Real *to* Reel

Newsletter of Oral History Tasmania Inc.

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NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE – Jill Cassidy

Oral History workshop 26 May
A final reminder that this year's Oral History workshop will be held in Launceston on Saturday 26 May. Details and registration form are available on page 11. Please tell anyone you feel may be interested.

Seminar and AGM 4 August
The program for our seminar, held in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting, has now been finalised. Anthony Black, Librarian with the State Library and Archive Service, will talk about 'Glimpses: stories from the Tasmanian Archives', a pilot project that combined oral histories with archival records such as photographs, letters and films, and explain how you too can use State Library resources to create your own Tasmanian Oral History films. Interviewees included a former driver with the State Library Bookmobile and a descendant of pioneering families from the Huon Valley.

Dr Tony McCormack will detail some of the information he has gleaned from interviewing farmers in 'Stories of farmers in the Evandale municipality', highlighting the changes in farming techniques over the past 100 years. Finally, Rena Henderson will introduce us to a remarkable career in 'Bunny Busting: The Life of Doug Brooks'. After leaving school Doug Brooks worked full-time as a rabbit trapper, before being employed in rabbit and other feral animal control at the Mount Pleasant Laboratories in Launceston. All speakers will include oral history excerpts or film in their presentations.

More details will be sent later in the year but please put this date in your diaries now.

National conference 2019
Owing to changes in the Oral History Queensland committee, the 2019 national conference will now probably be held in Brisbane. Further details will be forthcoming later this year.

Informal meetings
Robert Thompson would like to repeat his invitation to meet other members in the south to talk about their projects and interests in a quiet facility. This could be in the evening to suit people who work in the daytime. He can be contacted on 0413 701 291.

To facilitate such meetings in the future, the new renewal of membership form will allow people to indicate whether they are happy for their email address to be provided to other members on such occasions.

ONE HELL OF AN INFERNO: ORAL HISTORY AND THE 1967 TASMANIAN BUSHFIRES

by Ian Terry

Senior Curator, Cultural Heritage, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (now retired)

Introduction

On 7 February 1967 bushfires engulfed south-eastern Tasmania in an inferno that killed 64 people and caused extensive damage. In its commemorative exhibition on the Black Tuesday fires the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery used oral history extensively to elicit a range of personal stories of the day. Seventeen Tasmanians shared their experiences on video with me to create a powerful archive of moving testimony. The museum screened edited sequences of the interviews throughout the exhibition to provide visitors with an opportunity to engage with the personal impact of fires on a deeply emotional level. In this paper the author shares how this award-winning exhibition was developed and how videoed oral history played a critical role in this development.

* * *

Overall gallery view. *Ian Terry photograph*

In mid-2015, following the opening of the World War 1 exhibition, *The Suspense is Awful: Tasmania and the Great War*, curators at Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) turned their thoughts to the upcoming 50th anniversary of the catastrophic Black Tuesday bushfires which killed 64 people in south eastern Tasmania and permanently affected the lives of thousands of others.[1] Other organisations in southern Tasmania had also begun to explore ways to commemorate the disaster. The Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) undertook a co-ordinating role in the commemorative planning in the region with Lesley King from the Community Education Unit taking the lead. Lesley also co-ordinated the TFS's own project which focussed on gathering personal stories and memories of Black Tuesday via a portable video booth which was installed at various festivals around Tasmania as well as libraries, shopping centres and banks.[2]

At the outset it is important to provide some background. Black Tuesday occurred on 7 February 1967 when, after a wet spring and a warm, dry summer, 110 separate fires converged into a series of infernos that engulfed south-eastern Tasmania and became the state's most catastrophic natural disaster. Within a few short hours the bushfires had burnt 653 000 acres of land, including wide swathes of forest, farmland and urban areas.[3] Fourteen hundred homes and other buildings were destroyed, 64 000 farm animals perished

[1] The official death toll has been 62. Research undertaken by Ian Terry and Roger McNeice has revealed that 64 people died as a direct result of the bushfires on 7 February 1967. This figure is now becoming more widely accepted.
[2] See 'Firestorm 50 Years On: A Community Storytelling Project', in *Community Education Newsletter*, Issue 4, November 2015, p. 1. https://www.bushfirereadyneighbourhoods.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/newsletter/pdf/tfs_brn_newsletter_edition_4_20.11.15.pdf. See also Tasmanian Fire Service '67 Bushfires Storymap – www.67bushfires.fire.tas.gov.au
[3] *Tasmanian Year Book 1968*, pp. 590-591.

and 900 people were injured. Some towns were almost wiped out, leaving thousands homeless. Hobart's city centre was threatened. The economic cost was assessed at $40 million in 1967 terms.[4]

The museum was committed to commemorate this anniversary and partnered with the TFS to undertake a wide-ranging project. A significant difficulty arose from the scarcity of objects related to Black Tuesday in the museum's collection. Its collection included a group of melted coins mounted on a myrtle board which had been retrieved from a house at Fern Tree, a blackened server, also from Fern Tree, some newspapers and letters, as well as files and reports from the Postmaster-General's Department on the disaster and its recovery. This provided little on which to base a proposed three gallery exhibition. However, a tea-room conversation suggested a direction. A colleague, six months old in February 1967, recounted her family survival story which related that they were only able to save her mother's old Singer sewing machine when their Allens Rivulet home was gutted. The sewing machine became a symbol of the family's survival and resilience as they rebuilt their lives. The constant hum of the sewing machine as her mother Marie sewed everything the family needed – clothes, linen and even toys – marked my colleague's childhood.[5] Her mother still owned the machine and would be willing to lend it for display. After further discussion, Marie and her husband Bryan agreed to be interviewed for the exhibition, providing their personal testimony of a day they remained traumatised by. Their story was compelling – moving and harrowing in equal measure, but also uplifting in its revelation of the journey of an ordinary working class family in the aftermath of calamity. It also gave Marie and Bryan an opportunity to express long-withheld feelings about Black Tuesday, providing a cathartic and healing process.[6]

Rebuilding with curtain, sewing machine and Le Creuset saucepan all mentioned in the text. *Ian Terry photograph*

From this point the museum determined that the exhibition would rely on personal testimony to tell the story of Black Tuesday. The exhibition would become a conduit for Tasmanians to tell visitors of their experiences, to invite them into their lives and memories of that day. In this way a conversation would be started as people reflected on their lives, survival and rebuilding. This formula was not unique. The TFS's '67 Bushfires Storymap project also recorded personal testimony from more than 100 people who sat in its video booth as it toured festivals, libraries, halls and local businesses around the state.[7] Fire historian Roger McNeice similarly relied on dozens of interviews for his sweeping history of bushfire in Tasmania, *Flames of Fear*.[8]

The museum had neither the time nor the resources to interview so many people. It was also important that interviews be technically sound as we wanted them to drive the exhibition. Screens would be placed around the gallery so visitors could watch the stories as they unfolded. By the time funding was secured for the exhibition from the Tasmanian Community Fund only five months remained for it to be developed,

[4] *Companion to Tasmanian History* - http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/B/Bushfires%201967.htm, viewed 9 October 2017.
[5] Mary Bracken, pers comm, exact date not recorded – August 2015.
[6] TMAG, Interview with Marie and Bryan Horton, 1 December 2015 – R2015.38 Mary Bracken, pers comm, 21 November 2017.
[7] http://www.bushfirereadyneighbourhoods.tas.gov.au/67-bushfires-storymap
[8] Roger McNeice, 2017, *Flames of Fear: a photographic and documentary history of the fear and devastation caused by bushfires in Tasmania since 1820*, Wellington Bridge Press, Hobart.

researched and installed prior to its projected opening in mid-December 2016.[9] The museum is very grateful to both the Tasmania Fire Service and Roger McNeice for their exceptional assistance in identifying potential interviewees and sharing their research into Black Tuesday, and to the Tasmanian Community Fund for providing funding.

Following considerable discussion the exhibition team divided the exhibition into three distinct galleries. The first explored the social history and personal experience of Black Tuesday, the second explored Tasmania's fire ecology and why the island's south east is particularly vulnerable to catastrophic bushfire, while the third completed the exhibition with a photographic essay on Tasmania's tall eucalypt forests, a forest type that was particularly hard hit in 1967. This paper will focus on the first gallery and the way personal testimony was used in it.

There are many people still living in south-eastern Tasmania with direct experience of and vivid memories of Black Tuesday. For many, these memories remain quite traumatic. The experience of interviewing Marie and Bryan Horton revealed that the exhibition could become part of a community catharsis. It would enable people to tell their stories of survival and resilience, or to visit the exhibition and relive and relate their own past experiences to family members. The exhibition indeed was extraordinary for the cross-generational nature of its visitation as visitors told their stories to their children and grandchildren in the galleries.

Over a period of fifteen weeks from June 2016 I interviewed thirteen Tasmanians about their 1967 fire experiences. We interviewed another two Tasmanian Aboriginal men who did not experience Black Tuesday but who were knowledgeable about traditional Aboriginal burning and land management practices. Their interviews were significant components of the gallery exploring fire ecology. The museum was also fortunate to have access to the video stories collected by the Tasmanian Fire Service video booth. The TFS video stories provided me with some interesting stories and leads. With the help of the TFS, I contacted three of the story-tellers and re-interviewed them. This was largely because of the poor vision or sound quality which arose from the nature of the video booth and its locations. Substantial ambient noise due to the location of the booth (for example, AgFest, the Taste of Tasmania and the Cygnet Folk Festival) made it difficult to use them for display. Some tellers, nervous about recounting their stories, read out prepared scripts and did not engage the viewer with their voice or face. In reinterviewing these three Tasmanians our aim was to provide them with the best opportunity to connect with visitors. We did use three videos as provided by the TFS because of the intense emotion displayed in the original recording. One of these, in particular, was very marginal in its audio quality but we decided that the story-teller's emotion and poeticism would be impossible to recapture in a second interview. The museum's technician worked long hours to clean the audio and improve its quality to make it usable.[10]

Through the generosity of the Foundation of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery[11] the museum has been able to acquire professional quality recording equipment. These include a Canon Professional XA20 video camera and a Zoom H6 digital recorder with Røde shotgun and lavalier microphones. Sadly the operator, me, sometimes let the equipment down, reinforcing the importance of knowing your equipment and being practised in using it before embarking on a project.

For exhibition purposes the decision to use video was critical. Visitors engage with the human face, particularly one that shows great emotion. In oral history there is a recognised trajectory from transcript to audio with the former unable to adequately recapture the nuance of the spoken word, 'the texture and sound of speech'.[12] We wanted to capture more – the raised eyebrow, the sudden stillness or half-smile, the coming

[9] Funding for the exhibition was confirmed in late June 2016.
[10] Interview with Julie Fisher (Martin) – see www.67bushfires.fire.tas.gov.au.
[11] The Foundation of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, the museum's main fundraising body, is comprised of community-minded supporters who help through giving and philanthropy. Since the 1980s the Foundation has raised more than $6mil to support acquisitions and programs.
[12] Anisa Puri and Alistair Thomson (eds), 2017, *Australian Lives: an Intimate History*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, pp. xii-xiii.

of tears and the uncomfortable fidgeting.[13] Black Tuesday is an emotional story and we sought to give visitors a close-up view of that emotion.

This emotional range was particularly well captured in the interview with Rosie Reid. Rosie was a young pre-school teacher at Barclay Kindergarten, which was located in Bathurst Street in 1967. On that stiflingly hot afternoon she had a class of five three-year-olds, on their first day ever of school. Rosie decided to take the children to the museum, reasoning that it would be cooler than their classroom. They took a taxi to the museum and she requested that it return at 2.30 to enable her to return her charges to school in plenty of time for the 3 o'clock pick up. Rosie's face became visibly pained and anxious as she remembered leaving the museum to find not a waiting taxi, but empty streets with 'smuts and cinders' raining down from the red sky and the distant sound of sirens. With sighs and silences she recounted walking the children, eyes closed and holding hands, through the centre of Hobart back to Bathurst Street, knowing that they would be late returning and concerned that she had done the wrong thing. As she recounted the children's return to the relieved arms of their mothers, Rosie breathed a deep sigh and collapsed with relief, remembering her feeling that everyone was safe and her confusion of not knowing what was happening.[14] Rosie's experience of reliving this afternoon in the interview was palpable for visitors. The interview, the second collected for the exhibition, confirmed our commitment to using personal testimony as the exhibition driver.

The interviews ranged from about 15 minutes in length to more than an hour, most of them at the longer end. We felt that it was important to obtain a wide spread of interviews to capture some of the variety of experiences people had on Black Tuesday. The interviews revealed the stories of people who were children at the time of the fires, the experiences of emergency services personnel,[15] a young news photographer who went on to a glittering international career[16], stories of resilience and rebuilding, the memory of a young mother walking into the safety of the sea with her two young children,[17] the anxiety of a mariner sailing through impenetrable smoke down the coast of Tasmania not knowing whether or not his young family had safely evacuated the fire at Mt Nelson.[18]

The most emotional of these interviews was a short one with Julie Barnes.[19] Black Tuesday was Julie's first day of high school. Her beloved step-father farewelled her from their Chigwell home in the morning, but was trapped by the fires while saving some horses and suffered burns to more than 80% of his body. He was evacuated to hospital in Melbourne but did not recover from his burns and died eight days later. Julie did not see her father again after his morning farewell and still feels the trauma of her loss and its continuing impact on her life. The interview raised uncomfortable questions to me as a museum curator preparing an exhibition. While it provided deeply emotional and heart-rending material for screening I was very aware of the potential for its potential to become a sensationalised and even voyeuristic element of the display. Julie and I discussed this but she was very keen for it to be screened as she had a message she wanted to convey – that is, to think of the potential impacts before doing anything heroic in an emergency. She also observed that the interview had a very positive effect on her grief process both at the time and subsequently during the exhibition.[20]

While the primary purpose for the museum's fire interviews was for the exhibition they remain archived in the museum's oral history collection and are available for future researchers. Although most of TMAG's oral histories are collected for specific exhibitions they form part of the museum's history collection and will provide a significant resource for future researchers and Tasmanians. By always keeping the exhibition uppermost in my mind, the questions I asked were directed towards the twin goals of obtaining accurate

[13] See review of *Australian Lives: an Intimate History* by Michael Piggott at http://honesthistory.net.au/wp/the-generations-of-us-australian-lives-review-of-puri-and-thomson-ed/.
[14] Interview with Rosie Reid, 14 June 2016. TMAG collection, R2016.12.
[15] Interviews with police officer Russ Ames, 3 August 2016. TMAG collection, R2016.20; fireman Brian Baker, 8 August 2016. TMAG, R2016.21; nurse Philippa Brettingham-Moore, 9 August 2016. TMAG collection, R2016.24; and Hydro linesman Rodney Hurst, 25 August 2016. TMAG collection, R2016.28.
[16] Interview with David Brill, 9 September 2016. TMAG collection, R2016.32.
[17] Interview with Mary Read, 26 July 2016. TMAG collection, R2016.19.
[18] Interview with Digby Longhurst, 9 August 2016. TMAG collection, R2016.22.
[19] Interview with Julie Barnes, 21 September 2016. TMAG collection, R2016.35.
[20] Julie Barnes pers comm, September 2016, March 2017 – exact dates not recorded.

testimony and material that will work well on display; testimony that can be edited to short clips to succinctly and engagingly tell important stories.

Once we had decided to use video interviews we had to consider the best way to display them within a tight budget. After a long-term and long-suffering volunteer transcribed each interview, I created time-coded scripts to guide the film editors that TMAG contracted to cut the final sequences of two to four minutes each. We inserted text screens and still photographs into the clips to add interest and bridge gaps in the stories told.

The museum used oral history material collected in two ways. Three of the edited interviews were screened in one of three theatrettes which had been installed at the rear of the three galleries for the previous exhibition and retained. The others were shown on thematically-linked small screens located within the main gallery space. In the past the museum has provided headphones to visitors but we felt that this strategy had significant limitations. By preventing more than one or two visitors to view a screen at the same time it reduced the social aspect of viewing an exhibition. This was a particularly important consideration in this exhibition where the opportunity to share stories and experiences had been identified as critical. The alternative of having voices from four screens scattered around the gallery loud enough to be heard easily by all visitors without creating a tower of Babel seemed unfeasible until we decided to keep the sound fairly low and use subtitles. This worked well and had the unexpected advantage of giving a great intimacy to the video displays as visitors closed in to view them. It also helped the museum to comply with its accessibility requirements and aspirations.

The oral testimony combined with research of letters and journals contributed directly to the design of the exhibition. Many interviewees described how dark it became on the afternoon of Black Tuesday, likening it to night.[21] In response we decided to keep the galleries painted a dark blue to create that foreboding atmosphere of encroaching dark, with splashes of bright orange as described to me so often. In addition the theatrette at the rear of the gallery was converted into a space where visitors could gain an inkling of what it is like to experience catastrophic bushfire. Original black and white footage shot on Black Tuesday by David Brill, a young unknown ABC news cinematographer, was colourised and projected onto a wall with a soundtrack of the roar of raging wind and bushfire played through the audio system. Inserted into the footage were interviews with David Brill, now an internationally renowned cameraman, mariner Digby Longhurst and immigrant mother, Mary Read. David spoke about how he was torn between doing his job filming the unfolding disaster and wanting to help people trying to save their homes.[22] Digby recounted sailing through thick smoke down the Tasmanian coast, wondering whether his young family in Mt Nelson were safe while Mary movingly recalled wading deep into the water at Birches Bay with her two pre-school children, wondering all the while whether she would ever see her husband again as he fought to save their farm.[23] The theatrette proved to be very effective and many visitors reported feeling intense emotions while viewing the footage, particularly if they had experienced bush fire themselves.

So, what were the experiences of the interviewees, experiences that made the exhibition such an emotional and critical success?[24] Tasmanians who were children in 1967 retain vivid memories of the day and its aftermath. Julie Martin, a ten-year-old girl at Goodwood Primary School, remembered the sky which became a 'great big red shape, dark, black … the sun just seemed to get dim ... it just got worse and worse, darker and darker.' Her teacher told her class to crawl under their desks, a memory seared into Julie's memory:

> We had to scramble. I remember everyone was just so tiny and we just had to get under our desks and we just had to wait, wait and wait and wait. And we just waited. I remember it being difficult to breathe. The smoke was

[21] See, for example, interviews with Julie Martin and Rodney Hurst, op cit, and letter from Eric Stock to Bob and Sylvia Hurder, 17 February 1967 – Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery collection, R2008.1.
[22] Interview with David Brill, op cit.
[23] Interview with Digby Longhurst, op cit; Interview with Mary Read, 26 July 2016 – Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery collection, R2016.19.
[24] *One Hell of an Inferno: the 1967 Tasmanian Bushfires* won the Level 2 (budget of $20,000-$150,000) Temporary or Travelling Exhibition national award at the 2017 Museums and Galleries National Awards – see https://www.museumsaustralia.org.au/magna-2017-winners

everywhere … It's so long ago. I just remember the sky. The black sky and the sun going, and the redness and the smoke and being afraid and being really tiny, and under my desk.[25]

Julie's memories also showed how oral history can contribute to the exhibition design. The stories of Tasmanian's childhood memories were displayed on a screen fixed inside a 1960s era timber school desk that the museum purchased second-hand for the exhibition.

For five-year-old Phil Supplice, the fire had lasting impact. He and his mother suffered significant burns while running through the fire from their trapped car to safety at Electrona and Phil became the youngest patient in the Royal Hobart Hospital's burns unit. He recalled the roar of the fire as they ran, then being taken from Snug Area School to hospital laid out in the back 'of some gentleman's station wagon'. While in hospital Phil was photographed with the Governor-General on the front page of the *Mercury*. For him his mother, widowed in late 1966, was the real hero, both in 1967 and during his childhood.[26] Lindsay White, a high school student at Sorell High School, recalled a strange incident that has entered the local lore. Sole Bros Wirths Circus was in Sorell, camped on the town oval and preparing for its shows. As the fire bore down on the town from the Penna Hills, the school's teachers took the children to safety on the Causeway to Midway Point. Like many other Sorell children, Lindsay remembers that they shared this refuge with the circus animals, albeit separated by around two hundred metres. 'The kids thought it was pretty special,' he told me, 'because the lions were roaring, the elephants were roaring and the tigers and everything was going off their heads because of what was happening.'[27]

School desk with video screen. *Ian Terry photograph*

Eleven-year-old Gintaras Kantvilas was sent home from school and helped his mother and sister save their Strickland Avenue home, dousing spot fires using water from a line of buckets he had filled up and hessian sacks as beaters. As houses around them were destroyed Gintaras yelled to his mother that she should save the family's bank books. His mother instead laid out his father's suit and her children's school uniforms. In the aftermath, their house safe and its saviours fire-blackened they ate water melon as they tried to forget the day. For Gintaras, the event taught him the value of self-reliance, a lesson he has carried with him throughout his life.[28]

While children hid under desks, saved their homes and dodged terrified circus animals, Hobart's emergency services personnel did their best to contain the growing natural disaster. Young police officer Russ Ames found himself having to allay everyone else's fears and solve their problems in circumstances for which he had been singularly untrained. Meanwhile he wondered whether his own wife and children at Rosetta were being looked after by other emergency workers. 'You can't do anything for your own people,' he told me, 'You're hoping that somebody's doing something for them.' Police officers made decisions on the run, some later queried by finance controllers at head office, but supported by the Police Commissioner who

[25] Interview with Julie Martin (Fisher), op cit.
[26] Interview with Phil Supplice, 6 September 2016 - Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery collection, R2016.31.
[27] Interview with Lindsay White, 31 August 2016 - Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery collection, R2016.30.
[28] Interview with Gintaras Kantvilas, 19 August 2016 - Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery collection, R2016.13.

understood their predicament.[29] Fireman Brian Baker knew when he arrived at work that, 'It was going to be one of those days … it just built up and built up'. Later, he led his crew from door to door in South Hobart evacuating sometimes-reluctant householders, then watched as the historic Cascade Brewery was gutted. He recalled that, 'You was almost blind … because of the amount of soot and dust that came – you was just sort of groping in the dark'. Fortunately the wind suddenly dropped late in the day – otherwise Brian had little doubt that Hobart's CBD would have burnt. Although retired for many years every summer Brian thinks of the firefighters who have 'to go out there and get stuck into it … it can be a risky business'.[30]

Rod Hurst was working as a Hydro-Electric Commission linesman on Black Tuesday. He and his crew targeted houses that were alight and disconnected the power by placing ladders against the power poles outside, climbing up and cutting the lines. One such house, within sight of his own home, burned down in minutes.

> By the time we got down, put the ladder back on the panel van, turned the van around, the house had gone. There wasn't anything left. That was it, you know, you don't hang about … we tried for a half of minute, probably, to put out the fire. And then you know that you're beaten so get out of it.

Rod finally returned home about midnight, had a long bath and wondered, 'What was all that about?' He was chilled at the extent of the destruction he witnessed as he drove to work the next morning.[31]

Grief came in many forms. We have already seen how Julie Barnes's life was shattered by her father's death. Other people found the destruction of property, livestock and lifestyles almost as disturbing and continue to feel that impact fifty years later. Betty Burke, recording her thoughts for the TFS, was visibly shaken as she recounted the bus ride home from Campania District High School, passing through hills burnt black and littered with dead sheep, cattle and kangaroos, watching farmers as they shot badly-injured stock. Arriving in Colebrook she found:

> the houses were all burnt, the hotel, post office was all gone … it was horrific. For days we had the smell of burnt animals through the town and we'd lost the lovely lady, Miss Evans … [she] was burnt in the house, unable to get away from the raging fire. Our town really never ever recovered from this terrible day fifty years ago.[32]

We felt that it was important to complete visitors' journeys through Black Tuesday with stories of resilience and recovery. Torquil Canning, five years old in 1967, lived with his family in Fern Tree. Their home was destroyed with the only object surviving being an enamelled Le Creuset saucepan, left on the stove with the evening's curried dinner in it when his mother was forced to suddenly abandon the house. Torquil still owns and uses the saucepan which he lent to the museum for display during the exhibition. While many families left Fern Tree after the fire his parents decided to remain and rebuild a house on the same site. They took the opportunity to contract Melbourne architect David McGlashan to design a replacement for the old weatherboard residence. Torquil thought that rebuilding on the site was important, preventing the feeling of loss he senses in other Fern Tree families who left the mountainside suburb:

> I think rebuilding on the same site was quite important. You know, people I've spoken to who moved out of Fern Tree, in some ways, they experienced quite a profound sense of loss from their childhood home, because they just moved out and didn't go back. And so that connection was lost. So rebuilding on the original site was probably quite a good thing I think. Yes.[33]

Robert Vincent told the TFS about losing the home in which he grew up in Sandy Bay. This was the closest home to the Hobart GPO to be destroyed. Robert, a recently graduated architect, designed a new house for his parents on the site, a home built using recycled bricks from the original dwelling and featuring new curtains woven by his mother as part of her personal resolution of the crisis.[34] As with the Canning's new home, the Vincent residence remained in family ownership until recently and it retained a deep meaning borne out of the family experience of destruction and renewal. Robert lent the curtains to the museum for the exhibition.

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[29] Interview with Russ Ames, op cit.
[30] Interview with Brian Baker, op cit.
[31] Interview with Rod Hurst, op cit.
[32] Interview with Betty Burke – see www.67bushfires.fire.tas.gov.au.
[33] Interview with Torquil Canning, 25 August 2016. Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery collection, R2016.29.
[34] Interview with Robert Vincent – see www.67bushfires.fire.tas.gov.au

The few stories that the museum collected and displayed in the exhibition are, of course, just a few of the many thousands of memories Tasmanians have of Black Tuesday and its aftermath. As people grow older and pass away the stories also lose impact and pass out of the community memory. Projects such as the Tasmania Fire Service's Story Map and the museum's oral history collection and exhibition were important steps on the road to retain those memories and stories for future generations of Tasmanians. They provided an opportunity for people to tell of their experiences with many reporting that although an intensely emotional and often difficult act, recording what happened to them helped the healing process that continues fifty years after Black Tuesday.

Ian Terry's email address is ianterry@netspace.net.au

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Australian Lives - an online oral history resource for Australian history teaching
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3pXD_PIaxIE&feature=youtu.be

In this video Alistair Thomson (Professor of History, Monash University) introduces an extraordinary new resource for school and university teaching in Australian history and Australian studies. *The Australian Lives* ebook curates access into one of Australia's largest online oral history collections, so that students can read - and listen - to 50 Australians born between 1920 and 1989 talking about their personal histories across the past century, in every corner of the country, from childhood through to old age, and ranging across themes such as migration, faith, place, work, school, play, family, love, sex and politics.

A new type of oral history book - Australian Lives
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJ3Z2PWcB4Y&feature=youtu.be

In this video oral historian Alistair Thomson introduces you to the *Australian Lives* ebook, which enables readers to be listeners to the hundreds of oral history extracts in the book, and which curates access into one of Australia's largest online oral history collections. Al demonstrates the extraordinary technology that made the book possible and which brings oral histories alive on the page and in the archive.

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Do you have a project to tell us about?

We are always looking for items for the newsletter, anything 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.

ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

10.00 am – 4.45 pm, Saturday 26 May 2018. St Johns Parish Centre, St Johns Church, Launceston
(to the right of the main church entrance)

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 (a phone or tablet is okay for practice).

✂……

ORAL HISTORY TASMANIA Inc. WORKSHOP REGISTRATION
ABN 19264 496 176

For catering purposes registration must be received by **Wednesday 23 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

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_____

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
Correspondence secretary:	Leonie Prevost
Web manager:	Jen Thompson
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