

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* Wins Victorian Tourism Award**

The Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* has taken out the Heritage and Cultural Award at the Melbourne Airport 2008 Victorian Tourism Awards.

More than 120 businesses and individuals from across the State vied for top honours at the prestigious awards held on 17 November.

National Trust of Australia (Vic) CEO, Mr Martin Purslow said: “this award crowns a best ever year for the Gaol, which welcomed over 150,000 visitors this year. I am delighted that the hard work and dedication by our staff and volunteers and their commitment to deliver best practice and a quality experience has been rewarded in such a way”

“the cutting-edge experience launched at the site in October 2007 combines the Gaol where Ned Kelly was hanged, with the Police Watch House Experience and court room drama. It is a heritage and cultural experience like no other; an experience where visitors can follow in the footsteps of Ned Kelly, or have a chance to feel what it was really like to be locked up. Building on the success of the last year, we are looking forward to the launch of more exciting developments to come”, he also said.

The Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* is home to our oldest prison, historic Old City Court and former Police City Watch House. Visitors can step back in time and walk the road to the gallows in a 19<sup>th</sup> century prison, be arrested in a modern-day Police Station or be put on trial in court.

This award-winning and unique heritage and cultural tourism attraction was opened in 1972 and relaunched with its new name in 2007. It employs 33 staff and has a number of dedicated and hard-working volunteers.

As a Victorian Tourism Awards-winner, the Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* will go on to represent Victoria at the 2008 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards to be held in Melbourne on 27 February 2009.

The Minister for Tourism and Major Events Tim Holding congratulated the team from the National Trust of Australia (Vic) on their achievement.

“The Awards recognise tourism businesses striving for excellence and the Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* was judged best in their field,” Mr Holding said.

“The Victorian Tourism Awards have been recognising innovation, creativity and professionalism in the State’s tourism industry since 1985.

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“The Awards reinforce the enormous value of tourism to the community, highlight the great experiences on offer across Victoria and recognise the hard work of tourism operators who go that extra step to provide their guests with a quality experience”.

More information and contact details for winners is available at [www.victoriantourismawards.com.au](http://www.victoriantourismawards.com.au)

Images are available to media at [www.visionsofvictoria.com.au](http://www.visionsofvictoria.com.au) – choose Mini Collections and Tourism Awards – Melbourne Airport 2008 Victorian Tourism Awards.

The Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* is operated by the National Trust of Australia (Vic). This is a non-government community funded organisation that is dedicated to preserving our cultural heritage.

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For further information please contact Carmel Ganino, Media & Communications Manager  
(Ph: 9656 9805 or M: 0417 337 478)