

Wednesday 16 March 2011

A touching experience

Ever been to a gallery or museum and wanted to reach out and touch something on display? Well, now you can – at least in a small way.

A 'suitcase' of art works is travelling around Indigo Shire for most of April with original art works that people can touch, handle and talk about – rather than just look at.

Maggie Tyrie, a retired museum curator now living in Stanley, will be travelling with the suitcase during the first week of its tour in the Shire. The tour is part of the National Gallery of Australia's program of facilitating access to the National Collection.

The *Elaine and Jim Wolfensohn Gift - Suitcase Kits* has been developed for travel to regional and remote areas of Australia. The Gift allows people to discover and handle works of art. The Gift is made possible by Jim Wolfensohn, the Australian-born former president of the World Bank, and it comprises three art-filled suitcases and the 1888 Melbourne Cup, touring to schools, libraries, community centres, regional galleries and nursing homes.

Indigo Shire Council is receiving the *Blue Case: Technology* from the end of March to April 27. The case will be taken to various locations throughout the shire, including the Burke Museum, local schools and aged care facilities.

Maggy said the idea of the suitcase kits was to give people a chance to handle and appreciate original works of art by contemporary artists as well as works from other cultures and periods.

"During the first week, the general public will be able to handle these art pieces. We have arranged to use the old rectory opposite the Beechworth Neighbourhood Centre on Friday 1 April at 2pm and 6pm. And on Saturday, 2 April, the art works will be at Stanley Memorial Hall at 2pm, and again on Sunday, 3 April, at 2pm and 6 pm," Maggy said. She advised people to book by calling her on 03 5728 6749. Sessions go for an hour.

The suitcase is booked in to the Burke Museum in Beechworth on April 12, 13 and 14 from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Bookings are needed and can be made through Susan Reid, Indigo Shire Council's Arts and Culture Development Officer, on 02 6028 1166, or email sreid@indigoshire.vic.gov.au

The suitcase will go to a number of schools, and other venues, during April before going to Wodonga for the month of May.

The Elaine and Jim Wolfensohn Gift is at the heart of the National Gallery's Access Services program. This opportunity to provide the community with a way of interacting with works of art is unique.

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More Information:

Maggy Tyrie
03 5728 6749

Susan Reid
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02 6028 1166

Captions:

1. Maggy Tyrie will be helping people discover what's in the suitcase, at the old rectory opposite the Beechworth Neighbourhood Centre on Friday 1 April, and at the Stanley Memorial Hall, on April 2 and 3.
2. **Emily O'Brien**
Hair chairs 2004
anodised aluminium
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra