



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY
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Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into ACT's heritage arrangements

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The Committee Secretary

ACT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

GPO Box 1020,

CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

Thursday 20 April 2023

Inquiry into ACT's Heritage Arrangements

Dear members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the Inquiry into ACT's Heritage Arrangements. We appreciate that our comments may not directly relate to heritage in some instances, but we submit the following points in relation to the topic hoping that it may provide a broader picture of the reach of ACT's Heritage within the region.

1. FHACT is a "light" user in the Heritage space. By that I mean our core business is genealogy not "heritage". For the most part, we don't hold artifacts like a museum or cultural centre but do hold some items that are significant to our organisation. Our heritage holdings are most likely manuscripts and documents of heritage value, such as the Father Brian Maher or Shirley Tuft Collections or books of interest to people researching family history in the region. Our organisation is probably representative of other similar organisations working in this space, such as the Monaro Pioneers.
2. Our involvement in the Heritage Space has been recent, mostly over the last three years.
3. We have been involved with the ACT Heritage section of the ACT Government as we received funding from the ACT Heritage Grants to digitise and index the Father Brian Maher Collection and to create Augmented Reality videos for the Canberra Tracks program. We have dealt mostly with the staff members involved and found them to be helpful and engaging.
4. We have also been a part of the ACT Heritage Festival for many years delivering the St Johns torch light tours, and more recently lectures and open days.
5. We have worked in partnership with the ACT Heritage Library to deliver their community family history talks and to put a display in their display area.
6. In general, we have found the interactions and connections between the different parts of the ACT Government Heritage organisations difficult to work out – who is responsible for what, who we should deal with and who decides the allocation of grant funding. However, the criteria for grant funding have always been clear.

7. Until the ACT Heritage Council was sacked, we were not aware of who they were, their role and responsibilities or how they were chosen. If asked we probably would have confused them with the National Trust
8. Until fairly recently we were not aware of the ACT Heritage List and still don't know the criteria or process for being listed.
9. Going forward, we believe it is important to provide users/public with a clear idea of how the different parts of the Heritage space are connected and the role they play in determining what is or isn't of Heritage value.
10. The criteria for selection of advisory groups should be transparent and open to the public. There should be clear terms of reference for the group, and members selected on their ability to contribute to the Councils goal.

Once again thank you for the opportunity and we hope our feedback has been useful.

Yours sincerely,

Rosemary McKenzie

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