



ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.

239 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne 3000

RHSV Barbara Nixon Award Nomination

Ian David Wight

5 March 2022

Ian joined the RHSV and the Heritage Committee in 2017, the year after the committee was set up, and has since made an outstanding contribution to the RHSV's defence of heritage as Deputy Chair of the Committee.

Ian brought a wealth of planning and heritage knowledge and experience to the Committee and thus to the RHSV. Armed with a Master of Arts in Geography from Edinburgh University and a Master of Civic Design (Town Planning) from Liverpool University, he built a formidable reputation in planning and heritage in his adopted home of Victoria from 1974. He undertook major heritage studies for the Cities of Ballarat, Colac-Otway and Yarra as well as for the Victorian Heritage Council. From 1990 to 1997, he was Conservation Manager, National Trust of Australia (Victoria). In 1998, he was named Heritage Advisor Co-ordinator, Heritage Victoria, and continued in senior positions with Heritage Victoria until his retirement in 2014.

Ian had long been recognised as a Full International Member of Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), which works with UNESCO on the evaluation of world heritage. He joined the Executive Committee in 2011 and served as a state representative for Victoria and then as Treasurer, before stepping down in 2017.

On the RHSV Heritage Committee since 2017, Ian has been a very active and committed member, bringing a wealth of professional knowledge to our work across a range of issues. He has made particular contributions and drafted Committee submissions in a number of areas.

It was largely owing to his professional knowledge that we discovered that the Corkman Hotel had been set up for development by a state government Design and Development Overlay that called for a twelve-storey building on the site contradicting the Heritage Overlay supposed to protect it. Recently, in a hard-hitting letter to the Age (22 February 2022), he pointed out that the John Curtin Hotel, now under threat, is in the same situation: it is covered by a Design and Development Overlay calling for an eight-storey building!

Ian has had a special involvement with our campaigns to save the heritage shopping strips of inner Melbourne, many of which are similarly threatened with Design and Development Overlays. He led the successful struggle to preserve the North Fitzroy Queens Parade shopping strip, which was threatened with six to eight storey development. The submission he drafted for the RHSV argued

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effectively for setbacks to limit the extent of façadism characterising many other designated Major Activity Centres.

Ian has been passionate in fighting to obtain nomination to the Victorian Heritage Register for the Tanner Street industrial complex in Richmond, home to the Australian Knitting Mills and many other iconic Australian clothing and textile brands. He recently obtained a victory in preventing the complex from being designated part of the Swan Street Major Activity Centre, which would have been a major incitement to intense development.

Ian has been committed to fighting these battles as a proud member of the RHSV and he has been an invaluable member of the team. He richly deserves the Barbara Nixon Award.

Charles Sowerwine and Judith Smart.