

Australia ICOMOS E-Mail News No. 16

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(27 March 2002)

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Message by the Director-General of UNESCO

Above the door of the Kabul Museum, ravaged by more than 20 years of warfare, this maxim was posted up by persons unknown a few days ago: "A nation is alive when its culture is alive". This symbolic gesture gives a deeper meaning to the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 21 November 2001 proclaiming 2002 "United Nations Year for Cultural Heritage".

The cultural heritage of a people is the memory of its living culture. It is expressed in many different forms, both tangible (monuments, landscapes, objects) and intangible (languages, know how, the performing arts, music, etc.). The origins of this heritage are multifarious, too. In retracing its own cultural lineage, in recognizing the many different influences that have marked its history and shaped its identity, a people is better able to build peaceful relations with other peoples, to pursue what is often an age-old dialogue and to forge its future.

To value the cultural heritage and to care for it as a treasure bequeathed to us by our ancestors that it is our duty to transmit as wholly as possible to our children, is a sign of wisdom. That is why we must pursue our standard-setting action and design instruments like the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, whose thirtieth anniversary is being celebrated this year, able to give effective protection to all cultural heritage.

Today, the biggest challenge facing UNESCO, designated lead agency for this Year by the United Nations, is to make the public authorities, the private sector and civil society as a whole realize that the cultural heritage is not only an instrument for peace and reconciliation but also a factor of development. There are numerous examples in which a new approach to the management of the cultural heritage has promoted economic growth by creating employment opportunities for local populations, whether through crafts, cultural tourism and the emergence of new trades or through new forms of activity.

We must therefore encourage each member of society to become actively involved in the conservation and enhancement of the heritage of humanity. It is through the heightening of public awareness and increased mobilization and action in favour of heritage values, involving young people in particular, that the year 2002, United Nations Year for Cultural Heritage, will acquire its full significance.

Hence the importance of associating cultural heritage with development policies and

also the importance of demonstrating, as in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Caucasus and Cambodia, how much this powerful symbol of a people's identity can become a unifying factor for national reconciliation provided, that is, it is revitalized in people's minds not only as the mark of a common acknowledged past but also as the foundation of a shared future.

Koichiro Matsuura

UNESCO Preliminary draft Convention on the Intangible Cultural Heritage: the legal experts get down to work

At a meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters from 19 to 21 March 2002 at the invitation of the Director-General, some 10 experts in international law and cultural heritage have been entrusted with the task of mapping out the broad outlines of a **Convention on the Intangible Cultural Heritage**.

At its last session the UNESCO General Conference decided indeed, by 31 C/Resolution 30, that the question of the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage should be regulated by means of an international convention and invited the Director-General to submit to it at its 32nd session a preliminary draft of such a convention.

Following on from the meetings already held on the intangible cultural heritage, in particular in Turin (March 2001), Elche (September 2001) and Rio de Janeiro (January 2002), this meeting will focus on the more specifically legal aspects of the ongoing process of elaboration, which will include many other consultations, notably with Member States.

At the opening of the meeting, Mr Koichiro Matsuura spoke of the challenge facing the group of experts, declaring: "This is no easy task, but the stakes are high. You will need to decide on both the structure and the guiding principles of this new instrument. You will have the great responsibility of transforming this idea of a convention (...) into a first concrete embodiment of the concerns it is designed to address".

All the Director-General's addresses and speeches may be accessed on the Organization's website <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ulis/dgspeeches.html>

Southeast Asian Regional Conference & Workshop of National Heritage Trust Organisations

The Southeast Asian Regional Conference & Workshop of National Heritage Trust Organisations is to be held in Kuala Lumpur from 4-7 July 2002.

The theme of the Conference is The Symbiosis between Economic Development and Heritage Conservation: Sharing of Experiences. It is designed to increase understanding about the contribution that preservation of built heritage can make to nation building and tourism. It will also consider the interaction between urban

development and the conservation of built heritage, including in relation to tourism. Case studies from countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Australia will be considered.

The conference will be hosted by Badan Warisan Malaysia, and is aimed at non-government organisations, government bodies and individuals involved in heritage conservation throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

For further information please contact:

Elizabeth Cardosa : elizabeth@badanwarisan.org.my
www.badanwarisan.org.my

Canberra and Region Heritage Festival 6-21 April 2002

This year's Canberra and Region Heritage Festival runs from 6-21 April 2002. The theme of the 2002 festival is 'secrets and stories', and offers a perfect way to discover the Canberra region's less well known places and happenings.

For further information contact Environment ACT: www.environment.act.gov.au
Tel(02) 6207 9777

ACT Heritage Grants Program

The ACT Heritage Grants Program is an ACT Government program administered by the Heritage Unit to assist the community in conserving and promoting the ACT's heritage.

Any incorporated non-profit or private organisation, community group, or person working individually or jointly may apply for an ACT Heritage Grant.

An allocation of \$239,000 in funding (excluding GST) is available for the 2002/2003 round of the Grants Program for projects commencing within the financial year.
Generally funded grant projects are under \$10,000.

A proportion of funding is guaranteed for Aboriginal heritage projects and for the ACT Heritage Festival. A proportion of the funding may be allocated to directed grants. The Minister for Urban Services makes the final decision on the grants funded based on advice from the Heritage Unit and the ACT Heritage Council. Information on recently funded projects is available from the Heritage Unit or on the website.

Applications close 5.00pm Friday 17 May 2002.

For more information on how to apply for an ACT Heritage Grant go to www.environment.act.gov.au

Employment Openings

Details of the following jobs are currently listed on the Australia ICOMOS website:

- **Cultural Heritage Officer** 0.8 EFT (12 month Maternity Leave vacancy) City of Boroondara
- **Curator**, Old Parliament House Canberra
- **Exhibitions Manager** Old Parliament House Canberra
- **Collection Manager** The Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich QLD
- **Conservator** The Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich QLD
- **Curator** The Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich QLD
- Apprentice Stonemason (Melbourne)

Diary Reminder

31 March: The link in last week's Diary Reminder was wrong. The correct one is below. Entries close for the **UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage 2002 Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation**. For further info:

<http://www.unescobkk.org/culture/heritageawards/index.shtml>

6-21 April: Canberra and Region Heritage Festival: further info:

<http://www.environment.act.gov.au>

17-20 April The US/ICOMOS Santa Fe Symposium is just around the corner. The symposium will focus on how communities can make a powerful impact on the preservation of cultural heritage. Please visit the following link for up-to-date conference information, including registration materials.

<http://cstones.org/newsletter/icomos.html>

Islands of Vanishment Conference 8-10 June 2002 Port Arthur Tasmania.

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2002 is the United Nations Year for Cultural Heritage

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