

Annual Report
2015-2016

National Trust Tasmania Chairpersons's Report

I am pleased to present my Report as Chair of the Board of the National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) for 2015-2016. It has been an eventful, productive and progressive year with considerable achievements and milestones met. This positive outcome is due to the very considerable efforts of the Board, State Office, staff and volunteers – with the ongoing support of our members.

Strategic directions and initiatives

In its determination to continue to enhance the position of the Trust, the board has been working diligently to implement focussed aspects of the strategic plan, whilst also taking advantage of opportunities as they have arisen.

In the national context, for example, we have seen a more actively collaborative approach established over the past year between the state/territory trusts and the national organisation, the Australian Council of National Trusts (ACNT). This has resulted in a wide range of national initiatives being commenced which will also enhance the activities of the state trusts - and have provided welcome additional opportunities for the Tasmanian Trust in particular.

A national approach to the annual heritage festival, for example, will enhance the Tasmanian heritage festival, through additional support and by creating greater national awareness through promotion. The re-visioning of the national magazine will promote the Tasmanian Trust's significant properties, collections and activities to a much wider audience. The new magazine format is designed to present heritage in a more contemporary way, resulting in greater impact at national, state and community levels, and providing the potential for a higher level of presentation, acknowledgement and appreciation of Tasmania's heritage.

The ACNT has also been more active in advocating the advantages of the National Trust movement's unique expertise, assets and community connections to national decision-makers and potential national sponsors, resulting in an increased number of national partnerships and funding sources. The federal government-funded National Trust Partnership Program (NTPP), for example, provides important opportunities for the Tasmanian Trust to engage in larger national heritage projects.

More specifically, the Tasmanian Trust was very pleased to have been selected as a lead site for piloting several important ACNT strategic project initiatives, before their introduction into the other states. We were keen to be involved as these projects are likely to produce considerable benefits through increased opportunities for innovation and creative partnerships, as well as access to additional funding sources. They also confirm that Tasmania can be an acknowledged leader in heritage conservation and management within the national heritage context.

The first of these pilot projects will focus on cultural heritage tourism and commence later this year, although a considerable amount of preparatory work has already been completed. We expect to work in close collaboration not only with the ACNT but also in partnership with the University of Tasmania. The second pilot project will be the trial of an innovative national retail approach, scheduled to commence early next year.

Our objectives have involved working with the State and Federal Governments on cultural tourism initiatives and forming a close relationship with the University of Tasmania. We have also partnered

with local governments as the major custodians of our state's heritage. This includes establishing appeals to assist local governments to raise funds to ensure our heritage sites are maintained for future generations.

These initiatives are also important as they involve building stronger relationships with key sources of support, assist us in forming stronger partnerships within the community and help us to strengthen the reputation of the National Trust.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ACNT Chairman Mr Scott McAllister and CEO Mr Tom Perrigo, for their particular support of the Tasmanian Trust in the implementation of these initiatives. Both have shown great appreciation of Tasmania's special heritage values and places and a strong determination to support them from the national level. Mr Perrigo has also been directly and positively involved with the Tasmanian Trust over the past year in the preparation of the pilot projects, in the initiation and development of national partnerships and in federal, state and local government advocacy activities. He has also worked directly with us by providing expert support and facilitation to the board in the strategic plan review.

At the state level, we have been working on the strategic initiatives that not only relate to these state-national Trust partnership projects, but also on those related to our own strategic priorities.

The Trust's strategic plan was reviewed to provide a framework for the next three years and also to give it consistency with the broad national strategic plan objectives based on the four pillars of sustainability, governance, partnership and leadership.

Within this framework, we have continued to focus on our commitment to enhancing the Trust's financial situation through the careful monitoring of expenses as well as the seeking of new sources of income; this has been assisted by moving to a new financial management system which has afforded greater capacity for monitoring and transparency. A 3 year budget has also been developed, putting in place measures that are designed to provide a strong financial future for the Trust. The board's Audit and Risk Committee under the leadership of Ms Amanda Roberts, and working closely with the Managing Director, has played a very diligent, positive and important role in this process.

Major projects and activities

Properties

We have a strategic focus on developing the presentation of our properties open to the public, which includes not only the conservation of the buildings and their contents, but also the historical and social interpretation. While we maintain a focus on all properties, we also take a cyclical approach to the development and refreshment of the properties. This year we have paid particular attention to two properties – Clarendon and the Penitentiary Chapel Historic Site (PCHS).

This year we were very pleased to see the conclusion of the major conservation project at Clarendon which was its complete re-roofing with traditional slate. This was a very large project and I wish to thank our Managing Director in particular for bringing this to a timely and successful conclusion.

We are now working on further strategies for the refreshment of Clarendon and its presentation.

At the PCHS, we are delighted to note that the new addition to the interpretation and visitor experience – *The Pandemonium* film – is close to completion with a planned launch in early November. This will greatly enhance a visit to the site by providing a provocative interpretation of the convict experience as a more engaging and exciting introduction to a tour of the building. I should like to thank all board members for their active support of this project, with Ms Zoe Smith and Mr Warwick Oakman giving particular support. I should also like to acknowledge the work of Professor Hamish Maxwell-Stewart of the University of Tasmania for the contribution of his expertise, enthusiasm and tireless effort in bringing this project to such a high level conclusion.

Conservation issues

The Trust continues to monitor local conservation issues under the leadership at board level of Mr Warwick Oakman. We have been involved in direct advocacy across the state on such issues as the CH Smith building, Melton Mowbray horse trough and Lauderdale Cottage.

Communication

As mentioned, a new national magazine is in preparation which is intended to complement the revamped website as a combined means of enhancing communication with National Trust members and volunteers and provide more comprehensive information to the community.

At the state level, we have continued to work on developing comprehensive membership and volunteer databases. We have also worked on developing a social media presence and on piloting an e-newsletter. It was essential that we incorporate and embrace new technologies in communicating with our members and the community. I should like to thank Mr James Reynolds for taking a lead role at board level with this initiative.

Board

The 2015-2016 board comprises Dr Marion Myhill (Chairperson), Ms Amanda Roberts (Deputy Chairperson), Mr Warwick Oakman, Mr James Reynolds, Ms Zoe Smith, Mr Stuart Wiggins and Mr Matthew Smithies (MD). Ms Smith and Mr Wiggins were appointed this year to replace retirees.

The board met 9 times during the year in the north and the south of the state.

I should like to thank all board members for their very high level commitment to the objectives of the Trust, the contribution of their expertise, and their active engagement and support over the year.

I should also like to thank the State Office for its administrative support to the board, and acknowledge in particular the contribution of Ms Christine Parker.

Conclusion

In concluding, I would like to summarise the past year as being one of consolidation and extension of the achievements of the Trust since the *National Trust Act 2006* was introduced a decade ago which re-set our structure with the purpose of sustaining the Trust and its vital heritage role in the state

into the future. Over the year we have focussed particularly on strengthening our financial base, and on reviewing our strategic directions and on positioning the Trust to meet its heritage objectives in sound and effective, but also creative, innovative and contemporary, ways.

The National Trust's success is the result of a combined effort based on the support of our members, the work of the State Office, property-based staff and our volunteers, within the strategic direction provided by the board. The Trust is fortunate to have loyal members, as well as active and engaged staff and volunteers working collectively – usually with very limited resources – to ensure the Trust prospers.

The Annual General Meeting provides an appropriate opportunity to record our deep appreciation of our loyal and supportive members, our diligent and faithful staff, and our passionate and devoted volunteers (including our board members) and our donor supporters. We also acknowledge with gratitude the contributions of the heritage specialists, consultants, tradespeople, and suppliers especially those who have helped to bring key projects to successful outcomes over the year.

I should like to commend in particular our Managing Director and the State Office staff for their very positive engagement with a considerably increased workload, and our Property Managers who have worked tirelessly to maintain the good stewardship of our properties and their collections. Their efforts are all crucial to ensuring that our important and unique properties are made available for the appreciation, education and enjoyment of Trust members, the Tasmanian community, visitors to our state and the nation.

On this occasion, however, I should like to take a special opportunity to acknowledge, commend and celebrate the very important and valuable contribution of our volunteers. We are fortunate to have so many loyal and committed volunteers, all of whom are vital to the success of the National Trust. Every task they undertake is deeply appreciated.

For this reason, we have commenced a volunteer recognition initiative, which has been made possible by the introduction of the NationBuilder system which has allowed us to develop a more comprehensive volunteer database.

From these data we have identified more than 400 volunteers currently working for the Trust, with 67 providing more than 10 or more years of service, 28 providing 20 or more and 8 providing 30 or more years of service. This is a superb effort.

It is my great pleasure therefore at this year's Annual General Meeting to be able to recognise this our much valued Trust volunteers by presenting volunteer appreciation certificates in gratitude for their magnificent contribution.

Dr Marion Myhill
National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) Chair

National Trust Tasmania Board

Dr Marion Myhill | Board Chair

Ms Amanda Roberts | Board Deputy Chair & Audit and Risk Committee Chair

Mr Warwick Oakman

Mr James Reynolds

Ms Zoe Smith

Mr Stuart Wiggins

Mr Matthew Smithies | Managing Director

National Trust Tasmania Managing Director's Report

Taking the time to reflect on the year that was is not easy at the National Trust, as we always have so much on, with a clear focus on the future. On reflection, I realise we have achieved a great deal over the past 12 months and these achievements could not have been accomplished without the incredible support of the volunteers and members of the National Trust, as well as our small and extremely dedicated management team. It is truly a privilege to work in this supportive environment where we all share a common passion, that being the preservation of some remarkable and unique heritage assets.

The State Office and Property Managers are also privileged to have a Board who have been willing to roll up their sleeves and be involved in operational aspects of the National Trust when required. This human resource combination has resulted in the ability for the National Trust Tasmania to present itself as a state where major projects can be piloted prior to being rolled out on a national basis. In the coming year we will see many of these initiatives come to fruition, which is an exciting prospect for the National Trust in Tasmania.

Over the past year we have implemented the Xero Financial Accounting System which provides a very high level of transaction transparency as well as the ability to generate a broad array of reports, providing the basis for sound business and strategic planning.

The implementation of a new member management system, NationBuilder, now provides the opportunity for the National Trust to communicate with all members on a regular basis. This major project has been implemented by Ben Whiteley, who has volunteered a huge amount of time and expertise.

In the coming year we will be inviting members to a range of member-only events which will include guest speaker presentations, "behind-the-scenes" experiences and social events. Invitations to these activities will be sent via NationBuilder, so should you change your contact details please let us know by phoning 6344 6233 or emailing ben.whiteley@nationaltrusttas.org.au.

Through a grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund, an exciting new interpretation concept has been developed for the Penitentiary Chapel Historic Site. This project in consultation with Professor Hamish Maxwell-Stewart and production by Roar Films is an innovative and refreshing way to present Tasmania's rich convict history and engage tourists through a multi-sensory experience.

Earlier in the year we completed a major conservation project, the re-roofing of Clarendon with 10,000 slates imported from Wales. This project was made possible through a grant from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development and it is pleasing to advise that it came in on budget and ahead of time, as well as meeting all heritage management standards. Throughout this major project the support of Heritage Tasmania was greatly appreciated and support from the Clarendon Gardening Group was amazing as we worked around, and often through, garden beds.

Earlier in the year we welcomed new tenants Steve Berndt and Karen Nixon, who have taken a 10 year lease of Penghana and have embraced the importance of this significant heritage asset to the state. Steve and Karen hosted several National Trust events at Penghana throughout the Tasmanian Heritage Festival which received community support.

This year's Tasmanian Heritage Festival was a great success thanks to the coordination of Christine Parker who was supported by two amazing volunteers, Peta Newman and Sue Overton. National Trust Marketing Manager, Sophie Bleach secured state and national TV coverage, as well as a lot of local radio chat. Feedback from festival participants has been positive and we look forward to launching the 2017 Heritage Festival with the theme, *Voices*.

At Home Hill, we developed and launched an e-book, which provides the history of Joe and Enid Lyons along with an interactive visual presentation of the site and its unique collection. The e-book is available through the National Trust website and I'd like to encourage everyone to have a look at it.

The team at Runnymede had another successful year, culminating with the Annual Antiques Fair. Runnymede maintains a standard of curation and conservation that is not only a benchmark within Tasmania, but receives professional recognition at a national level.

It is truly humbling to see the extraordinary efforts of our volunteer managers at key sites, Franklin House, the Old Umbrella Shop, Latrobe Courthouse Museum, the Fly Fishing Museum and the Norfolk Plains History Museum. These heritage heroes are an inspiration to us all and without their dedication, along with other volunteers, we simply wouldn't exist.

We welcome Tony Wright, who has been appointed as Property Manager for the Penitentiary Chapel Historic Site. Tony brings to the National Trust a wealth of experience and enthusiasm which will assist in positioning the Penitentiary as a major heritage destination.

The National Trust acknowledges the continued support of the Tasmanian State Government through triannual funding and the Australian Government through funding via the National Trust Partnership Program. It is through this support that we have been able to invest in research and development activities, which in turn will result in a more sustainable operating position.

It is with enthusiasm and optimism that we move into a new year where the challenges become fewer and the opportunities become greater.

Matthew Smithies
National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) Managing Director

2015 – 2016 Financial Overview

Throughout the 2015 – 16 financial period the National Trust managed its finances utilising a new accounting management platform, Xero. This system was specifically selected due to its ability to provide transaction transparency and real time reporting mechanisms.

An emphasis was been placed on expenditure control as well as ensuring the National Trust receives the best value possible from service and product providers.

A new format was implemented in the development of the 2015 – 16 budget which clearly defined individual budget categories, e.g. general operations, specific purpose funding, grants, National Trust Partnership Program funding, conservation appeals and donations/bequests (please refer to pie chart).

By managing the budget through this segmented approach, expenditure and revenue have been tightly monitored on a real time basis, with the intention of identifying issues quickly and implement appropriate strategies.

Throughout the year we carried out a series of internal reviews as part of an ongoing system testing program. This included examining short and long term service provider contracts, insurances, employee entitlements and leases. A full review of external conservation appeals was also carried out.

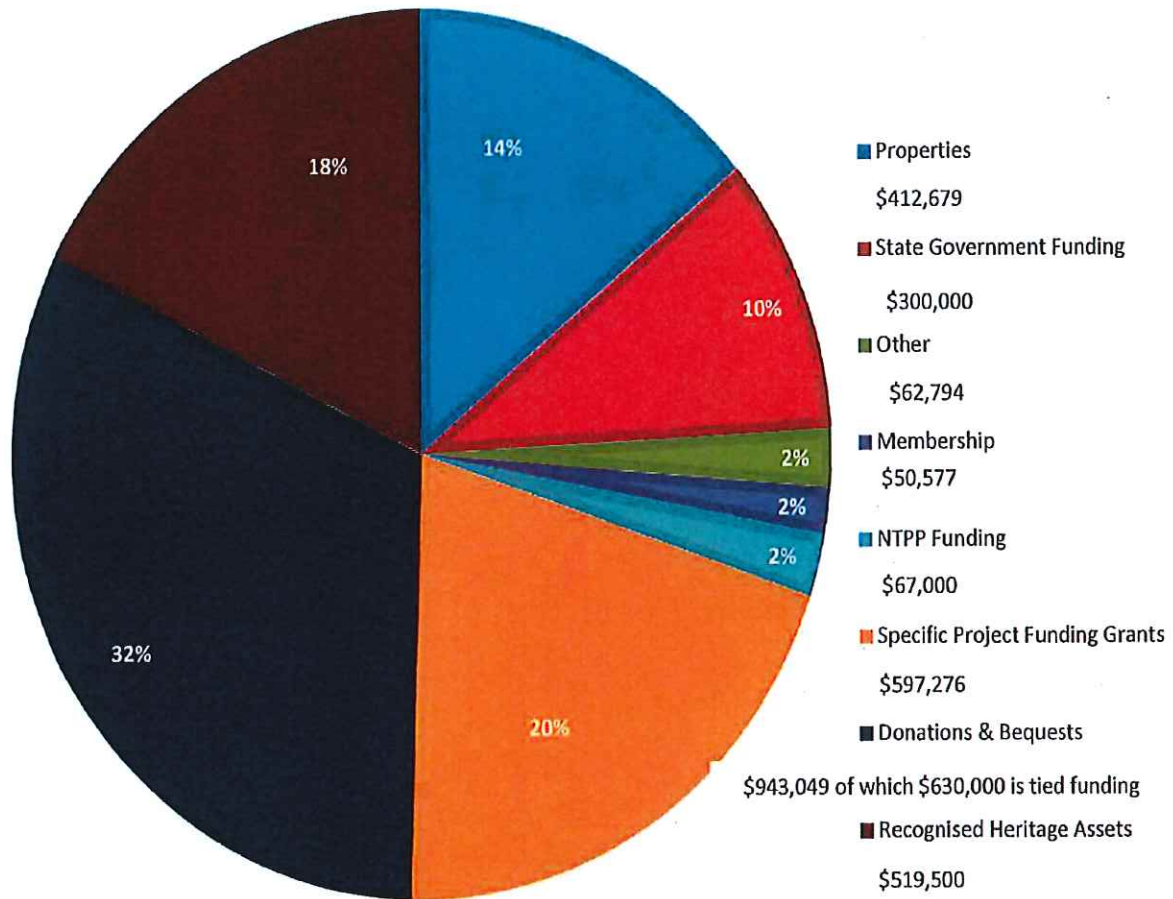
The National Trust received professional advice throughout the year on accounting matters from contracted external providers, Ruddick's Accounting, who also prepared the end of year general purpose financial statements in preparation for the Tasmanian Audit Office. The Tasmanian Audit Office carried out their annual audit interrogating and testing our systems and it is pleasing to advise that they have noted the progress made in refining our financial management and reporting, providing a robust level of transparency.

The National Trust is on sound financial footing, providing the opportunity for the organisation to invest in the development of initiatives that will further enhance our financial sustainability.

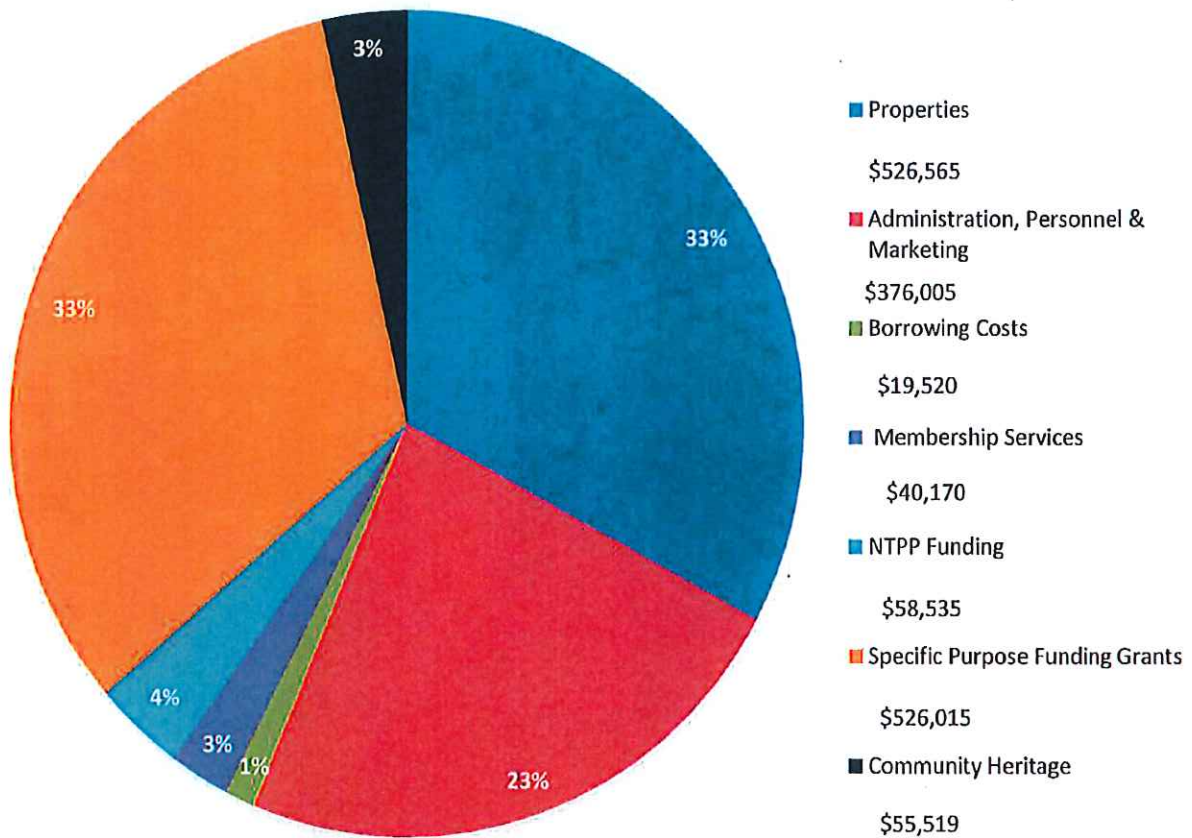
Matthew Smithies

National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) Managing Director

2015 – 2016 Operating Revenue



2015 – 2016 Operating Expenditure



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