

From: alan ventress

Sent: Thursday, 4 June 2020 1:03 PM

To: Shayne Mallard <Shayne.Mallard@parliament.nsw.gov.au>; Daniel Mookhey <Daniel.Mookhey@parliament.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Adam Lindsay Executive Director Sydney Living Museums/State Archives and Records NSW submission

Dear Mr Mallard

I draw your attention to the following in Adam Lindsay's submission to the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into State Records Act 1998 and the policy paper on its review dated 29 April 2020

In fact, the refusal to open our minds to contemporary or progressive approaches to the management of our Collection is, perhaps, precisely the reason there is a backlog. The insular and covetous approach to management of the Collection displayed by previous leadership has only served to result in poor public awareness of one of the State's most valuable cultural assets. .

This is a patently false and misleading statement and an unacceptable interpretation of the facts. There was never an insular and covetous approach during my time or in earlier periods. As you know I worked at State Records NSW from 2001-2012 initially as an Associate Director (2001-2008) and Director (2008-2012). During this time massive and concerted attention was made to raise public awareness of the collection through exhibitions both physical and web based, social media, a State Records blog, publication of Archives in Brief, the Archives Research KIt (circulated to over 40 public libraries and archives in NSW) the establishment of a volunteers program to make the collection even more accessible, not to mention the hundreds of hours of

unpaid overtime that staff such as myself, _____, Manager Public Access _____ Senior Archivist, Public Access, _____, Senior Archivist Reading Room and many other dedicated staff provided by giving talks about the archives on weekends and after hours. _____ and myself also attended hundreds of functions where we tirelessly advocated for State Records to politicians, public servants and the cultural leadership, not only in Sydney, but in NSW and Australia. In addition we represented State Records to the archives and records management and professional communities by presenting papers at conferences and writing articles for key journals covering the discipline..

In addition during this period there were substantial efforts to make the collection widely known and accessible through the publication of guides to the Centenary of Federation and the Sesqui Centenary of Responsible Government in NSW, which in themselves considerable undertakings requiring research, resources and scholarship.

In the collaboration with the Historic Houses Trust - Bridging Sydney exhibition and book, I wrote a chapter entitled Politics and Players in which I did in my own time. This book and my chapter highlights the State archives collection in a very positive way.

A cursory examination of previous annual reports would have indicated to even the most inexperienced researcher the time and effort that has been put in for many years to raise the profile of the archives collection and to make it more accessible to all.

State Records NSW Board was always updated on a monthly basis through a list of publicity during the preceding month. These actions by management are hardly the hallmarks of an organisation Mr Lindsay dismisses as insular and covetous

Finally I would also contend that the management of the State's archives have always striven to make the archives available and accessible to the public from the establishment of the Archives Office of NSW in 1960.

Mr Lindsay's statement does a grave disservice to those who preceded him at State Archives and Records NSW.

Yours sincerely

Alan Ventress

cc: Deputy Chair Hon Daniel Mookhey, MLC