

Tassie snatches wine world's spotlight

By Graeme Phillips



Tasmania scored a branding coup in Seattle in June by securing the 2012 Inter-national Cool Climate Symposium (ICCS). Minutes before the State's delegation was due to make its final presentation on the last day of the Seattle ICCS, it was announced that Hobart had been chosen to host the next session of the globally respected meeting. The Tasmanian presenters quickly turned their prepared sales pitch into an invitation to their audience of hundreds of scientists, academics and wine-industry leaders from around the world to come to Tasmania from February 1-4 in 2012.

Wine Industry Tasmania's Chief Executive, Sheralee Davies, said hosting the symposium would put Tasmania firmly on the global stage and reinforce its cool-climate winemaking credentials to the world. "The symposium has already attracted a group of European viticultural researchers, *Groupe d'Etude des Systemes de Conduite de la Vigne*, to convene in Hobart at the time of the 2012 conference," Ms Davies said. "And we are delighted to confirm Jancis Robinson as the conference's keynote speaker, and to have the support of the Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI) and Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research (TIAR) as conference partners with Wine Industry Tasmania."

The successful bid was the result of close collaborative work over the past year between the board and members of Wine Industry Tasmania, the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts and Tourism Tasmania, culminating in a winning pitch in Seattle that included tastings, a Tasmanian wine dinner, behind-the-scenes lobbying and very professional promotion of the State by Tourism Tasmania.

The outcome of a \$1.8 million Tasmanian research project will be the centrepiece of the 2012 symposium. The investigation into pinot noir and sparkling wine done over the past three years at Tamar Ridge and UTAS was funded by Ausindustry and a Tasmanian-based consortium led by WIT and including the AWRI, TIAR, Tamar Ridge Estates, Croplands Pty Ltd and Flextank International Ltd.

The ICCS symposia are largely focused on science. WIT Director, Dr Andrew Pirie, said the challenge for Tasmania now was to maximise the benefits that would flow from the 2012 event by weaving in a series of consumer and lifestyle opportunities to showcase Tasmania's rich diversity of food, wine, art, history and nature. Linking ICCS to Savour Tasmania, or a series of regional events, are possibilities that will be explored, as well as working with the 2012 Tasmanian Wine Show, due to be held in the week or so leading up to the symposium.

World listing for 5 convict sites



Five Tasmanian convict sites, including two privately owned farms, have been added to the World Heritage List. They are:

- The Port Arthur Historic Site - Australia's best-known penal station, located on the Tasman Peninsula. It was a major colonial industrial complex and housed secondary offenders until 1877.
- The Cascades Female Factory in West Hobart - an enclosed, purpose-built institution intended to reform female convicts. The inmates did laundry and needlework, off-setting some of the colony's penal costs.
- The Coal Mines Historic Site - on the north side of the Tasman Peninsula, provided the colony with valuable fuel that was mined underground by up to 500 convicts. It was a place of severe punishment.
- Brickendon and Woolmers estates - neighbouring riverside land-holdings near Longford that were granted to the Archer family and developed in the style of English country estates through the use of convict labour.
- Darlington Probation Station - consisting of 16 surviving sites on Maria Island dating in some cases to the 1820s.

The Tasmanian sites were among 11 throughout Australia that were granted World Heritage Listing at a meeting in Brazil that concluded in early August.

The Australian Minister for Environment Protection and Heritage, Peter Garrett, said: "Australia is a relatively new country in terms of its European history. However, our early history coincided with one of the great historical phenomena, penal migration. This is reflected in the pre-eminence of our convict sites and their worldwide relevance and interest. A strong case had to be made to convince the World Heritage Committee that inclusion on the prestigious World Heritage List would hold relevance beyond Australia and for the world."

The Tasmanian listings are expected to ignite tourism opportunities and preservation investment.

The Chief Executive of the Tourism Industry Council, Daniel Hanna, said: "Heritage and history is one of the most important features of Tasmanian tourism. It's a big reason why many travellers come here. This confirms the significance of Tasmanian sites and really adds to Tasmania's reputation, and if that's coupled with a quality State and national campaign then we can leverage a lot from that."

The Chief Executive of the Port Arthur Historic Site, Stephen Large, said: "There is a real opportunity here. We're offering visitors the chance to visit six world heritage sites, possibly in a week. We might not see the benefits straight away but there are certain advantages that are set to come."

The Chairman of the Female Factory, Peter Rae, said: "We see a national tour that has a Tasmanian base where it will all start from. With that in mind, we're looking into an ideal location in Hobart where we would present the total convict story to people and then send them off on the tour."

Tasmania's previous World Heritage Listings were its south-west wilderness in 1982 and Macquarie Island in 1997.

More information: www.heritage.gov.au

Architect etches tourism gem

Architect Robert Morris-Nunn was one of the proudest people in a crowded room when Tasmania's standard-setting east coast resort, Saffire-Freycinet, was officially opened by the Premier, David Bartlett, in August. Several hundred guests, including Federal Group board members, other tourism industry leaders and many local and State government representatives were torn between the titanic scenery of the Freycinet Peninsula outside and the complementary beauty, closer at hand, of Morris-Nunn's latest creation.



As the Premier was speaking, eyes focussed past him into the majestic distance, or flicked up to the intricate celery-top pine ceiling, rolling like lines of breakers far above craned necks. Granite feature walls, gurgling ponds, native timber stairways and flooring all reflected Morris-Nunns' brief to make it natural; make it organic. And the architectural features didn't make it easy for an obviously amused keynote speaker. [It should be noted that Mr Bartlett managed some quite eloquent passages about some of the things that make Tasmania so special].

Most of the hundreds of visitors at the opening were anxious to take their turn gawking at the exquisite detail of both the main building and the guest suites situated in the stylish, near-natural landscape below. Saffire has been designed to pamper only 50-or-so guests at a time and it was easy to imagine the sense of space and peace they would enjoy.

The \$32-million resort employs 48 staff - 27 full-time and 21 casual. The Federal Group has a knack when it comes to choosing and training staff and it shows in the cheerful enthusiasm of the young Saffire team.

Mr Bartlett acknowledged the work of Tasmanian architects Morris Nunn and Associates. The design team was led by Robert Morris-Nunn, who has practiced in Tasmania for 25 years. He is an Associate Professor of Architecture at UTAS and is regarded as one of the State's most adventurous practitioners. His work in creating the Henry Jones Art Hotel in Sullivans Cove attracted international interest and awards. It inspired architectural reviewer John Ancher to describe Morris-Nunn in 2006 as: "An architectural magician who transforms his commissions into an architecture of whimsy and delight."

Ancher characterized Morris-Nunn as a gentle but obstinate man who would fight for his principles despite the pressures for compromise that rain in from all sides during a major construction.

Morris-Nunn has designed and built a number of other ground-breaking buildings that have attracted international interest. The Forest Eco Centre, built for Forestry Tasmania at Scottsdale, won a National Environmental Architecture Award. Morris-Nunn has won numerous State and several national architectural awards.

His work has been illustrated in international publications, such as *Architectural Review*. He has been invited to lecture at many Australian and international conferences.

Morris-Nunn designed Saffire's buildings to evoke a connection to the sea, through references to waves, sea creatures, sand dunes and a flowing, natural form. He set out to make the design as unique and recognizable as its fabulous backdrop. The roof line accurately frames the unmistakable Hazards mountain range, while separate suites appear from above like waves breaking across the site.

The main roof is made from curved Tasmanian wood beams, built in a ribbed structure with ply overlay. Although complex in concept, the roof has a simple appearance and avoids dominating the structure. The glass used at Saffire has a low percentage of reflectivity, allowing for maximum viewing clarity at night as well as day.

The 20 suites were designed to maintain high levels of privacy, while maximising the view and natural light. High-quality finishes are sensitive to the raw materials of the precinct, and a shack-style eclectic mix of classic and contemporary furnishing delivers a sense of coastal freedom.

The landscaping at Saffire complements Morris-Nunn's architecture beautifully. Around and inside the suites there is evident Japanese influence in patterned beds of gravel, bonsai-like feature trees and pathways that writhe past lichen-daubed mini-boulders. Native grasses and shrubs abound and young employees talk enthusiastically about the return of birds and other wildlife to what was - not so long ago - a building site.

Asked what input he had to the landscaping, Morris-Nunn smiled reflectively and said: "It was a collaborative effort."

Like everything else at Saffire, the interior design genuflects before the almighty panorama before it. "The purity of the environment is reflected in a fresh, modern, relaxing and uncontrived design style," the Creative Director of Chhada Siembieda Australia, Juliet Ashworth, said. "The base palette of materials - stone and timber - closely relates to the landscape with colours, hues and textures which create an almost seamless feel between the inside and outside."

"The interiors do not compete, but harmonise with the site's natural beauty and offer guests comfort and luxury while allowing them to use the space freely and informally; as they might relax in a coastal home."

Ms Ashworth said colours had been drawn from the world outside, with the orange of seashore lichens adding punch to soft greys, taupes, greens and blues. "The granite of the Hazards range is also featured in pops of deep red in hand-woven rugs bearing designs which celebrate the rugged beauty of the dramatic rock formations," she said.

All in all, Saffire is simply a jewel.

Mr Bartlett, said: "Saffire is already receiving international media attention that is valuable for our State."

Tasmanian tourism has been moved to a new level and the State has itself another priceless brand champion.

Tree war truce on highlands farm

A farming property in Tasmania's central highlands is the first in Australia to secure full Forest



Stewardship Council certification for the harvesting of native forest. Peter and Anne Downie took four years to achieve certification under FSC rules, but because of the sustainable forest-management practices they already employ on their 6,500ha sheep, cattle and timber property, not much will have to change.

About 80 per cent of the Lagoon of Islands property's native forest was ring-barked and burned in about 1900 to make way for sheep grazing. By the early 1980s it had regenerated to become a commercially viable forest and Mr Downie, whose family has farmed in the highlands since the 1860s, opted for a harvesting system that left some of the high-value trees untouched.

He saw Tasmania's long-running forestry war as a potential threat. "The forest industry was losing public support and that concerned me, because I've set this forest up for the long term," he said. "I thought I might be stopped and not allowed to complete my vision."

His interest in FSC certification as a solution was first sparked by a TV interview with Canadian environmentalist David Suzuki. "I was quite surprised he was saying that a well-managed native forest is actually the best form of forestry from his point of view. So I rang up the ... Tasmanian Conservation Trust and said, 'What's going on here?'"

Mr Downie was told environmentalists' views were changing and they were becoming more interested in constructive outcomes.

Under the Downies' FSC-approved management plan, roughly half the forests at Lagoon of Islands will be protected while the rest will be selectively logged and regrown naturally.

This accommodates Mr Downie's aspiration to find a way to continue forest harvesting for generations to come, while averting opposition by conservationists.

It has cost the Downies \$20,000, but has been endorsed by the Australian Conservation Foundation, The Wilderness Society, the Tasmanian Conservation Trust and the Worldwide Fund for Nature.

In July, the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania added its seal of approval. The association's Chief Executive, Terry Edwards, said: "It indicates that when people sit down and work things through, it is possible for accommodation to be reached."

The Director of the Tasmanian Conservation Trust, Peter McGlone, said: "It means that 50 per cent of those forests are off-limits to logging and are protected ... so that's an amazing outcome for conservation."

Chemicals are not used at Lagoon of Islands. Forest harvesting has a 150-year rotation and management excludes high-intensity burning. Forests are allowed to re-seed naturally and harvesting involves tree selection rather than clear-felling.

Mr Downie said even his protected forests had potential to earn income in the form of carbon offsets sold to companies around the world. "It's the same income as if we had harvested it ... it's a no-brainer. I think we are offering the industry a way forward."

There is already interest from architects and construction companies in the nation's first native timber grown in an accredited natural forest, rather than in a plantation.

Other Tasmanian forest managers, including Gunns Ltd, are seeking FSC certification for native forest products. Gunns' major Japanese woodchip customers - NPI, Oji, Chuetsu and Itochu (Marusumi) - have been granted FSC Controlled Wood status for woodchips supplied to them by Gunns from specified areas of the company's rapidly diminishing forest holdings. Gunns has sold, or is selling, 28,000ha of its native forest freehold.

Gunns held a series of public meetings in July as part of a FSC pre-assessment process it hopes will lead to overall certification.

FSC Australia Chief Executive, Michael Spencer, said the Downies' initiative should not be under-estimated. "Peter and Anne's certification is a real turning point nationally. The future of this industry is not about hectares and volumes, but about being smart and responding to the needs of customers who want to feel good about what they are buying and are prepared to pay for that."

The State's biggest forest manager, Forestry Tasmania, remains cautious about FSC requirements and prefers to operate under the Australian Standards-approved Australian Forest Certification Scheme.

Private forest management company, SFM Forest Products, announced in July that it had achieved certification for Sustainable Forest Management (AS-4708) under the Australian Forest Certification Scheme, enabling it to offer a cost-effective certification process to its landowner clients in Tasmania. SFM Director David Wise said the certification would be a great benefit to landowners, giving them confidence that their forests were being managed according to principles of sustainability.

Unlike the FSC, the Australian Forest Certification Scheme is not conditional on endorsement by local environmental groups.

Peter and Anne Downie's success and Gunns' swing towards FSC made headlines as another forestry milestone loomed. Historic talks involving conservation, industry and trade union representatives quietly entered a critical final phase and expectation strengthened of an announcement before the 21 August Federal Election. *The Australian* reported that good progress had been made and the negotiators were taking recommendations back to their wider constituencies to see whether agreement was possible. The future of the proposed Gunns Ltd pulp mill and the speed and extent of an agreed phase-out of logging of high conservation-value regrowth forests were among the issues requiring resolution.

Gunns Ltd announced on 14 July that it had entered into contracts for the sale of approximately 28,000ha of native forest land in Tasmania at a value of \$27.5 million. Most of the land was bought by Chickenfeed owner and environmental activist Jan Cameron.

The winner is ... Bec Smith



Bec Smith, a digital project manager, from Newtown, NSW, has won a holiday for two in Tasmania. She was the first person selected by computer after correctly responding 'Macquarie Harbour, Tasmania' to the quiz question run by Brand Tasmania in conjunction with the release by SBS1 of the documentary, *Tetsuya's Pursuit for Excellence*.

Bec, 34, will be making her first visit to the State of Islands. "I've always wanted to have a holiday down there," she said. "I'm really excited and looking forward to visiting Cradle Mountain, in particular." She will share the holiday with her boyfriend, Damon Gillard, and they will *definitely* do some bushwalking.

For those thousands of unsuccessful entrants, a second chance is looming. Encouraged by strong audience numbers and viewer feedback, SBS1 will be showing *Tetsuya's Pursuit of Excellence* again at 7.30pm on 11 November 2010. This will be a slightly updated version of the documentary, incorporating the latest vision of Tetsuya's stunning new restaurant, Waku Ghin, at the Sands Resort complex in Singapore. Tasmanian beef, seafood, lamb and beverages are part of the Waku Ghin dining experience.

Brand Tasmania will run a new competition in conjunction with SBS1's second showing. Watch our website for details.

Bec Smith correctly answered the question about the source of the ocean trout used by Tetsuya in his signature dish, Confit of Ocean Trout, with the words 'Macquarie Harbour Tasmania'. Many other entrants answered either 'Devonport' or 'Cressy' which are both locations of Petuna Seafood's operations featured in the documentary. However, the end product comes from sea cages at Macquarie Harbour, on the edge of Tasmania's south-west wilderness.

Bec and Damon will enjoy a two-week holiday, courtesy of Pure Tasmania.

Friend of the Devil; a New York story

There's no arguing that Rebecca Mead's interview with Larissa Bartlett in *The New Yorker* made quite an impact. Even far from the skyscrapers, at Mead's "bottom of the map of the world," it evoked political claims and counter claims and some oddly skewed media reporting. Mrs Bartlett's free-day touring wish-list was translated by at least one reporter into actual events; while hotel rates became an issue of hot contention.



How about the story's impact in New York? "I think it is excellent," said Tasmanian expatriate merchant banker and Brand Tasmania eFriend, Mark Habner. *The New Yorker* has been published since 1925 and it has a readership of just over one million, with impressive demographics. It is a very good place in which to be noticed.

The more-or-less weekly magazine has always exuded sophistication, along with the sort of cocktail party one-upmanship that is a caricature of New York's *high society*. As Mark Habner, one of Tasmania's more highly paid expatriates, observed: "The New Yorker is always looking to add in a little bite to their articles."

The "bite" applied by Ms Mead took various forms, including somewhat catty observations about clothing and the failure of a first-time visitor to New York to identify the Chrysler Building.

The article, titled *Friend of the Devil*, has Larissa Bartlett and Tasmania as its intended focus. In reading it, you learn just as much about Rebecca Mead and her New York parochialism. Here it is:

Friend of the Devil By Rebecca Mead of *The New Yorker*

Larissa Bartlett, the First Lady of Tasmania, was in New York in July, on a mission to enhance American awareness of her island - a mission that, it might reasonably be thought, can only have a positive outcome. Tasmania's profile has nowhere to go but up. To the extent that most Americans have any opinion of Tasmania, it is to regard it as the Australia of Australia - an impossibly distant, sparsely populated backwater with spectacular beaches and improbable marsupials, sliding inconsequentially off the bottom of the map of the world.

It was the first visit to New York for Mrs. Bartlett, who is an official spokesperson for Brand Tasmania, a marketing program to promote products native to Australia's smallest State. The First Lady, who is tall, with blond highlights and an unpretentious manner, was eager to position her's as an island of the future. "Tasmania's been going through a bit of a renaissance," she explained as she sat in a suite at the Sofitel in midtown. (Through the window, she could see what she had to be reminded was called the Chrysler Building.)

She enumerated Tasmania's industries: hydropower, mining, telecommunications, boat-building. "We have agriculture, aquaculture, and produce production," she said.

Tasmanian sheep, she explained, provide some of the finest merino wool in the world - although, sheepish herself for a moment, she admitted that the red knit shrug she was wearing over a plum-coloured dress was not of Tasmanian origin. "And we have the whole Southern Hemisphere's production of saffron, which is literally worth its weight in gold," she said. "I think there are two shoeboxes full that come out of the State."

Tasmanian wine, she added, is another high-quality product, though only 15 per cent of it is exported, much of the rest presumably being consumed by the Renaissance men and women of Hobart, the capital city. Tasmania also has the cleanest air in the world, according to measurements taken at the discouragingly named Cape Grim.

Bartlett, who is 41-years-old, was born in England but moved to Penguin, Tasmania, as a baby; she fled the island for the more cosmopolitan precinct of Sydney after graduating from college, only to return in 2001. "I left pretty much as soon as I could," she said. "Very often, if you grow up on an island, you leave - you kind of need to, in order to appreciate where you come from. But then you want to go back and look after it - preserve it, but grow it."

These days, she is happy to be an ambassador for a place hitherto most often associated with transported convicts, the near-obliteration of its indigenous population, and a scavenging, doglike marsupial named without the aid of a branding consultant. (Turns out there are distinctively Tasmanian animals other than the notorious devil, including the bandicoot. "It has a little pointy face, pointy ears, a stripy back, and it sort of looks like a cross between a squirrel and a mini wallaby" - and the potoroo, "a miniature wallaby.")

The First Lady's husband, David Bartlett, became Premier two and a half years ago. He is a member of the same party as Julia Gillard, the country's first female Prime Minister.

"I'm really quite excited about having Julia Gillard as our Prime Minister," Mrs. Bartlett said. She felt a certain empathy for Tim Mathieson, Gillard's hairdresser-turned-real-estate-agent consort, and the unofficial First Bloke of Australia. "I understand he's a lovely man," she said. "I fully expect he looks after her and keeps her real, as is necessary from time to time."

Having left at home their two young children, Matilda and Hudson - the latter of whom was named in part for the Hudson River and in part for Peter Hudson, a well-known Tasmanian football player - the Bartletts were planning to spend a little time exploring the city. Their itinerary was a tourist apotheosis: Central Park, the Guggenheim, a Broadway show, the Statue of Liberty.

"We'll go to Little Italy; I would love to go to Chinatown; we'll obviously have a stroll down Fifth Avenue at some point," Mrs. Bartlett said.

She was looking forward to dinner in the West Village, though she had not yet picked out a restaurant. "It's a neighbourhood that I had heard of more than I had heard of others," she explained. "I understand there are a lot of places to eat, and you get really good coffee there."

On Sunday morning, an outing was planned to the Abyssinian Baptist Church, in Harlem. "This type of church doesn't exist in Australia," she said. "We're not necessarily going for worship purposes. It's more for absorbing part of this vibrant, diverse culture that we don't have."

For the record, the Premier's party attended at least 40 engagements with representatives from the US Government, Google, Microsoft, CISCO, A.C. Nielsen and others in nine days. They did a lot of travelling and had a single free day - in New York.

Challen, 60, ends Treasury reign



Tasmania's fiscal puppet-master, Don Challen, the longest-serving Secretary in the history of the Department of Treasury and Finance, will retire on 15 October. Mr Challen, 60, has guided Liberal,

Labor and minority governments in the framing of Budgets for 17 years. He can leave his office with pride in the State's economic progress from near basket case in the late '80s to surprising strength in the aftermath of the global financial crisis.

Since his appointment as Treasury Secretary in 1993, Mr Challen has overseen a progressive reduction of State debt, resulting in three credit rating upgrades. He is the longest serving head of agency in Tasmania at present and the longest serving Head of Treasury in the nation.

Mr Challen's career was founded on 15 years as a University of Tasmania academic and economics lecturer. He spent the following 25 years as a public-sector financial manager in both Canberra and Hobart. Mr Challen made his mark publicly in 1989, while still Michael Vertigan's deputy at Treasury.

When a new Labor-Green government led by Michael Field discovered the State's finances to be in a desperate situation, Mr Challen toured with Mr Field in a successful campaign to convince opinion makers in all regions of the need for a new era of fiscal stringency.

Two years later, when the Labor-Green accord collapsed, Mr Challen was able to bounce back under the new Liberal administration despite his close previous relationship with the Labor leadership. In Westminster system theory this is normal; in practice it is rare. Tired of being blocked by Mr Vertigan from the top job in Treasury, Mr Challen temporarily abandoned that core ambition to accept a posting as head of Tasmania Development and Resources (formerly the Tasmanian Development Authority and now the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts). Mr Challen moved the agency out of the Lands Building at 134 Macquarie Street to new headquarters in the ANZ Centre at 22 Elizabeth Street. The top floor, with views to Storm Bay, was outfitted in relative luxury and several protégées of Mr Challen moved to senior positions in the department.

As the first public servant to be appointed to the top TDR job, he strived to improve relations with other arms of government and to address bureaucratic concerns that the economic agency had an approach better suited to the private sector than to government.

Everything changed in 1993 with a telephone call from Mr Vertigan. His former boss had unexpectedly accepted an offer to take over the Victorian Treasury. Without hesitation, Mr Challen returned to the historic sandstone Treasury offices to take up the vacant top job. Some of his appointees stayed at TDR or its step-child Major Projects Tasmania, while others spread through the upper echelons of the State service.

For the ensuing 17 years, Mr Challen executed his Treasury responsibilities with panache alongside State Treasurers Tony Rundle, David Crean and Michael Aird. He also served with distinction on the Basslink and Hydro Tasmania boards and chaired the Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation and the Tasmanian Gaming Commission. Mr Challen had overall responsibility for Tasmania's very challenging and ultimately successful entry into the National Electricity Market after the commissioning of Basslink.

The Premier, David Bartlett, said: "Mr Challen has been an outstanding public servant who has headed up two major government agencies ... He has made an immense contribution to public administration and financial management in Tasmania. Mr Challen leaves on a high note having helped the Government manage the impact of the global financial crisis on Tasmania. I am pleased that the strategy encapsulated in this year's Budget has resulted in Moody's and Standard and Poors confirming Tasmania's existing credit ratings of Aaa/AA+."

The Treasurer, Michael Aird, said: "I would like to express my personal appreciation to Mr Challen for the support that he has provided to me as Treasurer over the past four years. Mr Challen's intellect, his knowledge and experience and his determination to provide independent and frank advice has been highly valued. Mr Challen has played a key role in the transition of Tasmania's finances to an Aaa credit rating and in the development of the Tasmanian economy. Tasmania is also now seen as a leader in the quality of the information provided on public sector finances.

Mr Challen is highly respected not just in Tasmania, but throughout Australia. I look forward to Don continuing to contribute to public life in Tasmania."

The Leader of the Opposition, Will Hodgman, said: "The Tasmanian Liberals would like to thank [Mr Challen] for his outstanding contribution to public policy and economic and financial management in Tasmania during his long and successful career. Mr Challen was first appointed Treasury Secretary by the Liberal Groom Government in 1993 and has served with distinction ever since."

Mr Challen will continue as Chair of the Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation, while the Government will recommend his appointment to the Retirement Benefits Fund Board. He will also make himself available for other public and private sector appointment "provided they are interesting."

The media made much of the public announcement of a 3-year arrangement with the Government for the provision of consultancy services, when required, at \$1,900 a day. A clarifying statement said: "Most of the income he receives will come from Board work, the expectation being that only a small amount of \$30,000 to \$50,000 in the first year and likely none thereafter will come from consulting work."

"Consulting work will be on agreed projects paid at \$1,900 per day, a standard rate for this kind of work."

Mr Challen, told *The Mercury* in July: "I've been planning [retirement] for a couple of months. I want the next decade of my professional life to be about consulting and working as a non-executive director. I'm looking for interesting things to do. I'm open to any offer or idea; if it passes the interesting test, I'll do it."

He said he hoped his new lifestyle would leave Wednesdays free for competition golf at his beloved Kingston Beach Golf Club. Mr Challen also intends to do more bushwalking and photography and to develop his skill with the clarinet. He and his wife Ann will begin their new life with a month-long holiday in Ireland, where his younger son and two grandchildren live.

Full circle for Murphy's life of dance

By Penny Thow

Acclaimed Tasmanian choreographer Graeme Murphy has travelled full circle to the venue where he began his stellar career



in the world of dance. Murphy's latest production, *FORTY Miles - A River of Dream*, was staged as part of Tasdance's *Heart Matters*, which premiered at the Theatre Royal on July 23, before a second performance the following evening and one in Launceston on July 30.

In the lead-up to the premiere Murphy, 59, worked with the Tasdance company in the same studio in Wellington Street, Launceston, where he studied dance as a teenager with ballet great Kenneth Gillespie. "I blame him entirely for my over-developed sense of theatre," Murphy said, laughing. "He was really a great man of theatre. He pushed me as a child and got me into the Australian Ballet School in just three years. It was a miracle to me and a lot of others."

Murphy was thrilled to be able to come home to Tasmania and work. "Working is such a part of my life and it's such a privilege being able to work on my home turf," he said.

"I'm really grateful to Tasdance for giving me that chance. Just being here feels fantastic. It's part of a larger plan my wife Janet (Vernon) and I have to spend more time here. Also as a patron of Tasdance it's great to have the honour of being able to contribute something creative and artistic rather than just being a figurehead."

Murphy was full of praise for the dancers and said working with Tasdance was very different from working with bigger companies like the Australian Ballet and Opera Australia. "It gives me an intimacy and freedom to be brave and creative that I had with Sydney Dance Company [a smaller troupe he founded in 1976]," Murphy said. "I'm really enjoying the aspect of working with just seven dancers. They're very much like family and it's a different creative process. The company has a real sense of allowing you to make experimental work and push boundaries."

He said part of a choreographer's role was to make the dancers feel comfortable.

“When there are only seven dancers you get to know them in a short time and discover what they are best at. You know what their zone is and push them within that.”

Murphy worked with the dancers in the development of the choreography. “I came with a concept and an idea, but I even kept that flexible until I saw the whites of their eyes,” he said. “Choreography should be interactive. It means the dancers are involved and they can contribute.”

Carl Vine’s *Tribe’s Desire*, performed by the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and conducted by Kenneth Young, was chosen by Murphy for the production. “Carl Vine’s music is beautiful and I can’t get over the luxury of having it played live by the TSO,” he said. “It’s sensational, a real bonus.”

FORTY Miles - A River of Dreams was partly inspired by a poem written about the Tamar River by Murphy’s father. “It contemplates the effect Tasmania seems to have on people’s creative souls and their heart,” he said. “I’m always amazed the way people come down here and suddenly do creative things they never thought they’d do when they were in a big, bustling metropolis. They suddenly turn around and make something exquisitely beautiful. I’m not sure if it’s inspiration from nature or a different sense of time that allows you to think of things of a more spiritual nature than you would in the big city.”

“It’s as if you are compelled to do something more than [the] functional. In my father’s case he was a very practical man, a school teacher and quite a disciplinarian, yet he found time to write poems.”

Murphy and Vernon have bought a property at Beauty Point and they travelled the inspirational “40 miles” along the Tamar to Launceston on a daily basis while working on the production. Murphy said *Forty Miles* celebrated the fact that the Tamar Valley’s beauty had inspired his father to put pen to paper, but the content of the resulting poem was less important than the process of its creation.

“It [dance] gives me an opportunity to transport my visions of beauty into something that is physical and something I care very much about,” he said.

“It’s quite organic and related to themes of nature and people learning to love nature. I think the wild, uncontrollable aspect of nature really scares some people. There are elements of coming to terms, learning to embrace, of being overwhelmed and inspired by the beauty of nature and that sense of harmony you achieve when you realise we are part of it.”

Murphy and Vernon make a close team. “Janet and I met at ballet school when we were teenagers and we’ve been throwing each other around rooms for a long time,” he said, laughing. “Janet is my muse. She is the woman who kept me in the business when I probably would have stopped choreographing and left theatre. Janet is part of my creative input and our thoughts are in tune. I often say we share a brain between us. Because she’s been the subject of the majority of my works it’s not hard for her to impart what she understands to the dancers.”

He said dancers loved the way Vernon could unlock the secrets of the movements for them. “I’m busy dreaming up the next step while she delves into the central soul of a movement. She brings nuance, polish and meaning. It’s not like contemporary dance has a great repertoire of existing movements. You actually have to rediscover each step and find out a way to do it. You also have to have the meaning and know why you are doing it and that’s part of Janet’s role.”

And finally: “Dance is rich in that it [is not restricted to narrative], but what it does best is take you on an emotional journey. That’s the coolest thing and that’s why I still do it.”

Brand takes up fair marketing cause



Brand Tasmania has publicly backed local vegetable growers by asking consumers to choose Birds Eye brand frozen peas over those

marketed by McCain. Responding to an upwelling of farmers’ anger over a McCain TV advertisement they believe to be misleading, Executive Director, Robert Heazlewood, took the message to the media in July.

A complaint has been lodged with the ACCC about the ad which was filmed in Australia using Australian actors, although McCain moved its entire pea-processing operation to New Zealand last year. The Canadian-owned multinational has not processed Australian-grown peas since the closure of its Smithton factory in April with the loss of 190 jobs and an estimated \$20 million in farm income.

Heazlewood said: "It's pretty obvious McCain would have asked the ad agency to make the ad look Australian and, probably, even Tasmanian. But we all know McCain doesn't buy any peas in Tasmania, let alone Australia." He encouraged Tasmanian shoppers to opt for Simplot's Birds Eye brand frozen peas. Tasmanian growers produce about 75 per cent of the frozen vegetables processed by Simplot.

The Chairman of the Vegetable Council of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, Andrew Craigie, said the McCain ad had caused anger. "It rubs salt into the wound of every McCain vegetable grower who no longer has a crop to grow." A McCain spokesman, Tony Rasman, denied the ad was misleading or deceptive, but acknowledged it could be challenged. He told *The Mercury* that the location of the ad's production was irrelevant.

Branding breakthrough at Woolies

Woolworths supermarkets will soon label Tasmanian food in response to a national consumer-driven trend towards buying local. The grocery chain announced at a Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers' Association conference in July that it would introduce new labels identifying Tasmanian produce, because shoppers were increasingly interested in the provenance of their food.

Woolworths Media Manager, Benedict Brook, said Tasmanian shoppers, as well as shoppers in other States, had made it clear they wanted to buy local produce. Tasmania's brand values had encouraged the company to introduce "Made in Tasmania" identification. "It is letting people know where the food comes from - if there is a significant shift in the level of interest in Tasmanian produce as a result of that, we will look at it," Mr Brook said.

Producers win four national medals

Tasmanian producers won four medals - two for honey, and one each for seafood and saffron - at the 2010 Produce Awards announced in Melbourne in July. Spring Bay Seafoods, Miellerie Honey, Tasmanian Honey Company and Tas-Saff were presented with their medals by *ABC delicious* magazine at a celebrity dinner at Circa, the Prince restaurant.

Spring Bay Seafood was awarded one of four medals in the From the Sea category for its mussels and cocktail abalone. Miellerie (tea tree honey), Tas-Saff (saffron) and The Tasmanian Honey Company (leatherwood honey) were among 12 medallists in the From the Earth category that was won by South Australia's Australian Caper Company.

After tasting their way through the produce of more than 50 finalists, the national judges - Maggie Beer, Alla Wolf-Tasker, Matt Moran, Neil Perry, Cheong Liew and Philip Johnson - awarded the Producer of the Year trophy to the winner of the From the Sea category, South Australia's Pristine Oyster Farm.

Tassie trio makes Test history

An Australian Test cricket team included three Tasmanians for the first time when wicketkeeper Tim Payne joined captain Ricky Ponting and swing bowler Ben Hilfenhaus for a July match against Pakistan. Payne, 25, was chosen to replace injured keeper Brad Haddin at the historic Lord's ground in London, becoming the State's 15th Test player and its first Test keeper since Roger Woolley in the early 1980s.

Payne had previously played in 23 one-day internationals and one international Twenty20 game before earning his baggy green cap. His parents and his cricket-loving grandmother, Elizabeth Shaw, who has been watching his matches since he was 10, flew to England to be present.

Hilfenhaus, returning from a knee injury, snared three wickets - all caught behind by Payne, who added a stumping to his four catches in the 150-run Australian victory. After modest first-innings efforts with the bat, Payne scored 47 in the second and Hilfenhaus, batting at 10, excelled with 56 not out. It was his first Test half-century.

The three Tasmanians were together again for the second and final Test against Pakistan at Headingley.

Spotlight on our winemakers

Tasmania winemakers will be in the spotlight when pace-setting Melbourne restaurant, Pure South, stages its second Tasmanian Winter Wine Dinner on Monday, 16 August. Like the 2009 event, the dinner will feature leading Tasmanian winemakers and, like its precursor, it was sold out within 48 hours of being announced. In the meanwhile, young Head Chef, Nick Anthony, has been delighting patrons at the Southbank restaurant with a menu liberally garnished with Tasmania place names. Some examples:

- Crispy Winnaleah pork belly & Spring Bay scallops and with a Tamar Ridge Reserve Pinot Noir.
- King Island Black Angus eye fillet with a Penfolds Shiraz, or freshly shucked oysters from cold Freycinet waters with a Tasmanian Pirie sparkling

Other items on the menu include Cape Grim grass-fed beef, Hightorpe farm rabbit from Penguin, Bruny Island cheese, Highland Goat Chevre, and Petuna Ocean Trout.

Wooley to front events campaign

Television journalist Charles Wooley is to be the "international face" and a patron of a Business Events Tasmania (BET) program to attract more events to the State. "As a journalist, I have been around the world enough times to know that I live in one of the best parts of it," Wooley said at the launch of *The Catalyst Program* in Hobart in July. "Those of us who travel professionally should take a little time to share Tasmania with the wider world by becoming a champion. Don't keep our island a secret." BET's Chief Executive Officer, Stuart Nettlefold, said: "A catalyst is something that initiates or causes an important event to happen. We know that there are many Tasmanians who attend business events around the country and internationally every year that could be hosted in Tasmania. We are asking those Tasmanians that know of a conference, corporate meeting, incentive, seminar or exhibition, currently held elsewhere, to initiate for that event to be hosted in Tasmania."

More information:

www.businessvetnettasmania.com.au/catalyst

Arras markets \$190 Tassie sparkler

A 12-year-old Tasmanian sparkling wine is fetching \$190 a bottle, making it Australia's most expensive bubbly yet. Constellation's House of Arras 1998 EJ Carr Late Disgorged Sparkling is outpricing some respected French champagnes. Winemaker Ed Carr said the use of cool-climate grapes from the Derwent and Tamar valleys had given his namesake an edge. "This is our opportunity to show just what Australia is capable of; that our sparkling wines are truly world class," Mr Carr said. "It's sort of uncharted waters for Australian sparkling to be at this price point. These wines are older than competitors in Australia, but we believe that to be globally competitive our wines need to have this sort of age." Only 50 dozen bottles were produced at Constellation's winery at Reynella in South Australia.

Hobart secures Antarctic tour summit

Hobart will host the 2011 conference of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators, bringing about 100 delegates to Tasmania for a week and exposing them to the city's capabilities as a gateway to Antarctica. The conference in May 2011 will kick-off a year-long program of local events, to celebrate the centenary of Antarctic expeditions, climaxing in the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Hobart in mid-2012. Private tour operators established IAATO in 1991 to promote and practice safe and environmentally responsible travel to the icy continent. Antarctic Tasmania, the Science and Research Office and Business Events Tasmania worked cooperatively to secure the 2011 event for Tasmania.

Business recovery loses some steam

The MyState Financial Tasmanian Economic Index for the June quarter confirmed a softening in consumer confidence, in line with an overall national decline. Tasmanians continued to worry about the impact of interest rates, following three successive rises by the Reserve Bank.

The Managing Director of Mystate Ltd, John Gilbert, said falls on the ASX, debt problems in Europe and local political uncertainty after the State election had also contributed to the index's decline from 58.9 points to 53.6 points. This slip in confidence was confirmed in a subsequent TCCI Survey of Business Expectations, although it also showed that trading conditions remained positive and businesses expected further improvement.

Canberra post for schools chief

The Secretary of Tasmania's Department of Education, John Smyth, has been appointed interim Chief Executive of the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator. Mr Smyth will assume the position in Canberra after four years in charge of the Tasmanian department, including a central role in the turbulent recent period of attempted secondary school reform and resistance. Mr Smyth will not return to the Education Department after his secondment. Jenny Gale has been appointed Acting Secretary.

Infrastructure work boosting jobs

Record public sector infrastructure investment in 2009-10 has contributed to the creation of 2,600 new jobs in the Tasmanian construction industry, the Minister for Infrastructure, Lara Giddings, told a Budget Estimates hearing in June. She said the Tasmanian Government had invested a total of \$1.3 billion, more than doubling the infrastructure spending level of 10 years ago.

European role for UTAS sociologist

The Professor of Rural Sociology at UTAS's Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research, Professor Frank Vanclay, has been appointed Professor of Cultural Geography at the University of Groningen in The Netherlands. Professor Vanclay specialises in the assessment and analysis of the social impacts of farming, agriculture and rural life. He is a former President of the International Rural Sociology Association.

Big US Navy deal for CBG Systems

Tasmanian company CBG Systems has secured a major subcontract to supply high-tech fire divisions for Joint High Speed Vessels to be built at an Alabama shipyard. CBG Systems' Managing Director, Noel Richardson, said: "Access to a significant US Government-funded program is considered a major achievement and recognises the technology and innovation CBG Systems has assembled in winning this contract. The initial subcontract is for three vessels with options for up to 10 vessels and could ultimately extend to 40 additional craft."

Tassal opens high-tech hatchery

Atlantic salmon producer, Tassal, opened a world-class \$25-million hatchery at Ranelagh in southern Tasmania in July. The facility, featuring a Danish recirculation system that re-uses 95 per cent of its bore water input, will produce 4-million smolt (baby salmon) each year to be grown out on the company's fish farms. Filtered solids and waste water will be used in agriculture. Tassal has invested \$150 million over the past four years and now employs 700 Tasmanians. The company recently won international recognition for its innovative fish net cleaner - the Marine Inspector and Cleaner.

Tyro chef wins French experience

Tasmanian apprentice chef, Brendon Walter, will spend a month in France training under two-Michelin star chef, Thierry Marx, after winning a coveted Thierry Marx Career Development Award. Apprentices around the country had to submit two original recipes, which they were required to cook for tasting and assessment during a workplace visit by a judging panel. Mr Walter, of Meadowbank Estate Winery, was among the four winners who will train at Marx's 18th century Château Cordeillan-Bages in Bordeaux.

RET improves Musselroe prospects

Enhanced Renewable Energy Target legislation enacted in Canberra will unlock massive renewable energy potential around Australia, according to Hydro Tasmania's CEO Roy Adair.

He said: "The Federal Government is to be commended for working with industry to address critical policy issues ... While many elements remain to finalise the business case, this should remove a significant barrier to the \$400m Musselroe wind farm in north-east Tasmania."

RDM to build Seychelles ferry

Hobart boat-builder, Richardson Devine Marine Constructions (RDM), has secured a contract to build a 26-metre fast ferry for service in the Seychelles. *Cat Cocos III* will have the sleek appearance characteristic of Incat Crowther's hull designs. It will provide Inter Island Boats with capacity to carry 216 passengers comfortably at a cruising speed of 28 knots through the Indian Ocean archipelago of 115 islands.

Flyfishing champs are Tassie-bound

Commonwealth Flyfishing Champion, Australia, will defend its title against anglers from Britain, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand in Tasmania in February 2012. The annual event will be based at the Launceston Country Club, with daily competitions in selected rivers and lakes. The Australian team won the 2010 title in Wales. Further information: www.flyfishaustralia.com.au

Oyster growers looking ahead

The Tasmanian oyster industry will hold its annual conference - Shellfish Futures 2010 - at Tidal Waters Resort at St Helen's on 10-11 September. The event is an initiative of the Tasmanian Shellfish Executive Council. For more information email: info@oysterstasmania.org

Jobs edge up again

Unemployment in Tasmania rose slightly to 6.3 per cent in trend terms in June, largely due to continued growth in the participation rate. There were 400 additional jobs and employment has now risen by 4,700 in six months.

Whales make a downtown visit

Two southern right whales swam within 150m of Macquarie Wharf, in Hobart's CBD, in July. The animals, believed to be making their seasonal migration from Antarctic waters, thrilled ferry passengers and on-shore observers and were seen again off Taroona the following day.

Roof-top turbines begin work

Australia's most powerful vertical wind turbines began generating electricity on the roof of Hobart's Marine Board Building in July. Erected by local business I Want Energy, the turbines are expected to reduce the building's energy bill by more than 10 per cent.

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