



Welcome to the tenth instalment of the *Historians' SIG Newsletter*.

If you have any news, coming events, book reviews, short papers, or any other information you would like to share with us please e-mail cmanning@history.sa.gov.au

The deadline for contributions to the next newsletter is Friday 2 September.

2006 Museums Australia National Conference Call for Papers

The 2006 MA Conference Committee invites proposals for contributions to the conference program from individuals and groups within museums, galleries, the wider arts and natural history fields and beyond, that tackle issues, inspire debate and offer examples of constructive outcomes.

www.museumsaustralia.org.au

The deadline for abstracts is 16 September 2005

The Historians' SIG is planning to organise a panel session. Input on speakers and themes is welcome. For more information contact Deborah Tout-Smith: dtoutsm@museum.vic.gov.au

What's on?

Our Community: a great place to be

This exhibition explores the distinctive cultural and social diversity of communities in the



north-west of New South Wales: predominately Walgett, Brewarrina, Lightning Ridge and Angledool.

Where: National Museum of Australia, Canberra

Until: 28 February 2006

Sydney designers unplugged: people, process, product

Find out what it really takes to be a product designer! This exhibition takes you behind the scenes and into Sydney's leading product design studios to discover how many months or even years can go into designing products you use everyday. Interviews with the designers reveal their inspirations and the challenges they face to bring you everything from a rugged and reliable torch to a sleek and shiny toaster. There are also some sneak previews of concepts planned for the future.

Where: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney

Until: 9 October 2005

Meeting of the Memory of the World programme in Lijiang, China

Roslyn Russell

In June I attended my first meeting of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) of the UNESCO Memory of the World programme for documentary heritage. As a member of the Australian MOW Committee since its inception, and as one of the authors of the original programme guidelines over ten years ago, it was good to be able to participate in discussions at an international level of very similar issues to the ones that we deal with here in Australia. These include the recognition of whole archives and libraries in the programme, and the problems associated with preserving newer forms of documentary heritage, such as digital heritage.



Members of the Naxi minority group who attended the IAC meeting. The Naxi Dongba pictogram manuscripts are listed on the Memory of the World Register.

I will be getting the opportunity to do more of this in the future. At the meeting I was appointed to the IAC Bureau as Rapporteur (a fancy name indeed for someone who takes the minutes and has the job of producing a report of each meeting); and have subsequently been appointed Chair of the international Memory of the World Register Sub-Committee. Fortunately for this novice Australian, who will now be responsible for coordinating the assessment process for each nomination to the international MOW Register, I have the assistance of fellow Australian (and veteran of the

process) Ray Edmondson, who has been appointed the representative of CCAAA (the peak body for audiovisual archives) on the Register Sub-Committee. Ray was for many years Deputy Director of the National Film and Sound Archive. It will be a lot of work, but I look forward to the interaction with historians and other experts around the world, and with representatives of the international organisations that represent archives and libraries.

Meeting colleagues from the museum sector was a highlight of the trip. These included fellow Bureau member Alissandra Cummins, the President of ICOM and Director of the Barbados Museums; and Ralf Regenvanu, who directs three cultural organisations – the national museum, library and archives of Vanuatu.

The Lijiang meeting was not all work. We shopped for bargains in the Old Town of Lijiang, which is on the World Heritage Register, tried (in vain in my case) to keep up with the rapid delivery of courses at the two official banquets, and visited some rather unusual sites – particularly the World Heritage Park, which featured large scale models of natural features in the World Heritage area. These included the Yulong Snow Mountain, the real version of which could be clearly seen on a good day; and a full-sized recreation of the Old Town of Lijiang, only a few kilometres away!



Alissandra Cummins (Barbados), Andris Vilks (Latvia) and Ralf Regenvanu (Vanuatu) at a banquet in Lijiang hosted by the State Archives Administration of China, the sponsors of the IAC meeting.