By the Minister for Education and Science, and Member for Wannon, Mr Malcolm Fraser

The historic Court House building at Port Fairy is to be preserved 'at all costs' by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

In deciding this, the Trust's Council has declared the preservation of the building to be of national importance.

It is pleasing indeed to see once again the result of the Trust's work in its objective of acquiring, maintaining and managing suitable buildings, objects or sites for the purpose of preserving them for posterity.

No doubt the new status of the Court House will add to the interest of those who find great enjoyment and stimulation in visiting a place like Port Fairy, which is one of our most historic towns.

The old Court House - which still houses the Port Fairy Court and provides some office space for the Police - was built in 1859-60 by Mr J. Mason, a contractor of Port Fairy.

A report prepared for the Trust's Survey and Identification Committee likens the state of preservation and design quality to the Portland Court House, which is also classified 'A'.

The report says, 'Over the years the (Port Fairy) Court House has been virtually untouched and remains a superb example of an early court house...'

There had been little change inside, except for the fitting of fluorescent tubes. Furniture is, with the exception of some recent wooden benches, all in keeping with the rest of the building and appears to be the original.

Visitors calling to inspect the fine quality volcanic stone building will have plenty to see as there are 39 other buildings earmarked under various categories of preservation by the Trust.

The Historical Societies of Warrnambool and Port Fairy are now organising a tour to Warrnambool and district from March 8 - 10 taking in these areas which are some of the earliest settled parts of Victoria.
I congratulate the Trust on this new step which will I feel sure contribute to the Trust's stated objective to educate the public and stimulate their interest in places and things which are of national or local importance because of educational, historic, architectural, traditional and other reasons. An important aim is to make these places readily accessible to the public.