

**Submission
No 13**

INQUIRY INTO MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Organisation: Dutch Australian Cultural Centre Ltd

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Dutch Australian Cultural Centre

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Patron: Consul-General of the Netherlands

ABN 94 002 727 862 - Registered as a Cultural Organisation

Deductable Gift Recipient and Tax Concession Charity

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Dutch-Australian-Cultural-Centre-907023886011360/>

Mr. Robert Borsak, MLC,
Chair,
Inquiry into NSW Museums and Galleries.,
Legislative Council, NSW Government,
Parliament House, Sydney.

Dear Mr. Borsak,

We are making a submission to this Inquiry. We have noted your Committee's Terms of Reference. Our understanding is that the Inquiry will address the question of the location of Powerhouse Museum and will also look, more broadly, at Government funding for NSW Museums and Galleries. In discussions published in the media there has been mention of a possible Migration Museum in Parramatta either as an Annex to the Powerhouse Museum there or as a Stand-alone facility. We are particularly interested in this very important aspect.

The Board of the Dutch Australian Cultural Centre in Smithfield would like to suggest that the NSW Government considers the possibility of establishing a Migration Museum instead or as an annex to a relocated Powerhouse Museum in Parramatta. Adelaide and Melbourne have such a Museum and so does Broken Hill. They house a wonderful collection of histories and memorabilia of our immigrants' lives before and after coming here. We realise that the Maritime Museum has a collection but it mostly relates to those who came by sea. Regrettably, the Migration Centre at the Powerhouse Museum closed a couple of years ago.

Many of the Post-War II ethnic groups set up small clubs where people could gather to share their language, food and culture and experiences of life here. With advancing age many of the original members are no longer able to participate and the younger generation don't have the time to volunteer to run them. As a result many of these clubs are closing down and the stories are lost forever. People also have memorabilia which is an important part of our history and sadly with nowhere to go, it often ends up in landfill. We have had many visitors to our Centre who say they wish they had known we were there when they cleaned out a

deceased parent's home. At the Dutch Australian Cultural Centre we aim to collect, preserve and promote Dutch culture, heritage club records in Australia. We are not a museum and do not have space or expertise to store all these precious items. We have collected these items and archived Dutch clubs' records since 1984, when the DACC was incorporated and started operations. We also have a collection of replicas of Dutch 17th century maps of the coastline of Australia, which will be exhibited in the Fairfield Museum and Gallery during October, 400 years after Dirk Hartog made landfall in Shark Bay, W. A.

With such a large number of nationalities in Western Sydney it would seem most appropriate to house a Migration Museum in Parramatta. Families could take their children and grandchildren to visit and expose them to other cultures and traditions. We believe it is ignorance which breeds fear and intolerance so by exposing us to different cultural practices be it food or religion, language or history we can learn and be more respectful and appreciative of our cultural differences. When most of us arrived in Australia, in the early 1950s, the delicatessen section of the local shop only sold Devon, ham, Frankfurts, corned beef and cheddar cheese. Look how far we have come and now with a population of 24 million, many of whom are immigrants, it is time to recognise their contributions to this wonderful country we call home.

We would be most grateful if you would consider this idea and bring it up at the Inquiry and in its recommendations. It would also be wonderful if the Inquiry Committee could find the time to visit our Centre to see what we do. Two MLA's have done so already a couple of months ago, at our invitation. Mrs. Tanya Davies (Mulgo) and Dr. Hugh Mc Dermott (Prospect). They were impressed they wrote to us later.

We are located at the rear of Holland House, 85 Market St, Smithfield. We are open on most Fridays and every Sunday from 11 am - 3pm or by appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Paulus Breedveld,
Chair,
Dutch Australian Cultural Centre, Ltd,
Committee Members personal phone numbers:
Ph.
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