

# History & Heritage

Circulating throughout Bendigo, Eaglehawk, Heathcote, Castlemaine, Maldon, Kyneton, Elmore, Echuca, and Rochester areas

A publication of the National Trust Bendigo & District Branch  
March 2025



## Cover story: an insight into miners' cottages

**Next Branch Meeting**  
**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 5.30pm**  
**Bendigo Library 259 Hargreaves Street Bendigo**  
**(enter via Hargreaves Street)**

**All members and supporters welcome to attend**

**Discussion will include:**

- action on 'Demolition by Neglect'
- the Heritage Festival
- planning applications
- and issues you would like to raise

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Cover image: Miner's cottage c1890, possibly  
Golden Gully. On reverse "Mr and Mrs Wearne."  
Image: Bendigo Historical Society

## Cover story: an insight into miners' cottages by Bendigo Branch member Jan Sonogan, owner of a miner's cottage.

When we first saw our property in Ironbark in 2019, I was drawn to the welcoming feel of the cottage and Rob was entranced by the rock hut in the back yard - sold! And as we explored the area of the Ironbark gully, we realised what gems the miners' cottages are, a visible and palpable link to the goldfield's history. It is critical that we retain, maintain and love these dwellings. They have seen so much that we can only wonder about, but how delicious is that wondering.

Another cottage in Ironbark at 12 Quick Street (pictured), was obviously standing before the street existed, probably just a walking path, the orientation telling its own story, gazing out over the gully, looking for the right next owner.

"The dwelling features two bedrooms and one bathroom, providing a solid foundation that can be transformed with your creative vision. Whether you choose to renovate the current home or demolish and rebuild, the potential is enormous." read the PRD advertisement.



Above and right: 12 Quick Street, Ironbark looks  
down the hill away from today's street. Images: PRD  
Real Estate



My thoughts were immediately raised so further investigation was required which demonstrated that the cottage did have a history, and it was protected by a Heritage Overlay. Council had to be contacted as demolition was stated to be an option. It was not an option as the Ironbark/Long Gully areas had been subjected to a comprehensive Heritage Study in 2010 -11.

The Study found "The collection of 1860s to 1870s miners' cottages in the vicinity of Roeder, Prout, Thomas, Casley, Curtis, Bell, Duncan, Jebb, Quick, Truscott, Victoria and Hayes Streets as well as later 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages form part of the historic mining landscape associated with Ironbark Hill. The area was worked from the earliest alluvial and quartz period of gold mining in 1852 to the 1950s and is associated with highly specialized copper and tin miners from Cornwall and silver miners from the Harz mining region of Germany." You can read more from the Victorian Heritage Database Report [here](#).

Council followed through by contacting the agents who have now changed their advertisement and deleted the option of demolition and stated that the property has a Heritage Overlay.

## Consider the option of living in an historic home

The Branch is holding an Open Day at three cottages on 27<sup>th</sup> April between 10am and 4pm as part of the [2025 Australian Heritage Festival](#). You get to go inside to see what some owners have done to their cottages, and you will be able to talk to the owners about living in a dwelling that was built over 150 years ago. The cottages are located at 9 Black Street, Long Gully; 34 Valentine Street, Ironbark; and 57 Green Street, California Gully.

## Demolition by Neglect - authorities urged to take action

### Opinion - Terry Davidson

I have read the [2013 Renee Muratore Report on Demolition by Neglect](#) and offer these observations a decade later in terms of Greater Bendigo Council's 2024 Heritage Strategy.

There are 42 pages to this report (2013) which itself was not addressed to a specific municipality but looked at the issue at the state-wide level. Perusal of the 13 detailed recommendations shows that there are both aspirational and no doubt long-term objectives for some of the recommendations, with potential for involvement of broad bodies.

### Summary of Recommendations

1. Local Amenity Laws – Enact and Strengthen across all municipalities to govern maintenance of derelict or dilapidated buildings, including maintenance criteria. Combine with greater enforcement powers and sufficient penalties to provide a disincentive.
2. Amendment of the Planning Scheme to include the discouragement of demolition through condition or integrity.
3. Heritage Overlay – Regular reviews and condition audits to ensure the overlay is comprehensive and up to date, and properties that are at risk are identified.
4. Section 29A of the Building Act – The creation of a Procedure for Interim Controls to be enacted across all Municipalities.
5. Streamline the planning process to include fast tracking of applications, waived fees for minor works and free heritage advice for owners.
6. Increase community activism through the strengthening of local law enforcement capabilities. Introduce 'Snap, Send, Solve' across all Councils.
7. Provide avenues for community participation and consultation in community adaptive reuse projects. Increasing awareness of adaptive reuse projects increases chances for success.
8. Initiate community education programs to increase awareness of heritage properties and the opportunities they offer.
9. Introduce "Differential Rates" for vacant/derelict properties.
10. Introduce revolving funds, in which a fund is established for a certain purpose (such as loans) with the repayments to the fund used anew for the same purpose. A loan scheme on this model should be implemented for heritage properties.
11. Ensure all municipalities have a heritage grant scheme in place. Increase awareness of grant schemes for heritage properties by increasing funding, easing the application process and project criteria and increase the advertisement of successful projects. This will help to encourage developments that adaptively reuse, rather than seek the demolition of heritage places.
12. Instigate reverse mortgages as a loan option for owners of heritage properties. The scheme should be interest free to increase popularity and success.
13. Increase planning incentives for adaptive reuse projects including concessions of floor space ratios, permitted uses, etc. for owners willing to conserve their property.

### The COGB 2024 Heritage Strategy and Action Plan.

I found not a single reference to "Demolition by Neglect". I noted that the Heritage Study makes mention of already built structures - to their maintenance and various aspects to maintenance and improvements and



to funding of such; the promotion of better awareness of built-heritage etc. but, as far as I could see, no specific reference nor strategies for vanishing heritage structures. There are likely to be some council provisions in place, but I could not find them.

### My summary of how this left me!

Having some clarity seems important. There appears to be a vacuum in the four-year vision in the recent Strategy even after a decade of the topic being well defined for possible municipal action. If it has not already been put forward, is this the time for the Branch to seek a series of on-going consultations with Council officers and ultimately with a willing and aspirational Council to ascertain how existing local policy and law fits with the entire suite of 2013 recommendations? Some modification to the current Heritage Strategy would be an objective. You can read the full report [here](#).



These photographs appeared on the front page of *History & Heritage* April 2022. Top: Sampson's Cottage, Golden Square, which is on the Victorian State Heritage Register. Below: The rear of Sampson's Cottage 2022, victim of neglect. Images: National Trust Bendigo Branch.

### Phil Howe contributes to the discussion:

The report we are looking at is very thorough and detailed. There are 3 types of Demolition by Neglect outlined but we are only concerned with the 2 major ones, the deliberate or intentional neglect used to obtain a demolition permit in order to redevelop the site for financial reward and the inadvertent or accidental neglect, basically a failure to complete routine maintenance of a property or a failure to secure a property to prevent damage by neglect. The main problem encountered here is determining which category the neglect falls under. The inadvertent neglect can be caused by the owner being absent for any number of reasons or elderly or there could be a property dispute about ownership or simply ignorance of the heritage value of a property or inability to do anything about it.

Municipalities have their own and sometimes differing views on what heritage means and which of the 2 main categories sites in their area fall into, for instance one council stated there was virtually no neglect in their area, another said there was a little, but it was mostly inadvertent and a third said the prevalence of neglect was high in their area and mostly deliberate! Even if councils are aware of the issue in their area there seems to be little that can be done about or not much effort is made by the council, one example quoted is the owner of a property claims to be doing something and keeps applying for a works permit and repeating this action every time it expires and the property



More examples of Demolition by Neglect - Long Gully (above) and Eaglehawk (below). Images: Realestate.com.au.

continues to decline and the council doesn't check if anything is being done. One council actually has/had a compulsory acquisition process but doesn't pursue it.

One of the major recommendations of the report is for all councils to have a heritage strategy which The City of Bendigo now has but it needs to be actioned more proactively and for the council to show leadership by example otherwise the strategy is just a nice document. Examples of the benefit of the document if used are the provisions for Heritage Design Guidelines, a Heritage Advisory Service and a Financial Assistance Program to help private property owners especially those in the accidental/inadvertent category.

I was surprised to see the advocacy of Snap Send Solve in the report as a useful tool to inform council of issues of neglect in their jurisdiction, something we should all pursue further. I hope this summary is of use and/or interest to our members. You can read the full report [here](#).

**Editor's note.** The Branch would like to receive other photos of properties that are falling into disrepair because of being unsecured.

## 2025 Australia Heritage Festival Branch Events

Online bookings open 12<sup>th</sup> March at <https://humanitix.com/au>

### **Bendigo Law Courts Tours** (over 5 days)

**Dates:** Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April, Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> April, Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> May, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May, Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**Tours:** at 11am, 12.00, 1pm & 2pm.

### **Bendigo Gas Works Tours** (over 2 days)

**Dates:** Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April & Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May.

**Tours:** at 10am, 11am, 12.00, 1pm, 2pm, 3pm.

### **Former Bendigo Post Office Tours** (one day)

**Date.** Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**Tours:** at 10.30am, 11.30am, 1.30pm & 2.30pm.

### **Open Miners' Cottages x 3** (One day)

**Date,** Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April.

Homes open 10am to 4pm.

9 Black Street, Long Gully   34 Valentine Street, Ironbark   57 Green Street, California Gully.

### **Bendigo Cemetery Chapel Open Day** (one day)

**Date,** Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 11am to 3pm.

### **Shakespeare Play at the Law Courts** (one day)

**Date:** Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm.

## **Festival Launch**

There will be a Launch of the Festival in Bendigo on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 6pm at the refurbished Bendigo Mining Exchange. If you are organising or volunteering at an event at the festival or volunteer for a history or heritage organisation you are invited to apply for entry. Places are limited. Refreshments and a presentation from Dugal James will be enjoyed by all.

Text or phone Peter on 0447473674 for your ticket.

[Click here to take a Virtual Tour](#) of the Former Bendigo Mining Exchange.

## Volunteers needed for Heritage Festival

You don't have to be a history expert to assist with the 2025 Australian Heritage Festival. We all have skills. Are you willing to share them with some of your time to promote and save heritage throughout the region? You can assist by working in a team environment with Branch members to-

- Help set up gazebos, tables and promotional material before start of events
- Welcome event patrons when they arrive and check them in for an event
- Sell Branch books and distribute Branch information
- Support tour guides by being at the back of the group to keep people moving
- Be available at some events to monitor activity in venues
- Assist organisers of events to promote through social media
- Look after other volunteers with refreshments
- No one should be working alone, be a support person at an event.

You might have suggestions on how you could assist. Please let us know. New ideas keep people amused and stimulated. People feel part of a team.

Thank you to all who have registered as volunteers.

**More are needed at the Gas Works on morning of 26<sup>th</sup> April, afternoon of 11<sup>th</sup> May and at cottages on 27<sup>th</sup> April. Contact Peter 0447 473 674.**

## Let's replace Rosalind Park fernery. It could be a soundshell or skate park - Bendigo

### Advertiser

*"I am writing in regard to the area formerly known as the 'The Fernery' at the northeast end of Rosalind Park. This area was once a cherished location for Bendigonians to visit and a favoured site for outdoor wedding ceremonies. Now closed to the public, it is evident this prime central location is no longer serving the city of Bendigo in its current state. Climate change and the resulting migration of native fauna will now require some adaptation by the Bendigo city council. The repurposing of this site is a necessity for the survival and prosperity of our city - a fact that should not be ignored or denied indefinitely. Some suggestions for the future adaptation of the site might include a soundshell facing the rising ground towards the Bendigo High School, skatepark, water feature, playground and so on. There are so many possibilities for this outstanding future venue. I feel certain the great majority of Bendigo residents would welcome such a repurposing of the dysfunctional "Fernery" site."* - Anthony Dewhurst, Kangaroo Flat.

**Editor's note.** The site is protected by State Government legislation but needs the Council to consult with the wider community. What do you think? [Email us here](#) with your thoughts.



"Over our dead bodies!!" Ladies enjoying Rosalind Park Fernery c1900. Image: Bendigo Historical Society



## Bendigo Art Gallery Redevelopment

### The Branch has written to Greater Bendigo Councillors

*I write on behalf of the National Trust Bendigo & District Branch to again raise that the Branch believes that there needs to be a rethink on the redevelopment of the Bendigo Art Gallery.*

*The Branch, after contacting Council, was very pleased in February 2024 when Council decided to include information on the redevelopment on its website including the proposed plans. Since that time, there has been no updates, no community consultation and the costs must be rising which will be a huge discouragement for other heritage projects being considered, in particular for a revised Plan for Pall Mall and its heritage buildings occupied by many businesses.*

*Two other changes have also occurred. There is a new Council. Has it reconsidered the project and what are the arguments for it going ahead? The other important announcement is that Bendigo is now part of the World Heritage Listing application and has to argue a case for its permanency. In light of the World Heritage initiative, how does the ultra-modern façade proposed in the redevelopment fit with the heritage feel of the precinct?*

*The Branch still believes that the proposed works in size, style and scale will detract from the landmark qualities of the earliest Art Gallery Buildings, the Capital Theatre and the 19<sup>th</sup> century streetscape. Branch members have spoken to many people about the project, and most have not heard of it, are shocked at its impact on View Street, the enormous cost of the project, and believe more consultation is required immediately*

You can also read the Art Gallery's page on the redevelopment [here](#).



Artist impression of the future Bendigo Art Gallery, View Street frontage, shown in context with The Capital (left) and the 1867 Volunteer Rifles Drill Hall (the historic courts of the art gallery, right). Architects [Jackson Clements Burrows](#) with [Clare Design](#) and Openwork. Image: [Jackson Clements Burrows](#)

## World Heritage Listing 'Public Talk' review

The Talk was well attended with over 70 people hearing from Trevor Budge from the World Heritage Bid Committee, Euan McGillivray from the Bendigo Historical Society, James Myatt from the City of Greater Bendigo, James Reade from Bendigo Heritage Attractions and Kath Bolitho from the Bendigo Tourism Board.



Postcard of New Chum Mine, Bendigo 1906. One of the significant mining landscapes informing the application for World Heritage listing. Image supplied.

There were many questions from the audience including questions about heritage and economic development and how each sits comfortably with one another, the role of First Nations People and more on the process, timing and how to get involved.

If you couldn't attend [here is Trevor's presentation](#). It also has a link on page 3 to Barry Gamble, UK World Heritage Expert, speaking about the Victorian Goldfields.

## Planning permit for hotel - review

**Planning Application AM/274/2020/A: Proposed Hotel at 98-104 Williamson Street Bendigo.**

*by Michael Lake, Architect and heritage enthusiast (and Bendigo Branch member)*

I was recently notified via "Planning Alerts" of a proposed Hotel Development at 98-104 Williamson Street Bendigo, on the vacant block adjoining Bush's Produce Stores. [Here is a link to the Planning Application.](#) (If you get an "Error" message, click on "Home" and then on the box "Planning and Building Permit Registers" then you can search using either the application number or address (both above here). The next page brings up columns in which you can click on the application number.) If you want to view the documents submitted with the Planning Application, scroll down to "Click to View" and 9 separate documents should appear for download.

Being relatively new to Bendigo, I was unaware that a much larger hotel development had been approved by City of Greater Bendigo in 2021. I am not sure what has transpired since that Permit was granted, but the current proposal by Cera Stribley Architects of Richmond Victoria is one of the best design solutions I have seen in many years.

I had a quick look on [Cera Stribley website](#) and was most impressed with their design ethos and [social responsibility](#). I have summarised my thoughts on the proposed development below:

- This current proposal for a 5-storey boutique hotel of 57 rooms over 3 levels (one storey of carparking on level 2, NOT in the basement) is a significant reduction of a previous proposal approved by Council in 2021.
- The previous approved proposal was for a 6-storey building with a 2-level basement carpark, which would have endangered the adjoining properties.
- The building form and materials are very sympathetic to the existing building form in the vicinity.
- The reduced scale of the building (from previous proposal) helps to diminish the impact on adjoining Bush's Store and St Paul's buildings
- Part of the existing awning on the Oil Store building on Mollison Street will be retained
- The application includes documents specifically addressing the Heritage overlays



Overall, I would have no objections to this proposal from a heritage or architectural perspective



Perspective View 1



Perspective View 2



Mollison Street View



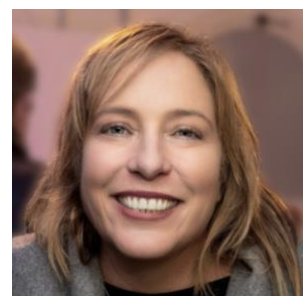
Williamson Street View

### Branch meets with NTAV staff

The Branch Committee was pleased to meet with National Trust Australia (Vic) CEO Collette Brennan, Volunteer Coordinator, Kate Drummond, and Advocacy Strategic Manager, Maddie Moore. The NTAV staff travelled to Bendigo for the meeting to discuss how both groups can continue to work together in promoting our cultural heritage.

Collette (pictured), who has been in the role for only 4 months, was very complimentary about the work of the Bendigo Branch and is keen to continue to have a positive relationship and to learn more about the region, local heritage issues, and branch activities. We discussed many of our shared priorities especially about finding ways to connect people to heritage.

Image: National Trust Australia (Vic) CEO Collette Brennan.



### Branch Meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> February Report

- Festival Report. Volunteers needed for all festival events. Circulate schedule. Launch of festival in Bendigo for event organisers & volunteers. 3<sup>rd</sup> April at Former Bendigo Mining Exchange.
- Miners' Cottages- Jan raised issue of advertising of 12 Quick Street Ironbark includes demolition but has heritage overlay. Follow up with Council/article for newsletter. Elaine suggested leaflet on miners' cottages to be drawn up for festival.
- Demolition by Neglect- Terry and Phil have read the Muratore Report and have written comments for newsletter. Need to have informed Planning Office to speak to Branch.
- Rosalind Park Fernery. Follow up letter in *Bendigo Advertiser*. Council management Plan will be presented in April.
- Art Gallery redevelopment. Phil suggested petition, letter to be sent to councillors. Euan suggested concentrating on loss of heritage streetscape.
- History & Heritage- Cover story to be either Art Gallery or Miners Cottages. Referred to committee.
- Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March with National Trust CEO, Collette Brennan. Normal committee meeting.

## 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 April *History & Heritage* will be **April 1<sup>st</sup>** 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 **3<sup>rd</sup> April** Bendigo Library 1st floor meeting room

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

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

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**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.**

