



NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (ACT)

HERITAGE IN TRUST

Journal of the National Trust of Australia (ACT)

WINTER 2007 \$2.00



In the final federal elections of Menzies' record term, the Albert Hall became the first National Tally Room to be televised.

CANBERRA'S ALBERT HALL



In an intriguing regeneration of its original purpose, the Albert Hall in Canberra – notwithstanding its approaching 80th birthday – has again become a vigorous player in the civic life of Australia's national capital. Neither Federal nor ACT government agencies were ready for the strength of opposition to their plans for this heritage precinct that dominated the usually mellow months of autumnal Canberra. The Albert Hall put heritage into the headlines, special features, opinion pieces and letters to the editor – sometimes all in the same edition of Canberra's daily newspaper. Talkback radio buzzed, television news teams ran regular stories – and as winter set in, the Albert Hall starred in Estimates hearings in both the Senate and the ACT Legislative Assembly. In the offices of Federal Minister Jim Lloyd and the three ACT ministers whose portfolios cover its heritage, management, maintenance and future, the Albert Hall had become a presence. By the time the last leaves left the trees, the proposals, policies and processes of both governments lay exposed to a coldly critical public gaze.



It is not nostalgia that kindles such public passion, but the idea, embedded in the Albert Hall, that participation is essential to democracy. In Canberra, more than any other Australian city, we can readily compare the vision and the reality of Australia's constitutional democracy. The campaign for the future of the Albert Hall draws its power directly from this heritage place.

The opening of the Albert Hall on 10 March 1928 was no less significant a nation-building occasion than the foundation of the national capital itself on 12 March 1913, nor the opening of Parliament House in 1927. In the ringing words of Prime Minister Stanley Melbourne Bruce, the new Albert Hall was "a definite step towards making Canberra the centre . . . of everything that will uplift the Australian people – a centre from which will radiate all those aspirations that are truly national". In those grander days, a prime minister could assert the essential roles of the arts and of the citizenry in national life and pronounce the Albert Hall the civic and cultural heart of the new national capital. And for much of the 20th century that's just what it was. The city's only performing arts venue for its first forty years, the Albert Hall influenced the growth of flourishing musical, operatic and dramatic societies like the Society for Arts and Literature formed by Robert Garran, Harold White and Robert Broinowski, and for Lewis Nott's breakaway Canberra Repertory Society. Once the Albert Hall was built, literary and musical salons were no longer confined to the homes of Canberra's elite, but open to everyone with an interest and the price of a ticket.



Cover photograph & historical images kindly provided by the author, Dr Lenore Coltheart.

The Albert Hall was the stage local artists shared with international musicians and theatre companies and the venue for tours by the Royal Ballet and a fledgling Australian Ballet. It was Canberra's first concert hall and playhouse, and an exhibition space for painting and sculpture before Australia had a national gallery.

But it is the significance of the Albert Hall as a place for civic as well as cultural assembly that is most important in understanding how a neglected heritage place could so readily ignite potent civic action. Eighty years ago, no city in a constitutional democracy could be complete without a hall suitable for formal public assembly.

The first such events at the Albert Hall were probably the British Empire Forestry conference in September 1928 and the congress of the 65th District of Rotary International a year later. In May 1930, it was the venue for public hearings of the Constitutional Royal Commission reviewing the working of Australia's Constitution. In the early 1930s the Canberra Relief Society's unemployment benefit concerts were held there. In 1934 British Poet Laureate John Masefield gave the official address after the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone for the first National Library building, on Kings Avenue. Three years later the Albert Hall became the birthplace of the Australian Institute of Librarians.

During the second world war it was the venue for Red Cross fundraisers and in 1945, the unforgettable site of the celebrations of the declaration of peace. There was a flurry of activity there in the years of postwar reconstruction, with a major refurbishment for events including the first graduation ceremonies of the new Australian National University College. From the legislative creation of Australian citizenship in 1949, Australia's annual citizenship conventions were held at the Albert Hall. In 1951 the nation's jubilee was celebrated there, the major events including the Town Planning Congress where principal speaker William Holford so impressed Prime Minister Robert Menzies that Holford was given direction of the first major planning of the national capital since its inception.

The Albert Hall even had a Cold War role, with meetings like the 'Women against Socialism' rally chaired by Annabelle Rankin in 1948. Six years later, the first sessions of the Royal Commission on Espionage triggered by the defections of Vladimir and Evdokia Petrov were held there. In the final federal elections of Menzies' record term, the Albert Hall became the first National Tally Room to be televised.

Two months after Menzies' retirement, it was the venue for the historic conference of the Federal Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, when the 10-year campaign for a Constitutional referendum was won, and the campaigners turned instead to working for the 'Yes' outcome so resoundingly achieved on 27 May 1967.

Even such a rapid historical resumé reveals an intriguing civic history, but wandering about the Albert Hall last summer told a very different story. The landscaped gardens are straggling and neglected, cobwebs curtain the tall arched windows, drifts of dessicated leaves made tinderboxes of accessways, and the stage loading doors at the rear faced the detritus of a works depot. Inside, paint peeled, toilets leaked, a hole gaped in the gallery ceiling, piles of chairs teetering up the stairs obscured the graceful balustrade. Could this be the place where the glorious operatic career of 'Our Joan' was launched in 1950? The place the Prime Minister had charged with a key role in national civic and cultural life in 1928?

Though the Friends of the Albert Hall network was not formed until March 2007, the current public campaign for the Albert Hall probably dates from December 2005, when the ACT Government called for commercial 'Expressions of Interest' in taking on what they apparently saw as a liability rather than a legacy. Unsurprisingly, the response was minimal.

Did the ACT Government, charged with responsibility for the management, conservation and maintenance of the Albert Hall, then turn to the National Capital Authority, responsible for planning of the precinct, for help? For hard on the heels of its controversial 'Griffin Legacy' amendments to the National Capital Plan, in March 2007 the NCA issued Draft Amendment 53 for the Albert Hall area.

Recalling the NCA's DA53 public consultation session in the Albert Hall on 5 March still wrings wry smiles from the 60 or so people who attended. That the level of interest was underestimated was evident - not enough chairs, insufficient copies of DA53, and no public address system. That meeting indicated the wide gulf between the planning authority's awareness of the heritage significance of the Albert Hall precinct, and that of the audience. To the NCA it indicated a need to control consultation more carefully, as demonstrated in a second session held at the NCA's own premises on 22 March.

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES 2006

Joining Fee	\$33.00
Joining Fee, concession	\$25.00
Single	\$55.00
Single, concession	\$40.00
Household	\$80.00
Household, concession	\$60.00
2 year membership	5% discount
3 year membership	7% discount
Corporate	\$500.00
Life memberships	12 times the relevant annual fee

New members and renewal payments can be made by post or in person at our city office, or at the Old Parliament House Shop. Cash, cheque and all major credit cards are accepted. Membership renewal reminders are generated on the anniversary of due dates.

The National Trust of Australia (ACT) is a non-profit, community-based organisation that aims to preserve Australia's heritage for future generations. Membership of the National Trust offers a number of benefits. Among them are:

- * Free entry to National Trust properties around the world
- * Complimentary copy of National Trust magazine(s) quarterly
- * Discount of up to 15% at National Trust Shops
- * An opportunity to participate in travel organised by the Trust
- * Access to the National Trust's special events and activities
- * An opportunity to help the Trust protect your local & cultural heritage

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PUBLISHER

Heritage in Trust is published four times a year as a supplement to the National Magazine 'Trust News' with financial assistance from the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Water.
ISSN 0727 - 9019 C 2006

Harry Oldfield (1912-2007)

The ACT National Trust deeply regrets the passing in April 2007 of Harry Oldfield a pioneer of Canberra. Harry was born in the winter of 1912 in the Tuggeranong Valley. He was one of six children born to Henry and Martha (nee Harman) Oldfield in what was to be named Athllon Homestead. Athllon is an acronym for the names of the Oldfield children: *A=Alf, T=Ted, H=Harry, L=Les, L=Lyle, O=Oldfield and N=Nancy.*

Although the homestead has gone, Athllon Drive now bears the name of Harry and his siblings.

The National Trust recently completed an oral history of Harry (see our Autumn issue) and I along with Dr Margaret Park, who conducted the interviews, had the great honour to work with him on this project. Margaret and I will always remember Harry's smiling face, his cheeky nature and the wonderful stories he told of his life. The oral history recordings have captured Harry's voice and persona in perpetuity. Sections of his interview were played at his funeral service.

Dr Peter Dowling

The National Trust extends its sympathies to Harry's extended family.

Dr Robert Boden OAM

The National Trust congratulates Dr Robert Boden on his well deserved Medal of the order of Australia awarded in this year's Queens Birthday Honours List. Robert has been a member of the ACT National Trust for many years and has served on our Council and Heritage Committee.

His award citation reads "For service to horticulture, particularly through contributions to the development of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, and to the preservation of the natural environment." Dr Boden has been a pioneer in threatened plant species conservation and has made a significant contribution to botany and horticulture, particularly in the ACT. Congratulations, Robert.

Appology

In the last two issues of HIT the Patron is listed as the Hon. Margaret Reid OAM. In fact, Margaret Reid is an *Officer of the Order of Australia* - and the post nominals should be AO.

Our sincere appologies to Margaret Reid.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We are pleased to advise members that we have finalised our 2005/2006 audit and the result was a profit of \$303, which was substantially better than we expected. The delay in finalising these arose from the changeover of staff during this period requiring extra effort to go over some details. Any member wishing to see the final Financial Report should contact the Trust Office for a copy.

Unfortunately Linda Beveridge has resigned from Council due to other commitments. Although Linda was not on Council for a long period this time (she had previously had an extensive time on Council) her contribution was appreciated.

Council now has 2 vacancies which we are in the process of filling.

At the time of writing this the public meeting on Alfred Hall precinct has just been held and a complete review of the proposal is to be considered by the National Capital Authority over the next six months. This is a welcome change and we are looking forward to an appropriate definition of the heritage values of the precinct, establishing the opportunities and constraints arising from the significance and then see what evolves to protect the heritage values. The Trust's thanks are extended to Di Johnstone and her small committee for the sterling effort made.

An unfortunate fire in May saw damage to a Trust classified property, the Gungahlee Schoolhouse. This is extremely disappointing and we hope that it can be and will be reconstructed.

On 23 September the Council invites all members to come and meet us at one of the oldest, and believed to be the oldest complete building in Bungendore - The Beehive. This 1859 Inn is substantially intact and harbors an interesting history. Council welcomes all members to have a pleasant afternoon in Bungendore, meet the Council, enjoy a refreshing afternoon tea and learn more about the Beehive's history with guided tours. You are also welcome to enjoy many of the benefits Bungendore offers on the day, including the antique shop and the famous woodworks. We hope that many members will come and share the day with us.

Eric J. Martin, AM
President



PEOPLE & PLACES



Novi Scripti

The National Trust (ACT) warmly welcomes the following new members:

Yvonne Solly & Andrew Adzic
 Suzan Aylen
 Mr Craig Balkema
 Mr Shane Bannister
 Ms Robin Bass
 Dr Dean & Mrs Gaynor Beaumont
 Alan Scott & Peter Benson
 Ms Jenene Marie Bentley
 Rod and Jenny Berill
 Noel Bland
 Alison & Carl Brinkley
 Melissa Brumfield
 John & Helen Burdett
 Dora & Alec Chapman
 Cheryl & Zenon Ciciksza
 Tony & Maria Davison
 Peter & Maureen French
 Mr J Roberts & Ms F Gaspersic
 A..M & Michael Gawan-Taylor
 Margo & Bill Geering
 Jodi & Jason Golding
 Kathryn Sainsbury & Rodger Gorey
 Sue Guelman
 Mrs Gael Hallissey
 Gwen & Roger Hallows
 Margaret & Charles Hancock
 Judy & John Harris
 Ms Diane Harris
 Ms Mary Harwood
 Mr K Henry
 Merilee and Brian Hepworth
 William Mudford & Eleanor Hobba
 Patrick & Carol Hunt
 Joyce & Peter Hutchings
 Richard & Penelope Lloyd Jones
 Anthony & Susan Jordan
 Robin & Allen Kerr
 Tom Kerr
 G Warwick, S & E Lahey

Ms Therese Elizabeth Lalor
 Mrs Rita Lawrie
 Heather & Jim Leedman
 Stuart Leonard
 Mrs Anne Lewis
 Heather Ann Macky
 Brenda & Hugh Malcolm
 Susan Marks
 Erica Muir & John McCaffery
 Andrew & Anne Moore
 Elizabeth & Noel Moorhouse
 Ms Sonia Morabito
 Ms Kamini MuttuKumaru
 Melitta & Charles Nicholls
 Dr Charles & Mrs Valerie Noble
 Ms Anne O'Hehir
 Elaine & John Olive
 Jennifer & Des Page
 Elizabeth & David Pearce
 Graeme & Donna Pepper
 Mr Evan Pepper
 contentgroup/David Pembroke
 Mr Philip Piggin
 Ms Jacqueline Pinkava
 Rev Gary & Mrs Rosemary Piper
 Anne & Terence Polleycutt
 Frederik & Catherine Polman
 Joy & William Roberts
 Simon Roberts
 Anthony & Susan Robson
 Mark & Melenie Ross
 Cassie Stephens
 Mrs Lilian May Stinear
 Dr Jennifer Thompson
 Karen & Gerardus Van Dooren
 Julie Wade
 Ms Barbara Frances Walker
 Ms Heather Wallace
 Dylan Walton
 Mr Stephen Watter
 Judith & Peter Webb
 Diane & James Whiteford
 John & Jeannie Whittaker
 Mrs Gillian Wilde

Members and Friends Evening

Our next members and friends evening will be on Wednesday 22nd August. Dr Peter Dowling, our Heritage Officer, was Group Leader on the recent National Trust Tour to Greece. He will give a presentation of the tour covering the history and archaeology of Ancient Greece. Join us while we visit the Minoan and Mycaenean civilizations to more modern times.

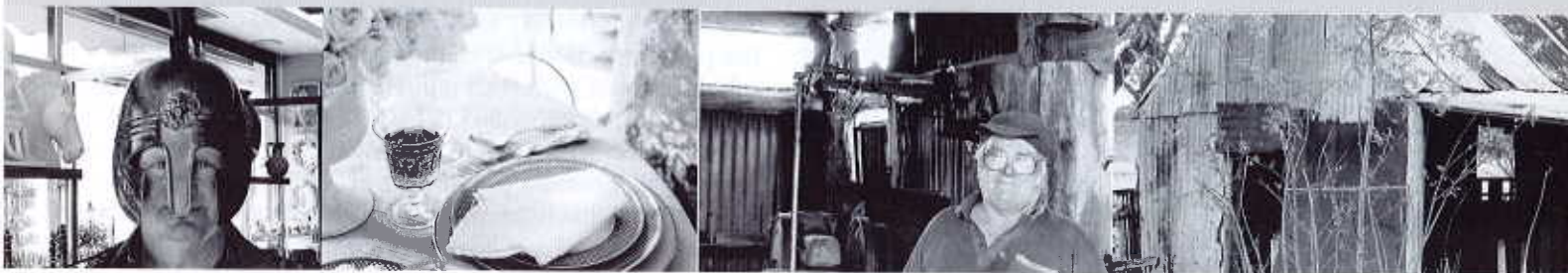
Date	Wednesday 22nd August 2007
Time	5.30 pm
Place	Menzies Room National Archives
Cost	\$10.00 Members \$12.00 Friends

Members who joined us between July 2006 and the end of February 2007 are invited to attend the evening free of charge and will be receiving an invitation. Please call 6230 0533 for bookings.

Meet your President and Council

Our President and Council invites all members to come and meet them at one of the oldest, and believed to be the oldest complete building in Bungendore – 'The Beehive'. This 1859 Inn is substantially intact and harbors an interesting history. Council welcomes all members to have a pleasant afternoon in Bungendore, meet their President and Council, enjoy a refreshing afternoon tea and learn more about the Beehive's history with guided tours. While there, enjoy many of the benefits Bungendore offers on the day, including the antique shop and the famous woodworks. We hope that many members will come and share the day with us.

Date	Sunday 23rd September 2007
Time	2.30 for 3pm
Place	'The Beehive' 26 Molonglo Street Bungendore NSW
Cost	\$7.50 Members



Christmas Cocktails

The National Trust is very grateful for all the support we receive from John Gale, and after the tour of the gardens last year we realise just how lucky he was in the 2003 bushfires. We are pleased that 'Huntly' is well on the road to recovery. The change in the timing of last year's event, from Saturday evening to Sunday afternoon, was welcomed by many. The bus will operate again this year for a small fee, as this service was also welcomed, particularly by those who do not have transport. Why not come out and enjoy the afternoon wandering around the property and relax in the peaceful surroundings prior to the hustle and bustle of Monday? Drinks and refreshments included.

Date	Sunday 18th of November 2006
Time	3pm until 5pm
Cost	\$20.00 members
	\$25.00 non members
Bus	\$10 for the return trip

Volunteers Lunch

Mugga Mugga has been selected again for our volunteer's luncheon, thanks again to Historic Places. The facilities there are very good, and full use of the kitchen certainly makes our job a lot easier. There is ample room under cover, so that the event will go ahead regardless of the weather. For all those who have volunteered their time for the National Trust in the past twelve months please phone the office to be placed on the list. This luncheon is for you, in appreciation for the time you have given the Trust. This event pays tribute not only to National Trust Volunteers, but to members of the Trust who are volunteers at Lanyon, Calthorpes' House and Mugga Mugga.

Day	Tuesday
Date	4th December
Time	12 for 12.30

All volunteers will receive their invitations in the mail. Could you please RSVP to the office or the shop at Old Parliament House. At this event we recognise those members who have volunteered their time for a continuous period of ten years or more. Could you please advise the office if you qualify for your 10 years certificate.

The Shop News

By the time this has been published our annual stock-take will be well and truly over. On behalf of Barbara, Margaret and myself we would like to thank all our volunteers for all their friendship and support during the past year. A special thank you the following for their use of their fingers and toes in the stocktake: Alla Reynolds, Paddy Sly, Pauline Avis, Barbara Hawke, Margaret Howard, Margaret Roseby, Margaret Bradshaw, Margaret Mitchell, Peter Dowling, Pam Quick, Dianne Lantry, Robin Blake, Joan Pitt, Pearl Moyseyenko and Robyn Hughes. We counted 77, 966 items.

I have not been in the shop as much in the last few months but Barbara and Margaret, well what can I say, where would the shop be without you both, thank you very much for looking after our faithful family and the shop. As yet we do not know the final results of the figures but the shop has been running to budget.

The Prime Ministers' Centre is now open on the Senate side of Old Parliament House. This centre provides a national focus for research in the field of Australian prime ministerial history. It works collaboratively with relevant cultural institutions to improve access to prime ministers' personal and official records. The centre also offers scholarships to university students and established researchers.

While in the house visit the 'Scarred and Strengthened: Australians in the Great Depression' exhibition in the House Gallery. This exhibition, on until 28th November this year, reveals what life was like for Australians during one of the most testing periods in our history.

We can take your payments for memberships, tours and functions and we have free parking and free entry to Old Parliament House when you visit the shop and café.

Dianne Dowling

Farewell to Chris

Chris Davies our office manager has resigned to go back to the medical profession as a student. She has enrolled in the Community & Health Development Course at Canberra University. Chris has only been with us for eighteen months but during that time she took up the challenge of the transition period between Executive Officers and learning something new (computers). Chris has been an integral link between our members and the office and has also played a vital role on committees. I am sure that all members would join me in wishing Chris all the best with her studies.

HERITAGE TODAY

GALLIPOLI

After the tour of Greece the Executive Director and the Heritage Officer visited the Anzac battlefield sites of Gallipoli (see the article, "Gallipoli – The current state of roads and the presence of exposed human bones in the Anzac area – who is responsible?", published in the latest edition of Trust News).

Of particular note at Gallipoli was the current state of roads in the Anzac Cove area. Despite the 2005 road works and the subsequent controversy they raised in Australia in which the Trust played its part, the main access road leading up to Anzac Cove is still in a state of disrepair with large sections remaining unsealed.

There is obviously more work to be done on this section of road given the huge amount of traffic (particularly large coaches) it receives daily. Another concern of the Trust is the unrecovered remains of Anzac soldiers. During the visit human bone pieces were found eroding from one of the forward Anzac trench lines on the edge of an extremely busy road.

The unrecovered remains of our Anzacs can often be found throughout the battlegrounds and in many cases nature is allowed to take its course without further intervention. But when they are plainly visible on the sides of busy roads and are at risk of damage by the wheels of vehicles or even worse, unscrupulous collectors, it is a different matter. As a result the Trust has made a formal approach to the Australian Government asking what measures are in place to collect and respectfully inter the remains of our Anzacs which are at risk.

HERITAGE AT RISK

State and Territory Top Ten lists of Our Heritage at Risk were released on April 18th, World Heritage Day, and the National Top Ten Heritage Most at Risk list will be announced in November 2007. We have contributed several nominations for selection to the National List of Endangered Places

- *Register of the National Estate
- *Canberra Garden City
- *Heritage Places in the ACT
- *Belconnen Naval Transmitting Station
- *Cameron Offices

For further details of the Heritage at Risk Programme see: www.heritageatrisk.org.au

DRAFT AMENDMENT 53-ALBERT HALL PRECINCT

The public reaction to this amendment has been bubbling along with strong public objection to the proposed developments. On May 24 the National Trust, in association with the newly formed Friends of the Albert Hall, hosted a public meeting and discussion on the proposed amendment and its possible effects on the Albert Hall. The Trust has also submitted a detailed comment on the proposed development around the building.

ACT HERITAGE GRANTS PROGRAM 2007-2008

The Trust has submitted grant applications for the following projects

- *Edlington Oral History Transcripts
- *Digitisation of Lyall Gillespie's Archive material
- *Register of the National Estate -
ACT Places on Designated Land
- *Women's Lives – Living in the early years of Canberra
- *Oral History of Eddy Green – Tidbinbilla pioneer family
- *Rock Valley, Tidbinbilla – Garden Landscape Plan
- *Living photographic library – ACT National Trust.

ACTPLA DRAFT RECONSTRUCTED TERRITORY PLAN

The Trust lodged (Friday 1 June 2007) a letter of comments to the ACT Planning and Land Authority on its draft reconstructed Territory Plan document. The newly reconstructed plan is supposed to cut through the red tape of development applications and clarify development regulations. The Trust is alarmed that the draft restructured plan is not, as is being publicly stated, a restructure without policy change, but in fact contains substantial policy changes which have the potential of major impacts on our heritage values. The draft report has met with a great deal of criticism from other organisations including the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, the Planning Institute of Australia and the ACT Law Society. The Planning Minister, Andrew Barr, is now reconsidering the direction of the draft reconstructed plan.

OTHER HERITAGE ISSUES

During the next few months we will be keeping an eye on the progress of

- *Albert Hall and Draft Amendment 53
- *Draft Amendment 66 – Diplomatic Mission Yarralumla (the Trust has commented on this proposal)
- *Parliamentary Vista study
- *Fire Trails in Namadgi National Park
- *Variation 287 – future use of Gold Creek Homestead (the Trust has commented on this proposal)
- *The ACT Parklands development

Dr Peter Dowling
Heritage Officer
July 2007

VICTORIAN REGIONAL GALLERY TOUR

On Monday 16 April, 2007, forty people started off on a tour of the Regional Art Galleries of Victoria, and, happily, much more. What turned out to be an interesting and harmonious group was drawn from members of the National Trust, Volunteer Guides from the National Gallery of Australia, and members of the University of the Third Age (U3A). Some were members of all three organisations.

Pamela Weiss, who planned and guided the tour, is one of those people who enjoy and contribute to the voluntary arm of the three organisations. And what a superb job she did! After two reconnaissance trips to assess the best route, the most comfortable accommodation offering good food, and visits to public and privately owned galleries, Pamela offered the tour. In a very short time the forty seats were occupied by expectant and eager travelers.

The staff at each gallery greeted us warmly, providing guided tours, and/or an introductory talk by the Gallery's Director. Several put on a grand morning tea spread - true country hospitality. This trip was a tour for the gastronome as well as the art lover. And what a visual feast our regional galleries offer. Australian art from early colonial to contemporary, as well as the specialised collections within each gallery. The National Glass Collection in the impressive purpose-built gallery in Wagga Wagga, the Historical Museum in Castlemaine, and the Ceramics Collection in Shepparton to name but a few.

The poignant remains of the Eureka Flag hang proudly in the Ballarat Gallery - its symbolism and legacy brought to life by the 'Blood on the Southern Cross' Sound and Light Show we experienced at Sovereign Hill that night. The gallery in this once gold-rich city is the oldest purpose built gallery structure in Australia still in use. It was the first to operate outside a capital city, with additions and extensions carried out in the 19th and 20th centuries. The area of the original 1890 structure has been doubled. The current program includes a series of Sunday afternoon concerts, a concert given by Slava and Leonard Gregorian as part of their national tour, and a series of lunchtime lectures. Our provincial galleries are anything but 'provincial'. They are dynamic institutions offering mind, heart and soul food to the viewing public.

No visitor to North East Victoria can escape the presence of the mythological Ned Kelly. We walked and talked the Kelly 'Siege and Capture' site in Glenrowan, admired the fine Kelly tapestry in the beautifully sited Benalla Gallery, and were confronted with many Sidney Nolan inspired iconic head-dress images throughout the region.

As Australia approached Federation there was a need for heroes to forge our national identity. Every nation has its mythology and it seems that, regardless of whether Kelly was criminal or hero, he has become one of our most potent national symbols.

A rarity in the galleries we visited was the Trustee-owned and Committee-managed Gallery and Museum of Castlemaine. The gallery collects Australian art, but this is spread over a range of art media. It includes many significant works by Australian artists of Impressionist, Edwardian, Modern and Contemporary Schools. The quite extensive historical museum housed in the gallery, contains a wealth of objects illustrating the lifestyle of many of our early settlers.

Gold Rush money certainly contributed to several Victorian galleries, but Bendigo must be near the top of the list of those which gained most. Its strong holding of Australian art is complemented by an outstanding collection of 19th century European painting and sculpture, and a fine collection of 18th and 19th century English Decorative Arts, primarily silver, porcelain and furniture. The gallery building itself has grown from its early days in the 'Orderly Room' of the Victorian Troops Cavalry (the present Bolton Room) to become the largest in regional Victoria.

On the homeward journey we had a surprise stop at the Lanigan Abbey and Bandamora Art Gallery overlooking the town of Gundagai. If the High Victorian period is to your taste, then this historic heritage and National Trust property is the place for you.

As with the rest of the trip, we arrived home on schedule. Forty happy people gave Pamela a rousing thankyou and many asked when the next big adventure will be. Hopefully soon...

Thank you to Pamela Weiss and the ACT National Trust of Australia.

Marcia Fletcher
Tour Participant, Victorian Regional Galleries
6th June 2007

Do you have an interesting article or a point of view that you would like published in the magazine. If so send it to info@act.nationaltrust.org.au

TRAVELS WITH THE TRUST

2007 SERIES

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Matinee Concerts August and December 2007

Following the success of the first of three concerts from the 2007 subscription series, you can still reserve a place for the remaining concerts in August and December. The package comprises return travel to the Sydney Opera House by coach, a morning tea stop on the way down, and dinner at Mittagong on the return trip, as well as your concert ticket. Lunch in Sydney is not included but the tour allows approximately 2 hours between arriving in Sydney and the start of the concert, with plenty of opportunities to enjoy a lunch of your own choice at The Rocks or The Quay, or nearer the Opera House at northern Macquarie St.

Concert Details

Thursday 23 August 2007

Rimsky-Korsakov *Capriccio Espagnol*
Tchaikovsky *Romeo & Juliet Fantasy Overture*
Prokofiev *Romeo & Juliet Suite*

Thursday 6 December 2007

Wagner *Siegfried Idyll*
Berg *Violin Concerto (To the Memory of an Angel)*
Schubert *Symphony no 9 The Great C Major*

COWRA IN THE SPRING

in conjunction with Travelscene, Canberra City
Weekend Tour 22-23 September 2007

There is a lot more to Cowra than the famous Japanese Gardens. The first day of this weekend bus tour, Saturday, will concentrate on the 'Japanese' side of the Cowra story – the WW2 history including visiting the War Cemetery and Nagakura Park, lunch at a Japanese restaurant, the Japanese Garden (in spring the gardens are outstandingly beautiful) and the Cultural Centre.

On Sunday we will see some of the Aussie side of things – some of the famous Cowra wineries such as 'The Mill' and 'Mulligans' (with a chance to sample a drop and pick up a few additions for your cellar), Iandra Castle at Greenthorpe for lunch and the JD Jam Factory at Young on the way home.

To reserve your place, please phone the National Trust (ACT) on 6230 0533, or email to info@act.nationaltrust.org.au

An initial \$50 as an 'expression of interest' payment will secure your place.

Full Cost	\$295 NT members
	\$300 U3A members
	\$305 non-members

Spring in Hall - Heritage Walk

October 2007 -Step into Spring and join the Hall Heritage Walking Tour!

Hall village is named after Henry Hall who was the first resident landholder of the Ginninderra district. Hall township was proclaimed in 1882 and the first land sale occurred in 1886. Several of the original buildings established soon after that date are included in the heritage walk. Features of the walk include the General Store; the village well (Hall was without a town water supply until 1967); churches; Hall Primary School (recently closed); and several original residences. In 1980 a by-pass was built around Hall to divert the Barton Highway, which had run through the centre of the village. This has helped in preserving the rural village character. Hall is surrounded by open country and is visually isolated from any other developments. Afternoon tea (at a local café) will be provided at the conclusion of the walk.



Date	A Sunday in October (date TBA)
Time	2.00 - 3.30 pm
Cost	TBA (includes afternoon tea)



WINTER FESTIVALS IN NORTHERN JAPAN

in conjunction with Travelscene Canberra City
February 2008 for two weeks

Special celebrations of winter are an important part of the culture of Japan and the Sapporo 'Yuki Matsuri' (the Sapporo Snow Festival) in February each year has long been a famous, 'must see' item on the Japanese calendar. Detailed sculptures ranging from a giant snow replica of a Japanese castle to a Chinese dragon fill a large park in the centre of the city and there are musical and cultural performances throughout the day.

But many other Japanese cities have special winter festivals so this tour will start with a weekend at the Sapporo festival then come south, visiting other winter festivals in the northern provinces. We also propose to spend some time in and around Tokyo and to visit Nikko, the site of some famous temples and cultural precincts.

The \$6,500 cost of the tour includes all travel (return flights to Japan, and a 'Japan Rail Pass' throughout the fortnight); all accommodation (including 3 nights at traditional 'ryokans'); and all dinners and breakfasts.

Travelscene
Canberra City

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VISITING THE VIKINGS

in conjunction with Travelscene Canberra City
Departing 6th August 2008, approx 31 days

Following previous archaeological and history tours to Turkey, Egypt and this year to Greece, with archaeologist Dr Peter Dowling, the National Trust in conjunction with Travelscene, is planning another tour based on a similar theme.

The itinerary will focus on Viking history and culture in Scandinavia and Great Britain. The tour will be in two parts. Part one will take in Denmark, Norway and Sweden and will include a cruise in one of Norway's World Heritage fiords, a visit to see Denmark's famous bog body, Tollund Man; a three night stay on the Swedish World Heritage listed island of Gotland and tours of museums to see the famous Viking ships.

The second part will take in Helsinki, and three nights in the marvellous city of St Petersburg in Russia. Then on to York, England, to visit this city founded by the Vikings and experience the Jorvik Viking Centre where you can get face to face with the Vikings.

Tour participants will have the option of doing part one of the tour or continuing on to do part two. *Note:* this option does not extend to doing only part two.

Cost: Full Tour \$19,250 pp
Part One \$14,750 pp

Wait List only at time of going to print.
For a more detailed itinerary visit our website.

For further details of any of these tours
Phone 02 6230 0533
(Fax 02 6230 0544)

Visit: www.act.nationaltrust.org.au
Email: info@act.nationaltrust.org.au
Secure your place with an 'Expression of Interest' fee payable to National Trust (ACT)
\$50pp local tours
\$100pp for o/seas tours

TRAVELS WITH THE TRUST REGISTRATION FORM

National Trust of Australia (ACT) PO Box 1144, Civic Square ACT 2608 phone (02) 6230 0533

TOUR	NAME	EOI \$	BAL \$	TRUST MEMBER?	COACH POINT?

PLEASE ADVISE GROUP LEADER OF INDIVIDUAL NEEDS
PLEASE CIRCLE FORM OF PAYMENT

DIET MOBILITY OTHER CONDITION
CASH CHEQUE B/CARD M/CARD VISA AMEX DINERS

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT INFORMATION

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CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRES ____ / ____ SIGNATURE _____

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Processing date _____

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SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

contact your tour leader to discuss individual requirements

TRAVELLERS NOTE

Whilst the National Trust (ACT) maintains Public Liability Insurance Cover, it is necessary to remind applicants that most activities involve some element of risk. Bushwalking, in particular, is an inherently dangerous activity and requires a reasonable level of fitness. Whilst the National Trust (ACT) will endeavour to protect your safety, it cannot remove all dangers. Anyone undertaking activities should be aware that they are participating at their own risk. The National Trust (ACT) must also assume that each applicant has levels of acuity, mobility and fitness appropriate to the particular activity.

PROCESSING YOUR BOOKING

Although requests for further details will be posted out as soon as possible, please note that activity leaflets, receipts, etc, may only be posted out a few weeks before each activity. Places are reserved in order of receipt, provided subsequent payments are received by the date (s) advised.

DISCOUNTS/CONCESSIONS

Although not always possible (particularly with overseas tours) the Trust aims to offer reduced rates as follows: discounts for members to reward Trust membership; concession rates for Seniors Card(Gvt), pensioners and full-time students; junior rates for children (under 12 yrs). All quoted prices include applicable GST.

TOUR WITHDRAWAL CONDITIONS

Withdrawal after the close of bookings may incur a \$25 fee.

EXTERNAL OPERATORS

In order to ensure that applicants for the more expensive tours receive protection under the Travel Compensation Fund against default by external suppliers and agents, and acting on the advice of the ACT Registrar of Agents, payments for such tours, other than the Trust's EOI, will need to be paid to the relevant travel agent. As of 1 July, this applies to all Trust tours which extend beyond one day. Full details will be advised to each applicant. As of 1 July, Travelscene Canberra City (operated by Jetaway World Pty Ltd – licence no. 18800203) is appointed as the Trust's travel agent for such tours, for the next two years.

ANCIENT GREECE AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL TOUR OF MAINLAND GREECE, CYCLADIC ISLANDS & CRETE

In April, 2007, a group of National Trust tourists led by Dianne and Peter Dowling departed for Greece. The group had met twice before at a 'getting-to-know you' dinner and a slide evening. Peter, three months prior to our departure, had given us an extended reading list, hence with our minds stimulated, can I say we were calmly excited for the archaeology adventures that awaited us. The flights from Canberra, Sydney, Singapore and Athens went smoothly.

Our tour of Athens began, collected by our coach driver, Zisses and tour guide, Voula, who both proved to be excellent and proficient in their roles. All warmed to their cheerful and friendly personalities. The city tour included the Kallimarmaro Stadium, site of the original Panathenaic Stadium built 330-329 BC, was restored for the start of the first Modern Olympic Games in April 1896; the Presidential Palace, once the residence of the Royal Family 1890-1973, and now of the President of Greece, guarded by Evzones, the traditionally dressed Royal Palace Guards. Modern day buildings, such as Parliament House, National Archaeological Museum, and Benaki and Byzantine Museums were also pointed out to us.

Our visit ended that morning at the Acropolis. In the mid 5th century BC Perikles persuaded the Athenians to begin a programme of work that has come to represent the political and cultural achievements of Greece. The work transformed the Acropolis with three contrasting temples: the Temple of Athena Nike; the Erechtheion, including the Porch of the Caryatids; and the Parthenon. The Parthenon was built primarily to house the 12m high chryselephantine (ivory and gold) statue of Athena Parthenos, sculpted by Pheidias. Over the centuries it has been used as a church, a mosque, and a Turkish arsenal, and has suffered severe damage. Other monumental buildings on the eastern side include the Theatres of Dionysos and Herodes Atticus. A new museum is currently under construction. In the evening we could see the floodlit Parthenon from our hotel balconies.

The next day our week long trip of mainland Greece started in earnest. We headed west along the scenic highway, crossing the Corinth Canal, constructed in 1883 and continued to the Sanctuary of Epidauros. The magnificent theatre, built in the 4th century BC for the performance of Greek plays and drama, is renowned for its near-perfect acoustics. It has the only circular orchestra (stage) to have survived from antiquity. Volunteers from our group read portions of plays from Homer's Iliad, but had to compete with other very vocal groups!

After lunch we arrived at Mycenae, where our eagerly awaited archaeological visit of the palace began. The fortified palace complex of Mycenae, uncovered by the archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann, is one of the earliest examples of sophisticated citadel architecture. The Mycenaean, a Late Bronze Age culture, spanned the years 1700-1100 BC.

The enormous stones used in the fortifications are beyond belief. The Lions Gate Entrance derives its name from the two carved lions above the lintel. The Beehive Tomb at the bottom of the hill outside the Palace walls is where the Mycenaean nobles were buried. The impressive tomb is cone shaped, 14 metres high and 13 metres in diameter and constructed with large marble stones.

After such a thrilling and stimulating afternoon we drove west across the very scenic landscape of the Peloponnese to Olympia, which is situated on the coast of the Ionian Sea in the western Peloponnese. There was a settlement here during the Bronze Age, however, its importance dates to the coming of the Dorians and their worship of Zeus, the chief and most powerful of all Greek gods. The Olympic Games were established in 776 BC, and held every four years in mid July - nude males only competing in sprinting, boxing, wrestling, equestrian and athletic events. Women were entirely excluded from the events. By the end of the reign of Roman emperor Hadrian (AD 117-38) the sanctuary had ceased to have religious or political significance.

The following day, was a public holiday in Greece and the archaeological sites closed, so our itinerary was changed. Voula, our tour guide extraordinaire, suggested we visit the Monastery of Osios Loukas, about one hour drive from Delphi. The monastery is dedicated to a local hermit, Holy Luke. Architecturally it is one of medieval Greece's most important buildings. Built in 1011, it is an extension of an earlier church dating from AD 944.

Our next experience was ancient Delphi. According to legend, when Zeus released two eagles from opposite ends of the world, their paths crossed in the sky above Delphi, establishing the site as the centre of the earth. Renowned as a dwelling place for the God Apollo, from the end of the 8th century BC, individuals from all over the ancient world visited Delphi to consult the Oracle on what course of action to take, both in public and private life. The walk up to the Temple of Apollo was quite steep, but worth the effort and one was rewarded with magnificent views over the whole site and valley below. As was our custom after exploring the ancient sites we visited the fantastic on-site museum which holds one of the finest collections of original ancient Greek art in the world. We saw outstanding sculptures, friezes from the Temple of Apollo, capped by the unique masterpiece, The Bronze Charioteer.

Meteora, where sandstone pinnacles soar into the sky. A geological phenomenon, these pinnacles or 'soaring rocks' were first used as a religious retreat, when in 985 AD, a hermit occupied a large cave. Others joined him in the 14th century and up to twenty-three monasteries were built over this period. By the end of the 18th century many had fallen into ruins with only six remaining today. We visited the Varlaam Monastery founded 1518 and still used by the monks today. We climbed many, many steps to the monastery entrance and were rewarded in the central room of worship with magnificent frescoes depicting the life of Christ on the walls, and the dome, of the Transfiguration and Resurrection of Christ. Leaving Meteora we drove into Macedonia to Vergina.

Continued Over...



Vergina is the site of the Royal Tombs of Phillip II of Macedonia. Phillip was assassinated at Aegae thus opening the way for his son, Alexander the Great's reign. Precious weapons and costly bronze, ivory, silver and gold ornaments and vessels accompanied the deceased. The main feature of Phillip II's tomb is the large Doric façade with a mural frieze, painted in the 4th century, depicting a many-figured hunting scene set within a verdant grove and remarkable for its composition and colouration.

A short drive the next morning brought us to Meiza, the site of the School of Aristotle, where the great philosopher taught Alexander the Great. The school is set in a treed grove with a hilly backdrop of rocks and caves where the students had their dormitories. Sitting on stone steps, as the students would have done, Peter, and volunteers read passages from Aristotle's teaching, and one's imagination could picture the scene, bringing tears to Peter's eyes.

A newly constructed museum and monument of Aristotle has just been completed, but the building is not yet open to the public. From here we drove to the lakeside town of Kastoria in Macedonia. Kastoria is the Greek word for beavers, and these little animals, living in the lake, brought a prosperous fur trade in the 17th and 18th centuries. Another notable feature of Kastoria is the number of Byzantium mosques.

Pella, the site of the Palace of Phillip II, and once the flourishing capital of Macedonian Kingdom in 4th century BC. The royal court was moved here from Aegae (near Vergina) in 410 BC by King Archelaos who ruled from 413-399 BC. It is here that Alexander the Great was born in 356 BC. We viewed outstanding pebbled mosaics, noted to be the best in Greece, including the famous design of Dionysos riding a panther. The visit to the small museum afterwards also displayed further beautiful mosaics, our excitement causing our digital cameras to work overtime!

From Pella we drove to Thessaloniki, Greece's second city. The Romans made it the capital of their province of Macedonia in 146 BC and in AD 395 it became part of the Byzantium Empire. In 1430 it was captured by the Turks who held it until 1912. It has a flourishing cultural life and is a major religious centre with an array of splendid churches and mosques. The walk around the harbour brought views of a shipping terminal and the city's famous attraction, the White Tower, once part of the city wall built by the Turks in 1430. Today it contains a collection of Byzantium icons and historical displays.

Our afternoon treat was the visit to the Archaeological Museum containing a host of treasures. The displays progress chronologically giving a clear picture of the area's history and a new wing, opened in 1980, contains the treasures found in the Royal Tomb at Vergina, including crowns and weapons belonging to Phillip II, and gold burial caskets.

One, emblazoned with the Macedonian Sun, held the bones of Phillip II. These gold crowns and artefacts are magnificent. If only our heads could retain what we were viewing! We returned to our hotel, enjoying a farewell dinner for Zisses and Voula who would be leaving us the following day. We had all come to love these two people, not only for their friendliness, but Zisses, for his faultless driving skills and, Voula's excellent knowledge of Ancient Greek history. Our meals at our Hotel were particularly Macedonian in taste.

After exploring northern and central Greece we left early for the long drive to Athens, calling in at the archaeological site at Dion, lying in the foothills of Mt Olympus, abode of Zeus. The snow capped mountain range, known as Mt Olympus extends over 20 kilometres, the highest peak being 2,917 metres. A group of Greek archaeological students were excavating a Roman villa site, digging down the stone layers to the ruins of the Hellenistic period 323 BC – 150 BC. Dion proliferated with red, yellow and white wildflowers in bloom making the otherwise flat site very colourful.

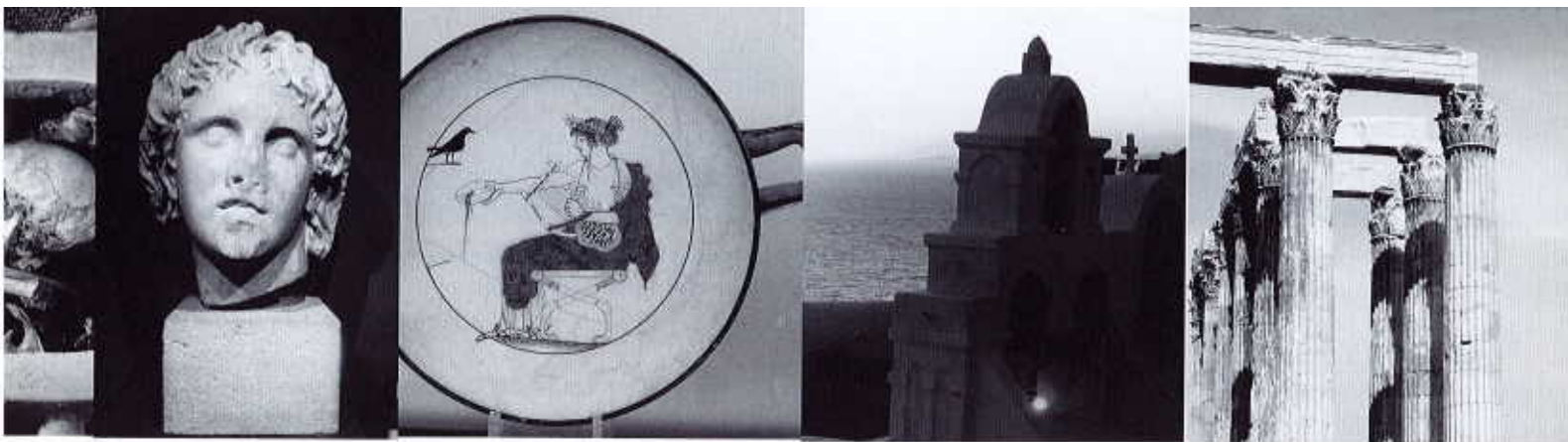
Further south we came to the Pass of Thermopylae. In 480 BC an army of over 7,000 soldiers under the command of Leonidas I of Sparta met an overwhelming force from Persia. Expecting the attack to come through the pass, Leonidas was deceived and the attack came over the mountains, massacring the Greek and Spartan force. An impressive bronze statue of King Leonidas stands on the side of the highway. A monument to the soldiers on the opposite hill reads, "Travellers if you go to Sparta, tell them we are here and have died on our shields".

Another battle took place here in 1941 when Germany invaded Greece. In the coach prior to our visit, Peter read heart-rending stories from Australian soldiers defending Greece and nurses' attempts to help the injured.

Back in Athens we visited the National Archaeological Museum opened in 1891. The superb collection, displayed chronologically, proceeds through the Neolithic and Cycladic, Minoan and Mycenae, Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods. The bronze, marble, ivory, silver and gold artefacts and sculptures are magnificent and one could spend days exploring this wonderful collection.

Then our trip to the Cycladic Islands. Arriving at Mykonos, the afternoon was free, to relax, explore, shop or enjoy the waters of the Mediterranean!

The next day, an optional visit to Delos, a small rocky island, situated in the heart of the Aegean. Delos was the birthplace of Apollo and his twin sister Artemes, two of the most important deities. The early inhabitants in 2,500 BC built simple dwellings on a low hill; the Mycaeneans came later in 1,500 BC. Delso sanctuary was established 9th century BC and reached its glory between the 7th and 4th centuries BC when Greeks would gather to worship their Gods.



On a terrace nearby, stand the famous reconstructed sculptured white lions erected in 7th century BC, the originals are in the island's museum. After 167 BC the island developed rapidly, bringing great prosperity through trading to become the commercial centre of the world. In 88 BC it fell into decline, as it was looted due to its prosperity and pirated by the Romans.

Our trip to Santorini by flying cat was no comparison with the delightful cruise trip two days earlier from Athens. Speed is the name of the game these days to transport the number of tourists coming to the Greek Islands. Nothing prepared us for the stunning sight and unique landscape that awaited us on arrival at Santorini with its steep rimmed volcanic caldera, cars and coaches negotiating the narrow winding roads, churches, houses and villas perched on the sides and top, colours of white, blue, pinks and golds. Santorini's existence, yesterday and today is bound up with the volcano. In 1500 BC a series of earthquakes followed by a huge eruption wiped out the inhabitants of the island. Eight eruptions have been documented since, the last being in 1950, causing only slight problems for the inhabitants. The peak of a second volcano in the former caldera was the site for our excursion the following day.

Our group embarked on a small boat to the much anticipated volcano. A retired geologist from our group stimulated our minds to what we were about to see. The climb to the top was difficult in parts due to the steepness and slippery surface of volcanic ash on the paths but the experience of standing on an active volcano was worth it all. Peter showed his true colours by helping those in the group who found the descent difficult. Returning to the ship we cruised to a bay where hot springs gave a delightful experience for those who chose to swim and appreciate the cool and warm waters of the caldera.

Heraklion on Crete was our next destination. The following day we travelled to Rethymno, Crete's third largest town once occupied by the Venetians. Initially, we visited the Archaeological Museum, displaying finds from Minoan and Roman periods. Later we walked through the narrow streets, made colourful with vines and geraniums grown in pots outside shops and villas. Some visited a family-run bakery business operating since the 1560s, and noted for its delicious baklavas, which we sampled and shared with approval. From here we drove to our lunch stop at Chani, again a very pretty town, Crete's second largest. Colourful buildings ring a sheltered harbour, once guarded by Venetian fortifications.

After lunch we drove to Suda Bay Cemetery. Suda Bay was the site of a German airborne invasion in 1941. Many Greek, Australian and allied lives were lost defending the island. As we wandered through the cemetery, a very humbling experience indeed, we felt proud of these young men who had given their lives to help their Greek comrades. The cemetery is maintained in excellent condition today.

Lawns neatly mowed and rows of gravestones are circled with alternate plantings of roses, gazanias and herbs. From here we drove back slowly to Heraklion, quiet in thought and contemplation.

Knossos was our next treat on the itinerary. This renowned site was once the centre of the Minoan civilization, a Bronze Age empire, powerful in the Aegean. The excavations on the site were carried out by an eminent British archaeologist, Sir Arthur Evans between the years 1900-1929. His reconstruction work on parts of the site has brought him into much criticism, and debate continues today. Original floor mosaics, wall paintings, and reconstructed frescoes, fine in colour and composition, indicate a highly artistic workforce indeed and one can only marvel at the works of these brilliant craftsmen.

Then, our last full day on Crete, and in warm sunshine we travelled south to the archaeological sites of Gortys and Phaestos and the fertile Messara plains. These once great cities were settled by the Minoans and bear the traces of later Mycenaean, Greek, Roman and Byzantium occupations.

We first came to the Basilica of Agios Titos, established in 5th century AD and evidence of the presence of Christianity in Greece. We then walked to the odeon (theatre), built in 1 BC.

Its roof and walls provide a covering for the stone slabs inscribed with a code of law dating from 500 BC. The law codes relate mainly to family relationships and inheritance but include some criminal cases. These tablets are the oldest written legislative material in Ancient Greece, and were important not only for the rights of Greek citizens but also slaves. They proved an unforgettable sitting for us as Peter read (in English) sections of the code in front of the wall. At Phaestos the remains of a theatre, courtyard, grand stairway, temple, palace workshops, royal apartments, and storerooms can be seen. At the archive, in a row of mud-brick coffers, the now famous Phaestos Disc was discovered. Discovered in 1903, the disc displays a number of embossed symbols in circular composition believed to be the earliest form of writing and earliest known Minoan script. It remains undecyphered. The disc today is displayed in the Archaeological Museum in Heraklion.

Back once again in Athens, the group joined together to salute and thank Dianne and Peter for the physical and emotional energy they had expended to ensure the success of our Ancient Greece archaeology experience. Peter had said a few times previously, "I want you all to have fun and learn a bit". We certainly did. Thank you Dianne and Peter. I would recommend their tours to anyone who is thinking of travelling with the ACT National Trust.

by Jennifer Martin, tour participant
Photographs courtesy of D & P Dowling

NAMADGI



View from the ACT's highest peak, Mt Bimberi (Matthew Higgins)

Recently I was bushwalking in the Bobeyan valley, in the deep south of the ACT's Namadgi National Park. It had been a few years since I was last in this beautiful area and it was a great way to reconnect with the place's natural and cultural heritage.

As I walked out of the valley on a tempestuous, moody afternoon, and reflected on evidence of Aboriginal habitation over a time span almost uncountable, the ruins of the Brayshaw family's Bobeyan homestead, and various hut sites scattered here and there, I couldn't help but be reminded of the human past here. As the sun occasionally broke through and lit upon the green valley floor, the rich foliage of the black sallees along the edge of the timberline, the forests running up into the hills, and granite-slabbed Mt Gudgenby, I couldn't escape the natural beauty of a special part of the ACT. It was more like a John Glover painting than typical hard Australian light.

It is this combination of natural and cultural features that is for many of us a key attraction of Namadgi. Declared in 1984 a few years after the pioneering Gudgenby Nature Reserve and since expanded, Namadgi is listed on the Register of the National Estate. In recent days it has also been mooted as part of a World Heritage Listing of Australia's high country.

Ironically, at the same time controversy has arisen over plans to build new fire trails to improve fire-fighting access in the park in the wake of the terrible 2003 fires. The main fire trail proposal causing concern, especially among members of the National Parks Association ACT the community group which did more than any other to bring about a national park for the national capital – is that along Orroral Ridge. Located high up between the site of the former Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station to the east and Orroral Valley to the west, the ridge is a powerful place of big granite and big views. Despite the impact of the 2003 fires, the area is important, and there is concern that the trail development might destroy Aboriginal heritage in the area.

Proponents of the fire trail feel that this trail and several others planned for the park are needed in order to protect those very same qualities in the future. Although media reports state that the trail is not yet a 'done deal', concerns have been strongly expressed about the trail's potential impact on park values.

Like all management proposals for Namadgi, this one has to be judged against the likely outcome. If the benefits from such a trail can be proven and if no alternative location for such a trail can be found, then it might be justified.

On the other hand, if the values at risk of destruction are great and if the trail will destroy unique qualities in the park, the trail should not go ahead.

A healthy result from the present controversy will be the careful examination of each side of this argument and a better awareness among all parties both of Namadgi's natural and cultural values and park management requirements.

The park's values are many. Namadgi contains some of the most northern parts of the Australian Alps, with all that entails in terms of flora, fauna and landscapes. From the corroboree frogs at Ginini Flats to the snow-covered peak of Mt Bimberi, and from the Powerful owls of tall forests to the snowgrass gaps and wildflower dells that characterise many parts of the park, Namadgi's natural qualities are rich, despite 2003.

The park contains Canberra's main water catchment – the Cotter system – and the mountain streams provide aesthetic as well as physiological refreshment. Culturally, the park spans thousands of years of human occupation and use. Given that the Birrigai Rockshelter at nearby Tidbinbilla has been dated to 21,000 years, Aboriginal life in Namadgi clearly spans a vast amount of time. Rock art at Yankee Hat, Rendezvous Creek and other sites, the bora ring on Namadgi Peak, stone scatters and camp sites in numerous parts of the park all combine to present a rich picture of indigenous heritage. That Ngannawal people are today involved in management of the park reflects an ongoing connection.

Post-settlement heritage consists substantially of pastoral sites, ranging from numerous ruins – either standing chimneys or fallen hearth stones and perhaps a corner post, denoting what was once home to early settlers – to intact buildings like Orroral Homestead which, dating from the 1860s, is Namadgi's oldest. Dingo fences and sheep dips and yards extend the rural theme beyond dwellings. The Namadgi peaks had their share of fine horse riders, and prior to the bushfires there was an important collection of brumby trapyards, one of which survives.

Beyond pastoralism, recreational use of the area was reflected particularly by the 1938 Mt Franklin Chalet which, though destroyed by the fires, is succeeded by the array of hand-cut ski runs which still adorn Franklin and nearby Ginini and Little Ginini. The earliest days of the ACT are reflected in the border survey marks installed back around the time of Canberra's naming. At the opposite extreme are the interpreted sites of the Orroral and Honeysuckle Creek space tracking stations.

Namadgi's influence extends beyond the park boundaries. We look out at that mountain country every day from central Canberra. Canberra is indeed defined in part by its mountain backdrop, and much of this is composed of the peaks and valleys that are Namadgi (the rest being Tidbinbilla, and Brindabella National Park in NSW).

Namadgi provides recreational opportunities for those who venture into it. Members of the Canberra Alpine Club have skied and walked the mountains for decades. The National Parks Association and Canberra Bushwalking Club have run innumerable walks, as have other groups. It is through these sorts of activities that people have developed their own relationships with that mountain country, and so the park has assumed social value for Canberrans and others. It could even be said that Namadgi provides spiritual refreshment to those willing to open themselves to it.

In all these ways we are very lucky to have this great swathe of mountain country - over 110,000 hectares of it – in our backyard. Its management will always be developed through a process of interaction between its professional managers and the community which also has a stake in its future. In this way issues such as the fire trail referred to above, and the multitude of others which are part and parcel of any national park, will hopefully always be able to be resolved in a way which ultimately protects the park's values.

MATTHEW HIGGINS

Matthew Higgins is a professional historian. He has written numerous publications on the high country of New South Wales and The Australian Capital Territory.

Bobeyan Homestead ruin (Matthew Higgins)



EDUCATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Continued page 16, inside back cover...

Continued from inside cover...

That audience was no less vigorous in its opposition to the number and height of the proposed buildings in the development plan; to the land rezoning from cultural to 'commercial/hotel' use; to the major traffic changes planned; and to the inadequacies of the NCA's consultation process.

These meetings fuelled a campaign of opposition, with wide support for a petition calling for the withdrawal of DA53. Volunteers from residents' associations and the new Friends of the Albert Hall were gratified at the cooperation of local businesses, and overwhelmed at the responses of the hundreds of people who queued to sign at local markets. The market stalls provided a valuable public forum for discussing and clarifying the complex mix of Federal planning proposals, and management responsibilities spread across three ACT Government agencies. The heritage issues were easier to explain once the conservation management plan for the Albert Hall Heritage Precinct was finalised and made public late in April. And the petitioners proved a marvellous source of Albert Hall stories – never was civic action more fascinating than at those markets.

With the campaign for the NCA to withdraw DA53 in full swing, on 21 April 2007 the ACT Government called tenders for the management of the Albert Hall. The tender documents deepened concern about the civic and cultural future of the Hall, particularly a requirement that private management would be responsible for the urgent accumulated program of conservation and maintenance, effectively privatising a public building.

On 24 May, a few days after the Albert Hall petition with some 3,300 signatures was tabled in the House of Representatives, hundreds of people assembled in the Albert Hall for the public meeting called by the Friends of the Albert Hall. The resolutions passed were directives to both governments making clear the high value Canberrans place on participation in the shaping of their city and its national role.

Ironically, this latest episode in the civic history of the Albert Hall adds to its significance as a place where we can glimpse the vision for an Australian democracy. How Federal and ACT governments respond to the challenge of civic action is a measure of the distance between that vision and our reality.

Dr Lenore Coltheart is a heritage consultant practising in Canberra and is the founder of 'Friends of the Albert Hall'

Living Treasures - Connecting to Heritage

A major role of the National Trust is to foster public knowledge about and to conserve heritage places and objects. As part of this, the National Trust of Australia (ACT) is committed to raising awareness of heritage issues through education in schools.

Over the last three years, the Trust has run three competitions for secondary and primary students in the ACT and has supported and promoted participation by ACT schools in the National History Challenge.

This year's History Challenge was on the theme: *Australia's Heritage - Lessons From The Past*. Entries to the Challenge closed on 28 July and ACT prize-giving presentations will be held in October/November. National prizes, including the National Trust prize, will be awarded in December in Canberra.

The three ACT specific competitions focused on personal heritage from viewpoints of the entrants and older members of the community from diverse backgrounds. The competitions had differing themes mirroring the ACT Heritage Festivals, (Places in the heart, Connections and Living Treasures). All involved young people talking to older people about what was important to them. The competitions defined heritage as "what we value from the past and want to give to the future".

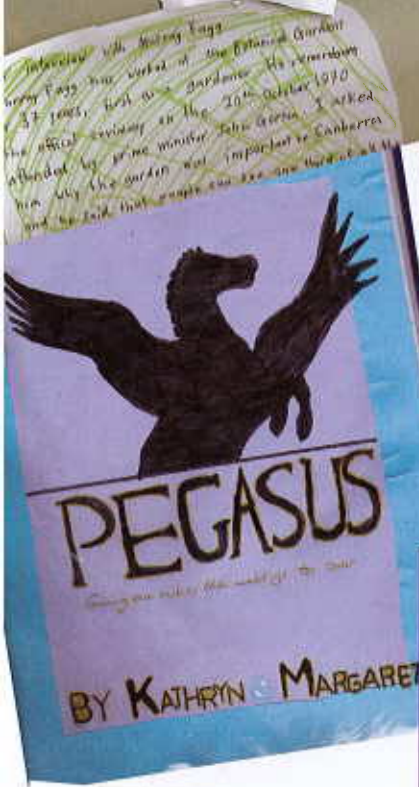
These competitions were funded by ACT Government CUPP grants in partnership with Department of Urban Services, Heritage Unit and ACT Heritage Library. Over the three years of the competition, over 100 students from 20 schools have submitted essays, stories, posters, Power Point presentations, audio tapes, videos and CD-ROMs, DVDs and websites on ACT and world heritage.

These entries have been collated into a series of three books, and winning entries from all three competitions will be placed onto the ACT Trust website. Last November, during the ACT Heritage Weekend, the first of the publications, Places In The Heart was launched at the presentation of prizes for the third competition, the two remaining publications, Connections and Living Treasures will be launched in September.

Maree Treadwell

The National Trust will be manning an information stall at Village Fair at Blundell's Cottage on 18th of August 2007
Please come and say hello, we would love to see you there

Telstra Tower



A selection of entries from the NATIONAL TREASURES competition, run by the National Trust ACT in 2006 for school children in the Canberra region. Clockwise: Botanical Gardens Poster by Will Kain from Macquarie Primary - War Memorial Poster by Adelina Berisha, Rin Rin Ly & Cordelia Rentsch from Macquarie Primary - Telstra Tower Poster & Report by Thomas Batch & Bhavi Shrestha from Macquarie Primary - War Memorial Poster by Melissa Keys & Albulena Osmani from Macquarie Primary - Multicultural Festival Poster by Sava Arsenjevic, Maruti Vadrevu & Nicholas Crawford from Macquarie Primary - The National Zoo and Aquarium Poster by Bridie Clark from Lyons Primary - Pegasus Riding School Book by Margaret Palazzo & Kathryn Lewis from Macquarie Primary - Corin Forest Book by Kimberley Bluett from Macquarie Primary - RSPCA Power Point Presentation by Emily Whittle from Macquarie Primary

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