

**3 February, 2024**

**CRACK IN PHM CHIMNEY DATES BACK TO 1905**

Save the Powerhouse Museum [savethepowerhouse@gmail.com](mailto:savethepowerhouse@gmail.com)

Hi everyone,

"That's the standard technique of privatization: defund, make sure things don't work, people get angry, you hand it over to private capital." (Noam Chomsky)

After over a decade of total neglect of the Powerhouse Museum buildings, the Arts Minister John Graham disingenuously discovers that "the building had significant problems that must be addressed without delay, including leaks from the roof and large cracks in several walls. These leaks had resulted in mould and damp, and put the collection at risk... To put it bluntly, the current Ultimo building is not up to the standard of a world-class museum." (read SMH of February 1 <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/art-and-design/unions-mobilise-to-protest-against-powerhouse-closure-20240122-p5ez5u.html> )

This is supported by a series of "supplied" (by whom?) photos to the media (read News.com of February 1 <https://www.news.com.au/national/nsw-act/politics/angry-workers-demand-answers-from-government-as-powerhouse-museum-prepares-to-shut-for-renovations/news-story/dacdf105ae25b54d1be489fa9990c734>)

These photos show a few minor construction issues, which could easily and rapidly be repaired by trades people, as part of a normal maintenance routine, without closing the museum or moving its exhibits.

Two of them (out of four) caught the attention of former PHM Deputy Director Jennifer Sanders. She says "The crack in the base of the Boiler Hall chimney is actually a single thermal expansion fracture. The chimney was built in 1904 and, like all chimneys, when first fired in 1905, the chimney fractured. These are firing cracks which have been there for nigh on 120 years. Cracks like these are an original feature of the historic Ultimo Power House and were preserved by the architect, Lionel Glendenning, as part of the Sulman Award winning adaptive reuse of the buildings to become the Powerhouse Museum - a museum which celebrates our industrial and technological history."

But, of course, the Minister never accepted the assistance offered by the PMA experts, including the Powerhouse Museum Architect, Lionel Glendenning.

Save agrees with Sanders that "The advice to the Minister is ignorant and incorrect." Or is it a deliberate piece of disinformation aimed at desperately justifying the unnecessary closure of the Museum on Monday February 5?

Whichever it is, it gives us an insight into the unethical tactics the MAAS

Management/Create NSW/Infrastructure NSW team is likely to use during the coming set of fake consultations.

These bureaucrats were appointed by the previous Coalition Government, worked for years to devise various plans to dismantle the Museum but, inexplicably, retained their functions under the Minns Labor Government.

A long-term follower of Save's Facebook page ironically commented: 'A leak in the roof makes the building in Ultimo unsuitable, and yet constructing a new building (in Parramatta) on a flooding riverbank is somehow the definition of suitability?'

This absurd state of public affairs can be taken with a dash of humor until one realises that \$2 billion of public resources are wasted, one of the best Applied Sciences and Arts Museum in the world destroyed, and the NSW Arts budget lumbered with large recurring operational costs for decades.

You can still pay a last (free of charge) visit to the Museum until tomorrow Sunday February 4, 5pm and say goodbye to Leo Schofield's short-lived "1,001 Remarkable Objects" exhibition, the Steam revolution, the Air and Space and Experimentation permanent

exhibitions and to the other marvels of the Museum. They are all to be “decanted”, dispersed and exiled forever.

The fight will continue, stronger than ever.

Follow our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/savethepowerhouse/> , joint our mailing list by emailing to [savethepowerhouse@gmail.com](mailto:savethepowerhouse@gmail.com) and sign our joint petition <https://chnng.it/HWYWPscJBD>

*Save the Powerhouse*

