



# History & Heritage

A publication of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)  
Bendigo & Region Branch. November 2022

End of Year Review

Cover Story - Speaking out on issues 2022



**Demolition by Neglect  
Reimagining Pall Mall  
Cast Iron Collection  
School of Mines  
and more....**



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## **Next Branch Meeting - Monday 28 October, 5.30pm**

The next branch meeting will be held on Monday 28th October, 5.30pm, at the Shamrock Hotel taking up the issues from History & Heritage including a review of the issues taken up by the branch during 2022, Greater Bendigo's 108 State Heritage sites and more on your views about your priorities. All members and supporters are welcome to attend and raise issues.

This will be the final meeting for 2022 with the AGM being held on Monday 27 February, 2023 at 5.30pm for members only and a "Public Talk" at 6.30pm for members and supporters to attend.

## **History & Heritage**

Branch Newsletter. Everyone has a story that, when combined with others, provide a record of the social history of our region and draws attention to the significance of local built heritage. To receive H&H or contribute a story or photograph, send a message to [natrustbendigo@gmail.com](mailto:natrustbendigo@gmail.com) To help increase circulation send it to your friends and family or sign up your organisation to receive it. To join the editorial group, contact the branch President, Peter Cox on 0447473674. This will be the last issue for 2022 with the contribution deadline for the February History & Heritage being Monday 6 February 2023.

## **For previous editions of History & Heritage**

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/branches-vic/bendigo-branch/>

## **Join the National Trust**

Advocate for Preservation! Support! Explore! Enjoy! A National Trust Membership is your ticket to the world, with over 1000 destinations to explore. The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is the state's largest community-based heritage advocacy organisation actively working towards conserving and protecting our heritage for future generations to enjoy, representing 30,000 members across Victoria.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/membership-vic/>

## **Book sale**

A great birthday or Christmas present! The branch has two books for sale. Bendigo at Work- An Industrial History by Mike Butcher & Yolande Collins \$40 Postwar Portrait- Photographs by Allan Doney 1900-1987 by Mike Butcher & Yolande Collins \$30.



## Cover Story - Some issues raised by the Branch in 2022, by Peter Cox



The closure of the Bendigo Joss House Temple since June 2022. Now reopened on weekends.  
Image: tourism@bendigo



The protection of John Beebe's East Bendigo Observatory and his home 'La Rocca.'  
Image: Bendigo Branch



The preservation and use of the Bendigo School of Mines (front page) group of buildings and other state government sites such as the Bendigo Railway Station, Specimen Cottage and the Stone Cottages on the Ravenswood (above) Water Reserve, which are all in need of repairs.  
Image: Courtesy of Rhett Symonds



Specimen Cottage, Hargreaves Street.  
Image: Bendigo Branch



The protection of miners' cottages as an important part of the district's social history.  
Image: Bendigo Branch



Demolition by Neglect of many historical sites covered by heritage protection including Sampson Cottage, (front page) Nanga Gnulle, Rocky Vale Villa among others.  
Image: Bendigo Branch



A Development Plan for the State listed Victoria Hill Mining Reserve.  
Above: Image: Bendigo Branch

Speaking out about planning applications that threaten the integrity of heritage precincts including the construction of a poorly designed 6 - storey hotel in Hargreaves Mall.

Right: Artist's impression of hotel development in Hargreaves Mall, 2020. Image: BE Bendigo Facebook page.



The preservation of the Allan Doney Photographic Collection and easy access for the public.

Right: Farmer Lane & Park Road. Below: Pall Mall/McCrea Street. Two more examples of Allan Doney's wonderful Bendigo pictures. There are over 14,000 negatives in the collection. Images courtesy of National Trust of Australia (Vic)



Requirement for a new plan for Pall Mall to reinvigorate the many State Registered Heritage Buildings in that precinct, including the Bendigo Law Courts, the former Bendigo Mining Exchange and Allan's Walk (within the Beehive building).

Right: Image: Allan Doney Collection, National Trust of Australia (Vic)  
Below: Image: Real Commercial



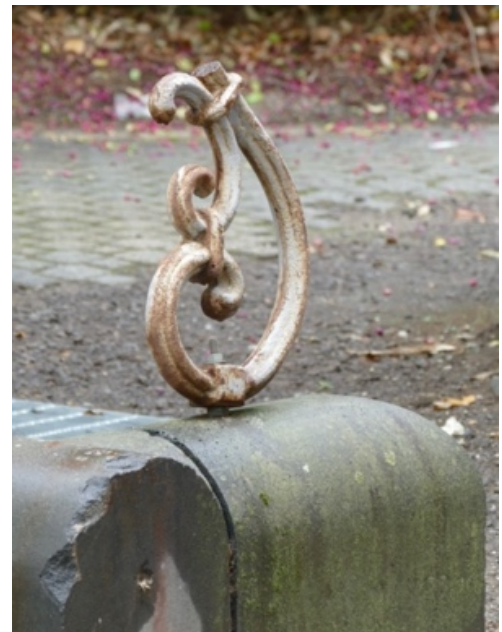




The protection and display of the E.G. Robertson Cast Iron Collection which is under Bendigo Council's custodianship.  
Images: Bendigo Branch



Need for repairs to important historical sites such as the Vahland Water Fountain (above) and the gates and fence at Bendigo TAFE (below and right).  
Images: Bendigo Branch



The Branch newsletter, *History & Heritage*, has played an important role with many contributors raising issues of concern. The branch has met with many people including Bendigo TAFE, Court Services Victoria, Councillors and staff from Bendigo Council, Heritage Victoria, our local state parliamentarians, local developers, and Planning Panels Victoria. It has advocated on many issues to protect the region's history & heritage.

However, the branch believes that heritage does not rate highly as an important economic factor and as a result many heritage buildings are neglected and there is a lack of desire to repurpose many of them. Thousands of people come to Bendigo each year because of its historic features, its display of architectural merit and its stories including it was once the richest city in the world. Marvelous Melbourne was only given this name because of the riches that were created in the goldfields.

As it has been quoted so many times before, "Historic Buildings are likely to define a city." Historic places and landmarks, cultural offerings, public places and architecture, for many, symbolize a city.

Therefore, it is difficult to understand why a permit for a six-storey hotel with little architectural merit was granted in the heart of the city with 22 State Heritage listed buildings located within 200 metres. The construction of which could virtually close the Hargreaves Mall for up to two years and its height will over shadow a heritage precinct changing the character of the city.

### **So, what about next year, 2023?**

The branch needs to prioritise its activities and of course get more people involved. It does not represent the region well and it is not representative of the population. Many organizations have aging memberships and different reasons determine why people join.

In the case of the National Trust many people are elderly, and may join to enjoy free entry into over a thousand heritage properties throughout the world. The branch does not use social media to extend its reach and this must change. Advocacy and site visits, while very different, can be marketed to attract and cater for both interests.

The branch will be holding its Annual General Meeting on 27 February 2023. As the constitution requires this will be for members only but will be followed by a Public Talk which will be open to branch supporters and the general public.

The branch needs people of all ages who love history and heritage. To be successful in any field of education and advocacy it needs the skills to market, to communicate, to manage activities and to organize events that enthuse and create enjoyment. You do not have to be a historian to be involved. The Branch needs someone to run social media for us. You may not be able to afford to pay a membership but if you are willing to be involved you can play an important role in preserving the regions history. The branch would love to hear from you.

### **Updates...**

#### **Bendigo Joss House Temple Reopens**

Bendigo Heritage Attractions have had the Bendigo Joss House temporarily closed since June due to a range of safety incidents at the site. Many people have been distressed with the closure as it is an important historical and worship destination for locals and visitors from around Australia. It has now reopened but only on weekends from 10.30am to 3pm. H&H has raised questions about its future, security at the site, maintenance of the building and its gardens, its artefacts and the involvement of volunteers in its management and operation.



The Bendigo Heritage Attractions website still displays messages that it is temporarily closed. Further information on opening times call 54438322.

### **Bendigo Creek Walk, 5 February 2023**

Recent rain caused the cancellation of the walk planned in conjunction with Bendigo Historical Society. More details will be in H&H or on the Bendigo Historical Society website in early 2023.



Bendigo Creek flood 1871, Bridge Street, where the Chinese Museum is sited. Image: Dennis O'Hoy

### **Specimen Cottage, Conservation works by Dr Gary Hill**

178-189 Hargreaves St Bendigo

Many people have been wondering what is happening with works at Specimen Cottage. Here is a brief update from Dr Gary Hill Minerva Heritage.

Specimen Cottage is owned by Bendigo Kangan Institute, however Court Services Victoria agreed to carry out a series of conservation works to the building during the construction of the new courthouse. These works address several ongoing issues generally associated with changes made to the building and its surrounds over time. One of the main issues was rising damp and its associated salt damage. This was partly caused by rendering a number of the internal walls with a cement-based render in the late 1980s which prevented the building from breathing. To rectify this the cement render is to be removed, the walls desalinated and then rendered with a traditional lime putty based breathable render.

To address water entering the walls there are a number of new agricultural drains surrounding the building incorporated into the landscaping. The ground level around the building is also to be lowered from its current level and sloped away from the building to a drainage system.

Incorporating the landscaping around the cottage with that around the courthouse has allowed all water in the area to be collected and carried away from the cottage. To further assist in protecting the building an improved air circulation system below the floor is to be installed.

The original exterior stone and brickwork are also undergoing conservation works with the entire exterior desalinated and cleaned. Damaged stones and bricks are being either repaired or replaced and areas of earlier inappropriate rendering and pointing with cement-based materials are to be remediated by removal and replacement with lime-based materials matching the original. There are also areas where the original mortar is in poor condition, such as the north wall of the two-storey section which is to be completely repointed.



Other works include the restoration of the metal roof tiles of the single-storey section, repairs and modifications to the guttering and downpipes, and painting of the exterior woodwork. Internally, later non original floors will be removed and replaced with Baltic Pine flooring to match the original material.



Works underway at Specimen Cottage, Image supplied

### **State Heritage Register**

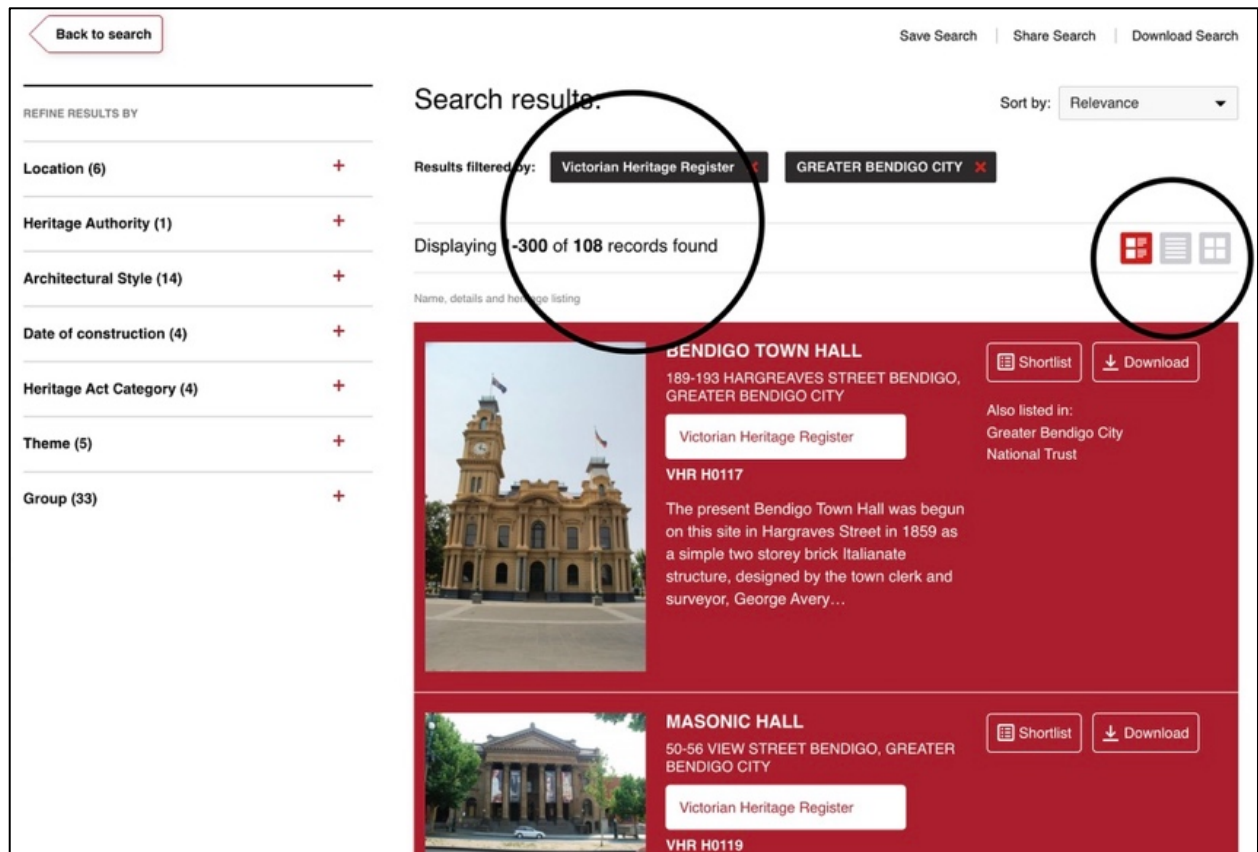
In the October edition of History & Heritage a summary of Heritage Listings was provided explaining the different levels of listing which included The Victorian Heritage Database, The Victorian Heritage Register, A Local (Council) Heritage Overlay, classification by the National Trust, The War Heritage Inventory and The Victorian Heritage Inventory.

In July the branch met with staff from Heritage Victoria where some local properties that were on the State Heritage Register were discussed, including Sampsons Cottage, which had fallen into disrepair. It was explained that there were two staff members working on 165 enforcement cases throughout Victoria. There are 108 sites in Greater Bendigo and 120 sites in Mount Alexander Shire on the State Heritage Register. The link below shows pictures and provides information on all of these sites.

While some people may be very familiar with the sites, others new to heritage, will be introduced to these sites that are on the State Register. (Click on the link. Click on location in the left column. Scroll down to Greater Bendigo City or Mount Alexander Shire, click on the one you want.)

<https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/search?kw=&aut%5B0%5D=1086&collapse=true&spage=1&tab=places&view=detailed&pp:pp=25&mun=25&type=place&ppage=5>

In the new year it is hoped that a project can be created, working in conjunction with Heritage Victoria, to monitor the sites and their condition. While you are unable to go on to a site if it is owned privately, you are able to take a photograph from the street.



Example of using database, this is a screenshot of VHR database with 108 Bendigo records. You can select one of the boxes shown in the small circle to choose the view you prefer.



Former Royal Bank up for sale.  
17-19 View Point Bendigo.  
Image: Real Commercial.com.au

The branch has focused on heritage buildings that are along View Point, for example former Royal Bank which is currently for sale (see left), Pall Mall and McCrae Street in the centre of the city, as some of them are vacant. You can see the details of this building from the link above as it is on the State Heritage Register VHR H1332.

Allan's Walk and The Bendigo Mining Exchange in the Beehive Building has recently been sold to a local investor but it has been difficult to find out information about its future. It is also on the State Heritage Register. If you have information on the future use of the building many of our readers will be most interested.

There is no forward plan for the repurposing of the current Bendigo Law Courts, the former Bendigo Post Office which houses a Court Room on the first floor. There is also no apparent plan for the vacant Bendigo TAFE buildings known as the School of Mines.



## Letters to the editor

Dear Editor,

I have attached a picture from an article in the latest Midland Express regarding the Mopoke Gully water wheel. It would've been about 4yrs ago that I'd been first alerted to the intentions of the land owner by Max Kay of Yapeen, asking me for a letter of support from the Newstead Historical Society to be sent onto Maree Edwards asking for the government to give consideration to the purchase of the allotment which hadn't been placed on the market at that stage as the owner was still in the process of tidying up the paperwork surrounding subdivision etc.

But I think the urgency for the government to act has come a few steps closer and before the heritage is lost. The allotment abuts the Castlemaine Diggings National Park so there wouldn't be much work to attach it into the park if purchased. Derek Reid



Editor's note; It appears that the remains of the water wheel does not have heritage protection.

Mopoke Gully Water Wheel. Image: Midland Express

Dear Editor,

These now almost unique stables were once part of the Methodist Manse in Panton Street, Golden Square. The building has deteriorated considerably since the property along with the church was sold at auction. The property as I understand it at that time was purchased by a real estate agent. I photographed the stables from the footpath. You will notice a temporary construction fence erected in the backyard. The building is and has the potential for restoration if the owner was willing.

Cheers for now, James



Image: James Lerk

Dear Editor

Another Chewton issue... the stone wall along Forest Creek has reached a state of major collapse. Heritage - ours to protect!

Cheers John



Image: Chewton Chat. [www.chewton.net](http://www.chewton.net)

### **Rocky Vale Villa**

This home was built by stonemason William Beebe Snr who built the property of locally quarried sandstone and granite over a period of almost 20 years from the early 1870s. The residence is testament to the skill and perseverance of its builder who died the year the house was completed in 1891. He was the father of two of Bendigo's renowned architects William and John Beebe.

The Beebe family has been in contact and are very concerned about the condition of Rocky Vale Villa. It has been severely vandalised. It is another victim of 'Demolition by Neglect' where owners purchase a property with intentions other than preserving the property, and in an area where the local Council, in this case Greater Bendigo City Council, takes the view that it has no power to have the property maintained.

Council officers have recently inspected the site but have provided no report to the National Trust after raising risks that it is in danger. The property has a Council heritage overlay which should protect it but unfortunately authorities are not taking their responsibilities seriously.



Rocky Vale Villa. Image: Ray Wilson



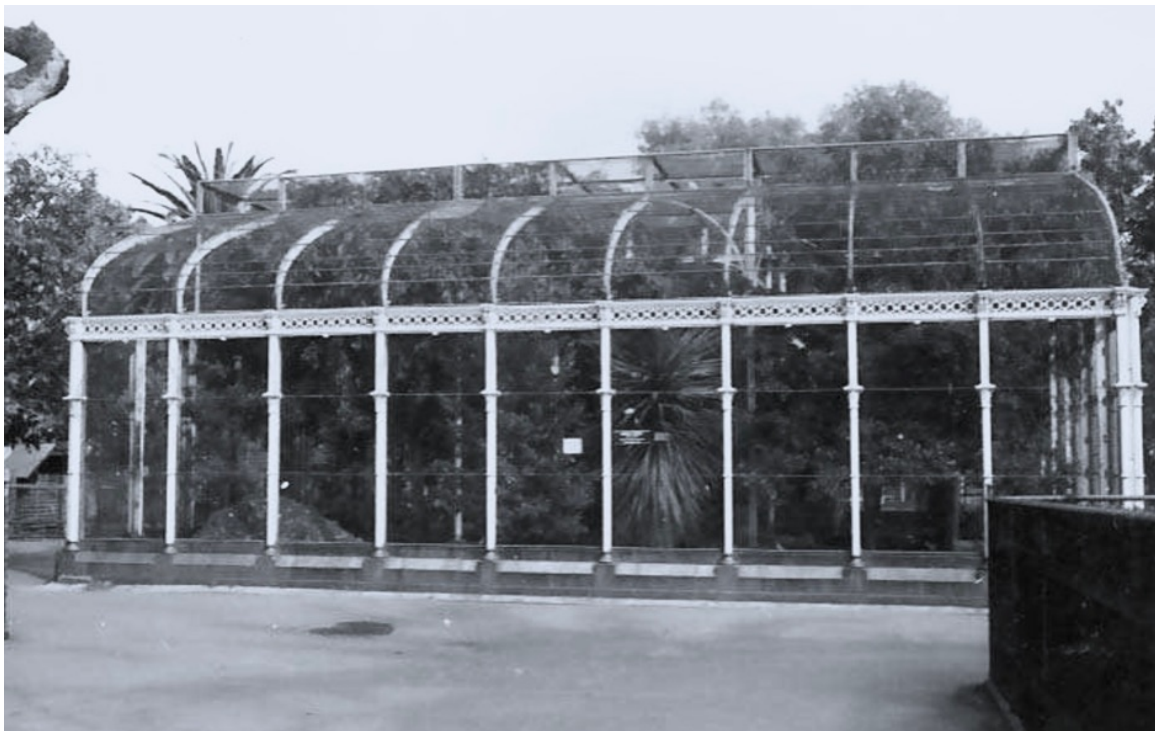
## Conservatory in Custodianship of Greater Bendigo Council

A member has recently alerted the branch to a report written by the City of Greater Bendigo on the Graeme Robertson Cast Iron Collection Conservatory. The report written in 2013 has not been acted upon and the branch believes the cast iron structure still remains at the Council Depot open to all weather conditions causing its decay.

Some extracts from the report:

*"The purpose of this report is to inform stakeholders of the present status of the National Trust of Australia Graeme Robertson Cast Iron Collection Conservatory and recommend a program of work for its restoration, reassembly and conservation. The Graeme Robertson Cast Iron Collection is a project that the Strategy Unit is responsible for.... The Graeme Robertson Collection is on a 50-year loan (2001-2051) to the City of Greater Bendigo, except the conservatory which was donated outright and is now owned by the City of Greater Bendigo.*

*The Conservatory is thought to have once been a conservatory from the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne (RBG). There were many conservatories at the RBG and tracing which conservatory is difficult. The cast iron conservatory required a semi-trailer to relocate it and was stored outside at the Adam Street Depot. The then Depot Manager, was in charge of receiving and storing the conservatory. He estimates that perhaps only 30% of the conservatory remains..... The cast iron conservatory can become an important cultural asset for the City of Greater Bendigo..... The remaining pieces of the cast iron conservatory need to be assessed so that the restoration and re-erection can be carried out, highlighting the conservatory's history while demonstrating a commitment to our valuable heritage assets."*



The Dove Aviary, Melbourne Zoo, 1973, Image courtesy of National Trust of Australia

One of the flaws of the report was that once the structure had been refurbished it was to be re-constructed on a site at the Bendigo Botanical Gardens White Hills which is currently the site of the swimming pool. The report indicated that the pool had a life of 5 years and was going to be decommissioned at that time. As a result, the pool is still operating and no doubt this has been a reason for the delay.

The branch now raises the question of the current condition of the cast iron structure and the possibility of locating the conservatory to another at the Botanical Gardens.

### **Council to consider Significance Assessment**

Greater Bendigo Council has undertaken a Significant Assessment of the Graeme Robertson Cast Iron Collection in partnership with the National Trust.

The Assessment does not include the conservatory but hundreds of other cast iron artefacts which are referenced above.

### **Chewton Domain Society and Parks Victoria**

CELEBRATION OF THE 1851 MONSTER MEETING OF DIGGERS &  
THE 20th BIRTHDAY OF THE CASTLEMAINE DIGGINGS NATIONAL HERITAGE PARK.

Sunday 11 December 1.30 – 4.00 pm

Monster Meeting site @ Golden Pt Rd Chewton

Organised by Chewton Domain Society and Parks Victoria

For more information and to arrange photos or interviews contact Pat Healy at  
[pathealy1908@gmail.com](mailto:pathealy1908@gmail.com) or 0422 759 661.

The branch welcomes your ideas, contributions and photographs for the newsletter which is published monthly. You can keep up with the current advocacy issues at the Trust Advocate blog at <http://www.trustadvocate.org.au/>

National Trust of Australia (Vic) Bendigo & Region Branch [natrustbendigo@gmail.com](mailto:natrustbendigo@gmail.com)

Telephone: President, Peter Cox 0447473674 Mail; C/- 57 Green St California Gully 3556.

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We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and recognize 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.