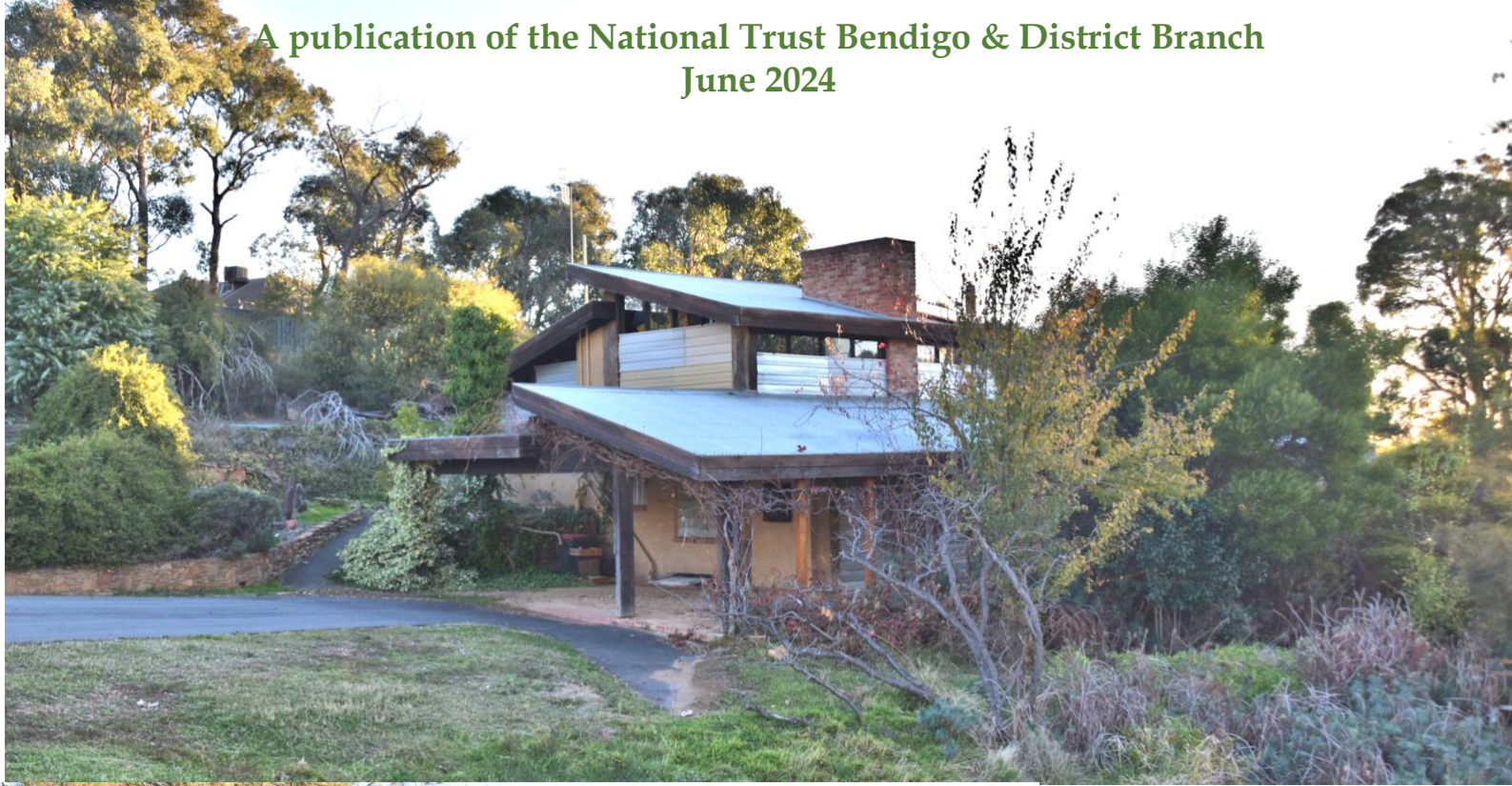


# History & Heritage

Circulating throughout Bendigo, Eaglehawk, Heathcote, Castlemaine,  
Maldon and Kyneton areas

A publication of the National Trust Bendigo & District Branch  
June 2024



**Next Branch Meeting -  
Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 5.30pm  
Bendigo Library  
(enter via Hargreaves Street  
entrance)  
Open to all who are  
interested in history and  
heritage**

**Cover story:  
*The future  
of  
Nanga Gnulle***

The development site today showing the remains of the garden. A Planning Panel and the Bendigo Council agreed that the curtilage be extended as part of the overlay. The planning application intends that the vegetation be totally removed. It has also not shown a landscape plan. Photos: National Trust Bendigo Branch



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## Cover story: The future of Nanga Gnulle

A proposal for alterations and extension to the dwelling known as Nanga Gnulle in a current planning permit application, DR/100/2024, lodged with Greater Bendigo Council must be carefully considered in the context of its heritage overlay.

The subject dwelling and land have been on the council agenda for many years culminating in council placing a heritage overlay on the dwelling and a small parcel of land on which it sits. However, council also issued a planning permit for the original 5 acres to be subdivided into new residential blocks destroying a 'botanical type garden' which was not included in the heritage overlay.

While the new planning proposal retains the architectural style of the existing building and is designed to fit the existing land formation, it does not address issues relating to the heritage overlay now part of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

It is the role of the National Trust to raise heritage issues of concern with authorities dealing with planning applications. The site is affected by a site-specific Heritage Overlay (H0915). This overlay relates to the dwelling and grounds of the site and known as "Nanga Gnulle, mud brick and reclaimed materials house": The purpose of the Heritage Overlay is to, above all, conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of the heritage place and to ensure that development does not adversely affect it. The application does not address all of these issues.

The overlay not only relates to the dwelling but also to the curtilage to the dwelling and its vegetation. The independent panel appointed by the Planning Minister in 2018 recommended that the curtilage be extended which was adopted by the Greater Bendigo Council. It is stated in the planning application that vegetation is to be totally removed contrary to the overlay and there is no landscape plan provided.

There is also no Heritage Impact Statement prepared by an experienced heritage consultant nor materials or colour schedules or use of solar panels, required by the overlay, provided in the application documents. Given changes to climate, it is likely that air conditioners at least would be installed.

There are zero setbacks to the south eastern boundary, Colourbond fencing will not add to the significance of the heritage place and retaining walls need further consideration to match the existing stone walls. The rear street appearance



Section of the Nanga Gnulle garden. Top: in 2018  
Image: Tweed Sutherland. Below: today. Image: 2024  
National Trust Bendigo Branch

of the new extension does not reflect the heritage place. The name of the site, Nanga Gnulle, has not been acknowledged.

The application states "The heritage significance of the site was thoroughly debated and tested through Amendment C234". This has entailed a lengthy public process but unfortunately the application has not adhered to its findings. For this reason, the Branch requests that a Planning Consultation Meeting be held so that objectors can hear and understand the applicant's position and ask questions on issues that are of concern and relevant to the application. As a result, the applicant, objectors and Council may be able to avoid a lengthy, protracted and costly debate about the merits of the proposal and the objectors will also have answers to their questions and concerns.

The planning application can be [viewed here](#). Submissions can be made up until Council considers the application. Send to [planningadmin@Bendigo.vic.gov.au](mailto:planningadmin@Bendigo.vic.gov.au). Seven objections will mean that it will be considered at a public council meeting rather than by the Council's planning officers.

## Heritage protected observatory, house to become child care centre

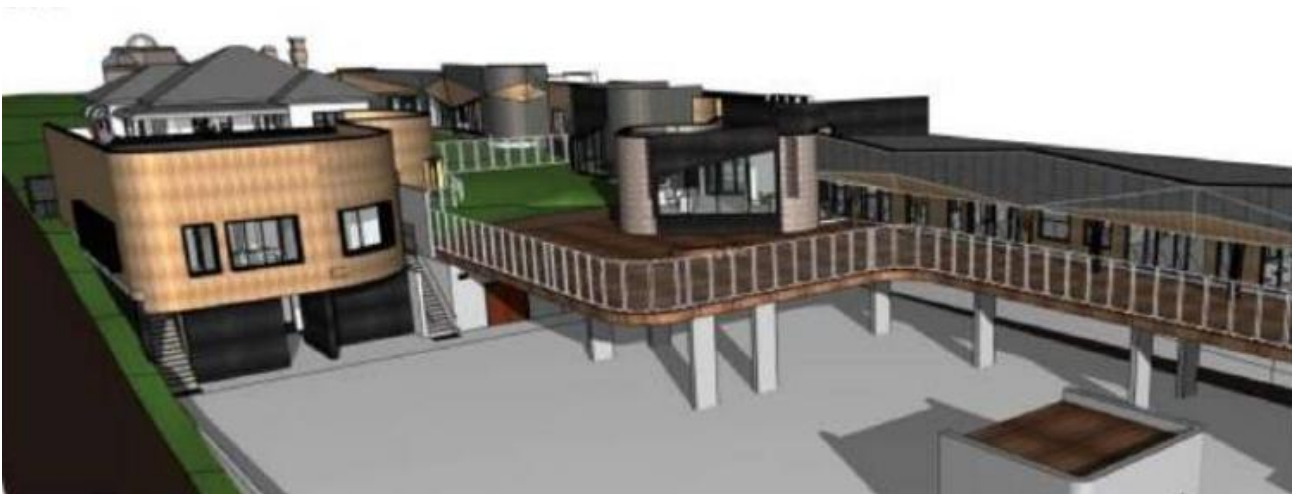
Jonathon Magrath *Bendigo Advertiser*



The heritage protected East Bendigo Observatory (pictured above) will form part of a new childcare centre. A \$2 million [childcare centre will be built on the site of a historic observatory](#), after City of Greater Bendigo councillors approved a planning permit at their meeting on Monday, May 27. [The centre](#) would see the abandoned and [heritage protected La Rocca house at 55 Condon Street](#) Kennington repaired and restored, as well as the East Bendigo Observatory, which was used for weather observations in the early 1900s and deemed significant to Bendigo's history.

Councillor Dave Fagg said the plan was a 'win-win' for the site's development and heritage conservation. "I think this application is a success story because until council put an interim heritage overlay on the property in 2021, the residence and observatory had no heritage protection and it could easily have been demolished," he said. The observatory once housed a 4.5-inch telescope under its retractable domed roof and reflected advances in Australian science and astronomy, according to a state government heritage report in 2023.

The application struck the right balance between developing the site for contemporary need while committing to preserve its heritage, Cr Fagg said. The proposed childcare centre would accommodate 144 children and 21 staff and would operate between 6:30am and 6:30pm Monday to Friday. It would occupy three separate buildings with three outdoor play spaces and would be partially constructed over two levels, with car parking to be provided on a lower level.



An artist's impression of the childcare centre. showing La Rocca and the Observatory behind. Image: supplied

Cr Jen Alden voted in favour of the permit, however voiced her concerns it ignored the significance of the "local landscape" and natural environment. Forty-five of the site's 76 trees would be removed during construction, including some mature native trees which were "beneficial for biodiversity purposes". The permit was granted following a unanimous vote.

**Editor's note:** The Branch has been advocating for the preservation of this site over the past six years and has worked with Council to gain its heritage protection. The developer has indicated that they would like to work with the Astronomical Society of Victoria to get the Observatory operating again.

### Planning for future growth - community feedback sought

Greater Bendigo Council is seeking community feedback on two key strategies designed to manage long term housing growth. By 2056, Greater Bendigo's population is expected to grow by 87,000 people, requiring 38,000 new dwellings. To address future growth, the City has drafted the **Managed Growth Strategy** forecasting that growth will be catered for by 70% infill development and 30% greenfield development, and the draft **Housing and Neighbourhood Character Strategy** which outlines a framework for sustainable housing development. The strategies ensure that new developments, including units, townhouses, and multi-storey buildings, are well designed and consider the character of each precinct. It outlines areas designated for minimal, incremental, or substantial change in residential development.

While the Branch supports these strategies, it is aware that heritage factors will arise during consideration of planning applications. Members and supporters will need to carefully consider the strategies in the context of both heritage issues and issues that will adequately cater for the reality of population growth and let council know of your views.

Click [here](#) for more information on the strategies and a feedback survey to complete if you wish. Send your comments on these strategies to [strategic.planning@bendigo.vic.gov.au](mailto:strategic.planning@bendigo.vic.gov.au)

### Sign up to 'Let's Talk Bendigo'



Greater Bendigo Council has a weekly newsletter keeping us up to date on local issues, events and decisions made at council meetings. In this week's issue there is information about the above strategies, a survey to fill in and info on events. Click [here](#) and you can scroll down to sign up.



## Greater Bendigo Council to sell land

The site of Lansell's Little 180 Mine Site located at 53 Eaglehawk Road in front of Spotlight is to be sold by Council. The site was formerly Crown Land up until 1991 when it was purchased by Council. "Investigations have shown that there is little public open space in the immediate vicinity." Council purchased the land.

A report was published in 1993 by David Bannear on historic mining sites which included the Little Mine Site 180 saying it was part of a group of sites that were considered in their totality as being significant. They are associated with the 1930s mining revival period. The site was then protected. Council planning officers may have erred in assessing and or in determining the values and outcome for the land. Information in a *Bendigo Advertiser* article indicates that a member of the public submitted concerns about the potential destruction of mine engine footings on the site. Council staff (apparently) rejected these concerns by claiming that "There are more intact mining landscapes and foundations nearby".

Further from Heritage Victoria- "The site is listed on the Heritage Inventory because it contains historical archaeological remains (including mine engine footings) that are likely to be associated with the operation of Lansell's Little 180 Mine on Victoria Hill by George Lansell in the 19th and early 20th century. The mine is significant because it supplied the initial wealth that made Lansell Bendigo's 'Quartz King'. George Lansell was such a force in Bendigo's mining history that his death was cited as one of the reasons for the decline of Bendigo as a quartz mining centre. If works are proposed that may affect the site, it will be necessary to obtain a Heritage Act Consent."

It is hoped that council will follow the correct procedures.



53 Eaglehawk Road Ironbark. Image: Realestate.com

## Rocky Vale Villa Campaign

Further to the Heritage Festival's visit and talk at Rocky Vale Villa, there has been a flurry of activity by people who want to save the property. This includes a rate search to identify all the owners of the property since the 1860s, and the house being measured with plans in the process of being drawn up. It could be that no plans have ever been drawn up on the building.

The owners have been in touch about Greater Bendigo's Managed Growth Strategy. To get it included in the Urban Growth Boundary there will need to be compromises made on all sides to cater for a particular need such as the development of one/two-bedroom dwellings, a subdivision that will retain important vegetation and a separate title for the house and funds to restore it. Considering it is only 3.5 km from the centre of Bendigo it makes sense it needs to be seriously considered.

Geoff Barker sent in this photo of his Grandfather Keith Macnaughtan and father Gilchrist sometime when they lived at Rocky Vale Villa between 1926 to 1934.



You can read Mike Butcher's talk from the Heritage Festival [here](#).

## Correspondence

### Bendigo TAFE fence update

Thanks for the Newsletters, I always enjoy reading the latest updates. I thought I would provide you with an update on the damaged fence at Bendigo TAFE, the section out the front of the School of Mines. You will recall it was damaged by a delivery truck during the construction of the New Bendigo Law Courts. Heritage Victoria have given their recommendations on the fence repairs. The gate itself will not be repaired as it is not original. Dr Gary Hill has taken spare pieces of the fence to take to a foundry to get moulding and replicas made to repair. Once done, the fence will be welded, repaired, and painted to a certain point. The same painter will then finish remaining sections of the fence to give it a facelift. Slow progress, but a good outcome I believe.

Dave Richardson  
Campus Director - Bendigo  
Bendigo TAFE | Kangan Institute

### Illegal mountain bike trails from Norm Stimson

I refer to Mr Rimmon Martin's letter in the May edition of *History and Heritage*, responding to my article on illegal mountain bike trails and the effects to heritage and other sites.

Mr Martin does not dispute the proliferation of illegal trails around Bendigo, their poor design, and the disregard by the builders for the environment. However, he does suggest that it is possible to create trails that are environmentally sustainable and culturally sensitive. He also says that "one of the biggest reasons" that there are so many illegal trails around Bendigo is the lack of legal, professionally built trails. I substantially disagree with Mr Martin on this latter viewpoint.

In response I make the following points:

1. There are up to 170km or thereabouts of mountain bike trails on mainly public lands around Bendigo (according to the TrailForks website). Some of these will be on formed vehicular tracks, but many (majority) are illegally developed stand-alone mountain bike tracks. This equates roughly to up to 17ha of loss (illegal removal) of native vegetation and habitat (if using a nominal trail width of 1 metre). The totality of impacts to mining heritage and other values is currently unknown. These illegal tracks are also increasing, with another 12.5km of newly made illegal tracks found within the last month.
2. The development and use of these trails are illegal on a number of fronts, including: requirements for planning permits and offsets (Planning and Environment Act); impacts and controlled actions to listed threatened species and communities and required referrals (EPBC Act, FFG Act); impacts and disturbance to heritage and archaeological sites and required referrals for permits or consents from Heritage Victoria (Heritage Act); possible contraventions to Government approved Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) land use determinations; possible contraventions to Management Plans and Parks' Regulations (National Parks Act, Crown Land (Reserves) Act); other legislation such as the Land Conservation (Vehicle Control) Act.
3. The idea that the construction of legal professionally built formal trails will allay the (currently prolific) illegal construction of trails is contested. There is strong evidence to the contrary. There are many hundreds of kilometres of formed vehicular tracks running through Bendigo's bush that the mountain bikers are free to use. The Bendigo Bushland Trail is situated in the ring of Public Land that surrounds urban Bendigo, and provides for mountain bikes and walkers with 65 kilometres of further trail. The Green Loop track is a 5km formal dedicated mountain bike track built by Parks Victoria (but apparently maintained by the Bendigo Mountain Bike Club), and that was supposed to have illegal tracks in the area closed down. But in all cases, the proliferation of illegal mountain bike tracks and track building, continues. There is also evidence that indicates that these formal trails and roads are actually assisting the builders and the users of the illegal tracks by providing easy or easier access, to even acting as "spring boards".
4. The Spring Gully Trail Network Master Plan, developed by the City of Greater Bendigo and the Bendigo Mountain Bike Club in conjunction with Parks Victoria, had various potential or apparent flaws. It supposedly sought to avoid native vegetation removal where possible. Many of the tracks proposed to be incorporated into the network were apparently claimed to be "existing" tracks where native vegetation would not have to be removed (and supposedly no offsets would then be required). However, many of these tracks in fact were "existing illegally developed tracks" with native vegetation having been earlier illegally removed. Selection of such existing illegal tracks to circumvent requirements for offsets is unconscionable.

**Editor's note:** Perhaps the Branch needs to bring together a group of people including Norm Stimson, Rimmon Martin, Council and DEECA staff, mountain bike riders and other concerned people to work out a forward plan. [Email](#) H&H if you are interested in participating.





## Call out to photographers - Snap Send Solve

At the May Branch meeting it was decided to set up a small group of photographers who could take photos of the wonderful heritage that is in our region. There is an old saying "a picture is worth a thousand words". For most of us, pictures are often remembered much better than words. *History & Heritage* has used photographs to help tell stories to its readers. But many more are needed.

If you are a keen photographer and interested to assist, please [email](#) the Branch. If you know of keen photographers, you could encourage them to get in touch.



Photos can be useful for heritage information. At a Planning Panels Victoria hearing where a heritage overlay was placed on Beebe's East Bendigo Observatory and house 'La Rocca', photos were used to show the important proximity of the Observatory to the house and also some of the significant architectural details of the house. These photos helped influence the final decision that secured the heritage overlay



**Snap  
Send  
Solve**

## Snap Send Solve - for the rest of us

With your mobile phone camera, you can report on heritage issues along with other issues you are concerned about.

I have just become a Snapper.

### Welcome to Snap Send Solve

Hi Snapper,

Congratulations on joining half a million other legends across Australia and New Zealand who've downloaded Snap Send Solve.



## Our Mission

Founded in Melbourne in 2013, our free app is all about helping keep shared spaces safe, clean and great to be in.

## Making an Impact

Every report you send makes a difference. Since 2013 2+ million reports have been Snapped. Talk about many hands making light work. And the great thing is, when you use Snap Send Solve, it helps Councils and other authorities get the job done.

## How is the app free for Snappers?

Every Council in Australia and NZ can access free basic Snap Send Solve reports, but we also offer a paid version with more sophisticated features. Other organisations like emergency, energy and water authorities can also subscribe to a paid version of Snap Send Solve. This way, it's a win, win!

For more information [click here](#)

## And from Branch member Phil Howe....

Snap Send Solve is a free app for the public to use in order to contact various public and private organisations to report issues that have an impact on their local community. Snap Send Solve is a privately owned Australian company based in Melbourne which operates throughout Australia and New Zealand. The app has been around for about 10 years and its popularity with organisations and the public has grown to the extent that by 2020 there were over 100,000 reports made by the Victorian public. The app is very easy to use and generally gets much faster results than any other method of contacting organisations with an issue. There is a full list of user organisations on the app site, the most common user are local councils and other public utilities such as water authorities. This could be an ideal tool for members of the public interested in the heritage features of our community to report any adverse problems with buildings and other sites to the responsible authorities.



Rear view of a stone cottage on Eaglehawk Road, sent in by James Lerk. This illustrates the solidity and beauty of the stonework, but also how the cottage is at continual risk of damage with its rusted roofing, broken timbers in the gable and unstable brickwork of the chimney.

The Branch has been encouraging Council to get the owner to secure the house from the weather, vandals and passers-by. The windows have recently been smashed and it is unsafe for children playing in the neighbourhood. It has a heritage overlay but is receiving no protection. It was sold to new owners in 2022. This could become another example of 'Demolition by Neglect' The National Trust has a new page on its website on 'DBN' [Check it out](#). Thanks James.

## Branch meeting held 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024

- Planning application for a Child Care Centre passed at this week's Council meeting. Beebe's observatory and house 'La Rocca' to be restored. The house was badly damaged in a fire in 1958 so many heritage features were lost, but what is there will be incorporated in the build. The owners are wanting to work with the Astronomical Society of Victoria in restoring the observatory and there is some hope that it could be working again.
- Thanks were extended to all who worked to make the Heritage Festival a great success. Letter to be written to Council in regard to future tours of the Former Bendigo Gas Works and Former Bendigo Post Office. Disappointment was expressed in that the Post Office tours were too short, there was no time to read the information boards, that previous tours had demonstrations such as morse code and sending telegrams and that there was no entry to the top floor. Request meeting with Council. All events were well attended and each event identified a specific goal. For example, the Open Miners' Cottages highlighted the need to stop 'Demolition by Neglect', Rocky Vale Villa's future use, and why protection is needed for the Castlemaine Government Camp heritage site.
- Follow up on the Former Bendigo Court House was needed with a goal that it be a part of the 2025 Festival. A small group was formed to work on this which will meet on 5<sup>th</sup> June. It would be worthwhile to get a group of photographers to photograph the inside.
- Next year's Festival could be organised by a multi organisation group with a meeting being called in September.
- Planning permit advertised to extend house at Nanga Gnulle and it looks like the heritage overlay has been discounted particularly in terms of the curtilage. Overall design is based on the house and formation of the land. Branch to lodge objection. It will need 7 objections for it to go to a Council meeting.
- Review of May *History & Heritage* - very informative, information on Law Courts. Articles for June required, Editorial meeting, 5<sup>th</sup> June, to be sent to Melbourne 12<sup>th</sup> June. Cover story to be Nanga Gnulle.
- Next Branch meeting: Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June. Editorial meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> July 10am Corner Store Cafe.

### Save The Law Courts

This group was formed at a meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> June and is open to all interested in saving the Former Bendigo Law Courts. Tasks were allocated with a report back at the next meeting to be held at the Bendigo Library on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June at 10am. Meet firstly at the café for a coffee and then we will go to a meeting room.

If you know of others who might like to join the group, let them know to come along. Further info 0447473674



## Coming up in heritage

While these details are current at time of issue, please check with organisers for any changes:

- MON 1 JUL - 2:00PM** [Scottish Wills & Testaments](#), presented by Bendigo Regional Genealogical Society, Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- FRI 5 JUL - 2:00PM** [Thespians & Divas: Amateur Theatre in Bendigo](#), presented by Bendigo Historical Society, La Trobe Art Institute, 121 View Street Bendigo, from \$5.00
- SUN 7 JUN - 10:00AM** [Radical Bendigo: Unionist, Lefties & Agitators](#), presented by Bendigo Historical Society, Trades Hall View Street Bendigo, from \$5.00
- WED 10 JUL - 11:00AM** [Using Family Tree Maker](#), presented by Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- SAT 20 JUL - 2:00PM** [Irish Research Tips from the Guru](#), presented by Bendigo Family History Group, Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- THU 25 JUL - 10:30AM** [Online Family History](#), presented by Heathcote Library, 125 High Street Heathcote, FREE
- THU 1 AUG - 5:30PM** [Discovering History: Malmsbury Bluestone](#), presented by Dr Susan Walter, Bendigo Regional Archive Centre, Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- FRI 2 AUG - 11:00AM** [Introduction to TROVE](#), presented by Castlemaine Library, 212 Barker Street Castlemaine, FREE
- SUN 4 AUG - 10:00AM** [A Unique Miners Cottage: Cheap, rudimentary housing of the working class](#), presented by Charles Fahey, Bendigo Historical Society, car park of Hockey Centre, 30 Ashley Street Ironbark, from \$5.00
- MON 5 AUG - 2:00PM** [Shipping Records](#), presented by Bendigo Regional Genealogical Society, Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- THU 8 AUG - 5:30PM** [Malmsbury Bluestone](#), presented by Dr Susan Walter, Bendigo Regional Archive Centre, Kyneton Library, 3 Baynton Street, Kyneton, FREE
- FRI 9 AUG - 10:00AM** [Find Your Ancestors Using PROV](#), presented by Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- WED 14 AUG - 2:00PM** [Handle With Care: Exploring the Bendigo Health Archives](#), presented by Desiree Pettit-Keating, Bendigo Regional Archive Centre, Kangaroo Flat Library, 23 Lockwood Road, Kangaroo Flat, FREE
- WED 14 AUG - 11:00AM** [Using Family Tree Maker](#), presented by Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- SAT 17 AUG - 2:00PM** [Understanding Ancestry](#), presented by Bendigo Family History Group, Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- WED 21 AUG - 11:00AM** [Introduction to DNA](#), presented by Bendigo Family History Group, Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street Bendigo, FREE
- FRI 23 AUG - 11:00AM** [Online Family History](#), presented by Castlemaine Library, 212 Barker Street Castlemaine, FREE
- MON 26 AUG - 11:00AM** [Malmsbury Bluestone](#), presented by Dr Susan Walter, Bendigo Regional Archive Centre, Elmore Library Agency, Memoriam & Athenaeum Hall, 62 Michie Street, Elmore, FREE
- EVERY SUNDAY & TUESDAY - 11:00AM** [Bendigo Town Hall Tour](#), presented by Tourism Bendigo, Hargreaves Street, bookings essential, tickets from \$10
- SOME TUESDAYS - 2:00PM** [Sandhurst Gaol Tour](#), presented by Tourism Bendigo, Gaol Road, bookings essential, tickets from \$10

## 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 July *History & Heritage* will be **July 1<sup>st</sup> 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

Next editorial group meeting. **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July** 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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