



After 27 years

the **WORLD  
TRADE  
CENTRE**

*becomes*

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**‘MELBOURNE’S MEETING PLACE’**

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Ask a Melburnian about the city's World Trade Centre, and it is likely you will be given an insightful look with a comment like 'Yes, I can recollect the place but remind me where it is'. Since the buildings on the Yarra on the corner of Spencer and Flinders Streets opened almost 27 years ago, any Victorian seeking a passport for overseas travel would have visited the WTC complex. Of course many would have also paid a visit to Victoria Police Customer Enquiries. But the truth is, whilst the WTC resonates with a memory, it has not been on top of Melburnian's minds. That is all changing. Since Asset1 WTC purchased the complex over four years ago, it has quietly developed and executed detailed architectural plans to co-join the four towers that are the WTC. This makes the once complicated building easy and logical to walk through and enjoy, even for the first time visitor.

The expansive Atrium Lobby now connects all four towers to each other. New signage is being installed to ensure all visitors have easy access to their particular destination in the World Trade Centre. Asset1 WTC want their pride and joy to be accessible to all Victorians, whether they have a reason to visit the complex for business, pleasure or pure curiosity. Over the past six months the Siddeley St main entry has been aligned directly with the Yarra, and along the sides of this mall are four casual eateries and a convenience store. The frontage along the edge of the river will boast three classy restaurants, a tavern and an elevated event centre, all to open later this year. But in the meantime the owners have embraced a strategy to introduce the WTC to leisure time visitors. A variety of community events have been unfolding over the last nine months, under the



watchful eye of WTC Marketing Co-ordinator Emma Volk. The expansive Atrium Lobby now hosts the WTC Gallery, a magnificent exhibition space. In June, star 'Neighbours' actor James Sorensen, revealed a talent which may have been unknown to even his most avid fans. James' silent passion is situation photography, and for the first time he placed over thirty fabulous photographs from his personal collection on display. The launch was attended by over 150 people, including a strong media contingency that saw television stations and news media extensively report this four week exhibition. Mounted photographs were sold with all proceeds benefiting Camp Quality, a charity that makes life easier for kids with cancer. Two months later, in conjunction with the Red Desert Dreaming Indigenous Art Gallery, an exhibition titled 'Utopia' was unveiled. The Melbourne Football Club became involved, and a contribution from sales of art works was made to assist the football club's Indigenous scholarship program, established to provide opportunities for promising, raw-talented AFL footballers from the Northern Territory and Torres Strait Islands.

A very different exhibition was planned for earlier this year. The anniversary of Black Saturday on February 7th was a poignant time

for many people who work in the WTC complex. In the previous three months the WTC Centre Management team spent countless hours speaking with, and visiting victims of the devastating bushfires, seeking their views for placing their photography and works of art for all Victorians to experience at the WTC Gallery. The response was overwhelming, and ultimately following more than 100 expressions of interest, twenty artists were selected to exhibit their artistic representations of the event etched in all of our minds. The exhibition was titled 'Reflection & Regeneration' and was appropriately opened by Chief Commissioner Simon Overland to more than 200 visitors and journalists. Hundreds of people took the opportunity to experience this outstanding visual story of personal experience over five weeks at the WTC Gallery.

Over the first quarter of 2010, the WTC has hosted two exhibitions in conjunction with The Age newspaper on the Ground Level WTC Wharf Mall. 'The Age of Tennis' comprised twelve towers with four panels each showcasing an historical and colourful narrative of the Australian Open Tennis Championship spanning more than fifty years. This was quickly followed by 'The Age of Fashion' which recorded the Melbourne fashion scene from the 1930's to





contemporary days. These two exhibitions were held concurrent with two of Melbourne's major events - The Australian Open Tennis tournament and The Melbourne Fashion Festival.

The versatility of the WTC Atrium Lobby is on display again with a most intriguing exhibition which will be officially opened in mid-April. Melbourne's Chinese Museum in Little Bourke St is about to undergo a substantial renovation. But what to do with the exhibits during the three month closure? WTC Melbourne provided the answer. Many of the pieces which tell the history of Chinese culture are now occupying much of the vast space of the Atrium Lobby. The WTC marketing team worked with Mark Wang from the Chinese Museum to ensure the exhibition was managed appropriately. Amy Zurrer, in-house historian at the WTC, has curated the exhibition. The fifty metre long dragon is now domiciled in the Atrium Lobby, alongside an extraordinary collection which showcases an amazing cultural history. The collection includes an ancient seismograph, and replicas of the Terracotta Warriors. An insightful photographic exhibition of the development of the city of Beijing is displayed on the nearby WTC Gallery walls. School children will now have the opportunity to visit Melbourne's WTC

for a double-headed treat. Alongside the temporary home of the Chinese Museum is a classroom where children can learn more about Chinese culture from specialist educators. The second element of the 'double header' is the exhibition in the Victoria Police Museum, on the Mezzanine Level one floor down from the Atrium Lobby. Entitled 'Ambush' the exhibition provides a realistic account of our police force engagement with bush ranger Ned Kelly during the late 19th century. Original exhibits of armour, photographic records and both written and verbal accounts of the saga are there to illuminate the story.

The variety of exhibitions that have occurred since the reinvigoration of these public spaces demonstrate the commitment of the owners of the WTC Complex to ensuring the complex they have redeveloped will now be visited and enjoyed at the level it deserves. Thousands of people have already visited to enjoy the offerings to date, and the Chinese Museum exhibition that will extend to July is already proving extremely popular. Keep an eye open for the upcoming Anzac exhibition to be titled 'Fromelles, the Western Front'. A further six displays are in their planning stages, ensuring WTC Melbourne delivers on its promise of being 'Melbourne's Meeting Place'!

