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Museums and Tourism

Shining a light on Queensland's museums and galleries
celebrating International Museum Day



Welcome to the 2009 issue of *Artery*, published by Museum and Gallery Services Queensland [M&GSQ], the peak industry body for museums and galleries in Queensland, Australia.

As in past years, this issue of *Artery* celebrates International Museum Day (IMD), which falls on 18 May, by focusing on the theme for IMD set each year by the International Council of Museums. For 2009, the theme is ***Museums and Tourism***.

ICOM states: '*Museums & Tourism*' encourages museum professionals and volunteers to work together with visitors and tourists, creating interactions with local communities in order to experience heritage both inside and outside of the museum walls.¹

In 2008, 1.26 million people visited Queensland's regional galleries, another 1.9 million visited the State's statutory institutions (Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, campuses of the Queensland Museum, State Library of Queensland exhibitions) and it is estimated a further 1.8 million people visited other Queensland museums.

In this issue of *Artery*, Dr Sharron Dickman examines the often confusing term, 'cultural tourism', and looks at ways that museums and galleries might assess their own viability as a cultural tourist destination.

We then present some insights on the impact that winning tourism awards can have on a museum in terms of its audiences and areas of operation. The Workshops Rail Museum at Ipswich, south-west of Brisbane, provides the inside story.

Continuing the theme of *Museums and Tourism*, we shine a light on museums and galleries celebrating International Museum Day as part of Museum and Gallery Services Queensland's annual, week-long State-wide event, *Museums Alight!* This event provides an opportunity for museums and galleries in every region of Queensland to showcase their collections, exhibitions, historical venues, special events and stories to the public. In this issue, we take a snapshot of some of the 2009 *Museums Alight!* activities. This year, M&GSQ has linked participating galleries to Google Maps on our website (www.magsq.com.au) to help in planning a visit to one of our State's many cultural institutions.

Other stories in this issue focus on the growing number of new or transformed venues which are now part of the Queensland gallery sector, and on museum/gallery practice in Australia. Michael Desmond contributes to our discussion on best practice initiatives, which M&GSQ presents at an annual seminar in partnership with The University of Queensland. Michael's article, based on his paper at the 2008 seminar, looks at creative uses of the collection with two of the National Portrait Gallery's exhibitions that challenge the Gallery's collecting policy and a conventional understanding of portraiture.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Artery* and are inspired to become a cultural tourist at a museum or gallery somewhere in Queensland – even in your own backyard.

Rebekah Butler
Executive Director

1. International Council of Museums press release. Paris, 18 March 2009, www.icom.museum/release.tourism.html



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Opened in December 2008 Hinkler Hall of Aviation in Bundaberg dramatically tells the story of Bert Hinkler.



Tableau of Hinkler lying in state in Mussolini's Italy.



Hinkler Hall extensively uses multimedia storytelling.



Full-size replica of Hinkler's Avro Avian.



The globe charts Hinkler's flights and houses a theatrette.

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Culture + Tourism

Natural partners or strange bedfellows?

DR SHARRON DICKMAN

Introduction

Visiting Japan in the near future? You might like to include a day trip to Stratford-upon-Avon.

Maruyama Shakespeare Park, a re-creation of Stratford-Upon-Avon, includes a reproduction of Shakespeare's birthplace, the home of his mother, Mary Arden, and his home during his later years, all based upon the original 16th-century specifications. All interiors and furnishings faithfully reproduce the style of Shakespeare's time as well. Japanese flock there, combining it with a visit to the European-style Rosemary Park Gardens next door.

While you're there, you might also like to check out the nearby Awa Museum to visit 'Abalone: Food and Beauty', an exhibition related to the history, customs, and food culture of abalone fishing. Abalone ("awabi" in Japanese) is not only an historically important food in coastal areas of Japan, but also an important material for jewellery and other local crafts. International visitors have been fascinated by this exhibition.

Meanwhile, over in Eastern Ontario, Canada, the production of maple syrup is the basis for a very successful living cultural heritage tourism business. Run by the enterprising owner of a maple tree woodlot and sugar shack, Fulton's Pancake House is a thriving living cultural heritage tourism business and maple syrup operation — particularly popular with the Japanese.

And then there was... *Australia*. Tourism Australia invested \$40 million in a campaign, including two ads directed by Baz Luhrmann, to piggyback on the movie. "Unless the movie's scenes of outback Australia, with its cattle drives, dust, charging horses and spectacular scenery resonates with



Overlooking Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways, Western Queensland.
Photo: Ann Baillie.

audiences in Tokyo, Tulsa and Stoke on Trent – enough to persuade them to pop down to their local travel agent and book a Qantas flight to Sydney – then Tourism Australia may have done its money yet again."¹ Early feedback has not been encouraging.

Defining cultural tourists and cultural tourism

Welcome to the sometimes confusing world of cultural tourism. Whose culture? Which tourists?

'Cultural tourism' is a current popular marketing buzzword. First there was tourism, then 'niche market' tourism, which included things like sports tourism and environmental tourism. Now there is cultural tourism. Of course there are a few things that need to be agreed upon... For example, what do we mean by 'cultural'? And what, exactly, is a cultural tourist?



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According to Tourism Queensland, “Cultural tourism focuses on the distinct culture of a destination – its lifestyle, heritage, arts, people and industries – and the business of providing and interpreting that culture to visitors.”² However the Bureau of Tourism Research says a cultural tourist is “a person who stayed more than 40 kilometres away from home for at least one night and attended a cultural venue. (‘Cultural venues’ include: art galleries, museums, animal/marine parks, botanical gardens, libraries, popular music concerts, classical music concerts, theatre, dance, opera or musical theatre, other performing arts and cinema.)”³

But don’t stop there! According to the Bureau of Tourism Research in *Cultural Tourism in Australia*, the list of cultural activities should also include festivals or fairs (music, dance, comedy, visual arts, multi-arts and heritage), performing arts or concerts (theatre, opera, ballet, and classical and contemporary music), museums or art galleries, historic or heritage buildings, sites or monuments, art or craft workshops or studios, and Aboriginal sites and cultural displays.⁴

If you prefer ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) definitions, then, “cultural tourism can be defined as that activity which enables people to experience the different ways of life of other people, thereby gaining at first hand an understanding of their customs, traditions, the physical environment, the intellectual ideas and those places of architectural, historic, archaeological or other cultural significance which remain from earlier times. Cultural tourism differs from recreational tourism in that it seeks to gain an understanding or appreciation of the nature of the place being visited.”⁵

These definitions reveal a diverse range of views on what the term ‘cultural tourism’ encompasses. This diversity in views is also apparent in discussions with cultural tourism stakeholders. In essence, it seems that cultural tourism is understood more as a concept than as a particular set of products, and the range of what is considered to fall within the scope of cultural tourism is heavily influenced by personal or professional perspectives. For example, tourism industry stakeholders have expressed the view that international tourists tend to strongly link the term ‘culture’ in Australia with Indigenous culture. Domestic tourists, on the other hand, tend to link ‘culture’ with institutions such as art galleries, museums, etc.

The range of definitions reveals one of the key issues in cultural tourism: defining exactly what we are talking about. For some, cultural tourism is defined in terms of those who

visit cultural venues (theatres, art galleries, museums, keeping places, heritage buildings). Cultural tourists are discussed in terms of visitor numbers to specific attractions which have been classified as ‘cultural’.

For others, a cultural tourist is someone on a quest to understand or experience a culture. This might mean anything from eating local food to attending a local sporting event, staying in traditional-style accommodation or ‘meeting the locals’. Is a cultural tourist who attends a performance of The Queensland Orchestra (performing Mozart), then visits the Queensland Museum’s display of English porcelain more of a ‘cultural tourist’ than a visitor who attends a State of Origin match, then has fish and chips at a pub and ends up discussing cricket and cane toads with the locals?

Another challenging aspect of cultural tourism discussion relates to the issue of the role of cultural assets in the life of the resident community. What cultural facilities, services and events do we have for our local population and what do we have for visitors or tourists? Should these cultural assets be shared? Can they be shared? Does sharing these assets with ‘outsiders’ (tourists) increase or decrease their value and relevance for local populations? Are the things which interest visitors the same things that resonate with local populations?

All these issues are important because they impact on how both the cultural sector and the tourism sector define, promote and evaluate cultural tourism. Once an organisation has addressed these issues, the decision to actively be involved in cultural tourism can begin – or end. The degree of difficulty will depend on the type of cultural organisation. While a regional historical society may decide without hesitation that sharing its community stories is a positive tourism move, an Indigenous keeping place may well need to consult more widely within its constituency. A remote and fragile heritage site would likely have to be more cautious than a metropolitan-based art gallery. There’s seldom a single, simple answer.

Cultural tourists are good tourists

Cultural tourists, according to all the research, are ‘good tourists’. On average they stay longer at destinations, they spend more, and we presume because they are interested in ‘cultural things’ they are probably not demanding, unpleasant, loud-Hawaiian-shirt-wearing, video camera-carrying boors who want low-fat skinny-milk lattes even in



Boonarga Cactoblastis Memorial Hall, built in 1936. Photo: Peter Saxelby. Courtesy Dalby Regional Council. The building is listed on the Queensland Heritage Register and commemorates the eradication of Prickly Pear in the region. The *Cactoblastis* moth and larva were introduced from South America in 1925 to combat the spread of the Prickly Pear, which was declared a pest in 1910.

the middle of the outback. We have a mental image (which may or may not be justified) that they are considerate, respectful, interested and sensitive. Tourism Queensland's research shows:

- Cultural tourism is a rapidly growing industry, with a significant proportion of domestic and international visitors to Australia looking to participate in cultural experiences as a key element of their holidays.
- Cultural industries injected almost \$12 billion into the Australian economy and employed 85,000 people in the 12 months ended June 2000.
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of the Australian population aged 15 years and over had attended at least one cultural venue or participated in at least one cultural activity in the twelve months ended April 1999.
- Fifty percent (50%) of Australians experienced the performing arts (popular and classical music, theatre, dance, opera, musicals, other performing arts) at least once in the twelve months ended April 1999, while 51% visited an art gallery, museum or library.
- There were 1,353,000 domestic cultural visitors (visitors who participated in at least one cultural activity on their trip) to Queensland in the year ended December 2002.
- There were 945,673 international cultural visitors to Queensland in the year ended December 2002, representing 50% of all international visitors to the state.
- The majority of overseas cultural visitors to Queensland are from Europe, Japan, the United States of America and New Zealand.

- Female visitors were more likely to participate in cultural activities than males.
- Cultural visitors from overseas spend approximately 20% more in Australia (\$2,230 per stay) than overseas visitors generally (\$1,920 per stay).
- Cultural visitors tend to be younger than inbound visitors generally and will stay in Australia longer.
- The main motivating factor for international cultural visitors in visiting a cultural attraction was a desire to experience something Australian.
- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of international cultural visitors had not planned their visit to a cultural attraction in Australia beforehand.⁶

Assessing your cultural tourism viability

Tapping into cultural tourists means understanding what it is about your facility that would appeal to audiences seeking a cultural experience. Who are you? What are you offering? Will it have appeal to people? Generally it is recommended that four criteria be used in making evaluations:

1. *What is your uniqueness?*

What makes you different?

Every local community museum has a collection – amongst that collection there are probably some flat irons, some electric jugs, perhaps an old switchboard or two. Old Bakelite radios? Uniforms? War medals?

These are all good things, and important and relevant to the history of your town, your people. But what makes them different, unusual, unique? Is the only thing that makes your flat irons unique the fact that they have come from your community? While that might be important, it may not be important enough to draw visitors from other communities. It doesn't devalue them or make them less meaningful, it just makes them less a drawcard for cultural tourists (except, of course, for those people who have a particularly compelling interest in flat irons or electric jugs).

Identifying the things that have made you different is critical for cultural tourism. What is the story that ONLY you can tell? Or that you can tell BETTER than anyone else. What happened here? Who lived here? What are the rare, odd, amazing things that you have in your collection that can't be found anywhere else?

I have a treasured photograph taken at the Cactoblastis Hall in Boonarga, Queensland. As noted in the Queensland



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Heritage Register, “it demonstrates a rare aspect of Queensland’s cultural heritage as the only known building dedicated to an insect”.

2. What is your distance-pull?

Having identified what makes you unique, it is essential to evaluate – honestly and realistically – how interesting that difference really is for others. Distance-pull is a tourism term, it relates to the ‘degree of difficulty’ that people will go through in order to experience your special things.

Will people drive two hours on an unmade road to visit your heritage site? Will they be disappointed if they get there and discover it is not what they expected? It can sometimes be very difficult to assess objectively the things that are precious to us. Asking others for their opinion, surveying existing visitors, or asking for help from other cultural organisations can help determine an honest, fair assessment of the distance-pull of an attraction.

3. What is your time imperative?

Is there any urgency to visit?

Museums and art galleries have learnt this lesson well. There is nothing like a temporary exhibition to encourage people to visit. Come now, or it will be gone. That’s a strong message and incentive to act. Some smaller museums, galleries and historical societies take great pride in including virtually all the ‘good things’ in their collection on permanent display. While there are advantages to that approach, it also risks people feeling that they have ‘been there and done that’ and don’t need to come back. Varying displays, changing displays, taking things off display for a while, can improve the imperative to visit.

4. Who are your most important markets?

Who will appreciate your uniqueness?

Remember those flat irons and electric jugs? Well, there are people who are passionately interested in irons and jugs, and they will seek you out. But for most of the rest of us...

Learning who are your likely target markets is essential for efficient marketing and promotions. Hospital museum? Probably people involved in medical activities will find it interesting. Dinosaurs? A family market for sure, especially those with children going through their dinosaur phase.

Craft? Textiles? Probably women and perhaps that market often referred to as ‘grey nomads’, the older, retired or semi-retired couples involved in more leisurely travel (often with a caravan) who like to discover out-of-the-way places.

Once you have identified your uniqueness, assessed your distance-pull and reviewed your time imperatives, then finding your markets is relatively easy. You just need to connect with them.

Connecting tourists and cultural experiences

The figures from Tourism Queensland’s research, quoted above, highlight an interesting critical point – many of our international cultural tourists don’t plan their cultural experiences before they arrive.

Many tourists ‘tap into’ opportunities when they are here. They decide to attend a performance, visit an historic building, participate in a festival, visit a museum or shop in a craft centre based on information they receive once they arrive – perhaps from recommendations from family or friends, or as a result of picking up a brochure or perhaps serendipitously passing by something that ‘looks interesting’.

Making information – and experiences – accessible is an important part of cultural tourism marketing. For museums, that means raising a profile within the local community. Tourists often are in our community visiting family and friends. It is important that those local people are positive, enthusiastic promoters of our facilities and that they put the local museum or art gallery on the ‘must do’ list.

The more locals know about your museum or gallery, the more often they have visited, the more involved they are as friends, members, volunteers — the more likely they are to encourage tourists to visit.

Connecting both locals and visitors to cultural experiences is an importance challenge for cultural organisations. Ensuring local support (and approval) is essential.

How we reach these potential visitors, however, is becoming more and more challenging. Dedicated cultural tourists are extremely internet and web savvy and do extensive research prior to leaving home. That means our internet and web presence is more important than ever before. Virtual tours, special information, opening hours, directions, descriptions and illustrations of what is on exhibit and why it is unique and worth a visit are essential. Websites need to sell your museum or gallery or heritage site. Comments from visitors, guestbooks, details about upcoming exhibitions and archives about past exhibitions are all useful.



Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways, Western Queensland (detail). From the walkway over 3,300 stampeding dinosaur tracks can be seen. Photo: Ann Baillie.

The days are well and truly over when a website could be a single page, possibly hosted by a local government council, with the name of the organisation and its hours. These days websites encompass e-marketing and are designed to encourage visitation to the website and to the attractions. Including downloadable material for school groups, games, activities – even wallpaper and online ticket sales – is more and more the ‘norm’. For good examples of websites that work, check out the Lark Quarry website (<http://www.dinosaurtrackways.com.au>) and The Workshops Rail Museum (<http://www.theworkshops.qm.qld.gov.au>).

But not all cultural tourists plan ahead. Also important are those wonderful ‘accidental’ tourists who find you once they have arrived. Brochures, printed material, advertisements and word-of-mouth recommendations are therefore important. Involvement in combined promotions such as tours and trails which promote a variety of activities which appeal to cultural tourists, including food and wine and shopping, is highly recommended.

There are five critical elements to successful cultural tourism:

The importance of authenticity

Visitors are generally seeking genuine experiences. In a world of special effects (and Japanese reproductions of Shakespearean England), authenticity is a unique and memorable experience.

Thus there is a sector of the cultural heritage tourism market that seeks greater authenticity, more realistic experiences and closer contact with living cultural heritage products. Like the ecotourist who prefers spotting a wolf in the wild to seeing one in a zoo, the demanding cultural heritage tourist

values authentic, living cultural heritage experiences over pre-packaged and sanitised versions.⁷

Years ago, museum journals were full of stories about the imminent arrival of holograms of major artworks. There would be no need, we were told, to visit the Prado, the Louvre, the Vatican. We could, rather, visit holograms of all the ‘great works’ at our local museum. It hasn’t happened. Most of us still want to stand in front of the ‘real thing’. We want to ‘feel the history’. As we have seen with the increasing interest of young people in visiting ANZAC Cove, there is a desire to stand on the spot, experience the dawn, walk amongst the graves. There is nothing quite like the long drive which adds to the sense of ‘place’ you get when standing at Lark Quarry, looking at those dinosaur footprints, envisioning a different time, a different eco-system, a different world.

The importance of distinctiveness

Visitors want something different – something unique to a time or a place. Tell us about the artists who lived and created here (as they do at the Heide Museum of Contemporary Art in Melbourne). Show us the houses they lived in, the garden they walked through, the scenery that inspired them. What was it that made them “Angry Penguins”?

The importance of sustainability

It is essential that tourism not devalue or destroy the things that make a place special. In these days of increasing awareness of the fragility of our environment, tell me what you are doing to preserve these things, to run an environmentally friendly organisation. In large metropolitan facilities, this may mean providing information on your ‘green’ behaviour and the use of paper bags in your gift shop. At heritage sites, let visitors know how to care for the environment and that you are mindful of the responsibility we have to future generations. Don’t assume people know. Tell them.

The importance of quality and attention to detail

The quality of the experience is a critical part of creating a positive and memorable experience. Doing things well, having a commitment to a consistent, reliable, memorable experience, delivered by people with enthusiasm and respect for what they are doing cannot be over-emphasised. Alaska’s Silver Hand Program protects Indigenous artists and guarantees consumers that items carrying their seal are authentic and made in Alaska by native artists.

NZ Indigenous Art.com provides carvers and traditional craftspeople with a place to sell their Taonga (artefacts)



Loomis Dean. Models posing in new Christian Dior Collection 1957. Copyright Time Life Pictures. Licensed by Getty Images. From the Victoria and Albert Museum Travelling Exhibition, 'Golden Age of Couture', at the Bendigo Art Gallery.

without compromising the spiritual or historic meaning of their art. They guarantee authenticity and that every item for sale is hand crafted from start to finish and is provided with documentation.⁸

Conclusion

Putting it all together – Bendigo's 'Golden Age of Couture'⁹

Cultural tourism has the potential to increase visitor numbers to a region and to provide positive returns to cultural organisations. It provides an opportunity to enrich visitors and locals and to bring economic and social benefits to a region. With appropriate planning and marketing, and by delivering a quality product, museums and galleries can enhance their reputation both locally and internationally, and increase their profile and their revenue. Let's finish with a recent success story.

Bendigo, in Victoria's arts and heritage central heartland, has developed a reputation for its food and wine, heritage attractions, boutique accommodation, its galleries and

theatres and, increasingly, its savvy fashion sense. So there was a strong combination of both local interest in couture and a more widespread acknowledgement that 'Bendigo' and 'style' go together. It made fertile ground for a fashion-oriented exhibition.

The 'Golden Age of Couture', a Victoria and Albert Museum Travelling Exhibition held recently at Bendigo Art Gallery (December 2008 – March 2009), broke all Bendigo Art Gallery records and exceeded expectations with 75,000 attendees, of which some 60,000 were visitors to the region.

"Attracting an exhibition of this calibre to Bendigo was definitely a bold move. The City of Greater Bendigo, in partnership with the Art Gallery Board, was keen to stage an international exhibition that would attract new visitors to the city and the gallery. However, the end result of 75,000 attendees and an estimated \$10M injection into the local economy is far over and above anything we had hoped for," said Greater Bendigo Mayor, Cr Kevin Gibbins.

Visitor Survey Forms (8,835 or 12% of attendees) indicated:



- 45% of attendees were from the Melbourne Metropolitan area, 28% from regional Victoria, 20% from Greater Bendigo, 6% from interstate and 1% were international visitors.
- 92% of attendees indicated the exhibition was the primary reason for their visit to Bendigo.
- 44% of attendees had never visited the Bendigo Art Gallery before, 16% had visited once before and 40% had visited two or more times before.
- 40% found out about the exhibition from advertising, 40% from family and friends.
- 68% had found out about the exhibition from print media, 18% from television and 5% from radio.
- 79% had travelled to the exhibition by car and 19% by train.
- 32% indicated they used the gallery café during their visit.

The exhibition was advertised extensively on the internet and in the Melbourne metropolitan area. According to Mayor Gibbins, staff from Bendigo Art Gallery and the City's Marketing and Major Events and Tourism departments worked closely together on the event. More than 570 accommodation packages were sold, and there was a significant increase in turnover for the accommodation booking service.

Importing an authentic, genuine high-couture collection created a unique experience for Victorians, with sufficient distance-pull to make the hour-and-a-half journey up the highway from Melbourne. Delivering an exhibition noted for its quality and attention to detail ensured the success of 'Golden Age of Couture'.



Visitors queuing for the Victoria and Albert Museum Travelling Exhibition, 'Golden Age of Couture', at the Bendigo Art Gallery. Courtesy Bendigo Art Gallery.

notes

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Dr. Sharron Dickman is principal of Pathfinder Marketing. She has 25 years' experience in cultural tourism and arts marketing. She was a member of the Victorian Arts Marketing Taskforce and was President of the Cultural Tourism Industry Group (CTIG) for six years. She now serves as the secretariat for the CTIG. She is on the Committee for the Bacchus Marsh Blacksmith's Cottage and Forge and is a member of the Museums Australia (Vic) Training and Professional Development Committee.

Her publications include:

- *Tourism: An Introductory Text* (Cambridge University Press).
- *The Marketing Mix: promoting museums, galleries and exhibitions* (Museums Australia) – also printed in a Chinese edition in Taiwan.
- *Arts Marketing, the Pocket Guide* (Australia Council) – available as a talking book and in a Chinese edition.
- *Tourism and Hospitality Marketing* (Oxford University Press).
- *What's My Plan - a Guide to Developing Arts Marketing Plans* – designed specifically for individuals involved in arts and crafts (Australia Council).
- *Visitor Research Made Easy and Audience Research Made Easy* (Arts Victoria).
- *Marketing Planning and Writing Your Marketing Plan* – two guides for small business operators and commercial arts practitioners, including notes and materials for facilitated workshops (Museums Australia, Vic).



Awards Rewards

The value of quality tourism award programs

GLENN PRICE

THE WORKSHOPS RAIL MUSEUM, LOCATED IN NORTH IPSWICH APPROXIMATELY 40KM SOUTH-WEST OF BRISBANE, IS THE WINNER OF THE 2008 QUEENSLAND TOURISM AWARD FOR HERITAGE AND CULTURAL TOURISM, AND THE 2007 WINNER OF THE AUSTRALIAN TOURISM AWARD FOR HERITAGE AND CULTURAL TOURISM. THE MUSEUM'S MARKETING AND SALES MANAGER, GLENN PRICE, DISCUSSES THE IMPETUS FOR ENTERING THESE AWARD PROGRAMS AND THE IMPACT THAT RECOGNITION HAS HAD ON THE MUSEUM'S AREAS OF OPERATION AND ITS AUDIENCES.

Since opening in September 2002 The Workshops Rail Museum, the newest campus of the Queensland Museum, has increased visitation from approximately 50,000 to 100,000 visitors per year, developed a strong program of events and been awarded a number of tourism awards for heritage and cultural tourism.

While being recognised for excellence in heritage and cultural tourism by both State and National tourism industry bodies is a tremendous honour, the main purpose for entering such award programs from 2003 was largely centred around:

- Increasing the profile of a new Museum;
- An opportunity to critically review our strategies and processes;
- Developing relationships with the tourism industry.

Six years on and the benefits of participating in quality tourism award programs has been proven for staff and management at The Workshops Rail Museum.

Increasing the profile of The Workshops Rail Museum

The first and most apparent result of being successful in an award program is the media exposure (both Museum and non-Museum generated!), reporting the win or special commendation. As the significance of the award program heightens (for example, from local to State to National) so does the coverage and uniqueness for local media.



Visitors participating in activities across the extensive site of The Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich.

After the initial burst of media, the endorsement of adding the obligatory award logo to marketing collateral and communication efforts creates a new selling point for potential visitors, providing a consumer comfort zone to assist the decision making process – akin to the Heart Foundation's 'tick of approval'.

The endorsement of State and National tourism industry bodies promotes that the uniqueness of The Workshops Rail Museum product (the birthplace of rail in Queensland; 60,000-plus collection items; genuine Working Workshops where visitors can see heritage rail restoration and maintenance work undertaken) has been packaged for the tourist market and specifically for punters who are not necessarily rail or history enthusiasts. The endorsement implies accessibility to



'Tickets Please' aboard a Steam Train.

and through the experience, and promises a take-home of something memorable and distinctive.

Self critique

Quality award programs also facilitate and encourage the critical review of a number of areas of the Museum's operation: from the effectiveness of our customer feedback process to the way a potential visitor is given a truthful representation of the visitor experience through our marketing materials.

Such self critique encourages us to develop more effective and efficient processes to keep up with tourism industry benchmarks and, as a result, better equips us to answer questions asked in the award submission.

When preparing evidence to justify claims in award submissions, gaps in reportable data capture can be uncovered. For example, a question to capture a quantifiable percentage of visitors who would recommend The Workshops Rail Museum to their friends and families was added to our standard exit survey to better answer an award submission question relating to visitor referral and, as a result, provided deeper data about visitor satisfaction.

In addition, the process of increasing the capture of data through the years of compiling award submissions also provided us with the opportunity to analyse trends and predict likely peaks and troughs in future years.

Increasing credibility within the tourism industry

Being recognised through a tourism award program increased our profile and credibility to local, regional and State tourism organisations and illustrated our 'industry ready' position to expand our reach through tourism distribution channels.

In addition, because the industry is aware of the thorough and comprehensive nature of tourism award submissions, by being recognised with either a special commendation, finalist or winner award, further credibility is added to our brand with key industry stakeholders who are more likely to partner with The Workshops Rail Museum.

For example, key strategies in which The Workshops Rail Museum has been recognised as a significant tourism hub for further development include the Ipswich Regional Centre Strategy and the Brisbane Regional Tourism Investment and Infrastructure Plan.

Community pride

The Workshops Rail Museum values and celebrates the stories, history and place of the historic site, and our events and activities foster a sense of pride and ownership and promote continued engagement with the community. Therefore, when The Workshops Rail Museum, and by association the City of Ipswich, is recognised in an award program, significant community pride is generated along with considerable positive publicity for the City. This encourages deeper ownership and engagement with the activities of the Museum in the future.

Staff morale booster

Last, but certainly not least, being acknowledged through an award program has the ability to boost staff morale and reenergise the team as they recognise the uniqueness and quality experience that we offer, with which we may have become complacent. However, it is important that the team comes along for the ride. They need to know that we are entering an award program, be asked to contribute (for example, training and skills development they have completed during the qualifying period) and be informed when the 'big night' is coming up. Recognition after the announcement is critical to show appreciation and thank those at the coal face and the 'face' of your experience.

Finally, it is important to understand the requirements of participating in a program and make an informed decision to enter based on the likely value as a result of your input. 📌

The Workshops Rail Museum is located in North Street, North Ipswich, Queensland. Visitor information can be found on their website, www.theworkshops.qm.qld.gov.au



Sometimes The Collection Is Not Enough

MICHAEL DESMOND

MUSEUM AND GALLERY SERVICES QUEENSLAND PRESENTS AN ANNUAL SEMINAR EXPLORING BEST PRACTICE INITIATIVES, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND ART MUSEUM AND UQ MUSEUM STUDIES PROGRAM¹. THE 2009 SEMINAR WILL BE PRESENTED IN AUGUST². AT THE 2008 SEMINAR, *CREATIVE USES OF THE COLLECTION*, A PANEL OF FOUR KEYNOTE SPEAKERS EXPLORED CREATIVE AND VISIONARY WAYS IN WHICH GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS MIGHT FOCUS THEIR PROGRAMS ON COLLECTIONS. THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS DRAWN FROM THE SEMINAR PRESENTATION BY KEYNOTE SPEAKER MICHAEL DESMOND, SENIOR CURATOR AT THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY [NPG].

Any curator will tell you that the collection is the heart of an institution. But sometimes the works in the collection are only the starting point for a bigger enterprise, a means of gaining leverage for ambitious public programs and exhibitions. Two recent projects at the National Portrait Gallery illustrate this in their creative use of the Collection: the ephemeral, animated works of art in the NPG's first online exhibition, 'Animated: Self Portraits Online' and the gallery's opening exhibition, 'My Favourite Australian', a collaboration with ABC TV, both challenge the Gallery's collecting policy and a conventional understanding of portraiture.

Collection and beyond

When I was the Manager of Research and Collection Development at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in Sydney (the Powerhouse Museum), the question we asked ourselves was 'what wasn't available for collection under the Museum's collection policy'. Virtually everything, except art, was the answer. And even then, art was permitted under certain circumstances; that is, when it illuminated aspects of social history. At the National Portrait Gallery it is the opposite: the policy is not broad – it's extremely narrow and very prescriptive. The collection policy ensures that what might be brought into the collection is limited to portraits only. And beyond that, the subject must be significant, having made a recognised contribution to Australian culture in some shape or form; and the subject must be Australian.



Rick Bull, Still from *Weissebeer, becoming small*, 2007, Digital video.
Courtesy the National Portrait Gallery.

These are essential stipulations. It is also preferable that if a portrait of a particular person exists, it is made in the sitter's life time and that this portrait is of a high standard. These qualifiers preclude most works of art. But it also precludes great portraits if they don't represent a significant person (imagine the frustration if the *Mona Lisa* were offered to us as a gift!) However, while we are restricted in what is brought into the collection, the Gallery can display a very broad range of work, as long as it relates to portraiture. As an example of this, I am currently working on an exhibition of two British artists for 2010: Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud. Indeed most of our exhibitions are based on non-collection material. The works in our exhibition 'Animated:



Self Portraits Online' are not in the NPG collection and it is unlikely that the Gallery would try to acquire them.

Most exhibitions derive from private passions or a strongly held admiration for an artist or idea. 'Animated: Self Portraits Online' started in this fashion. I sent a few friends at work a clip by Paul Robertson that I liked, *Pirate Babies Cabana Battle Street Fight* 2006. Only the Online Manager, Gill Raymond, responded. We shared a common interest in animation and our pet project became the animated self portraits now on the NPG website. We asked artists for short animated self portraits (as the easiest subject for the artists to do), with the justification that the project was encouraging animation in Australia and provided a forum for showing the work of young film makers.

For the Gallery, this was a new way of framing traditional artists' self portraits in that these were temporal portraits and incorporated sound as well. The idea was intended to be attractive to youth (a holy grail in the museum world), and got around the difficulty of 'how do you lure them in to the gallery and away from the internet'. We didn't try: this was an exhibition intended from the start to be seen online. We did however distribute the exhibition on disks with our in-house journal, *Portrait Magazine*, for the less well-connected.

There was a connection to the collection from the start, in that the first two artists I approached were Bruce Petty and Adam Elliot, the two Australian Oscar-winning animators. I thought it would be a good way of getting them to produce work that might enter the collection. Both artists were very sympathetic but both were too busy to contribute. It's fair to say that there was little incentive to abandon other projects



Arlene TextaQueen, Still from *Self Portrait (Textanude)*, 2007, Digital video.
Courtesy the National Portrait Gallery.

for this one. We did pay artist fees (slightly higher than recommended by Australia Council) but we were not really offering anything other than a place to show work, a chance for solidarity with other animators, an entry on the CV and, perhaps, fame.

Responses to the exhibition were hard to determine as this was an on online show, but the NPG website certainly got more hits, but it is difficult to tell if this is reliable as an indicator of interest. Did we build stocks of good will? Did the exhibition encourage others to explore animation? Was youth attracted? To the website perhaps, but to the gallery itself? There is only anecdotal evidence. In any case, one to the attractions for us was that this exhibition was to take place while the NPG was closed from April until the new building opened in December 2008. This project was a way of maintaining the Gallery's profile in our down time. 'Doppelganger' is the new online exhibition that Gill is curating for 2009. As the title implies, it involves alter egos, with artists using the virtual body doubles in the avatars that populate Second Life. Watch this space!

What these two online exhibitions demonstrate is our determination to avoid a fixation on the gallery-based exhibition to the exclusion of other forms of access. These aren't regular exhibitions translated to our website. They are specific to the online medium. There are, of course, other alternatives to collection-based exhibitions in physical space – what about lectures and illustrated talks, the website, podcasts and vodcasts, the traditional printed catalogue, teachers' notes, trails, brochures, etc – which often can be more effective than traditional exhibitions. The rule of thumb when choosing the access medium is always 'horses for courses'. It can be rewarding to consider displays that transcend the actual object (while acknowledging its primacy).

The NPG website (our url is: <http://www.portrait.gov.au>) also has a number of 'Portrait Features', little animated sections that are intended to illuminate the static portrait with information or provide an entrée to appreciating the portrait in terms of the sitter or the artist who created it. This section of our site was instigated by Leonie Hellmers who has since worked on the *Dictionary of Australian Artists Online*. These are advertisements for the works, not works in themselves in the way that 'Animated' showcases animated works by artists.

Did 'Animated online' connect with the collections in the Gallery? Did viewers assume a correspondence between




Petrina Hicks, Portrait of Layne Beachley, Digital print. Commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery 2008. Courtesy the National Portrait Gallery.

the on-screen portraits and the images on the gallery walls? Was there a genuine engagement with the collection? Did looking up one specific part of the Gallery's site take users to the main web site? Perhaps. That was never the ambition, however. Our aim was a celebration of animation and a connection with portraiture broadly.

As I mentioned earlier there was, from the start, a determination to somehow include animation in the collection, so the first two people asked to participate in 'Animated' were Oscar winners Adam Elliott and Bruce Petty. While unable to respond to the exhibition, I later asked Petty to produce a self portrait for the collection and he agreed. His animated self portrait is currently on display in the new Gallery.

I am suggesting that here is a means of building the collection by going beyond what exists to creating the works useful to the collection in the same way that we created the animated exhibition: by commissions. The NPG undoubtedly uses commissions to build the collection more than any other institution in Australia. The first room in the new building displays most of these commissions. An outstanding example is the new media portrait of Cate Blanchett by David Rosetzky. In considering this project we asked ourselves, 'What would be the best medium?' – for a celebrated actress, video seemed the most appropriate and she was matched with Rosetzky. This is not a first, however: the National Portrait Gallery in London has a video portrait by Sam Taylor Wood, *David Beckham Sleeping*, 2004.

'My Favourite Australian' follows this lead. This exhibition is part of our inaugural display and is a collaboration with the ABC. Again it is not the collection on display, but the collection prompted the content and the approach. Essentially it is a series of filmic commissions from new media artists and filmmakers. The ABC coordinated a popular vote to select Australians favoured by the public, and we then linked them with an artist to create a short temporal portrait. The Gallery is showing this group in the entrance of the new building so that people are welcomed by familiar faces when they come in to see the collection. We follow this up by showing them the commissions which also reinforce the idea of the familiar and the current before they see the older works. Because the display is basically chronological, there was the chance that we might alienate the public with obscure and unfamiliar material. In essence, the contemporary material teaches people how to read and interpret the works in the remaining galleries.

Strictly speaking, none of these projects actually uses the collection. But they are premised on the shape and form of the collection – that is, they mirror the collection brief. Not surprisingly, most of the National Portrait Gallery's exhibitions use works or items beyond the collection. There are real advantages in this: borrowing works for exhibitions outside the collection allows the gallery to trial works, put the collection in context, extend beyond the limits of policy which can be restricting and equally (the gift of a *Mona Lisa* aside) the budget restricts too, so such a policy as this takes exhibitions outside the realms of acquisition budgets. The creative use of a collection is always a given, but there is huge potential to refresh the collection and to refresh audiences, especially for those who are regulars, because sometimes the collection is not enough. 

Michael Desmond is Senior Curator at the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra. The three other keynote speakers at the *Creative Uses of the Collection* seminar were Robyn Stacey, artist and Senior Lecturer in the School of Communication Arts, University of Western Sydney; Michelle Desailly, Project Officer, Parramatta Stories, Parramatta City Council; and Jonathan Cooper, Manager of Information/Website, Art Gallery of New South Wales. The seminar was chaired by Sue Smith, Manager Arts and Cultural Services, Rockhampton Regional Council. Audio and video files from the seminar are available to download from the Museum and Gallery Services Queensland website, http://www.magsq.com.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=411

1. The Museum Studies Program is in the School of English, Media Studies and History at the University of Queensland.

2. The 2009 seminar, *Artist-in-Residence / Artist Interventions in Museums*, will be held at the University of Queensland Art Museum, St Lucia, Brisbane on Wednesday 5 August 2009. Go to www.magsq.com.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=583 for details.



Growing Culture

Recent additions to the Queensland gallery sector

MUNDUBBERA REGIONAL ART GALLERY

Mundubbera, North Burnett region

Mundubbera, a picturesque town about 400km north-west of Brisbane, is situated on the Burnett River at the junction of the Boyne, Auburn and Burnett Rivers. The Mundubbera area has an approximate population of 2,500 people and is renowned for its beef, pigs, citrus, grapes, mangoes and horticultural industries.

The Mundubbera Regional Art Gallery is the regional art gallery of the North Burnett Regional Council. The new gallery was an initiative of the former Mundubbera Shire Council that received a grant for its construction through the Queensland Government Rural Living Infrastructure Program.

The gallery is supported by the new North Burnett Regional Council and is attached to Mundubbera's Town Library, with easy access to the neighbouring town hall's air-conditioned rooms and kitchen facilities. The gallery is volunteer managed, overseen by Council, and its Advisory Committee is elected annually.

Mundubbera Regional Art Gallery comprises Gallery One and Gallery Two/Workshop that are both climate-controlled; a foyer display space which is air-conditioned; two secure storage rooms; and three display cases, two with self-contained lighting. There is an external courtyard accessible from Gallery Two/ Workshop which may be used for exhibition openings. Each space has adjustable track lighting to recommended gallery standards. A loading bay is located at the rear of the gallery, allowing ease of access into the storerooms.

Regional Arts Development Funding (a partnership between the State Government through Arts Queensland and local councils) made it possible for the volunteers to attend



Gallery One, Mundubbera Regional Art Gallery

workshops conducted by arts consultant, Bettina MacAulay, to learn how to set up and run the gallery.

The gallery's first exhibition was opened on 19 April 2008 by the Member for Callide, Hon. Mr Jeff Seeney MP. The exhibition comprised works by the artists of the North Burnett region, with more than 200 people travelling from across Queensland to witness the opening. Both Cr Seeney and the Mayor of the North Burnett Regional Council, Cr Joy Jensen, paid tribute to the former Mundubbera Shire Council for its foresight in undertaking this cultural project and providing an important facility for the entire region.

Mr Seeney also paid tribute to the volunteers as being the 'lifeblood of the nation' and making communities great places to live. Volunteers at the gallery can be identified by their green scarf and/or green tie embroidered with the Mundubbera Grevillea, which has been chosen as the gallery emblem.

Exhibitions that have been on show in the Gallery since opening have been:



- Kay Faulkner from Brisbane: Textile exhibition, *Indulgence*
- Gina Davey from Baloggie: Traditional/contemporary art
- Maree Cameron from Jandowae: Traditional/contemporary art exhibition, *Magical Moments*
- Mundubbera Quilters: An exhibition of beautiful quilts, table runners, wall hangings, cards.

Exhibitions for 2009 include *Wandering Hearts* by The Two (Short) Fat Artists, Larian Sloan and Gina Davey, displayed in Gallery One and Foyer. An Artist Book Exhibition by the Australian Bookbinders Inc. was held in Gallery Two and Glass Cabinets. This imaginative exhibition came from Sydney and most of the artists were from New South Wales, with four being from Queensland.

The next exhibition, held in both Galleries and Foyer, presented a range of works by Biggenden Artists. It closed on 9 April and was followed by an exhibition in Gallery One and the Foyer by Brisbane artist, Merv Dowling, who paints in oil. Gallery Two and Cabinets held an exhibition by Fahey Schulz from Mundubbera. Fahey exhibited her Russian Embroidery and art and craft work. These exhibitions ran from 18 April to 22 May 2009.

From 23 May to 3 July 2009, Gallery One will display *A Child's Life on a Station* from the Queensland Arts Council. Gallery Two will display paintings by the Mundubbera High School students. From 9 July to 5 September will be an exhibition by well-known Mundubbera Aboriginal artist, Malcolm Brown. This exhibition will coincide with NAIDOC Week in July.

Since opening, the Mundubbera Regional Art Gallery has had over 2,000 visitors to view the art work. The Gallery is open for five-and-a-half days a week from 10:30 am to 5:00 pm from Monday to Friday and 9:00 am to 12:00 pm on Saturday. It may be opened by arrangement at weekends or after hours.

Mundubbera Regional Art Gallery welcomes enquiries from arts and crafts people wanting to exhibit their work. Enquiries can be directed to the Co-ordinator, Roslyn Berthelsen, phone: 07 4165 6169, email: roslyn@bordernet.com.au

Mundubbera Regional Art Gallery
30 Lyons Street, Mundubbera, Queensland, 4626

UMI ARTS

Cairns, Far North Queensland

UMI Arts is the peak Indigenous arts and cultural body in Far North Queensland. UMI was established in 2005 as a not-for-profit company and is managed by an all-Indigenous Board of Directors. The word UMI is significant as it is a Creole word that means "You and Me". For UMI this means "You and Me keeping our culture strong".

In September 2008, UMI Arts created a small gallery space within its offices in Cairns. With a bit of juggling and ingenuity, a white-walled space of approximately 35 square metres with a street frontage has been created. It is fully air-conditioned and has motion detectors and security monitoring installed.

Primarily, the gallery was created in response to an identified need for space in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists can present exhibitions of their work and showcase their culture.

The space has enabled UMI to deliver a new program of support for Far North Queensland Indigenous artists, called the Exhibition Ready Program. This program is being delivered by UMI Art's two Development Officers who work with individual artists on all aspects of preparing their works for exhibition. The program is designed to take the artist through all the stages of preparing for an exhibition and presenting works to the public in a gallery space: mounting and framing techniques, cataloguing and documentation of artworks, creation of work labels (including writing stories and using language if appropriate), exhibition and loan contracts, condition reporting, CVs, media releases and photographic documentation, hanging and installation and, finally, a public opening at the gallery.

Since September 2008, UMI has mounted a changing program of exhibitions, each running for a four-week period. Artists that have exhibited as part of the Exhibition Ready



UMI Arts Gallery, Cairns



Above left: Opening of Ceferino Sabatino's exhibition at UMI Arts. Welcome to Country by Seith Fourmile.



Above right: Opening of the 'Jettison Wove' exhibition at UMI Arts.

Program include Joey Laifoo (linocuts), Eva Wanganeen (silk paintings), Napoleon Oui (acrylic paintings), Lisa Michl (prints and jewellery), Roy Mclvor (acrylic paintings), Priscilla Major (acrylic paintings), Ceferino Sabatino (prints), Gertrude Ygosse (photography) and Lara Fujii (jewellery).

The role of UMI Arts is to support and promote arts centres and Indigenous artists who have connections to Far North Queensland. The region UMI supports extends from Cardwell to the Torres Strait Islands, west to Camowéal and includes the Gulf and Mount Isa regions of Far North Queensland.

Since the appointment of its first Executive Officer, Janet Parfenovics in July 2008, UMI Arts has embarked on an active program of events, exhibitions and community projects. In 2008–2009 UMI is working intensively with three remote Indigenous communities: Kowanyama, Hope Vale and Mona Mona (on the tablelands).

Concurrently, UMI Arts is also developing projects that engage with the local Indigenous Cairns community. In June, UMI Arts will launch the new UMI Arts Indigenous Markets. The markets will be held on the last Friday of each month from 3pm to 9.30pm, and will be a celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island arts, crafts, performance, dance, music and food. The Markets will be held on the grassed Esplanade in the heart of Cairns and will be a place for families and community to come together to celebrate the breadth and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture and life in Cairns.

UMI also participates in a number of Indigenous festivals including the Dreaming Festival in Woodford, and the bi-annual Laura Festival (2009). A major event in its annual program is its own signature event – 'Big Talk One Fire' which is a two-day cultural summit that is held in Cairns.

'Big Talk One Fire' was first held in Cairns in May 2008 and was a great success. The summit brings together community elders, performers, school children and Indigenous leaders in the arts and culture. Its aim is to encourage pathways for success for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists through the sharing of stories and aspirations.

UMI is committed to presenting skills development workshops and is developing a new program that is aimed at developing business skills for artists and arts centres in the region.

UMI Arts has been working with Arts Queensland as part of the Backing Indigenous Arts (BIA) program to define the terms of reference for a future Indigenous Arts Hub in Cairns. This Hub is an exciting opportunity that will not only support the creation of cultural works, but will also showcase Indigenous artists, particularly in collaboration with the Indigenous arts centres in Far North Queensland.

The future for UMI and for Indigenous arts and cultural practice in Far North Queensland has now entered an exciting stage of development.

UMI Arts, 2/151 Martyn Street, Cairns, Queensland, 4879
 Email: admin@umiarts.com.au
 Phone: 07 4041 6152
 Fax: 07 4041 6542
 Website: www.umiarts.com.au



Michael Marzik explains the intricacies of crate packing at an installation workshop for 'Jettison Wove' held at UMI Arts. L to R: (Back) Michael Marzik, Julie Williams, Pamela Salt (Bamanga Babu Ngadimunka, Mossman Gorge), Doreen Ball, Lily Panola (Wujal Wujal IKC and Arts Centre). (Front): Tim Park (Tableland Regional Art Gallery, Atherton), Roy Gray, Philomena Yeatman (Yarrabah Arts Centre).



TABLELAND REGIONAL GALLERY **Atherton, Far North Queensland**

The Tableland Regional Gallery opened in March 2008. The gallery has been built in time for Queensland's Q150 Celebrations and is part of the Queensland Government's legacy project: a celebration of the past, present and future. The project was jointly funded by the Queensland Government's Q150 Legacy Infrastructure Program and the then Atherton Shire Council. It's both a modern-day monument to local artists and a lasting legacy for future generations. Louise De Marzi, who is the gallery Patron, worked for years in her role as Councillor and Deputy Mayor of the Atherton Shire Council to establish the gallery – an excellent, climate-controlled exhibition space. Far North Queensland has a wealth of talented artists and, until now, there has been a limited opportunity for these artists to exhibit their works on the Atherton Tablelands. The gallery was opened by Hon. Warren Pitt MP, Minister for Main Roads and Local Government and Member for Mulgrave, just prior to the amalgamation of the new Tableland Regional Council. Deborah Godfrey was appointed as Curator of the new gallery and, on a very tight timeline, organised 54 artists for the opening exhibition and produced the catalogue of artworks. (Deborah has recently been appointed as Director of the gallery for a three-year term.)

A large crowd of 250 people attended the opening celebrations on a windy and wet North Queensland day where the gallery logo, a large metal leaf sculpture by local artist Amanda Feher, was unveiled – the first Regional Art Gallery on the Atherton Tablelands was opened. The entry to the gallery is through a foyer and reception area, with the main exhibition space being a hexagonal shape with a high central ceiling. The gallery was immediately booked for 2008 with exhibitions by local artists from across the Tablelands. Exhibitions change monthly and 2009 has seen the introduction of the first touring exhibitions in the gallery; the 'Creative Generation Awards for Excellence in Visual Art and Design' features as one of these exhibitions.

Exhibitions for 2008 included 'The Elements' by Helen Hume. The exhibition featured in the Winton Gallery before opening in Atherton. Helen is a local artist who spends a lot of her time camping out in the dry country looking for her inspiration.

The Tableland Regional Gallery has appointed an Advisory Committee to Council and is delighted to have 52 volunteers



Tableland Regional Gallery Director (then Manager/Curator), Deborah Godfrey (left) with gallery Patron, Louise De Marzi in front of the sculpture by Amanda Feher on the gallery's opening day, 8 March 2008. Photo courtesy the *Tablelander*, Atherton.

of all ages and from diverse backgrounds to help with the daily management of the gallery. It is also well supported by members from the Atherton Art Society and local community groups. The original two council galleries in Atherton, The Old Post Office Gallery and Foyer Gallery, have also benefited from their exhibitions being organised through the Tableland Regional Gallery.

In February 2009, the gallery played host to an important visitor with the opening of 'Days and Daze' by talented local artist, Sonia Cooper. Professor Ted Snell AM, Cit WA, Director, University of Western Australia Cultural Precinct and Chair of the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council flew across to open Sonia's exhibition. Sonia was one of Snell's students many years ago in Western Australia and he didn't hesitate when asked to attend her exhibition. ■

Tableland Regional Gallery
16 Robert Street, Atherton,
Queensland, 4883
Phone: 07 4091 5261
Email: trcartgallery@trc.qld.gov.au



Artist Helen Hume and partner Richard at the opening of her exhibition, 'The Elements', at Tableland Regional Gallery in November 2008. Photo courtesy the *Tablelander*, Atherton.



PINNACLES GALLERY

Riverway Arts Centre, Townsville, north Queensland

Pinnacles Gallery is a innovative exhibition space showing the finest of what's happening in the contemporary art scene. The gallery has played host to a number of significant local and national artists, with a range of diverse and exceptional exhibits on offer.

The gallery was originally situated alongside the Thuringowa library. However, three years ago, a cutting edge arts complex was built on the Ross River and the centre now houses Pinnacles Gallery, the Riverway Theatre, conference rooms, a restaurant and swimming lagoons.

The Gallery's mission is to make its programs contemporary, engaging, accessible, interactive and enjoyable. The exhibitions draw on emerging ideas and developments in the contemporary art world, embracing new and experimental media. The gallery has a forward thinking approach to art-making with a definitive interest in art practices that are designed to captivate a diverse cross-section of the community.

Some of the highlights from 2008 included Shaun Gladwell's video works; an edible sculptural installation by Ayelet Anush, a Melbourne-based artist; and 'Vernacular Terrain', an international digital art project curated by QUT.

2009 is set to follow the precedents of previous years with the first exhibition 'Wired 4 Games' looking at the artwork of computer games and showcasing the medium as an artform. In October 2009, Pinnacles Gallery will play host to 'Experimenta Playground' – a coup for the gallery with this being the first time that 'Experimenta Playground' has ventured north of Brisbane.

Pinnacles Gallery has a commitment to celebrating NAIDOC Week by fostering Indigenous artists in the Townsville region. In 2008, six short films were produced by local Indigenous artists and featured in the 'Vantage Point' exhibition. In 2009, two artists from the 'Vantage Point' show will mentor young emerging Indigenous artists in a photographic show, exploring themes of identity. The opening is scheduled for NAIDOC celebrations in July 2009.

Pinnacles Gallery has an inclusive exhibition program complemented by a range of public programs for adults and children of all ages. The public programs involve floor talks,



Top: Ayelet Anush, *Bon Bon Voyage*. Above: Shaun Gladwell, video works.

short-term and long-term workshops, symposiums, artist talks, forums and launches.

More information and images about the gallery and its projects can be accessed via the web, facebook and myspace sites.

Pinnacles Gallery, Riverway Arts Centre, 20 Village Boulevard, Thuringowa Central, Queensland, 4817
Phone: 07 4773 8871

Fax: 07 4723 0280

Email: pinnacles@townsville.qld.gov.au

Website: <http://riverway.townsville.qld.gov.au/explore/gallery/index>

The Riverway Arts Centre is a featured venue for the Fourth National Public Galleries Summit, presented by Museum and Gallery Services Queensland, to be held in Townsville in September 2009.

MUSEUMS ALIGHT! 2009

Shining a light on Queensland museums and galleries in celebration of International Museum Day

IN YOUR HANDS
BRISBANE HERITAGE EXPO 2009
Museum of Brisbane and Brisbane 150

A showcase of over fifty historical and heritage groups was presented at the Brisbane City Hall on 16 May by Brisbane 150 and the Museum of Brisbane, in partnership with Brisbane's Living Heritage Network.

The Heritage Expo also marked the launch of *Museums Alight! 2009*, in partnership with Museum and Gallery Services Queensland [M&GSQ]. Councillor Geraldine Knapp launched the Expo and *Museums Alight! 2009* amidst the multitude of participants' booths in the main auditorium, including M&GSQ's which had demonstrations of the *Museums Alight!* participants linked to Google Maps.

The Expo program included performances, talks, demonstrations and children's activities, including a 'reverse' striptease, recycled silky oak demonstrations, make-a-badge workshops and storytelling based on mystery objects. The Museum of Brisbane's exhibitions, 'Temperature 2: New Queensland Art' and 'Silky Oak' were also open to the public.

HISTORIC HOUSE
OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY
APRIL–OCTOBER

Leahy Historical House
Thargomindah, South-West Queensland

Explore this historic building which is made of local mud brick – the exterior has cat paw imprints that are 124 years old.

The house was built as a newspaper paper office in 1885 for proprietor John Leahy, a former Queensland speaker of Parliament. Sir Sydney Kidman acquired it in the early 1900s. The Bulloo Shire Council purchased the building in 1995 and the Thargomindah Historical Society were entrusted to preserve its history.

JENNY LIND
FIGUREHEAD
Gladstone Maritime Museum

The Gladstone Maritime Museum has an impressive collection of boats, model boats, photos and artefacts illustrating the maritime history of the Curtis Coast Waterways.

The *Jenny Lind*, named after the famous Swedish-born opera singer known as the 'Swedish Nightingale', foundered on Kenn Reef, east of Gladstone in 1850. All aboard survived with resourceful crew members distilling drinking water from seawater and making a rescue vessel from the wreckage, taking all survivors to Moreton Bay.

Following the shipwreck of the vessel, the figurehead was lost and presumed destroyed by weather and time. However when Capricorn Coast resident, Jim Byriel, was exploring North Keppel Island in the 1950s, he found the figurehead on rocks within a cave. The Museum acquired the figurehead in 2008.

Photo right.
Photographer: Noel Bowley.



For details on all 2009 *Museums Alight!* participating organisations, go to M&GSQ's website, www.magsq.com.au

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE
CONTESSA DIAMANTINA, LADY BOWEN**

**Miegunyah House Museum / Queensland Maritime Museum
Brisbane's Living Heritage Network / Paniyiri Greek Festival and the
Greek Club and Convention Centre**

All things 'Diamantina' were included in celebrations by a number of Brisbane museums and heritage groups as part of *Museums Alight!*

On 16 May, Miegunyah House Museum held an Elegant Afternoon Tea and Talk by Diana Hacker on *Diamantina and her Daughters*, the life of The Contessa Diamantina, Lady Bowen, Consort to the first Governor of Queensland, Sir George Ferguson Bowen.

The Contessa's life and times also form the focus of a display of Lady Bowen memorabilia at the Greek Club and Convention Centre in conjunction with the Paniyiri Greek Festival.

The Queensland Maritime Museum showcased its Australian naval frigate, the HMAS *Diamantina* (photo right). The final surrender of the Second World War was signed aboard the *Diamantina* which is the only surviving warship of her class in the world – these ships were the first of the modern naval frigates. The ship was built in Queensland during WW2 and is the largest naval exhibit from that conflict on display in Australia. Between 1959–79 *Diamantina* undertook important oceanographic research in the Indian, Southern and Pacific Oceans, making many significant discoveries.

A coach tour organised by Brisbane's Living Heritage Network, in conjunction with the Paniyiri Greek Festival, followed the trail of Hellenic influences on Brisbane. Visits to the Bowen family collection at Miegunyah House Museum, the Diamantina Healthcare Museum and the HMAS *Diamantina* at the Queensland Maritime Museum were included in the tour.



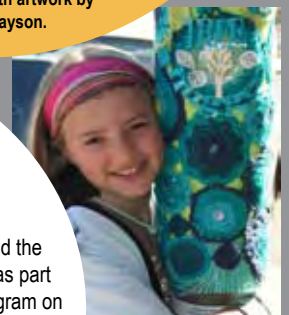
**WOOD 'N ART
AND THE EGG INCIDENT
Warwick Art Gallery**

Warwick Art Gallery's current exhibition, 'Wood 'n Art', displays a selection of works created over the past year by the talented members of the Warwick Artists Group and the Warwick Woodcrafters. The exhibition runs to 7 June 2009.

The Gallery celebrated the 90th anniversary of the 'Egg Incident' in 2007. Local objectors threw eggs at the Prime Minister when he arrived in Warwick and this prompted the government to form the Federal Police.

Warwick Art Gallery organises an annual outdoor exhibition called 'Jumpers and Jazz in July'. More than 100 trees in the CBD are 'dressed' in artwork for a two-week festival full of colour, creativity and melody.

Photo: 'Jumpers and Jazz in July' outdoor exhibition.
Ruby Grayson with artwork by
Loretta Grayson.



**HISTORY OF TOURISM ON NORTH
STRADBROKE ISLAND
Wine and cheese evening and screening
North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum**

The North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum opened in 1987 to present the social history of this beautiful location. The museum presents a blend of Indigenous and non-Indigenous history. Many of the Island's themes are explored: maritime history including shipwrecks; convict history; mining history; institutional history including the Catholic Mission to the Aborigines, Myora Mission, Amity Pilot station, Quarantine station and Dunwich Benevolent Asylum.

As part of *Museums Alight!* the Museum held a wine and cheese evening on 22 May with a screening of historic and contemporary photographs about the history of tourism on North Stradbroke Island.

During the week, the North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum was announced the winner of the ABC's 2009 Radio National Marvellous Regional Museums competition. The Museum was selected from more than 80 other museums from across the country entering the competition.

**MUSEUMS AND
MUSIC LOVERS
Museums Alight! on
4MBS Classic FM**

Museum and Gallery Services Queensland had the opportunity to promote *Museums Alight! 2009* as part of 4MBS Classic FM's *Music Lovers Choice* program on 16 May.

M&GSQ's Executive Director, Rebekah Butler, was the guest of Howard Ainsworth for a two-hour program, promoting *Museums Alight!* participants and playing specially selected music to complement *Museums Alight!* activities.

GHOSTS AND GOLD
Venus Gold Battery, Charters Towers

Located on the outskirts of Charters Towers, the Battery offers an insight into an amazing real-life gold rush of the late 19th century. It has national cultural significance as the largest surviving battery relic in Australia and oldest surviving battery in Queensland.

Venus Gold Battery crushed its first ore on 16 July 1872 and its last in 1973.

At the time gold was worth 6 shillings an ounce.

At the Battery, you can see images of and hear stories told by ghosts from the gold rush times. Guided tours are available daily. One of the highlights is a fascinating film presentation that shows not only the process of extracting gold from ore, but also the story of the battery's working life.

Photo right: Venus Gold Battery.



OPEN STUDIO ARTS TRAIL
The Centre for Scenic Rim Arts and Culture

The Centre is a modern flexible artspace in Beaudesert, offering state of the art facilities for exhibitions and performances from companies and artists from across the region and the country. The Centre launched its first annual Open Studio Arts Trail for the Scenic Rim region in 2008 involving practicing artists and craftpersons actively working on location in their studios. The inaugural Open Studio Arts Trails proved so successful that they will be continuing annually to allow visitors the unique opportunity to participate in the different trails and associated attractions.

The Centre also hosts monthly Arts Dinners for the arts and tourism community to foster creative industry development and networks. Numerous partnerships and projects have been initiated as a result of new networks established during these inspirational dinners.

**THE DYNAMICS OF CULTURAL
 PRECINCTS –
 TOURISM, MUSEUMS AND THE COMMUNITY**
Gold Coast City Art Gallery

The Gold Coast City Art Gallery presented this special *Museums Alight!* seminar at the Gold Coast Arts Centre on International Museum Day, 18 May, in collaboration with Museum and Gallery Services Queensland and supported by the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland.

As the Gold Coast looks to consider the development of a Cultural Precinct at Evandale, the seminar addressed some of the most important ingredients for a successful precinct and how such a precinct could contribute to the tourism profile of the city.

Keynote speaker, Malcolm Snow, CEO, Southbank Corporation gave a national and international perspective on the topic, and three local speakers offered their insights and experiences of cultural precincts. Michael Aird discussed progress on the redevelopment of the Cherbourg Historical Precinct; Julie Anderson discussed recent international touring experience with 'How to make a monster', a John Cox Creature Workshop exhibition; Jonathan Fischer discussed the new visioning for a cultural precinct for the southern Gold Coast around the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary that is developing in partnership with the new entity *Surfworld Gold Coast* and other local cultural festivals.

ART AMONGST THE OIL
Tanks Arts Centre, Cairns

The Tanks Arts Centre, situated in the Cairns Botanic Gardens, is housed in three concrete ex-World War II oil storage tanks and is heritage listed. The demands of naval operations during the Pacific War were responsible for the building of these three fuel tanks, completed for the Royal Australian Navy in 1944, and carefully camouflaged under the rainforest shroud of Mount Whitfield to protect them from enemy eyes.

Tanks Arts Centre includes a gallery, performing arts venue and an amphitheatre. It is an integral component of the Cairns Botanic Gardens, the city's 38-hectare botanic and cultural precinct. The entire precinct was placed on the State Heritage Register in 2006 and is currently undergoing major redevelopment works to formalise and expand the area into a highly attractive, environmental parkland and must-see destination for the best in tropical botanical and cultural experiences reflective of the region.

Photo left: NAIDOC exhibition at the Tanks Arts Centre.

Photographer: Cohen Bassingthwaight.



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Editor: Debra Beattie

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Office

Level 3, 381 Brunswick St, Fortitude Valley,
Queensland 4006 Australia
P: 61 (0)7 3215 0820 F: 61 (0)7 3215 0821
E: information@magsq.com.au
W: www.magsq.com.au

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THE VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFT STRATEGY

Front Cover: Shirley Collins, *Walking in her footsteps*, Film still, from the exhibition 'Vantage Point'. Courtesy the artist and Pinnacles Gallery, Townsville.

Header Inset: Dinosaur footprints (detail), Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways, Western Queensland. Photo: Ann Baillie.

Contents Page: (from left) Croydon Historic Precinct buildings; Fairy Grotto in Donna Cave at Chillagoe Hub; Cosmos Centre and Observatory, Charleville; Qantas Founders Museum, Longreach. For more information on all 2009 *Museums Alight!* participants, go to M&GSQ's website, www.magsq.com.au

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M&GSQ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Lisa Jones – Deputy Chairperson and Company Secretary
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M&GSQ STAFF

Rebekah Butler
Executive Director
rebekah.butler@magsq.com.au

Debra Beattie
General Manager
debra.beattie@magsq.com.au

Leisha Lawrence
Information Officer
information@magsq.com.au

Ann Baillie
Manager Training and Professional Development
ann.baillie@magsq.com.au

Kerri Laidlaw
Training and Professional Development Coordinator
kerri.laidlaw@magsq.com.au

Fiona Marshall
Exhibition Program Manager
fiona.marshall@magsq.com.au

Jodi Ferrari
Exhibition Development Coordinator
jodi.ferrari@magsq.com.au

Helen Pithie
Exhibition Development Coordinator
helen.pithie@magsq.com.au

Judy Kean
Coordinator, Fourth National Public Galleries Summit
judy.kean@magsq.com.au

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A national Summit dedicated to Australian and
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The Summit includes a tantalising range of
social events showcasing Townsville's tropical
setting and coincides with the biennial **Strand
Ephemera 2009** and the opening of a landmark
touring exhibition, **Twelve Degrees of Latitude:
Regional Gallery and University Art Collections
in Queensland.**

For program information, registration form and
details of generous bursary programs visit

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Earlybird registration closes **31 July**.
Final date for Summit registration **21 August**.

