

RICHMOND, TASMANIA
and the Richmond Cultural Resource Management Plan.

A submission to be presented at the Australian Government Productivity Commission's
hearings on **Conservation of Historic Heritage Places**
at Hobart on Friday August 12th 2005.

The Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) recognized the heritage value of Richmond as a whole by inclusion of the historic town in the Register of the National Estate.

On 31st July 1996, following an announcement by the then Chair of the AHC, the Commission wrote to the Clarence City Council (CCC) recommending that it initiate a thorough study of Richmond Historic Town, to assess and then, as an outcome of the study, to conserve the cultural heritage of the town ship and its elements.

Subsequently, funding was provided by and through the AHC and CCC for the study and outcome plan, which was named the Richmond Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP).

In late October 1999, as part of stage 1 of the CRMP study, three community workshops were conducted and attended by a cross-section of Richmond residents totaling some 15% of the township's population. The community identified issues threatening Richmond's cultural, social and heritage values and proposed solutions to remove such threats.

In June 2001 the Richmond CRMP was published and made available to key decision makers and interested parties in either hard copy or on electronic media.

Volume 1 of the CRMP reported "Key Issues and Recommendations" and outcomes of the CRMP study were detailed in Part 5 of the Report under 8 main headings:-

- Townscape
- Streetscape
- Signage
- Traffic Management
- River Management
- Heritage Promotion
- Development Control
- Community Involvement

The Report notes the CRMP's "recommendations are a collective responsibility of the Federal, State and Local Government bodies as well as the community". However, as at August 2005, to a community observer, it appears that few of the CRMP recommendations have been implemented or even initiated.

Indeed, in some key issue areas, the evidence will show that matters have become worse due to the apparent unwillingness of Clarence City Council and/or the Tasmanian Government to enforce current planning and traffic requirements or laws, let alone adopt and implement new controls and guidelines as recommended by the CRMP. In support of my contention, I offer the following examples:-

- **Signage:**

The Richmond Planning Scheme 1993 requires that all commercial signs greater than 0.1 square metres in area be subject of a development application to the Council. In the 13 years since Richmond was incorporated into the Clarence City Council municipality, research indicates that less than 5 signs have been the subject of a development application, yet business signage in Richmond has burgeoned. This issue has regularly and frequently been raised with the Council by the Council's own Richmond Advisory Committee and other community members, including myself, but Council has taken little action to enforce its own Planning Scheme (see photographic evidence supplied with this submission as .jpg files).

- **Traffic Management**

- 1) Franklin Street Car park. Despite recent expenditure on a new bus shelter and toilet facility, which opened in late 2004, effective action has not been taken to encourage/enforce usage of the car park. While Richmond's historic buildings and streets are regularly choked with buses, mobile homes, campervans, 4 wheel drive vehicles and cars, the Franklin Street car park (just 80 metres from Richmond's main street) remains virtually empty (see photographic evidence supplied with this submission as .jpg files).
- 2) Richmond By-Pass. Despite CRMP recommendations that Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the bypass be constructed by June 2005, there is no indication that Richmond will **ever** obtain a bypass. Indeed, on 4th October 2001, 4 months after the CRMP was released, and just 2 years after the CRMP community consultations which supported its construction after 25 years of inaction on this matter, Minister Paul Lennon (now Premier) was recorded in Hansard as saying "there is considerable expense involved in a by-pass of Richmond and quite frankly I think that if I went up and down the commercial areas of the historic village of Richmond and asked all the people the direct question about whether they wanted a by-pass at Richmond I do not think many hands would go up". However, in ****July 2001**** the Mayor of Clarence City Council, Cathy Edwards, is reported in the media as saying, "If an alternative route can't be provided, there will soon be nothing left of Richmond. The fabric is being worn away. It's an insidious thing" and "It's been recognized for far too long that heavy traffic is a serious threat to the Richmond Bridge and historic buildings in the town. Council's recent investigations confirm this, with a number of heritage registered buildings showing signs of structural failure".

It would appear that while local and state government argue with each other and do very little or nothing to implement the CRMP, Richmond's social, cultural and heritage fabric continues to deteriorate, under the pressure of local, interstate and overseas visitor activity (257,000 interstate and overseas visitors visited, stayed or passed through

Richmond in the year to June 2004). There are many more examples of inaction by the appropriate authorities in respect to protecting and conserving Richmond township's heritage values, which need to be highlighted or exposed, but the limited time available to prepare and present this submission restricts the opportunity to do so.

In summary, all levels of Government appear to continue to be focused on process rather than outcomes, so in this case one might argue that "while Government fiddles, Richmond 'burns' ".



Notes on the contributor of this submission

Barry Chapman lives at 18, Wellington Street, Richmond, Tasmania 7025, and has lived in the Richmond area for 18 of the past 24 years.

Barry has spent the past 40 years in business, within a range of companies from SMEs to multi-billion dollar trans-nationals, in management positions from junior levels to State Manager, General Manager and Managing Director. A former Treasurer of Business East (Tasmania), he was appointed to the Manufacturing Industry Council by the former Premier of Tasmania, the Hon. Jim Bacon.

In 1985, in association with other local families, he and his wife Dr. Joan Abbott-Chapman, purchased the defaced and damaged former Bridge Inn and restored it to its 'former glory', after researching archives, and using 1880s photographic and documentary materials as restoration guidelines. (See the CRMP Volume 2, pages 69 & 70, with its complimentary report on the outcome of this restoration). From 1985 to 1987 Joan and Barry operated the business 'Old Times of Richmond' in the restored Bridge Inn.

Barry Chapman is currently Secretary of the Richmond Residents' Association, but this submission is made in his capacity as a concerned, individual resident.