

Roaring 40s signs biggest deal

Tasmanian-based renewable energy developer, Roaring 40s, has signed a joint development agreement to build a wind



farm in China that will generate more electricity than all of Australia's wind farms together. Roaring 40s, a joint venture between Hydro Tasmania and China's CLP Group, will work with the China Datang Corporation to build a 1,000 MW wind farm at Xiangyang in Jilin province. One of the largest on-shore wind-farm projects in the world, it is the seventh and biggest undertaking by Roaring 40s in China. Roaring 40s' China successes involve billions of dollars in investment and have positioned the company at the forefront of the global industry.

The Xiangyang wind farm will be built in stages, with construction of the first 400 MW stage scheduled to commence early in 2008. The \$640 million Stage One will supply enough energy for almost a million homes and offset over a million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year (equivalent in carbon offset terms to planting 1.5 million trees).

Earlier in August, Roaring 40s had commissioned its second Chinese project, the 48.75 MW Rongcheng Wind Farm. This \$80 million investment, in Shandong Province, on China's east coast, was a joint venture with Chinese renewable energy company Guohua Energy Investment Corporation. Its successful completion confirmed Roaring 40s' status as the leading foreign wind energy developer in China. The company has risen rapidly and unexpectedly to this position after being established initially to build wind farms in Australia. Withdrawal of Australian Government support for wind energy projects forced Roaring 40s offshore and into China's booming renewable energy sector.

The Rongcheng project, consisting of 39 1.25 MW Suzlon wind turbine generators, follows on from a strategic cooperation agreement signed with Guohua in Canberra in April 2006 as part of an official visit to Australia by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. Roaring 40s and Guohua are constructing three other developments in Shandong. Wind farms of 49.5 MW each are expected to be commissioned at Lijin, Hekou and Binzhou in 2008.

"I am particularly pleased with the successful completion of the Rongcheng project as it has allowed Roaring 40s to build a strong partnership with Guohua," said Roaring 40s Managing Director, Mark Kelleher. "With further developments already underway with Guohua, I am confident that Roaring 40s will remain the leading foreign wind energy developer in China and continue to grow its renewable energy capabilities."

Heritage listing for convict sites



The Australian Government has added three additional Tasmanian convict sites to the National Heritage List. The Coal Mines site on the Tasman Peninsula, the Cascades Female Factory at South Hobart and the Darlington settlement on Maria Island were added to the national list that already included Port Arthur. Aside from the recognition it brings, listing delivers practical benefits through access to Commonwealth funding.

National Heritage listing will also strengthen the Tasmanian Government's hand as it works with the Australian Government to have 11 convict sites added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. Van Diemen's Land was Australia's second colony and a major destination for convicts from Britain and Ireland.

The Coal Mines site, at Saltwater River, was chosen as an example of the severity of punishment that could be metered out to recalcitrant convicts. Coal was discovered there in 1833 and was being mined by "refractory convicts" within 12 months. At its peak, the mine employed 170 hardened prisoners from nearby Port Arthur and a garrison of 29 officers and men. The government closed the mine in 1848, but private operators continued limited coal extraction until around 1877.

Management of the Coal Mines Historic Site was transferred from the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service to the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority in 2004. The site is a 25-minute drive from Port Arthur and a visit is recommended by the authority as an adjunct to the Port Arthur experience. There are a number of walking routes in the area, ranging from a few minutes to several hours.

Cascades Female Factory is a relatively intact place of incarceration for female convicts that is now enclosed by South Hobart suburbia. It operated as a workhouse from 1828 to 1856, gradually expanding to house up to 1,200 female convicts and their children in extremely overcrowded conditions. It was closed soon after the end of transportation and served for a time as a women's prison.

Darlington was established on Maria Island in 1825 as a secure place to imprison convicts whose offences were of a lesser nature and did not, in the official view, warrant incarceration at Port Arthur. Darlington's well-preserved buildings represent two distinct phases of convict occupation: an initial penal settlement; and a subsequent probation station.

At the same time as the three Tasmanian sites were listed, the Australian Government listed the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area on Norfolk Island, along with the following sites in NSW: Old Government House and the Government Domain; Hyde Park Barracks; Cockatoo Island (all in Sydney); and the Old Great North Road Precinct.

Each of these sites is considered to have played a unique role in Australia's convict history.

China drives export boom



Exports from Tasmania to China and Hong Kong have more than tripled

since 2000, reaching \$891 million in the year to June 2007. Overall, the value of Tasmania's exports grew by 28 per cent in 12 months to a new record of \$3.7 billion. In the same period national exports grew by less than 11 per cent.

Asian markets, aside from China, continued to be important. Exports to Japan totalled \$551.72 million, down 22 per cent on the previous year, but a strong growth trend continued in trade with the Republic of Korea, with exports rising by 26 per cent to \$324.1 million. India also continued an uptrend, with exports rising 63.9 per cent to \$227.97. Sales to Taiwan totalled \$187.06 million and the United States maintained its position as Tasmania's biggest market outside Asia, buying goods and services totalling \$181.64 million.

The Treasurer, Michael Aird, said that the continuing export boom was a reflection of the premium quality of Tasmanian products, a commitment to innovation and a strong focus on promoting the State as being open for business. "The Tasmanian business community, in partnership with the State Government, has worked very hard in recent years to seek new markets, promote investment in the State and develop innovative ways of doing things. We know that we cannot always compete on quantity so we have to focus strongly on quality and doing things better. "Clearly Tasmanian goods are finding their way to key markets all over the world and that is an important indicator of the strength of our economy and the quality of our products."

Retail trade is also setting records. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures released in August showed that the value of retail trade increased by 0.9 per cent in June 2007 to a record level of \$414.9 million. This was 6.2 per cent above the level recorded 12 months earlier.

“Tasmania’s monthly increase was the second highest of all States, behind Queensland which was up 1 per cent.,” Mr Aird said. “Tasmanians are feeling confident about the future. Many more are in jobs, so they can afford to spend.”

Overseas tourists spend \$242m.

Spending by international tourists in Tasmania jumped by 40 per cent in the year to March, reaching a new peak of \$242 million. An International Visitor Survey conducted by Tourism Research Australia showed that Tasmania had 156,000 international visitors in the 12 months to March 31 -- an 11 per cent increase. Importantly, the average time spent by international tourists in the State rose by two nights to 20.9 nights. These were positive aspects of figures released in August by the Australian Tourism Export Council.



With arrivals into Australia tipped to reach nine million by 2016, the council said there was great potential for further growth in Tasmania.

The Hobart region recorded spending of \$162 million, an increase of \$57 million over the previous year. Launceston and the Tamar Valley attracted \$34 million; the north-west \$16 million; the east coast \$11 million; the south \$8 million; and the west coast \$7 million (down \$1 million on the previous year).

The Managing Director of the Australian Tourism Export Council, Matthew Hingerty, said there was potential for regional Australia to increase its share of the international tourism dollar. Increasing numbers of international visitors are expected to be looking in coming years for new experiences beyond the capital cities and other established tourism areas. "If regional communities are to capitalise on this growth potential, it is now they need to invest in products, experiences and infrastructure to meet visitor needs," Mr Hingerty said.

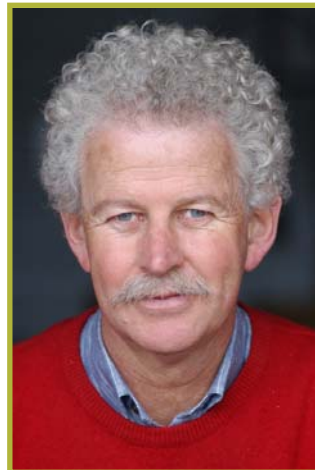
An inventory of Tasmanian attractions, commissioned by Tourism Tasmania in 1999, listed 250 attractions and more than 900 community events. The attractions were audited on the basis of six defined marketing criteria (size, potential, location, fit, strengths, services). From this analysis, 81 attractions (or groupings of attractions) were classed as “Major”.

The analysis demonstrated an even spread of attraction types offered in Tasmania: 31 per cent Historic; 31 per cent Cultural; 30 per cent Natural, and 8 per cent “Other.”

An examination of more than 900 events concluded that most Tasmanian events were small, brief and had limited potential in attracting visitors to the State. *Ten Days on the Island*, the Wooden Boat Festival and the Taste of Tasmania have all demonstrated more recently that they sit outside this generalisation.

Darby launches a subtle Harpoon

By Christopher Bantick



The opening line, “This much we know,” of the Prologue of Andrew Darby’s, *Harpoon*, (Allen & Unwin, \$29.95) is both unsettling and memorable. This is a book which should be read by pretty well everyone who wants to know more about whaling. While Darby does not resile from

the view that the resumption of whaling, particularly by Japan for “scientific” purposes, is untenable, the book does not have a tone of hectoring or protest. The impact is far more subtle.

This is as good a book as you’ll find anywhere on the present state of whaling. The writing is at times as engrossing as a suspense novel. Even so, the almost detached reporting on the slaying of a fin whale in the Prologue is memorable, owing to its sharp observation. No detail is spared and anthropomorphism is avoided. None the less we feel for the whale because of the brutality of what happens to it.

Darby is a writer who knows his subject intimately. He holds a Masters degree in Antarctic politics and he explores the issue of whaling with the benefit of scholarship. The extensive notes and index are testimony to the level of research that he has undertaken. But leaving aside his bona fides as an author, the book is likely to become a deserved instigator of much discussion. 'Why?' I hear you say when there is already substantial published material on whaling. The fact is there are few if any books, pitched at a general market, that are as good as this.

Organisationally, Darby has headed each chapter with the names of whale species. Be they right, blue or minke, the purpose of this is for him to explore the history and practices of whaling for these particular animals. It works well as an approach.

For Tasmanian readers, there is adequate space given to the history of whaling and how this, to some extent, defined early Hobart. An example is that the right whale appeared to be a seemingly inexhaustible resource for early Tasmanians. Darby notes: "In a sure indication of where Hobart Town's cash flowed, Knopwood [the colony's influential pioneer clergyman] drank at the opening night of the first pub: The Sign of the Whale Fishery."

The strength of the book is found in the melding of an astute and up-to-date assessment of whaling politics and the lack of information that is being passed on regarding the killing of whales to the International Whaling Commission. We make our own judgements of this, as we should, but we should also thank Darby for informing us so we can reach an obvious conclusion.

UN to hear from Tassie youth

Tasmanian student Ben Groom, 23, left Hobart on 27 August to address the United Nations



General Assembly in New York as Australia's Youth Representative.

Groom, the youngest child of former Premier Ray Groom, was chosen for the role in April after years of trying. "I started applying a few years ago and just kept rejigging it and adding to it each year," he said. Since his selection, Mr Groom has spent three months travelling throughout Australia to talk to young people about their challenges and aspirations.

He carried a book in which some of the thousands of people he met wrote about the issues they wanted raised at the UN. Mr Groom told students at Rosny College before he left: "Young people are crying out to be given the opportunity to do something. People are starting to realise the impact of their activities. At the moment, future generations are bearing the cost of what we are doing."

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will assist Mr Groom in preparing for his address, which is part of the United Nations Youth Association's program.

Power price 'reasonable'

Hydro Tasmania has welcomed a draft retail energy price determination by the State's Prices Commissioner, Andrew Reeves, as a fair and reasonable outcome that reflects a balance between market prices and the concerns of customers. "We believe the figure set of 6c per kWh for the energy component is reasonable," Chief Executive Officer, Vince Hawksworth, said "However, it is important to remember that the new energy component being proposed is still less than the current market prices interstate, which are also rising as a result of the drought." During the past year Hydro Tasmania has spent \$80 million on BassLink imports and gas-fired generation to conserve water reserves that are down to 19 per cent of capacity after 10 successive years of below average rainfall.

The Treasurer, Michael Aird, promised to take steps to protect low-income households from the full effect of the projected price rise. He blamed drought, along with widespread increases in material and labour costs, for putting additional pressures on the electricity market. "The annual value of Aurora's customer connections has increased from \$13 million five years ago to around \$30 million, with significant growth on Hobart's eastern shore and northern suburbs and in Kingston, Launceston, Burnie and Devonport," Mr Aird said.

BassLink fetches \$1b.

CitySpring Infrastructure Management, a company in which the Singapore Government is the majority shareholder, has been chosen as the preferred bidder for the BassLink undersea power cable connecting Tasmania with the south-east Australian power grid. CitySpring, a new entrant to the Tasmanian power market, will pay the cable's British owner National Grid \$1 billion after topping an international shortlist of four bidders. Electricity trading through BassLink has enabled Hydro Tasmania to maintain electricity supplies to domestic users and industry at a time of low water storages over the past 15 months. "We look forward to working with CitySpring and developing a good business relationship," Hydro Tasmania's Chief Executive Officer, Vince Hawksworth, said following the August announcement.

Another jobs record

Tasmanian jobs increased by 400 in July, establishing a record of 227,000. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that employment in the State has grown by 14.9 per cent since April 2002, against national growth of 13.8 per cent. The July 2007 unemployment rate of 4.8 per cent is a 1.5 per cent improvement over 12 months. The Treasurer, Michael Aird, said: "The number of Tasmanians in jobs has risen by about 33,100 or 17.1 per cent since January 1999, a remarkable turnaround from the dark days when Tasmania had an unemployment rate of 11 per cent."

Formal tick for forestry

After a three year review, Standards Australia has given the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) used by Forestry Tasmania in managing its native forests formal recognition and endorsement. Welcoming the development, Forestry Tasmania's Executive General Manager, Hans Drielsma, said: "Tasmania's AFS-certified, State-owned native forests are managed organically. In other words, they are chemical free; they are not converted to broad-scale plantations; and harvested areas are regenerated using methods that mimic nature. Plantations are important in meeting world demand, but sustainably managed native forests store more carbon, provide better wildlife habitat, and better protect biodiversity.

In time, products from AFS-certified native forests will become known as eco-premium products."

Pinot leads grape upsurge

Pinot Noir now accounts for 44 per cent of Tasmania's wine grape production, according to data released in August by the Department of Primary Industries and Water. Total production in 2006 was 5,500 tonnes, more than three times the figure recorded nine years ago. After Pinot Noir, white varieties were most popular, notably Chardonnay (28 per cent); Riesling (9 per cent); and Sauvignon Blanc (8 per cent). There are 141 licensed wine producers in the State.

Tailings plans lodged

Intec Pty Ltd lodged development and environmental plans in August relating to its Hellyer Mine tailings recovery project south of Burnie. If approvals are received the company will increase its workforce from 50 to 95 and begin building a tank farm next year, with the aim of extracting zinc, lead and silver, estimated to be worth \$2 billion, from tailings at the mine.

Prostate gene found

A gene that could predispose men to prostate cancer has been isolated by medical scientists at the Menzies Research Institute in Hobart. Work with members of Tasmanian families in which the cancer has recurred over generations has led to the breakthrough that will enable researchers to develop a better understanding of the cancer's biology.

Paddling against cancer

A dragon boat crew of 23 women from Dragons Abreast Tasmania will represent the State at the Abreast in Australia 2007 regatta at Caloundra, Queensland, in September. The event, which raises funds for the fight against breast cancer, involves more than 1,800 female paddlers from around the world, along with their supporters.

Gunns wins takeover fight

Tasmania's biggest forestry player, Gunns Ltd, has won a protracted battle for control of the State's largest softwood processor, Auspine. Gunns Executive Chairman, John Gay, announced on 23 August that the company's holding in the Scottsdale-based sawmiller had passed 50 per cent. Auspine Chairman Paul Teisseire said the company's 280 employees would continue business "as usual" despite the change of control.

Academics to work with Hydro

UTAS Innovation has signed an innovative memorandum of understanding with Hydro Tasmania Consulting giving that company access to technical expertise in a broad range of disciplines, including engineering, environment, sociology and law. The agreement will create opportunities for UTAS academics and students to work on commercial market-based projects.

Bender's big win

The Managing Director of Huon Aquaculture, Peter Bender has won the 2007 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Awards - Southern Region and will contest the national finals in November. The national winner progresses to world titles held annually in Monte Carlo.

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