

## **Australia's National Cultural Policy**

### **Submission**

**5<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

It is pleasing to see Australia is at the forefront of new programmes that are quickly taken up or followed by other countries, for example restrictions on the advertising of tobacco, and imposing an age limit for accessing social media.

My name is Rod Julian. I have researched Australia's complex history since European settlement, and have had several feature articles published in various magazines.

### **Proposed Inclusion in the new National Cultural Policy**

I note that Tony Burke MP has noted in his Minister's message: *Creative Australia is dedicated to Australian stories and Australian creativity in all its forms.*

I have delved deeply in the personal lives of early settlers who came here in the 1800's and 1900's, making a new life for themselves. This originated from an interest in my own family history, and resulted in one published book and one booklet being lodged into the National Library of Australia's Legal Deposit programme. This ensures the histories and personal stories are on file for future generations. With my research, I soon discovered that our culture changes drastically with time, and with the passing of just one generation there can be a pronounced shift in our culture.

I also discovered that learning information about Australian citizens in the past is extremely difficult and time consuming, but very rewarding, too. (Near impossible, too, if not for the Australian National Library Trove website) It is inspiring to learn how many Australians overcame enormous difficulties to make a life for themselves, and also sometimes made serious contributions to our society. For one example, I discovered that one family ancestor planted the pine trees behind the beach at South West Rocks, beautifying the area, which are now 100 years old and certainly impress anyone visiting for the first time.

How beneficial would it be, if a short biography of Australians could be lodged at the Australian National Library, on their passing? Their lives could be described when still fresh in the memory. It shows how we respect what they have achieved, and what they have contributed to this country. Every person contributes in some way. Delving into the lives of others gives us a fresh exposure to their culture, and what aspects of culture were important to them.

If the Life Story could be assembled by family members, and submitted via portal, the only cost to the Government would be that of filing. The service would be strictly optional, for those interested.

In the ACT, there is a service run by volunteers called Life Stories. This service interviews citizens in palliative care and makes a document of their life which is then given to the family for safekeeping. To prevent the knowledge in the files being lost with the passing of time, it would be preferable if the Life Stories were stored in one location, and preferably in both digital and printed form.

Reference: (<https://www.pallcareact.org.au/life-stories/>)

