

**The Colonial Gardens  
Of  
Port Arthur**

**Landscape, Culture & Conservation at a Penal Settlement**

**1830 -1990**

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**Revised 1999**

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## Background

The Colonial Gardens of Port Arthur study was commissioned in 1983 by the then Port Arthur Management & Development Authority (1979-1986), generally known as the 'Port Arthur Conservation Project' (PACP). A Federal and State funded concept, the PACP was initiated by a number of people including Tasmania's Department of Parks & Wildlife, then responsible for Port Arthur and Point Puer historic sites.

I was the historian in a team of three commissioned to study the gardens of Port Arthur, and in 1984 became PACP site historian, continuing under the Port Arthur Management Authority (PAMA) from its inception in 1987 until 1991.

The Colonial Gardens study was intended as a resource for the other two team members, 19th century plant specialist, Penny Bruce-Ralph, who identified surviving plants on site, and landscape architect Lester Tropman whose final report recommended procedures for rehabilitating the gardens.

With only three months, the study concentrated on the private gardens of the site, rather than the public, food-production gardens which are documented in the colonial records. These have physically vanished from the site but surrounded the Model Prison and Farm at Port Arthur, with an extensive vegetable garden at Garden Point, now a caravan park.<sup>1</sup>

Following completion of the report, a two day seminar was held at Port Arthur by the Australian Garden History Society, attended by about 50 people.<sup>2</sup> According to the Mercury newspaper, 'Highlights of the program were addresses by plant consultant Penny Grant (sic. i.e. Ralph), architect Clive Lucas and historian Peter MacFie.'<sup>3</sup>

The study concludes with a series of appendices, extracted from the first plant lists published in the annual reports of the Royal Society from 1857.

The study is reproduced with a new introduction, and an analysis of the site as an historical landscape.

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<sup>1</sup>In 1926 the human ploughing scenes for *The Term of His Natural Life* were filmed there.

<sup>2</sup>Not 500 as reported!

<sup>3</sup>Mercury 2/4/1984 p11. Other who spoke were Lester Tropman and Kathy Purtscher.

## Port Arthur as a Cultural Setting

*Decisions and choices about gardens are not made in a vacuum.*

*They are culturally mediated.<sup>4</sup>*

The Colonial Gardens of Port Arthur study tried to identify the social and cultural milieu in which an interest in decorative or recreational gardens operated. As the report identifies, recreational gardens were part of the social and intellectual life of officers and their wives, an interest shared across colonial society and Empire. The records are to be found in often obscure private holdings, government archives and in the all-too-brief records of the Royal Society of Tasmania, responsible for the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens of Hobart.

Australian society was not strictly classed based as British society; officers, administrators and settlers were as much ‘rejects’ from British society as those forcibly transported. But emigrants felt their absence from ‘Home’ where isolation increased their need to be aware of latest social and intellectual pursuits. Knowledge and interest in plants was across the spectrum, from the military to Quakers to visiting collectors to transportees with particular skills, including the many unsung gardeners who used their skill to establish the recreational and productive gardens at Port Arthur and around private homes in town and country.

Early plant enthusiasts from Jane Franklin to Port Arthur commandants Booth and Champ used native as well as exotic plants as a botanical ‘playground’ in which to experiment, mixing the types in public and private gardens. These liberal attitudes were encouraged by Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin, the next governor Eardley Wilmot and recommended by Hobart Town’s early commercial horticulturist Daniel Bunce. He had taken over Lightfoot’s Denmark Hill Nursery in New Town Road.<sup>5</sup> In Bunce’s 1837 Gardener’s Manual he suggested that ‘A gentleman in Hobart Town may easily form a very handsome shrubbery of native plants.... intermingled with a few lilacs, honeysuckles and other British shrubs.’<sup>6</sup>

The enthusiasm was two way; the Quaker James Backhouse sent specimens of native plants to his family’s commercial nursery at York while receiving seeds of European plants.<sup>7</sup>

Lady Jane Franklin played a central role in many aspects of early Tasmanian cultural life, including an interest in and dissemination of plant material. When she visited Port Arthur in

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<sup>4</sup>Seddons, George Landprints, Reflections on Place & Landscape, CUP, 1998. p176.

<sup>5</sup>author’ records.

<sup>6</sup> Colonial Gardens, p 70.

<sup>7</sup>ibid, p70.

1837 she gave T. J. Lempriere, the ‘urbane commissariat accountant... a collection of seeds (including) the diosma ‘from the south of Spain.’ Champ, the commandant after Booth, sowed seeds of camellias and carnations sent by his mother.<sup>8</sup>

Port Arthur senior staff were part of this intellectual and cultural network. A prime example of the inter-relationship between officials and their wives is indicated by Commandant Booth sending ‘a basket of moss’ for the green-house of Mrs Forster and Mrs Montagu in October 1836. Revealed also is the mainly hidden role of women in plant collecting and propagation.<sup>9</sup>

While the convicts familiarity with the bush made it a ‘home,’ to urban-based officials and visitors such as Butler Stoney and Louisa Meredith, the bush was often threatening, and not a place to be lived in. Collectors relied on local knowledge and enthusiasts, including bushmen, to seek out the rarer plants and habitats. At Port Arthur, William Swainson studied eucalypts on the Tasman Peninsula from December 1853 to January 1854, and was assisted by convict William Fowler.<sup>10</sup> Allan Williamson, a convict in charge of a semaphore, was according to Gruncell, a ‘good botanist and collected dried, pressed and named ferns.’ This tradition continued throughout the 19th century.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Botanical Gardens**

Hobart’s Botanical Garden, after a shaky start, was placed permanently in its present location in 1818, only two years after its equivalent was begun in NSW. Charles Fraser, NSW’s first superintendent, made at least two trips to VDL, and was possibly influential in establishing the local garden.<sup>12</sup>

In southern Tasmania the central role of the Botanical Gardens as distributor of newly arrived plant material was pivotal, while in northern Tasmania R.C .Gunn, after falling out with his southern mentors, played a central role in establishing a garden and horticultural society based in Launceston.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>MacFie, paper read to the Australian Garden History Society, at Port Arthur, March 1984.

<sup>9</sup>See P52. The interest in gardens by officials reflected their would-be social status, but often belied their real economic state. At Port Arthur Thomas, Lempriere was a bankrupt, and although former commandant O’Hara Booth had responsibility for the new prison in its formative years, he died virtually penniless, his wife having to sell family belongings to return to Britain.

<sup>10</sup>CSO 24/241/9248

<sup>11</sup>In 1869, von Mueller relied on the experienced bush skills of the Rayner brothers to collect plants in what later became Mt Field National Park, Tasmania’s first park. See MacFie, ‘The Evolution of Mt Field National Park’, 1991.

<sup>12</sup> Report p p50.

<sup>13</sup>For detail see Hoare, Michael ‘Botany and Society in Eastern Australia, in Carr, DJ and Carr, S. G. M. People and Plants in Australia, Academic Press, Sydney, 1981, vol. 2, pp 183-219. With no

The new Botanical Gardens developed a policy of propagating recently arrived plants, and seedlings for both horticulture and floriculture. Exchanges between private residents and the Gardens were common. With the Lieut. Governor's sanction, plants could be obtained from the Gardens by - mainly affluent- settlers. Senior government appointees also had privileged access.

The new Botanical Gardens on the shores of the Derwent River were initially administered by the Civil Engineer (John Lee Archer) on behalf of the Lieut. Governor of the day. He was responsible for the activities of the Superintendent once appointed, and the allocation of prisoners working in the gardens. After much debate and rancour, the Botanical Gardens were put under the management of the Royal Society in 1843, a move initiated by Lt. Gov. Eardley-Wilmot. Some senior staff at Port Arthur and other penal stations became members of the Royal Society. As members, they had privileged access to plants and seeds from the Gardens.

### **Port Arthur, the Botanical Gardens & Gardeners**

In May 1833, the newly appointed Port Arthur Commandant Charles O'Hara Booth (1833-44), visited the Gardens and 'got a capital collection' without specifying plants. These and other specimens were obtained from the Gardens once the process was approved.

One of Booth's early duties as Commandant was taking evidence from Matthew Williams, (per *Georgiana*) a former gardener at the Botanical Gardens, who accused the Superintendent of corrupt practices. Port Arthur had a small 'contingent' of convict gardeners. Some are listed in the study.

Commandant Champ (1844-48) was a heavily involved in the early Royal Society, holding meetings in his Hobart office in 1843 the year before his Port Arthur appointment.<sup>14</sup> His successor, James Boyd, Port Arthur's longest serving commandant (1853-1871) was also a member of the Royal Society, and was known to have a greenhouse at Port Arthur.<sup>15</sup> In 1867 for example, he ordered a collection of plants including dahlia, anemone and ranunculus.<sup>16</sup>

Encouraged by von Mueller, Port Arthur and Tasman Peninsula was used as an experimental farm for trialling plants, including New Zealand flax. The attempted acclimatisation of a

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continued government backing to an equivalent of Hobart's botanical gardens, more reliance on private interest seems apparent in northern Tasmania.

<sup>14</sup>author's records.

<sup>15</sup>ibid

<sup>16</sup>MacFie, 1984.

North American elk caused damage to the garden of Rev. Eastman at Port Arthur. Canadian seeds and trees were also planted.<sup>17</sup>

### **Port Arthur & the East Coast**

A strong connection existed between Port Arthur and the settlers on the east coast of Tasmania. This was due to its proximity to the Tasman Peninsula, the interest of its settlers in botany and to links with former Port Arthur officials who settled there. Commandant Booth visited the area, while Champ owned *Lisdillon*. Louisa Meredith's influence was apparent, and John Mitchell, former superintendent of Point Puer juvenile prison, also owned east coast properties. In addition, the botanically minded Quakers had a base there.

The role of the Quakers in early botanical history of Tasmania is significant, and has East Coast links. The first secretary of the new Royal Society was the Quaker Dr G. F. Story, the generous-natured house guest, resident and friend of the Cottons of Swanport.<sup>18</sup> Francis Cotton of *Kelvedon*, near Swanport, was one of Tasmania's earliest Quaker adherents, and it was a home where Backhouse and Walker stayed on their visits in the 1830's.<sup>19</sup> The network continued to function after their return to the UK as Francis Cotton reported to the Royal Society in November 1844 that he had received a case of plants from fellow Quaker and missionary, James Backhouse of York.<sup>20</sup>

The plant-procreating network from the colonial era was kept alive by a few enthusiasts. In 1983 Ms Megan Griffiths had growing a *Rosa centifolia* (or the perpetual flowering rose), grown from a cutting from the original shrub brought out by Francis and Eliza Cotton.<sup>21</sup>

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, gardens experienced a marked change, with emphasis on formal exotic gardens devoid of native plants, rather than the earlier mixture of types. This rejection of natives and obsession with the European paralleled the period's 'shame' over convict ancestry. This impact is/was particularly noticeable in Tasmania.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>author's records.

<sup>18</sup>Hurburgh, M. *The Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens 1818-1996*, Hobart, nd, c1988, p20.

<sup>19</sup>The property is still held by the family.

<sup>20</sup>ibid

<sup>21</sup> pers comm, 1983. Transcribed as 'Rosa centiflora.'

<sup>22</sup>see MacFie, 'The mental & physical landscape of Tasmania', draft paper based on a lecture to University of Tasmania, Launceston campus, 1987.

## Port Arthur - a Landscaped Site

*The English imperial dream is also dispensable, the dream of conquest and transformation.*<sup>23</sup>

Many visitors to Port Arthur comment on the contrast between the sites' setting as a 'prison in a park'. The visitor's sense is apt; the former penal colony appearance is not 'natural' but heavily contrived. The 'imperial dream' in this sense was the effort to make a place of punishment 'pleasant' for its staff and families, yet painful for the convicts, their fellow human beings. The result was the contrasting and apparently contradictory character of Port Arthur's character. This in turn reflected the classification of plants, and the ordering of humanity whether under Linnean or Darwinian models. Such models gave those at the 'top' the questionable privilege of theoretically being 'lords' over those on the lower rungs of evolutionary development. However, compassion and human dignity could not be classified or denied.

### **The Setting**

To appreciate Port Arthur as a site, an understanding of how the bay was modified and landscaped by convict era demands, as well as administrators and 20thC residents followed by late 20th century government managers is necessary.

### **Convict Era Modification.**

On the arrival of the first party of sawyers in 1830, the heavily timbered bush reached the water's edge. A small stream - Settlement Creek - ran into the bay over a tidal and marshy foreshore which extended to the edge of the later Church Avenue, and the edge of the street leading to the Commandant's House (Champ Street).

Changing the landscape began immediately. Trees were felled, houses were built on terraces, saw-pits dug, a dock-yard excavated, a commissariat store and quay built to receive stores by water. Middens and sea-shells were removed to burn into lime mortar. Across the bay, teenage prisoners clear-felled their prison home at Point Puer. Later - at Port Arthur - tramways were laid to saw-pits and quarries, the rail system running to the dockside where sawn timber was loaded on waiting vessels. All the time, tall trees were crashing in the bush to be sawn into scantling and shingles for constructing Tasmania's many new public buildings.

During Port Arthur's operation as a penal station, public and private gardens were laid out at The Settlement, as it became known. Staff were also allowed to develop private ornamental

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<sup>23</sup>Seddons, op cit, p 182.

gardens around their cottages. Those families with children kept goats (for milk) and fowls to supplement the bread-winners' meagre stipends.

### **Government Gardens**

The Government Gardens consisted of those worked by prisoners which produced vegetables including potatoes and turnips for the consumption of prisoners. A small 'seed-shed' is also shown on an early plan of this garden. Extensive Government Gardens were developed at Garden Point, a mile from Port Arthur.

From the time of Booth small plots of open land were allocated to staff based on the size of their families. These allotments were worked by prisoners. The plots were allowed three launch-loads of kelp per acre a year, and one days' night soil for every quarter acre. Excess production could be sold at market prices to the Commissariat.<sup>24</sup>

T.G. Lempriere described the six acres of officer's gardens where,

... currants, gooseberries and strawberries are... plentiful; peaches apples cherries, plums and figs are also met with, also cucumbers and melons.

### **Ornamental Public Gardens.**

Officers Booth and Lempriere began to formally landscape the walks, especially those leading to the church which was begun in 1836. Viewing the beach of the original shore-line, Lempriere then described the site's first public ornamentation.

From the beach or quay on the right of the bridge a broad walk leads through a handsome gateway to the church; on either side of the walk is beautiful border of flowers interspersed with native shrubs and even (by the kindness of Sir John Franklin) young oaks, elms and ash trees.<sup>25</sup>

These gardens were embellished by following Commandants, with the notable addition of a fountain.

### **Ornamental Private Gardens.**

Port Arthur's visible gardens are the recreational gardens established by the senior officers, those established by free settlers of the re-named Carnarvon (1877-1920), and gardens re-instated by the recent site management systems. The oldest garden surrounds the Commandant's House while remnant gardens near the later officer's houses in Officer's Row date from the 1840's.

The Ornamental Public Garden near the Church (recently restored by the PAMA) dates from the 1840's when Commandant Champ, a garden enthusiast, laid out the garden centred

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<sup>24</sup>author's records

<sup>25</sup>Lempriere, T. J. The Penal Settlements of VDL, p111.



around the three-tiered fountain, also restored. The fountain is attributed to convict stonemason Richard Patterson.<sup>26</sup>

In 1847 the *Van Dieman's Land Royal Kalanda and Almanac* described the new gardens;

..... A beautiful avenue of trees leads to the church, near to which are hop grounds covering an extent of about six acres. This piece of ground had been most tastefully laid out by Mr Champ the commandant. It is intersected with broad walks lined on each side with flower borders in which native plants as well as the exotic are cultivated. In the centre of the main walk a jet of several feet throws up continually a shower of water, which after falling from a pyramidal series of shelves into a basin is carried underground to a canal, which, besides its refreshing appearance affords the water necessary for irrigating the plants. Rustic benches are placed in the different walks. There is a summerhouse at the highest part of the ground, from which a view of the settlement and harbour is obtained; this place is a favourite resort for the officers and their families.<sup>27</sup>

The private gardens were deliberately established to foster the interests of officers, offering an aesthetic interest. The site's public ornamental gardens and avenues allowed for a retreat from the harsh realities of the site for senior officers' families.

In the 1850's the summer house over-looking the Gardens was replaced by Government Cottage, taking advantage of the location overlooking established gardens. Here VIPs visiting the penal station, including the Lt. Governors and heads of the Convict Department, enjoyed an exclusive privilege obscured from the prison and prisoners.

### **Later Avenues**

When the bay was filled in during the 1850's, trees were used to line the artificial foreshore. Trees were also used to line the path leading to the Model Prison and Asylum, intended apparently to lessen their impact and pacify the inmates. Along the reclaimed foreshore, blue gums were planted by Boyd. All avenues are visible in 19th century photographs.

However, the penal station was still hemmed in by the sea and the forests which still encroached. In 1895 and 1897, bushfires made a mockery of the 'Imperial Dream'.

More than ever, the dilemma over attitudes to punishment and reform are reflected in the two physical components still evident at Port Arthur.

### **Carnarvon**

Free settlers developed their own functional and decorative gardens among those established by the officers of the penal departments. The Commandant's House became the *Carnarvon Hotel* and the Medical Officers House was known as *Hotel Arthur*. After the bushfires, the ruins were either renovated or rebuilt. The Chaplains' House was converted to the Carnarvon

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<sup>26</sup>ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Brand, Ian Penal Peninsula, nd, c1988, p 89.

Post Office, while a timber cottage called *Trenham* was built on the ashes of its brick predecessor, and around these were developed cottage gardens. The Senior Medical Officer's House was re-named *Clougha* and, with the *Carnarvon Hotel*, became up-market guest houses for travellers.

By 1900 the former Asylum was the location of the local school and centre for local government. After men served and died in the Great War, a memorial avenue of 44 macrocarpa pines was planted outside the council chambers. This was the last avenue to be planted.

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## **Port Arthur – the Landscaped Site, 1830-1999**

The Ornamental Gardens need to be seen as part of the wider adaptation or ‘landscaping’ of the location as a functioning prison. The blend of functionality and aesthetic opportunism by staff gives Port Arthur its unique character.

Six distinct phases are visible, three reflecting the changes to prison management as much as aesthetics, and three the subsequent adaptation by post-prison and 20thC residents and heritage managers.

### **Penal Era 1830-1877**

#### **Phase 1. Settlement Hill. 1830-40.**

The Commandant’s House is all that remains intact of the original settlement that extended above Champ Street, from the Commandant’s to the first prisoner’s barracks at Settlement Creek. The garden around the Commandant’s House, although added to, is the most described historically, while the adjacent cottage garden, the Subaltern’s House, was also decorative. Lempriere’s home, the first Accountant’s House, also had a decorative garden, and - with a large family - functional. Both are now ruins only.

The most significant landscaping features from this period are;

- i) Terracing of Settlement Hill.
- ii) The reclaimed foreshore below Champ Street (but not the oval) where the first Workshops and Commissariat Store were located.
- iii) Church and the oak avenue leading from the then foreshore.

The oak avenues are the first step in a deliberate policy of landscaping the settlement, and appears likely to have been instigated by T. J. Lempriere, who with Booth, exchanged acorns with Lady Jane Franklin.

#### **Phase 2. Officer’s Row & Ornamental Garden 1840-50.**

Construction of a second, more substantial row of stone houses for officers began in 1842, initiated by Booth. These extended from the church over a period of 6 years. Each had an ornamental as well as productive private garden.

The major landscaping features of this era - apart from the houses – were;

- i) The flour mill and granary built on the reclaimed foreshore.
- ii) The Ornamental Gardens. These gardens were developed by the next Commandant W.T.N. Champ and were apparently laid out without official sanction, as was so much of Champ’s administration.

#### **Phase 3. Internal Centred Institutions 1850-67.**

This period equates with the administration of Commandant James Boyd, and saw the institutional-based structures constructed. These included the converted flour-mill/penitentiary (1854), Model Prison (1852), Asylum (1867) and Pauper dormitories. Until

this period, buildings were primarily erected as ‘bases’ for prisoners to work from and in. The new institutions however were designed instead to house men for long periods of institutional punishment, or management control in the case of the Asylum and Pauper Dormitories. The converted penitentiary however continued to operate as a dormitory for workers.

The distinctive landscaping features of this period are;

- i) The infill forming the cricket oval and
- ii) The avenue of poplars leading from Champ Street to the Asylum and Model Prison. The trees were apparently part of a deliberate policy which equated gardens and gardening with settling the mind of inmates. (Some seriously disturbed inmates housed in part of the Model Prison were allowed a small garden of their own.)<sup>28</sup>

The cricket oval was formed by reclaiming the bay from the tidal foreshore, the work being done by prisoners under Commandant Boyd’s direction. Many of these men were recently arrived from Norfolk Island after its closure. Much stone was thought to have come from rock blasted from the tessellated pavements area at Eaglehawk Neck.

The oval was intended as a cricket ground for use by officers and the military. In addition, an esplanade was built over the water allowing quick access across the bay. Beattie photos c1880 reveal the juncture between the oval and the esplanade planted with a row of blue gums (*Eucalyptus globulus*).<sup>29</sup>

## **Free Settlement 1877-1972**

### **Phase 4. Carnarvon Period 1977-1914.**

Port Arthur was changed to Carnarvon by officialdom, but continued to be known by its original name. The former prison became headquarters for the new community, whose administrative centre was the Town Hall located in the former Asylum.

The most enduring landscaping feature is the WWI Memorial Avenue of macrocarpa pines dedicated to the men from the Tasman Peninsula who volunteered to fight on the side of Empire. These trees are now in an advanced state of age.

The local community used the oval for cricket and Australian Rules football until 1987.

Around 1900 the new community began a tradition of Boxing Day Sports, whose main event was a series of wood chopping matches. The arena was located in part of the former Officer’s Garden. The chopping blocks are still used and extant. Their location is significant, as they are situated opposite the original convict period sawpits, the basis of Port Arthur’s historical existence.

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<sup>28</sup>A tradition continued today in places of hospice care, and for the same reason.

<sup>29</sup>Some of elderly blue gums survived until demolished by the PAMA c 1992.

## **Park/Heritage Management**

### **Phase 5. Historic Park Management 1972-1979.**

Following a State Government decision to gradually acquire the historic site, the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) gradually purchased the remnant buildings from their owners. (The two main ruins, the church and penitentiary, were already Government owned.)

In the process however, a short-sighted decision was made to demolish a number of Carnarvon-era structures, including the first site museum and bakery operated by the Ratcliffes. For ease of maintenance by tractor mowers, farm fences were removed, giving the 'park' appearance.

### **Phase 6. Conservation & Heritage Management. 1979-??**

In 1979 the Port Arthur Conservation Project was established by the NPWS, and Dr Brian Egloff appointed a site manager to head a multi-disciplinary team of professionals and skilled staff to conserve and restore the site under a \$9M budget over 6 years.

The site was managed by dual bodies from the DP & W, and the new PACP staff. The joint management caused considerable argument and duress.

Conflict ensued over on-site works, with archaeologists wanting priority, and DP&W staff wanting to insist on traditional management practices. The advent of sprays such as 'Roundup' to control weeds was realised too late, as many edges where remnant plants traditionally survive were sprayed for weed control. Like many other departments, using the latest technology was a sign of 'progress.'

In this setting, the garden history consultants began work.

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## Update & Errata

Since written in 1983 additional information came to light.

### 1. Commandant WT N Champ.

Champ served as military officer at Macquarie Harbour, and was at Port Arthur from 1844-48. In 1854 he became briefly, Tasmania's first premier, before being appointed as Governor of Melbourne's new prison in Coburg, where Champ Street (as at Port Arthur), is named after him.<sup>30</sup> He retired to *Darra*, a property near Meredith in the western district of Victoria.

On leaving Tasmania in 1858 he acquired plants from the Botanical Gardens (see report) Champ's impact, if any, in Melbourne or at his Meredith home is worth investigating.<sup>31</sup> His list includes a range of spring bulbs and roses.

*Champ's Private Papers.* These were held by an elderly Mrs G. Holdsworth of Melbourne. By phone, c1988 she discussed, among other options, donating the records to the Latrobe Library, but there location is unknown.

### 2. Dr James Murdoch.

His farm *Craigow* is on the Richmond Road was an 1823 land grant to the Scottish trained doctor, (about 2 km from the author's home). As part of a long term study of the district by the author (intended for publication), a section is devoted to Dr James Murdoch including his interest in medicinal herbs.

### 3. Megan Griffiths.

Megan Griffiths has since died. The former Port Arthur Project gardener, Ron Westcott, taped an interview c 1986 with Miss Griffiths amongst her roses in her New Town home, but the tapes' location is uncertain. (Her address was, 27 Carlton Street, New Town.) Unique roses grown by her in 1983 included 'Jeune d'esprit', the first yellow rose imported by Lipscombes, the early Hobart nurserymen.<sup>32</sup>

### 4. W. T. N. Champ.

The heading should also read '& Other Officials.'

### 5. Peter Benson-Walker.

**Lawyer**, Hobart antiquarian and publisher has since died.

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<sup>30</sup> See Australian Dictionary of Biography entry.

<sup>31</sup>A researcher some years ago apparently visited the property, but with what outcome is unknown.  
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<sup>32</sup>pers comm, 1983.

## 6. Owen Stanley

His painting of the 'Commandant's House, Tasman Peninsula,' is not the Port Arthur house but that at the Coal Mines, extant as a ruin. Stanley's painting refers to the view as seen 'From the House of Captain Rice'. This was Captain A.T. Rice, 51st Regt, who was OIC in charge of the Coal Mines at a time when the Mines were the HQ for the military on Tasman Peninsula, rather than Port Arthur.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>see McLachlan, Robyn & MacFie, Peter 'HISTORICAL SURVEY OF PORT ARTHUR GARRISON AND MILITARY BARRACKS (1830 - 1863)', in Cox & Associates, Conservation Study for the Port Arthur Management Authority, 1992.

RICE, A. T. (Capt 51st Regt)

Arrived Hobart Town from Sydney 22.2.38 per Marion Watson. JP & Visiting Magistrate 1837. At Jerusalem 1839. OIC detachment (Coal Mines??) 1839-45. Fellow of the Royal Soc. of Tas. To India per China 8.8.46.

(McLachlan & MacFie, appendices ii p7)

Note: Captain Rice was a Fellow of the Royal Society, source of plants as outlined. Apart from a yellow broom, aloe vera is the only other exotic plant appearing to survive at the Commandant's House at the Coal Mines.