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COUNCIL OF  
AUSTRALASIAN  
MUSEUM  
DIRECTORS

**Response to the Australian Heritage Strategy  
Public Consultation Paper**

June 2012

## COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIAN MUSEUM DIRECTORS

### Response to the Australian Heritage Strategy Public Consultation Paper

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The Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD) welcomes the opportunity provided by the Australian Heritage Strategy public consultation paper to provide comment on an area in which its members are directly involved. We recognize that this is not yet a consultation on a strategy, but an opportunity to respond to the key issues facing heritage in Australia.

#### **Culture and Heritage**

CAMD believes that the consultation process should give due consideration to the breadth of different heritage activities in Australia and their integral relationship to other areas of policy. In particular, CAMD is concerned that to date the consultation process and paper continues to underline the separation between culture (including the arts) and heritage. Despite the acknowledgment in the paper that heritage ‘includes stories, traditions, languages, events and experiences’ (p.2) there is little or no mention of the fundamental relationship between culture on one hand and heritage on the other. The link between the two is provided by our **cultural memories** which are embedded in the nation’s cultural collections. The fact that a National Cultural Policy is currently in the process of development provides a significant opportunity for the two policy areas to be aligned more effectively around this nexus.

#### **Museums and Heritage**

Museums are amongst a number of cultural institutions which encompass and celebrate our cultural heritage yet their absence from the consultation paper suggests that it sees little or no role for museums in heritage. CAMD believes that museums perform a range of important roles in relation to heritage. In particular, they:

- care for significant heritage places, sites and buildings;
- conserve collections which are an integral part of Australia’s heritage;
- are major providers of access to heritage;
- are important sources of heritage expertise;
- deliver significant amounts of heritage education; and
- help communities to engage in heritage.

A short paper exploring further the ways in which CAMD museums deliver heritage outcomes, and some suggested case studies is at *Attachment A*.

#### **The Heritage Cycle**

CAMD is concerned that the consultation paper focuses too much on protection and management to the detriment of enjoyment and understanding, thus missing an important opportunity.

The fundamental heritage cycle begins with understanding:

*In the end, we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught.*

Baba Dioum, African Ecologist

*By UNDERSTANDING the historic environment people value it, by VALUING it they care for it, by CARING for it they help people to enjoy it, and from ENJOYING the historic environment comes a thrust to understand it.*

English Heritage Corporate Plan 2010-15

CAMD would argue that heritage is both something that we participate in, learn about and enjoy, as well as something that we protect and manage. All parts of the heritage cycle should be considered during the process to develop an Australian Heritage Strategy.

### **Risks and Benefits**

The paper asks specific questions about who and how best to manage heritage. It is clear from the essays provided with the consultation paper, and from the current State of the Environment report, that Australian heritage is at risk. Indigenous heritage sites are being lost at an alarming rate, levels of grant funding are falling and there is a relatively low level of policy commitment to heritage management and protection. The reports also make it clear that data collection for cultural as opposed to natural heritage is poor, which in turn impacts on our ability to manage the resource.

We also note that there is evidence set out in the papers for the economic, environmental and social benefits of caring for heritage for communities and for places. In particular, CAMD commends the contribution made by its member, Ms Kate Clark (Director, Historic Houses Trust of NSW), in her essay 'Only Connect' in delineating the many and complex ways in which heritage benefits the community.

Whilst CAMD does not have specific views on heritage legislation or site protection, we believe that Australia's rich natural and cultural heritage underpins our sense of place and national identity, but the current fragmented nature of heritage protection, and separation from wider cultural and arts agendas means that Australia's heritage is at risk.

### **Heritage Strategy**

We would ask the Commonwealth government to show clear leadership and commitment by:

- stating clearly the importance of cultural heritage to all Australians;
- asking all Government departments to recognize the role that cultural heritage can play in achieving their own outcomes (whether it be tourism, education, environment, social inclusion or infrastructure);

- making an explicit connection between caring for heritage and arts and culture through a connection to the new National Cultural Policy;
- recognizing the role of education, learning, access and engagement in heritage strategies;
- making a commitment to reducing the level of loss and destruction to Australian indigenous heritage; and
- also committing to significantly improve the quality of data collection and mapping for Australian culture and heritage.

### **Heritage Resources**

Finally, we would point to the UK Heritage Lottery Fund, which has demonstrated what can be achieved for communities across the United Kingdom with funding dedicated to heritage. This fund has delivered significant social, economic and environmental benefits, by enabling communities to learn about and discover their own heritage. It brings together museums, archives, libraries, historic buildings, biodiversity, public parks, industrial heritage and oral history, and shows what can be achieved if resources are sufficient and suitably allocated.

### **CAMD**

The Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD) brings together the leaders of the major national, State/Territory and regional museums in Australia and New Zealand (see *Attachment B*). Together they manage 62 museum sites (see *Attachment C*) including state and national museums, social and natural history collections, heritage buildings and outdoor museum sites.

CAMD would be pleased to provide further details in relation to the above submission if required.

*Dr Meredith Foley (CAMD Executive Officer) on behalf of the Council of Australasian Museum Directors*

*20 June 2012*

## Attachment A

## The Role of Museums in Heritage – Issues and Case Studies

### MUSEUMS CARE FOR SIGNIFICANT HERITAGE PLACES, SITES AND BUILDINGS

There are over a thousand museum and gallery organizations in Australia, operating from 1,456 locations. Many of those are in (or responsible for) heritage buildings – whether purpose-built (such as the Australian Museum) or adaptively re-used (for example, the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney). In terms of World Heritage Sites, the Museum of Victoria cares for the Royal Exhibition Building World Heritage Site in Melbourne and the Historic Houses Trust of NSW (HHT) for the Hyde Park Barracks Museum and Old Government House. Others such as the Sydney Opera House or Fremantle Prison are managed by cultural organizations whilst both the Australian Museum and the Queensland Museum play a pivotal role in the study and protection of the Great Barrier Reef. Many museums are responsible for major archaeological sites (such as the Museum of Sydney on the site of First Government House place).

#### **CASE STUDY: World Heritage - The Royal Exhibition Building (Museum of Victoria)**

Built in 1880, and of the oldest Exhibitions Buildings in the world, and now a World Heritage Site, the Museum of Victoria manages this building as part of a group of heritage and museums sites.

See: <http://museumvictoria.com.au/reb/>

### MUSEUM COLLECTIONS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF AUSTRALIA'S HERITAGE

Museums of course are also major repositories for cultural heritage collections – with well over 55 million objects in their collections, as well as archives and records, these are significant repositories of the nation's stories and memories. As well as smaller objects, these collections include major items such as locomotives, ships, vehicles, machinery and other industrial heritage items. As Museum Victoria notes:

*The Museum's priceless collections record Australia's environmental and cultural history. They are an irreplaceable resource for understanding the past, reflecting on the present and looking into the future.*

#### **CASE STUDY: Collections - The NSW State Collections (5 State museums)**

The State collections of NSW held by the five cultural institutions are valued at \$4.3 billion, and include items which span visual arts, design, technology, literature, natural sciences, culture and history. They feature the very best examples of human creativity, and allow us to research, interpret and understand our culture and environment, bring the past to life and assist us to meet the challenge of a changing world.

See:

[http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/3814\\_The-State-Collections-Report\\_WEBsinglepgs.pdf](http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/3814_The-State-Collections-Report_WEBsinglepgs.pdf)

## **MUSEUMS ARE MAJOR PROVIDERS OF ACCESS TO HERITAGE**

Over 30 million people visit museums across Australia each year. And without exception, every one of these museums provides access to cultural heritage in some form or other. This may be through:

- exhibitions relating to history, Indigenous culture;
- public programs including festivals, events and other activities;
- partnerships with multi-cultural, indigenous or architectural organizations to help bring history and culture to a wider audience;
- oral history and other programs; and
- book publications and web material that includes information about heritage.

Whilst much of this activity takes place in museums, there is also a huge amount of access and enjoyment of heritage that takes place beyond the boundaries of the museum site through festivals, tours and other events.

It is important to note here that such cultural heritage activities are a key component of the tourism sector. The Tourism and Transport Forum reported that in 2010-11 there were 23.4 million cultural and heritage visitors in Australia whose economic impact, beyond direct participation, accounted for \$23 billion.<sup>1</sup> Visiting historic/heritage buildings and sites and museums and art galleries were the most popular activities for these cultural groups.

In a recent NSW study, it was found that over 2 million people visited museums and galleries in outer metropolitan and regional NSW. The study, *Value Added! The economic and social contribution of cultural facilities and activities in Central NSW*, identified economic benefits including an additional 8.5 jobs outside the cultural sector across the central NSW region for every 10 full time positions within the cultural sector.<sup>2</sup> The types of cultural heritage tourism provided by museums and heritage organisations in rural and regional Australia allow these communities not only to develop and project a sense of their distinctive local identity but to assist rural regeneration.

### **CASE STUDY: Access to Heritage – The Australian War Memorial**

The Australian War Memorial is a National Heritage Site which combines a shrine, a world-class museum, and an extensive archive. The Memorial's purpose is to commemorate the sacrifice of those Australians who have died in war. Its mission is to assist Australians to remember, interpret and understand the Australian experience of war and its enduring impact on Australian society. Through exhibitions, research, events, tours, publications and other activities, people are able to learn about and discover their own past and that of others.

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<sup>1</sup> Tourism and Transport Forum, Submission to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Office of the Arts, National Cultural Discussion Paper, October 2011, p.4

<sup>2</sup> Museums & Galleries NSW, 'Value Added! The economic and social contribution of cultural facilities and activities in Central NSW', June 2010, [http://mgnsw.org.au/uploaded/resources/Value%20Added\\_final%20report.pdf](http://mgnsw.org.au/uploaded/resources/Value%20Added_final%20report.pdf)

See: <http://www.awm.gov.au/about/>

**CASE STUDY: Access to Heritage – About Time: South Australian History Festival (History SA)**

Held each year, thousands of people across South Australia explore history through over 500 events which range from walks and talks to tours, exhibitions and special events. The event is coordinated by museum organization History SA.

See: <http://www.abouttime.sa.gov.au/>

**CASE STUDY: Access to Heritage – SYDNEY OPEN (Historic Houses Trust of NSW)**

SYDNEY OPEN has been organized by the Historic Houses Trust of NSW for many years; it literally ‘opens’ up the city’s buildings, sites, architectural icons and much loved historic places, many of which are off-limits to the public most of the time. In 2010 close to 6,000 people made 37,000 visits to 70 buildings and sites. The idea has spread with Open House Melbourne underway since 2008 and Open House Adelaide commencing in 2012 as part of the About Time history festival.

See:

[http://www.hht.net.au/whats\\_on/event/architecture/sydney\\_open\\_presents\\_talks\\_public\\_sydney](http://www.hht.net.au/whats_on/event/architecture/sydney_open_presents_talks_public_sydney)

<http://www.openhousemelbourne.org/>

<http://www.openhouseadelaide.com.au/>

**CASE STUDY: Heritage access and Rural Regeneration – SOVEREIGN HILL MUSEUM, Ballarat**

The award-winning Sovereign Hill Museums Association employs over 360 people and generates annually about \$50 million which is injected into the Ballarat economy. Its outdoor museum researches and interprets the region in its gold rush days through a reconstructed township and diggings, mining history through its Sovereign Quartz Mine and the social heritage of the region through its Gold Museum. In 2010, Sovereign Hill celebrated its 40th year and received its 18 millionth visitor. Over 5 million have visited its Gold Museum and its nightly sound and light show has attracted over 1.5m visitors. Today, it attracts some 687,000 day and up to 86,000 night domestic and international visitors a year.

See: <http://www.sovereignhill.com.au/>

**MUSEUMS ARE IMPORTANT SOURCES OF HERITAGE EXPERTISE**

Museum curators are heritage professionals in their own right. With expertise in indigenous culture and history, archaeology, history, decorative arts, sciences, architectural history, archives and other disciplines, they use their expertise to both care for important heritage items, but also to interpret them, and to engage wider audiences. Some of Australia’s best known scientists and cultural heritage experts are museum-based, and museums provide an opportunity for research, training and career development.

Many museums play a key role in preserving heritage skills. For example, both the Powerhouse Museum and the Australian National Maritime Museum have voluntary groups which care for ships, locomotives and other types of heritage, and also support wider groups which care for those kinds of heritage.

**CASE STUDY: Heritage and History – Centre for Historical Research (National Museum of Australia)**

The National Museum of Australia's Centre for Historical Research fosters new thinking about Australian history and the Australian historical experience. Its members work in fields including desert archaeology, Australian cultural, environmental, Indigenous, military and social history and Pacific cultural studies. Annual Collections Symposia are held on aspects of history, heritage, conservation and museology and the Centre takes a leading role in editing the Museum's online journal *reCollections*.

See: <http://www.nma.gov.au/history/research>

**CASE STUDY: Heritage Skills – Cobb & Co Museum (Queensland Museum)**

In 2010 the Cobb+Co Museum in Toowoomba opened the National Carriage Gallery and the National Carriage Factory. The Factory is a custom built facility designed to showcase heritage trades and skills. It provides popular workshops in blacksmithing, silver smithing, leather plaiting, lead lighting, stonemasonry and millinery.

See: <http://www.cobbandco.qm.qld.gov.au/>

**CASE STUDY: Cultural Regeneration – Indigenous Bark Canoes and Fibre Work (Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery)**

Museum heritage collections are being used to regenerate traditional Indigenous practice. The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's Aboriginal Gallery worked with local Indigenous community members to build a full size bark canoe – a project that had not been attempted in over 170 years. It also worked with 35 Tasmanian Aboriginal women and girls to use collections to rediscover Indigenous fibre skills. The resulting exhibition of works – *tayenebe* - toured nationally from 2009 to 2012.

See:

[http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/learning\\_and\\_discovery/learning\\_resources/current\\_resources/ningenneh\\_tunapry](http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/learning_and_discovery/learning_resources/current_resources/ningenneh_tunapry)

<http://static.tmag.tas.gov.au/tayenebe/tayenebe.html>

**CASE STUDY: Heritage Partnership – the National Register of Australian Vessels (Australian National Maritime Museum)**

The register is designed to build and promote a national picture of historic vessels – their existence, condition, use and importance – now and since they were built. The program has been developed by the Australian National Maritime Museum, in association with the Sydney Heritage Fleet and is built on a collaborative model. Its success depends on the



support of boat owners from across the country, whether private or public, individual or institutional.

<http://emuseum.anmm.gov.au/code/emuseum.asp?newpage=ARHVWelcome&newprofiles=ARHVObjects>

## **MUSEUMS DELIVER SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF HERITAGE EDUCATION**

Museums deliver significant amounts of out of classroom learning for young people. Over 1.4m students attended CAMD museums last year. Although it is not possible to separate out heritage, the majority of that programming would relate to cultural or natural heritage. Even core science programs will often have a heritage element to them.

For example, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery notes that:

*Learning is at the heart of the museum. Our vision is to make Tasmania's natural and cultural heritage available and relevant to as wide an audience as possible, and aid the learner's journey in understanding this heritage. This includes contextualising the learning experience geographically and historically as well as enabling learners to reflect on their role in societal development*

Museums contribute to many different areas of the curriculum – as well as history, museum heritage programs can contribute to learning about science, maths, the environment, human society, English, geography and other areas. Many museum education programs are directly linked to the curriculum, using innovative hands-on learning and experiences.

### **CASE STUDY: Heritage Education - 'A Convict Story' (Historic Houses Trust)**

Each year around 60,000 children experience heritage through education programs provided by the HHT. The most recent of these is 'A Convict Story' – a new connected classrooms initiative broadcast from the Museum of Sydney which enables children from across NSW to learn about the use of history and sources.

See: [http://www.hht.net.au/education/resources/connected\\_classrooms](http://www.hht.net.au/education/resources/connected_classrooms)

### **CASE STUDY: Heritage Education - Bound for South Australia 1836 (History SA)**

Launched in early 2011 by History SA, 'Bound for South Australia 1836' is a digital reenactment of the sea voyages made 175 years ago to establish the British Province of South Australia. It is one of the first online resources supporting the new National Curriculum for History. The serialised delivery of these stories in a blogging format enables a narrative approach that is more contingent, open ended – and dramatic – rather than traditional discursive presentations of historical events.

See [www.boundforsouthaustralia.net.au](http://www.boundforsouthaustralia.net.au)

## **MUSEUM HELP COMMUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN HERITAGE**

Most museums have over many years, built up strong community networks. As well as the special interest groups identified above, museums often have strong links to cultural communities. For example the Australian Museum works closely with Pacific Islander groups and indigenous communities, while the Immigration Museum in Melbourne provides a showcase for different self-curated migrant community exhibitions and a site for annual cultural festivals. Museums are also constantly seeking to find new ways to engage people in culture, heritage and science. Working with artists, charitable organizations and communities, museums have developed innovative audience development and interpretation strategies for linking people and heritage.

### **CASE STUDY: The Migration Heritage Centre (Powerhouse Museum)**

A virtual migration museum managed by the Powerhouse, this tells the wider stories of Australian migrants in partnership with community organizations across NSW. The centre undertakes research, develops exhibitions, publications and events, and provides educational resources to share migrant stories. A series of online exhibitions link the connections between people and places across NSW.

<http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/online-exhibitions/>

### **CASE STUDY: Pacific Youth Cultural Connection (Australian Museum)**

Pacific communities make up approximately 0.86% of the Australian population, with 32% (about 19,000) in Sydney. Their youth is disproportionately represented amongst those identified as being 'at risk' or in gaol. The Australian Museum has been working with the Department of Juvenile Justice since 2009 to reconnect young members of Pacific diaspora communities with their tangible and intangible heritage; to allow them to interact with their culture via the Museum's significant Pacific Island collections.

See:

[http://www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam/publications/conference\\_publications/Howarth&Pieta.2011-05-27%200930%201-3.pdf](http://www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam/publications/conference_publications/Howarth&Pieta.2011-05-27%200930%201-3.pdf)

### **CASE STUDY: new audiences - The Disappearing (Historic Houses Trust NSW)**

The Red Room Company is a not-for-profit organisation based in Sydney, Australia who create, promote and publish new poetry by Australian writers, in unusual ways. Their current project is 'The Disappearing' which explores the link between poetry and place and focuses on loss. Working jointly with the HHT, they have encouraged poets to write about historic places and sites. The result is a new Iphone and Android App which can be downloaded.

See: <http://redroomcompany.org/projects/disappearing/>

Attachment B

**COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIAN MUSEUM DIRECTORS  
MEMBERSHIP 2012**

**Ms Margaret Anderson**

Director  
History SA

**Mr Pierre Arpin**

Director  
Museum and Art Gallery of the  
Northern Territory

**Mr Bill Bleathman**

Director  
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

**Mr Alan Brien**

Chief Executive Officer  
Scitech Discovery Centre, Perth

**Dr Dawn Casey**

Director  
Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences  
(Powerhouse Museum)

**Ms Kate Clark**

Director  
Historic Houses Trust of NSW

**Mr Alec Coles**

Chief Executive Officer  
Western Australian Museum

**Professor Graham Durant AM**

Director  
Questacon – National Science and  
Technology Centre

**Dr Ian Galloway**

Director  
Queensland Museum

**Dr J. Patrick Greene OBE**

*CAMD Chair,*  
Chief Executive Officer  
Museum Victoria

**Ms Nola Anderson**

A/Director  
Australian War Memorial

**Mr Frank Howarth**

Director  
Australian Museum

**Mr Michael Houlihan**

Chief Executive  
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa  
Tongarewa

**Mr Jeremy Johnson**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Sovereign Hill Museums Association

**Prof Suzanne Miller**

Director  
South Australian Museum

**Mr Richard Mulvaney**

Director  
Queen Victoria Museum and Gallery

**Mr Shimrath Paul**

Chief Executive  
Otago Museum and Discovery World

**Mr Andrew Sayers**

Director,  
National Museum of Australia

**Mr Tony Sweeney**

Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Centre for the Moving Image

**Mr Kevin Sumption**

Director  
Australian National Maritime Museum

**Mr Anthony Wright**

*CAMD Executive Member*  
Director  
Canterbury Museum

Attachment C

## **CAMD Museum Sites**

- **Auckland War Memorial Museum**, Auckland
- **Australian Centre for the Moving Image**, Melbourne
- **Australian National Maritime Museum**, Sydney
  - Wharf 7 Maritime Heritage Centre, Sydney
- **Australian Museum**, Sydney
- **Australian War Memorial**, Canberra
- **Canterbury Museum**, Christchurch
  - Robert McDougall Gallery
- **Historic Houses Trust of NSW**
  - Elizabeth Bay House, Sydney
  - Elizabeth Farm, Sydney
  - Government House, Sydney
  - Hyde Park Barracks Museum, Sydney
  - Justice & Police Museum, Sydney
  - Meroogal, Nowra
  - Museum of Sydney, Sydney
  - Rose Seidler House, Sydney
  - Rouse Hill Estate, Sydney
  - Susannah Place Museum, Sydney
  - Vaucluse House, Sydney
  - The Mint, Sydney
- **History SA**
  - History Trust of South Australia, Adelaide
  - National Motor Museum, Birdwood
  - South Australian Maritime Museum, Port Adelaide
  - Migration Museum, Adelaide
- **Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences**
  - Powerhouse Museum
  - Sydney Observatory
  - Powerhouse Discovery Centre
- **Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa**
- **Museum Victoria**
  - Melbourne Museum, Melbourne
  - Scienceworks Museum, Melbourne

- Immigration Museum, Melbourne
- IMAX
- Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne
- **Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory**
  - Bullock Point, Darwin
  - Fannie Bay Gaol, Darwin
  - Lyons Cottage, Darwin
- **National Museum of Australia, Canberra**
- **Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre , Canberra**
- **Otago Museum and Discovery World, Dunedin**
- **Queensland Museum**
  - Queensland Museum South Bank, Brisbane
  - Museum of Tropical Queensland, Townsville
  - Cobb & Co Museum, Toowoomba
  - Lands Mapping & Surveying Museum
  - The Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich
- **Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery**
  - Inveresk, Tasmania
  - Royal Park, Launceston, Tasmania
- **Scitech Discovery Centre, Perth**
- **South Australian Museum**
  - South Australian Museum, Adelaide
  - South Australian Museum Science Centre, Adelaide
- **The Sovereign Hill Museums Association**
  - Sovereign Hill, Ballarat
  - Gold Museum, Ballarat
  - Narmbool, Elaine
- **Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery**
  - Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
  - Tasmanian Herbarium, Hobart
  - Rosny Research and Collections Centre, Hobart
- **Western Australian Museum**
  - Western Australian Museum, Perth
  - Western Australian Maritime Museum, Fremantle
  - Fremantle History Museum
  - Western Australian Shipwreck Galleries
  - Western Australian Museum Geraldton

- Western Australian Museums Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Western Australian Museum Albany
- Samson House, Fremantle