

75 YEARS

BRINGING OUR
HERITAGE TO LIFE



Celebrating
75 years

Louise Warren, Lyn Taylor & Eleanor Bowen-Thomas, The Women's Committee Shop, Pymble, date unknown

In our 75th Anniversary year we have celebrated all the National Trust of Australia (NSW) has achieved, ensuring the conversation and preservation of our built and natural assets, care of collection items and regions of native Bushland. None of this would have been possible without the commitment, passion, drive and generosity of all our Board members, advisors, staff, volunteers, branches, committees, members, supporters and donors since 1945.



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
SYDNEY

A message from
*Her Excellency the Honourable
Margaret Beazley AC QC, Governor
of New South Wales*

It is an enormous pleasure, as Patron of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) to contribute to the Trust's 75th Anniversary celebrations. A 75th Anniversary, the original Diamond Anniversary, is sometimes described as the pinnacle of anniversary celebrations. Perhaps that was true of an age when centenary celebrations, whether of birthdays or events, were not so common. Nonetheless, I am sure that the National Trust is more than happy to accept the recognition of 75 years, sitting at the pinnacle of the preservation of the natural, built and cultural environment of our State. Congratulations to everyone at the National Trust (NSW) who have dedicated so many years to the Trust and its work.

Since the pioneering efforts of Annie Forsyth Wyatt in 1945, the Trust has been led and supported by dedicated and expert staff and volunteers, all passionate advocates for the protection of our heritage. The contribution of these wonderful citizens spans so many aspects of giving, whether as tour guides, providing visitor services, creating culinary delights and engaging in fund raising activities, critical to the survival of the Trust and the promotion of its work and mission. The volunteers in regional New South Wales bring their unique knowledge and insights to the Trust's work in their areas, as well as providing that other 'essential service' in country towns – social connection. Over its entire existence, the Trust, through its staff and volunteers, has creatively found new ways to engage the public and make them aware and appreciative of the heritage of New South Wales.

In preparing this piece, I came across a record of their meeting on 29th July 1946, which was a list entitled 'Places Worthy of Preservation', including the likes of St James Church on Macquarie Street, Government House Parramatta, Macquarie Watch House at La Pouse and the 'Historic Cemetery at Camperdown'.

What better tribute could there be to the foresight of the Trust, that these places are today preserved, enjoyed, reminders of our built history and important features of our landscape.

For too many reasons, 2020 has been a difficult year. After drought, fire and flood, who would have thought that a global interdiction on gatherings, large and small, would have so 'rudely interrupted' what was planned to be a wonderful year of celebration for the National Trust. Nonetheless, the Trust has ensured that the year has been marked in the best way possible: by recognising its people, its 'most valuable asset', and by maintaining communication with its informative 'mini journals', published quarterly. Still, there is nothing like the real thing, and the Trust has carefully and safely planned its 're-opening' over the last couple of months, bringing so much joy to so many as it always does.

Congratulations to the National Trust on achieving the grand age of 75 years. Thank you everyone, staff and volunteers, as we look forward to the next 25 years of fulfilling work, carried out so selflessly by you all.

National Trust (NSW) Celebrating 75 Years

Throughout the years the National Trust of Australia (NSW) has attracted a wealth of passionate, hard-working visionaries, those who, not content with the status quo, have striven to ensure our unique state history has been preserved, conserved and championed for 75 years.

Being an active member of the National Trust workforce, isn't just something to fill in time, it is a calling, a chance to really make a difference with like-minded souls with the added benefit of endless social activities, a sense of connection and community engagement. While each contribution, no matter how small, has helped build the organisation to what it is today, it would be remiss not to mention in our 75th year the foresight of Annie Wyatt and members of the Ku-ring-gai Tree Lovers Civic League, her son Ivor Wyatt, Joan and Elaine Bradley, as well as Fred Berman, Karl R Cramp, W Cresswell O'Reilly, Dame Helen Blaxland, Caroline Simpson, Marie Byles and the many heroes of heritage, volunteers, donors, bequestors and members who have set the foundations for all that we value in 2020.

We have fought together, mourned together, but most of all celebrated our collective legacy together, most recently the individual legacies left for the next generation by our late former President Brian Powyer, the late Jan Heffernan (who revelled in the fact she was not accepted as an initial volunteer at Old Government House in 1970, but outlasted them all with her 50 years' service until earlier this year) while also celebrating alongside Pat Stratton on her 101st birthday in July.

Our collective accomplishments and failures are too numerous to list, as are the names of everyone in the National Trust family, but we are proud to have played a part and raise a virtual toast of congratulations to all.



Volunteer Award Winners, 2018



Junior Group fundraising, 1970's

MARRIED INTO THE TRUST - Lois Rasmussen, OAM

Almost 50 years ago, to the day of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) 25th Anniversary which was on 6 April, 1970, I was married. That day I gained a loving husband and a serene, lovely mother-in-law, Clare. She had been a good friend of Annie Wyatt and both were involved with Red Cross and the Ku-ring-gai Tree Lovers Civic League, the latter Annie had founded. Clare had been a volunteer from her girlhood, collecting for Sydney Hospital as early as 1912 and in 1945, under the leadership of Mrs Annie Wyatt, she was one of the nine other ladies who belonged to the Ku-ring-gai Tree Lovers Civic League, the group who formed the National Trust of Australia (NSW). At the end of the Second World War, first attempts were made to rip down the Hyde Park Barracks and The Mint along Macquarie Street and build something new, fresh and interesting. These ladies from Ku-ring-gai headed by Mrs Wyatt stood up, were counted and formed the National Trust, the 5th oldest National Trust in the world. Initially however, it was not for bricks and mortar that the fledgling movement gained its first official recognition, but rather for saving the Fairy Penguins on Montague Island off the coast of Narooma.

And so it was that my mother-in-law joined my late husband, Philip, as a junior member on the first day, which led to him taking on numerous roles over 40 years, including a Trust Councillor, member of the Centenary Conservation Fund Committee, Volunteer Guardian at the S.H. Ervin Gallery and Chair of the Friends.

As a young country girl I had always been part of a family who volunteered for worthy community causes.

Timeline of the Trust

1945

Establishment of the National Trust of Australia (NSW)

1949

The first National Trust of Australia (NSW) Register of historic buildings was published and included places listed by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and Cumberland County Council (Sydney)

1953

The Commonwealth Government entrusts the National Trust (NSW) with the care and conservation of Montagu Island. A plan for the scenic preservation of the lower Hawkesbury River's flora, fauna and Aboriginal carvings was also created

1957

By an Act of New South Wales Parliament, the Tenterfield Memorial School of Arts was placed in the care of the National Trust. The first photographic exhibition of historic buildings was staged by the National Trust (NSW)

1960

National Trust of Australia (New South Wales) Act 1960 was passed by the State Parliament

1947

The National Trust (NSW) first public meeting at Norwich House, 17 Blich Street, Sydney

1950

The National Trust (NSW) became a legal entity under the Companies Act

1956

First Women's Committee, the Central West, was formed

1959

The National Trust (NSW) received its first state government grant to fund the preservation of The Rocks

1961

Formation of Committee

Our People – The Most Valuable Asset



Continued..

In the 1950s, I was aware of the valiant struggle waged by the National Trust to try to preserve historic Subiaco and St Malo, which at that time was leased to the National Trust. When the S.H. Ervin Gallery was opened, the Director Clytie Jessop staged the splendid Conrad Martens exhibition that took Sydney by storm. Philip became a volunteer Gallery Guardian and later when Dinah Dysart was Director, Rouel Edin, another volunteer Gallery Guardian suggested the formation of a Friends Group to support the Gallery. In those days, there were very few 'Friends Groups' in this country and the group at its height had more than 450 friends. A meeting was convened to form the group which Philip attended. He came home and announced that as they could not find a Secretary he had 'volunteered' me as the founding Secretary! So that is how I fell into the National Trust as a volunteer and so began my story, only one of so many which we have to celebrate in our 75 years.



Over the years there were many and diverse activities organised by the Friends to support the Gallery, not only by way of fund raising, but also in helping to publicise its very existence. Fantastic talks by Robert Irving on Macquarie's Sydney, on art by Lloyd Rees and Lou Klepac, (who were great supporters of the Friends) and a host of others. Visits to important art collections like The Reserve, Macquarie and Art Banks, as well as legal firms were also undertaken; the list was long and varied and popular events like the first two books sales organised by the Friends created quite a stir. Another unforgettable event was the original Ghost Tour organised by the S.H. Ervin Gallery Friends at Old Government House.



When the National Art Gallery opened in Canberra and held blockbuster exhibitions the Friends decided to run day trips to see these exhibitions. Groups like the Art Gallery Society and other bands of art lovers soon copied our lead.

At Lindesay, Women's Committee volunteers have held wonderful dinners, exhibitions, Christmas and Antique Fairs, and lectures on everything from tribal rugs to flower demonstrations, bridge days and of course the garden seminars to mention but a few activities. The support of the Women's Committee has spread across New South Wales, from restoring houses in the Hawkesbury in the 1960s, to supporting the appeal for the restoration of St. Matthew's Church at Windsor, installing water tanks at Riversdale and a car park at Everglades is just part of our lasting legacy. Over the years, the National Trust has had some high and low points, but one constant has been the ongoing contribution of volunteers. It has always been acknowledged that, without the volunteers, this fine organisation could not operate. Just think of what New South Wales would be like without the work of the National Trust and its volunteer workforce.



Top left image – Annie Wyatt, 1941

Top right image – Honorary Life Member Badge

Middle image – Marie Byles at Ahimsa, 1972

Bottom image – Dundullimal Volunteers, 2019

1963

First Church Restoration Appeal launched for funds to restore St Matthew's Church at Windsor

1974

Parramatta River regeneration and clean-up scheme successfully initiated

1981

First National Trust Heritage Week

2000

Major Federation Fund grant for restoration work on National Trust (NSW) properties

2020

National Trust of Australia (NSW) 75th Anniversary Parramatta Branch continues to fight to conserve their local area

The Women's

1967

First Regional Committee, The Southern Tablelands, was formed, one of many regional branches statewide

1975

The National Trust (NSW) moved into its permanent headquarters in the Fort Street Girls High buildings, formally the 1815 military hospital

1990

A new Trust Act gives National Trust (NSW) independent control of its property portfolio

2009

Old Government House, Parramatta listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Our People – The Most Valuable Asset

Continued..

In the devastating drought that has gripped the state for many months, it has been the “long paddock” crisis-crossing the state that has been an enormous assistance to farmers. These Travelling Stock Reserves were under threat of being sold, but thanks to the work of the National Trust were saved.

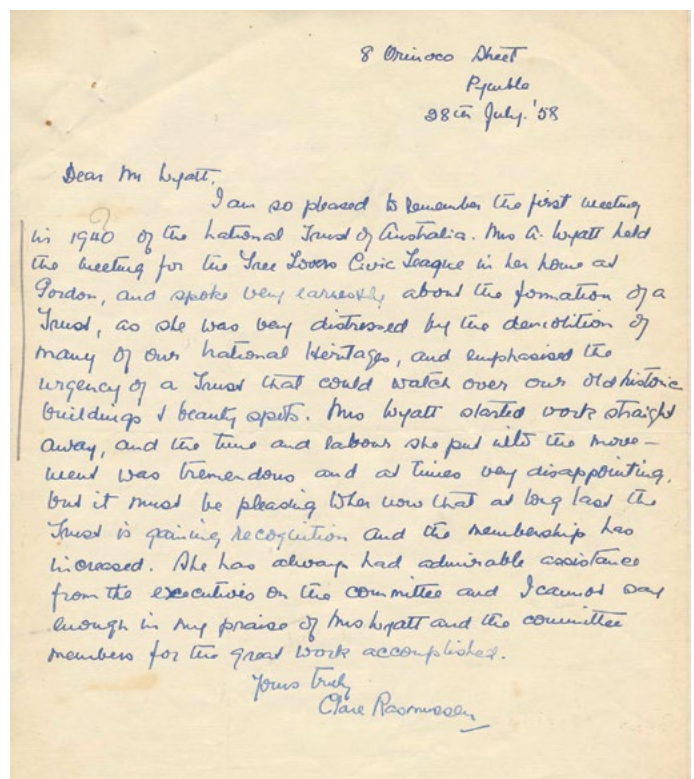
In Sydney, there would be no Customs House, no Queen Victoria Building, no Balls Head Reserve, no Roxy Theatre, Parramatta, and the three acres of land that became the Swain Nature Reserve at Killara would have been lost, just to name a few. Although a “jewel” in the crown of early Sydney was lost in 1960 due to the demolition of “Subiaco,” Hannibal MacArthur’s house at Rydalmere that loss was attributed by some for the awakening of conscience about Australia’s colonial heritage. It is not generally known that a Trust Councillor (and volunteer), Mr F. D. McCarthy was responsible for urging the establishment of a body to assume responsibility for the protection of aboriginal sites and relics on private and Crown land throughout New South Wales.

Over the years I have been inspired by many of the National Trust volunteers I have encountered. The amazing cooks at Everglades and all those who bake everywhere, the needlewomen at Old Government House who have made such fantastic drapes, tassels et al, the gardeners who quietly help maintain the many gardens, the guides, the men cheerfully parking cars in all weather, branches preserving their local history, bush management and advocacy committee volunteers, writers, cherry bows, ticketing people and all those who work behind the scenes to ensure events run smoothly and care for the maintenance of the properties and their contents.

Like many before me volunteering has enriched my life in so many ways and led me to meet wonderful people and see diverse places. It has afforded me the privilege to see private homes of architectural interest in the city house inspection program as well as visits to country districts like Wagga Wagga, Cooma, Young, Dubbo, Goulburn, Armidale, the Blue Mountains, up and down the coast, to Government House in Canberra and countless places in between. Yes, volunteering is and has been a most rewarding experience knowing that what we do (no matter how small we think the contribution is) does help to make a difference in preserving and protecting the best of the past for the benefit of future generations. The added bonus is, of course, that one can make lifelong friends with kindred interests.

In this special 75th Anniversary year there are things we can all do at arm’s length to continue this support. May I suggest?

1. Become a volunteer and join a friend as well – after all it is the strength of volunteers that helps the Trust to run. You won’t regret it.
2. Give a Christmas gift of membership to family or friends. While they may not be able to benefit from visiting the 800 properties for free across the globe at the moment, they can visit the splendid National Trust properties across NSW and have the satisfaction of knowing your gift gives vital support for the ongoing work of the Trust and its people.



Top left image – Clare Rasmussen, lifetime volunteer collecting for Sydney Hospital, 1912

Top right image – Lois and Philip Rasmussen

Bottom image – Member letter from Clare Rasmussen, 1958

Volunteer with us

Make history and volunteer your time and talent with the National Trust (NSW).
nationaltrust.org.au/volunteers-nsw/

Refer a friend

Share the benefits of being a member during our 75th Anniversary year and refer a friend!
nationaltrust.org.au/membership/



Lachlan Branch volunteers cake, 2009

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