

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TASMANIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH
ASSOCIATION HELD IN THE ROAL SOCIETY ROOM, TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND
ART GALLERY, ON TUESDAY 14 AUGUST AT 8PM.

Present: The President, Caroline Homer, in the chair and about 55 members and friends.

Minutes: The minutes of both the June and July meetings were read and approved.

Business: The President referred to the recent successful excursion to New Farm, Moonah, and to the forthcoming program of talks at Port Arthur; the Australian 'Museum of the World' committee was seeking nominations for its register.

Speaker: The speaker tonight was Pam Sharpe, a Professor of History at the University of Tasmania. Her major professional writing concerned Britain's industrial revolution, but since coming to Tasmania in 2006 she had developed interests in local history. Such was the background to the topic she now offered, 'An Historical Atlas of Tasmania: Projects and Plans'.

Professor Sharpe began by remarking that some time back Henry Reynolds had urged on her that there should be a new Atlas of Tasmania, succeeding that published in 1965. All other States had thus moved, using electronic technology. Extant earlier maps, now largely in process of transfer from the Lands Department to the Archives Office, offered rich source material; many of these items had been digitised, as a current display at Service Tasmania reveals. The aim of her project was not merely to make such items accessible, but to enrich cartographic items relating to particular sites with further interpretative materials, using GIS technology. One channel of approach could be via the digitised version of the *Companion to Tasmanian History*; another mode would be for contact via mobile phone or ipod. The National Broadband network offered such quick downloading as the project would demand. Early tests had confirmed the viability of proposed delivery techniques. The site offered tonight as an example of what might be done was the Hunter street area, Hobart. Throughout the talk were displayed maps pertaining to this locale.

Already the project had brought into play a very wide range of expertise—those skills (coming largely but not entirely from the University of Tasmania) including history, geography, art, architecture, engineering, information systems, and so on. Local institutions having input included TMAG and LINC; from interstate, the National Library of Australia, and the State Library of New South Wales. Further collection of photographs and other supplementary material might come, for example, from local historical societies and museums.

Turning to more detail apropos Hunter Street, Professor Sharpe spoke of its history back to the 1820s, the structures first of wood but soon supplanted by stone. One remarkable building was the so-called Iceworks, that function dating from 1903, but earlier the site had been used for decades as a rabbit store by the same family business. Early maps showed not only buildings actually on site, but also foreshadowed future plans, often unfulfilled and to be echoed by later generations.

Obviously, the project would require funding, although not necessarily of massive order. This very modesty had a downside, however, as University funding now called for large-scale, grandly 'performing' ventures. However, appropriate applications had been made, with hope for the best.

After a vigorous question-session, and thanks from the President to the speaker, the meeting closed at 9pm.

Michael Roe for Secretary

Caroline Homer, President