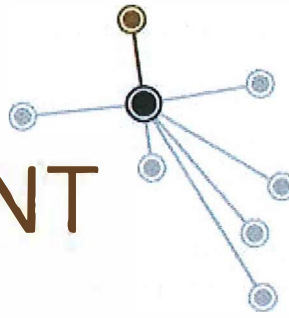


PHA NT



Professional Historians Association (NT)
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14 June 2019

Mr David Tune AO PSM
Independent Reviewer
c/o Tune Review Secretariat
National Archives of Australia
Queen Victoria Terrace
Parkes ACT 2600

Dear Mr Tune,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Tune Review of the National Archives of Australia. The Professional Historian's Association of the Northern Territory represents the interests of professional historians across the breadth of the Northern Territory.

Role of the National Archives

The role that the National Archives plays in collecting and preserving historical records for current and future researchers is fundamental to the record keeping of our nation. Maintaining or increasing current levels of resourcing to the Archives would reflect the enormous responsibility and trust placed in the Archives to continue providing a service which is crucial to our understanding of where we have been, where we are today and where we are going.

The Northern Territory has been under the administrative control of both the South Australian and Commonwealth governments. This has resulted in a large collection of material about the Northern Territory being held in locations outside the Northern

Territory. The repatriation of records about the Northern Territory to the Territory through an enhanced digitisation program and a commitment to increased item level description would assist historians/researchers based in the Northern Territory enormously with their research. These services need better resourcing as a matter of equity as the cost of interstate travel for research is prohibitive to many Territorians.

Many records about the Northern Territory are still held within the Northern Territory. We cannot stress highly enough that Territorians should always be able to access records about Territorians and about Territory history from within the Northern Territory.

National Archives of Australia (Darwin office)

The Darwin office of the National Archives provides an excellent service and is a highly valued resource for members of the Professional Historian's Association (NT) and the broader community.

The Northern Territory Archives Centre (incorporating the NAA) works hard to keep itself locally relevant through an active public program of events, talks and exhibitions. Events are often packed to capacity – an incredible achievement which points to the success of the archives in supporting local research and bringing Northern Territory stories to Territorians who are hungry for this kind of information. It is a no-brainer to adequately fund such an important institution.

The Darwin office operates with a small staff. Even so, the experienced and knowledgeable staff manage to provide an excellent face-to-face research service. Better resourcing would allow for extra staff, increased digitisation of records which includes the photograph collection, reduced wait time for records to be access cleared, a thorough investigation of backlogs and further item level description of files which will make records more accessible.

There are some things that our members would like to see the Archives moving towards. These include extended opening hours; a reduction in the cost of photographs that have already been scanned at a high resolution; and an investigation into the ways of making access to the archives for people living in remote parts of the Territory (often with intermittent internet connection) possible. Instigating a local volunteer program and crowd sourcing to fund specific projects are ideas that could also be explored.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Samantha Wells
President
Professional Historians Association (NT)