

MEDIA RELEASE

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Partnership to preserve maritime collection

Newcastle City Council and the Hunter Development Corporation have committed to work together to ensure the preservation of Newcastle's maritime and seafaring history for generations to come.

The decision comes after members of the Newcastle Maritime Museum Society (NMMS) voted today to voluntarily wind up operations and close the Maritime Museum on Wednesday 23 May 2018.

HDC Chief Executive Michael Cassel said HDC was working with Port stakeholders to ensure that proper storage facilities can be found.

"We will work to ensure the protection and security of what's a valuable maritime and seafaring collection," Mr Cassel said.

HDC is the landowner of the heritage-listed building in Honeysuckle, where the Newcastle Maritime Museum (NMM) has been situated over the past 10 years.

NMMS President Ian Jones said that although the decision to close the Museum was regrettable, it's the right course of action.

"Ultimately, the prohibitive cost of running the Museum, coupled with the fact that the Museum heavily relied on volunteers and donations, made it impossible to continue to operate in a sustainable manner," he said.

"We are working with creditors to ensure all debts are paid and appreciate their patience as we complete this process."

Mr Jones said that he was optimistic about the collection's future and had been encouraged by the support shown by HDC and Newcastle City Council.

Council CEO Jeremy Bath said Council, and specifically the Newcastle Museum, would likely inherit the Museum's collection.

"We have been working with the Board of the Maritime Museum for several months on a likely handover," Mr Bath said.

"Director of the Newcastle Museum Julie Baird has been involved to ensure any inherited pieces are responsibly cared for."

ENDS

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