

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

Group: 2

Program: 2.1

Question No. SBE14/005

Senator Macdonald asked the following question at the hearing on 20 November 2014:

CHAIR: Senator Brandis, in relation to that last one you spoke about, there was a very good film made called Beneath Hill 60 and a lot of it was shot in Townsville. It celebrated the work that underground miners did in tunnelling under the trenches in the First World War, which is an element that was not well known until then. Perhaps you could take this on notice. That film was released publicly a few years ago, and I am not sure that it did terribly well at the box office. I am wondering if there is any way that that could be incorporated into the collection of Anzac material.

Senator Brandis: That is a good thought, Senator Macdonald. That is really, I think, more of a matter for Senator Ronaldson.

CHAIR: Okay.

Senator Brandis: We run this arts program, but that is about the creation of new work specifically to commemorate the Anzac Centenary. As to the exhibition of existing or older works, I think that is a judgement made by those who have the overall administration of the Anzac Centenary programs.

CHAIR: I wonder if I could ask the department to pass on my query to Senator Ronaldson's department.

Ms Basser: We would be very happy to.

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

As requested, the Ministry for the Arts passed this query to Senator the Hon Michael Ronaldson's department, the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs consulted the Australian War Memorial, and provided the following information to assist the Chair of the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee.

The Australian War Memorial collects films and film footage which have been created to record the real experiences of Australians in war rather than fictional interpretations of them. This film may be better suited to the National Film and Sound Archive's collection which is more broadly-based in collecting examples of Australian film-making and popular culture in film.

The Memorial's new First World War galleries include objects associated with Australian mining operations on the Western Front. The objects include a coloured chart which shows the saps leading towards German positions on Hill 60; a plaque from the Australian Tunnelling Company Memorial at Hill 60; a straw shoe used by German tunnellers to minimise noise; an

electric lamp used by Germans and the firing switch used to detonate the mines at Hill 60. This switch was used by Captain Oliver Holmes Woodward, commander of No. 2 section of the 1st Tunnelling Company to detonate two of the 19 huge explosions which signalled the opening of the battle of Messines on 7 June 1917.

The Memorial has a Summer Screening program during the summer holidays which shows feature films for our audiences in themes relevant to the Memorial's purposes. The Memorial would be happy to consider showing *Beneath Hill 60* in that series at a time in the future.