

Inquiry into the role of the National Capital Authority

Submission by Dr Jill Forrest
University Carillonist, University of Sydney NSW 2076
Immediate Past President, Carillon Society of Australia

To accompany the Submission of the Canberra Carillonists to the above Inquiry

I write to express my dismay at the recent Draconian budget cuts to the **National Carillon, Canberra.**

Australia has only two functional carillons, but they are both of world standard. The War Memorial Carillon at the University of Sydney, established in 1928, is fully integrated into the life of the University Community, and serves as the ceremonial voice of the University. The National Carillon in Canberra, a gift of the British Government and established in 1970 in its architecturally outstanding tower on Aspen Island in Lake Burley Griffin, serves a similar function for Australia's national capital.

Under the inspired Directorship of Timothy Hurd QSM over the last seven years, the Canberra instrument has reached a pinnacle of excellence. It is recognised internationally as a splendid musical instrument, and players from all over the world are keen to be invited to play it. Its bells from the Taylor Bellfoundry in the UK are universally acknowledged to be the "Rolls Royce" of bells, and the music they produce is enjoyed not only by those on the ground but also by those on and across the lake. The musicians who play the instrument are professionally trained and enthusiastic, and the programs they provide are varied and original. Few carillons around the world can boast such a comprehensive program and outreach as that which the National Carillon has been able to offer in recent years.

The National Carillon is a symbol of the city, an icon for tourists, a source of delight for residents and visitors alike. It is more than just a monument; it is a living musical instrument, and a concrete expression of our country's links with the United Kingdom. It provides an example of how a small group of Australian musicians can master and then extend musical traditions which have their source in older nations and cultures.

To develop such a program and to maintain it necessarily requires effort, practice and support. To have outlaid funds to reach the current state of excellence and then to withdraw support makes no sense.

In terms of the overall government budget, the annual amount spent on the carillon is very small. However, in the context of maintaining and sustaining this unique feature of Australia's cultural life it is critical. It may be argued that in the current economic climate every one needs to endure some pain, but the pain being inflicted on the Carillon seems disproportionate. I am sure that the carillonists understand the need for public thrift. However, funding reductions that render this very public instrument essentially inoperative are hard to comprehend, in the light of Australian's optimism about its future.

I believe that the role of the National Carillon is important enough for the situation to be reviewed, and for a system to be developed that ensures stability and maintenance of the gains of recent years.

Jill Forrest

14 April 2008

Wilson, Frances (REPS)

From: Rob and Lyn Fuller [fulfam@aapt.net.au]
Sent: Tuesday, 15 April 2008 5:13 PM
To: Committee, NCET (REPS)
Subject: Inquiry into the role of the National Capital Authority

Please find as an attachment a further two letters of support in relation to the National Carillon from:

1. Ms. June Catchpoole (Secretary of the *Carillon Society of Australia Inc.*)
2. Dr. Jill Forrest (University Carillonist, University of Sydney. Immediate past president of the *Carillon Society of Australia Inc.*)

I regret these did not arrive in time to attach to the submission from the Canberra Carillonists to the inquiry into the role of the National Capital Authority, but I hope they can still be included as evidence before the Committee. Again, they reinforce the very special nature of the National Carillon and its importance to the world stage and to other Australian carillonists.

Yours sincerely
Lyn Fuller
(on behalf of the Canberra Carillonists)

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