

This is the speech delivered by Mr Peter Lundy, President of the Friends of the Albert Hall Inc on the occasion of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Hall.

I WELCOME THE CHIEF MINISTER, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND FRIENDS OF THE ALBERT HALL AND THANK THEM ALL FOR THEIR SUPPORT. THEY ARE, I BELIEVE, ALL CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF OUR BELOVED ALBERT HALL.

I ESPECIALLY THANK THE PARTICIPATING GROUPS IN THIS IMPORTANT EVENT THAT IS BEING HELD TODAY. I THANK THE SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS – ACT GOVERNMENT, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP, ACTEW AGL, ABC, LABOUR CLUB GROUP, GINGER CATERING, ART DIRECTION CREATIVE, ON Q CONFERENCE SUPPORT, MLAKAR SIGNS, AND MANNING CARK HOUSE.

I ALSO THANK THE MANY PARTICIPATING GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS WHO HAVE FREELY GIVEN OF THEIR TIME AND TALENTS TO MAKE THIS 80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION A SUCCESS, AND TO OUR SUPPORTERS, DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS, WITHOUT WHOM THESE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE.

A SPECIAL THANKS GOES TO THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA, ACT.

I BELIEVE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR A COMMUNITY TO PRESERVE ITS HERITAGE BUILDINGS AND CONTINUE THEIR HISTORIC USES AND VALUES.

THERE IS, I BELIEVE, A NEW AWARENESS IN THE CANBERRA COMMUNITY. THIS AWARENESS OVER THE YEARS HAS MANIFESTED ITSELF BY HONEST CITIZENS VOICING CONCERNS ABOUT THE ARBITRARY ACTIONS OF CERTAIN AUTHORITIES.

I BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A GROUND SWELL OF PUBLIC OPINION AGAINST THOSE WHO WOULD WISH TO OPPRESS THE CRIES OF DISSENT BY THE COMMUNITY. BY THIS I MEAN WE HAVE A BODY WHICH BELIEVES THAT IT HAS A MANDATE TO MAKE PROPOSALS CONCERNING THE DEFILEMENT OF BUILDINGS, THE CLOSING OF PUBLIC ROADS AND THE USE TO WHICH CERTAIN LANDS MAY BE PUT.

THE NCA HAS A BROAD RANGE OF POWERS AND OBJECTIVES THAT WHEN EXERCISED DO NOT ALWAYS CONFORM TO THE GENERAL RULES OF NATURAL JUSTICE AND OVER THE LAST YEARS HAVE MERELY REFLECTED THE WHIMS OVER THEIR POLITICAL MASTERS

AND THE GREED OF LAND DEVELOPERS. IT IS PLEASING TO NOTE THAT THE HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER, THE HON BOB DEBUS, HAS GIVEN THE PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE NCA NEW TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN INVESTIGATION THAT HE SAYS SHOULD END THE BLAME GAME THAT HAS AFFECTED PLANNING FOR CANBERRA'S FUTURE. WE LOOK FORWARD TO BETTER PROVISIONS FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE PLANNING PROCESSES.

THIS COMMUNITY CONCERN LED TO THE FORMATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE ALBERT HALL AND WITH THE MARVELLOUS SUPPORT OF ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE YARRALUMLA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION, WALTER BURLEY GRIFFIN SOCIETY, MONARO FOLK SOCIETY AND THE EMBROIDERERS' GUILD, SOME 3364 MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY SIGNED A PETITION REQUESTING THE WITHDRAWAL OF DA53 THE OFFENSIVE NCA DEVELOPMENT PLAN. SINCE THE PUBLIC MEETING OF OVER 300 HELD IN THIS HALL THE NCA HAS TWICE REVISED THE PLAN, BUT IT HAS NOT WITHDRAWN IT.

INSTEAD THE NCA HAS WRITTEN TO THOSE PEOPLE WHO REGISTERED THEIR INTEREST IN ATTENDING THE PROPOSED SERIES OF WORKSHOPS. THESE WORKSHOPS HAVE BEEN POSTPONED TO THE SECOND HALF OF 2008. NOTWITHSTANDING THE COMMUNITY CONCERN IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE WORKSHOPS WILL BE HELD AFTER THE COMPLETION OF "RELEVANT STUDIES". I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS PRACTICE OF THE NCA IS PROPER CONSULTATION.

THE FRIENDS OF THE ALBERT HALL CALL ON THE MINISTER TO DIRECT THE NCA TO STOP WORK ON DA53 AND WITHDRAW IT.

THE FRIENDS OF ALBERT HALL HAVE A NUMBER OF MAJOR CONCERNS ABOUT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE ALBERT HALL AND ARE PLEASSED TO NOTE THAT THE ACT GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO TAKE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF ALBERT HALL. WORK HAS ALREADY STARTED.

IT IS ALSO PLEASING TO NOTE THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS MADE AVAILABLE \$500,000 TOWARDS THE COST OF RESTORING THE ALBERT HALL AND IT WILL ASSESS THE ALBERT HALL FOR INCLUSION ON THE NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST.

WE STRONGLY COMMEND THE ACT GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO COMPLETE THE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PLAN AND THE NEED FOR THE ACT GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT PUBLIC INPUT INTO THE PLAN.

A CLASSIC AND INNOVATIVE APPROACH THAT WAS IMPLEMENTED BY THE STANHOPE GOVERNMENT IS THE CREATION OF THE CANBERRA GLASSWORKS.

THIS IS BUT ONE OF A NUMBER OF OPTIONS THAT COULD BE USED.

CANBERRA IS AN UNIQUE AND MODERN CITY AND IN AN AGE WHERE IT IS VOGUE TO RESPOND TO THE WISHES OF DEVELOPERS WHO WISH TO REDEVELOP IMPORTANT HISTORICAL BUILDINGS – IT IS IN MY VIEW THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CONCERNED CITIZENS TO VOICE THEIR CONCERNS.

THE AWARENESS ABOUT WHICH I SPOKE OF EARLIER IS TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE TO THE WELL BEING OF OUR HERITAGE IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL.

FRIENDS OF THE ALBERT HALL WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN PROGRESS WITHOUT ANY FURTHER DELAY.

THE FRIENDS OF THE ALBERT HALL WOULD LIKE TO WORK WITH THE ACT GOVERNMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN OF MANAGEMENT. SUCH A COOPERATIVE APPROACH WOULD ENSURE THAT THERE WAS AN INPUT FROM ALL THOSE INTERESTED IN USING THE ALBERT HALL.

PLEASE ENJOY THE DAY.

ON A FINAL NOTE I WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND AND THANK THE EFFORT THAT DI JOHNSTONE AND HER COMMITTEE HAS PUT INTO THE SAVING OF THE ALBERT HALL.

Peter Lundy, President

Friends of Albert Hall

March 10, 2008