

Thank you for extending the submission date for this review as I only found out about three weeks ago. As an enthusiastic user of Trove (which I know is the library but ... ), I am surprised that I didn't find out about it from there.

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#### My background

- I am a retired secondary teacher and have used the national archives for lesson preparation and for student research purposes: history of advertising, biographies and autobiographies reading and writing.
- I am a family history tragic and have found it invaluable for tracing the lives of people who otherwise would have fallen off the tree! I am hoping to develop a book that contains social history as well.
- I have been able to share the information with family and friends.

Many of the areas I cannot comment on but there are some about which I feel most passionately.

#### **The efficiency and effectiveness of all aspects of the National Archives' operations, programmes, administration, governance and authorising environment.**

- Of course, the bottom line is: no money – no future.
  - Everyone wants the education system to produce students who understand, value and think critically about the past and access to these materials online is crucial.
  - Indigenous students and their non-indigenous colleagues would benefit enormously from more travelling exhibitions. I was employed to write curriculum documents for a remote Western Australian community and would have loved to have been able to have more artifacts and travelling exhibitions. There is an issue with many of the institutions being in the eastern states. How exciting for a remote school to have a special exhibition of colonial documents (both good and bad) tour.
  - In terms of administration etc – there is a case for saying that too many cuts lead to great inefficiencies – it is unlikely that 10-15% of the employees were doing nothing and people can't be asked to 'do more with less' or 'step up' indefinitely.
- **National Archives and its budget position; d) Any barriers (resourcing, legislative or other) preventing the National Archives from fulfilling its core outcomes and functions**
    - Allocating money to the archives will generate jobs and increase consumer spending – an economic benefit.
    - More staff would mean that the price for scanning of non-scanned items could be reduced as more items are scanned.

#### **The feasibility and efficiency of alternative approaches to fulfil its outcomes and functions including identifying the benefits, costs, risks and any other relevant considerations.**

- I am confused about the relationship between the National Archives, Museum, Museum of light and sound, National Library, State Libraries and the War Memorial. I have used all of

these institutions with great effect. Is there some efficiency possible between these institutions? Is there doubling up or, indeed, competition? Not that I want a super department!

- I am concerned that the half a billion dollars that has been allocated to the War Memorial building is excessive and takes money from equally worthy areas. I feel that it skews the overall collection enormously (and reflects the values of certain areas of society only). It is also in Canberra and not everyone can go to Canberra and so the building and the various equipment are less important than the documents.
- I am believe that Australia has more history and identity than that of the world wars – though I do find the service records exciting.
- I feel that preserving/scanning records and digitalising film etc are the most important things. It provides immediate access to researchers and also allows them to contribute further documentation. Many people can't be bothered sorting through Baby Boomer 'stuff' and so it is just thrown out. The idea that information would be sought would see many aspects of Australian history expanding. For instance, I have photos of the Governor General's visit to the North West of Western Australia in 1926 and have approached the Battye library who are very interested but said they did not have the budget to scan them (after I have sorted and labelled them and about 100 other photos from the 1910-1940). I offered to volunteer to do them but a qualified person is required – understandably.
- There are employment and training opportunities here for librarians, heritage specialists, admin people and so forth. Indeed, I have a friend on a disability pension who is desperate for paid work: she has a heritage degree and this kind of work would be good for her as she is on the autism spectrum. A friend's son did a heritage degree and now works in a café. The employment could also be done in regional areas. I think during the bush fires some value documents were lost from genealogical societies and local history societies. Some money into these areas would be fantastic – perhaps training of the more mature unemployed could be factored in.
- Oral histories are also important as the older generations die. Conditions and stories of the Depression, for instance, would be interesting as would interviews about the environmental conditions when people were younger. Once again, employment opportunities.
- Programmes where educators go out to schools need to be expanded. The insurance risks, paperwork and time for excursions are onerous for teachers and so incursions are more efficient and would spark up the miserable lives of teachers who also suffer from the 'do more with less' issue. Help put some fun back into schools.
- With loneliness and isolation becoming a social issue, I believe that informal groups of people working on historical projects online (eg family history) is another way of incorporating people into community.

Anyway, that's enough from me. I'm sure you get the drift.

Thanks for all your work on this review. I hope that future decisions ensure that all aspects of Australia's history is preserved for the future through a decent budget and community involvement.