CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION

CHAPTER 3

Section through the Dome. (39)

3A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

The Site

The 1880 and 1888 Melbourne international exhibition site is a rectangular block of 26 hectares (64 acres) bounded by four city streets. The site comprises three zones of roughly equal size. The permanent exhibition building of the 1880 Exhibition is positioned on the high open ground of the central zone. The formally laid out 'palace' garden forms the forecourt to the building and is contained in the southern zone. The northern zone is part of the Carlton Gardens, which, for the most part, was formally laid out with paths and avenues after the closing of the 1888 Exhibition (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 32-33). The edge of the site is marked by the bluestone perimeter plinth of the cast iron palisade fence that defined the 1880s exhibition grounds.

The Exhibition Building in its current form (the 'Great Hall') is only a portion of the substantial complex of structures erected for the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 39). Unlike many international exhibitions, part of the Exhibition Building was conceived as a permanent structure that, although purpose-built for a one-off event, would have a future role in the cultural activities of the burgeoning city (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 49-50). The original structure comprised a 'temporary' component, demolished after the 1880 Exhibition, and a 'permanent' component. The permanent component consisted of the Great Hall, cruciform in plan, flanked by two smaller wings, known as the western and eastern annexes, which were demolished in 1961 and 1979 respectively (Whitehead 1997:137; Allom Lovell and Associates 1999:39).

The Exhibition Building is constructed from traditional nineteenth century materials. The walls of the building are constructed of cement rendered brickwork, originally an unpainted finish, but subsequently painted. The roof is timber framed and covered with a combination of corrugated galvanised steel and slate. All windows and doors are timber framed and painted (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 32-33).

The building and grounds were designed by Joseph Reed of the architectural partnership Reed and Barnes. Reed won the design competition for the Exhibition Building with an entry representing the site in a Beaux-Arts axial scheme with the building as a palace, primarily in the Italian Renaissance style (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 32-33). Reed's design combined Gothic and classical elements in a manner consistent with creating a building that was at once useful and ceremonial, secular and sacred (Dunstan 1996:14). Reed and Barnes adopted the little-known German *Rundbogenstil* mode, and other more familiar stylistic motifs from earlier international exhibition buildings in Britain and Europe, to great eclectic effect. *Rundbogenstil* was essentially a 'round arched' style, made popular in northern Germany in the early nineteenth century by architects exploiting the tensions between Greek Classicism and Gothic. It combined elements from Byzantine, Romanesque, Lombardic and early Italian Renaissance buildings (Willingham, in Dunstan 1996: 52-53).

In adopting ecclesiastical principles of design, the Exhibition Building was like many British and Australian exhibition buildings. It was designed to clearly express the ideals developed at the Crystal Palace and its cruciform plan, nave, transepts and fanlight windows reflected the design of that building (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 49-50; Dunstan 1996:14). The 1880 Exhibition Building combined the ecclesiastic and secular traditions of the

cathedral or temple with the banqueting hall, the Renaissance palace, gallery and library. In its cruciform plan, with nave, aisles, transepts, dome, and clerestory lighting, it was more a temple to industry than a palace (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 49-50).

Reed and Barnes' building was planned with long central naves and stunted transepts, wide side aisles at ground floor level and continuous galleries at first floor level, and triumphal entrance porticoes at the four extremities of the cross and corner pavilions. A soaring octagonal dome was placed centrally over the arched brick crossing of the Exhibition Building. Access to the roof below the dome was provided via a staircase in the south portal, allowing for spectacular views of the city. The principal entrance to the building faced south towards the city, with a massive portico functioning both as a triumphal arch and temple front (Dunstan 1996: 53).

The main building, as it currently exists, is cruciform in plan, comprising a pair of elongated rectangular wings, extending east and west, with a transept to the north and a truncated transept to the south (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 39).

The Southern Elevation

The southern elevation consists of a large and prominent central porch, flanked by elongated nave wings that each extend to form tower-like square pavilions. The central porch consists of a large round-arched opening that extends back into the building to reveal a large portal. The portal consists of a semicircular fanlight, with peacock-like pattern of radiating ellipses and circles, detail that derives originally from the Crystal Palace of London in 1851. Below the fanlight, the wall is divided by piers to form three wide rectangular doorways, each of which contains a pair of six-panel timber doors. The bays on either side of the portal arch rise over three levels. At the ground level, each has a large arched opening, flanked by piers, with a bipartite window and a glazed fanlight above. The second level has a pair of Corinthian pilasters flanking a smaller arched window, which is surrounded by an ornate aedicule composed of a moulded and bracketed sill, a second pair of Corinthian pilasters, and a cornice surmounted by a scrolled disc. The third level of each bay projects above the parapet line to form a small belvedere, containing a pair of narrow windows with round arched heads and a continuous archivolt (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 39-42).

The projecting pavilions that terminate the south elevation have rounded corners. At the ground level, the pavilions have the same tripartite window and blind fanlight detail that is repeated throughout the building. At the attic storey, the pavilions have three round-arched windows with a continuous archivolt. At each side of the attic storey is a pair of narrow piers with reversed volutes at their bases. This supports a heavy dentillated cornice, above which is a low parapet wall with a row of urns. The pavilions have broad mansard roofs, clad in corrugated galvanised iron and surmounted by a flagpole (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 39-42).

The Northern Elevation

The north elevation is largely identical to the south. The main differences are the presence of the projecting northern transept and a porch on either side forming a doorway. The transept porch is similar, although smaller and less ornate, than the corresponding porch on the southern elevation. On the north porch, the parapet belvederes are smaller, with only one window rather than a pair, the stairwell bays have plain piers instead of Corinthian pilasters, and the windows lack the highly ornamented aedicule (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 42).

South Elevation with partial plans. (40)

The East and West Sides

The east and west sides of the Exhibition Building are similar to the north and south sides in that they are symmetrical and have the same overall composition, although horizontally smaller in scale, of a central porch, flanked by bays and terminated by square corner pavilions. There are three bays between the corner pavilions and the central porches, detailed in a similar manner as the ground floor bays elsewhere on the building. The east and west porches have round-arched portals that, unlike their north and south counterparts, are smaller in scale and devoid of decoration (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 43).

The Dome

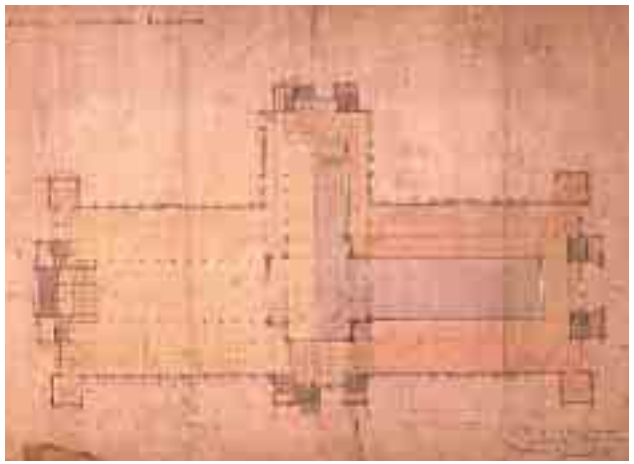
The octagonal drum of the dome rises 68 metres (223 feet) above the floor of the nave and is 18.3 metres (60 feet) in diameter. The dome rises up from an octagonal drum that is placed on a square base at the crossing point of the naves and transepts. The base has eight faces, each containing two bays, that each contain a pair of narrow round-arched windows. The dome is timber-framed and double-shelled, with an octagonal timber cupola at the apex. It was formed using cast iron and rendered masonry, with the cupola finished in gold leaf (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 45).

At the crossing are four round arches and arched pendentives from which the octagonal dome rises. Lunettes mark each of the four spokes of the structure. Their round arches, dropped below the dome arches, combine with the massive portal fanlights and the decorated timber roof trusses, to produce the effect of a four barrel vaulted ceilings, on what is in fact a simple gable roof (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 40).

The Interior-The Naves and Transepts

The existing Exhibition Building includes a pair of elongated projecting wings extending to the east and west (the eastern and western naves), and a pair of shorter projecting wings (the northern and southern transepts). Although these wings vary in length and width, they are largely identical in form, structure and

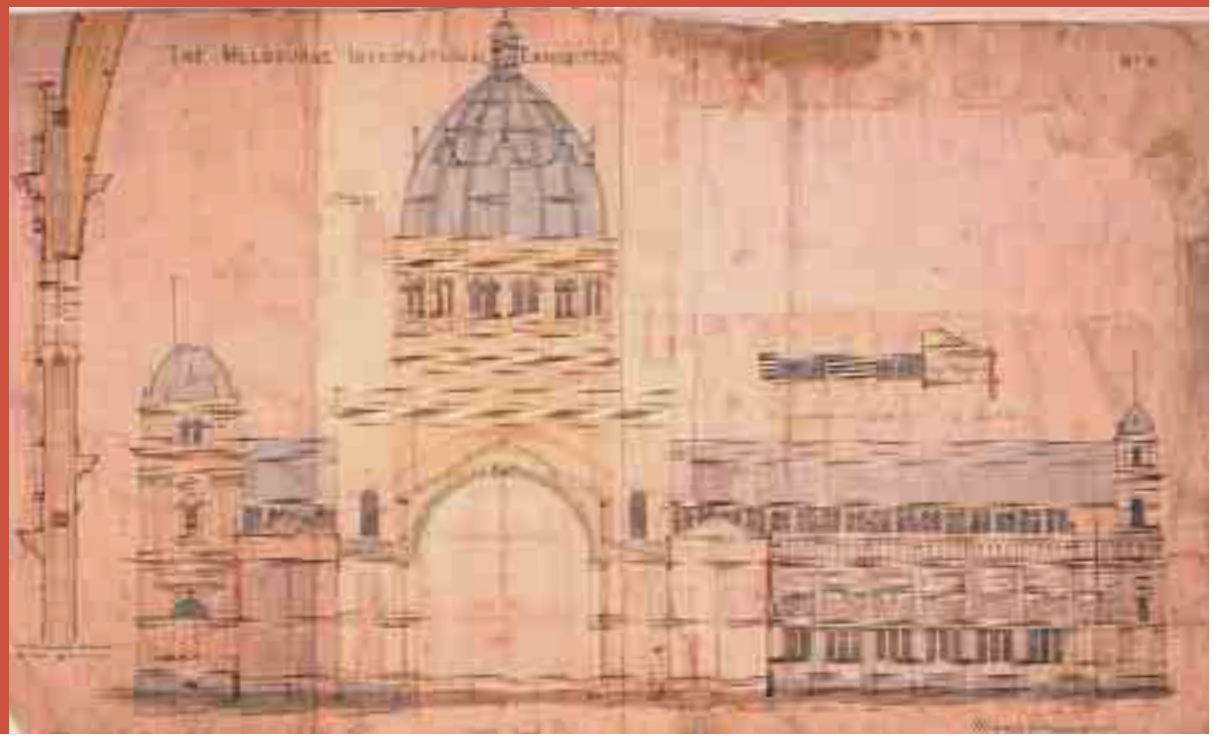
South Elevation. (41)



Floor plan. (42)

detailing. In section, the composition of these spaces is similar to a traditional Roman basilica or Gothic cathedral form: a tall central space with an exposed raked ceiling that is flanked by a pair of lower aisles. These aisles comprise a wide passage at ground level, with a mezzanine gallery above. The height difference between the ceiling of the central space and the ceiling of the aisles is infilled with a continuous clerestory (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 47).

The flanking aisles are three bays wide in the eastern and western naves. In the smaller northern and southern transepts the galleries are only one bay wide. The bays are marked by rows of square timber posts with moulded capitals and plinths, and stop-chamfered shafts. At the upper (gallery) level, there is a secondary clerestory in the external wall, comprised of a continuous row of narrow windows along the ceiling line. On the opposite side of the gallery, overlooking the nave proper, an open timber-framed balustrade runs between the timber posts.



Section of the nave. (43)

Directly above the gallery is the main clerestory, which corresponds to the bays formed by the rows of timber posts. Each clerestory bay contains two pairs of rectangular timber-framed windows. Beyond the clerestory windows and the ceiling line of the gallery below is a rectangular spandrel lined with horizontal beaded timber boards (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 47).

The roof framing of the central nave, which springs from the clerestory, also corresponds to the repetitive bays marked by the timber posts. Each bay has a pair of deep rafters with a collar-beam that straddles the apex, and a pair of collar-braces at the lower ends that, in turn, are connected by a horizontal metal tie rod. This creates a roof truss of a distinctive canted profile that is further embellished by ornamental timber fretwork in imitation of four-centred arches and pendants. Running perpendicular across the top of the trusses is a row of narrow timber purlins that support a band of secondary rafters.

Beyond these rafters is the exposed roof sarking, in the form of narrow timber lining boards (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 47).

At the extreme end wall of each nave and transept, there is a large and slightly recessed archway that contains the distinctive semicircular fanlight, with its peacock-like pattern of radiating ellipses, circles and tear-shaped elements. The fanlight in the northern transept is proportionally smaller than those in the corresponding three wings. Underneath each of these fanlights is an area of blank wall, along which runs an uncovered walkway that connects the covered mezzanine galleries on each side. In the southern transept, western and eastern naves, the principal entrances to the building are located immediately below these walkways. Each of these entrances consists of three wide rectangular doorways, each of which, contain a pair of timber six-panel doors (Allom Lovell and Associates 1999: 47).

The Carlton Gardens

The Carlton Gardens, the setting for the Royal Exhibition Building, are significant for their nineteenth century 'Gardenesque' style featuring specimen trees, parterre garden beds, in a symmetrical design with the use of axial views and foci. 'Gardenesque' is a term applied to a garden design style that became popular in England in the 1840s. It developed from the intense interest in botany, horticulture, floristry and floriculture, with garden designs reflecting scientific interest rather than mythical concepts (Heritage Victoria, Carlton Gardens File).

The landscape features outstanding tree avenues, rows and specimen trees on the lawns, two lakes with islands, shrubberies and elaborate annual bedding displays along the southern promenade. It consists of two main sections to the north and south of the Royal Exhibition Building. Each of the north and south gardens has a formal layout of paths, including a wide avenue walk, lined with plane trees on the main north-south axis, forming the main entrance to the building from Victoria Street (Heritage Victoria, Carlton Gardens File).

The gardens also consist of a number of fountains and other architectural and landscape features, including the Hochgurtel Fountain (1880), the remnant cast iron perimeter fence and remaining bluestone plinth (1880), the French Fountain (1880), the Woods Freestone Exhibit (1881), the rediscovered Westgarth Memorial Drinking Fountain (1888), the Curator's Lodge (c.1890), two lakes with islands and numerous shrub beds, all linked by a series of geometric and linear paths (Heritage Victoria, Carlton Gardens File; Carlton Gardens Conservation Management Plan: 2002: 3).

The nineteenth century path layout is enhanced by magnificent avenues of trees, including the grand avenue of twenty-six plane trees that frames the Exhibition Building dome, elms, cedar, white poplar, English oak and an uncommon avenue of thirty five Turkey oaks. Carlton Gardens is a notable creative achievement, demonstrating skilful garden design and a landscape character that features plantings of pines, cedar, *Araucaria*, cypress, gums, figs, pepper trees, elms, planes, oaks, poplars,

Canary Island date palms and Washington palms, that display contrasting colours and forms that enhances the Gardens (Heritage Victoria, Carlton Gardens File).

The Carlton Gardens area as a whole is a significant demonstration of the Gardenesque style. Its nineteenth century garden style includes the virtually intact path system, the high numbers of trees extant on the site from the 1880s and 1890 layout, reconstructed parterre garden beds, significant avenues including the southern carriage drive and *'Grande Allée'* specimen and cluster trees, two ponds and three fountains (the Hochgurtel Fountain, the French Fountain and the Westgarth Fountain). The remnants of the bedding displays near the Exhibition Building are also notable features, illustrating typical Gardenesque landscape elements (John Patrick & Allom Lovell 2002: 3).

In its present configuration, the South Garden is principally the work of Reed and Barnes. It also reflects major input from the leading nineteenth century horticulturalist and designer, William Sangster, especially in the placement and selection of trees, many of which have survived through to present day. The unity of the symmetrical design with its use of axial views and central focus, particularly the grand avenue, southern and eastern forecourts and French and Hochgurtel Fountains, are integral elements of the original 1880 scheme (John Patrick & Allom Lovell 2002: 4).

The Hochgurtel Fountain, at the time the largest and most elaborate fountain in Australia, was installed for the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition. Centrally located at the focus of the southern pathway system, its modelling and iconography incorporate mythological tritons, young boys representing commerce, industry, science and arts, native birds, platypi and ferns (John Patrick & Allom Lovell 2002: 4).

In its current form, the North Garden remains as a largely intact public park established in the late nineteenth century after removal of the northernmost exhibition annexes. The design for the area is attributed to Clement Hodgkinson. Nicholas Bickford and John Guilfoyle were subsequently charged with re-establishing Hodgkinson's layout. The site features a number of elements of individual significance, including oak, elm and other mature treed avenues that cross the site, the Curator's Lodge, remnant cast iron perimeter fencing from the 1880 Exhibition and internal rod fencing to the beds (John Patrick & Allom Lovell 2002: 4).

Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens, 1880. (44)

3B HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

The history of the international exhibition phenomenon has been widely written about (see Geppert, Coffey and Lau 2002, comprehensive bibliography). To place the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens within their historic context, we first provide a brief overview of the history of international exhibitions (1851-1915). This is based largely on Briggs (2002 manuscript). A copy of the complete text can be found in Appendix 2.

The History of International Exhibitions (Briggs, 2002 manuscript)

The sequence

The concept of the international exhibition had a long gestation, evolving slowly as a cultural phenomenon for almost a century before the first event took place, in 1851. The Society of Arts held the first formal display of manufactured goods in 1756-7 in London. In subsequent decades similar displays followed in other parts of Britain, France and elsewhere in Western Europe.

French national exhibitions were widely used as a means to display to a mass audience, the achievements of modern industrial development. The first exhibition of manufactured goods took place in 1798, with subsequent fairs held intermittently throughout the nineteenth

century. The eleventh national French fair attracted over 4,500 exhibitors in 1849. Similar national exhibitions did not develop in England, although there were, from about 1820, exhibitions sponsored by mechanics institutes and artisans schools.

The development of exhibitions as a concept during this time paralleled a nineteenth century preoccupation with display, and was demonstrated through the development of institutions such as museums, art gallery, dioramas and cycloramas. The international exhibition movement was an extension of the principles of classification and comparison developed by eighteenth century scientists. Contemplation of objects was intended to inspire feelings of human progress and achievement.

Once the idea became established, many exhibitions were held between 1851 and 1915, each with its own identity, all with features in common. They were landmark events in history both for countries at a national level and for the general populace. Yet they were far more than events. With many links between them, they stand out in retrospect as part of a significant economic, social and cultural process. It is possible to identify an 'exhibition era', the time-unit usually applied to it. The adjective 'international', always given emphasis, helps to define it. The exhibitions set out to chart visually 'material and moral progress', within a world context.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 at the Crystal Palace is usually recognised as the first event in an international sequence. The objects collected inside the building were carefully classified, representing the material culture of the age. Many contemporaries, in retrospect, viewed the Great Exhibition as a turning point in human history, 'casting all its predecessors into the shade'. The purpose of the 1851 Exhibition was to display 'the industry of all nations'. This was industry in its broadest sense — a human quality rather than an economic sector. Organisers for this and all subsequent exhibitions saw it as their mission to register visually the unprecedented changes taking place in society, with emphasis on work, on ingenuity, innovation, and science as 'art'.

Between the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the Paris Exposition of 1900 there were at least 53 international exhibitions. The word 'Palace' persisted throughout the Exhibition era. New York had its own Crystal Palace in 1853 and most exhibitions had a 'Palace of Industry' and a 'Palace of the Arts' after the Paris 1855 Exposition. By the 1870s international exhibitions had acquired a cluster of features. Buildings were set in planned spaces, often including gardens. There were exhibition complexes with their own iconography, a part of history-domes, viewing platforms, national pavilions.

The dynamics of the international exhibition movement were such that the experiences, ideas and values expressed at each event were transmitted and enlarged upon from one to the next. There were always observers, often known as exhibition 'commissioners', who at each exhibition reported what was happening, sometimes officially and always in letters. They identified particular points considered to be relevant to the planning and organisation of international exhibitions in their own countries. Communication between commissions in different countries was a basic ingredient in the exhibition era. This was a highly influential network, carrying out diplomatic as well as planning duties.

Work as well as imagination was always required from colonial commissioners. Their place within the State apparatus of their own countries varied, but their countries came to depend on them as they established authority in their own sphere, which often included libraries, museums and art galleries as well as exhibitions. The number of colonial exhibitions increased during the 1880s and 1890s. Unique and invaluable objects, treasures and displays were often acquired from exhibitions to form the basis of that country's permanent State collections.

The success of every exhibition depended on its power to attract visitors. Vienna's 1873 Exhibition failed to do so. Paris 1878 almost bankrupted the city. The Paris Exposition of 1900 was attended by over 50 million people, a smaller figure than had been hoped for (60 million), but nevertheless the largest attendance of any nineteenth-century exhibition. Public travel was becoming

Royal Exhibition Building in its garden setting today. (45)

international, but mass tourism was to be a late-twentieth century phenomenon.

When people travelled to exhibitions, they were not mere observers. They were participants. The nature of the entertainment to be found inside and outside the exhibition space, not all of it 'respectable', sometimes shocked visitors, but entertainment contributed to the exhibition atmosphere. This made the exhibition experience more intense. It also encouraged what later became called 'consumerism'. There were food and drinks never tasted before, souvenirs to purchase. Spending was encouraged at a time when thrift was being extolled as a complement to work. However, it was thought proper that visitors had to be informed and educated as well as entertained.

A distrust of exhibitions began to form at the end of the nineteenth century in most countries other than the United States. There was no longer a confident belief in 'progress'. There was an increasing awareness of the element of drudgery in most people's work, and of the existence of poverty in the midst of plenty. Between 1901 and 1915, of around seventeen exhibitions calling themselves international, seven were held in the United States.

The View from Melbourne: an International Perspective

Leaders of opinion in the Australian colonies had been interested in exhibitions from the time of the opening of the Crystal Palace onwards. From the distant periphery of empire, Australian exhibits made their way to London in 1851 and in 1862, triumphing over distance as did the telegraphic cable that reached Melbourne in July 1872. Soon foreign exhibits made their way to exhibitions in Sydney and Melbourne.

As early as 1854, Melbourne had erected its own first exhibition building at the site of the later Royal Mint in William Street, the design of which was based on that of the Crystal Palace in London. The exhibition building had 200 ornamental windows and was lit by 306 gaslights. An exhibition, modest in scale-there were 428 exhibits, mainly local industrial and agricultural products-was held in that year, and was viewed by 40 000 people. Some of these exhibits went to Paris for the 1855 Exhibition.

Exhibitions in Melbourne became a regular occurrence, becoming grander and larger each time. These exhibitions were intercolonial in nature, that is, exchanges between the Australasian colonies. The first exhibition building was closed and demolished in 1861 as it was deemed too small for future exhibitions. Sir Redmond Barry, founder and trustee of the Public Library and Museum, and Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, offered the grounds of the Public Library and Museum to serve as a temporary venue for the exhibitions. In 1866, 1872 and 1875 exhibitions were held in the grounds of the Public Library (now the State Library of Victoria). Each of the exhibitions preceded one overseas, to which the Victorian exhibits were sent (Paris Exposition Universelle 1867, London International Exhibition 1872 and Philadelphia Centennial International Exhibition 1876).

At the close of the 1875 exhibition, Barry announced that as he was retiring it would be the last at which he would officiate as either president or commissioner. He suggested that steps be taken immediately to a secure a site where future exhibitions could be held (Dunstan 1996:24). In 1877, a plan for constructing a large permanent exhibition space was submitted to the Victorian Parliament, to be opened in 1879.

At the same time as a new site for future exhibitions was being sought, there was a strong desire to hold a truly international exhibition in Melbourne, rather than exhibitions restricted to the Australasian colonies. Colonists inspired by exhibitions in Europe and the United States lobbied the Victorian Government and eventually gained support for the impressive Melbourne international exhibitions in 1880 and 1888.

These took place at a time when the city boomed. It was also a time when the Australian colonies were placing more emphasis, as indeed London then was, on empire and on imperial trade, and less on the doctrine of free trade that had been proclaimed with complete confidence in 1851. It had never been treated so confidently in Australia. Yet the timing of the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition was related less to what was happening in London than to the timing of the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876 and the Paris Exposition of 1878. It was sensibly thought that exhibits sent there might then make their way to Melbourne. This was a genuinely international preoccupation.

There had been a note of pride ten years earlier, as there was in most exhibition cities, in a message sent from the Victorian Commissioners to the Commissioners of the 1878 Paris Exposition. Melbourne, they stated, was now 'the site of a populous and well-built city presenting all the evidences of wealth and civilisation, taking rank with the foremost cities of the world'. 'The rapid progress of Australasia' was 'one of the marvels of modern times'. The increase of wealth and the advance of civilisation were part of a single process.

The same note was struck in 1880 by Sir William Clarke, the chairman of the Commissioners, who planned the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition. The site on which a new building was erected 'only a generation ago was part of an unknown forest in an unknown land'. This theme was taken up in a prize cantata, *Victoria*, with music by Leon Caron. Part I described the past, 'Victoria sleeping amidst the primeval solitudes and awakened by voices foretelling speedy discovery and development'. Part II described how Victoria, now Queen of the South, is discovered 'engaged in various pursuits'-pastoral, agricultural and industrial-and is approached by a company of nymphs, 'representing the various nations of the earth'.

On the opening day of the 1880 Exhibition twenty thousand people were in the streets watching a great procession led by two brass bands. The building itself, designed by Joseph Reed was of Beaux Arts inspiration, as Chicago, 1893, was to be, and there were 'aesthetic' sunflowers and lilies embellishing its dome and balconies. The interior decoration was complete with text and symbols that caught the essence of the exhibition experience. They included 'Victoria Welcomes all Nations', and 'All the Earth is Full of Thy Riches'. It has been fully described and its history can be found in Dunstan's *Victorian Icon* (1996).

The Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition of 1888 had more British and imperial resonance. A centennial exhibition to celebrate a century of Australian settlement history, it attracted over two million people, but it was necessary for the Victorian government to spend £250 000 on it, ten times the amount estimated, a sum that seemed absurd after the economic boom came to an end, as it did in 1889. There was a greater emphasis on culture than in 1880, particularly on music and painting. A choir of five thousand sang music old and new, and half a million people attended symphony concerts. There were over three thousand paintings on display, including works by artists like J.M.W. Turner, C. Lutyens and Frederic Leighton.

The fact that the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens housed a second exhibition on a larger scale in 1888 and that it survived both, though without the original 1880 interior décor, and that most other exhibition buildings elsewhere have not, gives it unique heritage value. The adjective 'royal' attached to it in 1980 adds to, rather than diminishes, its nineteenth-century significance.

Exhibitions that took place late in the exhibition era were less attached to the vision of peace than their predecessors. A Krupps gun had been displayed in the Crystal Palace in 1851 and an even bigger gun at the Paris Exposition of 1867. Now there were 'Armaments pavilions', labelled as such and said to be very popular with visitors. Few people, gazing into the future, had any intimation, however, of what the next war would be like, although it was plain long before 1914 that the exhibition era that began in 1851, was over. The passion to systematically relate past to present and present to future as a universal theme was burning itself out.

A sense of heritage

Most of the objects seen in the international exhibitions were quickly dispersed, and many of the buildings were destined from the start to be pulled down quickly. Much of the printed material surrounding the exhibitions was by its very nature ephemeral. Disaster by fire was common: the Sydney International Exhibition Building of 1879 burned down as early as 1882.

The objects on display at all international exhibitions came from all parts of the world and from the start included raw materials as well as finished articles and traditional as well as manufactured products. The role of power-driven industry-and of transportation-was emphasised in 'Palaces of Industry' where huge crowds could see not only static objects but machines at work. The values behind the exhibitions were international too. Work was hailed, mankind was treated as one and the future of mankind was explored.

As there was an international exhibition sequence, it is possible to trace not only the changing use of raw materials (rubber, for example, or aluminium) and new modes of production, both transformed through science, but changing attitudes to historic heritage and to the environment, to human relationships and, indeed, in language and values. The gospel of peace, one of the original themes of the international exhibition movement, rang hollow when there were popular pavilions devoted to war.

There were major changes in attitudes towards empire during the exhibition era, both at the centre and at the periphery. Although the Victorian colonists were loyal to the British Empire, they also began to think of themselves as 'independent Australian Britons', and to forge for themselves economic and other ties with countries outside Britain. The imperial element in international exhibitions became a more potent ingredient during the 1880s and 1890s. Colonies developed their independent outlook and orientation, with the Victorian colony leading the way and after 1888, forging its own trade routes with European countries besides Britain, and across the Pacific with Canada, where there was both a British and a French inheritance. Nationalism emerged within an international context, demonstrated by the number of international exhibitions in colonial countries. There was a persistent looking to the future and in the future was hope. The Royal Exhibition Building symbolises this for all such countries that held exhibitions.

In Australia, as in other countries, the international exhibitions were always matters of pride and of importance in forging a sense of Australia within an imperial and international context. They assisted in introducing the world to the Australian colonies. One of the most revealing accounts of the 1888 Exhibition was the official report on it by R Burdett Smith, New South Wales Executive Commissioner. Covering all sections of the Exhibition, it stressed 'the moral effects of the event'. New South Wales had a 'fine spirit of Australian patriotism [that] permeated all who had a responsible personal interest' in it, and stressed how it pointed towards 'harmonious relations with all parts of the civilised world'. It adds to the sense of heritage that after international exhibitions were no longer held at the Royal Exhibition Building, it was accorded additional significance when the first Australian Federal Parliament was opened there in 1901.

As the Royal Exhibition Building survives in its original Carlton Gardens setting, the building and gardens form part of an international heritage in their own right, as authentic survivals of the international exhibition era. More importantly, however, they bear witness to the

Preparing for the 1888 Exhibition. (46)

power of the great international exhibition phenomenon of the nineteenth century that led to countries reconsidering their place in the world. The need to display a country's technological and cultural wealth and to see that of others, still resonates today with the Expo movement managed by the Bureau International des Expositions (http://www.bie-paris.org/). The values associated with international exhibitions are still powerful and relevant. One of the last surviving memorials of the early exhibition movement, the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens, calls for full international recognition.

History of the Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne

Melbourne and its colonial context (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 47–50)

Melbourne's international exhibitions were held during a period of marked economic growth based on mineral and agricultural exports (gold, wool and wheat), stockmarket profits and real estate speculation. This was also a period of notable public building with projects such as the new Law Courts, Public Library, National Gallery, Town Hall, Treasury Building, Parliament House, Royal Mint and the Exhibition Buildings themselves, being undertaken in the second half of the nineteenth century. Wealth from a booming economy was directed to grand and symbolic projects intended to reflect the status and position of Melbourne, Victoria and the Australian colonies on the world stage. The 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition was to be a further expression of this.

From the beginning of its settlement in 1835, Melbourne had been a commercial centre, focused on the distribution of agricultural products. The gold rushes commencing in the 1850s rapidly led to Victoria becoming the commercial centre, and later the leading manufacturing centre, of Australia. The Victorian goldfields were extremely rich and enabled Melbourne to grow substantially, assisted by a flood of British capital. Melbourne became the commercial centre of Australasia and the South Pacific, financing ventures in other Australasian colonies and countries in the Pacific. The new technology of rail and

Melbourne, 1887, with Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens. (47)

Melbourne, 1866, with Carlton Gardens. (48)

The growth of Melbourne and the Central position of Carlton Gardens.

telephones enabled the merchants of Melbourne to expand their influence and power (Davison 1978: 11; Dingle 1984: 152-155). Its population grew from 77 000 in 1851 to nearly 900 000 by 1881 (Bate 1999: 27; Davison, et al 1987: 41). Its wealth and the size of the city led George Sala, influential London journalist, to dub it 'Marvellous Melbourne' (Sala 1885: 231ff).

Following the growth of Melbourne as a commercial centre, manufacturing industry became established and flourished. (Dingle 1984: 156) Within the space of only 25 years, Victoria went from a dispersed pastoral colony to a substantial industrial one with a metropolis of over 250 000 people that has been described as one of the world's great Victorian Cities (Briggs 1963: 277ff). The entire range of manufacturers was soon represented in Melbourne and the provincial towns, producing consumer goods, export commodities and light and heavy engineering products.

Melbourne's first international exhibition was planned before, but was opened after, Sydney's international

exhibition of 1879–80. The rapid construction and planning of Sydney's Garden Palace ensured it was opened before the Melbourne building. The Sydney buildings, although of a temporary nature and constructed in timber, were modelled on London's Crystal Palace. While the Sydney International Exhibition had a considerable international component, with fifteen countries and nine British colonies represented, its focus was primarily on agricultural and livestock production. The exhibition aimed, and to some extent achieved, greater non-British commercial interest in the Australian colonies, with new shipping runs being established in the years following. However two years after the exhibition's closure, the buildings burnt to the ground.

The 1870s were a period of recession throughout Europe. Victoria, as a major trading partner with Britain, was also affected by this downturn. Victorian Chief Secretary Graham Berry took up the idea of an international exhibition, partly as a response to a well-defined need for a permanent exhibition facility, and partly to provide stimulation to the economy. In 1877 Berry appointed prominent commissioners to oversee the Victorian exhibit at the forthcoming Paris exhibition and to consider the possibilities for a pre-departure local display. Shipping dates made the latter impossible, so as an alternative, the commissioners suggested Melbourne take the much larger step of hosting an international exhibition itself late in 1879.

By mid 1877 the site had been selected. Although Berry was delayed by Parliament, having his bill rejected in late 1877, he continued with preparations for the event. He sent one commissioner to Paris to gain commitments for attendance at the Melbourne exhibition and to review the facility. By May 1878 a successful design had been selected and the land secured. To ensure a truly international exhibition, Berry set up a London committee of the Commission. Its task was to ensure a large commitment from the major European industrial nations.

Melbourne's preparations for the exhibition were extensive. As exhibiting nations had to travel half-way around the world to attend, the Commissioners were charged with communicating the benefits to participants. Melbourne was successful in attracting every major European country, the United States of America and Japan. For these nations there was an opportunity to make firmer relationships with a prosperous new market and to display their cultural achievements in art and industry.

Such long voyages were fraught with danger. The American ship Eric the Red was chartered to carry a cargo of merchandise (tinned kerosene and turpentine, tobacco, Bristol's Sarsparella, Wheeler and Wilson sewing machines, axe-handles, furniture, cases of silver plate, toys, pianos and organs, carriages and wagons) for the 1880 exhibition. However it was wrecked on Cape Otway Reef on 4 September 1880 due to navigational error, with the loss of four lives. As a result of the non-arrival of most of their prize exhibits, the American exhibition space was described rather kindly by one reporter as having "ample promenading space" (*Portland Guardian* 7 September 1880: 2; Dunstan 1996: 123; Cahir, in press).

Another ship bringing exhibits from England, the Loch Ard, also sunk on the way to Melbourne, off the western coast of Victoria on 1 June 1878. The loss of forty-seven lives made it one of Victoria's worst shipwrecks. Much of the cargo consisted of ceramics that Minton intended to be part of their exhibit in the British pavilion. In particular, a rare 153 cm high majolica peacock that was intended to be the main exhibit, was lost. The peacock and other Minton exhibits such as encaustic tiles have since been recovered by archaeologists and are on display at the Warrnambool Maritime Museum (Sotheby's 1988; Heritage Victoria Loch Ard Shipwreck file).

The exhibitions were fundamentally an urban phenomenon, and the colonies of Australia were amongst the most urbanised regions in the world in the nineteenth century. When Melbourne chose to stage its own international exhibitions it was declaring its equality with the notable cities of the world.

The 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition buildings were erected to present a display of Australian and international achievements that would mark Victoria's entry onto the world stage and its commercial markets. Unlike many international exhibitions, part of the Melbourne exhibition halls were conceived as a permanent structure that, although purpose-built for a one-off event, would have a future role in the cultural activities of the burgeoning metropolis.

The Exhibition Building was designed to clearly express the ideals developed at the Crystal Palace, such as the large fanlight windows at each end of the nave and transepts.

Melbourne and the spread of technology

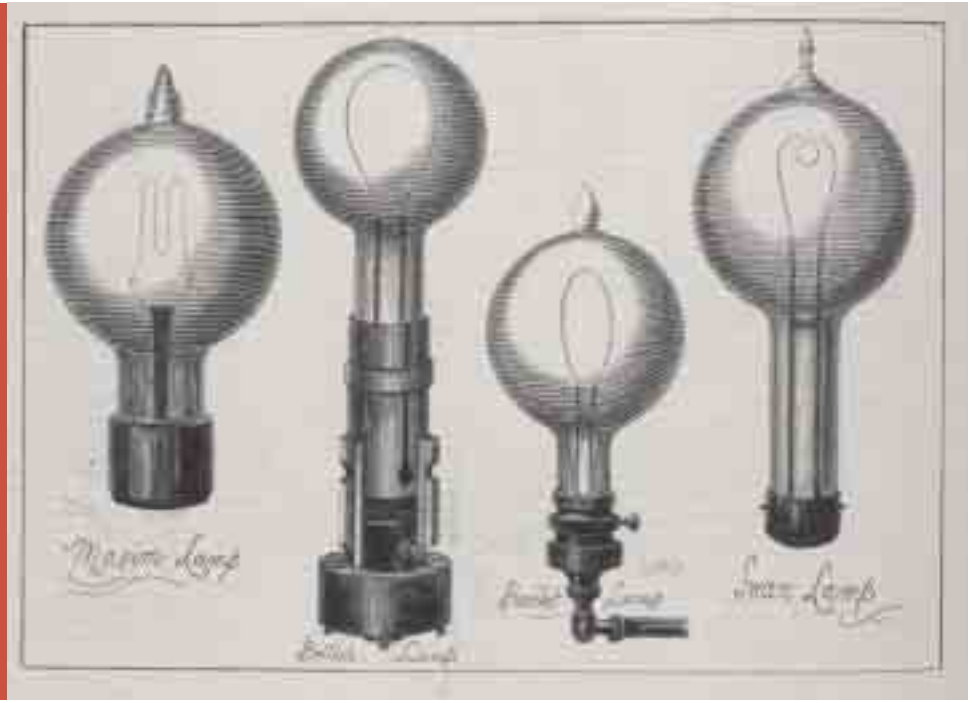
Technological innovations were a major feature at international exhibitions, and the exhibitions facilitated the transfer of this technology around the world. Hoffenberg (2001: 166–167) notes that

> Visitors from around the world observed and operated "machines-in-motion", including ones for milling, cutting, and carding woollen and worsted products, printing the *Times*, crafting pottery, brewing beer, and extracting gold.

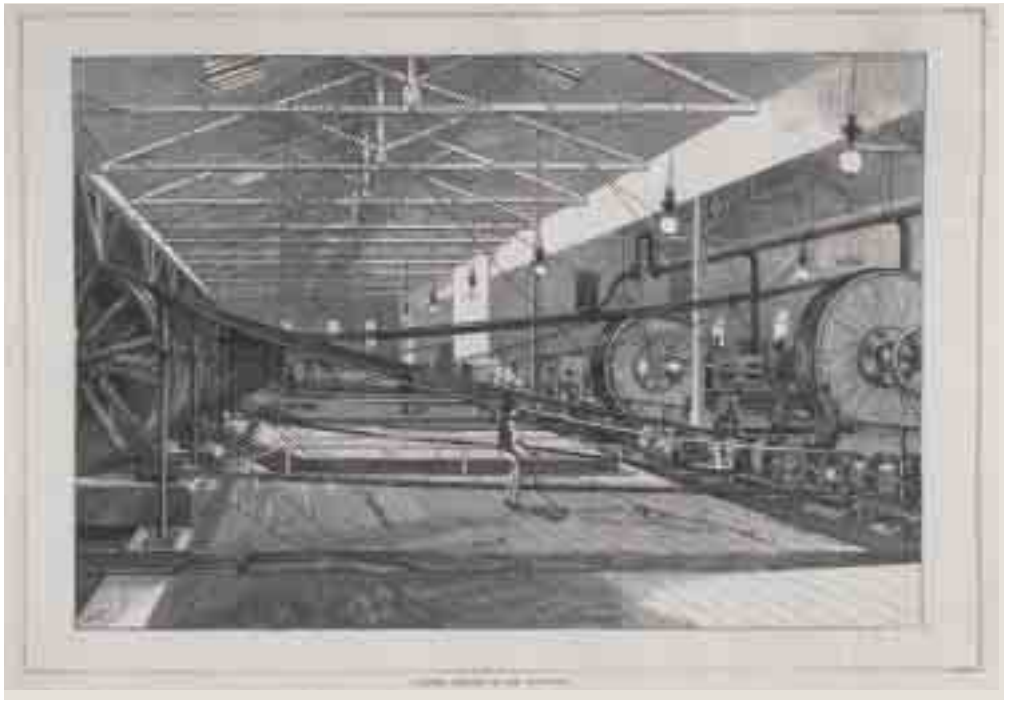
In England and the Australian colonies, exhibits of machines were very popular and their exhibition often led to purchases and applications (Hoffenberg 2001: 169).

Australian colonists visited international exhibitions abroad, eying the various displays of "machines-in-motion", with a view to using them back in Australia. At the time of the Paris Exposition of 1878, an executive commissioner from New South Wales is reported as informing officials in Sydney that the colony's exhibition would give the colonists a chance to study and learn from the machinery, instruments and apparatus that would be brought to Sydney from all over the world (Hoffenberg 2001: 166).

Electricity was at that time one of the marvellous, new technological inventions, and provides a good example of the role of international exhibitions in facilitating its popularisation. Alexander Dobbie, an engineer and machinist from South Australia, remarked of the 1878 Paris Exposition that Thomas Edison's exhibits were 'intensely interesting' and 'always honoured with admiring crowds' (Hoffenberg 2001: 166). The idea of using electricity as a drawcard was picked up by the organisers of Melbourne's international exhibitions.



Electric lamps at Melbourne Electrical Exhibition 1882. (49)



Electric lighting at Melbourne Exhibition 1888. (50)

The1878 Paris Exhibition commemorated its opening with a display of 300 street lights-carbon lamps using electricity. In 1880 at Melbourne, carbon arc lamps were used internally to facilitate construction but as with previous international exhibitions, the hours of attendance were ruled by natural light. Gas provided lighting for functions but not exhibits.

In 1884, the Trustees in Melbourne called tenders for the electrification of the building. It was not until 1888 that this eventuated, for the exhibition that would celebrate the centenary of European colonisation of Australia. The permanent buildings of the 1880 exhibition were to be used again and new temporary annexes added, much in the same manner as in 1880. However the Commissioners made an early decision to provide for night attendance by use of electricity. An indication of the importance of this decision can be gleaned from the March 1888 pre-opening estimates for expenditure. New buildings would cost 87 759 pounds, and electric lighting 57 894 pounds, a massive 40% of building expenditure. The electrical installation and generating plants were the most popular features of the exhibition. Power was generated on site by three, 500-horse power, twin cylinder steam engines, driving the generators that supplied 1000 arc lamps and 3 040 incandescent globes, taking advantage of the advances in lighting made by Edison with the incandescent globe in 1881(McCann 1994: 74).

Melbourne had been very early in the utilisation of electricity for power. In August 1879, a football match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground was watched "beneath a wondrous illumination of electric lamps". Small steam driven, direct current electricity generation plants had been built in the industrial areas of the city in the early 1880s. By 1888, Adelaide, the capital city of South Australia, had hosted the small Adelaide Juvenile Industrial Exhibition, with night lighting made possible by electricity. Its success had prompted Melbourne's determination to electrically light its centenary exhibition of 1888, claimed to be the largest installation of arc lighting in the world (*Argus* 12 July, 2 August 1888). For the first time, an international exhibition could be lit at night. In addition, the Exhibition Building's exterior was outlined in lights, and this was an additional popular attraction (Dunstan 1996: 201ff).

The mastery of this system of power marked the beginning of the technological age. Electricity transformed the way in which international exhibitions would be presented, and their built form. Towers would become dominant, to be highlighted by night lighting as landmarks, and the building image would take over from the contents to be displayed. This could be seen in the 1889 Paris Exposition (Findling and Pelle 1990: 114).

The Royal Exhibition Building: 1888 to the present day (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 74–76)

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Royal Exhibition Building had hosted two international and numerous locally based exhibitions. The Trustees had perceived the need to give the site a range of viable uses and an Aquarium and an Ethnological Collection were installed within a small part of the permanent buildings in 1885. Concerts, gatherings, exhibitions, fetes and further extensions to the museum and permanent art gallery continued. A Cyclorama was added in 1892. Most of these subsidiary functions were located in the 1880 Machinery Hall that formed the eastern annex of the Great Hall. The space between had been redeveloped as an oval and cycle track. The 1880 Industrial Hall remained primarily as an exhibition forum. It was also used for musical concerts and gatherings that required a huge space.

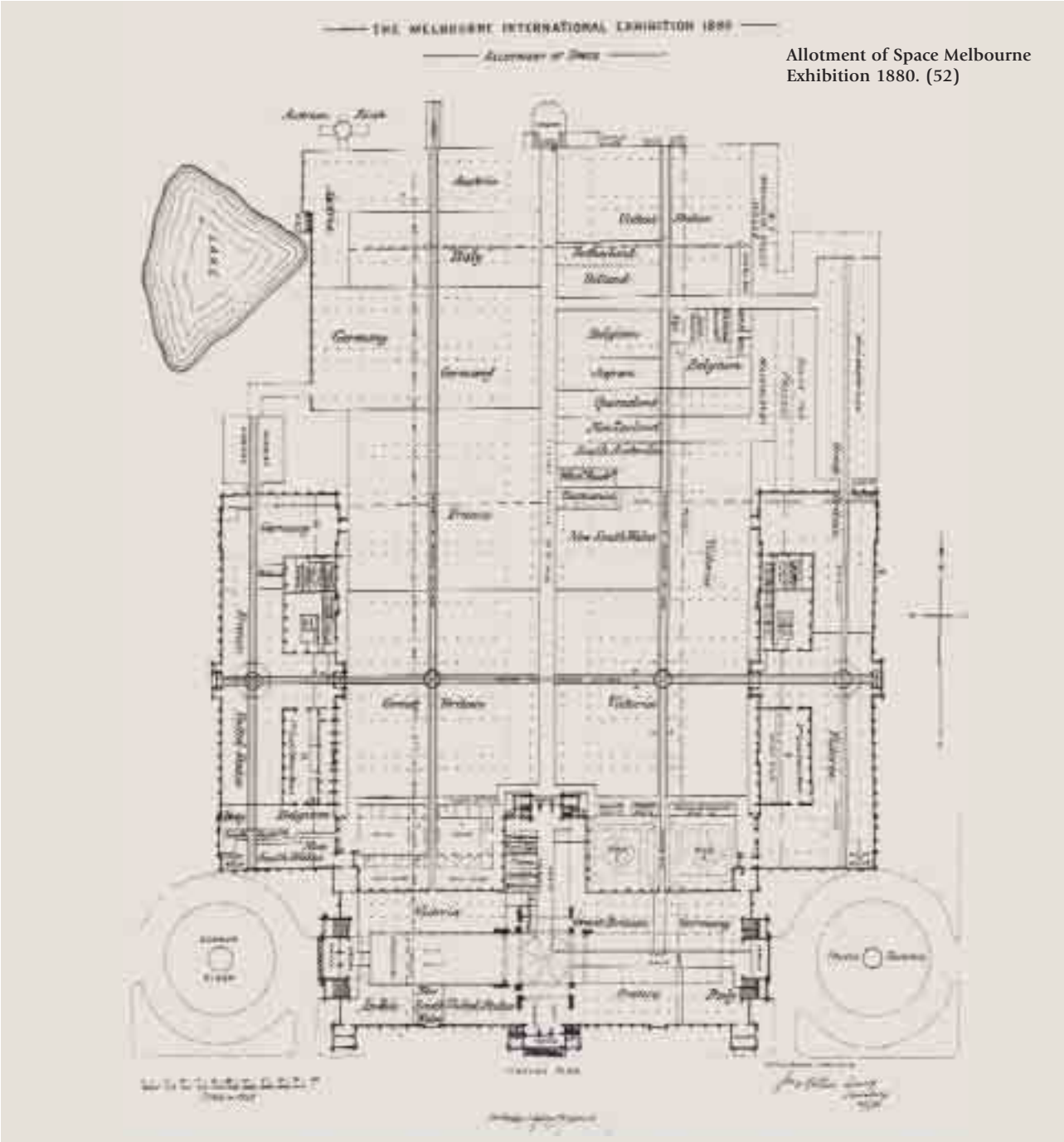
Opening of Federal Parliament, 1 May 1901

On 9 May 1901 the Duke of York presided over the opening of the first Federal Parliament of the six colonies of Australia, which had federated to form the Commonwealth of Australia. Two massive paintings, one by Tom Roberts (now in the collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on loan to the Australian people), and one by Charles Nuttall (which now hangs on the mezzanine of the Royal Exhibition Building), memorialised this event). The new Federal Parliament sat in the Victorian Parliament Houses, and the State Government of Victoria sat in the western annex of the Great Hall, until the Federal Government vacated the State Parliament building and moved to the purpose-built new capital, Canberra, in 1927.

In the early twentieth century, a hedged maze, eight years in preparation, was opened in front of the eastern entrance and proved a popular attraction. It remained for fifty years, to be replaced by a car park. In 1912, the first of Victoria's motor shows, showcasing the newest in automobiles, were held in the exhibition buildings and continued to be held annually until a new, larger Melbourne Exhibition Centre was opened in 1995 on the Yarra River.

In 1919 the Royal Exhibition Building was used as fever hospital to cope with 1800 patients infected with the deadly influenza virus (Spanish flu). Following the First World War, part of the eastern annex became a temporary home for the collection of war memorabilia brought back by returned soldiers. The exhibition of First World War relics enabled the historian CEW Bean to pressure the Commonwealth to agree to create the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. The Royal Exhibition Building remained the principal store for the Australian War Memorial until the building in Canberra was finally opened in 1941, was its head office until the

Opening of Australia's Federal Parliament, 1901. (51)



Allotment of Space Melbourne Exhibition 1880. (52)

1930s and its Melbourne office until 1971. During the interwar years, musical concerts, the Aquarium, the ballroom and the Cyclorama continued to attract visitors to the building. Bicycle and motorcycle races were held on the oval on the north side of the building.

In 1940 the Royal Exhibition Building was used for temporary troop accommodation. By the end of that year it had been requisitioned under National Security Regulations for the Royal Australian Air Force to be used for barracks and training. Extensive temporary buildings were erected on the oval between the two former machinery halls. At the end of World War II, the site returned to the management of the Exhibition Trustees. The building was in need of repair and a new direction. Although the Home Show and the Motor Show continued to be major exhibition events, and the building was also used for annual school and university examinations. A mixed collection of uses and a variety of buildings prevented a more coordinated use. Dancing continued in the ballroom; basketball and badminton were played every night; some government agencies continued their occupancy; and other government departments used the building for storage.

From 1949 to 1962, the site became a major migrant reception centre, utilising the Royal Australian Air Force's temporary huts on the oval. It escaped damage from the fire that destroyed the Aquarium in 1953. The Great Hall and a new stadium annex were used as a venue for weightlifting and basketball during the 1956 Olympic Games.

Exhibition activities received a boost after the removal of the migrant centre, with the construction of a new western annex, partly attached to the main hall. A further injection of funds also occurred in 1951 when the City of Melbourne staged a ball for the then Princess Elizabeth. The new ballroom complex replaced the 'Palais Royale' with the 'Royal Ballroom'. This was to have a short life. In 1979 the remnants of the 1880 eastern machinery hall and its ballroom alterations were demolished for the construction of a convention centre and an increase in on-ground car parking.

A new direction for the Royal Exhibition Building came with national heritage listing of the building, following inclusion on the Register of the National Estate in 1975, and State listing in the Victorian Register of Government Buildings in 1982. The decision to demolish the remnants of the 1880 machinery hall within the Royal Ballroom brought protests from the National Trust and community groups. Despite the eventual demolition, an understanding of the cultural asset of the Exhibition Building began to grow, prompting the commissioning of a conservation analysis (Willingham 1983). A commitment to undertake conservation works began in 1982 (Dunstan 1996: passim).

In 1995 an architectural competition for a new Melbourne Museum to be located on part of the Carlton Gardens reserve was announced, and a design was selected. A freestanding building to the north of the 1880 structure was opened in 2000. The Royal Exhibition Building continued to be used as a venue for major exhibitions, trade fairs and public events, the anchor events being the biennial Melbourne International Contemporary Art Fair and the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, and as a part of the Museum's program of events.

The Carlton Gardens (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 63–74)

The land for the Carlton Gardens was initially reserved as part of Superintendent (later Lieutenant-Governor) Charles La Trobe's network of parks and gardens that enclosed the north and east edge of the fledgling town's centre. Due to a severe lack of funds, the government was unable to undertake any developmental works and most of the gardens remained undeveloped and unfenced. At this time, much native timber was removed and grazing by cattle and goats was a commonplace occupation of the land.

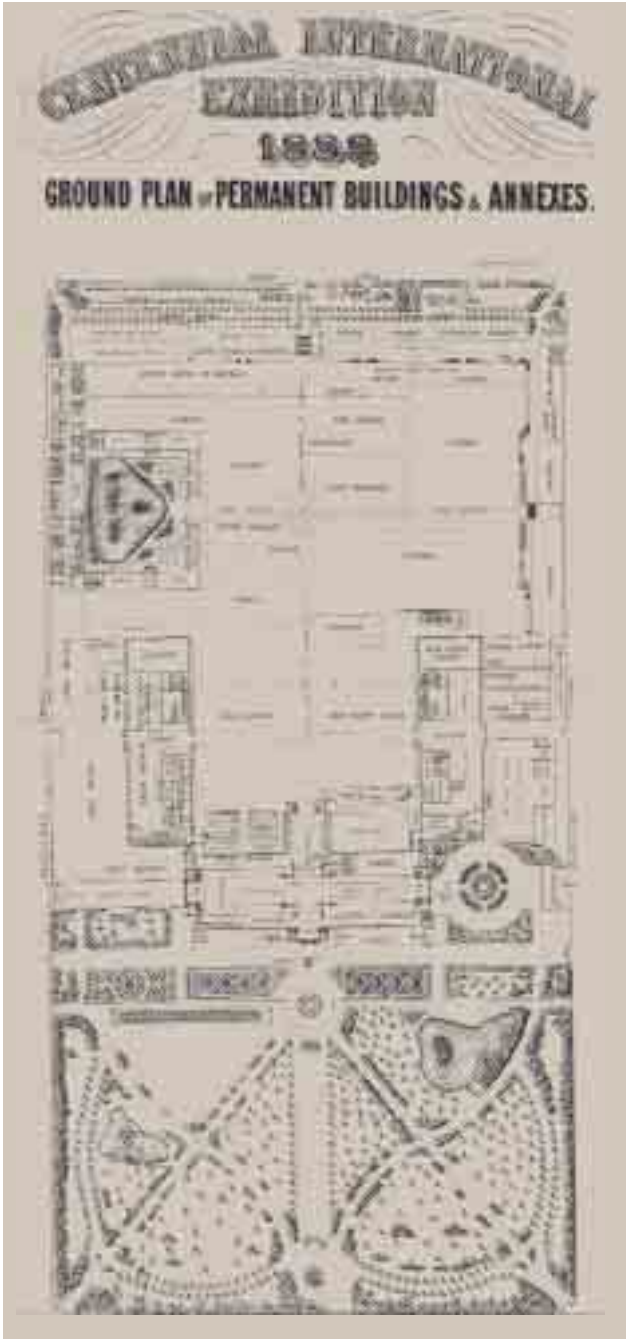
An area of 26 hectares (64 acres) was reserved for public purposes and the Carlton Gardens identified "as a recreation reserve" in the Legislative Council on 16 November 1852. By 1856 a simple paling fence and gates had been constructed. An 1855 government decision relinquished routine management, but not legal control, to the Melbourne City Council. The site was declared a permanent reserve and vested in the Melbourne City Council as trustees on 12 February 1864. One of the significant uses of the gardens at this stage was as a social meeting place and gathering point for the public.

By 1858 minimal works undertaken at the gardens included earthworks, the formation of some footpaths and the sowing of grass. The establishment of a heated greenhouse provided an opportunity to propagate additional plants for the gardens. A Council-sponsored ploughing competition in the park cleared areas in anticipation of development (Swanson 1984: 54–60).

The earliest landscape design for the Carlton Gardens, Melbourne, presented to the City's Park Lands Committee in 1857 by Edward La Trobe Bateman, appears to have been the basis for the original laying out of the gardens. A somewhat later plan prepared in 1874 by Hodgkinson of the Lands Department is thought to summarise his design intent. La Trobe Bateman made some alterations to his original plan in 1868. Early photographs show the path system as built, which included the main east-west path through the gardens connecting Queensberry to Gertrude Street to provide for pedestrians between Carlton and Fitzroy. Fencing of separate sections meant that the gardens could be locked at night and the major east-west path spine was left unlocked to allow for pedestrian access at all hours.

One of the most important developments for the site was Melbourne's connection in the 1860s to the Yan Yean water supply. A regular piped water supply opened up new possibilities in terms of the range of plants that could be grown in the city and also the type of architectural and water features such as elaborate fountains that could be introduced. With the connection to regular reticulation, Melbourne's first public drinking fountain was relocated from the city streets to the Carlton Gardens in 1863.

Photographs of the site from the 1860s and 1870s show the use of a range of plant species typical of the late nineteenth century, such as pines, cypress, poplars, and willows, contrasted with the distinctive foliage of cordyline



Ground plan for 1888 Melbourne Exhibition. (53)

and rockery plants. In 1873 Clement Hodgkinson formalised La Trobe Bateman's earlier layout, which led to the straightening of some of the sinuous paths, the re-organisation of ornamental features such as plant groups and shrubberies, the introduction of statuary on path axes and other points, the introduction of elaborate entrance gates, and the planting of tree avenues (cedars, elms). Large specimens of trees were transplanted from other public parks and garden so as to achieve a notable visual impact within the shortest period of time.

A large, roughly triangular lake encircled by paths in the north western-corner was created in an exhausted quarry. In this era, lakes were important not purely as decorative embellisments but as a watering source and for fire protection.

In November 1878 the Government passed an Act of Parliament to transfer control of the Gardens to the newly appointed Trustees of the Melbourne International Exhibition. Major building and development works were undertaken from 1878 until the Exhibition's opening in October 1880. The central and northernmost sections of the site were resumed for Exhibition purposes (construction of the permanent building, eastern and western annexes as well as temporary structures). The Exhibition Trustees had sole control over the entire Carlton Gardens for the duration of the Exhibition, after which they retained control over the central third, subsequently called the Royal Exhibition Gardens Reserve.

The new design by Joseph Reed provided a grand entrance to the building, linking it with the clear vista to the other central places of democracy and civic institution-Parliament and Government House, via a grande allée entrance in the form of three straight tree-lined paths, which formed powerful converging avenues from entrances in Victoria Street. To restate and reinforce the importance of this view, and the sense of the building as the focus of the gardens, a Promenade Deck was constructed at the base of the dome, to allow Exhibition visitors an opportunity to take in the full breadth of Melbourne's expanding urban architecture.

The axial layout of the building on a north-south alignment was carefully placed within the gardens on the high point of a ridgeline, so that the building's dome would become a landmark in the surrounding city. The adjacent gardens on the north and south sides of the Yarra River, the Fitzroy, Treasury and Parliament Gardens, Yarra Park and the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, all heightened the contrived device of the Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building as set within an endless boulevard of greenery and civic grandeur, reminiscent of European baroque palace gardens.

The firm of Sangster and Taylor, landscape designers and nurserymen, appointed in February 1879, were employed by architects Reed and Barnes to devise and implement the international exhibition planting scheme. Sangster proposed to straighten some of the existing paths and, with the removal of

> gloomy cypresses and dismal pines, make the grass grow on the waste places, and group bright flowers and plants with attractive foliage in shapely beds.

Huge quantities of soil were moved on the south side to provide a level podium for the front of the building (*Argus* 2 October 1880; Foster 1989: 68).

In its overall design theme, the gardens draw on landscape principles from the estates of the European aristocracy, combined with elements of the international style of the nineteenth century. The use of these features was intended to place Melbourne in an international context. The landscape elements included ornamental water features and the bold layout of paths lined with trees to form grand allées. Trees were also planted in clumps or groups, reminiscent of '*bosquets*' at Versailles, where ornamental groves of trees were used to encircle a central space of lawn, a fountain, sculpture or more elaborate set piece. The technique of transplanting large trees was employed in the Carlton Gardens, as in European gardens, to create the impression of a mature landscape that contrasted with the newly-created and short-lived colourful bedding plans, and the shrubberies and open expanses of lawn.

Adjacent to the main building were two distinctive and ornamental landscape features, in the form of large circular garden beds as floral features, surrounding a central fountain and kiosk. A similar circular arrangement was centrally placed at the south of the main entrance to accommodate the slightly off-line Spring Street and Carlton Garden axes, to form a '*patte d'oi*'. The five '*allées*' or streets of the park converge on the commissioned Melbourne International Exhibition fountain (later known as the Hochgurtel fountain). The '*patte d'oi*' design feature is based on the landscape principle demonstrated at France's King Louis XIV's royal garden of Versailles in the seventeenth century.

Trees were carefully chosen to line the main avenues, with tall deciduous plane trees for the central and most dominant vista, and smaller-growing trees such as white cedars selected for the lesser paths. The bedding and parterres placed in front of the main building consisted of 'sunken rectangles and triangles, bordered by abrupt terraces; and geometrical devices have been wrought out by means of bright-foliaged plants'. The colourful beds were intended to be viewed close up as well as from the Exhibition promenade deck. Colours changed from bed to bed as a result of careful plant selection. Circular beds on the east main entrance to the building contained grass, French bronzes, busts, statuary and a central fountain. On the west a mirror image design contained similar ornaments from Germany, placed around a central kiosk.

There was a rosary of standard, dwarf and pillar roses. Beyond these flower beds were broad lawns and water in the distance in the form of two lakes, the eastern one at a higher level, in which the building could be reflected. Planting around the eastern lake was of dragon trees, arums, palms, and fleshy-leaved plants, while on the lower ground to the west of the site, Sangster provided rockwork on the edge of the lake and created a semi-tropical setting with his selection of plants, such as yuccas, agaves, palms, pampas grass and bamboo (Foster 1989: 67–70).

Following the closure of the international exhibition on 30 April 1881, the north and south gardens reverted to the conservancy of the Metropolitan Parks Committee, under Hodgkinson, who drew up a restoration scheme in 1882 to be implemented by the curator, Mr Bickford.

In 1887, the Carlton Gardens land was resumed by Trustees once more and the northern garden was built over by temporary buildings for the 1888 Centennial International Exhibition. The southern section of the Carlton Gardens retained the layout as implemented for the 1880 Exhibition, although the now more mature trees substituted for the colourful bedding plants. In the northern garden and the linear ribbons on the eastern and western aspects of the building, the plantings were almost totally removed to provide for an enlarged area of exhibition buildings and displays. Other than the western lake and some tree plantings, the landscape features of the site were reduced and even the circular bed and German kiosk were removed from the western entrance to the Palace of Industry. The only compensation was a small fernery placed directly at the northern end of the central axis of the main building.

The northern garden was eventually restored in c1890 in line with Hodgkinson's 1882 design and the mature planting and the present layout in this part of the gardens is thought to date from this scheme. The simple pattern of tree-lined diagonal paths separating garden spaces provided pedestrian routes across the gardens linked to surrounding streets. This layout is essentially unchanged today.

Four marble statues, commissioned from the Australian sculptor Charles Summers, were placed around a bed at the eastern entrance along with the William Westgarth fountain of Aberdeen granite and the French fountain, erected in front of the East Portico (*Australasian Sketcher*, 14 June 1888: 89). A caretaker's brick lodge was built in the north-western corner for the new curator, John Guilfoyle, who occupied it in 1891. Security was not as high a priority in the south garden that had been left open at night since 1890.

In the twentieth century the building was subsequently used for a variety of government purposes. Gradually the Rathdowne Street garden frontage was replaced by car parking, a process that was all but complete by the 1950s. Alterations in the use of the eastern annexe occurred at various stages, which also largely determined the fate of its adjacent garden areas.

In 1925, the City of Melbourne removed the perimeter iron fence and ornamental gates installed for the 1880 Exhibition, but the bluestone plinth that defines the site remains largely intact (Swanson 1984: 64). Some sections along the Nicholson Street edge adjacent to the Melbourne Museum and car park entries were removed recently, as part of the construction of the new Museum.

A regeneration and restoration program was initiated in the 1920s and 1930s, which introduced a range of passive and active recreational activities and equipment such as playgrounds and tennis courts into the northern garden, along with later toilets and a works yard later. The north garden was dedicated to active recreation and service facilities while the south garden catered for passive recreation and decorative floriculture and horticulture.

The ornamental features of the gardens were simplified in the 1950s and 1960s, with some reduction of the overall floricultural attributes, such as the carpet beds, as the trees matured and provided more shading and a more dominant visual form in the garden. This period also saw the introduction of a number of civic functions. A Model Playground, constructed adjacent to the western lake in the 1950s, was added to with a Children's Traffic School, which was created out of the western lake.

Other relatively modest works were undertaken in a utilitarian fashion. These include a tennis court, toilets, a maintenance depot in the northern part of the site, and the replacement of the Children's Traffic School with a new adventure playground. None of these intrude in any major way on the significance of the site. The construction of the new Melbourne Museum on the northern side of the Royal Exhibition Building has had a dramatic impact on parts of the North Garden, with the northern face of the Museum close to diagonal avenues of chestnut-leaved oak and Dutch elm (John Patrick & Allom Lovell 2002: 8). A conservation management plan has recently been completed for the Carlton Gardens, with a major aim being to assist in the future care and development of the site.

3C FORM AND DATE OF THE MOST RECENT RECORDS OF THE PROPERTY (Meredith Gould Architects 1997: 76–77)

Archive

The Exhibition Trustees have maintained a collection of documents relating to the 1880, 1888, and all intervening and subsequent exhibitions at the site. Some original architectural drawings and contemporary artists drawings, as well as drawings for the majority of alterations that have occurred, have also been kept. The University of Melbourne Archive holds the original architectural drawings.

Some parts of the archives were destroyed in the Aquarium fire in 1953. The collection of over 3000 objects and several thousand files and images, was catalogued during the 1990s. This is known as the Royal Exhibition Building Collection. In 1996 Museum Victoria became responsible for the Royal Exhibition Building Collection. The objects are held within Museum Victoria's collections. Remnants of one of the temporary halls, which has been relocated a number of times, is now located in central Victoria and being used as part of a tram museum.

Major documentation work for the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens was commissioned by the Exhibition Trustees and edited by David Dunstan. Numerous contributions by experts in the fields of art, architecture, history, politics and music were published in 1996 as '*Victorian Icon, The Royal Exhibition Building Melbourne*'.

Conservation Management Plans

In 1987 a conservation policy for the Royal Exhibition Building, based on the conservation analysis prepared in 1983, was completed and subsequently adopted. With the handover of the management of the building to Museum Victoria in 1996, a conservation management plan was completed in 1999. It follows the format of Australia ICOMOS guidelines for the preparation of conservation plans and the principles set out in the Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter — Appendix 3).

A master plan for the Carlton Gardens was prepared by the City of Melbourne and adopted in 1991. A conservation analysis was completed for the Carlton Gardens in 2000 and a Conservation Management Plan completed in 2002.

3D PRESENT STATE OF CONSERVATION

The Royal Exhibition Building was first listed in the Victorian Government Buildings Register on 20 August 1982 and was transferred to the Victorian Heritage Register on 23 May 1998. The Carlton Gardens were added to the extent of registration on 21 March 2002.

Major conservation works to the dome, roof and the interior were completed in 1995 and were undertaken in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, and are consistent with the requirements of the Venice Charter. These works have returned the building to a stable, dry condition and presented the interior in its 1901 form.

The building has been adapted to continue to meet the demands of exhibiting. Some changes include replacing the floor a number of times over the past 120 years. The major servicing works of the mid 1980s have provided all the technological facilities needed to retain the exhibition function into the future.

Further conservation works were carried out in 1999–2001. These include the conservation and reinstatement of the rendered façades, fanlights, windows, doors and the east roof, and the completion of exterior painting.

3E POLICIES AND PROGRAMS RELATED TO THE PRESENTATION AND PROMOTION OF THE PROPERTY

The presence of the Melbourne Museum, headquarters for Museum Victoria, to the north of the Royal Exhibition Building, has increased the opportunities to present and promote the Royal Exhibition Building.

Museum Victoria is required by legislation, through the *Museums Act 1983* (Victoria), to control, manage, operate, promote, develop and maintain the Exhibition land as a place for the holding of public exhibitions and for the assembly, education, instruction, entertainment or recreation of the public or any sector of the public.

Museum Victoria's policy in relation to the promotion of the Royal Exhibition Building is to continue and increase both of its current dual uses: the first as a functioning commercial venue for events, exhibitions and trade fairs, and the second as a visitor attraction of immense heritage significance.

Promotion of the Building as a commercial venue is handled by dedicated venue management staff. Promotion of the Royal Exhibition Building as a visitor attraction is handled by the Museum's marketing and public relations departments, who are experienced in the promotion of cultural facilities.

Melbourne Museum has an extensive team of trained customer service staff who have developed a program of guided tours of the Royal Exhibition Building. These tours draw on the research and curatorship of Museum staff as well as the Royal Exhibition Building archives, which are managed by the Museum.

The Royal Exhibition Building is being interpreted by Museum Victoria, which organises regular tours of the building and has developed an interpretative display 'From World Fairs to Federation: The Royal Exhibition Building's First 21 Years', on display in the northern mezzanine of the building.

Museum Victoria also holds the copyright for the Royal Exhibition Building image collection. The Museum develops and manages all of its collections in trust for present and future generations, to which end it will provide conscientious care.

The Museum also has a range of staff with specialised skills in conservation, and building and facilities management, who are responsible for management of the capital works and on-going maintenance of the Building.

The Royal Exhibition Building is also highlighted on Melbourne's Golden Mile Heritage Walking Trail, which showcases the buildings and structures constructed with the enormous wealth created by the gold rushes in nineteenth century Victoria.