



25 May 2015

The Hon Dame Quentin Bryce, Patron of Dinosaur Museum, leads day of celebration

- Senator Matthew Canavan, Senator for Queensland, and Hon Rob Katter MP, Member for Mount Isa, officially open final building in Stage 2 development
- Museum Patron and former Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Hon Dame Quentin Bryce, officiates at the opening of Stage 3
- An evening of celebration for Museum during which the Hon Dame Quentin Bryce launches the AAOD Legacy Fund

The Australian Age of Dinosaurs (AAOD) Museum of Natural History's annual three-week dinosaur dig season has started and, while so many diggers and supporters are in Winton, the museum will hold three significant events this Sunday, May 31.

From 9am to noon, on the museum's Jump-Up site 23km south-east of Winton, dignitaries, staff and museum supporters will gather for the official opening of the new Staff and Volunteers' Amenities Building - the last phase of Stage 2 of the museum's development.

After a tour of the unique Australian dinosaur fossils in the museum's Holotype Collection Room, the official party will also view the latest preparatory work being carried out in the laboratory on dinosaur fossils, dug up near Winton on previous dig seasons.

Then, the new building will be the centre of everyone's attention, beginning with a welcome on behalf of the local Koa people, greetings from Winton's Mayor Butch Lenton, followed by an acknowledgement by AAOD Executive Chairman David Elliott of the Australian Government grant, under its RDAF (Rural Development Australia Fund) program, Winton Shire Council support and Queensland Airports' contribution, all of which enabled the building to proceed. The building will be officially opened by Senator Canavan and Rob Katter MP.

The new facilities include a staff and volunteers' room with additional kitchen and fridge capacity to support catering at the Reception Centre, meeting room, shelter for staff vehicles, a generator to mitigate the risk from power cuts, and vital storage for the museum's range of unique dinosaur merchandise.

Winton locals have been invited to join a sausage sizzle lunch at the museum's Reception Centre at noon before having the rare opportunity, at 1pm, to proceed 2km along The Jump-Up to the proposed site of the third and final stage of the museum's development where the first phase of work on the Outdoor Galleries Project has commenced.

The extensive galleries, when finished, will display life-sized bronze dinosaurs and be adjacent to the site of the main museum building. This will be a world-class natural history museum telling the 4.5-billion-year, deep-time story of the Australian continent with the Australian Age of Dinosaurs - around 100 million years ago - as its centrepiece.

From 1.30pm to 2pm, David Elliott will speak about the museum's future and the Hon Dame Quentin Bryce will talk about the importance of the museum to western Queensland, and beyond, and unveil the Stage 3 plaque. Guests will then be able to inspect the Outdoor Galleries layout, the contents of a time capsule to be buried at the site, the first small life-sized bronze dinosaurs and concept design images of the Stage 3 buildings.

After AAOD Ltd members attend their Annual General Meeting mid-afternoon, the day of celebration will conclude with the official launch of the AAOD Legacy Fund by the Hon Dame Quentin Bryce, in her role as Museum Patron, and a tribute to donors by David Elliott. From 6pm, around 150 supporters and members of the AAOD Museum will congregate at the Winton Shire Hall to catch up, enjoy a meal and be entertained by Museum staff.

AAOD Executive Chairman David Elliott says that the AAOD Legacy Fund is another important step in the Museum's growth; just as important as finishing buildings and opening new displays. The fund is already attracting contributions from around Australia with more than \$60,000 received in the few weeks since event invitations were sent out. As donations continue, an investment portfolio will build to provide ongoing and permanent income for the general operations of the museum and to support new capital projects and replacement of capital assets.

"The huge interest that people have in helping the Museum as volunteers and with donations, never ceases to amaze me," says David Elliott. "It's humbling, exciting, and encouraging to know that the museum is moving towards a sustainable, long-term future."

END

Timetable

9am to 10.45am	Official party tours collection and laboratory (on The Jump-Up)
11am to noon	Official opening of the Staff and Volunteers' Amenities Building (near Reception Centre, on The Jump-Up)
noon to 1 pm	Officials and local share sausage sizzle lunch at the Reception Centre
1pm to 1.30pm	Transfer 2km to Stage 3 site

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- 1.30pm to 3pm Official opening of Stage 3, inspection of Outdoor Galleries and new Museum sites, viewing of concept designs for main Museum building
- 6pm to 10pm Celebration dinner and launch of the AAOD Legacy Fund (approx. 9 pm) at Winton Shire Hall, Vindex Street, Winton

Media representatives are welcome to attend any or all of these events. Please indicate attendance by contacting Naomi Miles, Museum Services Manager on (07) 4657 0712 or email: museumservices@aaod.com.au

Images

AAOD will have an official photographer at each of the day's events. He will also take some video footage. Please contact Naomi Miles, Museum Services Manager if you wish to obtain images after 31 May 2015.