

TASMANIAN ABORIGINAL HERITAGE LEGISLATION

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www.tahl.tas.gov.au

2006 Consultation Report Out Now

A report on and answers to questions from the second major stage of the Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage legislation consultation, undertaken during November and December 2006 has now been released.

These consultations focussed on a Consultation Package which accounted for the current status of the project and raised concepts for discussion.

Consultation started with a series of interest group meetings, providing early and maximum opportunity for participation in the Project by a range of key interest groups.

Soon afterwards, public forums were conducted in Launceston, Flinders Island, Burnie, Strahan, and Hobart. These forums gave all Tasmanians an opportunity to offer comment on

the Consultation Package and other issues.

Numerous submissions on the Consultation Package were also received.

Discussions are continuing with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community on a range of integral issues.

Several clear topics emerged from the consultations which will provide direction for the project.

We are pleased to report a high level of support for the concepts raised in the Package.

However, many people requested more information on the proposed Duty of Care and resourcing concerns were also raised.

Another issue was the lack of

Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage education resources. (see article on page 2 of this newsletter)

The report on the 2006 Consultations can be found at <http://www.tahl.tas.gov.au/projectresources.html>. Answers to questions raised during the consultations can be found on the Frequently Asked Questions page of this website.

If you do not have access to the internet and would like a copy, please contact us (our details are on the back page).

Alternatively, there is a network of 66 online access centres across Tasmania which provides public access to computers and the Internet and basic training in their use. You can call 6233 2802 to find out your nearest location. Internet access is also available at your local branch of the State Library of Tasmania, each one has at least one computer with Internet access.

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Seeking Knowledge on Aboriginal Culture and Heritage



Although a range of educational resources and places to visit to learn about Tasmanian Aboriginal culture and heritage exist, it seems they are somewhat elusive.

Greg Lehman, who has an extensive background in Aboriginal education and Aboriginal heritage management and is the current Manager of State Aboriginal Education agrees; "People have got to get out there and look for information, there's not a huge amount about.

"All our department can do is make sure that in the education system the material is up to date and includes current knowledge and reflects [Aboriginal] community values."

He said another reason that information is not widely available is the negative impacts research has had on the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and individuals in the past.

"It wasn't until the early eighties that

Aboriginal people started to become involved in curriculum. And the process is continuing now, we're redeveloping and revising curriculum material and we do that in consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Education Association," said Mr Lehman.

"There's no central reference site set up at the moment, that's what we really need; a well developed site that has high quality and reliable information. People need to be wary that there is a lot of unreliable and politically driven information out there."

There are also good reasons that little information is released about Aboriginal heritage sites.

"Keeping sites anonymous is often the best way of protecting them," added Mr Lehman.

But it is a catch twenty two situation, while anonymity of an Aboriginal Heritage site may afford it protection

from wilful damage, it may leave it open for accidental damage.

"People need to get information about Aboriginal heritage that allows them to understand the relationship between them and the Aboriginal community. Aboriginal sites are places we have a connection with. If people do not understand that connection it's hard for them to value Aboriginal heritage," Mr Lehman said.

"There's some good reading material out there. Lyndall Ryan's *The Aboriginal Tasmanians* and Henry Reynolds *Fate of a Free People* are two that come to mind. There were also two books written by Aboriginal people that were released only last year, *Keeping Culture: Aboriginal Tasmania* and *Aboriginal Connections to Launceston Places*. We have a resource library that anyone can access that has lots more.

"There's also places to visit like Tiagarra in Devonport and the Wharf Centre in Strahan as well as a range of libraries, visitor centres and interpretation panels in National Parks. Not all of these have quality information, but the community is working on developing a heritage centre that will set some important standards. The Tasmanian Museum is also currently renewing its Aboriginal gallery."

There is high quality information available and the range, quality and quantity is continually growing. On the next page we have put together a list of resources as a starting point for those with a desire to learn more about Aboriginal Heritage and Culture. Please be aware that this is by no means a comprehensive list, rather a sample. There are places throughout the state with information, movies, places to visit, people to talk to and more books.

RECOMMENDED INFORMATION SOURCES

Places to Visit in Tasmania

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 40 Macquarie St, Hobart, open 10 to 5 daily, free entry (new Aboriginal gallery open late 2007), ph - (03) 6211 4177

Queen Victoria Museum, Royal Park: 2 Wellington St, Launceston and Inveresk: Invermay Rd, Launceston, open 10 to 5 daily, free entry, ph - (03) 6323 3777

St Helens History and Visitor Information Centre, 61 Cecilia St, St Helens, open Monday to Friday 9 to 5, Saturday 9 to 1, Sunday 10 to 2, free entry, ph - (03) 6376 1744

Bruny Island History Room, Main Road, Allonah, open 10 to 3 daily, free entry, ph - (03) 6293 1139

Visitors Centres

Lake St Clair Visitor Centre, open 8 to 5 daily, parks pass* required, ph - (03) 6289 1172

Cradle Mountain Visitor Centre, open 8 to 5 daily, free entry, ph - (03) 6492 1110

Hastings Visitor Centre, open 10 to 4 May – August, 9 to 5 Sept - Dec 25, March - April, 9 to 6 26 Dec - Feb, free entry, ph - (03) 6298 3209

Freycinet Visitor Centre, open 8.30 to 4 May - Sept, 8 to 5 Oct - April, free entry, ph - (03) 6256 7000

Mt Field Visitor Centre, open 9 to 4

winter, 8.30 to 5 summer, parks pass* required, ph - (03) 6288 1149

Narawntapu Visitor Centre, open 9 to 4 winter, 8 to 5 summer, parks pass* required, ph - (03) 6428 6277

Information Panels

(please note that access to some of the areas below will require a parks pass*)

larmairremener tabelti cultural walk at Lake St Clair

tulampanga interpretation trail (Alum Cliffs) State Reserve

Rocky Cape National Park

Bruny Island Neck Game Reserve

Humboldt Divide buttongrass panel - Southwest National Park

Arthurs River, outside the Parks and Wildlife Offices

loon.tite.ter.mair.re.le.hoin.er cultural walk, Waterloo Point, Swansea

Sisters Beach

Preminghana Aboriginal Land, Marawah, North West Tasmania, ph - (03) 6231 0288

kunanyi (Mt Wellington) Pinnacle Interpretation Signage, South West Observation Deck, Western side of car park, Mt Wellington Pinnacle, road open weather permitting, ph - (03) 6238 2176

Risdon Cove Aboriginal Land, 838 East Derwent Highway, East Risdon, Public Access 9 to 5 daily

Libraries

Department of Primary Industries and Water Library, Level 5, Lands Building, 134 Macquarie Street, Hobart, open 10.30 to 5 Monday to Friday, ph - (03) 6233 6418

Aboriginal Education Resource Centre, c/o Elizabeth College, 256 Elizabeth Street, Hobart, open Monday, Wednesday & Friday 8 to 4.30, Tuesday 8 to 7 and Friday 8 to 4, postal service available, please contact before visiting on (03) 6235 6594 or by email aboriginal.education.library@education.tas.gov.au

State Library of Tasmania, 46 Branches State wide, see yellow pages or go to www.statelibrary.tas.gov.au, ph - (03) 6233 7511

The Tasmaniana Library, 91 Murray Street, Hobart, open Monday - Friday 9.30 to 6, last Saturday each month 9.30 to 2.30, ph - 6233 7474

Morris Miller Library, University of Tasmania Library, open during semester: Monday - Thursday 8 to 10, Friday 8.30 to 6 and weekends 8.30 to 6, ph - (03) 6226 2229

* Tasmanian Parks passes to enter Tasmanian National Parks are available for purchase from a number of outlets, for further information please call (03) 6233 2621 or visit www.parks.tas.gov.

Laser Technology Meets Ancient Rock Art

Armed with state of the art equipment and decades of combined expertise in Aboriginal heritage management, a team has recently returned from two significant rock art locations in Tasmania where the latest laser scanning technology was put to the test.

The team from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (TALSC) and Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO) are working on the pilot stage of a project, to record a painted hand stencil site and a rock-engraving site. Should this method live up to expectations then the big picture will be to record all of Tasmania's Aboriginal rock art in this way.

Don Ranson, Senior Archaeological Research Officer with the AHO, and project manager, said the laser scanning was of international significance, "it is the most accurate ever done on rock art in the world." "The instrument shines a laser beam onto the art which is reflected back into a camera on the instrument, where

"Potential uses, perhaps only limited by the imagination"

the information is recorded digitally in three dimensions. The important thing is that it is recorded to the accuracy of one tenth of a millimetre (approx. the diameter of a human hair), it is at the limit of human vision," explained Mr Ranson.

Following a day of laser scanning in the field, the 'terra bytes' of information are processed over four days by sophisticated software, preparing it for a variety of potential uses, perhaps only limited by the imagination. Comparing scanned information over time provides the capacity to monitor erosion that is impossible to detect with the human eye, or, importantly, given the horrendous acts of vandalism to rock art sites in Tasmania, provide accurate forensic evidence. Mr Ranson is also looking forward to the possibility of discovering additional sites. "There is potential to discover art not discerned by the human eye by

shifting a virtual sun across the virtual rock face to pick up shallow relief or heavily eroded rock art," he said.

Tony Brown, curator of Indigenous Cultures at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) and TALSC committee member is also eager to witness potential uses.

It is possible to replicate sites in intricate detail using a combination of the scanned 3 dimensional data and accompanying information recorded by a 12 mega pixel camera to provide accurate colour.

The potential for conservation, interpretation, education and tourism is huge. Visitors could be walking through what is visually identical to a fragile, remote and significant cultural site without impacting on the real site or leaving the comfort of a visitors centre. "It's going to come down to (Aboriginal) community consultation though," stressed Mr Brown.

"Its breaking new ground," he said, "with what's been happening (vandalism to rock art sites), it's not going to bring them back, but to know it can be reproduced is reassuring." He said that previously the Aboriginal community had approached such technologies with caution, but laser scanning is about as non-intrusive as it gets, sites are not touched and studies show that the laser scanning is comparable to three minutes of sunlight being cast onto the site.

CALLING FOR ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES: At public forums late last year a some people mentioned that they had missed our newspaper advertisements. Naturally, our budget only allows for a certain amount of paid advertising. We would therefore be grateful to hear of free advertising opportunities, such as community notice boards, local papers, etc. If you know of any, forward contact details, email addresses (where available) and any applicable deadlines that may apply to tahl@taae.tas.gov.au or call us on 6216 4471

Did you know?

Scientific evidence indicates that Aboriginal people have lived in Tasmania for at least 35,000 years

Further Information To find out more about the Tasmanian Aboriginal Heritage Legislation project, contact:

Aboriginal Heritage Office

Department of Tourism, Arts and the Environment
PO Box 771, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001
Phone: (03) 6216 4471 Fax: (03) 6233 5555
Email: tahl@taae.tas.gov.au Web: www.tahl.tas.gov.au

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