

president's message



When you read this, the disappointment which followed the passing of the NSW Planning Bill in the Upper House would have been replaced by a stronger determination to step up our advocacy campaign on all fronts to protect our heritage. The Trust has led this fight, helped by the most extensive media coverage in many years. My deep gratitude goes to everyone for trying so hard. That 100% effort is what makes me so proud of you – there is no shame in losing because we tried our best. Don't ever give up. Besides, the fight is not over yet, in fact the next phase has just begun!

An exciting forthcoming event is the exhibition *Yin-Yang: China in Australia* in August - September 2008 at the S.H. Ervin Gallery, which examines the engagement between Chinese and Australian culture. Coinciding with the Beijing Olympics this exhibition will be a seminal event in Sydney and focuses on the cross cultural influences between China and Australia, through art, architecture and all aspects of domestic life.

Keeping with the Chinese theme, is the exhibition by Pamela Griffith, *Orientalism: An Australian Artist's Perspective* from 6-21 August, featuring for the first time block prints of the *Animals of the Asian Zodiac*. Both exhibitions confirm that our heritage is all inclusive and embrace every Australian, past and present, as well as future generations. See the feature article in *Trust News Australia, August 2008 edition*. Come and enjoy both exhibitions and spend the day at the National Trust.

My sincere thanks to all our members and supporters for their encouragement and support – whether a few words or a donation – via letters, emails, phone calls and over coffee or lunch. It reinforces the fact that I am very lucky to be working for the National Trust.

Dr Zeny Edwards
President

P.S. This inaugural issue puts us under the umbrella of the National Magazine. Going national opens up new vistas on heritage issues far beyond our own backyards.

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acting executive director's message



The National Trust in New South Wales has been waging a series of vigorous campaigns in recent months, most notably in relation to the protection of Catherine Hill Bay from development, the destruction of the large erecting shop at Sydney's Eveleigh railway yards and more comprehensively against the changes to the State's heritage and planning laws.

Of the latter we were extremely disappointed that the NSW Government ignored the myriad of submissions made to it by individuals and groups so obviously concerned about the effect that the changes might have in their neighbourhood, towns and cities that called for a full enquiry into them. I say that we were disappointed but certainly not disheartened.

The campaign continues and the Trust needs you our loyal members, volunteers and supporters to put your best foot forward and continue to walk with us. Remember that just because the government of the day passes its desires into law does not mean that those desires will produce the best outcomes or even good outcomes for the community in the long run.

Long-time activist and supporter of the Trust, Jack Munday, said when speaking of the Green Bans of the seventies:

"There was so much development taking place and at the outset there was this feeling that 'all development was good – it was progress...'. But as historical buildings and buildings worthy of preservation were knocked down, and whole neighbourhoods were disrupted...a segment of the population said 'well, we should be concerned about our vanishing heritage'."

Our very own Annie Wyatt, when speaking of our remaining precious heritage and the need for the independent body that would become the National Trust in New South Wales, said that:

"The great essential of course was permanence. That could not be found in either Government or Local Government bodies, as however sincere the intentions of the members when they accepted Trusteeship, they have no power to control beyond their own term of office."

There is a fight to fight and we are in it. The Trust is joined by many voices including the Local Government and Shires Association who agree that the process of building approval at the local level has to be improved, but we do not believe that the planning law amendments have had appropriate public debate or scrutiny and we are very concerned by what now lies ahead for heritage in this State.

Be vigilant, keep us informed of any issues that arise in your "backyard" and if you are unsure about any items of local heritage significance seek to have them listed, and remember, as the renowned American anthropologist Margaret Mead said:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has!"

Steven A. White
Acting Executive Director

farewell to Patricia R. McDonald

Saying farewell is always hard to do and when that farewell is to someone known well over a long time and who has contributed so much then the task is made doubly hard. Patricia, best wishes from us all in retirement.

Patricia has committed over 20 years to the National Trust of Australia (NSW) as senior curator, curator, consultant, volunteer and a valued museum colleague. A recognised authority on colonial furniture and furnishings, Patricia played a guiding role in the presentation of many Trust properties. Patricia authored, co-authored, contributed to and encouraged a host of publications including the recent "Historic House" guide book series.

We owe a great deal to Patricia, and on her retirement acknowledge the sharing of her passion for all things colonial and her encyclopaedic knowledge of 19th century Australian life with us all. Patricia inspired her young colleagues to explore the interpretation of history with intelligent research and a sharp open mind that forged a deep connection with our past, a foundation enabling us all to understand and actively value and protect our heritage.

Steven A. White
Acting Executive Director