

Year 3: HASS

Activity: A history of Tasmanian Hydro Villages – Learn about Hydro Villages

Let's explore the
villages from
People of the Hydro –



Name:	
Class:	
Date:	

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Hydro villages find each of these locations on a map of Tasmania

Town	Surrounding landmarks or features	Location (North, South, East, West or Central) or distance from your school (kilometres)
Bronte Park		
Butlers Gorge		
Tarraleah		
Waddamana		

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Bronte Park

Bronte Park village was built in the late 1940s to house workers who were building the dams and canals for the Nive River Scheme.

It was the first of the Hydro villages to be planned in advance. The village was designed to be an appealing place to live, leaving trees where possible and incorporating facilities like sports grounds.

In 1949, Bronte Park had a cinema, police station, post office and a school. Films were shown three times a week at the cinema.

Construction works ended in the late 1950s. The population decreased as many workers left Bronte Park.

In 1959 the cinema and police station closed. The post office closed in 1979.

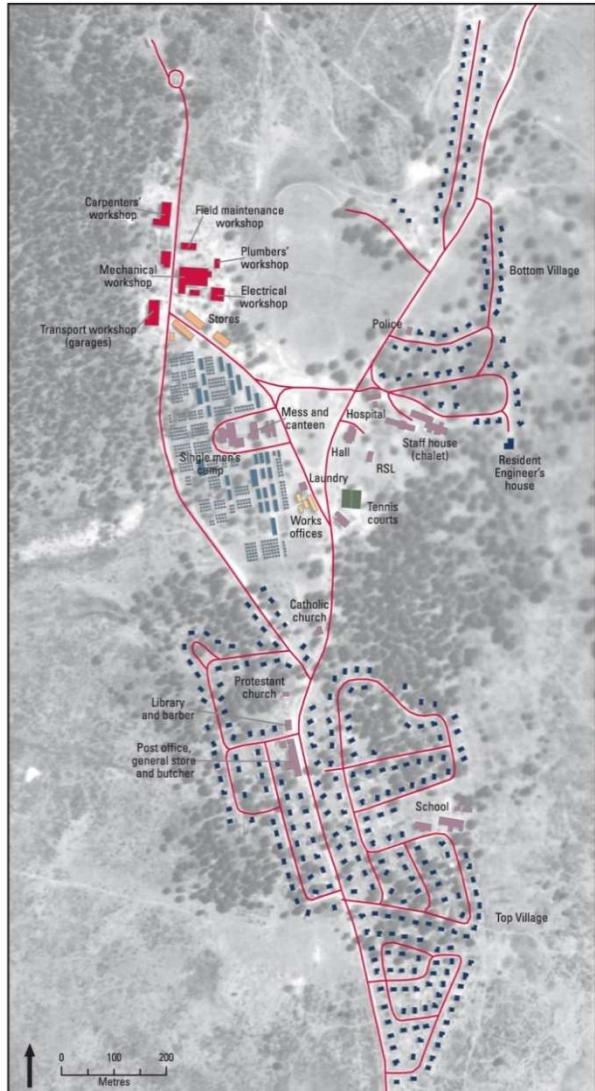
The remains of the village were sold to a private operator in 1991.

The Bronte Park Chalet, originally the staff house, was destroyed by a fire in March 2018.



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Bronte Park

1. Locate Bronte Park on Google Maps

2. Compare the current map to the 1953 map (right), what do you notice?

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Butlers Gorge

Work on the Butlers Gorge village began in the late 1930s.



The staff cottages generally consisted of two to three small rooms, with a kitchen and bathroom at the back. Virtually all of the buildings in the area were built with vertical boards.

Butlers Gorge once had a butcher shop, barber, wet canteen (similar to a public bar), billiard room, tennis court, sports ground, piggery and milking sheds.

Activity in the area wound down in 1955 and the village officially closed on 16 September 1955.

Now vegetated and bare of buildings, there are very few signs of settlement other than indications of an occasional street.

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Butlers Gorge

After the village closed, most of the Hydro buildings were removed, sold or destroyed. The site was left to return to a natural state. There is barely any sign of the thriving community that existed between 1940 and 1955.

1. Locate Butlers Gorge on Google Maps, what do you see?
2. Butlers Gorge was a temporary village to house construction workers. How is this different to your community?
3. Do you think the community might have lived on if it was not so remote?

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Tarraleah

Tarraleah was one of the most long-lasting Hydro villages, surviving for almost six decades. It has one foot in the past and another in the future, starting life in the Depression era and continuing now as a tourism village.



Temporary camps with tents, and later rough timber shanties, sprang up from 1934. However, the first houses at the permanent village were not built until 1937.

Over time Tarraleah grew into a lively town with services such as street lights and a library, as well as its own police, doctor, school, shops, picture theatre and sports club. Facilities also included a nine-hole golf course and heated swimming pool.

The last residents moved out in the late 1990s and the buildings that remained was later sold to a private operator. Visitors to the area can stay in the lodge and view the power station from the lookout.

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Tarraleah

Tarraleah grew into a lively town.

Explore this sentence through the narrative of:

George (Wladyslaw) Krzysica from *People of the Hydro* video.



The Polish Orchestra in Tarraleah in 1948. From left, Stanislaw Kaczor, Mieczyslaw Macko, Jozef Gawlik, George (Wladyslaw) Krzysica, Tadeusz Kubas, Kazimierz Cwikla and Henry Mamonski
Image sourced from Hydro Tasmania's oral history book, Ticklebelly Tales and other stories from the People of the Hydro by Heather Felton

1. Can you identify any individual contributions to the community?

2. Can you identify any group contributions to the community?

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Waddamana

Waddamana is the site of Hydro Tasmania's first power station (Waddamana A Power Station).

Waddamana is very isolated and construction in this region was difficult. There were no roads and the prospect of a trip into Waddamana was daunting – walk or ride a horse into remote and wild country.

Construction of the Red Gate Tramway started in 1912. It was almost 29 kilometres long and provided a return trip every two days. It carried everything needed to build the power station – all of the equipment and supplies for the workers.

On 6 May 1916, Waddamana 'A' Power Station was officially opened by Governor General Sir Ronald Munro-Ferguson.

The power station initially powered 300 homes in the Hobart region. Demand for electricity was high.

Between 1939 and 1949 a second power station at Waddamana, Waddamana B, was constructed.

During construction and operation, Waddamana was a true village community with cook houses, a bakery, butcher shop, piggery and school house.

While the generating days are over, the Waddamana Power Stations still have an important role to play. The site, along with other elements of the Great Lake Power Scheme, was added to the Tasmanian Heritage Register in 2014 in recognition of the important part this development played in shaping the Tasmania that we know today.



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Waddamana

In 1988 Waddamana A Power Station was converted into a heritage site. Visitors to the heritage site can:

- read the stories from the people who lived and worked at Waddamana
- see the tools that the workers used
- see the machinery that has been faithfully restored.

In your own words, why is it important to look after this historical site?

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Extension options

1. Create a timeline (in chronological order) of the events from:

- Bronte Park
- Butlers Gorge
- Tarraleaf, and
- Waddamana



2. Research other key facts, photos, maps or other details to add to your timeline