



Heather Butler, MP

Labor Member for Lyons

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Volunteers Praised for Convict Site Restoration

Volunteers from four continents have helped to collect bricks, remove weeds and lime-wash walls to prepare one of Tasmania's major convict sites for nomination to the World Heritage List.

Labor Member for Lyons Heather Butler today said overseas visitors were among more than 150 volunteers to assist contractors and Parks and Wildlife Service staff at the Darlington probation station on Maria Island.

Inspecting the restoration project today, Ms Butler said it was a truly co-operative project.

"I'd like to especially thank the many volunteers, including dedicated Tasmanians, who have worked tirelessly on this project," she said.

"Conservation Volunteers Australia participants from Taiwan, Mexico, Canada, Denmark, Scotland as well as Australia have worked with school children and locals on a range of tasks.

"As well as making repairs and doing a general clean-up, the volunteers and PWS staff have returned the majority of the Darlington buildings to a uniform lime-wash finish.

"They have also helped to catalogue and relocate the island's movable cultural heritage collection."

The \$500,000 Priority Asset Maintenance Project was funded by the State Government.

Ms Butler said that since work started in March last year the transformation had been remarkable.

"The conservation works help give a better understanding of how each building fitted into the probation settlement and how the community of officers and 600 convicts functioned from 1842 to 1850," she said.

"They help us understand a little better the complexities of the convict system in Van Diemen's Land and the rest of Australia."

The Darlington probation station is among six Tasmanian sites in a serial listing of 11 convict Australian convict sites nominated for World Heritage Listing. The other Tasmanian convict sites are: Port Arthur and the Coal Mines on the Tasman Peninsula; the Cascade Female Factory at South Hobart; and the Brickendon and Woolmers properties outside Longford.