

FOSTERING THE VALUE OF PLACE



Secretary's foreword

*Amplified 2006, APRA masterclass with Dave Faulkner of the Hoodoo Gurus
Photo by Thomas Moore*

This year has been a year of consolidation for the tourism, arts and environment portfolio. The Department, together with its eight divisions, has been working to finalise its first Corporate Plan and to maximise the benefit to the State of having the diversity of the tourism, arts and environment portfolio under one umbrella organisation.

The purpose of the Department of Tourism, Arts and the Environment

The Department has responsibility for the natural and cultural assets for which this State is renowned and in which creativity abounds. The work of the Department is strategic as well as technical, long-term as well as reactive and overall, always mindful of its important role and impact on the lives of Tasmanians and the Tasmanian community.

The Department's people are professional, dedicated and share the values that underpin those assets for which we are custodians and that creativity which we seek to nurture and which contribute daily to Tasmanians' enjoyment of their island.

The value of place

The Department of Tourism, Arts and the Environment, across its divisions, plays an important role in promoting that value of place. At the core of all we do is respect for and acknowledgement of Tasmania's Aboriginal culture, heritage and history; a role which we have met across the Department with increasing vigour in recent years.

The ongoing protection and promotion of Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage, culture and history is integral to Tasmania's value as a place. Tasmania is home to one of the world's most unique and longest surviving cultures, a story which spans tens of thousands of years of Aboriginal occupation. There now exists a thirst for knowledge about the true story and identity of Tasmania.

The celebration of Tasmanian values, communities, arts and culture is as important to the promotion and delivery of tourism experiences as inspiring images of our natural attractions.

Tasmania's national parks and reserves are fundamental to the social, environmental and economic future of the State. They support regional communities and provide a range of recreational opportunities that inspire and invigorate people, and promote a sense of place and connection with nature.

Many improvements to facilities have been completed during 2006-07 including upgrades to the Lake St Clair carpark and several management plans were published. An arduous and long summer of fires directed many resources to ensuring the lives and properties of Tasmanians were protected as fires burnt large tracts of the State. Already, a program to address a strategic burning program has been introduced.

In January 2007, Tourism Tasmania launched the \$3 million 'Island of Inspiration' marketing campaign in its strongest pitch ever to attract domestic visitors. Tourism Tasmania continued its support for major tourism events in 2006-07. Many of these events fostered the value of place by focussing attention on our island's natural environment or culture.

Uniquely Tasmanian events that can attract visitors are opportunities for communities to share their own connection with place. The Australian Wooden Boat Festival achieves this through a strong alignment with the Tasmania tourism brand built on our maritime heritage, and the passion and skill of boat owners and builders. This biennial event, which is supported by Events Tasmania, attracted more than 500 vessels and 30,000 attendees in February 2007.

A key component of Tasmania's unique value is its abundant native wildlife, the most well-known species being the iconic Tasmanian devil. Tourism Tasmania secured a partnership with Warner Bros. that drew on the worldwide fame and popularity of the Looney Tunes character Taz to help raise funds for research on the Tasmanian Devil Facial Tumour Disease that is impacting on the species.

Similarly the 'value of place' is central to many of Arts Tasmania's most successful programs. What would Ten Days on the Island be without its positioning of a statewide festival celebrating Tasmania's natural assets and its links to island cultures world-wide?

Arts Tasmania's Natural and Cultural Residency Program, run in conjunction with the Parks and Wildlife Service, enables artists to spend time in some of Tasmania's greatest locations and to express their artistic impressions of 'place'. In response to interest from artists world-wide, Arts Tasmania opened the program to international artists.

Emerging designers from each State and Territory joined with local designers in a Design Island workshop led by two Parisian designers at the fabulous Bay of Fires Walk. A new suite of Tasmanian Book Prizes for the best book about Tasmania, the best book by a Tasmanian and the best book published in Tasmania provided a focus on the written word. Nicholas Shakespeare's 'In Tasmania' presented a slice of Tasmania to a worldwide audience.

Tasmanian Living Writers' Week provided discourse on many aspects of Tasmanian life and the opportunity for readers to engage with Tasmania's prominent writers in settings around the State.

Aboriginal projects highlighted the value this community puts on place. The 'Keeping Culture: Aboriginal Tasmania' publication from the National Museum this year carried stories from many members of the Aboriginal community. Tayenebe is very much rooted in place, with Aboriginal women rediscovering and identifying grasses and techniques used in traditional basket making and bringing these back into contemporary cultural and arts practice.

Heritage Tasmania has continued its work to ensure that Tasmania's historic heritage is highly valued. It is a key contributor to our sense of place and one of the three key tourism brands. The value of place is increasingly being recognised by local communities who appreciate the need to protect those values as a link to our past and a defining aspect of our future.

On a national level, the Tasmanian Government, through this Department, has been working with the Australian Government and the governments of Western Australia, New South Wales and Norfolk Island to develop a serial nomination of 11 convict sites in Australia for inscription on the World Heritage List.

The six Tasmanian sites included in the nomination are the Port Arthur Historic Site, the Coal Mines Historic Site, Maria Island's Darlington precinct, the Cascade Female Factory, Brickendon Estate and Woolmers Estate. Today, these sites are among Tasmania's most visited tourism destinations, highlighting the social and economic value of places of historic heritage.

Planning for the long-term futures of both the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery is also well under way. Established in 1818 the Gardens are Australia's second oldest botanic garden and will celebrate its 190th anniversary next year. The Gardens have embarked on the development of a Strategic Master Plan which includes the development of a Conservation Plan and Thematic Interpretation Plan, both of which will lay the foundation for conserving and interpreting the Gardens into the future.

Likewise, the Museum is progressing with a \$30 million redevelopment, which is indicative of the value the Government places on the Museum to provide Tasmanians with an opportunity to understand more about the natural, artistic and social environment in which we live.

The Environment Division has continued to play a major role in ensuring best environmental practice within the State's industrial activities, including the proposed pulp mill. Regulation, legislation and policy development, environmental assessment and extension programs, such as the Living Environment Program, all contribute to ensuring the sustainable development of Tasmania's natural resources. These tasks and functions all assist in fostering the value of place by protecting Tasmania's unique natural environment.

The future

I would like to thank and congratulate all staff for their contribution and achievements over the year. The many achievements and successes of the Department's staff are highlighted in the following pages.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of our Minister, Paula Wriedt, who is a great advocate for our Department.

I look forward to continuing to lead the Department's work, together with our Minister, staff and stakeholders, in 2007-08.



Scott Gadd
SECRETARY

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