

## **REVIEWERS COMMEND DISPLAYS TELLING LOCAL STORIES**

Museum and Gallery Services Queensland (M&GSQ) congratulates **Chinchilla Historical Museum**, one of nine museums and galleries from Southern Inland Queensland who have completed a challenging year-long program assessing their existing practices and policies against the **National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries**.

Reviewers, Josh Tarrant and Steve Chaddock, who played a vital role in providing professional advice and assistance throughout the program, free of charge, congratulated the **Chinchilla Historical Museum** saying,

'Considerable work has been done towards improving the Committee's policies and procedures. The museum committee and volunteers are to be congratulated on their dedication and enthusiasm.'

Chinchilla Museum is dedicated to the natural resources of the Chinchilla area and the history of their use. It offers a glimpse into farming and local industry including dairying, cattle, sheep, timber, melons, grapes, stone fruits and vegetables and more recently the extraction and utilisation of energy resources.

Key displays include the Cypress Pine Centre, telling the story of the saw milling industry that established the town of Chinchilla, The Green Plague exhibit, explaining the devastation caused by the Prickly Pear cactus and the development of the local cactoblastus moth breeding program, and The Melon Festival display, which tells the story of this important industry and its contribution to the economic and tourist growth in the town known as the 'melon capital' of Australia. Reviewers praised the Museum, saying:

'The museum has developed a number of commendable displays which tell significant local stories. These interpretive displays are a considerable strength of the museum. The Prickly Pear exhibit, for example, is a wonderful account of the scourge of a rogue cactus in the district, and the various means employed in controlling it. It is well designed, makes good use of wall-mounted objects and images, and highlights a significant national and local story.'

The museum has strong social history collections. Buildings located on site include Chinchilla's very first homestead 'Wongongera Cottage' (built in 1880) and Goombi Hall. Halls were the hub of community life and Goombi Hall captures the atmosphere of country social life: the dances, weddings, kitchen teas, balls, meetings and sporting events.

With the assistance of the Standards Program, the Chinchilla Historical Museum has created an Action Plan for the future. The Museum plans to build relationships with the new amalgamated

Council, implement collection policies and procedures, further develop their new Strategic Plan through stakeholder consultation, and improve volunteer training, recruitment and management procedures.

The Museum has built supportive community relationships, working successfully with local TAFE and high school students, is committed to building relationships with the local energy industry, and is working with local Aboriginal representatives to improve the display and interpretation of Indigenous artefacts.

Gail Taylor, Secretary, Chinchilla Historical Museum explained what they gained from participating in the Standards program,

'The Standards Program has highlighted the importance of policies, procedures and documentation. It has refocused our attention on the purpose of the Museum and has enabled us to identify the significant portions of our collection and the areas that require attention. We have gained a better understanding of our significant stories, particularly relating to natural resources.'

In 2010 the Museum Standards Program will be offered by M&GSQ in the Brisbane metro and surrounding regions.

Full program information is available at

<http://www.magsq.com.au/01 cms/details.asp?ID=509>

The Museum profile and print quality images from the Museum and Presentation Ceremony are attached.

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#### **IMAGE CAPTIONS:**

**Image 1 – Chinchilla Historical Museum receives their Certificate of Recognition. L-R: Debra Beattie, General Manager, Museum & Gallery Services Queensland - Gail Taylor, Chinchilla Historical Museum - Trish Henningsen, Chinchilla Historical Museum**

**Photo Acknowledgement – Bruce Cowell**

**Image 2 - Chinchilla Historical Museum**

**Photo Acknowledgement - Chinchilla Historical Museum**

**Image 3 - Chinchilla Melon Festival**

**Photo Acknowledgement - Chinchilla Historical Museum**

**Image 4 – The Chinchilla Cockroach  
Illustration Acknowledgement - Going Bush with Chinchilla Nats**

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