

FRIENDS◀REVIEW

JULY 2026



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Australian Federation of Friends of Museums

Patron Her Excellency the Honourable Ms. Sam Mostyn AC

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AUSTRALIAN
FEDERATION
OF FRIENDS
OF MUSEUMS

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Introducing new Co-Presidents



Sarah Maxwell (left) and Katherine Kingsle, AFFM's new Co-Presidents.

Former AFFM President Chad Mackenzie has had to step down as AFFM President as he has obtained a position outside the museums and galleries sector. Two other Art Gallery of NSW staff members, Katherine Kingsle and Sarah Maxwell, have stepped up as Co-Presidents and are continuing to support AFFM's programs, including the Professional Development webinars (see following).

Katherine Kingsle is a senior events producer with the Members program at the Art Gallery of NSW. She is responsible for developing and managing lectures, talks and other programs at the Art Gallery, including the Art Appreciation and Learning Curve lecture series. She was previously a senior programs producer with the public programs team at the Art Gallery of NSW.

Sarah Maxwell is the membership programs and partnerships manager with the Members program at the Art Gallery of NSW. For over 10 years, she has enjoyed producing and delivering a variety of engaging programs for members of the Art Gallery of NSW including lectures, talks, concerts, parties and offsite tours. In addition, she develops relationships with external partners and sponsors to further engage with members.

AFFM Professional Webinars

Dealing with difficult members was the subject of this year's first Professional Development webinar for AFFM members this year.

Hosted online by AFFM's new Co-Presidents, Sarah Maxwell and Katherine Kingsle of the Art Gallery Society, members discussed the challenges, common themes, underlying causes, learning opportunities and short- and longer-term strategies to address the issues that can arise, especially when changes to membership conditions or benefits are introduced.

Members shared their experiences of navigating changes to membership categories and benefits. Alex Reinhold of the National Gallery of Australia, which changed its membership structure and resulting benefits two years ago, said that its staff had had 'difficult conversations' with some longer-term members who did not always understand that the changes to membership actually offered more than had been the case in the past.

Sarah and Katherine also reported that some members were unhappy when, once the new Friends Lounge opened at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, they could no longer access free tea and coffee. A solution was found: members in a higher tier can obtain a voucher to entitle them to a free coffee or tea from the serviced bar.

Issues with digital membership cards or online booking and other platforms for communicating with members were also discussed. Bruce Waxman from the RAAF Museum at Point Cook said that some elderly members did not own or use computers with confidence. Clare Rowley from the National Museum of Australia agreed, and spoke of NMA Friends staff having to deal with members who preferred a phone or face-to-face conversation, especially when delivering credit card details. Not all members were

happy with the idea of a digital membership card – some prefer a physical card; while others quickly embraced the digital option.

Sam McLachlan from the National Portrait Gallery introduced another area where difficult conversations with members could occur – conflicting views of what constitutes 'proper art', and whether particular artists or artworks were suited to a portrait gallery. The National Portrait Gallery tries to 'push the boundaries' and foreground the story an artwork represents over the art itself. To address this issue, the National Portrait Gallery has scheduled drop-in discussion sessions, staged conversations and curatorial talks to bring members along with the Gallery's vision.

The problem of recruiting younger members was also addressed. The Art Gallery Society has introduced a new free category, Explore, for 16-24-year-olds, in the hope that this will translate to a paid membership when Explore members turn 25.

The **second webinar**, held on 23 June, focused on the subject mentioned at the end of the first webinar – the challenge of engaging young members. To prepare for the webinar, participants were asked to think about the following questions: How do we engage with young members? What works and what doesn't in attracting and sustaining a younger demographic?

Participants from across Australia, and also Aotearoa New Zealand, shared their experiences and initiatives in this area. These included: recruiting young people for a museum's Board (Lismore Regional Gallery, Tweed Regional Gallery); instituting events with emerging artists (Lismore

Regional Gallery); establishing a scholarship for a university student (Miss Porter's House, Newcastle); and offering free tickets to member events (Art Gallery Society).

Some more solutions to the challenge of engaging young members included education programs to interest younger audiences in what the museum has to offer, and diversifying event offerings (Museum of Contemporary Art); and programs for young mothers and their children, with free entry to the Discovery Space (National Museum of Australia).

A persistent problem noted by participants was that young people tend to be time-poor, and are also more attracted to free rather than paid events. School bookings, which have the potential to engage children with museums so that they return in the future, can also encounter cost pressures as items such as bus hire increase in price. On the other hand, Lismore Regional Gallery reported success with its Business After Hours program, which attracted local business owners who had never entered the gallery before and were pleasantly surprised.

The webinar provided a great opportunity to share a range of views and experiences across the AFFM membership. Further webinars are scheduled for the following dates:

Tuesday | 25 August 2026, 4–5pm

Tuesday | 27 October 2026, 4–5pm

Tuesday | December 2026, 4–5pm

Members are advised in advance of the meeting topic and provided with the link to Teams.





AFFM News

WFFM General Assembly in Athens

This year's General Assembly of the World Federation of Friends of Museums was held in Athens, Greece, from Thursday 23 to Sunday 26 April 2026.

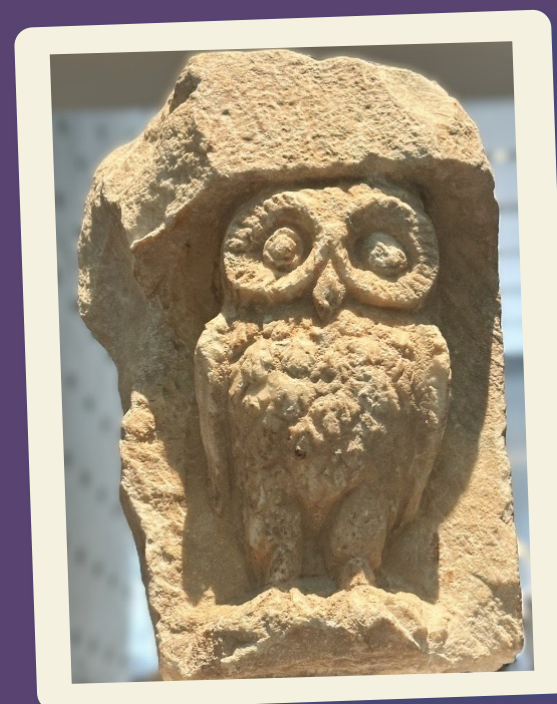
The program featured a colloquium "Museums and their Friends: Challenges and perspectives in an ever-changing world", organised by the Hellenic Federation of Friends of Museums (HFFM). This topic was followed up in a Council and Youth Council meeting that considered how Friends of Museums can respond to the new challenges facing museums.

Other activities during the General Assembly included an academic session in which WFFM members described their achievements in 2025; and meetings of the WFFM Council and Youth Council.

Delegates to the General Assembly then toured the wonderful range of cultural institutions and sites that Athens and its environs offer, including the Museum of Modern Greek Culture; the Acropolis hill and the Parthenon; the Acropolis Museum; and Athens Town Hall.



Young Friends from Germany, France and Canada in the Acropolis Museum.



Owl sculpture in Parthenon Museum.
Photos supplied by Carolyn Forster.



Carolyn Forster speaking to the AFFM report on the first day of the meeting, which was held in the War Museum Amphitheatre.



World Day of Friends of Museums 11 October 2026

The World Day of Friends of Museums on 11 October this year will celebrate the community of two million museum enthusiasts worldwide, under the theme "Your museums, our passion!" It follows on from the European Day of Friends of Museums celebrated since 2023. 150 associations from 14 countries participated in 2025.

Following the World Day, there will be an Extended European Meeting hosted by the Friends of the National Museum of Art in Bucharest, Romania, from 23-25 October 2026. The meeting will exchange information and experiences from the World Day.

WFFM Council and General Assembly, 14-18 April 2027

The WFFM General Assembly for 2027 will be held in Argentina, with a one-night stay in Buenos Aires then travel to Cordoba for the General Assembly. The meeting will be hosted by the Argentinian Association of Friends of Museums.

Have your say

Calling community museums

Are you involved with a community museum? How much do you know about it? How does it operate? Who runs it? What's in it? These are some of the questions asked in a new nationwide, online survey of community museums being conducted by Bryan Kalms, a PhD student at the Australian National University.

Bryan is seeking to understand the role community museums play in modern Australia and the challenges they face. Overall, very little is known about these important institutions. Completing this survey is an opportunity to highlight their importance and the contribution they make to their local community and Australian society generally.

You can access the survey at https://anu.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_

Have your say



Have your say

Have your say

Have your say

Have your say

Have your say

aWg65JKAv3KgwGG or by clicking on the QR code. And don't forget to tell your friends in other museums about the survey.

More information on the survey is available on the Participant Information Statement available at https://anu.au1.qualtrics.com/CP/File.php?F=F_BL77foe3tNlrpR.

Bryan hopes that this research will provide several benefits for the community museums sector, including:

- informing debate about the role of community museums in modern Australia
- demonstrating the uses to which community museums are put by those who work in them and who visit them
- illustrating what is at risk should these organisations close, noting the apparent precarious state of many of them.

In this way, he hopes that community museums will gain greater funding from all levels of government, along with increased community support.

If you want to know more about the survey or Bryan's project please contact him at bryan.kalms@anu.edu.au.

Films with back stories at the NFSA

What was Australia's first successful screen musical? And why did its original negative end up in the back room of "The House of Time", an old, suburban clockmaker's shop? How did it find its way to the National Film and Sound Archive?

The film was *His Royal Highness*, produced in 1932 by Melbourne's Eftée Studios during the pioneering years of the 'talkies'. It's a Ruritanian fantasy which marked the feature film debut of beloved comedian George Wallace. Like so many Australian films, especially from the first half of the 20th century, the back story of its survival is as intriguing and entertaining as the film itself.

Australia has no legal deposit system for films. Every film acquired by the NFSA has to be individually negotiated. That's one reason why so much of our film heritage, especially from the early years, is missing. Those that have come down to us had often been rescued through the vigilance of private collectors and other interested individuals – or have turned up simply as a matter of luck.

His Royal Highness is lined up for future screening in a monthly matinee series conceived and presented by the Friends of the NFSA. Titles so far shown include *The Sentimental Bloke* (1919), *The Flying Doctor* (1936), *Mr Chedworth Steps Out* (1939), *Smithy* (1946) and *Orphan of the Wilderness* (1936). All of these films are still with us through remarkable, and fortunate, circumstances. At its screening, each film was given a historical and critical introduction, and then the survival back story was revealed and discussed in a Q&A afterwards.

These are rare opportunities to see these films as they were meant to be seen – on the big screen. But the real spice is always in the survival story. For example, *The Sentimental Bloke* – lauded today as a masterpiece of Australian silent cinema – almost never made it.

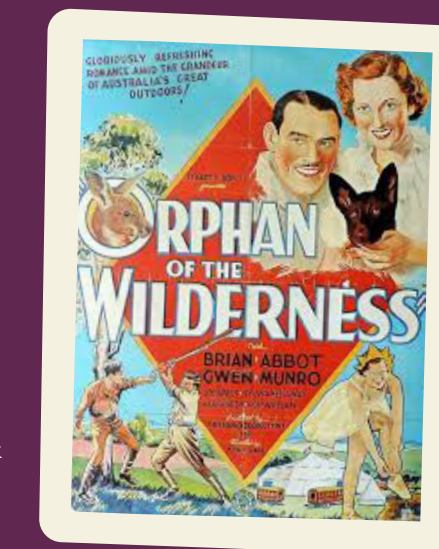


Scene from *The Sentimental Bloke*, 1919.

The original negative ended up not in Australia, but in the vault of a film archive in upstate New York, where it was filed under the title *The Sentimental Blonde*. No one was sure how it got there. That it was correctly identified in 1973 was a matter of pure coincidence. Truth stranger than fiction.

Screenings are held on Saturdays in the NFSA's state of the art Arc Cinema, McCoy Circuit, Acton. Program listings can be checked on the NFSA website.

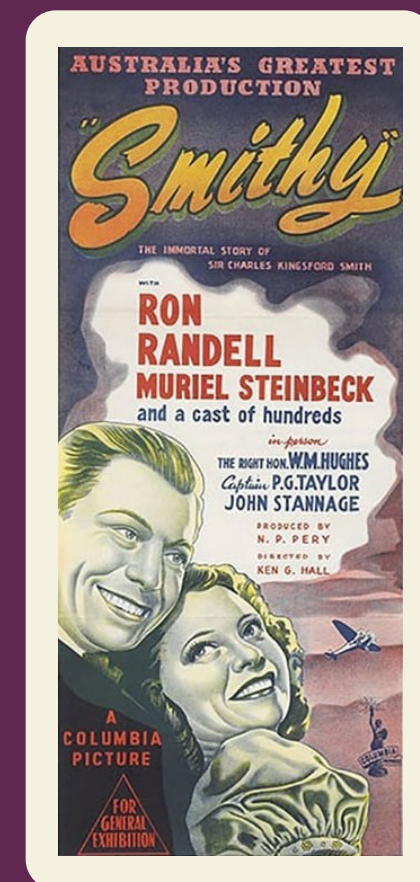
Ray Edmondson
President, *Friends of the NFSA*



Orphan of the Wilderness poster, 1936.



His Royal Highness poster, 1932.

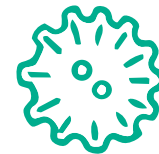


Smithy poster, 1946.

Crimplene and AI: Reflections from Miss Porter's House



The Observer, 29th September 1960.



Look what
'Terylene'
is up to now!

MAKING BRILLIANT NEW
DRIE-DRY FASHION FABRICS—
'CRIMPLENE' JERSEY
This is a very exciting moment
in the history of a fabric with a dazzling future.
'Crimplene' is 100% 'Terylene', built
up by a very special new process.
'Crimplene' jersey has a wonderful
feeling for fashion, as leading houses
have already discovered. It looks
pleasantly weighty, yet feels light as a
feather. It drapes well, yet can take any
amount of wear. It has all the pleasure
of 'Terylene'.
Anything made of 'Crimplene'—
however haute couture it is—can be
washed at home (even in a washing
machine) and hung out on the line to
dry without losing its shape. No iron-
ing. Sounds too good to be true. But
it is true.
This dress by MISS MURRAY, made of 'Crimplene', is
a beautiful example of the new fabric's
versatility. It is a true 'wonder' fabric.
Crimplene is the ideal for modern dress 'Terylene' designer.

'Exciting, a dazzling future.' This could describe Artificial Intelligence today, but it was once used for Crimplene, the wonder fabric produced from terylene in the 1960s, which became a staple in Australia. The women of Miss Porter's House, a National Trust museum in Newcastle, obviously thought so too.

A significant feature of the textile collection is the use of Crimplene, a popular synthetic fabric of the 1960s and 1970s, in the creation of many items of clothing by the Porter family.¹

The collection contains over 20 pieces of Crimplene, hats, dresses, coats, vests, even a nightdress.

Hazel Porter, the youngest daughter, worked all her life as a secretary/office manager. Her co-worker remembers she was always well dressed, often in a suit². The sisters sewed most of their clothes on their Singer treadle machine purchased by their newlywed parents in 1910.

At a time when more women were entering the workforce, mass produced Crimplene was a welcome addition. Machine wash, no ironing – Crimplene's durability and ease of care meant women could spend less time on household chores, freeing up time for work and leisure. In the late 1970s it was replaced by lighter and less odorous materials.

JUST FOR FUN

Crimplene in the Women's Weekly International Look in Summer Fashions (1969, November 19). *The Australian Women's Weekly* (1933 - 1982), p. 61. Retrieved May 12, 2026, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43601467>

FASHION "ON LOCATION" (1970, September 30). *The Australian Women's Weekly* (1933 - 1982), p. 1 (Crimplene Supplement). Retrieved May 12, 2026, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46934627>

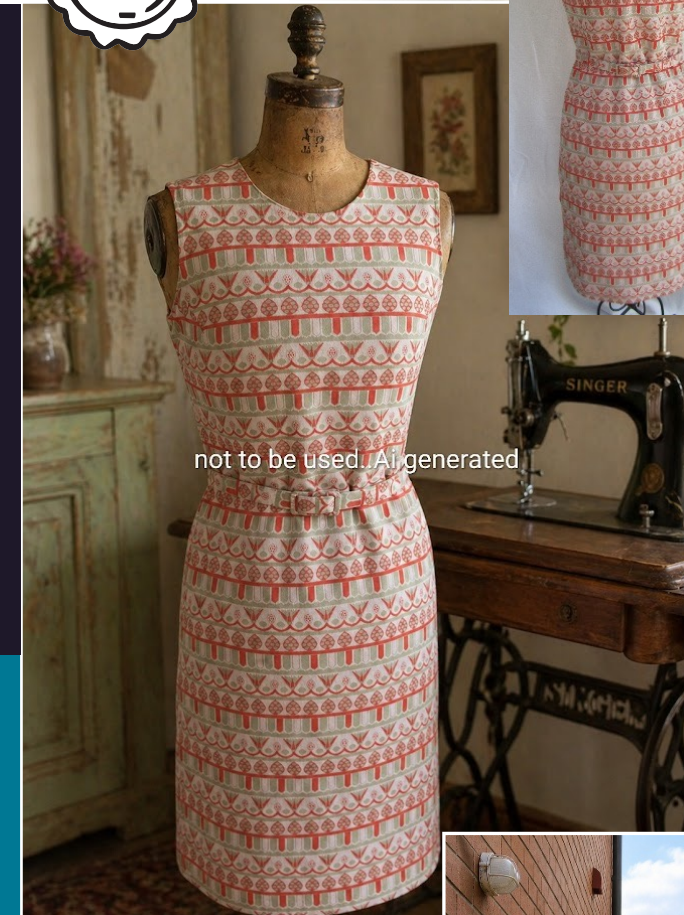
Pam Marley for Miss Porter's House

Consider this Crimplene dress (42783), one of the many pieces of clothing that needs minimal handling. A photo (right) was taken at the time of accessioning in 2013.

Using AI we can put the dress on a model, include the MPH sewing machine and pose it against a period background. It solves the problem of minimal handling of the items, but to what extent are we creating erroneous interpretations?

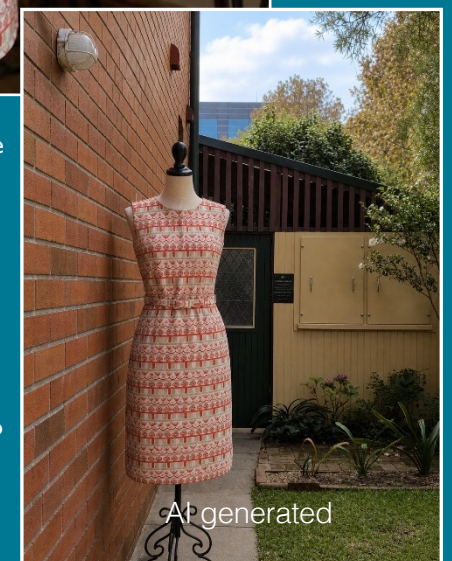
If we present the dress with the implication that it was made on the machine in the photo, we risk misleading viewers, as this is not known. The AI generated background is 'shabby chic', certainly not indicative of the Miss Porter's House 20th century interior.

Still using AI, a less misleading approach might be to pose a photo of the dress against a modern photo of the garden.



Again, this can be misleading as there are elements in the garden which were not there when the dress would have been worn.

Crimplene was once marketed as modern magic: durable, effortless, and made for a changing world. In a different way, museums now find themselves confronting a new "wonder" technology. Artificial Intelligence offers fresh ways to interpret and share delicate collections without constant handling—but it also raises questions about authenticity, accuracy, and trust.³



MPH Collection 44894.



PH281 & 42834.



MPH Collection 43736.



MPH Collection PH 1592. Retirement party circa 1983.



1. Russell, R. and Douglas, L. (2021) *Miss Porter's House Newcastle. Significance Assessment of the Collection*. Roslyn Russell Museum Services.
2. Interview with colleague 2018.

3. ...And we generated this paragraph with AI!!

Restoring the Past

On an evening in early February, Friends of TMAG members got to step inside a world few ever get to see. The Restoring the Past exhibition event invited us behind the scenes of art conservation, where the painstaking work that protects our cultural heritage for future generations was revealed. A walk through the exhibition showcased the extraordinary restoration of three significant 19th century paintings and their ornate frames, including the portraits of Thomas and Catherine Chapman, and a landscape by John Glover.

TMAG's Senior Conservator (Painting) Jennifer Bird, Assistant Conservator Kate McKay, and Conservation Technician Lisa Charleston spoke to us about the work they did on the paintings and the frames whilst sharing

the challenges of preserving fragile artworks, the delicate techniques used to revive them, and the thoughtful decisions that guide every step of the conservation process.

This conservation project, along with the research that underpinned it, was made possible through the generous support of the Keith Clarke Foundation.



Photo J Hawkins.

Later in February, members visited *Hobart Current: Here*, showing in the Argyle galleries at TMAG. This contemporary exhibition is the third iteration of an innovative partnership between TMAG and the City of Hobart. In the company of two of the participating artists, Sara Morawetz and Dylan Sheridan, members were offered thought-provoking insights into their work and their art practice. Attendees then joined Sara and Dylan in the Members' Lounge for morning tea and further discussion.



Cut from the Same Cloth (Disassembly of Empire), Sara Morawetz (Photo J Wilcox).



Music of Pieces, Dylan Sheridan (Photo J Hawkins).

Following

George Augustus Robinson

Historian and author Ian Terry led a Friends of TMAG coach tour through central Tasmania to follow George Augustus Robinson, who in late 1831 spent two and half months traversing central Tasmania during his so-called ‘Friendly Mission’ to persuade Palawa living on Country to abandon their resistance to invasion and colonisation. We visited some of the places Robinson wrote about in his journal and investigated how colonisation has impacted the Tasmanian landscape.

Our stops, with some flat walks, included Bronte Lagoon, Bronte Park, the Five Rivers Reserve on the Marlborough Highway, Miena, the Lagoon of Islands and Bothwell.

Our wonderful guide, Ian, offered many insights into this era of Tasmanian colonisation.



Ian Terry with Friends members on a high plateau (Photo J Hawkins).



The amazing footwear of Suzie, Marie, Katrina and Jane. (Photo J Hawkins).



Ian Terry near Bronte Park. (Photo J Wilcox).



Members negotiating a stile at Five Rivers Reserve (Photo J Wilcox).

Art at Government House

In April, Friends members visited Government House as a special fundraising event.

We viewed the art collection with TMAG Head of Art Ash Kerr, who was responsible for the recent rehang which features contemporary Tasmanian artists. TMAG Senior Curator (Decorative Arts) Peter Hughes took us on a tour to see significant pieces of

colonial furniture. Peter is the author of a soon-to-be-released publication, *Furnishing Van Diemen's Land: Tasmanian furniture of the early colonial period 1803–1870*, which will feature pieces from the TMAG collection, Government House, and items held in interstate

collections. Members then enjoyed drinks and nibbles, generously provided by the Office of the Governor.

Thanks to this fundraiser, the Friends of TMAG were able to support the purchase of a Canon EOS R8 mirrorless camera for the Conservation team.



Ash Kerr (Photo J Wilcox).



Peter Hughes (Photo J Hawkins).

New and Current Exhibitions

Art Gallery of New South Wales

Avatar: Forms of Vishnu

This captivating exhibition brings together centuries of art and storytelling from South and Southeast Asia celebrating Vishnu, the Hindu deity who preserves order in the universe. Avatar, meaning 'descent' in Sanskrit, describes the many forms Vishnu takes to descend from the heavens to restore balance on earth. In sculpture, painting, textiles and photographs, the exhibition traces the ways artists have envisioned Vishnu's various avatars, including Matsya the fish, Kurma the tortoise, the beloved Krishna, the noble prince Rama, and Kalki, the future avatar who will bring renewal.

Brimming with tales of heroism, love and devotion, the exhibition presents exceptional historical and contemporary art from renowned collections in Australia, India, Cambodia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. It also includes work by contemporary artists Gitanjali Das, Kalyan Joshi, Jumaadi, Desmond Lazaro, Kalam Patua, Nalini Malani, Pushpamala N, Sumakshi Singh and Satyanarayan Suthar.

Avatar: Forms of Vishnu is exclusively on show at the Art Gallery of New South Wales from 20 June to October 2026. Tickets are now on sale.



Ravi Varma Press, India 1894–1972 'Lakshmi' designed 1894, printed early 1900s, chromolithograph, 35.8 × 25 cm, Art Gallery of New South Wales, gift of Dr Jim Masselos 2011, image © Art Gallery of New South Wales

Maitland Regional Gallery

Upriver Downriver

The Hunter River has shaped one of the most important regions in Australia and along its mighty length we have a community of artists connected geographically and creatively.

Building on the 2023 iteration of Upriver Downriver, Maitland Regional Art Gallery will embark on a major exhibition energising all our Gallery spaces to celebrate the expansive range of art and ideas resonating throughout our region.

Join us on a journey through the eyes of over thirty artists, as we wind our way from the Upper Hunter down through to Maitland, across many tributaries and into the Port of



Ravi Varma Press, India 1894–1972 'Lakshmi' designed 1894, printed early 1900s, chromolithograph, 35.8 x 25 cm, Art Gallery of New South Wales, gift of Dr Jim Masselos 2011, image © Art Gallery of New South Wales

Newcastle. The artists selected for this exhibition reflect the diversity of practice and ideas in the region and we want to celebrate this and give our audience the opportunity to see our building hum with the creative energy of the Hunter.

On exhibition at Maitland Regional Art Gallery from 11 July to 11 October 2026.

National Archives of Australia

Rear Vision: the Holden collection

Take a drive through the story of an Australian icon in *Rear vision: the Holden collection* at National Archives of Australia in Canberra.

Trace Holden's journey from a 19th-century saddlery to 'Australia's own car' and its lasting impact on the nation's economy, industry and identity. Explore archival records, rare artefacts, drawings and images that reveal the people, innovations and decisions behind General Motors-Holden. Developed by the State Library of South Australia in partnership with Adelaide University, the exhibition has been expanded by National Archives of Australia with



Cleaning dust from bomber tanks, 1943: SLISA: B 7798/420

records from the national archival collection. From wartime production to the fight for equal pay, these stories highlight how Holden helped shape modern Australia.

This free exhibition is open daily until 11 October, with daily gallery talks for visitors keen to discover the stories under the hood.

National Gallery of Australia

Ngura Pulka—Epic Country

Ngura Pulka is an epic project both in scale and scope, led by senior First Nations artists and collectives from the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands, Coober Pedy and Tarntanya/Adelaide, in South Australia. *Ngura Pulka* brings together 30 large-scale paintings that depict expansive Country while celebrating the powerful Tjukurpa (Anangu law/cultural stories) that lie within, reinforcing the artists' deep connection to culture and place. Through stories and distinctive designs, the featured artists continue to strengthen their cultural knowledge of their homelands.

Audiences can experience this ambitious artist-led project, open in Kamberri/Canberra until 23 August 2026.



Betty Muffler, Pitjantjatjara people, at Iwantja Arts, *Indulkana*, 2023 - image courtesy APY Art Centre Collective Iwantja Arts, photo Rohan Thomson.

Arthur Boyd: Tapestries



The National Gallery presents a world-first opportunity to experience the full cycle of 20 monumental tapestries by renowned Australian artist Arthur Boyd. Boyd commissioned the tapestries, part of his extensive artistic exploration of the life of Saint Francis, from the Manufactura de Tapeçarias de Portalegre, Portugal, and they were purchased by the National Gallery in 1975. This exhibition marks the inaugural presentation of the complete series. At 2.5 by 3.4 metres, each tapestry is a scene in the artist's retelling of the life of one of the most venerated figures in human history, St Francis of Assisi. Woven at a scale more than 20 times larger than Boyd's original source images, and each containing between 4 and 8.5 million stitches, the finished textiles are a testament to the collaborative process of artistic creation.

Installation view, Arthur Boyd: Tapestries, National Gallery of Australia, Kamberri/Canberra, 2026 featuring: Arthur Boyd, Manufactura de Tapeçarias de Portalegre, St Francis when young turning aside, 1972, purchased 1975, Arthur Boyd's work reproduced with the permission of Bundanon Trust.

National Library of Australia

Wangka Wakanutja: The Story of the Papunya Literature Production Centre

Explore the remarkable decades-long efforts of the Papunya community to record language and culture and keep it alive. The exhibition, Wangka Wakanutja: The Story of the Papunya Literature Production Centre, brings the readers to life and builds on a recent exhibition on show at the Library

and Archives NT in Darwin. It features stories, drawings, photographs, manuscripts, ephemera and oral histories from the collections of the Papunya community, Papunya School, National Library of Australia, the Australian National University, and private collections.

Wangka Wakanutja: The Story of the Papunya Literature Production Centre.



National Museum of Australia

Antarctica

This stunning new exhibition tells the extraordinary first-hand stories of more than 100 years of Australians in Antarctica — from early explorers such as Tannat Edgeworth David and Douglas Mawson to recent expeditioners at research stations including Mawson and Macquarie Island.

See rare objects from one of the world's largest Antarctic collections, on public display for the first time since their acquisition from the Australian Antarctic Division. Meet amazing animals from penguins to sled dogs and discover vehicles and scientific instruments modified to withstand extreme conditions. Witness the beauty of the Aurora Australis, feel the force of a blizzard and track the midnight sun as we immerse you in a polar landscape and challenge you to stay in touch with family and friends in our code game! Leave with a new understanding of how Antarctica continues to capture the imaginations of Australians — and why caring for it matters to us all.

On exhibition until 11 October. Free entry.

Nuyina breaking ice into Davis, 28 October 2025.
Photo credit: Simon Payne, AAD.



State Library of New South Wales

PIX

PIX — Australia's first pictorial news weekly — hit newsstands around the country in January 1938. With its eye-catching lipstick-red logo, PIX delivered a new style of journalism, using photographs to tell daring stories of modern life. Always intended to shock, entertain and inform, PIX stayed popular with its readers for over

30 years. This exhibition explores the PIX story — through the people and pictures that made the magazine — for the first time.

On display in the Photography Gallery, State Library of New South Wales until 16 August 2026.



Margot Lee exercises, 13 July 1945, photographed by Ivan Ive, ON 388/Box 016/Item 059

Lucy Culliton, Sulman Prize

Sulman Prize winner, and Greyhound Rescue

Lucy Culliton has won the Sir John Sulman Prize 2026 and \$40,000 for her work *Toolah, artist model*, an intricately detailed painting of Toolah, one of her beloved rescue greyhounds. The Sir John Sulman Prize is awarded to the best subject painting, genre painting or mural project by an Australian artist. This is Culliton's seventh time as a Sulman Prize finalist, with her 2026 winning work selected from 26 finalists. Culliton said she was overwhelmed and had not expected to win.

'This painting of Toolah means so much to me. Besides painting, I rescue animals in need. Toolah is one of seven greyhounds who live with me that come from the greyhound racing industry. This

is my quiet protest against greyhound racing,' said Culliton.

Born in Sydney, Culliton is a contemporary painter known for her vibrant and observant depictions of landscapes, still life and animals, and is widely recognised for her distinctive realist style grounded in everyday rural life. Living and working in Bibbenluke in the Snowy Monaro region of southern NSW, Culliton's subject matter is strongly informed by her surroundings, gardens and menagerie of animals

Culliton's work has regularly been selected for major Australian art prizes, including the Archibald and Sulman Prizes, and her work is held in major public collections around Australia.



Winner Sulman Prize 2026, Lucy Culliton *Toolah, artist model*, oil on canvas, 137.6 x 137.1 cm © the artist, image © Art Gallery of New South Wales, Diana Panuccio

Cover image credit:

National Museum Director Katherine McMahon with huskies from the Antarctica exhibition.
Photo: National Museum of Australia.



Contact list for AFFM members

Here is a list of AFFM representatives who are able to assist with problems, give advice and bring issues to the notice of the Executive Committee.

CO-President

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CO-President

Sarah Maxwell
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ACT Vice-President

Alex Reinhold
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Tasmania Vice-President

Jane Wilcox
president@friendsoftmag.org.au

WFFM President of Honour

Carolyn Forster OAM
carolynforster@bigpond.com

Friends Review Editor

Roslyn Russell
rosrussell25@gmail.com

Call for contributions

Do you have a story about a recent Friends activity?

Is the institution you support showing an exciting exhibition, or promoting a new activity?

Friends Review is interested in showcasing as many projects as possible, and spreading the word about how Friends can make a difference in their museum, library or archive community.

Please send your contributions by the due dates below:

31 October for December issue and 1 June for July issue.

to Roslyn Russell, Editor, *Friends Review*, email rosrussell25@gmail.com