

Establishing a Cultural Landscape and Historic Centre at Lenah Valley in the Vicinity of Ancanthe Park

Proposal submitted to HCC by Saving Ancanthe Action Group

June 2012

Attachments to this proposal, to be presented at HCC Meeting on 25 June 2012, are:

1. An international e-petition of academics and experts on the Franklins
2. Letters of support from Heritage experts around Australia and
3. A Community Petition respectfully requesting that the Hobart City Council facilitate the purchase of the land at 270A Lenah Valley Rd, Lenah Valley for the development of Cultural/Historical Tourism and the amenity of the community.

The reason for requesting that the Council facilitate the purchase of this land is the cultural and historic significance of the Lady Franklin Museum set within its wider landscape at 270A Lenah Valley Rd, which is attested in a number of reports commissioned by HCC and others 1998, former RNE 2003, Sheridan 2010, Sheridan 2011 as specially worthy of conservation.

The argument that visitors will not be able to see the subdivision from Ancanthe Park because of a planting of trees is completely misleading. It is not unreasonable (in our view) to expect that modern urban residential development will follow on the subdivided land parcel. From time immemorial, this area has not had urban residential development. The degree of land use change therefore will be very significant. As it is, in its natural state, the site dates back to colonial times and is the last vestige of the natural landscape and the last link to Mount Wellington, intended by Lady Franklin as a backdrop to the Museum.

If the cultural landscape can be protected, the following alternative suggestions (a few of many options) to a subdivision would enhance the site for cultural/historical tourism:

- Botanical /Wet-Mixed indigenous forest 'Garden'
- Centre for the Arts in consultation with the Art Society
- University Collaborative Research Centre focussed on Ancanthe and the legacy of the Franklins
- Interpretation Centre/Design Centre incorporating a Café and venue to be hired out for community events and private functions
- Site for a public Sound and Light Show
- The Starting Point for a Franklin Trail extending from Lenah Valley to Macquarie Harbour.

This Proposal incorporates points from a Community Forum held on Sunday 15 April 2012 and from a discussion held at UTAS on 23 May 2012.

The cultural and historical significance of the landscape at 270A Lenah Valley Road

The area which includes Ancanthe Park and the adjacent land at 270A Lenah Valley Rd is extraordinarily rich in history which is of local, state, national and international significance. The cultural significance of this landscape is increasing year by year. The Senior Heritage Officer of HCC says in the *270A Lenah Valley Road Committee Report*:

The Lenah Valley Heritage Review (undertaken for the Council by consultants Ian Terry and Paul Davies in 2003) noted that the suburban development of Lenah Valley followed rural land uses which were dominated by orcharding, particularly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Review also observed that 'at its western extremities Lenah Valley retains a semi-rural character unusual in a capital city close to the city centre.' This landscape character, now quite rare within the city of Hobart is evident in the photograph [on the same page].... (p.20)

The Lenah Valley Heritage Review also identifies two cultural landscapes which demonstrate pre-suburban land use patterns of Lenah Valley and recommends their listing and protection. One of these, identified within the Review as the "Brushy Creek Road Landscape", includes the farmland of No. 270A Lenah Valley Road and adjacent land at 39 Brushy Creek Road..... The allotments identified in this 2003 Lenah Valley Heritage Review as "Brushy Creek Road Landscape" (T13) have not been subdivided or developed since that time [colonial times], and it remains of sufficient historical and aesthetic interest to be worthy of conservation... (p 22)

The existing property provides an important physical and visual connection between Ancanthe and its hinterland. The documentation [of the developer] provided with the application fails to address the cultural heritage issues associated with the proposal. It ignores the 'discretion' which the Council is required to exercise in relation to Schedule F... (p 24)

The location of the Museum and the Ancanthe Estate on the perimeter of the town, within the foothills of Mount Wellington, emphasise the original notion of Lady Jane Franklin to create a small cultural institution within a 'vale of flowers' - Ancanthe. The survival of the semi-rural and bushland setting of the park, with the imposing uninterrupted vista of Mount Wellington beyond contribute to the significance of the place (p. 25).

Bryce Raworth, the Architectural Historian employed by the Saving Ancanthe Action Group, made it clear that for Greek temples, as this is, the setting was an integral part of the temple itself. All Greek temples were placed in areas of natural significance, sometimes, like Delphi, they were adjacent to mountain backdrops with significant local relief. Lady Franklin had travelled in Greece and seen such temples as Delphi, in its natural mountain setting. The setting of a Greek temple is as important as the building itself.

Saving Ancanthe Action Group support the opinion of the Senior Heritage Officer as stated in the 270A Lenah Valley Road Committee Report that:

[t]his subdivision will irretrievably alter the nature of the landscape connection between Ancanthe and the foothills of the mountain beyond...

The proposed subdivision will introduce an intrusive pattern of development between the Ancanthe estate and its mountain backdrop. It will change the present nature of the land

from an open semi-rural orchard and pasture. It will interrupt the visual connection between Ancanthe and the natural landscape beyond, and will envelop the Ancanthe estate in suburbia. The proposal is clearly not in keeping with the present values of Ancanthe Park, and furthermore it will detract from these values by impacting upon the present nature of the surrounding landscaped setting of the park. (p. 26)

The Burra Charter,¹ the Australian ICOMOS Charter for places of cultural significance 1999, is nationally and internationally recognised. It,

sets a standard of practice for those who provide advice, make decisions about, or undertake works to places of cultural significance, including owners, managers and custodians.

Articles 6, 8 and 24 are most relevant to the subject area.

Article 6: The cultural significance of a place and other issues affecting its future are best understood by a sequence of collecting and analysing information before making decisions

Article 8: *Conservation* requires the retention of an appropriate visual *setting* and other relationships that contribute to the *cultural significance* of the place

Article 24: Retention of associations and meanings

and at 24.2: Significant meanings including spiritual values of a place should be respected.

To maximise the integrity of the Lady Franklin Museum within its setting, we need to consider that the setting of Lady Franklin's Museum, as long as we have known it, has always been a natural, soft, open, green, space setting. The landscape changed with orchard use but was still a natural setting, presenting as a more open, agricultural or pasture area. In colonial times, this bucolic setting was considered idyllic.

We propose that HCC facilitate the purchase of this land as a Cultural Landscape and Historic Centre and examine the possibility of establishing a Botanical/ Wet-Mixed indigenous forest 'Garden' at 270A Lenah Valley Road. Such an initiative would then permit timely and appropriate exploration of other options suggested in the vicinity. This would build on the excellent preservation work completed by HCC up to now, create a site unique in the world and encourage cultural/historic tourism at local, national and international levels with an associated generation of income.

This proposal for the site is particularly important with the 175th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of the Museum in March 2017 and the Bicentenary of the Franklins' arrival in 2037. That the Franklins are still the centre of international interest and scholarship is shown by the attached e-petition from Professor Russell Potter, a Franklin expert from Rhode Island College. The story of the Franklins is of international significance and is recognised as such by websites like that of Professor Potter <http://visionsnorth.blogspot.com.au>.

¹ The Burra Charter. The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance. Australia ICOMOS. 2000.

Indigenous wet-mixed flora as a 'Garden'

Lady Franklin's diary and communication between plant collector Ronald Gunn and Sir William Hooker, (by 1841, Director at Kew) indicates that there was an intent by Gunn to establish a botanic garden in this vicinity. Gunn's description indicated that wet gully flora already existed in the area. The Botanic Garden was planned as early as 1838 and started before the Museum as the main focus while the Museum was built later, originally as a Museum for the Arts, but later as a Museum (and library) of the Natural Sciences.

We are advised that the Tasmanian Royal Botanic Gardens are seeking further land for expansion, particularly with a view to the establishment of a wet-mixed forest flora (and understory) that could showcase some of Tasmania's unique understorey flora such as Celery Top pine, Sassafras, Myrtle-Beech and more.

The establishment of Lady Franklin's intended botanical garden would be a wonderful means of celebrating the bicentenary of the Franklins' arrival in the state in 2037, 25 years from now.

The local School has already arranged for plantings in the area. Such a program would invite the support of a number of Community groups: Friends of the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, The Australian Garden History Society, and the Royal Society of Tasmania. There would also be scope to establish a group of community members to care for the future development of Ancanthe, such as a Friends of Ancanthe Group.

Centre for the Arts

The Lady Franklin Gallery provides a link with Regional Arts and Art festivals through the Art Society and the Theatre Royal. In consultation with the Art Society, and in connection with other organisations, it may be possible to develop further festivals for the arts in Tasmania.

Under the auspices of the Art society, in the decline of Adult Education, there could be a role for the Museum in attracting visitors to the site. There are already classes and workshops run through the Art society, but possibly this may be extended. Consideration would need to be given to the toilet and kitchen facilities. Consultation with the Art society could explore further options for development of this area.

There could be a link with TMAG, the Fine Arts School at UTAS and MONA. Lady Franklin's Museum was the first Museum of the Arts and Natural Sciences and paved the way for the TMAG. MONA is building on that, creating collaborative exhibitions of significance. There is a natural connection between the three establishments that might be more fully developed with benefits for all stakeholders.

An immensely important, related, very rich, archival, colonial art legacy was achieved during the time of the Franklins and this possibly developed due to their connections and interest. It is one linked very much to Mount Wellington,² an unrivalled outpouring. It followed John Glover's arrival, blossoming in the early 1840s with the arrival of John Skinner Prout, intimately linking symbolic

² Seen as the south eastern, eastern, north eastern face of the Mountain and its foothills, which includes the Ancanthe land and its surrounds.

meaning of landscape to art. This may be seen in Gwenda Sheridan's Reports to the Wellington Park Management Trust, 2010 *The Historic Landscape Values of Mount Wellington*, especially Vols 1 and 3.

As Louisa Meredith noted,

...a landscape-sketching and water-colour fever was raging with extraordinary vehemence among the usual too placid and apathetic sons and daughters of Tasmania. The infection had been originally brought by Mr Prout, the fame of whose very clever water-colour drawings of the scenery in New South Wales and the celebrity he attained there had prepared for him a glad welcome in Van Diemen's Land; and the exquisite art which he taught and practised so well at once became the fashion *par excellence* [*My Home in Tasmania*. Volume 2 204-205].

Collaborative Research Centre focussed on Ancanthe and the legacy of the Franklins through UTAS

Professor Russell Potter has shown that interest and scholarship about the Franklins and their legacy is sustained and widespread. The Ancanthe site, maintaining its links with the colonial landscape and Dr Scott's days in the 1830s, has drawn attention from significant scholars. There are few sites around the world, connected with the Franklins, extant, as this is. This site is also linked with an outstanding colonial woman, another rarity in our country.

Discussions with academics at UTAS reveal that there is already a hub of national and international scholarship at UTAS based on the Franklins and their legacy, which could provide a platform for establishing a Collaborative Research Centre, across Ancanthe, UTAS and other institutions. We already have three Centres of Excellence in Tasmania associated with areas in which Sir John Franklin made significant contributions: Australian Maritime College, the School of Geosciences and the Antarctic Division. Together the Franklins left a legacy in Polar Exploration (recently topical), Geography, History, Botany, Zoology, Geology, Education, Fine Arts. Jane Franklin Hall proudly attests on its website the debt it owes Lady Franklin, and could be approached for accommodation in the matter of international student exchanges.

Other organisations in Tasmania which could be associated are the Royal Society of Tasmania and TMAG.

Interpretation Centre/Design Centre

While we were collecting signatures for our petition we discovered that local people are very attached to Lady Franklin's Museum and very interested to protect the 'place'. A large proportion of the signatories to the attached petition are from residents in the local area.

However, most people did not know the remarkable story of Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin and their legacy to the people of Tasmania. This is a story well worth telling. Before his arrival here, Sir John had established himself as a hero of naval warfare and geographical exploration and Lady Jane was a woman at least 150 years ahead of her time. Their story incorporates many different aspects which would generate sustained interest at many levels. This site and this story is a cultural and historic asset to the municipality, the state and the nation, but it hasn't been recognised in the wider community with the significance it deserves and its profile needs to be lifted. This site is ideal for

cultural tourism, but has not been fostered as such. There is not much information about the site on the internet, even its location and important factual information are very inadequately presented.

An interpretation centre in the vicinity, would raise the profile of the site and become a hub for visitors undertaking many activities. Interpretation provides a means of presenting the significance of an item or a site, both to visitors, but also to new generations in a community. Interpretation explains cultural and heritage significance. It reveals meanings and values in relation to the historic, scientific, cultural, social, architectural, natural and aesthetic importance of the item or the site, so that there is no danger of the item or place of significance being lost to later generations because its importance is not understood.

<http://www.nationaltrust.com.au/placestovisit/dundullimal/>

<http://icip.icomos.org/ENG/home.html>

Ancanthe Park, with the adjacent colonial landscape, lends itself as a setting for an Interpretation centre in the vicinity. Such a Centre could be a base for many activities, such as events held as part of Heritage festivals, or Arts festivals in conjunction with the Art Society. History walks that were conducted recently showed the great interest in which the local people regard this site. Walks, guided tours and re-enactments have been very popular with the local residents during the efforts of the Saving Ancanthe Action Group to raise the profile of this site, and would be with interstate and overseas visitors. *Her Story* at the Cascades Female Factory, together with tours of the Penitentiary Chapel in Campbell St Hobart, is popular with both locals and visitors and the story of the Franklins would contribute greatly to this kind of event. Such a centre could also incorporate a tourist agency, Library/bookshop, facilities for Exhibitions and meetings. <http://www.hht.net.au/>

In addition, such a centre could double as a place to showcase Tasmanian fine wooden products, furniture, art work, sculpture, and related work (as does the Launceston Design Centre), one which would display quality, beautiful creations. Another outlet like the shop at TMAG could also be incorporated. If it worked in conjunction with a starting point for a Franklin trail (see page 7), it would become an important cultural centre, (walking, interpretation, high class products for sale etc.).

A well-designed Interpretation Centre could also incorporate a quality Café, which would encourage more visitors to the beautiful walks provided by the HCC in the area.

It is possible to create an outstanding complex in the vicinity. Thought just needs to be given to developing the area to support the immense cultural legacy already here. The stories are already available to Aldermen through Gwenda Sheridan's Report to the Wellington Park Management Trust.

Sound and Light Show

In Interpretation Centre might also be a base for a Sound and Light program which could be held at Lady Franklin's Museum. Ancanthe lends itself to a Sound and Light show, such as in South Australia at the Steam Town Heritage Centre at Peterborough <http://www.peterboroughsa.com.au/steamtown.php>, on the Great Ocean Road

<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/about/heritage-week/2011-events/vic/shipwrecked.html> and Sovereign Hill in Victoria <http://www.sovereignhill.com.au/sound-light-show/>, the War Memorial in Canberra <http://www.awm.gov.au/visit/visit-mustsee-anzac.asp>, and sound and light shows on heritage buildings, listed in the Launceston Strategic Tourism Plan http://www.launceston.tas.gov.au/upfiles/lcc/cont/council/community_engagement/strategies_plans_and_reports/draft_launceston_tourism_strategic_plan.pdf

Overseas, such presentations can be seen on the Acropolis, in Rome, and at other key monuments around the world, such as Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Canada <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmQnNsyz6g>.

The rollicking tales of derring-do which were part of the Franklins' lives are very appropriate for presenting in such a manner.

Numbers could be limited by booking and sound could be minimised by the provision of headsets. As this would be an outdoor evening activity, presentations would be limited From Christmas to Easter, in a similar way to the drama presented in the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens.

Franklin Trail

An Interpretation Centre would be an excellent starting place for walkers of a Franklin Trail.

In colonial times the area beside Ancanthe was the starting place for people, including Lady Franklin, to climb the mountain. Through such a venture, visitors could to be encouraged to return to the state or to stay for longer periods. The Heysen trail in South Australia performs this function in that state. http://www.heysentrail.asn.au/heysen_trail/ The N.S.W.P.S. trail down the Blue Mountains from Mount York, highlights the first road down the mountains to Hartley Valley below. Similarly the Great North Road, north of Wiseman's Ferry has been developed as a walking trail.

Given the exploration the Franklins did in the state, in particular to the south-west, perhaps there could be a Franklin Trail established, starting at Ancanthe. Well-known Trackmaker, John Hughes, <http://www.abc.net.au/stateline/tas/content/2006/s2696677.htm> says that it is feasible to join tracks many of which are already in existence, starting at the Lenah Valley track. The trail could join Bob Brown's proposed track going over the Snowy Ranges to the Styx (the Wellington Ranges Walk). From the Styx, a Franklin Trail could then extend to Derwent Bridge and Lake St Clair, without too much difficulty or expense. From Lake St Clair, it could loosely follow the Franklins' trail to Macquarie Harbour, following tracks already there. Walkers could be picked up by a boat along the Gordon River and could join up with the steam train to Queenstown. Appendix 1 on page 9 gives more detail of the route suggested by John Hughes and suggestions of connections or side tracks to historical sites.

A walk could start at an Interpretation Centre and be linked to others in the Wellington Range. From the top of the mountain, this trail could link with present tracks to Judbury, the Styx Valley, Weld and Upper Florentine. In the future, a Franklin Trail could be linked to specific areas in New Norfolk, where the Franklins resided at Turriff Lodge away from the capital and its faction-fighting. Willow Court, which has just won funding for renovation from the Federal Government, could be incorporated into a cultural walk. A number of trees from the Government House at Turriff Lodge

are still alive there. The Franklins went there after they were relieved of command by Eardley-Wilmot and before they returned to London, where Sir John fought to resolve the humiliation he felt at his dismissal as Lieutenant-Governor because of the faction-fighting of the day, by volunteering to command his ill-fated third and last trip to find the North-West Passage, although he was too old.

The Franklins began their trek into the South-West at Lake St Clair. *The South West Book*, published by the Australian Conservation Foundation in 1978, notes that a party of six retraced the steps of the Franklins' expedition to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Tasmania. John Hughes has walked this route himself and can speak from experience.

Once at Lake St Clair, there could be a connection with the Overland Trail, creating a walk of national and even international significance.

Lady Franklin started the trip to the South-west by a boat trip to New Norfolk, so this might be an alternative first leg.

In addition to a Trail, there could also be a Franklin Drive, from Ancanthe to Macquarie Harbour, which might shadow the trail with side roads and points of interpretation, into significant areas.

We understand that the HCC is attempting to reduce rates, which is laudable.

However, the request of the petitioners is asking for the Council to consider facilitating the purchase of the land. There is also other land in Kalang Ave, which we understand is surplus to Council requirements, which could be sold to support the purchase of this culturally significant site.

We are also aware the Federal Funding has been received for developing Interpretation facilities at the Cascades Female Factory, for a new Arts Centre in the Glenorchy municipality and for the restoration of Willow Court in New Norfolk.

We also understand municipalities are looking for way to work together for their mutual advantage and this would provide such a mutual purpose.

This proposal links the purchase of the land with cultural development and tourism because Heritage conservation and Heritage-led tourism can be a catalyst for improving social economic and environmental outcomes for the local and wider communities. As it is, this is a major heritage site, with clear tourism potential. We believe that a feasibility study would show sustainable, long-term heritage benefits, together with benefit and enjoyment to the whole community. Supporting this initiative would show innovation and leadership, instead of allowing an ordinary subdivision to desecrate this extraordinary site.

We thank you for your consideration of this submission

Terry Sussmilch	Gwenda Sheridan	Dr Alison Alexander	Dr Stewart Williams
Meghan Mann-Leonard	Martin Gibson	Sam Leitch	Grace Sussmilch

and the wider Saving Ancanthe Support Group

Appendix 1

Franklin Trail from Lenah Valley to Macquarie Harbour

Lenah Valley Track

Zig-Zag Track

Top of Mount Wellington (An alternative first leg might be a boat trip to New Norfolk)

Proposed Track from the Top of Mount Wellington to the Styx Valley

Side-track from Collin's Cap to New Norfolk

Gordonvale

Florentine Valley

Wyld's Crag

New Track on Forestry Land down to the Derwent River

Wayatinah

Butler's Gorge

Lake St Clair and link to Overland Track

Mt Arrowsmith

Frenchman's Cap Track

Old Hydro Fincham Track

Possible Flying Fox across the Franklin River

Crotty's Road

Kelly's Basin

Apart from historical sites such as New Norfolk, sites such as Adamsfield, Wayatinah, Gordonvale and Pillinger could be included.