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National Chinese Museum of Australia Inc. T/A

**GOLDEN DRAGON MUSEUM  
YI YUAN GARDENS & GUAN YIN TEMPLE**

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19 August 2021

**MEDIA RELEASE**

*It's Official – Our Collection is World Class*

*Mayor Launches Collection Redevelopment Project*

The Mayor of Greater Bendigo City Council Cr Dr Jennifer Alden today launched the Golden Dragon Museum's Collection Redevelopment Project as the Museum released the Statement of Significance that has just been completed on its Collection by Dr Sophie Couchman.

Dr Couchman was commissioned earlier this year to undertake a Significance Assessment of the Golden Dragon Museum's Collection. For the first time, the 30,000 or so objects in the Collection have been considered and assessed, looking both at key individual pieces and the Collection as a whole.

*'The fine-grained local community history captured within the Museum's collection has high state, national and international significance.'*

Dr Sophie Couchman said.

Dr Couchman has described a Significance Assessment as 'A reasoned, readable summary of the values, meaning and importance of a collection. It is more than a description of what the collection looks like. A Significance Assessment summarises how and why the collection is important. It is supported by research and evidence assembled through the assessment process.' The Statement of Significance is the key findings of the Assessment and draws attention to the unique qualities of the Golden Dragon Museum's Collection.

*"The real strength of the collection is the deep insight it provides into the Bendigo Chinese community as a whole. No other single collection in Australia is able to provide the depth of insight into a Chinese community as large as Bendigo's, in the detail it does, over such an extended time period. A deep understanding of Bendigo's Chinese community helps us better understand the histories of Chinese communities around Australia and internationally and, through the connections of Chinese Bendigonians, helps us understand Chinese Australian social and business networking and mobility."*

Dr Sophie Couchman said.

Noting the Statement of Significance, the Mayor Cr Alden commented: "The City of Greater Bendigo is pleased to join with the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and the Board of the Museum in supporting and delivering the two-year Collection Redevelopment Project. The Collection is the Museum's most valuable and important asset, and it requires specialised care and conservation. This project will see the

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10.00AM FRIDAY 20 AUGUST 2021

employment of a contract Collections Manager who will join the Museum's team and undertake a deep intervention to work on cataloguing, condition reporting, conserving, and digitising these wonderful objects to international museum standards. The City's \$125,000 contribution over two years will play a major part in seeing this project come to fruition to the benefit of the Collection and to everyone from Greater Bendigo and beyond who visits the Golden Dragon Museum for years to come'

The City of Greater Bendigo is joined by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust in funding the Collection Redevelopment Project. Lin Bender, Chief Executive Officer of the Trust said 'The Helen Macpherson Smith Trust is very pleased to join with Council and the Museum Board in delivering this critical and timely project. Dr Couchman's work has identified how important the Collection at the Golden Dragon Museum is and our grant of \$30,000 will be directed specifically towards buying the very particular materials the Collections Manager will need to undertake their specialised and detailed work. The Trustees look forward to hearing about the wonderful outcomes that will be achieved through this project at the Museum over the coming months.'

In thanking the Mayor and Ms Bender for their support, Chair of the Golden Dragon Museum Doug Lougoon said: "I want to thank the City of Greater Bendigo and the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust for their support of the Golden Dragon Museum's Collection Redevelopment Project. Their grants will enable us to employ a Collections Manager for the coming two years to focus on looking after this wonderful collection to the highest possible standards. The Museum's Board takes its responsibilities towards the care, conservation, research, and exhibition of the outstanding and very significant objects in our Collection very seriously. Our job is to ensure that they are looked after so that they can be enjoyed and appreciated now and for many years to come. This project will play a vital role in helping us meet that obligation. I am pleased to also remind people that our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Collection Fund, which the Mayor launched for us several months ago, is still open. It is specifically targeted at supporting the ongoing costs relating to the care and conservation of our Collection and people should visit our website [www.goldendragonmuseum.org](http://www.goldendragonmuseum.org) for further information. Donations are tax deductible."

Dr Couchman's work on the Significance Assessment was generously funded through a grant from the Bendigo Bank Community Enterprise Foundation.

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## **MEDIA CALL AND PHOTO OPPORTUNITY**

**10.00am**

**Friday 20 August 2021**

**Golden Dragon Museum**

The Mayor Cr Dr Jennifer Alden, Doug Lougoon and Hugo Leschen will be available for interview.

Copies of the Statement of Significance will be available.

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