



Patron:
Mr Laurie Ferguson, MP
Federal Member for Reid

Heritage Enquiry
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
Belconnen ACT 2616

28th July, 2005.

Conservation of Historic Heritage Places

To Whom it May Concern.

The Friends of Linnwood is a community group *formed to* 'protect and preserve' historic "Linnwood" at Guildford, in the western suburbs of Sydney.

When under threat of being sold by the NSW Government, and the site being redeveloped, the local community, with the support of Holroyd City Council, campaigned against the sale of this historic house and its 5 hectares of grounds and **were** eventually victorious in stopping the sale and the property was then 'saved' *for* community use,

Whilst this was a tremendous result, it also raised the very *real issue of how this* historic heritage building was to be conserved *for the future, with* the State Government transferring title from one of its own departments to the NSW Heritage Office, with very little money *for much* needed repairs, let alone money for restoration.

This property, and many like it, depends on the community to care for it. It is the volunteer workforce in the community that works so very hard to raise funds, and in many cases, provides the labour needed to conserve many of our historic heritage buildings.

Groups such as ours, spend many, many hours working to conserve these buildings for future generations, so that they may 'provide a sense of identity and a connection to our past and to our nation'.

Whilst this *work* is done voluntarily and enthusiastically, there are many restrictions placed on community groups and we have seen many fundraising activities curtailed or cancelled due to the high cost of public liability insurance, which is mandatory. In some cases, much needed restoration funds are used to pay this expense.

It should also be noted that it is extremely difficult for small community groups to obtain grants for much needed restoration works, having to seemingly jump through many hoops to justify their application. This is most frustrating, to see many of our heritage buildings crumbling away, and money being granted elsewhere on what could be termed 'frivolous' projects.

We would therefore respectfully request that the Commission take into consideration the considerable cost of insurance to community groups and the detrimental effect these costs have on such groups and their capacity to continue raising funds for conservation purposes. We would also request that the Commission reassess the application process that heritage based community groups have to go through to obtain much needed funds for conservation purposes.

Community groups make an immense contribution to the conservation of our heritage buildings and we would appreciate some consideration in return.

Yours faithfully

Dorothy Warwick
President.

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