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WINNER
2008 AUSTRALIAN
TOURISM AWARDS

MEDIA RELEASE

National Trust's Old Melbourne Gaol

Crime & Justice Experience

Wins top Australian Tourism Award

The National Trust of Victoria's Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* has won the Heritage and Cultural Tourism Award at the 2008 Australian Tourism Awards held in Melbourne on Friday, February 27, 2009.

Winning this prestigious national award recognises the Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience's* status as the best cultural heritage attraction in Australia and one of the premier tourist destinations in Melbourne.

National Trust of Australia (Vic) CEO, Mr Martin Purslow said, "Winning Australia's top tourism award for cultural heritage is a major achievement for National Trust staff and volunteers who have worked to develop the Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience*."

"This award recognises the unique quality of the visitor experience at this site where 135 people, including Ned Kelly, were tried and hanged. The investment in expanding the visitor experience, opening of more of the site and adding a confronting new Watch House costumed tour experience and innovative audiovisual courtroom dramas make our site unique in Australia, and this quality has been recognised with the peak industry award."

The Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* visitors can now be charged with a crime by the police sergeant, locked up in the old Police Watch House and take part in the recreation of a real trial in the old City Court, taking the part of the judge, witness, prosecutor or the accused including, on specific days, Ned Kelly himself.

[More...](#)

Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience*
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“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 from Victorian times up to the 1990s when the watch house ceased to take prisoners. Building on this award we are now looking forward to the launch of more exciting initiatives in the coming year,” said Mr Purslow.

A record 157,000 people visited the Old Melbourne Gaol last year, including more than 30,000 school children, yet many people admit they haven’t been to the Gaol for years. There isn’t a better time to visit than now. See, first hand, why the Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience* has been awarded above all others.

In the words of one recent visitor sharing her experience with her seven-year-old, “While the original intention of our trip to Melbourne was to see Billy Elliott and Wicked, the fact that we happened upon the Old Melbourne Gaol was a real bonus.

“According to my daughter, your tourist attraction was on par with the two shows we flew there to see. It’s easy to see why your establishment was a winner of the 2008 Victorian Awards.

“We will definitely recommend it to all our friends.”

There is nowhere else in Australia where visitors can enter a courtroom and become one of the characters in a dramatic recreation of a real trial, and decide for themselves on the guilt or innocence of the accused through their scripted role, or where visitors can experience what it is like to be ‘arrested’ without committing a crime, or where visitors can see life in a 19th century gaol, its notorious inmates and their punishment. And there is nowhere else visitors can contemplate what it is like to have been Ned Kelly in his last days, or any of the 131 men and four women who met their fate on the Old Melbourne Gaol gallows.

There is no other attraction that can offer such a unique insight into crime and justice, all within a convenient, city-based attraction

There is no better time than now to visit the Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience*.

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 and to organise interviews or a tour of the
Old Melbourne Gaol *Crime & Justice Experience*

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