

TRUST ACTION

Trust action

State cabinet changes

The Trust has written to the new Premier Nathan Rees, Deputy Premier and Minister for the Environment, Carmel Tebbutt and new Planning Minister Kristina Kenneally congratulating them on their new portfolios and highlighting the community's concern on issues such as the conservation of Eveleigh Railway Workshops, Catherine Hill Bay, Currawong at Pittwater and Ku-ring-gai's Blue Gum High Forest and urban conservation areas.

Eveleigh Railway Workshops

The blacksmith at Eveleigh is in negotiations with Australian Technology Park to secure his long term tenure and the Trust continues to argue strongly against the redevelopment of the Large Erecting Shop which should be retained as an operating workshop for the repair and maintenance of historic locomotives and rolling stock.



Eveleigh Rail Workshop



Catherine Hill Bay

Catherine Hill Bay

The Trust has received notification that the Federal Department of the Environment has determined that the Coal & Allied development proposal at Catherine Hill Bay is a "controlled action" and the development will consequently require the approval of the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment before it can proceed. The outgoing Minister for Planning gave State approval for the Rosecorp Catherine Hill Bay development in his very last days as Minister but this development will also need Federal approval before it can proceed.

Scone Civic Theatre

The Trust is liaising with theatre entrepreneurs and Scone Council with a view to having the historic, State Heritage Register listed Scone Civic Theatre re-opened. The theatre has been closed for some time and had been falling into disrepair.

Wollongong Town Hall and pipe organ

In December last year, the Wollongong City Council announced their intention to demolish the Wollongong Town Hall and to relocate the Ronald Sharp pipe organ. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch and the broader community were outraged and embarked on a joint campaign to save the site.

Wollongong Town Hall has been a focal point of the city's cultural life since 1887, and the current building incorporates two previous Town Halls on the site. The pipe organ was purpose built for the Hall by Ronald Sharp immediately before he built the Opera House organ and it is an instrument of international acclaim.

The Trust's campaign to save the Town Hall and pipe organ included meetings with council staff, public addresses in Council meetings, a petition, interviews with local radio, TV and newspapers; these activities were supported by a flood of letters from the public to the papers and community protest meetings. The National Trust classified the site and the South Coast Labour Council placed a Green Ban on demolition work. The SCLC also invited Richard Tognetti, the Director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, formerly from Wollongong, to play an impromptu recital to demonstrate the Hall's fine acoustics for the Administrators who have replaced the dismissed Councillors.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch of the Trust organised a concert in the Town Hall, initially to give the community the opportunity to re-engage with this highly valued community asset and to experience the powerful pipe organ, but the concert became a celebration, following the Administrators' decision to retain and reopen the Town Hall. Robert Ampt, City of Sydney organist, along with local musicians performed to a full house of over 900 people.

The concert was a great success, made more so by the generosity of spirit shown by the performers, technicians and audience. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch has received numerous expressions of thanks for our part in the campaign, and in return, we extend our thanks to the community and to the National Trust head office, who worked with us for the retention of the Town Hall and pipe organ.

Meredith Hutton, Chair National Trust Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch



The Illawarra Choral Society, conductor Meryl Jackson-Kew, and City of Sydney organist Robert Ampt, performing at the National Trust Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch concert at Wollongong Town Hall. Photo: Peter Costigan.

erratum: Rosemary Annable

The citation in National Trust Magazine (NSW), Winter 2008 edition, of the book 'A Setting for Justice: Building for the Supreme Court of NSW', as Highly Commended in the National Trust of Australia (NSW) Heritage Awards 2008, should have included the name of the book's author, Rosemary Annable. The National Trust of Australia (NSW) apologises for the omission. Dr Rosemary Annable is a consultant historian who has worked for over 20 years in the field of heritage studies. She is a Fellow and past President of the Royal Australian Historical Society. The book is the first detailed history of the three heritage buildings that comprise the King Street Courts and house the Supreme Court of NSW. In the words of barrister, David Ash, in his review in the Law Society Journal, April 2008, 'What Annable and the Attorney-General's Department have given us is a beautifully produced, illustrated compendium, not only of what was but of what might have been.' Our apologies for the omission.