



16 September 2008

## **Understanding Our Need for a Sense of Place ~ National Trust (NSW) Conference.**

The history of settlement in Australia has been enriched by immigrant populations, and their attempts to bring some of the old country to their new home. Whether it is building Churches, planting familiar trees or living in mock Tuscan villas, new immigrants have always felt the need to create a sense of place with which they can identify.

Whilst today we value our multicultural influences, transition is never smooth. New immigrants have often encountered a tribal-like clash of cultures from sections of the existing community who fear their 'sense of place' is being eroded.

The National Trust's NSW 'Sense of Place' Conference (22 Sept) will examine how 'sense of place' and identity are core to an individual's notion of belonging and how an unfamiliar environment can be an alienating experience for new immigrants.

This year's conference features speakers from a diverse range of community groups, discussing Australian places that hold historical and cultural significance to their communities. See conference program attached.

Key-note speaker Silma Ihram has been at the frontline of the culture clash, through her work to establish Muslim schools in Australia.

Silma is an Anglo-Australian convert to Islam and mother of 6 children. With a foot in both camps, she will discuss the importance of maintaining a sense of place for Muslims living in Australia and her frustration over her own difficulties in establishing a Muslim school.

### **The National Trust Sense of Place Conference**

**Date:** Monday 22 September 2008  
**Where:** National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill  
**Time:** 9am – 5pm

Media wishing to attend please contact National Trust NSW Communications Manager, Kathy Scott on 0415 764 159