



**National Trust of Australia (Victoria)**  
**Bendigo and Region Branch**

***April 2020 Newsletter***

***BENDIGO & REGION BRANCH MEETINGS AND EVENTS  
POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE DUE TO COVID 19***

***Some words from the Branch President***

***Dear members and supporters***

We hope you are keeping well and safe from the coronavirus. It is a very difficult time for everybody but as we have seen from world wars and the Great Depression of the 1930's time will heal, but unfortunately not overcome the feelings you have today.

While meetings and events have been postponed lovers of history and heritage can still explore these wonders through books and the internet, indeed, many of you are no doubt expanding your knowledge and continue working on issues through reading, writing and sharing your thoughts on important heritage matters.

It is unfortunate that the Australian Heritage Festival has been cancelled but some of these events will be held later in the year. Dr Denis Robertson and Professor Miles Lewis have committed to a future "Revival of Dr E. Graeme Robertson Cast Iron Collection" event. We look forward to spending some time with Wes and Pamela Vine at the Mandurang Valley Winery and the history of the Beehive Stores is still being collected. Perhaps someone might be enthused to write a book on the Beehive building as it appears no one has done this so far.

If you have an issue that you would like the Branch to tackle, perhaps now is a good time to share it with other members. Thanks for the feedback on the February newsletter. It is always rewarding when someone expresses their thoughts, no matter what they might be.

The newsletter gives you some updates on issues the Branch is working on and shares some stories of note. You will be notified when the Branch resumes its meetings.

***Peter Cox, President, 0447473674***

## ***Bendigo's Busiest Beehive***

The Bendigo Branch of the National Trust is asking people to contact the Branch if they have stories, photographs or artefacts relating to the Beehive Stores which operated from 1852 to 1987 in the Beehive Building in Bendigo.

National Trust Branch spokesperson and historian, Darren Wright said today "The Beehive Stores was one of the busiest department stores in Bendigo and certainly the longest to keep its doors open. It sold just about everything from haberdashery, clothing and crockery to furniture and household items. Locals were often heard to say if you cannot get it from the Beehive it wasn't worth having it or it didn't exist. It was a store renowned for keeping a good stock of items even if that stock was from previous decades. The history of the Beehive Stores is not well documented as there has not been a book written on its operation but we know that many locals worked and shopped there who have stories to tell." he said.

The Beehive Building is currently subject to a planning application to Heritage Victoria for the construction of a six storey hotel on the site in Hargreaves Mall. The Mining Exchange in Allan's Walk and the front section on Pall Mall are also both being re-developed and being repurposed.

"So these developments give the Bendigo community an opportunity to focus on the building's history and put together a collection of items that tell the story of this remarkable building. The National Trust Branch will display these items in a future event. The Branch will only require the items for one day." Mr Wright said.

People who can contribute items or stories can contact the Branch President, Peter Cox on 0447473674 or email [natrustbendigo@gmail.com](mailto:natrustbendigo@gmail.com)

Thank you to those people who provided information. Keep it coming!

Here is an article from the Beehive Centenary Booklet, 1952.

## **Beehive Stores Centenary 1852 – 1952**

"A Birthday is always an event varying in importance according to the views and inclinations of those concerned, but a one hundredth anniversary is invariably a matter of moment, and one of great interest to all. There is justifiable pride in the achievement of what is normally unattainable, and also in the thought of having bridged so long a period of history. What are the essentials for one hundred years of uninterrupted continuity of business? The energy and drive of successive partners, each carrying on where his predecessors left off, loyal hardworking staffs. Yes, but surely more than anything else, the emphasis must be on service. The Beehive believes that its long survival and outstanding progress are due in no small measure to the fact that its main consideration has always been service to clients.

That this will continue to be the aim of the Beehive goes without saying. Though the Beehive is now a Proprietary Company, this will not in any way affect the personal character of the business; the status may be changed- but not the policy.”

Edward W. Conn

(From the Foreword of the Centenary Booklet)

**WE GIVE THANKS  
TO OUR  
PIONEERS**

**BENDIGO'S  
ANNIVERSARY  
100<sup>TH</sup>**

WE ARE PROUD to have been associated with Bendigo in its March of Progress and to know that our business has grown with the City — from the first store photographed above to the spacious premises which we now occupy (pictured below), having a frontage of 66ft. in Pall Mall with a depth of 320ft. through to Hargreaves Street.

OUR STOCKS INCLUDE: Men's and Boys' Wear, Ladies' Frocks and Coats, Dress Goods, Millinery, Ladies' Underwear, Children's and Teen-age Apparel, Ladies' Footwear, Hosiery and Gloves, Neckwear, Ribbons and Laces, Haberdashery and Wools, Manchester, Soft Furnishings, Furniture and Floor Coverings, Crockery, Kitchenware, Ladies' Handbags, Toiletries, Sweets and Cigarettes.

**THE BEEHIVE**  
*The Store for Better Value*

## A personal recollection of the Beehive

Cheryl Axell (McLelland) was a teenager in 1966 working at the Beehive in ladies' wear. She says there was a big emphasis on customer service and her supervisor, Mrs Jack, maintained the high quality of service among all staff. Everything had to be just right with goods folded or hanging to perfection. There was a gentleman employed in the store who walked around between departments checking the performance of staff. There were hundreds of staff. The vacuum



money system was in operation at the time. Money was put in a container and sent through a pipe system to the office where it was receipted and sent back with change. There were no cash registers. Being a teenager at the time, the Store had an atmosphere of being very old. It was enjoyable and had the ambience of an old English store. The wives of farmers came in to shop. It was popular and fashionable. Cheryl went to Girton Grammar School and working at the Beehive was her first job. She went on to be a nurse. Cheryl's dad was head of the Chemistry Department at the Bendigo School of Mines.

### *Chewton's Wesleyan Church Needs Saving!*



The Mount Alexander Council is intent on disposing of the 1861 former Wesleyan Church by selling it privately. The Chewton Domain Society is interested in negotiating with council about a gifting of it to the community. We had a great turnout of Chewton people at the public forum before a recent council meeting. Council is aware of Chewton's interest! But we need to convince the 7 voting councillors that it should be gifted to the Chewton community. That may not be easy. Written submissions need to be sent to council asap. Council's CEO has emailed to say a viewing of the inside of the church will be organized shortly – so we can all see the interior that has been locked up for 8 or so years. The viewing will be organised once the coronavirus lockdown is over.

We have been using Facebook to update details as they become available. Look up Chewton.net on FB. <https://www.facebook.com/Chewtonnet-288889464550308/>

An application for this building to be put on the State Heritage Register has been sent to the Heritage Council of Victoria. Amazingly, no-one has done that during the 159 years that the church has survived – a genuine relic of the gold rush. And still with so much to offer the Chewton community, the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park and the State of Victoria. We used this process for heritage listing of the Monster Meeting site a few short years ago... let's hope for a similar result this time.

*John Ellis.*

Here is a message from a Maldon member, a good idea!

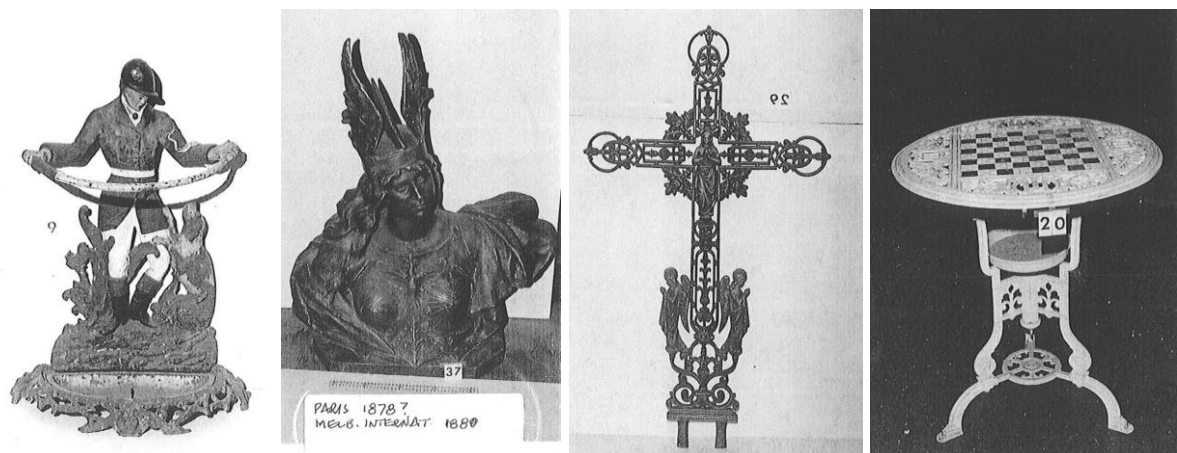
Dear All. @NTAV CEO Simon Ambrose announced cancellation Heritage Festival 2020 also offering refunds for NTAV ticketed events. Please do not take up offer. \$\$ raised would go to heritage protection, restoration, advocacy. The \$\$ still needed. Consider \$ spent as donation. Ta!

Our Branch now includes the former Mt Alexander Branch area- thanks -for these submissions. (Ed.)

## **Revival of the Dr E. Graeme Robertson Cast Iron Collection**

As mentioned above an event on this Collection will be organised later in the year. The Collection has been stored in Bendigo since 2002. The Branch has decided to promote the Collection and is looking for a site to house it in Bendigo. A large shed is required with forklift access would be ideal to display and loan items for restoration works across Australia. Any ideas?

Here are some interesting examples from the collection catalogue. Not just bathtubs and balustrades!



## ***Greater Bendigo City Council update on Heritage Issues.***

- World Heritage Listing of the Central Victoria Goldfields
- Bendigo City Centre Plan and Parking Strategy
- Bendigo City Centre Heritage Study – Stage 1

### **World Heritage Listing of the Central Victoria Goldfields**

There has been huge progress in the last 12 months. Using the highly successful serial listing of a dozen sites in the Cornwall West Devon Tin Mining Area for UNESCO World Heritage designation as a model, together with its focus on being a regional development initiative, the approach for central Victoria has been completely redesigned.

Rather than seeking a recognition of the whole of the Central Victoria Goldfields Region the focus is now on 12 – 20 sites which collectively tell the story of mining and the changes and development it produced. These sites are then the backdrop to the whole region. This approach is in line with how UNESCO is approaching scattered sites around the world.

The CEOs of the 12 Councils in the region are now a Steering Group for the whole project. The 12 Councils and the Victorian Goldfields Tourism Exec have collectively put together a fund of \$200,000 and this has enabled the group to go to Regional Development Victoria with a very substantial funding application – the group is currently working through an application for the first allocation of funds from RDV.

The City of Ballarat has assigned Susan Fayad to work on this project FT for two years and City of Greater Bendigo's Trevor Budge is working on it one day a week.

There have been extensive meetings with all relevant state and federal government departments and relevant Ministers. There is full support at the state level. Federal is giving support in general. John Brumby and Denis Napthine have signed on as Patrons.

The focus of the work is on four areas

- World Heritage Listing – see below
- Positioning the listing and process as a regional development initiative – to get much wider traction
- Sustainable Tourism - coping with increased visitors and ensuring that the benefits reach the communities that need it
- Communication

World Heritage Listing is a complex – time consuming process – there are steps and timelines that can't be avoided – if everything went as planned it would be 6 years to achieve listing.

The first stage is to get the federal government to agree to a tentative listing. This is based on a draft statement of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Central Victorian Goldfields. A World Heritage listing must meet at least one of six criteria – the application is based on meeting two.

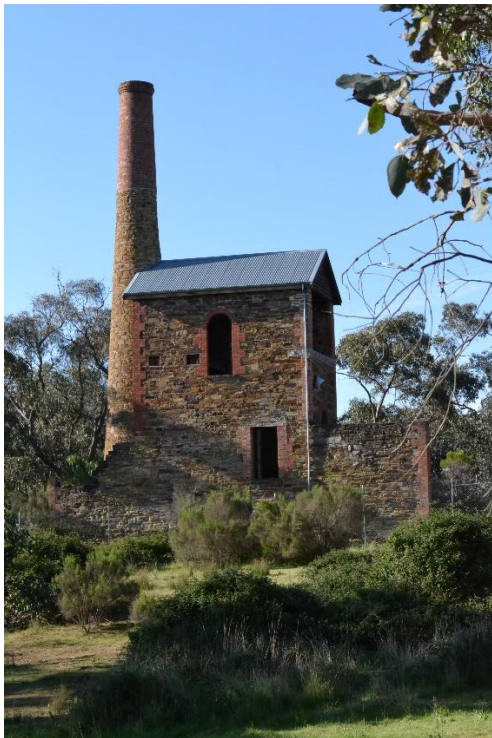
(ii) To exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;

(iv) To be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

The group has been reliably informed by ‘experts’ who work with UNESCO that the case is exceptionally strong. The group is in the process of engaging one of those experts, Barry Gamble from the UK, to write the first draft – he has extensive experience and has worked with sites around the world that have achieved designation (including Cornwall West Devon). That draft will be workshopped extensively with a wide range of persons and authorities before being submitted to Canberra for evaluation.



*Irishtown Hut Sites near Fryerstown, Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park.*



*Duke of Cornwall Mine Engine house, near Fryerstown. (Photos: E. Doling)*



The group is also -

- Preparing a Sustainable Tourism toolkit which is a UNESCO requirement.
- Drafting a statement around the regional development impact (particularly using examples from other places in the world) – which is designed to assist in leveraging more state government funding.
- Rolling out a communication plan.

### **Bendigo City Centre Plan and Parking Strategy**

Following a review of the submissions made to the draft the document has been amended. There are no fundamental changes in the overall approach that was set out in the draft. At this stage the Bendigo City Centre Plan and Parking Strategy is scheduled to go to the April meeting of Council for adoption. When the Planning Scheme Amendment has been prepared, a report will go to Council for a resolution to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning for a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the Bendigo City Centre Plan and Parking Strategy.

### **Bendigo City Centre Heritage Study.**

This study relates to a relatively small part of the City Centre that had not been assessed for buildings or precincts of heritage significance. Letters went on 16 March to 18 property owners who have buildings that have been identified as of heritage significance which are proposed to be listed in the planning scheme. The letter provides the draft citation. Owners have been invited to contact the City to raise any questions or to talk through the implications of listing. At this stage the Bendigo City Centre Heritage Study with its listing of 18 properties is scheduled to go to the April meeting of Council for adoption. When the Planning Scheme Amendment has been prepared, a report will go to Council for a resolution to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning for a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the Bendigo City Centre Heritage Strategy.

In accordance with Council procedures the papers for the April 15 Council Meeting will be available one week before the meeting.

It is proposed that the Bendigo City Centre Plan and Parking Strategy and the Bendigo City Centre Heritage Study listing of 18 properties will run as separate Planning Scheme Amendments in parallel. The Planning Scheme will of course be subject to a full exhibition period of at least one month. At this stage it is anticipated that they would be on exhibition in mid 2020 and would be subject to Planning Panel hearings following the receipt and consideration of submissions.

It is proposed that there will be a second stage to the Heritage Study and this will involve a review of all the Heritage Precincts in the planning scheme in terms of their coverage and applicability across the City Centre.

### **Branch Response on CBD Heritage Study**

The Branch has been calling on council to release this study for public comment for a number of years as it commenced in 2016. It is important the City Centre Plan is informed by the City



Centre Heritage Study and not the other way around. The heritage study is required to be released for public comment. In 2016 over 300 properties were to be evaluated but from the above council update only 18 sites are now included in the study. This must raise concern and poses questions around council prioritising development over the protection of heritage sites. So much of Bendigo's economic strategy revolves around the heritage of the City. Bendigo's point of difference is its heritage.

### ***Spring Gully Stone Culvert***

I have received communication from Parks Vic re the stone culvert. I contacted Peter Foster via email, he responded and handed the issue onto Matt Sobey. I subsequently received a 'phone call from Matt Sobey, team leader, Bendigo. His main points were:

- an amount of \$15,000 has been allocated to restore the stonework
- a stone mason has been engaged to do the restoration
- work will commence within 6 weeks
- graffiti will also be removed
- regular contact can be maintained through Matt to track the project – I will certainly do that!

So it is good news at this stage. Also, a grant of \$2 million dollars has been awarded to the joint project 'Walking Together' which is an initiative of Parks Vic with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. Whilst this does not directly impact our concerns re the culvert, I think it is an indication of the heightened awareness regarding the degradation of our surrounding bushland and can only be good for our cause. Matt said that Wildflower Drive area is markedly affected by mountain bike use. A statement from Parks re this project pasted below:

**The Walking Together Project involves the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation working in partnership with Parks Victoria to focus on two key areas of local parks – Kalimna Park within Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park and the Wildflower Drive area of Greater Bendigo National Park.**

Kay MacGregor

### ***Update! Some good news about the stone bridge at Spring Gully!***

***The stone bridge at Spring Gully January 2019 with dislodged stones.***

Good news and thank you to Parks Vic. Attached below two images (taken yesterday) of above culvert/bridge in Wattle Drive. Parks Vic have spent a couple of days working on the culvert to repair the damage to the capping stones that were, allegedly, levered off by vandals. Parks had a front end loader and other vehicles there to effect the repairs. The temporary fence is still in place to prevent cyclists entering the culvert underneath. So in these strange times, Parks Vic were still operating.

Kay MacGregor (via email 31/3/20)



*Repairs as of 30 March. Images: Kay MacGregor.*

## **Bendigo Mechanic's Institute and Free Library Needs Focus**

This is one of Bendigo's most important historic group of buildings as it has educated so many people over 164 years. Along with the Bendigo Law Courts, the two sites have been designated as obsolete for their current use and need to be repurposed for the future. It is important that the discussion starts now and not postponed until they are closed. Their future depends on it. Here is a short history of the Octagonal Library.



*The Octagonal Library exterior in 1984. Image: Heritage Victoria*

## The Octagonal Library



*The Octagonal Library. Image: E. Doling*

On August 5 1856 the Sandhurst Mechanics Institute and Literary and Scientific Association was opened in McCrae St.

The Mechanics Institute committee made a brave and far-seeing decision prior to late 1885, to build a new library, precipitated by lack of space in the existing library.

The successful tender was submitted by Coombes Bros. for £2,259 for construction. The new building will contain a passage 10 feet 6 inches wide through the centre of the library, the space on each side being utilised for rooms for the use of the members and committee. The hall will be continued for about 19 feet, and at the end large folding doors with ornamental side lights and fanlights, will open the way into the new building, which will be built of brick, with foundations of piers of stonework from the bedrock. Between the piers will be arches of brickwork carrying the superstructure. The walls of the lower storey will be 18 inches thick, and in the upper storey they will also be 18 inches thick, but hollow. The building itself will be octagon shaped, the sides of the octagon being 21 feet 6 inches wide. The width of the building will be 52 feet between the extreme walls.

The building will be two storeys high. On the lower storey opposite to the entrance door, will be situated the present stand of the librarian. To the left will be a door leading to the garden at the rear and to the right will be a door leading to the balcony. On the two opposite sides of the library there will be fireplaces. There will be eight Tobin's ventilators, and six windows close to the ceiling to give additional ventilation and light. The balcony will be supported by eight columns of the Doric order, and will be 10 feet wide all round, and will be faced with an iron balustrading. At one of the corners of the staircase landing there will be a lavatory. The height from the floor of the gallery to the ceiling will be 15 feet. The dome of the roof will be carried by eight Corinthian columns of brick and stucco. The principal light of the dome shaped ceiling will

be from eight large skylights, 9 feet by 7 feet. There will also be ten windows in the upper storey close to the ceiling for the purposes of light and ventilation.

The centre part of the roof, which is octagon in shape, will be an iron tube 15 inches in diameter, have shoes of iron riveted to it to receive the different timbers of the roof.

In the centre of the dome there will be open iron work eleven inches in diameter, into which the vitiated air will be carried into a funnel, and thence into the tube. This tube will be connected with a Boyle's patent air-pump, and the means for the ventilation of the building will be a constant inflow of fresh air as the heated air is pumped out.

About the cornice of each column will spring ribs, highly ornamented and finished in plaster of Paris, to the centre of the dome. Between the different ribs the spaces will be panelled. The ribs will be continued under the ceiling of the gallery, forming eight large panels. In the centre of each will be a three feet diameter centre flower, with a ventilator.

The glass in the skylights, outside, will be of ribbed plate, a quarter of an inch in thickness. Inside the skylights will be of sheet glass. All the walls are to be plastered, and the ornamental work, columns and ceilings will be in plaster of Paris. The decoration was undertaken by important artist and modeller, Otto Waschatz, and is a fine example of his work – other examples being the Town Halls in both Bendigo and Melbourne.

The total height of the interior of the building from the floor to the highest part of the dome will be 45 feet, and the walls 36 feet high. The building will be unique in character; and the first of an octagon shape of such dimensions built in the colonies.

The Sandhurst Mechanics Institute Library designed by Vahland, and opened in 1887 was a building unique in character, and the first of an octagon shape of such dimensions built in the colonies.

This makes the Sandhurst Mechanic's Institute Library the most extensive building of its kind outside the capital cities, and having a dome older than the State Library of Victoria Domed Reading Room, which opened in 14 November 1913, after being commissioned to celebrate the Library's jubilee

*Kay Smith, Manager, TAFE Library*



The wonderful 'Sunlight' gas chandelier was made by T. J. Connelly of Bendigo. It is probably the only one remaining intact. (Ed.)



## Planning Alerts!

If you are interested in knowing what development might be planned for your neighbourhood or town you can subscribe to **Planning Alerts**. [contact@planningalerts.org.au](mailto:contact@planningalerts.org.au)

A new alert came through last week on 23 Hill St Bendigo- subdivide land into 4 lots and demolition of outbuilding. You can then submit to your local planning authority.

## *Reflecting on a story from Bendigo- Sidney Myer*

*At a time when jobs and business are experiencing very difficult times*



*Sidney Myer, n.d. [National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an20207313](https://nla.pic-an20207313)*

Simcha Myer (Sidney) Baevski (1878-1934), merchant and philanthropist, was born on 8 February 1878 at Krichev in the Russian province of Mogilev, within the Pale of Settlement, youngest of eleven children of Ezekiel Baevski, Hebrew scholar, and his wife Koonah Dubrusha, née Shur.

In August 1899, almost penniless, he joined his brother Elcon (who had migrated to Australia in 1896) for a time in Slutzkin's underclothing business in Flinders Lane in Melbourne, teaching himself English. Several months later, adopting the family name of Myer (the second name of their eldest brother Jacob), the brothers moved to Bendigo and opened a small drapery shop. Sidney plied a rapidly growing trade in fabrics and garments in country districts, first on foot, later with a horse and cart. In 1900 the brothers formally became partners in new premises in Pall Mall.

But the partnership soon foundered on Elcon's strictly orthodox opposition to Saturday trading, and he returned to Melbourne.

The Bendigo drapery, decked out in exotic style, drew crowds of customers with irresistible bargains and novelties temptingly displayed; Sidney Myer had a flair for discerning new fashion trends and presenting stock attractively. He also advertised boldly, in a style both sensational and persuasive, appealing to women's shopping habits and predilections with a sure touch.

Late in 1909 Sidney travelled overseas to study British and European merchandising methods and to establish contact with manufacturers and exporters. In April 1911 he seized the opportunity to purchase Wright & Neil, a drapery store in Bourke Street, Melbourne, for which he paid £91,450. He raised staff wages, then closed the store for a fortnight's stock-taking and ordering; and in June, after a spate of full-page newspaper advertisements, Melbourne experienced its first Myer sale. Old stock sold for a song, new stock was priced almost at cost, goods once kept behind counters were strewn upon tables, and the rush lasted for a week.

Myer provided creative energy, commercial intuition and sheer merchandising genius. His influence was almost charismatic. He could speak harshly when he saw fit, or at moments of sudden wrath, but generally treated staff with consideration, criticizing constructively, consulting freely, rewarding initiative and encouraging effort. He was a remarkable judge of character; and his own infectious enthusiasm, natural dignity and persuasive charm won an eager response.

Sidney now offered on easy terms 73,000 'staff partnership' shares of £1 each. He also began distributing shares (more than 200,000, all told) among his executives and managers, according to his estimation of their merit. Increasingly, Myer looked upon his staff as a community; by 1926 they numbered over 2000. Weary managers received paid vacations, a sick fund was instituted, holiday homes were established, and an elaborate free hospital provided in the store. Social activities included annual staff balls and picnics, football and cricket matches, a Christian Fellowship, and choral society concerts in aid of charity.

*(Australian Dictionary of Biography in part by Anthea Hyslop)*

### **PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR CONCERNS!**

Don't forget The National Trust has an interest in industrial and mining heritage , trees, landscapes and gardens as well as buildings! And we don't just concentrate on the Bendigo town area-we include the following areas- Castlemaine Kyneton Maldon Heathcote Maryborough Goornong and Rochester, and we would love to hear from you!

### **PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO THE BRANCH'S NEWSLETTER !**

We welcome your ideas, contributions and images to the Newsletter. Please let us know of your concerns on heritage issues. We would really welcome "Letters to the Editor". And keep up with the current advocacy issues at the Trust Advocate Blog at <http://www.trustadvocate.org.au/>

### **EBAY SHOP STILL NEEDED**

The Branch has copies of 'Bendigo at Work,' 'R A Love Goldfields Architect' and 'Post War Portrait' for sale and would like to sell them on line. Is there a member who has an eBay shop that the books could be sold through? Contact Peter 0447473674

Our publications, *Bendigo at Work: an industrial history*, *Post War Portrait: photographs by Allan Doney* and *R A Love: Goldfields Architect* are available at the Tourist Information Centre, Old Post Office, Pall Mall.

**National Trust of Australia (VIC) Bendigo & Region Branch**

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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past, present and future.

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Newsletter editor: E. Doling



**Houston we have a problem- Moving a house in Victoria 1915- what did they do next?**

*Image: Museums Victoria Collection*