

REPORT BY CHARLES GLANVILLE

STRUCTURE OF THE SEMINAR

The morning session could be categorised as the “theory” component with the 2nd afternoon session as the “practical” component. The quality of the speakers was first class with each not only outlining the parameters of the topic under discussion, but raising issues with elements of the topics or giving considered opinions of directions which the heritage aspects being discussed by them, might take.

MORNING SESSION

1. PETER MOULD: OPENING ADDRESS

As an introduction, I found the historical overview of interest including:

- The relatively young age of the heritage protection Acts in NSW when compared with other countries.
- The thematic basis of listings in NSW, Macquarie era, etc.
- Numbers of annual listings (approx 30) and total listings in NSW (approx 1500)

As well as his observations that:

- Design is of all importance
- CMPs need to be concise, articulate and provide guidelines for decision making.

2. MARY-LYNNE TAYLOR & MICHAEL NEUSTEIN: SETTING THE STAGE - AN OVERVIEW OF HERITAGE POLICY AND PRACTICE

The overview of heritage protection was very interesting including observations that:

- We need to watch out for “over protection”
- The use of Heritage agreements is highly advisable where State-listed buildings are involved. Early contact with the Minister can produce a good heritage outcome.
- Where “local” listings apply, voluntary planning agreements are an effective method of producing desirable heritage outcomes.
- Issues which need consideration in the future are:
 - a) Is “heritage” for the elite
 - b) What should be done with, e.g. fibro houses of the 1950s
 - c) How to alleviate cost burden which falls on owners of heritage items, e.g. transfer of FSR.
 - d) Tools for management of heritage need to be carefully assessed. Councils must avoid use of pseudo lists. Re-assessment needs to be part of the process.

3. PHILLIP THALIS: INTERVENTIONS - PROCESSES OF CHANGE

Cultural continuity is more important than “frozen history”. “Buildings” are not frozen and every new building is an example of change and more importantly, engagement with change. New buildings can add layers of richness. The creation of new settings can add to the urbanity of a place. Looking ahead - not always a consideration with “heritage” issues in the past - as well as backwards at the same time, will enrich and extend cultural values when handled effectively.

4. PAUL RAPPAPORT: THE FUTURE OF HERITAGE MANAGEMENT IN NSW

I found many of Paul’s suggestions to improve the “relationships” of heritage with the broad community to be of value, including:

- Collapse of all Heritage Acts into a single legislative instrument.
 - Clear communication of heritage values to non-heritage persons.
 - Factoring of costs and future viability profiles into listings.
 - Key aspects of listings must be clearly stated, e.g. pressed ceilings, with structured policing and auditing after listing.
 - Listing bodies should be independent of management.
 - Reconsideration of the composition of the Heritage Council.
 - The promotion of Heritage Agreements between developers and Government.
 - Formal accreditation of all heritage consultants.
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AFTERNOON SESSION

INTRODUCTION

Presentations by speakers in the afternoon sessions with particular experience in building types from three periods - Federation, Inter-war and Post WWII, highlighted a range of buildings which might not yet be considered to be of particular "heritage" consideration but which should be studied with that future consideration in mind.

The argument was effectively put that the growing understanding of the fundamental principles governing the designs of each type was the best way of ensuring preservation of the best examples of each type prior to 'age' per se becoming the initial impetus.

Noting that heritage is more than preservation and now includes issues of sustainability, income and re-use, further arguments were also put for the need for fundamental reconsideration of legislative controls relating to heritage consideration of buildings.

1. **HOWARD TANNER: ACHIEVING A FUTURE FOR MAJOR AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE BUILDINGS**
Heritage needs to be more than a conservation movement. Use, income and future role - adaptive re-use - have to be considered in conjunction with conservation.

As other influences, such as sustainability, etc, have come into play to the extent that the existing approvals system - the layer cake system of approvals - needs upheaval.

Good design can speak firmly with intervention with the strength of the original heritage fabric enhanced by the new components and the adoption of re-use.

2. **TREVOR HOWELL: FEDERATION OF FAKERY - DIFFERENTIATING THE GENUINE FROM THE IMITATION**

Trevor promoted the thesis of Howard Tanner for well designed 'interventions' which enhanced the original design by showing how poor 'imitations' can destroy the quality of the original.

He noted that the great command of the architectural language of the style which was displayed by original architects in their academic interpretations from pattern books, was usually totally diluted by insensitive, later additions which meekly endeavoured to imitate the original.

3. **JAMES PHILLIPS: INTER-WAR STYLE - ARCHITECTURE IN NSW 1918-1941**

I found this session of particular interest as my architectural training seemed to jump from Federation/Californian bungalow era straight into the international modernist influences of the early 50s. This presentation effectively filled in the gaps between 1915 and 1950 for me.

The exuberance of the commercial buildings of the 1920's was put into context. The demonstration of the variety of domestic styles imported from overseas between the Wars demonstrated that in the future, heritage considerations need to be directed to more than just 'Federation' houses in preserving the built history of houses in NSW.

4. **JENNIFER HILL: POST WORLD WAR II ARCHITECTURE - THE EMERGENCE OF MODERNISM**

This study of what could be categorised as essentially contemporary buildings viewed from a historical perspective, was not only academically enlightening but emphasised that the best way to ensure future preservation of contemporary buildings is to understand the planning and design principles inherent in their construction.

Too often in the past, buildings were not considered relevant until they were old. Later considerations revealed that 'heritage' very often was simply preserving the last one standing with excellent examples of the building type already demolished.

Rigorous study applied to contemporary buildings can ensure early listing of excellent examples of current buildings.
