

Museums Discovery Centre

Go behind the scenes of three unique museums



THREE STATE MUSEUMS ANNOUNCE FREE WEEKEND

Explorers young and old are invited to a weekend of excitement as the Museums Discovery Centre (MDC) presents the first of four free, open weekends for 2017, complete with camel rides, archaeology demonstrations, a film screening, rock climbing, and more, in addition to the thousands of curiosities on display from three of NSW's cultural institutions.

The MDC, a collaboration between the **Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS)**, **Australian Museum (AM)** and **Sydney Living Museums (SLM)**, re-opened in September 2016 following refurbishment, and offers a rare chance to see how museums store their vast collections.

MAAS Director, **Dolla Merrillees**, said the open weekend provided a great day out for families.

"The collections on display at the MDC are the spark for sharing thousands of stories. We love welcoming visitors who share their memories, whether it be of catching the old Albion Valkyrie bus, or driving an early FJ Holden.

"During the open weekend, the MDC will come alive with two full days of free, hands-on activities, talks and tours, and demonstrations from the Jeep and Meccano Clubs."

AM Director and CEO, **Kim McKay AO**, said that this open weekend would celebrate the joy of exploration and discovery at the heart of all three museums.

"Exploration has been in the DNA of the Australian Museum since it was founded 190 years ago – an anniversary we celebrate at the end of March – and we're delighted to partner with our fellow state museums to share that adventurous spirit.

"Visitors to the MDC can see Mawson's clothes and boots from his expeditions, and undertake their own orienteering challenge."

SLM Executive Director, **Mark Goggin**, said the MDC provides much needed space and expanded public access to the SLM collections.

"We have a large number of architectural items on open display and we are delighted that visitors, who may not be able to get to the MDC through the working week, will now have an opportunity to view these historical pieces on the open weekend."

The MDC open weekends will be offered quarterly, with the first on 25-26 March.

The MDC opened in September 2016 and is the first shared museum of its kind in Australia. Covering several state of the art storage and conservation facilities, the MDC houses extensive collections from the fields of engineering, architecture, science, art, transport, fashion, design, health, technology, natural history, domestic life, Indigenous and Pacific cultures and more.

Museums Discovery Centre

170 Showground Road, Castle Hill

See museumsdiscoverycentre.com or further information.

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

MAAS Eli Wallis | eli.wallis@maas.museum | 9217 0564 / 0402 359 016

AM Rohan Astley | rohan.astley@austmus.gov.au | 9320 6086 / 0407 215 392

SLM Emma Heath | emma.heath@sydneylivingmuseums.com.au | 8072 4516 / 0466 503 732

Media images available: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/efkxnsrkyky5j/AABMyPt7k3aUMg-HFjhdCjY2ja?dl=0>

Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences (MAAS) The Powerhouse Museum, alongside Sydney Observatory and Museums Discovery Centre, is part of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), Australia's contemporary museum for excellence and innovation in applied arts and sciences. The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences has a vast and diverse collection of over 500,000 objects.

Australian Museum (AM) Australian Museum (AM), founded in 1827, is the nation's first museum, and is an internationally recognised natural science and culture institution focused on Australia and the Pacific. As custodian of more than 18 million objects, the AM is uniquely positioned to provide a greater understanding of the region through its scientific research, exhibitions and public and education programs. Through the Australian Museum Research Institute (AMRI), the AM also has a leading role in conserving Australia's biodiversity through understanding the environmental impacts of climate change, potential biosecurity threats and invasive species.

Sydney Living Museums (SLM) Sydney Living Museums manages and cares for a group of 12 of the most important historic houses, gardens and museums in NSW, from Elizabeth Farm and Vaucluse House to Susannah Place Museum and Museum of Sydney. SLM's purpose is to enrich and revitalise people's lives with Sydney's living history, and to hand the precious places in its care and their collections on to future generations to enjoy. Sydney Living Museums' collection comprises more than 45,000 objects with an additional 250,000 archaeological artefacts including material from two of Australia's most significant historic archaeological digs - Hyde Park Barracks and First Government House Sydney.