

Annual General Meeting

17 May 2014
Agenda Item 6

Annual Report on the Work of the Committee For the period June 2013 to April 2014

1. Introduction

It has been another active year with respect to the ICOM Executive, whose activities range from administering ICOM memberships, supporting conferences and other professional activities, making submissions on relevant policy issues and making a number of awards and bursaries.

2. Year in Summary

1.2 Joint Secretariat ICOM Australia-Museums Australia

Once again the joint ICOM Australia and Museums Australia Secretariat has continued to thrive.

I'd like to thank Lee Scott and Bernice Murphy for their assistance in administrative support such as membership processing, general enquiries and the provision of website services.

1.3 Executive Board

The ICOM Australia Executive Board for 2013 was comprised of:

Chairman	Dr Robin Hirst	
Vice-Chairman	Mr Alec Coles	
National Secretary	Ms Nancy Ladas	
Treasurer	Dr Scott Mitchell	
Membership Secretary	Dr Donald McMichael	
Public Officer	Ms Louise Douglas	
Ordinary Members	Ms Nola Anderson	Ms Maisy Stapleton
	Ms Carolyn Forster	Ms Deborah Tout-Smith
	Ms Mirna Heruc	Ms Annette Welkamp
	Mr Chris Nobbs	
Ex-Officio	Mr Frank Howarth	
Ex-Officio	Ms Tarisi Vunidilo	

I would like to thank all members of the Executive Board for their commitment throughout the year. I'd also like to thank Roger Garland for his advice and quick response to maintaining for the ICOM Australia website.

1.2 Membership

As at 31 March 2014 there were 364 ICOM Australia members.

My thanks to Don McMichael for his tireless efforts as Membership Secretary.

1.3 ICOM Australia International Travel Bursaries

In 2013 ICOM Australia supported member Ms Diane Gardiner, General Manager, Old Treasury Building, a travel bursary to attend the *23rd General Conference of the International Council of Museums* in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in August 2013.

1.4 Awards for International Relations

Dr Robin Torrence, Senior Principal Research Scientist at the Australian Museum, was presented with the individual award for 2013 for her research achievements as in archaeology and material culture for furthering international relations with particular focus on Papua New Guinea and Australia.

The 2013 institutional award acknowledged the work of Dr Sarah Kenderdine for the PLACE – Hampi Museum at Kaladham. This exemplary program of initiatives reaches across the oceans and brings together several organisations in two countries. The project generated significant local community impacts and has created longer-term and wider outcomes. PLACE – Hampi was developed as a partnership between Museum Victoria, the iCinema Centre of University NSW, Epidemic, Paris, and ZKM Karlsruhe, supported by Australian Research Council funding.

Thanks to Annette Welkamp and Deborah Tout-Smith for overseeing the smooth running of the awards over the last couple of years.

The award winners for 2014 will be announced at the Conference Dinner tomorrow night.

1.5 23rd General Conference of the International Council of Museums

As Chair of ICOM Australia I participated in the 77th and 78th Advisory Committee meetings, meetings of the National Committee and International Committee chairs and the 28th General Assembly. The conference attracted over 1800 participants.

A Code of Ethics for Natural History Museums was presented to the General Assembly. It is seen as complimentary to the ICOM Code of Professional Ethics and is available on the ICOM Australia website.

1.6 ICOM Australia Strategic Plan

The ICOM Australia Executive held a workshop in December 2013 to review the existing ICOM Australia Strategic Plan. The draft is currently being refined and will be finalised once the ICOM Strategic Plan 2014-2016 is adopted in the second of 2014.

Key projects for the Executive are to:

- Increase institutional membership
- Promote the benefits of membership, in particular to promote free entry to participating Australian institutions

1.7 Meeting with the Hon. Senator George Brandis, QC, Minister for Arts and Attorney-General

Dr Stefano Carboni, Chair, Council of Australian Art Museum Directors (CAAMD) and Director, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Mr Frank Howarth, National President, Museums Australia and Director, Australian Museum, Professor Suzanne Miller, representing the Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD) and Chief Executive Officer, Queensland Museum Network and I met with Hon. Senator George Brandis, QC on 6 February 2014.

The meeting was brief but was a great initiative and the introduction of a national forum was suggested. The first meeting took place yesterday, 16 May 2014, as part of the MA conference.

Major points:

- strongly supportive of the continuation of the Return of Indigenous Cultural Property (RICP) program;
- takes issues of disputed provenance very seriously and notes that rigorous due diligence procedures are recognised across the sector
- appreciative of the creation of the immunity from seizure legislation
- pleased that the Commonwealth insurance scheme has been opened up to competitive process. As discussed, however, we will shortly provide the Minister with suggestions about how the scheme might be improved, particularly to assist smaller institutions
- will provide further details of the proposal for a national forum to the Minister and his department
- will also provide the Minister with a preliminary proposal for the development of a digital national cultural object access system

1.8 Pacific Islands Museums Association

ICOM Australia has continued to provide support and advice to PIMA throughout the year including:

- in-kind support for a successful funding application to ICOM to organise a "Melanesian Workshop on Fight against Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Objects", to take place in Papua New Guinea from June 30th to July 4 2014, leading up to the Melanesia Arts Festival, in Port Moresby.
- recommendation of experts, Dr Lyndel Prott AO and Dr Mike Green, to assist with an illicit trafficking workshop in PNG in 2014 and Vanuatu in 2015
- development of support program to match Australian museum professionals to assist with aspects of fundraising, grant writing and exhibitions development.

1.9 Blue Shield Australia

Blue Shield Australia (BSA) is an international committee, working to protect the world's cultural heritage threatened by armed conflict and natural disasters. It is working to enhance disaster preparedness and recovery throughout the museum sector. The BSA committee comprises representatives from the following Australian peak industry organisations: the Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities, Australia ICOMOS, the Australian Library and Information Association and ICOM Australia.

ICOM Australia Executive is represented by the National Secretary Nancy Ladas and by ICOM member Samantha Fabry.

1.10 ICOM-CC

The 17th Triennial Conference of the International Council of Museums Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) will attract leading international keynote speakers and up to 800 delegates, including conservators, scientists, historians and art historians, curators, librarians, archivists, students, collection managers and directors from the world's leading cultural institutions and the private sector.

Each Triennial Conference is a joint initiative of ICOM-CC and partners in the host country. The Australian National Organizing Committee for the 17th Triennial Conference is comprised of the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation of the University of Melbourne and The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM), Australia's leaders in conservation training and practice. Together, we are working to provide an invigorating, productive, and exceptional Australian experience in September 2014.

ICOM members receive a substantial discount.

1.11 Ethics and Provenance

An Ethics and Provenance Statement was developed by the Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD), Council of Australian Art Museum Directors (CAAMD), ICOM-Australia and Museums Australia.

In light of recent issues at the National Gallery of Australia the four peak museum bodies agreed to prepare a statement on ethics and provenance to have available should any media make inquiries of our position. The statement is available on the ICOM Australia website.

1.12 ICOM International Training Centre for Museums Studies (ICOM-ITC)

I was recently appointed to the Governing Board of the newly developed ICOM International Training Centre for Museums Studies (ICOM-ITC) from June 2014 to June 2017. ICOM-ITC is housed at the Palace Museum in Beijing, China, and will provide training programs for museum professionals and aims to "promote research and exchange among museums at an international level as well as develop the museum expertise of professionals from developing countries, especially those from the Asia-Pacific region."

1.13 ICOM Australia Executive

And finally I would like to thank the ICOM Executive Board members for their enthusiasm and support throughout the last 12 months. We have held four teleconference meetings and on face to face meeting.

I'd like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the National Secretary and the other executive members. We have three outgoing members, all of which have made a great contribution. Don McMichael, most recently, our Membership Secretary and the source of great information and advice. Deborah Tout-Smith and Annette Welkamp have served on the Awards Committee for the last few years and we will miss their contributions to discussions at the Board.

I thank the ICOM Executive Board for their contribution to a very successful year.

Dr Robin Hirst
Chair