The National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

Mission	The mission of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is to inspire Australians to conserve our heritage.
Vision	The Trust's vision for Australia's wonderful historic places is to create a 'journey of discovery' across Australia featuring vibrant historic houses and flourishing gardens with the objective of inspiring new generations of Australians to understand, appreciate and respect our heritage.
Structure	The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is a not-for-profit membership organisation. In its near 50 years since incorporation as a company limited by guarantee, the Trust has been the major influence on conserving Victoria's heritage. Through its life, the Trust has classified thousands of significant places across the state, accumulating an extensive bank of knowledge in the process. It has acquired more than 70 heritage buildings and places for their protection many of which it continues to manage, providing Victorians with a unique insight into their proud history. The Chief Executive Officer reports to a board, comprising 12 elected and three appointed Directors. The number of elected Directors is expected to reduce by three in July 2005 following the passing of a replacement Constitution. The Trust has 14 branches, which together cover approximately one quarter of Victoria geographically. The Trust is the largest community based heritage organisation in the state with a large and committed membership and supporter base. It is the major operator of house museums and historic properties open to the public, It is independent of Government except that it works collaboratively with Government, local councils, business and local communities to strengthen heritage protection, increase community involvement in heritage conservation and arrest creeping destruction of heritage. Except for specific grants for conservation projects, the State Government contributes only $233 000 annually to the Trust for which the Trust manages eight state-owned properties.
Date formed	1956
Members	13 000 memberships (or approximately 20 000 members).
Key functions	The work of the National Trust is divided into four main areas: constructive engagement, problem solving, facilities and project management and purposeful networking. Learning is at the heart of everything the Trust does.

Properties

The Trust in Victoria manages 40 properties in the state, of which it owns 32 and has Committee of Management responsibilities for a further eight on Crown land.

There are 25 properties that are regularly open to the public, and 15 that are rented out or that do not have public access.

Collections

33 000 items (mostly catalogued)

The total value of collection items approximately $10 million. These include:

- a significant collection of Australian art including:
  - Latrobe Water Colours (housed at the State Library of Victoria)
  - Hoddle Water Colours (ditto)
  - Sir Daryl Lindsay paintings at Mulberry Hill
  - 'The Great Lake, Tasmania' by Eugene von Guerard
- provenanced furniture and other items associated with the majority of Trust open properties
- Costume Collection
- E. G. Robertson Cast Iron Collection
- Caine Tool Collection
- Carriage Collection
- Ned Kelly Gun.

Volunteers

The Trust has approximately 1400 volunteers.

Staff

The Trust has 66 equivalent full-time staff.

Register

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) has classified approximately 6000 places of cultural or natural heritage significance that are considered worthy of preservation, including buildings, public art, industrial sites, historic areas and precincts, cemeteries, landscapes, historic gardens, trees and urban parklands. The Trust also holds files on a further 2000 places of heritage value to Victoria.

Summary Submission

- The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) endorses the Australian Council of National Trusts' submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places. We note also the dearth of hard data and metrics available in the Australian context on the economic value and impact of historic heritage regulatory regimes in comparison with North America and the United Kingdom.

- The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) endorses the findings from the Heritage Council 2003 publication *Managing Our Heritage*, a study done in conjunction with the Trust in Victoria and others, to address the apparent build-up of overdue maintenance on public heritage infrastructure and its causes. Key observations made included

  - "Unless the state of affairs revealed by the report is addressed, the Government may not achieve its objective to manage in a sustainable way Victoria's cultural heritage so as to maximise benefits for the whole community.
  - Sustainable management requires a good understanding of what is to be managed so that resources may be appropriately marshalled and applied using a co-ordinated approach.
  - Government needs to be well informed about the extent and condition of the heritage places in Victoria and what is required to conserve them.
  - Government's first role is leadership; to set an example in the sustainable management of its own heritage places, by its dealings with the heritage places in its property portfolio, and by adopting policies which actively discourage heritage places coming into disuse.
  - Government has a responsibility to adopt strategies which avoid redundancy and facilitate reuse of heritage places."

- The conditions that gave rise to the study *Managing Our Heritage* were articulated publicly by the National Trust in Victoria, but as the study proved, were felt far more widely. In summary, those managing public heritage places were starving for resources (financial, workforce skills). Were it not for the combination of Centenary Federation Funding, funding from a philanthropic foundation and asset sales in the year 2001 and 2002, the financial position of the Trust in Victoria would have been dire. This funding allowed the Trust to reenergise its members and supporters and lift its visitations to the point that it is now close to achieving break even from its operations. However, the challenge to make tangible advances in maintaining and restoring 41 properties having value of around $100 million is continually elusive.

- The National Trust in Victoria endorses the Conclusions and Recommendations of the UNESCO Conference Linking Universal and Local Values: Managing a Sustainable Future for World Heritage (Amsterdam, 22-24 May 2003) as it can be applied to significant places using the hierarchical assessment methodology. Key observations included

  - Since (the previous conference in) 1998, "there has been a shift in focus from identification of potential World Heritage sites to management and conservation in the

context of development. Further emphasis has been placed on the intrinsic relationship between culture and nature, people and place, and cultural diversity."

- "World Heritage properties are dynamic entities where cultural and social values evolve. They should not be frozen in time for purposes of conservation. Indeed the continuity between the past and the future should be integrated in management systems accommodating the possibility for sustainable change, thus ensuring that the evolution of the local value of the place is not impaired".
- "World Heritage is about people as well as place"

- The National Trust in Victoria has embraced these observations in its own behaviours. It views itself as the body best positioned to bridge the gap between government and the community to improve management of heritage places.

- As another example of market failure, there is an unsatisfied need for a body and funding to sustain those places that are considered to be an important link in our understanding of our roots but have limited ability to attract commercial or philanthropic funding and limited potential for economically sustainable reuse.

- We commend the creation of the new national heritage regime through the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, especially the increased integration of natural, cultural and indigenous heritage values. The Trust in Victoria attempts also to consider these heritage values in an integrated, holistic way.

- The Trust in Victoria supports the directions of the Heritage Council Victoria's 'Victorian Heritage Strategy 2005-2010', which signals the need to integrate historic heritage conservation within State Government sustainability and planning strategies and to increase community engagement and participation in the management of historic heritage places. We draw the Commission's attention to the sections of the State Government's draft strategy document *Victoria's Heritage 2010* that discusses the economic, social and environmental benefits derived from historic heritage conservation in Victoria[1].

- **We believe that the conservation of historic heritage places is not only a desirable outcome for the community but is essential for the development of shared values within society and to enhance social cohesion. Historic heritage places should be maintained for the public good, and amongst other things their conservation is show rived from in Victoria**

Budget

The original two NEGP grants, although much less than the original estimate of the project cost, were sufficient to enable the Trust to leverage additional funding from other interested parties and stakeholders: VicRoads, and the Public Transport Corporation (Victorian Special Projects funding) as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Cash Contribution to Timber Bridges Study

NEGP Funding for Timber Bridges Study			
First grant (1993-94):	$20,000		
Second grant (1994-95):	$15,000		
Total		$35,000	
VicRoads Funding			
First (March 1995):	$10,000		
Second (further assessment of bridges):	$ 5,000		
Third (reformatting of bridges for VHR)	$ 1,500		
Third (towards publication)	$ 5,000		
Total		$21,500	
Victorian Special Projects (May 1996)		$ 5,000	
Total Funding Received for Project to date			**$ 61,500**
Estimated publication costs (not secured)		$ 55,000	
Expected Total Funding for Project			**$115,500**

Estimate of in-kind contribution

A large amount of staff resources were allocated by the Trust to this project as part of its mission to educate the community and raise awareness and understanding of the value of cultural and natural heritage places. A significant amount of *pro bono* expertise was also contributed to this project through the steering committee, volunteer researchers, administrative support, database development and support, and the preparation of the text for a monograph on the subject.

The figures identified in Table 2 below are conservative estimates. They apply to the project only, and do not include the significant number of hours of work generated as a consequence of the project (most notably, the Trust's ongoing involvement in conservation issues on particular bridges identified within the study).

Table 2: In-Kind Contribution to Timber Bridges Study

TASK/ACTIVITY	VOLUNTEER HOURS	RATE	ESTIMATED VALUE
NATIONAL TRUST STAFF			
Industrial Historian (project management; coordination of volunteers; liaison with stakeholders & media; managing classifications and nominations)	4,000	$30[2]	$120,000
Average of 8 hours per week 1993-2002			
Administration staff (administration support; accounts and finance input)	500	$20[3]	$10,000
Average of 1 hour per week 1993-2002			
Sub-total	**4,500**		**$130,000**
NATIONAL TRUST VOLUNTEERS			
Project Steering Committee (professional engineers and other experts, representatives of stakeholder groups)	828	$60[4]	$49,680
Attendance at a total 46 meetings over 8 years, each contributing 3 hours in preparation and attendance[1]			
Other Trust expert committees (Conservation Advisory Committee and Trust Council)	40	$60[4]	$2,400
Average 15 mins per meeting for each at 10 meetings per annum over 2 years[1]			
Historical Research (tertiary students and volunteer researchers)	350	$20[5]	$7,000
Administrative support (retirement age volunteers)	740	$20[5]	$14,800
Other special tasks (professional pro bono assistance on database design; field survey preparation; and photography)	240	$60[4]	$14,400
In-kind support from participating agencies (VicRoads, Public Transport Corporation, local municipalities)	180	$30[2]	$5,400
Other community groups (local historical societies assisting with research etc.)	150	$20[5]	$3,000
Preparation of publication monograph (awaiting publication)	500+	-	$50,000[6]
Sub-total	**3,000+**		**$146,680**
TOTAL IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION	**7,500**		**$276,000**

1 Based on the median number of volunteer members of the committee attending each meeting.

2 $30 per hour figure based on the direct salary cost of specialist Trust staff member.

3 $20 per hour figure based on the direct salary cost of administration Trust staff member.

4 $60 per hour figure based on the minimum cost of obtaining review of research in a specialist discipline.

5 $20 per hour figure based on value of general volunteer time.

6 Based on publisher's and Public Historians Association of Australia estimate of value.

Study Outcomes

The positive outcomes from the Timber Bridges study are wide ranging and include increased public awareness of the value of these important industrial artifacts and community engagement with their local historic heritage places. Specific benefits accrued from this study include:

- Statewide history and survey of Victoria's timber bridges and identification of the most important and most representative examples. 88 bridges were identified at the state level of cultural heritage significance filling a major gap in the State's heritage register.

- Statutory protection for culturally significant bridges, either by inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register or Heritage Overlay (municipal planning scheme) controls for most of these bridges. Although a number of bridges identified and classified in the study have had to be replaced due to changing traffic and load standards, many have been successfully modified, or continue to be subject to further studies (Conservation Management Plans) and repair works at various levels, as a result of the completed study.

- Raising awareness of timber bridges in the professional communities and general public by production of reports and papers, including:
    - National Trust of Australia (Victoria), 'Timber Bridges Study' (Report to the Australian Heritage Commission, June, 1997). This includes a 25,000 word Thematic History, and reports on the database, study method, and proposes conservation guidelines;
    - 'Victoria's Timber Bridges Study', paper presented to the Ninth National Conference on Engineering Heritage, March 1998 (by project Steering Committee), and published in the conference proceedings;
    - 'Structural History of Timber Bridges in Victoria' (Ken McInnes, January 1999)
    - Contributions to the practice of management of heritage bridges, by substantial submissions to draft documents: VicRoads 'Strategy for the Management of Heritage Bridges' (2000), and the 'AUSTROADS Guidelines for Heritage Bridges' (2000);
    - Articles in professional (heritage, engineering, historical) journals, feature articles in Sunday and regional newspapers, and other media.

- Development of a database of over 2,000 bridges. This database was originally known as the 'National Trust Timber Bridges Database'. Its success has seen it greatly expanded in recent years to include data on masonry, metal and (soon) concrete, bridges. It is a dynamic resource now known simply as the 'National Trust Bridges Database'; it is used by VicRoads and recognised by Heritage Victoria and municipal heritage advisors and engineers as the key reference for heritage bridges in Victoria.

- Production of material for book and website publication:
    - Manuscript (50,000 words) for a book on Victoria's Timber Bridges by noted historian Dr Don Chambers;
    - Collection of 200 contemporary and historical photographs for book on Victoria's Timber Bridges. Approximately 30% of these are historical photographs that have not previously been published.

Conclusions

The Timber Bridges study, through initial seed funding by the Australian Government through the National Estate Grant Program, has resulted in the completion of a major statewide study into an important but neglected part of Australia's historic heritage. It has resulted in many of the bridges identified in the study now enjoying statutory protection, and has resulted in further research into, and improved management regimes for, individual bridges.

The dissemination of this study has raised public awareness through conference papers, academic publications and numerous media articles. It has facilitated the production of the text and photographic images for a monograph on the subject (which is awaiting a publisher). The study has generated an appreciation of a type of historic heritage place that was previously underrepresented in all registers, and whose value is now widely accepted in the community. The study has also made possible the recognition by VicRoads and the local municipalities of the economic value of typological heritage studies of assets in advance of capital works projects for roads.

The value placed on the Timber Bridges Study by the Victorian Government, as well as the Trust's ability to procure and manage it in a cost effective manner, is evidenced by the commissioning of the metal and concrete bridges studies by the VicRoads and Heritage Victoria.

The original $35,000 grant from the Australian Government for this study has so far leveraged out:

- Approximately the same amount in cash grants ($26,500) from the State Government for that Timbers Bridges Study.
- Over 6 times that amount in cash grants ($216,500) from State Government sources for all three bridges studies (Timber, Metal and Concrete).
- Over 3.5 times that value in paid staff time paid for by the National Trust ($130,000) on the original Timber Bridges Study and associated work.
- Over 4 times that value in volunteer time and *pro bono* expertise (in excess of 3,000 hours or $146,000) for the Timber Bridges project alone.

Overall, the three studies once complete could be considered to have leveraged additional cash and in-kind contributions in excess ten times the value of the original NEPG grant.