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donors to non-approved organisations to receive a tax deduction.

To tap into sources of information and take advantage of the resources of artsupport Australia the following contacts are useful:

- For more information on how artsupport Australia can help cultural groups, including information on the Australia Cultural Fund visit [www.abaf.org.au](http://www.abaf.org.au)

- For information on Federal Government arts policy and assistance go to the Department of Communications, Information and Arts website [www.dcita.gov.au](http://www.dcita.gov.au)
- For grant opportunities Our Community produces *Easy Grants*, a subscription newsletter containing a comprehensive listing service on all new and recurring federal, state, philanthropic and business grants. Go to

[www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

The panel speakers agreed that to be successful, organisations both large and small, whether seeking \$100 million or raising money for a local project, planning is essential. Have a plan, stick to it, review progress regularly and pursue your goal with passion, whatever the setbacks.

Our thanks to AFFM's Victorian Branch for organising the seminar at the National Gallery of Victoria in August.



AFFM President David Tunny, panel member Alun Evans and Executive Committee member Caroline Forster at the fundraising seminar

AFFM Victorian Vice President Graham Ryles, Tasmanian Vice President Jude Andrews and National Vice President Ian Higgins at the seminar

AFFM Executive Committee member Winnifred Rosser and seminar participants

# Money Money Money

**Craig Werner, President of Nepean District Historical Society, reports on fundraising from the coal-face. This volunteer-run organisation increased its revenue by 300% in two years through a number of ideas so simple and so effective you wonder why you didn't think of them yourself.**

It is increasingly difficult to obtain grant money to fund small museums. Three years ago when I was elected president of the Nepean District Historical Society there was not much coming in the way of revenue but the members had some great ideas that they wanted to turn into reality. So going back to my days with McDonalds I started to look at how we, as a Society with a small number of active people, could increase our turnover and generate the income to do those things that had been in the pipeline for years.

It is always a good idea to look at the skills of the members to see how they can be used to benefit the Society. In some cases, this can be more beneficial than money. A person's sphere of influence and those they associate with can put you in contact with the right people and save you considerable time and money. Networking with like-minded people is the key to the small museum's survival.

The first thing we did was produce a video on our museum and its history, using a small grant from the local council. We asked several local schools

if they would agree to being filmed during their visits, then used the footage to create a 15-minute video which we sent to every school in the area. This simple promotional tool helped triple our school visitation numbers.

The second thing we looked at was how to attract more people to the museum. Not just the retired, but young family groups and school children.

The solution was quite simple and again goes back to the old corporate adage of targeting your market. We looked at how to make the museum more kid-friendly and came up with the idea of having lots of interactive displays that would be enjoyed by children and adults alike. We started in the old barn which houses our washing, dairy, blacksmith and farm tools displays. Two of our old hand-operated drills were encased in perspex so that the children could turn the handles without injuring themselves. We set up an old grindstone wheel so that visitors could try sharpening equipment just as if they were on a farm.

We then set up a replica well next to the existing well with a recirculating 'rat tail pump' so visitors could try pumping water as they would have 178 years ago. This attraction has proved so popular that we are increasing the size of the display to incorporate three pumps of different sizes for the children to try.

Another idea came to us in relation to our archive facility, an under-utilised resource. After receiving a grant for a new computer we set about scanning our extensive photo collection. We run several bookstalls through the year and often receive requests for old photographs of the Penrith area. With this in mind, we went through our scanned photographs and selected 30 which covered a variety of subjects. These were then reproduced, framed and sold to the public for \$20 each. We buy the frames in bulk and print and frame the photos ourselves, so our overheads are minimal. This has proven a tremendous money spinner, and it's always a crowd-puller at our stalls.

This represents only a fraction of the things we've been doing over the past couple of years that have resulted in a 300% increase in our revenue. But they highlight the fact that you don't need to outlay thousands of dollars to be a successful small museum.

*Money Money Money* first appeared in the September 2004 issue of *Museum Matters*, the magazine of Museums Australia NSW branch. Many thanks to Julie Potts, Museums Australia, and Craig Werner, for allowing us to reproduce the article here.