NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND CULTURE

Room 5014
June 20, 1988

Mr Carl Doring
5 The Crescent
Chatswood NSW 2067
Australia

Dear Mr Doring:

Late last fall Peter Freeman was in the city discussing with various American historical organizations the problem of preserving the Eveleigh Railway Workshops in Sydney. Although I have not seen the full detailed account of the shops, I certainly have formed a reasonably solid image of them on the basis of your description and the photographs.

If it would be of any help in the campaign to convince the NSW Government of the historical value of the shop complex, I would observe that such turn-of-the-century railway shops, with essentially original equipment intact, are now a great rarity world wide. I can speak with authority only for the U.S., of course, but can state that in this country there is nothing comparable to Eveleigh with a single exception, and that not really a comparable one in terms of scale. This is the repair shop of the East Broad Top RR at Orbisonia, Pennsylvania, a facility of the 1880s which remains largely intact and with original machinery in operable (and to some extent, operated) condition. As noted, this facility is on a much smaller scale than Eveleigh so in a sense doesn't really count as an instance of such a site formally preserved. Furthermore, regrettably, Orbisonia is not formally preserved or protected, so counts even less leaving Eveleigh as, it would appear, an extremely rare example of such a shop complex if not actually unique.

In view of the broad significance of the railway in the development of world civilization, and the concomitant vital role of the repair shop in the operation of any sizable railway system, it would appear essential to protect the Eveleigh facility if an accurate picture is to be preserved of the railway's place in our culture. I hope that it will be possible to do so.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely,

Robert M. Vogel
Curator
Division of Engineering &
Industry