



# about Australia

## cultural institutions

- The Australian Government promotes opportunities for everyone to experience and enjoy Australia’s rich cultural heritage and contemporary cultural activities.

The Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts is responsible for policies and activities that promote a vibrant and diverse arts and culture sector.

One of the main areas of government support for cultural activities is through Australia’s national collecting institutions, which play an important national and international role. Some of these institutions are profiled below.

### Australian National Maritime Museum

Opened in 1991 in Sydney, the Australian National Maritime Museum offers a diverse range of activities, programs and exhibitions catering to all age groups.

The museum’s main focus is to provide a memorable and enjoyable experience for visitors by bringing to life Australia’s maritime past, as well as preserving the country’s maritime heritage for future generations.

To meet these objectives, the museum promotes a broad view of maritime history and encourages the preservation of traditional maritime skills and practices.

One of the museum’s major attractions is Her Majesty’s Bark *Endeavour*—an authentic, Australian-built replica of the former collier in which Captain James Cook charted the east

coast of Australia in the late 18th century. *Endeavour* was acquired by the Australian Government in April 2005 and given to the museum.

### Bundanon Trust

The Bundanon and Riversdale properties that make up Bundanon Trust are located 160 kilometres south of Sydney on the Shoalhaven River. The properties were donated to the Australian people in 1993 by Arthur Boyd, one of Australia’s most respected and prolific artists, and his wife Yvonne.

The Bundanon Trust gift includes a large collection of artworks and was born out of the Boyds’ wish that others might draw inspiration from the Bundanon properties.

Bundanon Trust runs a number of programs, including artist in residence opportunities for visual artists, writers and performing artists, as well as education programs and exhibitions drawn from the Bundanon Trust collection.

### National Archives of Australia

The National Archives of Australia in Canberra cares for and makes available valuable Australian Government records. The records held by the archives trace the events and decisions that shaped the

nation. Some of these documents include the papers of governors-general, prime ministers and ministers, Cabinet documents, Royal Commission files and departmental records on foreign affairs and trade, defence, immigration, security and intelligence, naturalisation and many other issues involving the Australian Government.

### National Film and Sound Archive

The National Film and Sound Archive in Canberra is responsible for collecting, preserving and telling Australia's story in screen and sound.

From early Australian films, such as *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (1906) and *The Sentimental Bloke* (1919), to contemporary radio and television news coverage and music industry releases, the archive plays a leading role in preserving Australia's unique film, television, radio and recorded sound culture and heritage.

It is home to Australia's largest collection of recorded sound and moving images, with more than two million items including television and sound recordings, and thousands of newsreels, scripts, posters, film stills, memorabilia and other items from over 100 years of Australian filmmaking.

### National Gallery of Australia

Based in Canberra, the National Gallery of Australia provides access to and information about Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian art, Asian art and international works including paintings, prints, sculpture, photography, posters, textiles, illustrated books and decorative arts.

The gallery is responsible for developing and maintaining a national collection of art and mounting exhibitions from its collection, as well as exhibiting works from other national and international institutions.

### National Library of Australia

The National Library of Australia is also in Canberra. The library was established to provide all Australians with access to Australia's documentary heritage and information resources from around the world. The library builds and maintains a national collection of Australian materials and provides a gateway to national and international sources of information. It also ensures that other Australian libraries can share their resources effectively for the national good.

### National Museum of Australia

The Canberra-based National Museum of Australia opened in March 2001 as part of the celebration of the centenary of Australia's federation. The museum houses the stories of Australia and Australians. It presents its major themes of land, nation and people using state-of-the-art technology and exhibition design to include the many different cultures and experiences that have shaped the nation.

### National Portrait Gallery

The National Portrait Gallery, located in Canberra, is a repository of Australian portraiture and explores the role this genre plays in understanding Australian history, creativity and culture. The gallery houses a collection of portraits of people who have had a major impact on Australia, and makes these portraits accessible through exhibitions,

research, publications, interpretation and electronic media.

Currently located primarily within Old Parliament House, a new purpose-built building for the gallery is under construction, and scheduled to open to the public in December 2008. This will enable the gallery to greatly expand its exhibitions and activities.

## Old Parliament House

Canberra's Old Parliament House is a living museum of Australia's social and political history. It is a heritage building that housed Australia's parliament between 1927 and 1988.

Old Parliament House introduces audiences to the nation's political past, explaining the significance of parliament in the lives of Australians through entertaining and educational public programs. A major redevelopment of Old Parliament House as a 'Gallery of Australian Democracy' is currently under way. This package of initiatives will be completed by mid-2009 with the first instalment, stage one of the Australian Prime Ministers Centre, scheduled to open to the public in June 2007.

## Further information

Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts  
[www.arts.gov.au](http://www.arts.gov.au)

Australian National Maritime Museum  
[www.anmm.gov.au](http://www.anmm.gov.au)

Bundanon Trust  
[www.bundanon.com.au](http://www.bundanon.com.au)

National Archives of Australia  
[www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)

National Film and Sound Archive  
[www.nfsa.afc.gov.au](http://www.nfsa.afc.gov.au)

National Gallery of Australia  
[www.nga.gov.au](http://www.nga.gov.au)

National Library of Australia  
[www.nla.gov.au](http://www.nla.gov.au)

National Museum of Australia  
[www.nma.gov.au](http://www.nma.gov.au)

National Portrait Gallery  
[www.portrait.gov.au](http://www.portrait.gov.au)

Old Parliament House  
[www.oph.gov.au](http://www.oph.gov.au)

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