EDITORIAL

This issue of Historic Environment is devoted to selected and edited papers from the Central Goldfields Conference, which was jointly sponsored by Australia ICOMOS and the Victorian Historic Buildings Council. The conference, held over five days in mid-August 1988, traversed the central goldfields region of Victoria taking in large regional centres and small country towns, historic landscapes and mining relics and sites.

Participants came from most states and the U.S.A. Speakers represented a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds - architects, architectural social and mining historians, archaeologists, engineers, lawyers, conservation planners, geographers, agricultural scientists, community representatives, academics, educationists and government officials.

The conference was important for local people, for it has shown them that the rest of Australia actually cares about the heritage of a region such as this, and that we are all in debt to them for the burden of stewardship which is entailed in living and working amidst important evidence of the past.

The papers presented here express the concern for that heritage by discussing the historical context, sequence of cultural occupation, comparative context with other parts of Australia, site identification problems, rehabilitation issues, mining claim speculators, regional planning framework, tourism development and interpretation possibilities.

In selecting the available papers for publication in this issue we did not attempt inclusiveness, since a significant number of speakers did not provide them (others were in note form only); instead, those papers exploring two core themes were chosen. We hope this is an appropriate way of presenting conference papers in a journal of this size. The conference summary by David Dunstan refers to most of the contributors.

It is our hope that these papers reaffirm that the central goldfields region of Victoria is a place of cultural importance to the nation.

Cover Illustration: Prince of Wales Headframe Carshalton Reef. (Photo: G. White).