

## MEDIA RELEASE

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 7.30 pm AEST, Thursday 7 August 2014**

Victoria's quiet achievers in the arts and cultural heritage sector will receive some very special awards for creating amazing tourism experiences at our museums, contributing to the commemorations for the Centenary of Service and for digitising cultural treasures for the public to discover online.

The 2014 Victorian Museum Awards will be presented on 7 August at Melbourne Museum by Museums Australia (Victoria) – [www.mavic.asn.au](http://www.mavic.asn.au) – the peak industry body for 1,000 museums and collecting organisations. The night will be hosted by special guests Adam Ford from ABC TV's *Who's Been Sleeping In My House?*, the Hon Heidi Victoria MP, Minister for the Arts, and Dr J Patrick Greene OBE, CEO, Museum Victoria.

Winners to be announced on the night include Lurline Knee and Patrick Watt in the **Museums Australia (Victoria) Individual Award for Excellence**. Ms Knee, 88, is the World War II Camps Researcher for the Tatura & District Historical Society and has been responsible for thousands of precious artefacts, photographs and oral histories. Mr Watt, Manager of the Burke Museum in Beechworth, has applied his expertise to increase visitor numbers by 32% including schoolchildren from the local area.

Creswick Museum will be awarded the **Archival Survival Award for Volunteer-Run Museums** for their *Spirit of China in Creswick* exhibition, which highlights Creswick's Chinese heritage using artefacts from the local community and objects on loan from larger museums in the State. The Johnston Collection will be recognised with the **Museums Australia (Victoria) Award for Small Museums** for the *David McAllister Rearranges Mr Johnston's Collection* exhibition. McAllister, Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet, transformed the interior into spaces inspired by ten classical ballets, increasing visitor numbers by 72%.

In the **Medium Museum** category, the National Wool Museum in Geelong will be rewarded for its *Reminiscence Cottage* immersive space, developed in collaboration with Volunteering Geelong and Alzheimer's Australia, which provides a safe and familiar reminiscence space for visitors with dementias through sight, sound, touch and smell. The State Library of Victoria will receive the **Museums Australia (Victoria) Award for Large Museums** for the exhibition *Rome: Piranesi's Vision*, presented in partnership with the University of Melbourne. Curated by Dr Colin Holden, this was the largest exhibition of works by Giovanna Battista Piranesi to be shown in Australia with over 82,000 visitors.

The **Victorian Collections Awards for Excellence in Museum Cataloguing** were presented to the Victoria Police Museum, Orbost and District Historical Society, and the Geelong RSL Sub-Branch by the RSL State President, Major General David McLachlan. The Awards are presented for excellence in digitising cultural artefacts online for the public to discover via the Victorian Collections website ([www.victoriancollections.net.au](http://www.victoriancollections.net.au)) developed in partnership by Museums Australia (Victoria) and Museum Victoria. Since 2009, Victorian Collections has been the online tool which makes state-wide cultural treasures accessible and discoverable, with over 34,000 objects already online.

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The Hon Heidi Victoria MP, Minister for the Arts, will also present certificates to museums who have completed the gold-standard **Museum Accreditation Program**: the Australian Racing Museum, Burrinja Cultural Centre, Coal Creek Community Park & Museum, Echuca Historical Society Museum, and the Polly Woodside.

Minister Victoria said: "Victoria's museums – large and small – are an important part of our cultural offering across the state. They teach us about our place in the world, promote understanding and help build stronger communities. These awards celebrate and recognise the role of our museums and the expertise and commitment of the people behind them."

Laura Miles, Executive Director of Museums Australia (Victoria), said: "All the Award nominees this year are congratulated for their amazing achievements to create vibrant, inventive and highly engaging museum experiences for all Victorians and visitors. Museums Australia is delighted to celebrate the work of the thousands of volunteers and staff who collectively maintain Victoria's position as the cultural capital of Australia."

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**Further information:**

<http://www.mavic.asn.au/awards>

**Photographs of the Awards Ceremony, Award-winning projects, Accredited museums, and selected objects from Victorian Collections are available upon request.**

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**Notes for editors:**

Museums Australia (Victoria) was established as the peak body for museums in Victoria in 1994. Our 1,000+ museums include galleries, science centres, Indigenous Keeping Places, historical societies, historic houses, botanic gardens, zoos, aquaria, cultural centres and archaeological monuments. Two-thirds of these are volunteer-run 'community museums' caring for an estimated 1.5m objects in Victoria. Museums Australia (Victoria) supports the development of quality museums, collections care, knowledge and specialised skills, for people from small and large museums in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

**VICTORIAN MUSEUM AWARDS SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS**

