

Big cat among tourism pigeons

The shifting landscape of Tasmanian tourism is in for another major change before the end of 2007. Low-cost Asian carrier, Tiger Airways, will join Qantas, Jetstar and Virgin Blue in the battle for



Tasmanian and visitor bookings. Tiger will fly initially between Launceston and Melbourne and its announcement of the new service to begin on 29 November provoked an immediate price war. Tiger's fares will start at \$39.99, but Jetstar trumped the newcomer with an offer of \$29 flights. All airline marketing teams, as well as those at the TT Line, are facing a torrid summer.

The Minister for Tourism, Arts and the Environment, Paula Wriedt, said: "The arrival of this new service will have broad appeal because it provides travellers with more choice. History has shown, with other low-cost air carriers ... that the introduction of Tiger Airways' services will generate renewed interest in travel to the State."

As well as connecting Melbourne and Launceston, Tiger Airways Australia will initially run services to Mackay, Rockhampton, the Gold Coast, Alice Springs and Darwin.

Tiger Airways began operations from Singapore in September 2004 with two aircraft serving three routes. Its business model was based on the highly successful European operation, Ryanair, and the family of that company's founder, Tony Ryan, has a 16 per cent interest in Tiger. Singapore Airlines is the major shareholder with 49 per cent. Tiger now has a fleet of nine Airbus A320 aircraft, flying to 18 destinations across the Asia-Pacific region.

Tiger Airways' web-site describes the company as "a true low-fare airline" operating on three customer-focused core strategies:

- Market stimulation - creating opportunities for new travellers and empowering budget-conscious people to fly more often by making travel affordable through consistently low fares;
- Stringent cost controls so that fares can consistently be kept low;
- Capacity utilisation - maximising the number of sectors served each day through efficient air traffic planning.

Tiger Airways Australia will use new Airbus A320 aircraft based at Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport. The airline expects to carry more than 2 million passengers within the first year of operations.

Tiger Airways' entry to the Australian market is still subject to regulatory approval by the Federal Government.

Meanwhile, Tourism Tasmania has won the Best Australian Tourist Office (Domestic), category at the Australian Federation of Travel Agents annual awards in Sydney. Tourism Tasmania won the same award in 2006.

Tourism Tasmania is now conducting its annual Australia-wide program of Tasmanian road-shows, which encourage agents and wholesalers to build their knowledge of Tasmania through face-to-face contact with local business operators.

Power station on track



Alint Ltd's \$230 million Tamar Valley power station project will go ahead. The owner of the under-utilised Bass Strait gas pipeline signed a long-term electricity-supply contract with Aurora Energy on 27 July to ensure the viability of the new station.

The 200 MW gas-fired operation will be the first private-sector power generator in Tasmanian history and will ease pressure on Hydro Tasmania's drought-depleted dams. "This is a huge step forward for genuine energy competition in Tasmania," the Minister for Energy, David Llewellyn, said. "An investment of this size by one of Australia's leading companies certainly sends the message that Tasmania is a great place to do business. This ... will create up to 300 jobs during construction and will employ about 22 permanent staff when operational. Tasmanians are certainly seeing the benefits of the majority Labor Government's stewardship in terms of job creation, energy security and economic growth."

Alinta is a top-100 Australian company and one of the nation's leading energy businesses. It has infrastructure in five States, as well as New Zealand, and it manages, operates or part-owns a diversified \$7,500 million portfolio of energy assets, including the 305km Bass Strait under-sea gas pipeline that was built by Duke Energy International in the early 1990s.

Alinta's latest Tasmanian project has not been easy. In October 2006, the energy giant entered into a conditional agreement to supply Aurora Energy with electricity from its proposed combined cycle station. Alinta said at the time that it also planned to build an additional power station comprising 180 MW of open-cycle generation capacity (known as a peaking power station). This would allow Alinta to provide back-up electricity when required, as well as peaking capacity to the National Electricity Market. Alinta entered negotiations with Hydro Tasmania on acquiring the site of its Bell Bay Power Station, along with three gas-fired generators. Alinta regarded Hydro Tasmania's three 35 MW Bell Bay turbines as strategic assets that it would be able to use to meet the growing demand for peaking generation in the National Electricity Market.

Alinta's initial plans were based on a 15-year gas supply contract with Beach Petroleum Ltd and Anzon Australia Ltd, who were planning to jointly develop two new Bass Strait gas fields. When the partners decided to defer their project, Alinta made its power station plans conditional on the achievement of an alternative gas supply.

On 29 June, Alinta dropped conditions on the deal with Hydro Tasmania.

It also announced that its conditional agreement to supply Aurora Energy with electricity from its new power station had been extended until July 27. The extension was agreed to provide Alinta with an opportunity to secure alternative gas supplies. The gas problem was eventually solved internally, with Alinta reconfiguring its own gas resources in order to supply the new Tasmanian plant.

Alinta's new power station is expected to be operational in 2008. The company is considering expanding the 105 MW capacity at Bell Bay to 180 MW by adding additional turbines.



Go-ahead for Menzies 'morph'



The Menzies Research Institute took a big step in July towards its planned transformation into a premier international health and medical research facility. The Hobart City Council approved plans for a futuristic building designed to house the expanded institute, along with the University of Tasmania's Faculty of Health Science. The council voted 7-4 to accept revised plans for a 'morphed' building to be constructed on the Liverpool and Campbell streets corner. It will be built on the site of the present institute building, as well as adjoining land acquired by the University of Tasmania (UTAS).

The Director of the institute, Professor Simon Foote, revealed an ambitious new growth strategy during Medical Research Week in May. He said the plans would give the organisation critical mass, enabling it to evolve into a significant institute focusing on biomedical research. "We are restructuring and expanding the institute's areas of research to focus on both clinical and basic science. This is essential to ensure that the depth and the quality of our research are enhanced and strengthened," Professor Foote said.

The expansion hinges on one of the Menzies Research Institute's global advantages: Tasmania's unique population resource, a key factor in its success since being established 18 years ago as the Menzies Research Centre. Professor Foote said: "Tasmania's stable population, excellent genealogical records and the generosity of the community make this State a unique and ideal place to conduct ground-breaking research on common and chronic health problems. With its enhanced capacity and the continued support of the community, the institute will be able to break through on key health issues and influence clinical medicine and public health guidelines here in Tasmania, as well as nationally and globally."

The institute's expanded resources and new research themes have already drawn interest from researchers around the world. Organisation Chairman, Dr Dan Norton, revealed that UTAS had provided \$5 million to help employ five new senior research fellows. "We are very pleased that the university has recognised the institute's potential to attract high-quality researchers through this significant investment. Our new research fellows will bring diverse skills and biomedical knowledge to Tasmania, and enable us to establish new links with the national and international research community."

Professor Foote expects the institute to double in size in the next six to 12 months. To keep pace with the rapid growth in its research team, the institute sought approval for its new \$47.3 million building, with state-of-the-art laboratories on a shared site with UTAS' Faculty of Health Science. The Hobart City Council conditionally approved plans for the building in April, although several aldermen voted against it. Modifications suggested by the council were made and the plans were passed on 16 July.

The building is scheduled to be operational in 2008.



Tetsuya walks on the wild side

Tetsuya Wakuda, celebrity chef and Brand Tasmania Ambassador, thought it was time to broaden his engagement with the State's hospitality industry. How about sampling Pure Tasmania's new Piners and Miners Experience out of Strahan, we suggested.



Tetsuya required a little more information, then agreed to test one of the State's newest tourism

products, involving road and rail travel in a 3.8-tonne, 8-passenger Hi-Rail four-wheel drive that can lower rail wheels and become legally and technically a train (on the road you wear seat belts, but when the vehicle transforms and transfers to the West Coast Wilderness Railway they are not required). Named after the Huon pine cutters and mineral extractors who pioneered Tasmania's wild west, Piners and Miners also involves a two-hour bushwalk. Tetsuya had never hiked in Tasmania or anywhere else, preferring to pour out his energy in the kitchen of his world-ranked Sydney restaurant, Tetsuya's. He had never owned walking boots, a problem we had to address at a sale of outdoor clothing in Hobart. This is how his *big* day evolved.

We meet our guide, Allan Thrush of Pure Tasmania, in the pre-dawn gloom of Strahan's main street. It's mid-winter in the west and, although the weather forecasts aren't good, the rain's holding off under a low overcast. After introductions and a little paperwork, Allan kits us out in his office cum clothing depot. A rosy-cheeked, personable young man, originally from Launceston, Allan shows no sign of being overawed by Tetsuya's global fame. When the great man fumbles as he tries to fit unfamiliar gaiters, Allan offers helpful hints prefaced by the salutation "Tets, mate, ..." Tetsuya beams.

Eamonn Seddon is in charge of the Hi-Rail vehicle. He was recruited from Wales in the 1990s because of his expertise, experience and passion for railways. Without somebody like him, the West Coast Wilderness Railway could not have been rebuilt along the track originally laid in the 1890s by the Mt Lyell Mining and Railway Co. to transport ore. Eamonn stayed on to operate the new tourism business and recently became an Australian citizen.

Eamonn drives us around to Regatta Point, the Wilderness Railway's harbourside terminus, and begins a series of safety checks to ensure early-morning inspection crews have found the line to be clear of fallen trees, landslips or other obstacles.

The Hi-Rail is operationally a train as soon as it goes on the rail line, so Eamonn uses a traditional system of checks and counter-checks (assisted by Allan, in this instance) to ensure the Hi-Rail will be the only train on the line.

Allan begins an account, which will unravel episode by episode during the day, of the two feuding Irishmen who established the rival Mt Lyell and North Mt Lyell mining companies a century ago, complete with competing railway lines, towns and smelters in these rain-lashed and challenging West Coast mountains. It's a big story and Allan tells it well. Before too long, as he explains railway construction techniques, local history, botany, zoology and geology, we're wondering how such a young head can hold so much knowledge. "He knows everything," Tetsuya says with an admiring grin.

When we reach the rail track, Allan helps with hand signals as Eamonn turns the car into a train, carefully lowering the



lowering the rail wheels so they engage with the line. Now the vehicle's steering wheel is redundant, railway-lover Eamonn is in his element and the wonders of the revitalised West Coast Wilderness Railway unfold. The rail gauge is only 3ft 6 1/2ins, so the temperate rainforest crowds in close on either side and often creates a canopy above the glass roof. You marvel at the engineering feats of the pioneers who built the line through such impossible country – and at the efforts of Eamonn and his colleagues who spent three years bringing 39 bridges and 35km of line back into operation. As we climb, there are spectacular views of the brutalised King River far below. A century ago, when untreated tailings started to pour from the Mt Lyell mine into this superb waterway, all the trees along the railway were systematically removed to fuel Mt Lyell's copper smelter. Now the regrowth crowns arch impressively above our heads.

Several times, pademelons scurry from the track as we approach. When Tetsuya asks about the qualities of pademelon meat, we learn that Allan is a vegetarian.

Eamonn lets us off at Teepookana, once a substantial port and the railway's original terminus.

The town has all but vanished and this vernal resurgence over man's monumental but transient accomplishments becomes one of the themes for the day. The silt-laden King River churns around the last vestiges of Teepookana's jetty, while Allan points out Huon pine, King Billy pine and celery-top pine among the luxuriant rain forest on the further bank.

Back in the Hi-Rail, it's on to Dubbil Barril and the start of the famous rack-and-pinion system that enabled the Mt Lyell company's trains to manage grades too steep for conventional rail traffic. The men who started work on the railway in 1893 had a very Tasmanian motto: *We find a way or make it!*

Unlike other trains, the Hi-Rail has no need to engage the central toothed rack in its climb towards the track's highest point at Rinadeena, where there's plunger coffee, muffins and a fruit platter. A pretty little splendid fairy wren is quickly identified by Allan as it hops about on a nearby bush, sizing up the muffin crumbs. Before we leave the station, Eamonn demonstrates the mechanical ingenuity of the railway's Staff-and-Ticket safety system.

At a crossroad before Lynchford station, the rail wheels are raised and the Hi-Rail becomes a road vehicle again. Eamonn takes us past two of the State's few remaining stockpiles of Huon pine. Then, somewhere along the road, a spotted-tail quoll – vivid ginger with big white spots – undulates gracefully across our path. It's broad daylight. How good is this?

We pause at a spectacular view over Lake Burbury. The flooded valley below conceals the long-dead town of Crotty and its famously dysfunctional twin smelters, as well as a stretch of the extravagantly constructed railway line that once connected the North Mt Lyell mine with Pillinger, a port town and industrial centre on Kelly Basin, a sheltered bay at the Gordon River end of Macquarie Harbour. Allan produces a sack of stones to help explain the region's complex geology. Tetsuya shakes his head in quiet admiration.

By the time we leave the tarmac for a four-wheel-drive track that was once the North Mt Lyell-Pillinger railway, we're well into Allan's narrative about the two Irish visionaries and their competing Tasmanian dreams. With rare cunning for such a young man, he keeps enough information in reserve to ensure our continued engagement.

Our track takes us into the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, where Eamonn leaves us in a mossy turning circle in rainforest above the Bird River. It's time to walk. As we ease into our backpacks (supplied by Piners and Miners), Tetsuya is alive to the beauty and silence around us. Then he confides in a somewhat nervous whisper: "I've never done this before. I have a personal policy of never walking."

Before I can respond, Allan calls: "Tets mate, are you all set?"

So we're off. As walking tracks go the first part of the rail bed is a virtual Autobahn: flat; mossy underfoot; and on a scarcely-discernable down-grade. Tetsuya assures us his boots are comfortable and Allan introduces us to some of Tasmania's 101 endemic fern species. He points out a fine example of forest regeneration in action. An ageing myrtle tree has been invaded by a spectacular fungus that has reduced its wood to a powdery pulp. Specialist beetles have bored into the softened interior to feed on the fungus and then yellow-tailed black cockatoos have ripped the whole thing apart to feed on the beetles. Beneath the bits of tree still standing is a circle of highly nutritious mulch ready to help the next generation of greenery establish itself in the otherwise impoverished rainforest soil.

The forest (regrowth again) is delightful. The Bird River burbles companionship. A darkly furred potaroo - the only nest-building member of the kangaroo tribe - dashes across the track and zigzags away into the undergrowth. There's a glimpse of green rosellas in the canopy and their "cuss-ick" calls follow us as the kilometres slip by with surprising ease. As we pause by a particularly attractive stretch of river, Tetsuya asks if it contains trout. "For sure," Allan replies, "and lots of lovely little native galaxias."

"These are excellent," says the chef. "Whenever I can, I buy Tasmanian whitebait to serve in the restaurant. I love them."

The vegetarian guide responds with a diplomatic smile.

As we swing away from the river and into more open forest, Allan assures us that blue-winged parrots are common hereabouts. There are tree roots on the track in this section and you have to keep your eyes down, but we pause from time to time to scan the canopy.

Alas, we have to leave a sighting of these beautiful green-yellow-and-blue parrots to another group on another day.

Eventually, paperbarks and tea trees suggest we're nearing the shores of Macquarie Harbour. It doesn't seem possible that we have been walking for nearly two hours. We cross a final bridge and follow Allan down a track that opens abruptly on to a jetty, with the sleek white *Second Nature* - our transport back to Strahan - tied up alongside. After dropping our packs on board we're ushered back along a track by Allan to the promised "gourmet barbecue" prepared on a movable wooden platform under a dismountable canopy in the bush. There is a triumphant spring in Tetsuya's stride during this short, unencumbered walk. He's like a student after a successful exam.

We're sitting in the former industrial quarter of Pillinger, where there were once bustling wharves, a



terminus, warehouses and an export-sized brick-making industry. It's silent now. The forest is back: calm and soothing. It's a perfect place to sip Tasmanian pinot noir with oysters or Atlantic salmon canapés. For the main course, Allan concentrates on bread rolls and several varieties of salad, while the rest of us tuck into tender beef, fillet of wallaby, local ocean trout, marinated quail and seared scallops. Tetsuya has been treated to some elaborate Tasmanian meals in recent days, but he delights in these simpler flavours. "This is just wonderful," he tells chef Katie Lockett. "Do you have a little more of the wallaby?"

While Katie and the skipper of *Second Nature*, Damian Betts, pack up, Allan takes us back into the forest to see the relics of Pillinger: crumbling brick kilns; rusting boilers; two long-ruined piers; and the wreckage of a passenger carriage that ended its life stripped of fittings and converted into static accommodation. It's taking time, but the forest is on its way to an astounding victory. Of course, the work of the piners will take a little longer to redress. Some of the Huon pines they selectively logged more than 100 years ago were 4,000 years old.

No Huon pines are cut down these days, but enough of the dense butter,-coloured wood is salvaged from the forest floor to supply discerning boat-builders, furniture makers and craft workers.

Tetsuya, a passionate fisherman, trails a line as we begin the run across Macquarie Harbour to Strahan. Choppy conditions had been predicted, but the surface is flat and we make unexpectedly good time as the last light of day burnishes the forest along the harbour's edge.

Tetsuya winds in his line. "A *big day*," he says. "Wonderful, really. Tasmania has so many surprises!"

For further information:
www.puretasmania.com.au

Cellar find crystallises history

There's a little bit of sleuthing going on in Tasmania at the moment. Not quite in the *Da Vinci Code* league, but intriguing nonetheless. Are some bottles of sparkling wine soon to go on display at Meadowbank Estate the oldest-known wines in Australia?

The first vines in the country were planted in what is now downtown Sydney; in small vineyards long since buried under the high-rise car parks and Asian takeaways of Sydney's suburbs.

Tasmania's first vineyard was planted at Prospect Farm by Bartolemew Broughton in 1823, ancient remnants of which still grow in New Town; the vines now gnarled and as thick as a gourmand's waist. These predate the first recorded vine plantings in the Hunter Valley, Victoria and South Australia by a decade and more. Indeed, the first vineyards in both Victoria and South Australia were established with cuttings taken from Tasmania – by William Henty from Launceston to Portland in 1834; and from Hobart and Port Arthur to John Hack and John Reynell in South Australia in 1837 and 1838. By that time, Tasmania had commercial vineyards at Campania, Relbia, the lower Tamar at Windermere, on the East Coast around Swansea and Falmouth and in what is now the Hobart suburb of Moonah.

So it is incontestable that, of all modern wine-producing regions in the country, Tasmania is the oldest.

In February, 1979, at Wendover House - which adjoined the original Prospect Farm vineyard - Rick Reynolds, the owner and an antique dealer, lifted layers of old carpet, lino and newspapers and uncovered a ringed hatch. Under the hatch was a cellar. And tumbled and scattered on the cellar's dirt floor were numerous wine bottles, many still wired and sealed with wax, some still containing wine and a few still reasonably full.

Rick says the style of the lino and the dates of the newspapers indicate the wines had lain undisturbed in the cellar for over 100 years. He said he contacted previous owners of the house and they had no idea about the cellar. Unevenness in the bottles, different punt depths, different thicknesses of glass and striations within the glass, show that the bottles were hand-made. From this - and the fact that there was no industrial manufacturing of glass in Australia until 1880, Rick further reckoned the wines dated back to between 120 and 180 years ago. This reckoning was confirmed by experts at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery who dated the glass to pre-1870.

Next, Rick conducted a land title search. This revealed that Broughton's farm passed to a Captain Swanson and, on his death, was sold again in 1850. Records show further that the new owners produced no wine and the vineyard disappeared shortly thereafter. So it's not unreasonable to suppose that the wines date from a period earlier than 1850.

If so, they are by far the oldest bottles of wine extant in Australia and the first Champagne (or Champaigne as it was then spelt here) recorded as having been made in this country.

Reynolds also speculates that they might well be from the 1847 vintage, the wine that won Tasmania's and Australia's first international wine medal in 1848, presented to a "champagne-style wine" at the Paris International Exhibition. At the time, the vineyard was producing 1,000 gallons (more than 4,500 litres) annually.

Unfortunately, the Australian Wine Research Institute in Adelaide says there is no known scientific method for establishing the age of a wine.

The bottles have recently been acquired by Gerald Ellis of Meadowbank Estate and will go on show for the first time to the public shortly as part



of Meadowbank's Flawed History of Tasmanian Wine. He says he's unfazed by science being unable to date the wine, since he plans to open a bottle for tasting at the launch and is confident the tasters will be able not only to tell when the wine was made, but on which side, slope and part of the vineyard the grapes were picked.

Whatever, the collection is an historic treasure, unique in Australia and a legitimatising testament to Tasmania's place in the nation's wine history.

July's just awful for giant squid

A rare giant squid (*Architeuthis*) weighing more than 200kg that washed up on a west coast beach in July has confirmed the mid-winter month as a very bad time for its



species. Giant squid strandings in Tasmania have occurred on 19 July 1986, 20 July 1991, 20 July 2002, and 10 July 2007.

The deep-sea giant, believed to have been more than seven metres long, was found on Ocean Beach near Strahan. The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's Senior Curator of the Southern Ocean and Antarctica, Dr David Pemberton, said: "The timing is incredible ... the date of this latest finding is more than a coincidence. Something is happening at this time of year. Squid in general die after their breeding seasons, so it could have something to do with that."

The giant squid was shown to local school-children in Strahan, then packed in ice for its trip to TMAG in Hobart. It was carried in a whale rescue trailer supplied by the Parks and Wildlife Service. The squid was measured and examined by an expert team, including Senior Curator of Invertebrate Zoology, Genevor Walker-Smith, before being frozen and stored in TMAG's collection. Samples will be taken from time to time for tissue studies and diet evaluation.

The giant squid inhabits deep water and is rarely encountered by man. Little is known about its lifecycle. "This is the first giant squid stranding reported on the west coast - the other giant squid were discovered off Tasmania's east coast," Dr Pemberton said. "However, the giant squid is known to be a food source for sperm whales, which have frequently stranded on the west coast."

Dr Pemberton said TMAG's stranding response, which also involved staff from the Parks and Wildlife Service and the marine conservation section at the Department of Primary Industries and Water, had gone very smoothly.

Giant squid are found in all of the world's oceans, usually where continental shelves drop away to great depths. Mariners have reported sightings since ancient times, and their exaggerated tales may have led to the Norse legend of the kraken, a tentacled monster as large as an island, capable of sinking any ship.

Female giant squid are believed to reach 13 metres measured from the caudal fin at the base of the body, or mantle, to the tips of two long tentacles. The male of the species grows to around 10 metres. The mantle is around 2 metres long.

Giant squid have sophisticated nervous systems and complex brains that are of great interest to scientists. Their eyes are among the biggest on earth: more than 30cm in diameter. Unlike fish, the animals maintain neutral buoyancy in seawater through a solution of ammonium chloride that is lighter than seawater and flows throughout their bodies. Fortunately for giant squid, this solution has a nasty taste making them unsuitable for human consumption.

The colossal squid (*Mesonychoteuthis hamiltoni*), a 495kg specimen of which was caught in the Ross Sea in February, is believed to be even bigger than the giant squid, with females reaching at least 14 metres.

Anne conquers the Channel



Marathon swimmer Anne Steele became the first Tasmania to conquer the Everest of her sport when she swam the English Channel on August 7. After a meticulous 18-month preparation, the 38-year-old mother of two was fresh enough after the gruelling swim to run up the pebbly beach where she landed on

the French coast. Not only did she become the first Tasmanian – male or female – to swim the Channel, she delivered a dividend of more than \$300,000 in sponsorships to the Children's Cancer Institute Australia

When Anne's support boat, with husband Hayden Steele on board, collected her from the beach for the return trip to Dover, the crew was amazed at her fresh appearance and not surprised by her excited repetitions of the refrain: "I swam the Channel; I swam the Channel ..."

Anne's time placed her among the 30 fastest Channel swimmers in history. "I decided I'd focus my swim on raising money and awareness for the Children's Cancer Institute Australia," Anne had said before the event. "They're the only independent medical research institute in the country that deals with childhood cancer and, personally, we've all been indirectly or directly affected by cancer." Anne started with a goal of raising \$200,000, but she left Tasmania in late July with funding commitments of more than \$300,000.

Expert check on RHH site

Pitt & Sherry, a Tasmanian firm of consulting engineers, has been appointed to assess the suitability of the Hobart Railyards site for the new Royal Hobart Hospital. The company has recruited local and interstate specialists to provide the diverse range of skills required for the project. Issues to be considered in the six-month assessment include:

- Detailed investigation of site contamination, along with costing of remedial works;
- An assessment of the impact of and on surrounding activities, such as port operations, the Hobart City Council sewerage plant and caustic soda plant;
- Geological tests and evaluations to assess foundation issues;
- A risk assessment of flooding during extreme weather events; and
- The capacity of existing services including power, water and sewerage, road access and the cost of potential upgrades.

Meanwhile, the Government has advertised for consultants with skills in hospital planning and design to join the team working on plans for the new hospital. "The team of consultants will be made up of architects, engineers and planners and will provide advice on areas such as health services and facilities, environmentally sustainable design, structural engineering, and services such as power and water," the Deputy Premier, Steven Kons, said.

Further information: www.tenders.tas.gov.au

\$31m. upgrade for Mercury

Global publisher News Corporation is to invest \$31 million in a new printing press for the *Mercury* in Hobart. To be located at the Technopark at Dowsings Point, the press will enable an 80-page newspaper to be printed with colour on every page. "This is a significant capital investment in Tasmania and demonstrates great confidence in the strength of our economy," The Premier, Paul Lennon said. "I congratulate News Corporation on the faith it is showing in Tasmania and encourage other companies to follow its excellent example."

Fabrication windfall

Launceston-based Haywards Engineering has secured a \$13 million contract with Spanish company Acciona Energy to supply 31 wind turbine towers.

The Tasmanian steel fabrication and construction specialist is also well-placed to earn an additional \$12 million contract for the second stage of Acciona's Waubra Wind Farm near Ballarat. Haywards has invested \$3.5 million to improve capability and capacity at its workshops and will employ another 12 people - six tradespeople and six apprentices. The Haywards/Crisp Bros operation now employs 180 people, an increase of 50 over the past five years.

New abalone measure

The Tasmanian Government has restricted the movement of all abalone and rock lobster caught recreationally in Tasmanian waters in an additional measure to prevent the spread of abalone viral ganglioneuritis from Victoria. All catches must be landed in Tasmania and cannot be transported out of the State on any vessels, other than the Bass Strait ferries, north of a line of latitude 39° 30' South. The aim is to channel recreational catches through established quarantine barriers.

Further information: www.fishing.tas.gov.au

Webster promotes Nigel Carey

Australia's biggest onion exporter, Webster Ltd, has promoted Nigel Carey to the position of General Manager of its Webster Fresh division. As Sales and Marketing Manager of the division, Mr Carey has been responsible for the successful development of long-term customer relationships across the company's markets in 18 countries. He has worked with clients to develop advanced on-line product traceability, food safety, quality and environmental systems, helping build Websters' reputation as a global leader in systems innovation and delivery.

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State-shaping events

Local author Michael Ludeke has released a book that is bound to trigger furious debate - *Ten Events Shaping Tasmania's History*. His 10 selections



include the development of hydro-electricity, but not the Franklin River blockade. White settlement in 1803 gets a chapter, but not the occupation of Tasmania by Aborigines 30,000 years earlier. The author points out that there is no "The" at the start of the title that would have made it an exclusive list. Stand by for a sequel.

Dam refurbishment

Catagunya Dam, on the Derwent 30km from Ouse, will undergo a \$25-30 million refurbishment commencing in March 2008. The 49m high concrete dam, built in 1962, is partly supported by steel anchor cables and Hydro Tasmania engineers believe these to be gradually corroding. The 18-month project is expected to employ up to 60 people.

Gilmour joins TIS

Cycling world champion and Olympic silver medallist Matthew Gilmour has joined the coaching staff at the Tasmanian Institute of Sport. Gilmour, whose long career included a silver medal in the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and a world championship title in 1998, will work with head cycling coach Paul Brosnan.

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