



A new master plan for the Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery has been launched.

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FRIENDS

A stunning vision for TMAG's future

NEW MASTER PLAN LAUNCHED FEBRUARY 2014

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2014

TASMANIAN
MUSEUM &
ART GALLERY

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Acting TMAG Director Jennifer Storer speaks at the launch of the new master plan.

A stunning vision for TMAG's future

At our function for the opening of the redeveloped TMAG — Stage 1 — in March 2013, many of our members were clearly overwhelmed. 'This is better than MONA' was one comment frequently expressed. I don't think it is necessary to compare: MONA is brilliant, and so is TMAG.

Now we have had a look at what might be in the future — what the next stage of the resurgence of TMAG could be. We have been shown a master plan of what Hobart and Tasmania could have if a fully world class museum and art gallery were to be created on the unique waterfront of Hobart, a museum that could finally accept and exhibit international exhibitions that now pass us by because our facilities are totally inadequate by international standards.

The current Premier, Lara Giddings, gave an impassioned introduction to the revamped, rethought and superbly reworked master plan vision for the future stages of TMAG, reworked in the light of the experience gained from the \$30 million Stage 1 of the overall redevelopment package.

Learning from experience and projecting forward within the bounds of what could be and what is feasible, the architects FJMT Associates have come up with an inspiring vision of what could be a museum that would possibly be an even bigger drawcard for Tasmania than MONA — being right on the glorious harbour, the centrepiece of a world class cultural and artistic precinct in Hobart.

The Premier stressed that there was no money for this next stage. It is all vision, without any promises or deadlines. It's what might be — if the planets move in the right direction and the people, institutions, governments with vision and money come together to make the vision a reality.

The Friends of TMAG would love to see the next stage begin to take shape, under whatever political or philanthropic or practical banner it happens. We believe that the vision shown by these plans demonstrates clearly that TMAG could become a major international iconic institution for Australia, not just for Tasmania,

if these plans could be brought to fruition. We call on the government of the day here in Tasmania and in Canberra to broaden their minds and consider how Bilbao created a successful iconic institution in a provincial city — could Hobart be the next such success story? Are we big enough to grasp the opportunity presented by these wonderful images of what TMAG could be if we had the leaders in government and business to embrace it?



Above: Premier Lara Giddings with Richard Francis-Jones of FJMT Associates and TMAG Acting Director Jennifer Storer.

Left: Richard Francis-Jones outlines his vision for TMAG's future.

Below left: Friends of TMAG President John Sexton with Chairman of the Board of Trustees Sir Guy Green.





The architectural concept plan for the future vision of the museum redevelopment will be on display for viewing in the Link Foyer at TMAG until the end of March 2014.



Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery - an architectural concept



Introducing Jennifer Storer

The \$30 million redevelopment of TMAG was a huge project, and its result is the modern museum in heritage buildings that is attracting remarkably increased numbers of Tasmanians and tourists. Jennifer Storer is not surprised. She is the Acting Director of TMAG, and was the Project Manager for the five year project, working closely with Bill Bleathman.

'The new spacious central gallery and the recreated Bond Store galleries are just two of the areas that visitors tell us they love,' she says. 'We now have a museum we can be truly proud of — and we have the plans to eventually create a museum that will place Hobart and Tasmania firmly on the cultural and tourism map of the world.'

A ten year veteran of TMAG, Jennifer's first job was to set up the collections storage and research facility in Rosny — where the Friends have had fascinating insights into what goes on 'behind the scenes' during our events there.

The position of Director will be advertised by the State Government some time this year, and Jennifer will be one of the applicants. In the meantime, she is enjoying getting on with the job as Acting Director, and imagining what it would be like to have a completed TMAG as the cultural jewel in the centre of a revitalised waterfront precinct in Sullivans Cove.

Comings and goings

IN MEMORY OF ROSS FOURACRE

Our friend, committee member and great supporter of the Museum and the Friends, Ross Fouracre, passed away in December. Here is the heartfelt memo to Museum staff that Director Bill Bleathman wrote — it perfectly expresses the sadness of all of us who already miss Ross around the Museum and at our events.

With regret I advise you that one of our strongest supporters and friends Mr Ross Fouracre passed away after a long, but intermittent, battle with emphysema.

Ross made a significant contribution to the museum over many years. He was a founding member of the Friends in the mid 1980's and was still a very active committee member. He was also the long time Hon Secretary of the Foundation of TMAG and the Foundation's third life member.

Ross was devoted to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and was a regular in the museum. His presence brightened the day of everyone he met and he would regularly bring flowers from his garden to the girls at the museum and was always interested in what was going on.

He had a wicked sense of humour, if not slightly politically incorrect, and while he loved the museum he did have quite strong views on some (only some) contemporary art.

Ross was a regular at social functions for the museum, either helping to set them up or enjoying the atmosphere of the occasion. He joked that he was the oldest person ever in Tasmania to gain his responsible service of alcohol certificate.

As a mark of respect I have asked that the flag be flown at half-mast for the next few days.

Farewell Rossie, you will be sadly missed.

Bill



Ross Fouracre

FAREWELL BILL BLEATHMAN

After 20 years in TMAG and 37 years in the public service, Bill Bleathman has now retired from both. I know I speak for all our Members when I say we and TMAG will miss him very much. He has been a consistently positive inspiration during his tenure as Director of TMAG for the last twelve years, as well as being hugely and publicly appreciative of the support we provided as the Friends of TMAG.

But it's not only we, the Friends, who should be grateful to Bill and thank him for his vitally important contribution to the cultural and economic life of Hobart and Tasmania. Tasmanians owe Bill Bleathman a lot more than they fully recognise. It was his vision of a Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery that would be truly worthy of its collections, its unique heritage buildings and its splendid site at the waterside entry to Hobart that culminated in the successful completion of the first stage of the redevelopment in March 2013.

It was due to his energetic pursuit of that vision, and his guiding leadership of the TMAG team during the five arduous years of this first phase that TMAG has now evolved from a good provincial Museum to a world class facility, attracting significantly greater visitor numbers and receiving the kind



Bill Bleathman viewing artwork from the Baudin expedition in Le Havre with Trustees Chairman Sir Guy Green. Tony Brown, TMAG Senior Curator, Indigenous Cultures, hopes that these iconic images will be seen at TMAG in the future.

of positive comments that MONA has been getting since its splendid arrival.

Now we can stand back and thank Bill for his leadership, his achievements, and his generous support of every initiative the Friends took in the interests of TMAG. Bill likes to tell the story of his first public speech as Director: it was at a Friends function, and he was nervous. But, he says, he soon got over that and looked forward to actively participating in our events, which he did right through to the end of his tenure as Director.

We will miss him, as a friend and supporter of the Friends. However, your Committee has voted to give him no excuse to change his habit of participating in TMAG and Friends activities by making him and Leanne Honorary Life Members of the Friends of TMAG.

We wish him an active and happy retirement, and we look forward to seeing Bill and Leanne at some of our functions in the future.

GOODBYE PETER WEST

PETER WEST has been the public face of TMAG for a number of years, a regular voice on the radio and a lively and informative presence on TV.

As Acting Deputy Director in charge of marketing and media, he was often Bill's deputy at our committee meetings and a great supporter and friend to the Friends.

He has now taken a new step in his career and has become the General Manager of the RSPCA.

Always good for a quote or a quip, Peter and his entertaining personality will be missed around TMAG. We wish him every success in his post-TMAG future.



Theatre of the World goes to Paris

The people at MONA sure know how to throw a party — even in Paris!

The opening of the TMAG/MONA exhibition *Theatre of the World* was kicked off by a lunch for some three hundred Friends of the Paris gallery housing the exhibition, La Maison Rouge, just around the corner from the Bastille in central Paris. This private gallery is ideally suited to a slightly smaller version of the exhibition at MONA which had been such a success during the months while TMAG was closed during redevelopment.

The exhibition was a hit with the Parisians, and the *International New York Times* thought it was important enough to have a full page story on the day.

The buffet lunch was a showcase of Tasmanian food and wine, organised and catered by MONA, while the evening's official opening attracted over a thousand people — all of whom had invitations to this major Paris art function. This was the biggest Australian cultural event in Paris in recent memory and the Australian Ambassador was one of the guests who praised the content and showing of the exhibition. TMAG people had been in Paris working with MONA people and the gallery staff to ensure the joint exhibition maintained the quality of the Hobart experience.

Unlike our openings here, there were no speeches, no formal opening, no free grog — just a lot of interested people coming through the bar or going directly to the galleries to see what Tasmania and Australia had to offer — and they loved it.



John Sexton with Bill Bleathman at lunch on opening day. John and David Coleman travelled to Paris at their own expense to celebrate this special event.



Above: Introductory public seminar on exhibition opening day: panellists Tony Brown, TMAG Senior Curator, Indigenous Cultures, Paula Aisemberg, Director, La Maison Rouge, Jane Stewart, TMAG Principal Curator of Art and Bill Bleathman.

Below: Setting up the majestic tapa cloths, part of the TMAG collection. John Sexton heard a guest on entering the room exclaim, 'Mais, c'est une cathedrale!'



Recent events

A large number of members took the opportunity to view the Tasmanian Art Quilt Prize exhibition in late October. A collaboration between the Tasmanian Quilting Guild and TMAG, the exhibition featured quilts by textile artists from all around Australia, with the competition theme being 'What a site!' to celebrate TMAG's 150 years on Hobart's waterfront. Barbara Mellor gave a fascinating talk, and winner Sandra Champion also spoke about her entry, *From the Cove*.



Pam Stewart



Barbara Mellor gave a well-illustrated talk in the members lounge.

One of the highlights of 2013 was *Illumination*, a survey of the work of nationally acclaimed Tasmanian artist Philip Wolfhagen, which filled three galleries and ran from September to December. A Newcastle Art Gallery and TMAG travelling exhibition, it is now travelling to the ACT, Queensland, NSW and Victoria.

The Friends were invited by TMAG to take part in the official opening event, opened by Chairman of the Board of Trustees Sir Guy Green. What a wonderful night it was!



Phillip Wolfhagen

Professor Wong Shiu Hon and the Chinese Art Society invited Friends members to participate in a series of free talks and workshops in September and October. These were held in the spacious Learning and Discovery Centre at TMAG, and were facilitated by the Friends. The photograph shows eager participants in the *Beginners in Chinese calligraphy* workshop under the watchful eye of Professor Wong.



Seen around TMAG

Photo: Richard Jupe

ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER WINS CHURCHILL AWARD

Zoe Rimmer, Registration Officer in Indigenous Cultures, will soon be packing her bags for an exciting trip to North America and Europe to study how other museums and communities run/manage indigenous cultural centres and heritage sites.

She won a 2013 Churchill Fellowship Award and will travel for about 8 weeks from Hawaii, Washington and Alberta to London and Paris, looking at ways museums interact with indigenous people. 'I'm hoping to attend the World Indigenous Conference on education in Hawaii in May', Zoe said. "There has been a strong international movement

in recent years to bring indigenous culture more into the mainstream — and I am hoping to meet the people involved in such institutions as the Smithsonian, the Anthropology Museum of BC in Canada and the Quai Branly in Paris, just to name a few!

Zoe joined TMAG in 2002 as a trainee cadet, and this is the first time she applied for the Churchill. She follows Mark Colegrave, Exhibitions Officer and lighting expert, whose expertise was enhanced by his Churchill trip overseas two years ago. You saw the results of that trip in the creative lighting of areas in the redeveloped museum, especially in the Bond Store.

'I hope to bring back useful knowledge to build on the knowledge already in our team here', Zoe said, 'But also I hope to get inspiration for our own cultural and community engagement projects here through meeting with indigenous institutions and community leaders.'

Like Mark, Zoe will be working hard on the trip — while, we hope, having a great time!



TMAG SHOP

You may remember the old bookshop — it was tucked away off the Zoology Gallery, which has now become the Central Gallery. But the bookshop is no more — the TMAG Shop is right beside the main entrance and has a lot more than books on offer.

'If they are looking for something uniquely Tasmanian, something different, visitors and locals say they can often find it in the shop.' Heather Morris, a Friends Committee Member who works in the shop, says that new manager, Matt Spencer (also a Friends Committee Member) has tried to source unusual and special items for the shop.

And shoppers can sign up on the spot to become a Member of the Friends — and get the 10% Members discount immediately!

Maybe it's time you had a look at the new TMAG Shop for yourself? It might have just the thing for your next present: there's something for all ages.

THERE'S MORE CHINESE CULTURE TO COME

Professor Wong is planning another talk: this time about Chinese antiquities. The tentative date is 12 April. We'll provide you with more details closer to the event.



USE YOUR MEMBERS LOUNGE

The photograph shows the members lounge in use at a Friends function, but remember it is also available for your use any time you are visiting TMAG. Simply present your membership card at the reception desk to gain entry.

You can order food or drinks from the café to be delivered to you in the members lounge (and remember that you'll receive Friends discount), or enjoy a glass of wine available on a cash honour system in the lounge.





Upcoming events

Above: W.C. Piguenit
Near Liverpool, New South Wales c. 1908
oil on canvas
74.2 x 125.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra,
acquired with the assistance of the
Masterpieces for the Nation Fund 2005

6pm Friday 14 March **CAPITAL AND COUNTRY**

Capital and country is a travelling exhibition of paintings from the national collection, developed as the National Gallery of Australia's gift to the nation in celebration of Federation and the centenary of the Federal Capital in 2013.

It considers the parallel stories of Federation landscape painting in Australia and the art produced by Australians who lived in Europe during this period.

The forty-six works brought together in *Capital and country* reveal the richness and diversity of non-

Indigenous Australian painting during the Federation years. They range from sunlit images that convey the nation's patriotic embrace of their own landscape, to those that emphasise the popularity of portraiture and figure painting in Europe.

Well-known and loved works in the national collection by Frederick McCubbin, George W Lambert and Hans Heysen are brought to light in new ways alongside lesser-known images by Florence Fuller, Godfrey Rivers and Richard Hayley-Lever that will both surprise and delight.

This event will also be an opportunity to celebrate the first anniversary of the reopening of TMAG after Stage 1 of the redevelopment.

Membership that rewards you



The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery collects, houses and safeguards our natural and cultural heritage and provides an insight into other cultures.

The Friends are a group of people formed to bring the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery to Tasmanians and Tasmanians to TMAG. The Friends aim to help TMAG with our time, our talents and our money and to make more information available to the community about the TMAG and its collections.

Part of the function of The Friends of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Inc. is to raise funds to assist with the purchase of significant items for the TMAG.

The Friends of TMAG are part of a wider Australian group with similar aims, the Australian Federation of Friends of Museums (AFFM).

For more information or to join the Friends, mail or email your postal address to us or pick up a membership brochure from the TMAG reception desk.

The Friends of the Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery Incorporated

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Hon. Secretary: Jean Boughey
Committee Members:
David Coleman Digby Longhurst
Heather Morris Andrew Ross
Matt Spencer Christopher Thomas
Ex Officio:
Jennifer Storer, Acting Director, TMAG

OFFICE HOURS

We almost always answer the phone at TMAG on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10 and 12, so that's the best time to phone. An email will get our attention at other times. And comments and suggestions are always welcome!

Views expressed in this newsletter reflect the views of the author and not necessarily those of the editor, the Friends of the TMAG or the TMAG.
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