

# The National Trust of Australia (New South Wales) Annual Report 2023/24

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A pivotal year of advocacy, conservation and connection







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The National Trust acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, celebrate and share the stories of heritage. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and we support the Uluru Statement.

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# President's Report

I am pleased to present the achievements of 2023/24 and report on the events, results and significant advocacy efforts of the National Trust this year.

It is due to the outstanding support and dedication of our volunteers, committees, branches, supporters and staff that the outcomes of this year have been possible. I am proud of what we have accomplished together.

It was thrilling to see heritage celebrated on a world stage at the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) General Assembly and Scientific Symposium, in Sydney. As a supporting partner, the National Trust played a leading role chairing panels, running exhibitions and hosting more than 1,000 delegates at the National's Trust's special places. It was wonderful to witness the strengthening of heritage ties and positive publicity generated.

For heritage to be relevant, it must be inclusive. This year we worked towards launching the National Trust's first Reconciliation Action Plan. This important work outlines our commitment to acknowledging, understanding and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage. It recognises our responsibility to create change by building connections and

sharing the stories of First Nations people. I look forward to this framework inspiring future activity.

The theme of this year's Australian Heritage Festival was 'connections' which is fitting for the nation's largest community-driven heritage event. Led by the National Trust, with events spanning the cities and regions, it offered more than 72,000 attendees the opportunity to engage with the rich and diverse stories of our nation.

The Heritage Awards are always a personal highlight. I was impressed by the scope of the projects, big and small, city based and from the regions. At a time when heritage in NSW is under unprecedented threat due to planning reforms, the passion of everyone involved in heritage gives me great hope and confidence in the future.

The enthusiasm of our volunteers, committees and branches never fails to encourage optimism. I profoundly enjoy presenting the National Trust Honours Awards and meeting our volunteers, members and supporters who generously give their time and support. Successful recent campaigns by the Illawarra Shoalhaven and Hunter Regional branches to protect regional heritage are shining examples of the vital presence of the National Trust across NSW. The leading role we play in conservation was also reflected in 25 major advocacy submissions, numerous media appearances and meetings with key local, state, and federal members.

Through collaboration, hard work and tenacity, the National Trust's staff, volunteers and supporters have protected and championed natural, cultural, indigenous and built heritage this year.

Kathryn Pitkin AM, President

# Chief Executive Officer's Report

This year the National Trust's role as a respected advocate for heritage came into sharp focus. The announcement of the Transport Oriented Development (TOD) program and changes to low and mid-rise housing policy poses one of the greatest challenges to heritage in NSW to date. Immediate action was taken by the National Trust to address the blanket planning reforms. Meetings with state ministers, consultation with councils and local communities, media appearances and submissions sought to highlight the unforeseen impact of this new legislation. The National Trust will continue to advocate for heritage as these planning changes evolve.

The first step in conserving and advocating for heritage is identification. The 14 diverse new listings added to the National Trust Heritage Register reflect the vital independence of this list. Thanks to our generous members and donors, we maintained strong momentum in delivering significant repairs and maintenance projects to house museums, gardens and galleries. Everglades House & Gardens was restored to its former Art Deco glory, while meticulous conservation work to the Civil Officers Barracks at Old Government House, has unveiled the original heritage of the building.

We continued to modernise our systems and technologies through a new cloud-based finance system. This has improved reporting functionality and efficiency. Our Bushland Management Services moved to digitised documentation, improving productivity and streamlining services.

We were pleased to see growth in new memberships this year. Likewise, it was positive to see our current members enjoying a range of member activities throughout the year. The time and support of our volunteers is fundamental to the National Trust and we are delighted that over 95% of our volunteers are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their volunteering experience.

We continued to build on the reach of our digital communications, doubling the number of people subscribed to our emails. Our emails and social posts pleasingly recorded extremely high engagement levels, well above industry average. Strong media coverage this year has ensured both the National Trust and heritage maintain a profile.

As the final year of our 2020-24 Strategic Plan draws to a close, we look confidently ahead to our next Strategic Plan thanks to the fundamental steps we've taken towards a sustainable future. The achievements of this year have been made possible by the dedication of staff, committees, branches and volunteers with the support of members, donors, sponsors and partners. Thank you.

Debbie Mills, CEO



Board of Directors as at 30 June 2024 (left to right); David Pratt; Treasurer, Kathryn Pitkin AM; President, Mark Phibbs, Debbie Mills; CEO, Luton White, Suzette Meade, David Collingridge LVO, Caroline Mackaness, Bruce Pettman, (Susan Hunt, Lisa Newall, Alison Page, William Oates absent) (photography by Yianni Aspradakis)



# In Review: Advocacy

In a year defined by controversial planning reforms, the National Trust played a leading role in advocating for our built, cultural and natural heritage.

## POLICY AND PLANNING

The Transport Oriented Development (TOD) and low and mid-rise housing policy were announced in late 2023, with consequential major impacts on the heritage of NSW. Overriding local planning, including heritage and environmental controls, the legislation aimed at increasing density around rail stations and town centres covered 43 government areas. The National Trust estimated the proposals would encompass two-thirds of heritage-listed items in NSW.

In response, the National Trust submitted a detailed objection, spoke at a Parliamentary Inquiry into the TOD Program, and advocated for heritage, achieving 12.6 million in media reach. Meetings were held with key local and state government representatives, including ministers. Although the legislation is still evolving, changes have resulted in greater consultation with councils, local and state heritage items will be excluded from these changes, and the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area has also been excluded.

The National Trust continued to monitor major proposals affecting key heritage sites, including Sydney's Central Station and Eveleigh Workshops, Newcastle CBD, and the proposed development affecting the Harris Park heritage precinct.

Following advocacy efforts, the entire Ultimo Powerhouse precinct, including the Harwood Building (former Ultimo Tram Depot) was recommended to the Minister for inclusion on the NSW State Heritage Register. New plans for a heritage revitalisation of the existing museum have since been announced, with the National Trust continuing to advocate for appropriate heritage outcomes including the consideration of the entire site as a purpose-built museum.

A reduction of the proposed 73-metre-high tower at Barangaroo was announced, however overscale developments continue to threaten the heritage of Millers Point and views from Observatory Hill. In a submission relating to the Barangaroo Concept Plan (Modification 9) the National Trust argued that the important cultural values of Observatory Hill and Millers Point must be considered.

The National Trust provided comments in response to the draft masterplan for Cockatoo Island, recommending

a more sensitive approach to heritage in the revitalisation of the UNESCO World Heritage site. Similarly, we advocated for heritage to be better considered in the update to Newcastle Ocean Baths. Thanks to the efforts of the passionate local community and Hunter Regional Branch the baths were nominated to the State Heritage Register.

## WINS

Important wins for heritage were achieved through dedication and collaboration.

- **Iris East End:** Located in one of Newcastle's most significant historic areas, this proposed development was refused by the Planning Panel. The Hunter Regional Branch of the National Trust and the local community successfully campaigned against modifications which would have imposed on local heritage and sightlines to the cathedral.
- **Hayden Orpheum:** First listed by the National Trust in 1977, this striking Art Deco theatre was finally placed on the State Heritage Register in June 2024.
- **Willow Grove:** The National Trust welcomed the NSW Government's decision to not rebuild the historic 19th-century villa that was demolished to make way for Powerhouse Parramatta. The proposed replica building was not a positive heritage outcome.
- **Berry Hotel:** Thanks to the successful advocacy efforts of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch of the National Trust, a proposed expansion of the existing Berry Hotel was recently refused, having been found to be undesirable in the heritage township of Berry.
- **Anthony Hordern Warehouse:** Following objections by the National Trust in 2021, the approved proposal to demolish the c.1913 former warehouse in Sydney's Haymarket was revised to include the retention of this historic structure by the project's architects.

## OUTREACH

Working in collaboration with our 11 branches and local communities, the National Trust engaged with government, media and communities to identify and protect heritage.

- 25 major advocacy submissions.
- 9 letters of support for nominations to the State Heritage Register.
- Heritage representation at the Parliamentary Inquiry into Transport Oriented Development.
- Meetings with local, state, and federal members including the NSW Minister for Planning, the Hon. Paul Scully; NSW Minister for Heritage, the Hon. Penny Sharpe; Federal Minister for Heritage, the Hon. Tanya Plibersek; and Lord Mayor of Sydney Clover Moore.
- Strategic meetings with heritage stakeholders, including Aboriginal Affairs NSW, Heritage NSW, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, Create NSW, and Transport for NSW.
- Extensive media appearances advocating for heritage in online articles, radio segments and newspaper articles, including an opinion piece in the Sydney Morning Herald.
- 30 expert technical committee meetings for advisory and technical submissions.



Newcastle Ocean Baths and CBD (image supplied)

## LOSSES

Despite advocacy by the National Trust, redevelopment of the Clocktower building in The Rocks was approved. Dominating the skyline, the National Trust maintain this will adversely affect important views and overshadow the human scale of this heritage area. A proposed multi-storey apartment block behind Hambledon Cottage in the Harris Park heritage precinct continues to threaten historic connections between nearby Elizabeth Farm, Experiment Farm and Clay Cliff Creek. All three properties are of significance to Australia's heritage.

## ON THE LIST

14 diverse new listings were added to the National Trust Heritage Register reflecting its vital independence.

- All Saints Cathedral, Bathurst
- Berrima Public School, Berrima
- Camerated Concrete Houses, Croydon (update)
- Cherrydell, Leura
- Coast Chapel (Australian Nurses War Memorial Chapel), Little Bay
- Gosford Library, Gosford
- Hermidale Cemetery, Hermidale
- London Hotel, Ardelthan (update)
- Number 5, The Boulevard, Cammeray
- Nyngan Cemetery, Nyngan
- Old Girilambone Cemetery, Girilambone
- Primitive Methodist Church, Annandale (update)
- Stream Hill, Dombarton
- YMCA Facade, Pitt Street Sydney

‘Heritage listing is simply, at its core, the community recognising that something is of value and worth keeping.’

David Burdon, Director Conservation





# In Review: Conservation

Important restoration works and repairs to our special places ensured our built heritage is preserved for future generations.

### PROPERTIES

#### Old Government House

Major conservation and repair works were completed on the historic Barracks building to the rear of the UNESCO World Heritage Listed Old Government House in Parramatta, reactivating this important building.

The conservation project was partially funded by a NSW Government Grant, along with a very generous bequest and \$273,000 in donations received from supporters of the National Trust appeal. The works commenced in October 2023 with the removal of intrusive additions including a former caretaker's kitchen that later became an outdoor bar, and internal wall linings that allowed original late 19th century fireplaces to once again be uncovered.

During the process of repairing all windows, doors, floors and fireplaces in the building by expert craftsmen, the early origins of the structure were confirmed with sash window weights and other metalwork revealing convict markings. In addition to the entire building being repainted, an original section of external wall providing a very public face to visitors approaching from Parramatta Park had sensitive repairs undertaken and a new layer of limewash applied for the first time in many years.

The works have included all necessary fire, security and lighting upgrades to the building and made it once again a structure ready to be used by all staff, volunteers and visitors to this important place.

#### Experiment Farm Cottage

Funded by a significant private donation, major works have been undertaken to revive the historic gardens at Experiment Farm. Significant pruning, repairs to fencing, renewal of historic plantings and complete resurfacing of all gravel pathways has ensured that the site of Australia's first land grant and earliest colonial experiments in agriculture is once again safe and accessible to all who visit.

#### Grossman and Brough Houses

The first stage of a major project to repair the ground floor verandahs at Grossman and Brough Houses has now been completed, with the ground level verandahs now fully repaired, painted and safe for our visitors. The second stage of the project to repair the first floor verandahs has recently been funded and is now underway.

Volunteers are making great strides in digitising the eclectic collection at the property, with numerous items being meticulously photographed and uploaded to our collection database. The Wilga Abrahams Heritage Rose Garden at Grossman House also had its pathways resurfaced in time for the Maitland Spring Fair.

Thanks to the NSW Government's Community Building Partnerships Grant we were able to install a new roof hatch recently at Grossmann House, allowing safe access to the roof to undertake roof repairs and help us maintain the roof and conserve our fragile interiors and decoration.

#### Saumarez Homestead

A continuing program of property improvements at Saumarez House has seen the majority of the property's numerous gates, fences, paths and driveways now all in good repair. Of particular note, the Australian Cedar front gates have had their main posts replaced with beautiful ironbark hardwood sourced especially for the job, once again restoring the formal approach to the Homestead.

Alongside repairs to the buildings, the Picking Garden returned to full bloom after being decimated by drought. Volunteers propagated new plants from cuttings and seed, enabling the garden to flourish once more, and the already commenced refurbishment of the property's greenhouse will assist with future plantings in the gardens.



From top: The formal approach to Saumarez Homestead has been restored (photography Jarrad Stevenson); Conservation work at Old Government House (photography by Rick Stevens)





# In Review: Collections

From a major fashion exhibition at Old Government House to accessing Collections online, this year offered new and diverse ways to experience the fascinating items under the care of the National Trust.

## COLLECTIONS

### Online access

Supported by a Creative Capital Minor Works Grant, the year-long digitisation project at Saumarez Homestead drew to a close. For the first time the public can now access highlights of the property's collection online with a selection of the objects and their fascinating backstories published to the Museums and Galleries of NSW Storyplace website. Digitisation of the house collections of Woodford Academy has also begun, with volunteers collating images and information for future public access.

### Conservation training

Thanks to funding from the Community Heritage Grant program, a series of seminars and workshops were undertaken at Bedervale. The training focused on the principles of conservation, including collection care and the writing of significance reports. Attended by volunteers and staff from multiple National Trust properties, the valuable knowledge gained will also be put to good use at other house collections. The program finished in a flurry of activity with an audit of the library at Bedervale where 1,200 books were treated in just five days.

### Retford Park refresh

Following months of research and planning, a rehang of the house collection at Retford Park was completed. The aim of this project was to realign the interiors with how they were styled in 2011, when James Fairfax AC resided in the house. Drawing on their valuable skills and expertise, volunteers generously supported the conservation team with relocating items, reframing original artworks and safekeeping of collection items.

### Heritage in focus

Visitors to Dundullimal Homestead can once again view a rare travelling organ after it was taken off-site for conservation. With support from the Dundullimal Dubbo Support Crew, a custom cabinet was made and installed to both protect and display the fragile object. At Miss Porter's House, volunteers created innovative new ways for visitors to experience the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register collection.

### Dress conservation

Dresses featuring in the *Back to Black* exhibition were conserved ahead of display thanks to a generous donation from the J Permew Foundation. Spanning more than 100 years of fashion, all of the designs shown in this major exhibition were sourced from the National Trust's dress collection. The exhibition, which was opened by renowned fashion designer, artist and broadcaster Claudia Chan Shaw, symbolises how collection care enables heritage to be shared with future generations.



Back to Black exhibition at Old Government House (photography by Jenni Carter)

'Conservation and digitisation of our collections ensures their ongoing protection, as well as making these incredible objects accessible for future generations.'

Craig McPherson, Senior Curator



From top: Historic floor plans and original wallpaper samples have been digitally scanned (image supplied); The photography of Harold Cazneaux on display at Everglades House & Gardens (photography by SGR Photo)

## ARCHIVES

### Digitisation of maps and sketches

Large-scale plans associated with the National Trust's properties have now been scanned and archived. The 900 documents include historic floor plans, garden sketches and even original wallpaper samples. Still in constant use, creating accessible digital images of these archival items ensures their preservation, alongside providing a record and deeper understanding of how National Trust places have evolved over the years.

### Oral history project

The oral history project continued its important work in capturing the life-story of prominent Australians associated with the National Trust. This year saw the first-hand accounts of trailblazing women recorded, including celebrated author and historian Anne Philp and acclaimed historian and heritage consultant Dr Sue Rosen. The oral history project is available on the National Trust website, offering the public unprecedented access to these invaluable audio records.

### Everglades restoration

A striking discovery of archival photographs revealed new insights into the original 1930s interiors of Everglades house. These proved an invaluable resource for conservation work, informing the reconstruction of furniture and interior details. Thanks to a generous donation by the Dick and Pip Smith Foundation, founded by entrepreneur Dick Smith, the images by Harold Cazneaux that guided the restoration of the elegant Art Deco building are now on display in two new exhibition spaces in the house.







# In Review: Celebrating Heritage

Forging connections. From a global forum to Australia's largest community-driven heritage event, our vibrant calendar of events inspired and engaged.

## VISITATION

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of volunteers and staff the National Trust welcomed more than 107,000 visitors in 2023/24.

Visitors were invited to celebrate heritage through events, exhibitions, museums, galleries, historic properties and stunning gardens throughout the year.



## AUDIENCE OUTREACH



## EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

- S.H. Ervin Gallery**  
*Fearless: Indigenous Women in the Hassall Milson collection, Art in Conflict, Ann Thomson, Portia Geach Memorial Award, Salon des Refusés*
- Norman Lindsay Gallery**  
*I am Rose, Modern Women Printmakers*
- Old Government House**  
*Back to Black*
- Everglades**  
*In focus: The photography of Harold Cazneaux*
- Retford Park**  
*Desmond Freeman: Impressions in ink*
- National Trust Centre**  
*Grassroots: Annie Wyatt exhibition*



*Sleep School (Self-Portrait)* by Vanessa Stockard, oil and enamel on dibond, 80 x 80cm – 2023 Salon des Refusés exhibition

## EVENTS

- This year the National Trust planned and produced more than 100 events and tours. A diverse program of exhibitions, performances, tours, talks, workshops, open days and more, connected with members and the wider community, bringing heritage to life.
- The Women's Committee popular weekends away featured Orange in November followed by the historic town of Braidwood in May. More than 700 visitors enjoyed house and garden inspections across the two weekends.
- The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) General Assembly and Scientific Symposium was held in Sydney over ten days in 2023. The National Trust played a leading role across the week-long global forum, participating in panels, organising events and hosting a tour of our properties in the Blue Mountains.
- In partnership with Reconciliation NSW, a colourful collection of art and writing by primary and high school students toured Everglades House & Gardens and Brough House. The captivating works were part of the NSW Schools Reconciliation Challenge Exhibition.

## AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Drawing on the rich and diverse stories of our nation, 'connections' was the theme of Australia's largest heritage event this year. Community-driven activations across the country celebrated our links to people, places and the past while encouraging the forging of new bonds. Running from the 18 April to 19 May 2024, this year's festival attracted more than 72,000 visitors.

In NSW 116 organisers hosted 189 events spanning the state. Open days, talks, exhibitions and performances were all on offer, with 'dark histories' tours proving popular with younger audiences. In a sign of the festival's ever-increasing popularity, 72% of events were created especially for the month-long celebration, while 25 million in media reach and 1 million social impressions were recorded.

## NATIONAL TRUST HERITAGE AWARDS

This year marked the 30th anniversary of the National Trust Heritage Awards. Recognising excellence in heritage, the ceremony took place on Friday 17 May at Doltone House, Pyrmont. A record number of entries were received with 133 projects submitted, 56 shortlisted and 19 winners, with a new category of Young Achiever reflecting the ever-growing diversity of the awards.

Author and radio presenter Sarah Macdonald was MC, while GML Heritage CEO and partner, Sharon Veale delivered a thoughtful keynote speech on urban planning. 100% of attendees surveyed confirmed they believed the awards to be a valuable program, signifying their importance to the industry.



History Walking Tour by Murders Most Foul at the 2024 Australian Heritage Festival (image supplied)





# In Review: Bushland Management Services

Caring for natural heritage is central to the National Trust’s mission. This year, the passion and expertise of our Bushland Management Services resulted in more than 160 projects to help restore natural areas.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 35,000+ plants established across greater Sydney.
- 163 projects completed for 29 clients.
- Four successful tender submissions, including one new client.
- Restored vital native bushland at Lansdowne BioBank in Western Sydney.
- New field staff members employed and inducted.
- Recertification of the integrated management system enabling efficient and safe management of operations.
- Improved habitat for vulnerable birdlife.
- Enabled the return of the scarlet robin by restoring natural areas.
- Digitised documentation, improving efficiency and service delivery.
- Upgraded utility vehicles.

### THE POWERFUL OWL

Northern Beaches Council partnered with Bushland Management Services to conserve Elgata Close Reserve in Avalon. One of Sydney’s few remaining natural habitats for vulnerable bird species the powerful owl, the rewarding project delivered the following highlights:

- Rigorous vegetation management practices to restore the ecosystem.
- Manual removal of exotic vines and lantana to minimise disturbance.
- Crucial habitat features, such as nesting hollows and dense shrub layers, created for the powerful owl’s breeding and hunting success.
- 500+ plants endemic to the area established to maintain biodiversity.
- Documented sightings of a breeding pair of powerful owl following conservation.

35,000+

Plants established  
in Sydney

25+

Hectares  
restored

‘Preserving areas of healthy bushland is vital to the survival of countless species.’

Jack Holdsworth,  
Bankstown Crew Supervisor



National Trust Bankstown Crew Supervisor Jack Holdsworth (photography by Lisa Siberry)

Our Bushland Management Services team working at Lansdowne Biobank (photography by Lisa Siberry)



Restoring native bushland at Lansdowne BioBank (photography by Lisa Siberry)



Powerful owl (image supplied)



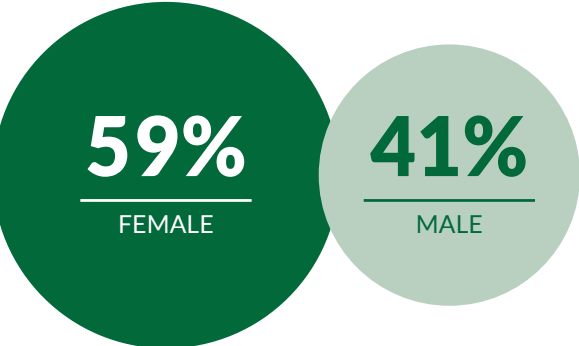


# In Review: People

We welcomed enthusiastic and knowledgeable new staff members while also expanding our team of dedicated volunteers.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The diverse workforce of the National Trust reflects our commitment to inclusivity. The gender balance of staff is 59% female and 41% male, including our Bushland Management Services casual workforce which is 48% female and 52% male.



Barbara Foster, volunteer at Cooma Cottage and recipient of a Senior Volunteer of the Year Award at the 2023 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards (photography by SGR Photo)

## TRAINING

Staff undertook compliance, skill-based and personal development training, participating in programs focused on leadership, bush regeneration and safety. Volunteers signed up for a range of courses, including privacy workshops, sales training, and collection care, completing more than 1,250 hours in training.

## VOLUNTEERS

The generous time and support of our volunteers is vital to the work of the National Trust. We are proud to report in our latest Volunteer Satisfaction Survey that more than 95% of volunteers said they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their volunteer experience with the National Trust.

We took a fresh approach to recruitment this year with targeted social media campaigns. This resulted in fivefold increased traffic to the volunteering page and over 300 expressions of interest. Our total number of volunteers now surpasses 1,000.

Volunteers engaged in a diverse range of activities including gardening, tours, collection care, events, open days, visitor experience and administration. We were thrilled when the dedicated service of Barbara Foster, a volunteer at Cooma Cottage, was recognised at the 2023 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards.

We are grateful for the essential work carried out by volunteers for the National Trust, which this year totalled an impressive 85,650 hours of service.



## BOARD APPOINTED COMMITTEES AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

- Built Heritage Conservation Committee
- Cemeteries Committee
- Collections Committee
- Conservation Policies Taskforce
- Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee
- Finance, Audit & Risk Management Investment Sub-Committee
- Industrial Heritage Committee
- Landscape Conservation Committee
- S.H. Ervin Gallery Advisory Committee

## NATIONAL TRUST BRANCHES AND SPECIAL PURPOSE COMMITTEES

- Bathurst and District Branch
- Blue Mountains Branch
- Butler Bequest Committee
- Far South Coast Branch
- Friends of Ahimsa
- Friends of Old Government House and Experiment Farm Cottage
- Friends of Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts
- Friends of Grossmann & Brough Houses
- Gulgong Mudgee Rylstone Branch
- Hawkesbury Branch
- Harpers Mansion Management Committee
- Hunter Regional Branch
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch
- Lachlan Branch
- Lithgow Branch
- Miss Porter's House Management Committee
- Miss Traill's House Management Committee
- National Trust Honours Committee
- Norman Lindsay Gallery Advisory Committee
- Parramatta Branch
- Southern Highlands Branch
- Tours Committee
- Vienna Cottage Management Committee
- Women's Committee
- Woodford Academy Management Committee

## NATIONAL TRUST HONOURS

The following volunteers and staff were recognised for their outstanding contribution.

### Honorary Life Membership

Lawrie Greenup – Landscape Conservation Committee  
Neil Wykes OAM – National Trust of Australia (NSW) Board

### Meritorious Service Award

#### More than 15 Years of Outstanding Service

John Carr – Hunter Branch  
Margaret Harrison – Woodford Academy Management Committee  
Gail Johnston – Friends of Grossmann & Brough Houses  
Holly McNamee – Friends of Grossmann & Brough Houses  
Ailsa Russell – S.H. Ervin Gallery  
Joanna Vink – Women's Committee

### Voluntary Service Award

#### Over 10 Years of Service

John Archer – Harper's Mansion Management Committee  
Sally Anderson – Dundullimal Dubbo Support Crew Inc.  
Catherine Brown – S.H. Ervin Gallery  
Jane Deen – Southern Highlands Branch  
Patricia Grove – Old Government House and Experiment Farm Cottage  
Jill Helps – Miss Porter's House Management Committee  
Robyn Milner – Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee  
Susan Morris – Miss Traill's House Management Committee  
Doug Werner – Harper's Mansion Management Committee

### National Trust Commendation

#### Over Five Years of Service (or exceptional service)

John Biffin – Retford Park  
Pat Cutts – Miss Traill's House Management Committee  
Jan Livingstone – Hawkesbury Branch  
Airdrie Martin – Hawkesbury Branch  
Barbara Osmond – Friends of Grossmann & Brough Houses  
Judy Paddison – Miss Porter's House Management Committee  
Sharon Peterson – Old Government House and Experiment Farm Cottage  
Francesca Raft – Women's Committee  
Deborah Stevenson – Saumarez Homestead  
April Unsworth – Miss Traill's House Management Committee

### Staff Distinguished Service Award

Rebecca Pinchin – Collections Manager, National Trust Centre

### Lifetime Service of Excellence

George Gibbons – Cemeteries Committee  
Lee Squires – Cemeteries Committee





# In Review: Membership and Giving

The vital conservation and advocacy work of the National Trust was supported by generous donations and growth in new memberships.

## MEMBERSHIP

In 2023/24 the National Trust welcomed almost 3,000 new members, bringing the total number of members to more than 20,000 individual members.

Members enjoyed the opportunity to engage with heritage and conservation through a broad range of member benefits including exclusive events, exhibition openings and tours. Emails kept members updated on future happenings, news and advocacy while the National Trust magazine inspired and informed.

Membership revenue was more than \$970,000 funding vital conservation work and advocacy. Member retention was 74%.

20,000+

Individual Members

74%

Member retention



Members at Retford Park (photography by SGR Photo)

## DONATIONS

Fundraising revenue was over \$924,000. This result is due to the exceptional generosity and support of almost 1,590 individual donors with over 2,900 gifts received.

### Major Gifts

Invaluable to funding important conservation work, major gifts contributed close to \$227,000 to fundraising revenue this year.

### Appeals

Raising crucial funds for pivotal projects, annual appeals make up a significant proportion of revenue. This year's appeals accounted for just under half of all fundraising income.

The Norman Lindsay Art Studio appeal raised more than \$133,000 for critical maintenance at the place in which Norman created some of his most beloved works, including *The Magic Pudding*. Donations ensured much-needed repairs will be made to termite-ridden timber, roofing and water-damaged ceilings at this historically significant creative space.

Strong support for the Harper's Mansion Appeal exceeded our target and resulted in more than \$266,000 in donations raised for this historic site in Berrima. The funds will enable important repairs and improvements. New irrigation and drainage systems, preservation of the original kitchen ruins, paving repairs and matting in the maze will all be carried out.

### Patron and Guardian Program

Patrons contribute an annual donation with the donations directed to where they are needed most. This year revenue from the program was close to \$100,000. Connected by a passion for heritage and conservation, our patron community enjoyed a series of curated events including behind-the-scenes tours and talks by specialist speakers.

### Regular Giving

Every gift makes an impact. On a monthly, quarterly or annual basis, regular donations contributed more than \$32,000 to ongoing operations.

Norman Lindsay Art Studio (photography by SGR Photo)



## GIVING

Thanks to the philanthropic support of members, donors, trusts and foundations more than \$1.1m was raised in 2023/24. This revenue is essential to facilitating the National Trust's work in protecting and conserving the natural, cultural and built heritage of NSW. This amount includes donations of collection items valued at \$267,000.

### Gifts in Wills

Gifts in Wills leave a lasting legacy and help protect heritage for future generations. The National Trust is grateful for the thoughtful generosity of members and supporters with \$28,000 received this year from bequests, as well as a notified bequest of over \$1m to be received in FY25.

## CONNECTING

Unique events and exclusive tours brought our community of members and supporters together.

Members and donors enjoyed engaging talks with specialist guest speakers and artists at the S.H. Ervin Gallery at the National Trust Centre. The talks covered exhibitions including the *Portia Geach Memorial Award, Fearless: Contemporary Indigenous Women Artists, Ann Thomson Exhibition*, and *Salon des Refusés*.

Donors enjoyed a private tour of Everglades House & Gardens, where they were able to admire the completed restoration of the stunning Art Deco interiors. Tours of the Norman Lindsay Art Studio in the Blue Mountains and Harper's Mansion in Berrima were also undertaken. This allowed donors to gain first-hand insight into the conservation work needed at these special places that were the subject of this year's appeals.

Held in the creative surrounds of S.H. Ervin Gallery, the inaugural President's Lunch gathered donors together to share in the future vision of the National Trust.

Members and supporters were invited to experience an exclusive look at the major fashion exhibition *Back to Black* at Old Government House. The display features items conserved as a result of the Dress Collection Significance Assessment report and generous donor support.

The Women's Committee weekends away and Lindsay Christmas Fair drew supporters together, while also donating to properties. The National Trust Tours Committee continued their popular tours to sites of historical significance.

\$1.1m+

Raised from donations

2,900+

Gifts received





# In Review: Finances

The National Trust achieved improved visitation and events revenue and a strong investment income return, however it continues to face the challenges of ongoing rising costs.

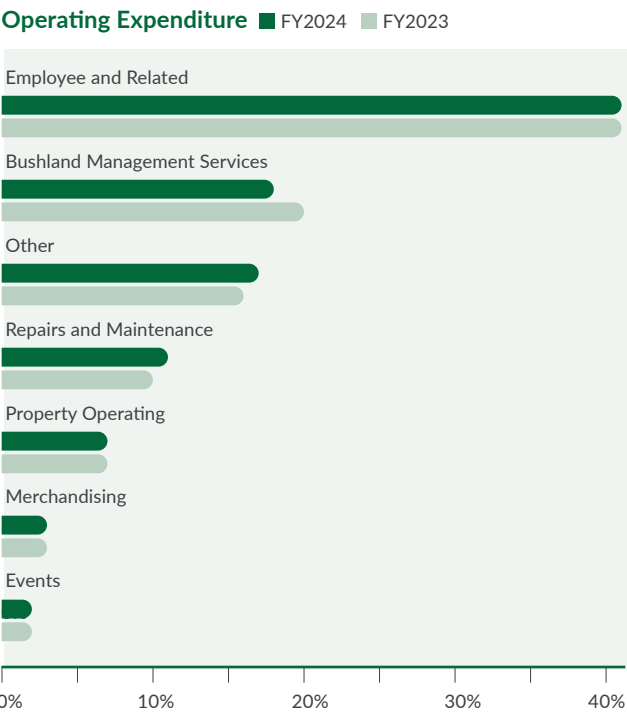
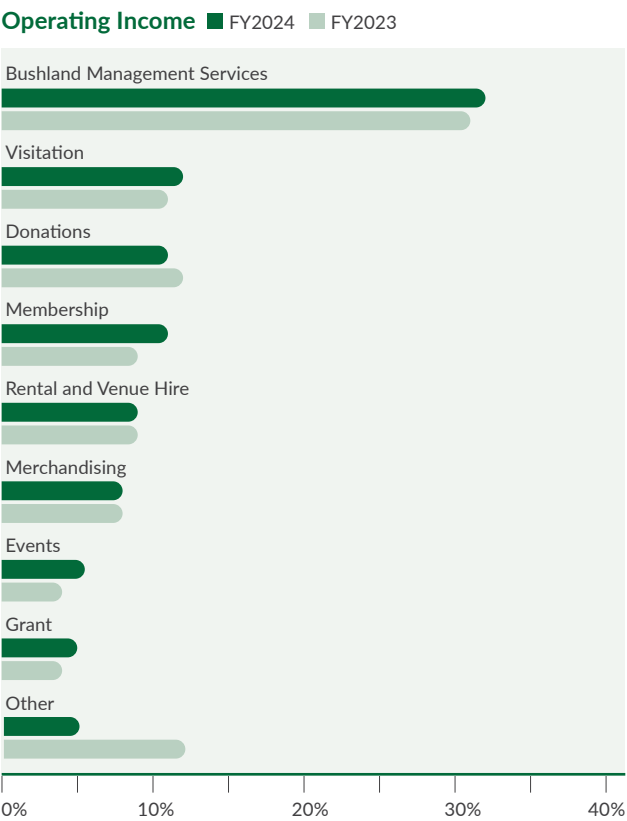
The National Trust is a charity and a not-for-profit organisation. The financial results presented are for the consolidated entity of the National Trust of Australia (NSW), together with the National Trust of Australia (NSW) Heritage Foundation Limited.

### Revenue was generated through:

- Native bushland regeneration services
- Visitation to art galleries, historic properties and gardens
- Membership, donations and bequests
- Investment returns
- Conservation fees and restorations appeals
- Events and merchandise
- Venue hires and commercial and residential rentals
- Grants from government and other organisations.

### SUMMARY

- Donations and Collections gifts amounted to more than \$1.1m
- Bushland Management Services contracts equalled \$2.7m
- In a robust performance, the investment portfolio provided an income of over \$2m after management fees
- Investment continued in the Strategic Plan from the prior year funds, in particular the Neville Grace Bequest. This included audience and member growth campaigns, critical IT projects to ensure the security of our systems and data and, improved information for visitors at our places. This investment is shown in the FY24 expenses
- The above investment, together with rising costs and caring for our special places resulted in an operating loss, after investment income of approximately \$3.8m. The Strategic Plan 2025–2029 aims to reduce this operating loss going forward
- The net deficit for the year overall was \$1.5m, which was less than originally budgeted.



|  | FY 2024<br>\$000's | FY 2023<br>\$000's |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| INCOME   |                    |                    |
| Bushland Management Services   | 2,744              | 2,832              |
| Conservation Services  | 244                | 196                |
| Donations  | 924                | 1,044              |
| Rental and Venue Hire  | 789                | 791                |
| Events   | 506                | 374                |
| Grant Revenue  | 444                | 351                |
| Membership   | 971                | 780                |
| Merchandising  | 697                | 732                |
| Visitation   | 1,060              | 1,030              |
| Other (including sponsorship and Trustee fee)                        | 225                | 290                |
| Insurance Claim (directly offset additional repairs and maintenance) | 0                  | 592                |
| Operating Income   | 8,603              | 9,012              |

|                              |        |        |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|
| EXPENSES                     |        |        |
| Bushland Management Services | 2,678  | 2,750  |
| Cost of Merchandising        | 395    | 395    |
| Employee and Related         | 5,891  | 5,662  |
| Events                       | 326    | 319    |
| Legal Fees                   | 79     | 30     |
| Heritage Consultancy Fees    | 740    | 515    |
| Other Office                 | 898    | 927    |
| Postage and Printing         | 236    | 257    |
| Property Operating           | 1,082  | 1,014  |
| Repairs and Maintenance      | 1,615  | 1,416  |
| Other                        | 539    | 540    |
| Operating Expenses           | 14,479 | 13,824 |

|  |         |         |
|--|---------|---------|
| Net Operating Result                         | (5,876) | (4,812) |
| Investment Income                            | 2,035   | 1,190   |
| Net Operating Result after Investment Income | (3,841) | (3,621) |

|  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| Bequests                                 | 29    | 671   |
| Gain/(Loss) on Revaluation of Investment | 2,021 | 3,426 |
| Gift - Collections                       | 267   | 4     |
| Non-Operating Income                     | 2,316 | 4,101 |

|                         |         |     |
|-------------------------|---------|-----|
| Net Surplus / (Deficit) | (1,525) | 480 |
|-------------------------|---------|-----|

### SUPPORTERS

#### Grants

We are grateful for the NSW Government support through Heritage NSW of the Australian Heritage Festival and National Trust Heritage Awards as the continued principal sponsor providing \$75,000 in grant funding.

The National Trust would also like to recognise the grant support from the Australian Government – Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, NSW State Government – Department of Planning and Environment, Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade – Create NSW, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Infrastructure NSW, National Library of Australia, Museums & Galleries NSW, The Copland Foundation (for multiple projects), Maitland City Council and Armidale City Council.

Support (including in-kind support) was also received from Armidale, Dubbo, Maitland, Lithgow, Tenterfield, Wingecarribee Shire and Yass City Councils.

#### S.H. Ervin Gallery

We acknowledge the generous support provided to the S.H. Ervin Gallery by Allen & Unwin, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Holding Redlich, National Trust Wine Service and Perpetual Trustees. We are also grateful for the work undertaken by NSW Public Works and the Minister's Stonework Program.

#### Corporate Partners and Supporters

A special thank you to our Corporate Supporters; International Conservation Services, Laithwaites Wine People, Museums & Galleries NSW and Safewill. We are also very grateful to our Corporate Members and National Trust Heritage Awards category sponsors; Allen Jack + Cottier Architects, Cox Architecture, Design 5 Architects, Extent Heritage, GML Heritage, Hector Abrahams Architects, Heritage 21, Lucas, Stapleton, Johnson & Partners, Museums of History NSW, Sydney Metro, Winten Property Group and Long Blackledge Architects .

#### Committees

We are thankful for the generous philanthropic support provided by the Women's Committee to support properties, and the Dundullimal Dubbo Support Crew.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The full details of the Audited Financial Statements can be found at [nationaltrust.org.au/about-us-nsw](http://nationaltrust.org.au/about-us-nsw)



# About us

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The National Trust of Australia (NSW) is a community-based organisation, committed to promoting and conserving New South Wales natural, built and cultural heritage. It is a statutory body corporate and charitable entity established under The National Trust of Australia (New South Wales) Act 1990.

## OUR MISSION:

- Advocate for the conservation of built, cultural and natural heritage by engaging with the community and government
- Identify, conserve and protect our built, cultural and natural heritage by example, advice and support
- Educate and engage the community by telling our stories in ways that awaken a sense of place and belonging.

Our values include independence, trustworthiness, inclusiveness and inspiration.

## CONTACT US

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Front cover: Restoration of Everglades House & Gardens (photography by SGR Photo)