

MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA NSW BRANCH

CHAPTER PLAN 2010-2011

1. SUMMARY

Background

Museums Australia (NSW) currently has about 430 members throughout the state.

NSW Chapters were established in 1979 as sub-divisions of the NSW Branch. Ten chapters continue to operate. Some are functioning well. Some are operating under difficulties or have become dormant. Further information on the situation and issues to be addressed are outlined in sections 2-3.

Government policies – currently in a state of flux - continue to influence the direction of the association. In 2009, the Cultural Ministers Council announced the closure of the Collections Council of Australia. Decisions on the Collections Australia Network and Museums and Galleries NSW are expected in 2010. The Federal Government is currently devising a national cultural policy which may influence future funding of museums.

This Chapter Plan outlines principles and action to be taken by the branch to support and develop chapters in this evolving landscape, 2010-2011.

Related plans, chapter documentation and efforts

- The NSW Branch strategic plan 2009-2011.
- The NSW Branch advocacy plan 2010-2011 will determine specific action by the Branch in representing the interests of members.
- The NSW Branch program of events 2010, with details of conferences, workshops, tours and other events, flags opportunities available to chapters.
- Museum Australia's work nationally provides a context and specific action, particularly in relation to membership and marketing, publications and standards, and a museums digital strategy.

Principles & priorities

- **Provide value to as many members as possible.** The branch will focus its efforts in areas where members are located (50% in Sydney, 50% in regional NSW)
- **Support local initiative.** The branch recognises the high value of those people who make voluntary commitments as office bearers, committee members and chapter coordinators. In developing chapter programs, the branch will recognise and support their efforts.
- **Provide special support for chapters where needed.** The branch recognises that special efforts may be required where there are few museums and few members in a large geographical area.

Strategies

Governance & administration

Issue	Description	Action
Regional representation	More opportunities for regional representation on MA committees?	MANSW to consider further possibilities in Advocacy Plan
Planning	Chapter reps meetings 2010 and 2011	MANSW to organise
Electronic communication	Current steps are considered to be satisfactory	MANSW to continue current approach
Research & data	Chapter profiles, NSW Government policies and funding volunteer data, Aboriginal culture.	MANSW to implement research program.
By-laws	Changes & chapter operational issues	MANSW to clarify issues
Finances	Membership rebate to NSW branch, procedures and audits, administrative subsidy, insurance	MANSW to report progress
Membership & marketing	National membership committee, logo	MANSW to provide update on progress.
Records management	Guidelines to chapters	MANSW to provide guide to chapters by Dec 2010

Development & support

Advocacy	Representation of chapter and member interests	MANSW to incorporate issues in Advocacy Plan by Mar 2010
Website & systems	Being upgraded. Changes needed to existing branch and chapter pages	MANSW to provide updates and coordinate changes
Publications	Museum Matters, NSW Branch Updates Museum Methods	MANSW to implement 2009 decisions and lead work on Publications Committee
Events & professional development	Branch program of events 2010 and 2011	MANSW to implement plan 2010, develop workshops and completed 2011 program
Chapter visits	Schedule of visits to chapters	PB/AS/BS to coordinate schedule in consultation with chapters
Support for particular chapters	Sydney chapter. More effective collaboration needed.	MANSW to clarify separate programs and opportunities for joint action.
	Functioning chapters. Far North, Mid North Coast, New England North West, SH & I, Lachlan.	MANSW to invite feedback on further support by 28 Feb 2010
	Dormant chapters. Golden West, South East, Murray Riverina.	PB/BS to clarify options by 30 Mar 2010
	New chapters. Goulburn. Murray Darling	MANSW to clarify options by 30 Mar 2010
Awards	IMAGinE awards	MANSW to implement 2010-2011
Project support	Use of university students for regional projects	MANSW to promote possibilities by 30 Mar 2010

Paul Bentley
 NSW Branch Committee
 29 January 2010
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2. Situation
3. Strategies
4. Project plan

2. SITUATION

What is a chapter?

Chapters are formal units of Museums Australia that have been endorsed by the National Council as sub-divisions of the NSW Branch. They are bound by the legal requirements of the ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991 and MA's constitution and regulations. They work to further the interests of museums and museum workers within agreed geographical boundaries. They may consist of Museums Australia members and non-members.

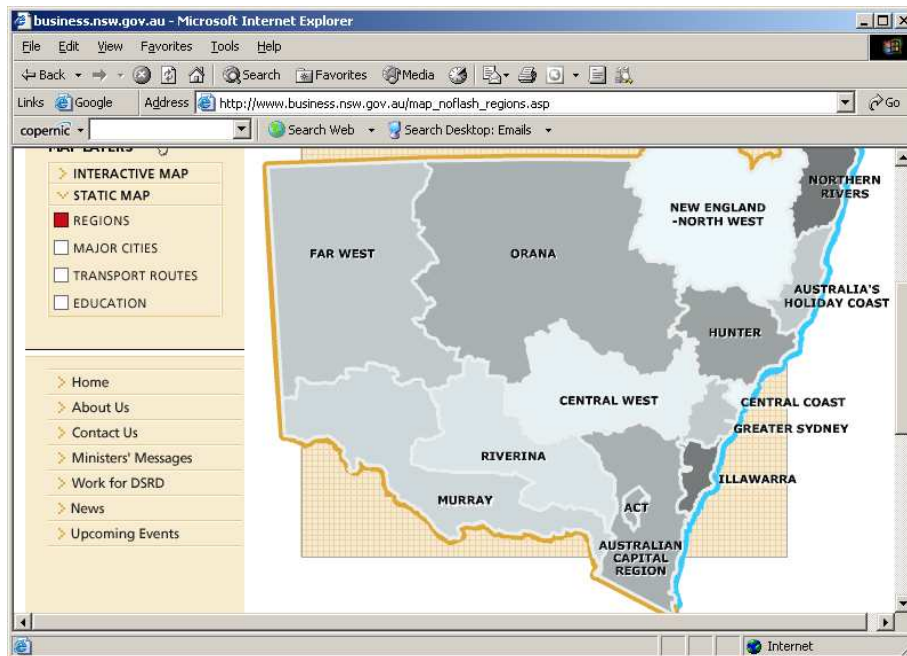
Historical background

For information on the historical background, see *Chapter Plan 2009-2011: Situation*, distributed to chapters in September 2009.

Boundaries and statistics

Current chapter boundaries are listed in the MANSW *Chapter Profiles* and in the spreadsheet *Local Government Councils and Chapters (V2)*, which includes the ABS code for each shire/council, city, postcode, area, population and regional designation by LGSA area, MA chapter name, RANSW name and NSW Department of Local Government area.

The Branch is creating a map of chapter boundaries. In the meantime, the following map of the 14 regions supported by NSW State & Regional Development serves as a rough visual guide of the territory.



Chapters by regions

The Branch currently has 11 chapters in 5 regions:

Regional sectors	Chapters	Area	pop	museums	MA members
Sydney	Sydney including Western Sydney	5,963	3,609,538		286
Sydney adjacent areas	Hunter, Southern Highlands/Illawarra	45,826	1,605,471		76
North	Far North Coast, New England North-West, Mid North Coast	88,547	458,478		36
West	Central Tablelands, Golden West	69,113	198,437		17
South	Lachlan, Murray Riverina, South East.	74,189	294,485		19

Chapters by status

		Area served	Pop	Museums	MA members
Metro chapter	Sydney chapter	5,963	3,609,538		286
Functioning chapters	Far North Coast	8,414	113,241		10
	Hunter	34,410	954,399		48
	Southern Highlands & Illawarra	11,416	651,072		28
	Lachlan	19,606	52,744		6
	Mid North Coast	11,335	195,625		8
	New England Far West	68,798	149,613		18
					118
Dormant chapters	Central Tablelands	28,587	141,854		12
	South East	18,875	80,175		5
	Golden West	40,526	56,583		10
	Murray Riverina	35,708	161,566		14
		123,696	440,178		41
Proposed chapter	Murray Darling	101,649	32,831		1

The above tables are preliminary readings only. Some current member postcodes appear to be unaligned with current chapter boundaries in the current version of chapter profiles. Apart from other strategies to be considered, changing chapter boundaries (as defined by postcodes) may be desirable. Museums, historical societies, galleries and other collecting organisations need to be reviewed and compared with institutional membership numbers.

Dormant chapters are under the administration of NSW Branch or without a viable committee or without plans for 2009

What makes a successful chapter?

- catalysts committed to the work of the association
- a critical mass of museums within regions

Other players

Programs for chapters will be influenced by the work of the Museums Australia national office and other divisions, including national networks and special interest groups. The Branch is currently investigating possible collaboration with the following:

- **Other MA divisions.** Of particular interest are the ACT and Victorian branches and MGSQ. The ACT Branch presents programs in the ACT. Some chapters draw on the national institutions in Canberra when presenting workshops. The Victorian Branch provides services and products in Victoria, including museums and galleries of NSW/Vic border regions. It may be possible to piggyback off its publications and events in providing services to NSW members.
- **Other organisations working on behalf of museums** include a number of NSW Government departments, local government areas operating with or without Regional Museum Development Officers, Museums & Galleries NSW, major institutions, Regional & Public Galleries Association of NSW, Royal Australian Historical Society and Regional Arts NSW.

3. STRATEGIES

Principles & priorities

- **Provide value to as many members as possible.** The branch will focus its efforts in areas where members are located (roughly 50% in Sydney, 50% in regional NSW)
- **Support local initiative.** The branch recognises the high value of those people who make voluntary commitments as office bearers, committee members and chapter coordinators. In developing chapter programs, the branch will recognise and support their efforts.
- **Provide special support for chapters where needed.** The branch recognises that special efforts are required where there are few museums and few members in a large geographical area.

Governance & administration

Issue	Description	Action
Regional Representation	Some chapters have asked for more regional representation on MA committees. Marea Buist (Far North Coast) currently represents regional perspectives is an elected member of the branch committee. In 2009, the Branch invited nominations for the Branch committee 2009-2010. No new nominations were received. The Sydney Chapter is invited to all committee meetings of the branch. Marea Buist and Gay Hendriksen are Branch reps on the MGNSW Volunteer Reference Committee and Museum Reference Committee. MA Networks provide additional opportunities for representation and participation in the affairs of the association.	PB to consider other options in Advocacy Plan

Planning	Annual chapter representative meetings are important forums for making face-to-face contact, reporting achievements, and helping to shape future directions of the association.	PB/AS to organised meeting in March 2010 and 2011.
Electronic communication	Information distribution. Minutes of branch committee meetings; invitation for comment on issues; MA e-bulletins, <i>Museum Matters</i> , <i>NSW Branch Updates</i> , Manexus.	PB and others to continue to use existing tools.
Research and data	Chapter profiles to assist branch and chapters understand needs and opportunities. Related data exists in ABS surveys, surveys by individual chapters, NSW State & Regional Development regional profiles, and MGNSW research (eg standards program profiles)?	PB to finalise profiles and chapter map by Dec 2010 (3 chapters a quarter) in consultation with chapters who want to be part of the process.
	NSW Government policies and funding.	PB to develop and report on profiles of relevant departments
	Museum volunteer data and research, particularly on training needs and gaps.	PB to develop proposal by 28 Feb 2010
	Aboriginal cultural heritage. SHI Chapter has raised the need for a better understanding of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage material in regions and has undertaken a survey in SHI region.	PB or branch or committee member to develop proposal by 31 December 2010.
By-laws	MA adopted a revised the national constitution and regulations in 2008. The NSW Branch revised its by- laws in 2009. Changes and operational improvements need to be communicated.	PB to provide an update upon further advice from MANO by 28 Feb
Finances	NSW membership rebate. Some chapters have suggested MANO should consider changing the basis of the membership rebate (72% instead of 28%) to enable MANSW to provide more direct support and services to members.	PB to raise issue in membership committee deliberations.
	Financial procedures and audit. MANO is streamlining processes in consultation with the national auditor.	PB to advise chapters upon further advice from MANO 28 Feb 2010.
	Administrative subsidies. The branch provides an administrative subsidy to chapters of \$10 for each MA institutional member in chapters with a MANO bank account. There's a need to streamline the process.	PB to advise chapters by 28 Feb upon advice from MANO.
	Insurance. MA is updating its volunteer, public liability and other insurance	PB to advise chapters upon advice from MANO.

	coverage and will publish details on website.	
Marketing	The MA Membership Committee, under the chairmanship of Bill Storer, with the involvement of Paul Bentley, is currently reviewing membership issues and preparing a marketing plan. Suggestions from chapters: demonstrate and promote value to membership; develop affinity programs.	PB to report progress in 2010.
	Logo. MANO created a new MA logo in 2008. MANSW is awaiting instructions on its use from MANO.	PB to provide update as when available.
Records management	MANSW is currently developing record-keeping systems, reviewing, culling and archiving branch records 1969 to date.	PB to provide guidelines to chapter by Dec 2010

Chapter support and development

Issue	Description	Action
Advocacy	The Branch represents chapter and member interests to national council, government bodies and sector at large.	PB to amplify details in Advocacy plan
Website & systems	MANO is launching a new version of the website with direct access to membership and event databases. It launched maNexus, a Ning site, in 2009. MA members and others are invited to join maNexus and the maNexus NSW Group. Chapter are invited to create their own maNexus chapter groups.	PB to advise chapters on website progress, review content and coordinate changes
Publications	<i>Museum Matters</i> and proposed <i>MA NSW Branch Update</i> promote the activities of chapters and other information.	PB to implement changes
	The NSW Branch leads the MA Committee on Publications under the chairmanship of Andrew Simpson. This is reviewing <i>Museum Methods</i> and other publications.	PB to report progress
Professional development & events	To complement the work of chapters and other organisations such as MGNSW, the Branch program in 2010 includes the chapter reps meeting, Sydney tours and talks, Sydney and regional workshops, national conference bursaries and awards. Bill Storer offers on-demand workshops on disaster planning, marketing, risk management, volunteer management, aspects of collection management and significance assessment. Possible collaborations with interstate branches and other organisations are being considered. The branch also promotes volunteer	PB to report options and progress, and provide feedback on particular issues.

	workshops provided by other organisations such as Regional Arts NSW. Suggested issues from previous discussions: need for regional conferences; need to identify training needs and gaps; need for travel grants & internships in intrastate and interstate institutions; perceived deterioration in availability of training on good museum practice in regions and loss of the MANSW outreach services and bus; perceived deterioration in practical assistance and training via phone and email; need for MUGS (Mosaic User Groups) to be set up possibly within MA; MGNSW standards program, initiated in 2003, continues to be vital need (Sydney and Dubbo to participate in 2010), but some chapters have expressed concerns about lack of follow-up and the "need to reward museums who have worked to a high museum standard against those participants who haven't".	
Chapter visits	Branch representatives visited most chapters 2006-2009. Andrew Simpson visits regional museums annually as part of Macquarie University's museum studies program. Rebecca Pinchin maintains contact with regions as part of her job at the PHM. Bill Storer is available to assist in regional development 2010-2011.	PB to invite chapters to provide interest in chapter visits and possible dates, then coordinate, with budget implications.
Support for particular chapters	Sydney Chapter. A consolidated plan is needed to clarify and coordinate branch and chapter and branch programs to 50% of members	PB and AS to clarify with Sydney Chapter by 28 Feb 2010
	Functioning chapters. Far North, Mid North Coast, New England NW, Hunter, SH & I, Lachlan.	PB to invite requests for support by 28 Feb 2010.
	Dormant chapters. Golden West, Central Tablelands, South East, Murray Riverina.	PB/BS to implement plan.
	New chapters. Goulburn, Murray Darling	PB, AS and BS to review situation
Awards	IMAGinE Awards in partnership with MGNSW, RPGNSW and MAACT to recognise the achievements of museums and individuals in Sydney and the regions.	MANSW to implement in 2010 and 2011
Project support	The possible use of students from Macquarie and Sydney Universities in regional projects has been suggested at a number of recent forums.	PB to clarify with AS and Uni of Sydney contact by 28 Feb 2010

4 PROJECT PLAN

	2010				2011			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION								
Regional representation								
Planning								
Chapter reps meeting 2010								
Chapter reps meeting 2011								
E-communication								
Research and data								
Chapter profiles								
Volunteers								
Aboriginal cultural heritage								
By-laws								
Finances								
NSW membership rebate								
Procedures and audit								
Administrative subsidy								
Insurance								
Marketing								
Membership committee								
Logo								
Records management								
CHAPTER SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT								
Advocacy								
Website & systems								
Publications								
Museum Matters & Branch update								
Methods, standards & other pubs								
Professional development & events								
Chapter visits								
Support for particular chapters								
Sydney chapter								
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