and Australian museums".

Again, congratulations and keep up the good work.

Giacomina Pradolin • Noble Park

While it is of great relief to the Museum Profession in Australia that it finally has a national journal I would like to register my disappointment (ironically somewhat belatedly) at the first Issue's content and format.

Not only was I dismayed at the slimness of the Volume (after all this was a quarterly meant to represent the *whole* Museum sector both Art and Historical Museums) but I couldn't believe the waste of space – as witnessed on pp. 12, 21 and 26. If, as you write in the Editorial, your call for contributions was met with 'an overwhelming response in quantity and enthusiasm' why wasn't this obvious in the publication. The reprinting of articles which have appeared in other publications (eg. Michael McMahon's *Tax Deductible Gifts To Cultural Bodies*) surely contradicts such claims.

What is more, the appearance of *Artlink's* special edition on Museums cast an even greater shadow on *Museum National*. I had, perhaps naively, assumed *Museum National* would contain a similar body of stimulating, well researched articles which widened the scope of all Museum Professionals. This was not the case as most of the articles were too short for any indepth analysis to occur and I would hate to think that the publication of *Artlink* somehow impacted on the content of *Museum National*; is the Museum Profession in this country so small that it cannot produce two publications of equal worth at the same time?

If we are to have a single, strong association for all museum people in Australia then we need to have a journal which reflects this – only then will we be taken seriously by others and by ourselves.

Editor's Note:

Museum National draws its content from solicited material and the unsolicited contributions of members. It is financed through the contributions of CAMA affiliates.

continued on page 28

A NATIONAL MUSEUM

AN ESSENTIAL PART OF AUSTRALIA'S NATION BUILDING

Emeritus Professor Donald Horne AO •

Chancellor • University of Canberra

An extract of an address given to the Museums Association of Australia ACT Branch on Tuesday 26 May 1992.

A national museum is as essential to a nation as a national capital and a national flag.

Australia has had a national capital since 1927 and a national flag since 1953 (even if it is something of a branch office flag). It is almost beyond belief that we have not even yet got a national museum in our national capital – even more unbelievable that the need for a national museum should still be questioned.

We have, coming up, Australia's hundredth birthday – the centenary of the creation of an Australian nation in 1901. To my mind there are only two ways in which we need to celebrate that centennial.

One of them is controversial – it is the view that by then we should establish a real basis for citizenship in Australia by turning our Constitution into a readable document which is pruned of the sections which no longer apply, and is in part rewritten to clearly express the realities of our traditional political system of parliamentary government, and which also expresses the new principle that we should have our own head of state.

The other should not in any way be controversial. It is that in the year 2001 we should open the Museum of Australia – and it should be a museum that shows the world how to produce a national museum in the 21st century.

So why is this idea seen by some people as controversial? One reason comes because there are still residues of the colonial cultural cringe – shown, in this case, in the feeling (never stated) that Australia is not really worth a national museum – that we have not really got a story to tell.

Another comes because of the present panic in Australia about economic matters – a panic that

ignores how real living standards in Australia are still among the highest in the world and that also ignores how we see our nation is an essential element even in economic policy-making.

However, even opponents of the cultural cringe and of economic fundamentalism can feel uneasy about a national museum. And their uneasiness comes, I believe, because they do not understand how modern museums need not be nostalgia shows, or infantile push-button playgrounds or temples of art, or mausoleums of the authentic.

Museums can be agents of change – as they were when they were invented in the 19th century.

In a world of shoddy, third-hand images, museums can help ordinary people regain a more innocent sense of vision. And, by appealing to our imagination, museums can arouse our curiosity in new ways that might lead to new beliefs and new actions.

In this case the curiosity that should be aroused is: what does it mean to be an Australian?

A national museum, or, indeed, any other kind of museum, should no longer be seen as a propaganda device. It should be seen as the beginning of a discussion.

When it is finally built, our national museum must not be of the chauvinist and triumphalist kind. (That is one very good reason for not making it yet one more palace in the parliamentary triangle.) Its buildings should be, in appearance, not showy, but graceful, friendly and efficient.

If a national museum can be built like that, this alone would make it world news.

But what would be even more likely to make it world news would be if the presentation of objects was neither triumphalist in the chauvinistic sense nor authoritarian in the curatorial sense.

The section of it devoted to the physical environment of Australians could present the world's best example of an alternative to the old style natural history museum. It could show not the differences between things, but their interconnections, and it could place humans as part of the physical environment.

The section of it devoted to Aboriginal culture could present an instructive example of an alternative to the old style ethnographic museum (although, if the South Australian government got moving, the South Australian Museum could do an even better job) and thereby help visitors towards a more informed view of Aboriginal culture.

And its third section, through showing us wonderful things from our past (some of them 'ordinary' perhaps, but none the less wonderful for that), could remind us of the enormous cultural resources that can come from the diversity of Australians.

We could be reminded of chauvinist stereotypes of a manufactured single identity. But we could also be encouraged to look at things that would remind us of some of the ways in which we are different from each other – in region, in religion, in social class, in gender, in ethnicity, in attitudes – and this could be the most realistic of all ways in which we could wonder about ourselves as Australians, especially if we could also contemplate the coherence and resilience of our society as well.

A museum of that kind would be something that every Australian should feel bound to come and see. It would provide foreign visitors with a focus on Australia that distinguished it from everywhere else.

And by becoming one of the world's great museums, expressing a democratic liveliness absent from all other national museums (although the New Zealanders are working on theirs), it could be seen as a national achievement that would mean more than any passing sporting victory.

UPDATE

SLEEPING BEAUTY AWAKES

THE VICTORIAN REGIONAL GALLERIES ASSOCIATION INC.

Joseph Pascoe • Director • Shepparton Art Gallery and Vice-President Regional Galleries Association of Victoria Inc.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Regional Galleries Association of Victoria Inc. (RGAV) in May, members voted in favour of procedures and criteria that smoothe the way for new galleries to join the Association. Boring? No! It has taken almost ten years for these changes to come about.

The hurdles have included inertia of an old, proud organisation with bureaucratic tendencies; changes to the Victorian Ministry for the Arts funding arrangements (regional galleries now make application for operating costs directly to the Ministry rather than through the Association); the growing professionalisation of the regional galleries, disallowing the purely parochial arguments sometimes advanced for a closed Association, and the establishment of several new, smaller public galleries in the greater metropolitan area. Most importantly, however, the RGAV Inc. wanted to secure its position as a peak arts body, to protect and promote its members into the future.

It is in fact this last point which drove the thinking behind the revised procedures and criteria. While galleries are expected to be public in the ICOM sense, they need not have collections and the traditional importance of qualified staff is enshrined along with the necessity of clear management structures and targeted public programs.

How does the future look? It is hoped that the new members will be strong contributors who demand that the issues they raise be addressed, be they political, financial or professional, as they are likely to be very similar to the concerns of many other galleries across Victoria.

Regional Galleries Association of Victoria Inc. - procedures and criteria for new members/ship:

1. Applications shall be made in writing to the Secretary of the Association and address the following criteria:

1.1. The proposed member shall supply full details of Gallery ownership, management and funding.

1.2. The proposed member shall undertake to support the objects of the Association.

1.3. The proposed member shall be a public art museum or public art gallery, administered generally in accord with the model rules for incorporation noted under the Associations Incorporation Act, Victoria, or other applicable Commonwealth, State or Local Government Legislation and shall employ an appropriately qualified Gallery Director.

1.4. The proposed member shall present as a part of its application information on the following areas of its operation:

1.4.1. Gallery building:

- opening hours*
- access for disabled*
- outline of display facilities*
- outline of art storage and loading-dock facilities*
- environmental control*
- security and fire protection systems*

1.4.2. Public program and audience development:

- anticipated annual audiences and actual visitor members for previous two years*
- types of programs planned and actual programs for previous two years*
- registration and conservation procedures for exhibition*

1.4.3. Collection: Points to be addressed by applicants with collections:

- acquisitions policy*
- conservation program*
- registration program*

1.4.4. Staffing:

- staff structure*
- duty statements*

1.5. The proposed member shall present as part of its application financial statements as follows:

- actual income and expenditure for the immediate past year*
- current year budget*
- budget for next financial year*

- 2. Upon receipt of the above the Board of the Association may seek further information prior to making a recommendation to the Association.*
- 3. The proposed member shall be deemed to be a member of the Association on the basis of a simple majority of a quorum of members at an Annual General Meeting and payment of due fees.*

MAA MUSEUM GRANTS SCHEME

Peta Gjedsted • Museums Association of Australia
• Western Australian Branch

The Western Australian Branch of the MAA has been successful in obtaining the sum of \$260,000 from the Lotteries Commission for the period 1992-94, to introduce a small grants scheme for museums. Although the branch had previously sought funds from the Ministry for the Arts, economic conditions prevented the government funding what was nevertheless recognised as a worthwhile scheme.

In providing funds for this scheme, the Lotteries Commission has acknowledged that there is a gap in funding sources for community museums in Western Australia. This gap, of which the MAA was very aware, provided the impetus to the Association to seek avenues for funding projects which did not fit the criteria of *Equipment Grants*, previously a main source of funds for community museums.

While administration of the grant is the responsibility of the MAA WA Branch, we are bound by the Lotteries Commission Act, and final approval of the grant recommendations will rest with the Lotteries' Commissioners and the Minister for Racing and Gaming. A sub-committee has been established to administer the grants, including the formulation of guidelines, forms and assessment procedures. The first round of applications will close mid-October 1992. It is envisaged that there will be one round per year in order to enable museums to give lengthy and full consideration to the projects for which they require funding.

In applying for grants museums will be encouraged to consider the overall policies of their museum with hope that the standards of museums may be enhanced. The Lotteries Commission's general policy is to foster community development, interaction, sense of identity and involvement. Applicants would be encouraged to consider these issues when making submissions.

One of the most important aspects of this grants scheme is that museums will be able to apply for funds for things other than equipment, such as projects. The MAA WA Branch is delighted to be able to assist Western Australian community museums in implementing programs which have until now not been possible due to lack of resources.

ARTISTS AND CHILDCARE

CHILDCARE: A LEGITIMATE COST

The Australia Council recently published a pamphlet informing artists and artworkers of options for childcare and how to assess the quality of the care being offered. The pamphlet, prepared in response to a report on childcare needs of 'non performing' artists, was commissioned by the Australia Council from the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA).

The pamphlet also advises that childcare expenses are now considered a legitimate cost component of a project budget.

Artists and Childcare is available from the Australia Council. Tel: 008 2269

FEDERAL CULTURAL GRANTS

In March, the Minister for the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories, Ros Kelly, announced grants to 338 projects under the community cultural, recreation and sporting facilities program.

The grants are part of a national three-year program totalling \$30m. They represent a significant boost to community resources and signal a commitment to job creation through capital works programs and on-going operation of facilities.

Over 1800 applications were received, and of the total \$17.6m distributed, \$1.46m or just under 9%, went to 22 cultural heritage projects.

These include \$100,000 to the Bendigo Chinese Museum for the establishment of a classical Chinese garden; \$50,000 to the Cocos (Keeling) Island Council for extensions to the Home Island Museum, and \$65,000 to the Cairns City Council to develop Australia's newest regional art museum and its artist-in-residence facilities. The City of Keilor received funding totalling \$124,500 for two concurrent heritage restoration projects. The Nutcote Trust received \$250,000 to restore and develop the May Gibbs estate as a cultural resource.

South Australia's Migration Museum received \$29,552 to upgrade the Immigration and Settlement Database to improve access to information. This was the only research project to be funded.

While a complete statistical analysis is not yet available from DASET, preliminary figures offer some indication of the distribution of funds. Sporting facilities received the largest proportion of grants, and in the case of New South Wales, this translates as 69.3% of all successful applications, or a total of \$3.8m. Projects in New South Wales received 73% of the total grant monies.

No grants were allocated to cultural heritage projects in Tasmania or the Australian Capital Territory. Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory each received one grant for museum related projects.

The majority of cultural heritage applications were for capital works projects. Smaller museums that were successful include the Yankalilla District Historical Museum at the tip of the Fleurieu Peninsula, which received \$33,900 for the construction of an amenities

block, and the Geelong Historical Records Section, which received \$41,500 to construct a ramp to improve physical access to the building.

The aim of the program is to enable the Commonwealth Government to provide financial assistance to supplement that provided by State/Territory and/or Local Government authorities and other community groups to meet the selected community's highest priority cultural, sporting and recreation facility needs and to encourage the provision of such facilities. The major selection criteria are demonstrated community need, complementary funding support and the capacity for on-going management. All grants are determined by the Minister.

The maximum grant available is \$250,000 for any single project. Organisations can submit applications for more than one project at a time, provided the projects are independent.

Grants are administered by the Sport and Recreation Branch of the Department for the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories.

The next round of applications closes 3 September.

For full details contact:
The Assistant Director (Facilities)
Sport and Recreation Branch
DASET
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601
Tel: 06 274 1866

Susan F. Abasa • Executive Officer • Art
Museums Association of Australia Inc.

COMMONWEALTH POLICY ON CULTURE

The Commonwealth Department of Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories (DASET) has released a discussion paper titled *The Role of the Commonwealth in Australia's Cultural Development*.

The paper is the first step in the formulation of a policy statement on the role of the

Commonwealth in the development of Australian culture. The initiative was flagged by the Minister for the Arts, Wendy Fatin, as her first priority on taking up the Arts portfolio in the new Keating ministry. But the paper appears to be the same one discussed by former Minister for the Arts, David Simmons, in his address to the 1991 CAMA Conference.

Great minds must think alike, as both Ministers have identified access and participation as key issues in the development of the Commonwealth's cultural policy. The other 'guiding principles' discussed in the report are creativity and excellence, diversity, valuing our heritage and a viable industry.

The paper is directed at interest groups across the broad cultural spectrum covered by the Commonwealth Arts portfolio, including film and television, arts practice and performance, and collecting institutions such as libraries and museums. Written submissions are being called for in response to the issues raised in the paper, or, for that matter, any other aspects of the Commonwealth's activities in the field of cultural development.

This is a thoughtful discussion paper that should be of great interest to the whole museum community. Rarely has there been discussion of national cultural issues across such a broad range of activities. Museums are not well served by the current structure of funding for culture, or the lack of an articulated cultural policy from the Commonwealth, so this opportunity to comment on the issues should not be missed.

In previous statements on cultural policy such as *What Value Heritage?*, the Commonwealth defined for itself very limited responsibilities for movable cultural heritage, essentially in terms of the collections in Commonwealth institutions and a small body of legislation. Already this discussion paper points to a real policy shift with the statement that the Commonwealth 'can also be a partner in developing national strategies which address documentation and collection management issues, encourage the continued development of excellence in Australian museums, and support the rational development of significant and representative collections in

all regions of Australia, taking into account the varying needs in different parts of the country.'

It appears from the content of the discussion paper that the Commonwealth has already taken note of some of the findings of Margaret Anderson's *Report on Heritage Collections in Australia* for the Heritage Collections Working Group (HCWG). It is pleasing to find some discussion of the work of the HCWG in the section *Valuing our Heritage*, and recognition of the role of the National Museum of Australia (NMA).

The paper says the NMA 'has been given the task of explaining at a national level and through our material culture, what it means to be an Australian'. Does the renewed search for national identity under Paul Keating's Government mean a more secure future for the National Museum? The NMA is still waiting for a major funding commitment so that it can fulfil its charter. This budget round will be a critical test of the Government's commitment, made as long ago as 1980, when it passed the legislation setting up the museum.

More pertinent to the discussion paper's aims are the questions it raises about the relationship between the NMA and the community, including 'its relationship with State and regional museums, how it will make a continuing, educative contribution to the debate about Australia's history and future direction, and how it can best play its national role.' These are issues which bear on the work of every museum in Australia. If we get these things right for the National Museum, it will enhance the work of all museums in Australia.

A good starting point for the development of a national cultural policy, the discussion paper offers the museum community the chance to define a more dynamic role for museums in Australian culture, one in which museums are central agencies rather than marginalised institutions stranded somewhere between arts and heritage.

Kylie Winkworth

CONSERVATION POLICY ENDORSED

The Minister for Arts and Cultural Heritage in South Australia, Anne Levy, recently endorsed the draft conservation policy for South Australia prepared by Artlab Australia to address the broad conservation needs for the State's movable cultural heritage. The endorsement, a significant development for South Australia, may also have national impact. It recognises the need for the government to ensure conservation services are accessible to all people in South Australia, not only to the major collecting institutions. It also recognises the need for public education programs to raise community awareness of conservation issues.

The policy is to be implemented in the 1992/93 financial year, marking a new age for materials conservation in South Australia.

Mary Jose • *Artlab Australia*

REVIEW

TRUST THE WOMEN

WOMEN IN FEDERAL PARLIAMENT

Parliament House Canberra throughout 1992 • Curated by Ann Millar • Designed by Tom Hewitt • Developed for the Procedure Office • Senate Department • Parliament House

"I am fascinated to see that we are to mount an exhibition on women in the Federal Parliament... Are we that rare?" asked Bronwyn Bishop in the Senate Estimates Committee last year.

The exhibition *Trust the Women* has now materialised, and with it the answer 'yes'. There are currently 10 women in the House of Representatives and 19 in the Senate, out of a running total of 50 since 1902. The history of women's slow and often uphill movement towards equal representation and influence in society is filled with so many demoralising incidents of neglect and put-down that public accounts of the status quo, such as this exhibition, could seem tiresomely virtuous. But when you look into the display cases, the material evidence of the long struggle is so outrageous and absurd that the blood rises in a surge of solidarity.



Dame Enid Lyons and Dorothy Tangney. Photo: National Library of Australia.

The exhibition covers two major historical themes of federal politics: the right of women to vote, and the election of women to Parliament. The (white) female franchise denied in the Federation Act was enacted a year later in 1902 (Aboriginal women were not even judged citizens until 1967). Yet 41 years passed before a woman was elected to a seat, and women in Parliament remain scarce – even today just 6% of the governing House of Representatives are women. Women had voted in South Australia's colonial elections since 1894. Australia was among the very first national legislatures in the world to make women full citizens of the polity. Britain offered the vote to women aged over 30 in 1918, after a campaign involving Australian women and the central item of this exhibition, the grand painted banner depicting the maiden Commonwealth of Australia urging the matron Britannia [to] 'Trust the women, Mother, as I have done.' It was painted about 1908 by Dora Meeson, and carried in English suffrage demonstrations. It is a fine piece, sentimental but noble, and it deserves to become an icon of Australian consciousness.

Australian women had the right to vote before many others, but they did not elect women. The conventional explanation for this lies with the tightly controlled party pre-selection processes, and the exhibition displays recent documents from the South Australian Liberal Women's Network and the Queensland Labor Women's Group which attempt to grapple with this bottleneck. But it also turns to latterday feminists to explain the situation, quoting Germaine Greer, who wrote in *The Female Eunuch*, 'The cage door had been opened but the canary had refused to fly out.' It would have been most interesting to see *Trust the Women* pursue this reference to the political paralysis of enfranchised women.

The trivialisation of women in public life was no doubt a factor in that paralysis, exemplified by the 1943 front cover of *Women's Day*: Australia's first (two) women in Parliament are photographed taking afternoon tea together. In such a setting, how could these women convey their competence, authority and expertise?

Their formal portraits in oils and gilt frames displayed in sound environments with their maiden speeches beaming down onto the viewer are certainly more convincing!

Sound in exhibitions is always difficult. On the one hand it must entice people to stand still long enough to listen, on the other it must not bleed into the larger space. Neither problem is successfully managed in *Trust the Women*, for the speeches are not really very gripping, and the drifting sound rather distracting.

The exhibition's subtitle, *Women in Federal Parliament*, suggests a wider constituency than Members of Parliament, but this is only partly realised. Since 1987, women have held ceremonial offices in Parliament such as Serjeant-at-Arms and Deputy Clerk of the Senate. But, as the slogan of the women's movement of the 1970s told us, women hold up half the sky.

In Federal Parliament women are also clerks, waiters, librarians, cleaners and researchers... An eloquent point could have been made about the necessity of women's labour by comparing the numbers of women employed in ordinary work at Parliament House with those elected.

The dilemma that still surrounds the image of women as public figures can be seen in the wall of photographs of all 50 female Members and Senators. The pictures were selected by the women themselves, and therefore can be presumed to express something of the persona each parliamentarian wants to project.

Apart from the formal portraits of older times, this is a collection of very reasonable-looking human beings, neither prissy nor cagey.

There are conventional poses, with a twist, such as Jeanette Hughes gazing up from her desk, a portrait of Jessie Street behind her, and there are other action shots, such as Jo Vallentine protesting against United States Navy ships in Fremantle. It's all a bit of a club, but you have to give them a cheer.

Linda Young • *Cultural Heritage Management* •
University of Canberra

CAN YOU DIRECT ME?

AUSTRALIA'S PLETHORA OF MUSEUM DIRECTORIES

As recently as five years ago, Australia was not well served with museum directories. There were little guides associated with the Museum of the Year awards, the general coffee table guide *Australia's Museums*, and the NRMA's 1982 guide to New South Wales museums. By 1986, the first *Official Museums Directory for Victoria* had been produced by the Victorian Branch of the Museums Association of Australia (MAA), marking the start of a new trend for state based directories. In 1988, the WHAT directory produced by the Campbell Group provided the first – and only – attempt at a comprehensive national museums guide.

Since the late eighties, various state branches of the MAA and other museum organisations have been caught up in an enthusiastic rush to produce a range of state based or theme based museum directories. This has, for the first time, provided a valuable, if patchy, guide to museums in Australia, their staff, collections and programs. In the last 18 months, separate directories have been published for Tasmania, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia and one will hopefully appear for New South Wales by year's end. The Art Museums Association of Australia (AMAA) has published a new edition of its national directory of art museums and public galleries, and Victoria has just published the VCE oriented *Art Galleries Planner* and *The Galleries Book: A Guide to Public Galleries* in Victoria, both aimed at a student audience.

Victoria's MAA Directories (1986 and 1990) have served as the model for the other state directories. The data presented in each generally encompasses name and contact details, opening hours, admission prices, facilities and a brief description of the museum and its collections. Primary entries are presented in place name order with indexes for museum names, subject categories, and in some cases, regional maps indicating museum locations. Most of the directories are peppered with half tone photographs to break up the text.

The quality of these images is best in the South Australian guide and could be improved in the others.

The various formats and layouts of the state directories have a number of shortcomings. Tasmania's directory has one entry per A5 sized page, often with large blank spaces where no data was provided. The Queensland and Victorian directories are tightly packed with three entries per page. South Australia has used an attractive, if not entirely practical, landscape style presentation with two entries per page.

All the directories allocate equal space to each museum entry. This becomes awkward for the large regional or state institutions where the breadth of collections and programs cannot be adequately represented. Details of departmental structures and staffing beyond the contact person are not given.

Searching for particular types of museums can be somewhat haphazard. Subject indexes are only included in the Victorian and South Australian directories. These indexes are relatively complex and inevitably it is difficult to determine a uniformly acceptable set of headings. Tasmania's museums are listed by museum name in three main regions. The name index provided is difficult to use, but with about 120 museums listed, not impossible to sift through.

The state directories have gone to some trouble to be comprehensive listings and the core data is generally accurate and reliable. Any inaccuracies are not terminal when it comes to tracking down a museum, but the contact people can change with alarming regularity. This, coupled with the birth rate of new museums, suggests that the directories might need to become annual productions to keep track of changes.

The AMAA Directory is a more detailed – and national – guide to 130 art museums and public galleries. In addition to the types of data in the state directories, it also includes staff listings, collection data, exhibition categories and extensive facilities listings.

The indexes also cover names of galleries, personnel and a series of general maps. While it is without illustration, it sets out in a clear and concise form basic data on each gallery. The facilities guide does however tend to crowd each entry with potentially unnecessary text and graphics. In its focussed way this style of publication has more in common with the professional association directories available overseas.

Although clearly aimed at the secondary student market, the two new thematic guides to art museums in Victoria duplicate much of the information contained in other guides.

The VCE Art Gallery Planner provides general access information with additional data in some entries on the collections, resources, associated activities, exhibition listings, education programs and special services. On the other hand, *The Galleries Book* focuses on the collections and their significance. It is much more a promotional guide in the sense of enthusing students about the collections and services offered by the gallery network.

The rapid growth in the number of directories raises the question as to how useful they are and to whom. Most of the MAA directories tread a fine line between tourist guide and professional directory. For the dedicated tourist and/or regular museum visitor, the information is clear and generally helpful. Overall, the directories are not as promotional as most tourist guides due to the lack of colour, gloss and contextual information such as food, wine, and accommodation. For museum workers, these directories are a reasonable introduction to the professional networks, but for the state museums the data is simply inadequate to find your way. The AMAA directory provides a better model for a guide to the profession. It is important to know staff names and positions and to build a sense of community amongst museum workers. Detail on the collections is a bonus.

One can but speculate on the meaning of this spate of directories. Is the Australian museum community on the point of developing a national directory to itself? Such a venture could be complemented by other guides marketed for

tourists or for specific museum audiences. Data could soon be available to create a very useful national guide to Australian museums and their staff. This should then encourage the publication of thematic or other promotional guides, perhaps freeing up state branches to be more adventurous in the format and marketing of their own directories. Great Britain, Canada and the United States have all developed useful, 'no frills' directories of their member museums. Updated annually, these directories are an essential guide. Britain's *Exploring Museums* series and *Good Museum Guide* have both provided useful information aimed at the general public.

One of the challenges for CAMA should be the creation of a national directory of members and institutions. In the meantime, many people will be using the existing directories to find museums in such intriguing locations as Kurwongbah (Qld), Koppio (SA), Koo Wee Rup (Vic) and King Island (Tas).

AUSTRALIAN DIRECTORIES IN PRINT

1991. *Australian Art Museums and Public Galleries Directory*, Art Museums Association of Australia with the National Centre for Australian Studies, Monash University, Melbourne

1991. *Tasmanian Heritage Directory*, MAA Tasmanian Branch, Launceston

Birtley, M. and McGillivray, N., 1990. *The Official Museum Directory of Victoria*, Wileman Publications, Main Beach

Hammond, G. and Watts, I., 1992. *The Galleries Book: A Guide to Public Galleries in Victoria*, Wileman Publications, Main Beach

McNaught, P., 1991. *Directory of Queensland Museums*, Queensland Museum with the MAA Queensland Branch, Brisbane

Speirs, G., 1991. *Museums in South Australia Directory*, History Trust of South Australia, Adelaide

Watts, I., 1992. *Art Galleries Planner 1992*, Victorian Ministry for the Arts with the Department of School Education, Melbourne

Roger Trudgeon • Senior Lecturer in Museum Studies • Deakin University Rusden

ARTS LAW

MORAL RIGHTS AND MUSEUMS

Michael McMahon • Director • Arts Law Centre of Australia

The debate on moral rights for artists in Australia received a fillip recently when the Attorneys General of New South Wales and Victoria, who are also the Ministers responsible for the arts in their States, joined forces. The Attorneys urged their Federal counterpart to take action to ensure the introduction of legislation to protect the moral rights of Australian artists. Their action follows a series of controversial cases where artworks have been mutilated or destroyed.

Moral rights, with or without legislation in place, should be of keen interest to and understood by everyone involved in the preservation and display of artworks.

The doctrine of moral rights has been part of the law of many European countries since early this century. Moral rights are personal rights belonging to artists in relation to the works they create. The doctrine is recognised in the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, to which Australia is a signatory, and over 60 countries have legislation to ensure protection. The United States and the United Kingdom have both recently enacted moral rights protection for artists. Australia seems to be falling further out of step. In 1988, the Federal Government's Copyright Law Review Committee reported (by a 5 to 4 majority) that it did not consider necessary the introduction of legislation to protect moral rights in Australia. Perhaps the Attorneys' approach will prompt some action.

There are four main components to the doctrine of moral rights. These are *the right of attribution* – the right to be known as the author or creator of a work; *the right to integrity* – the right to object to and prevent any distortion, mutilation or alteration to a work; *the right of disclosure* – the right to say when a work is complete and able to be made available to the public; *the right to control the public exhibition of a work*.

Discussion in the Australian context is generally limited to proposals to introduce the rights of attribution and integrity. Introduction of the right to control public exhibition would obviously cause museums and galleries to take an interest in moral rights issues! Introduction of such a right would also solve the problem of exhibitions which infringe on the contextual integrity of an artist's work and reputation.

Such an example occurred with the inclusion in *The Great Australian Art Exhibition*, a major Bicentennial event, of an Aboriginal artist's anti-Bicentennial poster. The work was displayed in a context that was never intended and which brought criticism of the artist from the Aboriginal community. Requests to remove the poster from exhibition were not met. Curators need to be mindful of the context in which a work is to be shown, and to respect the artist's wishes regarding display.

Even in the absence of legislative protection, museums and their staff should be 'pro-protection' when considering moral rights. The Australia Council has published a free booklet *Moral Rights for Artists - A Code of Practice* which should be read and understood by all museum and gallery staff.

The code suggests that to respect the right of attribution the artist should be clearly credited whenever their work is exhibited or reproduced; a work should not be falsely attributed; any decision by an artist to remain anonymous should be respected, as should a request by the artist to have her or his name removed from a work.

Steps recommended to maintain the right of integrity include not intentionally destroying, mutilating, distorting or defacing a work; maintaining works in good condition and consulting the artist on any repairs necessary, and ensuring that the work is not trivialised.

Observation of this code would ensure that the Arts Law Centre receives fewer complaints from artists about their works being reframed without consultation, included upside down in a video of a gallery's collection, being displayed with a new

title, or being put on show in a very poor state of repair. All of these are circumstances which have occurred and which may affect an artist's reputation. This alone should be enough reason for museums to be committed to the idea of moral rights.

A further reason is that museums are charged with the responsibility of both presenting to us our present culture and preserving it for future generations. They are also responsible for presenting us with our past. Their work is central to society's interest in having its culture preserved and respected. Abuse of moral rights, whether intentional or not, places the development and preservation of works of art as part of our culture at risk. This is a matter of concern for museums in Australia.

INSIGHT

*Whether in Toowoomba or Tasmania, or still on the drawing board, Australian museums are working in partnerships. Is this a pragmatic response to the question of survival, or is it a genuine desire to better serve the museum's community? Museum National offers you **Insight** on partnerships and Australian museums.*

NUSA TENGGARA STUDIES

Darrell Kitchener • Senior Curator • Terrestrial Vertebrates • Western Australian Museum •
Principal instigator of the Nusa Tenggara field study

Over the last five years, a field study initiated by the Western Australian Museum on nearby Indonesian islands, has been investigating the north-western limits of the distribution of Western Australian terrestrial vertebrate fauna, marine turtles and marine crocodiles, and the nature of their interaction with Oriental fauna.



Field team preparing lizards and bats on Nusa Penida island in 1991. Photo: R A Han © Western Australian Museum.

The study focuses on islands straddling the boundary between the Australian and Oriental biogeographic regions, one of the most sharply defined biogeographic boundaries in the world. As well as leading to a contemporary reappraisal of this classically important contact zone between these regional faunas, the study is expected to determine those migratory species and their habitats that may require joint Indonesian and Australian management and conservation strategies.

During the Pleistocene glaciations, when Timor was approximately 70 kilometres from the Australian coastline, there was probably a great deal of movement between the fauna of what is now Indonesia and Australia. Today, many Australian birds migrate north to these islands in

winter, and many seabirds and waders use pathways between them on their way to the northern hemisphere. The Nusa Tenggara expeditions have documented the extent of these migrations and built up a large database on the status and distribution of birds in the region.

The first island we visited in the region, Lombok, was a great surprise. We increased its known mammal fauna from 23 to 53 species. All the additions were Oriental species, yet Lombok was supposed to be in the Australian biogeographic region. This certainly is not the case, at least for the mammal fauna.

Detailed studies of morphological and genetic variation of selected species are expected to offer new insights into the nature of the interface between the Australian and Oriental fauna. Noteworthy field discoveries in both mammals and reptiles include new species of high mountain rodents, particularly interesting to Australian scientists because they may be the missing links in our understanding of the origins of Australian rodent fauna. Among the new species of bats discovered is a long-eared species

from a group previously known only from Australia and Papua New Guinea.

An important adjunct to the study is the assessment of the extent to which the terrestrial vertebrate fauna of the region has been exposed to Salmonella Serovars and selected human pathogenic viruses such as Japanese Encephalitis and Dengue, a subject of considerable interest to health authorities in both Indonesia and Australia because of the potential cross-over from wild animals to humans, and the extent of the current movement of people between Indonesia and Australia.

A number of Australian and Indonesian institutions have been working together on this study. They are the Terrestrial Vertebrate Department of the Western Australian Museum, the National Museum of Indonesia (Balitbang Zoologi), the Anatomy Department of the University of Western Australia, the Western Australian Department of Public Health, the Virology section (Jakarta) of the United States Naval Medical Unit, and the South Australian Museum.



Netting for bats in the cathedral-like cave of Batu Tering, Sumatra Island 1988. Photo: R E Johnstone © Western Australian Museum.

The collaboration involves joint field-collecting, principally between staff of the Western Australian Museum and the National Museum of Indonesia. The collections are shared, with all unique specimens and holotypes¹ going to Balitbang Zoologi, along with half of all other specimens collected. The remainder is lodged at the Western Australian Museum. The field work also results in considerable sharing of information on field survey techniques and on the biology of the region. This is followed by joint research on specimens flowing from the field work, and jointly authored papers. Three Indonesian colleagues are currently carrying out postgraduate studies and training programs at the Western Australian Museum and at the Anatomy Department of the University of Western Australia focusing on specimens collected during this project.

Funding for the Nusa Tenggara project has been principally from the Washington-based National Geographic Society, the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service, and the Australian Research Council. Sources of other small but important grants include BHP Pty Ltd, Garuda Airlines, and the Scott Trust, South Australia.

A museum exhibition highlighting the interrelationships of the Western Australian and Indonesian fauna is currently in preparation.

1. A holotype is the specimen chosen by a taxonomist who is describing a new taxon (species or subspecies) to represent that new taxon. It is in fact the 'name bearing' specimen. Frequently a new taxon is described from a number of specimens. It may be that later workers recognise more than one taxon from such a series of specimens, in which case the holotype becomes very important in allowing subsequent researchers to know which taxon the first researcher named in a mixed series of specimens.

BEING COBBERS: A COUNTRY TALE

Vicki Northey • Director • Albury Regional Museum

Once upon a time, at a museum conference long, long ago (1990, CAMA to be precise), an idea was born and nurtured by three knights from three very different lands in Museum World. The first was from the Pioneer Women's Hut, Tumburumba, in Volunteer/No Government Money Land, the second from the Albury Regional Museum in Small Museum/Local Government Land, and the third from Albury Regional Art Centre from Local Government/Gallery Land.

Five months later a Who's Who from many lands in Museum World came together at the Campbelltown City Art Gallery under the banner of *New Partnerships* to discuss the exciting future for all the lands in Museum World if they could only work together more. Museums and galleries should share ideas, resources, networks and even audiences. Everyone agreed Museum World was under threat from the evil economic rationalists who wanted to conquer Museum World and force it to become User Pays World.

The forum recommended that 'regional cultural clusters' be set up. These clusters would be effective lobby groups as well as inexhaustible ideas banks for each region. An excellent idea, but, as usual, the country institutions, organisations and volunteer groups were already well clustered. Indeed, it was from one such cluster that the Knights of the Upper Murray emerged to take up the *Mum Stayed Home* travelling exhibition quest.

Mum Stayed Home will be a major travelling exhibition about ordinary Mums who lived and raised families in Australia during the 1950s. It will be shown at major metropolitan institutions and large regional centres in a selection of museums and galleries. It will include social history, popular taste, artworks and technology that show how mums lived and worked in their homes. It will offer portraits of both the

individual mum and the generic mum created by the media and social forces. It will have universal appeal as well as a focus on ordinary mums. It will have a 50-page catalogue with commissioned essays and excerpts from interviews with mums from four different socio-economic backgrounds.

Mum Stayed Home has been taking shape in the minds of Wendy Hucker, Audray Banfield and Vicki Northey for two years. During this time, interest and support for the project from other members of Museum World has been given generously. The Museums Association of Australia NSW Branch has provided a grant under its Museum Project Plan scheme to facilitate the development of the concept.

This project is a huge undertaking for three small institutions, particularly for the totally self-funded Pioneer Women's Hut. The budget is greater than the running costs of all three organisations put together! While much remains to be finalised, there is little doubt in our minds, or in the minds of our supporters, that the exhibition will happen. The concept has been so well received across the spectrum of museum activity that one wonders why no one thought of it before.

As the knight from Small Regional Museum Land, the quest has already borne fruit. I have learnt much about organising a major project from scratch, about co-development and about broadening my ideas of history and its presentation.

I have learnt how to organise a travelling itinerary and how to negotiate with different venues. I have learnt that museums and galleries have more in common than they have differences.

We are all partners in the museum world. It is just that most of us do not know about it.

PORTRAITS AND PARTNERS

PROSPECTS FOR AN AUSTRALIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY

Julian Faigan • Curator • Towards an Australian Portrait Gallery

Nothing could be less desirable than the establishment at the recession-weary close of the twentieth century of a new arts institution for which interaction with other institutions was not an elemental component, elaborated at conception and realised at birth.

An Australian Portrait Gallery is no exception, for an early and obvious question will be: if all the best known Australian portraits – be they the famous Dobells, the sophisticated Lamberts, Ramsays and Bunnys or the languorous Whiteleys – are already in collections across the nation, what hope is there for a new collection to be formed?

The same question was asked through the 1960s when Washington's National Portrait Gallery was being formed. 'The early Board of Commissioners of the Gallery in fact were dubious that a proper collection of portraits could be assembled,' the gallery's present director, Dr Alan Fern, has written. 'Happily, the prediction of the founding officials has proved to be wrong.'

The earliest displays in Washington were mainly of works borrowed from other institutions, a pattern that could well be followed here. The preparation for *Uncommon Australians: Towards an Australian Portrait Gallery* has revealed an important stock of portraiture in Australia, perhaps related to the Archibald Prize tradition. Regardless, many of these wonderful works of art remain in storage in galleries, museums and libraries around Australia and could be made available on long-term loan to an Australian Portrait Gallery.

There is benefit to be derived from having to start slowly, especially as far as the permanent collection is concerned, for it places

considerable emphasis on the development of a thematic exhibition program for the new gallery. And portrait galleries in Washington, London, Edinburgh and (most recently) Wellington are showing that they welcome the opportunity to present exhibitions which markedly extend the understanding of the term 'portrait', which embrace younger, unconventional artists, and which can attract new audiences to institutions which – in the case of London's venerable portrait gallery – in the past served best those seeking shelter from the rain.

The necessity for a common sense-driven relationship with other institutions is evident here not only in terms of the proposed portrait gallery's exhibition material (whether permanent holdings or temporary collections), but also in the fundamental question of the structure of the new institution. Are we to consider the establishment from scratch of a wholly new and separate bureaucracy or can we envisage a gestation period during which the portrait gallery develops under the aegis of an existing body? The second option appears to make more sense, and imposes a respect for the concept of partnership from the outset. Who from the existing national institutions could be the portrait gallery's potential 'god parents'?

In the case of the Australian National Gallery (ANG), those portraits which it has acquired over the years (and portraiture has not been a priority area of the collection) were sought as art objects of the highest quality. For the Australian National Gallery, the documentary value of a portrait is not of primary concern. A portrait gallery, on the other hand, fulfils a dual role – art museum/social history museum – and while the ANG would no doubt be associated with many portrait gallery programs and make occasional loans as it has in the case of the present exploratory exhibition, the philosophical differences between the two bodies might not make for a fully satisfactory relationship.

The Australian Archives and the Australian War Memorial on the other hand come closer in function: their vast resources could offer much suitable material for exhibition purposes and perhaps for loan on a longer term. But each of these institutions has a specific role in terms of its own use and interpretation of the national collection which surely precludes the 'parenting' role envisaged above.

The National Library of Australia has a grand, recently opened exhibition space in which it can finally do justice to its extensive art holdings. The Library is the major lender to *Uncommon*



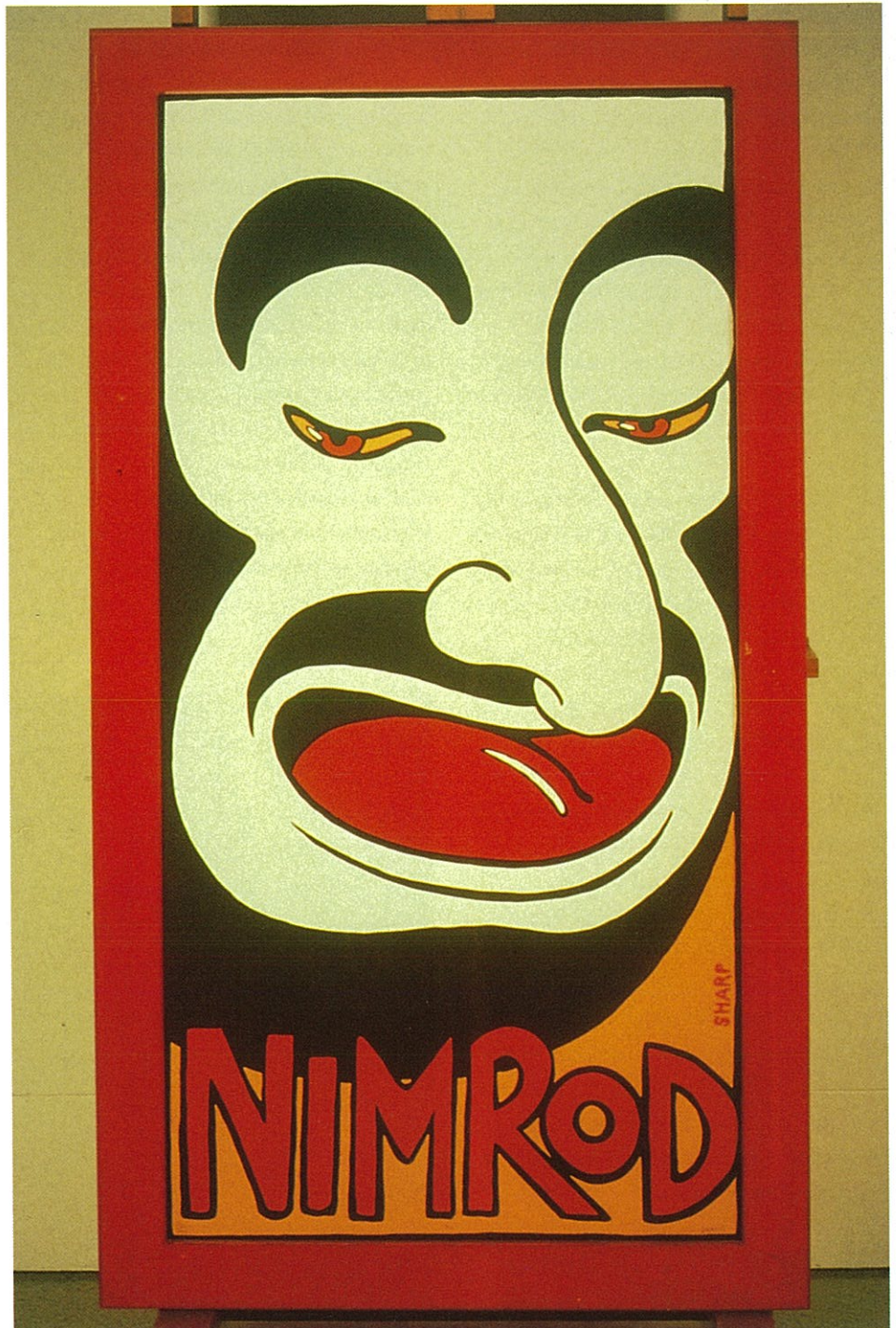
Alexander Collingridge, Rt Hon Joseph Lyons and family. Photo: National Library of Australia.

Australians and it actively collects portraits in a variety of media which illustrate people of relevance to its collections. The Library is completely sympathetic to the 'documentary' value of the portrait – indeed, of all the art it owns. Clearly, the National Library of Australia and an Australian Portrait Gallery could advantageously share not only aims, philosophies, collection development and exhibition programs but possibly also personnel, facilities and space.

The art collection now on view within the Parliament House is diverse, large and representative of many of Australia's best artists: its basis, however, is the collection of the Historic Memorials Committee (HMC) which has been in operation since 1911. This Committee has collected commissioned portraits of Governors-General, Prime Ministers, Chief Justices of the High Court and others in high office. The records of the HMC show that the concept of a portrait gallery was never far from the minds of its originators.

The last institution to mention here is the National Museum of Australia. With its wide-ranging brief, the museum could quite properly concern itself with the nurturing of an Australian Portrait Gallery. Even if such an undertaking were to impose on the museum a greater 'fine arts' element than may have been once intended, there is no doubt that the social/historical preoccupations of a portrait gallery are completely sympathetic to the thematic relation of the story of Australia which the museum has undertaken to tell.

However the present project unfolds, an Australian Portrait Gallery can only exist and flourish in partnership with the existing bodies mentioned herein. As funds become ever tighter, co-operation and resource-sharing are imperative, and nowhere more important than in the eventual creation of this new national institution. The return would surely come in the form of public endorsement of another stimulating cultural attraction in the national capital. One should also bear in mind the touring exhibition potential – of relevance to Australia as a whole – which a portrait gallery would generate, and its interactive links with state and regional galleries, libraries and museums.



Martin Sharp, Mo: Nimrod Theatre Poster. Photo: Art Gallery of South Australia.