

Real to Reel

Newsletter of Oral History Tasmania Inc.
(formerly the Tasmanian Branch of the Oral History Association of Australia)
ISSN 1039 – 0707



No. 76 April 2016

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NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE – Jill Cassidy

Last hard copy of *Real to Reel*

This will be the last issue of *Real to Reel* available in hard copy. There are no longer any members without access to email, and only a handful not wanting the electronic version. Moreover, as you are all aware the cost of postage has escalated sharply this year.

The State Library has initiated STORS, the Stable Tasmanian Open Repository Service, as a way of permanently storing items on the LINC Tasmania website so they will no longer require legal deposit items sent to the library in paper format. Three Oral History Tasmania committee members are planning to do the training course in coming weeks.

If you or your organisation still requires a hard copy, it will be a simple matter to print out the electronic version which is how the printed version has been produced for several years anyway. Please let me know if you foresee any problems.

(If you belong to an organisation which would like to upload items to TAHO, email gisu@education.tas.gov.au to arrange a training session.)

Oral History Workshop

Don't forget that the next oral history workshop will be held in Launceston on Saturday 28 May. Details and a registration form are included on page 12.

Minutes secretary

I'm sorry to say that after almost six years in the position, Terry Fritsche has resigned as minutes secretary. We thank her for her hard work and are pleased that she will continue on the committee. Fortunately, Alison Johnston has agreed to take the minutes in future.

September seminar

This year we will again combine with the Launceston Historical Society to hold a seminar at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston. It will take place on Sunday 18 September. The speakers will be:

Brad Williams – *Archaeological dig at Launceston College/Gaol*

Jill Cassidy – *Some aspects of oral history*

Margaretta Pos – *My journey with colonial pioneer Elizabeth Fenton.*

Further details will be forthcoming next month.

Oral History Australia website

The Oral History Australia website has just had a complete overhaul in the process of making it easily readable on mobiles and tablets. You can still access it at www.oralhistoryaustralia.org.au

International Oral History Association conference

A final reminder that the next IOHA conference will be held in Bangalore, India, 27 June to 1 July 2016. Full details can be found at <https://iohaconference2016.wordpress.com/call-for-papers/>

Do you have a project to tell us about?

We are always looking for items for the newsletter, anywhere from a few sentences to a lengthy article. All members are interested in knowing what is going on in the state, and you may make some good contacts through responses to the article.

NEW ORAL HISTORY-RELATED PUBLICATION

IN CONTEXT JOURNAL

Our Mission

In Context Journal is an independent quarterly platform for oral historical work and thoughtful explorations of what it means to listen, to speak, and to be heard. We welcome dialogue and engagement with practitioners of any field.

Call for Submissions for *In Context Journal* – Deadline June 1, 2016

'Questions' for many of us drive the work we do. As scholars, journalists, caregivers, oral historians, documentarians, and artists in many forms, our curiosities and those of our audiences propel and shape our work. We also attend to how we ask those questions—it invokes our ethics, affects the people we interact with, and determines whether we and our audiences deem our work a success or failure. But none of us have all the answers. We work in hopes of learning from doing, and in hopes of continuing to be surprised, humbled, and awoken to new questions. By starting with the theme of 'Questions', we seek to provide a forum that honours thoughtful inquiry, protest and exchange within our community.

With that, we invite submissions to our inaugural issue on 'Questions'. We encourage visual, audio, and textual works that provoke thought or discussion on this theme and which resonate with the mission of *In Context Journal*.

Submissions Guidelines

Submissions can be of any medium, length and/or file size but if you plan to send us a file larger than 25MB, please email us with a project description first. *In Context Journal* particularly encourages submission of works exploring new and innovative angles of consideration and reflection. We also accept submissions that have been published previously and compelling works in progress. In acknowledgement of the best ethical practices in oral history, please submit work only if appropriate permissions for your sources have been obtained. Currently, we do not offer compensation for publication.

Send submissions to incontextjournal@gmail.com by **June 1, 2016**.

If you're unsure of whether your potential submission fits with our theme and our journal's overall intent (it's ok if that's the case—we're brand new), please be in touch to discuss your general idea with us further.

Feel free to circulate this Call for Submissions within your broader community, sign up to receive updates, and follow us on Twitter.

Sewon Barrera, Nicki Pombier Berger, Cindy Choung, Sarah Dziedzic
Co-Founders, *In Context Journal*
www.incontextjournal.com

LAUNCESTON'S GASWORKS SITE, OR ORAL HISTORY WITHOUT RECORDINGS

Jai Paterson

This article is based on a talk given at the Oral History seminar at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery on 26 September 2015.

I completed this Gasworks project in 2007, which was also the year that Origin (the most recent reincarnation of the Launceston Gas Company) moved to Murphy Street in Invermay. Firstly I will briefly outline the project I was involved in, then a history of the Gasworks site itself, before discussing the oral history issues.



Fig. 1 Launceston Gas Company, with a still-bare Windmill Hill in the background, 1889.

Courtesy Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston

The project

In 2006 the *Examiner* published plans to redevelop the entire Gasworks site.¹ It was to be a two-part architectural project, with the new Centrelink office built first on Boland Street along with offices planned for the historic buildings on either side of the Gas Company's entrance gate. The original office was on the right of the gate (see left), here sporting the 'modern' facelift it was given in 1880, with the gothic Engineer's Cottage on the left. Directly behind the cottage is the old corrugated iron Laboratory building where it was intended to create a modern cafe.

In 2006 there was also a plan to develop the later brick Vertical Retort building into a possible upmarket evening restaurant. It is currently a Hog's Breath Cafe – not a terribly

original use as Hobart also has a Hog's Breath Cafe on its old Gasworks site. Launceston is, however, more fortunate than Hobart as we have all our original buildings still in situ. This occurred because the Launceston site was large to begin with, so the Company was able to keep building without pulling anything down, as well as the fact that the site is on reclaimed land which is not always attractive to potential developers.

The second part of the project was to develop the remaining gas holder frames across the rear (Cimitière Street end) of the site. These were intended to become modern apartments. Finally, there was also a half-mooted plan for developing the corner on the other side of Willis Street into a park for residents and tourists as this land was also part of the history of the Gasworks. It was once the railway terminus where great piles of coal were dumped for use in the Gasworks' furnaces.

Part of this plan included a commitment to make the site available to the public as a recreational precinct, an ambling thoroughfare between the riverbank and City Park. This is doubtless where the idea of contracting an historian-cum-museum person began – someone to research the site and provide text for strategically-placed signage. I was employed through the architect's office (Artas) though I never knew for certain whether my brief came from the architect, the developer or even Heritage Tasmania.

I was fortunate that there was some research material already available. In the early 1980s the Launceston architect, Lionel Morell, had prepared plans which included a report on the old Gas Company offices on the Esplanade, a copy of which is located at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery. Under the floorboards of the old offices Morell had found several original lampshades, and these are still on site in one of the storerooms – a little flattened after their years in obscurity. As well as the gas lamp now outside the gate on Boland Street, there is also another of these lamps in Trustees Court, the little bricked area behind the Paterson Street Car Park.

¹ *Examiner*, 23 May 2006, pp. 4-5.

More research material was available courtesy of the archaeologist, Brad Williams, who had completed test pits around the site as well as digging the backyards of Wescombe Street.² This street contained the houses of working families but was subsumed into the Gas Company's site and no longer exists. Williams found Wescombe Street's backyard rubbish pits, containing old bottles and broken crockery from the days before the city had a regular rubbish collection. It was also intended that some of this material would be displayed.³

As well as the research of others, I could also do my own as the Museum holds substantial records for the Launceston Gas Company (CHS 30). There were also many people who had worked on this site still living in Launceston, as well as information to be gleaned from the site itself.

As we now know, the timing was wrong for this project. There was an economic downturn and funds were not forthcoming to develop the gas holders into apartments. These events coincided with my coming to the end of the first stage in my contract and any continuation of the project was shelved.

A brief historical overview

The Launceston Gas Company was established in 1858. For the next 130 years the Company modernised its processes and constructed new buildings on its original site, as well as its later showroom and offices in the Launceston CBD.

The early photograph (above) shows the original Horizontal Retort building behind the tall chimney. This is the oldest building on site, built in 1859. It is a horizontal retort: that is, the furnaces which powered the Gasworks had their coal shovelled in from the front. Apart from the tall chimney, now unfortunately gone, the rest of the building still has its six retorts inside, set into the internal wall that runs down the centre. It is a beautiful building with wonderful sandstone detailing – marred somewhat by modern graffiti, especially around the back.

Also currently intact is the original Governor House, on the fence line at the corner of Willis and Cimitière streets. It is corrugated iron painted a dull red with lovely wooden features, and it is from this building that the gas went up into the town. My informants told me that there were no valves after this point. Whenever they wanted to work on a pipe in the town, they had to drill a hole in the cast iron pipe and insert a bladder to close off that area while they worked, because they had no other way to shut off the gas flow once it left the Governor House. The inside of this building is stunning with all its machinery and fittings currently intact. Unfortunately it is unsecured and vandalism has begun.

There are many wonderful original buildings on this site. The ornate Engineer's Cottage, said to date from the 1860s, in the mid-twentieth century had a concrete-lined heated open-air swimming pool in the back yard, at a time when private pools were rare in Launceston. The Engineer arranged for a pipe to heat the water, straight out from the Vertical Retort. I got the impression that the pool may have rankled a bit with the Gasworks tradesmen. They were never allowed to swim in it, yet they had to fix it when anything broke down. Apparently the pool is still there; Origin had it filled in and planted a lawn over the top and it is now an enclosed courtyard.

Behind the Engineer's Cottage is the old Laboratory. Like the Governor House, it is also a beautifully-proportioned corrugated iron building with period details. Every day the Laboratory technicians had to collect samples and test the quality of the gas. They also did extra jobs as required, like drawing up site plans and maps of the layout of the mains. I spoke to one retired Lab technician who said that working in the Laboratory was no cleaner than any other job on site. He was exposed to the same atmosphere as everyone else, and everyone on site went home dirty and smelly at the end of the day.

During the 1929 flood the Horizontal Retort House was flooded which doused the fires in the furnaces and left Launceston without gas. It took some time to pump the water out of the mains, and then the air that had entered the broken pipes. There were complaints in the *Examiner* that housewives had to go through a whole box of matches before they could get their stoves lit, because of the air still in the pipes which came out with a puff

² The corner of Wescombe Street is visible at the far right of the 1889 photograph above. The house on the corner was occupied by Miss Maney.

³ Currently there are only a few items from this dig on display, in the back window of the old Laboratory building.

when they turned on the gas.⁴ I was told that Launceston was without gas for only one week before everything was up and running again which is an amazing turnaround after such a devastating natural disaster.

Just as a matter of interest, the Launceston Gas Company is said to have been the first in Australia to hire out gas stoves to its customers which it began doing as early as 1888. This proved a major liability after the 1929 flood when the Gas Company was expected to replace all those stoves that had been inundated and then thrown outside during the clean-up and left to rust.

A story I particularly enjoyed from the 1929 flood was a boyhood memory from a gentleman in his nineties. My informant said that the water went over halfway up the wall of their house which was located in a block adjacent to the Gasworks. In the ceiling was a little attic space with some steps leading up, and his mother followed him and his sister up into it. He remembered sitting near the top of these steps and seeing big water rats swimming round in the water swirling just below him. So he removed his boot and leant over and hit the rats on the head as they passed by, which absolutely horrified his mother.

The flood meant that the writing was on the wall for the Horizontal Retorts, and the Gasworks purchased this Vertical Retort House (right) to replace them. The steel frame was sent out from Britain and filled in with local bricks. It was completed and opened in March 1932.⁵ At one time these prefabricated vertical retorts were built all over the British Empire. Others might have been bigger than Launceston's example but very few of them have survived.



Fig. 2 Launceston Gas Company's Vertical Retort, completed in 1932.

Jai Paterson photo, 2015

This Vertical Retort worked via a hopper that took coal up inside so that the furnaces were fed from above. One of my informants told me that when the city gas supply changed from being coal fired, a co-worker put a car he was trying to get rid of into the base of the old hopper and they threw other rubbish in on top of it.⁶ These sorts of stories are usually hard to prove, but when I mentioned it to the archaeologist he confirmed that the remains of a squashed car are still down there!

The oral history

I was put in touch with ex-Gas Company staff who now work for Origin and it was through their generosity that I received access to as many people as I did. As these things often do, it snowballed and one person led on to another.

This project was always going to be oral history without recordings, simply because of the limited time available. I had a set timeframe for producing text and images for the architect's graphic designer, so I was not going to waste it making transcriptions from tapes which, as every oral history workshop tells us, is extremely time-consuming. Instead I listened with a pad and a pen, wrote down everything I could and typed it up immediately afterwards. My purpose was simply to seek out relevant anecdotes that I could work into label text and which would add some insight into the past working life on site; it was not to create a word-by-word testimony or a 100% accurate transcription. However, there were one or two people who did ask to see my typed-up notes and, of course, I obliged in those cases.

Even though I stuck to my original purpose, I also follow another rule of my own when I am interviewing people. It is that I let them talk. I allow them to go off on tangents and tell me other aspects of their lives and

⁴ *Examiner*, 16 April 1929, p. 9.

⁵ A copy of the brochure produced for the official inauguration on 18 March 1932 is held by the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

⁶ That is, when they changed to producing gas with butane in the 1970s. (Note also, that during World War 2 oil was used instead of coal.)

I write it all down. I know it is not the focussed way in which one is supposed to approach taping an interview, but it works for me. This is because I am a freelance historian and I never know what my next job will be and what information might prove useful in the future. It all gets added to my own little archive of Launceston's past. So if an elderly gentleman wants to tell me about the things Depression kids got up to in City Park, when I was ostensibly interviewing him about his parents' home in Wescombe Street, then I let him go.

This particular gentleman told me a lovely story about what he and his mates got up to when they tired of trying to catch eels in the North Esk River. As soon as it was dark they would climb over the fence into City Park and try to catch whatever happened to be living in the fish ponds at the time. One night they were caught by the caretaker and were told a cautionary tale. He told them that they had better not take anything home that they caught in the park, because of the Gasworks across the road. He said that because the gas came underground from the Gasworks and therefore under the park, did they also know that little bits of gas leaked out and escaped through the ground and came up through the water in the fish ponds? Consequently it was swallowed by the fish and they ended up full of gas. He told them that if their mothers put a City Park fish in the oven, it could cause an explosion and blow up the whole house – then they would be in big trouble. So they gave up fishing in City Park and went back to eeling in the river instead.

Obviously this story was worth jotting down because what started out as a group of stories about what boys got up to as they roamed around the area at night, also contained a useful reference to the Gasworks. This of course was an anecdote and, for what I do, a good anecdote is worth its weight in gold, even if it has been embellished over time and might not be exactly as it originally happened. Childhood stories like these still have a truth to them, even if the only truth is the innocence of childhood – though they also ooze the flavour of the times and this also makes them important. For the Gasworks story I already had a wide range of facts (from the research done by other people, the archives at the Museum, newspapers, etc.) so I was especially hoping for these personal insights.

There was also another reason for not making recordings – as a freelance historian what would I do with them afterwards? By making my own notes of my interviews, which I call 'conversations' rather than 'interviews', my written document is *my* interpretation of that conversation. In copyright terms these notes belong to me and I can control the ethical issues relating to them. I have never trusted the idea of handing over copies of recordings to a person or a company that is not a formal collecting institution because I cannot expect them to understand all those issues of ownership and copyright. I therefore thought it was better not to risk making recordings at all, than to have them fall into the wrong hands or end up at the tip shop or in some other inappropriate place.

Apart from the savings in time and worry, there are other advantages to not doing recordings. One is that people will casually tell you things off-the-record, which I do not write down as that would not be fair. But I do remember what I have been told and if I meet someone else from the same workplace I might hint that I already know about something else historically interesting. The second person may be the one who is happy to talk on-the-record and I become permitted to have that story by another person instead. Another advantage is the flexibility to encourage site visits. This meant that I was able to invite some interviewees onto the Gasworks site to point out features they remembered and to look through the salvaged material in the old Retort House and identify various items. Site visits are particularly enjoyable for the interviewee and a great way to jog their memory, though I discourage people from visiting in groups as they all talk at once!

For this project I told my client that I would interview six people in total, a quick cross-section of ex-management, gas workers and office workers. This reassured the client that there was an end in sight. However (and this is the point at which freelance historians earn no money), because one person always leads to another I ended up putting in extra hours to capture more conversations than I technically needed. In this particular case I did at least ten interviews altogether, plus one or two extras by telephone where the recommended interviewees had moved away from Launceston.

Not all informants came through the Gasworks network. I always tell as many people as possible about my current research and through Launceston's famous word-of-mouth I was lucky to get an opportunity to talk to Audrey Dobson before she passed away. Audrey was Tasmania's first television cooking presenter.

There was more to the Launceston Gas Company than the site beside the river. There was also the Gas Company's state-of-the-art edifice which opened in St John Street in 1940, with showrooms displaying the latest in gas fittings for the home. This was where the Gas Company also ran its cooking demonstrations and where Audrey Dobson got her start.



Fig. 3 A cooking demonstration in the Gas Company's theatrette.
Courtesy of Origin

Shortly after World War 2 the Gas Company's Secretary invited Audrey to organise a new series of cooking demonstrations for the theatrette. The Gas Company had realised that many of Launceston's younger housewives had learnt to cook using only wartime rations. By 1950 when things were returning to normal, women were desperate to learn new recipes to try the new ingredients that had become available. In the 1970s Audrey Dobson went on to host Tasmania's first televised cooking show on TNT9.

Stories such as Audrey's add another dimension to the Gasworks site and it was planned to create signage discussing the cooking demonstrations to go somewhere in the 'Cook With Gas' Vertical Retort

building. This would have suited its planned role as a restaurant, but that aspect of the development never happened. Much of the information I collected has never been used as I was collecting with an eye to the whole site. I gave a copy of my research notes to the architect, in case the project is ever reactivated.

Some artefacts

As a museum professional I also believe that artefacts can 'speak', in the sense that like people their stories can be researched and interpreted. While on site I was able to forage through four rooms full of equipment salvaged from around the site. I even found the last remaining lamplighter's ladder. The Gas Company first lit Launceston's 123 street lamps in April 1860. The process of lighting them every evening and extinguishing them each morning was carried out by lamplighters until electric light replaced the gas in 1896. Apparently the job was quicker in the mornings because the lamplighter did not have to climb up to put out the lamps; the ladder was only required for lighting them. Unfortunately I came along too late to obtain an interview with a lamplighter, but in this case I discovered that the *Mercury* had done it for me. In 1949 the paper conducted an interview with a very old Launceston lamp lighter. He stated that he used to walk fourteen miles (20 kilometres) a day, often accompanied by groups of boys who were fascinated by his daily ritual.⁷ This particular ladder has since been donated to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

This unprepossessing hot water system (below) was another storeroom 'find'. Still encased in its original felted lagging which I am told was made from cow's hair, this hot water service was designed and patented by the Launceston Gas Company and manufactured on site. Various Gasworks employees told me the story of how it had not been possible to obtain new hot water services from Britain during World War 2, so the Gasworks made their own. The story goes that these units were particularly sturdy and even after being repaired many times their owners never wanted to replace them with the newer models.

One Gasworks artefact that I am still seeking is 'the gun that can shoot round corners'. Apparently there really was a shotgun with a twelve-foot long barrel with a bend on the end, but of course it could not really shoot around corners. I was told that sand would be loaded into the barrel followed by a blank cartridge, and when

⁷ *Mercury*, 10 November 1949, p. 8.



Fig. 4 An Aladdin's cave of leftover gas fittings with the hot water system in the centre.
Jai Paterson photo, 2007

they found a gap in the bricks of the furnace they would fire in the sand. I was given the impression that this helped seal up the gaps, but I could be wrong and this may turn out to be just one of those stories made up by the old hands to tease the gullible.

Photographs are obviously another type of artefact with stories to tell. One worker was so fascinated by the gas explosion in January 1971 that he purchased prints of all the newspaper photographs taken at the time. Launceston's only major gas explosion occurred in Charles Street and blew up six shops. It was caused by gas trapped in the basement of one of the buildings that ignited and blew out three of the walls. Reports say that twelve people were injured and the noise could be heard out at Rosevears. The top of one parking meter even broke off in the street and

flew across the road, right through the Canton Restaurant and over the startled heads of the diners – it was a miracle that no-one was killed.⁸

Although I interviewed people who, on the whole, did not start their apprenticeships and working life at the Gasworks until the late 1950s, many of them were still able to tell me first-hand stories from much earlier. This was especially true of the tradesmen who worked on site because, as apprentices, they had been privy to the apprenticeship stories passed down from the generation of tradesmen before them. Working life is a particularly rich vein to mine for oral history because of the oral traditions within each workplace.

When it came to the working life on site, I had a lucky find – a double-page spread on the Launceston Gasworks in the *Mercury* in June 1955.⁹ This meant I could produce relevant images to accompany the text for the signage around the site. One of the *Mercury* images was used for this sign (left) outside the Meter Shop, along with a photograph of a meter found in a storeroom and the testimony of men who worked in that particular area. Engineers or Gas Fitters also used the Meter Shop as their base. They had a little room in which to write up their logbooks. A Gas Fitter told me that they did their city rounds on bicycles and everything they needed had to be tied on to their bicycle, 'from a 20 foot length of pipe to a sheet of plywood, and when we got the wobbles we got off and walked'. I also used this sign to talk about the apprenticeship system – it was five years for a Meter Maker and Repairer. This sign was an added opportunity to mention that employees generally felt that the Gas Company was 'a terrific employer'. It was a workplace where everyone knew each other, where the social club was strong and organised picnics for their children, and where there was that family feeling that I have encountered on other industrial sites in Launceston.



Fig. 5 Gasworks sign outside the Meter Shop.
Jai Paterson photo, 2007

Now that this project has stalled, it remains to be seen what will become of my box full of typed-up 'conversations' and other research material!

⁸ *Examiner*, 19 July 1971, p. 1.

⁹ *Mercury*, June 1955.

CONFESSIONS OF A WRITER

Lana Wall

Oral History – capturing people’s memories – is such a satisfying venture. I was able to utilise oral history for my recently-published book, *Lindsay Haslem: fly fisher, teacher, innovator*.

The proposal was instigated by the Corralinn Fly Fishing and Casting Association of Launceston (CFFCA). Lindsay Haslem was the coach and a foundation and life member, and more importantly the mentor to many members since the inception of the club on 30 July 1991. (He was also the founding member of a Victorian fishing club.) He was revered in countless ways, many considering him a father figure. On his death in 1998 the CFFCA established the Lindsay Haslem Memorial Trophy for an annual competition in his honour.

New members know little about Lindsay’s contribution to and knowledge of fly fishing or about his character. There was a need to document the Haslem story, and I agreed to do it. I thought a couple of pages would do, but as I interviewed people in Tasmania and Victoria, the state where he lived most of his life, I realized I had enough material for a small book. The idea was broached in 2010 and finally came to fruition in November 2015. It was quite a journey.



Fortunately, I met Lindsay and his wife Jean shortly before he died but did not fully realize what he knew about fly fishing nor how he imparted that knowledge and love for fishing to others. Lindsay mentioned with amazement how in his younger years he had fished in all types of adverse weather: rain, hail, sleet, snow. He lived, breathed and (practically) died fishing.

Nearly 50 people were approached for interviews. Most gave generously of their time; even if they didn’t like the man personally they respected his talent. I needed to do telephone interviews with those living in Victoria and with a few in Tasmania. If I was starting this venture today it would be very difficult, because so many people have given up their landline or do not answer their phone for fear of it being a cold caller.

Current members of the CFFCA, Bruce Tole and Jim Fulton (and his wife Marie), provided extensive interviews, with additional information from Neville Goodger, John Hepburn and Alan Taylor. Jim now teaches fly fishing and casting on a casual commercial

basis. Marie proudly stated that Lindsay eventually came to appreciate Jim’s coaching skills, whereas with others he could be a bit touchy, saying, ‘I’ll job you’, whenever he felt they were encroaching on his area of expertise. Both Bruce and Neville were closely mentored by Lindsay and they eagerly lapped up his fishing knowledge.

There are many myths and legends about Lindsay Haslem in circulation; some are fictional. Stories in the book in most instances have been independently counter-checked, and can be regarded as factual. The book is not intended just for fly fishers. Many mothers have enjoyed reading the book before presenting their son with his hard-to-find birthday present.

Copies of *Lindsay Haslem: fly fisher, teacher, innovator* are available from either Petrarch’s Bookshop or the author (lane.wall@activ8.net.au or 03 6391 1086) for \$25, plus \$5 for postage. A limited edition hardback is also available from either.

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The latest theme issue of *Australian Historical Studies* (AHS), edited by Katie Holmes and Alistair Thomson, features seven articles by members of the Australian Generations team in which we use the project's oral history interviews to illuminate a range of topics in Australian social history, and to discuss innovations and issues in oral history. The open access online [editorial](#) on 'Oral History and Australian Generations' by Katie and Al introduces the project and the articles. Katie and Al also discuss the articles in a [video clip](#) on the AHS Facebook site. Note that if you are not an AHS subscriber you will need to view through a local, state or education library, or pay for access).

The articles are:

[Class, Social Equity and Higher Education in Postwar Australia](#) (Christina Twomey and Jodie Boyd);

[Talking about Mental Illness: Life Histories and Mental Health in Modern Australia](#) (Katie Holmes);

[Australian Generations? Memory, Oral History and Generational Identity in Postwar Australia](#) (Alistair Thomson);

[Telling Families and Locating Identity: Narratives of Late Modern Life](#) (Kerreen Reiger);

[Creating an Oral History Archive: Digital Opportunities and Ethical Issues](#) (Kevin Bradley and Anisa Puri)

[Oral History in the Digital Age: Beyond the Raw and the Cooked](#) (Michael Frisch)

[The Radio Documentary and Oral History: Challenges and Opportunities](#) (Michelle Rayner)

This journal theme issue is the major academic outcome from the ARC-funded Australian Generations Oral History Project, a collaboration between historians at Monash University and La Trobe University and colleagues at the National Library of Australia and ABC Radio National which produced 300 life history interviews with Australians born between 1920 and 1989. Later in 2016, Monash University Publishing will publish [Australian Lives: An Aural History](#) by Anisa Puri and Alistair Thomson. This book uses interview extracts to illuminate the lived experience of Australian history across the 20th century, arranged in chapters on Ancestry, Childhood, Faith, Youth, Migrations, Midlife, Activism, Later Life and Reflections. The book will be published as a paperback and e-book, and e-book users will be able to listen to each interview extract as they read – an 'aural history' first!

You can also listen to ten [Australian Generations radio programs](#) produced by ABC Radio National, or access the interviews via the [Australian Generations website](#).

ACCREDITED ORAL HISTORY TRAINING - WINTER SCHOOL IN BROOME 14 – 16 JUNE 2016

Enjoy a unique Broome experience at the Goolarri Media Enterprises (GME) oral history winter school.

Oral History Australia National Training Convenor and OHAA WA remote committee member Elaine Rabbitt has developed the oral history training package, drawn from the wealth of oral history teaching materials that are available in Australia and overseas.

The winter school comprises three consecutive workshops with assessments to be completed. GME's professional sound recordist, Arthur Hunter, will be available to give participants advice on the recording devices and how to use them.

Practical tasks to be completed to gain the qualification include:

- Complete assessment workbook containing activities including answering questions re ethical practice.
- Learn how to write a letter of invitation and informed consent to suit your project.
- Use professional recording equipment
- Complete an interview
- Keep a reflective journal to evaluate the interview context.

Certification

Those who complete the three workshops, an interview and their assessment workbooks will be awarded their certificate issued by the Goolarri Media Enterprises (GME) Registered Training Organisation No.51278.

Having your knowledge and expertise recognised professionally and gaining the certification is a stepping stone for further learning and possible employment opportunities to teach the accredited course.

Who should attend?

Those wanting to gain an accredited oral history qualification: community members, historians, history teachers, museum and interpretive centre staff, librarians, students, academics, organisations and individuals working to document significant sites, aged care workers, health workers, ranger and land management groups, language centres and any organisations or community working to preserve languages and cultures.

COURSE COSTS: \$395 (NO GST)

Includes enrolment fees, resources, participant handbook and assessment.

Recognition of prior learning

If you have completed other oral history courses, workshops or interviews you can apply for 'recognition of prior learning' (RPL). RPL is a way of using your existing skills, knowledge and experience to gain your formal qualification. You will be required to meet the performance criteria for the unit of competency Record and Document Community History AHCILM404A.

THE COST: \$180 (NO GST applicable)

Qualifications required to teach

To teach the accredited oral history course trainers must hold the following qualifications:

- ANCILM404A Record and Document Community History
- A current Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and then work with a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) authorised to issue the oral history certificate.

A Diploma of Teaching or Bachelor of Education provides you with the skills to teach adults but does not give you the correct credentials to teach, train and assess within Australia's Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

For further details and advice how to proceed contact **Elaine Rabbitt** elaine.rabbitt@gme.com.au

TESTIMONIES FROM 2015 WINTER SCHOOL PARTICIPANTS

A 25 year old Singaporean PhD student who travelled from Sydney to attend the course said, 'This was an extremely comprehensive and informative course, well worth the expense and travel. All the issues we dealt with were important and stimulated lively debate and conversation facilitated well by the experienced Dr Elaine Rabbitt: that of ethics, of technology, of interview etiquette and so on. The assessments were also practical and useful, particularly drafting invitation letters/consent forms and also a mock interview which made me realise I had underestimated how complex the oral history interview exchange was. Although I had a strong grasp of oral history in theory, I came away much better equipped to do it in practice.'

Fiona Bowring-Greer from Canberra said: "I had a wonderful week in Broome with the course and the people of the course as the highlight! Just the antidote/pre-retirement preparation I needed".



ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

9.30 am – 4.00 pm, Saturday 28 May 2016. Education area, Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk,
Launceston

The workshop will be conducted by Jill Cassidy of Oral History Tasmania and will cover all aspects of oral history practice. Topics include: interview technique, possible pitfalls, use of digital recorder, ethics, transcription & publication. Participants will be able to listen to interview excerpts and do practice interviews. Oral History Tasmania's digital recorder will be demonstrated.

Numbers are strictly limited and prior registration is essential for catering purposes.

PLEASE BRING A MEANS OF RECORDING IF POSSIBLE (borrowed, not bought)



ORAL HISTORY TASMANIA Inc. WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

ABN 19264 496 176

For catering purposes registration must be received by **Wednesday 25 May**.

If an institution is paying your fee or you are paying electronically, please ensure that Oral History Tasmania receives a copy of this form.

Name:.....

Address:.....Postcode:.....

Email:.....Phone:.....Mobile:.....

Any dietary requirements

Payment of \$_____ is for (please tick):

[] Registration for workshop @ \$40 members Oral History Tasmania

(includes lunch)

\$50 non-members

\$30 students

\$.....

[] Membership of Oral History Tasmania (for new members)

\$.....

Payment options (Receipts will be issued on 28 May.)

Electronic transfer to: Commonwealth Bank, BSB 067 003; account number 2803 2783

Payment to 'Oral History Tasmania'.

Please provide your name as a reference. Date transferred:

After making electronic payment, email form to president@oralhistorytas.org.au

Or post to The Treasurer, Oral History Tasmania, 276 Brumby St, Longford 7301.

Cheque or money order: made payable to: 'Oral History Tasmania' and sent with completed form to:
The Treasurer, Oral History Tasmania, 276 Brumby St, Longford 7301.

Office use only Cheque/Money Order/Cash/Electronic Receipt No _____ Date _____

Reminder that a 20% discount is available for the **3RD EDITION** of *The Oral History Reader*
Edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson
Series: Routledge Readers in History

For the 20% discount enter the code FLR40 at checkout.
Hard cover: 978-0-415-70732-9 | £72.00 Paperback: 978-0-415-70733-6 | £23.99 * Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount and only applies to books purchased directly via our website:
<http://www.taylorandfrancis.com/books/details/9780415707336/>

WEBSITES

Oral History Tasmania: www.oralhistorytas.org.au

Oral History Australia: www.oralhistoryaustralia.org.au

IOHA (International Oral History Association): www.ioha.fgv.br

EQUIPMENT HIRE

A **Fostex digital recorder** is available for hire to members. It comes with its own lapel microphones and *User Guidelines*.

Cost of hire: \$30 a week, plus transport costs if necessary. You will also be required to sign a form agreeing to pay to replace any part that is damaged or lost while you have the recorder, up to a maximum of \$250 for individuals or \$500 for groups or institutions.

To make a booking, contact Jill Cassidy on 0418 178 098 or email president@oralhistorytas.org.au

THE OBJECTIVES of ORAL HISTORY TASMANIA

promote the practice and methods of oral history
educate in the use of oral history methods
encourage discussion of all problems in oral history
foster the preservation of oral history records
pursue common objectives and maintain links with other Australian oral history
associations through membership of Oral History Australia Inc.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Individuals	\$40.00	Households	\$55.00
Student/unemployed/pensioner	\$30.00	Institution	\$65.00

ORAL HISTORY TASMANIA EXECUTIVE

President, and delegate to Oral History Australia:

Jill Cassidy 0418 178 098 Email: president@oralhistorytas.org.au

Secretary: Alison Johnston

Treasurer: Lana Wall

Committee members: Elaine Crisp, Terry Fritsche, Andrew Parsons, Leonie Prevost, Pauline Schindler

All correspondence should be directed to Jill Cassidy, Oral History Tasmania, Queen Victoria Museum, PO Box 403, Launceston Tas 7250, or emailed to president@oralhistorytas.org.au

Real to Reel is edited by Jill Cassidy. The next edition is due in August 2016 and contributions should reach the editor no later than 31 July. They can be emailed to president@oralhistorytas.org.au