

# Heritage

ACT Labor is building a better city and a stronger community that respects and values our heritage.

ACT Labor wants Canberra to be a place where our community is familiar with our own stories and proud of our heritage.

Through preserving our significant heritage icons, ACT Labor has ensured protection of Canberra's past and provided opportunities for the people of the ACT to learn more about the history of the nation's capital, both our modern story and the history of the original inhabitants of the Canberra area.

The national capital is a young city by world standards, but our urban heritage stems from a pastoral heritage dating to the 1830s and an Indigenous heritage dating back thousands of years.

The ACT Labor Government has struck the right balance between preservation and progress, to ensure that we protect heritage without stifling the development of our great city.

ACT Labor has committed more than \$14 million for the full restoration of the historic Allen truss Tharwa Bridge and, through our investment in the redevelopment of the Kingston Powerhouse, we have breathed new life into Canberra's oldest public building which is now home to The Canberra Glassworks.

To ensure we have a full appreciation of those Canberra sites important to our heritage, the ACT Labor Government has started an audit of heritage assets under the control of ACT Government agencies.

ACT Labor has also invested in the restoration of important Canberra sites such as the historic Duntroon Dairy and the ACT's oldest marked graves and the Colverwell Graves in Kowen Forest. We have also invested in the documentation and interpretation of pioneer Catholic graves at the Queanbeyan Riverside Cemetery, the resting place of many of the ACT's Catholic pioneers.

To help Canberrans and visitors understand more about our city's heritage, the ACT Labor Government has created Canberra Tracks, three self-drive heritage trails commencing at Mount Ainslie and covering 30 significant sites in Canberra's Indigenous, pastoral and national capital history.

ACT Labor has been able to do all this, and deliver much more, because we have been strong economic managers who have delivered budget surpluses that allow us to invest in the preservation of our heritage.

As we head towards our second century— and with the 20th anniversary of self-government falling in 2009 — the time is right for a renewed focus on our heritage in all of its forms: our stories, our documents, our built heritage and our natural heritage.

**Jon Stanhope**  
Chief Minister

**Katy Gallagher**  
Deputy Chief Minister

## **A Proud Record of Investment in and Support of the ACT's Heritage**

ACT Labor has ensured Canberra's past is celebrated and protected. Through our approach to heritage, the ACT Labor Government has preserved key historic sites across the ACT and provided opportunities for Canberrans and visitors to learn more about our history.

ACT Labor has worked to balance the needs of development and expansion of our city with the protection of our heritage – a heritage of which Canberrans are justifiably proud.

ACT Labor values Canberra's remaining high-quality pioneer structures as well as the many fine examples of innovative architecture from the modern era. We value the Canberra region's natural heritage that is very much a part of modern life in the ACT.

That is why we have made such a strong investment in maintaining our nature parks, heritage sites and community facilities, for the enjoyment and education of Canberrans and visitors.

## **Our Record**

Since it was elected, the ACT Labor Government has made significant investments in the ACT's heritage, including:

- committing more than \$14 million for the full restoration of the historic Allen truss Tharwa Bridge;
- investing \$12 million in the redevelopment of Canberra's oldest public building — the Kingston Powerhouse — which now houses The Canberra Glassworks;
- introducing an audit of heritage assets under the control of ACT Government agencies;
- restoring the historic Duntroon Dairy;
- restoring the Colverwell Graves in Kowen Forest — the oldest marked graves in the ACT. The graves are those of Elizabeth and Margaret Colverwell, who drowned in December 1837, aged 6 and 5;
- the creation of Canberra Tracks — three self-drive heritage trails commencing at Mount Ainslie and covering 30 significant sites in Canberra's Indigenous, pastoral and national capital history.; and
- funding the documentation and interpretation of pioneer Catholic graves at the Queanbeyan Riverside Cemetery — the resting place of many of the ACT's Catholic pioneers.

In the 2008/09 ACT Budget the ACT Labor Government:

- committed more than \$2 million to the restoration of the Albert Hall;
- provided \$50,000 for restoration of Yarralumla Nursery's historic glasshouses; and
- provided \$136,000 for capital upgrades to Tuggeranong Homestead.

## **Moving Forward**

### **Preserving our Heritage Buildings**

ACT Labor will continue to restore and develop the Kingston Foreshore Arts Precinct by developing a new arts facility in the historic Fitters' Workshop next door to the Canberra Glassworks. A re-elected ACT Labor Government will invest \$1 million in capital funding for the first stage of this work.

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will also provide \$200,000 to conserve the historic cottage and English Garden in Weston Park in liaison with the Heritage Unit.

### **Heritage audits**

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will build on the current audit of heritage assets to look at new ways of managing heritage buildings under the ACT Government's control.

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will look at issues relating to the management of heritage buildings including current condition, regulations and policies dealing with the ongoing care of buildings and capital and maintenance works.

### **Heritage Fund**

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will explore the establishment of a new Heritage Fund which would be used for the upkeep of the ACT's important heritage infrastructure.

### **Heritage cemeteries**

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will commit \$185,000 to develop an online resource to document and interpret the Canberra region's pioneer graves and cemeteries, including cemeteries on public land and family burial grounds on rural properties. This valuable work will ensure we have a thorough record of our pioneer graves, before headstones deteriorate and existing physical records are lost.

### **Learning about our Heritage**

In the lead-up to Canberra's centenary in 2013 a re-elected ACT Labor Government will develop a curriculum unit on Canberra history, for use in ACT public schools.

### **New Heritage Signage**

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will build on the success of the Canberra Tracks program and commit an additional \$200,000 for new interpretive signage and public displays that describe important Canberra stories.

This will include \$100,000 in the lead up to the Centenary in 2013 for signage relating to historic sites and places where significant Canberra stories took place; and \$100,000 to support new interpretive signage at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve.

### **Capturing our Golden Stories**

Since 2005 a highlight of Canberra's birthday celebrations each March has been the awarding of Canberra Gold awards to men and women who have lived in the national capital for more than 50 years.

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will commit \$20,000 a year for three years for a program of recording oral histories of a selection of Canberra Gold recipients.

### **Preserving Built Heritage in Private Care**

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will expand the heritage advice service with an additional \$10,000 per year for three years to provide additional advice to individuals and community groups who need guidance to conserve the built heritage assets under their care.

This service provides free advice from a heritage architect on the renovation and conservation of private buildings in the ACT.

### **Celebrating our Heritage**

The ACT Heritage Festival is an important way to engage more Canberrans and visitors with the richness and diversity of our local heritage. A re-elected ACT Labor Government will invest \$60,000 in new funding to reinvigorate the ACT Heritage Festival in the lead up to the celebration of our Centenary in 2013.

### **Finalise the reprint of *The Bush Capital***

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will finalise the reprint of *The Bush Capital* by December 2008 to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the selection of Canberra as the site for the national capital by members of the 1908 Australian Parliament.

*The Bush Capital* was first published 25 years ago as a concise history of the establishment of Canberra as the national capital. The publication focuses on the period between the 1890s and 1913, when the Foundation Stones were laid and the city's name announced by Lady Denman.

## **International Recognition**

The ACT Labor Government has taken the first steps to gain international recognition for our Bush Capital by researching the criteria for programs such as UNESCO Biosphere Reserves or World Heritage listing.

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will explore the options for gaining international recognition for our Bush Capital and, should a suitable option be identified, will pursue a nomination prior to the Centenary in 2013.