

**Submission
No 119**

INQUIRY INTO REVIEW OF THE HERITAGE ACT 1977

Organisation: Miss Porter's House Museum, National Trust NSW

Date Received: 26 June 2021

Miss Porter's House is the only National Trust property in Newcastle and was given to the Trust by Hazel Porter in 1997.

Ostensibly a simple Edwardian free standing house, the recent Significance Assessment undertaken by museum experts, shows the national significance of the house and its collection as it represents a living snapshot of life in twentieth century Newcastle. The report recommends nomination of the MPH documentary collection to the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register of documentary heritage of national significance.

This example demonstrates the importance of recognizing heritage at various levels, importantly the local level.

Heritage recognition should be a proactive undertaking rather than a defence against potential loss.

Heritage at the local level demonstrates the capacity to link parts of the community together, to build social cohesion based on a shared understanding of the past, an understanding that respects the diversity of Australian history, before and after colonisation.

Local heritage provides opportunities for volunteering, for the formation of community partnerships and and the development of local projects.

Local heritage provides economic benefits by encouraging tourism, by way of property and other bequests and by the local maintenance of the heritage facility or place.

The review of the Act should reflect these day to day benefits to local communities.