



Brian Matters

Dear Minister,

My name is Brian Matters; I am 55 years of age and live in Mundaring.

I, along with my 3 daughters and my partner, are the proud and lucky lease holders of one of the oldest established shacks in Grey. My reason for this letter is to, let it be known the facts, culture, history, and Australian heritage involved with the "shacks" at Grey. My first encounter with the shack way of life ( which I will never forget) was when I was very young 6 or 7, my parents took me to a shack at Yatala Harbour just south of Port Augusta in S.A.

On arrival we were met with the odour of burning kerosene, the shack was made from pine off cuts from the Wirrabara pine forest Saw mill and lined with hessian and kerosene lamps in every room. I was soon at the beach exploring with other kids id never met before.

It was scary when time to go to bed, dark and dingy rooms that you could see the stars through the gaps in the planks. But up early to learn how to catch crabs with a dab net or a broom handle with a nail in the end, then back for breakfast with fresh crabs and fish fresh from the beach.

These memories and the people will always be part of my life and I hope my children and theirs can have the same lasting experiences. The people are still life long friends, and still have the same location, handed down and now free hold.

About three years ago the original shack still stood, but now it has gone, with a new transportable in its place, due to Gov and health requirements (which were never a problem for the previous 70 yrs or so)

The things that haven't changed are the life style, the comradeship, the culture, the heritage and last but not least the Australian way.

It saddens me that immigrants can come to this country with there cultures and religions and we accept these but when it comes to

something Australian we are all too willing to let it go. I can see the plight of our Indigenous people.

Some friends of mine and another couple came to stay for a long weekend and the young ones were asking their mother where their electronic gadgets were, I think they used it for about 20 minutes for the whole weekend, they just bonded with everyone and played with people they had never met before and still keep in contact with them after 10 yrs.

I work away 3 on 1 off and the amount of people up here that want to come too, or use my shack is out of control, now the word has spread, but I would rather see it used and enjoyed than sit empty during my time away. These people also fly in and out but they want to go there instead of flying back to Qld , Vic, NSW even Tasmania. I have read the proposal from the Grey Com and I think this can work well for all, to make it a safer, and more accessible place for all .

PS

I just read my daughters letter to you, and she mentioned “It brings a tear to her eye and a lump in her throat when she thinks we are going to lose such a part of our lives” and it does to me as well.

Yours Faithfully  
Brian Matters