

MEDIA RELEASE

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Powerhouse Museum releases historic Sydney images on world's largest photo website -

The first museum globally to join Flickr initiative with US Library of Congress

Sydney, 8 April 2008: The Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, is the first museum in the world to release publicly-held historical photographs for access on Flickr, the largest photo website in the world. The Museum joins the world's largest photo library, the US Library of Congress, which released its first photos for public access on Flickr in January this year.

An initial 200 historic black and white images from the Powerhouse's Tyrrell Collection of Sydney life in the late 1800s and early 1900s go live on the Flickr site from 7 April 2008, San Francisco time (8 April 2008, Sydney time).

Known as Flickr Commons (www.flickr.com/commons), the online initiative was launched by Flickr to share the collections of cultural institutions worldwide and to make historical photos more widely accessible to a global community.

NSW Minister for the Arts Frank Sartor said: "The Powerhouse Museum initiative shows that the NSW Government is a leader in increasing public access to Australian cultural collections.

"These evocative images of historic Sydney and early Australian life will greatly appeal to people from around the world, as well as Australians."

Representing some of the most significant examples of early Australian photography, the Tyrrell Collection is a series of glass plate negatives by Charles Kerry (1857-1928) and Henry King (1855-1923), two of Sydney's principal photographic studios at the time. Further images from the Collection will be regularly released by the Powerhouse on Flickr.

Kevin Sumption, Associate Director Planning, Projects and Exhibitions, Powerhouse Museum said: "By providing greater public access to historical material through popular information or photo-sharing websites such as Flickr, Museums can continue to piece together a richer history with the help of users of the global internet community.

Sebastian Chan, Manager of Web Services, Powerhouse Museum said: "This online resource can provide the Museum with further valuable information about the people, places and times represented in the photos. Flickr allows users to interact with the images, giving the public a voice to describe the content through tagging or labelling.

"Another exciting Flickr feature is the use of satellite maps to find the locations of sites in photos and it allows users to compare these to contemporary photos.

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“Since the Tyrrell images are over 100 years old and out of copyright, the public can freely use them. Educators and students can use the images in classrooms; artists and designers can rework images; and historians and photographers can learn from them.”

George Oates, Senior Program Manager at Flickr said, "We are thrilled to welcome the Powerhouse into the Commons on Flickr. They are the first museum to contribute historical photography, joining the US Library of Congress. On a personal note, I'm also chuffed that an Australian institution has come on board so quickly, being an Aussie myself!"

Until now, the Tyrrell Collection has only been available on the Powerhouse Museum website, accessed by specialist audiences rather than the wider global community known to Flickr. The Powerhouse continues to offer high-quality prints of Tyrrell images for purchase via its website www.powerhousemuseum.com as well as high-resolution versions for commercial publication.

Further media information, images, interviews:-
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