

Message from the Chair



Ms Catherine Heggen

I am thrilled to report that the Victorian Heritage Strategy was launched by Minister for Planning, John Thwaites, in May this year. The Strategy is the first of its type in Australia and is the result of three years of hard work. The Strategy is concerned with Victoria's non-indigenous cultural heritage and aims to take heritage into the twenty-first century. It focuses on knowing, communicating, protecting and managing Victoria's diverse cultural heritage.

One of the most valuable features of the Strategy is the bipartisan approach to its development. It has been created with the help of key Strategy partners, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Parks Victoria, the National Trust, Arts Victoria, Tourism Victoria and the Department of Infrastructure. I believe this is one of the great achievements of the Strategy, and this strong partnership is vital for its successful implementation.

The Strategy broadens the focus of heritage from listing and interpretation

to celebrating and encouraging community ownership of its heritage. The concept of heritage has moved beyond nineteenth century buildings and mansions, to the houses, landscapes, precincts, industrial sites, cemeteries and artefacts, and even to the stories of our local communities. Our heritage reflects the breadth of our history, from the State's earliest days through to our more recent 20th century past.

I would like to congratulate all of the partners and the working groups involved in bringing the Victorian Heritage Strategy to life, and I look forward to seeing it implemented over the next five years.

On the archaeological front of Heritage Victoria's activities, I would like to refer to two prominent but quite diverse excavations: Camp Street in Ballarat and the dig in the Warrnambool sand dunes.

The Camp Street dig entered Stage 2 over June/July, and revealed a wealth of artefacts dating back to the 1850s. Camp Street was the site of the gold-fields colonial government and also played a role in the Eureka Stockade. However, the value of this project went beyond giving us evidence about the fascinating history of the site and showed great educational potential. This is a key parameter of the Victorian Heritage Strategy, and this project includes the cooperation of a number of local education stakeholders and a range of educational tools such as web sites, which are now an important part of taking heritage into the future.

The dig in the Warrnambool sand dunes was undertaken in a scientific and careful way to determine whether it was a

historic shipwreck site. Many hoped the dig would answer the question about the Mahogany Ship myth. Although the origin of the oak timber could not be determined, it is an interesting case that demonstrates the power of archaeology to tell a story, and to help fill in the gaps of knowledge about our past. The excavation was able to answer definitively that the site wasn't shipwreck-related, but the dig demonstrates how fascinating our past is to the wider community, and the enduring hold the Mahogany Ship story has on the public's imagination.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge that the definition and understanding of what heritage means, increasingly draws on the concept of social significance. The recent decision of the Heritage Council to add Waverley Park to the *Victorian Heritage Register* on the basis of its social and historical significance, and not on the grounds of architectural significance, demonstrates the growing importance of community factors. No Victorian, whether they follow Aussie Rules or not, could have been impervious to the huge and widespread community interest in the Grand Final. Football is uniquely Australian and Victoria was its birthplace. The game permeated all levels of society and Waverley Park is an important part of the story of football and the AFL.

Until next time,
Catherine Heggen



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Front cover: Footscray Gardens

Visit a registered property

In this issue, we recognise two of Victoria's oldest settlements by taking a look at how they present their history through heritage trails.

Protecting and presenting the heritage of Australia's greatest gold rush: Mount Alexander Diggings

In 1851, Victoria was an infant colony. Ever since the town of Melbourne was founded in 1835, the settlers had chafed at being governed from Sydney. In July 1851, Victoria became a separate colony and, in that same month, gold was discovered. Things would never be the same, not just in Victoria, but across the nation.

The Mount Alexander Diggings, near Castlemaine, was a key early goldfield. It yielded around four million ounces of gold, most of it within two years of the initial rush and within five metres of the surface. By the end of 1852, 90,000 newcomers had flocked to Victoria in search of gold. Convict transportation to Australia ceased the following year but, even so, within a decade the population of Australia had trebled.

Towns like Chiltern and Castlemaine tell a great part of the gold-rush story of the Mount Alexander Diggings, but the surrounding bush harbours its own tales of a golden past: crumbling stone walls of huts and pubs and the goldmines and gullies that yielded up fortunes.

The Mount Alexander Diggings Project was launched this year. It is an integrated system to protect and present the heritage of the gold era, by linking gold towns, mining relics and parks to visitor information centres at Castlemaine and Maldon. A committee of the Mount Alexander Council, with representatives from Heritage Victoria, Parks Victoria, the National Trust and local tourism associations, developed the project.

Visitors can purchase the *Diggings Guidebook*, which is their key to unlock the secrets of the region's goldmining past. A range of guided tours are also in development to cover all aspects of the region's heritage, from buildings, cemeteries and goldmines to flora and fauna.



Ovoid Sewer Aqueduct, Geelong

Journeying through Geelong's heritage: the Barwon River Industrial Heritage Track

The Barwon River is inexorably tied to the economic and social history of Geelong – and the Barwon River Industrial Heritage Track provides fascinating insight into the bond between the river and the residents. The river system is significant to the Wathaurong tribe and they are the guardians and custodians of a number of culturally significant sites along its banks.

Settlers depended on the river for drinking water and it also serviced the wool industry. Later on, manufacturers, industrialists and entrepreneurs used it as a source of power and as a drain to carry away waste. In this era, the river was fundamental to the physical and economic survival of the growing township.

The structures along the river tell the exciting story of enterprise and innovation shown by Geelong's industrial pioneers, who developed industries such as woollen textiles, rope, starch, paper, cement and preserved meat for export. For a decade from 1912, the river also played host to the paddle launch

Perseverance, which initially carried passengers and then cement from Fyansford.

It is recommended that you start the track at Baum Weir so that you can enjoy the river in all its moods. Look out for the nationally important Barwon Paper Mill, Rocky Point, where, in a shed near this site, James Harrison pioneered the refrigeration industry with the world's first commercially produced ice; the 1850s Sunnyside Woollscouring Works; and the impressive span of the Ovoid Sewer Aqueduct.



What's new

An archaeological and historical overview of limeburning in Victoria

(Jane Harrington, Heritage Council Victoria, June 2000)

Limeburning was one of the State's earliest and most important industries. Lime is an essential component of our past and present built environment in the form of mortar, plaster and white-wash. It is also extensively used as an agricultural soil improver. The process of burning and 'slaking' lime gives it adhesiveness and allows it to be shaped and set. This latest publication from the Heritage Council, takes a look at this fascinating industry. The following is taken from a critique of the publication by archaeologist Geoff Hewitt .

I have vivid memories of visits to Coimadai, Victoria, as a child in the late 1950s and the thrill of exploring what must have been Alkemade's abandoned limeworks which faced the open centre of the small village. when you stood on the rim and looked down. I also remember how exciting it was when the resident on the hill across the

road – the self-appointed caretaker – shouted at us to go away, firing his gun for dramatic effect. I also remember the sadness of discovering, somewhat later, that one of my favourite childhood places, with the outbuildings demolished, was now partially lost beneath Lake Merrimu. Then I hoped that our old adversary on the hill had fought valiantly until his last cartridge was spent.

Accordingly, I was pleased to see this latest offering published by Victoria's Heritage Council and produced by the staff of Heritage Victoria. This report is a fascinating history and archaeology of one of the earliest industries in the State. It gives a clear account of the distinctions between lime, Roman and Portland cement and also the technology of limeburning from the Incas to colonial Australia. It goes on to provide a Victoria-wide historical summary of the lime trade on a regional basis and investigates the relationship of limeburning activity with limestone deposits. The report also documents the remains as they appear today.

Jane Harrington's study has highlighted significant research opportunities. Two immediately obvious ones are firstly the



maritime aspects of the lime trade, then secondly, there is the question of the domestic lives of limeburners. Several of the locations detailed by Harrington include the remains of houses and other settlement infrastructure. Indeed, the description of Vale's Dutson Lime Works suggests a positively mouthwatering archaeological opportunity to place a human face upon the limeburning trade.

Available now through DOI 9655 8830 or Information Victoria 1300 366 356.

\$10 (includes GST)



Heritage Victoria farewells David Wixted

David Wixted, Heritage Victoria's Senior Architect for almost 12 years, excused himself from office in March this year. David will be missed for his personality, professionalism, photographic excellence and great knowledge of Victorian and Australian architectural heritage. Fortunately he is remaining in the field as a consultant and will be based in Melbourne under the name of Heritage Alliance (Tel. 9328 5133).

Heritage Council metropolitan

The Heritage Council undertook its annual metropolitan visit in July, taking in the City of Kingston and the City of Bayside. Twelve council members and four Heritage Victoria staff attended the day-long visit, beginning with a discussion session at the City of Kingston's Mentone offices. Cr Elizabeth Larking and Cr David Normington and Kingston officers attended this session and accompanied the council on a number of site visits around the municipality.

The City of Kingston has completed Stage One of its Heritage Study and has received Heritage Victoria funding to begin Stage Two. An examination of the city uncovered a rich twentieth century history.

A luncheon seminar followed at the City of Bayside's Sandringham offices. The Heritage Council was joined by Cr Terry O'Brien, Cr Alex del Porto, Cr Ken Beadle and the Mayor, Cr Graeme Disney, as well as Bayside Council officers. The Heritage Council took the opportunity to view a range of sites in the Bayside municipality, including HMVS *Cerberus*, which has received funding for an engineering feasibility study.

Heritage Council Chair, Catherine Heggen, described the day as a real success. 'It was encouraging to spend time with the Kingston and Bayside Councils, which provided us with a valuable opportunity to understand the challenges facing both municipalities,' she said. The Heritage Council regional visit is planned for November this year.

