

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## The Jewish Museum of Australia pays tribute to its Patron Sir Zelman Cowen

As the Jewish Museum of Australia mourns the sad loss of Sir Zelman Cowen, one of the most distinguished individuals in Australia, it celebrates his achievements and honours his thirty years as Patron of the Jewish Museum of Australia.

It is timely that this month we begin major works on the Museum's Australian Jewish History Gallery to make way for a stunning new gallery named the Zelman Cowen Gallery of Australian Jewish History.

On the occasion of Sir Zelman's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2009, he graciously agreed to have the Gallery named in his honour. It was an appropriate tribute and now serves as a fitting memorial.

Rebecca Forgasz, Director, Jewish Museum of Australia says, "In any account of Australian Jewish life, Sir Zelman Cowen is celebrated. The 'healing' Governor-General of 1977, academic, soldier, Rhodes Scholar, Vice Chancellor of two universities, Sir Zelman always identified himself as a proud Jew and a proud Australian. His values set an example to our community about the sort of society we wish to be a part of and we are incredibly lucky to have had his support and recognition since the Museum was founded. He was such an extraordinary visionary and we will carry his spirit with us always."

***Calling Australia Home*** which opens in the Zelman Cowen Gallery of Australian Jewish History in May next year moves chronologically from Jewish settlement in Australia in 1788 until the present day. The exhibition looks at the adaptation of Jewish tradition and culture in response to the conditions of Australian life and the ways in which Jews have interacted with and contributed to Australian society.

"Visitors will engage with the diverse and unique expressions of Jewish life, culture and identity in the Australian context, and it is most appropriate that it takes place in a gallery honouring the spirit of Sir Zelman," says Rebecca Forgasz.

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***Calling Australia Home*** opens in the Zelman Cowen Gallery of Australian Jewish History at the Jewish Museum of Australia in May 2012. [www.jewishmuseum.com.au](http://www.jewishmuseum.com.au)

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