

ic properties cost a large amount of money to restore and maintain.

It is the price we pay as a community and as a civilisation for the continued enrichment of our lives through our connection to the past.

The City of Greater Bendigo is fortunate indeed to have the opportunity to add another fine historic property to its portfolio, which includes such iconic buildings as the old Town Hall, and the Shamrock Hotel.

As Anthony Radford notes, the community consensus is that Fortuna should remain in public ownership.

Therefore a use must be found for it which is financially viable.

So far, two different potential uses have been suggested. Cr Kevin Gibbins is on record as favouring a health facility.

Another idea, favoured by the Villa Fortuna Action Group, proposes a community arts complex.

Mr Carter is of the opinion that the idea of an arts centre is "romantic and fanciful and totally unrealistic".

No-one would argue that another health facility in Bendigo would not be a good thing.

However, such a facility could be purpose built - and, indeed, would better ~~suit its purpose for being so.~~

But the main problem with the health facility idea is that it does not, and can not, maximise the greatest attribute which this unique building offers - its pulling power.

Developed appropriately, Fortuna Villa could be a goldmine, yet again.

*Beverley Carter,
Bendigo.*