

Campaign to Save the Powerhouse

Act now to prevent certain disaster!

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The Transport Hall will be shut on July 1 to begin its demolition.

I am a member of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia, (NSW) and was given access to a mailing list of aviation historians throughout the east coast and others interested in aviation over most of Australia. This mailing list would be about 120 people.

I set up an email survey which went online 4pm Friday 5 June and messages went out to the contacts as listed above and to another mailing list of about 40 general historians as well as my personal 'museum allies' mailing list. These were asked to forward the message on, which several did.

At 11 pm that night my internet speed dropped to 1.5 mps and other technical problems emerged so I cancelled the survey.

But in the short time it functioned there were 82 responses, 62 of which were brief messages of support, 5 words or less. 14 were to the effect of 'don't move the Catalina'.

I had promised anonymity in the survey, but among the names I knew were prominent aviation historians and aviation museum workers. Five OAM recipients replied. Senior members of AHSA NSW, Victoria and Queensland (including Presidents) replied. Three prominent members of the Australian Women's Pilots Association replied. Two pilots that were world champions in their sports aviation fields replied. Here are some of the comments:

1. I cannot imagine the Smithsonian Institute or British Science Museum contemplating being uprooted for the benefit of commercial interests. They do appreciate their respective heritage far more than our State Government seems to.
2. The move to Parramatta site I believe is a complete waste of money as the existing site is a proven strong magnet attraction for all Sydneysiders and visitors.
Historically it fits much better where it is
3. After nearly 50 years experience running a museum I have learned that if you scratch the surface of any proposal to close or relocate a museum you will find greed and probably corruption. For any museum relocation to work there must be a purpose-built facility ready to receive and display the collection before it is moved. This never happens. What will

happen is that the collection will be placed in storage. Artefacts will be damaged and lost. Then it will be discovered that there isn't enough money to build the new museum and the collection will be dispersed.
DON'T DO THIS DAMN FOOL THING!

4. I live in Melbourne and visit Sydney annually. I have on occasions squeezed in a visit to Powerhouse by public transport. It is a fabulous museum with fabulous exhibits that include an Apple I, one of a very few of its kind in the world — one of only 200 made. Stories like that can be multiplied.
But the key to public engagement is accessibility. Regular visitors to Sydney like me or international visitors will diminish significantly because of Paramatta's relative inaccessibility.
5. The most famous and most popular museums in the world are either in or adjacent to their city's centre. Moving Powerhouse Museum to the outskirts of Sydney will in effect mean that the State of New South Wales will lose a museum of international standing.
6. Waste of time and money and the building should be left alone as it - never moved - give the money to the MAAS to spend on fixing it up
7. Best of luck with your opposition to what sounds like an absolutely dreadful idea. As one from Western Australia, who has spent many happy years in the Power House Museum, both relatively recently during visits to Sydney and previously when we visited from our earlier homes in Canberra, I always found it fascinating and an excellent use of an old industrial building. The exhibits were well presented and easy to access - = a great use of a heritage building for the benefit of all. The NSW government decision smacks of corporate greed for space in inner Sydney. Let's hope they see sense before it is too late.
8. The only reason for moving the museum can be to sell the space to pay for more tunnels or. football stadiums. This is following the lead of RioTinto in destruction of our heritage.
It was always a bad move and shows the wish to get votes or business support is our Government's primary aim.
I hope it can be stopped.
9. I think it is criminal for the Powerhouse to be demolished and all the items stored and not being looked after properly.
There is far too much to lose and nothing gained by this wasteful lack of respect for all these precious items
Let's hope a miracle happens at the deadline fingers crossed?
Thank You for all your hard work on this important decision!
10. The \$1.1 billion allocated to move the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta and destroy another historic site is pure economic and social vandalism.

11. The Powerhouse Museum is an iconic building that deserves to be retained.

To relocate that collection to a new site anywhere will be a colossal waste of money that can and ought to be spent on projects that will benefit the people of NSW. Moving the collection to Parramatta is not of any benefit to most people.

It is obvious that greed is the background driver of this project. All the waste of money so that somebody can build yet another skyscraper. It is well-known that an overwhelming percentage of people are firmly of the opinion that this wasteful uprooting of important exhibits, for example, the NSW railways locomotive engines and rolling stock, the major aircraft, especially the Catalina, VH-ASA, the space exploration exhibits, etc., followed by the destruction of a sound building should not go ahead.

12. Comments = I think it is stupid to move the original museum. Just doesn't make sense, when I visit Sydney I like to go to attractions which are central to Sydney but not something that is a 45 minute train ride. If you want to move the Powerhouse Museum then why not go all the way and move the opera house as well, that's a good idea. (world famous pilot from Queensland)

13. The idea is a travesty. I was associated with the creation of the Museum and the destruction of it for partisan reasons is unconscionable. Many of the displays will not survive the storage which will be required and the proposed new location will never reach the people who are most interested in visiting it. (another person from Queensland)

14. This Museum has been the place of interest for Aviators and others for decades and to relocate it to an area further and less accessibility to many is not in the interest of the historic story of Sydney. Development is not always in the best interest of the Majority. (person from South Australia)

15. This so-called move is a mistake. It's been managed by people who know little about museums (backgrounds in galleries & events), to clear out the buildings in Ultimo and put a few of the items from Ultimo into Parramatta in a community hub and corporate events centre on a flood plain. The aspects of the museum that I most care about, that show industrial history and engineering achievements from Australia and elsewhere, and the intersection between industry and design, will be downplayed in the new museum. Moving the Boulton & Watt beam engine will doom it to never working again -- an incalculable loss -- just as one example of the history that will be lost by doing this. That doesn't even count the items that will be locked away in warehouses, or loaned out to regional museums that lack the climate control and security to

conserve them as well as they are conserved at the current Ultimo location.

16. The removal of the Powerhouse from Ultimo to provide housing for the wealthy will be a travesty and desecration of the history of Sydney. A museum or cultural centre in Parramatta named "The Powerhouse" will be meaningless. To demolish 2 historic buildings in Parramatta in order to display antique reminders of Sydney's past makes a nonsense of the unsubstantiated reasons for the move. The unsightly housing units recently completed in Darling Square are a testament to the current Government being too closely linked to property developers with no interest in aesthetics or a sense of community.
17. The Powerhouse Museum must stay in Ultimo. The community of Parramatta must be allowed to decide what kind of museum they have. We must have a fair and equitable museum plan for NSW.
18. Far from being a democratic government, the NSW State Government is autocratic and endeavours to hide their idiotic scheme that fails every analysis behind 'Cabinet in confidence'. The legislated mandate of the Museum will be disrespected as the current proposal is to use the Parramatta venue as a performance and temporary exhibition venue - a Carriageworks west. Worse the site of the new museum is flood prone and will entail the loss of two heritage sites: Willow Grove and St. George's Terrace. The politicians forcing this on the people of NSW think they are creating an internationally significant museum for Parramatta but it will be a national embarrassment and a huge waste of money that could otherwise be put to better use.

And just as I finished this report I checked my emails, to find that more are coming in continually: here are those since 10 40 today, both from newcomers to the protests

- : Re the PHM I disagree with the proposition of moving it away from the Sydney CBD...clearly a political exercise to please those living in the Western suburbs (who cd easily catch a train into town to visit the PWM and other venues eg Art gallery) and/or to sell the PHM site (for \$\$\$\$) and lose that public asset to a commercial enterprise (likely "Foreign-owned" - the usual pathetic Australian politician / journalist / financial bizoids mantra.... My question, never answered : Why can't Australia get up and do something by themselves for once ? Also, the new proposed building is an eyesore... any one could do better. What would you like me to do to assist? (aviation history enthusiast, retired engineer)
- I believe that the Powerhouse Museum has to be preserved as a valuable part of the great history of Australia to pass it on to future generations.

The move in my view is political and monetary motivated, and I agree that has to stop. It is not cultural and financially sound, it is a very bad idea. Please let me know if you need help with this matter, I'm ready to help. (AHSA member,)

I do hope the Premier / Arts Minister does not underestimate the resistance she will face over this matter in the next few weeks. This is the time for her to make not a backflip but a considered recognition of reality.

Tom Lockley, 10 52 on 7 July 2020.

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Australia's major museum of arts and sciences in Sydney's most evocative heritage building. For more information

<https://powerhousemuseumalliance.com/> See also: <http://maasbusinesscase.com/>
<http://lockoweb.com/phm/>

Facebook pages <https://www.facebook.com/savethepowerhouse/>
<https://www.facebook.com/savethepowerhouse/>