

Melbourne Museum of Printing.

A cold Thursday afternoon, the 14th of August, was the day I heard about the Melbourne Museum of Printing. It was mentioned so fleetingly, that I had to write it down before I forgot.

Later that day, I searched for their website, really nothing to go by at all, and read a bit of the history of the museum. I saw they were open two days a week, Sundays and Thursdays, and as that day was a Thursday, and I had nothing planned for the afternoon, I decided that I would get a little head start and a bit of type culture and head down to Footscray.

It was not what I expected at all; small and quaint and jam packed full of old men and printing glory.

Not something I hope will always come as a package. A lovely old man greeted me and I soon realised that the museum was a type junkies' paradise, run by retired type junkies themselves.

I signed the guest book, did the old "read the health and safety document", had a little laugh with the guys about my typography teacher, and started to wander around.

Before too long, Michael decided I looked like I needed a little assistance. Needless to say 2 hours and many missed phone calls later (I didn't want to appear rude and interrupt him whilst he was on a role), many things that had been talked about in class that day, such as true quotes, em and en dashes and spaces, glyphs and ligatures, became a reality to me. I found that it is one thing to be taught about typography, but it is an entirely different thing to

be able to see it and touch it. It really was 2 hours of information overload, and I knew I'd have to head down there again to refresh my memory in a few weeks. Michael stayed with me long past closing, teaching me everything he could. I gave them all the money I had on me, and promised to bring friends next time, which I did, and plan to do again.

I've asked a number of third year friends from RMIT about it, none of whom knew about it. It's sad to know that it's a struggle for them to stay open as it is, especially when there are design students out there who don't know about them, but would go if given the chance.

Knowledge gained, priceless. Recommendation: if you call yourself a designer, you MUST go!

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