



National  
Trust  
Tasmania



2024-25

# Annual Report



# Acknowledgement of Country

The National Trust pays its respects to Tasmania's First People and elders past and present. We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as the traditional custodians of Lutruwita (Tasmania)





# Year in Review - Highlights and Achievements

1

## **Hobart Penitentiary - UNSHACKLED Experience**

Winner at the Tasmanian Tourism awards and recently named Number 1 in the 2025 Traveller's Choice Best of the Best Awards. This honour places the Penitentiary in the top 1 per cent of experiences globally and at the top of the list for attractions across Australia and the South Pacific.

2

## **Clarendon's interior is given a brilliant face lift.**

Paint specialist, Michael Bremer-Trainor, has reproduced the original colours in the upstairs bedrooms and dressing room of James and Eliza Cox. The ceiling in the dining room has also been returned to its original colour. Completed recently, these works were funded by a grant of \$44,000 from the Copland Foundation.

3

## **A major project to repair the Stables Block at Franklin House completed.**

For many years the interior of the Stables Block has been 'off-limits' and its external walls propped up by supports. With a grant from the State Government's Built Heritage Grants Scheme of \$176,000, the walls have been rebuilt along with other significant restoration to the interior.

4

## **Works underway to conserve and restore Nile Chapel, Deddington.**

Important conservation works have recently started on the Nile Chapel, the burial place of colonial painter, John Glover, made possible by a State Government grant of \$90,000 through the Premier's Discretionary Fund. These works, with support from the local community trustees, will contribute to the Glover Country experience.

5

## **Substantial improvement in revenue from admissions.**

Revenue from admissions has grown steadily in the 12-month period. UNSHACKLED: Hobart Penitentiary has delivered the largest increase in visitor numbers across the National Trust's property portfolio. Some 15,127 people have visited the site and these numbers are expected to grow in 2025 - 2026.

6

## **Collaboration with National Trust Australia.**

We are a member of the national body representing each state and territory charged with advocating at the federal level for heritage funding and policy outcomes. Over 60,000 Australians belong to their National Trust, together with 3,700 volunteers and 735 staff. Our membership is enabling us to benefit from the experience of larger Trust organisations and to collaborate where we can on shared services.



# Chair's Message

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2024 - 2025 and Financial Statements.

This year has been one of resilience, growth, and renewed ambition for the National Trust.

We have welcomed hundreds of visitors back to our properties after several challenging years and strengthened our brand through award winning experiences like UNSHACKLED: Hobart Penitentiary.

We have made progress on critical conservation works at Clarendon, Franklin House, Nile Chapel and Penghana, both through grant funding and releasing some of our own limited resources. We have sought to strengthen our partnerships in the heritage and tourism sectors including, for example, with the Devonport City Council to realise the ambition for Home Hill's conservation and future use.

Looking ahead, the Trust faces some key challenges. Like many organisations in the heritage sector, we face the rising costs of conservation, reliance on volunteers and fundraising and the need to find new sources of funding.

Our strategic goals are changing. We have the evidence from the Stennings Report and Heritage Tasmania visitor data that growth in heritage tourism has the potential to provide further economic and social benefits for Tasmania. We are strengthening our partnerships and collaboration across the heritage and tourism sector, including to support development of new heritage tourism experiences. This could include convict-based tourism involving sites managed by the Trust, the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority and Parks Tasmania.

Government support is most needed in partnership development, product development and marketing. The development of UNSHACKLED: Hobart Penitentiary is a model for government investment in new heritage tourism experiences.

Heritage is Tasmania's story. And the National Trust wants to ensure that story is told, preserved and shared. We want to be able to do more than survive, we want the organisation to thrive. That means we must be successful in attracting new and stable funding and strengthening our capacity to inspire and educate future generations. We see the opportunities to increase our audiences, to gain new supporters and to help position heritage as central to Tasmania's tourism and cultural identity.

I would like to thank the Minister for Heritage, the Hon Madeleine Ogilvie MP, and her staff for the support they have given to the Trust. I would also like to acknowledge the productive and professional relationships with Heritage Tasmania, Tourism Tasmania, Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority and other government and non-government organisations in the heritage and tourism sectors.

As I leave the Board after six years, I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary support I have received from my Board colleagues. I admire their dedication and their resilience. In particular, I would like to thank Jude Franks, who together with her role as Deputy Chair, has acted as the Managing Director since late January 2025. I also wish to acknowledge the staff and volunteers whose passion and commitment for their roles is an inspiration.

Thank you all.  
Catherine Walker





# The Role of Our Volunteers

Our **200 plus volunteers** are the backbone of the Trust. They are the people who keep the doors open, welcome visitors and strive to manage and present our properties in the most engaging way. They are vital to the Trust's continuing viability and we are indebted to their contribution. We thank them all for their dedication.

Our volunteers know that we need to grow their numbers at all our properties by creating a welcoming and stimulating environment for newcomers.

Volunteers themselves acknowledge the benefits of volunteering with the Trust - such as staying connected with like-minded individuals, joining a friendship group to take on a special project, or using their professional skills and experience. We are fortunate to have a number of retired educators at the Hobart Penitentiary who run the tours and get a chance to offer their performative skills once more. They are also great mentors for our younger history and heritage buffs, building their confidence in storytelling to engage audiences.

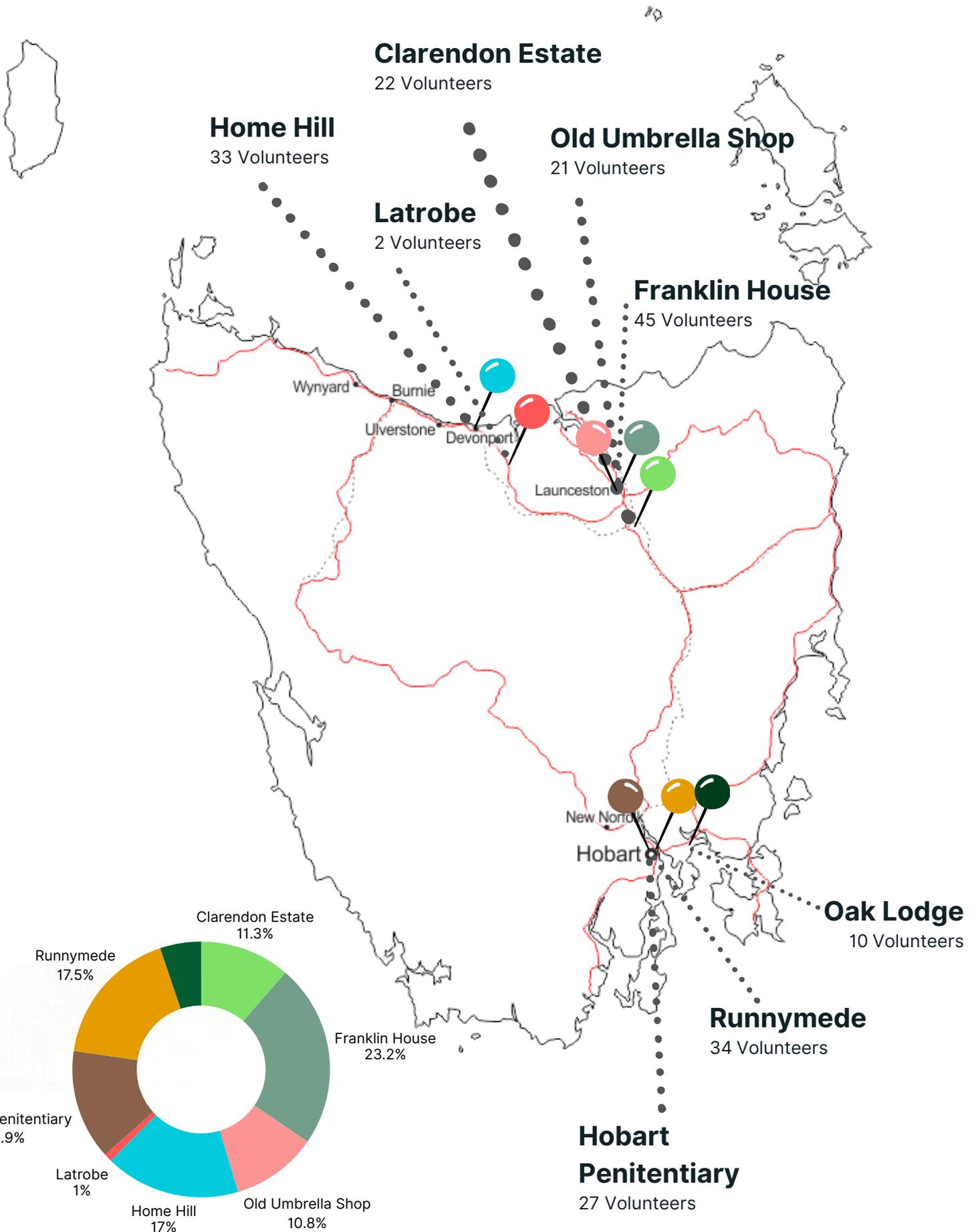
If you have a spare half or full day a fortnight or know someone who would enjoy being part of a social hub, please let us know.

**Tripadvisor  
Travellers'  
Choice Awards  
Best of the Best**





# Volunteers by Property





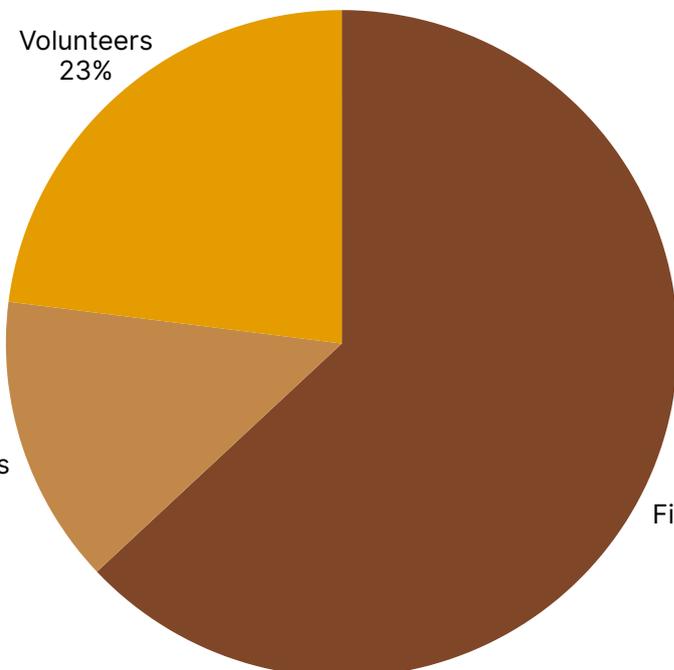
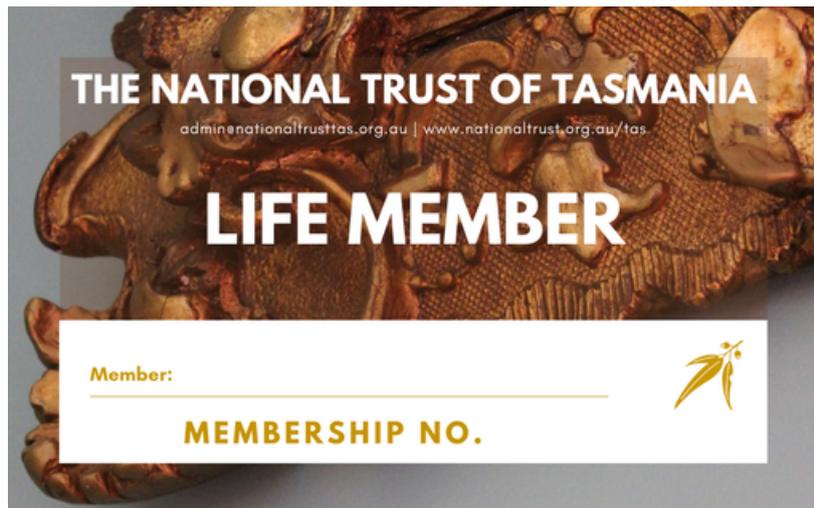
# Our Members and Supporters

Membership is critical to underpinning our success.

The Trust remains Tasmania’s **largest community-based not-for-profit heritage organisation** - currently with 492 financial members. Increasing our membership is an important contributor to recurrent costs.

Our ambition is to relaunch membership of the Trust with new benefits and value propositions and to refresh the brand and public presence to engage younger audiences.

We are very grateful for your continuing support and hope that you can help us to drive an increase in our membership by highlighting its current value, especially for those fortunate to be travelling interstate or to the UK.



National Trust Membership 2024-2025	
Financial Members	492
Life Members	104
Volunteer Members	208
<b>Total</b>	<b>804</b>



# Future Opportunities & Challenges



While we are continuing to increase our own revenue, particularly from admissions, the Trust continues to depend on the State Government's annual operating grant of **\$312,325** which has remained at the same level for some years. This grant helps to meet our staff costs, insurance and utility costs across our property portfolio.

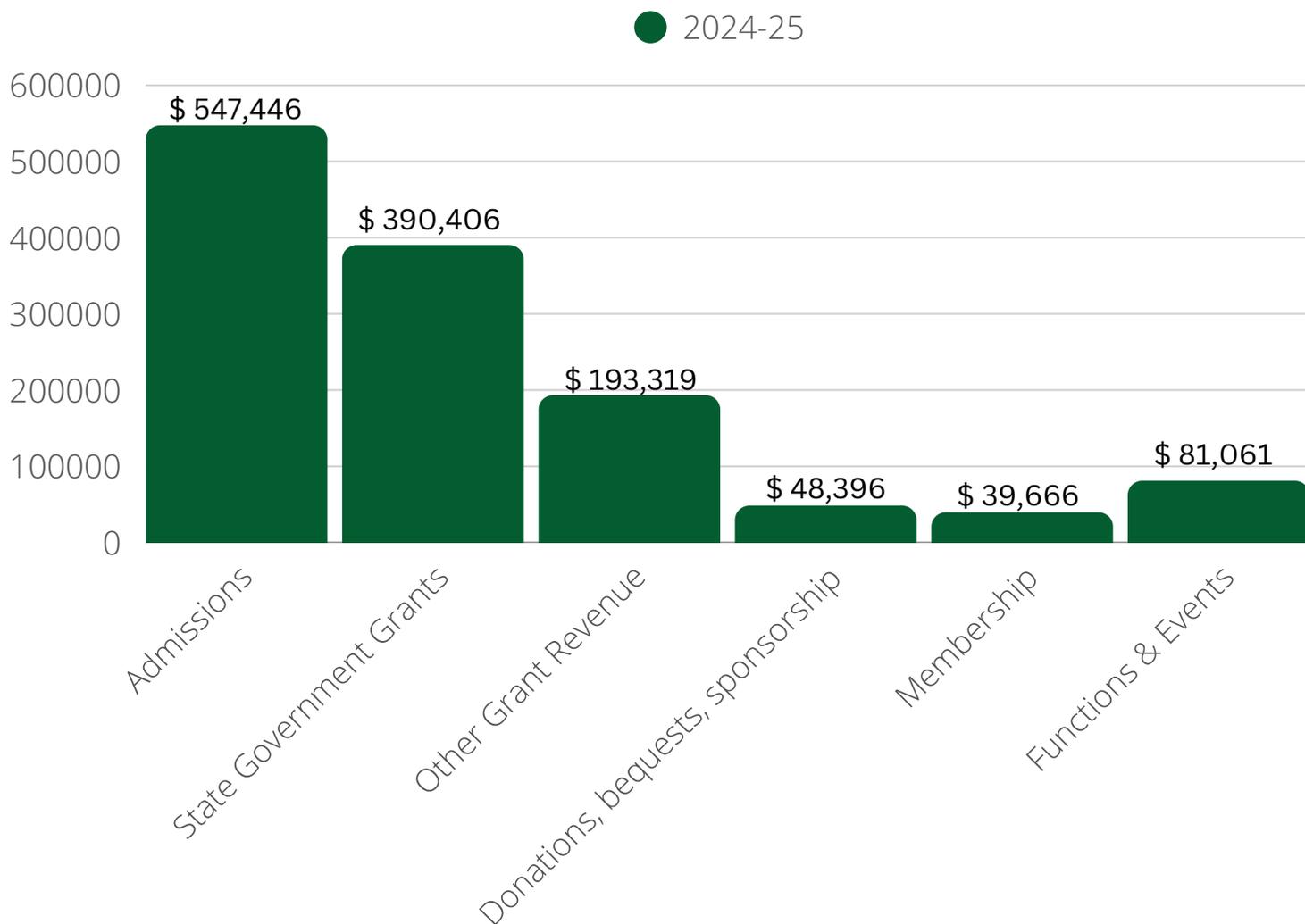
We also rely on State Government support through the **Built Heritage Grants Scheme** for essential conservation and maintenance works. This Scheme is a vital investment in Tasmania's built heritage and the Trust is a strong advocate for its continuation.

There is an expectation from government that the Trust become more financially sustainable. Our current approach is to build recurrent revenue from admissions, while relying on State and Federal grants for maintenance works.

We are exploring opportunities to diversify revenue through events, retail, the adaptive reuse of buildings, and partnerships with other organisations in the sector, including for example the management of our collections. We are also trying to build fundraising, including through signature events in the North and South of the State, philanthropy and private sector support.

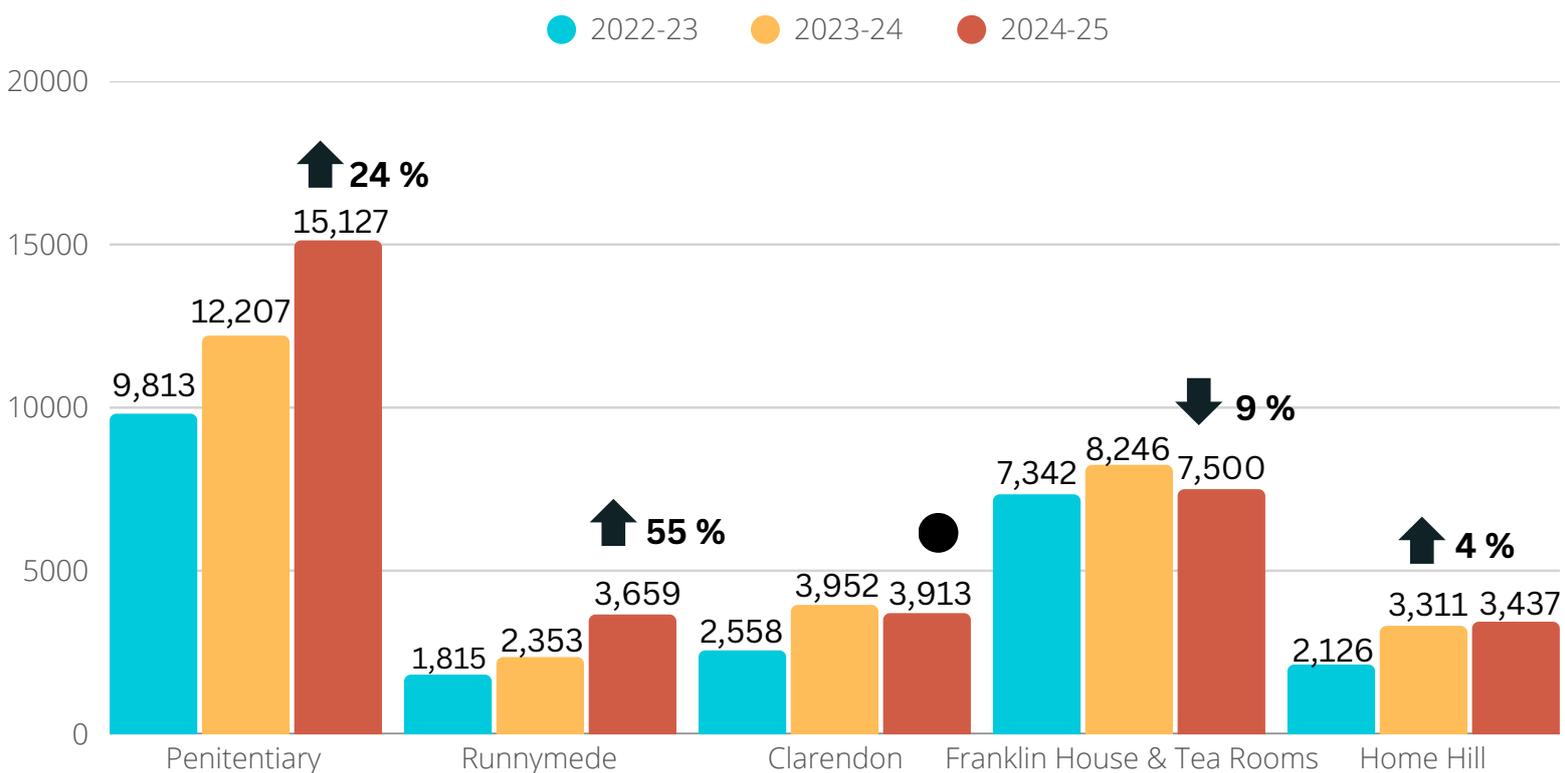
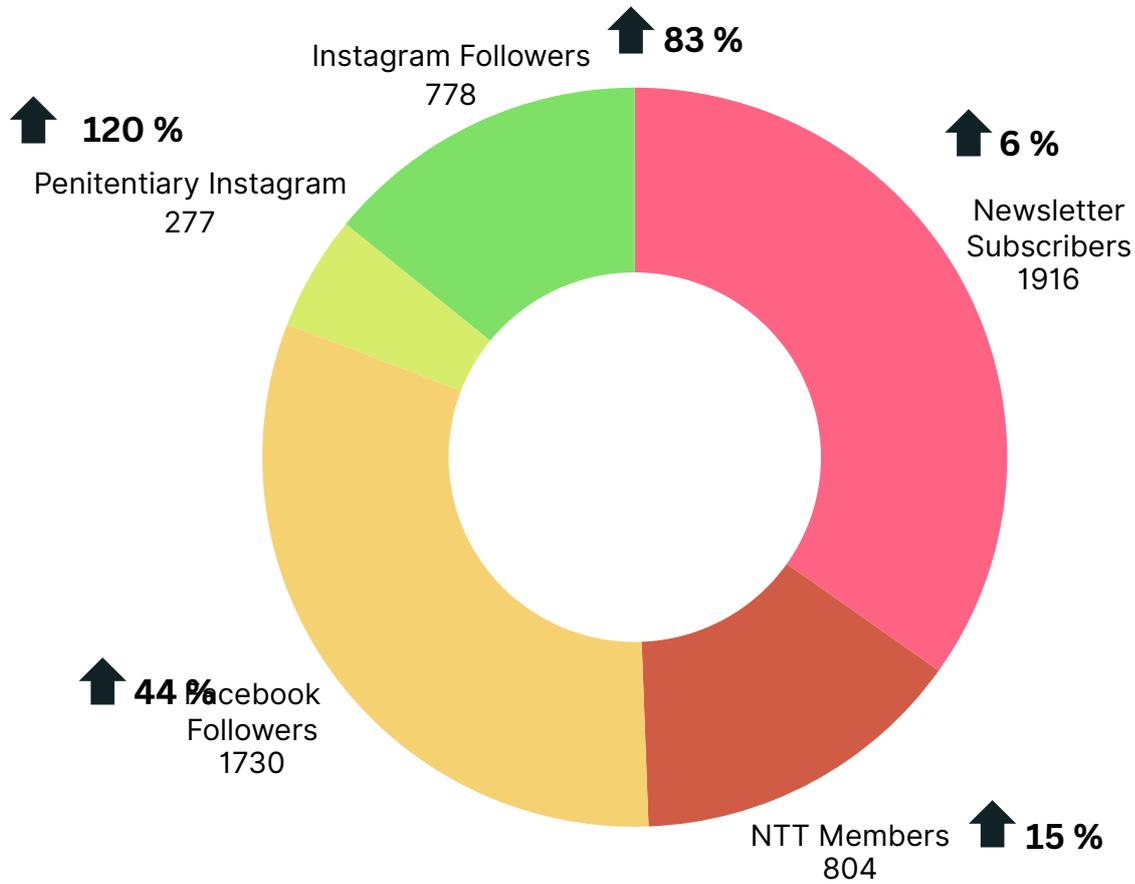


# Financial overview





# Reaching Our Members



Visitation numbers at our five major properties

# Our Governance



The Board reached its full complement of members with the appointment by the Minister for Heritage in January 2024 of Harriett England and Dr Peter Tucker. We have a professional skills-based Board with representation from the North, North-West and the South of the State.

-  **Catherine Walker** Chair,  
Member Elected - 20 October 2019 - 19 October 2025
-  **Jude Franks** Deputy Chair  
Minister Appointed - 30 May 2023
-  **Alistair Scott** Non-executive director  
Member Elected - 22 October 2023
-  **Kerry Houston** Non-executive director  
Member Elected - 22 October 2023
-  **Dr Peter Tucker** Non-executive director  
Minister Appointed - 8 January 2024
-  **Harriett England** Non-executive director  
Minister Appointed - 8 January 2024
-  **Scott Carlin** Managing Director  
Board Appointed - 14 February 2022 - 30 January 2025



# Our Properties

## Hobart Penitentiary



Winner 2025



**Tripadvisor  
Travellers' Choice Awards  
Best of the Best 2025**

Hobart Penitentiary

Reviews from millions of Tripadvisor travellers place this winner in the **top 1%** worldwide.

**Top  
1%**

## Runnymede



Winner 2025



**Tripadvisor  
Travellers' Choice Awards 2025**

Runnymede

Reviews from millions of Tripadvisor travellers place this winner in the **top 10%** worldwide.

**Top  
10%**



# Clarendon Estate

Significant conservation works were completed at Clarendon Estate, thanks to the generous support of the **Copland Foundation**. Heritage colour consultant, Michael Bremer-Trainor, led the project, which focused on restoring upstairs bedrooms, dressing room and the grand dining room to their historically accurate finishes.

The bedrooms were repainted in authentic heritage colours, carefully chosen based on detailed paint scrapings taken from the original layers. This method ensured the new finishes honour the estate's historic integrity, bringing these elegant spaces closer to their 19th-century appearance.

In the magnificent dining room, scrapings from the ornate ceiling curiously uncovered a beautiful dusky pink—a surprising and delicate hue with very few overpainting layers, suggesting it may be one of the room's earliest colour schemes.

We are thrilled to be revealing these rooms in their former glory—not only to enhance the visitor experience and storytelling of Clarendon's rich past, but also to explore the estate's potential as a heritage filming location.



# Franklin House

We are delighted at the completion of the stable restoration project at Franklin House, made possible with support from the State Government **Built Heritage Grants Scheme**.

Franklin House, the first property acquired by the National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) in 1960, was built in 1838 for former convict Britton Jones and stands as a rare example of Georgian architecture. The property later served as a private school and is now preserved as a museum and heritage site.

Martyn Jordan from Heritage Restoration Tasmania undertook the project, which carefully preserved and stabilised the historic stables. This project has ensured their long-term conservation and reinforced the Trust's commitment to protecting Tasmania's heritage for future generations.



Franklin House Stables Following Completion of Renovation Works



# Home Hill



Winner 2025



**Tripadvisor  
Travellers' Choice™  
Awards 2025**

Home Hill

Reviews from millions of Tripadvisor travellers  
place this winner in the **top 10%** worldwide.

**Top  
10%**

Star Gazing at Home Hill





# Penghana

Tripadvisor  
Travelers'  
Choice Awards



Best of the Best





# New Acquisitions



## CLARENDON ESTATE

A Victorian half tester bed currently displayed in James Cox's bedroom. (Private donation)

Two Victorian cast iron single beds for the nursery. (Private donation)

A Victorian small boy's brown felt jacket, trousers, and linen shirt. Currently on display in the nursery. (Private donation)

A large tortoise shell, similar to one currently hanging in James Cox's study. (Private donation)



### **Runnymede**

A Tasmanian-made cedar armchair ('easy chair') with largely original upholstery, generously donated to Runnymede through the Cultural Gifts Program in September 2025, by Lee-Anne and Michael Fintor.