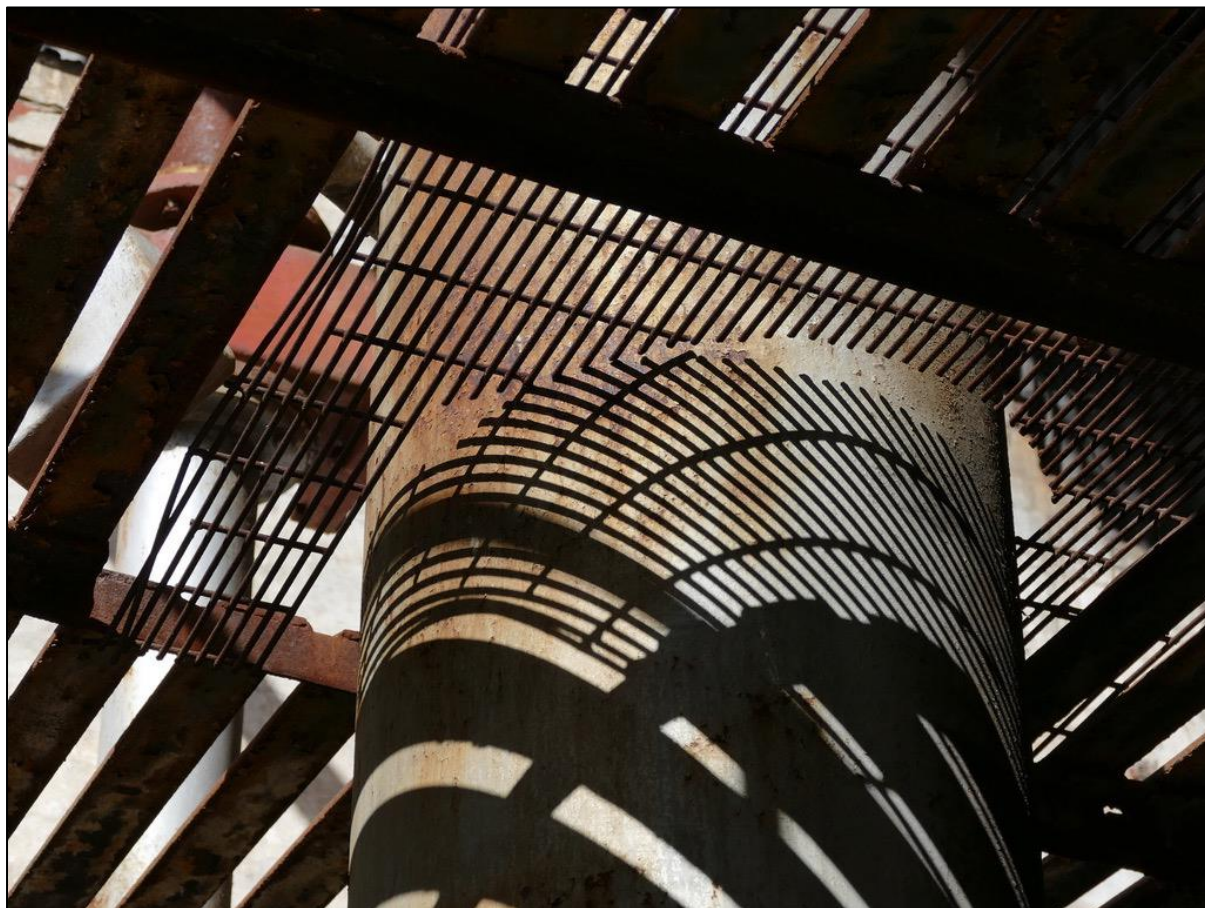




History & Heritage

A publication of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
Bendigo & Region Branch May 2023



Bendigo Gas Works Tour Saturday April 29. Images: Bendigo Branch

Great Success for Bendigo Gas Works Tours

Next Branch Meeting: Tuesday May 23 2023 5.30pm
Venue: Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street, Meeting Room 1

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Cover Story: Great Success for Bendigo Gas Works Tours - Peter Cox

The Bendigo Branch of the National Trust has been overwhelmed by the number of people who want to visit Bendigo's former gas works. The Branch has received over 350 emails, texts and phone calls with most requests asking for multiple tickets taking the tally for tickets to well over 600 wanting to visit the site.

The Branch organised the tours as part of the Australian Heritage Festival. Due to the need for safety on the site, only 15 people at one time could go on a tour. This meant that we could only manage about 150 visitors each day.

All tours were booked out and the Branch will need to discuss the demand for tours with Council. Hopefully more will be conducted during the year. However, further work is scheduled at the site to make it safer for the public to visit.

Visitors on the April 29 tours were able to stand in the footsteps of the workers who produced

this gas, see the engineering that lasted over 100 years and hear the story of the rising gas storage cylinders. Many people loved photographing the buildings, machines and retorts. Others had family members who had worked at the site and wanted to see what they did - workers on the site laboured under intense heat.

It is very encouraging that our history and heritage is in the minds of both locals and visitors. The Branch thanks the Greater Bendigo Council for its support, and the media for the promotion of the tours. The Branch will have a Council representative at its next meeting to discuss the possibility of future tours and the master plan for the site.



Many thanks to tour guides Elaine Doling and Gary Hill for sharing their deep knowledge of the gas works and industrial heritage. Above left: Elaine shows plans of the site explaining the function of each area. Above right: Gary taking tourists into the Retort House. Images: Bendigo Branch

Some comments about the Gas Works tours:

Thank you for such a wonderful tour of The Gas Works. Our group really enjoyed the experience and the professionalism of the whole thing. - Steam Engine Group

I just did the tour of The Gas Works... It was VG! Thanks to everyone that made it possible!

I had a great insight. Finally got to see behind the red-brick wall that I often peer at through the gates.

I spent many hours there as a child and I think that my dad was one of the last workers before we went to natural gas at Abel St. His name was Jim.

Our Branch has new meeting place - Peter Cox

The Branch will meet at the Bendigo Library on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 5.30pm between February and November in meeting room 1. You enter via the Hargreaves Street entrance. We have met for many years at the *Shamrock Hotel* but the new leaseholders have encouraged us to find an alternative venue.



Hargreaves Street entrance to the Bendigo Library

The library provides a central location with a warm environment and excellent meeting facilities. It joins with other history and heritage organisations such as the Bendigo Regional Archive Centre (BRAC) and the Bendigo Family History Group who are based at the library.

The next meeting on May 23 will review the recent Bendigo Gas Works tours with a representative from Council, and discuss other issues that members and supporters are keen to raise. As President I believe that the Branch needs to target five major issues that need action and work out a plan to create worthwhile outcomes while at the same time raise general awareness of heritage matters.

What do you think? Come along to next meeting and express your views.



Comfortable meeting space

Castlemaine Gold Commissioner's Camp and its Camp Reserve - heritage tour of an historic precinct, 23 April 2023

As Castlemaine is part of the Branch's membership base, we want to highlight the Castlemaine Camp Reserve and its redevelopment.

A group of Branch members enjoyed a tour of the Government Camp with our host Alice Matthiesson from the Castlemaine Society Inc. (CASSOC). We joined CASSOC members while they explained the plans for a major development on the sports and recreation reserve that was once the Parade Ground in the 1850s and used for the Castlemaine Volunteer Rifles in the following decades.

The tour group was able to visit some significant homes and buildings that were part of the Reserve during the Mount Alexander gold rush. We began the tour at the former Court House in Goldsmith Crescent (home to Castlemaine Historical Society), and gathered in front of the verandah which faces across to town and the gold fields of Forest Creek. Then a short walk to Commissioner Bull's house - *Camp House* c1854, in Yandell Street. The current owners kindly let us through the garden and onto the verandah. Circling back to Camp Reserve via the Old Military Quarters, then to Sheriff Richard Colles' house and Robert O'Hara Burke's house *Broad Oaks*, where the current owners welcomed the group to look inside their private homes.



Former Court House, 1852. Home of the Castlemaine Historical Society. Image: Castlemaine Historical Society.



Sheriff Richard Colles' House, Camp Crescent Castlemaine. VHD B2837. Image: Cantwell Property, Castlemaine

CASSOC provided a splendid morning tea in the Reserve where the group discussed the development plans. While not opposed to a site upgrade, was it possible to lessen the impact of the landscaping and building works on the heritage asset of the Camp Reserve?

Gold Camp Castlemaine and CASSOC have been clear that improved sports' facilities are supported, but plans should preserve the historical integrity of the area, including two red gums and other established trees, the natural landform, and significant sightlines.

The tour continued in a minibus to Howe's Survey Tree on Gaulton Street and the confluence of the creeks, to Sheriffs Bridge at Yandell Street, to Ah Coy's (the Chinese Translator) house on Bowden Street, the Powder Magazine, Castle House, the Old Gaol, the VHR listed Doctors' House and Nurses' Quarters along Gingell Street, Christ Church - Agitation Hill and return to Camp Reserve.

A group had lunch at the *Railway Hotel*, followed by a tour of Archbold Gold Treatment Works, Chewton (VHR1351). It is a rare example of a gold assaying and treatment works. It contains relics and machinery used to treat gold bearing ore from the mid-1880s to the 1950s.

New Advisory Group for Mount Alexander Shire Council

Mount Alexander Shire Council has recently appointed a Project Advisory Group to oversee the *Castlemaine Heritage Study*. The study aims to identify, assess and protect places and objects that are significant to the history and development of the shire and Victoria. The Project Advisory Group is made up of six community members with a diverse set of skills and experience, including architecture, history, heritage and archaeology. The group will represent the wider community and work with Council over the various stages of this long-term study.

The appointments are:

Donne Fearne, Kelly Ann Blake, Luke Stokes, David Bannear, Robyn Ballinger, and Giselle Harris.

Their overall objective is to:

- Assist with research and give advice on relevant heritage matters
- Help identify emerging heritage related issues that may impact the project
- Participate in workshops, meetings and other activities as required.

The group is chaired by Mayor, Cr Rosie Annear, who said “Castlemaine’s heritage is a big part of the town’s identity. We’re lucky to have engaged expert community members who are dedicated to protecting its heritage. As the shire grows and develops, we want to ensure that we can meet both housing needs as well as protect heritage places that are important to the community.”

(From a press release.)

For more about the *Castlemaine Heritage Study* [click here](#)

Talks and events:

Bendigo Historical Society

Friday 2 June, 2pm. LaTrobe Art Institute 121 View Street Bendigo

What is Bendigo’s Heritage Advisory Committee?

Guest speaker: Cr Dave Fagg, Chairperson, Heritage Advisory Committee



Heritage generally refers to treasured objects and qualities that have been passed down from previous generations. In order to advise it on policy and matters affecting such areas and to act in the community interest in protecting and preserving such important assets, the Greater Bendigo City Council has established an expert advisory committee. The purpose of the Heritage Advisory Committee is to provide strategic advice, guidance and representation to Council on the natural, Aboriginal and cultural heritage of the city.

Free event, no bookings required

Sunday May 28 - Open Day for Steam Engines - a great display of steam in motion.

Jessica Payne - BSOEPG Inc. Secretary

After several years of having our doors being closed, they are being opened for you to visit and blow out the cobwebs.



Come along on **Sunday the May 28 from 9am - 2pm** and see what is on display.

Located at the Bendigo Prince of Wales Showgrounds down the back behind the exhibition centre. Visit the Sunday Markets while you are here. All we ask is for a donation in the tin which allows doors to remain open.

Hope to see you there!



Map showing location at the Showgrounds

More amazing talks and events:

Australian Heritage Festival (National Trust of Australia) [Click here](#) for all events

Bendigo Historical Society - more *Walks into History* and other events: [Click here](#)

Bendigo Historical Society - Members and Friends Meeting talks: [Click here](#)

BRAC (Bendigo Regional Archives Centre): [Click here](#)

Response to Planning Amendment C275 Miners' Housing Serial Listings

The Bendigo & Region Branch of the National Trust supports the amendment C275 and looks forward to participating in the process to substantiate and expand the listings of Miners' Housing throughout Greater Bendigo.

As demonstrated in the *2011 Ironbark Heritage Study*, miners' housing tells a very important story of the social and architectural history of residential dwellings in Greater Bendigo. During that study public forums were held where the study was fully explained overcoming many misunderstandings of what a heritage overlay does. Owners of miners' cottages embraced the Ironbark Study and the amendment that followed and learnt a great deal about the people who previously lived in their homes and how they built them.

In the case of this amendment, it has been disappointing that such public discussions have not been held, or that the Branch was not aware of them.

The Branch encourages Council to adopt the following requests:

1. In regard to the recommendations for the schedule to the heritage overlay, the Branch requests the Council to include External Paint Colour controls using those colours recommended in the *CoGB Heritage Design Guidelines*. This has been an important document previously written and adopted by Council and therefore needs to apply to all properties under a heritage overlay.
2. To have controls on the removal of early garden plantings and any trees over 50 years old. These trees, plantings and elements are important to retain the character of these properties.
3. To have controls to protect outbuildings and fences where they exist as they too contribute to the story of how people lived. Many properties of the era had stables, workshops and some had mudbrick outbuildings. Fences provide a valuable contribution to the streetscapes.

The Branch sees that incorporating a heritage overlay on a property includes three steps:

1. The process of undertaking research through studies and the writing up of citations on individual properties and incorporating them into an amendment through a public process which is currently being done with C275.
2. Once the properties have been incorporated into the *Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme* with a heritage overlay, the Council needs to monitor the condition of those properties.
3. If Council finds that the property is not secure or falling into disrepair and becomes a safety hazard (this is commonly known as 'demolition by neglect') then it needs to take action to protect it by enforcement of the heritage overlay.

The Branch has previously contacted Council about the 'demolition by neglect' issue and requests an update of discussions between Council and the State Government on this issue. On the one hand the Council spends a great deal of money undertaking heritage studies and amendments, yet it is not prepared to follow through with enforcement. This is a good time to discuss such action as the work involved in C275 needs to be valued and have a long-term positive outcome.

The Branch also raised issues of protecting the whole of Greater Bendigo as many properties have still not been assessed.

Two properties come to mind. As Bendigo has its first built house, Specimen Cottage, which is protected, Eaglehawk also has a first built house at 92 Victoria Street which is not protected and dates back to the 1850s. Kangaroo Flat also has a cottage at 14 Lockwood Road which has had many roles both as a business and residence dating back to the 19th century. When will these properties be assessed along with others? And a final question: Is the Council listing all submissions on its website? This would encourage discussion which the Branch strongly supports.



Historic Kangaroo Flat cottage at 14 Lockwood Road.
Image: realestate.com.au

Letters

Property with heritage overlay left to the elements. Is this 'Demolition by Neglect?'

Dear Editor,

For some years now I have watched the Californian bungalow, in High Street next to Reece's, deteriorating through vandalism, squatting and neglect. This was once the proud home of Leila Watson, accomplished pianist and piano teacher. Since her passing we found out that the property had a heritage overlay and could not be demolished. However, as you can see by the couple of photographs it is in a rapid state of decline.

James Lerk
Golden Square



Neglected - once the home of Mrs Leila Watson OAM (1913-2006), Bendigo pianist and music teacher. Awarded an OAM in 1988 for service to music education and to the community. Images: James Lerk

Protecting Historic Trees

In the April edition of *History & Heritage* there was a segment asking:- Do you have a favourite historic tree in your neighbourhood? Send *H&H* a photo. No responses were received. Do we as a community value our trees? Trees provide beauty, shade, they keep the water table low and provide habitat and food for many species of life. Are there other benefits?

Greater Bendigo Council has a guide to protecting trees and here is the link- [click here](#)

Your response will promote discussion!

Here's an idea....

This spectacular eucalyptus tree can be found in Overbury Drive, Clarence Park S.A. The land was owned by the Overbury family. When widow Gertrude Overbury died in 1943 her Will stated that the tree could not be cut down. When the property was subdivided and the road built, the tree was retained. Source: Facebook page: David Attenborough Fans



Branch Meeting Report 24 April 2023 5.30pm at *History House Bendigo*

Agenda

1. Branch meeting place
2. NT Winter Magazine
3. Miners' cottages
4. Castlemaine Camp Reserve
5. Review of *H&H*
6. Coo-gate Bakery
7. Gas Works tours
8. Nanga Gnulle
9. General business

Discussion:

1. The Branch has secured Bendigo Library as a meeting room (free of charge). New meeting day will be Tuesdays. Need to meet at 5.30pm to enable collection of keys and allow people working to attend. New location to be published in *H&H*.
2. NT Winter magazine - an issue the Branch might contribute is the disconnect between the plans and strategies local governments publish about city liveability and the disconnect that exists with development permits being issued that appear to contradict those plans and strategies. (eg *City Centre Plan*) - and focus on CBD liveability for family homes and lessening the reliance on businesses occupying (and expanding) into what were once domestic residences.
3. Discussion about if the Branch makes a submission about the differences between 'inside' and 'outside' guidelines, including location on land and streetscapes. (Chimneys were used as examples of a wider issue of the purpose to protect.) Reference made of *Ironbark Study 2010*, submissions close 8 May 2023.
4. Branch offered to support community engagement- endeavour to make the issue more widely known through *H&H*. Tour demonstrated that key environmental issues need to be further considered.
5. No outcomes, always open to suggestions. Editorial committee meets monthly and is open for others to join.
6. General discussion around the issue with follow-up in *H&H* following further letter sent to Council.
7. Tours discussed with the constraints of OHS on numbers, everything seemed in order for tours.
8. Branch advised that the heritage boundary may have been breached, Branch to contact Council.
9. General Business. As there are so many issues, the Branch committee needs to expand to share workload. Members agreed to track issues in the media.

Meeting closed at 7.20pm.

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. [Click here](#) to join.

You can keep up with the current advocacy issues at the Trust Advocate blog [click here](#)

***History & Heritage* Branch newsletter - receive, contribute, read past issues**

The Branch welcomes your ideas, contributions and photographs for the newsletter which is published monthly. The contribution deadline for the June *History & Heritage* will be **June 5 2023**. For previous issues of *History & Heritage* [Click here](#)

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 0447 473 674

Email: National Trust of Australia (Vic) Bendigo & Region Branch [Click here](#)

Telephone: President, Peter Cox 0447 473 674 or 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.

