

CAMD

COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIAN
MUSEUM DIRECTORS

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AUCKLAND WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
MARITIME MUSEUM

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

CANTERBURY MUSEUM

HISTORIC HOUSES TRUST OF NSW

HISTORY TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

MUSEUM OF APPLIED ARTS
AND SCIENCES (POWERHOUSE)

MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND
TE PAPA TONGAREWA

MUSEUM VICTORIA

MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERIES
OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

OTAGO MUSEUM AND
DISCOVERY WORLD

QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM
AND ART GALLERY

QUEENSLAND MUSEUM

SCITECH DISCOVERY CENTRE, PERTH

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

TASMANIAN MUSEUM
AND ART GALLERY

THE SOVEREIGN HILL
MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

To:

cc:

Subject: 7 January 2007, 'Museums as Summer Icons'.

MEDIA RELEASE

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Museums as Summer Icons

The summer season will see the usual backyard barbecues, lazy cricket matches, days of sun and surf and ... a visit to a major state, national or regional museum.

A museum visit may not seem an immediate candidate for the list of quintessential Christmas activities but research undertaken by the Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD) tells a different story.

CAMD'S annual survey shows that total attendances at CAMD's twenty-one museums rose to over 11.8 million in the financial year 2005/06. Over 9.1 million of these visitors went to one of Australia's major museums and 2.7 million to New Zealand venues.

And its not only the locals who enjoy the stimulation of a visit to their local major museum. Interstate and overseas tourists will make up a sizable proportion of the visitors to the major museums' exhibitions over summer. In 2005-06 close to 1 million interstate tourists and over 2.1 million overseas tourists made the major museums one of their key cultural destinations when they travelled in Australia and New Zealand.

But not all visitors are walking through the door. Kevin Fewster, Chair of CAMD and the Director of the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney notes that,

"This year has been a significant tipping point for museums. For the first time more than half of CAMD's members are attracting more 'virtual' than actual visitors".

Dr Fewster said that, in 2005/06 "CAMD's research shows that the public logged on to the websites of CAMD museums for a staggering total of 34.6 million user sessions!"

The major museums have enthusiastically embraced the digital revolution. 'Virtual' visitors to their websites can take an online tour of a museum; digitally browse through vast picture libraries; search through millions of referenced collection items; sample online learning resources; play games; follow their family history and access printed library resources as well as checking forthcoming exhibitions and opening times for a 'real-life' visit.

There are still plenty of opportunities for a more hands-on museum experience: when the swimmers and surfboards are put away for the start of the new school year, returning students are likely to join the over 1.4 million school students annually who find their learning and knowledge extended by an excursion to a major museum.

[CAMD members – museum holiday exhibitions and programs]

CAMD represents the Directors of the 21 major national, state and regional, social and natural history museums and science centres in Australia and New Zealand.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

- *[name and phone contacts for local institution]*
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