

letter of submission

TO THE HON BOB CARR MP,

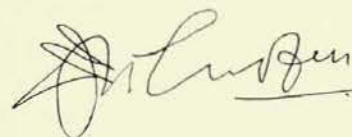
New South Wales Premier, Minister for the Arts and Minister for Ethnic Affairs

Sir,

In accordance with the provisions of the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984*, and the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, we have pleasure in submitting this report of the activities of the Australian Museum Trust for the financial year ended 30 June 1997 for presentation to Parliament.



MR MALCOLM LONG
President of the Trust



DR DES GRIFFIN
Secretary of the Trust



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Open 7 days (except Christmas Day)
9.30am to 5.00pm

ADMISSION CHARGES:

Family \$12, Child \$2, Adults \$5, Concession \$3,
Seniors card holders, TAMS members and children under 5 free

C O N T E N T S



4	MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY
6	HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR
8	PREMIER'S MESSAGE
9	PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
11	DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE
13	THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE
14	SCIENCE IN THE MUSEUM
28	PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND MARKETING
34	COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES
38	CORPORATE SERVICES
43	FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
59	APPENDICES:
59	MUSEUM TRUSTEES
61	MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE
63	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
63	ETHNIC AFFAIRS PRIORITY STATEMENT
71	SPONSORS
72	DISABILITY PLAN
72	INDEX



MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Our mission is to increase understanding of, and influence public debate on, the natural environment, human societies and human interaction with the environment.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO:

Gathering and communicating accurate information and providing high quality activities and services supportive of our mission and relevant to the community.

Ensuring that the Museum's public environment is comfortable and that our staff are friendly, reliable, and respectful of the interests and needs of visitors and other Museum customers.

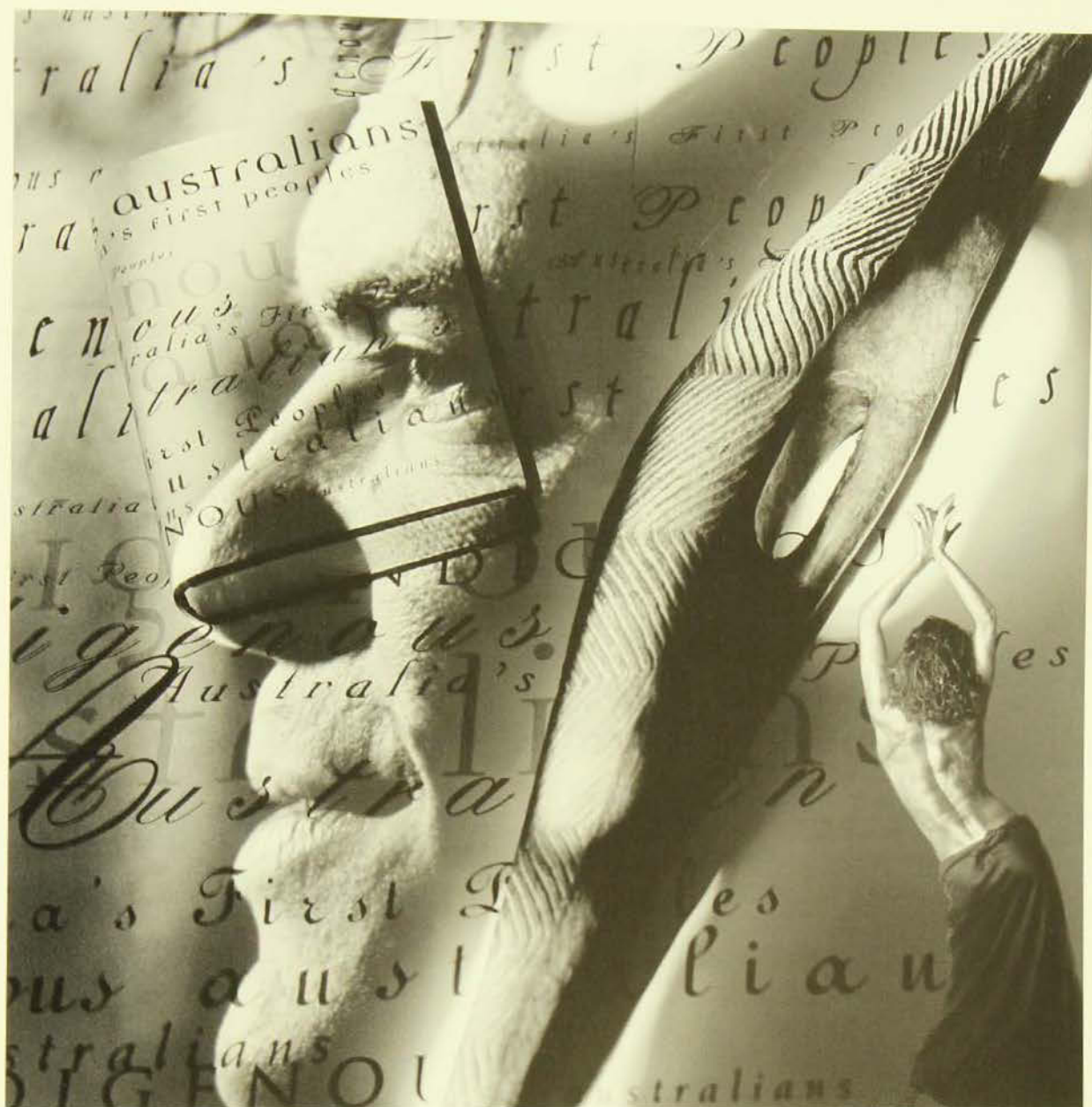
Providing visitors with a fair and reasonable opportunity to be heard regarding any aspect of the running of the Museum.

Providing innovative public programs using a variety of media to give entertaining, stimulating and educational experiences.

Maintaining and improving our scientific collections to international standards of documentation, conservation and accessibility.

Conducting socially relevant research and making the results available to the scientific community through publication in scientific journals and books, and to the public through our public programs and print and electronic media.

The Australian Museum is committed to being an exciting and rewarding place to visit ...and it should be fun!



*Our mission is to increase understanding of, and
influence public debate on, the natural
environment, human societies and human
interaction with the environment*



H I G H L I G H T S

- The launch of two new important exhibitions. After two years planning, *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples* was opened by the Premier, Bob Carr. It is one of the largest exhibitions staged by the Museum. And *The Albert Chapman Mineral Collection* was opened as an exhibition housed in a superb new space.
- The establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- The allocation of \$19.759 million capital funding over five years by the NSW Government for major programs including semi-permanent and travelling exhibitions, developments in information technology and research into threatened and endangered species.
- Research at an Aboriginal site at Jinmium, in the Northern Territory, focused on new theories about the earliest occupation of Australia.
- Expansion, and increased promotion, of the Eureka Prizes, which acknowledge and reward outstanding achievements in Australian scientific and environmental research, and the promotion of science.
- The launch of the People and Place Research Centre, and the Geodiversity Research Centre, two of the Museum's four new centres of excellence in scientific research.
- The establishment of the Multimedia Unit, a collaboration between the Exhibitions and Education Divisions.
- The continuation of a major study program on the effect of land clearance on bird populations in the NSW wheatbelt.
- The 1997 NSW Aboriginal Employment Award. The award recognises the Museum's strong record for employing Aboriginal people in a variety of positions across the organisation.



*Research at an Aboriginal site at Jinmium, in the
Northern Territory, focused on new theories about
the earliest occupation of Australia*



P R E M I E R ' S M E S S A G E

The Hon Bob Carr MP, Premier, Minister for the Arts and Minister for Ethnic Affairs

It has been a stimulating year for the Australian Museum with the launch of two important permanent exhibitions and the announcement of many exciting scientific developments.

It was pleasing to see that the major new exhibition, *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples*, generated, and continues to generate, considerable media interest and public discussion.

At this time of reconciliation, a thoughtful focus on the cultural and social history of Indigenous Australians provides valuable insights for us all.

Exciting research work continued the Museum's grab at the headlines. Museum scientists made world news with research on Aboriginal rock engravings at Jinmium, in the Northern Territory, which sparked new theories on the early occupation of Australia. The Rainbow Serpent was revealed as part of the world's oldest continuous religious belief system through a study of Arnhem Land rock paintings.

So it is no surprise that the Museum is acknowledged world-wide for the rigorousness of its research and the calibre of its collections - the Museum's achievements have resulted in an extraordinary quality of experience for the community.

As Minister for the Arts, I applaud the Museum's special outreach programs which do so much to involve the wider community in the Museum's life.

The community access space, *Viewpoints*, presented a lively lineup of exhibitions that demonstrated the Museum's belief in equity, involvement and ownership.

Many groups were represented during the year. Two that particularly showed us the power of cultural, social and spiritual traditions were *Images of Wisdom: Through Australian Palestinian Eyes*, and *Awakenings: Australia Pacific Spirits*. Both these imaginative exhibitions focused on the need for different groups within our greater community to continue to pursue the emotional and spiritual experience of renewing and strengthening contact with past traditions.

Hundreds of thousands of people attended Museum-on-the-Road travelling exhibitions in regional NSW and tens of thousands of students used the Museum-in-a-Box program.

Such committed participation is a tremendous gain for Australia's oldest and largest museum of natural history.

I congratulate the Australian Museum, its management and staff, and the Australian Museum Trust for their dedicated, stimulating efforts to bring the Museum's voice to the fore in the continuing discourse on the future of our natural environment and cultural heritage.



P R E S I D E N T ' S

M E S S A G E

Malcolm Long, President

In a very active year the Museum has built on the strategic objectives endorsed by the Trust during the 1994-95 period. Central to those objectives is the role of the Museum as a contributor to public understanding, discourse and debate on our natural environment and cultural heritage.

The Trust was proud to see the installation of *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples* - a major permanent exhibition which has generated considerable media interest and public discussion. *Sex, It's Only Natural* was a lively and controversial temporary exhibition which ran from December to May attracting over 82,000 visitors and much media attention. The year also saw the unique *Albert Chapman Mineral Collection* housed in a superb new exhibition space. It is a showcase for some of the world's best mineral examples.

The Museum's reputation for original scientific research was reaffirmed during the year in many disciplines. The People and Place Research Centre was particularly newsworthy when the work of Richard Fullagar and Paul Tacon on Aboriginal rock engravings at Jinmium was revealed in the national and international media. The Trust was also delighted when the Museum's Principal Research Scientist in mammalogy, Tim Flannery, was appointed Visiting Professor in Australian Studies at Harvard University.

Success in all the Museum's public programs, science and education activities depends on the skill, energy and commitment of its staff under the guidance of the Museum's Director, Des Griffin. The Trust extends its appreciation to Dr Griffin and his team for their efforts during the year.

The Trust's goal is to ensure that the Museum's resources are managed so they can best serve its mission. In that regard, the innovative conservation agreement with Australian Energy Solutions, a subsidiary of Energy Australia was a welcome initiative. The Trust also strongly supports plans to redevelop parts of the Museum precinct to maximise the efficient use of the site while retaining its heritage components.

Nicola Ward concluded her term during the year. The Trust is very grateful for her very active involvement on the Trust. Peter O'Connell and Kathleen Bowmer stood down from the Trust as a result of increased commitments. Their contributions are appreciated. The Trust welcomed John Whitehouse and Deeta Colvin.

During the year, the Trust conducted a number of workshops with The Australian Museum Society which has heightened even further our common purpose in supporting the Museum's work. I pay tribute to Beth Stokes who completed her term as TAMS President at the end of the year. I am sure her successor, Wilson da Silva, will continue to foster TAMS fine traditions.

The many volunteers who assist the Museum activities on a daily basis must also be recognised. The Trust greatly appreciates their tireless efforts.

The Museum's sponsors are also important. A number of companies were welcomed as new sponsors during the year. Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology joined IBM Australia, Hewlett Packard, Optus, Vodafone, Akubra, Rio Tinto and the Australia Council for Culture and the Humanities as valued partners. The Lizard Island Reef Research Foundation continues to contribute magnificently.

The support of the Government of NSW continues to provide a solid foundation for the Museum's activities. The Trust is very appreciative of the strong interest in the Museum taken by the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Bob Carr, and his Minister Assisting, the Minister for Corrective and Emergency Services, Bob Debus. The support of the Secretary of the Ministry for the Arts, Evan Williams, is also acknowledged.

The commitment to the Museum of all its friends is a satisfying indication that the values the institution was established to reflect and encourage are shared by very many people in our community.



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Des Griffin AM Director

director's
message

There is lots more talk about service, customer service and value for money. And about quality. The question is, what is quality and what is it that museums contribute? As funding tightens, museums, like other attractions, will begin to charge admission, as the Australian Museum did in February 1992. They will be forced to improve the quality of their service to visitors and other customers. So it is said. And their success will be judged on their attendances - as if they never concerned themselves with visitors before. Certainly museums will focus more on public programs. But a museum's audience is more than its visitors. And its product, if one wants to use that word which, like customers, has taken on the aura of a deity, is more than just its programs.

The outcome of a museum, a science centre or any worthwhile educational activity, should be, I suggest, the 'excited mind'. The confusion about the nature of learning and observations of people visiting theme parks and entertainment venues have led many to the view that what museums should provide is entertainment or 'infotainment'. If people are able to control their own learning agenda through making their own connections to meet their own goals they profess to be involved in enjoyable learning experiences. People form concepts about their surroundings in their earliest weeks: children excitedly discover their world. But later, narrow views about education as serving future employment rather than future life and a lack of appreciation of the many intelligences of people - kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal and so on - gradually disengages many people from the excitement of learning. The word 'learning' comes to have even more negative connotations than 'education'.

For a museum to produce 'the excited mind' is to seek to deliver new outcomes for new people. Gary Hamel and C.K. Prahalad, in their outstanding book, *Competing for the Future*, write, "In business, as in art, what distinguishes leaders from laggards, and greatness from mediocrity, is the ability to uniquely imagine what could be". This approach will drive the Museum's strategic planning to 2000. It will require a clear understanding of trends in the museum industry and a willingness to learn from our own past and from others. It will involve more widespread participation of Museum people and the result will be a different kind of plan. Implementing the new goals will require attention to cohesion, to sharing visions and to working effectively together. These are features of organisations which have been successful over the long term. Leadership is not imposing process on fearful employees but encouraging attention by everyone to shared core values and seeking audacious goals, taking people to places they never thought they could go.

The effectiveness of our planning was recognised during the year by the exciting decision of the State Government to provide substantial support over the next several years - \$5.4 million in 1997/98 - for major programs including semi-permanent and travelling exhibitions, for developments in information technology, research in biodiversity and improvements in the documentation of our collections, and for improvements in infrastructure including scientific equipment and air-conditioning.

In seeking to lead the way, the Museum refocussed its important scholarly activities last year into centres of specialisation dealing with evolutionary biology, biodiversity and conservation research, people and the history of their settlement, and geodiversity. The central themes of these centres is concern for our natural environment and cultural heritage, a concern for the future based on understanding the past. The centres are linked strongly with other programs, especially public programs such as exhibitions. Achievements in research such as the discoveries by anthropologists Richard Fullagar and Paul Tacon and collaborators at Jinmium in northern Australia of evidence that human settlement in Australia might date back at least 100,000 years and artistic expression 60,000 years gained enormous media attention this year. So did Tim Flannery's views on the past and future of Australia. Other scientists continued to seek new ways to understand the evolutionary paths which led to the huge diversity of insects, crustaceans, spiders and their relatives past and present.

And collaboration of Biodiversity and Conservation Research scientists, particularly Gerry Cassis, and head of Anthropology Jim Specht, with The Natural History Museum (London) led to an important exhibition, Kaleidoscope of Life which was proudly supported by Rio Tinto and the British Council as part of the *newIMAGES* program celebrating 50 years of the Council's encouragement of co-operation between Australia and the United Kingdom

Undoubtedly the most important exhibition opened this year was *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples*. Developed by a project team led by Tim Sullivan, and celebrated by Linda Burney of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and other prominent Indigenous citizens and by Premier and Minister for the Arts, Bob Carr, the exhibition focuses on themes central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander belief and existence. The exhibition is the largest in Australia dealing with this subject: it comes at a time more important than ever for Australia when the rights of Indigenous peoples as elaborated by the High Court judgements on Mabo and Wik are being questioned, even undermined.

With other Museum staff I attended the historic Australian Reconciliation Convention in Melbourne in May. With nearly 2000 other Australians, Indigenous and non-indigenous, we committed ourselves to: "walk together on this land...to reconciliation and building better relationships so that we can constitute a united Australia, respecting the land, valuing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and providing justice and equity for all".

Research on visitors by Evaluation Co-ordinator Lynda Kelly over the last three years has helped us to better understand the match between what visitors say they want from exhibitions and how they actually behave in exhibitions. Together with other education research it will make for better programs. What we have to do is take our visitors and other people to places they never thought they could go.

As always I thank the Trust, especially President Malcolm Long, for support during the year. I welcome our new Assistant Director Catherine Major, and thank colleagues and all those staff who have achieved such success during the year.

T H E A S S O C I A T E
D I R E C T O R ' S O F F I C E

During the year, the Australian Museum Trust and the Ministry for the Arts agreed to a restructuring of the Museum senior management following the findings of a 1996 review of the Museum by the NSW Premier's Department.

As a result, the position of Deputy Director was renamed Associate Director to reflect the position's broader responsibilities in formulating and achieving, in conjunction with the Director, strategic directions and broad policy issues. As well, the position assumed responsibility for achieving the integration of scientific programs with public programs and marketing activities while continuing to manage the functional areas of scientific research, collection management, materials conservation and information science and technology.

During the year, the office developed a strategic plan for the Museum's major program of biodiversity and conservation research and education. The plan complies with the aims of the State Biodiversity Strategy and focuses on links with community groups such as the Community Biodiversity Network and the Threatened Species Network; public education programs, including the Museum's forthcoming biodiversity exhibition; best practices for biodiversity surveys; research on threatened and endangered species concentrating on invertebrate animals; and quality assessment and enhancement of Museum databases.

Central to the strategy was the need for increased influence by the Museum in meeting conservation needs. This is being achieved through the production of products and services which will give improved information on biodiversity conservation to government, industry and the public.

Included in the strategy are three biodiversity research programs designed to directly apply extensive taxonomic and environmental expertise within the organisation.

The Associate Director's Office again co-ordinated the nationwide Eureka Prizes, which acknowledge and reward outstanding achievements in key areas of Australian scientific and environmental research, promotion of science and science communication.

With the addition of the inaugural Eureka Prize for Critical Thinking, a total of six prizes worth \$50,000 were awarded. Sponsors in 1996 were the Australian Skeptics (Eureka Prize for Critical Thinking); the Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories (Peter Hunt Eureka Prize for Environmental Journalism); the ABC (Eureka Prize for the Promotion of Science); *New Scientist* and Reed Books (Eureka Science Book Prize); POL Publications (Eureka Prize for Environmental Research); the Australian Museum (Eureka Prize for Industry); Ansett Australia and The Observatory Hotel, Sydney. The prizes were presented at an award ceremony at the Museum on 14 November, hosted by Andrew Denton.



SCIENCE IN THE MUSEUM

The Australian Museum's reputation for excellence in scientific research and collection management, and its commitment to introducing that knowledge and expertise into public programs, commercial ventures and science policy is internationally recognised.

The Museum's science divisions continue to explore the cultural diversity, biodiversity and geodiversity of the Australian region through research.

The division of ANTHROPOLOGY concentrates on the material culture, ethnography and prehistory of the indigenous peoples of Australia, the Pacific Islands, and island South-east Asia. Indigenous people whose cultural heritages are represented in the collections are widely consulted and actively encouraged to participate in the management, exhibition and research activities of the division. For example, the Aboriginal Heritage Unit within the division has an extensive outreach program which provides advice, services, loans and training to Aboriginal communities and cultural centres throughout NSW.

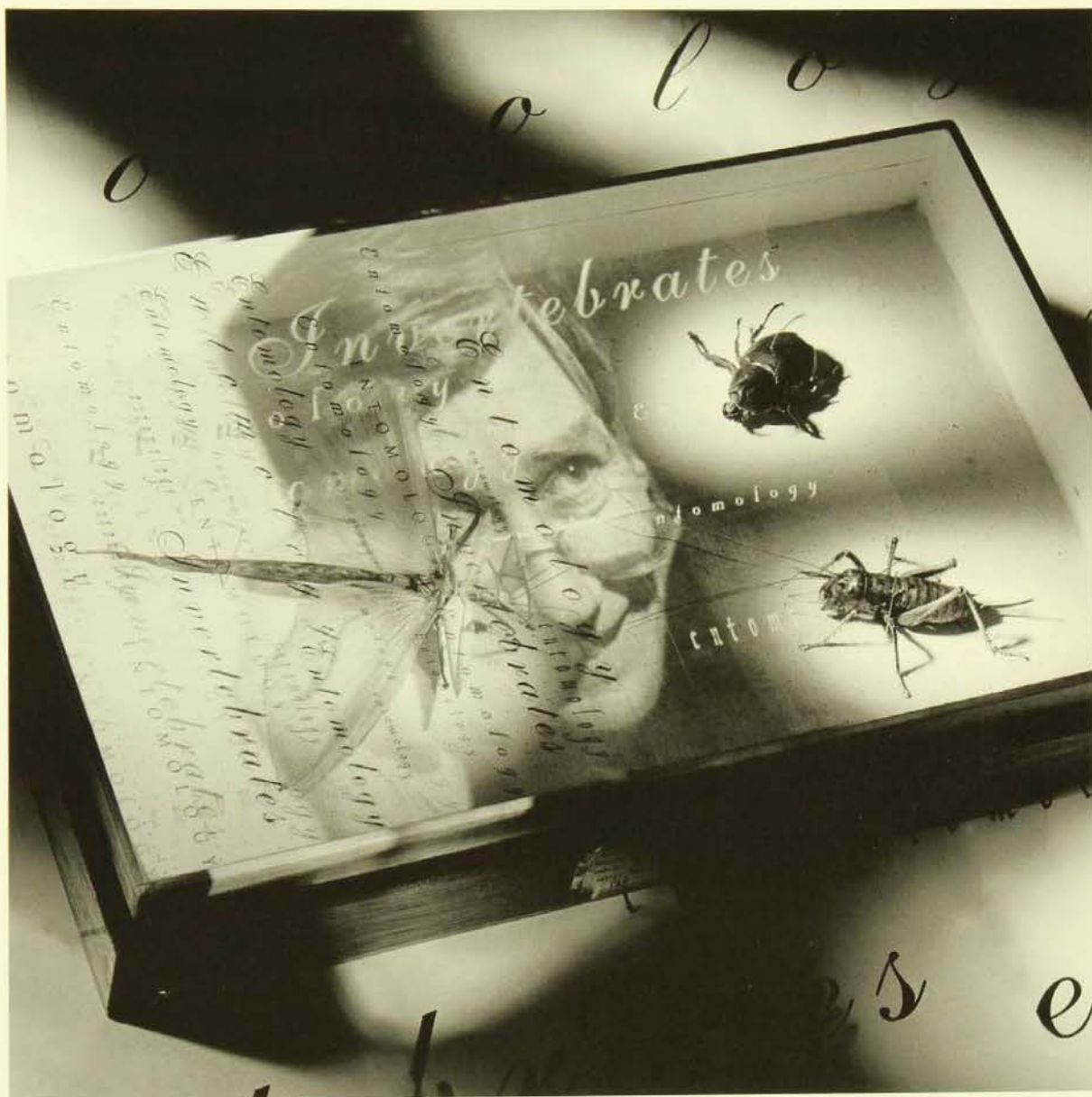
Members of the division have been involved in many exciting research projects, such as archaeological research into the prehistory of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Port Jackson, an important new archaeological study at Jinmium in the Northern Territory, a study of rock paintings depicting Rainbow Serpents of western Arnhem Land, and the history of land and plant use in West New Britain, Papua New Guinea.

Continuing work on the Port Jackson project included analysis of materials from excavated sites, analysis of stone artefacts from Balmoral Beach and the comparative analysis of material from middens in the estuarine areas and those found nearer the harbour mouth. Samples taken from a Middle Harbour shell midden - this project was carried out with students from Pymble Ladies College - showed that there had been a change over time in the abundance of certain shellfish.

In September 1996, results of archaeological research at Jinmium, in the Northern Territory, suggested it might be the oldest Aboriginal site in Australia and contain some of the region's oldest rock engravings. The findings gained national and international attention and it was an opportune time for the formal launch of the PEOPLE AND PLACE RESEARCH CENTRE. Cross checking of the data is continuing.

In October 1996, results of a study of rock paintings of the Rainbow Serpent showed that key features of Rainbow Serpent oral history are up to 6,000 years old, making it part of the world's oldest continuous religious belief system.

Further work undertaken through the People and Place Research Centre is exploring new ways of studying the history of land and plant use in West Britain, Papua New Guinea. High



The division of Invertebrate Zoology aims to increase knowledge and promote the importance of invertebrate biodiversity through taxonomic and environmental research, collection management and public programs

rainfall and acidic soils create huge problems for the archaeological study of agricultural history in the tropics because these destructive environments destroy most organic material.

To help find answers to these important archaeological questions, members of the people and plants research group have been developing new techniques for the identification of plants using microscopic starch grains. The team leads the world in the identification of starch found on ancient tools and in soils from archaeological sites.

The Research Centre is also involved in a study using luminescence and other dating methods to get absolute ages for sedimentary deposits at selected sites that were the habitat of Australia's giant marsupials (megafauna). Most giant marsupials died sometime in the late Quaternary but the lack of accurate dating at archaeological sites has thwarted any definite link being made between the arrival of people and the extinction of giant marsupials. This study will allow the timing of human colonisation and extinction of the giant marsupials to be compared. The site at Cuddie Springs, near Brewarrina, which is being studied in conjunction with the University of Sydney, will play a major role in this study.

The ethnographic collection, which is the responsibility of the division, consists of about 40,000 objects from Aboriginal Australia, 60,000 from the Pacific region, and 10,000 from other areas, predominantly South-east Asia but also the broader Asian region, Africa and America. The Australian archaeological collections contain one million objects, mostly from NSW.

Members of the collections management team provided access to the collections to both Indigenous Australians, regional indigenous people, and non-indigenous people. The number of Indigenous people from Australia and our neighbouring regions, who visited the Museum to see and renew their acquaintance with their heritage items in our collections, increased enormously. They came from places far afield, including Bathurst and Brewarrina, Mappoon, Maitland and Moree, and Wallaga Lake, Wellington and Wreck Bay.

During the year, the division organised the repatriation of a variety of cultural objects to the Larakia people in Darwin and the National Museum of Vanuatu. An illegally exported stone carving from the Angkor Wat temple complex was returned to the Royal Embassy of Cambodia.

The division of EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES has directed its research to areas of special community concern, especially in ecology, and fundamental questions, especially in earth sciences.

Earth Science is comprised of two sections, Mineralogy and Petrology, and Palaeontology. In the former, research has focused on 'hot spot' volcanic rocks and related earthquake activity in eastern Australia and associated minerals and gemstones. Palaeontology research focused on the evolution of Early Palaeozoic arthropods, and Early Palaeozoic vertebrates.

Environmental Science, made up of Marine Ecology and Terrestrial Ecology, has continued its mission to enhance environmental management and awareness through ecological research advice and committees. Major projects include the study of how vegetation fragments and corridors affect biodiversity, the biology and management of

the endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog, and the biology and ecology of small crustaceans of sandy beaches.

Research in the Mineral section concentrated on fundamental geological questions with several projects supported by the GEODIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTRE - the Australian/Asian gem project; the Sydney Aboriginal Midden Pumice Project, and the Laser Raman Zeolite Project.

Research results from the comparative study of East Australian and South-east Asian ruby-sapphire gem suites challenged some recently published models for volcanic sapphire origin and revealed remarkable similarities in ruby-sapphire suites from Barrington, Australia and West Pailin, Cambodia.

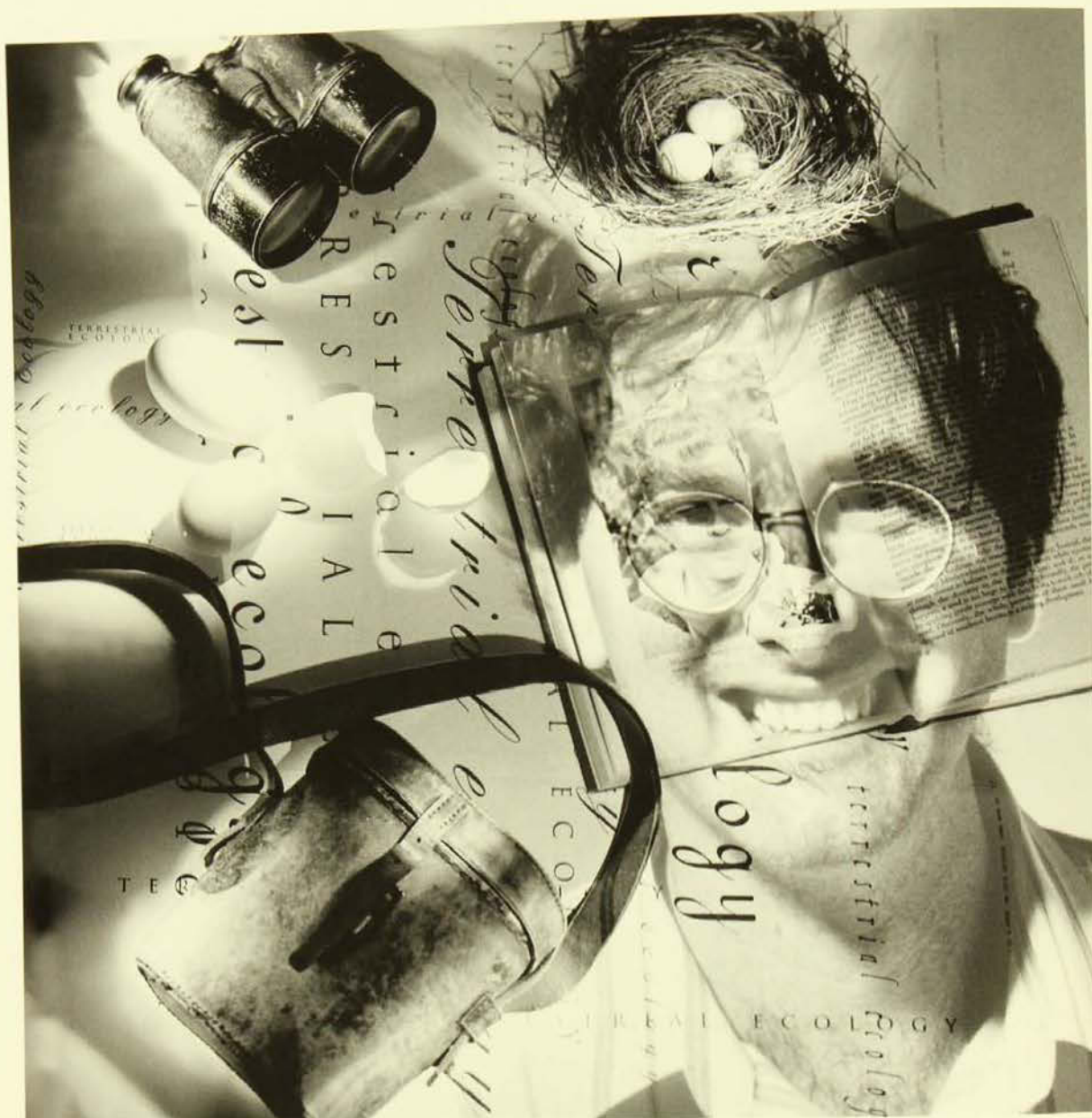
A petrological study of dated pumice layers in the archaeological excavation in the Balmoral Beach Aboriginal midden project, showed that the main pumice layer is 3,000 years old and very unusual in nature, being typical of the Tongan Islands 4,000 km away.

Two further projects in progress include the East Australian Volcanism Project and the Cretaceous-Tertiary Boundary Project. Two significant studies were completed on the Late Cretaceous Rockhampton province (which proposed a hot spot plume origin for this volcanism) and the late Cainozoic North Queensland province (which proposed a new plume surge model for these young volcanic fields). The Cretaceous-Tertiary Boundary Project reviews the role of meteorite impacts, volcanism and extinction patterns in the vast and controversial literature, with special consideration of Australia's global situation at the time.

In the Palaeontology section, anatomical evidence for the inter-relationships of major groups within the Arthropoda (jointed-legged animals) will be combined with DNA sequence data generated by the Evolutionary Biology Unit. To date, more than 180 features have been surveyed for the living arthropods. Work continued on well-preserved Cambrian arthropods from the Chengjiang fauna of China and early terrestrial arthropods from NSW. Devonian fish from Canowindra were investigated and descriptions of two new lobe-finned fish were completed and accepted for publication.

Important research projects have been undertaken by the Marine Ecology section to find answers to various environmental issues of community concern: a study of the biology and ecology of two beach amphipod species seeks to provide methods of assessing the ecological health of semi-exposed sandy beaches, areas which are of great value and that are vulnerable to human impact, and collaborative, experimental field research, now almost complete, in Botany Bay with the Environment Protection Authority aims to clarify the effects of contaminated sediments on benthic fauna.

The Terrestrial Ecology section continued a major program of study on the effect of land clearance on bird populations in the wheatbelt of NSW. Another aspect of the project seeks to find survival rates of birds in large and small native vegetation remnants. To do this, over



The Terrestrial Ecology section continued a major program of study on the effect of land clearance on bird populations in the wheatbelt of NSW

200 Red-capped Robins were banded and survivorship measured every six months. School students in central western NSW helped monitor the fate of artificial nests placed in remnant woodland - a very high predation rate was observed and the results were useful from both a scientific and educational perspective.

The main focus of work in the past year on the endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog was on patterns of habitat used by the frogs in Victoria and New Zealand compared with those found earlier in NSW. A relatively long-term study on succession among frog species and laboratory experiments on the nature and extent of predation on the frogs' eggs and tadpoles by the introduced Plague Minnow were completed.

Work continued on an investigation of the value of wildlife corridors for invertebrates. The project is supported by the CENTRE FOR BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION RESEARCH. Analysis of data should determine whether the habitat provided by narrow strips of vegetation supports a lesser variety of animals than large areas of habitat.

The aim of the division of VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC SCIENCES is to conduct research and provide information on the systematics, ecology and behaviour of Australian vertebrates (fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals) and their relatives from other areas. The division is comprised of four sections - Herpetology, Ichthyology, Mammalogy and Ornithology. The division also maintains the vertebrate collections.

The Evolutionary Biology Unit conducts research and provides services to all the other scientific divisions in the Museum. The major emphasis of current research in the biochemistry laboratory is phylogenic investigations using DNA sequencing. Important projects on marsupials and snails were completed during the year.

Increasingly, microsatellite DNA variation will be used in the study of molecular ecology. This technique has been established in the biochemistry laboratory in a study of the effects of vegetation corridors on the genetic diversity of invertebrates in fragmented landscapes.

Research in the Herpetology section focused on developmental abnormalities in frogs, descriptions of a new species of skink lizards, and relationships among skinks. Major field surveys in New Caledonia continued assessing areas of conservation significance for the island's flora and fauna. More than 2,200 specimens were added to the section's collection of reptiles and amphibians.

The Ichthyology, or fish, section continued its research on deep-sea whalefish biodiversity and systematics, and fish biodiversity in Australia, the western central Pacific and South China Sea. More than 64,300 specimens were newly registered - a large proportion of these fishes were larval specimens which were added to the collection using funding granted by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. The aim of the now completed project was to incorporate collections of larval fishes originally obtained for ecological and fisheries purposes into Museum collections for future study.

More than 700 new specimens were added to the Mammalogy section's collection, bringing the total number to 37,000 specimens. Significant acquisitions included a skull of Arnoux's beaked whale (*Berardius arnouxii*), the first specimen of this species from NSW and the fourth Australia-wide; and a specimen of *Pseudomys* from western NSW which may prove to be a new species allied to the New Holland Mouse (*Pseudomys novaehollandiae*). A specimen of the rare Mahogany Glider (*Petaurus gracilis*) was discovered in the collection!

Research during the year included the description of a new placental mammal from Cretaceous sediments in Victoria, analysis of fossil wallaby material from Gebe Island, Indonesia, and examination of specimens of New Guinea echidnas held in overseas institutions.

The Ornithology section's collections increased with acquisitions of bird skins and eggs from the Laurie Courtney-Haines estate and skeletons from the Burke Museum, University of Washington. More Australian skeletons were received from the Australian National Wildlife Collection, CSIRO, Canberra.

During the year, the section conducted fieldwork at Singleton Military Base as part of an environmental audit of the area and investigations began into means of controlling Indian Mynas in urban areas. A field trip was undertaken to investigate reports of Night Parrots along the Canning Stock Route - while no parrots were found, the site looked promising and could provide clues to the annual movements of this species.

During the year the Evolutionary Biology Unit received a large grant from the Australian Research Council, the only one given to a non-university institution. Funding was obtained from the policy enhancement program for a new scanning electron microscope for projects on the use of genetic criteria for reserve selection and the effects of habitat fragmentation.

The microscopy laboratory worked on a major project for the upcoming *Spiders!* exhibition in which a film sequence was created of a spider rotating in space. The sequence is an animation of over 1,000 still images, each of which is a stereo view made from two micrographs from the scanning electron microscope. The making of the film sequence was an enormous undertaking since each micrograph takes a minute to capture. Not surprisingly, the project, which has not been attempted before, has aroused the interest of film makers and the English manufacturer of the scanning electron microscope.

The division of INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY aims to increase knowledge and promote the importance of invertebrate biodiversity through taxonomic and environmental research, collection management and public programs. Division staff have initiated and participated in major collaborative research projects through the Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Research and the Centre for Evolutionary Research.

Several significant research and fieldwork programs were completed. They included the distribution and diversity of abyssal crustaceans and polychaete worms; new freshwater mollusc and isopod faunas from north-western Australia; a survey of the fauna of

seamounts south of Tasmania; reviews of Australian soil mites; a review of Papua New Guinea hawk moths; the biogeography of Pacific island flies; and the comparative morphology of hinge flies and related families which resulted in clarification of relationships between these flies and descriptions of a new family.

Conservation oriented programs for databasing NSW estuarine molluscs and Greater Sydney area terrestrial molluscs are in progress, funded by the Department of Land and Water Conservation and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. Several projects to produce CD-ROM interactive keys are well advanced. They include keys to the freshwater and estuarine molluscs of NSW, the polychaetes of south-east Australia, and the genera of Australian soil mites and amphipod families of the world. An Australian Museum InfoDisc on cicadas has been added to this popular range of natural history publications.

In the Arachnology/Entomology section, many research projects dealing with insect and arachnid diversity and phylogeny continued or were launched during the year. These projects included studies of long-legged flies and dance flies; insects associated with tree trunks in Australian eucalypt forests; the systematics of stipiid and desid spiders and the sytematics and biology of hawk moths. Work on the systematics of Australian cicadas continued - this work has led to a co-operative project with the University of Wellington, New Zealand, on the origins of New Zealand cicadas.

Other projects include the completion of a study of two genera of signal flies which inhabit Australian sandy coastlines and adjacent habitats; a catalogue of more than 700 known species of insects from Norfolk Island; a revisionary study of dragonflies; and the mapping of exotic weed invasion into NSW coastal rainforests which is important for the conservation management of invertebrate communities.

Field work carried out in northern Australia during the year by the Malacology section resulted in new discoveries in the freshwater snail families of Viviparidae and Bithyniidae. Research on the evolution and relationships of gastropods such as snails, limpets and slugs has been largely completed and the molecular component is now being written up.

Work continued on the preparation of a special paper on the Opisthobranch molluscs of New Caledonia, funded partly by the French research agency ORSTOM and the Natural History Museum, Paris. And a new study was begun of the feeding biology of pulmonate limpets of Sydney's rocky shores. Little is known about the basic biology of these common snails which play an important part in the ecosystems of threatened inter-tidal rock platforms.

Amalgamation of the Marine Invertebrate databases is near completion. The single data base system will greatly improve the efficiency of input and retrieval of these data sets. Databasing of the malacological collection has continued, with almost 50,000 records now entered. Within the Entomology Section curation of New Caledonian insects, Australian Geotrupine and Aphodine beetles, signal flies (Platystomatidae) and dance flies (subfam. Empidinae) have been completed totalling over 25,000 specimens.

The Federal Airports Corporation project monitoring dredged sites in Botany Bay and the final draft report have been completed. The data show definite trends of recovery of the sea floor animals in Botany Bay, although compared to the reference sites in Pittwater and Port Hacking, the dredged sites are poor in crustaceans, with the fauna being dominated by worms and molluscs.

Many significant research projects in Marine Invertebrates continued during the year. Among them was a molecular study of various groups of polychaetes or common bristle worms, which will help scientific understanding of the group and how it relates to other marine groups; an analysis, in collaboration with the Marine Station D'Endoume in Marseille, of bioerosion studies of both highly degraded and pristine sites in French Polynesia; the documentation of 90 species of ostracod crustaceans (or seed shrimps) discovered in the Scavengers of Eastern Australian Seas project - they are an important part of the sea's scavenging fauna and a major pest of commercial trap fisheries; the development of a DELTA taxonomic database to be used for writing descriptions of existing and new Phreatoicidea (ancient, small freshwater crustaceans commonly known as friartucks). The section also participated in an international workshop examining species diversity in the deep sea.

The CENTRE FOR EVOLUTIONARY RESEARCH consolidated its announced areas of research during the year - phylogenetic studies (the history of life in time and space); speciation mechanisms and patterns (how life diversifies); and the assessment, development and improvement of tools used in phylogenetic studies. Research studies specifically undertaken through the Centre include the phylogenetic history of *arthropoda*, or joint-footed animals such as insects, centipedes, crustaceans and spiders; the evolutionary relationships of the marine worms; the evolution and relationships of *gastropods* such as snails, limpets and slugs; and speciation in freshwater snails.

The key responsibilities of the division of MATERIALS CONSERVATION AND PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES is to preserve the Museum's collections and thus improve their accessibility to the community, and to provide photographic services for the scientific, promotional and public program needs of the Museum.

In fulfilling its responsibilities, the Materials Conservation section is guided by ethical considerations and respect for peoples' cultural property. It works with other museums, cultural groups and the public on the care of cultural heritage.

A major problem for museums is the high cost of creating appropriate environments for the long term storage of collections of organic materials. The Materials

Conservation section embarked on an important research program during the year to develop appropriate environments using passive techniques which will benefit the whole museum industry.

In the meantime, the section developed a new method for the safe, long term storage of a collection of iron pyrites. The new low oxygen storage environment, combined with low relative humidity, will prevent their rapid deterioration.

The section also started to put together a new flat storage system for the Museum's collection of over 500 Aboriginal bark paintings. The system will greatly improve access while protecting the fragile paintings.

An important assessment of the conservation needs for the preservation of the palaeontology collections was completed. A strategy to satisfy some of the identified needs was begun.

During the last year, a team of conservators concentrated on the treatment of over 600 objects from the anthropology collections to be installed in the *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples* exhibition. The objects ranged in size and complexity from a three-metre Pukamani pole to fine shell necklaces.

The Conservation Aboriginal Outreach program continued in collaboration with the Aboriginal Heritage Unit. The program arranged the long-term loan of objects from the Museum's collections to various organisations in Dubbo, Eden, Corindi Beach and Tibooburra. The conservation team assisted with storage and exhibition advice.

The Photographic Services section completed more than 700 assignments, an admirable effort considering that, for more than six months, one of the photographic team was dedicated entirely to two major exhibitions.

There was increased demand for photographs for use in multimedia and computer interactives. The section started to produce projection lecture slides directly from computer. The use of digital technology in publishing, presentation and public programs also increased.

The photographic collection continued to grow with the section's commitment to documenting and making accessible images of Museum science, events, public programs and collections.

The division of INFORMATION SCIENCE was created in 1989. It unites the separate information providers, managers and systems such as *search & discover*, Archives and Records, the Research Library, Information Technology including the Local Area Network, Internet access, the World Wide Web and database development. This integrated approach ensures a shared focus and best results in the provision and management of, and access to, information.



The Ichthyology, or fish, section continued its research on deep-sea whalefish biodiversity and systematics, and fish biodiversity in Australia, the western central Pacific and South China Sea

The principle objectives of the division are to provide: the most effective and efficient access to information to meet user needs; access to the collections, physically and intellectually; and a continually developing information technology infrastructure that supports the mission and objectives of the Museum.

The Australian Museum Archives hold Museum records which have long-term archival value. The holdings date from 1836 and provide evidence of the history and development of the Museum. New material from the Public Relations section and the Education, Exhibitions and Anthropology divisions was transferred to the archives.

The Archives were used by over 130 researchers this year. Loans of archival material were made to the Macleay Museum, the National Portrait Gallery and the Queensland Museum for display in exhibitions. Work on the Historic Bird Photograph Collection continued. The internegs collection, part of the original National Photographic Index, was transferred to the National Library of Australia, where cold film storage will help in their long term preservation.

A three-year strategic plan for Information Technology was developed with a view to identifying the priorities, use and management of information technology by the Museum. The Museum subsequently received advice of significant government funding for 1997/98, based on the program outlined in the Strategic Plan. This will enable us to make significant advances in the areas of Network development and expansion, multimedia, digitisation and biodiversity.

The Museum's Local Area Network extended to a range of new areas with 40 new nodes, making a total of 188 users. In addition, a pilot Intranet system, with key word search facilities, was developed. The significant government funding for 1997/98 will allow development in the following Network areas: Intranet development, electronic document management, remote access and extension of the Network to another 50 users.

In the Records Management program, major progress included the development of a Museum-wide file titling classification thesaurus. This is a key first step in the records management improvement program.

A major task was incorporating the records of the Assistant Director Corporate Services into the central records system. All inactive records were removed and the central files system was expanded to include the subject areas covered by these records.

The Research Library is one of Australia's finest and oldest natural history libraries, housing a significant rare book collection and a general collection of 35,000 monographs and 10,000 serial titles. Its comprehensive and specialised collections cover the main activities of the Museum.

It was a year of consolidation, with the review and overhaul of the Research Library's technical operations and processes. Much work was carried out on the Museum database, an in-house index of museological and other literature. Over 500 new monographs were acquired.

The Research Library has kept pace with changing library and information technologies. It continued to use new information products, both on-line and CD-ROM. A significant new purchase was Zoological Record on Compact Disc, a vital bibliographic reference tool. The World Wide Web continued to develop as an important vehicle for information access and delivery, with traditional library on-line service providers and suppliers changing to WWW gateways as well as new and expanded document delivery services.

The conservation program for the Rare Books Collection continued with the assistance of the Materials Conservation division. A Rare Books Action Plan was developed which details priorities and courses of action for the treatment and preservation of the collection.

search & discover, an information and resource centre established in 1994, is the central location for the thousands of general scientific enquiries that come to the Museum from the community by telephone, facsimile, mail, e-mail, and in person.

During the past year, there was an increase in the number of people using *search & discover*. The centre also recorded an increase in the number of post secondary students using its resources for their research. Most of them were university students, students doing TAFE courses, students from non-English speaking backgrounds and mature age students undertaking bridging courses.

Six new computers from Hewlett Packard were donated to *search & discover* and set up at four new access points to the Internet. The computers are now often in full use for the whole day, with visitors using them for e-mail, browsing, research, fun and entertainment.

There was an increase in the number of home school groups using *search & discover* which is ideally set up for independent and semi-independent study for small groups.

A full-time manager was appointed to develop and manage the Museum's World Wide Web site. As a first step, the website (www.austmus.gov.au) was overhauled - the directory structure was rationalised and the HTML coding standardised so that any changes in the future can be applied globally to the entire site, or to separate directories. Currently the site receives 3000 'hits' per month.

THE LIZARD ISLAND RESEARCH STATION, established by the Museum in 1973, has an international reputation as one of the world's most important coral reef research stations. Its mission is to increase understanding of the Great Barrier Reef by fostering high quality scientific research.

The results from many of the research projects allow reef and fisheries managers to base their decisions on sound scientific principles. Their decisions may have far-reaching implications both environmentally and commercially.

For example, over the past five years, researchers from James Cook University in Townsville have been studying the biology of coral trout. Coral trout are being studied

because of their commercial value and importance to recreational fishers. This pioneering research has shown that coral trout live up to 15 years and have relatively limited migratory behaviour except during the spawning season when they can travel many kilometres to join large spawning groups. Fisheries managers now use this information to establish appropriate regulations so that coral trout are not over exploited.

Many groups of marine animals produce chemicals that may be useful for pharmacological purposes. During the last year, a major research project on the venom of cone shells at Lizard Island got underway. The study has so far found that cone shell toxins have potential for use in pain management, epilepsy and stroke prevention.

The research station continued its support of promising young scientists through the Lizard Island Doctoral Fellowship scheme. Financial support for the annual Fellowship is provided by the Lizard Island Reef Research Foundation.

Two doctoral fellowships were awarded during the year. One study focuses on the unicellular algae that live with the body walls of the coral polyps of hard corals on the Great Barrier Reef. Discovering whether Great Barrier Reef corals can host a diversity of symbiotic algae contributes to conservation efforts to understand episodes of coral bleaching and death, as well as helping in such applied areas of coral reef science as reef restoration and coral culture. The second study focuses on the population ecology of small reef fishes (coral gobies) which have specialised habitat requirements - the availability of habitats could help determine the distribution and abundance of these species. This study has important management implications as it will help determine if populations of habitat specialised fishes are controlled in different ways to other reef fishes.

During the past year, the four major island-based research stations on the Great Barrier Reef formed a consortium called the Coral Reef Research Institute. The primary aim of the consortium is to lobby Federal agencies for funding for infrastructure development at the stations.

THE LIZARD ISLAND REEF RESEARCH FOUNDATION is an independent trust established in 1978 for the purpose of raising funds for capital development at the Lizard Island Research Station. This year, the Foundation contributed \$135,000 which attracted an additional \$25,000 subsidy from the NSW Government through the Australian Museum Trust. Since its inception, the Foundation has contributed more than \$1.5 million.

The Foundation's main source of funds is its members, of whom there were 62 in 1996/97. Each member makes an annual, tax deductible donation of at least \$1,000. In addition, Friends of the Lizard Island Reef Research Foundation donate smaller amounts which also support capital developments.



PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND MARKETING

The goal of Public Programs and Marketing is to promote awareness and understanding of the Australian Museum, to reaffirm and promote its work, and to encourage people to take part in its activities.

The Museum divisions of Exhibitions, Education and Community Relations work together to formulate the public programs, in collaboration with all scientific divisions.

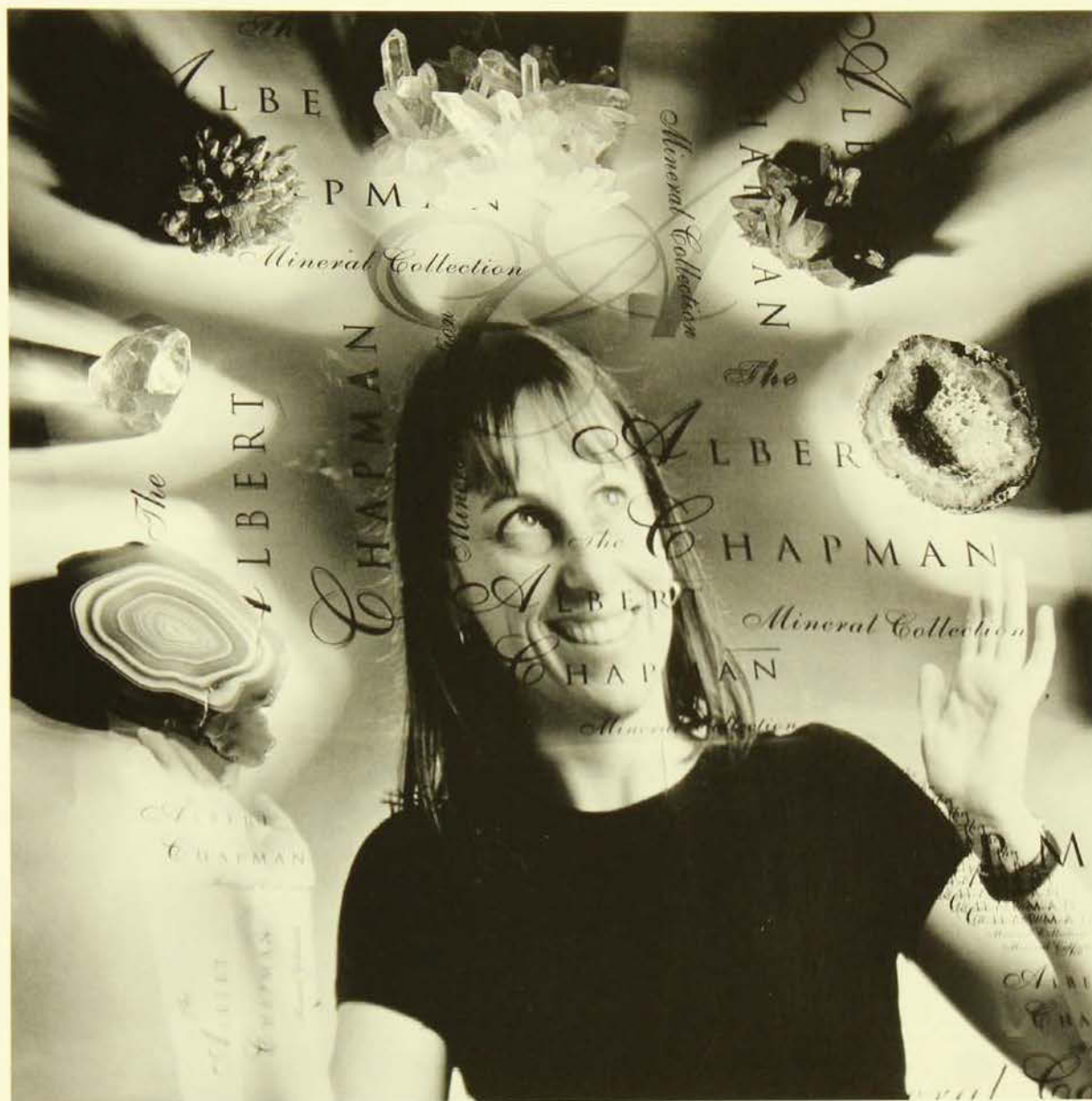
Public Programs and Marketing are vital elements in the successful promotion of community awareness, understanding and appreciation of the Australian Museum.

The EXHIBITIONS division, the creative centre of the public programs, is responsible for interpretive design and development, documentation, production and maintenance of the Museum's exhibitions. It also sources and installs exhibitions on loan from Australian and overseas museums and arranges tours of Australian Museum produced exhibitions, at home and abroad.

The year was full of intense activity and achievement. The completion of *The Albert Chapman Mineral Collection*, next to the *Planet of Minerals*, provided a beautiful, important addition to the Museum's presentation of minerals. After more than two years planning, the *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples* exhibition was opened by the Premier, Bob Carr, in April. *Indigenous Australians* is one of the largest exhibitions staged by the Museum.

The Exhibitions division also worked on three successful exhibitions: *Frogs; Sex, It's Only Natural*; and *Gargantuans From The Garden*, which returned for a five-month season after completing a two-year tour of New Zealand. This is the first time an Australian Museum exhibition has toured extensively abroad and plans are underway to take other exhibitions, such as *Sex, It's Only Natural*, which is currently on a national tour, and *Spiders!* overseas. Pre-production included two important forthcoming exhibitions, *Spiders!* and *Australia's Biodiversity*.

The EDUCATION division appeals to a wide range of audiences with its innovative programs and services which are designed to respond to community needs, provide opportunities for learning, and raise awareness of relevant issues.



The unique Albert Chapman Mineral Collection was housed in a superb new exhibition space. It is a showcase for some of the world's best mineral specimens.

During the past year, the Education division was involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of a range of exhibitions, including *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples*; *The Albert Chapman Mineral Collection*; *Sex, It's Only Natural*; *Frogs*; *My Tibet*; *Gargantuans From The Garden*; *Punkulture*; and the development of the upcoming *Spiders!* and *Australia's Biodiversity* exhibitions.

There was a four per cent increase in the number of students and teachers who visited the Museum, with over 50,000 enjoying the exhibitions, and the educational materials and resources prepared by the Education Services section.

Educational materials were developed for *Planet of Minerals*; *The Albert Chapman Mineral Collection*; *Sex, It's Only Natural*; *Indigenous Australians* and *Gargantuans From the Garden*.

Education Services was also responsible for the successful *National Earthworm Environmental Awards for Schools* and the *NSW Aboriginal Studies HSC Art Display*.

The Editing Unit worked on the development and production of text and communication strategies for all the permanent and temporary exhibitions and programs presented during the year. The unit is also responsible for signage and orientation throughout the Museum.

The Evaluation and Visitor Research Unit carried out evaluations on all exhibitions and other Museum projects and participated in external market research when commissioned.

In preparation for the *Spiders!* exhibition, the unit carried out a large visitor survey to find out what the public would be interested in seeing in such an exhibition. It also participated in a series of external focus groups on both *Spiders!* and *Gargantuans From The Garden*. The results from two visitor surveys and three focus groups which the unit conducted on the planned *Australia's Biodiversity* exhibition are being used in the development of the exhibition.

The Multimedia Unit was set up in August 1996 as a joint initiative of the Education and Exhibitions divisions to develop and manage multimedia interactive displays for exhibitions. Since then, the unit has produced material for *The Albert Chapman Mineral Collection*; *Sex, It's Only Natural* and *Indigenous Australians* and started work on material for *Spiders!* and *Australia's Biodiversity*.

Museum-on-the-Road (MOTR), managed by the Resource Services section, continued to be an important resource for rural communities who saw MOTR *Aboriginal Australia* and *Street Science*, and the new *More Than Dinosaurs*. More than 655,000 people visited MOTR travelling exhibitions.

More than 53,000 school students throughout the State used Museum-in-a-Box, with over 720 schools having used the boxes. Museum-in-a-Box programs continued to be restructured and updated, including *Water; Frogs; Dinosaurs* and *Molluscs*. The *Aboriginal Studies Food Technology* box won joint first prize in the Educational Kits category in the 1996 Museums Australia Design Awards.

Holiday, theatre and community access programs, and special events, tours, demonstrations and workshops were successfully presented by the Visitor Services section. The most significant change in Visitor Services over the last year was the implementation of new staffing arrangements to deliver new and improved interpretive programs. As well, Aboriginal Interpretive Officers were appointed to work on the new *Indigenous Australians* exhibition.

While the community access space *Our Place* closed in November to make way for *Indigenous Australians*, a new space *Viewpoints* opened in March to showcase the Museum's future Community Access Programs. Successful Community Access programs included *Awakenings: Australia-Pacific Spirits; Face to Face: Aboriginal Teenagers; Inside Out: Process, Progress, Change; Landscapes and Lives* and *Images of Wisdom: Through Australian-Palestinian Eyes*.

More than 41,000 people attended the Theatre Unit's 11 productions throughout the year, an increase of 18 per cent. Highlights included a diverse and exciting series of Indigenous performances from March to May, including the unit's first schools-based show. Other productions included *Frogtales; Volume of Angels; Professor Amass and His Big Bag of Stuff: A Kid's Guide to 20th Century Hunting and Gathering; Alive and Kicking; I Will Survive; Mudung! Alive!; If Butterflies Made Honey;* and *Bug Crazy!*.

The Education division managed a number of successful projects throughout the year. Division head Carolyn MacLulich produced 12 books in a natural science series for very young readers with Ashton Scholastics, the Editing Unit contributed to a project with the Liverpool Regional Museum and both the Editing Unit and the Multimedia Unit worked on a project with the Maitland Visitor Centre, and the Theatre Unit directed an opera for Opera Hunter.

The COMMUNITY RELATIONS division used a broad mix of media to promote the Australian Museum's work to as wide a range of public interests as possible. The medium of the message ranged from suburban and metropolitan print media to radio and television to outdoor advertising.

During the year, the Marketing and Public Relations section successfully promoted more than four major exhibitions, including *Frogs*; *The Albert Chapman Mineral Collection*; *Sex, It's Only Natural*; and *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples*. The results speak for themselves. More than 184,000 people visited *Frogs*, 40 per cent being family and school groups. Over 82,000 people visited *Sex, It's Only Natural* after extensive coverage in the media.

Many smaller exhibitions also received handsome media attention, including *My Tibet*; the *British Gas Wildlife Photographer of the Year*; *Awakenings*; *Kaleidoscope of Life*; *Punkulture*; and *Gargantuans From The Garden*.

Events such as the Museum's special school holiday programs Collect-A-Mania and Fascinating Science, the Earthworm Awards, the Eureka Prizes for Science and Open Day gained the Museum valuable editorial space in newspapers and on radio and television.

The big media news that made headlines here and overseas was the collaborative research of anthropologists Richard Fullagar and Paul Tacon on ancient rock art at Jinmium, and the results of Paul Tacon's study of rock painting depictions of Rainbow Serpents which showed that it is part of the world's oldest continuous religious belief system.

Marketing and Public Relations continued to provide editorial copy for, and edit, *Muse*, the bi-monthly magazine for The Australian Museum Society, and manage production of the *Australian Museum Annual Report*.

THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM SOCIETY (TAMS) continued its important role of promoting and supporting the Museum's activities through its healthy membership, and lectures, tours and special events.

It was an eventful year with a developmental review carried out following the Premier's Department 1996 review of the Museum, the resignation of both the Executive Officer and the President and the appointments of their replacements, and the finalisation of a major sponsorship commitment.

The TAMS Executive Officer, Carole Bibby, who left to pursue studies in New York, was succeeded in April 1997 by Sandra Harrison, who was previously executive administrator at the Anglo-Australian Observatory. Beth Stokes, president of TAMS until April 1997, was succeeded by award-winning writer Wilson da Silva.

At the end of 1996, TAMS fulfilled its \$300,000 commitment to the sponsorship of *search & discover*, the final payment being reached through an outstanding response from Society members to a special appeal.

The TAMS activities program was strongly supported by members. Three highly successful lectures in the Science Super Series featured evolutionary biologist Professor Richard Dawkins, environmentalist Professor Norman Myers, and theoretical physicist Sir Robert May. All the Focus series promoted the Museum's current research and exhibition programs. There were two field trips to the Lizard Island Research Station, and tours to the Antarctic and Celebes, both arranged in conjunction with the Australian National Maritime Museum.

CONSUMER RESPONSE

We value comments on our performance. These enable us to provide superior levels of service to our customers. Comments may be written in our visitors' book and are replied to promptly when accompanied by a contact name and address.

Although these comments were overwhelmingly positive, during the reporting year some improvements were made as a result of visitor response, including changes to the lighting in the *Albert Chapman Mineral Collection*, and improvements to the text panels and sound levels in *Indigenous Australians*.

All other complaints from visitors are investigated and a reply provided by mail, telephone or in person. Data on all visitor response is also used by the Museum's Evaluation Co-ordinator to include in the evaluation of our Public Programs.



COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

The Australian Museum continues to successfully operate a number of commercial enterprises which generate supplementary income for Museum activities and research.

The opening of two new exhibitions which also offer attractive function space helped boost the popularity of MUSEUM AS A VENUE during the year. The result is a 25 per cent increase in revenue.

The *Albert Chapman Mineral Collection* gallery is sought after for cocktail receptions and pre-dinner drinks, dinner being served in the *Skeleton Gallery*. The

Indigenous Australians exhibition offers a fascinating space for small dinner events and cocktail receptions. The Theatrette remains a popular space for hire so, in order to maintain and encourage more bookings, it will be completely refurbished in the coming year.

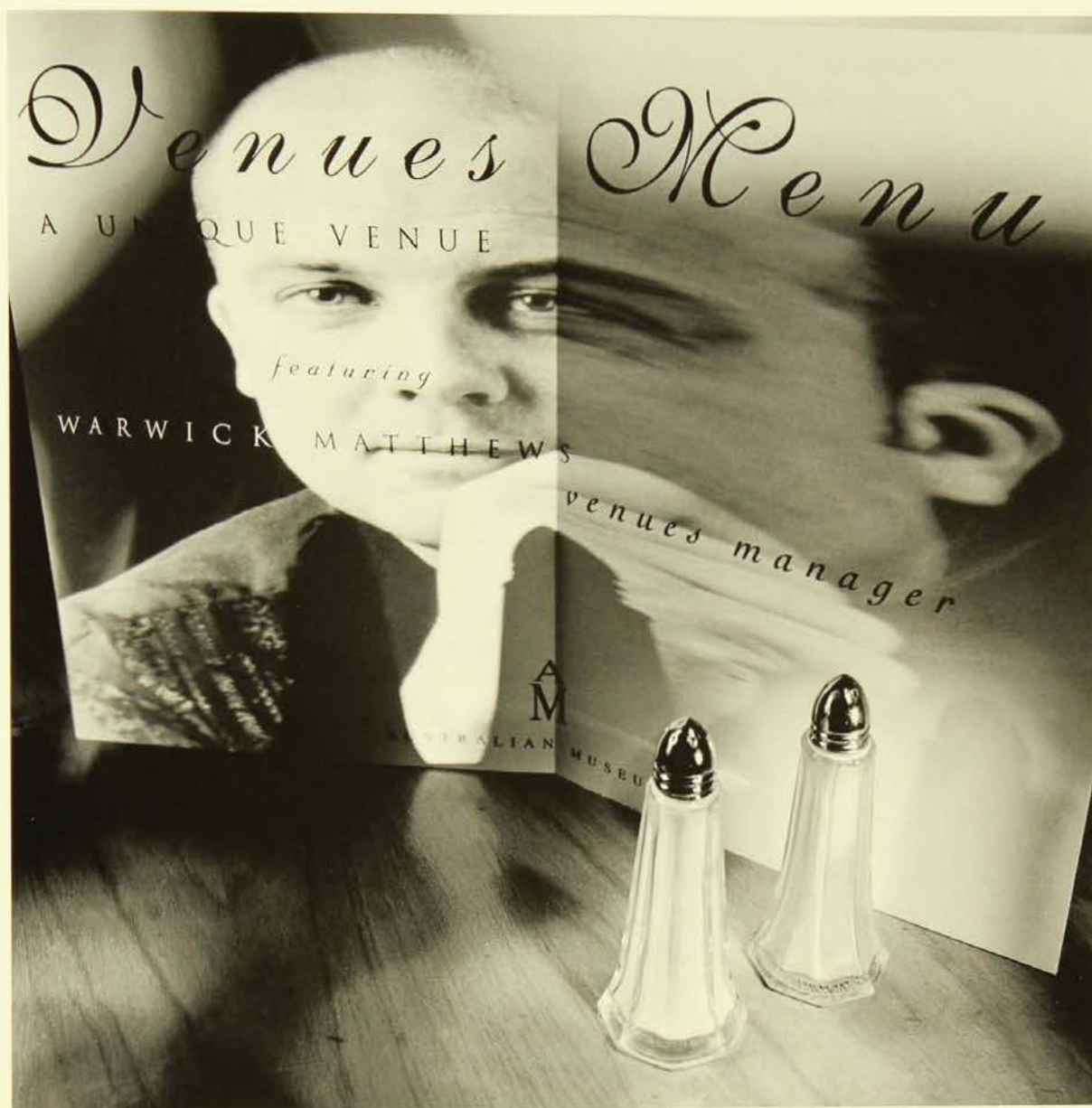
Weddings continue to be the Museum as a Venue's main source of business, with bookings spilling over from Saturday, to Friday and Sunday.

Museum as a Venue was a founding member of Sydney's Unique Venues Association and now holds the presidency. Museum as a Venue is also an active member of the Sydney Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Meetings Industry Association of Australia, the Venue Managers Association (Asia and Pacific) and the International Special Events Society.

The popular MUSEUM SHOP attracted a lot of support during the year; for example, trade in May increased by 43 per cent on a lower traffic flow, and went up by 58 per cent in June.

Interest in the Shop has escalated because of initiatives to make the space lighter, brighter and more enticing. New stock contributed to the increase in turnover - an expanded range of books on Aboriginal culture resulted in sales consistently 400 per cent above the average recorded in the previous nine months - and new lighting created a more inviting ambience.

Important modifications were made to the computer system to offer customers the most efficient and expert special order system. The intention is that the Australian Museum Shop will become the most authoritative in the science and natural history field.



The opening of two new exhibitions which also offer attractive function space helped boost the popularity of Museum as a Venue during the year

During the year, the Museum Shop also initiated an important joint marketing strategy with other museums around the country to effectively promote and market books and videos.

The Australian Museum has always sought to align itself with companies and organisations that share its social and intellectual philosophy. As a result, the Museum's MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND SPONSORSHIP ACTIVITIES showcase some of the country's most prestigious companies.

Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology, a subsidiary of Sonic, was a major sponsor of *Sex, It's Only Natural*. This was a rewarding, contemporary sponsorship arrangement in that it combined elements of traditional co-promotion and marketing with significant retail and product sampling, a public lecture program organised by The Australian Museum Society and an Open Day exhibition stand.

Rio Tinto offered sponsorship support for the British Council's *newIMAGES Kaleidoscope of Life, proudly supported by Rio Tinto* exhibition, a joint project of the Australian Museum and London's Natural History Museum. Rio Tinto is represented on the board of the Minerals Council of Australia which has supported minerals exhibitions, such as *The Albert Chapman Mineral Collection*, since 1995.

IBM Australia and Gateway 2000 supplied a variety of Museum programs with computer hardware. IBM supported the *Discovery Space; the National Earthworm Awards*; and *Sex, It's Only Natural*; and Gateway 2000 supplied the *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples* exhibition. For the last two years, Hewlett Packard has supplied computer technology to the Museum's information and technology centre, *search & discover*.

Optus and Vodafone continued to expand their GSM mobile digital service network through their sites at the Australian Museum. The revenue generated from this new site-leasing business will help support programs such as Museum-in-a-Box, Museum-on-the-Road and the Theatre Unit.

The Museum received several important grants (the Australian Council for the Arts), commissions (WorldxChange Telecommunications) and donations (Akubra) which gave vital support to its public programs and scientific research.

The highly regarded natural history magazine, *NATURE AUSTRALIA*, continued its fine tradition of educating, informing and entertaining its readers. The magazine provides a valuable means by which scientists are able to present their research to a general readership in an accessible and interesting form without compromising the scientific integrity of the research. Increasingly, *Nature Australia* is used by scientists to communicate their ideas and discoveries to the community.

Nature Australia continued to hold its audience, with a subscription renewal rate of over 80 per cent. New subscriptions also continued strongly throughout the year, helped by engaging editorial features on subjects as diverse as why kangaroos hop, the value of bushland corridors as a conservation tool, and the current status of the endangered dugong.

NATURE FOCUS, the Australian Museum's photograph library, had a successful year, boosted by a new computer software program that gave the library greater efficiency and competitive energy.

The library continued to attract renowned photographers such as Ron and Valerie Taylor, who have given Nature Focus exclusive Australian representation of their images.

The client base remained strong with regular clients Australia Post and NSW Lotteries repeatedly sourcing images from the library. Nature Focus images appeared on telephone cards, greeting cards, calendars, NSW National Parks entry stickers, and in magazines and newspapers such as *Time*, *The Australian* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS continued to publish the important, and sought after, *Records of the Australian Museum* and their *Supplements*, which carry the official names and descriptions of newly discovered animal species in the Australian region. These scientific publications, together with *Technical Reports of the Australian Museum*, are also a forum for leading research in anthropology, geology and palaeontology.

The discovery of 63 new species and six new genera was formally published in the Australian Museum's *Records* during the year. Two new species of fish, two new genera and four new species of hermit crabs, three new genera and 32 new species of mites, nine new species of NSW freshwater crayfish, and one new genus and 16 new species of amphipod crustaceans were recorded.

An important work on mineralogy and petrology of Tasmanian basalts, descriptions of early Cambrian arthropod fossils by Chinese, Australian and Swedish scientists, and images of beautifully preserved fossil footprints and fossilised tetrapod amphibians that roamed the Sydney region during the Permian were all published during the year.

The *Records of the Australian Museum*, *Supplements* and *Technical Reports* were circulated to 730 libraries in 89 countries around the world, either in exchange with 640 libraries for other scientific publications or donated to 83 libraries in Asia, South-east Asia, South America, Africa and the Middle East. The estimated value of the journals the Australian Museum receives in exchange for its *Records*, *Supplements* and *Reports* is \$100,000.



C O R P O R A T E S E R V I C E S

The CORPORATE SERVICES division provides many of the services supporting the operating areas of the Museum: Human Resources Services is responsible for staff recruitment and development; Property Services looks after the care of the buildings and plant; House Services provides admissions services, security and cleaning; Financial Services provide financial management and accounts services; and the Australian Museum Business Services is a commercial enterprise which adds to the Museum's funds by providing important expert knowledge to clients.

During the year, the Australian Museum was awarded the 1997 NSW Aboriginal Employment Award in the State Government category. The award recognises the Museum's strong record for employing Aboriginal people in a variety of positions across the organisation. The Museum has also established identified positions for Aboriginal people in areas concerning cultural heritage.

Enterprise bargaining has been a major focus for Human Resource Services. In December 1996, agreement in principle was reached between the Public Service Association and the Museum to finalise an enterprise agreement to cover all staff at the Museum. This agreement provides an eight-scale skills based classification structure that covers all staff at the Museum.

Another major achievement for the Museum was the implementation of an energy conservation agreement with Australian Energy Solutions, a subsidiary of Energy Australia. Under this agreement, which is one of the first of its kind in Australia, an agreed level of kilowatt-hour savings is guaranteed by AES over a seven-year period.

These savings represent a reduction of 25.5 per cent in energy use. This is largely achieved by better designed lighting and computer controlled air-conditioning.

With funds of \$300,000 provided by Treasury, the Museum commissioned a Development Application for an extension to the Museum's public and non-public areas. In the 1860s, the colonial architect James Barnet completed preliminary designs for the Museum which provided public access from William Street. These designs have been used by Peddle Thorp and Walker as a basis to develop the new design for the Museum.

The Museum, while at the forefront of developing exciting new exhibitions for the public's enjoyment, is aware of, and concerned about, the heritage precinct in which it is located and is keen to make sure that proposed designs reflect those parameters. With these concerns in mind, office and laboratory accommodation will be updated to overcome the current inadequate conditions experienced by some staff.



*The corporate services division provides many of
the services supporting the operating areas
of the Museum*

The Museum also successfully lobbied the Sydney City Council for significant alterations to the proposed plans for neighbouring Cook and Phillip Parks. The accepted alterations mean that the building of the Aqua Leisure Centre will not have a detrimental effect on the ambience of the Museum.

An exciting new concept to create and manage a cultural exhibition focusing on the indigenous peoples of Australia and neighbouring regions in the newly refurbished Customs House at Circular Quay was proposed by the Museum. The exhibition would be a showcase for the indigenous artworks held by the Museum. It hopes to present the exhibition as a joint venture with Balarinji Australia, the internationally acclaimed design studio which promotes and develops indigenous design through a range of media and forms.

During the year, a review of financial management reporting and cash management practices was commissioned. The Museum was concerned that its operations are of the highest standard and that the information provided to the Trust and management is indicative of good decision-making. As a result, reporting formats and operational practices have been improved.

The issue of the financial valuation of heritage and cultural collection assets has been a continuing matter of concern to both the Trust and Museum management. Under Australian Accounting Standard 29, 'Financial Reporting for Government Departments', agencies are required to value the collections in their possession or control. While the NSW Treasury arranged a meeting to discuss the means of implementing this Standard in May 1997, no agreement had been reached by the reporting date either on the method of implementation or for funding this time-consuming and expensive process.

Despite a difficult year, Australian Museum Business Services (AMBS) achieved a turnover of around \$1.52 million, exceeding its sales target of \$1.32 million. AMBS is involved in many of the development projects requiring environmental studies in the greater Sydney area.

The Museum reviewed two of its senior executive positions, Associate Director and Assistant Director Corporate Services. The role of Assistant Director Corporate Services now focuses more on organisational development, quality leadership and continuous improvement, site development and strategic planning for the Museum.

In the NSW State Budget announced in May 1997, the Museum gained \$19.759 million capital funding over five years. The allocation provides \$12.1 million over five years for enhanced public programs and the development of a new exhibition focusing on Australia's biodiversity;

\$2.8 million over four years for further research into threatened and endangered species and improved communication with, and assistance for, community groups and local councils; \$1.8 million over three years to expand the Museum's information technology infrastructure; and \$3 million over four years to achieve temperature and humidity control to preserve collections and meet required standards of health.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO ABORIGINAL DEATHS IN CUSTODY

Initiatives have been undertaken by the Museum to implement recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, specifically Recommendation 56, which stated (in part):

"... many Aboriginal people have expressed the wish to record and make known to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people aspects of the history, traditions and contemporary culture of Aboriginal society. ...The Commission recommends that government and appropriate heritage authorities negotiate with Aboriginal communities and organisations in order to support such Aboriginal initiatives."

ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES IN 1996 - 97 INCLUDED:

- Opening of the *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples* exhibition
- Continuation of the Aboriginal Museum's Outreach Program
- Repatriation of significant cultural items to the Larakia people, Darwin, Northern Territory
- Publication of the South Coast Aboriginal Collection catalogue
- Loan of Aboriginal artefacts to various Aboriginal communities
- Various programs conducted by the Museum's Education Department aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture amongst the broader community

1997-98 PLANS

- Implement a comprehensive public program in the *Indigenous Australians* exhibition.
- Total review of the policies that relate to Indigenous Australians and the Division of Anthropology
- Continuation of the Museum's Aboriginal catalogue series
- Publication of the Far North West NSW catalogue
- Loan of artefacts to various Aboriginal communities

independent
audit report



BOX 12 GPO
SYDNEY NSW 2001

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

Australian Museum Trust

To members of the New South Wales Parliament and Members of the Australian Museum Trust

SCOPE

I have audited the accounts of the Australian Museum Trust for the year ended 30 June 1997. The preparation and presentation of the financial report consisting of the statement of financial position, operating statement, statement of cash flows and summary of compliance with financial directives, together with the notes thereto, and the information contained therein is the responsibility of the Trust. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these statements to Members of the New South Wales Parliament and members of the Trust based on my audit as required by sections 34 and 41C(1) of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983. My responsibility does not extend here to an assessment of the assumptions used in formulating budget figures disclosed in the financial report.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Act and Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates.

In addition, other legislative requirements which could have an impact on the Australian Museum Trust financial report have been reviewed on a cyclical basis. For this year, the requirements examined comprise: Chief Executive Service/Senior Executive Service remuneration; Payroll tax on superannuation benefits; Disaster recovery plans for computer installations and prompt payment of accounts.

These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the requirements of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements (Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views) so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Trust's financial position, the results of its operations and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

AUDIT OPINION

In my opinion, the financial report of the Australian Museum Trust complies with sections 41B and 41BA of the Act and present fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements the financial position of the Trust as at 30 June 1997 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended.

P.J. BOULOUS, ACA
PRINCIPAL AUDITOR

(duly authorised by the Auditor-General of New South Wales under section 45F(1A) of the Act)
SYDNEY

3 October 1997

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

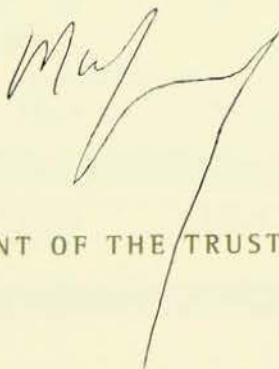
financial
statements

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST

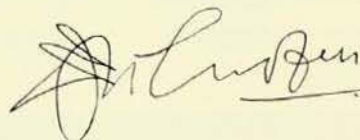
STATEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 41C(1C) OF PUBLIC FINANCE AND AUDIT ACT, 1983

Pursuant to Section 41C(1C) of the Public Finance and Audit Act we state that:

- a. The financial statements and notes thereon exhibit a true and fair view of the financial position and transactions for the year ended 30 June 1997.
- b. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements (Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views), the requirements of the Public Finance & Audit Act 1983, Public Finance and Audit (General) Regulations 1995, and the Financial Reporting Code for Budget Dependent Agencies.
- c. There are no circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.



PRESIDENT OF THE TRUST



SECRETARY OF THE TRUST

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST OPERATING STATEMENT
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1997

	NOTES	ACTUAL 1997 \$'000	BUDGET 1997 \$'000	ACTUAL 1996 \$'000
Expenses				
Operating Expenses				
Employee related	3 (a)	13,855	13,365	12,601
Other operating expenses	3 (b)	7,159	7,414	6,911
Maintenance	3 (c)	1,110	1,274	1,513
Depreciation	3 (d)	1,493	1,058	980
Grants and subsidies	3 (e)	50	-	40
Finance costs	3 (f)	13	-	20
Other expenses		12	-	30
TOTAL EXPENSES		23,692	23,111	22,095
Less:				
Retained revenue				
Sale of goods and services	4	4,683	4,303	4,568
Investment Income	5	5	-	7
Grants and contributions	6,7	960	1,643	1,573
TOTAL RETAINED REVENUES		5,648	5,946	6,148
Gain/(loss) on sale of non-current assets	8	-	-	(100)
NET COST OF SERVICES		20(b) (18,044)	(17,165)	(16,047)
Government Contributions				
Recurrent appropriation		15,370	14,633	14,450
Capital appropriation		2,350	2,350	825
Acceptance by Crown Transactions				
Entitlement of employee entitlements and other liabilities	9	1,424	1,379	1,214
TOTAL GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS		19,144	18,362	16,489
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		1,100	1,197	442

The accompanying notes form part of these Financial Statements.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST STATEMENT OF
FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 1997

	NOTES	ACTUAL 1997 \$'000	BUDGET 1997 \$'000	ACTUAL 1996 \$'000
Assets				
Current Assets				
Cash	10	160	53	177
Investments	11 (a)	102	-	71
Receivables	11 (b)	233	309	309
Inventories	11 (c)	125	130	130
Total Current Assets		620	492	687
Non-Current Assets				
Property, Plant & Equipment	12	137,800	126,619	125,327
Total Non-Current Assets		137,800	126,619	125,327
TOTAL ASSETS		138,420	127,111	126,014
Liabilities				
Current Liabilities				
Accounts Payable	13 (a)	1,285	1,182	989
Borrowings	13 (b)	-	-	100
Employee Entitlements	13 (c)	1,265	962	1,155
Total Current Liabilities		2,550	2,144	2,244
TOTAL LIABILITIES		2,550	2,144	2,244
NET ASSETS		135,870	124,967	123,770
Equity				
Reserves	14	131,870	120,870	120,870
Accumulated funds	14	4,000	4,097	2,900
TOTAL EQUITY		135,870	124,967	123,770

The accompanying notes form part of these Financial Statements.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST CASH FLOW
 STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1997

	NOTES	ACTUAL 1997 \$'000	BUDGET 1997 \$'000	ACTUAL 1996 \$'000
Cash Flows from Operating Activities				
Payments		(12,321)	(11,986)	(11,339)
Employee related		(50)	-	(40)
Grants and subsidies		(13)	-	-
Finance costs		(7,985)	(8,688)	(8,458)
Other services		(20,369)	(20,674)	(19,837)
Receipts				
Sale of goods and services		4,759	4,303	4,639
Interest received		5	-	7
Other		960	1,643	1,573
		5,724	5,946	6,219
NET CASH FLOWS ON OPERATING ACTIVITIES	20(b)	(14,645)	(14,728)	(13,618)
Cash Flows from Investing Activities				
Purchases of property, plant and equipment		(2,966)	(2,350)	(1,609)
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		-	-	81
Other		5	-	(10)
Proceeds from sale of investments		(31)	71	32
Other				
NET CASH FLOWS ON INVESTING ACTIVITIES		(2,992)	(2,279)	(1,506)
Cash Flows from Government				
Recurrent Appropriation		15,370	14,633	14,450
Capital Appropriation		2,350	2,350	825
New/(Repayment) of Loans from Treasury		(100)	(100)	(100)
NET CASH FLOWS FROM GOVERNMENT		17,620	16,883	15,175
Net (Decrease)/Increase in Cash		(17)	(124)	51
OPENING CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		177	177	126
CLOSING CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	10	160	53	177

The accompanying notes form part of these Financial Statements

SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE WITH FINANCIAL DIRECTIVES FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1997

	ACTUAL APPROPRIATIONS			ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE		
	Original		Original	Original		ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE
	1997	Revised		1996	Revised	
	\$'000	1997 \$'000		\$'000	1996 \$'000	
Recurrent Appropriations	14,582	15,370	15,370	14,404	14,450	14,450
Capital Appropriations	1,700	2,350	2,350	350	825	825
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	16,282	17,720	17,720	14,754	15,275	15,275
<i>(includes transfer payments)</i>						

The main variances between the original appropriation and the revised capital appropriation was due to early completion of the Indigenous Australians gallery. Funds were brought forward from the 1997/98 allocation. The recurrent allocation was revised due to changes in payroll tax legislation and increased cost of workers compensation. A drawdown of \$737,000 was received from future year allocations to overcome a cash shortage.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) *The Museum Trust Reporting Entity*

The Australian Museum Trust comprises all the operating activities and entities under its control. These entities include The Australian Museum Society, Australian Museum Foundation and the Lizard Island Research Station. It also encompasses funds which are restricted for specified purposes by the grantor or donor, but are nevertheless controlled by the Trust.

All transactions and balances between the funds and entities comprising the Australian Museum Trust have been eliminated in the process of preparing the financial statements.

(b) *Basis of Accounting*

The Australian Museum Trust financial statements which are a general purpose financial report have been prepared on an accruals basis and in accordance with the applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements (Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views), the requirements of the Public Finance and Audit Act and Regulations, the Financial Reporting Directions published in the Financial Reporting Code for Budget Dependent Agencies or issued by the Treasurer under Section 9(2)n of the Act.

Where there are inconsistencies between the above requirements the legislative provisions have prevailed. Statements of Accounting Concepts are used as guidance in the absence of applicable Australian Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views and legislative requirements.

Except for certain land and some buildings which are recorded at valuation, the financial statements are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention. The collection, which has not been valued, has not been recognised in the Statement of Financial Position. All amounts are rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars and are expressed in Australian currency. The accounting policies adopted are consistent with those of previous years.

(c) *Parliamentary Appropriations and Contributions from Other Bodies*

Parliamentary appropriations and contributions from other bodies (including grants and donations) are recognised as revenues when the agency obtains control over the assets comprising the appropriations / contributions. Control over appropriations and contributions is normally obtained upon the receipt of cash.

(d) *Employee Entitlements*

(i) *wages and salaries, Annual Leave, Sick Leave and On-Costs*

Liabilities for wages and salaries, annual leave and vesting sick leave are recognised and measured as the amount unpaid at the reporting date at current pay rates in respect of employees' services up to that date.

Unused non-vesting sick leave does not give rise to a liability as it is not considered probable that sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the entitlements accrued in the future.

The outstanding amounts of payroll tax, workers' compensation insurance premiums and fringe benefits tax, which are consequential to employment, are recognised as liabilities and expenses where the employee entitlements to which they relate have been recognised.

(ii) *Long Service Leave and Superannuation*

The Trust's liabilities for long service leave and superannuation are assumed by the Crown Transactions Entity. The agency accounts for the liability as having been extinguished resulting in the amount assumed being shown as part of the non-monetary revenue item described as "Acceptance by the Crown Transactions Entity or Employee Entitlements".

Long service leave is measured on a nominal basis. The nominal method is based on the remuneration rates at year end for all employees with five or more years of service. It is considered that this measurement technique produces results not materially different from the estimate determined by using the present value basis of measurement.

The superannuation expense for the financial year is determined by using the formulae specified by Treasury Circular TC97/08. The expense for certain superannuation schemes (ie Basic Benefit and

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

First State Super) is calculated as a percentage of the employees' salary. For other superannuation schemes (ie State Superannuation Scheme and State Authorities Superannuation Scheme), the expense is calculated as a multiple of the employees' superannuation contributions.

(e) *Insurance*

The Trust's insurance activities are conducted through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund Scheme of self insurance for Government agencies. The expense (premium) is determined by the Fund Manager based on past experience.

(f) *Acquisition of Assets*

The cost method of accounting is used for the initial recording of all acquisitions of assets controlled by the Trust. Cost is determined as the fair value of the asset given as a consideration plus the costs incidental to the acquisition.

(g) *Plant and Equipment*

Plant and equipment acquired for \$500 and above individually are capitalised.

(h) *Revaluation of Physical Non-Current Assets*

Buildings and improvements are valued based on the estimated written down replacement cost of the most appropriate modern equivalent replacement facility having a similar service potential to the existing asset. Land is valued at market value.

Where assets are revalued upward or downward as a result of a revaluation of a class of non-current physical assets, the Trust restates separately the gross amount and the related accumulated depreciation of that class of assets.

The recoverable amount test has not been applied as the agency is a not-for-profit entity whose service potential is not related to the ability to generate net cash inflows.

(i) *Depreciation*

Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis for all depreciable assets (except the Museum buildings) so as to write off the depreciable amount of each asset as it is consumed over its useful life to the entity. Land is not a depreciable asset.

The buildings on Lizard Island are depreciated over their remaining estimated life of up to 26 years on the assumption that the Museum's lease of land on the island will be renewed.

The Museum believes that the life of the Museum buildings (Sydney) is indeterminate but conservatively estimate that the useful life of the buildings as a Museum would be in excess of 200 years provided that the building is subject to normal maintenance. Therefore the annual depreciation expense to be applied to the building is determined to be immaterial.

Depreciation rates for each asset category are as follows:

Audio Visual, Plant and Equipment, Computers	20%
Photography, Science and General	10%
Vehicles	15%

Exhibitions are amortised on a straight-line basis based on their expected useful life, with a maximum life for depreciation purposes not exceeding 9 years.

(j) *Investments*

Bank term deposits are valued at cost. Interest revenues are recognised as they accrue.

(k) *Inventories*

Inventories are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The cost is calculated using the average cost of "first in first out" method.

(l) *Comparative Figures*

Comparative figures for 1996 have been realigned to comply with the new Financial Reporting Code for Budget Dependent Agencies.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

2. BUDGET REVIEW

NET COST OF SERVICES

The actual net cost of services for 1995/96 was \$879,000 more than the Treasury Budget Paper, (\$495,000 less in 1995/96). Budget variances were due to:

The budget figures as published in the Treasurers budget papers 1996/97 were subsequently reviewed and varied to reflect more up to date information and budget decisions by the Trust.

Employee related expenses were affected significantly by items over which there could be little control with increased workers compensation premiums, payroll tax legislation and the accrual of recreation and extended leave.

Other operating expenditure was well controlled by the Trust throughout the year and the increased depreciation reflects movement in assets and liabilities.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

During the year a new house was built at Lizard Island Research Station (\$166,662). Exhibitions were boosted by the Albert Chapman Mineral Collection (\$366,661), the early completion of the Indigenous Australians Gallery (\$1,287,241), and the building of small touring exhibits including Dino MOTR (\$87,823), Sex (\$229,824), Spiders (\$78,274). This was partially offset by the writing off of Frogs as a touring exhibit and "Our Place" semi-permanent gallery becoming part of the Indigenous Australians permanent exhibition.

CASH FLOWS

It was an extremely difficult year, with both admission and shop trading not performing as expected. The lack of sponsorship for the Indigenous Australians gallery was also a significant factor. To overcome the very low cash levels a drawdown of \$737,000 was received from NSW Treasury against future allocations.

3. EXPENSES

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
(a) Employee related expenses		
Comprised the following specific items:		
Salaries and Wages	11,208	10,472
Superannuation entitlements	1,132	1,074
Payroll tax and fringe benefit tax	842	729
Long Service leave	292	141
Recreation Leave	188	48
Workers compensation insurance	184	130
Other	9	7
	13,855	12,601
(b) Other operating expenses		
Comprised the following items:		
Audit Remuneration	32	31
Bad and doubtful debt	4	1
Rental Expense	284	300
Freight	94	138
Motor Vehicles	78	47
Advertising and Promotional	835	728
Electricity	379	491
Insurance	333	365
Postal and Telephone	285	294
Working Expenses	1,920	1,520
Printing	230	378
Maintenance Contracts	129	120
Other	10	19
Grants	987	491
Trading: Shop	322	347
Australian Natural History	422	468
Special Exhibits	82	83
Commercialisation Project	307	839
Research Facilities	426	271
	7,159	6,931

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
(c) Maintenance		
Comprised the following items:		
Repairs and Routine Maintenance	1,110	1,138
Energy Conservation Plan	-	375
	<u>1,110</u>	<u>1,513</u>
(d) Depreciation		
Depreciation was charged as follows:		
Buildings	34	20
Exhibitions	1,027	564
Plant and Equipment	432	396
	<u>1,493</u>	<u>980</u>
(e) Grants and subsidies		
Grants and subsidies were as follows:		
Visiting Fellowships	39	25
Post Graduate Research Grants	11	11
Other	-	4
	<u>50</u>	<u>40</u>
(f) Finance costs		
Finance costs were charged as follows:		
Interest on Loan	<u>13</u>	<u>20</u>

4. SALE OF GOODS AND SERVICES

Sale of Goods and Services comprised:

Sales - Shop Trading operations (note 4(a))	479	493
The Australian Museum Society (note 4(b))	292	305
Other Trading (note 4(c))	3,912	3,770
	<u>4,683</u>	<u>4,568</u>
(a) shop trading operations		
Sales	479	493
Less: Cost of Sales		
Opening Stock	130	120
Purchases		
	<u>293</u>	<u>284</u>
	423	404
Less: Closing Stock	<u>125</u>	<u>130</u>
Cost of Goods Sold	298	274
Gross Profit	<u>181</u>	<u>219</u>

Direct salaries and wages of \$148,771 (\$140,896 in 1995/96) and measurable overheads of \$29,007 (\$63,000 in 1995/96) were also identified against Shop Trading Operations. It is not the Museum's policy to consider and charge against the Shop Trading Account indirect costs. Expenditure mentioned above is included in the appropriate expense item in the Operating Statement.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

(b) The Australian Museum Society (TAMS)

The Society was established for the purpose of promoting a greater knowledge of and concern for the environment and to encourage community support for the work of the Museum.

	1996/97	1995/96
	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue		
Subscriptions	224	227
Functions	64	70
Donations	3	2
Other	1	6
	292	305
Expenditure		
Salaries	113	108
Working Expenses	198	158
Depreciation	3	7
	314	273
Net / (Loss) Revenue	(22)	32

Expenditure mentioned above is included in the appropriate expense item in the Operating Statement.

(c) Trading Operations - Other

Revenue from Other Trading operations comprised:

Australian Natural History Magazine	561	614
Gallery Revenue	625	678
Special exhibits - Touring (Gargantuans)	165	194
Commercialisation Projects	1,614	1,459
Restaurant Activities	68	34
Venue Hire	208	151
Research Facilities - Lizard Island	466	455
Nature Focus Photographic Agency	162	117
Miscellaneous	43	68
	3,912	3,770

5. INVESTMENT INCOME

Revenue from investments comprised:

Interest	5	7
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6. GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Revenue from Grants and Contributions comprised:

Scientific Research -		
Federal Government Grants	480	550
Scientific Research -		
State Government Grants	95	478
Other Grants	248	351
Foundation - Donations	128	144
Other	9	50
	960	1,573

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

7. CONDITIONS ON CONTRIBUTIONS

The Museum receives grants from various bodies for specific purposes (see note 6). These grants whilst specific in nature do not impose conditions as to how the funds are to be expended, other than in accordance with the grant's purpose.
Funds unexpended at balance date comprise:

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
Scientific Research - Federal Government Grants	208	221
Scientific Research - State Government Grants	219	180
Other Grants	328	570
	755	971

8. GAIN / (LOSS) ON SALE OF NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Gain/ (loss) on disposal of exhibits		
Proceeds from Sale	-	81
Written down value of assets sold	-	(181)
Gain/ (loss) on sale of non current assets	-	(100)

9. ACCEPTANCE BY CROWN TRANSACTIONS ENTITY OF EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS AND OTHER LIABILITIES.

The following liabilities and/or expenses have been assumed by the Consolidated Fund Entity or other government agencies:

Superannuation	1,059	1,074
Long Service Leave	292	140
Payroll Tax on Superannuation	73	-
Debt and Borrowings	-	-
	1,424	1,214

10. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash at Bank	150	167
Cash on Hand	10	10
	160	177

11. CURRENT ASSETS

- (a) **Investments**
investments recorded at cost comprised:

Bank Term Deposits	102	71
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Investments are brought to account at cost. The face value is \$101,873 as at 30 June 1997 (\$70,426 as at 30/6/96).

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
(b) Receivables		
At an aggregate value of \$233,555 was recorded at balance date and comprised:		
Trade Debtors	231	294
Accrued Revenue Payments	<u>7</u>	<u>18</u>
	238	312
Less Provision for Doubtful Debts	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
	233	309
the trade debtors are aged:		
Less than 30 days	110	216
30 to 59 days	72	48
60 to 89 days	23	3
90 to 120 days	3	4
120 and over	<u>23</u>	<u>23</u>
	231	294

(c) **Inventories**

The value recorded at 30 June 1997 of \$124,793 (\$130,405 as at 30/6/96) represented stock in trade held in the Museum's shop outlets and finished goods. All stock are considered current assets.

12. NON-CURRENT ASSETS

(a) **Summary of Property, Plant & Equipment, Exhibition**

	Land \$'000	Buildings \$'000	Plant & Equip \$'000	Exhibits \$'000	Total \$'000
Cost					
At July 1, 1996	-	837	3,264	5,889	9,990
Additions	-	167	724	2,075	2,966
Disposals	-	-	(162)	(685)	(847)
At June 30, 1997	-	1,004	3,826	7,279	12,109
Valuation					
At July 1, 1996	15,870	105,000	-	-	120,870
Increments	-	11,000	-	-	11,000
Decrements	-	-	-	-	-
At June 30, 1997	15,870	116,000	-	-	131,870
Cost and Valuation	15,870	117,004	3,826	7,279	143,979
Depreciation					
At July 1, 1996	-	129	1,920	3,484	5,533
Charge for year	-	34	432	1,027	1,493
Disposals	-	-	(162)	(685)	(847)
At June 30, 1997	-	163	2,190	3,826	6,179
Net Book Value					
At June 30, 1997	15,870	116,841	1,636	3,453	137,800
At June 30, 1996	15,870	105,708	1,344	2,405	125,327

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

(a) Land and Buildings

The value recorded in the Statement of Financial Position covers the following Trust Property:

	1996/97 Land \$'000	1996/97 Buildings \$'000	Total \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
Museum Property - College and William Street, Sydney (at valuation)	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Museum Property - Yurong and William Street, Sydney (at valuation)	5,870	-	5,870	5,870
Museum Buildings - At above listed properties	-	116,000	116,000	105,000
Lizard Island Research Station Buildings (at cost)	-	1,004	1,004	837
Less Accumulated Depreciation	-	(163)	(163)	(129)

15,870	116,841	132,711	121,578
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The Valuer General's Department valued the land at a market valuation. The date of valuation was 30 June 1995 for College Street.

The Lizard Island Research Station site is occupied by the Trust as lessee from the Queensland Government for a twenty five year period terminating in 1998 at a nominal annual rental. A depreciation charge of \$33,655 against operations was brought to account in 1996/97, based on the assumption that the lease will be extended.

The Museum buildings, which are recognised as heritage assets of the State, were valued at replacement cost, in July 1997 by D Campbell Arics of WT Partnership, Quantity Surveyors. This valuation is for a replacement building of modern design and construction that has the same service capacity and does not represent the replacement, historic or intrinsic value of the existing buildings.

(c) Plant and Equipment

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
The book values are summarised as follows:		
Book value at 1 July	1,344	1,094
Net Additions/Deletions	<u>724</u>	<u>643</u>
	2,068	1,737
Less Depreciation	<u>432</u>	<u>393</u>
Book Value at 30 June	1,636	1,344

It is considered that the market value of Plant and Equipment approximates the book value.

(d) Exhibitions

The value of Exhibitions represents capitalisation of the development and establishment costs of exhibitions that will continue to generate revenue or provide a community service beyond the financial year or years in which these costs were incurred.

Development and establishment costs as capitalised include material and construction expenditure but do not include an assessment of the intrinsic value of collection items incorporated in an exhibition unless specifically purchased (and thus costed) for the purpose. Labour costs for permanent staff inputs to the development of exhibitions are reflected in employee related expenses and are not included in the capitalisation of exhibitions.

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE
 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
Book value of Exhibitions operational at 1 July	2,405	2,430
Capitalisation of Exhibitions developed	2,076	720
Ner (loss) on sale of Shark! exhibition	-	(181)
	4,481	2,969
Less Depreciation to Operating Statement	1,028	564
Book value of Exhibitions at 30 June	3,453	2,405

The Museum has a number of fully depreciated Exhibits. The main items included in this category are:

Birds Gallery
 Insects Gallery
 Marine Gallery
 Mineral Gallery
 Reptile Area

The Museum continues to derive service potential and economic benefit from these exhibits.

(e) Collections, Specimen and Other Acquisitions

Acquisitions costs do not normally feature as a major component of operating costs. The costs so expended over the past 5 years are:

	\$'000
1992/93	330
1993/94	35
1994/95	79
1995/96	35
1996/97	13

Expenditure mentioned above is included in the Operating Statement in the relevant year of purchase. The nature, size, quantity and quality of the collections held by this Museum is wide ranging and are described in the annual report. The Museum collection is currently divided into the following subgroups:

Anthropology
 Entomology (including Arachnology)
 Herpetology
 Ichthyology
 Malacology
 Mammals
 Marine Invertebrates (including Crustacea, Polychaetes)
 Minerals
 Ornithology
 Palaeontology
 Photographic
 Research Library
 Tissue Collection

13. CURRENT LIABILITIES

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
(a) Accounts Payable		
Creditors	1,285	989

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
(b) Borrowings		
Loans - Treasury	-	100
Repayment of Borrowings: Not later than one year	-	100
(c) Employee Entitlements		
Recreation leave	1,150	962
Accrued salaries and wages	115	193
Balance 30 June	1,265	1,155

14. CHANGES IN EQUITY

	Accumulated Funds		Asset Revaluation		Total Equity	
	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	2,900	2,458	120,870	120,870	123,770	123,328
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,100	442	-	-	1,100	442
Increment/decrement on revaluation of:	-	-	-	-	-	-
Buildings and improvements	-	-	11,000	-	11,000	-
Balance at the end of the financial year	4,000	2,900	131,870	120,870	135,870	123,770

15. COMMITMENTS FOR EXPENDITURE

(a) **Other expenditure commitments**

Purchase orders for goods and services contracted for at 30 June 1997 not otherwise accounted for in the Statement of Financial Position totalled \$386,377 (\$347,379 at 30 June 1996) of which \$72,820 (\$47,296 at 30 June 1996) represents capital commitments.

All commitments are likely to fall due not later than one year.

(b) **Operating lease commitments**

The Trust has forward commitments for lease rentals with respect to three properties it occupies as lessee. The aggregate lease expenditure contracted for at 30 June 1997 (subject to adjustments) comprises:

	1996/97 \$'000	1995/96 \$'000
Not later than 1 year	222	231
Later than 1 year & not later than 2 years	72	-
Later than 2 years & not later than 5 years	72	-
Later than 5 years	-	-
	366	231

These operating lease commitments are not recognised in the financial statements as liabilities.

16. MATERIAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED AT NO COST TO THE MUSEUM

Material assistance provided to the Museum for which payment was not made, (figures are not available as to the cost of these services) included:

- Volunteer Services
- Industrial Relations from the Department of Industrial Relations
- Donation of objects for the Collections

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1997

17. AUDIT FEE

The fee for the audit of the Museum's accounts and records, by the Audit Office of New South Wales was \$32,500 (\$31,000 in 1995/96). No other benefits were provided/paid in respect of the audit. Internal audit was provided by the Internal Audit Bureau and paid by the Ministry for the Arts.

18. MEMBERS FEES OR BENEFITS, ETC.

Trust members do not receive emoluments or other benefits of office. There were no loans made to members or employees of the Trust.

19. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

The Trust was not aware of any contingent liability relevant to its functions as at 30 June 1997.

20. NOTE TO STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

(a) Reconciliation to Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in the bank accounts (including overdrafts). Cash at the end of financial year shown in the cash flow statement is reconciled to the items, Cash and Borrowings in the balance sheet as follows:

	1996/97	1995/96
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash	10	10
Salary Advance account	15	15
Lizard Island Advance account	10	9
Trust operating account	100	59
Australian Museum Foundation accounts	-	10
The Australian Museum Society accounts	24	72
Peter Rankin Memorial fund	1	2
	160	177

(b) Reconciliation of net cash flows from operating activities to net cost of services

Net cash used on operating activities	14,647	13,618
Depreciation	1,493	980
Acceptance by State of Museum liabilities	1,424	1,214
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	188	48
Decrease/(increase) in receivables	74	71
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	218	16
Net loss/(gain) on disposal of assets	-	100

Net cost of services	18,044	16,047
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(c) Bank Overdraft facility

The Museum has a \$403,000 bank overdraft facility on its operating account for payroll processing purposes. An offset facility of \$100,000 is included as part of this facility.

21. PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Australian Museum operates under one program. The objective is to increase understanding of and influence public debate on the natural environment, human societies and human interaction with the environment.

END OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM TRUST

The Australian Museum Trust consists of nine trustees appointed by the Governor on the nomination of the Minister. A Trustee is appointed for three years but is eligible for reappointment.

A Trustee is not to hold office for four consecutive terms.

The President of the Trust shall be nominated by the Minister.

The Governor may, on the nomination of the Minister, appoint a person to fill any vacancy that occurs for the residue of the term of office of his or her predecessor.

The appointment of a Trustee takes effect on 1 January of the year following that in which the appointment is made.

The Trustees must include at least one person who has a knowledge of, or experience in science, and at least one person who has a knowledge of, or experience in, education.

TRUSTEE PROFILES

Mr Malcolm Long LL.B was appointed Managing Director of the SBS Corporation in February 1993. The Corporation is Australia's multicultural and multilingual broadcaster, operating a national television network, radio services broadcasting in 68 languages and a range of related services. Prior to joining SBS, he was the Deputy Managing Director of the ABC. He is a graduate in law from the University of Western Australia, he has been a newspaper journalist, a producer, executive producer, station and network manager in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne. He has worked in a range of senior executive positions in broadcasting. He is currently Chairman of the International Institute of Communications (a leading organisation which draws its membership from telecommunications, broadcasting and information industry experts around the world) and is a member of the Musica Viva National Council. He was appointed to the Museum Trust in January 1995 and appointed President on 1 January 1996.

Professor Brian Low is Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) at the University of Technology, Sydney. He was born and educated in Queensland and has worked as a secondary school teacher in Queensland, and as an academic staff member in universities in NSW. His research interests are in the areas of mathematical reasoning, the education of mathematics teachers, and education policy. Professor Low joined the Museum Trust in January 1990 and was elected Deputy President on 13 February 1996.

Ms Robyn Holt is the CEO of Sanofi Beaute Australia, a French company whose brands include Yves Saint Laurent, Oscar de la Renta and Van Cleff & Arpels. Ms Holt was the head of Yves Saint Laurent in Australia for five years and is now responsible for all Sanofi Divisions in Australia. She began her career in the stockholding industry and has worked in journalism and film design. She was Editor of *Vogue Living* magazine for eight years and wrote a children's book *Let's Do It Together - Build a Cubby*. Ms Holt was appointed to the Museum Trust in January 1993.

Ms Lucy Hughes-Turnbull holds a Bachelor's Degree in law and an MBA from Sydney and NSW Universities respectively. She has worked as a solicitor and investment banker since 1986, specialising in commercial, corporate, insolvency and trade practices law. In investment banking she has worked in the corporate advisory area, mostly in investment evaluation and financial statement analysis. She is Chair of the Sydney Childrens' Hospital Appeal, and a director of the Sydney Childrens' Hospital Foundation Ltd. She is also a director of several companies, including Turnbull and Partners Holdings Ltd. She joined the Museum Trust in January 1995.

Mr Aden Ridgeway is a member of the Gumbayngirr Aboriginal people of northern NSW. He is Executive Director of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council. He has extensive experience in issues concerning Aboriginal perspectives of land management, cultural property, land rights and community planning. He has been a consultant to Aboriginal organisations on business planning and was a member of the team developing the Regional Plan for the socio-economic conditions of Aboriginal people in the Sydney region. He has been an Assessor (Aboriginal) at the NSW Land and Environment Court. He is a former member of the Sydney Regional ATSIC Council and a member of the Geographical Names Board of NSW. He convenes the Trust Committee for Indigenous issues. Mr Ridgeway joined the Trust in January 1993.

Associate Professor Margaret Rose is Director of Animal Care for the Prince Henry, Prince of Wales and the Prince of Wales Childrens' Hospitals and an Associate Professor in the Clinical School of the University of NSW which is associated with that hospital group. She is a veterinarian with over 20 years experience in biomedical research. For most of that time she has been involved in issues relating to science and public policy, particularly with regard to the use of animals in research and teaching. She is Chair of the Animal Research Review Panel, the statutory body responsible for the overview of the use of animals in science and teaching in NSW. She also serves as a member of the NSW government Animal Welfare Advisory Council.

and is a founding member of the Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching. She joined the Museum Trust in January 1995.

Dr Nicola Ward graduated with honours in medicine. She spent several years working in teaching hospitals before completing her MBA. She joined the Nucleus Group 10 years ago, initially as Clinical and Marketing Executive for the Group, then transferring to Cochlear Pty Ltd, world leader in cochlear implants (the bionic ear) as Strategic Planning Executive. She is also a member of the Industry Research and Development Board and its Health, Food and Bioindustries Committee, and the Advisory Council on Industrial Property. Dr Ward completed her two year term on the Trust on 31 December 1996.

Professor Kathleen Bowmer is Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. She was Deputy Chief, CSIRO Division of Water Resources and Chief Research Scientist. Professor Bowmer is currently a member of the Boards of the CRC for Freshwater Ecology; Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre; Australian Centre for Water Quality Research; and represents CSIRO on the ARMCANZ Water Resources Management Committee. She was appointed to the Trust in January 1995 and resigned in February 1997.

Mr Peter O'Connell, at the time of his appointment to the Trust, was Managing Director of Hargraves Consultants. Mr O'Connell has a BA (Hons) from Sydney University and an LL.B from the Australian National University. He has extensive experience as a commercial lawyer and in negotiating international defence contracts. He has acted for a number of Australian companies seeking to expand their commercial interests in China and other parts of Asia. Since 1993, Mr O'Connell has specialised in advising clients interested in developing overseas business and investment in multimedia, on-line services, and telecommunications technology. Mr O'Connell joined the Trust in January 1996 and resigned in January 1997.

Ms Deeta Colvin is the principal and founder of Colvin Communications International, an Australian firm specialising in niche marketing and publicity strategies for international events and luxury consumables including fashion, travel, food, wine, cosmetics and jewellery. Ms Colvin is a member of several committees including the NSW Cancer Council Breast Cancer Awareness Committee and the Australian Opera Events Committee. She is also a member of the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry and of the Public Relations Institute. Ms Colvin has a BA from the University of New England and post-graduate qualifications in Industrial Relations law from Sydney University. Ms Colvin was appointed to the Trust on 2 June 1997.

Professor John Whitehouse is a partner with Minter Ellison. He was appointed to the Trust on 8 March 1997.

TRUST ATTENDANCES

There were six meetings of the Australian Museum Trust in 1996-97. Attendances were as follows:

Mr Malcolm Long, President (5)
Professor Brian Low, Deputy President (4)
Professor Kathleen Bowmer (resigned February 1997) (0)
Ms Robyn Holt (2)
Mr Peter O'Connell (resigned January 1997) (1)
Mr Aden Ridgeway (3)
Associate Professor Margaret Rose (5)
Ms Lucy Hughes-Turnbull (6)
Dr Nicola Ward (retired December 1996) (3)
Professor John Whitehouse (appointed March 1997) (1)

COMMITTEES

TRUST COMMITTEES

Financial Audit and Review Committee

Ms Robyn Holt (Chair), Professor Brian Low, Vanessa Hudson (ex-officio)

Programs

Associate Professor Margaret Rose, (Chair), Mr Aden Ridgeway, Ms Lucy Hughes-Turnbull, Dr Nicola Ward, Professor Kathleen Bowmer, Ms Deeta Colvin

Site Development

Mr Malcolm Long, Mr Peter O'Connell

Indigenous Peoples

Mr Aden Ridgeway (Chair), Museum staff seconded as appropriate.

MUSEUM STAFF COMMITTEES

Animal Care and Ethics Committee

Allen Greer (Herpetology), Sally Reader (Ichthyology), Linda Gibson (Mammalogy), Walter Boles (Ornithology and Chair), and Trish McDonald (Education) from the Museum, and Glen Shea (veterinarian), David Butcher (World Wide Fund for Nature), and Joyr Everett and Surrey Jacobs (Royal Botanic Gardens) from outside the Museum.

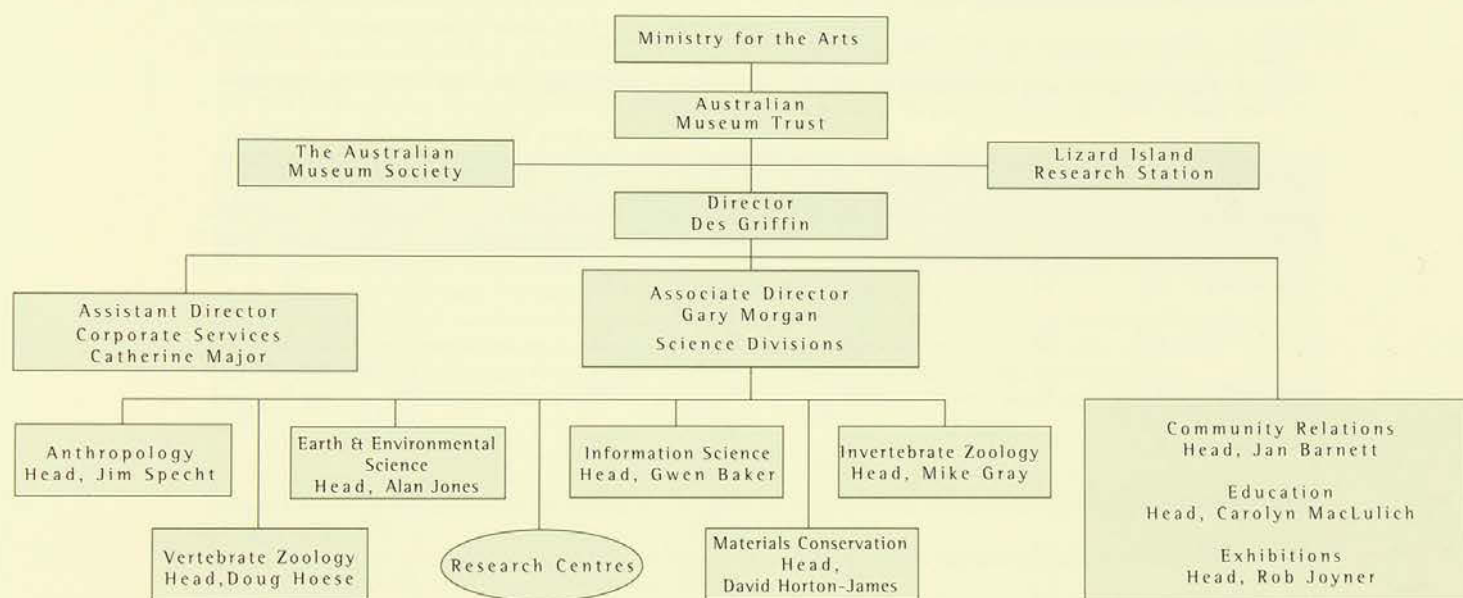
Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Kate Attwood (Science), Vinod Daniels (Materials Conservation), Allen Greer (Science, Chair), Donna Grubb (Human Resources), Cathy Lamond (Education), Sue Livingston (Management representative), David Millar (Exhibitions), Richard Monk (House Services), Liz Pearson (Security). During the year Malcolm Bray (Exhibitions) stood down.

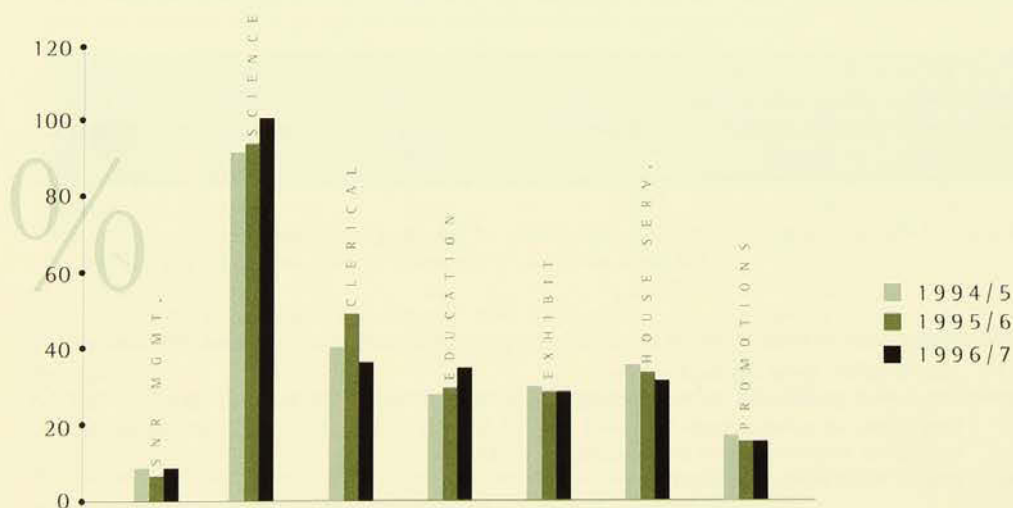
Disaster Management Committee

Walter Boles (Ornithology), Jan Brazier (Archives), Colin MacGregor (Materials Conservation and Chair), Richard Monk (House Services and Disaster Co-ordinator) and John Strand (Property Services).

no significant committees were established or abolished during the reporting year



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM STAFFING PERCENTAGES



SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICES (SES)

There are three SES positions at the Museum: Director, Assistant Director of Corporate Services, and Associate Director (previously titled Deputy Director). The position of Director is held by Des Griffin AM, MSc, PhD; the Assistant Director is Catherine Major BA(Hons), ACIS, AFAIM; and the position of Associate Director is currently vacant. The position of Assistant Director is held by a woman, there were no women holding permanent SES positions at the museum in the 1995/96 reporting year.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO)

The Australian Museum is fully committed to EEO and has in place a management plan which outlines the Museum's objectives and strategies for achievement in this regard.

Below are listed the key redistributive factors, in tabular form. The figures cover all staff, both temporary and permanent working full and part time.

There is significant improvement in some areas. For example, the percentage of women of the total number of staff is now 50.2% (an increase of 7.1% over last year). In addition, the percentage of Aboriginal people employed has increased to 2.8% of the total.

Table 1 - Representation of EEO target groups within salary levels

Table 2 - Representation and recruitment of Aboriginal Employees and Employees with a Physical Disability

TABLE 1		1996/97		1995/96		
SALARY LEVEL	TOTAL STAFF	WOMEN	NESB (1)	TOTAL STAFF IN TARGET GROUP	WOMEN	NESB
Below CO 1 (2)	14	8 57.1%	4 28.6%	16	8 50.0%	8 50.0%
CO 1 - Gd 1 (3)	55	23 41.8%	8 14.5%	52	19 36.5%	6 11.5%
A&C Gds 1 - 2	57	41 71.9%	8 14.0%	46	31 67.4%	6 13.0%
A&C Gds 3 - 5	80	47 58.8%	11 13.8%	63	33 52.4%	14 22.2%
A&C Gds 6 - 9	87	36 41.4%	8 9.2%	69	22 31.9%	5 7.2%
A&C Gds 10 - 12	19	6 31.6%	2 10.5%	19	5 26.3%	1 6.3%
Above A&C Gd 12	13	2 15.4%	0 0.0%	11	1 9.1%	0 0.0%
Total	325	163 50.2%	41 12.6%	276	119 43.1%	40 14.5%

TABLE 2		Total Staff		Aboriginal People		PWPD (4)	
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	325	9 2.8%	18 5.5%	276	6 2.2%	18 6.5%	
Recruited in the year	20	2 10.0%	0 0.0%	38	2 5.3%	0 0.0%	

- LEGEND -
- (1) Non-English speaking background
 - (2) Employees on salaries below Clerical Officer Scale Grade 1, 21 year old rate
 - (3) Employees on salaries from Clerical Officer Scale Grade 1 21 year old rate to below minimum Administrative and Clerical Scale Grade 1
 - (4) People with a physical disability

ETHNIC AFFAIRS PRIORITY STATEMENT

The Australian Museum is committed to the NSW Charter of Principles for a culturally diverse society. We seek to ensure that people from all cultural backgrounds have equal employment opportunities, representation, intellectual and physical access in/to the Museum and its services.

Three of the Museum's Corporate Strategic Objectives relate specifically to cultural issues: Equal Employment Opportunity, Multiculturalism, and Cultural Studies. See previous page of this report for a report on the progress of EEO objectives, and below for a report on progress of the objectives of Multiculturalism and Cultural Studies. Other initiatives for 1997/98 will focus on social justice, economic and cultural opportunities and community harmony.

A review of the Museum's Corporate Strategic Plan will be made in late 1997. The Strategic Objectives for 1997 will be reviewed and expanded, particularly in the area of Information Technology. This will permit an even broader community base for Public Programs and provide a public forum for debate on culture and the environment.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT:

1. CUSTOMER FOCUS

Maintain and reinforce a customer-focused organisation that understands and supports the Museum's Mission and Statement of Philosophy and provides the best possible services to its customers.

- The Museum has developed tailored and targeted customer service training for frontline staff including Corporate Services, House and Exhibitions staff and Interpretative Officers.
- All Public Programs are planned with customer evaluation data. Regular surveys are carried out, with results being fed into forward programming.

2. QUALITY LEADERSHIP

Introduce processes to achieve appropriate standards of quality through teamwork and learning in achieving outcomes. These processes to involve staff in developing solutions to identified quality issues.

- A critical re-evaluation of the process for nominating and evaluating Public Programs resulted in the establishment of the Team Assessing Public Program Proposals (TAPPPs).
- With the assistance of the Australian Quality Council, the Museum undertook an assessment of its key organisational processes in order to establish benchmarks for improvement in leadership, planning, information, people, customer focus, processes and performance evaluation. The Museum scored exceptionally well being placed in the top quartile in all key areas compared with other public sector agencies.

3. ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT

Conclude and implement an Enterprise Agreement specifying skills progression and career structure; and which increases staff opportunities, morale, quality of output and productivity.

- An agreement in principle between the Unions and the Museum has been reached and final negotiations with the Public Sector Management Office are underway.

4. SPACE

Ensure the Museum has appropriate space of appropriate standard to serve its purposes and functions.

- The Museum has completed a design and development study for a new building and is discussing the implementation phase of this project with the relevant agencies.

5. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

To use information technology to: effectively manage our information resources; increase access to our information services and products; increase access to information services of other agencies; and improve communication with audiences world wide.

- Approval and funding for these projects in the three year strategic Information Technology program was gained.
- Six additional computers were provided to *search and discover*. Increased usage of this facility by post-secondary and sight and hearing impaired groups was recorded.

6. INFORMATION ACCESS/DECISION MAKING

To develop the Museum's database of information on, and pertinent to, the Museum to allow effective strategic decision-making.

- A significant expansion of the LAN was achieved and planning for the new Web site has significantly progressed.

7. MULTICULTURALISM

Provide relevant Public Programs which attract and involve people from diverse cultural backgrounds; and give Museum visitors a greater appreciation of the diversity of contemporary Australian society.

- Several successful Community Access Programs were hosted throughout the year, with many performances, workshops and events being hosted by community members:

Face to Face: Aboriginal Teenagers 29.6.96 - 11.8.96

Inside Out: Process, Progress, Change 19.8.96 - 13.10.96

Awakenings: Australia-Pacific Spirits 23.10.96 - 17.11.96

Landscapes and Lives 1.3.97 - 27.4.97

Images of Wisdom: Through Australian Palestinian Eyes 3.5.97 - 15.6.97

- All recruitment for Interpretative Officers, Explainers and volunteers have "knowledge/understanding of a range of more than one culture" as a criteria and the position of Aboriginal Interpretive Officer was created and filled in 1997.

8. PUBLIC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTS

Provide a range of Public Programs, in terms of type, content, approach, duration, which are targeted to specific audiences in order to meet the Museum's Mission and increase audience reach.

- Two major semi-permanent exhibitions opened in 1996/97:

The Albert Chapman Mineral Collection 28.9.96 and *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples* 29.3.97

- Planning commenced for *Australia's Biodiversity*, a major semi-permanent exhibition to open in September 1998; and for *Spiders!*, a major in-house temporary exhibition to open in November 1997

- The following temporary exhibition/programs were held during the year.

Frogs 22.3.96 - 1.9.96

My Tibet 29.6.96 - 22.9.96

Captain Cook's Cloak 7.6.96 - 6.8.96

Wildlife Photographer of the Year 19.7.96 - 11.8.96

Drawn from the Heart 27.11.96 - 1.3.97

Earthworms 5.11.96 - 26.11.96

Fascinating Science 24.12.96 - 2.2.97

Sex, Its Only Natural 12.96 - 18.5.97

Ogadot 19.2.97 - 6.4.97

Toekang Potret 12.4.97 - 1.6.97

Gargantuans from the Garden 14.6.97 - 14.10.97

Kaleidoscope of Life 6.6.97 - 27.7.97

Djalkiri Wanga 21.6.97 - 10.8.97

Punkulture 28.6.97 - 10.8.97

9. SPECIAL RESEARCH CENTRES

To establish four special centres of specialisation to co-ordinate and encourage multidisciplinary and inter-institutional approaches to research.

- Official launching of the Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Research (August 1996); the People and Place Research Centre (September 1996); and the Geodiversity Research Group (November 1996). (The Centre for Evolutionary Research was established in November 1995).

10. CULTURAL STUDIES

Increased understanding of the cultural heritages of the region's Indigenous peoples through research, Public Programs and improved access by Indigenous peoples to the Museum's resources.

- Opening of new semi-permanent exhibition *Indigenous Australians: Australia's First Peoples* in April 1997, and an ongoing program of changing events, performances and displays.
- Computerisation of Aboriginal collections is ongoing, with databasing complete for collections from NW Queensland, and inventories prepared of collections from NT and central NSW in readiness for computerisation.

11. FUNDING

To increase the level of government and non-government funding

- In the NSW state Budget announced in May 1996, the Museum gained \$19.759 million capital funding over five years. The allocation provides \$12.1 million over five years for enhanced public programs and the development of a new gallery focusing on Australia's biodiversity; \$2.8 million over four years for further research into threatened and endangered species and improved communication with, and assistance for, community groups and local councils; \$1.8 million over three years to expand the Museum's information technology infrastructure; and \$3 million over four years to achieve temperature and humidity control to preserve collections and meet required standards of health.

PAYMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Schedule of accounts payable at 30 June, 1997

Current	\$1,064,531
Less than 30 days overdue	\$173,253
30 to 60 days overdue	\$52,007
60 to 90 days overdue	\$79,851
over 90 days overdue	\$18,407
TOTAL	\$1,388,049

Accounts Paid on time for the year ended 30 June, 1997

Percentage of accounts paid on time	60%
Total amount of accounts paid on time	\$7,572,341
Total amount of accounts paid	\$12,605,852

Commentary on action taken

The problems affecting the prompt payment of accounts this year have been associated with the low level of cash available. An agreement with Treasury to allow early drawdowns of cash and a change in administrative procedures will now enable payments to be processed on a due date basis.

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OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Overseas visits with the main purposes highlighted

ANTHROPOLOGY

Phil Gordon visited Japan during March 1997. He was invited to present a paper at a forum hosted by the Japan Foundation Asia. The Forum discussed issues relating to the preservation of cultural heritage in the South-East Asia area by the development of community museums. Barrina South travelled to Sweden to present the paper 'Where do Indigenous People Stand in Australian Museums, at the 4th World's Indigenous Youth Conference in June 1997.
Jim Specht travelled to Vanuatu in August 1996 to present a paper at the Third Lapita Conference held at the new National Museum of Vanuatu, Port Vila. Dr Specht also visited Papua New Guinea in July 1996 and June 1997 to assist Dr Robin Torrence's archaeological research project on Garua Island, West New Britain.
Paul Taçon travelled to San Francisco, USA, in November 1996 for 10 days to present an invited paper at the 95th American Anthropological Association Meeting. Robin Torrence travelled to the USA and UK in April 1997 to present a series of conference papers and seminars.

DIRECTOR

Des Griffin travelled to Cambridge, UK to present a paper: 'Natural History Collections - A Resource for the Future: Who owns the Collections?' to the Second World Congress on the Conservation and Preservation of Natural History Collections August 1996.

EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Alan Jones made a presentation to an international conference in San Diego on Crustacean biology in July 1996.
Richard Major spent eight weeks in Capetown, South Africa collaborating with the University of Wollongong on a project investigating the impact of invasion of Australian acacias on invertebrate communities in South Africa.

Graham Pyke carried out fieldwork in the North Island of New Zealand as part of his research on the endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog, he also presented a conference paper to the New Zealand Society for Research on Amphibians and Reptiles at Kaikoura on the South Island of New Zealand.

Alex Ritchie acted as courier on the outward journey and Robert Jones on the inward journey when "Eric" the opalised pliosaur toured to Japan in July-August 1996.

EDUCATION

Sheryl Connors visited the National Museum of the American Indian in New York whilst attending the 'World Indigenous People's Conference' on Education in New Mexico, USA in July.

Lynda Kelly attended the 'Australasian Evaluation Society' conference in Wellington, NZ, chaired the Arts, Culture and Heritage Special Interest Group session and visited the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in August/September 1996.

Sarah Main attended the American Association of Youth Museums conference 'Transforming the Learning Landscapes' in Indianapolis, USA in June 1997.

INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY

Dan Bickel collected flies in southern Chile and spent a week at the Smithsonian Institution studying the insect collection. Pat Hutchings spent a week diving in the Dutch Antilles in the Caribbean and was able to look at a variety of these reefs and compare them with those occurring on the Great Barrier Reef in July.

Max Moulds spent 5 weeks in Papua New Guinea working at the Wau Ecology Institute, Christenson Research Institute and with Ok Tedi Mining Ltd doing research for his PhD studies on cicadas.

Buz Wilson travelled to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, San Diego, California to pack up the isopod collection during July.

LIZARD ISLAND REEF RESEARCH STATION

Anne Hoggett and Lyle Vail attended the International Echinoderm Conference in San Francisco.

THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM SOCIETY

Carole Bibby represented the Society at the World Federation of Friends of Museums Congress in Mexico.

VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY

Dianne Bray and Mark McGrouther participated in a multi-institutional fish survey of northern Vanuatu. Numerous new species records and distributional range extensions of fishes were collected.

Tim Flannery travelled to London for the launch of his book, *Tree Kangaroos: a curious natural history*.

Jeff Leis was the Visiting Professor, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Université de Perpignan, France where he worked on a collaborative research project with the scientists there. He also visited marine labs in other parts of France and in Spain. He was an Invited Visiting Researcher at the Sekai National Fisheries Research Organisation, Ishigaki, Branch, Japan.

John Paxton spent three months in Japan as a Visiting Professor at the University of Tokyo's Ocean Research Institute, where he gave lectures, advised graduate students and conducted research on deepsea whalefishes. He also gave lectures at Hokkaido University, School of Fisheries in Hakodate, Kyoto University, Fukui Prefectural University in Obama, and the National Science Museum, Tokyo.

Ross Sadler undertook fieldwork to New Caledonia in November 1996 as herpetologist in a survey team assessing areas of conservation significance in the Northern Province, and in February 1997 accompanying Prof. Aaron Bauer (Villanova Univ., USA) in collaborative research on the lizards of New Caledonia.

LIZARD ISLAND REEF RESEARCH FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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James Creer, Robyn Holt & Nicola Ward resigned from the Foundation during the year.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION STATISTICS

NSW Freedom of Information Act, 1989

SECTION A Numbers of new FOI requests - Information relating to numbers of new FOI requests received, those processed and those incomplete from the previous record

FOI REQUESTS	PERSONAL	OTHER	TOTAL
A1 New (including transferred in)	0	0	0
A2 Brought Forward	0	1	1
A3 Total to be processed	0	1	1
A4 Completed	0	0	0
A5 Transferred out	0	0	0
A6 Withdrawn	0	0	0
A7 Total processed	0	0	0
A8 Unfinished (carried forward)	0	1	1

Sections B to L of the FOI reporting framework are not applicable for the reporting period.

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In May the Museum was notified that it would receive funds from the Vickery Estate. The Australian Museum gratefully acknowledges the material and financial support it has received from the Vickery family over a number of years.

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INDEX

CONSULTANTS

During the year the Museum employed the services of one consultant costing over \$30,000: Peddle Thorpe & Walker for a Site Development Masterplan DA Preparation including heritage consultancy, at a cost of \$158,080. The services of twenty consultants each costing less than \$30,000 were engaged, at a total cost of \$222,332.83.

DISABILITY PLAN

The Australian Museum aims to provide appropriate access and employment opportunities to people with disabilities through the implementation of our Disability Strategic Plan.

During the reporting year lighting and signage has been improved and the information desk lowered for easier access; hand rails have been installed in many exhibitions to assist special needs groups and Front Of House staff have participated in Customer Relations training which covers issues relating to assisting people with disabilities. Public areas within the Museum have wheelchair access and parking is available upon request for disabled visitors including mini bus parking facilities, wheelchairs are also available. There are disabled toilet and public telephone facilities.

The Museum's Education division continued to arrange Touch Table and hands-on sessions for special needs groups, and tailor tours to meet special needs of individuals. The Museum employs a total of 18 people identified as having a physical disability representing 5.5% of employees.

DESIGN AND ART DIRECTION Kristina Rand Australian Museum Design Unit

EDITORS: Francine Gregory
Australian Museum Public Relations and Sandra Symons Symons Symons & Symons

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Address	2
Admission charges	2
Anthropology Division	14
Appendices	59
Associate Director's report	13
Australian Museum Business Services	40
Centre for Biodiversity & Conservation Research	19
Centre for Evolutionary Research	22
Commercial Activities	34
Committees	60
Community Relations	32
Consultants	72
Consumer Response	33
Corporate Services	38
Director's Message	11
Disability Plan	72
Earth & Environmental Sciences	16
Education	28
EEO Achievements, Strategies and Statistics	62
Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement	63
Eureka Prizes	13
Exhibitions	28
Financial Statements	43
Freedom of Information Access	70
Geodiversity Research Centre	17
Highlights	6
Hours of Service	2
Independent Audit Report	42
Information Science	23
Invertebrate Zoology	20
Lizard Island Reef Research Foundation	70,27
Lizard Island Research Station	26
Management Structures	61
Market Development & Sponsorship	36
Materials Conservation	22
Method & term of appointment of Trustees	59
Mission and Philosophy	4
Museum Shop	34
Nature Australia Magazine	36
Nature Focus	37
Opening hours	2
Overseas travel	69
People & Place Research Centre	14
Performance Measurement	63
Photographic Services	22
Premier's Message	8
President's Message	9
Public Programs & Marketing	28
Publications	65
Records of the Australian Museum	37
Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody - implementation of Recommendations	41
Science in the Museum	14
Senior Executive Service	62
Sponsors	71
Staffing percentages and 3 year comparison	61
Telephone number	2
The Australian Museum Society	32
Trust meetings & attendance	60
Trustees of the Australian Museum	59
Venue	34
Vertebrate Zoology & Scientific Services	19