



Peg Putt MP

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> Denison division



"Jessica Wilson"
<jessica.wilson@parliament
.tas.gov.au>

09/05/2008 05:00 PM

To <tas.redistribution@aec.gov.au>

cc

bcc

Subject Denison division

Hello,

Please find attached a letter from Peg Putt MP regarding the renaming of the Denison division.

Kind regards,

Jessica

Jessica Wilson
Executive Assistant to Peg Putt MP
Tasmanian Greens

Parliament House
Hobart TAS 7000
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9 May 08 - AEC Marie Nielson - Denison renaming.doc

> Denison division

Peg Putt MP
Greens Opposition
Leader
Member for Denison

Friday, 9 May 2008

Redistribution Committee for Tasmania
2nd Floor, AMP Building
86 Collins St
HOBART TAS 7000
Email: tas.redistribution@aec.gov.au

Attention: Marie Nielson

Dear Ms Nielson,

I write as an elected representative for the seat of Denison to support calls for the Division to be renamed 'Inglis-Clark' in recognition of the outstanding contribution Andrew Inglis-Clark made to democratic processes in Tasmania, and to the formation and content of Australia's Constitution last century.

While I am very proud to have represented the electorate under the name of Denison for the past fifteen years, it is clear in terms of the historical record that Governor William Denison did not make anywhere near the same contribution to Tasmania as Andrew Inglis-Clark and the time has come to make formal amends.

Australian Electoral Commission guidelines state that Divisions '*should be named after deceased Australians who have rendered outstanding service to their country*'. With respect, Governor Denison made only the most fleeting contribution during his eight year tenure in Tasmania, and it was not all positive. He is most notable for (a year after his arrival) urging Britain to establish an Upper House in Tasmania, to be overseen by the State's landed gentry. Governor Denison also backed the continued transportation of convicts, in defiance of growing local concern.

The Australian Dictionary of Biography online closes its chapter on Denison with the revealing statement, "*As a skilled engineer he turned readily to practical subjects and breathed fresh life into the scientific societies in Hobart and Sydney. But he remained unversed in philosophy and other humane disciplines that might have conditioned his severe judgments, quick temper and sense of personal superiority. An Anglican by faith, he was also a fervent fundamentalist to whom Darwinism was anathema. At a time when the spirit of Socrates was animating the discussions of accepted teaching and practices, Denison's limited vision and rigid mind made him insensitive to 'winds of change'.*"

In short, Governor Denison manoeuvred against those enlightened and democratic principles which later guided Andrew Inglis-Clark in his service to Tasmania.

Andrew Inglis-Clark is best remembered for co-founding Tasmania's renowned Hare Clark voting system, widely regarded as a superior electoral instrument for furthering democratic principles. For this alone, he deserves our enduring gratitude.

It is now widely accepted that Andrew Inglis-Clark ensured Tasmania played a central role in the establishment of Australia's Constitution. He is credited with writing eighty-six of the clauses contained in the final document. Unlike Governor Denison, Inglis-Clark was driven by a conviction that we are all equal before the law, regardless of birth, race, gender, religion or wealth.

For these reasons, I strongly support the renaming of the Division of Denison in honour of Andrew Inglis-Clark.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peg Putt'.

Peg Putt MP
Leader of the Tasmanian Greens
Member for Denison