



Tasman Peninsula Historical Society Inc.

# Newsletter

Volume 2. Issue 3

September 2020

## Welcome to our third newsletter for 2020

We were saddened to hear of the passing of TPHS stalwart and life member Alison Shoobridge earlier this month. Alison was a founding member of the Society (1986) and was still attending meetings at the Old Courthouse until quite recently. Her knowledge of and commitment to the recording of our local community history will be greatly missed. In honour of Alison's contribution, our next Chronicle, to be published in November, will be dedicated to her memory. Stoic, down to earth, and community spirited, Alison was an outstanding woman. Our sincere condolences to Alison's family and her sisters Kate, Christine and Felicity. A tribute to Alison is included on pages 3 and 4.



Alison Shoobridge,  
12.7.1930 - 4.9.2020

Our proposed walking tour at Point Puer has been postponed until after February next year when the sea eagles are no longer nesting and access restrictions can be lifted. Graham led a great tour at the Coal Mines in August, and Laurie entertained us this month at his heritage museum to share some history of Taranna. We have further walks planned for October and November - details on page 2.

Denise Jeffrey's article on page 5 describes difficult times for Peninsula folk in the 1930s.

We close this issue of our newsletter with Graham's opinion about the role of planning regulation in preserving the historic heritage and natural beauty of our picturesque Peninsulas. Alison would approve the idea, I'm sure.

**Anne Hoyle**  
President

### Dates to remember:

- 5 Oct TPHS business meeting
- 17 Oct History walk
- 2 Nov TPHS business meeting
- 21 Nov History walk
- Nov Publication of Chronicle 20
- 12 Dec Launch of Chronicle 20

### Continuing priorities:

- Convict Trail project
- Chronicle no. 20 publication
- Local Heritage List
- Indexing of TPHS Bus Tour notes
- Website redevelopment
- TPHS Life Memberships

## PROJECT UPDATE: Convict Trail - Tourist Map and Roadside Interpretation Panels

With the support of Tasman Council, a Tasmanian Community Fund (TCF) small grant application (\$20,000) has been made to assist this project. If successful it will go a long way towards the design and manufacture of nine more interpretation panels for the trail. A proposed third stage of the project is an online portal or 'hub' that not only services the Trail but also provides links to local businesses and services for the visitor to explore and interact with in the Tasman region. This stage will involve many other stakeholders.

## PROJECT UPDATE: Local Heritage List

Work continues on compiling a list of local places that we think have historical significance and whose stories should be recorded for posterity. The original draft list identified more than 150 places of historic interest. A trawl through all the *TPHS Bus Tour notes* resulted in that list being doubled. The last step is to check we have captured every mention of buildings, features and locations in our *TPHS Chronicle* stories - a huge job for Anni McGinniss and Fay Odell.

A public version of the list will be published in Chronicle 20.

## Local History Walks

We will continue to organise local history walks until we run out of ideas. The two offered to date were well subscribed and very enjoyable. Some images from these are pictured here.



Coal Mines foreshore (Aug. 2020)



Taranna School building (Sep. 2020)

### The Stewart's Bay Trail - 17 October

The October Walk takes us along the Stewart's Bay Trail. Many of you will think that you know this area well, but our circuit will introduce you to a deeper and richer experience.

We start at the boom gate opposite the Lookout Road junction (off Safety Cove Road) and follow the convict track into the historic site. We emerge above the Commandant's House in the 'military precinct'. Here you will find out more than you could ever want to know about the British military at Port Arthur! Seriously, they are a fascinating lot ('scum' led by fools is how one unkind correspondent described them).

From here we make our way across the bay and take in the many points of interest along the Stewart's Bay trail before we circle back into Port Arthur.

Our next stop is the cemetery and here we will spend time looking at links with the old Port Arthur. Every headstone tells a story.

Winding back through the historic site we make our way along Church Street learning about old time Carnarvon – the Garnetts, the Masons, Woolnough and Reynolds. We take in the Soldiers Memorial Avenue as we make our way along Bond Street and back to the cars.

This is a two-and-a-half-hour walk. The walking is mainly along good walking tracks – there are a couple of small uphill sections. There are toilets all along the trail, and an opportunity for a coffee break.

*More detail on times and booking arrangements for both walks will be emailed to members and friends closer to the proposed dates.*

### The Island of the Dead - 21 November

Most of you will, at one time or another, have been on a tour to the Isle of the Dead. This is a vastly different experience.

Your guides Tammy Reardon and Graham Speight will focus on local connections and tell stories that are not included in the regular Island tour. Tammy will share her personal links to the Island as she leads off with stories about the women and children who are buried on the Island. Graham will explore shipwrecks, the 'celebrity convicts' and the lives of the soldiers. This is an opportunity for us to delve a little deeper and tell some of those stories that are not suited to a family audience.

Depending on which source you believe there are more than 1100 people buried on the Island of the Dead. That is 1100 stories. We will not attempt to tell them all.

Come armed with your questions.

In recent times the Island has been redeveloped with improved access and new observation platforms. There is a flight of stairs at the start of the tour, but once these have been negotiated it is easy walking.

The tour will commence at noon and last for two hours. Meet at the jetty at Port Arthur. Unlike the other excursions we have run this one has a cost (\$15 payable on the day – the money will go to PAHSMA). There are no toilets on the Island, but there are toilets on the M.V. Marana.

## A tribute to Alison



Always willing to share knowledge and encourage others, Alison readily demonstrated crafts or spoke on topics at History Society events, and contributed many articles to our Chronicles.

We are fortunate to have online access to some recordings made by Suze van der Beek as part of the Tasman Digital Collective project in 2009 that illustrate Alison's love of music, nature and her community: <https://vimeo.com/channels/tdc>

Alison's personality and influence will endure in so many ways. Vale Alison.



### SHOOBRIDGE, Alison (Rev. Rtd)

12.7.1930 – 4.9.2020 Passed away peacefully with family by her side. Beloved wife of Peter (dec). Loved and loving mother and mother in law of Richard (dec) and Kerrie, Kath and Steve, Bill and Rachel, and Meg and Jud. Treasured Grandma of all her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Now at peace with her Lord

*(The Mercury, 8/9/2020)*

### PROJECT UPDATE: Chronicle No. 20

Chronicle No. 20 has the theme of 'things we want to keep : connecting people and place'. Eighteen articles are getting the finishing touches, including student competition winner Summer Houston's story on Dunalley. Summer attends Dunalley Primary School and will be presented with her certificate by TPHS judge Helen Kerr Smith shortly.

This Chronicle will be dedicated to the memory of the late Alison Shoobridge, founding member of TPHS. It will include a celebration of her life together with an article that Alison had prepared on 'Lottah' (her home, lost to fire in Jan. 2015).

It will also contain a public version of the 'local heritage list' that we are busy compiling, and a story about St. Alban's Church at Koonya which we hope may have received a *Tasmanian Heritage Listing* by the time of publication.

#### Save the date:

A launch event is planned for **Saturday 12th December.**



The Shoobridge family in front of 'Lottah' in 1966, from left, Roy Shoobridge (Peter's Dad), Peter holding Bill, Richard (Peter's Son), cousin Maree MacCallum, Kath (Peter's daughter), Isobel MacCallum (Peter's sister), cousin Hugh MacCallum, Malcolm MacCallum and cousin Donald MacCallum.

<https://www.themercury.com.au/news/tasmania/familys-anguish-amid-the-ruins-of-historic-tasman-peninsula-home/news-story/8f63e73e1fe017564811be6c3319e589>

This story is reproduced from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mssavvy/5180201991/> (accessed 21/9/2020).

### Alison on the Triumph at Lottah

*“Mercury photographer, Robin Lane, would visit the Tasman Peninsula, frequenting his shack at White Beach and enjoying local events such as the Badger Creek regatta. Many quality images/photographs were captured of Peninsula Social events and people as a result of his involvement in the community here.*

*In the early 1960’s he popped into Alison and Peter Shoobridge’s property, ‘Lottah’ at Roaring Beach and took a snapshot of Alison straddling their 1951 650cc Triumph Thunderbird motorcycle.*

*Reaching 85mph in a quarter mile from a standing start - this was the vehicle of preference for the Shoobridges if they were in a hurry - if they had a load to carry they’d take the old Chevy panel van.*

*After running this powerful motorcycle in for 2000km, Peter decided it was time to throw on a side car so he could share some adventures with his young bride Alison. He chose a Golding side car, attaching the top strut of the frame under the seat. And adventures they had...*

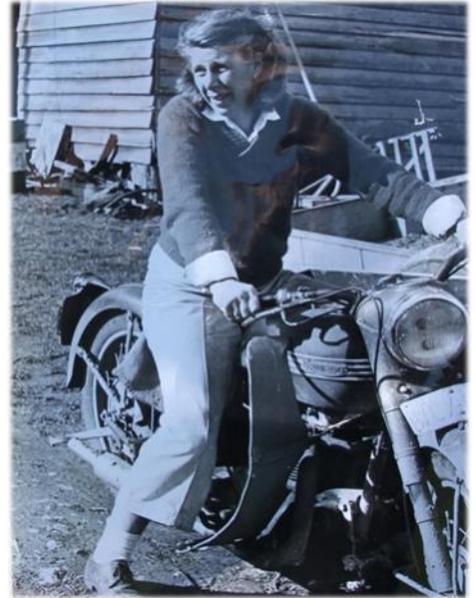
*In 1954 before the young couple had children, on their way home from a Hobart trip, the adventures began. It was late afternoon as they hit the crest of the Premaydena Hill, past Stuey Hirst’s cow shed, back into second gear, things started to go a little wrong.*

*As the top strut of the bike separated from the bike, Alison and the side car fell away, leaving the road, spinning into a gully of blackberries. After doing a full turn in the sidecar, protected by the front screen, Alison landed sitting up. Thankfully Alison took most of the rough landing on her shoulder and cushioned by the blackberries landed unscathed – just a little bruised.*

*Peter helped his young bride from the side car making sure she was A ok, and then promptly dug into the tool kit on the side of the thunderbird, removing the sidecar components from the bike. ‘Now here’s one for the bike buffs’ - Peter then had to relearn the art of riding solo with a pillion (after several 100’s of km’s with a sidecar on this can apparently be slightly challenging) They made it home safe and sound, taking the old Chev back the next day to pull out the side car.*

*Not long after, the new dusting sidecar was attached to the Thunderbirds back axle. The unique sprung hub of the Triumph Thunderbird allowed for this as there was a drum opposed to forks at the rear end.*

*Alison was (and still is) back on the horse”.*



Taken early 1960s



Taken October 29, 2010

“...get a  
reasonable coffin”

Contributed by Denise Jeffrey

Emma Burden penned these words to the New Town Infirmary Superintendent when the death of Reuben Burden seemed imminent on 4 November 1932. Peninsula residents seeking institutional care for the aged and ill faced health, transport and communication difficulties during the 1930s.

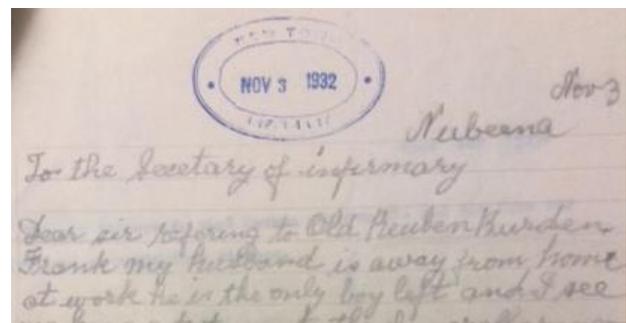
Emma wrote, “Referring to Old Reuben Burden, Frank my husband is away from home...he is the only boy left and I see we have got to see to the funeral arrangements when the end comes. We have to bring him down to Premaydena to bury him, so if you could get a reasonable coffin. If it is convenient, we want it sent down by steamer Wednesday, or *Gazelle* on Saturday, Mark Spaulding’s boat he only comes Saturday, very early about 7 o’clock.

It would be much cheaper by boat than buss [sic]. Of course Frank will come up if possible But take nearly one day to get their [sic]. So please let us know at your earliest should the end come but get a reasonable coffin. Frank’s love to his father.” Yours Truly, Mrs F H Burden. <sup>1</sup>

Reuben Burden was a well known Peninsula identity, who farmed at Mt Pleasant north of Nubeena and later at Burden’s Marshes (Slopen Main). He married Mary Ross of Richmond in 1864 and the couple had a large family of 13 children, 8 of whom pre-deceased him. Reuben lived on the Peninsula until 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1932 when he was admitted to the New Town Infirmary. The admission book records that he was 88 years old, his religion was Church of Christ, that he was born in England and that he suffered from senility and was a farmer at Saltwater River. Daughters Mrs J. Johnson of Cambridge and Mrs P. Campbell, Bream Creek were named as next of kin.<sup>2</sup>

Reuben died on 22 May 1933 at the Infirmary and a doctor certified that his death wasn’t caused by any infectious or contagious disease.<sup>3</sup> The Infirmary Superintendent informed the

Administrator of Charitable Grants that Reuben’s Estate was in the hands of J P Bradford, Solicitor, Hobart.<sup>4</sup> The undertaker, J P Richards submitted an account for £9 to J P Bradford for the supply of a coffin and transport of same to the SS *Breone*.<sup>5</sup>



After the funeral, the family sought to recover Reuben’s effects from the Infirmary. Charlotte Johnson wrote:

“...wish to ask you to have his clothes, boots etc. taken care of until I can go and get them. If you could kindly do so for me, you would greatly oblige.”<sup>6</sup>

The Superintendent of the Infirmary replied “I have to inform you...there was no clothing of any value belonging to him as such clothing as he brought out with him when admitted...was worn out by him.”<sup>7</sup>

This correspondence marks a sad postscript to an industrious life which began in Wiltshire, England 89 years earlier.

1. Burden, Mrs F letter to Supt., New Town Infirmary 4 November 1932. HSD186/1/702, Archives Tasmania. Transcribed from the original.
2. New Town Infirmary Admissions Book April 22 1932. HSD274/1/2, Archives Tasmania
3. Govt. Medical Officer, Memo, 23 May 1933. HSD186/1/702 Archives Tasmania.
4. Supt. New Town Infirmary, letter to Administrator of Charitable Grants 29 May 1933. HSD186/1/702, Archives Tasmania.
5. Supt. New Town Infirmary, letter to J P Bradford 2 June 1933. HSD186/1/702, Archives Tasmania.
6. Mrs C Johnson letter to Supt. New Town Infirmary 2 August 1933. HSD186/1/702, Archives Tasmania
7. Supt. New Town Infirmary letter to Mrs C Johnson 8 August 1933. HSD186/1/702, Archives Tasmania

## *Back page opinion*

### **An idea whose time has come**

New state planning provisions have meant that all Councils have to provide local provision schedules (LPS) to determine where heritage zones and codes apply. This has significance for historic places and buildings. In our Council area formal community consultation has not yet commenced, but TPHS has been looking at this issue since the St Albans controversy two years ago.

The jargon the planners use is 'overlays'. There are overlays for local heritage places, historic landscape precincts, landscape conservation zones, scenic protection codes, local heritage codes and separate listings for significant trees, places and precincts of archaeological potential.

Over the last twelve months I have surveyed several 'interest groups' to find out which historical sites and buildings they believe we might seek to recognise and protect as a part of the Local Heritage Code. We identified more than 150 places of historic interest. When I put the list before our Committee it had soon grown to more than 300. This is not inclusive of all those places on the state heritage list (37) and those on national and world heritage lists, nor does it include those that are covered under the relevant legislation relating to Aboriginal sites. Add to this the 'buffer zone', all the parks, the forestry areas and Council reserves and, let me tell you, it does not leave much.

And this is where I introduce the idea whose time has come.

To try and sort different conventions under the LPS will lead to a patchwork quilt of heritage and cultural constraints. This will add an unnecessary burden and a layer of complexity that is not needed. Instead of trying to legislate in this piecemeal way why don't we just declare the whole region (the two peninsulas) as a cultural heritage precinct - a place of outstanding natural beauty. *An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty* that aligns with the original National Estate nomination

of 1974 (that is the whole of the Tasman Council area) would make sense as a cultural heritage precinct. This is a global trend. For example, France's newest national park, *Baronnies Provencales*, (set up five years ago) is spread across 1,800 square kilometres and includes 130 communities. This is a cultural landscape. These are not living museums. The people living in these areas continue with their livelihoods, including fishing, agriculture, forestry, quarrying and mining, they just do so in a context where heritage and landscape values are at the forefront.

When Governor Arthur established the peninsula(s) as the place of secondary punishment for his open air panopticon the focus was the whole land area (including 21 semaphore stations, seven probation stations, the convict railway and much more). It was this heritage value and the scenic beauty of the region that was recognised by the National Estate.

In England areas of outstanding natural beauty have been declared in 45 regions. Their primary purpose is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape with two secondary aims:

- To meet the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside
- To have regard for the interests of those who live and work there

It is worth looking at how these areas work. We could adopt their methodology in mapping our cultural heritage precinct and save everyone a lot of time and energy.

Graham Speight  
Port Arthur  
Tasmania

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