

## Taste of success for Tetsuya doco



A Tasmanian-produced documentary on the life of super-chef and Brand Tasmania Ambassador, Tetsuya Wakuda, doubled SBS 1 ratings in June for the 7.30pm Thursday time slot. The 52-minute program, *Tetsuya's Pursuit of Excellence*, focuses on the remarkable Australian career of the world-renowned restaurateur who had never visited a commercial kitchen before he first flew into Sydney in the 1980s.

Produced and substantially filmed by Brand Tasmania's Executive Director, Robert Heazlewood, and scripted by Huon Valley-based writer Mal Maloney, the documentary is attracting interest from broadcasters around the world.

Brand Tasmania Chair, Michael Grainger, said: "*Tetsuya's Pursuit of Excellence* doubled SBS 1's ratings from the previous week, was competitive with the ABC and not far behind the commercial channels. Interstate TV critics have rated it as a 'foodies must-see'. I hope many of the viewers were Tasmanians because this documentary clearly shows the incredible influence Tetsuya has in the fine food industry around the world. Tasmania is very fortunate to be so closely associated with this modest and generous man."

Following the screening on 17 June, the [www.brandtasmania.com](http://www.brandtasmania.com) website had an unprecedented rush of people signing up as *eFriends*.

The documentary features spectacular Tasmanian footage as well as interviews shot in Tokyo, Milan, Venice, Barcelona and London. Heazlewood and Maloney ranged far and wide to interview some of Tetsuya's colleagues and friends at the very top of the culinary food chain. Ferran Adria of El Bulli in Barcelona - regularly rated the best restaurant in the world - David Levin, of London's five-star Capital Hotel, Heston Blumenthal from Fat Duck in Berkshire and Richard Geoffroy, Chef du Cave at Dom Perignon, help the Tasmanian team tell the story of a proudly Australian citizen who has an OAM, loves a barbecue and is the only Sake Samurai (a revered honorary position) living outside Japan.

Finally, the documentary shares Tetsuya's latest adventures: the development of a new restaurant at the Marina Bay Sands in Singapore; and construction of a substantially Huon pine fishing boat at the Wooden Boat Centre in southern Tasmania.

Tetsuya's *sensibility* makes it quite impossible for him to boast, but he confesses on camera to being "beyond satisfied."

"I have a very fortunate life from Australia," he says.

A review in Sydney's *Sun-Herald* summed it up: "Filled with interesting asides for food lovers and a rare glimpse into the world of 'the Brotherhood' of the world's top chefs, this is a documentary no foodie should miss."

## Outlook fine after no-frills Budget

Tasmania will be the only jurisdiction in Australia with an operating surplus and no net government debt by 2012-13, the Treasurer, Michael Aird, forecast as he delivered his fifth State Budget in June.

He said a budgeted net operating deficit of \$65m in 2010-11 would be transformed into a \$31.9 million surplus by 2012-13.

"This places Tasmania in the enviable position of having one of the strongest balance sheets in Australia. This is also reflected in Tasmania's Aaa credit rating from Moody's Investor Service, which is better than or equal to any other Australian State," Mr Aird said.



The Treasurer confirmed that Tasmania had fared better than expected during the global recession, with its 2009-10 budget outcome now expected to be a \$23.9m surplus - \$141m better than predicted 12 months ago. State economic activity is returning to pre-global crisis levels, with State Final Demand data reaching a new record of \$6.2b in trend terms in March.

The 2010-11 Budget has few frills and 25 per cent of the Labor Party's 2010 election promises have had to be deferred. Mr Aird said all election promises would be implemented during the present four-year term.

A difficult fiscal outlook for 2010-11 was rescued by a \$250m increase in forecast GST payments from Canberra. The State Government remains committed to a \$28m easing of land tax by July 2011.

Major initiatives for 2010-11 in the \$4.6b Budget include:

- \$118m in new rail funding;
- \$20m on improved housing and a commitment over four years to spend \$283m (including \$75m for 512 new houses from the Federal stimulus package);
- \$6.1m for disability services and a commitment to spend \$20.2m over four years, including an increase in the Community Equipment Fund;

- \$1.9m as the first instalment on an \$11m commitment to employ 30 new police officers over four years;
- \$1.1m to start a new emergency helicopter transfer service and a commitment to spend \$30m on the service over four years;
- \$800,000 as part of \$3.5m for Child and Family Centre coordinators over four years;
- \$750,000 to begin a \$24m upgrade of cancer services;
- \$700,000 a year for four years for an elder abuse prevention program; and
- \$500,000 to begin a \$6m four-year program to help combat bullying in schools.

Mr Aird confirmed that the Government's one-off \$100 household electricity concession would be limited to low-income households and that a previous commitment of \$23m in funding for a proposed Tarkine tourist road had been withdrawn.

The Government maintains it will regain an overall fiscal surplus of \$1 million by 2013-14, ahead of the next State election.

Tasmania's economy is expected to grow at a slower rate than the rest of Australia as the bounce from last year's Federal stimulus package peters out. The State is expected to grow by 2.25 per cent in 2010-11, compared with 3.25 per cent for the rest of Australia. Treasury estimates that the lag will continue in 2011-12, with Tasmania growing at 2.75 per cent, compared with a 4 per cent national rate.

Despite these relatively low growth figures, the Government is predicting 15,000 new jobs over the next four years, many of them part-time positions.

## Historic Macquarie Island clean-up begins



The operational phase of the Macquarie Island Pest Eradication Project began in late May when a team of Parks and Wildlife Service staff and

contractors sailed out of Hobart on the *Aurora Australis*. Their long-awaited 1,500km voyage to Tasmania's sub-Antarctic outlier was closely watched by conservation agencies around the world.

The team, led by a highly experienced New Zealander, Keith Springer, arrived at Macquarie Island on 25 May, safely landed all its gear and set up bait depots at three locations. A one-day trial baiting proved up various items of equipment. The aerial baiting phase will require approximately 600 hours of helicopter flying time. Rabbit hunting to complete the eradication is expected to continue for five years.

The aim is the total eradication of large numbers of rabbits, black rats and house mice introduced accidentally and intentionally to the island's highly sensitive environment by human visitors. The unprecedented \$24.6 million exercise has been jointly funded by the Australian and Tasmanian Governments. Peregrine Adventures and the World Wildlife Fund have contributed \$100,000.

The team will use proven techniques including aerial baiting and hunting with highly trained dogs to eliminate the introduced rodents while minimising the impacts of the operation on the island's prolific native birdlife. Years of training have been necessary to teach the dogs to ignore penguins, albatross chicks and other vulnerable birds. Aerial baiting has been scheduled for winter when most bird species leave the island.

Tasmania's Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage, David O'Byrne, told expedition members at a departure ceremony in Hobart: "I am very proud to be Tasmania's Environment Minister and to be seeing off this team on a project of truly international significance. A place as significant as Macquarie Island deserves to be restored to its natural beauty and functioning as an ecosystem free of introduced pests."

"I recognise that the task ahead on Macquarie is a big one and will require skill, dedication and determination; particularly given the difficult terrain, the time of year, and the sub-Antarctic conditions facing the team. I have every confidence the team will succeed and that this project will help to build the capacity of our conservation management agencies to conduct further eradication projects in the future."

Mr Springer's team is made up of 20 ground staff, four helicopters, helicopter pilots and 305 tonnes of the bait, brodifacoum. The carefully trained hunting dogs and their handlers will follow the advance team to the island next month to begin the second phase of the operation.

Rats and mice first travelled to the island with sealers who began hunting a local species of fur seal there in 1810. Cats were introduced to control the rodents in about 1820 and the rabbits were put ashore in 1878, not long before the last of the indigenous seals were exterminated. Effects on nesting birds and slow-growing vegetation were severe. The most southerly occurring member of the parrot tribe, the ground-nesting Macquarie Island parakeet, was exterminated.

Arguably, a successful feral cat eradication program between 1985 and 2000 had an unintended consequence when the rabbit population was freed from its major predator and exploded. Severe erosion followed, damaging many seabird nesting sites.

Macquarie Island is visited by four million sea birds each year, including royal, gentoo, rock-hopper and king penguins, several albatross species, giant petrels, skuas, prions and shearwaters. About 850,000 pairs of royal penguins nest on the island.

Although the indigenous seals are gone, hundreds of thousands of other species visit the island's black volcanic beaches to mate, give birth or simply rest. They include Australian and New Zealand fur seals, leopard seals, Hooker's sea lions and southern elephant seals that can weigh as much as 3.5 tonnes. The island, believed to be an uplifted slice of seafloor, was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1933 and the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions established a permanent base there in 1948.

Located halfway between Hobart and the Antarctic continent at 54° south, the 30km by 5km speck of land is almost constantly buffeted by gale-force winds and pounded by mighty seas. The maximum temperature rarely exceeds 10°C and mid-summer blizzards are not unusual. There is rain, mist or drizzle on 330 days of the year.

The island was added to the World Heritage list in 1997 and the eradication program is regarded as globally significant. It is expected that up to 24 bird species will benefit and many seabird species will rapidly recolonise the island once the predatory rodents are removed and the island's natural ecosystems can recover.

### NBN goes live this month

The National Broadband Network's stage one localities of Smithton, Midway Point and Scottsdale will begin receiving services this month. About 45 per cent of all eligible households in the three test areas have signed up to connect to the NBN. The Federal Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Stephen Conroy, said: "Many people predicted we would be as low as 15 per cent take-up, but we always believed there is an enormous latent demand, particularly in Tasmania, which has had some of the poorest broadband services, some of the most expensive and the slowest."

Mr Conroy was in Tasmania in June to officially open a Network Operations Centre at Cambridge that has been controlling NBN operations throughout the State since mid-2009. Smithton in the north-west, Scottsdale in the north-east and the outlying Hobart suburb of Midway Point were chosen in 2008 as testing grounds for the national rollout of the network.

Estimates of a \$43 billion bill for the national roll-out are expected to be revised downward following the breaking of a deadlock in June in negotiations between the Federal Government and Telstra. The company is now expected to receive a one-off \$9 billion fee for giving the NBN company access to its infrastructure, including pits, ducts and backhaul fibre. The deal will significantly reduce the cost of the rollout and the time it will take.

Nevertheless, Tasmania will retain its head-start on the rest of the nation.

Tasmanians who sign up with retail suppliers will have access to optic fibre broadband at speeds of 100 megabits a second. For those not connected to fibre, high-speed wireless broadband at speeds up to 12 megabits a second will be available. This will potentially benefit 200,000 homes and businesses in all parts of the State.

Aurora Energy and the Commonwealth's NBN Co. have established a jointly owned business, TNBN Co., to manage the four-year project. The final stages of the network's fibre 'backbone' were laid down by the Tasmanian Government in the first half of 2009. It runs from its landfall at George Town through Launceston to Hobart and across the north-west from Launceston to Port Latta. Controlled by Aurora, the backbone delivers commercial services while also meeting the operational needs of Aurora's electricity system.

Householders in the test areas who have signed consent forms to allow optic-fibre to be connected to their homes now face a more difficult decision on whether to sign up to a monthly plan with one of three retail service providers. One retailer, iiNet, is advertising packages starting at \$49.95 a month for speeds of 25 megabits per second and a 10 gigabyte download limit. Network Design and Development Officer, Gary Chappell, said: "The pricing we are offering is consistent with our mainland pricing. We have a lot of people taking up fibre-to-the-home on the eastern seaboard and I don't think [take-up] is going to be an issue."



The Tasmanian Premier, David Bartlett, is taking the State's NBN message to American businesses, including Apple, IBM, Google and CISCO, this month. Before leaving for the United States on 11 July, Mr Bartlett said: "Tasmania is at the frontier of Australia's broadband future revolution, with countless opportunities to attract investment, drive prosperity, and transform the way we learn, connect, and do business. The IT world needs to know about those opportunities loud and clear - and that's my mission in the U.S ... If we get on the front foot, promote ourselves properly, and seek out the best ideas and skills from around the world, Tasmania can lead Australia's IT sector for decades to come."

Earlier, Mr Bartlett told the TASICT Technology Tasmania 2010 conference in Hobart that \$4.85 million had been set aside in the State Budget for projects related to the NBN rollout, including:

- A Digital Futures Development Fund to help the ICT industry and the wider business community to maximise social and economic opportunities;
- A Pavilion Experience Centre to be established in partnership with industry;
- Planning for cutting-edge virtual E-health trials in homes; and
- A SmartGrid trial to investigate how the NBN can be used for more sustainable energy management.

Mr Bartlett told delegates the budget had also allocated \$8.87 million over three years to drive the transformation of IT services across the public sector in order to improve efficiencies in Government communications and provide better community access to Government.

Leading Google strategist, Alan Noble, delivered the keynote address at the TASICT Technology Tasmania 2010 conference.

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## Now it's multi-regional blends

By Graeme Phillips



Multi-regional blends are the next big thing on the Tassie wine scene. In the second release of her highly successful Heemskerk range of Tasmanian regional wines last year, Foster's wine-maker Anna Pooley foreshadowed the introduction of a second tier of wines from Tasmania that would include a sauvignon blanc, gewurztraminer, chardonnay and a pinot noir. Unlike the Heemskerk range, for which Ms Pooley sourced fruit from single vineyards in specific regions of the State, wines in this new range are multi-regional blends.

Sticking with the Abel Tasman/*Heemskerk* theme, the range is labelled Abel's Tempest and, according to Foster's PR release, is designed to offer "a fresh, stylish and accessible tasting adventure for those looking to explore the characteristics and flavours of the mysterious Tasmanian wine regions."

If Tasmania's wine regions are mysterious to some, they certainly aren't to Ms Pooley. The daughter of Elizabeth and John Pooley of Pooley Wines at Richmond and granddaughter of Margaret Pooley of Coinda Vale Wines at Campania, she says she fell in love with wine-making on her first visit to a winery when she was eight years old. "The smells, the rows of barrels, the bees in the press tray, the sweet juice all left a lasting impression," she said.

Last year, Ms Pooley was named among the top 50 most influential wine people in the country.

### Abel's Tempest 2009 Sauvignon Blanc, \$25:

The fruit was predominantly from the Coal River Valley, with the balance from the north. Ms Pooley said the Coal River fruit showed intense mulberry leaf and passionfruit aromas and incredible palate texture, while the northern fruit provided a classic grassiness, elegant acidity and lovely length. A pale, slightly greenish tinge with subtle tropical fruit and herbal aromas, the palate is smoother and fuller than most sauvignons, but still nicely juicy with good zesty freshness, lift and length.

### Abel's Tempest 2009 Traminer \$25:

Ms Pooley believes that Tasmania has possibly the best climate for traminer (gewurztraminer), and she set out to capture the essence of the variety, adding intensity by ageing a small portion in oak. The wine has lifted varietal aromas of rose petal and Turkish Delight, with similar flavours, plus an attractive spiciness on a palate, smoothed and given depth and character by touches of lees and oak. It has a refreshingly crisp, clean finish.

This is an enjoyable example of this too-often neglected and under-appreciated variety.

### Abel's Tempest 2009 Chardonnay \$25:

This wine is a blend of the best barrels from different vineyard batches around the State.

Ms Pooley says the batches were selected to produce the most elegant, expressive Tasmanian chardonnay she could. With a pale straw-gold colour, this wine has a nose showing fresh peach and nectarine characters followed by a similarly fruit-driven palate. Its plush texture is underlined by more complex, savoury toffee/nutty characters, the whole freshened by a lovely line of citrusy acid. Excellent value.

**Abel's Tempest 2009 Pinot Noir, \$32:** Made from east coast and Coal River fruit, this wine, according to Ms Pooley, expresses the intricate characteristics of these two regions. This is a more intense, savoury and drier style of wine than most you see under second-tier labels. It has lovely dark fruit and autumnal foresty aromas and flavours. The palate is mid-weight, beautifully balanced and long, holding the promise of even better things to come.

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### McIntyre matches Bligh's greatest voyage

Tasmanian maritime adventurer Don McIntyre, 53, has led three ship-mates in a triumphant recreation of Captain William Bligh's epic 3,700 sea mile open-boat voyage from Tonga to Timor. McIntyre and his crew began their odyssey off the coast of Tonga on April 29 at the same location where Bligh and his sailors - refugees from the mutiny on the *HMS Bounty* - started 221 years earlier. After almost seven weeks at sea, the Talisker Bounty Boat landed in the ancient west Timorese port of Kupang on 15 June, matching Bligh's sailing time almost to the hour.



McIntyre, the instigator and skipper, said: "Today we have made history and we are immensely proud of completing the Talisker Bounty Boat expedition. It is one thing anticipating what the journey will bring and quite another going through it for seven weeks. Even with my experience, this has undoubtedly been one of the hardest but best things I have ever done."

Hobart-based McIntyre is one of Australia's most seasoned blue-water sailors. He competed in the 1990 BOC Challenge single-handed around-the-world yacht race, coming second in class. He then embarked on numerous Antarctic sailing expeditions, including one in 1995 in which he and his wife lived in a 2.4m by 3.6m box for a year.

The Talisker Bounty Boat crew began their voyage from Tonga without charts, adequate food supplies or toilet paper in emulation of Bligh's party in 1799. There were difficulties from the start, with Chris Wilde, an 18-year-old rookie sailor from Britain, being enlisted at the last minute when a more experienced member pulled out. Dave Wilkinson from Hong Kong found the going so tough he wanted to be left on an island to make his own way home. The boat was knocked down and de-masted in an unexpected weather change less than a day's sailing from Kupang.

McIntyre, Wilde, Wilkinson and Australian Dave Price expect to raise more than \$250,000 through sponsorships for the Sheffield Institute Foundation for Motor Neurone Disease.

At 7.6m, the project vessel is longer than Bligh's 5.4m whale boat which accommodated 19 people, but less than half its volume, weighing only 1.6 tonnes fully loaded. McIntyre said the cost of producing a replica of Bligh's boat would have broken the expedition's budget. "With no further use for the boat at the end of the expedition, the whole voyage may have become an impossible dream," he said. "Already the budget is topping \$175,000. As a bonus, our whaleboat just happens to be a near replica of the *James Caird*, the boat [Ernest] Shackleton sailed from Elephant Island to South Georgia in 1915. Historians and academics often debate which was the greatest open-boat voyage in maritime history: Bligh's or Shackleton's."

Mr McIntyre said that having survived the Bounty voyage "with his humour intact", he would consider trying to replicate the Shackleton voyage through the gigantic, often icy rollers of the Southern Ocean.

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## Savour Tasmania is a sizzling sell-out

By Graeme Phillips



The five dinners, the lunches and the public and trade master classes of this year's Savour Tasmania were all sell outs. Little wonder the organisers from the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts could hardly conceal their Cheshire-cat-like smiles as the event wound up in June.

Not only was the food at the dinners always good but the three chefs involved, with contrasting styles, personalities and food philosophies, provided a snap shot of contemporary trends in the global culinary scene. They were Philippe Nouzillat, a French traditionalist; Paco Roncero, the molecular avant-guardist; and Alvin Leung, the gastro-rock 'n roller from Hong Kong whose greatest creation is perhaps his own, capitalised, Celebrity Chef image.

At the Remi de Provence dinner, the comforting familiarity and richness of flavours in dishes like Nouzillat's boeuf bouguignon and trout on Puy lentils showed why French bistro cooking has survived the challenges of modernism to still have validity and to be enjoying resurgence in popularity.

In contrast, Leung showed his dinners at Me Wah how he's turning Chinese cooking on its head with his molecular foams, powders, spherifications and gels. Rather than westernising traditional Chinese food, he wants, he says, "to open Chinese food up to the modern world, to jog diners out of their complacency in taking food for granted and to take dining much further than the eyes and palate by presenting an experience that's totally new."

Perhaps the best example of Leung's desire to break through the thick, conservative skin of Chinese classicism came in his take on *xiao long bao* - soup dumplings. In a dish whose quality has traditionally been judged by the thin delicacy of its gluten flour wrappings, Leung dispensed with these altogether, substituting a molecular-formed skin.

Leung has operated his Bo Innovation restaurant in Hong Kong for six years, but has effectively only been cooking professionally for three.

He has a media-savvy PR assistant, streaked hair, cut-away tee shirts in place of chef whites, 'dragon chef' tattoos and body bling.

Despite the brevity of his career, he's already on the global celebrity-chef treadmill - this week Hobart, last week Shanghai, before that Singapore, next week London, then Venice. Later this year there will be a restaurant in London; next year one in Toronto.

Asked whether he thought this frenetic pace was the reason Bo Innovation had lost its second Michelin star this year, he said: "I was happy to lose it. It was a wake-up call, a kick in the butt. You need failure to go forward. We've regrouped at the restaurant and we're now much better than we were last year."

In contrast with the hype and energy surrounding Leung, Roncero - who modestly refers to himself as a cook, not a chef - was a study in quiet concentration as he stood in the prep kitchen boning pigeons or, during service, putting a precise finishing touch to one of his creations. Later, at his superb dinner at The Source, the entertainer in him came to the fore as he wowed diners with the magical culinary uses of liquid nitrogen. In between, his food was an accurate reflection of his culinary philosophy, a mix of molecular innovation and respect for Spain's traditional flavours and techniques.

As diners ate frozen raspberries which shattered to flavoured crumbs in the mouth, enjoyed the mellow intensity of his daikon ice cream and wondered how he'd made the olive oil sauce with the crayfish, he said: "I don't want to just wow people with pretty dishes. I want dishes that are rich and taste good. With molecular gastronomy, it's important that you don't throw tradition out altogether. Lose that and you've lost part of your culture."

Roncero said it was necessary to provide diners with some comfort, so they would not be afraid of the unfamiliar. And it was important for young chefs to learn traditional methods first. "In Spain now we have the problem where all the students want to learn molecular. That's not what it's about", he said. In traditional Spanish cooking there is only one way of preparing a dish, while the molecular approach provides five or six alternative techniques and options.

"It's complex and complicated but we're open about it, happy to teach others and we don't hold secrets," Roncero said. "That's its strength; why it's taking the creative Spanish influence world-wide and why it will last and endure into the future."

Altogether, Savour Tasmania 2010 was a big step up in interest and quality from the inaugural event last year and the only murmurs of complaint I heard concerned some inappropriate wine matches - and that bottle of New Zealand sauvignon blanc that somehow found its way into one of the venue's thank-you bags.

As with the success of molecular gastronomy itself, so with Savour Tasmania - what comes next?

**Footnote:** Tasmania will host the 2012 International Cool Climate Wine Symposium, giving the local industry a priceless opportunity to place itself firmly on the international wine map.

Business Events Tasmania CEO, Stuart Nettlefold, said the symposium - to be held in Hobart from 1-4 February 2012 - would be a brilliant example of the social and economic benefits of such a business event. "The direct economic benefit of this event will be approximately \$500,000, but the long-term trade, investment and brand-building opportunities will be much greater," he said.

The symposium will bring 300 people to Tasmania, including many world leaders in their fields of cool-climate viticulture and winemaking.

The successful bid was presented by noted wine-maker and Director of Wine Industry Tasmania, Dr Andrew Pirie, and the Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Tasmania, Felicia Mariani, a member of the Brand Tasmania Council.

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## Yeltuor launches virtual boutique

Popular Tasmanian fashion business Yeltuor has launched an online store giving patrons the opportunity to purchase well-known labels from the comfort of their



own homes. The extensive online range aims to be at the leading edge of fashion, while remaining affordable. Yeltuor online brands include Sass & Bide, Metalicus, Seduce, Cooper Street, Mela Purdie, Wish, Ted Baker London and many more.

"We decided to launch the online site as we have many interstate customers who regularly shop in our stores while visiting Tasmania," said Mathew Routley, Managing Director, Yeltuor. "The stores are unique because they offer such a large range of brands in the one place that are both youthful and classic, delivered with genuine small town customer service - a philosophy we have mirrored in our online store." Mr Routley said staff would now be able to direct visiting shoppers, who frequently ask about interstate availability, to the online service. "The site is designed to be shopper friendly; it's clean, simple and easy to navigate. There is also a news section created by our in-house stylist covering the latest trends and key looks for this season - everything from jeans for your shape, rules of the season and knit picks. This is updated regularly to ensure the shopper has a fresh experience with each visit," he said.

Yeltuor has also launched Yeltuor First a club which will keep shoppers up-to-date with the latest Yeltuor happenings, special offers, style tips and fashion news. Every month a lucky subscriber will win a \$250 Yeltuor voucher. To start shopping go to [www.yeltuor.com.au](http://www.yeltuor.com.au)

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## Allanah Dopson joins Brand Tasmania Council

Allanah Dopson, proprietor and Director of the Handmark Galleries in Salamanca Place and Evandale, has joined the Brand Tasmania Council. Ms Dopson will represent the Arts sector which contributes so much to the image of our State in the wider world.

Ms Dopson, who has public sector experience in Arts administration, will replace the former Director of the Design Centre - Tasmania, Astrid Wootton, who has resigned from the council to take up a position as a government arts adviser.

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### Permit sought for Brighton bridge

The Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources has applied for a permit to build a long-span bridge over an archaeological site discovered in the path of the Brighton Bypass. Public comment will be sought before a decision on the application is made by the Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage, David O'Byrne.

The Minister for Infrastructure, Lara Giddings, said the proposed 70m bridge was the only viable option for the protection of the site, which contains artefacts that have been dated at 40,000 years old. "None of the alternatives were considered practical or feasible, and may even encounter similar Aboriginal heritage issues," she said. The proposed bridge would add an extra \$10 million to \$15 million to the \$175 million bypass on the Midland Highway.

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### Final demand sets \$6.22b. record

State Final Demand increased by 2 per cent in the year to May 30 in Tasmania to a record \$6.22 billion. The Australian Bureau of Statistics figure suggests that a 12.3 per cent rise in government spending has driven recovery from the economic shock of the global recession. Private investment fell by 13.3 per cent during the year.

The State's trend unemployment rate remained steady at 6.0 per cent in May as 500 additional net jobs were created, despite recent major business shut-downs. The labor participation rate rose a further 0.2 per cent, contributing to a 1.3 per cent improvement since October 2009. After being flat in March, retail trade improved by 1.8 per cent in April. Meanwhile, a Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry survey has shown business expectations, business conditions, sales revenue, exports, profits, wages and selling prices are all trending upwards.

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### Events body utilises brand mark

A new promotional identity - Business Events Tasmania - was launched by the Tasmanian Convention Bureau in June and will use the Brand Tasmania brand mark. The CEO of Business Events Tasmania, Stuart Nettlefold, said: "As Tasmania's peak marketing body for business events, our role is to market Tasmania as a destination of choice for business events and to provide free assistance and advice to businesses and associations considering hosting their business events in locations around Tasmania. The new logo has incorporated the Brand Tasmania brand mark, which is being utilised by other peak Tasmanian marketing bodies, including Tourism Tasmania." Mr Nettlefold said the brand mark had been created to reflect the islands' core values - trustworthy, resourceful, creative, pure, friendly and offering distinctive quality.

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### Boom times for poppy farmers

Tasmania's poppy growers earned nearly \$60 million from a harvest of 21,000ha in 2010. The area sown to poppies by the State's 1,000 licensed farmers has almost doubled in two years, from 11,000ha in 2008. Applications have been received to plant 29,000ha for the 2011 harvest, but growers are uneasy about trials planned in New Zealand and Victoria. "The Tasmanian Government would oppose any extension of poppy growing outside the State as we believe we can produce enough volume to satisfy the requirements of pharmaceutical companies in a reasonably controlled environment," the Attorney-General, Lara Giddings, said. "Tasmania has some competitive advantages over other Australian States, including low crop interference rates, first-class storage security and highly-skilled and experienced farmers.

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### Award for business-savvy innovators

The Tasmanian Government is on the hunt for innovators who not only have a promising innovation but also the drive to commercialise it. The ©-STAR Award will recognise a Tasmanian science and technology company or individual for early success in commercialising a science and technology product, process or service during the 2009-10 year.

Judges will be looking for entries that demonstrate a technology's clear commercial potential and will be particularly interested in those that can demonstrate that some progress has been made towards commercialisation, although this is not essential. The winner will receive the ©-STAR Award 2010 trophy and a \$5,000 cash prize. Five finalists will each receive a ©-STAR Finalist 2010 certificate. Applications close at 5pm on 23 July 2010. For more information: [diana.nahodil@development.tas.gov.au](mailto:diana.nahodil@development.tas.gov.au)

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### Incat boasts 20 years of supremacy

Incat Tasmania, the innovative Hobart-based ship-building company, has now held the Hales Trophy for the fastest Transatlantic Crossing by a commercial vessel for 20 years. On 23 June 1990, *Hoverspeed Great Britain* broke a long-standing record for the 2,922 sea mile trip. Eight years later another Incat-built vessel, *Catalonia*, improved the record, but it stood for only a month. In July 1998, Incat's *CatLink V* set a record of 41.284 knots (76.5 km/ per hour) average that has not been matched in two decades. The heavily gilded, ornate Hales Trophy remains on proud display in the offices of the Incat shipyard at Prince of Wales Bay.

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### Orca trio thrills Bruny visitors

Passengers on a Bruny Island Cruises tour were treated to a close encounter with a pod of feeding orcas, or killer whales, in early June. Two boats, carrying about 60 passengers in total, were on a regular three-hour cruise from Adventure Bay to the Friars (a group of rocky islets frequented by seals) when operations manager Mick Souter spotted a flock of feeding sea birds. "When we see birds like that, it usually means dolphins as well," he said. Instead of dolphins the tourists found a pair of orcas and their calf feeding on fish. The carnivorous mammals are regular visitors to waters around Tasmania, but are rarely seen. Unlike inquisitive dolphins, orcas tend to keep their distance from boats.

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### Lumina lifts winter activity

The Nant Distillery at Bothwell reports that its connection with *Lumina - A Winter of Festivals* has boosted bookings by 19 per cent. Being on the *Lumina* website has led directly to bookings, with the distillery's monthly Whisky Dinners now booked out for the rest of winter, according to Keith Batt, a Director of the Batt Group of Companies, that operates The Nant Distillery. Many local tourism operators have also seen an increase in winter trade due to their involvement with *Lumina*. Bernie Cochran, Marketing and Sales Manager for Cradle Mountain Lodge, said: "It has put the spotlight on events occurring in Tasmania over the winter period. As a result, we have received increased inquiries for Tastings at the Top, as well as additional interest in accommodation bookings in general."

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### Inquiry to investigate energy sector

An independent inquiry that will report directly to the Parliament has been established to investigate Tasmania's energy sector. Specific legislation will be enacted to give the inquiry investigative and legal powers. It will be the first time the operations of retailer/generator Aurora Energy, generator Hydro Tasmania and poles-and-lines owner Transend have been openly investigated since their establishment 12 years ago. The Tasmanian Greens demanded the investigation in exchange for voting for a financial package to support Aurora Energy.

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### Visitor numbers holding up

Visitors spent \$1.5 billion in Tasmania in the 12 months to 30 March, according to the latest Tasmanian Visitor Survey results. The number of visitors arriving on scheduled air and sea services rose 2 per cent to 912,600. There was a 17 per cent increase in the total number of nights these visitors spent in Tasmania and an 8 per cent increase in their total visitor spending. Nationally, there was a 3 per cent fall in interstate overnight travel during the period. A fall of almost 25 per cent in cruise ship passengers arriving in Tasmania has been blamed, in part, on the global financial crisis.

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## Canal estates facing legal ban

Tasmania's Labor-Green government intends to ban all canal estate developments and the Liberal Opposition has publicly supported its plan. This follows the Government's formal acceptance of all the recommendations in a Tasmanian Planning Commission decision opposing a \$300 million project proposed by the Walker Corporation at Ralph's Bay. The government has spent \$15 million on the project which has been on its books for 11 years and was declared a Project of State Significance in 2006.

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## New leader in agricultural research

Professor Holger Meinke, a respected climate and agricultural systems scientist, has been appointed Director of the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research and Head of the UTAS School of Agricultural Science. Professor Meinke worked for more than 20 years in primary industries research in Queensland and Victoria before moving to the Netherlands in 2007 to head up the Centre for Crop Systems Analysis at the Wageningen University and Research Centre.

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## Exports continue recovery

Tasmania's merchandise exports exceeded \$304 million in April, the best monthly figure since June 2009. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures showed the State's third consecutive monthly increase was driven by a \$57 million surge in exports to China, mainly through increased sales of non-ferrous metals. Overall exports have grown by 36 per cent in three months, but are yet to reach the levels enjoyed before the global financial crisis.

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## UTAS attracting overseas students

About 3,165 international students are attending the University of Tasmania this year, reflecting a 60 per cent increase over five years. Director of International Services, Paul Risby, said: "International students look at the quality of education they can receive here and the price they have to pay and that is why they are coming." In 2009, 911 students came to Tasmania from China, 643 from Malaysia, 261 from Singapore and 152 from India.

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## Sitel to add 200 contact jobs

The Sitel contact centre in Devonport announced a 200-job expansion in June, following the provision of a \$1.22m State Government grant. Sitel has secured a new contract to provide technical and customer support to an offshore company and will add the extra jobs over the next two years. The Tasmanian contact centre industry now employs more than 5,500 people and is set to benefit from the rollout of the National Broadband Network.

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## Population climbs to 505,377

Tasmania's population has maintained a nine-year surge, setting a record of 505,377 in 2009, according to the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics figures. The State population grew by 4,442 people or 0.89 per cent in 2009, compared with national growth of 1.99 per cent that occurred mainly in the mining States of Western Australia and Queensland.

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For further information contact :

Robert Heazlewood  
Executive Director, Brand Tasmania Council Inc.  
Telephone 03 6229 5719 | Mobile 0419 564 745  
Email [Robert.Heazlewood@brandtasmania.com](mailto:Robert.Heazlewood@brandtasmania.com)

Mike Jenkinson  
Communications Consultant, Brand Tasmania Editor  
Email [mjenk40@bigpond.net.au](mailto:mjenk40@bigpond.net.au)

Snail Mail to PO Box 957 Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7006

[www.brandtasmania.com](http://www.brandtasmania.com)