

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA

Annual Report of Operations and
Audited Financial Statements 2003–2004

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ISSN 0818-7142

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Produced by the National Museum of Australia

Designed by Z00

Printed by Goanna Print, Canberra

Cover image

Silver tea urn rewarded to the farmers who killed Gilbert and Hall gang member John O'Meally from the Outlawed! exhibition photo: Nadish Naoroji

Australasian Sketcher cover image of Ned Kelly from the Outlawed! exhibition photo: National Museum of Australia

Silk batik by Angkuna Kulyuru from the Stories from Australia exhibition photo: George Serras

Rose Pappas's hat and slippers from the Horizons gallery photo: National Museum of Australia



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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Senator the Hon. Rod Kemp
Minister for the Arts and Sport
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

On behalf of the Council for the National Museum of Australia, I am pleased to submit our annual report for the year ended 30 June 2004. The report is presented in accordance with Section 9 and Schedule 1 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, and it has been prepared in conformity with the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies (Report of Operations) Orders 2002*.

In its third year of operation the Museum has continued to build upon its success in delivering innovative exhibitions and programs that foster a greater understanding of Australian history and cultures. It has maintained visitor numbers and a high level of visitor approval. It has successfully presented travelling exhibitions throughout Australia and staged its biggest temporary exhibition to date. Public programs and school programs have continued to meet visitor expectations and enjoyed an increase in attendances.

During the year, considerable planning occurred towards the Museum's future. Following the *Review of Exhibitions and Public Programs* (2003), the Museum developed a new Collections and Gallery Development Plan. Council endorsed the plan in November 2003. The Museum also developed a new strategic plan for 2004–2007, which will provide greater focus on developing the National Historical Collection, reaching national audiences, building the Museum's research and strengthening its resource base. Council approved the plan in June 2004, for implementation in the next financial year.



Office of Senator Rod Kemp

*Senator the Hon. Rod Kemp,
Minister for the Arts and Sport*



Dean Golja

*The Hon. Tony Staley, Chairman
of the Council, National Museum
of Australia*

Other achievements of the year included an increase in non-Government revenues including an improvement in retail turnover and an increase in sponsorship.

The year saw some changes in leadership for the Museum. Ms Dawn Casey's term as Director ended in December 2003 and Mr Craddock Morton was appointed Acting Director. In June 2004 Mr Morton was appointed Director for a period of three years. The Council is pleased to welcome Mr Morton to the position and looks forward to working with him over the coming years. I would like to express the Council's gratitude to Ms Casey for her many achievements during her term as Director.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the support of my fellow Council members in guiding the Museum towards the successes it has achieved during the year. I would also like to express the Council's appreciation for the ongoing support of the portfolio ministers, Senator the Hon. Helen Coonan, Senator the Hon. Rod Kemp, and the Hon. Daryl Williams. Finally, all members of Council join me in congratulating the Directors and staff on the Museum's continuing outstanding success.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Staley', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tony Staley
Chairman of the Council
National Museum of Australia
7 September 2004

SOME HIGHLIGHTS AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN 2003–2004

- Visitor numbers remained steady during the year, with more than 820,000 people visiting the Museum's exhibitions and programs.
- 480,000 individual sessions were recorded on the Museum's website.
- More than 85,000 students from 1816 schools visited the Museum on booked school tours, an increase over the previous year's numbers.
- More than 1000 teachers attended professional development workshops at the Museum.
- 93 per cent of visitors surveyed recorded that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their visit.
- Evaluation demonstrated that 95 per cent of schools visiting the Museum were satisfied that it met their core curriculum requirements.
- Council endorsed the Collections and Gallery Development Plan, which addresses issues raised in the *Review of Exhibitions and Public Programs* (2003).
- 16 new collections, comprising 722 objects, were accessioned.
- The remains of 132 individuals were returned to their Aboriginal communities.
- Permanent galleries were enhanced through an extensive program of object changeovers.
- Eight travelling exhibitions opened across Australia.
- 1500 objects underwent conservation treatment.
- More than 140 public lectures, forums, seminars, conferences and workshops were presented at the Museum.
- Ten Talkback Classroom forums involving more than 1000 students and ten public figures took place.
- Museum research was enhanced through partnerships in 13 Australian Research Council grants.
- An integrated collections and exhibitions information management system was installed.
- Six live events were webcast from the Museum's Studio.
- Revenues from non-Government sources increased by 22 per cent over the previous year.
- There was a 50 per cent increase in both cash and in-kind sponsorship and grants revenue over the previous year.
- The Museum's retail operations experienced a substantial increase in net return in contrast to the previous year.
- A new strategic plan was developed for 2004–2007. Council approved the plan for implementation from July 2004.