

Affiliated Societies: a quick overview

This paper arose from an informal discussion with Ms Havilah at lunch on 7 February when she joined a group of volunteers. She indicated a willingness to co-operate with affiliated societies, eg in providing meeting spaces. It is a quick collation of available material from many sources.

A printed copy of this material was delivered to MAAS Ultimo on 8 February 2018 and this material is online on the unofficial website <http://maasbusinesscase.com/> , direct link <http://maasbusinesscase.com/Affiliated%20Societies/Affiliated%20Societies.pdf>

Further details can be provided regarding information sources but because of time constraints I accept responsibility for the statements herein.

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8 February 2019

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Summary

Historical role of affiliated societies

The role of affiliated societies has been a feature of the museum since its inauguration. Details on request.

Older volunteers and long-term staff recall good interactions between the societies and the museum, but this was in long-term decline, notably during this millennium. There has not been a designated person responsible for contact with Affiliated Societies for at least ten years. (However the Business Plan for the proposed NMWS lists Affiliated Societies as 'secondary stakeholders' and intends to engage with them. Stakeholder Engagement Plan, NMWS, attachment S, page 7, but this is not a reason for establishing a new museum. The engagement can more effectively be initiated from Ultimo).

Affiliated societies were last listed in the Annual Reports in 2013-13.

43 societies were listed but when efforts were made to contact them in 2016 many did not seem to exist (eg British Astronomical Association, NSW branch), others only had interstate or international bases, (eg Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain) others seem to have had name changes, (Metropolitan coin Club > Australian Numismatic Society NSW) and others had been superseded by new bodies that had taken on the responsibilities of the listed bodies (eg Pyrmont History Group). The latest contact information is listed later in these pages.

The most recent formal interactions

The Lace Guild co-operation has persisted, and the lace workers team are a regular and valued part of museum activities. The Lace Centre is a great model for this type of co-operation.

I believe that there have been significant interactions with the Ceramic Collectors Society but the details are not readily available.

The Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) met in the Harwood Staffroom until April 2014 (from memory) when they were asked to pay a large fee. Parking also became a problem. NB: meetings were held in the evening, monthly, about 8pm till 10pm. The AHSA had interaction with MAAS regarding the centenary of Maurice Guillaux in Australia, 2014, which was very successful, details on request.

Participation of Affiliated Society members as curatorial volunteers

There has been significant involvement of Affiliated Society members as curatorial volunteers. Examples that readily come to mind are ex-curators eg of Aviation and Engineering and Technology, Ceramics experts, involvement of World War I aero historians at Castle Hill (particularly involving the Barraclough engine collection). There are many others.

Participation of other groups

There have been some very successful interactions with other outside groups, eg Star Wars fans, Macquarie University in 2017 re Egyptian Mummies – this was an outstanding example. But these tended to be restricted to particular exhibitions.

Action regarding the Inquiry into Museums and Galleries

In 2016 as part of the Inquiry into Museums and Galleries there were at least four submissions seeing better interactions. As part of this efforts were made to contact all societies with results later in these papers (page 5 ff).

Possibilities for mutual co-operation

There was a general desire among the 14 societies with whom dialogue occurred for the restoration of mutual co-operation eg

1. Use of the museum for meetings free or at cost. Problems to be faced in this are
 - a. Access, security and supervision for night meetings. Perhaps each organisation can have a small group of trained responsible people.
 - b. Parking. Typically members come in cars so that aged or handicapped members can be efficiently transported.
2. Use of the expertise of the Affiliated Society members. For example the loss of specialist curators means that if a person approaches the museum for advice or offers a donation they may not easily get a reply. Experts in various fields could handle requests for information and, given training, could possibly conduct initial assessments of significance.

Honorary Associates

These played an important part in the early history of the museum and were active in recent times. They were last listed in the 2013-4 Annual Reports.

Affiliated Societies general information

Societies listed in the 2012-13 Annual Report (the last such listing)

Annual Report page 65

The Museum provides facilities and resources to the following 43 affiliated societies (representing some 20,000 people):

Antique Arms Collectors Society of Australia
Art Deco Society of NSW
The Asian Arts Society of Australia Inc
Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (NSW Division)
The Australian Ceramics Association
Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society (Ku-ring-gai) Inc
Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society (Sydney) Inc
Australian Association of Musical Instrument Makers (NSW Branch)
Australian Flute Society Inc
Australian Lace Guild NSW Branch Inc
The Australian Numismatic Society
The Australiana Society Inc
The Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc
Ceramic Collectors Society
Ceramic Study Group Inc
The Colour Society of Australia (NSW) Inc
Design Institute of Australia, NSW Chapter
The Doll Collectors Club of NSW Inc
The Early Music Association of NSW Inc
The Embroiderers' Guild NSW Inc
The Furniture History Society (Australasia) Inc
Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group of Australia NSW Inc
The Knitters' Guild NSW Inc
The Metropolitan Coin Club of Sydney
National Space Society of Australia Ltd
Object – Australian Centre for Craft and Design
Oral History Association of Australia (NSW)
Oriental Rug Society of NSW Inc
Philatelic Association of NSW Inc
The Phonograph Society of NSW Inc
Pymont Ultimo Historical Society
The Quilters' Guild Inc
Royal Aeronautical Society, Australian Division, Sydney Branch Inc
Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, NSW Chapter
Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (NSW Chapter)
The Silver Society of Australia Inc
Sydney City Skywatchers Inc
Sydney Space Association
The Twentieth Century Heritage Society of NSW Inc
Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc
Watch and Clockmakers of Australia (NSW Branch)

The Wedgwood Society of NSW Inc
Woodworkers' Association of NSW Inc

[Latest list of Honorary Associates](#)

Honorary Associates lists had also been a feature of the Annual Reports but the last was in 2013-4 Annual Report page 65

Mr Warren Anderson — arms
Professor John Bach — maritime history
Major Ian Brookes — Japanese swords
Emeritus Professor Alexander Cambitoglou AO — classical antiquities
Mr Dennis Eccles — clocks
Mr John Hawkins — silver
Mr Jolyon Warwick James — silver
Mr Alan Landis — ceramics, glass
Mr Ross Langlands — oriental rugs and textiles
Mr Randall Reed — ceramics, glass, silver
Ms Anne Schofield AM — costume, jewellery
Dr Janet West — scrimshaw and nautical crafts
Dr John Yu AC — ceramics, textiles, furniture

[Contact details as found August 2016](#)

One of the terms of reference of the Legislative Council Inquiry into Museums and Galleries was

c) opportunities to revitalise the structure, reach, and impact of museums and galleries, and their research and collecting priorities

and so there was a general desire among affiliated groups to revitalise the interactions between the affiliated Societies and MAAS.

Efforts were made to find current contact details and the results are as on the following pages.

Contact details of Affiliated Societies as at 11/8/2016

Affiliated body	Website	Contact
Antique Arms Collectors Society of Australia	http://www.antiquearmsociety.org.au/	admin@antiquearmsociety.org.au Secretary: Terry Hartmann Phone: 9247 4967 (BH) Chairman: Harvey Facer Phone: 9686 1931 (BH)
Art Deco Society of NSW	http://www.angelfire.com/retro/artdecons/	Affiliated Society of the Powerhouse Museum , The Royal Australian Historical Society , and the National Trust of Australia (NSW) , Patron: Ted Mack B. Arch Art Deco Society of NSW , PO Box 752 , Willoughby NSW , Australia 2068 Phone: 61-2-9319 1125
The Asian Arts Society of Australia Inc	http://www.taasa.org.au/	The Asian Arts Society of Australia Inc General Email: admin@taasa.org.au Membership: Gill Green: admin@taasa.org.au TAASA, PO Box 996, Potts Point, NSW, 2011 AUSTRALIA TAASA Review advertising: advertising@taasa.org.au
Association of Australian Decorative & Fine Arts Societies	Contact: sydney@adfas.org.au	Contact: sydney@adfas.org.au Good website, current activities
Australian Association of Musical Instrument Makers (NSW Branch)	http://www.aamim.org.au/index.html?nav/nav.html&http://www.aamim.org.au/history.html	The National Secretary AAMIM Inc 16 Montego Court EATONS HILL QLD 4037 current magazine published, no NSW contact secretary@aamim.org.au
Australian Costume & Textile Society	Does not seem to have a website	
Australian Flute Association	http://www.australianflutesociety.org.au/new/index.html	Current activities, no contact details for nsw but general contact form on http://www.australianflutesociety.org.au/new/contactus.htm
Australian Lace Guild (NSW Branch)	http://www.australianlaceguild.com.au/about%20us/About%20the%20Australian%20Lace%20Guild.shtml	Current activities, difficult to find
The Australian Numismatic Society	http://www.the-ans.com/	Australian Numismatic Society. P.O. Box 244, St Peters, NSW 2044, Australia
The Australian Printing Historical Society	No website	

Affiliated body	Website	Contact
The Australiana Society	http://www.australiana.org.au/	Michael Lech, PO Box 2335, Bondi Junction NSW 1355, 02 8239 2288, secretary email
The Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW Branch)	http://www.ahsa.org.au/about.html	Victorian branch is emphasised, no NSW contact details online but plenty of knowledge of this
British Astronomical Association (NSW Branch)	No website etc	
Ceramic Collectors Society	http://www.ceramiccollectors.org/	Ceramic Collectors Society, Po Box 1386, North Sydney, NSW 2059, or email adriennewilson@inet.net.au
Ceramic Study Group Inc	http://www.ceramicstudygroup.org.au/	http://www.ceramicstudygroup.org.au/contact-us/ appears vibrant
The Colour Society of Australia	http://www.coloursociety.org.au/events/new-south-wales.aspx	http://www.coloursociety.org.au/contact-us.aspx society is active
Crafts Council of New South Wales	No website obvious	
Design Institute of Australia, NSW Chapter	http://www.dia.org.au/index.cfm?id=83 NSW chapter not obvious	Lvl 1, 175 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000, Australia GPO Box 355, Melbourne VIC 3001 Phone: 1300 888 056 or +61 3 9662 2345 Fax: +61 (03) 9662
The Doll Collector's Club of NSW Inc	http://www.dollclubnsw.com.au/	P: PO Box 90, Pendle Hill NSW 2145, E: dollclubnsw@gmail.com , Shirleyanne: 02 9449 1999, Suzanne: 02 9958 2308, Ann: 02 9150 7059 (Fair enquiries)
The Early Music Association of NSW	http://www.earlymusicnsw.com/Early Music Association of NSW/Welcome.html	P.O. Box 620, North Ryde Business Centre, NSW 1670, Australia, , (02) 9888 5454, , \ Or email us ,
The Embroiderers' Guild NSW Inc	http://embroiderersguildnsw.org.au/	PO Box 109, CONCORD WEST NSW 2138, Phone: , 02 9743 2501 (International: +61 2 9743 2501), Fax: , 02 9743
The Horological Guild of Australasia (NSW Branch)	No website, no current group obvious	
The Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group of Australia		http://jmgawa.com.au/ is WA group
The Knitters' Guild NSW Inc	http://www.knittersguildnsw.org.au/	Knitters Guild NSW Inc., PO Box 460, Epping, NSW 2121, E-Mail , President - president@knittersguildnsw.org.au , Secretary - secretary@knittersguildnsw.org.au ,

Affiliated body	Website	Contact
The Metropolitan Coin Club of Sydney	http://www.numismatics.org.au/societies/ is overall website http://www.numismatics.org.au/societies/	Australian Numismatic Society NSW – NAA State Sponsor, Postal Address: PO Box 244, St Peters, NSW 2044, AUSTRALIA., Telephone: (02) 92234578, Email: RodSell@RodSell.com , Internet: www.The-ANS.com/ ,
National Space Society of Australia	http://www.nssa.com.au/	NSSA - GPO BOX 7048, Sydney NSW 2001, Australia, Phone (02) 91504553 http://www.nssa.com.au/contact-form/contact.php
The NSW Automotive Museum Association Inc		Does not appear to be active
Oral History Association of Australia (NSW)	http://www.oralhistorynsw.org.au/ may not be exact organisation http://www.oralhistoryaustralia.org.au/ may be overall coordinator	Prof. Paula Hamilton , President PO Box 261 Pennant Hills NSW 1715
Oriental Rug Society of NSW	http://www.rugsociety.org.au/	info@rugsociety.org.au . The Secretary, Oriental Rug Society of N.S.W. Inc, P.O. BOX 343, WOOLLAHRA N.S.W. 1350
Philatelic Association of NSW	http://www.philas.org.au/	Philas House, 17 Brisbane Street. Surry Hills NSW 9.30am to 3.30pm
The Phonograph Society of NSW Inc		Does not appear to be active
The Potters' Society of Australia		Does not appear to be active
Pymont Ultimo Historical Society		Pymont Historic Group is active and involved tl has contact details
The Quilters' Guild Inc	http://quiltersguildnsw.com/	The Quilters' Guild of NSW Inc seems very active Level 5, 276 Pitt St, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia, Tel: + 612 9283 3737, Fax: + 612 9283 3274, E-
The Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, NSW Chapter	http://www.rps.org/	Is GB website, no mention of Australia or NSW
The Silver Society of Australia Inc	http://www.silversociety.com.au/index.php?id=5	The Secretary,, Silver Society of Australia, PO Box 925, Northbridge NSW 1560 , Australia Alternatively either ring or fax The Secretary on the details below., Contact Numbers , Mobile: 0408 123 622, Intl: +61 408 123 622, email: info@silversociety.com.au
Sydney Space Association		Does not appear to be active

Affiliated body	Website	Contact
The Wedgwood Society of New South Wales Inc		PO Box 385, EASTWOOD NSW 2122, Australia
Woodwork Association of NSW	http://woodworkersnsw.org.au/	Secretary , David Palmer 02 9449 2602 secretary@woodworkersnsw.org.au May not be the exact organisation
Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc	http://www.griffinsociety.org/index.html *	info@griffinsociety.org
The Twentieth Century Heritage Society of NSW Inc	<input type="checkbox"/> http://www.twentieth.org.au/	davidrozenker@optusnet.com.au
These organisations seem to have joined this century		
NSW Chapter Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (NSW Chapter)	http://royalsoc.org.au/ is website mentioning this group, no action on either group apparent since 1999	
Royal Aeronautical Society, Australian Division, Sydney Branch Inc	https://www.raes.org.au/index.php/about/division/sydney-branch	sydneybranch@raes.org.au
Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society (Ku-ring-gai) Inc	http://www.adfas.org.au/societies/ku-ring-gai_index.html	kuringgai@adfas.org.au Chairman Dr Janet Reynolds h: (02) 9449 5738 Secretary Ms Lynette Davenport Ph: (02) 9438 4090
The Australian Ceramics Association	http://www.australianceramics.com/	http://www.australianceramics.com/contact/ has email form
This next-listed organisation seems to have been the last to become affiliated, about 2010		

Affiliated body	Website	Contact
Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (NSW Division)	* * https://www.atse.org.au/	info@atse.org.au
Not sure of status of this group		
ASHET, the Australian Society for History of Engineering and Technology, was formed in 2003	http://ashet.org.au/	Andrew Grant also http://ashet.org.au/contact/

Submissions to Inquiry

Submission 137b3: Various matters related to the status of affiliated groups

This submission addresses the following terms of reference:

c) opportunities to revitalise the structure, reach, and impact of museums and galleries, and their research and collecting priorities

d) access to the collections of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, the Australian Museum and any other state collections held in trust for the people of New South Wales, and programs that promote physical and online access

e) the sale of the Powerhouse Museum site in Ultimo and its proposed move to Parramatta, and whether there are alternative strategies to support museum development

Submission

This inquiry should recommend that developing and improving the museums' interaction with cultural groups should be a high priority. This can encompass assistance to the museum from members of these groups and assistance to the groups from the museum. This can be revenue neutral and provide benefit to all concerned and to society in general.

Supporting information

Taking the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences as an example, there have traditionally been interactions with 'affiliated groups'; these were featured in the Annual Reports until 2013-14. See the attached list. (the list on

Ms Lily Katakouzinou's job title is Head of Programs, and includes 'the determination and evaluation of the conceptual strategic framework and context for the development and delivery of public programs'. In a discussion on this matter on 11 May 2016 she indicated that plans were in hand to reinvigorate such relationships. It appears that the omission of these groups from the latest reports is brought about by pressure of work (see following paragraph), by the need to update the list and by staff reorganization.

The staff cuts to the museum, made necessary by funding reductions, appear to have been particularly severe in the specialist curatorial area. MAAS in 2011 had specialist curators for space, aviation, transport, science and technology, IT and light industry. These appear to have been replaced by a generalist head curator and another person two days per week.

This is grossly inadequate, and must be increased. This submission does not suggest the replacement of professionals by amateurs and volunteers. But demands for expert assistance are increasing, and it is suggested that in the present climate it is desirable to supplement these overworked resources.

Emails have been sent to all affiliated groups seeking and a total of 14 responses have been received in the short time available. From general observation, as well as these responses, I believe that there is strong evidence of the following trends:

1. Only a few affiliated groups have significant permanent interaction with the museum, though many members of affiliated groups are active as volunteers. The lace volunteers at MAAS Powerhouse are a great example of the potential for this type of activity.

2. There are significant examples of co-operation with other groups, ranging from the Star Wars displays of 2009 to the recent involvement of Japanese cultural groups in the recent school holiday activities. These demonstrate the value of the concept.

3. There is considerable interest in increasing interaction with the museum. Areas suggested include providing expert advice eg when people ask questions about various items, an extension of specialist curatorial volunteers, and providing assistance with themed displays. The museum could assist groups by providing access to relevant collections and making available such facilities as meeting venues at 'cost recovery' rates. One respondent stated that when commercial rates were charged for affiliated groups at Macquarie University from 2006 onwards there was a considerable decline in volunteer activity and major conferences, eg for the Australian Centre for Egyptology, moved to licensed clubs and similar venues.

4. Almost all of the affiliated groups have their headquarters and core membership centred more on the Sydney CBD than on Parramatta. There was general, but not universal, support for retaining the present site for the Museum of Arts and Sciences on the basis of its traditional heritage and general accessibility. The non-supporting comments came from two respondents were unconcerned either way.

Because of time constraints it is not possible to conduct a full survey with statistical analysis, so this submission must be seen as a personal view only.

Tom Lockley, committee member of AHSA, member of Pymont History group.

Submission 60: The Australian Ceramics Association

(Please note that there have always over this period been members of the Ceramic Society working as 'behind the scenes) volunteers.

Vicki Grima, Executive Officer
The Australian Ceramics Association

14.8.2016

The Australian Ceramics Association (TACA) is a national organisation representing the ceramics community throughout Australia, with over a thousand members. TACA publishes The Journal of Australian Ceramics, organises nationwide open studio events, supports ceramic artists in their studio practice and advocates for excellence in ceramics education and training.

TACA recognizes the valuable contribution of the Powerhouse Museum, in its present location, to the Australian ceramics community. It strongly recommends to the Committee that the Powerhouse Museum remains at its current location, and supports the proposal that a branch of the Powerhouse Museum be created at Parramatta which reflects local history and local interests.

TACA recommends that the Powerhouse Museum retains its current location for the following reasons:

- Its present location makes it accessible and an invaluable resource to students at Ultimo TAFE, UTS, Sydney TAFE, COFA, Sydney University, SCA and NAS.
- The excellent collection of historical and contemporary Australian ceramics at the Powerhouse Museum is a unique and significant resource to inspire and inform ceramic artists, ceramics teachers and students, the majority of whom are situated in Sydney's Eastern, Northern and Inner Western suburbs. The Powerhouse Museum's current location near Central Station and the CBD ensures that it is easily reached by public transport.
- Its current location makes it part of a Sydney City cultural, educational and creative hub along with AGNSW, Sydney Museum, MCA, and the Australian Museum and a diversity of galleries.
- As an international city and popular tourist destination, it is in our own interest to keep the Powerhouse Museum in close proximity to Sydney attractions such as the above, for accessibility by the time poor international and regional tourist.
- The proposed demolition of the Powerhouse Museum would be a serious loss to the living history of the City of Sydney.

The Australian Ceramics Association asks the Committee to take into account this submission and request that the Premier and Minister reconsider the proposed relocation of the Powerhouse Museum and that it remains at its current site.

Submission 30 Pymont History Group

Pymont History Group Submission to the Enquiry into Museums and Galleries.
Collated by Professor Donald Denoon, co-President.

The Pymont History Group is the successor to the Pymont Ultimo Historical Society, an affiliated body of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. Several members live in Jacksons Landing, a successful redevelopment of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, which integrates heritage with high-density residential development. (A scale model is held in MAAS.) We work to ensure that the social and economic traditions and history of our peninsula are preserved.

Apart from public talks, our main activity is the creation and organisation of an on-line archive. This archive collects and will make accessible a wide range of oral history, documentary, photographic and other visual records.

We seek to re-establish a vibrant relationship with our local museum, the iconic Powerhouse.

The catalogue of the Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences lists 474 objects related to Pymont, 3495 related to Ultimo, and 545 related to CSR. Even allowing for overlap, this is a magnificent resource for our endeavours.

We have a particular interest, therefore, in that collection and the building which houses it. Modern museums increasingly emphasise their educational role, and this is especially relevant to the young people of Ultimo and Pymont. The removal of the museum would sever the connections between the industrial and social exhibits on one hand and the people of inner-city Sydney for whom it has the most meaning. It would also inhibit people who use our archive from seeing the material, including the Powerhouse building, to which it refers.

We appeal for a reconsideration of the proposed destruction of the building and the removal of its contents. The outcome of that policy would deny the people of Ultimo and Pymont – and of the inner city as a whole – access to their own industrial and social heritage. It would also make an area of streetscape sameness, a desert bereft of heritage.

Further information:

David Anderson, *A Common Wealth: museums in the learning age*, London 1999.

Accessible online at www.culture.gov.uk, click on Publications, choose Archive 1999 and Museums and Galleries

Here is a succinct statement by the Museums Association of the United Kingdom, describing the linkage between education and museums in general.

The education agenda

Education has always been at the heart of museums, with many established specifically to provide educational opportunities for the public and to be centres for research and scholarship...

But in recent years, museums have begun to re-examine what education means for them and there has been a growing emphasis on the importance of all kinds of learning within museums.

This has partly been in response to government policy but has also grown out of recognition in the sector that the unique educational potential of museums was not being realised.

An influential report, first published in 1997 and revised in 1999 helped to set the agenda. 'A Common Wealth' by David Anderson, Director of Learning at the Victoria & Albert Museum made the case that museums could offer much better services to learners of all kinds, from family groups to pupils and students pursuing courses at all levels. Anderson argued that education needed more resources and needed a higher profile within museums.

Since its publication, many of the ideas in the Anderson report have become mainstream.... Museum decision-makers have moved on from regarding education as peripheral.

Submission 166: the Australian Society for History of Engineering and Technology Inc. (ASHET).

Dear Ms Thompson

I wish to make a submission to the Inquiry into Museums and Galleries in NSW. I am making this submission on behalf of members of the Australian Society for History of Engineering and Technology Inc. (ASHET).

I attach a copy of a letter previously sent from ASHET to the Premier which outlines the Society's position on the proposed relocation of the Powerhouse Museum from Ultimo to Parramatta.

Yours sincerely
Robert Renew
President, ASHET

A S H E T

**Australian Society for History of Engineering and Technology
Incorporated (ASHET)**

OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

This Society has expressed its alarm and deep concern to the Premier the Hon. Mike Baird MP about the NSW Government's plans to relocate the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta. The Society has also recorded its strong objections about the potential threat to the integrity of the former Ultimo Power House buildings if they are converted to some other use or indeed to their very survival, should the Government's plan proceed and the site be sold.

Since 1988, the Powerhouse Museum has played a vital part in public education about the role of engineering and technology in the development of New South Wales and Australia. The importance of the location of the Powerhouse Museum in the city cannot be overstated while the Society applauds the Government's plans to develop the cultural life of Western Sydney, it should not be at the expense of a wonderful existing facility that resonates within its urban environment, as it has done for 120 years.

The current location of the Powerhouse Museum capitalises on the synergies created by its proximity to the University of Technology Sydney and the Sydney Institute of Technology. This supports in spirit and in practice current policies to restore the focus on STEM subjects in the education sector.

The Ultimo Power House was built in 1897-99 to serve Sydney's first electric tramway system that, by the 1920s, was one of the largest in the world. Electric trams revolutionised the city of Sydney as no other form of public transportation has done and the Ultimo Power House was at the heart of this vast network. In these terms alone, the Ultimo Power House buildings are among Sydney's most historically significant. In 1994, the Institution of Engineers Australia recognised their heritage importance by placing an historic marker on the building fabric bearing the inscription, in part, "the first large power station in New South Wales." In this Society's view, the very real threat to the continued preservation of the Power House buildings represents a brutal assault on all the gains of the past 40 years to recognise and preserve Sydney's wonderful built heritage.

The decision by a previous state government in 1979 to preserve the Power House buildings and adaptively re-use them to display and interpret the collections of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences was inspired and far-sighted. One of the most significant aspects of the Museum's collections is engineering and steam technology. At the core of this collection is the 1785 Boulton & Watt beam engine, an object so pivotal in the history of industrialisation that it is beyond a dollar value. The painstaking reconstruction of this extraordinary technological treasure in the 1980s was part of a plan to relocate it in pride of place in the then new Powerhouse Museum. A key part of this process — and a 'world's first' — was the substantial investment in the creation of a permanent gallery of steam powered exhibits, a facility no doubt developed with many generations of visitors in mind.

It is fitting that the Boulton & Watt engine and its associated exhibitions are located in industrial buildings that owe their existence to the steam power that James Watt harnessed for its limitless applications, not least powering tramways. It would be a great and irretrievable loss to Sydney's heritage to destroy this association.

Rob Renew, President

[EMAIL: secretary.ashet@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.ashet@gmail.com)