

Scienceworks Museum - Exhibitions and Programs

CAMPUS OVERVIEW AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Scienceworks is a dynamic and interactive science and technology museum incorporating the Melbourne Planetarium and the Spotswood Sewerage Pumping Station. Through hand-on exhibits, live demonstrations, activities and shows, Scienceworks visitors are encouraged to 'get a grasp of science and technology'.

LONG-TERM EXHIBITIONS

Main West Gallery

House Secrets

Stayin' Alive was replaced by *House Secrets*, which opened on 28 June 2003 and looks at the physics, chemistry and biology behind many of the familiar things in our homes.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

Terrorsaurus

20 February – 14 July 2002

This exhibition explored current scientific thinking about how dinosaurs lived and featured robotic dinosaurs three quarters their real size.

Clockwise – It's about time

30 March – 13 October 2002

This exhibition looked at all aspects of time and how this affects us each day.



The attendances for Scienceworks this year have been outstanding, with more than 360,000 visitors. This success is attributed to the popularity of the *Body Odyssey* and *Space* exhibitions, followed by an overwhelming response to the reduced ticket prices announced in May 2003.

Main South Gallery

Sports Works

The exhibition *SportsWorks* was presented in this gallery and explores the science and technology of sport through the themes of fitness, movement and skills.

Mezzanine Level

Nitty Gritty Super City

This exhibition engages young children in a variety of activities designed to improve their understanding of the world around us.

Body Odyssey

3 August 2002 – 27 January 2003

104,000 visitors were taken on a journey through the human body during its six month display.

Space

23 October 2002 – 27 May 2003

The theme of 'humans reach into space' was used to explain the technology and science behind space and space exploration.

VISITOR PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Regional Arts Victoria Partnership

July – September 2002

As part of its 10th Birthday Celebrations, Scienceworks formed a partnership with Regional Arts Victoria. With the support of the Harold Mitchell Foundation, two unique and groundbreaking arts/science shows were developed and promoted within the Regional Arts Victoria (RAV) Schools Touring Program 2002.

Rare Trades – artisan demonstrations

16 – 23 March 2003

During the week of the Seniors Festival and over the Labour Day weekend, eight of the artisans featured in the *Rare Trades* exhibition conducted informal demonstrations at Scienceworks.

Rare Trades

15 February – 11 May 2003

This exhibition celebrated the art of skilled manual work and ancient trades. 65,000 people visited the exhibition in four months.

Sea Chest Secrets

7 May – 5 October 2003

Visitors were required to use their hands and minds to find the writer of an intriguing diary found washed ashore in a sea chest.

MELBOURNE PLANETARIUM

Approximately 134,000 people attended the Planetarium during 2002-2003, including over 54,400 school students and teachers. Several shows were on offer, including *Escape from Andraxus*, *Spinning Out*, *Launch Pad*, *Tycho to the Moon* and *Tycho Stars Again*. Two new shows were also launched: *Guiding Lights* (August 2002) and *Cosmic Couriers* (March 2003). Special screenings of *Guiding Lights* were conducted as part of National Science Week 2002.



Smugglers Customs and Contraband

7 May – 5 October 2003

This exhibition looked at how the customs service protects Australia from drugs, disease and other illegal imports.

Speed: Science in Motion

26 May – 5 October 2003

An interactive exhibition that explained the cutting-edge science and technology behind motor sports.

Working Machines

8 September & 1 December 2002

Machines in Action days were conducted at Scienceworks, as part of the Museum Victoria *Out of the Vaults* program. Various working machines were also displayed at local western region festivals.

Model Solar Vehicle Challenge

19–20 October 2002

The state finals of the Model Solar Vehicle Challenge were hosted by Scienceworks in October 2002. Three hundred teams from 80 schools participated in the event, with over 2,600 people attending the weekend.

Explorer Club

The Explorer Children's Club maintained a regular newsletter of information and activities, as well as conducting three special excursion days on 19 October, 1 December 2002 and 16 March 2003.

Highlights included:

- A highly successful Thursday evening program, *Cruise the Constellations*, was launched and operated from January–April 2003. Over 1100 people travelled by ferry to the Planetarium to see *Guiding Lights* and view the night sky through the Planetarium's volunteer-operated telescopes.
- Melbourne Planetarium successfully won a bid to host the International Planetarium Society's biennial conference in 2006. This will be the first time the conference is held outside of the Northern Hemisphere. The event is expected to attract over 300 planetarium professionals and provide an opportunity for Scienceworks to showcase the innovative displays produced by the Museum Victoria team.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

- Scienceworks was allocated \$2.69 million in the Victorian State Government budget for exhibition development and renewal. A proportion of these funds were used to develop and install the new *House Secrets* exhibition, which opened for public preview on 28 June 2003. Additionally, the funding assisted the development of a collaborative travelling exhibition with West Australia's SciTech Discovery Centre, *TOYS: Fun is just the beginning*. The exhibition will open in Perth in November 2003, followed by Scienceworks in May 2004 and then travel throughout Australia.
- Support for the building of a new high voltage electricity education and research facility at Scienceworks has been secured. Telstra has donated the high voltage equipment from their research laboratory, while partnership funding has been contributed by Victoria University, AGL/Agility, SPI Powernet, Olex Cables and TXU and through a grants scheme offered by the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development's Science, Technology and Innovation Infrastructure (STI) branch.
- Scienceworks was awarded \$187,000 under the EPA's Stormwater Action Program to develop and deliver an education program in the Pumping Station.

Education Programs

MELBOURNE MUSEUM

Over 100,000 students and accompanying adults visited Melbourne Museum this year. Of these, an astonishing 10,600 years 10 to 12 students attended the *Top Designs* exhibition.

The ratio of metropolitan to regional students has remained fairly consistent in recent years at 3:1. The number of school students visiting Melbourne Museum is equivalent to 12% of students in the State, and 44% of all schools in the State have sent one or more groups to the Museum this financial year.

During the last year we have had support from the private ONBASS Foundation. This funding has enabled economically disadvantaged schools to visit Melbourne Museum by allowing grades three and four students to visit the Museum at no cost. The response from participating schools has been very positive. Another pleasing feature of this year's attendance is the strong support from the adult, community and tertiary education sectors, with more than 11,000 students involved.

Education Programs

Maps Change the World

This program was offered as part of the *Beneath our Feet* exhibition in collaboration with the Centre for Adult Education.

National Science Week

This series of education programs was hosted during the National Science Week and supported by the Federal Department of Science, Education and Training and the State Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development.

VCE biology Workshops

This program was designed for students conducting DNA preparation and studying hominid evolution.

The Italians Exhibition

A range of sessions was organised for students and teachers, including adult education programs and Italian art workshops.

Choir performances

Twenty-nine school and community choir groups participated in this event between 27 November – 15 December, holding public performances at Melbourne Museum.

Pre-school Program

Lifecycles and Minibeasts was a new pre-school program introduced and enthusiastically received this year, with nearly all bookings received for the Children's Gallery also booking into the program. Almost all Victorian metropolitan pre-schools booked the program.

Lower Primary

The Children's Museum presented three new Primary School programs for grades prep to two, which are also proving to be very popular. These included: *Lifecycles, Minibeasts and Rocks and Minerals*.

IMMIGRATION MUSEUM

The number of students participating in formal education programs at the Immigration Museum continues to grow with over 31,000 students participating during the 2002-03 year. This was 41% above projected numbers.

Education programs strengthen the Museum's vision to foster understanding and respect. They also celebrate the many positive dimensions of our cultural diversity by providing a range of formal and informal activities and learning experiences.

The redevelopment of Gallery 4 to include *Getting In*, an exhibition exploring the policies and processes of Australian immigration, has broadened the education program for senior secondary students and satisfies specific curriculum requirements of the VCE. The exhibition's interactive facilities are proving to be particularly powerful learning tools for students by placing them in the shoes of immigration officers and requiring them to experience the decision making process of migrant entry.

The *Passport Program* has been redesigned to include two separate programs to meet the specific curriculum needs of junior and senior secondary students.

By attending relevant conferences and extending networks and connections with peers in other cultural organisations, Education Officers are constantly developing their professional interests to expand the organisations collaborative project scheme.

SCIENCEWORKS

Almost 100,000 students and teachers visited Scienceworks during the year, with over 50,000 also attending a Planetarium show. These figures are amongst the highest ever for educational visits at Scienceworks.

The Sleepover Program for primary students retained its popularity, with almost 1,000 students attending either Scienceworks or Planetarium sleepovers.

The past financial year has seen a total of 454 schools bring 16,162 grade six students to Scienceworks through the STAR 6 program. Approximately one third of the schools (159) were from metropolitan areas, with the remainder (295) coming from rural and regional Victoria.

The fourth annual Science Showcase for teachers was held in March to launch the 2003 Education Program for teachers and educators. Showcasing Scienceworks' education programs, the event featured a talk by Dr Rachel Webster, Associate Professor and Reader, School of Physics, University of Melbourne, who spoke about her research into extra solar planets and life outside our solar system. Teachers also viewed the *Rare Trades* exhibition and the *Cosmic Couriers* planetarium show. As a result of this showcase, 500 teachers subscribed to the Teachers Privilege Pass – an incentive scheme for science co-ordinators.

Professional development for teachers continued to be an important part of the education program at Scienceworks. Over 1,200 teachers attended either full or half-day, or after-school sessions run by Scienceworks education staff.

Scienceworks obtained a grant from the Federal Department of Education Science and Training to develop *Secret Life of Machines* – a program to tour regional Victoria during National Science Week 2003.

Education staff were active in exhibition development teams and successfully introduced CD-ROM based education materials to supplement traditional paper-based kits for two exhibitions – *House Secrets* and *Sea Chest Secrets*. In addition, education support materials were produced for the *Body Odyssey, Space – Reaching Out, Rare Trades* and *Speed – Science in Motion* exhibitions, and the *Guiding Lights* Planetarium show. A new science show called *Simple Machines* was developed to complement the *House Secrets* exhibition.

WEBSITE EDUCATION

A new design was launched for the ed-online portal, www.museum.vic.gov.au/ed-online, to incorporate features from the Museum Victoria website redesign and to highlight resources.

Publications this year included:

- A new case study for *Imagining Australia 1914-1918* (www.museum.vic.gov.au/edu_ww1/stateschools.html), which is based on the well-documented experience of Ballarat High
- designed to inspire (www.museum.vic.gov.au/design), which highlights the series of contemporary design exhibitions at Melbourne Museum and provides additional information and case studies for students
- Contextual essays on geological time, extinctions and scientific processes. These have been added to the popular *Dinosaurs and Fossils* website, (www.museum.vic.gov.au/dinosaurs), with inter-links to the *Prehistoric Life* site.

Commercial Operations

Museum Victoria's commercial activities contribute to generating financial resources, enhancing the public's access to Museum services and raising Museum Victoria's profile.

MELBOURNE MUSEUM

Melbourne Museum's commercial operations comprising retail, venue hire, retail catering and functions, carpark and the Royal Exhibition Building contribute significantly to the ongoing operations of Melbourne Museum and Museum Victoria. The businesses also provide the public with services and experiences that enhance their visit to Melbourne Museum.

Cafes and Catering

The two main cafes operated by Peter Rowland Catering were combined into one operation, The Museum Café, by removing a dividing wall. The Balcony Cafe, which overlooks the main foyer, has been operating during weekends and holidays and continues to be a popular destination for Museum visitors.

Functions & Venue Hire

Private functions at the Museum have proved to be immensely popular this year, with hirers taking advantage of the Museum's striking architecture and exciting exhibits. Almost 550 catered events were held in museum spaces over the past year, including corporate dinners, product launches and weddings. The venue has also been popular with film crews from Australia and overseas.

Retail

Operating on two levels, the Museum Shop offers a wide range of predominantly Australian products including Indigenous art and artefacts, Museum publications, children's toys and speciality products and souvenirs relating to touring exhibitions.

In partnership with a number of national museums in Australia, Melbourne Museum Shop launched a mail order catalogue that was distributed through *The Age* newspaper. The highly successful activity resulted in 350 mail orders and the sale of 6,962 individual catalogue stock items, including apparel, books and toys.

The Melbourne Museum Retail Department has established an original line of apparel, focussing on icons within the Museum's collection such as Phar Lap, the Mind & Body Gallery, the Children's Museum and the Science and Life Gallery. A range of souvenir items for local and international tourists has also been created.

IMAX

During the course of the year, IMAX screened a range of international film titles including *Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure* and *Space Station 3D*. This giant-screen entertainment venue, operated by MTM Funds Management Limited, enhances the experience of visitors to the precinct and complements the Museum's exhibitions and educational programs.

Carpark

The carpark continued to service the parking requirements of visitors to the precinct, as well as city workers. The carpark was used in the ongoing Park 'n' Ride scheme with Yarra Trams, which aims to ease traffic congestion in the CBD by encouraging commuters to park on the city's outskirts and use public transport within the CBD.

Royal Exhibition Building

The past year has seen a number of large-scale events have been hosted including: the Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show, Bride's Expo, Italian National Day, Motorsport Expo and the Melbourne Artfair, as well as the venue for the first concert of the Early Music Festival.

IMMIGRATION MUSEUM

Funds raised through the Immigration Museum's commercial operations are used to support ongoing exhibition development and visitor programs. The businesses also provide the public with services and social experiences that enhance their visit to the heritage-listed Customs House.

Cafes and Catering

White Card Catering operates the Immigration Museum's Cafe and provides catering for functions. The Cafe has established itself as a popular CBD lunch venue, attracting local business people each day.

Functions & Venue Hire

The Immigration Museum provides venue hire for corporate and private functions in the unique indoor and outdoor areas of the heritage-listed venue. Over the past year there were 60 functions held at Immigration Museum, including corporate, government and private events. Functions included formal dinners, cocktail parties, interactive workshops and product launches.

Retail

Stocking predominantly Australian-made items, Immigration Museum Shop specialises in merchandise that supports the permanent and temporary exhibitions. A large range of books relevant to the Museum's content is also available. The Shop has received a high approval rating from visitors.

SCIENCEWORKS

The commercial activities at Scienceworks comprise retail, cafe and venue hire. This year, each operation made profits above target, as well as undertaking improvement activities to enhance visitor satisfaction. All profits from these activities are used to fund Museum operations.

Cafe and Catering

White Card Catering operates the Scienceworks' Foodworks Cafe and caters for functions and events at the site during business and after hours.

Functions and Venue Hire

Facilities available for hire at Scienceworks can accommodate groups of up to 250 people for seated, fully-catered functions, and up to 400 individuals for cocktails. During the year 11,341 people attended 76 functions at Scienceworks. These functions ranged from sit-down dinners, cocktail parties, and conferences through to family days.

Retail

The Gift Shop offers a wide range of products that support the permanent and temporary exhibition programs at Scienceworks. The range of stock includes toys, books, educational products, gifts and souvenirs. The number of visitors purchasing from the shop is equal to the benchmark of 10-15% for Museum shops.

Beyond our Campuses

REGIONAL OUTREACH

Museum Victoria's Museum in a Van Outreach Program reached nearly 30,000 people in schools, kindergartens, aged care facilities, libraries and other community groups in regional, metropolitan and remote areas of Victoria. The Outreach Program presents a selection of display material from Museum Victoria's extensive collection.

MUSEUM VICTORIA TOURING EXHIBITIONS

Spirit Country

16 November – 2 December 2002

Spirit Country, an exhibition of contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art from the Gantner/Myer collection, was displayed at the Shanghai Library as part of the Shanghai International Festival of the Arts and *Celebrate Australia 2002*. The exhibition received significant funding support from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Thookay Ngaweeyan – Young Voices

This exhibition toured a number of venues including National Museum of Australia in Canberra, Warrnambool Art Gallery, Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery and Gippsland Art Gallery.

Megawatt

The *Megawatt* exhibition left Australia in April to commence an 18-month tour of six venues in New Zealand, beginning with Exscite in Hamilton where the exhibition was on display until the end of July 2003.

MUSEUM VICTORIA WEBSITES

This year, Museum Victoria websites recorded 2.05 million individual user sessions with an average visit length to individual sites ranging from eight to 21 minutes. The number of web pages served increased by 65%, reflecting the increased range of educational content and information published.

The Immigration Museum website was redeveloped to meet the new web-accessibility standards developed by Museum Victoria to meet Government guidelines. The Scienceworks Museum site is also currently undergoing redevelopment.

Websites published this year include:

Voyages to Victoria: Immigration stories, passenger and shipping lists

www.shippinglists.museum.vic.gov.au

This pilot project provided online access to material from the State Library of Victoria, Public Record Office Victoria and Museum Victoria.

Marvellous Melbourne

www.museum.vic.gov.au/marvellous

Historical information about the city of Melbourne providing an insight into how the city has grown into the metropolis that it is today.

Prehistoric Life

www.museum.vic.gov.au/prehistoric

An illustrated introduction to the fossil record of life on earth, including an overview of the local record in Victoria.

Scientists and Discovery

www.museum.vic.gov.au/scidiscovery

This site presents a range of science-related subjects selected to stimulate curiosity about our world and the process of scientific discovery.

Windows on Victoria

www.museum.vic.gov.au/windows

Eight historical moments that reflect our State's diverse history were presented on this site to represent meeting points of major events, individual Victorians and everyday experiences.

MELBOURNE'S GOLDEN MILE HERITAGE TRAIL

Melbourne's key heritage trail, the Golden Mile Trail, is now included in all tourist maps and literature. Over 1,250 people walk along the trail each month – approximately 300 participate in school groups, 150 on guided tours, and the remainder walk independently.

Daily guided tours currently run from the Melbourne Visitor Centre at Federation Square to Melbourne Museum and are proving increasingly popular with tourists and locals. The Museum also developed seven additional walking trails around Melbourne in collaboration with Federation Square Management, to coincide with Federation Square's opening.

REGIONAL AND SPECIALIST MUSEUMS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RASMAC) SERVICES

While on short-term secondment to Arts Victoria, the former Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Museum Victoria, Mr Martin Hallett conducted a review of key issues affecting Victoria's community museums. The associated report acknowledges the economic, social and cultural benefits offered by community museums to regional and metropolitan communities and makes a number of key recommendations to government including:

- Recognising the potential of community museums as community building agents as well as cultural and heritage resources.
- Identifying a need to coordinate support provided to community museums by a range of State Government departments and agencies and local Governments.
- Proposing that the Victorian Government establish a project, jointly led by Arts Victoria, the Department for Victorian Communities, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet, to develop a framework for more strategic delivery of *Growing Victoria Together* objectives by the community museums sector.

Museum Victoria also continued to provide accommodation for Museums Australia (Victoria) which provides support to regional and specialist museums.

