

History & Heritage

Circulating Throughout Bendigo, Heathcote, Castlemaine, Maldon,
and Kyneton areas

A publication of the National Trust
Bendigo & District Branch. March 2024



**Next Branch Meeting - Tuesday 26 March 5.30pm Bendigo Library
(enter via Hargreaves Street entrance)
Open to all who are interested in history and heritage**

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Cover image: Marg Hogan in her 1876 cottage
Image: National Trust Bendigo Branch

Cover story: Miners' cottages for the 21st century

Two of the events the Branch is hosting for the Australian Heritage Festival this year are tours of two miners' cottages.

One of these is a weatherboard miner's cottage built in 1876 when many people residing in the area were still living in tents. Nestled in a lovely garden setting within the Ironbark Heritage Precinct, it is a great example of a home comfortably renovated without compromising its heritage integrity. It is located in an area steeped in mining history with many Cornish emigrants settling in the area from the 1860s. You will be able to have a walk through the house, explore the garden and have some refreshments. Dr Charles Fahey, historian and author will speak on the History of Mining Cottages at 2pm and be available to answer questions. He will be able to explain The Miners Right and the part it played in housing the miners.

The other cottage, a mudbrick home built by Thomas and Sarah Evans in 1874, grew to a farm of about 120 acres and today sits on an acre of gardens with 7 out buildings. It was common for a miner's cottage to start as a small house, but many were

extended as families grew and miners advanced their employment prospects. Thomas and Sarah had 13 children. Their final extension was undertaken in 1895 with an addition of a parlour and verandah. The house water well still operates alongside a mudbrick buggy shed and the original stables, toilet and cook house. Listed in the book, *Bendigo Historic Buildings*, there is an acre of gardens, plenty of historic records about the property and a cuppa to enjoy. Heritage consultant and historian Elaine Doling will give a short talk on the History of Miners' Cottages at 11:00am and be available to answer questions.

See links to bookings for both properties on page 4

Continued neglect of miners' cottages

In contrast to these cottages, many others are left unsecured and deteriorate until they fall into a state of disrepair destined to be demolished even though many of them have heritage protection with authorities not prepared to protect our past.



Left to right: A neglected cottage in Shamrock Street Bendigo. Image: National Trust Bendigo Branch; Abbott Street Bendigo cottage, demolished. Image: Google maps; Samson's Cottage, Golden Square, literally fallen into neglect. Image: National Trust Bendigo Branch



Left to right: Neglected in Victoria Street Eaglehawk. Image: National Trust Bendigo Branch. 55 Arnold St Bendigo, to be demolished Image: Google maps. Protected by a heritage overlay 257 Eaglehawk Rd Long Gully has fallen into further disrepair with broken windows.'

Australian Heritage Festival 2024

[The National Trust of Australia \(Victoria\)](#) is excited to announce that Australia's biggest community driven heritage festival will run from Thursday 18 April to Saturday 18 May 2024 in Victoria. The festival is an opportunity for the community to immerse themselves in the state's rich and diverse heritage, offering unmatched access to unique exhibitions, tours, talks, workshops and more.

The 2024 theme is 'Connections'

Encouraging celebration of the rich and diverse stories of our nation, strengthening cultural and historical ties and forging new bonds. The 2024 theme acknowledges our link to people, places and the past, and the enduring connections that will shape the future of heritage.

This year's festival is supported by the Heritage Council Victoria, celebrating the [50th Anniversary of state government heritage legislation](#) and the creation of the Victorian Heritage Register.

The Branch has organised 6 events, and while they will be very interesting and to many of us a step back in time which we treasure, the events have a very important role to highlight what will happen to these sites in the years ahead.

Gas Works and Old Post Office

The Branch is partnering with Greater Bendigo Council for two events featuring visits and tours of the former Bendigo Gas Works and the former Bendigo Post Office. These sites are icons of Bendigo's past - architectural and engineering feats which provided important community services, changing the way people lived and creating an improved lifestyle in the 19th century. It is hoped that a greater public discussion will occur on the future of these sites as Council will soon need to make important decisions about their future.



April 20 & 28 Bendigo Gas Works [Book here](#)

12 tours for 15 people per tour, entry fee, no children under 12yrs, poor access, industrial site.

May 11 Former Bendigo Post Office [Book here](#)

3 levels, free event, 4 tours for 20 people per tour & self-tours between 10am -3pm.



April 27 Castlemaine Historic Camp Reserve [Book here](#) two tours, entry fee, self-tours without access to properties.

Members and supporters in Castlemaine are featuring tours of Castlemaine's Historic Camp Reserve - the heart of Castlemaine's Premier Historic Precinct. Bendigo members from the Branch were privileged to attend this tour last year and it certainly lived up to expectations. But again, decisions will soon be made by the Mount Alexander Shire Council on its future.



There is an article in the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Magazine, Autumn 2024, page 64.

May 5 Open House and Garden at two miners' cottages



The Branch is offering openings of two miners' cottages in Bendigo, both dating back to the 1870s, 150 years ago. These well cared for cottages will highlight the senseless demise of many other miners' cottages throughout the region which once provided much needed housing. Their stories demonstrate how authorities addressed housing issues at that time including the role of Building Societies, the Miners Right and the opportunities for owners who developed them as their families and incomes grew. Speakers at each event will tell these stories.

1876 miner's cottage [Book here](#)

1874 miner's cottage [Book here](#)

Includes speakers, entry fee, tours in houses and throughout gardens. Refreshments. You can book on the day depending on numbers.

May 12 Rocky Vale Villa [Book here](#)

The story of Rocky Vale Villa reveals the harsh but inspiring story of one man building his home from the stone on his property while in recent times it has been vandalised while authorities are indecisive about its importance and its future.

Speakers, free event, need to walk into the property, rough surfaces, no facilities, parking some distance from house. The event will be held in front of the house as the vandalism has made the house unsafe but a walk around the property will give you an insight into living in the 19th century.



Deciding on which events to attend

Online bookings are now open for all events (as shown above) and it will be competitive. Due to safety reasons attendances are limited, for example, the Gas Works has 12 tours over two days but limited to 15 people each tour, no children under 12 years may attend, and there are access issues and no facilities.

You will need to read the information on each event carefully to make sure you will be able to participate.

Some events have entry fees, others are free.

Bookings are essential.

Volunteers Required for events.

Over 30 volunteers will be needed to put on these events. There are benefits for volunteers as you will get into events free and be able to explore venues at a more intimate level. There are 2 hour & 3 hour times slots for volunteers. Please call, text or [email here](#) President Peter, 0447473674

'Golden' cities to help final push in World Heritage goldfields bid - Bendigo Advertiser

Ballarat and Bendigo's "glittering gold" cities are vital in the final push for a [Victorian Goldfields World Heritage bid](#).

The City of Greater Bendigo and the City of Ballarat Councils have been key drivers in the state's bid for a UNESCO World Heritage nod, according to an expert in the space.

Barry Gamble has spent decades around the world developing bids for heritage mining spots and said the Victorian Goldfields were an "unparalleled" example. He said to gain a World Heritage stamp, it has to be "the best of the best". "This has to be something special," Mr Gamble said. [Click here](#) to read the full story.



The new verandah at the Chewton Wesleyan Church.
Image: *Chewton Chat*

Works at the former Wesleyan Church in Chewton are progressing, with hard plastering repairs in the kitchen completed, all-abilities bathroom and exterior under the newly installed verandah completed, and all-abilities access ramp and new stairs completed. In the coming month, works will include new electrical and plumbing services installed for the kitchen and all-abilities bathroom. Hand railing for the new ramp will be installed in March, and joinery for the kitchen is on order and will be installed after Easter. Stage 3 works are dependent on budget funding. Article thanks to Comms at Mount Alexander Shire.

Future of majestic river red gum 'Big Tree' in central Victoria uncertain after massive limbs lost (by Rebecca Norman and Emma D'Agostino, *ABC Central Victoria* 4 March 2024)

- In short: The 2023 Victorian Tree of the Year has dropped limbs, devastating the local community.
- An arboricultural expert says it is not unusual for trees of this age to drop limbs.
- What's next? First Nations group Djaara will use the fallen limbs to create artefacts.



Left: Aunty Kerri Douglas says the tree has a lot of cultural significance for traditional owners. Image: *ABC Central Victoria*: Emma D'Agostino. Right: The Guildford red gum was awarded *Victorian Tree of the Year* in 2023 by the National Trust of Australia for its "outstanding size and curious fusion of branches" Image: National Trust Victoria



Above: Aunty Kerri Douglas can see potential for a boomerang in a fallen limb. Image: *ABC Central Victoria*: Emma D'Agostino. Left: Guildford's Big Tree has cultural significance for the local indigenous people. *ABC Central Victoria*: Tim Purdie

[Click here](#) to read the full article

Jillian Kilby - Heritage Building

Broadcast Friday 23 February 2024 on ABC *Nightlife*

Beautiful big pubs, courthouses, banks, post offices, halls... All over Australia, incredible old public buildings are in need of TLC. They tell a story, made with heart and skill in ways modern architecture can fail to match. Jillian Kilby (pictured) is a civil engineer with a love of heritage buildings. She's bought and restored three prominent buildings in regional New South Wales and created a social impact organisation called 'The Exchange' to give them a new life. Listen to the interview [here](#).



The future for Bendigo's former law courts?

Jillian Kilby provides a stimulating interview about preservation of heritage buildings. One of the disappointments about organising the Heritage Festival events was that the Branch could not get access to the former Bendigo Law Courts. It has been closed now for over 12 months and looking very dilapidated. Numerous calls and emails were made to Courts Victoria and other government departments to gain access but to no avail. The Branch made representations to local parliamentary members in 2018 as it was concerned that once closed it would quickly fall into disrepair. Perhaps the Branch could organise a community consultation event to focus on the building's future. Courts Victoria, while it has said it will undertake community consultation, has not indicated when it might happen. Send your views to H&H [here](#)



Former Dubbo Post Office. Purchased and refurbished. Image: Wikimedia Commons

Correspondence

Re. Bendigo Creek story from last month

In January I spent some time in Christchurch, New Zealand with a lot of that time walking along the Avon River which meanders around and through the centre of Christchurch. Following the earthquakes of 2011, a lot of money and effort was spent returning the river to its former state to the point that it is now one of the most important features of the city. The restoration of the river has included many gardens, new bridges, picnic spots and a multitude of native birds and fish.



Avon River, Christ Church New Zealand (Aotearoa) Image: Getty Images

Compare this to the sorry state of the Bendigo Creek which for the most part is a drain and an eyesore where it flows through the City of Bendigo. Parts of the creek are deteriorating greatly with the stone sides breaking up and the bluestone underneath thrown into the channel along with a mass of weeds deposited from the heavy summer rain. To date there appears to be no attempt from council to address the unsightly mess and the people of Bendigo tend not to go anywhere near the creek. The comparison with Christchurch is stark. They have a beautiful attraction in the centre of the city, we have a constantly deteriorating eyesore.

Philip

Do you have a view on mountain bikes in State Forests?

Illegal mountain bike track building is impacting heritage sites in forests throughout the region. According to the 'Trailforks' website there are over 170km of unsanctioned mountain bike tracks developed in the Bendigo area. Many of these are located in the Bendigo National Park and Bendigo Regional Park which are under the management of Parks Victoria. Native vegetation removal and damage to historic mining sites is common. If you have a view, email *H&H* [here](#).



One of the illegal mountain bike tracks around Bendigo.
Image: National Trust Bendigo Branch

Branch Meeting News

Branch meeting held 27 February 2024

- Review of February newsletter. More exposure and information required for events at the Australian Heritage Festival. Write letter to Greater Bendigo Council re flood damage in Bendigo Creek, in particular the heritage stone work. Art Gallery redevelopment objection comprehensive. Progress social media position. Position description circulated. Send to La Trobe, Tafe and Bendigo SSC. Gain access to large brick shed as part of the Gas Works tours.
- Additional Pillar Post Boxes on Pall Mall and at Tram Depot.
- 32 volunteers will be required for Festival events. Contact President Peter if you can assist.
- Position of Secretary required to be filled. Hold AGM in November 2024.
- March Newsletter- Focus on filling events for Festival and need for volunteers. Feature demolition of miners' cottages, no plan for former Court House in Pall Mall and updates on current issues.

Next Branch meeting- Tuesday 26 March 5.30pm at the Bendigo Library. Enter Hargreaves Street.

Discussion points will include Bendigo Art Gallery development, Heritage Festival, social media strategy, editorial content for next *H&H*, upcoming meetings. You do not have to be a member of the National Trust to attend, supporters are welcome.

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](#)

***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 November *History & Heritage* will be **8 April 2024**. 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 10 April** 10am Corner Store Café, View Street

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

Telephone: President, Peter Cox 0447 473 674 or mail: c/- 57 Green St. California Gully 3556.

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

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