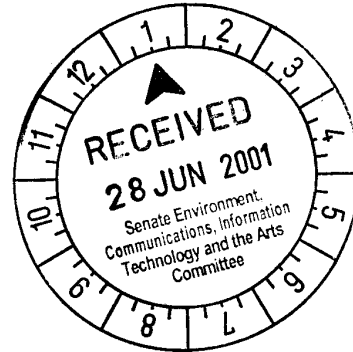


Department of  
Communications  
Information Technology  
and the Arts



Centenary of Federation



Technology and the Arts Legislation Committee  
The Senate  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Griffiths

At the hearings of the Committee on Wednesday 6 June 2001, I answered a series of questions asked by Senator Faulkner about centenary of federation medallions for primary school students.

Senator Faulkner asked (at age 192 of the Proof Hansard) if, "in recent months," the Minister corresponded with the National Council "about the medallion process and presentation issues".

In answering Senator Faulkner's question, I began by referring to correspondence dated 26 March 2001, from me to the Minister for the Arts and the Centenary of Federation, seeking his views on possible means of involving Members of Parliament in the project. I went on to explain that the Government decided to separately fund certificates for schools as an embellishment of the medallions project. This information led Senator Faulkner to ask a series of further questions about the preparation and production of certificates, with the result that I did not return to the original question and nor did the Committee. This, in turn, may have left the Committee with the impression that there was only one item of correspondence.

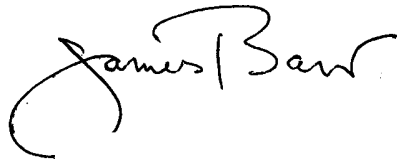
In addition to my minute to the Minister of 26 March 2001, the Minister wrote to the Chief Executive of the National Council for the Centenary of Federation on 30 March 2001. In that letter (copy attached), the Minister canvassed the desirability for greater involvement of all Members of the House of Representatives in the medallions project, including possibly by a change of presentation date. Following discussion, the Council made no change to the planned arrangements.

I would also ask that the following changes be made to the Hansard record of the discussion on Centenary of Federation issues:

- On page 194 of the Proof Hansard, key words are omitted from an answer of mine. In line 41, the words "was not" should appear before "directly asked for its view on that embellishment";
- On page 193 of the Proof Hansard, words are omitted from an answer by Dr Alan Stretton. In line 45, the words "to arrange for the distribution" should appear after "..secretariat to the Centenary of Federation".

On p 199, lines 9 and 10, there is a garbled answer attributed to me. I regret that I do not recall the terms of my answer. This would not seem a crucial issue, as the situation was made clear by the immediately following question and answer.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Bann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'J'.

General Manager  
National Council for the Centenary of Federation  
28 June 2001

30 March 2001

Mr Tony Eggleton  
Chief Executive  
National Council for the  
Centenary of Federation  
Old Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Tony

Re: Centenary of Federation Medallions for Australian school children

I have recently been contacted by several Members of Parliament, who have expressed the desire to be able to distribute medallions to the schools in their electorates.

I agree with them that it is absolutely appropriate for Members to play this role. The Centenary of Federation is a celebration of the establishment of our nation and its Federal Parliament. Federal Parliamentarians should, therefore, be encouraged to participate in Centenary activities and in helping to educate the community on the importance of this year. The distribution of the medallions provides Members a great opportunity to do this, especially with young Australians. It will also serve to make receipt of the medallions a special and memorable occasion for the children.

I understand also that the Council's intention was that the medallions would be distributed to children on 9 May, to draw to their attention the significance of that day and the activities taking place in Melbourne on that day. Obviously, as all Federal Parliamentarians will be involved in the event in Melbourne they will be unable to make presentations to school children on that day. However, I believe that the desirability of the involvement of Members outweighs this.

I would like a letter from myself to each school to be enclosed with the medallions when they are delivered. The Council Secretariat should liaise with my Arts Adviser, Gemma Allman, to arrange this.

I will also be writing to all Members, explaining to them their role and asking them to contact each school in their electorate to arrange for the presentation of the medallions.

I would appreciate your cooperation in this matter without delay.

Yours sincerely

Peter McGauran