

For immediate publication

**MEDIA RELEASE**



**MEDIA ALERT**

**Date:** Friday 31 October 2008

**Time:** 9.30am

**Where:** Magnet House, Observatory Gate, Birdwood Avenue  
South Yarra (Melway 2F K12)

**Subject:** Science meets history at the Royal Botanic Gardens  
Melbourne - Measurement of Tectonic Plates by Geo  
Science Australia

Is the earth moving?

That is what scientists from Geo Science Australia are working out.

Today they will complete measuring possible movement in the earth's tectonic plates as part of a nationwide exercise.

The Melbourne base for the project has been the basement of the historic Magnet House in the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. It is one of 11 sites around Australia.

Magnet House was built in 1877 and housed the instruments for measuring hourly changes in the Earth's magnetism.

The building had to be constructed entirely without metal – no nails and no roofing iron – to ensure the records were accurate, and to avoid affecting the sensitive instruments. In 1910 when the new electric trams on St Kilda Road caused interference to magnetic readings, Magnet House closed, and the operation moved to Toolangi.

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