

Interview with Anthony Knight – Armytage Society member



Anthony joined the National Trust in 1968 and is an Honorary member. Here is his story about why he has made a bequest to the National Trust in his will.

Tell us a little about yourself.

My passion for heritage was influenced by my grandfather. He must have been aware of the Trust back in the 1950s. I remember going with him to the first open day at Como as a teenager, although earlier school holiday treats often involved excursions to interesting old places, especially grand city buildings. I particularly remember visiting Ripponlea and Mrs. Jones asking, "if the boy would like a lemonade" and then being free to explore, which was a magic experience for a child. There were many similar adventures, and so I developed a lifelong passion for both heritage and gardens!

You have been a member for over 50 years – you must have seen a lot of changes in the heritage over that time?

Yes, I'm not sure that people appreciate heritage as much these days as they did then. These days lots of people live in grand old houses, so they do not have the mystery and intrigue that they once did. It is so much easier to restore houses now compared to 50 years ago, as we can replace things relatively easily. In days gone by it was very difficult to source things like ceiling roses or cove-back cornice, bullnose corrugated iron for verandahs, pieces of iron lacework or Victorian sash windows – these days they are all readily available. There is still a great passion in the community for restoration!

Community interest is still strong, and it is such an important part of Victoria's social history. Government however has quite possibly gone backwards in its support – heritage is simply not high on its agenda, so it doesn't get much of a run and little funding. That means that it's up to us as a community to carry it forward.

When did you first begin to think about making a bequest?

I probably first thought about it when I was aged around 50 years of age – I just always intended to make a bequest to the National Trust of Victoria Foundation. We don't have children so we will be supporting the organisations we care about. I am about to update my will and there will be a percentage of my estate that will be left as a bequest to the National Trust. I am leaving a percentage rather than a set dollar amount, because you never know how circumstances will change or what will remain when the time comes, so a percentage is a better approach for me. This is one way I can make a lasting difference. When I'm gone, I will have left a legacy and something behind.

Was it difficult to organise?

It's actually very simple. I asked my solicitor to include the wording for a bequest to the National Trust of Victoria Foundation when I updated my will. It is something like "I give or bequeath to the National Trust of Victoria Foundation (ABN and address) x% of my residuary estate..." There are some simple words in the National Trust Bequest Program brochure that can be used.

What do you want to achieve through your bequest - is it directed to your favourite property or program or more generally?

I have chosen to leave my bequest to the National Trust of Victoria Foundation, so the capital is preserved in perpetuity. Other people may prefer to leave their bequest to the National Trust for its operational costs – that is up to each individual. Either way, I am confident that the National Trust is well managed, and the funds will be used for what they are meant for. It really is an excellent and reliable organisation.

People don't realise what a difference that bequests (of any size) can make to an organisation like the National Trust.

Do you attend the Armytage Society events?

Oh yes. It's a special group of supporters who are loyal to the National Trust and believe in its work. It is always nice to be thanked and attend complimentary events and lunches, as well as hearing updates about all the important work that the Trust is doing. Being associated with a group of people who are all incredibly passionate about heritage is so enjoyable!

Do you have a final comment for readers Anthony?

People underestimate the difference bequests (of any size) can make to an organisation like the National Trust. When you make a charitable bequest, you're doing something that will be remembered when people look back on your life. It is a fabulous opportunity to leave a legacy to something that really matters.

Here's what some of our generous bequesters have to say...

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Leaving a legacy – it's about perpetuating your personal values and making a difference.

When you make a charitable bequest, you're doing something that will be remembered when people look back on your life.

You may never meet the people who benefit from your kindness, but you can create a lasting impact on the lives of others.

It is a way to give tangible support to what you value and to leave a lasting legacy in your memory.

All gifts – however large or small – are greatly valued.

Leaving a gift in your will can start a miracle growing.

Leaving a gift to the National Trust is a very special way you can keep on caring for heritage into the future.

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