

TONY WINDSOR B.Ec. MP
 INDEPENDENT
 FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND



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28th January 2005

PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Committee Secretary
 Senate Finance & Public Administrative Committee
 Department of Senate
 Parliament House
 Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir

RE Grace Munro Centre Bundarra – NSW

Background

The Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra is an aged care facility which has been funded through a number of sources but strongly led by the Uralla Shire Council and local community leaders.

Council Loan Funds	\$500,000
Minister for Ageing Grant	140,000
Regional Solutions Grant	100,000
Dept of Ageing, Disability & Home Care	34,060
Dept of Veterans' Affairs	33,000
Inverell District Legacy	10,000
Lions Club International	55,000
Community Fundraising	39,164

	\$911,224

I believe that the series of events leading to and following the Opening of the Grace Munro Aged Care Centre at Bundarra concur with the Senate Committee's Terms of Reference 1(L) and gets to the heart of our representational process and privileges of the Member.

- The documents enclosed particularly those presented in the form of a Statutory Declaration by the General Manager of Uralla Shire Council, Robert Fulcher, demonstrate the political pressure and bullying by Senator Sandy Macdonald to obtain political advantage.
 - The press clippings surrounding the opening and subsequent events clearly shows the deliberate attempt by Senator Macdonald to coerce and threaten a Council into removing the right of the duly elected Member for communicate with his constituents.
 - Senator Sandy Macdonald also misled the public and the press on a number of occasions.
1. **10 November 2005** Senator Macdonald's email asking that Mr Windsor's name be deleted from the plaque stating as a reason to the Inverell Times (December 17 2005) that he was under a lot of pressure at the time as Mr Windsor had named him in Parliament as part of an inducement offer not to stand at the next election.

Senator Macdonald also cited the same reason in The Australian (December 16 2005).

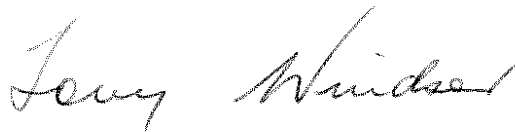
The question that needs to be asked is what was Senator Macdonald annoyed about on November 10 if he wasn't named until November 17?

If he had no knowledge of the "inducement issue" prior to his name being raised in Parliament on November 17, why was he so "upset" on November 10?

2. Senator Macdonald's misrepresentation of the Government's position by stating that it was the Government's position that the Local Member should not be part of an official function within his own Electorate. This is another example of a political condition being placed on a public body for political advantage.

I believe the behaviour of Senator Macdonald deserves closer scrutiny. His conduct is in stark contrast to the professional courtesies and advice extended to myself as the local member and Uralla Shire Council by the current Minister for Ageing, The Hon Julie Bishop, the former Minister the Hon Kevin Andrews, the former Minister for Regional Services, The Hon Wilson Tuckey and their Departmental staff who had carriage of funding arrangements. To them I extend a thank you on behalf of the people of Bundarra and Uralla Shire Council.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Windsor".

Tony Windsor MP
Member for New England

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Freedom of Information uncovers the truth about the Grace Munro opening

Council emails reveal political interference

Exclusive by **Liz Tickner**

THE Nationals' NSW Senator Sandy Macdonald ordered the Uralla Shire Council to delete independent Member for New England Tony Windsor's name from the plaque on the Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra.

Documents obtained by The Inverell Times under Freedom of Information laws reveal that the Uralla Shire Council had submitted the suggested wording for the plaque - which included Mr Windsor's name - to Senator Macdonald's office for approval on November 10.

But an email from Senator Macdonald's Tamworth office to the council one hour later stated: "The Senator has asked if these changes would be made."

"He has also deleted the Tony Windsor bit, sorry."

It was signed by Senator Macdonald's electorate officer.

The Grace Munro Centre was officially opened on December 4 by Senator Mac-

donald.

The plaque - which was paid for by the Shire of Uralla - did not include Mr Windsor's name.

Senator Macdonald told The Inverell Times on Friday he regretted what he had done.

But he said he believed he was entitled to have his name on the plaque, and Mr Windsor was not, because it was "protocol."

"I'd been asked to open it on behalf of the Government, I thought it was protocol," Senator Macdonald said.

"But yes, I acted in the heat of the moment, and I regret it," he said.

Senator Macdonald said he wanted to put the whole affair behind him.

He said he was keen to work with Mr Windsor in bringing about the best outcomes for the people of New England.

Tensions between the two politicians had been simmering after Mr Windsor named Senator Macdonald and the Leader of The Nationals, John Anderson, as being behind an offer of a diplomatic posting in

exchange for him not running in the last Federal election.

They were subsequently cleared by an Australian Federal Police investigation.

Political funding under the Regional Partnerships and Sustainable Regions programs is, however, now the subject of a Senate inquiry.

Senator Macdonald's interference over the opening of the Grace Munro Centre could be referred to the inquiry.

Mr Windsor said the documents revealed under FOI spoke for themselves. He declined to comment further.

State Independent Member for the Northern Tablelands, Richard Forbay, said he was "very disappointed and saddened" by the incident.

A spokesman for Mr Anderson said Mr Anderson "supported Senator Macdonald 100 per cent as the Government's representative."

Uralla Shire Council general manager Robert Fulcher said the council had fulfilled its obligations under the FOI Act and he did not wish to comment further.

Why Tony Windsor's name was not on the Grace Munro plaque

GRACE MUNRO CENTRE

THE OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY FOR THIS AGED CARE FACILITY WAS CARRIED OUT ON

SATURDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2004

BY SENATOR SANDY MACDONALD SENATOR FOR NSW AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE NATIONALS IN THE SENATE

AND COUNCILLOR RON FILMER, MAYOR, URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL

THE plaque, pictured left, is proudly attached to the side of the recently opened Grace Munro Centre aged care facility at Bundarra.

It was unveiled by The Nationals' NSW Senator Sandy Macdonald earlier this month but the political intrigue over the wording on the plaque has only just been revealed.

Uralla Shire Council paid for the plaque but it was Senator Macdonald who dictated to the council what wording was to go on it.

He ordered that the name of the independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor, be deleted. And that's exactly what happened.

The FOI documents, Uralla's plans for a fourth plaque, photos, pages 3; social photos page 4.

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Confidential Uralla Shire files reveal political interference over Grace Munro opening

Uralla Shire's email to Senator Sandy Macdonald

From: Barbara Urbonas
 Sent: Wednesday, 10 November 2004 11:25 AM
 To: 'senator.sandy.macdonald@aph.gov.au'
 Subject: GMC Plaque
 Importance: High

Dear Senator Macdonald

Please review the wording we have drafted for this plaque and advise if OK or any amendments.

Regards
 Barbara Urbonas
 Personal Assistant to General Manager

Grace Munro Centre

The official opening ceremony for this aged care facility was carried out on Saturday, December 4, 2004 by Senator Sandy Macdonald National Party Senator for NSW in the company of Mr Tony Windsor, MP, Member for New England and Councillor Ron Filmer, Mayor, Uralla Shire Council.

... and the response from the Senator's office

From: Macdonald, Sandy (Senator) [Senator.Sandy.Macdonald@aph.gov.au]
 Sent: Wednesday, 10 November 2004 12:15 PM
 To: Barbara Urbonas
 Subject: RE: GMC Plaque

Hi Barbara

Thank you for sent the draft copy of wording for plaque.

The Senator has asked if these changes would be made. He has also deleted the Tony Windsor bit, sorry (see attached)

Many thanks

Di

Dianne Korshaw
 Electorate Officer

Grace Munro Centre

The official opening ceremony for this aged care facility was carried out on Saturday, December 4, 2004 by Senator Sandy Macdonald, Senator for NSW and Deputy Leader of the Nationals in the Senate and Councillor Ron Filmer, Mayor, Uralla Shire Council.

Will four plaques be enough ?

By Liz Tickner

IT'S a case where three plaques on a building are still not enough. With Senator Macdonald having told the Uralla Shire Council that he didn't want Mr Windsor's name next to his on the official opening plaque for the Grace Munro Centre, it can now be revealed that there are plans afoot for a fourth plaque.

Uralla Shire Council general manager Robert Fulcher told The Inverell Times on Friday that it will be ordered and erected in the New Year.

Mr Fulcher said the plaque would acknowledge the contribution made by Mr Windsor and

the State Independent Member for the Northern Tablelands, Richard Torbay, in securing the building for the aged care facility and getting the project up and running.

But Mr Windsor and Mr Torbay said that although they were touched by the Shire Council's gesture, they did not expect another plaque to be erected on their behalf.

They said they appreciate Uralla's attempt to avoid any further political embarrassment over the opening of the Grace Munro Centre, but a fourth plaque was not necessary.

"I greatly appreciated the gesture, but at the end of the day plaques don't mean a lot to me,"

Mr Windsor said.

"I'd prefer they spent the money on buying another piece of furniture, a bed or a chair, than another piece of metal out the front," he said.

Mr Torbay said he would be happy to forfeit having his name on the fourth plaque, in lieu of recognition for the people of Bundarra who never gave up hope in seeing their dream of an aged care facility come to fruition.

"The people of Bundarra are the real champions," Mr Torbay said.

"They drove this project long before the politicians, any of us, got involved," he said.

How it was on the day



OPENING: SENATOR Sandy Macdonald unveils the controversial plaque at the Grace Munro Centre.

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Shires Association says Prime Minister should intervene

Inquiry into plaque affair

By Liz Tickner

THE Nationals' Senator Sandy Macdonald is to be investigated by a Senate Inquiry for ordering the Uralla Shire Council to delete Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor's name from a plaque on the Grace Munro Centre.

And, in another move involving the plaque affair, Shires Association of NSW president Phyllis Miller said Prime Minister John Howard should intervene and pull Senator Macdonald into line.

Democrats leader Senator Lyn Ellison

said she would refer the matter to the Senate inquiry, branding Senator Macdonald's actions as "very serious."

Federal Opposition Regional Services spokesman Kelvin Thomson said Senator Macdonald had behaved "completely inappropriately" and deserved to be investigated by the inquiry.

Mr Thomson said one of the terms of reference allowed for an investigation into: "the constitutionality, legality and propriety whereby any members of either House of Parliament are... coerced or threatened in an effort to prevent them from freely communicating with their constituents."

"Senator Macdonald has said he regrets the incident but the only thing he is sorry about is getting caught out," he said.

Greens leader Senator Bob Brown said it was "very sad" that the opening of an aged care facility in regional Australia had become embroiled in politics.

Mrs Miller said Senator Macdonald's behaviour was "most inappropriate" and the opening of the facility should have been a bipartisan occasion.

She believed Mr Howard would take a dim view of Senator Macdonald's actions.

"It's certainly a job for the PM," she said.

■ MORE, PAGE 5

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An angel's Christmas secret



INVERELL'S ANGELS: PHOEBE Jane whispers Christmas messages to Chelsea Renshaw while Brooke Feston looks on during the Platypus Club Long Day Care and Pre-School Centre's Christmas pageant last Tuesday. The children performed the traditional Christmas story with an Australian point of view. "Crikey" was all that Mary could say, when the angel told her that she would give birth to the baby Jesus and there were also liberal scatterings of the word "mate".

■ MORE CHRISTMAS PHOTOS, PAGES 4, 9.
WORDS AND PHOTO: LOUISA BUTLER

The Grace Munro Affair

Fall-out continues for beleaguered Senator

from page 1

THE so-called 'plaque-gate' affair stemmed from a Freedom of Information request lodged by The Inverell Times to the Uralla Shire Council.

The newspaper requested all documents held by the Shire relating to the wording on the plaque for the official opening of the Grace Munro Centre.

The documents - two emails with attachments - revealed details of Senator Macdonald's interference in the matter.

The Uralla Shire Council submitted its suggested wording for the plaque - which included Mr Windsor's name - to Senator Macdonald for his approval.

But the Senator's 'am worth office sent an email back to the council saying: "The Senator has asked if these changes would be made."

"He has also deleted the Tony Windsor bit, sorry."

It was signed by Senator Macdonald's electorate officer.

Senator Macdonald told The Inverell Times he had acted in the heat of the moment and that he now regretted his actions.

Senator Macdonald was under a lot of pressure at the time.

Mr Windsor had named him and The Nationals' leader John Anderson as being behind a bid to offer him a diplomatic post in exchange for him not running for Parliament in the last Federal election.

Days before the official opening of the Grace Munro Centre, Senator Macdonald had earlier said he did not want Mr Windsor to be part of the official party or make a speech at the official opening of the aged care facility in Bundara on December 4.

Mr Windsor revealed those details in Federal Parliament. Senator Macdonald subsequently changed his mind and Mr Windsor turned up on the day and made a speech.

The pair even shook hands and chatted together on the podium.

Senator Macdonald now says he wants to put the plaque affair behind him and that he wants to work with Mr Windsor for the good of the people in the electorate.

But since The Inverell Times broke the story on Tuesday, the reaction from Senator Macdonald's political opponents has been fast and furious.

The story also has captured the attention of the national media.

Senator Ellison said there were implied rights within the Constitution which gave Members of Parliament the right to go about their business without interference.

The test case, establishing the rights of MPs, was the Theophanous vs The Herald and Weekly Times ruling, she said.

Senator Macdonald may have breached the spirit of the Constitution by trying to prevent Mr Windsor from speaking at the function and then deleting his name from the plaque, she said.

Senator Brown said Mr Windsor had effectively been prevented from going about his duty as a representative of the people.

"The question the Senate Inquiry must ask is 'is this a one-off' or is it systemic," Senator Brown said.

Mr Windsor clearly believes it is part of a pattern.

The Shires Association of NSW also entered the debate, with Mrs Miller saying politicians needed to show respect to one another and display political bi-partisanship on occasions such as the opening of an aged care facility.

She said it was a matter Mr Howard should take up with Senator Macdonald.

How 'plaque-gate' unfolded



UNVEIL: SENATOR Sandy Macdonald unveiling the plaque.



CONTROVERSIAL: THE plaque, minus Tony Windsor MP's name.

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News

Grace Munro plaque affair exposes flaws in The Nationals' story: Windsor

By Liz Tickner

THE Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor, has questioned why The Nationals' NSW Senator, Sandy Macdonald, was so incensed with him on November 10 that he ordered the Uralla Shire Council to delete his name from the plaque for the official opening of the Grace Munro Centre.

Senator Macdonald - who has since said that he regrets his actions - told The Inverell Times and a national newspaper that he had acted in the "heat of the moment."

He told The Inverell Times he was angry that Mr Windsor had "defamed" him and The Nationals' leader John Anderson under the safety blanket of Parliamentary privilege by claiming that they were behind a bribe attempt.

In an interview with The Australian newspaper last week he said, "you can understand I was a bit annoyed" with Mr Windsor.

Mr Windsor claimed in Federal Parliament that he had been

offered a diplomatic post in exchange for him not running as a candidate in the last Federal election.

But Mr Windsor did not name Senator Macdonald and Mr Anderson in Parliament until November 17.

The Inverell Times has revealed that Senator Macdonald ordered the Uralla Shire Council to delete Mr Windsor's name from the plaque on November 10 - seven days before he was named in Parliament.

Mr Windsor said that after he had named Senator Macdonald and Mr Anderson in Parliament, Senator Macdonald had claimed he knew nothing about the bribe or that he was going to be named.

"If my naming him in Parliament was such a surprise then why was he so angry with me seven days earlier that he ordered the council to remove my name from the plaque," Mr Windsor said on Friday.

"This is the first chink in The Nationals' armour that they knew nothing about the bribe," he said.

He said the only plausible rea-

son for Senator Macdonald's anger was that he knew he was going to be named in parliament.

Senator Macdonald said at the time of being named in parliament that Mr Windsor's comments were "unforgivable smears on the character of (Tamworth businessman) Greg Macgillivray, Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson and myself."

Senator Macdonald was out of mobile phone range yesterday and was not available for comment.

Senator Macdonald has previously said that he wants to put the incident behind him and get on with the job of representing the people of NSW.

The Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra was officially opened on December 4.

Mr Windsor also revealed in Parliament that Senator Macdonald had said he did not want Mr Windsor to be part of the official party or to make a speech.

Senator Macdonald later relented and Mr Windsor took his place at the official opening and made a speech.

Bannockburn closes its doors ... \$2000 donation benefits rural counselling service



DONATION: BANNOCKBURN Quality Association's David Allan hands over the cheque to Kim Horneman from the New England Rural Counselling Service. Standing (l-r) are Ron Harris, Bob Moore and Bill Allen; also seated are Margaret Allan and Kim Beard.

THE Bannockburn Conservation Group has closed its doors after almost 40 years.

The group was formed in 1964 by a diverse group of farmers who were interested in acquiring and promoting the best farming and conservation techniques for the district.

A few years later, a speciality group called The Bannockburn Quality Association was established to help members diversify into the pork industry.

At a meeting in October it was decided it would, with regret, wind up and donate its bank balance to a worthy cause.

The New England Rural Counselling Service was the recipient of the \$2000. It said the money would help keep it viable.

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7⁹⁹ SINGLE BUY BOTTLE FAULHAWK Vodka 40% Alc/Vol 750ml	5⁹⁹ PER CTN BUY SINGLE BUY BOTTLE SUNNYVALE Vodka 40% Alc/Vol 750ml	6⁹⁹ PER CTN BUY SINGLE BUY BOTTLE SUNNYVALE Vodka 40% Alc/Vol 750ml	9⁹⁹ SINGLE BUY BOTTLE YELLOW Vodka 40% Alc/Vol 750ml
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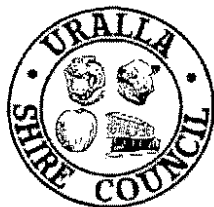
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Question without Notice: Federal Election: Member for New England**Federal Election: Member for New England**

Mr WINDSOR (2.32 p.m.) —My question is to the Acting Prime Minister. Is the Acting Prime Minister aware that Senator Sandy Macdonald advised Uralla council that he did not want me to be part of the official opening of the Grace Munro Centre in my electorate? Is the Acting Prime Minister also aware that the Mayor of Uralla has issued a press release today saying that the council never had a problem including me in the official party and that the decision not to do so was made in light of demands made on behalf of the government by Senator Sandy Macdonald? Has Senator Macdonald misled the public? Do you agree with Senator Macdonald's representation of the government?

Mr ANDERSON —I have not spoken to Senator Macdonald about the function at Uralla. I was advised by my office that the member for New England had been invited to it. I just make this point: I do feel that the member for New England has some right to be aggrieved when it comes to statements put before parliament. I have to say that. We are in a situation, I say to the member for New England, where he has made outrageous allegations based on hearsay which he has not been able to substantiate anywhere else, which he will not repeat anywhere else and which, I note, nobody is prepared to back or take up, not even those opposite. I presume that the normal courtesies will be extended to the member for New England—no more, no less.



URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL
32 SALISBURY STREET, URALLA
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In reply, please quote:
RFBC H-2/7

28 January 2005


Mr Alastair Sands
Committee Secretary
Senate Finance & Public Administrative Committee
Department of Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Sands

Statutory Declaration

I confirm that I authorise the inclusion of my Statutory Declaration headed "Grace Munro Centre Opening and Associated Matters" dated 15 December 2004 and associated material in a submission to the Senate Enquiry into Regional Partnerships.

Yours faithfully


Robert Fulcher
GENERAL MANAGER

PHONE: 02 6778 4606
FAX: 02 6778 5073
EMAIL: COUNCIL@URALLA.NSW.GOV.AU

**STATUTORY DECLARATION
NSW OATHS ACT 1900**

GRACE MUNRO CENTRE OPENING AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

I, **ROBERT GEORGE FULCHER**

of ...20 McCrossin Street, Uralla.....

in the State of ...New South Wales.....

do hereby solemnly declare and affirm that:-

This Statutory Declaration concerns dealings I had regarding the opening of the Grace Munro Centre.

1. By letter of 30 June 2004 (attached), I wrote a letter, on behalf of Council, to Mr Tony Windsor, MP asking him to invite either or both Minister Julie Bishop and/or the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Anderson, to carry out an official opening of the Grace Munro Centre, Bundarra.
2. This process was interrupted by the calling of the federal election.
3. By letter of 26 October 2004 (attached), I wrote again to Mr Windsor, after the election, asking him to ask the relevant Ministers whether they would be able to attend an official opening on 4 December 2004. A copy of that letter was sent to Senator Sandy Macdonald.
4. I then had a call from Senator Macdonald on either 28 or 29 October 2004. He made a number of comments concerning Council's decision to ask Mr Windsor to contact the Ministers concerning the official opening. Those comments included the following:
 - That the government was disappointed with the election result in the New England.
 - If the New England electors chose to return Mr Windsor, they will need to live with the consequences.
 - That the government was not pleased by the fact that Mr Windsor openly criticized them.
 - That Ministers of the government will not respond favourably to requests made to them by Mr Windsor.

(continued)

.....
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

.....
Rob Fulcher

- That if Council wished Ministers of the government to attend the official opening of the Centre, it will be necessary for Council to ask Senator Macdonald directly.
 - In response to my comments that Mr Windsor had been democratically elected as our local member and the correct protocol was to approach the government through the local member, Senator Macdonald said that that may be correct but what we were dealing with here was hard ball politics and political reality.
5. Having discussed this matter with the Mayor, who had also spoken to Senator Macdonald, it was agreed that I should write directly to Senator Macdonald asking him to invite the Ministers to attend the official opening. I did so by letter which was faxed on 29 October 2004 (copy attached).
 6. By letter dated 28 October 2004 (attached), Mr Windsor advised that he had written to the Minister for Ageing, the Minister for Transport and Regional Services and the Minister for Veteran Affairs inviting them to attend the official opening.
 7. By letter dated 4 November 2004 (attached), the Executive Assistant to the Deputy Prime Minister wrote to Tony Windsor advising that the Deputy Prime Minister would not be available to take part in the opening due to another commitment and that it would be appropriate for Senator Sandy Macdonald to participate on Mr Anderson's behalf.
 8. By email, sent on 9 November 2004 (attached), the office of the Hon. Julie Bishop, MP, Minister for Ageing, wrote to me advising her inability to attend and that she would like to invite Senator Sandy Macdonald to represent her at the opening of the facility.
 9. As a result, Council then dealt directly with Senator Macdonald and his office.
 10. Suggested wording for the official plaque for the opening was forwarded to Senator Macdonald's office on 10 November 2004. The wording suggested by Council included reference to Mr Tony Windsor (copy attached).

(continued)

And I make this solemn declaration, in accordance with the Oaths Act, 1900, and subject to the punishment by law provided for the making of any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Declared at Uralla.....)
 this 15th..... day of)
December..... 2004.)
 before me:)

R. J. Fisher.....



 JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

MEGAN ELIZABETH CONE (9321604)

 Print full name (and number) of JP

11. By email, dated 10 November 2004 (copy attached), Senator Sandy Macdonald's office replied requesting changes to the plaque. Those changes specifically involved the deletion of reference to Mr Windsor. The approved wording is attached with that email.
12. On 18 November 2004 I drafted a letter to the Prime Minister, for the Mayor to consider sending, seeking the Prime Minister's advice about the correct communication process between Council and the Government (copy attached). Because of the political sensitivity of this issue, the Mayor did not sign the letter.
13. By email, dated 23 November 2004 (copy attached), a copy of the draft program for the opening was sent to Senator Macdonald. That draft program, prepared by Council, included Mr Windsor on the official party and a speech by Mr Windsor.
14. In response to that program, I had a telephone call from Sandy Macdonald on Thursday, 25 November 2004. He also tried to talk to the Mayor about this matter on the same day. The words he used to me were generally as follows:
 - You have a problem with the official opening.
 - I have looked at the running sheet.
 - The problem is that I won't be on the same podium with Tony Windsor.
 - He has chosen to make allegations concerning me under parliamentary privilege.
 - I am offended by his action.
 - He can be a guest at the function but can't be on the official party and cannot speak.
 - I have no problem with Richard Torbay being involved in the official party – he is a very good local member.
 - I am sorry for the problem but it is an issue which Council will need to deal with.
15. After I discussed the matter with the Mayor, it was agreed that Council had no option but to remove Mr Windsor from the official party.
16. By email dated Friday, 26 November 2004 (copy attached), I advised Mr Windsor that the Mayor had asked me to tell him that he regrets to advise that Council will need to comply with the government's wishes and that he will not be part of the official party.
17. A revised running sheet was then sent to Senator Macdonald and to Mr Torbay on 26 November 2004 (copy attached).
18. Mr Bruce McLean rang me on Tuesday, 30 November 2004. He said that he had spoken to Mr Jim Booth of Sandy Macdonald's office who had said to Bruce McLean, "If they want to play hard ball, we will too."
19. Following discussions with Mr Torbay, Senator Macdonald and Mr Windsor and after review of statements made in parliament and to the media concerning this matter, the Mayor made another decision to include Tony Windsor in the official party and issued a press release on that day to that effect (copy attached).



In reply, please quote:
RF:LM H-2/7

30 June 2004

Mr Tony Windsor, MP
Member for New England
PO Box 963
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Dear Mr Windsor

Official Opening of the Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra

I am pleased to advise you that construction of the Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra is progressing well. It is expected that the building work will be completed by late July and it is hoped that the facility can commence operations in mid to late August 2004.

Council and the local Advisory Committee would now like to commence the process of planning an official opening of the Centre.

As you are aware, Federal funding for the project came from the Department of Health and Aged Care and also from the Department of Transport and Regional Service (Regional Solutions Program).

It would therefore be appreciated if you would be able to liaise with the appropriate people, with the aim of inviting either or both Minister Bishop and/or the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anderson, to carry out an official opening of the facility in September or October this year. It is the preference of the local Advisory Committee for the facility to be officially opened on a Saturday, if at all possible, to provide the best opportunities for local people to participate in the opening and to allow a festive atmosphere to prevail.

It would be appreciated if you could pursue this matter with the relevant Ministers and advise Council further if it is appropriate for it to follow this matter up with any other organisations or groups.

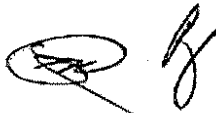
A copy of this letter will be forwarded to the Member for Northern Tablelands, Mr Richard Torbay, for his information, as the New South Wales State Government also contributed funds to this project and Mr Torbay will be invited to the official opening, once a suitable date has been set by the Federal Government Ministers.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully


Robert Fulcher
GENERAL MANAGER

cc Mr Richard Torbay
cc Mailout



In reply, please quote:
RF:BU H-2/7

26 October 2004

Mr Tony Windsor, MP
Member for New England
PO Box 963
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Dear Mr Windsor

Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra

I am pleased to advise you that construction of the Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra is nearing completion.

It is expected that residents will begin to occupy the premises early in November this year. It is also expected that the direct management of the facility will transfer from Uralla Shire Council to Maclean Village (under contract to Council) from early December 2004.

Council has corresponded with you earlier concerning an official opening of the new Centre. Your activities in negotiating with the relevant Ministers were interrupted as a result of the recent Federal Election. I understand that the new Ministry has now been appointed.

The local community is keen to hold an official opening of the Grace Munro Centre on Saturday, 4 December 2004, as that date corresponds with a number of other planned activities in the town. Unofficial celebrations will take place on site on that day, whether or not an official opening actually takes place.


It therefore would be appreciated if you would raise the matter with the relevant Ministers to determine whether or not they would be able to attend an official opening on 4 December 2004, or whether they would advise the community to defer the opening until a date earlier in 2005.

As a separate matter, Council would like to congratulate you on your recent reelection to Parliament and looks forward to our continuing close working relationship with you.

Yours faithfully


Robert Fulcher
GENERAL MANAGER

cc: Senator Sandy Macdonald



In reply, please quote:
RE:BU H-2/7

FAXED
29-10-04

26 October 2004

Senator Sandy Macdonald
National Party Senator for NSW
PO Box 1780
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Dear Senator Macdonald

Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra

I am pleased to advise you that construction of the Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra is nearing completion.



It is expected that residents will begin to occupy the premises early in November this year. It is also expected that the direct management of the facility will transfer from Uralla Shire Council to Maclean Village (under contract to Council) from early December 2004.

The local community is keen to hold an official opening of the Grace Munro Centre on Saturday, 4 December 2004, as that date corresponds with a number of other planned activities in the town. Unofficial celebrations will take place on site on that day, whether or not an official opening actually takes place.

It therefore would be appreciated if you would raise the matter with the relevant Ministers to determine whether or not they would be able to attend an official opening on 4 December 2004, or whether they would advise the community to defer the opening until a date earlier in 2005.

Yours faithfully


Robert Fulcher
GENERAL MANAGER



TONY WINDSOR B. Ec. MP
 INDEPENDENT
 FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Shop 5
 259 Peel Street
 TAMWORTH NSW 2340

All Mail: PO Box 963
 TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Phone: 02 6761 3080

Toll Free: 1300 301 839

Fax: 02 6761 3380

e-mail: Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au

Web Page: www.tonywindsor.com.au

28 October 2004

Mr Robert Fulcher
 General Manager
 Uralla Shire Council
 PO Box 106
 URALLA NSW 2358

URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL	
File:	W2/7
Received:	

Dear Mr Fulcher *Rob*

Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra

Thank you for your letter of 26 October 2004 providing me with an update on the Grace Munro Centre and I am delighted to hear that it is nearing completion with residents expected to start moving in next month. Thank you also for your kind note on behalf of Council congratulating me on my re-election as Member for New England.

I have been pleased to write to the Minister for Ageing, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, the Minister for Transport and Regional Services, the Hon John Anderson MP and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Deanne Kelly MP inviting them to attend the official opening on Saturday 4 December and to perform the official opening. I have also advised the Ministers to advise of a suitable date in early 2005 should this date be unsuitable. Due to time restrictions, I have encouraged the Ministers to respond at their earliest convenience.

You may be assured that as soon as I receive responses from the various Ministers I will be in contact with your office to confirm their availability.

Thank you once again for writing to me in relation to this exciting project and I look forward to continuing to work with you on other local issues in the future.

Yours sincerely

Tony Windsor

Tony Windsor MP
 Member for New England
 tw.mp

RF



Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
and Minister for Transport and Regional Services
Leader of The Nationals

4 November 2004

Mr Tony Windsor MP
Federal Member for New England
PO Box 963
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL	
File:	W2/7
Received:	- R NOV 2004
	General Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Mayor
	BCCS
	DES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	DEES
	DESS
	DEP

Dear Mr Windsor

Thank you for your letter of 28 October 2004 inviting the Hon John Anderson MP, Deputy Prime Minister to open the Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra on Saturday, 4 December 2004.

I regret to advise that the Deputy Prime Minister will not be available to take part in the opening due to another commitment on this day. It would be appropriate for Senator Sandy Macdonald to participate on Mr Anderson's behalf.

Kind regards

Danielle Kerr
Executive Assistant

Cc: Uralla Shire Council

Robert Fulcher

From: Noelene Porter
Sent: Tuesday, 9 November 2004 4:53 PM
To: Robert Fulcher
Cc: Barbara Urbonas
Subject: FW: opening - 4 December

From: Lehman, Marion (J. Bishop, MP) [mailto:Marion.Lehman@aph.gov.au]
Sent: Tuesday, 9 November 2004 4:48 PM
To: Noelene Porter; Windsor, Tony (MP)
Subject: opening - 4 December

Dear Mr Fulcher

Thank you for your letter of 26 October 2004 to Mr Tony Windsor MP, Member for New England, in which you kindly invite Ms Bishop to officially open the Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra.

Mr Windsor has forwarded a copy of your letter to the Minister, and has also written to request her consideration of the invitation.

The Minister regrets that, due to commitments in Western Australia on 4 December, she will not be available to be in New South Wales. She has asked me to convey her apologies for her inability to open your facility.

If it would be suitable to your arrangements, the Minister would like to invite her Parliamentary colleague Senator Sandy Macdonald, National Senator for New South Wales, to represent her at the opening of your facility.

I look forward to hearing whether this would be suitable to your organisation, and if agreeable I will arrange the details with the Senator's office.

Best wishes

Marion Lehman
Office of the Hon Julie Bishop MP
Federal Member for Curtin
Minister for Ageing
Perth: 08 9388 0288
Canberra: 02 6277 7280

Please note that this message is intended for the recipient to whom it is addressed and may not be re-distributed in any form without express permission from the author.



30/11/2004

10/11/04

GRACE MUNRO CENTRE

THE OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY FOR THIS AGED CARE FACILITY

WAS CARRIED OUT ON SATURDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2004

BY SENATOR SANDY MACDONALD

NATIONAL PARTY SENATOR FOR NSW

IN THE COMPANY OF MR TONY WINDSOR, MP, MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

AND COUNCILLOR RON FILMER, MAYOR, URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL

Message

Page 1 of 1

Barbara Urbonas

From: Macdonald, Sandy (Senator) [Senator.Sandy.Macdonald@aph.gov.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 10 November 2004 12:15 PM
To: Barbara Urbonas
Subject: RE: GMC Plaque

Hello Barbara

Thank you for sent the draft copy of wording for plaque.

The Senator has asked if these changes would be made. He has also deleted the Tony Windsor bit, sorry (see attached)

Many thanks

Di

Dianne Kershaw
Electorate Officer

Senator Sandy Macdonald
The Nationals Senator for NSW
467 Peel Street
TAMWORTH NSW 2340
Phone: (02) 6766 6998
Fax: (02) 6766 4169
Email: dianne.kershaw@aph.gov.au

-----Original Message-----


From: Barbara Urbonas [mailto:BUrbonas@uralla.nsw.gov.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 10 November 2004 11:25 AM
To: Macdonald, Sandy (Senator)
Subject: GMC Plaque
Importance: High

Dear Senator Macdonald

Please review the wording we have drafted for this plaque and advise if OK or any amendments.

Regards
Barbara Urbonas
Personal Assistant to General Manager

30/11/2004



10/11/04

GRACE MUNRO CENTRE

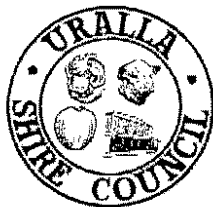
THE OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY FOR THIS AGED CARE FACILITY

WAS CARRIED OUT ON SATURDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2004

BY SENATOR SANDY MACDONALD

SENATOR FOR NSW AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE NATIONALS IN THE SENATE

AND COUNCILLOR RON FILMER, MAYOR, URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL



URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL
32 SALISBURY STREET, URALLA
PO BOX 106
URALLA NSW 2358
ABN 55 868 272 018

In reply, please quote:
RTF:BU P-4

18 November 2004

The Hon John Howard, MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Prime Minister

Communication with the Government

The purpose of this letter is to seek your advice and assistance concerning appropriate protocols and the most effective way for Uralla Shire Council to communicate with the Government and Ministers of the Government.

Uralla Shire council is in the electorate of New England. Its local member is Mr Tony Windsor, MP, who is an independent.

Senator Sandy Macdonald, a Senator for NSW, lives in Tamworth, which is also the location of Mr Windsor's electorate office.

Council recently had occasion to request its local member, Mr Windsor, to invite a Minister of the Government to carry out the official opening of a building in this shire which was partly funded by the Commonwealth Government. In response to that action, both the General Manager and I had separate telephone conversations with Senator Sandy Macdonald. His advice to us was that Council would be more successful in such requests if it made them directly to him and not through Mr Windsor. He also suggested that support for funding applications from Council to the Federal Government should be obtained through him rather than Mr Windsor.

Council's understanding is that the correct protocol is that it should approach the Government and its Ministers through its local member, no matter whether or not that local member is a member of the governing parties. Council has no problem if the Ministers, when approached by the local member, decide to respond to Council through Senator Macdonald, who is a member of the governing parties.

PHONE: 02 6778 4606
FAX: 02 6778 5073
EMAIL: COUNCIL@URALLA.NSW.GOV.AU

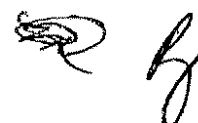
Council does not wish to become involved in party politics. Nor does it wish to breach appropriate communication protocols. Of prime importance to the Council is that it should not take action which may adversely affect the interests of the residents and ratepayers of this shire in relation to the chances of success of applications and submissions it makes to the Commonwealth Government.

I note that, after the recent election, you stated, in your victory speech, that you govern for all of Australia, whether or not people voted for your party or not. That comment would indicate to Council that it should continue to communicate with the Commonwealth Government through its local member.

Your advice concerning this sensitive issue would be sincerely appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Ron Filmer
MAYOR



Barbara Urbonas

From: Barbara Urbonas
Sent: Tuesday, 23 November 2004 4:36 PM
To: 'senator.sandy.macdonald@aph.gov.au'
Cc: 'RFilmer'
Subject: GMC Program

Dear Sandy

Please find attached a draft program for the opening of the Grace Munro Centre. Please advise of your concurrence.

Regards
Robert Fulcher



**GRACE MUNRO CENTRE OFFICIAL OPENING
SATURDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2004**

DRAFT PROGRAM

- 1.55pm** Official party and guests take their places on the lawn outside the entrance to the New England Area Health Service.
- 2.00pm** Official guests seated on the verandah area to include:
Senator Sandy Macdonald
Mr Tony Windsor
Mr Richard Torbay
Cr Ron Filmer
Chairman of the Board of HN McLean Memorial Retirement Village
- Guests welcomed by Cr Filmer
- Address by Mr Torbay
- Address by Mr Windsor
- Official address on behalf of the Commonwealth Government by Senator Macdonald
- 2.15pm** Party moves to the main entrance of the aged care facility where Senator Macdonald officially opens the centre and unveils the plaque
- 2.20-3.00pm** Guests inspect the facility and carry out interviews with the media
(Note: Media to be arranged by Senator Macdonald's office)
- 3.00pm** Guests move to the Bundarra Sport and Recreation Club for a catered afternoon tea
- 3.30pm** Guests leave when ready



Barbara Urbonas

From: Barbara Urbonas
Sent: Friday, 26 November 2004 9:16 AM
To: 'Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au'
Cc: 'RFilmer'
Subject: GRACE MUNRO CENTRE OPENING

Dear Tony

The Commonwealth Government has advised that its representative at the official opening of the Grace Munro Centre does not wish for you to be part of the official party or the official speeches. The Mayor, Cr Ron Filmer, has asked me to tell you that he regrets to advise you that Council will need to comply with the Government's wishes. Attached is the revised running sheet for the official opening.

Naturally Council would still welcome your attendance at the official opening function.

Best regards

Robert Fulcher
General Manager
Uralla Shire Council



30/11/2004

**GRACE MUNRO CENTRE OFFICIAL OPENING
SATURDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2004**

DRAFT PROGRAM

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- 3.30pm** Guests leave when ready



MEDIA RELEASE

Grace Munro Centre Opening

Since Senator Sandy Macdonald has now advised Council that it is a matter for Uralla Shire Council to determine whether or not to include Mr Tony Windsor as part of the official party for the opening of the Grace Munro Centre at Bundarra, the Mayor of Uralla Shire Council, Cr Ron Filmer, has decided to invite Tony Windsor to be part of the official party and to speak at the function.

He stressed that Uralla Shire Council has never had a problem with including Tony Windsor in the official party. His earlier decision not to include him was made in light of a request from Senator Macdonald.

For further information please contact Cr Filmer on 0413 459 010.

For immediate release

30 November 2004

