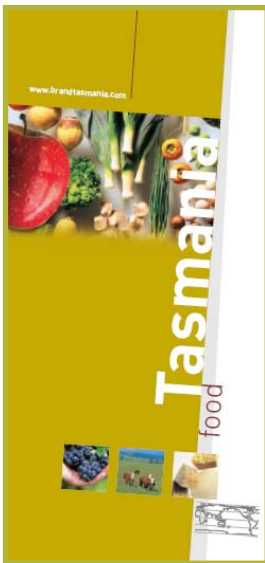


Food returns \$3.1b. a year



Tasmania derives \$3.1 billion a year in food industry income, according to a Food Industry Scorecard developed by the Department of Primary Industries and Water. The Scorecard, based on methodology developed by the Harvard Business School, highlights the importance of interstate markets to Tasmania's agriculture and fisheries businesses. Interstate sales bring in \$2 for every dollar earned in export

markets and sales within Australia are growing strongly. Confectionary, salmon, potatoes, beer and dairy products make up 85 per cent of Tasmania's total interstate food trade.

Launching the ScoreCard in September, the Minister for Primary Industries and Water, David Llewellyn, said it showed that production in the food and beverage sector had grown steadily at 5 per cent per annum over the past 10 years. Based on 2004-05 data – the most recent complete set of information available – the ScoreCard shows that food items at the farm gate or beach were worth \$984 million. When packed and processed their value increased to \$2.1 billion. “Net food income is \$3.1 billion, making this one of Tasmania's important industries,” Mr Llewellyn said.

Food trade (overseas and interstate) accounts for 58 per cent of production and is worth about \$1.6 billion a year. Since the compilation of the initial ScoreCard there has been a remarkable \$200 million increase in interstate salmon sales and a significant rise in interstate dairy product sales. Mr Llewellyn said overseas sales had been relatively steady in recent years with beef, dairy and abalone accounting for about 75 per cent of all overseas food sales.

Mr Llewellyn said the ScoreCard had been developed because of a need by industry and government for more reliable information. “What has been needed for many years is a comprehensive information source that tracks value along the food chain – from the farm gate or beach, to our customers overseas, interstate and locally in Tasmania,” he said.

The first Food Industry ScoreCard revealed a highly diversified industry with more than 70 major product groupings and a diversity of overseas, interstate and local markets. The ScoreCard, can be downloaded from DPIW at www.dpiw.tas.gov.au

Fire scars Hobart's heart



The future of Hobart's CBD was shrouded on 22 September when a towering fire destroyed the historic 157-year-old Myer department store building. Given the intensity of the blaze, Fire Service teams worked near-miracles in substantially containing it to the Myer building and averting casualties. Nevertheless, dozens of businesses were shut down because of smoke or water damage, or safety concerns. Insurance claims are likely to exceed \$50 million. Myer will be closed for an indefinite period and this is likely to have a severe impact on other traders who traditionally rely on customers attracted to the CBD by its biggest department store.

A CBD Task Force, set up to assist affected businesses, held its first meeting on the second working day after the blaze. The Chair, Norm McIlfratrick, Chief Executive of the Department of Economic Development, said: "The meeting fully supported action taken already to help businesses re-open, including grants provided to help businesses clean up their premises. The taskforce's initial focus is on talking to business to ensure they have all the information about the services on offer, as well as finding out from business what we can do for them. In addition to the services that have already been set up, including a hotline [1800 440 026] and the Business and Employee Assistance Service at the City Hall, the taskforce will conduct information forums for business and employees affected by the fire at the City Hall every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 4-5pm. This will be as much to let people tell us what they want from us, as it will be us conveying to them what assistance is available and what progress is being made."

Mr McIlfratrick said there had been an immediate response to the CBD Task Force's activities. "We have had around 90 enquiries, either via the hotline or at the City Hall, today and I remind businesses that they can apply for grant assistance either over the phone, at the City Hall or via www.development.tas.gov.au," he said.

Myer Chief Executive, Bernie Brooks, promised: "We will continue to employ all our staff and there will be no redundancies." Mr Brooks said Myer had been operating in the city centre for 70 years and was committed to re-establish its presence there. Announcing healthy national sales growth to \$3.3 billion at the company's annual general meeting on 25 September, Mr Brooks said the Hobart fire would reduce the group's 2007-08 sales by about 1 per cent and reduce earnings before interest and tax by about \$1 million.

Myer Hobart Manager, Peter Monachetti, praised the professionalism of police and fire crews in evacuating the building when the fire was detected and said he had been overwhelmed by the goodwill extended to the company in the wake of the disaster. He said Myer would stage a "huge party" and outdoor fire sale at the site to thank people and bring the crowds back to the CBD.

Mr Monachetti said the enthusiasm of Myer staff would help greatly during the rebuilding process. "They are eager to help in any way possible and their love and passion for our iconic brand is just amazing," he said. "We're about developing a plan which will bring a Myer business back to this community in the blink of an eyelid ... Clearly the council has offered the waterfront and the civic hall as an option and our property team is also looking at other options in the CBD. We're looking at possibly a larger development which is one of our plans. That's one that's on the table. We're certainly trying to get up and trading first and then we'll work out what the next step is going to be, but we have an unequivocal commitment to Hobart for the long term."

Myer Operations Manager Kathy Kelly, who ordered the building's evacuation after smoke was reported, said: "It was a terrible loss for the building, but from a people point of view nothing is more irreplaceable than the staff and the customers of our store, so I'm really glad it went so smoothly."

Three days after the fire, *The Mercury* editorialised that opportunity often arises from even the most terrible events. "Shopping trends change but it does not mean city centres have to die. Plenty of vibrant Australian cities have shown what can be done with flair and far-sighted investment, attracting droves of people by building on an urban atmosphere and buzz that no ordinary shopping centre can match. There is no reason why Hobart cannot do the same."

New renewable on the horizon

Tasmania produces more than 70 per cent of all Australia's renewable energy and efforts are now underway to expand the portfolio by adding geothermal energy to hydro and wind-generated power. The Government announced in mid-September that it would grant two new special exploration licences to companies wishing to join the search for so-called "hot-rock energy".

Energy generated by the earth's internal heat has been used for thousands of years in some regions of the world for hot water generation, cooking and heating.

Maori used it in some districts of New Zealand long before the arrival of Europeans.



Geothermal energy can also be used to generate base-load electricity by pumping water underground until it reaches hot, dry rocks about 3km below the surface. The heated water and steam can be piped back up and used to drive turbines. This form of energy is new to Australia, but is well-established in some other countries.

The first geothermal power plant was tested at Larderello in Italy in 1904. Geothermal power plants have been generating base-load energy at The Geysers in California since the 1960s. Iceland is a major user of geothermal energy and, overall, about 0.4 per cent of the world's power is generated by this method. Increased investment in the technology is now being driven by concerns about climate change. Modern low-temperature turbine technology can operate using water at 60-70 degrees centigrade, producing power with minimal environmental disturbance or greenhouse emissions. Geoscience Australia has estimated that hot rocks could generate 25,000 times Australia's present electricity requirements.

One of Tasmania's licence applicants, Geopower Pty Ltd, will concentrate its search for hot, dry rocks on an area of 4,892 sq km in the north-east. The company will invest \$558,000 in the first two years of its license period on geophysical and groundwater surveys and the drilling of at least five holes.

Geothermal Energy Tasmania West Coast Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of nickel miner Allegiance Minerals NL, will invest \$350,000 over two years in a search for suitable heat sources over a 2,205 sq km area in the Arthur-Pieman region of western Tasmania. The initial exploration will focus on a review of data available on the area, followed in later years by deep exploration wells if enough encouragement is obtained from the research.

KUth Energy Pty Ltd already holds a special exploration licence covering 12,360 sq km in north-east Tasmania and is strongly promoting Tasmania's geothermal prospectivity.

KUth (the name is formed from the chemical symbols for the heat-producing elements whose radioactive breakdown generates phenomenal heat in the earth's core) has raised \$7.5 million to fund its search. "KUth believes that the geology and existing thermal data from Tasmania presents an outstanding exploration play in an area where the transmission grid passes overhead, with connections into the national grid via BassLink," the company website reports. "KUth looks for thermal anomalies that can be exploited using hot fractured rock technology. Electricity is produced with zero carbon emissions and low environmental impact." KUth is the preferred tenderer for two exploration permits in [Queensland](#). It made a solid debut on the ASX on 25 September, trading two cents above its issue price of 25 cents.

"Commercialisation of hot rock energy is still at a developmental stage in Australia, but exploration is on the increase in Tasmania," the Government's spokesperson Bryan Green said. "We are seen as an attractive prospect because we have favourable geological conditions and access to national electricity markets. A successful outcome [by any of the explorers] may result in a very large, new source of energy."

Roaring 40s Renewable Energy, a joint venture between Hydro Tasmania and China Light & Power, is building a global reputation as a developer of wind farms, but is also keeping a weather eye on the geothermal sector. "It's certainly within our charter to work with other renewable energy technologies," Managing Director Mark Kelleher said recently. "We'd like to do that. ... We're definitely interested in pursuing technologies like geothermal energy that are just coming over the horizon and are still a few years out."

Top award for Ashgrove

Years of hard work, including time spent in England learning the secrets of cheddar manufacture, paid off when Ashgrove's Cloth Mated Cheddar Cheese was judged Supreme Champion Cheese at the Royal Melbourne Dairy Show in September.



The cheddar also won Champion Cheddar and Champion Hard Cheese awards ahead of entries from all over Australia.

Ashgrove Cheese, owned and operated by the Bennett families on their Elizabeth Town dairy farm, is the only Australian cheese producer specialising in the production of traditional English cheeses, including cheddar. Manager Jane Bennett spent two years making farmhouse cheeses in England before Ashgrove was established in 1993.

As well as its nation-topping Cloth Matured Cheddar Cheese, Ashgrove's range includes such English county styles, as Lancashire, Cheshire, Double Gloucester and Red Leicester. All cheese is produced by hand, using traditional recipes and techniques. These techniques and the sourcing of milk only from the family's own dairy herds ensure individual flavours and textures can be achieved. All the milk used is pasteurised to conform with Australian Government regulations. Ashgrove uses specific strains of starter cultures for different cheese varieties to ensure flavour and texture. Non animal rennet is used in all varieties of Ashgrove Cheese.

Cheddar cheese was first produced in the Somerset county of England to utilise surplus spring milk production. It was developed as a hard cheese so that it would keep for the entire year until more cheese was made the following spring. At Ashgrove, cheddar is only produced through the months of November and December when the cows are in the peak of their lactation and the milk is ideally suited to cheddar production. Traditional Cloth Matured Cheddar differs from Ashgrove Mature and Vintage Cheddar because it is matured for at least 15 months in a cheese cloth bandage. Each week, the cheddar wheels are rubbed with oil to prevent them drying out and their surfaces cracking. At the same time they are turned to rotate the exposure of their surfaces to the air. Mould grows on the surface of the cloth bandage, slowly covering it until the combination of mould and oil forms a crust around the cheese. The aim is to produce a hard cheese with a distinctive nutty flavour. The judges at the Royal Melbourne Dairy Show obviously deemed it a success.

Meanwhile, Ashgrove has launched a new range of cheese "five-packs" each containing a selection of five 50gram samples of the company's best-selling varieties. The attractively presented Beer Lovers selection, for example, contains the following cheeses to complement various beers:



- **Vintage Cheddar** - A premium aged Cheddar with a bold strong flavour, best matched with a hearty traditional ale.
- **Outback Red** - A spicy blend of bush flavours that are ideally suited to accompany the hoppy flavours of an Indian pale ale.
- **Red Chilli** - Fiery in both colour and flavour, Red Chilli is ideally suited to accompany a refreshing lager.
- **Wild Wasabi** - An original flavour concept with a wild wasabi zing that deserves a premium lager.
- **Smoked Cheddar** - A naturally wood smoked cheese with a superior smoky flavour best matched to a mild ale or for the very adventurous a smoked beer.

Three other feature packages are titled Flavours of Tasmania, Taste of Tasmania and Wine Lovers.

Creating a cultural legacy

By Graeme Phillips



David Walsh is a self-described eccentric, super-nerd and rabid atheist. He's also an autodidact, a multi-millionaire gambler, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's single biggest donor, was named by *Business Review Weekly* as Australia's top art collector and is the owner of Moorilla Estate, one of Tasmania's oldest and most highly acclaimed wineries.

Since purchasing the Moorilla vineyards and winery in 1990, Walsh has added a spectacularly modern restaurant/function and cellar-door facility, four luxury accommodation chalets hanging over the River Derwent, with four more to follow, the boutique Moo-Brew brewery and has turned the original Roy Grounds-designed residence into the Moorilla Museum of Antiquities housing his collection of pre-Colombian, Roman and African tribal artefacts and ancient coins.



He's now near to completion of his most ambitious project yet – a \$55 million, underground Museum of Old and New Art, to be called MONA. Designed by architect Nonda Katsallidis, it will be the largest private, not-for-profit gallery in Australia. Its collection will range from Africa, including Egypt, to Mesopotamia and Mesoamerica through to contemporary Australian, British and American art.

“The Museum of Antiquities was an attempt to reformat a whimsy as an indulgence,” Walsh said. “By the time I acquired Moorilla, the nucleus of my collecting philosophy had already appeared. Succinctly put, it is that art should not just have an aesthetic value but should have something to say about its own genesis – accessing sex and averting death. Satiation and propitiation was, before the West's inventing of art for art's sake, all there was and MONA will stand as a testimony to the power of sexuality to drive creativity.”

A whole mezzanine of the new building will be devoted to Walsh's favourite artist, the Australian modernist Sidney Nolan, including his 1,600-panelled, 47-metre-long mural *Snake*. Other Australian artists include Charles Blackman, Peter Booth, Callum Morton, Del Kathryn Barton, Howard Arkley, Fiona Hall, John Brack, Brett Whiteley, Russel Drysdale. The international works are by such artists as Egon Schiele, Wassily Kandinsky, Gerry Judah, Su-en Wong, Fernando Botero, Damien Hirst, Jenny Saville, Chris Ofili, Paul McCarthy, Erwin Wurm and Susan Rothenberg.

Comparisons have been drawn between MONA and the famous Getty Museum in Los Angeles. Like the Californian museum, and reflecting Walsh's dislike of art being locked away in warehouses and on boardroom walls, MONA will show its treasures freely to the public.

“We're not creating a bank but a cultural legacy,” Walsh said.

Bill Bleathman, Director of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, says MONA will complement the State gallery and be of great cultural significance – not just to Hobart, but to Australia.

For visitors to Moorilla, it will certainly add provocative new flavours to their glass of pinot noir.

A Walk in Old Hobart

Battery Point is one of the most thoroughly trodden suburbs of Hobart. While it is not the only easily traversable location, it remains - with the wharves and Sullivan's Cove - the premier site for strolling. For tourists, Battery Point presents a manageable area and a potted history of much of Hobart's robust maritime past.

Even so, there are so many architectural gems to discover about Hobart, let alone the stories and folklore which seeps from the walls, that the need for an authoritative walking guide was clear.

To this end, Charles Wooley and Michael Tatlow have produced *A Walk in Old Hobart* and it is hard to think of a more user-friendly, better designed and welcoming book.



Sub-titled *Your Guide to two wondrous hours*, it is published by Walk Guides Australia and retails for \$15.00. The layout is immediately appealing, with diamond-clear coloured photographs throughout; a nifty fold out map; and a writing style that is a treat.

In some ways, this stands to reason. Both Wooley and Tatlow are journalists and understand one critical aspect of writing: the reader needs to feel they are being spoken to personally. How this is achieved is in understated humour and the adoption of a laconic chatty tone. For example, any tourist or local with a couple of hours to spare would surely be hooked by the following:

“The last two hour circuit we walked included a snack and a couple of beers. So, why not benefit from our diligent and indulgent research and enjoy refreshments at some of the scores of fine restaurants and pubs and also shop along the way?”

This easy conversational approach is maintained throughout the book and its unhurried pace enables readers to dally and dawdle while being gently informed with cogent historical observations and descriptions. These are embellished with the occasional apocryphal story of dark deeds and the nefarious actions of some of old Hobart’s inhabitants.

Another very pleasing feature is the use of ‘Snapshots’ of the past. These are like mini time capsules where readers are given a summary of a particular year or period. This is helpful as it puts into context what they are seeing today.

For organisational reasons, the book follows a sequential numbered walk. But this is not essential to follow, as the walk can be started anywhere and ended anywhere. If chronology is your interest, then the suggested walk starts at the beginning of white settlement at the monument in Hunter Street.

This step-by-step approach is particularly helpful for tourists who may want to walk through Hobart’s past following the narrative the book provides. While each site of interest is numbered, the strategic use of bold type enables ready reference for particular features. Advice is also given about what to wear. All sections of the walk detailed in the book are wheelchair suitable.

The underlying question the authors ask, and answer, is what does a tourist or curious local need to know about Old Hobart on a casual walk? Importantly, there is just enough information to whet the appetite without being overly detailed. Moreover, for those who want to go further afield, there are helpful suggestions of other tourist sites in southern Tasmania.

Australia’s most famous street walker, Prime Minister John Howard, launched the book in Hobart during the ‘phony’ election campaign. The message was clear: put on your walking shoes and discover old Hobart.

A Walk in Old Hobart topped the Hobart best-seller list on a number of occasions during August and September. It is available in Hobart bookstores.

Treasure under TMAG’s feet



The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) has uncovered a ready-made exhibition feature under its car park. Archaeologists checking ground and soil conditions around the museum’s historic buildings in Hobart have found sandstone blocks, probably part of an early Hobart finger wharf. It is thought the wharf was linked to TMAG’s Bond Store, built in the 1820s. Other finds include glass and porcelain shards and a section of wall, either part of a house or of wharf infrastructure.

TMAG Director Bill Bleathman said soil sample test pits and drill sites were part of preliminary research for TMAG’s planned redevelopment. “Given the history of the museum site, we expected the geotechnical drilling and soil sampling would unearth some interesting parts of Hobart’s early history ... We need to stress that these are preliminary tests, overseen by an archaeologist, but given the historic nature of the site, it’s good to know that any archaeological finds uncovered as part of the redevelopment project may be incorporated and become a highlight of the revamped museum.”

Scheelite makes comeback

The Chinese mineral boom has reached King Island, with a \$100 million plan to resurrect Grassy's open-cut scheelite mine. King Island Scheelite Pty Ltd announced in September that it had reached in-principle agreement with Hunan Nonferrous Metals for the Chinese corporation to invest \$50 million in the operation and provide a further \$50 million as a loan. If the investment proceeds it should generate 150 jobs during construction, with 100 long-term jobs once the mine is operational. The estimated resource is 13.5 million tonnes of ore, sufficient for 20 years of operation. The project has secured environmental approval.

King Island has one of the world's biggest resources of scheelite, a calcium tungstate mineral that is one of two forms of ore used in the production of tungsten, a super-hard metal with robust physical properties and an extremely high melting point. Tungsten has many industrial applications, including use as light bulb and X-ray filaments. It is a component of many so-called super-alloys used in drill bits, tank armour and warheads. The Grassy mine was opened in 1917, but it closed in 1990 as a result of a sustained period of low prices caused by the entry of China as a low-cost supplier on world markets. The closure was an economic shock to King Island. Ironically, demand in China is now driving tungsten prices up.

\$25m. for farm research

Research and demonstration farms at Forthside (vegetables) and Elliott (dairy) are to be administered by the University of Tasmania (UTAS) in a \$25 million, 10-year scheme to boost primary industry innovation. The Minister for Primary Industries and Water, David Llewellyn, said the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research centres would be strengthened as part of a research partnership between UTAS and the Government. UTAS Vice Chancellor, Professor Daryl Le Grew, said: "This development comes at a time when primary industries need to be innovative to maintain market share and face significant global issues such as biosecurity, water management and climate change."

Cloud-seeding bonus

Hydro Tasmania is extending its cloud-seeding program beyond its dam catchment areas to help out drought-ravaged farmers. Areas to be targeted include the Meander, Macquarie, South Esk and Clyde catchments, along with areas of the Central Highlands, Southern Midlands and the East Coast. Scientific Officer Rebecca Crosthwait said: "Many parts of the State, particularly in the central and northern regions, continue to record below average rainfall. While cloud seeding is not going to solve the problems, we are confident it will help."

Further information on Hydro Tasmania's cloud seeding program can be found at http://www.hydro.com.au/home/Corporate/Generating_Power/Cloud_Seeding/

Big tourism push

Copies of a 32-page *Tasmania Magazine* were inserted in 1.3 million newspapers published on 24 September by News Ltd in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. The Tourism Tasmania magazine included feature stories by well-known personalities, articles on Tasmania's history and heritage, fly fishing, Flinders Island and Launceston, and many snippets of information designed to entice people to visit the State.

Dam storages languish

Disappointing early September inflows into Hydro Tasmania's storages have stalled a recovery that began with above-average rainfall in August. Manager Energy Resources, David Marshall, said storages had risen by 7.5 per cent in August to 27.1 per cent full, but this was still 4.5 per cent lower than at the same time last year. Hydro Tasmania will continue to buy energy through BassLink to conserve its water reserves.

\$23m. airport upgrade

Hobart International Airport's \$23 million terminal redevelopment was opened on 10 September. The three-year redevelopment program coincided with the arrival of Jetstar and Virgin Blue and a 33 per cent increase in passenger volume through the airport. The airport is being offered for sale by the Government.

Ferry promise

The ALP has promised increased funding for the Bass Strait Passenger Vehicle Equalisation Scheme if it wins office. Under the existing scheme the Bass Strait ferries carried 2 million passengers during their first five years of operations, but are now facing a market challenge from budget airlines.

Murphy joins Tasdance

Celebrated Tasmanian-born dancer and choreographer Graeme Murphy has been named Patron of Tasdance. "Because of my profile in the arts, I'm hoping I can bring some more attention to the company from the mainland," the Sydney-based Murphy said. He expects to have time for more freelance activity when he leaves his present position as Director of the Sydney Dance Company at the end of 2007.

Manufacturer comes home

A North West company producing unique pivoting foot pegs for motorcycles has brought its manufacturing plant back to Tasmania with the help of a \$50,000 loan from the State Government. Pivot Pegz Australia is a world leader in its field and expects to generate exports exceeding \$1 million a year following the transfer of production from Britain.

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Population record

Tasmania's population rose by 1,066 people in the March quarter to a new record of 492,741, according to ABS statistics released in September. There are 3,105 more people in Tasmania than a year previously, while population has now grown for seven consecutive years.

Cinema has big plans

Plans are in place for the popular State Cinema in North Hobart to become a cultural hub with the installation of a fourth screen and the establishment of a bookshop. Owner John Kelly has submitted plans to the Hobart City Council and the Tasmanian Heritage Council

Nickel search

Eastren Pty Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Allegiance Mining, has applied for an exploration licence covering 7 sq km in the Great Northern Creek area, south of Renison Bell. The company hopes to find nickel sulphide deposits.