

# Our Heritage At Risk 2009 Announced

This year's national Top Ten list highlights a number of major issues currently threatening Australia's built, cultural and natural heritage including:

- Development pressures in urban and rural landscapes
- Redundancy, neglect and disposal particularly of institutional and industrial buildings
- Land planning issues associated with capital cities and development pressure to cater for growing populations at the expense of heritage and liveability

The most common threat is development pressure, followed closely by neglect. The National Trust and our 2009 partners, Australian Historical Association and Australian Institute of Architects are particularly dismayed at the alarming loss of our urban heritage highlighted in our two largest cities.

Melbourne is at risk of losing both the heritage of its suburban centres and its "lungs" - the Green Wedges - while many of its CBD buildings are under development and population pressures. Ku-ring-gai in Sydney, a model for garden suburb design, is already losing its unique character and heritage values due to these same pressures. Inappropriate use and development is also impacting on our National Capital and our rural heritage.

Lower Lakes and Coorong continues to be at risk, and exemplifies the significant risks still facing the Murray Darling Basin, which for the third year running has been declared Our Heritage Region at Risk.

The National Trust and its partners are determined to work with the community, authorities and government agencies to conserve our valuable heritage for the benefit of future Australians, and work to find the right solutions as we battle with population and development pressures and conflicting uses.

Our Heritage at Risk program, coordinated by the Australian Council of National Trusts and the eight Australian State and Territory National Trusts, is one part of the Trusts' work to conserve our heritage on behalf of our 80 000 members and all Australians. The Trusts work closely with other heritage, conservation and community groups to identify and assess Australia's heritage at risk in this two-staged program which aims to raise community awareness of our valuable threatened heritage.

The National Top Ten Our Heritage at Risk is a sample of our Heritage at Risk throughout Australia which is selected from over 60 nominations throughout Australia. Visit [www.heritageatrisk.org.au](http://www.heritageatrisk.org.au) for more information on the National Top Ten and State Lists for 2009.

## NATIONAL TOP TEN

**Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores**  
ACT

**Ku-Ring-Gai Town Centres  
and the Jim McDougall House**  
NSW

**Middenbury, Former ABC Studios**  
Toowong QLD

**Victoria Barracks, Petrie Plaza**  
QLD

**Willow Court, New Norfolk**  
TAS

**Macquarie House, Hobart**  
TAS

**Urban Heritage and  
Green Wedges,  
Melbourne VIC**

**Unprotected CBD Buildings**  
Melbourne VIC

**Port Adelaide Maritime Heritage**  
SA

**Lower Lakes and Coorong**  
SA

**REGION AT RISK:  
Murray Darling Basin**

Heritage at Risk Nominations

[www.heritageatrisk.org.au](http://www.heritageatrisk.org.au)

## Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores

### High risk of destruction and devaluation of heritage values

- integral part of design of Canberra
- High aesthetic, social, scientific and historic heritage values
- Important recreation and social site
- Significant urban landscape

Lake Burley Griffin is as an essential landscape element of the early design of Canberra, the centre-piece for the National Capital and forms the immediate background of the national and parliamentary areas. It is a historically popular site for picnics, recreation and as a water-sport venue.



**THREAT:** Inappropriate use and development, including strong pressure to allow a pedestrian/cycle bridge over West Basin which could be a precedent for further encroachment, and subsequent loss of heritage values.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** No development that impacts on heritage and visual significance of the Lake and shoreline until a comprehensive management plan covering entire foreshores and which considers assessed heritage values is fully developed.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Suffering

## Ku-ring-gai Town Centres and the Jim McDougall House

### Imminent risk of destruction

- Threats to Jim McDougall House are symptomatic of the threats to Ku-ring-gai
- Ku-ring-gai has highly significant aesthetic, scientific, architectural, social and historic heritage values including endangered Blue Gum High Forest remnants
- The five town centres of Ku-ring-gai are in National Trust Urban Conservation Areas for their high integrity and village character
- Whole garden streetscapes are being lost including that of the former home of Annie Wyatt, founder of the National Trust in Australia

Ku-ring-gai is a model for garden suburbs design which has created a unique heritage character. A number of individual heritage listed places and streetscapes have already been demolished. The McDougall House and its grounds containing critically endangered Blue Gum High Forest face demolition for a six-storey residential development.



**THREAT:** Loss of settings and entire garden streetscapes, loss of trees and bushland, demolition of many individual outstanding heritage homes and replacement by six-storey apartment blocks, and loss of community under insensitive development and unsympathetic rezonings.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** Town Centres should be listed as statutory conservation areas, individual heritage items, including McDougall House, and their settings should be protected and new developments designed sensitively to complement the character and identity of the conservation areas.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Strongly suffering. Ku-ring-gai's heritage is being smashed and shattered.

## Middenbury, former ABC Studios, Toowong

### At risk of destruction

- Long history associated with prominent Brisbane identities and in one family for 6 generations
- State heritage values identified, but removed from Queensland register for legislative reasons
- Currently ineligible for inclusion on Commonwealth Heritage List
- Under provisions of disposal, ABC must assess for Commonwealth Heritage Values and, if identified, secure protection

Constructed for Eliza Rogers c1865, Middenbury is a single-storey brick residence overlooking the Brisbane River at Toowong. Purchased by the Commonwealth in 1957, it was part of the ABC Toowong studio complex until 2007. Expressions of interest for development of the 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> site, including Middenbury, closed in July.



**THREAT:** Protection of Middenbury under development of the site is uncertain. Will the ABC take into consideration State Heritage values and apply covenants should no 'Commonwealth Heritage values' be identified?

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** If no "Commonwealth heritage values" are identified, State heritage values should be recognised, Middenbury listed and covenants applied to assure its future. Development of the site should be sympathetic to Middenbury.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Surviving

## Victoria Barracks, Petrie Terrace, Brisbane

### At risk of destruction

- Important landmark
- Valuable streetscape component of Petrie Plaza, including many mature plantings
- On Defence Heritage Register and nominated to Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL) c2005
- Diverse range of building uses (stables, Lunatic reception, Commandant's House, Ammunitions Store) and social history

Situated on a 2.703 hectare site on the CBD fringe, the Victoria Barracks is a cohesive group of mid-19th to mid-20th century military buildings forming an identifiable precinct closely associated with the history of the military in Queensland. Each individual building is important in illustrating principal characteristics of its type.



**THREAT:** If not Commonwealth listed, the site may be subject to development pressure as there is no formal process to allow automatic nomination to the Queensland Heritage Register upon divestment of Commonwealth-owned heritage places.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** A formal procedure should be established so that all Commonwealth-owned heritage places in Queensland subject to disposal or divestment are nominated automatically to the Queensland Heritage Register for consideration by the Queensland Heritage Council.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Surviving

## Willow Court, the former Asylum Precinct, with Military and Convict Hospital, New Norfolk

### Imminent risk of deterioration

- Integral part of one of Tasmania's three great colonial institutions
- Earliest surviving example of convict hospital built in distinctive Colonial Georgian Palladian barracks style "Frescatti"
- Includes rare building methods, such as brick nogging and 19C pre-fabricated timber Hall
- Subject to vandalism and theft including original Blackwood staircase being used for skateboarding

Originally built as a picturesque villa designed by John Lee Archer, Willow Court is the earliest building in the Willow Court precinct which is part of the larger Royal Derwent Hospital. Retaining many original classic colonial features, it still has potential to be adapted to viable commercial or government use.

**THREAT:** The building has been unoccupied for some time and is subject to neglect and vandalism. Security is difficult and protection of the site is beyond the capacity of the local government authority.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** State Government support is needed to conserve Willow Court so that its heritage values are retained but which allow it to be adaptively re-used as a viable commercial or government undertaking.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Suffering



## Macquarie House, Hobart

### Immediate risk of destruction

- Architectural and social heritage significance
- Built as a 3-storey house with battlements on top to deter the French when they came up the Derwent River
- Integral part of Hobart's history

Built in 1815 as a private residence and used as a "de facto" Government House by Governor Lachlan Macquarie, it was converted to one of Hobart's earliest residential hotels in 1821, and regarded as the smartest hotel in Hobart Town. Architecturally and socially significant, it has been a seminary, Boarding House, school and residence.

**THREAT:** The current owner has proposed a number of more intensive uses of land adjoining Macquarie House and is appealing a former decision not to approve a 10-storey tower which if allowed would engulf Macquarie House.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** The future of this early house, now on prime real estate, is of great public concern. Any adjoining development must recognise its heritage significance so that the original context and streetscape is conserved.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Stable



## Urban heritage and green wedges, Melbourne

### Imminent risk of destruction

- Melbourne has been identified as one of the world's most liveable cities
- Typical 19<sup>th</sup> & early 20<sup>th</sup> century character of the inner city and middle ring suburbs with their distinctive "strip" shopping centres contributes to this reputation
- Melbourne is also known for its "green wedges" in the outer suburbs which provide accessible open space in a unique planning innovation
- Melbourne's population is growing

The State Government's new planning blueprint "Melbourne@ 5 million" and extension of direct planning control is placing both the heritage of many suburban centres and Melbourne's 'lungs', the green wedges, at risk of infilling and inappropriate development.

**THREAT:** Urban sprawl and population pressure threatens large scale development of inner city and middle ring areas of Melbourne's suburbs, and replacement of green fields with low density housing at the south eastern and western urban growth boundaries.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** Urban heritage and Heritage Overlay areas must be protected. Development proposals should involve community consultation. Green wedges must be maintained. **Cultural and natural heritage in new urban areas should be identified and protected.**

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Suffering



## Unprotected buildings and objects in Melbourne's CBD

### High risk of destruction and damage

Many city buildings were protected by 1984, but not one new place has been listed by the Melbourne City Council since.

Buildings not currently protected that could be demolished or significantly altered without consideration of heritage include

- Shops, residences and office buildings c1858 - 1885 in Little Collins Street
- Former Griffith Tea Warehouse, Flinders St c1990 and
- Banks, insurance and other commercial buildings of 1940s to 1960s

The range of buildings, from the early 1850s through Victorian, Interwar but especially post-WWII, represents a richer picture of the heritage of the CBD than existing listings. Street objects (eg horse troughs) and building interiors (eg lobbies) are necessary to fully round out the extent and types of places.

**THREAT:** A large number of places missing from Lists, or now considered significant, are vulnerable to demolition. As recently as 2007 a rare C19th Oriental style building was demolished with no opposition from Council.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** The City of Melbourne to implement the recommendations of various studies that numerous buildings, and objects and interiors should receive local heritage protection.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Suffering



## Port Adelaide Maritime Heritage

### Comprising

Waterside Workers' Federation Hall, the ketches "Falie" (also known as "Hollands Troaw") and Nelcebee, Customs House, North Bank Marine (slips, dock & surrounding buildings & waterways), and Port Adelaide Sailing Club.

### High risk of destruction and deterioration

- South Australia's oldest and most significant port
- Diverse Maritime heritage in one location
- Social and historic heritage values with high levels of authenticity and integrity
- Boat building and other traditional waterfront industries are central to identity of the port

The Port of Adelaide was one of South Australia's earliest settlements, and has historically been the major port of entry to the State. Its diverse maritime heritage including historic buildings, ketches and waterfront working areas, provides an insight into building techniques and life of the early port.

**THREAT:** Lack of appropriate maintenance, and in the case of Port Adelaide Sailing Club and the Waterside Workers Federation Hall, the threat of demolition from Port Adelaide waterfront development.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** Urgent maintenance, and where appropriate, Heritage listing. The Port of Adelaide should be developed as a Maritime Heritage area featuring the two ketches as visible historic icons.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Suffering

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## Lower Lakes and Coorong,

### Imminent risk of destruction and continuing deterioration

Very high ecological diversity

- Internationally significant wetland
- One of Top Six water bird sites in Australia
- Indigenous cultural heritage values to Ngarrindjeri people

As well as being of international significance, the Lower Lakes and Coorong supplies Adelaide's water and is a major tourist and holiday destination. It exemplifies both the cultural, social and ecological values of the Murray Darling River System, of which it is part, and the threats the system faces.

**THREAT:** Lack of flows and excessive salt levels due to regulatory structures, unsustainable water extraction and drought have endangered flora and fauna. Current and proposed actions by the SA government will not address the lack of environmental flows.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** For biodiversity to be restored and conserved, the volume of water reaching the Lower Lakes and Coorong must be increased and seasonal flow patterns be at least partially restored.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Suffering

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## EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA

### Murray Darling Basin

#### Immediate risk of deterioration and degradation

#### Australia's most important river system!

- The Murray River's drainage basin covers over 1,000,000 km<sup>2</sup>, beginning in Queensland and extending through NSW, Victoria and South Australia
- The Darling River is the longest in Australia with an even larger catchment than the Murray
- Both river systems support agriculture and a wide variety of ecosystems, and have archaeological, scientific, ecological, Indigenous and European cultural and historic significance

This river system and catchment is the life-blood of much of Australia supplying vital water, agricultural and ecosystem services to Australians, their livelihood and their environment.

**THREAT:** River flow has been drastically reduced in both systems, ceasing altogether in some places. 95% of the Murray is degraded due to historical over allocation of water, and only 10% of pre-European fish populations remain.

**DESIRED OUTCOME/VISION:** Both rivers must be returned to good health. Government, business and community must continue to work together to restore the river system.

**FATE/OUTCOME:** Suffering

**NOTE:** last year the text to signify where the place was from in the brochure (running vertically next to the image) was titled South Australia for Murray Darling Basin. As this actually extends over four states, perhaps this should say something like Eastern & South-eastern Australia or perhaps just Region at Risk as the description says where it is (Qld, SW, Vic & SA). If it said Region at Risk, the risk could beat top of the description as the other OHR template.

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