

Belonging opens in Melbourne

A collaborative exhibition to celebrate Federation

The first free exhibition in the newly dedicated Keith Murdoch Gallery at the State Library of Victoria opened on Saturday 5 May.

The century since Federation is celebrated in this probing yet entertaining exhibition, which takes visitors on an historic, often light-hearted and sometimes confronting journey from Federation to today, and looks at what 'belonging' means to all Australians — spiritually, socially and physically.

On show are over 300 items, including rarely seen photographs and films, paintings, posters and oral histories. Visitors can also have fun with the various interactive displays and view a wonderful array of rare and original materials.

Our sense of belonging is questioned in relation to the exhibition's general themes: land and country; home and community; work and special places like childhood holiday places; dress codes and uniforms, and the experience of feeling unwelcome in Australia. Community and Indigenous consultation contributed to the creation of the exhibition.

In the *Special places* section, you can hear author Amirah Inglis talking about her first years in Melbourne and Helen Garner on childhood memories of Ocean Grove.

The *Knowing the country* section is fitted out with a fun interactive mail box where post office workers in each state and territory correct you on some of the most mispronounced place names across Australia, such as Tallangatta.

Belonging will run in Melbourne from 5 May to 22 July, then travel to the National Library of Australia and the Na-



Crowd watching procession. Prams in foreground. An opportunity for the whole family to see the young Queen Elizabeth II, 1954

National Archives of Australia

tional Archives of Australia (22 August–11 November). It is a collaboration between the State Libraries of New South Wales and Victoria, the National Library of Australia and the National Archives of Australia.

Visitors can also experience *Belonging* online through the website at <http://www.belonging.org>.

Belonging has been made possible by the major sponsor AAMI. The exhibition is also supported by the National Council for the Centenary of Federation. ■

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