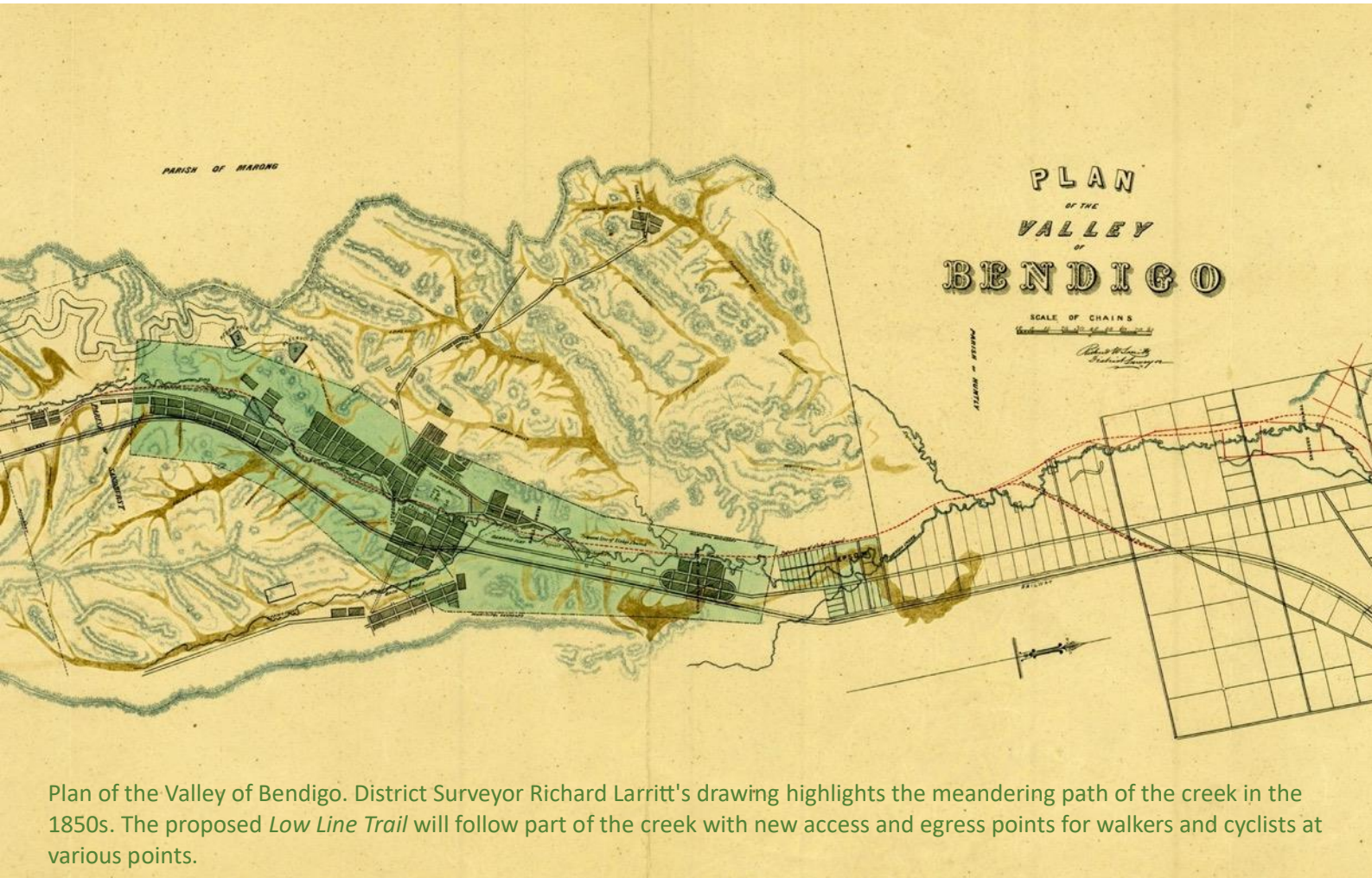


# History & Heritage

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

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



Plan of the Valley of Bendigo. District Surveyor Richard Larritt's drawing highlights the meandering path of the creek in the 1850s. The proposed *Low Line Trail* will follow part of the creek with new access and egress points for walkers and cyclists at various points.

## Cover Story: Bendigo Creek Low Line Project

Next Branch Meeting  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 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: Plan of Valley of Bendigo 1858 by R W Larritt, State Library of Victoria. For a high-resolution copy of this map [click here](#)

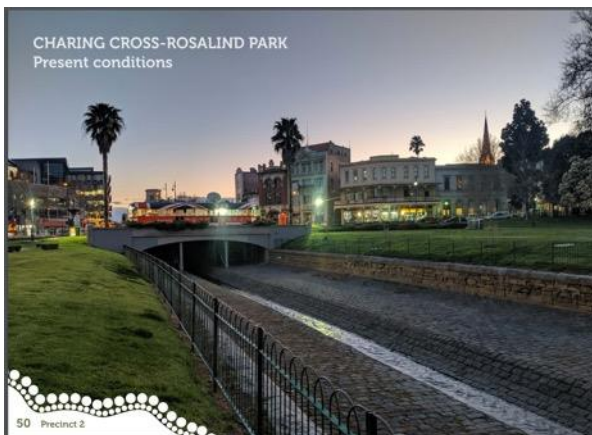


Image: from *Reimagining Bendigo Creek* 2020



Bendigo Creek showing the Conservatory. Image: Norm Stimson

## Cover story: Bendigo Creek Low Line Project

by Norm Stimson. 5 July 2024

In June 2020 the Greater Bendigo City Council adopted the *Re-imagining Bendigo Creek* Plan, a collaborative project between local Government, many Government Departments and Agencies, the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and the local community. *Re-imagining Bendigo Creek* sets out a shared vision for the future and a guiding framework to get there.

The goals of *Re-imagining Bendigo Creek* included “preserving” historically significant stretches and features of Bendigo Creek listed on the Victorian Heritage Register or in the Bendigo Planning Scheme. Other constructed channels and drains not listed could be “naturalized” including progressively replacing or softening concrete or stone-lined sections with natural forms and features. (This may incorrectly assume that because a site is not heritage listed it has no, or no significant heritage values; it may simply be that such parts of the Bendigo Creek have not themselves been heritage assessed or have not been subject to any heritage studies).

*Re-imagining Bendigo Creek* goals also included the desire to connect places and spaces with a network of public corridors – including a *Low Line Trail* along Bendigo Creek, utilizing the constructed creek channel as a prominent feature of the city’s unique character. To this end Greater Bendigo City Council has recently received five million dollars provided by the State Government for 2.95km of shared pathway, while 1.45km will be funded by the City.

The current constructed creek channel has significant cultural heritage values in known parts, listed on the Victorian Heritage Register and Bendigo Planning Scheme, including the bluestone-lined bed and sandstone-lined walls and significant foot and road bridges. Other parts of Bendigo Creek have different values, such as those with concrete bed and concrete slab walls. A heritage assessment of currently unprotected areas should be required, if there is no heritage study or heritage assessment known to have been done for that section or site. For example, there are 2 unprotected foot bridges over Bendigo Creek north of the Chinese Precinct that are similar or the same as the 3 pedestrian bridges in Rosalind Park, where the Rosalind Park bridges are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

The *Low Line* project will inevitably cause some impacts to heritage, including directly to heritage fabric, or indirectly to heritage aesthetics. The Greater Bendigo City Council should be seeking to avoid or minimize such impacts. A flat pathway is apparently also required, with the creek’s



existing coarsely cut bluestone bed blocks being too rough. Greater Bendigo City Council may be experimenting with different surfaces or treatments on the Bendigo Creek next to Lake Weeroona, including grinding the bluestone blocks' surface. There will also be a need for many on and off ramps, which will have additional impacts on the creek's fabric, including particularly on its sandstone walls. [NBRS Heritage and Landscape Architecture](#), working with the City of Greater Bendigo on the *Low Line* project, states to have been "working closely" with Heritage Victoria to develop a concept design that "responds sensitively to the site's heritage and environmental context". The plans for the *Low Line* project have not yet been formally released to the public. Nor has Heritage Victoria's dealings and requirements. It is understood that the *Low-Line* project may also be subject to a Planning Permit process.

**Bendigo Creek heritage:** Rosalind Park - listed on VHR (includes Bendigo Creek and 3 pedestrian bridges (H1866)); Weeroona Avenue (King's) Bridge – listed on VHR (H1935); Various Heritage Overlays (HO108, HO580, HO95, HO25); other Monier concrete arch bridges; potentially other features like inlet drains e.g. below City Family Hotel. [Note: Various sections and features are not listed as significant but may not have been assessed or been subject to any Heritage Studies. The CGB Heritage Gaps Study also doesn't appear to recognize this Bendigo Creek matter.]

**Bendigo Creek management issues:** Subsiding creek bed / bluestone blocks; deterioration of sandstone walls; wall collapses (mainly concrete slabs); graffiti and damaging effects to bricks / stone; road bridge deterioration.

**Rosalind Park Significance** (and the Bendigo Creek section running through it). Listed on the Victorian Heritage Register H1866. Significance: The stone-lined Bendigo Creek channel is historically significant for its strong association with gold mining in central Bendigo, and is an important example of late nineteenth century urban infrastructure development. [Three iron bridges were erected across the creek in 1882, the Conservatory Gardens laid out in 1886 and a conservatory erected in 1897.] The Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study (1993) also states among other things that that there is "no comparable drainage system linked to gold set in an urban domain in the State" and that associated with the creek are the "brick, iron and stone road and pedestrian bridges some of which are individually notable". NOTE: The VHR citation for Rosalind Park / Bendigo Creek could in effect be equally applied to some of the other unprotected sections of Bendigo Creek.



## City welcomes funding towards Bendigo Low Line Project COGB media release June 14<sup>th</sup> 2024

The City of Greater Bendigo has welcomed \$5M in funding from the Victorian Government towards the construction of the Bendigo Low Line. The Bendigo Low Line is an important major project to develop a separated walking-cycling shared path within the Bendigo Creek channel. The 4.4km path between Golden Square and White Hills will provide safe and active travel through the Bendigo city centre, increase active travel and reduce reliance on motor vehicles for everyday use. Greater Bendigo Mayor Cr Andrea Metcalf said the Low Line had been named to reflect the channel section of the Bendigo Creek and took inspiration from New York's High Line, a public park built on a disused 1.45-mile-long elevated rail structure on Manhattan's West Side.

"The Bendigo Low Line will serve as an active transport corridor and provide safe and efficient off-road transport in and out of the Bendigo city centre," Cr Metcalf said. "The only section of the Low Line not in the actual creek bed will be a small section, approximately 600 metres long, located between the new Rosalind Park ramp and the new Farmers Lane ramp in the Chinese Precinct. Users will need to access the existing shared pathway beside the creek through Rosalind Park in this section of the Low Line. The Bendigo Low Line will fill a major gap in the city's active transport network and will repurpose and evolve the Bendigo Creek to support a key active transport corridor for 95,000 people who live within 5km of the creek. It also completes a major project

identified in six Council strategies, provides a major separated walking cycling route through the Bendigo city centre and has strong community support."

The funding from the Victorian Government will go towards construction of 2.95km of shared pathway along the Bendigo Creek bed, between the existing Hargreaves Street ramp at High Street, Golden Square to Edwards Street, Bendigo (near Bath Lane), and from Farmers Lane (near the Chinese Precinct) to Lake Weeroona.

The other 1.45km remaining sections of the project will be funded by the City of Greater Bendigo and will be from Maple Street, Golden Square to the existing Hargreaves Street ramp at High Street, Golden Square, and from Edwards Street to Rosalind Park.

The project is expected to start in late 2024. The total Bendigo Low Line project is 4.4km in length, has seven landscaped entry/exit points in total, fills a key missing section of the 20km Bendigo Creek Trail which connects Crusoe Reservoir near Big Hill with the Huntly Streamside Reserve. It will be located between Maple Street, Golden Square and Weeroona Avenue, White Hills via the Bendigo city centre, and includes connections to Rosalind Park, the Golden Dragon Museum, Central Deborah Gold Mine, Lake Weeroona and Golden Square Recreation Reserve. It will serve a population of 95,000 people who live within 5km of Bendigo Creek and allow residents and visitors to safely access the Bendigo city centre off-road to enjoy a range of activities and events.



Concept design from Stage 4 of the Bendigo Low Line Project - Rosalind Park section with Bendigo Creek. Heritage elements are noted on this plan. Image: City of Greater Bendigo GB4980 - Low line all stages Concept.pdf



## Protecting Rosalind Park, its fernery and the Grey-headed flying fox colony

A difficult problem confronts the Bendigo community in its efforts to protect a park that is on the Victorian Heritage Register and a species that is considered to be endangered under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. In 2021 the species was one of many added to the IUCN Red List.

Rosalind Park is of scientific (botanical) significance for its plantings (some dating from the 1870s), including the avenues of elms, oaks and palms, and fernery, rare trees, and fern and palm collection.

Rosalind Park is historically significant as an important example of a large, late nineteenth century public recreation reserve. 'By 1891 the fernery had become an 'enchanted retreat' and 'was described by competent authorities in the neighbouring colonies as the finest fernery in Australia'. The present fernery is just under an acre in size. The council website describes it as 'The cool, green, lush fernery provides a shady respite from the heat. Once the site of a billabong, mature trees now provide a canopy of shade for the more tender ferns. Explore its water features, bridges, rockeries, gravel paths, and a fern and palm collection. The River Red Gums are remnant vegetation of historical significance. There is also, a great selection of Victorian fern species on display.'



Image: Rosalind Park Fernery early 1900s. Victorian Collections, Bendigo Historical Society. Inset: The grey-headed flying fox. Image: [Merlin Tuttle's Bat Conservation](#)

The Australian Conservation Foundation describes the Grey-headed flying foxes as threatened by loss of roosting and foraging sites for their colonies, as well as heat stress and conflict and illegal hunting by humans. They contribute to the important health and maintenance of many ecosystems in eastern Australia. The species performs pollination and seed dispersal for a wide range of native trees, including commercially important hardwood and rainforest species, such as native figs and palms (Tidemann 1998).

With a similar issue one solution that was successful in Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens which became home to a permanent colony of Grey-headed flying foxes in 1986 with numbers of 30,000 in summer and 8,000 in winter. In March 2003 the Grey-headed flying fox population was successfully moved to a more suitable location at Yarra Bend Park, in Kew because they were damaging heritage-listed vegetation. (DEECA) The ABC CV Radio has reported 'that Rosalind Park had a colony of 38,000 last year. Council now has workers who have to go in and clean up. The Council does not have the authority to remove or relocate the bats.'

However, Council has recently added three new gates at a cost of \$15,000 to the Fernery which has been closed for nearly three years. Council's aspiration is to undertake maintenance and renewal works within the Fernery to enable the Fernery to be re-opened to the community, an email explained. Unfortunately, at this stage Council is unable to provide a timeline.

Bendigo Senior Secondary College Principal Dale Pearce believes the City of Greater Bendigo needed to revisit the master plan for Rosalind Park, which he helped shape, as the college is part of the precinct. "When the master plan was put together 10 years ago the bats weren't an issue, but they are now," Mr Pearce said on the ABC last year.

It appears that the issue is very complex involving governments and organisations at all levels. The branch believes that it is time for a public review of the current situation. Perhaps it could be a focus of one of our branch meetings or even a public meeting with a panel of those involved.

What do you think? Send your ideas and suggestions to H&H. [Email here](#).

## Former Bendigo Law Courts sub-committee formed - Peter Legg

Bendigo and District Branch formed a subcommittee to 'Save the Law Courts' this month and have met several times based on the perceived importance of this issue. The subcommittee is a small but committed group and has defined the goals and objectives on this issue, and continue to evolve an action plan to 'Save the Law Courts'



The subcommittee has set two goals. The first is preservation of the former Law Courts building such that both interior and exterior are kept in its original state. The second is to ensure the Law Courts building is kept available and open for public use, for all to appreciate.

To achieve these goals the subcommittee has set the following objectives:

- To conduct a public consultation process to raise awareness and encourage ideas on the future use of former Law Courts.
- To compile a photographic record of the interior, rooms and features, to be able to share with the community.
- To include the former Law Courts Building in the 2025 Heritage Festival. This would allow the public to appreciate some of the grandeur of the building's interior.

Through public consultation the Branch will endeavour to promote this cause and share information where possible to inform the community. An application has been made to obtain a copy of the plans of the building.

It is widely known there is so much grandeur inside this building, but it is difficult to obtain more than a handful of recent images to attest to this. The Branch believes that having access to the building to create a photographic record, to share, is of great importance in increasing community awareness of the richness that we are all trying to preserve. The Branch is keen to work closely with the State Government but have had no response from them.

Including the Law Courts in the 2025 Heritage Festival would be a great achievement and while there are numerous challenges, the Branch will work collaboratively to try to bring this about. If you would like to join the campaign [email](#) H&H.

Two views of the former Bendigo Law Courts. Top: from the Vahland Fountain side. Bottom: the main entrance from Pall Mall. Images: Peter Legg



## 172<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the Ninnes Grave



The Ninnes Grave. Image: [Goldfields Guide](#)

The story of Ninnes Grave is a heart breaking and all-too-common tale from the early years of Victoria's gold rush.

After a difficult ten-week journey from the copper mines of South Australia to the gold diggings of Victoria in 1852, tragedy struck the Ninnes family when Thomas Ninnes' wife, Maria and two young daughters, Grace and Jane died, leaving Thomas and their two surviving daughters, Martha and Mary, to grieve their untimely demise. Thomas built their coffins, dug the grave, carved their names in a tree and constructed a small stone fence around their burial site.

The grave sits in a small bushland reserve between Kawana Drive and Pioneer Drive, with entrances on both roads and a walking track travelling straight through from one side to the other. In 1852, after a long and arduous journey to the Bendigo goldfields, tragedy struck the Ninnes family. Two of their four young daughters - Grace, 2 years and Jane, 2 months - died on the same night, just weeks after the family reached their destination. Soon after, their mother Maria also died. Maria and her two daughters were buried here by Thomas, Maria's husband, in July 1852.

The Ninnes family was Cornish and had travelled with other Cornish families from the copper mines in Burra, South Australia, to try their luck on the newly discovered goldfields in central Victoria. Their journey took 10 weeks and they covered more than 700 kilometres. Maria gave birth to Grace along the way and then fell ill, and never recovered. Thomas continued to work the goldfields after their deaths but it was a hard life and 18 months later, he returned to South Australia. He remarried and settled on a farm near Clare, where he lived until his death more than 40 years later. His surviving daughters Martha and Mary returned here in 1905 to arrange for the grave to be cared for. The stone wall was rebuilt and a headstone erected.

The site remains one of the earliest and best examples of a lone grave in Victoria and serves as a stark reminder of harsh realities of life in the early goldfields. Ninnes Grave has been preserved thanks to the efforts of Edith Lunn, the Friends of the Ninnes Grave, Cornish Association of Victoria, and the City of Greater Bendigo.

## Snap Send Solve

Here's an example of a post on **Snap Send Solve** (featured in last month's *History & Heritage*)

**Issue:** Graffiti - Public Property

**Location:** 13 Maple St, Golden Square VIC 3555, Australia

**Description:** Commemorating 150 years gold discovery. Monument on Bendigo Creek. Needs graffiti removed and cleaned up.

**Solver:** Greater Bendigo City Council

Click [here](#) to go to the Snap Send Solve website



## Historic family photographs of Rocky Vale Villa sent in by Giselda Bannister.

Photos from the family album (1926) of scenes at Rocky Vale Villa. The couple are Giselda's grandparents Lillian Hardcastle and Leslie Macnaughtan. The Branch has been in touch with the current owners and the council about the future of the house.





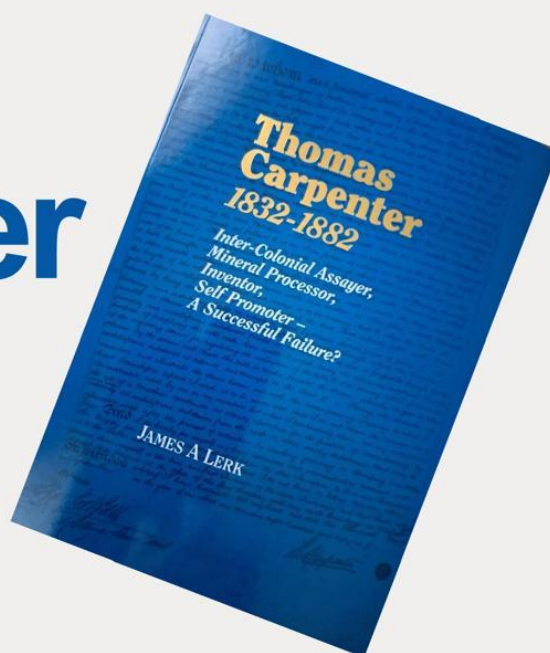
BOOK LAUNCH – JAMES LERK'S LATEST OFFERING

# Thomas Carpenter 1832 - 1882

Thomas Carpenter, born in Cornwall in 1832, led a remarkable life. At thirteen, he toiled in mines, later mastering the art of assaying. Selected by the London-based Australasian Gold Mining Company, he arrived in Sydney as their Assay Master in 1852.

Drawn by European gold discoveries, Carpenter settled in Bendigo in 1854, making an impact through assaying and gold buying. He became well-to-do, served on mining bodies, and even entered Victorian Parliament. His career spanned engineering, invention, and consulting, with a focus on mineral retention.

Despite setbacks, including a failed tin smelting operation in Sydney, Carpenter's legacy has been forgotten. He passed away, at Ballarat Hospital, after a protracted illness in 1882.



## Date & Time

03 August 2024

At 10:30am

## Location

Long Gully Uniting Church

Wilson Street, Bendigo, 3550

- Launched by Historian Robert W P Ashley, MA
- 140 pages on quality paper

Cost \$40 only available through the author – [jamesalerk@gmail.com](mailto:jamesalerk@gmail.com)

## Victorian Tree of the Year - It's time to nominate!

**The Victorian Tree of the Year 2024 is here – and we need your help to choose the most magnificent significant trees in Victoria!**

This annual celebration honours the beauty, history, and ecological importance of Victoria's significant trees. We are calling on tree enthusiasts, nature lovers, and anyone with a passion for our natural heritage to nominate their favourite significant trees for this year's shortlist.

Nominations are now open and will close on National Tree

Day, **Sunday 28 July 2024**. [Read here](#) for full details on eligibility criteria and how to nominate. The competition is proudly run by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) - the state's leading advocate for the protection of trees. Since 1982 the NTAV has classified over 20,000 trees in 1,200 places across the state on the National Trust Significant Tree Register.

[Nominate a Tree](#)



The Guildford 'Big' Tree, Winner 2023. Image: National Trust Victoria

## Branch meeting held 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024

- The Branch lodged an objection to a planning application for the redevelopment of Nanga Gnulle and requested a Planning Consultation meeting. It is to be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> July at 9.30am at the council offices. Peter Cox & Michael Lake to represent the Branch. Others will represent themselves.
- The Branch requested a meeting with council to review the recent Heritage Festival, in particular, regular tours of the former Gas Works & Post Office, and preparation for the 2025 Festival. It will take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> July at 10.30am. Peter Cox and Euan McGillivray will represent the Branch.
- The 'Save the Law Courts' subcommittee will meet on 26<sup>th</sup> June to discuss its research, strategy and objectives. The Branch has written to Courts Victoria requesting access to the plans of the building for a small group of photographers to take interior photos and for the Courts to be available for tours for the 2025 tours.
- Council is to sell land at 53 Eaglehawk Road Ironbark which is on the Victorian Heritage Inventory as it is the site of Lansell's Little 180 Mine. Heritage Victoria has been notified and they have in turn notified Council of procedures for sale.
- Council has received \$5 million from the State Government for the installation of the Bendigo Creek *Low Line Trail* between Golden Square and Lake Weeroona which will link an off-road trail from Kangaroo Flat to Epsom. It will include a section of the creek that is on the State Heritage Register in Rosalind Park and a section between Golden Square and the CBD which has a local heritage overlay. Council is planning to use the existing track in Rosalind Park rather than the creek for that section. Plans need to be checked for the project's impact on heritage fabric in the area.
- It was decided that the Branch will not make a submission to the Greater Bendigo Managed Growth Strategy.
- Review of the June copy of *H&H*. Members are very happy with content. Editorial group to meet at Corner Store Café on 2<sup>nd</sup> July at 10am. Cover story to be Bendigo Creek Low Line Trail. *H&H* to Tasma by 10<sup>th</sup> July.
- Castlemaine Gold Camp archaeological dig community meeting is on site, this Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm. Branch to attend.
- Branch to respond to Tasma re a review of the National Trust Branches Handbook.
- Next Branch meeting: **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 5.30pm**, at Bendigo Library.
- Editorial group meeting **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August 10am** Corner Store Cafe, View Street.
- Contributions to *H&H* in by 1<sup>st</sup> August



## 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 **August 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 7<sup>th</sup> August** 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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