

MEDIA RELEASE – 26 February 2015

Prime Minister's bike to become a part of Australian history

Prime Minister Tony Abbott's famous bike will become a part of Australian history, thanks to a donation by the Prime Minister to the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.

"It is lovely to be here at Old Parliament House, this is a magnificent building, it is a shrine to the great men and women who built our democracy and whose legacy we extend and build on today just up the hill," said Prime Minister The Hon. Tony Abbott MP.

Cycling is an activity closely associated with the Prime Minister and his love of cycling has become a big part of his personal image. The donated bike will add to the collection at the museum, which is at the centre of research, cultural resources and engagement around Australia's prime ministers.

Ms Daryl Karp, Director of the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House said the donation of the bike is a significant acquisition for the museum's collection and is something that many Australians will associate with Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

"In telling the stories of Australia's prime ministers we aim to paint a multi-faceted picture that gives unexpected insights into both the person and the politician," said Ms Daryl Karp.

"We would get out of our suits, out of the white cars, out of our offices, out of our comfort zone – in effect – to do something that would help to remind the general public, the people of Australia, that we're human, that we have the same sorts of cares, the same sorts of concerns, the same sorts of aspirations as people generally...," said Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

The Prime Minister's bike will join other unique exhibits that reflect the personality of their owners – including Edmund Barton's clock, Billy Hughes' cigar box, Paul Keating's briefcase and Kevin Rudd's boots.

"Prime Minister Tony Abbott's bike is about more than managing the pressures of office through exercise, it is also a symbol of his commitment to engaging directly with the community," said Toni Dam, Manager of the Australian Prime Ministers Centre, the national centre for research on prime ministers at the museum.

Visitors can get up close to the Prime Minister's bike from April 2015 when it will go on display in the Prime Ministers of Australia Gallery.

The museum celebrates the spirit of Australian democracy and the power of the voice of the people within it. It highlights the value of the democratic principles of equality, freedom, justice and representation. In a country made up of over 200 nationalities, it provides a space to engage in conversations about the value of our democratic traditions.

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