



Secretary: Elaine Doling Phone: 5446 7409 E-mail: emdoling@gmail.com Mail: PO Box 121 Strathdale 3550

NEWSLETTER MAY 2010

Victoria Hill Heritage Day 18 April 2010



Rod Fraser, Geology Manager with Bendigo Mining gave a presentation to sixty visitors on Victoria Hill. Photos by Jo Printz.

Displays mounted in the marquee and Albert Richardson reserve included the Bendigo Branch of the National Trust, City of Greater Bendigo Heritage and PROV, Heritage Victoria, the Genealogical Society, Field Naturalists, Eaglehawk Heritage Group, Bendigo Historical Society and the newly formed Friends of Victoria Hill. The Bendigo Veteran, Vintage and Classic Club provided a display of veteran cars and nearby Coath Cottage, built in the 1860s and gutted in the Black Saturday fire, was open for inspection on the day so that its restoration could be viewed. Thanks go to the City of Greater Bendigo for their assistance and support in allowing use of and cleaning up the reserves and assisting with publicity, NT head office at Tasma for their support and assistance, the

The Bendigo Branch of the National Trust joined with a number of other heritage groups and organisations to celebrate our heritage on the ICOMOS International Day of Monuments and Sites, 18 April.

The Victoria Hill Historic Reserve was chosen as it contains the site of several early open cut and tunnel gold mines as well as the sites of several deep quartz mines, including the Victoria Quartz Mine, which was the deepest gold mine in the world (over 4600 feet) during its time of operation. Guided tours of the Hill were held during the day, along with public talks in the courtyard of the historic Gold Mines Hotel.

The event was opened by the Mayor of the City of Greater Bendigo, Cr Rod Campbell, and was attended by several hundred people.



The cost of hiring the marquee was generously donated by Bendigo Mining, the City of Greater Bendigo and the National Trust.

Gold Mines Hotel, and Bendigo Mining for supplying their Geology Manager for a public presentation on the geology of Bendigo. Financial assistance was provided by NT Head Office, Bendigo Mining and City of Greater Bendigo.

Members Corner: Heritage tours? Open Days? Public Talks? We would like to hear from you about what you would like the Branch to do for you. Write to the editor (Elaine again!) about your ideas, successes and concerns. We have a number of events and attractions planned and would like your ideas and input. Get value for your membership.

Castlemaine-Maldon Showcase 3-5 September 2010

This is a 'golden opportunity' for Trust members and friends to experience the features of Castlemaine and Maldon from the gold rush years to the present day. Many interesting activities are planned...for further information please advise your name and address either by email to adco@bigpond.net.au or by a note to PO Box 957, Castlemaine 3450.

[Inserted at the request of the Mt Alexander Branch]

Coath Cottage



Coath Cottage has been a landmark in Happy Valley Road, Ironbark, since the 1860s. This freestone cottage was completely gutted during the devastating fires of 7 February 2009 and marked for demolition. At the last moment it was purchased by National Trust Member and former Heritage Adviser, Andrew Ward, who has undertaken the restoration of the cottage with the assistance of Branch Vice-President and Treasurer Gary Hill. The cottage is nearing completion and these photos show its amazing transformation from the ruin it was to how it stands today. The cottage was open to the public on Victoria Hill Heritage Day, and many people took the time to visit and speak to Gary and Andrew about the restoration process. City of Greater Bendigo Heritage loans have assisted with this worthwhile project.



The conditions imposed by new bushfire planning regulations made this restoration a challenge and its success is due to the successful collaboration of all the parties involved, including the City of Greater Bendigo staff. All recognise the special circumstances of Coath Cottage as the sole survivor from Black Saturday in Bendigo.



Top: The rear view of Coath Cottage late in 2008. The bathroom (right) and sunroom (left) were not restored after the fire.

Centre: After the fire in February 2009.

Bottom: The re-built house nearing completion in May 2010. The interior has been completely renovated to make the cottage suitable for 21st century living, while retaining a 19th century exterior.

The current members of the Bendigo and District Branch Executive Committee are: *President*: Mike Butcher; *Vice-President and Treasurer*: Dr Gary Hill; *Vice -President*: Rosemary Stipanov; *Secretary*: Elaine Doling; *Members*: Jane Cleary, Geraldine Mitchell and Helen Wansink. We meet monthly on the 3rd Thursday. Our address is PO BOX 121, STRATHDALE 3550.

Pen portraits: Branch President Mike Butcher

Mike and his wife, Yola Collins, have been involved with the Branch since 1980. Since then, they have written several books about Bendigo's Heritage and worked to promote an appreciation of our built heritage. Jointly, with the City of Greater Bendigo, Mike and Yola have been involved with heritage fairs, awards and talks on heritage planning issues. Mike was awarded with one of the inaugural National Trust Certificates of Appreciation for outstanding voluntary service in 1995.



The Branches Charter



Martin Purslow (CEO), Paul Roser (Planning Manager), and Ruth Crofts (Trust Councillor) with representatives of the Mt Alexander and Bendigo and District Branch Committees at the home of David Cunningham on 3 March 2010

The vexed question of what the Branches should be doing and how, has at last come to the top of the list of Trust priorities and a preliminary meeting between the CEO, Martin Purslow, and the Mt Alexander and Bendigo and District Branches was held at the home of David

Cunningham (MA Branch President) in Castlemaine on 3 March this year. The meeting could be described as "full and frank" as old grievances were aired. A draft document was promised and has now been received for comment. The tensions arose historically from a lack of direction from the organisation and a lack of responsiveness to the Branches own initiatives. The draft "Management Policy and Governance Manual for Branches and Committees" promises to address those problems. However, as a strategic planning process, it is flawed by lack of consultation at the early stages, but hopefully it can all be brought together. Many of the branch members are retired professionals with a wide experience of corporate responsibilities and feel their contribution is under-valued. Issues such as respect, autonomy, accountability and branch financing will be sticking points. Traditionally, problems have been solved on both sides by doing nothing and the current problem has gone away. A sound basis for the branches *raison d'etre* will hopefully see a resurgence in interest in local heritage.

Much of the manual is devoted to the policies and governance of the Trust as a whole and the strategic direction, with the Branches section from pages 28 to 40 and *Annexures C to G* of the attached Constitution. These include guidelines/directions for setting up new Branches and the operation of Branch committees. A significant omission is the organisational chart, which will show where the Branches fit into the structure. This is an important indicator of the seriousness with which the Branches are viewed as contributors to the operations of the Trust. We look forward to a new spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

Mike Butcher, President, Bendigo and District Branch

Snippet: Did you know that the pulpit of St Matthews Church, Albury, came from Bendigo? Designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and made from Purbeck marble in 1855, it was a donation from Westminster Abbey to the new cathedral then under construction at All Saints in Forest Street in 1936. The new cathedral didn't get very far, just the interior walls of the chancel in cream bricks. St Matthews lost their church in a fire 1991 and the pulpit replaces the one lost in the blaze. The historic church is well worth a visit when you are passing through Albury.



Wanted: Your Eyes and Ears

If you see something of interest happening to our heritage buildings, good and bad, please let us know. If necessary, we will then work with the appropriate authority to clarify the situation and decide what action to take. We have been alerted to many potential demolitions and alterations in the past. As a non-statutory organisation, the National Trust can only represent the interests of the building. Sometimes we are successful with appeals, but we prefer to work cooperatively with owners. Contact Elaine Doling, National Trust Representative on the Bendigo Heritage Advisory Committee on: 54467409 or emdoling@gmail.com

Wins and Losses



John Boyd Watson had this pair of houses erected in 1874 to the design of John Holme Jones, an English-trained architect who died in Brisbane 20 years later.

Have you noticed the marvellous restoration taking place at the corner of Wattle and Rowan Streets? The former home of John Boyd Watson is being faithfully restored in what has been a textbook collaboration. The original verandah was altered so long ago that there is no record of it and only the kindness of a *Bendigo Advertiser* reader made it's restoration possible. Tantalising evidence remained, but a photo of what it looked like was needed. A letter and photo in "The Way We Were" prompted a reply and the magnificent building we see today is the result.

Watson was as wealthy as George Lansell but not as well remembered because he invested his money in Melbourne and other places, but not Bendigo.



The former California Gully Police Station in Thorpe Street shortly before demolition in 2009.

A loss to our City's heritage occurred with the demolition of the former California Gully Police Station after a protracted campaign to save it after the weatherboard annex to the building was destroyed by fire. The original brick and stone building was largely undamaged and considered to be restorable. The Planning Minister intervened to allow the demolition after Council (in support of the recommendation of the Heritage Adviser and the Heritage Advisory Committee) had appealed to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). It was a rare example on the Goldfields and its loss demonstrates the difficulty of preserving a property if the owner is unsympathetic. No detailed measurements could be made as access was denied before demolition.