

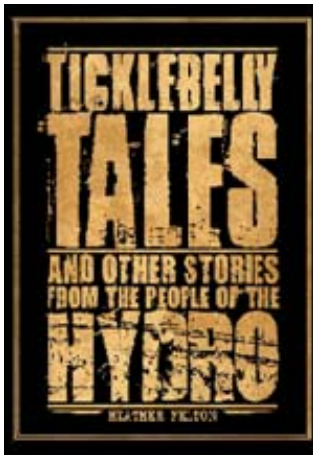


Cultural Heritage Program NEWSLETTER

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Oral History Book Launch



On the 20 May past and present employees of “the Hydro” gathered at Tarraleah for the launch of the long-awaited book telling their stories.

Ticklebelly tales and other stories from the people of the Hydro is written by Heather Felton and published by Hydro Tasmania. The 512-page book took three years to produce

and focuses on the social history of “the Hydro”.

The book starts with the creation of the Hydro Electric Department in 1914 and goes through to the environmental debates of the 70s and 80s and the end of the dam construction era.

The stories and images in the book are interwoven with defining themes, such as growing up in Hydro villages, migrant experiences and multicultural influences, and the challenges associated with working and living in often harsh and isolated conditions.

A number of people spoke at the launch including several contributors to the book, Heather Felton, Hydro Tasmania CEO Vince Hawksworth and Chairman David Crean.

Mr Crean said that hydro development was a crucial part of Tasmania’s growth in the 20th century and those who worked on it had plenty of stories to tell.

“This is the first time the history of the Hydro is told from the perspective of the many thousands of people who worked for the business. The book is an acknowledgement of their immense contribution and a celebration of what it meant to be part of the Hydro” Mr Crean said.

Mr Crean said that although Hydro Tasmania today is a different business compared to that featured in the book, the organisation’s history remains a vital part of its culture.

“We know the people who built the Hydro have provided the foundations, the building blocks and the capability of what Hydro Tasmania is today.”

“This book recognises the ingenuity, foresight, skill and dedication of the many thousands of people who worked for the Hydro, as well as their families. The book is their story.”

The book can be purchased from booksellers and newsagents for \$75 rrp.



The launch gathering



Former Hydro Tasmania Chairman Peter Rae, Bill Hilder, Christina Giudici, Rossalyn Giudici and author Heather Felton



Hydro Tasmania Chairman Dr David Crean and CEO Vince Hawksworth with Christine Giudici and Bill Hilder

Recent Heritage Assessments

A Heritage Impact Assessment was completed by Austral Archaeology in November 2007 on the Tarraleah Main Inlet valves on three English Electric Main Company machines. In the Hydro Tasmania system there are seven such machines, three at Tarraleah and four at Waddamana B. The Tarraleah valves have high surviving integrity and are the only ones currently part of an operating station. A planned upgrade would see the main inlet valves replaced. Part of Austral Archaeology's recommendations was for one to be retained and preserved in an appropriate site at Tarraleah.



The Tarraleah main inlet valve

Aboriginal Heritage Risk Assessment

Work has nearly been completed on the first stage of the Aboriginal heritage risk assessment project, with a series of field surveys carried out by Consultant Anne McConnell, Aboriginal Heritage Officer Colin Hughes and Hydro Tasmania Consulting's Ruth Painter. The data from these surveys will be used to identify areas of known Aboriginal values, and those requiring further assessment. Low lake levels have enabled access to the shoreline of Lake King William, where numerous sites were located, adding greatly to our knowledge of past Aboriginal activity in this region. Among the items identified were a hammerstone, a nodule of high quality red ochre, and a huge variety of stone scrapers. Other surveys have been undertaken at Lake Crescent and Lake Echo with a small survey at Lake Margaret (see following article).

Numerous sites have been recorded and will be included in the Tasmanian Aboriginal Site Index (TASI) with draft documents presented to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land and Sea Council for comment and consideration.



Ochre nodule



Stone scraper

Lake Margaret Update

On 25 June the Hydro Tasmania Board gave approval for a \$14.7 million redevelopment of the Lake Margaret Power Station. Hydro Tasmania Chief Executive Officer, Vince Hawksworth, has said the installed capacity of 8.5 megawatts from the station will provide around 50 gigawatts of electricity annually, enough energy to power around 5000 homes.

Staff from Hydro Tasmania Consulting, with input from Austral Archaeology, have been putting together documentation for permit applications. The redevelopment is expected to be completed in 2009, subject to approval.

Meanwhile, a dry inspection of the dam inlet required lake levels to be lowered to close to those of the original lake. As a result, a number of previously unknown historic sites associated with the 1914 construction of the dam were revealed. Hydro Tasmania Consulting staff inspected and recorded these 'new' sites, which include sections of tramway, stone walls and some of the original coffer dam structure built using local timber and conglomerate gravel.

Carefully following Lake Margaret operator Tony Potito's footsteps across the boggy ground enabled Hydro Tasmania Consulting's Ruth Painter to get close to the tramway. It was in remarkably good condition despite having been submerged for nearly 100 years.

With water levels down, this visit also provided an ideal opportunity for Aboriginal Heritage Officer, Colin Hughes to survey the lake shore for evidence of past Aboriginal use and occupation. The work was hampered by deep silt, slippery rocks and freezing weather conditions, but it became clear that any evidence of past Aboriginal use was most likely to occur at the more sheltered, flatter, eastern end of the lake, unfortunately inaccessible at the time. No artefacts were identified during this survey, although several large quartz boulders of a quality suitable for making stone tools were identified. A warm drink back at the power station was gratefully received.



Tramway



Coffer dam



Stone walls

Would you like to know more about the Program?

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