

## **Innisfail Friends of the Temple Looks to a Bright Future!**

Museum and Gallery Services Queensland (M&GSQ) congratulates the Innisfail Friends of the Temple, one of six community collecting institutions in Far North Queensland who have completed a year long groundbreaking program for Queensland's museum sector. The Standards Program is designed to help participating museums plan for a sustainable future by recognising their achievements, raising their profile and identifying strategic priorities for improvement and development.

On Wednesday 21 November Leslie Sparkes, Manager, Community and Cultural Development, Cairns City Council welcomed participants to a formal event celebrating their completion of the program. Innisfail Friends of the Temple received a certificate of recognition from Paul Brinkman, Director, Cairns Regional Gallery in acknowledgment of their achievement and hard work.

Reviewers, Tamara Lavrencic and Denise Neville, who provided professional expertise free of charge throughout the program, congratulated the Innisfail Friends of the Temple saying 'The Friends of the Temple are committed to ensuring that funds are available for continued support of the temple and its collection.'

They praised the Innisfail Friends of the Temple saying 'Opting to become involved in the Standards Program at such an early stage in the development of the museum-side of the venture is far-sighted. It gives the members an opportunity to review the direction in which they are heading, to check that it is in line with the aims of the custodians and that it doesn't duplicate the work of other public collectors of Chinese heritage. They have some unique stories to tell.'

The Lit Sing Gung Temple is an original art deco building constructed in 1940 by the renowned construction firm the Romano Bros. after the original temple was badly damaged in a cyclone in 1918, and demolished in 1940. Most of the temple artefacts date from 1896 and originate from China. The Friends collection includes the Dora See Poy Collection of photographs, clothes and original shop fittings as well as three original Chinese altar gods, and a collection of Chinese seals.

Using planning and management models provided by the Standards program the Innisfail Friends of the Temple have consolidated plans to add Chinese gardens and erect an additional, larger building to accommodate a teahouse and activity space for cultural programs such as their popular Tai Chi classes. The program has also assisted them in defining a collection development policy and assessing the significance of the existing collection.

The Friends will also expand their volunteer program in order to provide more visitor tours and possibly extend the current programs to include a river walk and a family history project. The Friends are committed to promoting the value and relevance of the temple to the Innisfail community and visitors to the region.

Nola Jappe, Friends of the Temple Publicity Officer explained what they gained from participating in the Standards program: 'We are now focussed on collecting the oral and written histories of the Chinese community within the region. There is a wealth of untold stories within the Chinese community in Innisfail and this will be a wonderful project. We are also refining our acquisition policy and streamlining our processes. We have realised that we need to concentrate on the stories, photos and objects with a history of relevance to the temple.'

Next year M&GSQ will offer the Museum Standards Program to another region in Queensland, to be announced in early 2008.

Full program information is available at  
[http://www.magsq.com.au/01\\_cms/index.asp?view\\_mode=subsection&ss\\_id=18](http://www.magsq.com.au/01_cms/index.asp?view_mode=subsection&ss_id=18)

Media profiles and print quality images from the Presentation Ceremony are attached.  
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Museum & Gallery Services Queensland Ltd. is funded by the Queensland Government, through Arts Queensland and is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments, and by the Commonwealth through the Australia Council its arts funding and advisory body.

ABN 32 109 874 811