

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories

RE: NATIONAL CARILLON, CANBERRA

Letter of Support to the Canberra Carillonists.

One of the joys of visiting our national capital is hearing the melodious tones of the carillon ringing out over Lake Burley Griffin. The National Carillon gives Canberra its sense of place. There is a plethora of visual symbols in the national capital to delight the eyes of visitors and citizens but there is only one, freely available, to delight the ears. One of only two carillons in Australia, it is unique in defining a city. Its sound is not drowned out by the noise of transport above and on the ground but chimes clear and bright over the water, surrounding buildings and tranquil parklands.

A silent carillon is as useless as any musical instrument which is not regularly played and serves no purpose other than as a signal of ingratitude to the donors of this national icon. I was shocked to learn that the legislation which guards the maintenance of the building and the musical instrument it houses does not address the playing of it.

That funding can be capriciously cut so drastically beggars belief. Carillonists are not so easily switched on and off. **Once continuity is lost, playing the carillon with artistry and expertise goes too.** I suspect the auditory heart and soul of Canberra, a city short on longevity and history, goes with it. Building tradition requires constancy, not on again, off again funding cuts.

I can only imagine that once it is generally known that it is proposed to cut funding to maintain the playing of the carillon so savagely, music lovers and the general public will react. Cutting funding to save such a small amount in the overall scheme of things seems so mean spirited and niggardly and would cause much unhappiness in the process.

Please ensure the playing of the National Carillon continues at present and for the future.

Legislate to secure our national musical heritage in perpetuity, making it possible for our world standard carillonists to **give the bells voice.**

Judith Sutton

Frequent visitor to Canberra, Member of the National Gallery of Australia for many years.
Federation Medal for Services to the Arts. Life member: Friends of the Tweed River Art Gallery
Tweed Shire Council Advisory Committee for Community and Cultural Development.
Gold card member: Northern Rivers Symphony Orchestra.