

ENDANGERED PLACES

The National Trust Endangered Places Program ran for seven years from 1998 until 2004. It was created as a reaction to concerns that heritage places remained threatened notwithstanding the existing legislative regimes throughout Australia. An audit of the fate of the 180 places listed to the Endangered Places program was conducted during 2005 and 2006. This list is being progressively entered onto the website www.heritageatrisk.org.au.

Based loosely on the American program of the same name, the objective of Endangered Places was to utilise the combined advocacy of the Trusts to focus community and media interest on the kinds of threats facing heritage places, and to marshal community action and government attention to address threats facing listed places and to achieve policy changes to address the issues raised by those threats.

The program was successful in raising community awareness of heritage issues and resulted in some positive heritage conservation outcomes including Point Nepean and Point Cook, the Abbotsford Convent and Pentridge Gaol sites (Victoria), the Manly Quarantine Station and the historic Maritime Precinct (NSW), Sullivan's Cove (Tasmania) and the Midland Railway Workshops (WA). Two places nominated as endangered, Recherche Bay in Tasmania, and the Burrup Peninsula in WA, have been listed on the National Heritage List.

However, despite these successes, and the respect for the program held by prominent conservation and community organisations, Endangered Places did not reach all members of community and it has been difficult for the National Trust to ensure that all places nominated as endangered met the criteria for risk. The new program Our Heritage at Risk was developed to increase objectivity, credibility and capacity of the program to influence community and government attitudes. It was launched in 2006 and is run in partnership with other Heritage conservation groups. 2007 was its first year.