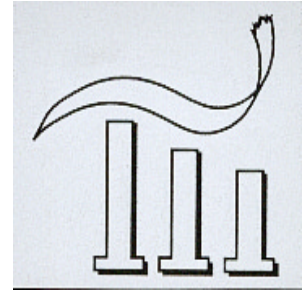


BULLETIN of the European Museum Forum

July 2002



Patrick Greene is leaving for Australia

In August I take up my new post as Chief Executive Officer of Museum Victoria in Melbourne, Australia after nearly 20 years as Director of the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. It is an exciting prospect: three world class museums in a vibrant and ambitious city. It does mean, however, that I will cease to be a member of the Committee of the European Museum Forum and I will no longer be a judge for the European Museum of the Year Awards. I have enjoyed my involvement in EMF and I have found it rewarding in so many ways. The twin goals of the organisation are to recognise excellence and creativity in museums throughout Europe, and to bring people together in order to spread good practice. It has been very effective in doing so for 25 years, as participants in the Award and the workshop will testify. However, members of the Committee also feel the benefits. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to examine in depth the operation of individual candidate museums on judging visits. I have learnt so much on such visits, and I can confirm three observations by the EMF founder Kenneth Hudson:

- The best new ideas are more likely to be found in a small museum than a large one.
- It is impossible to have a good museum if the director is not good.
- That people who work in museums are generally speaking amongst the nicest individuals that one can meet.

Moving to Australia takes me a long way from Europe to another continent where the heritage of Europe is nonetheless an important ingredient in the country's culture. One of the Museum Victoria sites is the Immigration Museum which sets out to tell the stories of the hundreds of thousands of Greeks, Irish, Italians and more than 100 nationalities (such as, in recent years, Vietnamese, Croatians etc) that have made Melbourne their home. Museums have an important role in giving people back their roots and identity whether they are immigrants or indigenous. The Melbourne Museum has an important part, Bunjilaka, about aboriginal history, culture and current issues. The days when museums inhabited a remote location away from the concerns of the world have gone, to be replaced by a genuine involvement. In consequence, they are fascinating places in which to work on every continent.

I am looking forward to contributing to Museum Victoria some of the experiences I have gained through the European Museum Forum. I intend to stay in touch with EMF and its members so do keep me on your contact list!

Finally, I would like to say 'thank you' to my colleagues on the EMF Committee, its Administrator, the National Correspondents and the participants in the Awards for friendship and support for me as Chairman. It is a remarkable network in which I will continue to take great interest from my new home in the Southern Hemisphere.

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Note: with the departure of Patrick Greene in August, Wim van der Weiden will become EMF's Chairman. We are also delighted to announce that we have a new President – a post held only once before for a short period by Kenneth Hudson. Sir Neil Cossons was formerly director of the National Maritime Museum and of the Science Museum in London, and is currently Chairman of English Heritage. By a happy coincidence Sir Neil was director of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum when it won the very first European Museum of the Year Award in 1977.

***Thank you Luxembourg** for providing a perfect setting for our 25th anniversary meeting in May. About 150 museum colleagues from 26 countries met in the centre of Europe to help us celebrate EMYA's quarter-century, ably hosted by Danièle Wagener and her colleagues at the Museum of the History of the City of Luxembourg. The first two days at Mondorf-les-Bains, where candidates for the 2002 Awards presented their museums, proved yet again that there is a great deal of talent, initiative and determination among today's museum staffs throughout Europe, who face increasing competition in a growing leisure market. Other activities included a welcome party at the Galerie Am Tunnel of the Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat, a wine-tasting at the Caves St Martin at Remich and a walking tour of the City of Luxembourg. The meeting's highlight was the prize-giving ceremony at the Cercle Municipal in the presence of EMF's Patron, Her Majesty Queen Fabiola of Belgium, and Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg. Our congratulations go once more to Michael Ryan and his staff at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin,*

winner of EMYA 2002, and to all those who took part in the competition this year.

The Council of Europe Prize was presented to the Buddenbrookhaus in Lübeck at a separate ceremony in Strasbourg in April. In his speech at the Château des Rohan, Mr Peter Schieder, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, said:

'This year marks the 25th anniversary of the European Museum Awards and the Council of Europe Museum Prize that forms part of them. I should like to pay tribute to those who have pioneered the scheme, to the few who have survived from its origins in 1977 and to those who have continued the momentum. It has been a difficult challenge.

'On the financial front, the European Museum Forum has progressed from the luxury of corporate sponsorship to a continual search for increasingly diversified funding. This is an independent non-governmental initiative.

'Need I add that any contributions will be gratefully received. I am sure this will be a point underlined on the occasion of the European Museum of the Year Award ceremony, complementary to ours here, that will be held in Luxembourg on 11 May in the presence of the patron of the awards, HM Queen Fabiola. If the financial contribution of the Council of Europe is regrettably discreet, the Assembly at least has remained faithful to its commitment to the initial project.

'Another challenge to the European Museum of the Year Award scheme has been its link to the cultural area of the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe. The area covered

since the inception of the scheme has therefore more than doubled ...

‘He [the rapporteur] will certainly draw on the network established by the European museum awards. This network I would say now represents a selection of the most progressive museum thinking in Europe. It is not necessarily a selection of the most important museum collections, that is a different point and in part exploited by the complementary Council of Europe series of European Art Exhibitions. The concern of the European museum awards is the relationship between museum and visiting public. In the case of the Council of Europe Prize it is a matter of European relevance.’

Footnote from Siberia One of the small number of Special Commendations this year went to the Permafrost Museum in Igarka, and its director, Maria Mischechkina, was there to collect her certificate in person. On her return home she sent this report.

‘Our museum has municipal status, and so it was very difficult to participate in EMYA 2002. Competitions are slowly coming to Russia, but they are either ‘competitions of exhibitions’, as at the Museum Biennale in Krasnoyarsk or ones which rely solely on information provided by the museums themselves, such as that organised by the Cultural Office of Krasnoyarsk Territory, and are not so objective for this reason. On this point, even the organisation of the EMYA itself is an excellent model for learning and merits special attention. It is very serious in its professional attitude.

The most complicated stage for our museum was the meeting with the EMF judge. We understood that this was a genuine examination for us, but we had great difficulties in showing Igarka because in spite of all our efforts we could

not change the appearance of the area surrounding the museum. We have tried to take the maximum advantage from the EMF judge’s visit. Many long-standing problems were resolved at once (receiving a computer for archive purposes, pulling down the old building over the underground part of the museum, preservation of the department on Stalin’s railway from Salekhard to Igarka). The local authority also began to pay more attention to developing the Children’s House of Crafts which belongs to the museum.

Receiving the diploma brought us a lot of attention in the region. Our colleagues from the Krasnoyarsk Museum of Regional Studies organised a press conference, attended by representatives from the mass media, the Open Museum Association and the Cultural Office of Krasnoyarsk Administration. Our success was widely reported in the press and on television. But in our own town the impact was not so great. We haven’t yet received official congratulations from the local authority, and the town newspaper published a small piece and an interview with the director.

The head of the town authority has expressed his gratitude for our participation in the competition, and has promised to look for more convenient and reliable premises for the museum departments. Major repair work will start soon around the museum. All these facts give us some hope for the future, and it has long been my belief that the Permafrost Museum should achieve the status of a regional or federal museum.

The question has often been put to me: ‘Why do you need to participate in the EMYA competition? You have received nothing in economic terms.’ My answer is simple: Every museum ought to strive for participation in such a competition and take its place in this professional

marathon. The wealth of knowledge, experience and professional contacts which were gained during the competition are impossible to value in material terms.'

The EMF Workshop in Parma is coming up to its application deadline of 9 August. To be held on 17-20 October, its subject is 'Museums as Crossroads: Meeting Other Cultures', and further information is available from the Administrator. Participation is free, as is the accommodation, the excursion, documentation and most lunches. All in all, the bargain of the year.

EMYA 2003 At the height of the visiting season for the Awards, Committee members are to be found in all corners of Europe between now and November, visiting 22 countries whose museums are participating in the next Award competition. We would like to remind those who may have forgotten, that all members carry out their duties for the Award and EMF in their precious free time, without any payment except the reimbursement of their travel expenses, and we would like to take this opportunity of thanking them for their boundless energy and enthusiasm in this task.

Swedish design exhibition *The county museum of Bohuslän in Uddevalla in west Sweden recently opened a new art wing created by the architect, Alexis Pontvik. The new wing opened in March 2002 and was made possible by a donation by the Swedish industrialist, Percy Barnevik. The opening exhibition was called 'Visitors', an international exhibition by 10 artists. The same architect is the exhibition designer of 3D+, Swedish Design on Stage, which is on show in the new wing during the summer. Needless to say, the new building and the exhibition are very well matched. The travelling exhibition, produced by Riksställningar in collaboration with Svensk Form, will be shown next in Madrid, at the Circulo de*

Bellas Artes during November, as part of The Swedish Institute's cultural event, 'Aires De Suecia'. See also

www.bohusmus.se and www.riksutstallningar.se

Stella Westerlund, EMF National Correspondent

Museum news from Ireland

Developments in the Irish museum sector continue to gather momentum. Under the direction of Eithne Verling (Museums and Archives) the Heritage Council's Strategy for Standards and Accreditation is in its second phase, with 13 museums subscribing to the rigorous methods required of this pilot project. The range of participants represents the different types of museums and galleries in Ireland in terms of scale, type of collection, resources and governance.

The objective of the project (September 2001-December 2003) is to facilitate the participating institutions reaching an interim accreditation stage. In the initial pilot study 32 minimum standards were agreed. Work is continuing to determine the next phase of standards and guidelines to ensure these are reached by the participating institutions. A panel of independent assessors has recently reviewed the accreditation plans of each participant and outstanding targets and goals will be implemented in the next 18 months.

The much-lauded economic boom has been reflected in a number of high-profile capital projects, among which the Francis Bacon Studio at the Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin; the Millennium Wing of the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin; and the Museum of Country Life, Castlebar, Co. Mayo, are the most dramatic. The Museum of Country Life is the first branch of the National Museum of Ireland to be located outside Dublin. It houses the national folk life collection and is set in the grounds of Turlough Park House (1865) in a purpose-built building erected by the Office of Public Works and the first

new building commissioned by the National Museum since 1890. *Editorial note: all three museums mentioned above are candidates for the 2003 Awards.* **Hugh Maguire, Museums & Archives Officer, The Heritage Council and EMF National Correspondent**

Museum sheds 150 jobs to save cash A £5 million cost-cutting exercise, phased over two years, at the British Museum in London means that about 15 per cent of the workforce will have to go. This will affect nearly every area of the museum's activities, including support services such as information systems, operations and marketing. It is hoped that a new control centre and CCTV will lead to longer-term efficiency.

An Open Museum Forum in Vladivostok is scheduled for September-October 2002 in co-operation with the Vladivostok School of Co-Action. It is a new initiative of the Open Museum Association in Krasnoyarsk and is linked to other cultural events in Russia. Its first meeting will commemorate Kenneth Hudson, both the person and the professional. The Forum's field of interest will include actual development (Open) of what is generally understood to be cultural heritage (Museum), and the central idea of the Forum is to present awards to the most successful museum-communication projects of the year. The essence of the competition is a survey of future prospects; the search for and discovery of new types of cultural practice; and means of carrying this out in the future. It will evaluate projects developed during five years' work by the Open Museum Association (1995-2000). The meeting will include presentations by museums, a workshop, a special exhibition programme and visits to museums in the region. Further information from aom@scn.ru Anah Glinska, EMF National Correspondent

Pasta: Italian culture on a plate is the title of an exhibition with linked events at the Estorick Collection in London running until 15 September. Reading the publicity leaflet on the exhibition is enough to make your mouth water. 'Pasta comes in hundreds of shapes and sizes and is covered by thousands of sauces. It is fast food but good food, as unambiguous a symbol of Italy as Vespa or Fellini. It is also the most universal dish on the planet. Pasta has myth and magic. Marco Polo brought noodles back from China to Venice. Grand Tourists of the 18th century returning to England were known as 'macaronis' as they affected Italian style and manners. The Futurist Marinetti denounced pasta as a source of Italian lethargy ... This unique exhibition, using original posters, packaging and menu cards from the Barilla Archive in Parma, examines the phenomenon of pasta. Part cultural history, part design, part gastronomy, this exhibition explains the shapes, decodes the messages and looks to the future of this staple food.'

Intriguingly, we are also told that a leading young product designer has been invited to design a new pasta shape for the future. After this build-up it comes as no surprise to learn that the exhibition is curated by Stephen Bayley, known for his exhibitions at the Boilerhouse, V & A and the Design Museum. Estorick Collection, 39a Canonbury Square, London N1 2AN. Tel +44 0207 704 9522. curator@estorickcollection.com

Our anniversary - again The Swedish Museums Association is marking the 25th anniversary of the European Museum of the Year Award by arranging a seminar on the afternoon of 28 August at the Music Museum in Stockholm. The keynote speaker will be Aleid Rensen-Oosting from the Netherlands, EMF Committee member, giving a presentation on changes in the museum world during 25 years of EMYA. As those of us who saw this performance in Luxembourg will know, our Swedish colleagues are in for a treat. A discussion

will follow, with a panel representing Swedish museums which have been nominated by EMYA over the past 25 years. There is no charge for the seminar and places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Further information and a press pack are available from info@museif.a.se or by fax +46 8 653 01 70.

Statistics corner gathered from the Netherlands -

In 1950 there were 250 museums with 5,000,000 visitors

In 1975 there were 500 museums with 10,000,000 visitors

In 2000 there were 750 museums with 20,000,000 visitors

While these figures seem suspiciously rounded up, it does seem to show that museums are now making much greater efforts to compete for visitors than even 25 years ago.

A further success for Yasnaya Polyana
Vladimir Tolstoy writes to say that the Museum-Estate of Leo Tolstoy at Tula was awarded first prize in the competition for the best Russian museum of the year at the Fourth Russian Museum Festival, 'Intermuseum – 2002', held in St Petersburg in May. The main theme of the Festival was 'Museums of Russia – outlook on the future'. We would like to congratulate Mr Tolstoy and his colleagues.

The 2002 DEMHIST Conference will be held in Amsterdam on 14-16 October, hosted by the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage. The theme will be 'The Historic House Museum as an Important Witness of National and Local Identities', and further information is available from demhist@iol.it

Inveraray Jail 10 years ago this museum on the shores of Loch Fyne in the west of Scotland joined the EMF Association,

having received a Special Commendation in the 1992 Awards. With a membership number in single figures, the museum has been a faithful supporter of EMYA over the years, and we thought it was time to catch up on its news.

A letter from the director, Jim Linley, announced that the museum was alive and well, and had celebrated its one millionth visitor in the millennium year, which gives an average figure of more than 100,000 a year from the date of opening. Publicising itself as Scotland's living 19th-century prison, the Jail has expanded its displays and added more facilities for visitors, with exhibitions on Children in Prison and – by popular demand apparently – In Prison Today, as well as information on the preparation of prison food. Certificates and quizzes for children are popular, and texts in French, German, Italian and Dutch as well as English have been added. Over the years the museum has carried out a great deal of research on prisoners in Inveraray Jail and it is currently working on a new website which will have a genealogy section. It is hoped to have this up and running by 1 November (www.inverarayjail.co.uk) Jim Linley says that the museum aims to have something different to offer its evermore discerning visitors every year, which is sometimes different with exhibits which represent factual historical information. He thinks that on the whole they succeed, and we wish them every success in the future.

Money is too tight to mention – On the restoration of the Berlin Museumsinsel
The River Spree flows calmly past the Berlin Museumsinsel – declared a World Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1999 for 'a unique ensemble of museum buildings which illustrate the evolution of modern museum design of more than a century' (see *Report of the 23rd Session of the Committee*). Embarrassed by its sad condition – leaking roofs, crumbling stone, faulty air-conditioning – parts of this site

are shielded from public view by a tarpaulin. The date of completion for the necessary extensive restoration work on one of the most prestigious and expensive long-term construction sites in Berlin keeps being pushed further into the future. In the meantime something worse may happen.

Dialogue between cultures: One hundred years were needed to build this museum complex. The *Alte Museum*, completed in 1830, signalled a change in the paradigm of Friedrich Wilhelm III's cultural policies. As a result of the French Revolution the Prussian king made his rich collection of antique sculptures and modern paintings accessible to the public for the first time. But the museum soon proved too small for the collection. The *Neue Museum* was built between 1843 and 1859 and presented a history of mankind with a historically decorated interior. The bitter fight between Hugo von Tschudi, director of the *Alte Nationalgalerie*, (built 1867-1876), and Emperor Wilhelm II about whether to include modern art, particularly the French Impressionists, with the collection of contemporary German paintings, clearly demonstrated the inner conflict of an empire torn between reaction and progress. With the *Bodemuseum* (1897-1904) and its Renaissance and Baroque paintings and sculptures, and the *Pergamonmuseum* (1907-30) with the famous Ishtar Gate of Babylon, the museum complex of European and Near Eastern Cultures was complete. Barely a decade later the violence of the Second World War led to heavy damage of the buildings. The *Neue Museum* burned down, leaving only the foundation walls. And the political division of Germany into east and west tore the remaining art collection in two.

In the autumn of 2000 an exhibition in the ruins of the *Neue Museum* presented to the public a master plan that promised all buildings would be restored for one billion

Euros in the space of 10 years, to house the majority of the rearranged and reunited collections. The *Bund* (the Federal Republic of Germany) and the City of Berlin agreed to share the costs. However, during the final phase of the *Alte Nationalgalerie* restoration, storm clouds gathered over Berlin. The Berlin city government toppled because of a financial scandal, the City Treasury was broke, and the drama began. This is what happened.

Act One – The threat of disaster. In May 2001 the magazine *Der Spiegel* claims the danger that construction work on the Museumsinsel will have to stop due to Berlin being unable to pay its share of 55 million German marks. The Berlin Senate denies this and Chancellor Schröder refuses to authorise a cash injection from the *Bund*. Tension rises.

Act Two – The disaster seems to dissipate. Berlin actually can pay. The reconstruction is not suspended. But now rumours circulate that the *Bund* will take over Berlin's share. The other 15 states glare at the problem child Berlin with envy. What will happen next?

Act Three – Catastrophe! The 2002/03 Berlin budget does not include funding for the Museumsinsel! The opposition is outraged. *Der Spiegel* reports that Berlin and other German federal states were promised financial aid if they vote in favour of the German Immigration Law. It was said that Berlin's mayor Wowereit, also president of the *Bundesrat*, played a key role in the controversial vote and had been promised the day before that the *Bund* would provide more money for the Museumsinsel or even pay for it entirely. The government immediately denied this rumour. Tension proceeds to rise.

Act Four – Chancellor Schröder to the rescue! Schröder declares in mid-May 2002 that the *Bund* will bear all the costs. Happy ending! But what did the

Chancellor really mean? Would the *Bund* take over Berlin's entire share and pay 100%? Or would the *Bund* still pay 80% as it had previously agreed and merely accept the city's breach of contract without protest? But then restoration would take even longer! Dead silence. In the meantime the River Spree still flows calmly past the Museumsinsel and the museumgoer has a glimmer of hope that he or she might still witness the completion of the restoration of this World Cultural Heritage Site in the heart of Berlin. To be continued ... Elke Jahnke, Museum für Post und Kommunikation Berlin

Art in Exile: Flanders, Wales and the First World War is an exhibition running at the National Museum & Gallery in Cardiff until 15 September. It is the result of a collaboration between the National Museums & Galleries of Wales and the Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Ghent in association with the Hannema-de Stueurs Foundation in the Netherlands. It has already travelled to Belgium and the Netherlands.

Many Belgian artists fled their country in 1914. Three of them, George Minne, Valerius de Saedeleer and Gustave van de Woestyne, all previously members of an artists' colony at Sint Martens-Latem near Ghent, came to live in Wales. Their arrival here was organised by Gwendoline and Margaret Davies, who hoped their presence would enrich the visual arts of Wales. They produced a significant body of work in response to their experience of Wales between 1914 and 1918.

The Davies sisters formed a spectacular collection of modern art between 1908 and 1922, which they later bequeathed to the National Museum & Gallery. This exhibition explores another lesser-known aspect of their support of the arts in Wales. Further information from Anna.Southall@nmgw.ac.uk

Two CDs on French industrial heritage and commercial vehicles were published at the end of last year by the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris and the DRAC (Centre for Documentation) Rhône-Alpes, and the Fondation Berliet.

'Patrimoine Industriel de la France' consists of 329 sites from across the country, 1,300 files and a glossary of 500 technical terms. The structure of CDs, so much better suited to works of reference than books have ever been, allows industrial France to be discovered by eras, regions or sectors. 14 types of activity illustrate the diversity of industrial heritage in France. Finally, the CD includes over an hour of conference video discussion of the theme.

The Rhône-Alpes region was a pioneer of French industrial development, specialising in the production of iron and steel and in applied mechanics, and it was natural at the end of the 19th century that motor vehicle production should start there. The Lyon school of automobile makers was well known world wide for the quality and robustness of their cars and commercial vehicles. Through the second CD, as well as the 'iron-heritage', other less palpable domains such as industrial organisation, the birth of 'know-how' and the enterprise culture are introduced. The set is available from the Fondation de l'Automobile Marius Berliet, F-69003 Lyon, France. Tel +33 478 541534. Fax +33 472 332025. From TICCIH News, 16, 2002