



ABOVE: Harwood's Cottage Café and Quindalup Post Office, now run as a café and bed & breakfast



ABOVE: Moore's Building, Fremantle, now used as an art gallery and café. Image courtesy of Fremantle Arts Centre. Photograph by Isabel Kruger

As the owner of a State Registered property, you have a rare asset of State significance that has a story of its own. This is a valuable point of difference that gives you a business edge.

What you do to market your heritage property depends on your aims. Many owners of heritage places feel a great sense of pride and attachment to their properties and are keen to simply share the place's story with the broader community.

If you are operating your heritage property as a business, for example, a bed & breakfast, café, restaurant, bar, retail space or art gallery, then heritage gives you a unique and valuable selling point – one that distinguishes your business from the competition.

This information sheet will offer ideas on how to use heritage to your business advantage.

Maximising the resources of the State Heritage Office

In order to optimise your heritage asset, the first thing to do is to learn as much as you can about your property. This will help you understand its significance and how it fits into the story of our State's history.

Assessment document: The Assessment Document, included as part of this package, is the official history of your place and explains why it is of State significance.

'Researching Heritage Places': This brochure provides an outline of the available sources of information and how to make the most of them, including accessing local history collections, private journals, newspaper clippings and historical images.



ABOVE: The old stables at Duke's Inn, Northam, have been converted to accommodation

inHerit: Accessed from the State Heritage website, inHerit combines descriptive and historical information and images on heritage places on local government and State registers. It can be used to research and point to places of historical interest and significance close to your own property.

Plaques: The Heritage Council has a plaques program to recognise and celebrate places entered in the State Register. You can register your interest to receive a stainless steel plaque that tells the story of your heritage place, which can be prominently displayed on your property.

Virtual plaque: A virtual plaque is also available and can be used to promote the heritage significance of your place through your website or emails. The virtual plaque will link to the State Heritage Office inHerit database of heritage places, with more information on your property.

How to use this information

Here are some quick and practical ideas on how to use the information you have collected about your property:

- Develop a map showing other heritage places around your property – offering information on a local walk trail on your brochure or website will enhance, for instance, a stay at your bed & breakfast.
- Spin a good yarn – is there a ghost story, secret room or hidden passage associated with your property? If so, then incorporate the story into the marketing, and make it a key selling point of your business.

- Cross-promote with other heritage businesses in the area – if you run a café, is there an art gallery or gift shop which is housed in a heritage building close by? You can promote each other's businesses and even share marketing costs.
- Focus on an anniversary relating to your heritage property to create an event, celebration or angle for a media story.

Working with local organisations

Historical societies and interest groups

Historical societies can help you research your heritage property. They can also offer useful leads and a wealth of information on the history of the local area, and how your property fits into that story.

Historical societies and organisations like the Art Deco Society of WA, formed around a specific interest area, coordinate all sorts of events, lectures, tours, heritage walks and social events.

Connecting with interest groups like these could potentially see your place added to information they distribute. They may even use your business or venue as part of their activities.

Local government

Local governments can also help. A community engagement or heritage officer will be able to tell you about initiatives or programs you can be part of.

Heritage walks

Heritage walks are usually developed according to a theme, and can be self-guided walks based on maps or online information, or led by a local historian or historical society. Having your heritage place included in those routes can raise the profile of your business and increase patronage.

Heritage events

A number of local governments, historical societies and organisations run events to celebrate heritage. This includes the annual National Trust Heritage Festival, Heritage Perth's Perth Heritage Days and Open House Perth. Consider nominating your heritage place to be a part of such events. This may involve opening part or all of your property to the public.

Media as a tool

Media can be very useful in helping promote and market your heritage place. The most accessible media outlet is your local newspaper which is always looking for interesting local stories. You may also consider approaching radio or television outlets, particularly holiday, food or lifestyle programs.

Be clear about what you want to achieve in approaching media and ensure you have a good 'pitch' ready. However, you should be aware that the media will cover the story as it sees fit, which could mean a different angle, an objective review, or as part of another story.

THINK BIG

Western Australian Heritage Awards

The annual WA Heritage Awards celebrate the outstanding contribution of individuals and organisations to heritage in Western Australia, as well as highlighting conservation, adaptive reuse, heritage tourism and interpretation projects. Finalists and award winners are heavily promoted in the media and throughout the year by the State Heritage Office. This can provide excellent exposure for your business.

Linking to the tourism industry

Local

Most regions have a visitors centre which offers information on accommodation and things to see and do including tours, sightseeing, walking trails, shopping and restaurants. Connecting with your local visitors centre provides a direct connection to visitors to your area.

Regional

Your Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) is responsible for marketing your region to domestic and international consumers, travel trade, media and business. Contact your RTO to see if you can be part of any marketing relating to heritage tourism experiences.



ABOVE: Main Pump Station, Kununurra, now run as a restaurant

State, national and international

Tourism Western Australia (TWA) is the State Government agency responsible for promoting Western Australia as a tourist destination. Connecting with TWA's marketing programs will help you market your heritage place outside of WA to international tourism professionals and media.

The Tourism Council of WA (TCWA) is the peak body representing tourism businesses, industries and regions in Western Australia. It also coordinates the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program, which provides an assurance that businesses commit to professionalism. This is invaluable if you are working to establish your enterprise as a professionally-run tourism business.