



On October 9th 1803 His Majesty King George III's ship H.M.S. *Calcutta*, under the command of Lieutenant-Governor David Collins R.M., anchored in Port Phillip, New South Wales. The purpose of the landing was to establish a British colony and to deter further French exploration of the southern coast. The human cargo of the ships included officers, surgeons, clergy, the crew, fifty six free settlers and their families and two hundred and ninety nine convicts, some also with families. The settlement was short-lived, only lasting seven months, before removing to Van Diemen's Land in search of a more plentiful water supply and fertile ground.

Through accessibility to maps, diaries, artworks and folk-lore handed down through the descendants of the first attempt at white settlement in what is now called Victoria, historians have worked continuously to keep this event at the forefront of Victoria's history.

In modern times the National Trust has supported the Collins Settlement Historic Site. In **1982** by campaigning, then facilitating a public appeal to save the site, in **1996** by nominating the area from the Western Sister to Cameron's Bight Jetty to the Heritage Register, in **2001** helping to get the site properly recognised and protected at a VCAT Appeal for the application of an extensive Heritage Overlay by the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, **2003** joining in the bicentenary celebrations and Branch representation over several years on the Collins Settlement Historic Site Advisory Group, working with Parks Victoria to re-establish an information centre, the original being demolished because of cliff instability.

The new Collins Settlement Historic Site Interpretation Centre in Leggett Way, Sorrento, was officially opened on 10th October 2008, by Stuart Ord, Regional Manager, Parks Victoria. A visit for Peninsula National Trust members is planned for Sunday 8th February 2009.



Left: Keith White (Friends of Collins Settlement Inc) Master of Ceremonies, Centre: The new Collins Settlement Historic Site Interpretation Centre, Right: Branch Secretary Judy Walsh and President Gillian Tolley catch up with Lieutenant-Governor David Collins.

An interesting observation, two hundred and five years after the original landing, is to stand in front of the Centre and take in the vista where one is presented today with much the same scenery as the first settlers, and indeed the indigenous people, the Boon Wurrung, making the sense of place more meaningful.



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BRANCH AGM SATURDAY 15TH NOVEMBER, 10.30am The Briars. All welcome