

*"All my lifetime it was there..."*

THE VALUING OF BALLARAT EAST  
*Community perspectives on heritage*

A pilot project for the National Trust (Victoria) by  
**PLACE Inc.**

March 1993

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Victorian Government  
Library Service

*"All my lifetime it was there..."*

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*Community perspectives on heritage*

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Library Service

A pilot project for the National Trust (Victoria) by

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PEOPLE • LANDSCAPE • ART • CONSERVATION • ENVIRONMENT

*"All my lifetime it was there..."*

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PLACE and the project team wish to thank the many people whose assistance contributed to this pilot project. Members of the National Trust Project Steering Committee are gratefully acknowledged for their contribution in shaping the project and outcomes. Thanks are also extended to the local branch of the National Trust for their input and support.

The City of Ballarat are thanked for their support, with special thanks to Paul Mason, for his enthusiasm and active participation from inception to completion.

And of course our thanks go to the many people in the community who gave their time and energy to share with us their feelings about Ballarat East. Their commitment to the area is evident and provides a solid foundation for the caring and custodianship of Ballarat East into the future.

## *Project team*

The following people played an active role in the project team.

Project manager	<i>Anne Dunlop (PLACE)</i>
Local co-ordinator	<i>Stuart Porteous (landscape architect - Ballarat)</i>
Visual artist	<i>Paul Lambeth (photographer - Ballarat)</i>
Writer	<i>Linda Blake (writer - Ballarat)</i>
Historian	<i>Peter Mansfield (librarian - Ballarat)</i>
Facilitator/overview	<i>Elizabeth Vaneveld</i>

With special support from *Paul Mason (Community Arts Officer, City of Ballarat)*

## *Photographs and poems*

The final photographs and poems that resulted from this project have been included in a book "*All my lifetime it was there...*", which is kept at the Ballarat City Library. Extracts from this book have been included here to give a flavour of the artworks and community feelings. Readers are encouraged to view the original artworks to see them in context and with higher quality reproduction.



I can't tell you  
what is "Now"  
and when was  
"Then" - I  
can't map a line  
and I won't try  
Rather  
tail a fly that's  
got the death buzz  
Zooms in spirals  
sure his time's up  
Overlaps his track  
so often, he's all  
dizzy - like he's  
had a whizzy  
with his arms out  
til they cracked

You've got to  
spiral back -  
We don't grow  
in lines  
We're more like  
vines

# INTRODUCTION

## *Context*

This project follows earlier initiatives by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) and others to explore the community's perception of heritage value.

The AHC has recently published a discussion paper entitled "*What is Social Value?*", prepared by Chris Johnston of Context Pty Ltd for the AHC and National Trust (Victoria). The paper canvasses the range of qualities, including community value, which might comprise the ill-defined criteria of 'social value' established in the assessment processes of the AHC, the Historic Buildings Council, and the National Trust.

An overview and discussion of consultation models for heritage studies is soon to be published by the AHC. Two studies form the basis of this paper: a community values study of Quenbeayan commissioned by the AHC, where Meredith Walker and Carol Scott compared community perceptions with those of heritage professionals; and a more conventional heritage study of Tilba in New South Wales, which had a strong emphasis on consultation.

This project is intended to take our understanding of the process of community involvement a step further, by seeking participation not only in identification of significant places, but also in their ongoing care and protection.

## *Background*

The National Trust (Victoria) received a grant from the Australian Heritage Commission to examine community heritage values. PLACE was commissioned to undertake a pilot project with the focus upon Ballarat. The Landscape Committee of the Trust initiated the project and formed the Steering Group.

Essentially, the project seeks to address the question:

*"What cultural heritage is important to the community and how can the community act to identify and protect it?"*

The brief called for a practical rather than theoretical approach, with a strong emphasis on community consultation. The focus area was narrowed to Ballarat East, to enable a more defined community to be reached that associated itself with a particular area, rather than with the whole of Ballarat. This area was also chosen as there was a feeling amongst locals that its heritage was less appreciated than many other parts of the City of Ballarat, despite the richness of its history (gold mining, Eureka uprising).

A major Ballarat Conservation Study was undertaken in two parts between 1978 and 1981. Over 200 buildings and areas regarded as of historic, architectural and environmental significance were included. Part 2 encompassed the Ballarat East area. Apart from the reports of the Conservation Study, other outcomes were a publication "Ballarat Conservation Guidelines"; a book "Ballarat: A Guide to Buildings and Areas 1851 to 1940"; and recommendations resulting in a degree of protection under the Planning Scheme for some specific items and certain streetscapes. This Ballarat East project has deliberately taken a different approach and sought to involve the locals in articulating what was significant to them, ie. local significance was the target.

A Ballarat Region Conservation Strategy had also been developed in 1991, being a world first at regional planning for sustainable development. This project fitted comfortably within that study's recommendations, where the focus of recommendations included a call to work at "*preserving the past, planning the future*".

### ***Project aims***

The key aims identified with the Steering Group were to:

- *identify places, items and qualities valued by the community that they would not want to lose;*
- *identify structures or processes that would support retention of those places;*
- *test the pilot project as a model that the National Trust and other communities may use; and*
- *promote community valuing of heritage and active participation in its custodianship.*

In addition PLACE had an aim to:

*involve artists as key members of the project team to assist in exploring visions and translating project outcomes.*

### ***Approach of PLACE***

PLACE is an environmental arts organisation that aims to promote the importance of links and attachments between people and their local environments through working with artists and communities. In developing a proposal to the National Trust, PLACE emphasised the contribution that artists could make to the project as integral members of the project team. Their ability to communicate values expressed by the community in ways that are meaningful to that community is a real asset. This can enhance a community's understanding and perception of itself and may assist in fostering an attitude of custodianship.

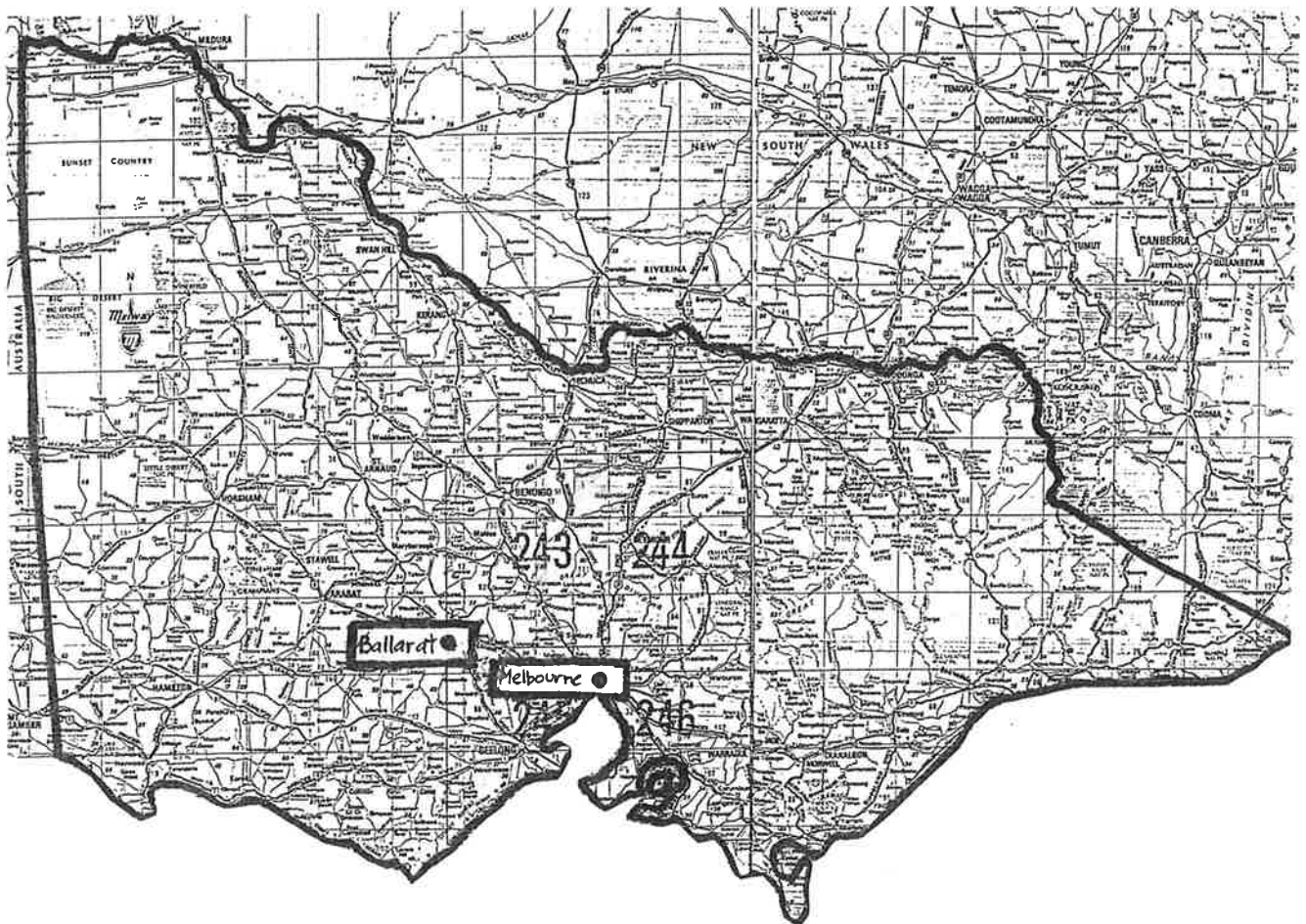
PLACE's commitment to collaborative ways of working and emphasis upon fostering custodianship by local communities influenced formulation of the project structure and process. The following aspects were regarded as integral to the project:

- *that the project outcomes be owned by the local community;*
- *that there be strong local representation in the project team for both relevance and ongoing facilitation of the outcomes;*
- *that community consultation be meaningful; and*
- *that a cross section of the local community be involved to represent a range of views.*

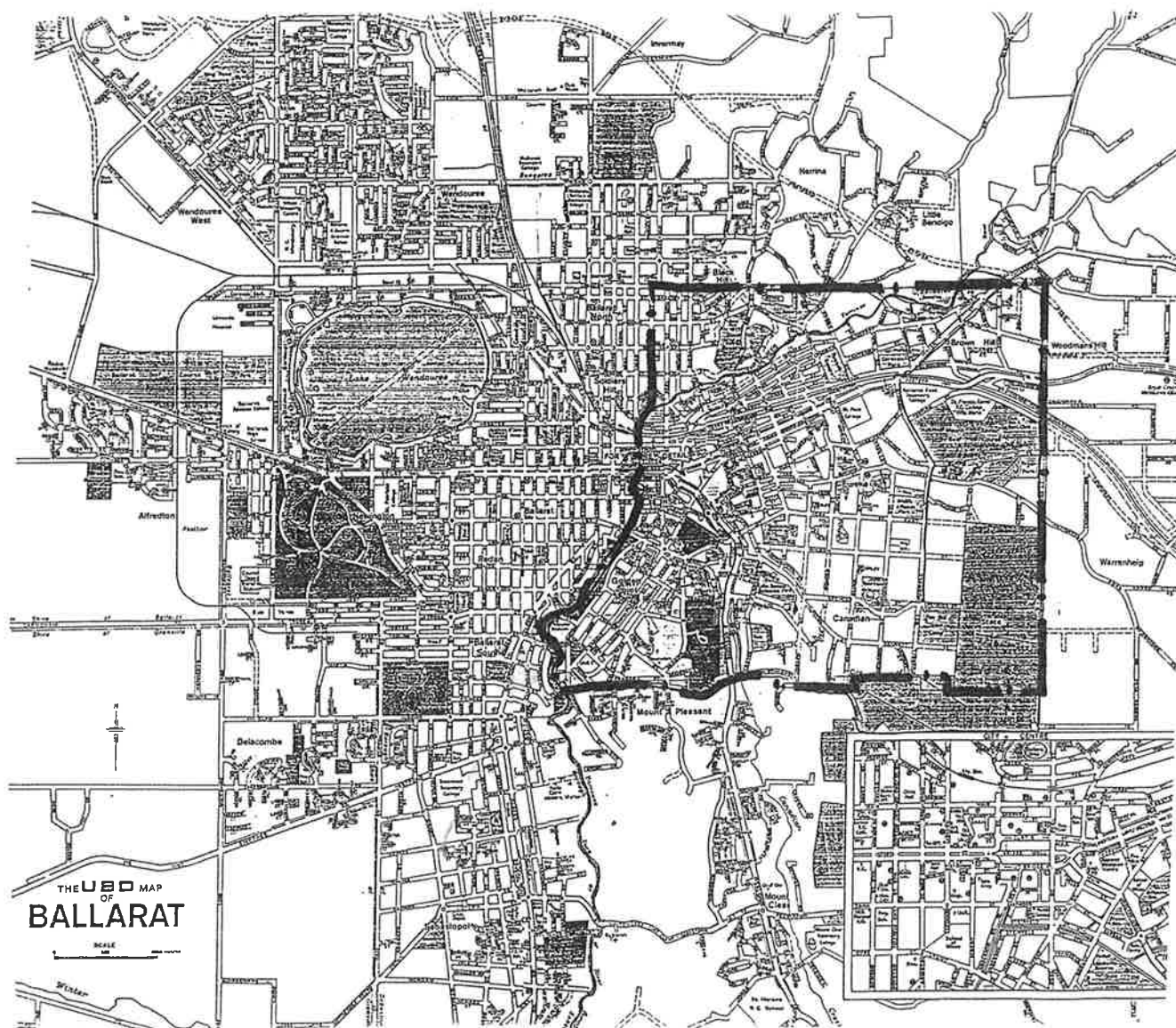
### ***Project focus***

We set out to capture some of the 'flavours' of Ballarat East, as expressed by a wide range of people from the local community. The emphasis was on finding out what was 'special' to people and about which they would feel a sense of loss if it was no longer there. The aim was to get people to say what it was that mattered to them and why they cared about it, rather than ask them how they responded to those items traditionally regarded as of heritage value.

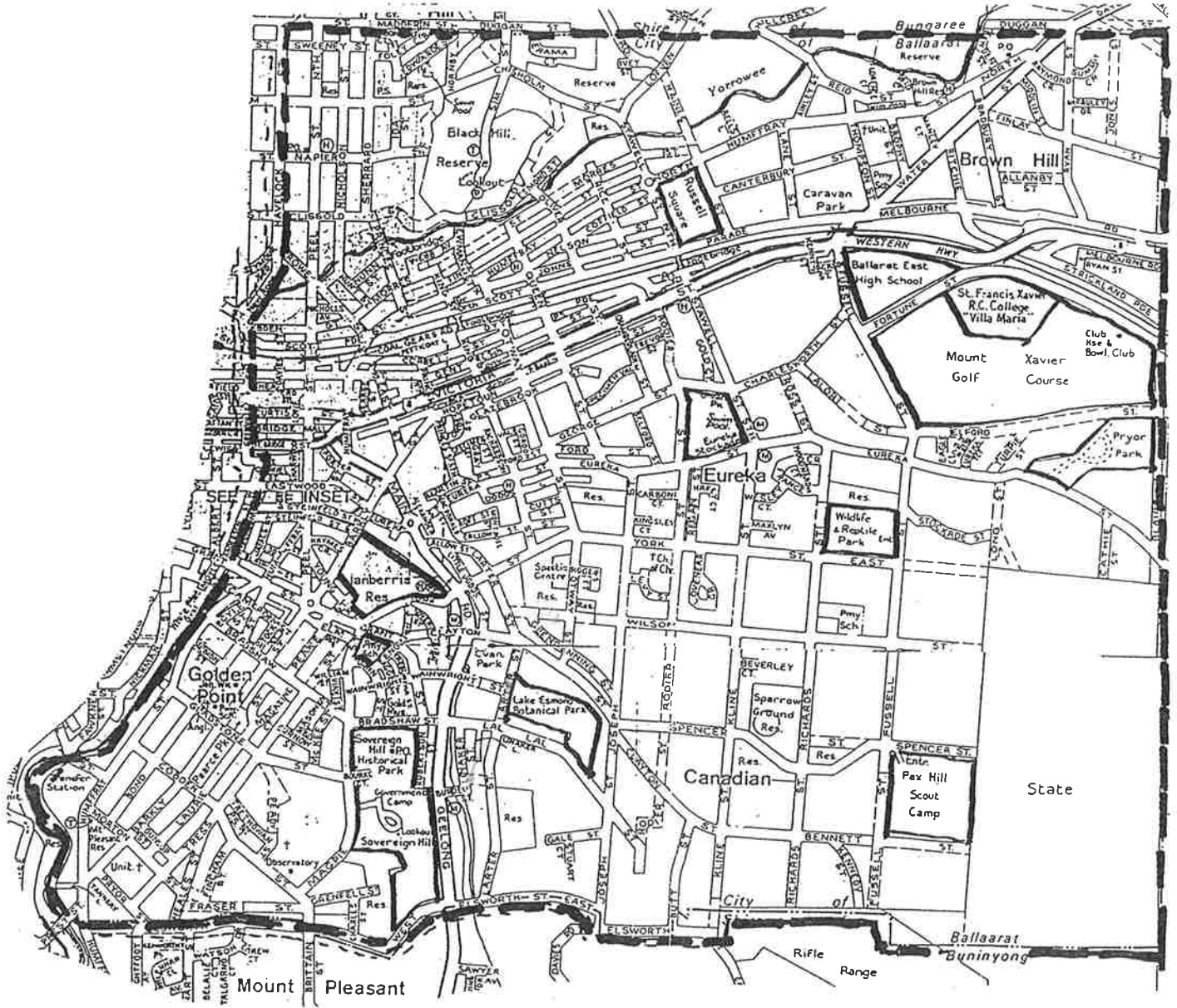




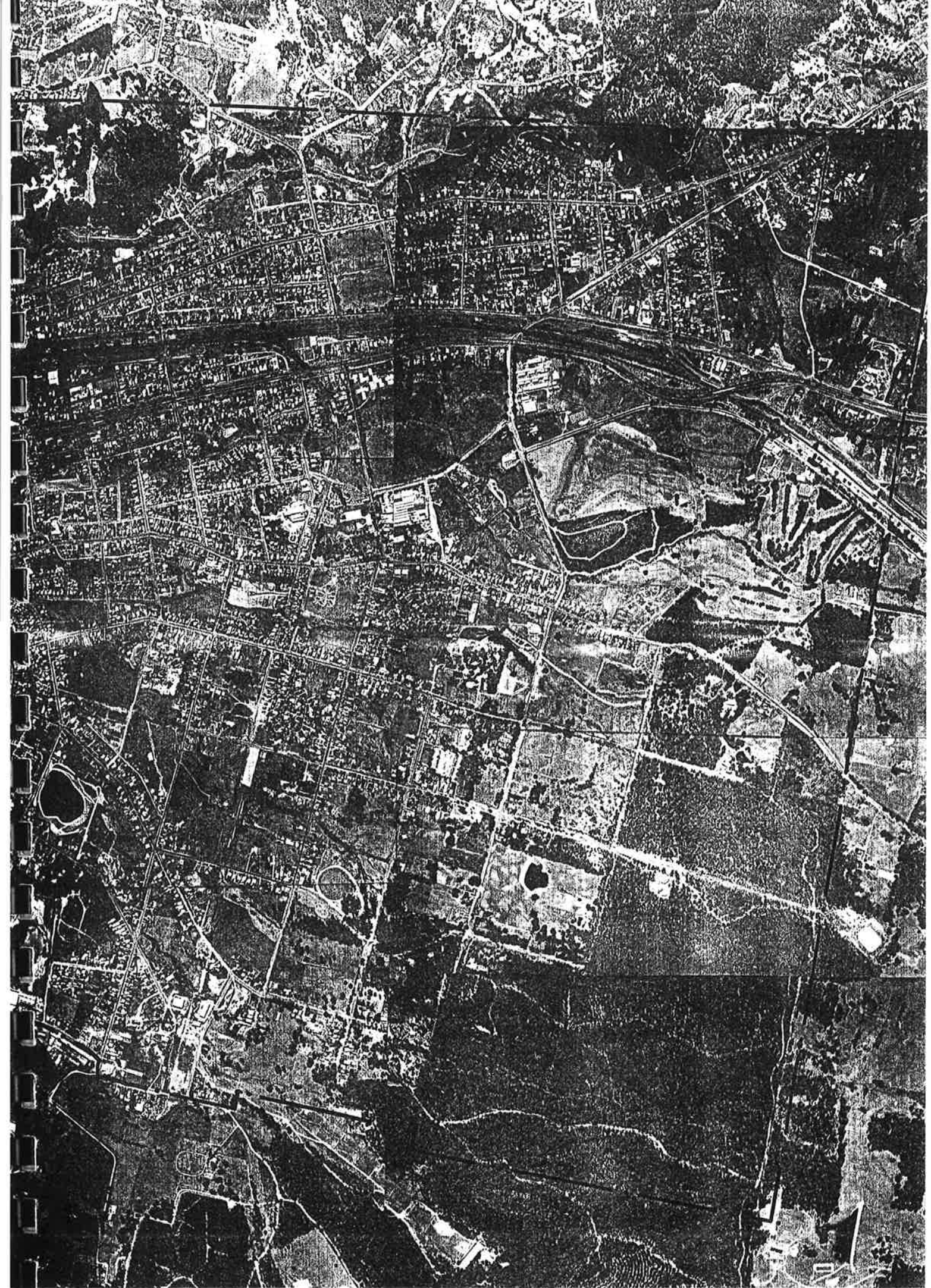
*Location of Ballarat in a national context*



*Parish of Ballarat East, the focus of the study, in context of Ballarat*



*Ballarat East study area*



# PROJECT STRUCTURE

The project was structured in four distinct phases.

## **1. *Establishment***

This phase aimed to introduce the project to the community and identify local participants, both team members and community contributors. Networking and media liaison were important ingredients.

## **2. *The mapping project and artwork***

This phase was focussed upon the community and aimed to get the community to identify and describe those things that they valued in Ballarat East and to "map" them in some way. The project team worked with a range of groups in workshops, had individual and group meetings and received submissions. The responses were recorded on plans, worksheets and tapes. The artists then worked with this material, informed by participation in the workshops and their own values, to develop an artwork that reflected those values and captured some of the spirit of Ballarat East. The artwork is a very large handmade book of large format black and white photographs accompanied by a series of evocative poems. The artwork was launched at the heritage forum.

## **3. *The heritage forum***

This phase was focussed upon heritage professionals and aimed to explore 'traditional' and 'community' approaches to heritage value through discussion about the mapping project and the artwork outcomes. Participants included interested members of the local community, the National Trust Project Steering Group, National Trust members and practitioners in heritage assessment. It also aimed to explore mechanisms that could enable community values to be recognised and incorporated in future development of the area.

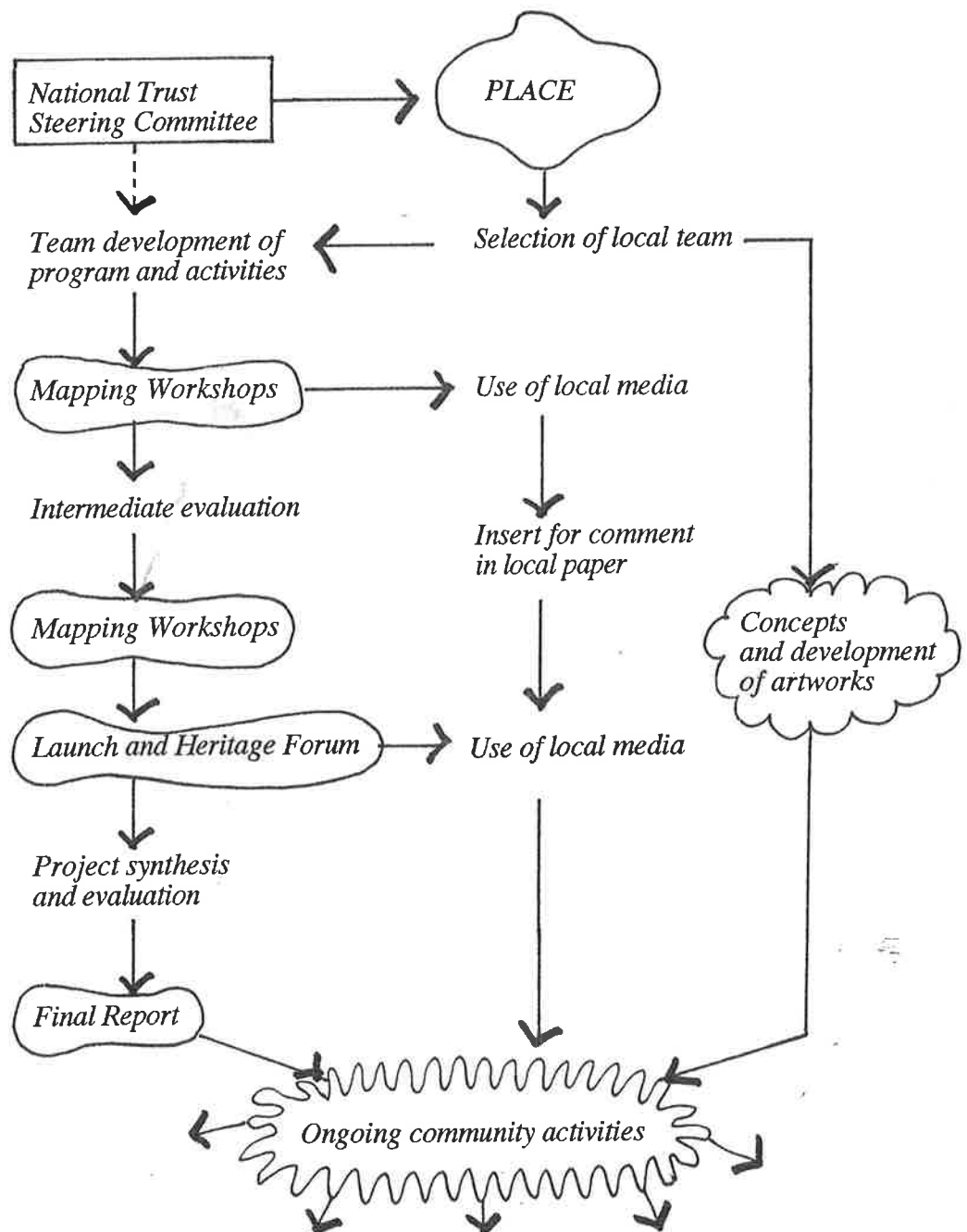
## **4. *Reporting***

This phase involved documentation of the project process and the synthesising and development of recommendations within a report format.

# PROCESS

There are many ways of shaping a project through the process adopted. PLACE set out to pilot one possible approach to gauging how a local community felt about its own heritage. Whilst it may have lessons for many other projects, it should not be regarded as a 'model' process that can be applied to all community heritage projects. In the section 'Conclusions and Recommendations', those aspects which are seen as fundamental to success are outlined.

The following flow chart sets out key project activities.



## *Phase 1: Establishment*

### *Choosing a local community*

The National Trust Steering Group was keen to focus the project in Ballarat, in part to 'test' the distinction - if any - between the well studied professional heritage values of Ballarat and those held by the local community. PLACE was keen to see the geographical area restricted to enable more meaningful consultation from a defined local community. Ballarat East was selected as an identifiable region with a strong heritage and an established community.

### *Establishing community contacts*

PLACE wanted local participation in the project team and began 'networking' to select a team. The team positions filled locally were that of co-ordinator, visual artist, writer and historian. The Ballarat Community Arts Officer was another valuable team member in a support role.

These people not only provided valuable skills but brought with them a wealth of local knowledge. Peter Mansfield's historical knowledge and passion for oral history brought a living history interpretation to the team and an illumination about the history of Ballarat East.

PLACE was keen to introduce the project to key people and establish local contacts to assist participation and 'ownership' of the project. The Ballarat National Trust branch were contacted some way into the project via their President. Input from this group was mainly limited to the third phase as in the earlier phases we were keen to focus on 'lay' community perceptions about heritage.

### *Publicity*

The local newspapers were a valuable way of sharing news about the project. The project was introduced to the community via a page three feature interview with the local co-ordinator. Subsequent articles focussed on the artists and launch of the artworks.

Information was also distributed via school and church newsletters.

Advertisements were placed in the local paper to alert people to the "Open Day" community workshop. We attempted to have a double page spread in the paper, sponsored by local businesses, however time constraints prevented this coming to fruition.

To ensure all sections of the local community had an opportunity to participate, an A4 leaflet was inserted in the local paper covering that geographic area of the City, calling for response to a series of questions.

The launch of artworks was formalised and held at the Ballarat Town Hall. It provided an opportunity to gain media coverage of the event and the project and involved the City of Ballarat in the project.

# Heritage probe for Ballarat East

By SEATON ASHTON

Ballarat East's rich heritage resources will be put under the microscope in an exhaustive probe — the first of its kind ever to be undertaken in Australia by the National Trust.

Citizens from all walks of life will be asked what is important to them in terms of local heritage.

Ballarat co-ordinator of the project, Stuart Porteous, said yesterday it would be an extremely exciting project.

He said the highly intensive review of Ballarat East's heritage would aim to "determine the different values of different age groups throughout Ballarat East".

"We will focus on a highly diverse range of individuals," Mr Porteous said.

This would include the widest possible range of residents, including senior citizens, youth, employed and unemployed families and church representatives.

The heritage survey will embrace the whole of Ballarat East Parish.

"This is the first time such a heritage project has been undertaken by the National Trust in this country," Mr Porteous said.

"It's a pilot project to see if (the trust's) criteria for establishing things of heritage significance are reflecting community values."

Mr Porteous said the project "would not be looking for verification of sites of historical significance".

"But what we are looking for are sites of personal significance."

Mr Porteous said that the project locked into the Ballarat Regional Conservation Strategy recently launched by Premier Kirner. A landscape architect, Mr Porteous was the chairman of the strategy implementation committee.

"The project aims to highlight the uniqueness of what Ballarat East has to offer."

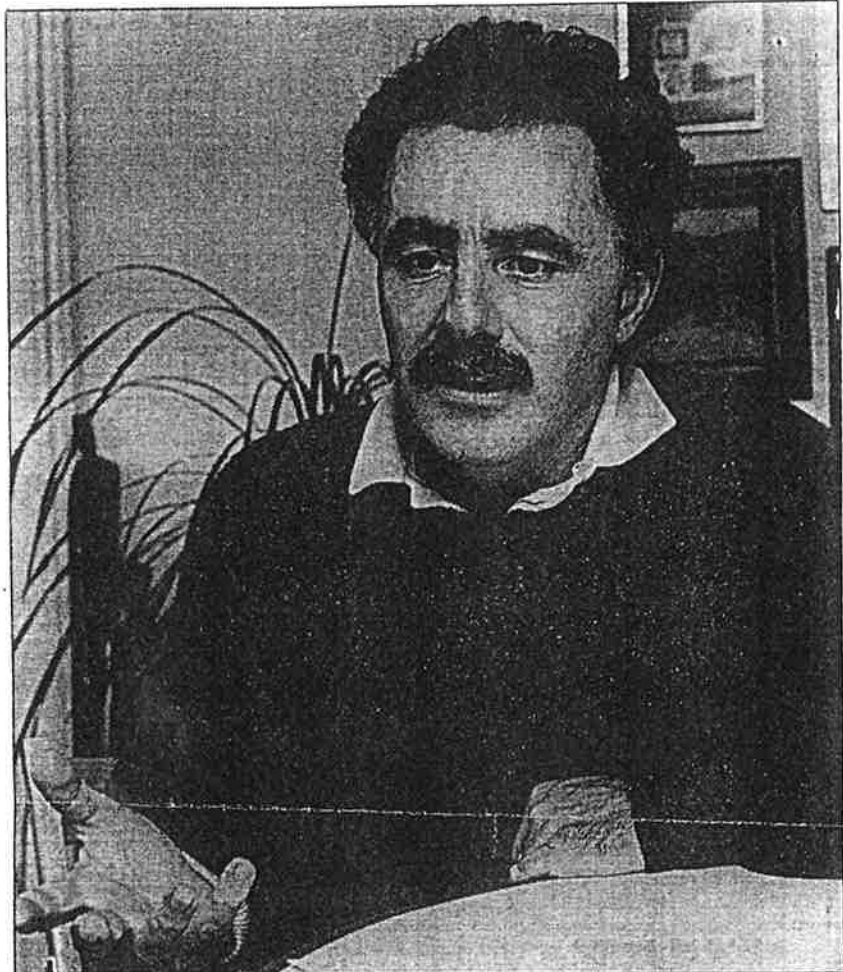
Mr Porteous said there was no doubt Ballarat East had some "extremely important" heritage resources.

"And I think the project represents a magnet for a new approach to the heritage of East Ballarat."

There are three main components in the community heritage project.

They are:

- The "mapping project" of the area. This part of the project



Ballarat project co-ordinator Stuart Porteous: an extremely exciting project. — PICTURE: Lyndelle Filtoft

will aim to bring together the East Ballarat "community" to examine what "heritage" they value in their community. It will be held in the old Ballarat East Library building on Saturday, August 1, between 10 am and 1 pm.

People will be asked to describe the "heritage" in Ballarat East and what it means to the community.

The "mapping project" will also involve local visual artists, an oral historian and a community facilitator.

- A heritage workshop and

launch on August 30 to explore "traditional" and "community" approaches to heritage values.

The workshop will involve heritage experts, including the National Trust Steering Committee and participants in the mapping project discussing its processes and outcomes as compared with more traditional approaches to heritage.

- Final report. This will document the mapping project processes and the heritage workshop and the results flowing from the project.

- Local artists will be asked to

"distill their community perceptions ... they will be asked to create personal works and express the values of the community groups and individuals involved in the workshops".

Visual artist and photographer Paul Lambeth will be closely involved in the project with poet and painter Linda Blake.

Mr Porteous is having talks in Melbourne today with Melbourne project leader Anne Dunlop on the probe. He said he would be working on the project with members of a Melbourne-based firm, Place Incorporated.



## *Phase 2: The mapping project and artwork*

### *Community mapping*

Trying to define a 'single' community view about heritage values implies a high degree of homogeneity amongst interests and values within the community. In reality, each geographically based community is composed of a series of sub-communities with many crossovers, some visible and others less defined.

In recognition of these sub-communities a series of workshops of differing formats and audiences were held to canvass a wide range of people. It was decided to run these as "common interest" groups rather than try and have representation from a broad range of groups at each workshop. This approach offered the potential for results between different groups, eg. senior citizens and youth, to be more directly compared.

### *Workshops*

Seven workshops were held, comprising the following groups:

- *Ballarat Senior Citizens*
- *Ballarat East Secondary College Year 11*
- *Sacred Heart College Year 10*
- *St Alipius Church Community*
- *Brotherhood of St Laurence Youth under 18*
- *Brotherhood of St Laurence Youth under 25*
- *Community Open Day*

It was felt that these groups provided a range of viewpoints, from those of the elderly, to the employed, to local youth and the unemployed. In addition to the workshops, personal responses were sought through insertions in the local media and word of mouth.

Altogether, about 200 people participated and contributed to the mapping phase of the project.

### *Success of workshops*

To help others with organising such workshops, some of the key reasons why we believe the workshops were successful are outlined below.

- Groups were first approached by phone and then followed up shortly after by a visit before the workshop to check logistics and brief participants or their coordinators on the purpose of the session.
- Key contact people were, without exception, excited by the idea and keen to participate. The National Trust link gave credibility.

- At the workshops, team members were introduced in an informal manner and interaction was intentionally 'laid back'.
- Relaxed involvement was encouraged, with use of the floor for drawing on large maps being a successful technique.
- The team as individuals were good listeners and generally asked open ended questions.

#### *Workshop formats*

A range of processes were used with these groups. The major features are outlined below.

##### *Ballarat Senior Citizens*

After an introduction to the group, five team members talked with both small groups and individuals to record their thoughts. Notes were made upon A3 maps, with some individuals filling these out and providing them to the team. A tape was used to record the words of some group members who talked one-on-one with the team writer.

##### *Ballarat East Secondary College Year 11*

##### *Sacred Heart College Year 10*

Classes from Australian Studies spent time working as a single group with one large scale map of the area, indicating their valued places and qualities. Three team members were involved, and a tape recording was made of the group discussion.

##### *Brotherhood of St Laurence Youth under 18*

##### *Brotherhood of St Laurence Youth under 25*

Three to four team members met with these small groups and worked on a large scale map of the area. Once again tape recordings were taken of the group discussion.

##### *St Alipius Church Community*

Team members met with a sub-group of the church congregation and used a large scale plan to aid discussion and mark on valued aspects.

##### *Community Open Day*

An advertisement was placed in the local paper, supported by earlier articles, inviting people to drop in some time between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm and share their thoughts on Ballarat East. The old library in Ballarat East was the venue and team members met visitors and talked with them either individually or in very small groups. Tape recordings were made of some of the conversations. A large scale plan was used for people to mark their thoughts upon and small A3 plans were available and used by some participants.

Whilst attendance was small (inadequate advertising of the event), the information elicited and perceptions shared were very useful.



Over a cup of tea or coffee  
 come & tell us what you think  
 is special in

## BALLARAT EAST

The National Trust wish to find  
 out what people who live or have  
 lived in Ballarat East consider  
 significant... It could be a land-  
 scape feature, a building, a tree,  
 a specific area or perhaps a  
 'character' in your street. Put  
 these sites/comments down on a  
 large map at a our

## WORKSHOP TODAY

Drop in anytime between 10-1 pm  
 at the Old Ballarat East Library  
 S.M.B. Campus Barkly Street  
 Share with our team plus two

**ARTISTS**  
 Linda Blake & Paul Lambeth  
 employed to create permanent  
 artworks of community views  
 to be launched at the Town Hall  
 on August 30th.

SEE YOU SOON!!

Enquiries contact Stuart on:  
 33 33 56 a.m.

Ballarat Courier Sat. Aug 1 1992

NOTE: TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ARTICLE IN THE AUGUST 12th EDITION OF BALLARAT NEWS

# BALLARAT EAST HERITAGE PROJECT

DO YOU LIVE IN EAST BALLARAT? WHERE? (PLEASE INDICATE BY X)

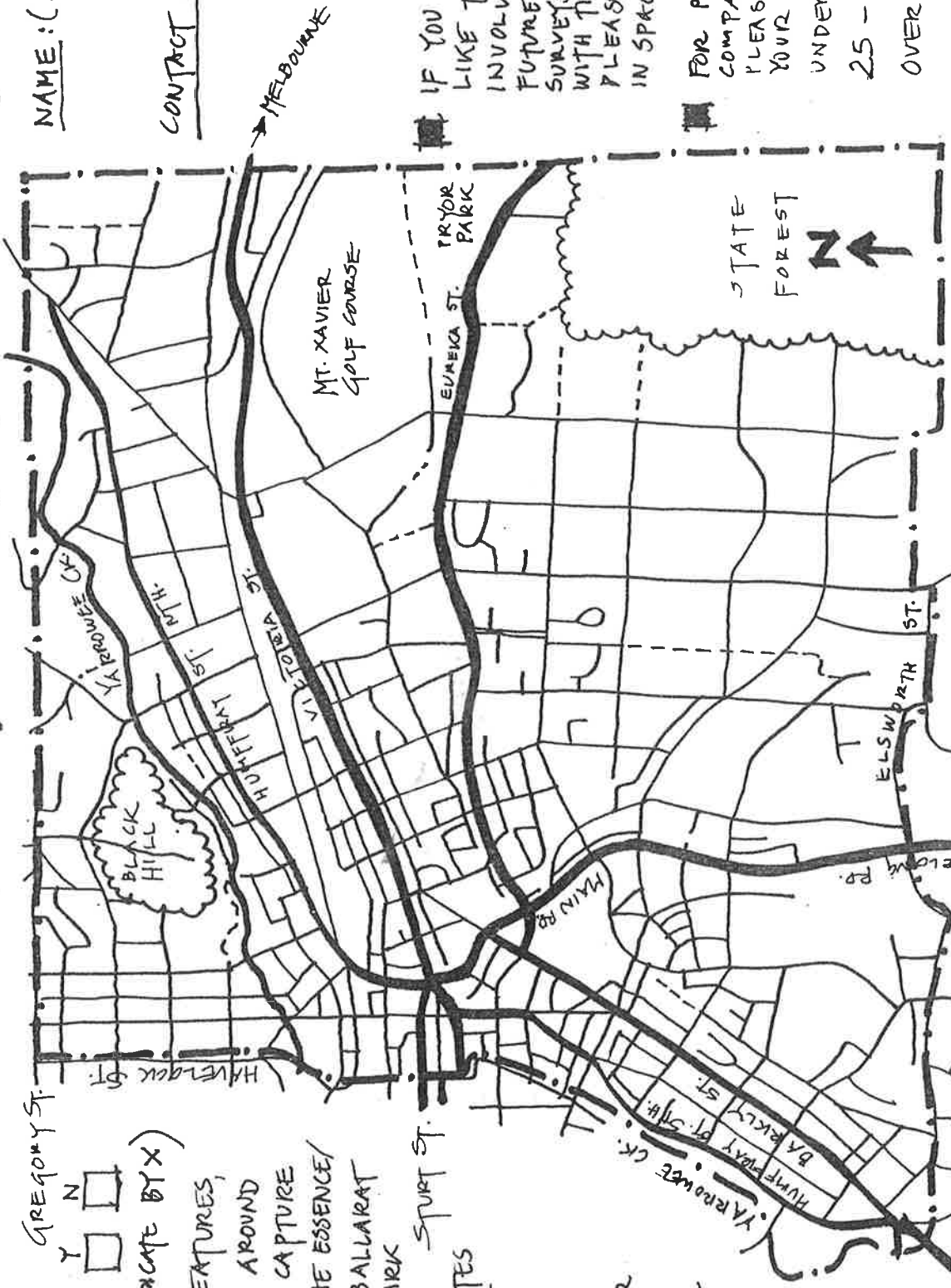
WHAT PLACES, FEATURES, THINGS OR PEOPLE AROUND EAST BALLARAT CAPTURE 'THE SPIRIT' / THE ESSENCE / THE HEART OF BALLARAT EAST (PLEASE MARK PLACES etc ON MAP & WRITE NOTES ON THE BACK OF THIS SHEET

WHY ARE THEY SIGNIFICANT OR SPECIAL? WHY SHOULD THEY BE REMEMBERED / CELEBRATED OR HONOURED IN THE FUTURE?

WHAT 'THINGS' IN BALLARAT EAST WOULD PROVIDE YOU WITH A FEELING OF LOSS IF THEY WERE CHANGED / REMOVED?

NAME: (IF DESIRED)

CONTACT NO.:



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN FUTURE ACTIVITIES / SURVEYS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROJECT PLEASE INDICATE IN SPACE ABOVE.

FOR PURPOSES OF COMPARISON PLEASE INDICATE YOUR AGE RANGE

UNDER 25	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 - 60	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVER 60	<input type="checkbox"/>

THANK YOU !!

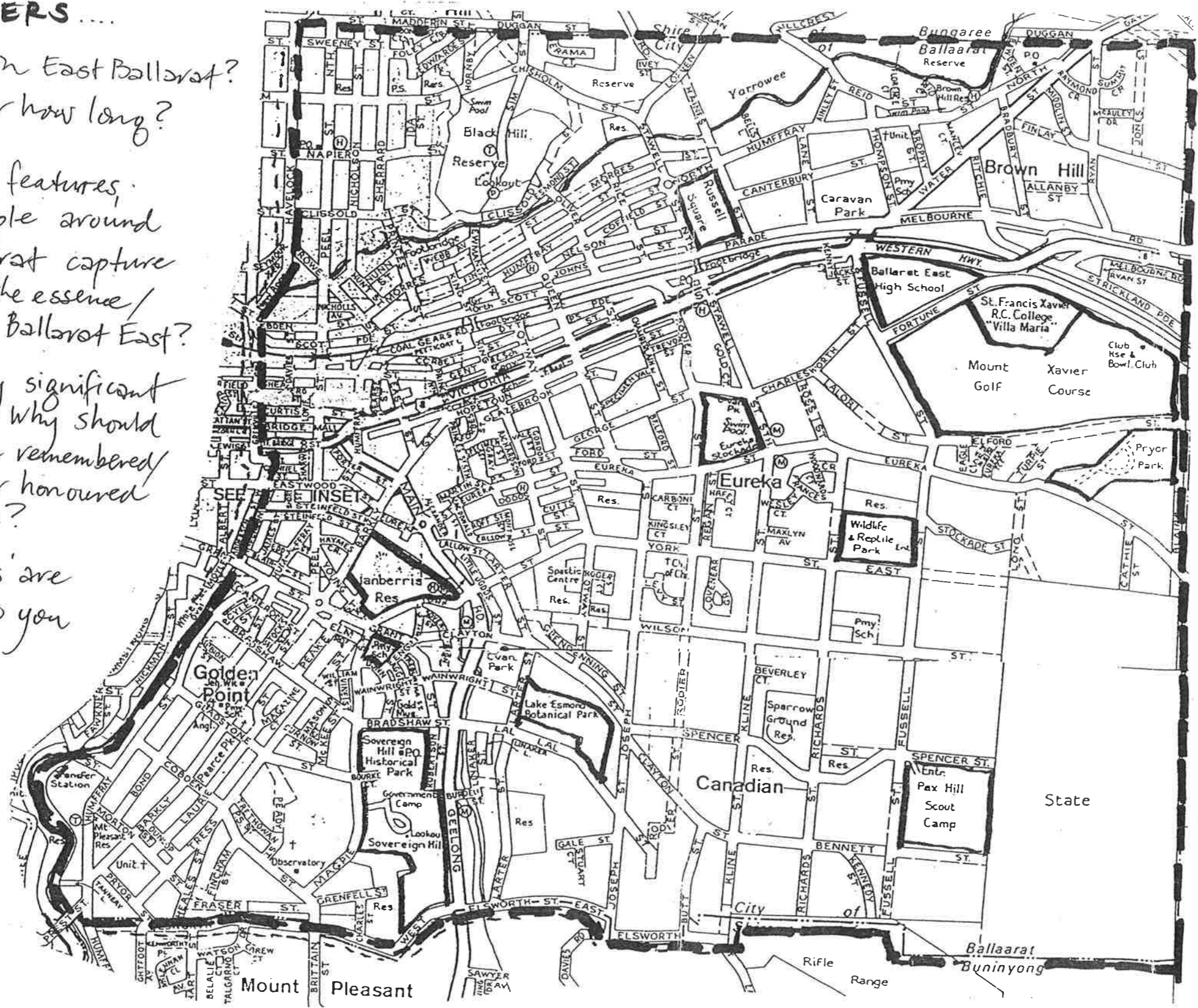
Please return to Stuart Porteous Suite 1/6 Lydiard St. Nth. Ballarat by Mon August 17

Enquiries: Phone Stuart on 333356

# Parish of BALLARAT EAST 1992

## STARTERS...

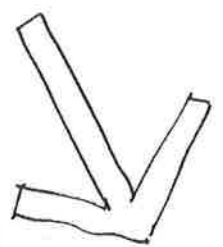
- Do you live in East Ballarat? Where? ... for how long?
- What places, features, things/people around East Ballarat capture 'the spirit' / the essence / the heart of Ballarat East?
- Why are they significant or special? Why should they that be remembered celebrated or honoured in the future?
- What 'things' are significant to you about East Ballarat? (so that if they were no longer there, you would feel loss)



Would you or your family wish to take part in a further interview with one/some of the project team in future?  Y  N

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
CONTACT NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE USE OTHER SIDE FOR NOTES/COMMENTS:  
SUGGESTION: YOU MIGHT LIKE TO NUMBER YOUR SITES ON THE FRONT & WRITE YOUR RESPONSE AGAINST THE SAME NUMBER ON THE BACK.  
(FEEL FREE TO ADD MORE SHEETS!)



THOUGHTS & FEELINGS!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE PART IN SHARING YOUR  
PROJECT COORDINATORS ON BEHALF THE NATIONAL TRUST, PLACE INCORPORATED 156 GEORGE ST. FITZROY & STUART PORTEOUS & ASSOC. 6LYDIARD ST. NTH BALLARAT & ELIZABETH VAN DER KAM 23 JAMES ST. NTH BALLARAT

## Artworks

The incorporation of artworks as an integral element of the project was seen as a way of enriching the project, benefiting the community and making the project and its findings more accessible and hopefully better appreciated.

Communication of the message about what people value is critical. Artworks provide another type and level of communication to that of a traditional final report, with greater opportunity for spreading the message whilst giving something tangible and meaningful back to the community.

Incorporating artists within the core project team was an intrinsic part of the project structure and process. The artists played both an interpretive and creative role. They were involved in project planning, participated in all the workshops, undertook further consultation outside the formal workshop structure, explored the area extensively, and delved into local history.

Following this phase the artists synthesised the material and developed a concept for the artwork (the form was not known at the outset) that enabled a combination of their written and photographic skills. Criteria for the artwork included simplicity of communication so that the message would be readily understood, and an honest approach to interpretation of people's views.

It was recognised that the artists would bring their own particular perspective to their work and a broader vision than "heritage" and the National Trust charter. This was seen as a positive feature, offering potential for new insights.

Completion of the artworks was timed so that they could be formally and publicly launched at an event in conjunction with the heritage forum. This presented an opportunity for the National Trust to 'hand over' the artworks to the City of Ballarat so that they could remain with that local community. Retention of the artworks within the community was seen as an essential component in the move to foster greater local custodianship.

And they say  
those two trees  
were there  
Before the church

They say  
maybe the road  
was built  
inbetween them

They  
may not be right  
of course

I still  
like the story 18

# Probe to be launched

By KIM QUINLAN

The first phase of the National Trust probe into Ballarat East's rich heritage resources will be launched on August 30.

To coincide with the launch, the Ballarat community is asked to participate in a questionnaire to outline aspects of Ballarat East which are significant to them.

Members of the community are asked to indicate on a map, which has been distributed to certain areas with today's copy of the *Ballarat News*, what is important to them in terms of local heritage.

The mapping project will be part of the final report for the National Trust, and will be an important aspect of future development in the area, but remaining sensitive to what the community values so development can be appropriate.

The project, which locks into the Ballarat Regional Conservation Strategy, is looking for verification of sites of historical significance.

The probe has also included heritage workshops to explore traditional and community approaches to heritage values.

Ballarat co-ordinator of the project, Mr Stuart Porteous, said the highly intensive review of Ballarat East's heritage would aim to determine the values of

different age groups through Ballarat East.

This includes the widest possible range of residents, including senior citizens, youth, employed and unemployed families and church representatives.

"Through dealing with these groups, we have ascertained that the (Yarrowee) creek plays an important part in the life and character of Ballarat East," Mr Porteous said.

This is the first time such a heritage project has been undertaken by the National Trust in Australia, and will see if the trust's criteria for establishing things of heritage significance is reflecting community values.

Visual artists and photographer, Paul Lambeth, is working closely with poet and painter, Linda Blake, to "create personal works and express the values of the community groups and individuals involved in the workshops".

Paul will listen to people's perceptions of Ballarat East, and his photographs will be the key to linking the probe. While Linda will write poems and bring together the "words" of people in the community.

The photographs and poems will be kept in a special box and stored at the Ballarat Regional Library.

"Ballarat East is where a major part of the gold was discovered, and the whole



Visual artist, Paul Lambeth and poet, Linda Blake compile work for the heritage probe.

area has a quality worth preserving," Mr Porteous said.

The information collected and that compiled by the Ballarat City Council will be used as an outline for a development plan.

Mr Porteous said Ballarat East was chosen for the pilot project because it was very significant in Australia's history.

The first stage of the project will be launched at the Ballarat Town Hall on August 30. Members of the local and Victorian branches of the National Trust and those involved in workshops have been invited.

A public launch will be held later, between 2.30 pm and 3 pm on the day. A bus trip around Ballarat East will also be held.

### ***Phase 3: The heritage forum***

The occasion of the artworks launch was used as a catalyst to bring together a wide range of people with an interest or expertise in heritage. The intent was to hold a heritage forum for invitees with a variety of perspectives on heritage, expose them to the project outcomes from the mapping and artworks, discuss the relationship between community and professional assessment of heritage, consider implications for future heritage conservation processes, and gather suggestions for action.

As a prelude to the launch and forum, a bus tour of the area was organised, guided by historian/librarian Peter Mansfield. This gave those from beyond Ballarat a feel for the area and offered new insights to some local residents.

### ***Phase 4: Reporting***

#### ***Evaluation and synthesis***

Following the heritage forum a full team meeting was held to review the project and synthesise our response. An outline of the final report was then prepared and discussed with the National Trust Steering Committee.

A further team meeting was held to evaluate the project process and outcomes, expand on the draft final report, and plan for ongoing activity related to the project.

#### ***Time and resources to undertake project***

To assist others in planning resource requirements for similar projects, we have estimated the total time spent on the project. With a core project team of four people (local coordinator, two local artists, project manager) and two specialist support people (local historian, facilitator), a total of eighty days were spent. Additional assistance was provided by the City of Ballarat at no cost via Community Arts and Planning.

With projects of this nature it is very difficult to contain time. Consultation always takes longer than expected, and in the minds of both the team and the community is not limited to 9 to 5 hours. Locals would 'drop in' or stop you in the street to have a chat and ask about progress or add more comment. This informal input was seen as very valuable and about helping to extend the sense of ownership of the project.

Time is also hard to gauge for creative arts, where ideas may come quickly or less so. Time thinking about the project and artworks tends to fill in many moments when not 'officially' working. That is the nature of the beast. The trick is to find a level that is reasonable and enjoyable and that does not seek to exploit anyone. We believe that we were successful in this and thank the artists for their continued commitment and passion.



THE VALUING OF BALLARAT EAST

Community Perspectives on Heritage

*The National Trust of Australia (Vic) and PLACE Inc  
are pleased to invite you to share in the*

*Launch of artworks*

*Hear the story of the Ballarat East Community Heritage Project and find  
out what it is about Ballarat East that the local community most value.*

*See how artists*

*Paul Lambeth & Linda Blake*

*have interpreted those values in lasting artworks to be presented to the  
Mayor of Ballarat  
on behalf of the community.*

*Share in afternoon tea with the artists, community,  
project team and the National Trust.*

*Sunday 30 August*

*from  
2.30 to 3.30pm  
in the*

*"Trench Room" at the Ballarat Town Hall*

THE VALUING OF BALLARAT EAST

Community Perspectives on Heritage

*The National Trust of Australia (Vic) and PLACE Inc invite you to attend a special afternoon of events on*

**Sunday 30 August 1992  
1.00 to 6.00pm  
Ballarat Town Hall**

***Tour of Ballarat East***

*A guided bus tour of Ballarat East for those not familiar with the area. Share in its distinctiveness with local historian Peter Mansfield and members of the community.*

*Assemble 12.45pm for 1.00pm departure from Ballarat Town Hall and return at 2.15pm.*

***Launch of Artworks***

*Hear the story of the Ballarat East Community Heritage Project and find out what it is about Ballarat East that the local community most value. See how artists Paul Lambeth and Linda Blake have interpreted those values in lasting artworks for the citizens of Ballarat. Share in afternoon tea with the artists, community, project team and the National Trust.*

*2.30 to 3.30pm at Ballarat Town Hall.*

***Heritage Forum***

*Reflect on similarities and differences between the local community and heritage experts about what is worth keeping in Ballarat East. Discuss what the project has demonstrated about heritage and social value processes. Address the future implications of incorporating social values in heritage conservation.*

*3.30 to 6.00pm Ballarat Town Hall.*

*Wednesday 26*

***RSVP Thursday 20 August***

*Yvonne at the National Trust 03 654 4711 or*

*Stuart Porteous and Associates 053 333 356.*

*Please note that places for the bus tour are limited.*

THE VALUING OF BALLARAT EAST

Community Perspectives on Heritage

*Dear community participants,*

*To all those who shared their thoughts and knowledge about Ballarat East with us over the past few weeks, a very big thank you. However the project doesn't end here. Artists Paul Lambeth and Linda Blake have been hard at work translating the community response into an artwork which will be retained in Ballarat.*

*We extend a warm invitation to you, your family and friends to come along to the launch of this artwork and hear about the findings from this project on those special aspects of Ballarat East that the community value.*

*Looking forward to seeing you there. Many thanks for your input.*

*Anne Dunlop  
PLACE Inc.  
Project Coordinators  
Ph 03 416 2649*

# OUTCOMES

## *"Heritage" preconceptions*

Use of the term "heritage" was found to bring with it a host of preconceptions. Immediately, people responded in terms of "old buildings" with anything else somehow not regarded as being about "heritage". After learning this lesson from our first press releases and talks, the language was deliberately changed to ask people what it was that they valued (places, features, things or people) and about which they would feel a sense of loss if it were changed or no longer there.

This approach has appeared to widen the range of responses that would otherwise have been received. It also showed that once the threshold was widened beyond buildings, there were many other aspects of value to the community.

## *Community mapping outcomes*

Each of the different workshop groups and other consultation undertaken produced some description of what those people valued about Ballarat East. There were different emphases evident between groups, however there was also a remarkable degree of consistency as to what was special and deserving of retention.

There was a noticeable distinction between the senior citizens group and the youth. The senior citizens had a greater awareness of historical events and local characters, with strong memories of what it used to be like. They had a real understanding of the underground world of mines and waterways related to the geology, and personal recollection of a less "organised" place when mines and rivers and drains were evident to all. The youth tended to focus upon the open spaces and places where they "hung out" and played, with more recent buildings featuring in their descriptions of valued things and a less nostalgic outlook overall.

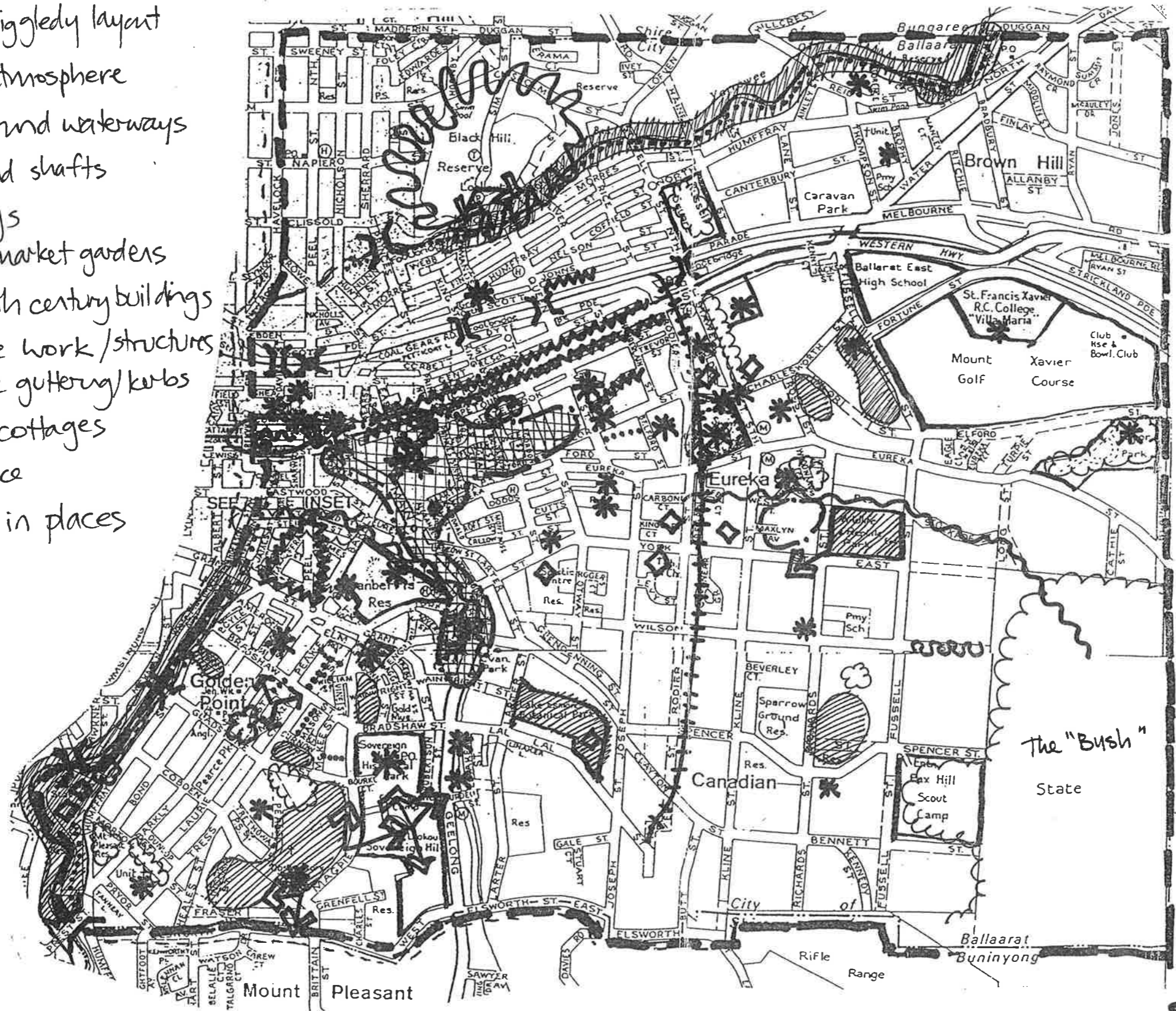
## *Summary map of community heritage values*

No single consensus view is possible as to what is important. Rather, people have individual values in response to "their" place, and a flavour of that range of values becomes evident from a cumulative viewing of many people's feelings about the area.

The summary map of community heritage compiles the views and values expressed by some 200 residents and represents the flavour of community values held about what is special in Ballarat East.

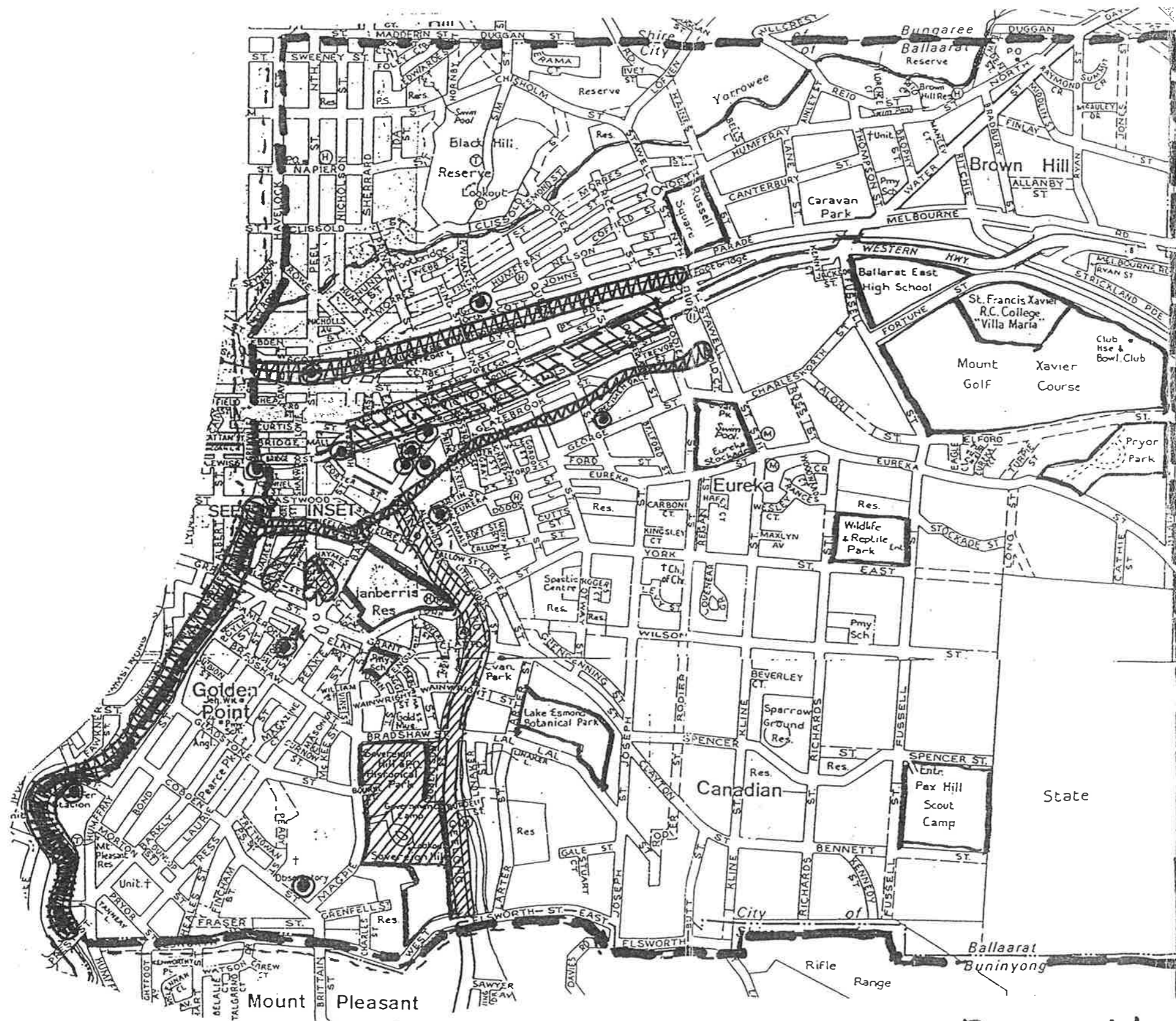
The map only shows those physical things that can be located upon the plan. Many other aspects, both physical and social, that are regarded as valued are less easy to mark. Annotations are included on the plan in reference to some of these aspects, and a verbal description is given in this section.

- higgledy piggledy layout
- country atmosphere
- underground waterways
- mines and shafts
- laneways
- chinese market gardens
- nineteenth century buildings
- bluestone work / structures
- bluestone guttering / kerbs
- miners cottages
- open space
- wildness in places



- ☼ special wild places
- ▨ open space zones
- ~ underground water
- \* buildings, physical items
- ◇ special sites
- ⌋ bridges and structures
- ≡ streetscape
- ➔ views and vistas
- ..... walking paths
- ☁ trees + parks
- ⊞ hub, buildings, events
- +++ old rail alignment

Summary Map of  
community heritage values  
Ballarat East  
August 1992



- Planning Scheme protection for items
- ▨ Planning Scheme protection for streetscapes
- ▩ A Conservation Study Priority A protection recommended
- ▩ B Conservation Study Priority B protection recommended



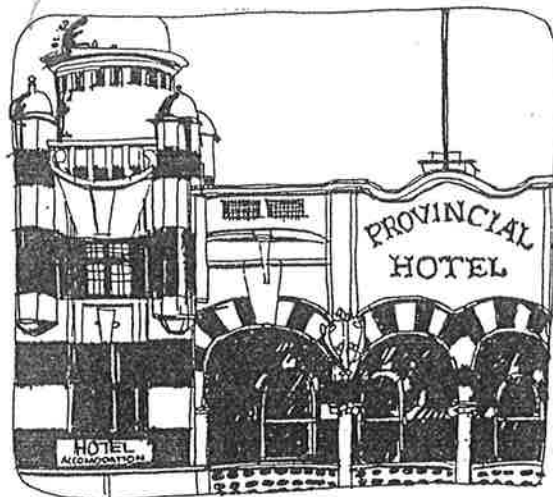
Previous identification of heritage  
 Assets referred to in Planning Scheme and  
 1980 Conservation Study. Refer to Study for  
 listing of individual items - not mapped here.

*Comparison with heritage assets identified in heritage studies*

A separate map shows those places and items currently given some status in the Ballarat Planning Scheme as items or streetscapes of heritage significance. Planning controls presently apply to these sites and areas.

Items and areas identified as of significance in the Ballarat Conservation Study are also identified on this map.

It is interesting to compare the degree of overlap between the two maps, one the result of professional judgments about heritage and the other stemming from views in the local community.



**BALLARAT CONSERVATION GUIDELINES**

*What is it that is valued?*

The primary conclusion is that the community values the overall "character" of Ballarat East and wishes to retain its intrinsic qualities. Individual "heritage items" and other aspects less traditionally regarded as of heritage significance, are just one part of this holistic view. Indeed, preservation of the entirety, not the particular, is sought.

The following key words or phrases describe those facets of the character of Ballarat East that are most valued.

- *Distinct from rest of Ballarat*
- *Diversity in land use and buildings*
- *Higgledy piggledy layout*
- *Country atmosphere*
- *Open spaces and wildness*
- *Bush on perimeter*
- *Subterranean world*
- *Rich in history*
- *Building stock*
- *Bluestone work*
- *European trees*
- *Family connections and memories*
- *Undulating topography*
- *Intimate pedestrian scale.*

She grew  
like a vast  
creeping weed  
Hemmed in  
by twin boundaries  
Forest and creek  
a natural growth  
lopsided and crazy  
Lazily following  
dirt tracks and ditches  
muddy with rain  
Clogged with the wreckage  
of goldthirsty diggers  
Lustily carving  
her hills into slag



*Distinct from the rest of Ballarat:*

"Easties" are defiantly proud of their differences from the rest of Ballarat and take some pride in the "us and them" relationship with the "Westies". The differences arise from the historical beginnings of Ballarat, with Ballarat East being a literal gold mine and area for noxious activities, and home to the miners and working class whilst the wealthier sections lived to the west on the hill beyond.

The differences are reinforced by: the topography, with Ballarat East being lower lying than the town centre; the building materials, with Ballarat East being predominantly timber and bluestone in contrast to the brickwork of other areas; the age and diversity of its buildings; and because of its working class associations.

*Diversity: in land use and buildings*

Buildings vary tremendously in character, from the tiny timber cottages to the superbly crafted and proportioned Jewish Synagogue at the corner of Barkly and Princes Streets; the Ballarat East Fire Brigade and the Ballarat East Library in East and Barkly Streets; the grand timber and brick homes as well as the terrace buildings along Victoria Street; the bluestone and brick grandeur of St. Alipius Church (with its manse); and Sacred Heart College in Victoria Street; Bakery Hill complex (now McDonalds and retail stores); and the Ballarat East Post Office (now Arts Post Gallery) in Main Road.

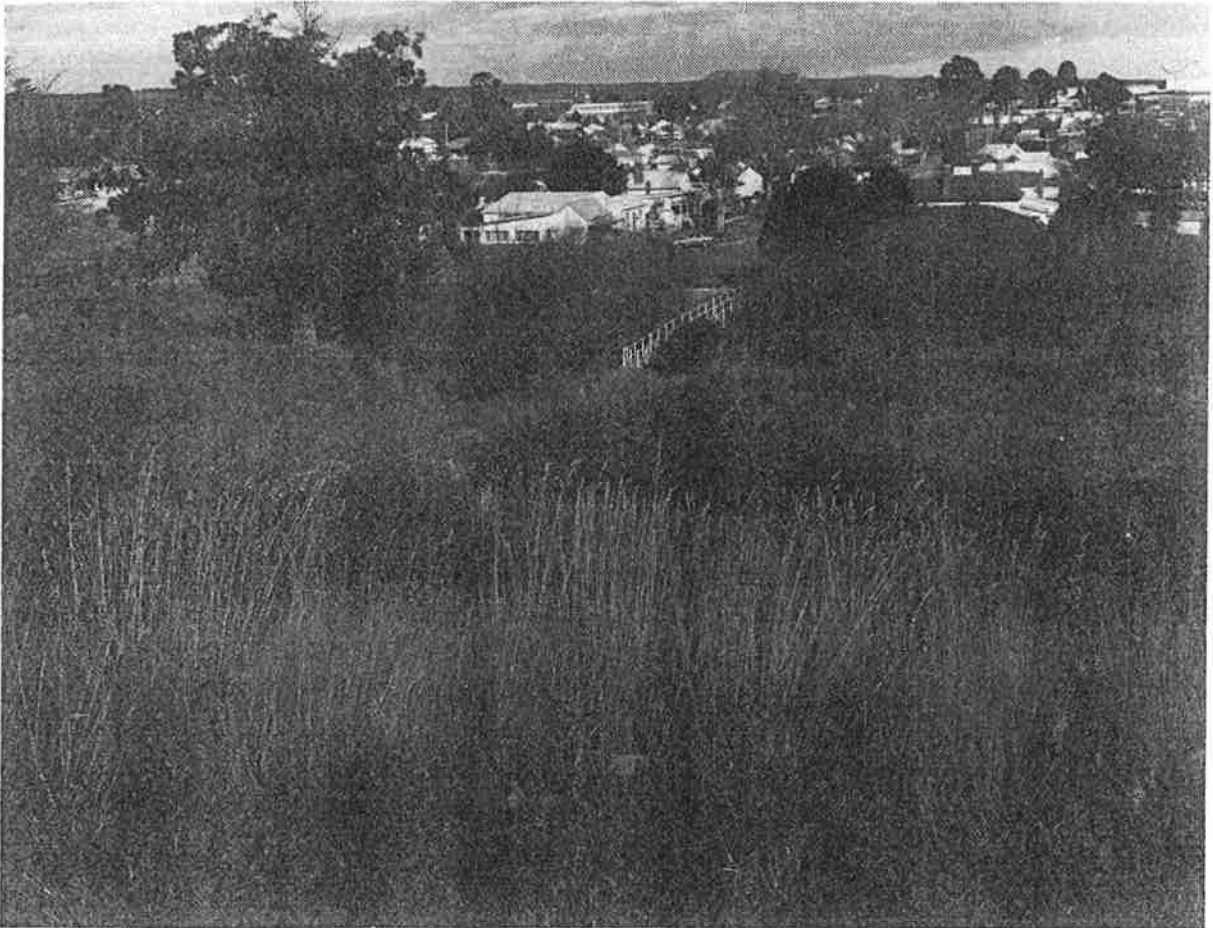
There is also diversity in land use, encompassing churches; the Sovereign Hill tourist complex; Lake Esmond native botanical gardens; public institutions; housing; retail; commercial activities; bush; and grazing by animals.

The mix of land uses and building types gives interest and vitality and avoids any sense of a "dormitory suburb". It is a constant reminder of the historical richness of the area.

*Higgledy piggledy layout:*

This relates particularly to the area bounded by Black Hill and the Yarrowee Creek to the north (both of which dictate the pattern of street layouts); Otway Street to the east where the landform becomes flatter along Eureka Street; Elsworth Street to the south where once again the land becomes flatter as it moves toward Mt. Clear. To the west the Yarrowee Creek and the Hickman Street escarpment (and the historic White Flat Recreation Reserve) also clearly define and dominate the way roads and houses sit in the landscape.

The lack of formal order in street and lane layouts and a similar variety in siting of early cottages and buildings gives an unordered air and adds interest and a sense of spontaneity. This is reinforced by the topography. Within these boundaries there is an awareness of mystery and drama, with significant changes of level and a tantalisingly varied collection of distant and obscured views.



*The rural feel and undulating topography of Ballarat East is greatly valued*

### *Country atmosphere:*

Unlike anywhere else in Ballarat, throughout Ballarat East you can find in most streets a paddock or open space between houses. These are host to horses or cows, or perhaps a vegetable garden, giving a semi-rural, relaxed and 'old fashioned' quality to the streetscape.

The old sawmill in Fussell Street; cricket, soccer and football played on the green expanse of Russell Square; the rambling undulations of Pryor Park; the intimate quality of Esmond and Clissold Streets at the base of Black Hill; the bush edging the area; and the Yarrowee Creek wild stretches all exude a pleasant rural ambience.

### *Open spaces and wildness:*

This feeling is generated by the broad range of open space characters; from the wildness of Black Hill Reserve less than 2kms from the heart of town, with its rugged mature pine trees and newly planted native trees clinging to cliff faces and ravines; to the meandering Yarrowee Creek valley with its graceful linear corridor of willows; and to the dense and dry indigenous bushland to the east, where you can literally get lost in the bush less than ten minutes away from the heart of Ballarat.

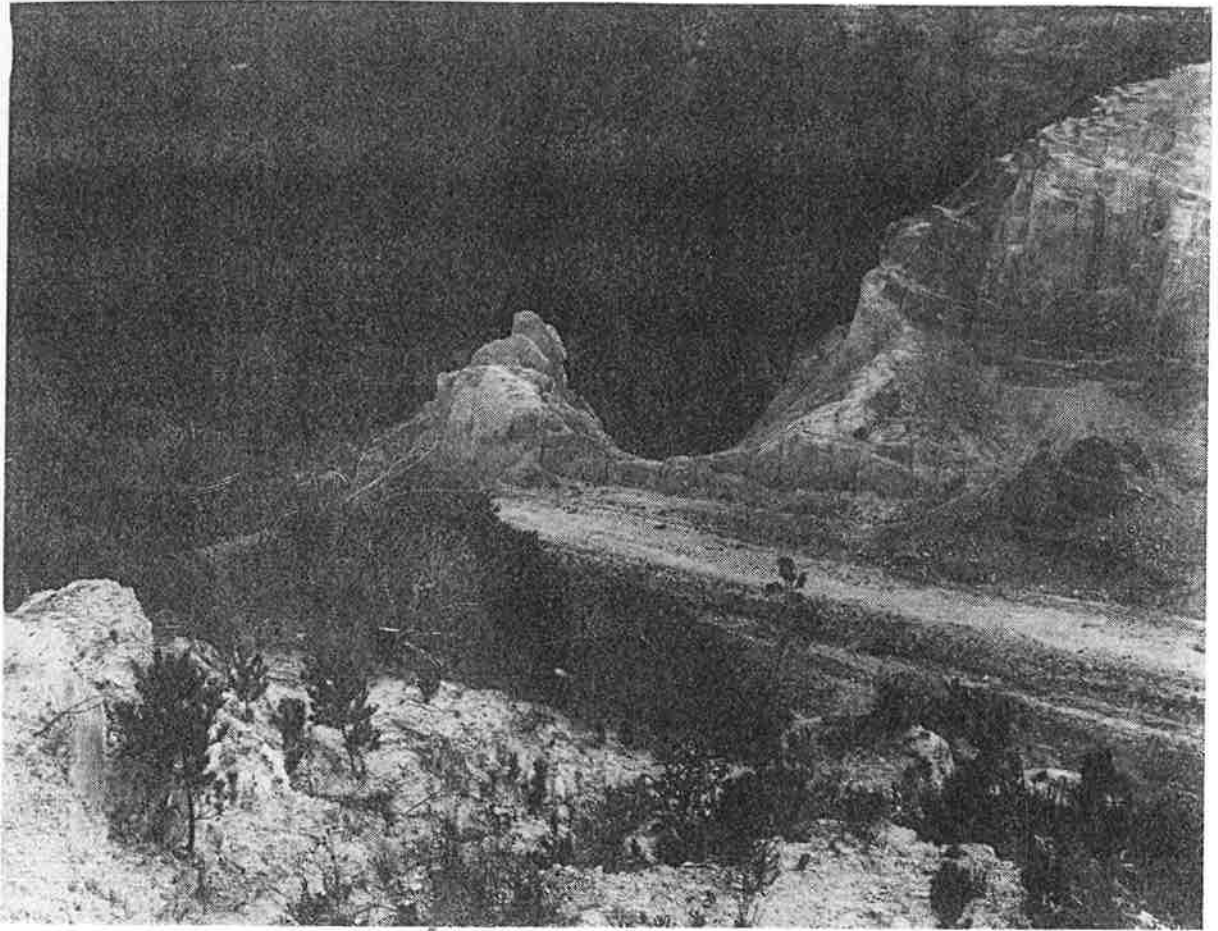
The Ballarat Wildlife and Reptile Park off Fussell Street has enhanced this transition from suburban development to the bushland fringe by extensive planting with natives. Other open spaces of diverse character include Russell Square; Specimen Vale; the old Buninyong Railway Line, Warrenheip Gully behind Eureka Street; and the Yarrowee Flora Park between Hill and Leith Streets.

The sense of wildness and remoteness experienced in some of these areas was highly valued. A sense of 'personal ownership' and a personal relationship to those places was described by many.

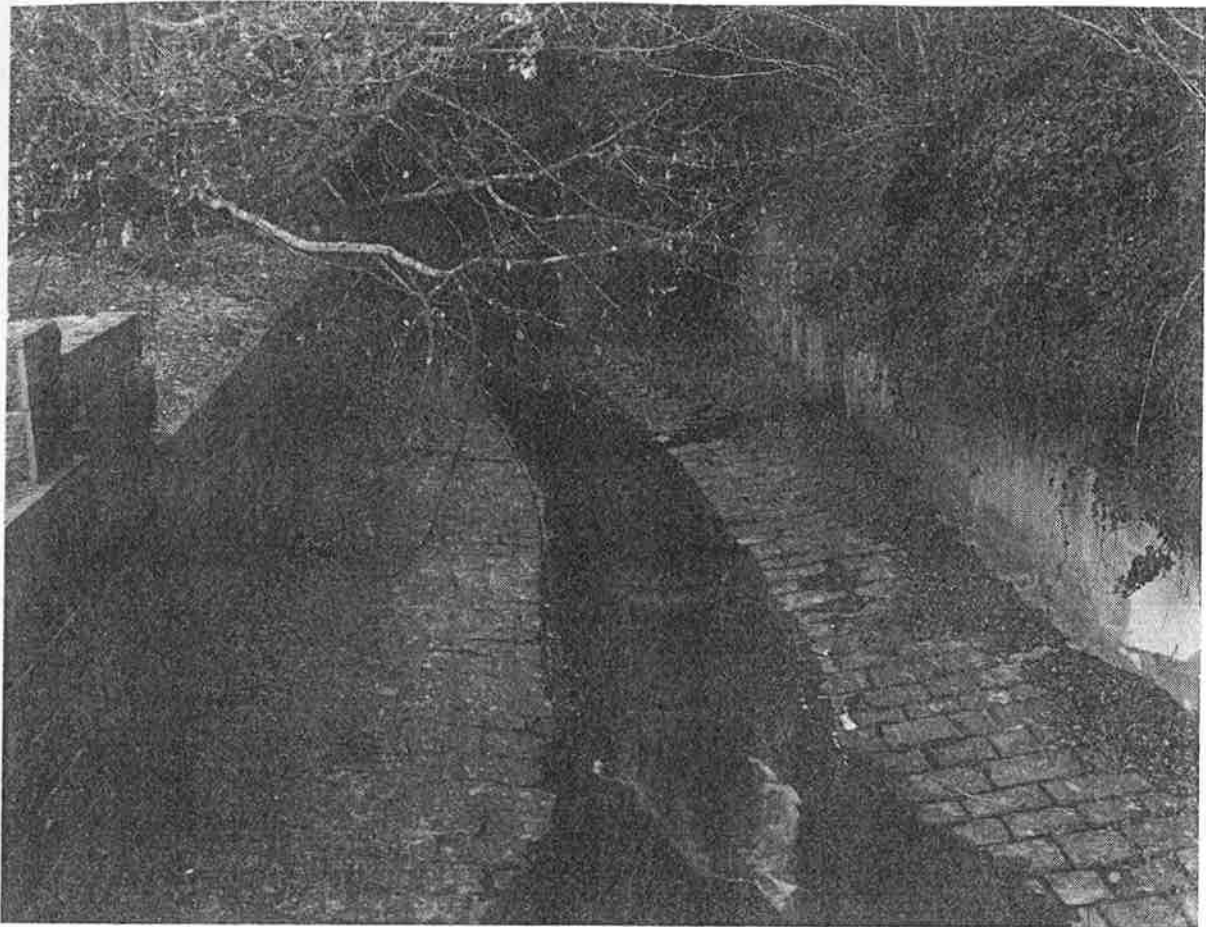
### *Bush:*

When people refer to 'the bush', they mean the area east of Fussell Street and south of Eureka Street, right down past Elsworth Street to where it becomes the Canadian Forest. This is an area of extensive natural bushland.

The bush is a highly treasured and solidly defined physical and psychological edge to the city limits.



*Black Hill intrigues all with its sense of mystery and wildness*



*Subterranean world:*

There is an understanding and knowledge of the city's underground activities - the waterways and drains; the gold mines and shafts; coupled with a feel for the geology of the place that has shaped its history.

There are many caves and tunnels in Black Hill Reserve, and an intricate network of interconnected bluestone stormwater drains beneath the city that link to the Yarrowee Creek.

This understanding of the subterranean world was particularly strong amongst older members of the community. They could recall it as a dynamic and living system, with shafts exposed, regular cave-ins over drains, and always water flooding across somewhere!

*Rich in history:*

Part of the excitement of Ballarat East is that you could be standing on great wealth or swept away in a creek flood, or even standing on the spot where the Eureka events occurred or where the Chinese had their market gardens.

The feeling of age and history abounds in all areas of Ballarat East, especially in that section defined as 'higgledy piggledy', in the same way that the character and sense of history is conveyed in The Rocks in Sydney. There is a sense that the newer areas in Ballarat do not have this historical richness, and therefore 'miss out' in some way.

*Building stock:*

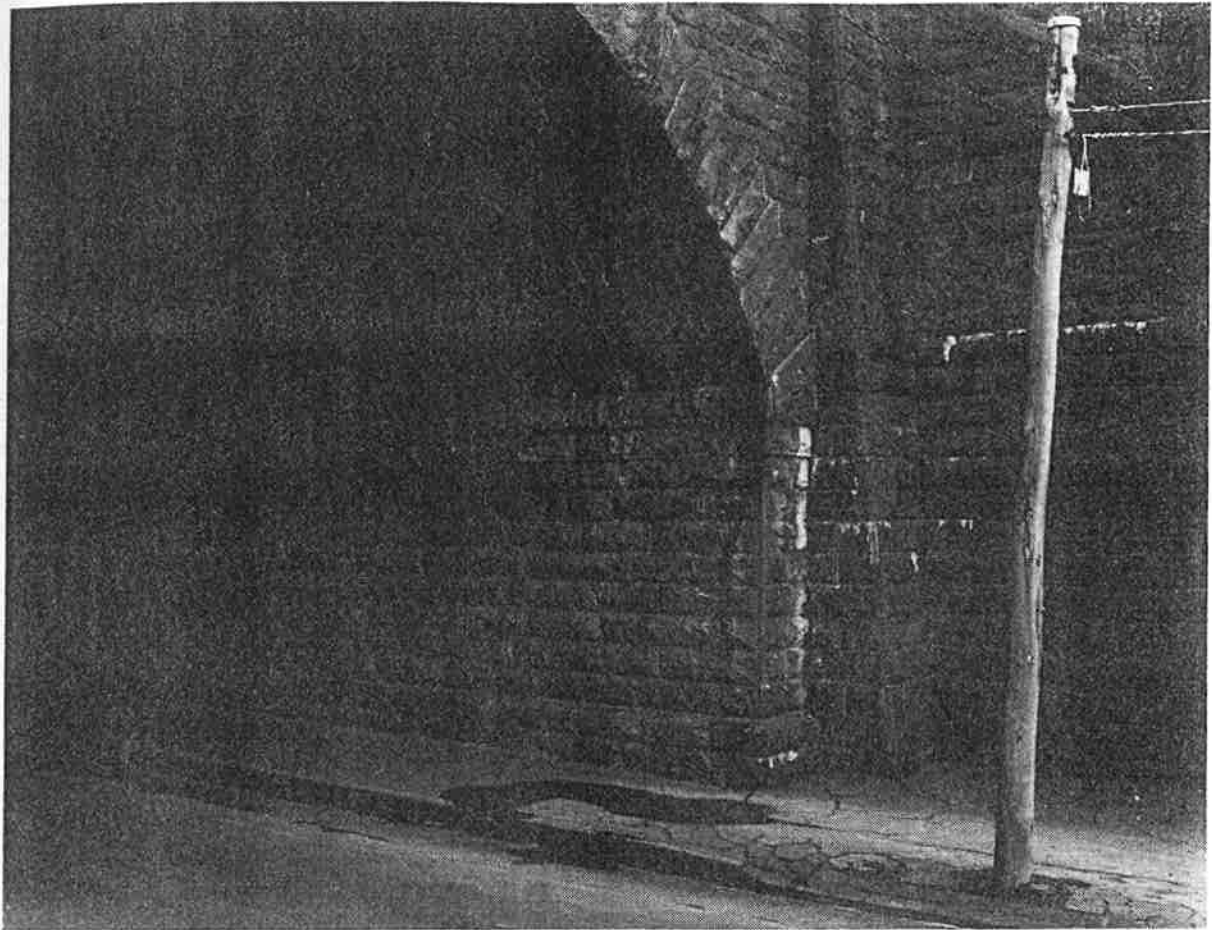
The quality, variety and design of many buildings are valued. This extends from the simple weatherboard miners cottages, to corner stores, to 1950s structures, to new vernacular buildings, and to grand heritage buildings. Examples of some of these buildings are noted under *Diversity*.

*Bluestone work:*

Bluestone is a predominant and much-loved element of the landscape, both built and natural. Ballarat tends to be based on, but not built out of, bluestone. It is used in the major drainage network, structures such as bridges, buildings, and as kerbing.

The Yarrowee Creek channel has well constructed bluestone walls about two metres high and eight to ten metres wide. It provides a visual and psychological connection from north to south through the city. The superb railway bridge over Peel Street, the pedestrian underpass between Scott Parade and Mair Streets, and the Yarrowee Creek double arched tunnel beneath the railway line and Mair Street are highly valued structures. The nearby solid bluestone foundations of the large 1870s residence 'Bethany' in Nolan Street, has extensive southern and eastern boundaries totally constructed of bluestone up to three metres high.

There is a real association of bluestone with hard labour, craftsmanship and quality.



Is it  
the buildings we  
lose - the  
churches, the  
theatres, old  
banks - or is it  
the joy of the  
making of  
crafting a  
thing so  
fine you  
could feel it

Carved stone or  
weatherboard  
what's there  
is the love  
from when  
Bloody hard work  
was at least  
money's equal -

*European trees:*

Unlike Ballarat and Ballarat West, there are few major avenues of European trees. Those that are significant tend not to be in major public thoroughfares. The most notable are the Elms in Steinfeld Street either side of the Canadian Creek bluestone channel. There is a strong European presence in the linear Willow plantings along the Yarrowee Creek to the north of the city. In addition there are two favourite peppercorns in Victoria Street outside the St. Alipius church. Whilst not 'trees' but still European in influence, the topiary in Glazenbrook Street brings delight to many.

*Family connections and memories:*

Continuity of family and memories of family connections in the area remain strong. Old characters are still talked about, such as Billy Butterfly, and places associated with day to day family activities such as walking, playing and shopping regarded fondly. The old feed stores and general stores figured prominently in recollections, as did the mines and waterways. There are a significant number of Honour Rolls at schools and churches, with the future of these Rolls of concern to locals as the institutions change or disappear.

The team's oral historian noted that "...people of Ballarat East are better talkers than the people of Ballarat". It was felt that this may possibly be due to pride in their history, but could also stem from the unpretentious yarns of working class origins (like the quality of Irish yarns perhaps).





Proud?

Proud was me  
being tall enough  
to  
cross the Yaarowee  
in one jump  
dry  
instead of two jumps  
wet

### *Undulating topography:*

The landform is seen as adding significant interest and complexity, with the undulations offering many changes of level, and a wide variety of views, both immediate and distant. The general panoramas across to, and beyond, the city are appreciated and, due to the open spaces, reinforce the rural qualities.

The area of most 'higgledy piggledy' has a great sense of the topography, due to its impact upon the pattern of streets and lanes. The large number of vantage points both in this region and in the wider study area, are particularly valued, with walking emerging as an enjoyable activity, in part because of the views.

### *Intimate pedestrian scale*

The intimate scale arising from the intricate street layouts, network of laneways and walking paths coupled with the low rise building forms, are valued for their pedestrian friendliness and visual interest. The intimacy is enhanced by the sense of enclosure and the clearly defined sense of territory, particularly at the pedestrian level.

The variety and level of detail in building and landscape add to the visual interest of pedestrians. Part of the higgledy piggledy quality extends to the design and siting of the housing, which can be quite tiny, quaint and unpredictable in form, eg. the Old Curiosity Shop and some of the cottages overlooking the railway in Corbett Street as well as in Humffray Street North and South.

### *Why is it valued?*

Trying to get people to articulate *why* something was special was very difficult. Reasons were not always forthcoming and, when identified, were often different between both individuals and groups.

Traditionally in heritage studies the reasons are classified as being of:

- *aesthetic value*
- *historic value*
- *scientific value*
- *social value.*

In this pilot project all of the above were raised. In exploring the reasons more deeply, the following five aspects were identified.

- *Meaning and identity*
- *History and continuity*
- *Childhood activities*
- *Quality of experience*
- *Aesthetic appreciation.*



*The sky and backdrop of hills enfolds Ballarat East*

Scud  
your heels  
through the  
dead needle floor  
uncover the clay  
ochre beneath  
carve a seat  
for yourself  
pad out with pine

Recline

Fill in your  
time and perspective  
with massed radiata  
laid leaf to leaf  
suck up the smell  
'til the wind  
burns your lungs

Hang stretched  
from low branches  
or backed  
to a trunk  
pick out  
the resin  
from bark impressed hands  
Stay  
'til it's black  
then  
go back

### *Meaning and identity*

Day-to-day familiarity has developed an attachment to Ballarat East for people and engendered regard for their local area as a distinctive place of special value. This connection with Ballarat East appeared to be valued for giving a sense of personal identity to the individual in relation to the broader community.

### *History and continuity*

Retention of the character and/or certain items and places within Ballarat East was seen as a way of keeping memories alive about how things used to be and the events that had taken place there. It was also seen as highly desirable to retain a continuity with the past through the physical presence of reminders.

### *Childhood activities*

People recalled their early life experiences and were keen for there to be some continuity between their childhood play and exploration and that of their own children. The sense of wanting to hold onto certain things so that the next generation too could experience them was strong, even amongst the youth groups.

### *Quality of experience*

People's enjoyment of many places within Ballarat East led to a wish to retain that quality of experience. Open space featured prominently with the sense of wildness and remoteness greatly valued along the Yarrowee Creek and around Black Hill and the bush on the outskirts. In addition, public ownership of these areas was highly valued, with the lack of development creating a sense that it belonged to "no-one or everyone" and was therefore the personal territory of those using that area.

### *Aesthetic appreciation*

The sense of delight that people experience from many of the features of Ballarat East such as the trees, bluestone work, miners cottages, and other buildings was something they did not want to lose. It was also appreciated as a tourist asset (locals were embarrassed at the unattractive nature of what they regarded as major heritage items that were inappropriately presented, eg. Eureka Stockade).

### *Artworks outcomes*

The artists worked to develop an artwork concept that:

- *was honestly reflective of community input*
- *would belong to the community*
- *would be accessible and understandable*
- *had artistic and technical quality*
- *held meaning for the community*
- *was capable of reproduction, and*
- *was open ended in nature to allow ongoing work.*

The final artwork took the form of a very big handmade book with large format black and white photographs and a collection of original poems.

The book was presented to the City of Ballarat at the launch and is to be kept in the Ballarat Library. The book has been circulating amongst groups in the community at their request and has had a steady stream of enquiries about it.

Images and words were selected to evoke an atmosphere of Ballarat East that reflected those qualities that people valued.



Photographer Paul Lambeth and writer Linda Blake look over the book they prepared for the National Trust, as part of a heritage study of Ballarat East. — PICTURE: Lachlan Bence

## Book marks heritage study

By **ANGELA BARLOW**

The first stage of an intensive heritage project for Ballarat East has been completed and was launched yesterday at the Ballarat Town Hall.

The National Trust handed over to Ballarat City Council a book containing photographs and literature compiled after more than two months of consultation with a cross section of the Ballarat East community.

The council will look after the hand-made document on behalf of the National Trust,

The book of pictures, poetry and prose is the work of artists Paul Lambeth and Linda Blake and reflects what the people of Ballarat East value in terms of the area's heritage.

Ms Blake wrote for the book and Mr Lambeth took the photographs after consultation over a two-month period with unemployed youth, school students, church groups, senior citizens and other members of the Ballarat East community.

Ms Blake said the various community workshops identified specific as well as general aspects of Ballarat East Par-

ish which they considered important.

The artists were part of a project team which included landscape architect Stuart Porteous, regional librarian Peter Mansfield and the city council's arts officer, Paul Mason.

The team was chosen by Melbourne-based firm PLACE Incorporated (which stands for People, Landscapes, Art, Conservation and Environment).

The next stage of the project will be to compile a report of findings of stage one, which will be presented to the National Trust.

### *Heritage forum outcomes*

A broad range of people attended the heritage forum and participated in discussion about the project outcomes and implications.

Unfortunately not all of the invited heritage experts were able to attend, with some being unwilling to attend. This latter attitude was felt to be in response to the view of some that this was not a 'real' heritage study. Such a perception makes it difficult to communicate and establish a dialogue about the implications of the approach taken in this study for other heritage studies.

Our thanks are extended to those heritage practitioners who were able to give us their valuable time for a mutually beneficial forum.

Key outcomes were:

- *a recognition and appreciation of the values expressed by the community*
- *a recognition of the similarity between the outcomes and those of more general planning and urban character assessment works*
- *the need to seek win-win outcomes to resolution of planning and development scenarios*
- *the need to review heritage briefs and budgets to better address local values and consultation processes*
- *the need to address the issue of identifying resources and skills/training required for community consultation.*



# IMPLICATIONS OF OUTCOMES

## *What do the community responses tell us?*

### *People care about their place*

What was evident from the outset was that local people care deeply about their own environs. There is a real and shared "sense of place" about Ballarat East and a genuine attachment to that place. Whilst this may have been expressed in many different ways, some less articulate than others, the strength of caring was consistent.

Whilst a strong commitment to Ballarat East was to be expected from people who volunteered to participate in the project, it was equally strong amongst the more general groups of youth who represented a wide cross section of attitudes. This is a very positive response that presents great potential for the National Trust (and local government) to tap into that local sentiment and commitment for an area.

What was also unexpected was the willingness and enjoyment that people felt in sharing what was important to them with others. There is the basis for real community participation in ongoing care and custodianship of an area with this strength of feeling and mutual interest.

### *A sense of resignation and frustration*

What was also evident was that people often felt that what they valued about their area was changing beyond their control. There was a definite sense of loss at what had already gone, a dissatisfaction with some of the forms of new development, and an apprehension about the future.

This was coupled with an acceptance of the need for new development (or perhaps "resignation" would more clearly reflect the attitude of many). The conflicts appear to stem from the rate of change and the sense that new development is not always appropriate and is changing the character of Ballarat East in a fundamental way.

### *Acceptance of new development*

Many people nominated examples of what they regarded as attractive and appropriate new development of the type that should be encouraged in preference to much of what is currently being built. This indicates that people do have a sense of what "belongs" in Ballarat East, even if they find it easier to articulate what they *don't* want than what they *do* want to see there.

And how  
do you preserve  
a barbecue?

Circling faces of  
overlapped lifetimes  
glowing with heat  
from ten gallon drums

And how  
do you keep  
a feeling -  
that each of you  
shares  
in the care  
of the other  
(  
I  
am connected  
to you)

That  
child is safe  
and recites  
with a passion  
neighbouring names  
that reach  
blocks away -  
saying  
This is my space  
I live here

Hello  
is not an invasion

## *Defining heritage*

### *Terminology*

The meaning of the term "heritage" in its widest sense is not well understood within the community. The focus remains upon old buildings when this term is used. This has implications for selling the work of the National Trust to the community and better educating them about the validity of other heritage perspectives.

Community values are often difficult to articulate. They do not appear to sit comfortably within the professional "jargon" of heritage terms. This increases the communication gap and makes it less likely that views are shared successfully.

### *Social values and the dynamic of change*

Social values reflect their era. They are dynamic over time and may change both within and across generations. The extent of change in values may be minor or major. When dealing with the "everyday" and locally significant aspects of place, it is possible that local views about their relevance and significance may change over time, reflecting possible changes in social values. However, the values expressed by any community are no less significant because they may alter over time. This is just part of the natural and dynamic human process of growth and change.

Another consideration is the way that social values reflect our view of ourselves. We may be selective in what we care to value. For example, Ballarat East residents proudly recall the gold mining days yet do not proclaim its old rabbiting tradition nor contact with the aboriginals. Some things remain stronger in the community memory than others.

### *Levels of significance and protection*

The notion of levels of significance introduces difficulties in the areas of social and community values. The local community place high priority upon the character and quality of their area and many of its associations. They see that as an end in itself worth retaining, rather than requiring some higher regional, state or national level of significance to gain support for retention of that particular character. Clarification of the implications of the different levels of significance in ongoing heritage protection is needed.

### *Looking at character*

Whilst people identified individual items they valued and regarded as of significance, their concerns were more generally with maintenance of the character of Ballarat East and the myriad of things that contribute to that character. This implies that people adopt a wholistic view of their community, and seek to maintain an integrated view of that world rather than compartmentalise it into fragments that are "historic" or "scientific", etc.

This approach of looking at the whole is more akin to "urban character studies" than a traditional heritage study. Such assessments are becoming more popular as local government utilise them to better understand their areas and assist in developing appropriate policies. It suggests that a strictly "heritage" approach may not recognise the full range of aspects that the community values and seeks to retain.

### *Implications for heritage protection*

This pilot project confirms that community values are both difficult to define in traditional heritage item terms, time consuming to gather, and very broad in their scope. This has a range of implications for methods of protecting heritage, the definitions of heritage and heritage significance, how heritage studies are conducted, and how their results may be implemented. The results of this pilot project suggest that we should be seeking a way of protecting the urban fabric and regulating development to enable preservation or improvement of the urban character and retention of historic features of the area.

Of particular note are the following matters.

#### *Validity*

The validity of looking at local heritage significance needs to be more firmly established to give it greater credibility and implementation support. (There is a view that locals do not really "know" the significance of things in their own areas and only the views of professionals should be accorded some status. This view does not place sufficient value upon the care and meaning that local environments possess for their inhabitants.)

#### *Consultation*

Local values can only be elicited if broadly based local input is sought. This has time and cost and implications for heritage study briefs. Consultation also has skills implications for heritage study practitioners and may require an interdisciplinary team approach.

#### *Implementation*

Ways of working are needed that encourage local involvement in analysis, implementation and ongoing custodianship.

#### *Communication*

Improved communication with the public is needed in forms that are readily understandable and encourage interest and involvement in the studies and/or their outcomes.

Artwork offers an avenue of communication that can capture the more ephemeral and non-physical qualities of place. It lends itself to conveying a complex range of information and values in another light to that of a traditional final report. Its ability to be evocative and tap into other mediums of communication may help bring more support for the cause at hand. Response to the Ballarat artworks confirms this can be case.

### *Analysis*

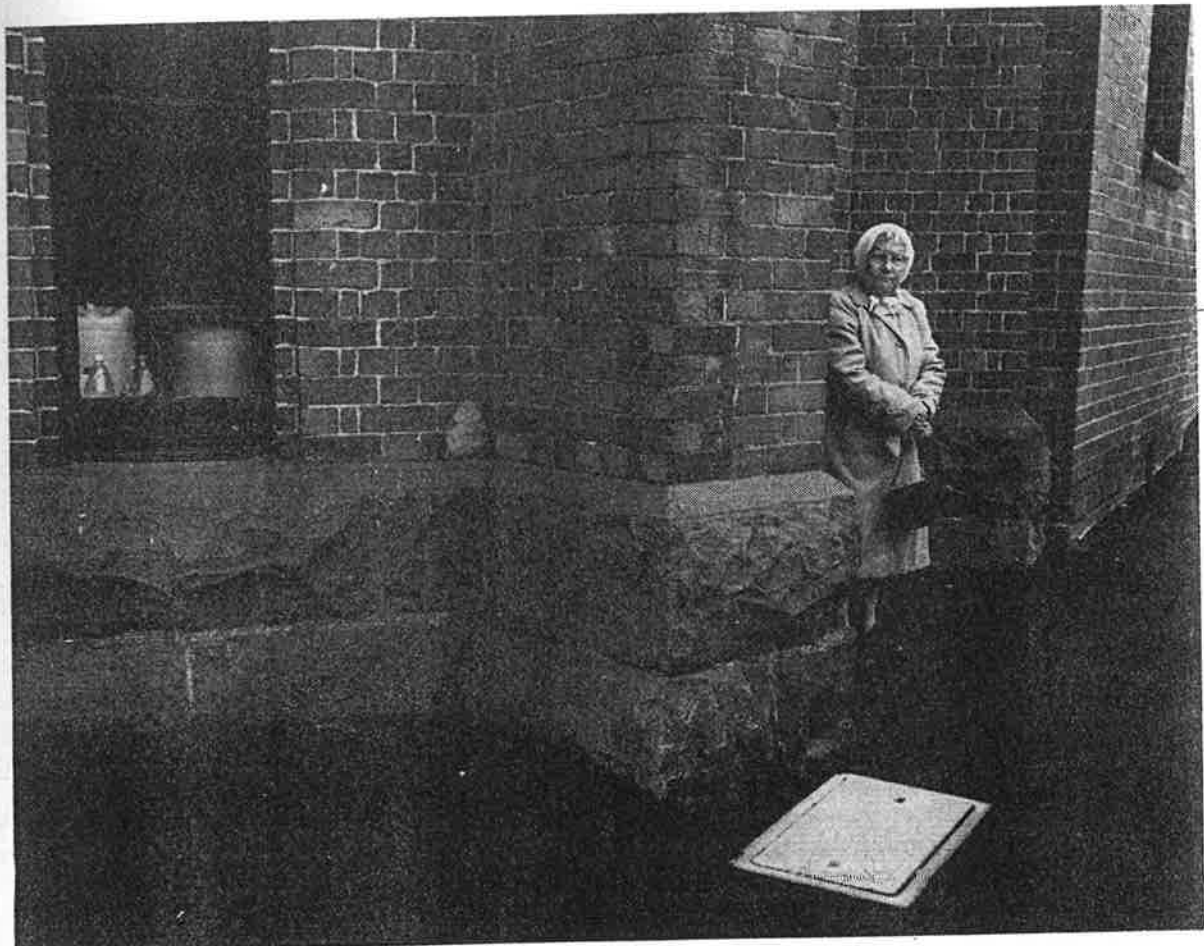
To address local significance, there is a need to identify the existing character of a place and what about it that is appreciated. This is not often in the realm of a heritage practitioner. Skills in urban design and character assessment are needed, and then the analysis needs to be tested against the views of the local community to see if it has been correctly interpreted.

### *Future development*

Guidance on appropriate future development is sought by the community as a way of preserving the positive features of their area and its character. This has implications for the direction and form of heritage study recommendations and their implementation.

### *Linkages and partnerships*

Responding to the wholistic nature of people's interests and values about their place means establishing stronger linkages with planning agencies and other non-heritage sectors of the community, other professional bodies, and government agencies to maximise implementation opportunities.



*Ballarat East Fire Station offers refuge from the rain*

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## *Conclusions*

### *Commitment*

It was evident from this project that a wide range of people in the local community do care deeply about their own neighbourhood and the changes that are taking place. What was also evident was that the valuing of heritage was seen as just one component of this broader attachment to the place itself.

### *Local involvement*

With an ultimate aim of fostering local involvement in ongoing care and custodianship of a place, community involvement in the planning and implementation process is regarded as essential. Ideally it would be a part of the assessment process, contribute to recommendations and review project outcomes, with follow through to implementation and later evaluation.

Depending on circumstances, the level of involvement in studies may be limited. In some circumstances it may be representation on a steering group or inclusion in a reference panel or group. In others it may be much broader, with consultation and participation an essential part of the study content. This can enable input from a wide range of people in the community and strengthen the robustness of the findings in terms of reflecting social values. The form and scope of community input can vary enormously.

The strength of local care and commitment to Ballarat East indicates that an enormous reservoir of energy and talent is available and could potentially be incorporated in ongoing care for the place to retain and build upon its most desirable characteristics and qualities.

### *Urban character*

People are interested in and concerned about the existing and future character of Ballarat East. This was seen as encompassing its identity, land use mix, diversity, higgledy piggedly street layout and building siting, the country atmosphere and abundance of open space and "wild places" and waterways, the surrounding bush, buildings, bluestone work, large old European trees, the network of lanes, the underground waterways and mines, the topography and the historical richness in both stories and physical reminders.

### *Wholistic approach*

The community focus upon urban character and conservation as a whole, rather than the more traditional "heritage" aspects, is one of the most interesting project outcomes. This wholistic perspective is likely to be found in other places and other communities.

It presents the National Trust with the challenge of finding ways of integrating heritage protection processes with broader urban character protection processes.

The incorporation of urban character analysis and assessment is recommended. This may either become a part of "heritage" studies or "heritage" may become a more integrated component of urban character studies.

Local input can assist in identifying those qualities and characteristics that are regarded as special and important to retain because of their local significance. There is then a role for professional analysis and interpretation of urban character. This task can fill the gap between what it is that the community have been able to articulate as valuing, and what the urban character actually is. It can identify the essential elements of that character and propose strategies for its protection and conservation.

#### *Desired future character*

Places are always in transition. With change as a constant, people want some degree of certainty about the type of change that may occur and the impact that may have upon their neighbourhood. The project results indicate that people have clear views about the sorts of changes that are occurring and whether or not these are appropriate and suit the qualities and characteristics of the area.

Whilst the existing urban character may be defined and those aspects that are regarded as valuable identified, there is still the issue of what type of future vision is held for the area. This suggests that the desired future character of the local environment should be described. This can then be used as the basis for appropriate planning and development controls or guidelines, reflecting social values.

The preparation of a statement of desired future character is recommended. It is a commonly used practice in South Australia but less widely used in Victoria. This technique has potential for being a mechanism to signify the community's vision for their place. It can encourage retention and respect for its heritage, characteristics and qualities and influence the form and type of new development.

The development of such a statement of desired future character is primarily a planning matter and requires public input and comment to foster a sense of "ownership" about the results. It is not likely to form part of a heritage study unless the planning and heritage work are closely integrated.

#### *Guidelines for future development*

The next step that local authorities can take is to facilitate appropriate development that is supportive of heritage and the desired future character. The preparation of development guidelines or controls is recommended. In recognition of this ultimate aim, heritage studies should consider framing recommendations that can be supportive of, or contribute to, such guidelines. This would acknowledge a more positive action orientation, and provide guidance on development.

### *Communication*

The lack of understanding of much of the professional heritage jargon could be substantially overcome by using different terminology to make the language and meaning more accessible to the community. The National Trust could consider standardising alternative terminology for future studies to avoid confusion and allow better comparison of results between studies. This could also include some standard ways of phrasing questions to the community. This project found the following expressions useful and comprehensible:

*"What places, features, things or people around East Ballarat capture the spirit / the essence / the heart of Ballarat East?"*

*"Why are they significant or special? Why should they be remembered, celebrated or honoured in the future?"*

*"What "things" in Ballarat East would provide you with a feeling of loss if they were changed or removed?"*

Clarification of the implications of the concept of "levels of significance" is also needed, as there is an implication that as the level "decreases" to local, it matters less that protection be offered. This view would not necessarily be shared by the local community.

Communication processes during the project are important. The audience of each activity or stage of the project should be considered when designing the appropriate communication. Use of artists to assist in evoking responses that would otherwise not be forthcoming is recommended.

The project outcomes need to be communicated in a way that maximises their accessibility and enhances understanding. Whilst formal written reports are a necessary part of communication, they can tend to remain on shelves rather than be utilised. Use of communication techniques such as artworks, quality publications and other media are recommended.



### *Value as a model*

Whilst much would obviously change to suit other circumstances, the following basic ingredients are readily transferable to most projects:

- *that there be local representation in the project team for both relevance and ongoing facilitation of the outcomes*
- *that there be a multi-disciplinary team or access to a range of skills*
- *that a cross section of the local community be involved to represent a range of views*
- *that community consultation be meaningful to that community*
- *that different communication modes be used to better convey the message to a range of audiences*
- *that a proactive approach is taken to urban conservation protection*
- *that there be a lasting project outcome that is owned by the local community*

## ***Recommendations***

These recommendations have been framed in recognition of the different groups that may be able to take action to continue to protect the heritage of Ballarat East. The first set are generally directed at the National Trust (Victoria), with the second set targeting joint National Trust and local authority initiatives. The third set are suggestions for actions that might be pursued more directly at the local or regional authority level. Finally, some suggestions are given for actions that the local community may, in partnership with others, wish to take up to build on this project and further strengthen the heritage and character of Ballarat East.

### ***1. National Trust (Victoria) focus***

#### ***Approach***

- 1.1 That the National Trust seek to tap into the genuine enthusiasm and commitment that many people feel for their local area, including the youth, in order to encourage ongoing interest and protection of heritage
- 1.2 That heritage study briefs be revised to encourage a greater emphasis upon identification of those things of local significance.
- 1.3 That heritage study briefs be revised to encourage processes and structures that are inclusive of local community input which is meaningful to that community, includes a wide cross section of local interests and that encourages local involvement in implementation and ongoing custodianship .
- 1.4 That the time required for meaningful local input be adequately recognised in heritage study budgets and schedules.
- 1.5 That an integrated and wholistic approach be taken that addresses the urban character of an area as an integral part of heritage assessment and protection.
- 1.6 That a range of communication modes be explored to examine the most appropriate ways of reaching the desired audience, both during and after studies, in recognition of the limited appeal of technical reports and the difficulty in raising enthusiasm via this medium.
- 1.7 That terminology used in describing and classifying heritage items be reviewed for community heritage studies, with the intent of standardising terms and ways of asking questions to elicit more useful responses from the public and to help them better understand the purposes of the Trust.
- 1.8 That further research be undertaken into 'levels of significance' with particular regard for the implications for items classified as being of local significance.

### *Skills and partnerships*

- 1.9 That the National Trust seek out opportunities for working in partnership with other groups and agencies on projects in order to build stronger networks, enhance skills and resources, and encourage a broader appreciation of heritage protection and avenues to achieve it.
- 1.10 That multi-disciplinary teams be encouraged to broaden the range of perspectives brought to heritage studies and that local skills and talents be incorporated wherever possible.
- 1.11 That the skills required for local community involvement and consultation be recognised and encouraged within study teams, or sought in partnership with local government, usually via their community development personnel.
- 1.12 That skills training in consultation techniques be considered for heritage study practitioners to better enable them to include consultation within their studies.

### *Artists involvement*

- 1.13 That artists be included as integral members of study teams in recognition of their role and skills in articulating perceptions and values (including their own) in a way that may deepen understanding and appreciation of the project.
- 1.14 That artists be utilised to translate study findings and community social values into artworks or other forms that are evocative of the qualities and characteristics that are valued.
- 1.15 That any artworks that are developed in the study process attempt to:
  - be honestly reflective of community input
  - belong to the community and remain within that community
  - be accessible and understandable
  - have artistic quality and a high standard of craftsmanship
  - hold meaning for the community, and
  - potentially be open ended in nature to allow ongoing work.

## **2. *Joint National Trust and local /regional authority focus***

### *Integration with planning*

- 2.1 That a sense of partnership between the National Trust and responsible local and regional authorities be fostered, linkages encouraged and urban character assessments undertaken jointly where possible.
- 2.2 That the National Trust seek to frame study recommendations to facilitate urban conservation and be of use to planning authorities in guiding future development.

### *Statement of desired future character*

- 2.3 That the National Trust support and contribute to the preparation of statements of desired future urban character as a way of setting a vision for an area that is supportive of social values and clarifying appropriate development.
- 2.4 That professional specialist expertise be used in urban character assessment in order to help translate local perceptions into a form that is compatible with the existing land management systems.

*Support*

- 2.5 That support services be provided to assist proactive responses to urban character conservation and heritage protection, including awareness raising, skills training, technical advice, promotional material and support, and negotiations assistance.

**3. *Local and regional authority focus***

- 3.1 That strategies, policies and guidelines that support retention of existing valued urban character and heritage items and promote appropriate development be developed in response to community heritage studies.
- 3.2 That a proactive approach be taken for protection of heritage and urban character conservation that seeks 'win-win' outcomes for conservation and development.
- 3.3 That the 'fit' between the outcomes and recommendations of this project and existing planning strategies and controls and their implementation (including the Ballarat Town Planning Scheme and Ballarat Region Conservation Strategy) be monitored, amendments incorporated to address identified local community concerns and values, and opportunities for partnerships on projects identified.
- 3.4 That the outcomes and recommendations of this project be utilised as a key resource in framing the proposed Outline Development Plan for Ballarat East and other forward planning activities.
- 3.5 That local authorities be encouraged to prepare a statement of desired future character in conjunction with the local community and National Trust, with regard to the community heritage values of that area, and amend this statement as necessary in response to public comment.
- 3.6 That guidelines be prepared for Ballarat East to encourage appropriate development that reinforces the valued urban character and heritage of the area. The guidelines could address land use, site planning and building design.
- 3.7 That the authorities promote awareness of the subtlety in existing details when implementing physical works such as kerbing, signage, fencing, roadworks, drainage, and encourage

appropriate design and respect for valued elements of the landscape.

- 3.8 That the value of involving artists in planning for the future of their local areas be recognised and encouraged.

**4. *Some suggestions for local action***

- 4.1 Consider nominating Ballarat East for inclusion on the Register of the National Estate as an example of a cultural landscape.
- 4.2 Encourage the development of a walking trail and walking map of the area that identifies special places and qualities that are of community heritage value, for local and tourism interest and benefit.
- 4.3 Investigate the production of a series of postcards, or other publications, that utilise the photographs and poems developed in the project and make them available to a wider audience for tourism and promotion. Use this as an opportunity to forge stronger links between Sovereign Hill/tourism sector and local heritage/arts/community groups.
- 4.4 Implement community based projects to retain and improve as appropriate the character and heritage of Ballarat East, with special opportunities for the involvement and training of unemployed youth.
- 4.5 Work with the Ballarat Region Conservation Strategy "LINCS" project on the development of a network of communal spaces through the Ballarat East area to protect and enhance the open space qualities that are valued by the local community, such as the Yarrowee Creek.
- 4.6 Investigate the establishment of a "Living Museum of Ballarat" along the lines of Melbourne's "Living Museum of the West".
- 4.7 Provide opportunities for residents to come together and continue the process of sharing their stories and feelings about Ballarat East in order to strengthen community development and foster ongoing custodianship.

### *Achievement of project aims*

The four key project aims and the extent to which they have been satisfied are set out below.

- *Identify places, items and qualities valued by the community that they would not want to lose*

Over 200 local people from a range of perspectives have shared their thoughts and feelings about Ballarat East. This has provided a "flavour" of what the total community values, rather than a rigorous description reached by community consensus. The summary findings of the mapping process give a good, and we believe, robust indication of local concerns and values.

- *Identify structures or processes that would support retention of those places*

The role that the planning authorities play in directing the future character of an area have been recognised. Opportunities for closer integration of heritage conservation and urban planning and development have been identified as a framework for retention of special places. The fostering of local community involvement is an essential ingredient for future care of the area.

- *Test the pilot project as a model that the National Trust and other communities may use*

A pilot model was developed and trialled successfully in this project. We believe the principles could be applied to many other communities with the detail varied to suit widely differing circumstances, however further testing is still needed in a range of situations.

- *Promote community valuing of heritage and active participation in its custodianship*

We believe that this project has commenced a process of greater public interest and awareness of Ballarat East, which is a necessary step in building a stronger sense of custodianship and responsibility for conserving one's own place.

Whilst statistics are not available, anecdotes from team members confirm the positive response to this project. Certainly there is a noticeable willingness of other Ballarat residents to now claim some association with the "Easties" after the artworks stage of the project, and see pride in that connection.

The project has formally ended in the field however there is ongoing interest. Team members have a new network of friends and contacts, they are stopped in the street and asked how they are and what is happening in the area - the interest is genuine. Stuart Porteous comments "many friendships were initiated through the workshops ...I still see people down the street and they've asked about the outcome and chat about what they're currently doing. I get the strong sense that they feel their thoughts and feelings were valued."

Many stories have been shared within groups and with the project team. The next step is to see that sharing extend across the community so that others can hear some of the wonderful stories, special memories and understandings that we were privileged to share. This would further foster a sense of custodianship amongst the local community and strengthen community development and cohesiveness.

People are thinking about what might happen from here. There is interest in preparing a walking trail and map, and some enthusiasm to utilise the artworks in postcards or some other promotional manner. There is also a recognition of the timeliness of the project and current planning studies of the area and a hope that the project will be a useful resource to that study and inform its outcomes.

#### *Other achievements*

The project introduced a host of people to the riches of Ballarat East. Networks were established and ideas for future projects generated that may lead to new partnerships in planning, tourism, the arts and community development.

The project has been seen by the community and team members as stage one of an ongoing process. Whether this eventuates will be a real test of the success of the project's structure, as we attempted to develop a process and format that would be open and encouraging of ongoing work. Certainly the interest, care and commitment is there for future projects to build upon.



*Sacred Heart College students express their feelings about their school*

### *Artists reflections*

The following notes were provided by the artists after the project activities had been completed.

#### *Reflections by Paul Lambeth, photographer*

"As a visual Artist/Photographer, my involvement with the East Ballarat Heritage project presented me with opportunities to look beneath the surface of the place defined as East Ballarat. I had a brief glimpse into the life of the people and landscape of East Ballarat.

The local people I came in contact with were inspiring and energetic in their commitment to their local community and environment, treating me to a display of texture and diversity which I feel is rare in urban Australia.

The process of this project has raised important issues. Issues of quality and participation. Issues affecting all communities.

My photographs pay tribute to the rich stories of the people and landscape of East Ballarat."

#### *Reflections of Linda Blake, writer*

"I love this town. I love the 'lazy wind' and the dreary weather and the gorgeous summer days that no-one outside believes in. It doesn't *always* rain here..."

I wasn't born in Ballarat but it feels more a part of me than any other place I've been. I am fiercely protective, always offended when a favourite building or tree disappears...why wasn't I asked? A feeling of no control, of apathy develops when an individual feels they have no say.

The workshops we ran, and everyone involved was an absolute joy to work with, were wonderful places to be heard. To know that your opinion was noticed, accounted for. I've enjoyed this project so much I wonder if it isn't meant to be much harder. Talking to people who have lived and worked in Ballarat East has filled in and made richer, more densely decorated, my own experiences there.

It's a process and it keeps going."



Going back  
Twelve months  
separated me  
from them  
and I searched  
for the  
patchy moss  
cushion that  
Sunshine found  
on unpredictable  
Ballarat days

Surveyor's pegs  
marked out a  
bulldozer's scar  
wide and ugly  
clay rimmed  
wound in the  
ground where I  
sang

And I didn't  
know who  
to be angry at