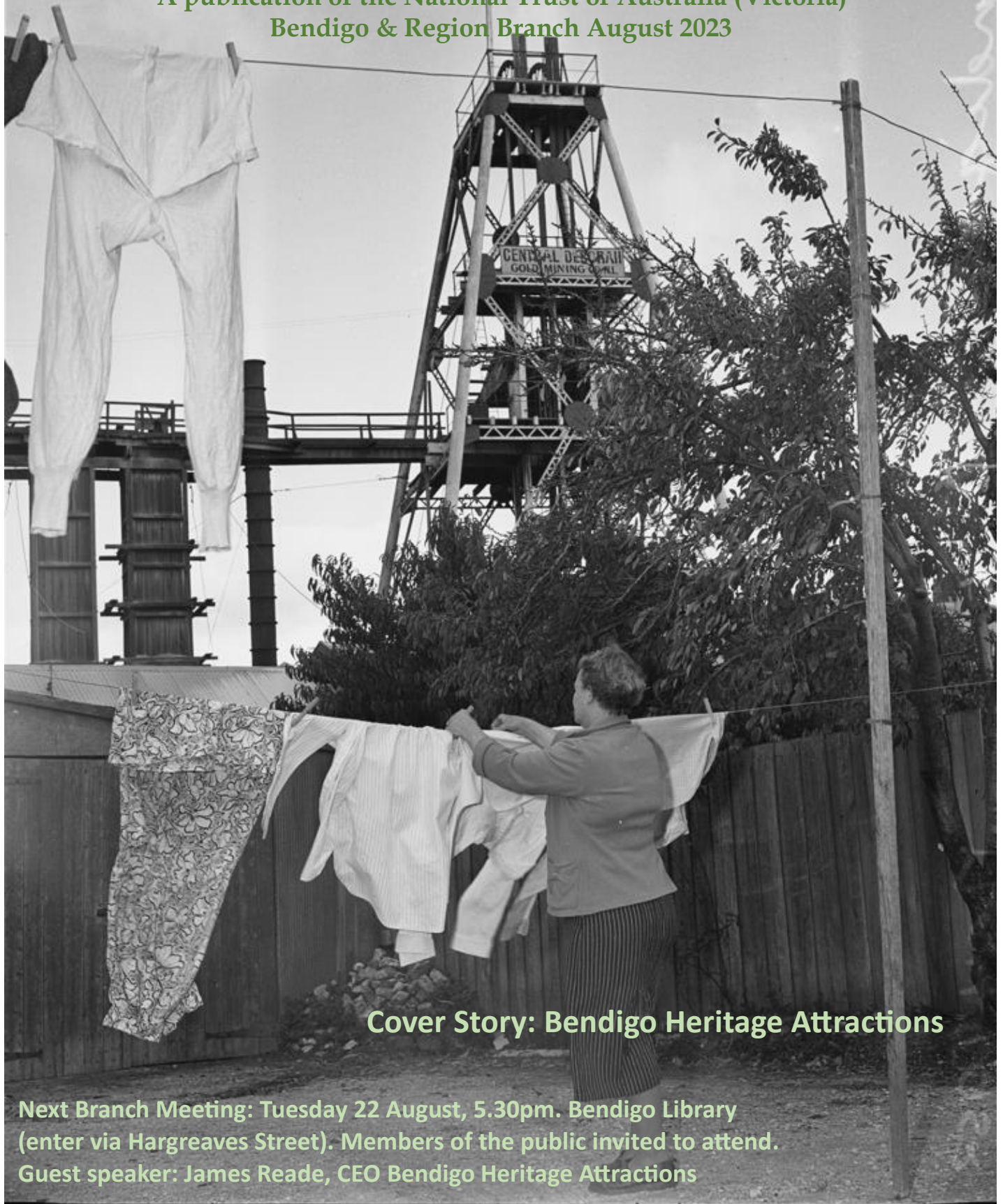


History & Heritage

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



Cover Story: Bendigo Heritage Attractions

Next Branch Meeting: Tuesday 22 August, 5.30pm. Bendigo Library
(enter via Hargreaves Street). Members of the public invited to attend.
Guest speaker: James Reade, CEO Bendigo Heritage Attractions

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Cover photograph: Gordon de Lisle 1952, State Library of New South Wales

Cover Story: Bendigo Heritage Attractions

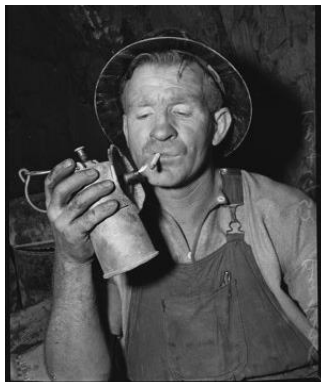
A Brief History

The word 'gold' is synonymous with Bendigo as one of the top 10 producers of gold in the world. Today, Bendigo is a grand city with many connections to its golden heritage still accessible.

The Bendigo Trust (now trading as Bendigo Heritage Attractions) was established in 1970 as a response to the Bendigo City Council's plan to restore, conserve and manage the Central Deborah Gold Mine. Today, Bendigo Heritage Attractions also maintains responsibility of Bendigo Tramways and the Bendigo Joss House Temple.

Bendigo Heritage Attractions works closely with the City of Greater Bendigo in the running of all of its tourism services. While Bendigo Heritage Attractions oversees the daily operations of these services, it is the City of Greater Bendigo who owns many of the physical assets.

Bendigo miner. Photo: Gordon de Lisle 1952, State Library of New South Wales



[Central Deborah Gold Mine](#) operated from 1939-1954 and during that time employed 357 male miners who successfully extracted almost one ton of gold (929kg) from the ground, worth about \$50 million at today's prices. At its peak, Central Deborah Gold Mine reached a depth of 412 metres. It has 17 separate levels and 15 kilometres of drives and cross cuts (tunnels).

[Bendigo Tramways](#) has been in operation since June 1890. From that time, the citizens of Bendigo have experienced battery, steam and electric traction as the principal modes of propulsion for their trams. the SEC made several attempts at closing the tramways and handing over the passenger services to private bus operators. It took some time, but in July 1970 the Victorian Parliament finally granted the SEC's application for abandonment of the tramways.

Despite the seeming practicality of a shift to private buses, the idea of trams vanishing from Bendigo's streets did not sit easily with the community. Many felt that the legacy of the past was being squandered, and the newly formed Bendigo Trust was called upon to present a submission to the Bendigo City Council suggesting that a two-year trial for a tourist tramway be undertaken. The Bendigo Trust's persistence was rewarded in September 1972 when the Victorian Cabinet announced that it had approved the two-year trial.



Trams at Charing Cross, Bendigo 1966. Photo: Smith Alan Eldridge; State Library of Victoria

No other Australian city which closed its tramway system left track, trams and a depot behind in the manner that Bendigo did and this enables us to create a picture of the past for our visitors. Whether enjoying a Vintage 'Talking' Tram Tour or taking our guided Depot and Workshop tour, a visit to Bendigo Tramways drives home the significance of how Bendigo has developed as a city, and the role Bendigo Tramways has played in that development.

Today, Bendigo Tramways is Australasia's largest tourist tramway and welcomes over 40,000 visitors annually. The Bendigo Tramways Depot is the oldest operating tram depot in Australia and is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. There are currently 45 trams in the fleet (13 of which operate as part of the 'Talking' Tram service).

The [Bendigo Joss House Temple](#), a Chinese house of prayer, was constructed in the 1870s. Standing for over a century, the Bendigo Joss House Temple is one of the few remaining buildings of its type in Australia. Constructed with locally hand-made bricks and painted red, symbolising the traditional Chinese colour denoting strength and vitality, the Bendigo Joss House Temple provides a glimpse into Chinese culture and tradition. The main temple is dedicated to Guan Di, the god of war and prosperity. The Chinese saw him as a wise judge, guide, protector and provider of wealth and prosperity; attributes sought by the Chinese inhabitants of this strange land.



Bendigo Joss House. Image: bendigojosshouse.com

James Reade CEO Bendigo Heritage Attractions will be the guest speaker at the next Branch Meeting Tuesday 22 August 2023 5.30pm at the Bendigo Library. Image: LinkedIn



The Bendigo Joss House Temple has been managed by Bendigo Heritage Attractions since 2007.

Some interesting facts ...

- The first tour of the Central Deborah Gold Mine surface precinct was conducted on Good Friday in 1971 and tickets were just 20¢.
- In 1971 The Bendigo Trust established an afforestation committee with a brief to promote tree planting in and around Bendigo. This committee functioned until 1980, with 2,700 trees planted during 1977/78 alone.
- The Bendigo Trust opened the city's first Tourist Information Centres, at Charing Cross and Kangaroo Flat in 1974.
- The Bendigo Trust opened the Dai Gum San Wax Museum in 1975 with 60 wax figures donated by Vivian Sun.
- From 1981 – 1986 The Bendigo Trust ran tours of [Fortuna Villa](#).
- 1993 saw the commencement of Double Decker Bus Tours which operated for 10 years.
- In 1995 the first public tours of the Bendigo Gas Works were carried out on weekends and holidays.
- The Bendigo Trust managed the [Discovery Science & Technology Centre](#) from 2001 – 2015.
- The Bendigo Trust took over the management of the [Bendigo Joss House Temple](#) from the National Trust in 2007.
- On 16 October 2010, The Bendigo Trust superseded the State Electricity Commission of Victoria as Bendigo's longest serving tram operator.

Red Ribbon Agitation

Sunday 27 August 11am.

170th anniversary – outdoor event

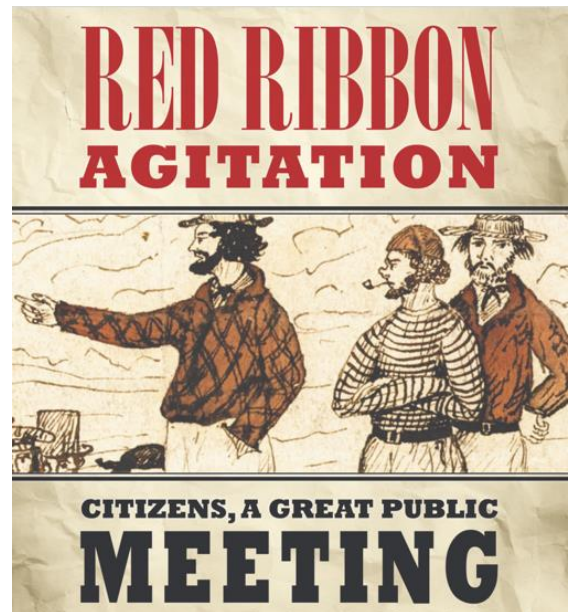
Meet at the Bendigo Piazza, View Point Rosalind Park, march to the rotunda, and enjoy a performance by the Bendigo Theatre Company of the events of 1853 when thousands of miners demanded a fair license fee.

Free event

Dress like a miner and **wear a red ribbon**.



The License Inspected S.T. Gill, 1852. The police were often brutal when checking if miners had a current license. Image: State Library Victoria



[Click here](#) for further information

Branch survey - update

The Branch circulated a survey to members and supporters in its July edition. [Here is the link](#) if you have not filled it in yet.

Hotel development in doubt



Artist's impression of the proposed hotel in Hargreaves Mall. Image: Bendigo Advertiser April 2021

Developers of the proposed \$14.4 million Hargreaves Mall hotel have confirmed it will be built but are waiting for costs to "level off". The Branch objected to issuing a permit by Heritage Victoria saying it will severely impact the heritage precinct which has 22 heritage listed sites within 200 meters of the proposed hotel, many of which are on the State Heritage Register. The Branch said it was poorly designed, it would be the highest building in the precinct and that a budget of around \$14 million would not provide a quality build representative of the area.

Meanwhile, the development site is a series of closed premises impacting the presentation of Hargreaves Mall, and if built will dominate the streetscape. The Branch believes the development should be abandoned.

Housing developer wants Fortuna land

Branch objection to Heritage Victoria Permit No P36838

The proposed residential development will negatively impact on the significance of the heritage place, Fortuna Villa. Here is a summary of what the Branch said:

1. The poor-quality design of the dwellings does not reflect the outstanding architectural merit of the heritage place. Small dwellings can also reflect architectural merit however, this development is dominated by large garage spaces and roads designed for the car and not for people. It is based on getting a maximum number of dwellings into the development, rather than designing a place for modern and healthy living which compliments a heritage place. The development design needs to excite potential buyers and provide benefits to the heritage place but it appears it has little to recommend it.



Artist's impression of the proposed residential development at Fortuna Villa. Image: <https://www.openlot.com.au/>

2. The removal of vegetation does not continue the landscape of the Fortuna gardens so the development is not compatible with the landscape of the area. Good design needs to reflect the best conditions for people living in the development with serious consideration given to the change in climate, providing shade and available open space compatible with the number of dwellings if the development is to proceed.

3. The development encroaches on the curtilage of the heritage place ignoring previous decisions where the boundary of the heritage place was determined after careful and publicised considerations. This encroachment will diminish the significance of the heritage place. There is no discussion on the positives of this encroachment by the applicant and as a result should be dismissed as a viable way forward.

4. The location of the development does not respect the long-standing entrance to Fortuna Villa and will negatively impact on the sense of open space and excitement always experienced when visiting Fortuna Villa.

5. It is an unreasonable economic use of the land as a part of it is designated on the Victorian Heritage Register and of particular importance to the State of Victoria and further, on land listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory. As a consequence, special consideration is required to be given to the use of this land. It adds nothing to Fortuna Villa, and therefore the development must rely on its own merits. The applicant has provided no substantial information or discussion on why the development should receive special consideration by Heritage Victoria.



Plan of the Fortuna Villa development. Image: <https://www.openlot.com.au/>

Branch support for the Camp Reserve, Castlemaine, to be placed on the Victorian Heritage Register

The Branch has written in support of this proposal. Here is an edited version of the letter:

“Views and vistas across to the creek have been preserved by the openness of the Reserve site and the unobtrusive nature of the existing buildings. The existing old trees and monument on the Gingell Street side contribute to the authenticity of the site. It is suggested by the nominees that the new facilities be constructed at the other end of the site so as not to interfere with the heritage landscape. The Branch supports this proposal.

During 1851 to 1854 three events influenced how Victoria would be governed.

- The Monster Meeting of diggers at Golden Point in December 1851
- The Red Ribbon Agitation at Sandhurst in August 1853
- Mass meeting of diggers at Bakery Hill Ballarat in November 1854 which led to the Eureka Stockade in December that year

These events not only changed how the Government Camps would be run but set Victoria on its path to democracy, formulated its character and its growth towards prosperity. The Camp Reserve at Castlemaine can be identified as the best reference of former Government Camps in this trilogy as the other Camps are unrecognisable. Authorities also had a range of strategies in handling the conflict with the Camp Reserve leaders having a more humane approach to diggers and their demands. These issues need further investigation by the Heritage Council.”

Here is a link to more information on Camp Reserve <https://goldcampcastlemaine.com.au/>



Two of the extant buildings from the Government Camp era. Left: Old Court House (now the Castlemaine Historical Society. Photo: Jessica Hood, <https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/>; right: the Powder Magazine House. Image: ABC News June 2022

Period homes and prime commercial sites need to be used for housing

All levels of government need to support the construction of houses and apartments by providing incentives for businesses to move from prime residential locations.

President of the Bendigo Branch of the National Trust said today "Planning authorities need to increase housing stock as an urgent priority and deter businesses from using period homes and prime residential land close to central business districts solely for business. Hundreds of homes, many of them built during the 19th & 20th centuries, around the Bendigo CBD and other shopping centres now have no one in them at night. The lifeblood of all shopping centres is people living close by with access to services and public transport."

“If period buildings in the Bendigo CBD are going to survive and be repurposed it will require an injection of people living, shopping and visiting central Bendigo.”

"Over 10 years ago some car sale yards were cleared out of High Street with permits issued for residential development but nothing has happened. With the Bendigo Creek being activated as a recreation corridor and with many green open spaces, the entrance to Bendigo along High St will become an enticing place to live with no need for using a car as a daily mode of transport. Good design would be a major factor in attracting new residents." he said.

"Sites like the former Gillies factory which has been left idle for many years also need activation through investment in housing."

"It will have a number of beneficial effects including the protection of period homes from businesses destroying their fabric, a halt to a sprawling city that destroys natural habitat and one- and two-bedroom apartments could be a focus to overcome the housing crisis along with a long list of vacant commercial and retail buildings in the CBD." he said.



The former Gillies Pie factory in Garsed Street, vacant for many years.
Image: Bendigo Branch



Examples of residences being used as businesses in Hargreaves Street and Queen Street. Image: Bendigo Branch

Central Victorian Goldfields Bid for World Heritage recognition

Recent editions of *H&H* have reported on this Bid and if successful will see a greater priority being given to the region's heritage assets. Hopefully it will see thousands of visitors exploring this rich history. However, an unusual statement was made this month when it was reported in a news interview (ABC Radio Central Victoria Breakfast Aug 2) with Trevor Budge (World Heritage Strategic Projects Officer) that State Cabinet would be deciding the key sites that would be recognised in the submission to UNESCO. This is of concern as it could make the chosen sites a very political decision. *H&H* believes that this decision is best left to the historians backed up by the hundreds of pages written as citations and studies on each particular site. Trevor stated in the interview that: 'It will be a decision that will have to be made by the Victorian State Cabinet. It will probably be in the order of 8 to 10 to 12 sites across the state. A site is not necessarily one individual site, a site could be a whole collection of buildings.'

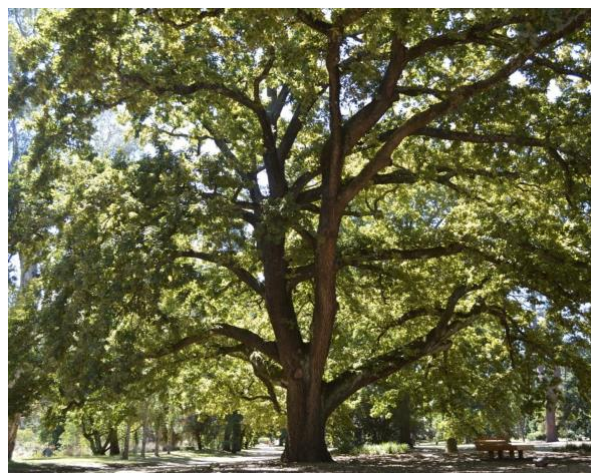
<h3>The Bid</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• About the Bid• Statement of• Outstanding Universal Value• Achieving the vision• Economic benefits		<h3>The Goldfields</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historic Places• The Stories• Visitor Information	
	<h3>World Heritage</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Benefits of the bid• Strategic Advice• What listing really means for prospecting & mining		<h3>What's new</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Latest news• Take the Happiness Index Survey• Interpretative stories• Member registration

For more information on the Bid <https://goldfieldsworldheritage.com.au/>

Nominations are now open for the 2023 Victorian Tree of the Year

The Victorian Tree of the Year is a celebration of the significant trees that have captured the hearts of Victorians; it could have a dramatic history, or a majestic canopy; it doesn't have to be the biggest or the oldest of its kind, just the tree we love the most.

The contest continues to follow in the footsteps of an immensely popular winner in 2018, the Lollipop tree (Monterey Pine, *Pinus radiata*) at the Parks Victoria Mount Beckworth Scenic Reserve; the 2019 winner, the Bulleen River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*); and the 2020 winner, the Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour (*Ulmus x hollandica*). The Royal Oak, one of the largest English Oaks in the state and the oldest tree in the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens, was named 2021 Victorian Tree of the Year.



The Victorian Tree of the Year 2021 - English Oak *Quercus robur* at Castlemaine Botanic Gardens. Image: National Trust Victoria

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is the state's leading advocate for the protection of trees, celebrating the benefits they provide to our communities. Since 1982 the Trust has classified over 20,000 trees in 1,200 places across the state on the National Trust Significant Tree Register.



2022 winner of the ABC's Australia's Favourite Tree, the river red gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*. Image: ABC Regional & Local: Damien Peck. August 2022



Our river red gum The King Billy Tree at Lockwood South, approx. 300 years old. Image: National Trust Significant Tree Register

To nominate your favourite tree

[Click here](#)

Branch Meeting report Tuesday 25 July at Bendigo Library

- Noel Ridge remembered
- Bendigo Gas Works future tour dates. Sunday 17th September & Saturday 19th November. All day events. Approval from council needs to be sought but looks good. A Guide Brochure will need to be written to share the work load on the day and contact made with Bendigo's Tourist Information Centre to assist with bookings.
- Branch survey has been circulated to members and supporters. All are encouraged to fill it in.
- Further follow up is required on NT Plaques and the Blue Plates issued by the Heritage Council. Forward information to H&H.
- NT in Melbourne is considering request on YES campaign involvement.
- The Conservation Management Plan on Specimen Cottage has been received by the Branch from Courts Victoria. Available for reference.
- August copy for H&H closes on August 1 with editorial committee meeting on August 2.
- Write letters to councils on branch view on 'Demolition by Neglect'
- Demolition in Russell St Quarry Hill to be followed up.
- Don to provide information on Heritage Victoria's Data Base.
- Next Branch meeting. Tuesday 22nd August, 5.30pm, with James Reade speaking on Bendigo Heritage Attractions.

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 40,000 members across Victoria. [Click here](#) to join.

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

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.

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

Everyone has a story that, when combined with others, provides a record of the social history of our region and draws attention to the significance of local built heritage.

The Branch welcomes your ideas, contributions and photographs for the newsletter which is published monthly. The contribution deadline for the September *History & Heritage* will be **Friday 1 September 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 Editorial group next meeting: Wednesday 6 September, 10am Corner Store Café

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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