



NATIONAL TRUST

Media Release March 2009: Nominations open for Our heritage at risk 2009.

The chairman of the Australian Council of National Trusts, Dr Graeme L. Blackman, speaking on behalf of all 8 National Trust organisations and their 80 000 members, today invited nominations to its “Our Heritage at Risk” program.

Dr Blackman warned Australians of the many risks their heritage is facing. “Throughout the country important heritage is in danger of being lost to future generations of Australians. This program, by working with other heritage, conservation and community groups aims to engage all Australians in seeking for solutions.”

“By raising awareness of the value of and the risks to our heritage, we hope to avert some of these losses for the benefit of all.”

“The two-tiered program is in its third year and has already had some notable successes. Last year the controversial North Bank project in Brisbane was abandoned on the day the National Top Ten *Our Heritage at Risk* List was announced.”

“Our heritage is important in understanding our past and who we are,” said Dr Blackman. “Sites of national, state and local heritage significance, such as Coorong and Lower Lakes and historic suburbs such as Ku-ring-gai, Sydney and important heritage collections are at risk of demolition, deterioration, damage, devaluation or disposal. Much important heritage, particularly around Marysville has been destroyed by the recent devastating Victorian bushfires.”

“It is not only places that can be nominated” Dr Blackman said. “Moveable heritage, objects and collections, and even intangible heritage can be nominated to the program. Our heritage at risk includes built, natural and multi-cultural, including indigenous, heritage. For instance, many indigenous languages and traditional skills are at risk of being lost forever.”

Dr Blackman advised that nominations will be accepted until World Heritage Day on April 18th. Nominations of heritage that can be shown to be at real risk should be submitted to State and Territory National Trusts. How to nominate may vary between states and this is explained on the *Our Heritage at Risk* website www.heritageatrisk.org.au

State and Territory *Our Heritage at Risk* lists will be released in July, and the National Top Ten *Our Heritage at Risk* list will be announced in November 2009.

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