MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY AT OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE

COVER IMAGE: OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE, PHOTOGRAPH BY, **ANDREW MERRY**

MUSEUM
OF AUSTRALIAN
DEMOCRACY

OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE

CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY
AND THE POWER OF YOUR VOICE WITHIN IT.

IF DEMOCRACY WAS AN OLYMPIC SPORT WE WOULD BE GOLD MEDAL CHAMPIONS.

WE'VE PIONEERED MANY DEMOCRATIC 'FIRSTS':

- THE SECRET BALLOT
- PROFESSIONAL, SALARIED ELECTORAL OFFICIALS
- VOTES FOR WOMEN AND THEIR RIGHT TO STAND FOR ELECTION
- A CONSTITUTION APPROVED BY THE PEOPLE

"Australians are apathetic about their democracy - over one million voters are missing from the electoral roll. The vision of the Museum of Australian Democracy is to celebrate the spirit of Australian democracy and the power of your voice within it. We make a difference - inspiring informed and engaged citizenship."

DARYL KARP, DIRECTOR, MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY AT OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE, 2015

"AUSTRALIA HAS ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE DEMOCRACIES IN THE WORLD, AND THE MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY IS OUR MOST IMPORTANT NATIONAL VOICE IN TELLING THE STORY OF HOW AUSTRALIANS HAVE BUILT THAT DEMOCRACY, AND HOW THEY CAN KEEP AND IMPROVE IT."

–

THE HON DR DAVID KEMP

THE HON DR DAVID KEMP, CHAIR OF THE OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE ADVISORY COUNCIL, FORMER MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND MINISTER (1990-2004), 2015

OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE, PHOTOGRAPH BY, **ANDREW MERRY**

“MAY THOSE WHO ENTER THIS OPEN DOOR GOVERN WITH JUSTICE, REASON AND EQUAL FAVOUR TO ALL. MAY THEY DO SO IN HUMILITY AND WITHOUT SELF-INTEREST. MAY THEY THINK AND ACT NATIONALLY. MAY THEY SPEAK WITH THE VOICE OF THOSE WHO SENT THEM HERE — THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.”

STANLEY MELBOURNE BRUCE, FORMER PRIME MINISTER, 9 MAY 1927

STANLEY MELBOURNE BRUCE

BUILT IN THE 1920s, OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE IS A BEAUTIFUL NATIONAL HERITAGE-LISTED BUILDING AND A TREASURED ICON THAT SYMBOLISES AUSTRALIAN NATIONHOOD AND UNITY.

Designed by John Smith Murdoch, Australia’s first purpose-built federal parliament building still displays much of the original 1927 furniture and fittings, creating an authentic experience.

Every part of the building tells a story. From the balconies, staff and workers watched as protests were held in opposition to the policies of the day. In the offices, libraries, party rooms, chambers and even the bar, the future direction of Australia was decided. The armchairs got comfortable and the floors well-worn as thousands of people passed through this building over the years, on their way to govern the country, write the newspaper stories, cook the meals or advise the minister.

The impact of these people on the nation over the past 88 years make this building an Australian icon.

Positioned in the heart of the Parliamentary Triangle, Old Parliament House has a new future as home to the Museum of Australian Democracy – celebrating the spirit of Australian democracy and the power of your voice within it.

ONLY 56% OF AUSTRALIANS BELIEVE THEIR VOTE MATTERS. AT THE 2013 FEDERAL ELECTION INFORMAL VOTES WERE THE HIGHEST IN 30 YEARS*

1 MILLION ELIGIBLE AUSTRALIANS ARE NOT ENROLLED TO VOTE IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS**

DEMOCRACY HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE ODD ONE OUT IN HUMAN HISTORY. EVER SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN ANCIENT ATHENS IT HAS BEEN MORE OR LESS EMBATTLED, UNDER SIEGE FROM INTERNAL CRITICS, EXTERNAL ENEMIES, HOSTILE IDEOLOGIES AND ITS OWN DYSFUNCTION.

ACROSS THE WORLD TODAY, ONLY 14% OF COUNTRIES HAVE FULL ACCOUNTABLE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS, AND THE PERCENTAGE IS FALLING NOT RISING.

In Australia we've done democracy longer, and better, than just about anywhere else in the world. Challenges and threats continue to emerge, just as they always have. But Australian democracy – noisy, rambunctious and assertive – has a track record which suggests that these challenges can be met more successfully here than anywhere else in the world.

* Australian Electoral Commission
** The Age, 5 November 2015

"I AM PROUD TO BE THE YOUNGEST WOMAN TO HAVE EVER ENTERED THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT, BUT MY LEGISLATIVE WORK INCLUDING BILLS TO ALLOW SAME-SEX MARRIAGE, PAID PARENTAL LEAVE, GENETIC PRIVACY AND STEM CELL REFORM ARE SOME OF MY PROUDEST MOMENTS. YOU CAN CHANGE LIVES FOR THE BETTER WITH THE STROKE OF A PEN IN PARLIAMENT. LEGISLATION CAN BE A MARVELLOUS THING."

– NATASHA STOTT DESPOJA AM

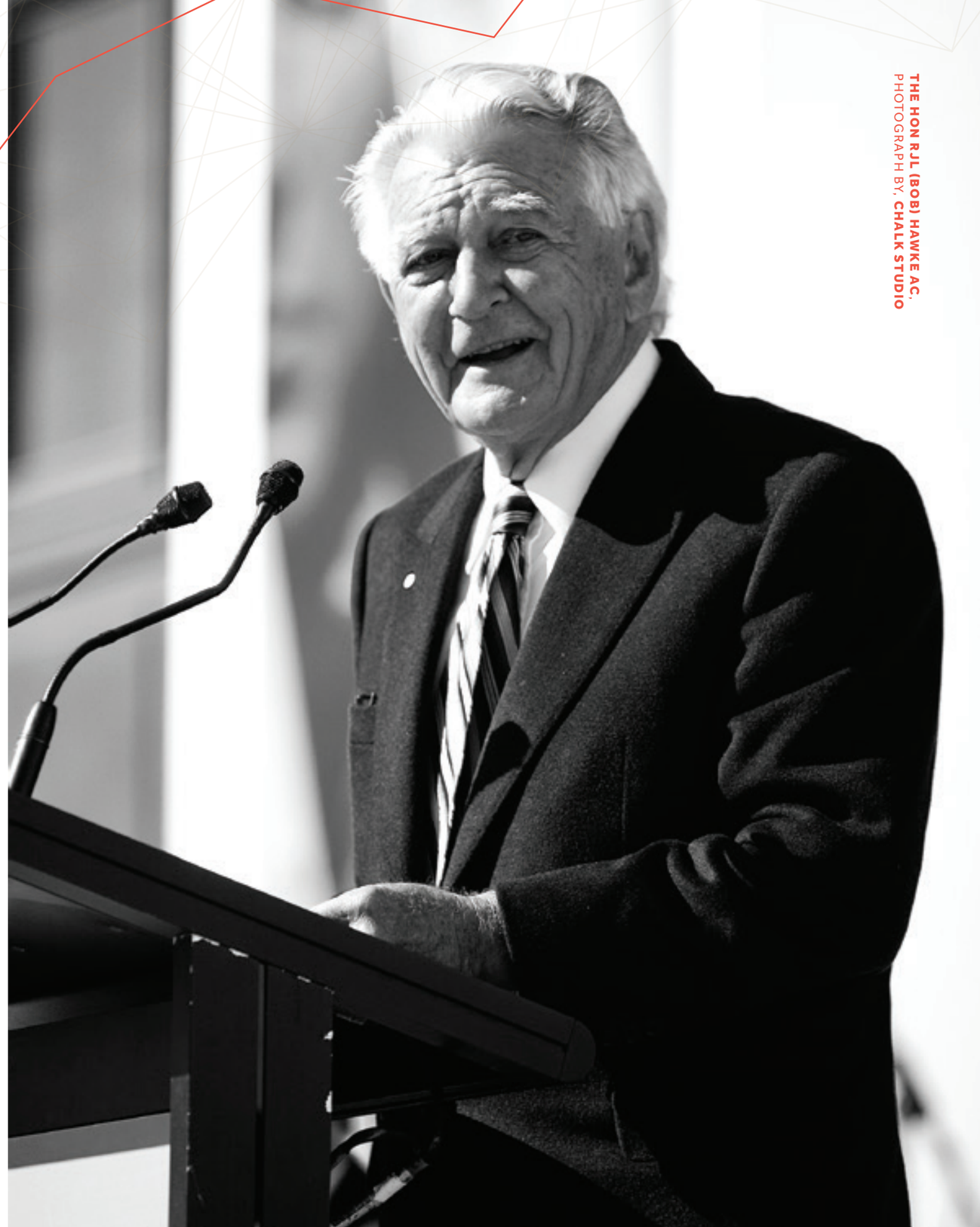
NATASHA STOTT DESPOJA AM, AUSTRALIA'S AMBASSADOR FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, FORMER SENATOR (1995-2008) AND MEMBER OF THE OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE ADVISORY COUNCIL, 2015

“...I TRUST THAT THIS MAGNIFICENT INITIATIVE, OF WHICH WE’RE PART OF TODAY, WILL SEE THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT NOT JUST OF THE MUSEUM WHICH PROPERLY HONOURS THE PAST, BUT THAT IT WILL BE AN INSTITUTION THAT WILL STIMULATE US ALL TO THINK ABOUT HOW WE CAN HELP MAKE AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY GROW AS A BEACON IN THIS TROUBLED AND FRAGILE WORLD.”

–

THE HON BOB HAWKE AC

THE HON BOB HAWKE AC FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA
AT THE OPENING OF THE MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY, 9 MAY 2009



THE HON RJL (BOB) HAWKE AC,
PHOTOGRAPH BY, **CHALK STUDIO**

43% INCREASE IN VISITATION IN THE LAST TWO YEARS

THE MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY UNPACKS THE SECRETS OF OUR GREATEST EVER NATIONAL SUCCESS STORY.

Housed in iconic Old Parliament House, the story of Australia’s democracy, what it is now, how it got to be this way, and what it might become in the future, is told in bold and arresting fashion. Hard conversations are embraced not shirked. Failures acknowledged, achievements celebrated, and true, real democratic engagement deepened.

LEARNING

School programs – youth parliaments
– digital resources – guided tours

LIVING HISTORY

Old Parliament House – King's Hall and Chambers
– heritage – stories – collection

EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

Behind the Lines – Power of Us – Play Up – election festivals
– Enlighten, Easter & Floriade family festivals

RESEARCH & OPINION

Australian Prime Ministers Centre – Hansard Monologues –
Canberra Writers Festival – Institute of Governance and Policy
Analysis: Democratic Conversations Uncensored series

FUNCTIONS & DINING

Members' Dining Rooms – Members' Bar
– Hoi Polloi restaurant – Terrace Café

“DEMOCRACY TO ME MEANS FOR THE LAWS AND POLICIES TO APPLY TO ALL PEOPLE AND TO BE ABLE TO GROW WITH THE GROWTH OF THE PEOPLE. PEOPLE MEANING ALL PEOPLE WITHOUT ANY DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE, CULTURE, GENDER, ECONOMIC STATUS, RELIGION, BELIEFS OR IMPAIRMENT.”

–

SARAH ELAKLOUK

SARAH ELAKLOUK PARTICIPANT AT THE AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL FOUNDATION FORUM HOSTED BY THE MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY AT OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE, 2015

WITH AN AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVE, IN A COUNTRY MADE UP OF OVER 200 NATIONALITIES, THE MUSEUM PROVIDES A SPACE NOT JUST TO CELEBRATE OUR DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS, BUT ALSO TO TRULY COLLABORATE WITH OUR AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS. EACH YEAR WE EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS, ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITIES WITH KNOWLEDGE AND PROVIDE THEM WITH A VIBRANT AND WELCOMING TOWN SQUARE.

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS YOUTH PARLIAMENT
MODEL UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLIES
STUDENT CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTIONS
ASSOCIATION OF THE FORMER MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
THE AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL FOUNDATION
UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA INSTITUTE OF GOVERNANCE AND POLICY ANALYSIS: DEMOCRATIC CONVERSATIONS UNCENSORED SERIES

RICHARD (JOEY) GALA PERFORMS A WELCOME DANCE TO OPEN THE EXHIBITION MICHAEL COOK: THROUGH MY EYES, 2014, PHOTOGRAPH BY, **CHALK STUDIO**

58% ELIGIBLE INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS ENROLLED TO VOTE IN 2015

Current national estimates based on sources including Australian Electoral Commission and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data 2015

"THE RIGHT TO VOTE IS NOT A RIGHT AT ALL
BUT LIKE AN ABORIGINAL CLAN,
PART OF A COMPLEX WEB OF RESPONSIBILITIES
BUILT TO BEST SERVE OUR SURVIVAL.
IT IS BEHOLDEN ON EACH MEMBER
OF A DEMOCRACY TO REFLECT
ON THE EVIDENCE AND AMASSED WISDOM
OF THE AGE TO SEE THE WAY FORWARD,
TO HAVE FRANK AND FEARLESS DEBATE
ABOUT THE SITUATION AT HAND.
TO PARTICIPATE RATHER THAN ABSTAIN
AND TO EDUCATE YOURSELF
ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES
BEFORE YOU TRY TO ENACT YOUR RIGHTS."

–

WESLEY ENOCH

WESLEY ENOCH, INDIGENOUS PLAYWRIGHT AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, 2015

THE MUSEUM IS COMMITTED TO TELLING THE STORIES OF INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS AND THEIR STRUGGLES FOR JUSTICE AND FULL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS.

MICHAEL COOK: *Through my Eyes*
Daring photographs of Australia's political leaders challenging viewers to rethink Australian history from an Indigenous perspective.

MARNTI WARA JANGA: *A walk together*
An exhibition that explores how the people of the Pilbara have engaged with democratic processes and movements.

INDIGENOUS YOUTH PARLIAMENT
Future Indigenous leaders from around Australia talk about issues affecting their communities.

NEVILLE BONNER
Keeping alive the story of Australia's first Indigenous parliamentarian through a remarkable collection of personal items and oral history.

“...THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS SO EASY TO MISS THAT AT TIMES WE NEED TO LOOK BEYOND OUR SHORES TO MORE AUTHORITARIAN STATES IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND WHAT LIFE MIGHT BE LIKE WITHOUT THE RIGHT TO SPEAK AS WE THINK – WITHOUT THE ABILITY TO OPENLY CRITICISE, PARODY AND DEBATE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES.”

–

PETER GRESTE

PETER GRESTE, AUSTRALIAN JOURNALIST AND AWARD-WINNING FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT, 2015

ACCESS TO INFORMATION IS A CENTRAL PILLAR OF A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY BECAUSE IT ENABLES INDIVIDUALS TO WEIGH UP QUESTIONS OF POLITICS AND POWER FOR THEMSELVES, RATHER THAN IT BEING FILTERED BY THOSE IN CONTROL.

Restrictions on media freedom and freedom of expression limit the marketplace of ideas and the opportunities for informed engagement.

Freedom of the press is a cornerstone of democracy and nothing represents this more effectively than political cartooning. Political cartoonists fearlessly and creatively interpret, comment and question.

The annual Behind the Lines cartoon exhibition celebrates the role of political cartoonists in Australia and highlights the power that their drawings have in contributing to our daily political and social discourse.

“ONLY ONE IN SEVEN PEOPLE LIVE IN COUNTRIES WHERE COVERAGE OF POLITICAL NEWS IS ROBUST, THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS IS GUARANTEED, STATE INTRUSION IN MEDIA AFFAIRS IS MINIMAL, AND THE PRESS IS NOT SUBJECT TO ONEROUS LEGAL OR ECONOMIC PRESSURES.”

–

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS 2014, FREEDOM HOUSE

Our Power of 1 exhibition and Free Speech Floats program broke new ground in creating opportunities for visitor contributions.

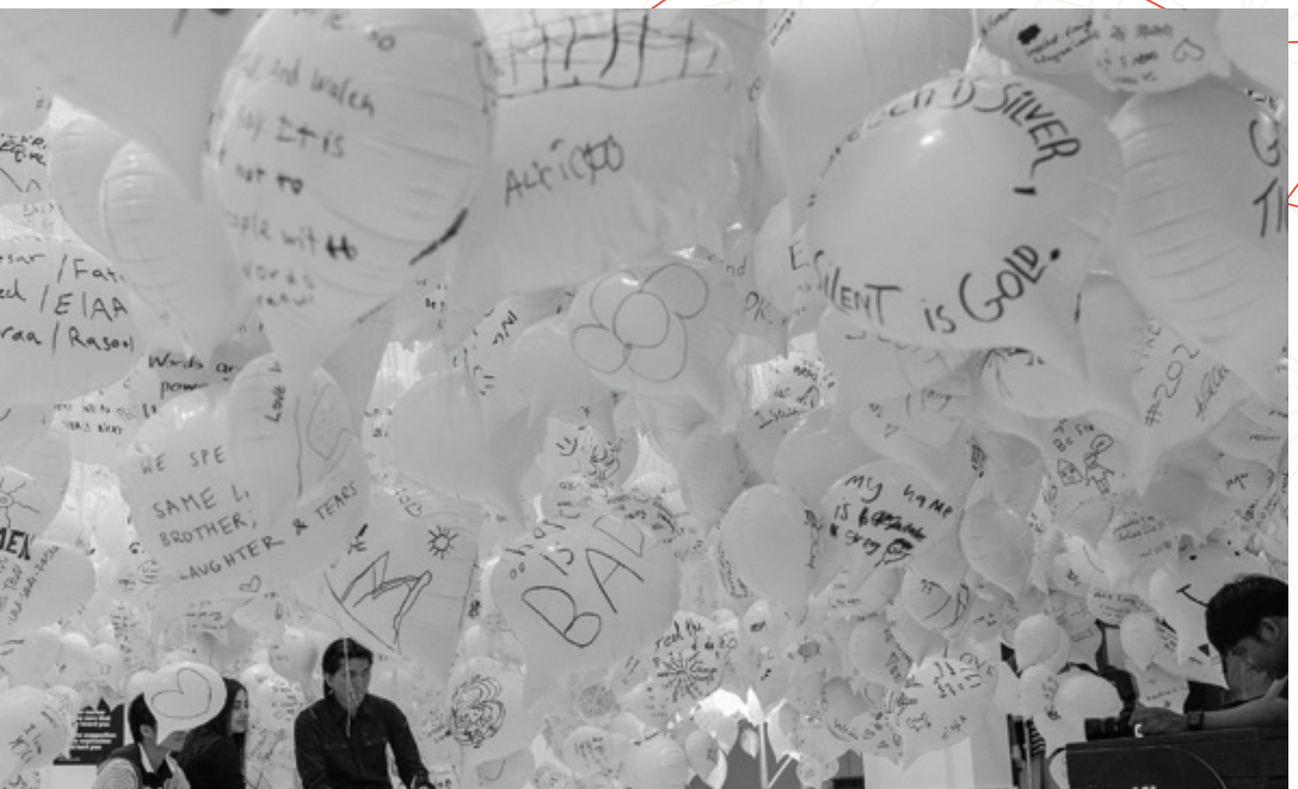
The voice of the people – their comments, selfies and statements – are as important as the enriching experience of the physical space. These contributions continue to influence and inform content in the museum.

39% OF GEN-Y AND **36%** OF GEN-X ARE AGAINST COMPULSORY VOTING*

19% OF GEN-Y AUSTRALIANS ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE WAY DEMOCRACY WORKS IN AUSTRALIA*

*IPSOS DEMOCRACY SURVEY, FEBRUARY 2014

FREE SPEECH FLOATS AT OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE, PHOTOGRAPH BY, **CHALK STUDIO**



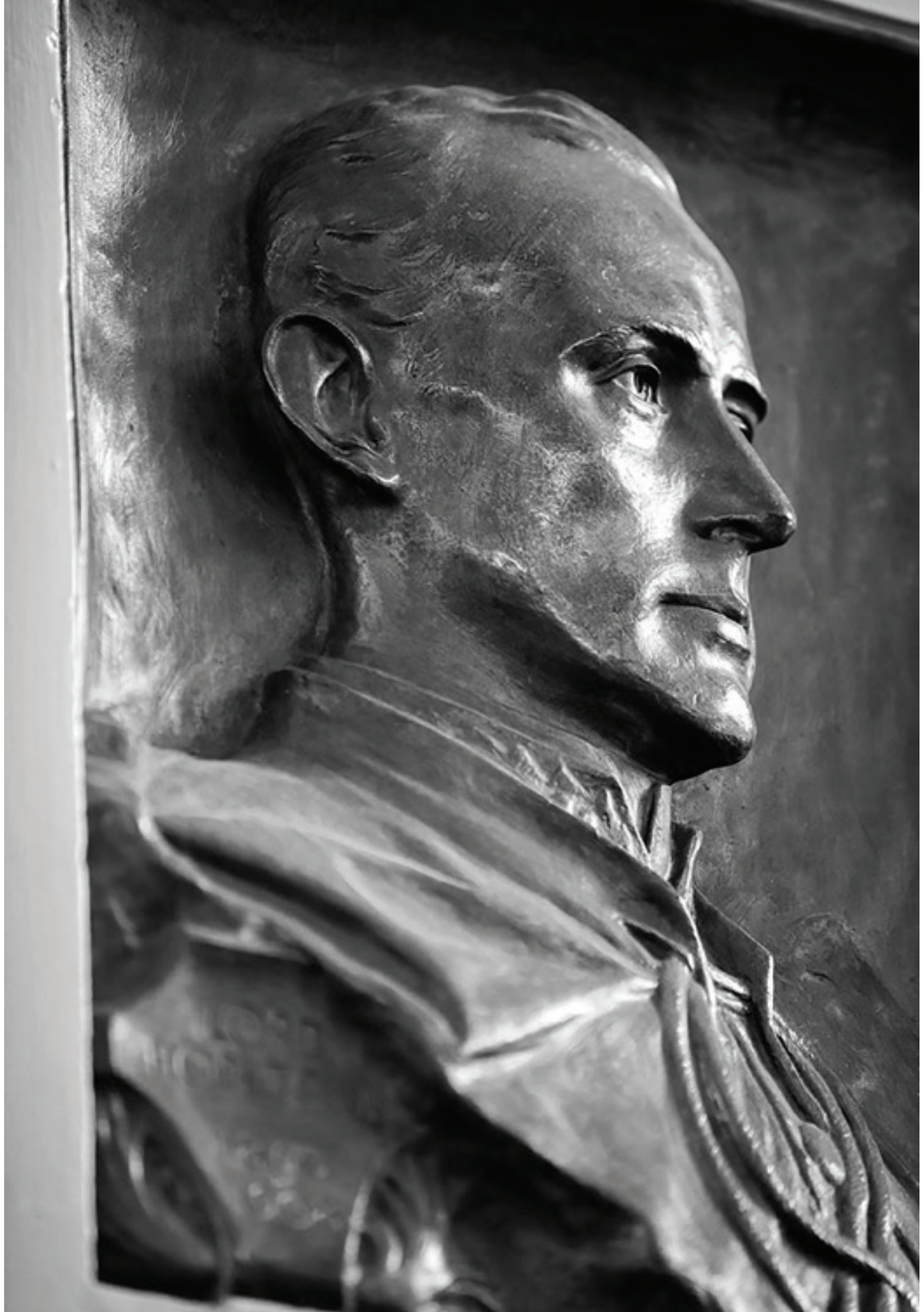
"I CAN SEE BOTH SIDES BUT YOU REALLY WANT PEOPLE TO BE VOTING WHO ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT THE LEADERSHIP OF THIS COUNTRY, TALK THROUGH THE ISSUES AND CARE ENOUGH TO VOTE."

– DR SAM PRINCE

DR SAM PRINCE, GEN-Y ENTREPRENEUR, PHILANTHROPIST AND CONTRIBUTOR TO THE POWER OF 1 EXHIBITION COMMENTS ON COMPULSORY VOTING BEING A BAD THING FOR DEMOCRACY, 2014

OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE, PHOTOGRAPH BY, **ANDREW MERRY**

BEHIND THE LINES GAME NIGHT, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE CHAMBER.
PHOTOGRAPH BY, **CHALK STUDIO**



EARL OF HOPETOUN, FIRST GOVERNOR – GENERAL OF AUSTRALIA, PHOTOGRAPH BY, **ANDREW MERRY**

THE HON TONY SMITH MP, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CHAMBER AND FORMER CHAIR JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS, 2015

“EVERY VOTER IS A CITIZEN SHAREHOLDER IN OUR NATION, DETERMINING THE DIRECTION OF THE NATION THROUGH THE BALLOT BOX AT REGULAR ELECTIONS. KNOWING OUR HISTORY IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTANDING WHY POLITICS AND PARLIAMENT MATTERS, AND HOW EVERY CITIZEN HAS A STAKE IN THE FUTURE.”

THE HON TONY SMITH MP

OVER 500,000 STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ACROSS AUSTRALIA PARTICIPATED IN ORGANISED SCHOOL LEARNING PROGRAMS

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IS THE BEDROCK OF A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY AND WE ARE LEADING THE WAY IN ENGAGING AUSTRALIA'S YOUNG MINDS AND INSPIRING FUTURE LEADERS.

We provide transformative learning experiences through formal, curriculum-based and age-appropriate programs for schools; and unique, informal experiences through exhibitions, youth parliaments, self-directed learning and online engagement as we explore what it means to be an informed and engaged citizen.

Our internationally award-winning RFID (radio frequency identification) technology underpins many of the onsite experiences, providing a personalised, collaborative experience.

Our school program is one of the mandatory Parliament Civics Education Rebate (PACER) programs, and we work collaboratively with Australian Parliament House (Parliamentary Education Office), National Electoral Education Centre and the Australian War Memorial to provide students and teachers with rich and holistic learning experiences.

"LET US TAKE UP OUR VOICES, FOR THEY TOO ARE ONE OF OUR MOST POWERFUL WEAPONS."

– ADELE LOUCHART-FLETCHER

ADELE LOUCHART-FLETCHER, YEAR SIX STUDENT, 2014

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS YOUTH PARLIAMENT, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CHAMBER,
PHOTOGRAPH BY, **ANDREW TAYLOR**

CORSAGE OF VIOLETS GIVEN TO QUENTIN BRYCE AC BY HER GRANDMOTHER. THE CORSAGE IS SYMBOLIC OF THE SUFFRAGETTE MOVEMENT AND IT WAS WORN BY QUENTIN BRYCE AC WHEN SHE SWORE IN JULIA GILLARD AS PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA **DONATED BY QUENTIN BRYCE AC**
PHOTOGRAPH BY, **ANDREW MERRY**

PARLIAMENTARY PILLOW IN RED PILLOWCASE USED BY NEVILLE BONNER
DONATED BY THE FAMILIES OF NEVILLE AND HEATHER BONNER
PHOTOGRAPH BY, **ANDREW MERRY**

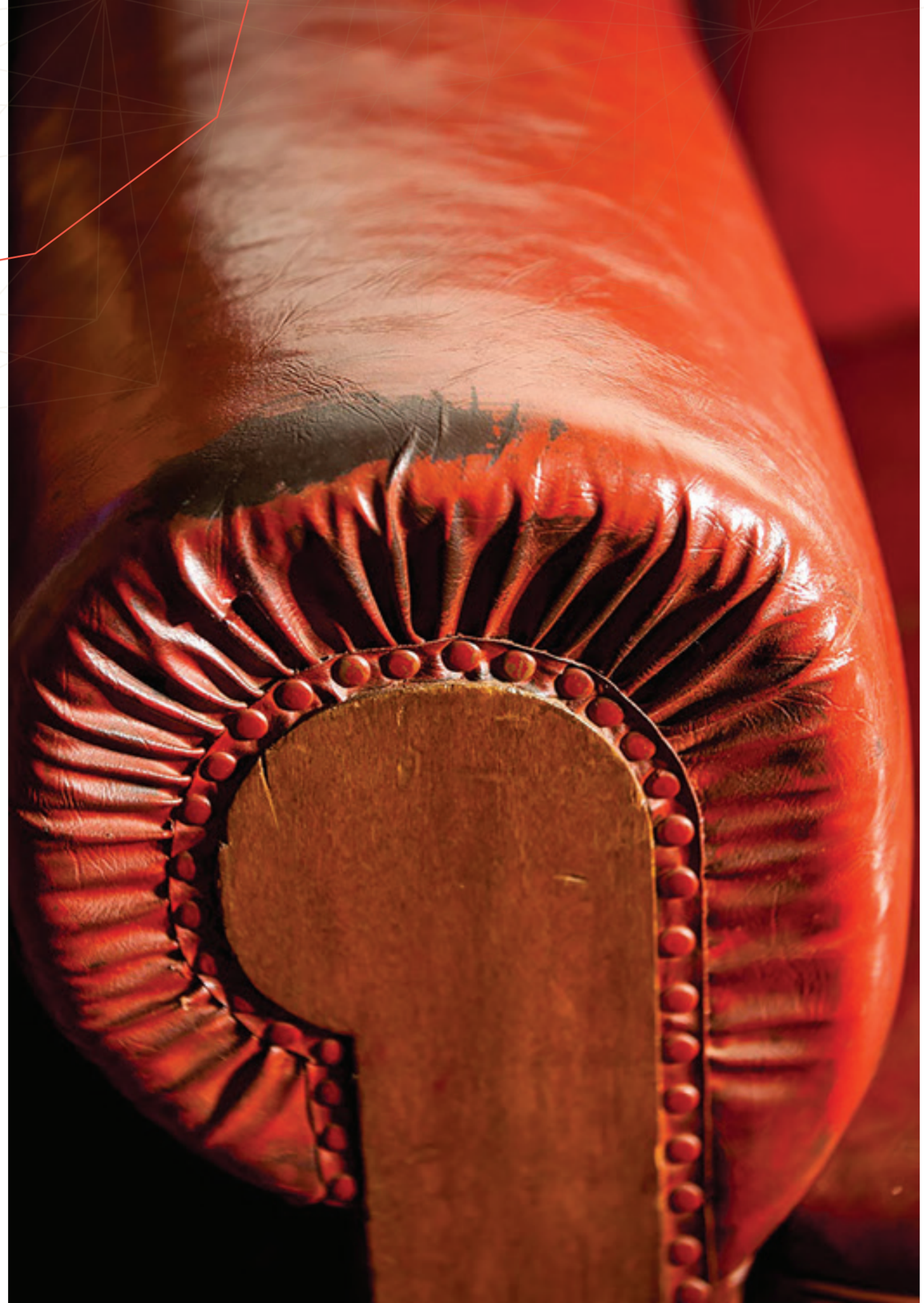
QUENTIN BRYCE AC,
GOVERNOR-GENERAL 2008-2014, 2010

"ABSOLUTELY THE MOST IMPORTANT CHANGE FOR WOMEN HAS BEEN OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION. CERTAINLY THAT'S BEEN THE GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT. THERE WERE VERY FEW WOMEN ON AUSTRALIAN CAMPUSES, VERY FEW GIRLS WHO FINISHED SCHOOL TO YEAR 12 WHEN I WAS YOUNG. NOW TO SEE THE MARVELLOUS PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN, IT MAKES MY HEART SING. IT'S NOT JUST IMPORTANT FOR THEM – IT'S SO IMPORTANT FOR OUR COUNTRY AND OUR WORLD."
–
QUENTIN BRYCE AC

NEVILLE BONNER AO, INDIGENOUS LEADER AND SENATOR (1922-99), 1996

"IT WAS WORSE THAN BEING OUT DROVING. I WAS TREATED LIKE AN EQUAL ON THE FLOOR OF THE CHAMBER, NEITHER GIVING NOR ASKING QUARTER, BUT THERE WERE HOURS JUST SITTING IN MY OFFICE AND I WENT HOME ALONE TO MY UNIT AT NIGHT. THERE WAS NEVER ONE NIGHT WHEN ANYONE SAID 'HEY LET'S GO OUT TONIGHT'."
–
NEVILLE BONNER AO

50% OF OUR COLLECTION COMES FROM DONATIONS



OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE HERITAGE CHAIR, PHOTOGRAPH BY, ANDREW MERRY

"CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU FOR BRINGING US MARNTI WARAJANGA – A WALK TOGETHER. THIS IS A TRULY IMPORTANT UNDERTAKING, AND ONE THAT WE AT BHP BILLITON, ARE VERY PROUD TO BE PART OF. WE EXPECT THIS EXHIBITION, AND THE UPCOMING TOUR OF THE PILBARA, TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO EXPLORE, AND BETTER UNDERSTAND, THE DEMOCRATIC HISTORY OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND THEIR JOURNEY TOWARDS EQUALITY."

RICHARD O'CONNELL, BHP BILLITON HEAD OF COMMUNITY AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS (IRON ORE), 2012

"IT WAS EVIDENT FROM THE START THAT MUSEUM STAFF SHARED OUR PASSION FOR THE SUBJECT [DEMOCRACY] BUT NEEDED ACADEMIC EXPERTISE TO HELP THEM BUILD A STRONG EVIDENCE BASE TO INFORM THE EXHIBITION [POWER OF 1: DOES YOUR VOICE COUNT?]. THIS WAS A GENUINE MEETING OF THE MINDS FROM THE BEGINNING."

PROFESSOR MARK EVANS, DIRECTOR AND PROFESSOR OF GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTE OF GOVERNANCE AND POLICY ANALYSIS, UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA, 2014

"THE BETTER SHELTER IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF HOW DEMOCRATIC DESIGN CAN CREATE BETTER LIVES FOR THE MANY. ALL OF US AT THE IKEA FOUNDATION ARE EXCITED AND HONOURED TO BE WORKING WITH THE MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY AT OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE TO SHARE WITH AUSTRALIANS OUR VISION OF HOW TOGETHER WE CAN CREATE A SAFER PLACE TO CALL HOME FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN."

JONATHAN SPAMPINATO, HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNICATIONS, IKEA FOUNDATION, 2014

"PLAY CAN BE A CHILD RIGHT WE TAKE FOR GRANTED IN AUSTRALIA, BUT ITS POWER FOR ALL CHILDREN CANNOT BE UNDERESTIMATED. IT'S AN IMPORTANT CHILD RIGHT AND ONE UNICEF IS PLEASED TO SEE THE MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY EMBRACING AND CELEBRATING."

DR NORMAN GILLESPIE, CEO UNICEF AUSTRALIA AT THE OPENING OF PLAY UP, 2014

IN THE WAYS THEY LEAD AND THE WAYS THEY LIVE, OUR PRIME MINISTERS REFLECT ASPECTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THEIR TIMES. PRIME MINISTERS PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN ORIENTING, INFLUENCING AND MANAGING AUSTRALIA THROUGH WAR AND PEACE, BOOM AND BUST, FIRE AND FLOOD.

The Australian Prime Ministers Centre (AMPC) spearheads the museum's efforts to find out more about our prime ministers and, through them, more about our nation, its political leadership and ourselves. Established in 2007, the APMC has grown into a hub for research and engagement on political leadership.

The APMC's fellowship and scholarship program has delivered countless publications and presentations that are shaping opinions and research about prime ministers.

"INTELLIGENCE, IMAGINATION, NOUS, STAMINA, GUTS — THESE ARE WHAT IT TAKES TO HANDLE THIS UNIQUE JOB SUCCESSFULLY — AND, USUALLY A DASH OF LUCK."

MICHELLE GRATTAN, JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR, 2008

"FOR THIS JOB A MAN REALLY NEEDS THREE THINGS, OR SOME OF THEM ANYHOW; A HIDE LIKE A RHINOCEROS, AN OVERPOWERING AMBITION, AND A MIGHTY GOOD CONCEIT OF HIMSELF."

STANLEY MELBOURNE BRUCE, PRIME MINISTER, 1923–29, 1932

JOHN HOWARD OM AC, ABC CONVERSATIONS WITH RICHARD FIDLER, 1996

"I THOUGHT, 'FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE', WHAT'S THE POINT OF BEING IN OFFICE WHEN YOU CAN'T DO SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT IN RELATION TO SOMETHING THAT AFFECTS COMMUNITY SAFETY?"

–

JOHN HOWARD OM AC

After the Port Arthur Massacre of 1996, the Howard government moved to institute uniform firearms laws. Prior to this, regulation of firearms had been left to State governments. The National Firearms Agreement was agreed to be a meeting of all state Police Ministers and Attorney-General Daryl Williams on May 10, twelve days after the massacre. John Howard used his influence to persuade the ministers and their premiers, and announced the deal that evening. Each state and territory then passed its own firearms control laws in line with the Agreement. The Agreement also included the federally funded national buyback scheme and created the Firearms Registry.

JOHN HOWARD OM AC, FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA 1996 - 2007
PHOTOGRAPH BY, **MARK NOLAN / GETTY IMAGES**

OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE, PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW MERRY

DEMOCRACY IS WEIGHING THINGS UP, WORKING OUT WHAT YOU VALUE MOST, DECIDING, AND CHOOSING. THE THINGS WHICH ARE THE HEARTBEAT OF MODERN DEMOCRACY OFTEN REQUIRE DISCRIMINATION AND CHOOSING BETWEEN.

The choices we face today are seldom unique; they are issues which have faced Australians across the sweep of our history. Issues such as a classless society, ownership of the land, education for all, an open or closed nation, empire and independence, the social safety net, private enterprise or socialism, conscripts or volunteers, nanny state and basic human rights have shaped policy for decades.

The capacity we need most in order to best live our life in a democracy is the capacity to decide, to discriminate, to work out what we think the most important actions are in new and unexpected situations. The capacity to choose well is at the core of it all. The Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House empowers Australian citizens of today and tomorrow, creating informed citizens able to participate in the big issues we will face. Our partners/sponsors can also be a part of shaping opinions and driving agenda.

THE MESSAGE IS SIMPLE: AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY— ARE YOU IN?

WITH YOUR HELP, WE CAN CELEBRATE
OUR DEMOCRACY AND THE POWER OF
YOUR VOICE WITHIN IT.

You can be involved and support the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House by:

– joining our mailing list
– becoming a volunteer
– attending our events
– donating to our collection, exhibitions and educational activities
– leaving a legacy gift in your Will

To seek further information and to discuss, please email **supportus@moadoph.gov.au** or call **02 6270 8222**

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