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**RESPONSIBLE BODY'S DECLARATION** 

I am pleased to present the Old Treasury Building Reserve Committee of Management's Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2021.

**Professor Marian Quartly** 

Marian Quarty

Chair 2021 The Committee of Management is pleased to report on its management of the Old Treasury Building (OTB) for the period 1 July 2020-30 June 2021.

Once again the year was dominated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In accordance with Victorian Government guidelines the museum in the building was closed to the public from 1 July until 6 December. Further mandated lockdowns closed the building during February and from 28 May–20 June. On each reopening the museum implemented restricted opening hours, to allow for cleaning between visitor sessions, with caps to visitor numbers to allow for social distancing. Not surprisingly, visitor numbers were the lowest for many years.

#### **PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAMS**

4,573 visited in person
A further 734 visited as part of
a booked school tour
4,416 attended an online
lecture or seminar
The total attendance of 9,723
represented only 10 per cent
of pre-COVID figures.
In addition the OTB's digital

#### **EXHIBITIONS**

million accounts.

Three new exhibitions were curated in-house and installed on the ground floor.

content reached some 3.3

Women Work for Victory in World War II was launched online on 15 August (VP Day) while the museum was closed. It was installed and opened for viewing when the museum reopened on 7 December.

Yarra: Stories of Melbourne's River was due to open in June 2020 but was delayed until the museum reopened on 7 December.

Protest Melbourne opened on 10 May.

#### **EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The extended periods of lockdown saw a significant reduction in the number of student visits to the building over the year. In all some 734 attended a booked visit, compared to 5,684 in the previous year (July-March only).

#### **LECTURES AND SEMINARS**

increased schedule of digital lectures and seminars was presented as partcompensation for closure. In all 86 lectures, seminars theatrical performances were offered— an all-time record. Most were delivered by zoom. The lectures and seminars attracted some 4,416 attendees, which was an increase in attendances of 350% on previous years.

#### **DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Digital engagement increased across all sites, though changes to provider sharing algorithms meant that fewer accounts were reached as a result. Facebook increased 17%, Instagram 10%, Website 10% and Twitter 9%. An estimated 3 million accounts engaged with OTB content.

#### **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

The volunteer program was suspended for all of this reporting period. A weekly publication, The OTBers Weekly, and regular zoom 'meetings', ensured that we stayed in touch.

#### THE HERITAGE BUILDING

Planning for a major program of refurbishment commenced and several urgent repairs were completed to prevent persistent leaks. A survey of the roof was completed.

#### ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Covid-Safe Plans were implemented and a Child Safe policy and procedures implemented. The exhibition and other programs were all managed within budget.



Marian Quartly

Chair



Margaret Anderson Director



#### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We present lively and inclusive programs that tell Victorian stories, contribute to community connectedness and inspire a sense of place.

We bring the Old Treasury Building to life and nurture it for the people of Victoria and beyond.

#### OLD TREASURY BUILDING GOVERNANCE

The Old Treasury Building is managed by the Old Treasury Building Reserve Committee Management Inc., under the Crown Land Reserves Act (1978).Committee members are appointed by the Minister Finance. The building is part of the Treasury Reserve Precinct and is included on the Victorian Heritage Register. The Committee's responsibilities under the Act are to:

- -Ensure public access to the building through a mix of cultural and promotional activities
- -Preserve the building's heritage value
- -Use its best endeavours to operate on a self-funded basis.

#### THE BUILDING

The Old Treasury Building is one of Australia's finest nineteenthbuildings. century lt was constructed between 1858 and 1862 to store the gold then flooding into Melbourne from the Victorian gold fields. Above ground it provided offices for senior government officials, including the Governor Victoria. The historic Executive Council Chamber is still used on a weekly basis, in a remarkable sequence of continuous use.

The ground floors and basement vaults now house a free public history museum, open on six days each week. Accommodation in upper floors is leased to a range of tenants, including a former governor and former premiers. Income derived from these tenancies funds museum operations.



# LEFT: . New signage at the Old Treasury Building. Photo by Katie Dunning.

#### THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2021-22 INCLUDE:

Continue to implement COVID-Safe Plan in the building

Reopen the museum to the public as permitted

Install incoming exhibition *Behind the Lines 2020: the year's best political cartoons* and *Behind the Lines 2021* in early 2022.

Install new temporary exhibition *Lost Jobs: the Changing World of Work* 

Prepare and upload digital support material for Lost Jobs

Research content for refurbished displays in the gold vaults

Continue digital lecture and seminar series and support contributing partnerships

Participate in festivals and public events as relevant and practicable

Prepare annual Marketing Plan (including digital strategy)

Manage programs within budget

Seek external funding of programs

Consult with and support staff and volunteers through lockdowns and return to work

Complete ICT transition to cloud

Facilitate building maintenance program as requested

Review longer-term strategy for JJ Clark Room and adjacent areas

Facilitate relevant staff training, including on Child Safe procedures and practice.

The museum at the Old Treasury Building is presented on the ground floor, in the former gold vaults in the basement and in selected areas on the first floor. Exhibitions present aspects of the history of Victoria relevant to the building and its context. Principal themes are the history of gold in Victoria, its impact on the city of Melbourne, the growth of the city itself and the evolution of a democratic system of government. We also interpret the heritage building and the career of its architect, JJ Clark. In line with the Committee of Management's terms of reference, entry to the museum is free.

The exhibition program tries to combine one or more temporary exhibitions, with changes to longer-term displays to refresh exhibits, attract new audiences and ensure the preservation of artefacts on display. In 2020-21 the exhibition program was presented in partnership with Public Record Office Victoria.



## YARRA

#### STORIES OF MELBOURNE'S RIVER



This is a long-term exhibition, designed to contribute to the presentation of First Nations history and environmental history Melbourne. The content was devised both for a general audience and to contribute to education programs, especially those presented in years 5-6, 9-10 and VCE levels. The museum consulted with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Corporation at strategic intervals in the curation process of this exhibition, and we wish to record our appreciation to Elders and staff for their assistance.

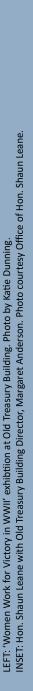
Yarra traces changes in the shape, use and ecological condition of the river from 1835 to the present. It explores in some detail the significance of the river to First Nations people and charts their systematic dispossession, as European settlement spread along the Yarra, its wetlands and tributaries. Only in recent years has First Nations' stewardship of the river been recognized.

Secondary themes are the swift pollution of the river after 1835 and the various schemes to tame its unruly floodwaters. Over successive decades in the nineteenth century the course of the river was altered and its many wetlands drained. The shape of the river we know in the CBD today is very different from the meandering stream of 1835.

# WOMEN WORK FOR VICTORY IN WORLD WAR II

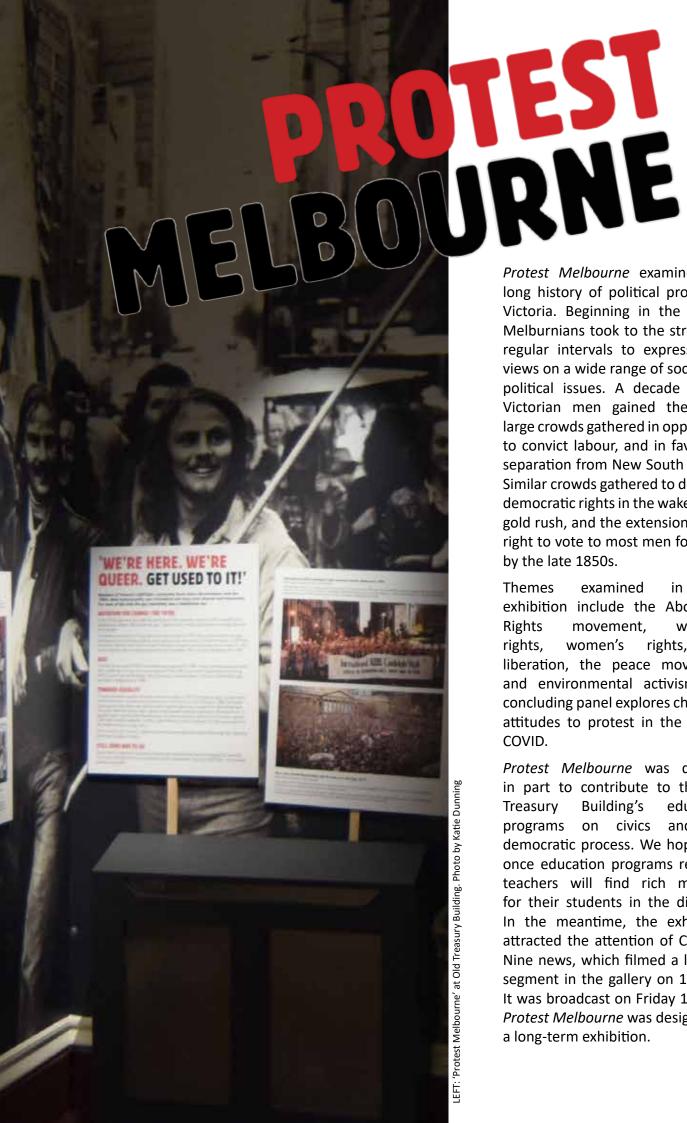
This exhibition was funded by the Veterans Branch, Department of Premier and Cabinet as part commemorations marking the end of World War II in the Pacific. It was planned to open on the anniversary of Victory in the Pacific (VP) Day on 15 August, but as the museum was closed for COVID at this point, the exhibition was launched online instead. Exhibition content was presented online in its entirety, with additional content on many themes, and with a free flip book which could be downloaded and printed. Some of this content was reproduced in a new history curriculum textbook released in 2021, which is an excellent outcome. The ABC News also broadcast a long segment on the exhibition on 29 December. Presenter Stephanie **Ferrier** interviewed Hon. Shaun Leane. Minister for Veterans, in the exhibition.

Women Work for Victory told some of the stories of women who contributed to the Allied victory, both in the services and on the home front. Many of these stories had been forgotten with the passage of time. Subthemes included the increased participation of women in the paid workforce during the war, the extraordinary range of war undertaken by women, and the strength of the first organized movement for equal pay that developed at this time. Of course at war's end many of opportunities vanished, as women were replaced by returning servicemen. moves for greater equality in the workforce did not cease entirely, and the campaign for equal pay that resumed in the late 1950s drew on those women's pioneering efforts.









Protest Melbourne examines the long history of political protest in Victoria. Beginning in the 1840s, Melburnians took to the streets at regular intervals to express their views on a wide range of social and political issues. A decade before Victorian men gained the vote, large crowds gathered in opposition to convict labour, and in favour of separation from New South Wales. Similar crowds gathered to demand democratic rights in the wake of the gold rush, and the extension of the right to vote to most men followed by the late 1850s.

Themes examined in the exhibition include the Aboriginal Rights movement, workers' rights, women's rights, gay liberation, the peace movement and environmental activism. concluding panel explores changing attitudes to protest in the age of COVID.

Protest Melbourne was devised in part to contribute to the Old Treasury Building's education programs on civics and the democratic process. We hope that once education programs resume, teachers will find rich material for their students in the displays. In the meantime, the exhibition attracted the attention of Channel Nine news, which filmed a lengthy segment in the gallery on 12 May. It was broadcast on Friday 14 May. Protest Melbourne was designed as a long-term exhibition.

#### **INCOMING EXHIBITIONS**

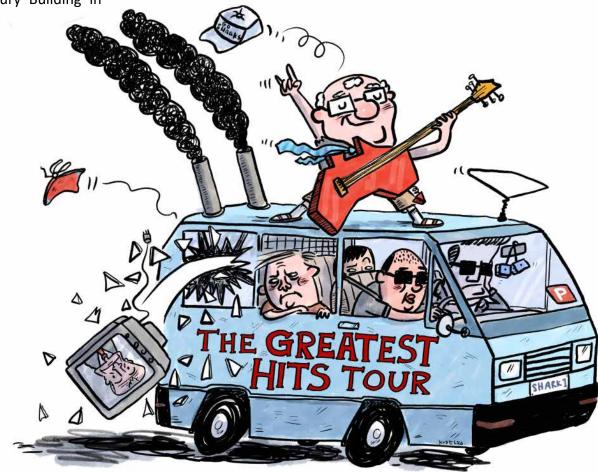
**TEMPORARY EXHIBITION** 

# BEHIND THE LINES The year's BEST political cartoons 2019

Travelling exhibition from the Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra

Behind the Lines is a popular exhibition, showcasing the best in political cartooning from the previous year. It is created each year by the Museum of Australian Democracy in Canberra and toured throughout the country. It has enjoyed a popular season at the Old Treasury Building in recent years.

Sadly, Behind the Lines 2019 was a victim of the first COVID pandemic. Although received at the museum, lockdown restrictions prevented installation, and in the end the exhibition could not be shown, to everyone's disappointment.



#### **EXHIBITIONS IN PREPARATION**

### LOST JOBS: THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

Lost Jobs is a temporary exhibition exploring the long history of workplace change in Victoria. Themes explored will include the decline of employment in rural industry, the rise and fall of manufacturing, the varied history of transport, transformations in the office and work in the home. Sub-themes include the impact of technology, and the devastating results of global events like economic recession, COVID pandemic. A secondary thread designed for younger visitors highlights the many jobs performed by children in the past. performed by children in the past. This exhibition was researched while staff were in lockdown for long periods and its opening date is still uncertain.

\*\*BIGHI: Composing Department at Sands & McDougall Limited, Melbourne. Reproduced courtess, State Library.\*\*



In common with many cultural organisations in this past year, the Old Treasury Building presented almost all of its public lectures and seminars online via zoom. This proved to be very popular with audiences, which expanded significantly over the year. In fact, attendance at lectures and seminars increased 350 per cent over the same period last year. This was an unexpected bonus at a time that was marked by very low attendances at the venue itself.

In all some 89 lectures or seminars were offered, in the largest program ever presented in the building. The herculean efforts of Kenneth Park in devising and presenting the majority of these lectures is acknowledged with gratitude. Also significant was the continuing partnership with the History Council of Victoria and Monash University in presenting the 'Making Public History' seminar series. Some five seminars were presented over the year, with many additional views of the seminar presentations online.

#### THEATRE IN THE MUSEUM

The Old Treasury Building was also fortunate to present several live theatrical performances relating to the temporary exhibition Wayward Women, which closed after a two-year season in June. Talented actors, who perform under the stage names of Violet and Rose, wrote and performed an original theatrical work entitled 'Hanging by a thread', which was seen by 73 people before COVID closed the museum again. Plans for another season foundered on a further lockdown.



LEFT: Publicity photo for 'Hanging by a Thread: The Ways of Women'. Photo courtesy Violet & Rose.

The presentation of education programs to booked school groups was much disrupted this year as COVID-induced lockdowns closed the building to visitors for many months. Some 15 programs were offered to schools, and many bookings were received, only to be cancelled as the museum was forced to close. In the end only some 734 students managed to visit.

A new program to be offered to Civics students was developed during the year, drawing in part on the Protest Melbourne exhibition. lt expands existing programs tracing the development of a democratic government, system of explore issues in contemporary democratic expression in Victoria. Contemporary issues include protest in the time of COVID and student environmental activism.



RIGHT: Schools Strike 4 Climate, DATE. Photo by Katie Dunning

The Old Treasury Building's marketing budget is limited, especially when compared to the resources available to many competing attractions. As a result we tend to focus on digital marketing and on participating in programs offering co-promotion of our programs through external publications, both print and digital. Unfortunately extended lockdowns meant that many public events were cancelled this year, although we did participate on those festivals that transitioned online. They included History Week (in October), Women's History Month (in March) and the Heritage Festival (in April). In addition social media 'events' like #MuseumWeek and International Museum Day online (May) were successful in increasing general brand recognition.

#### THE OLD TREASURY BUILDING GAZETTE

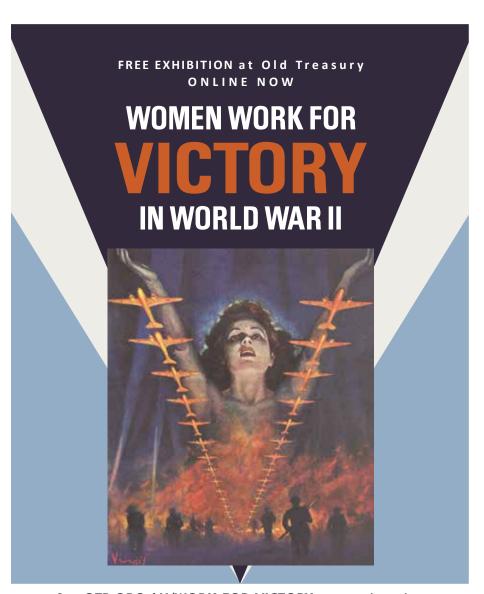
The Gazette keeps subscribers up-to-date with new programs, associated talks and lectures and general information. There were 1089 subscribers with a 38 per cent read rate.

#### **TRIPADVISOR**

In 2020-21 the Old Treasury Building was ranked 31 out of 710 things to do in Melbourne. This is the same position as last year, despite an increased number of listings, and constitutes a relative increase in rating of 9.5 per cent.

#### **DIGITAL PROGRAMS**

The Old **Treasury** Building maintains digital presence via a dedicated website and active participation on various social media accounts, including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. In addition a very active program of digital lectures was presented via Zoom. Overall we estimate that our content was seen by some 3.3. million users.



See OTB.ORG.AU/WORK-FOR-VICTORY to view the online exhibition and for detailed museum opening hours

**otb.org.au** | 9651 2233 | info@otb.org.au Women Work for Victory in WWII is supported by the Victorian Government.







#### SOCIAL MEDIA

The Old Treasury Building's social media accounts continue to grow in followers. Facebook was our fastest-growing audience, with an increase of 17 per cent. As Facebook increased its global membership base by 12 per cent in the same period, this is excellent progress. Instagram 'likes' increased by 10 per cent in the past year, and Twitter followers by 9 per cent.

As Facebook changes its sharing algorithms constantly, it is difficult to create yearly comparisons. The engagement rate for Old Treasury Building content is estimated to have increased by 6 per cent over this year. Whether that is OTB content performing better, or a reflection of Facebook's overall strategy, is impossible to know. However at the same time changes to Facebook's sharing algorithms meant that content was pushed to fewer accounts, which reduced the overall number of accounts our content reached. Interestingly, approximately 56 per cent of all Facebook users are male, while the Old Treasury Building's fans are 73 per cent female. Globally women are more likely to engage with content.

High engagement during #MuseumWeek on Twitter led to the Old Treasury Building being recognised as one of the top 'influencers' for the Pacific Region on two successive days. That meant that the content was viewed by far more people. It was also a notable success given that far larger organisations participated in this event.

#### **WEBSITE**

Users of the website increased by 10 per cent over the year. They also spent on average 19 per cent longer looking at online content than in previous years. Despite page views decreasing by two per cent, visits to 'content' pages (not homepage) increased. More people used saved links, or searched for our content, rather than looking for OTB generally.

Possibly thanks to online learning, old *Gold Rush* content from 2018 outperformed any other exhibition content in the past year. Over 24 per cent of visits to the website were to view this content, proving that evergreen content is worth retaining and updating.



#### **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

In the interests of personal safety, the volunteer program was suspended for all of this financial year. A weekly ebulletin, The OTBers Weekly, was produced and circulated in an effort to maintain contact and regular zoom catch ups were held.

We are very grateful that most of our volunteers maintained their links with the Old Treasury Building and have indicated their desire to return, once it is safe to do so. Some have been with us for a long time.

The following volunteers completed ten years of service during this year: Billy Quinn Emma Steinfort Gabrielle Keating* Jacqueline Leslie* Maria Liberogiannis*	These volunteers completed five years:  Christine Yang  David Tink  Faye Dennis*  Jack Norris  Norah Familton	These guides completed five years: Andrew Frost Paula Lindley Kieran Little
Maria Liberogiannis*  Pam Wynne*		

\*Also guides

We thank them all for their willingness to persevere through these trying circumstances.



Maintenance of the Old Treasury Building is managed in conjunction with the Treasury Reserve Precinct. A five-year capital works and maintenance schedule was developed in 2015-16 and implementation began in 2016-17. Additional *ad hoc* repairs were undertaken to address persistent leaks in offices on the second floor.

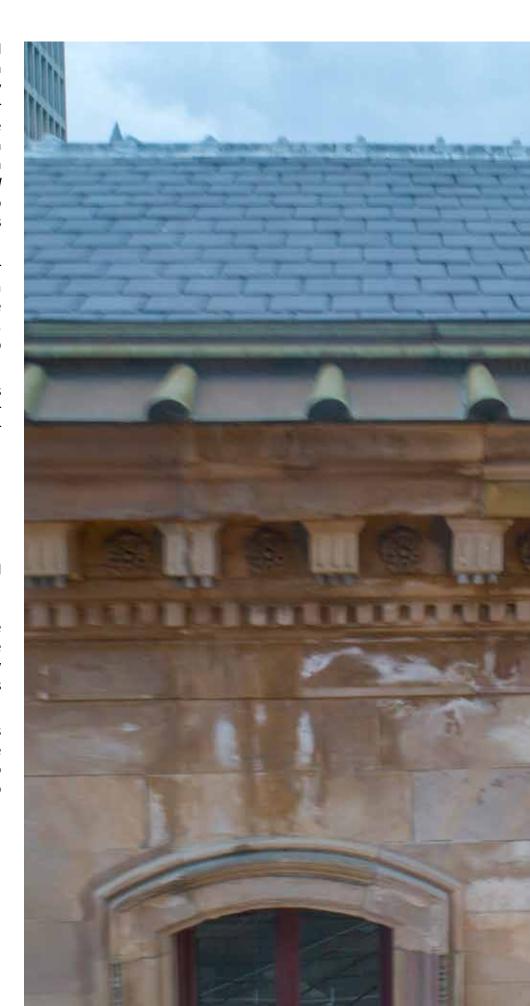
Projects completed this year included a survey of the condition of the roof, which identified the need for repairs to the flashing. The slate tiles were confirmed to be in good repair.

Several other important projects were scoped in readiness for the preparation of tender documentation. They included:

- restoration of stonework damaged by water from leaking gutters
- repairs to copper boxguttering
- painting of external doors and windows to protect original woodwork.

In addition a project to upgrade the basement bathroom to make it compliant with accessibility standards was scoped, but awaits funding.

Refurbishment of brass handrails on the forecourt to repair damage caused by skate-board riders, to prevent further damage and to avoid accidents did not proceed.





The Old Treasury Building is required under its enabling regulations to pursue financial self-sufficiency. The main source of income in any year is rental from the range of tenancies in the building. Rentals are based on formal reviews completed by the Valuer-General.

following organisations occupied tenancies in 2020-21: The Department of Premier and Cabinet on behalf of the Governorin-Council and other tenants, the Department of Justice (Victorian Marriage Registry), the Office of the Victorian Government Architect and the Social Housing Unit of the Department of

#### OTHER INCOME

Finance.

The

Additional income was derived from grants, tours, education programs and hiring spaces within the building for photography or film locations, although with repeated lockdowns this was much reduced.

LEFT: Detail of needed roof repairs. Photo courtesy JLL.

The financial outcome for 2020-21 saw the full impact of COVID19 over 12 months.

Prolonged closure of the museum for repeated lockdowns saw income impacted significantly. Income from group and education events/functions tours, the AFL Grand Final parade and location options for the film industry were all reduced. International visitors generally make up more than 50 per cent of visitors to the museum, and with domestic travel also restricted, revenue in the form of donations and book sales fell significantly. Low interest rates on reserve funds also contributed to the overall reduction in income compared to the previous financial year.

Expenditure increased for office equipment, furniture and computer maintenance to accommodate staff working from home and the need for improved digital performance across the organisation. Consumables remained consistent, though expenditure was heavier in some areas than others to establish and maintain connections to staff and volunteers. Advertising and marketing remained consistent, though the expenditure was directed at local audiences because of the constraints to the wider tourism industry. The installation of planned permanent exhibitions (Yarra and Protest Melbourne) took place after delays, and the exhibition Women Work for Victory in World War II (funded through Veterans Branch) was the **Employment** also completed. reduced expenses were to limited employment opportunities for education sessional guides, a reduction in hours for Public Programs Manager and the suspended volunteer program. Provision for accrued employee entitlements was made. COVIDsafe compliance increased expenditure in the area of Occupational Health & Safety. Careful financial management over a challenging year saw a positive increase in total equity.

\$689,494

#### **OPERATING STATEMENT**

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Tenant Income

Museum Admissions	\$6,664
Other Income	\$7,721
Grants	\$44,974
Grant - Cash Flow Boost	\$43,594
Total Income	\$792,447
Cost of Sales	\$255
Gross Surplus	\$792,192
Expenses	
Employment Expenses	\$501,971
<b>Exhibitions and Tours</b>	\$131,706
General Expenses	\$81,847
Total Expenses	\$715,524
Net Surplus/Deficit	\$76,668
BALANCE SHEET	
Assets	
Cash and Equivalents	\$755,124
Trade Debtors	\$20,959
Non Current Assets	720,333
Total Assets	\$776,083
Total Assets	\$770,003
Liabilities	\$110,124
NET ASSETS	
Equity	
Retained Earnings	\$589,291
Current Year Earnings	\$76,668
TOTAL EQUITY	\$665,959

#### ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO COVID19

The following was undertaken to protect staff and support remote access for staff working at home during the COVID-19 Stage 3 and Stage 4 restrictions:

- The museum was closed from 1 July until 6 December, for five days in mid-February and from 28 May – 20 June
- The OTB's COVID-Safe Plan was reviewed and updated on a rolling basis
- Check-in QR codes were implemented with assisted registration via iPad for those without smart phones
- Extensive signage was installed, indicating distancing and room density levels, updated as required
- Face masks were mandatory inside the building
- Multiple hand sanitizer stations were installed
- Reduced opening hours with visitor caps were introduced, with cleaning between the morning and afternoon open periods
- A Business Continuity Plan was drafted and revised to reference the pandemic
- There was a minimal staff presence in the building during periods of lockdown, as permitted.
- An online booking system was instigated for museum visitors (not mandatory).

#### SECURITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The following were undertaken as part of a program to improve security and work, health safety in the building:

- Continuing fire warden training
- Improvements to the response time for emergencies via use of technology
- On-going First Aid and CPR training.
- The Risk Register was reviewed and updated.
- A Child Safety Policy was adopted.





#### **COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT**

The Committee of Management met on four occasions in this period.

Members were:

Professor Marian Quartly (Chair) Associate Professor Don Garden Corrinna Hale.

Meetings were held on 15 September, 11 November, 8 February and 10 May.

#### **STAFF**

The following staff training was undertaken during the year:

- Return to Volunteering
- Vic Tourism Conference
- Digital Direction Virtual Conference
- Personal Resilience Series
- Worksafe Seminars
- Digital Engagement for Museums and Galleries
- Cross-Sector Infection Control Skill Set
- First Aid and CPR to retain certification
- Volunteer Manager Seminar
- Ongoing fire response and warden training
- Technology upskilling (various).

#### **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

