

Brown Mountain - A wonderful gift

An old-growth *Eucalyptus regnans* with mixed rainforest understorey Photo: Denna Kingdom

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Inspiring community dedication: Brown Mountain Reserve

It is a great honour to announce that the TLC is in the final stages of accepting the transfer of the beautiful Brown Mountain Reserve from the Brown Mountain Association.

The 86 ha Brown Mountain Reserve, rising to 745m and encompassing Ironstone Creek, is close to the northern boundary of Mount Field National Park in the Derwent Valley.

Wedge-tailed eagles are known to have nested on the reserve in the past and it is hoped that the *Eucalyptus obliqua* and *Eucalyptus regnans* forests of Brown Mountain will again host this magnificent and endangered species.

In 1994 three local residents decided to raise the \$60,000 purchase price to buy the land and protect it from further logging. Their plan was to recruit a total of 72 people, each donating \$1000 to cover the purchase and invest the remaining \$12,000 in an interest-bearing account to pay for annual rates and land tax. The plan was successful and the land was purchased. The Trust was converted into an Incorporated Association in the 1990s to manage the ongoing administration of the land, and draft and implement a covenant to permanently protect it.

In 2005 the Association's members approached the TLC to offer the transfer and management of the reserve. It was felt that a formal permanent conservation organisation like TLC was the best long-term custodian for the reserve.

The TLC is honoured that the Association members have put their trust in our conservation capabilities. We thank the Brown Mountain Association and the three founding members, Richard Davis, Mary Jenkins and Mary Dalyell.

We plan to continue the work of the Brown Mountain Association over the past 13 years, and are proud to be part of the next phase of the conservation of this beautiful place.

Revolving fund update

We were pleased to say that our beautiful revolving fund property, Colliers Forest Reserve, was unaffected by the recent bush fires on King Island, and is still available for sale. Also, for those interested in visiting the island, a car/passenger ferry from Melbourne and Devonport to King Island will commence in July.

Please call us at the TLC or visit the TLC website at www.tasland.org.au/revolving for more information.



Volunteers at Long Point, and Insert: *Wilsonia rotundifolia*, a newly discovered threatened species. Photos: Denna Kingdom



Jane Hutchinson TLC President. Photo: Matt Newton

Restoration recipe for Long Point

What's the best recipe to restore the white gum and banksia woodlands at Long Point? "Mix one weekend, ten enthusiastic volunteers and 1300 seedlings, then bake gently in the most perfect of autumn weather" jokes Jenny Fuller, one of those enthusiastic volunteers.

Long Point Reserve at Swansea is in the process of a gently baked transformation, from back-paddock to healthy nature reserve. The last flock of sheep left the property when the TLC bought it two years ago and since then the spread of gorse has been reversed with more than 15 hectares of gorse either sprayed or cut-and-painted.

It was hoped that the ageing stands of white gum and banksia woodlands would regenerate naturally once the gorse and sheep were removed. However very few seedlings have emerged, indicating that either there were insufficient viable seeds in the soil for natural regeneration to occur, or the rate of browsing by wallabies, possums and rabbits was unsustainable.

The TLC has begun an ambitious project to restore the woodlands at Long Point, armed with advice from revegetation and browsing mammal experts, and financial assistance from the Australian Government Envirofund and the Tasmanian Landcare

Fund. Our volunteers will plant 5000 seedlings this year, including eleven woodland species grown from seed collected locally.

The transformation of the reserve has also seen the number of threatened plant species found at the reserve rise to three, with the recent discovery of the rare saltmarsh plant *Wilsonia rotundifolia*.

This joins another rare saltmarsh species, *Wilsonia humilis*, and a rare woodland shrub, the Cranbrook paperbark *Melaleuca pustulata*.

The coming winter will see the transformation of Long Point continue with international volunteers dedicating four weeks of their time to the TLC during June and July, which will see the remaining seedlings planted and more gorse removed.

A healthy flurry of volunteers to lend a hand is one of the most essential ingredients for the restoration recipe from paddock to nature reserve.

So, if you are an enthusiastic volunteer – let us know and we'll add you to our volunteer register! Email volunteer@tasland.org.au or phone the TLC office on 6225 1399 to register and receive updates on volunteer activities.

TLC's President

Jane Hutchinson has been president of the TLC since June 2002. "I just love being part of the Tasmanian Land Conservancy" Jane says. "The energy, enthusiasm and dedication of the staff, volunteers, board members and all of our terrific supporters make this organisation completely special and unique."

Growing up in Kettering, Jane was imbued with the desire to conserve our natural environment. "I remember as a child fossicking around the rocky foreshore, near the boundary of our land, looking for orchids and the holes made by echidna's noses boring for ants. I remember my delight at finding a blue-tongue lizard lying motionless on the path before me and the sound of the pardalotes feeding in the white gums above my head. Writing this takes me back to that special place."

Jane joined the TLC when Nathan Males, the President at the time, approached her to join the Board early in 2002, and she eagerly accepted. "I hoped my skills as a lawyer might be put to good use" recalls Jane. "The TLC had about \$50 in the bank and 30 supporters. But it also had motivation in spades."

"I am so proud of the achievements of the organisation and I am incredibly excited about the future. Thank you all so much for your support."



The Western Tiers, part of the Tasmanian midlands - a national biodiversity hotspot Photo: Dan Sprod

New ventures, new horizons for the TLC

Over our six years of operation, the TLC has created six permanent reserves and a further four areas that will be managed by others as reserves through our revolving fund. In addition we have helped over 35 landholders establish reserves on their own land using conservation covenants.

Securing areas that will be managed exclusively for conservation is fundamental to protecting important landscapes, but if we are to truly safeguard Tasmania's natural diversity we must also engage in some big-picture and long-term planning.

The Tasmanian Land Conservancy is very pleased to announce a new collaboration to further protect some of Tasmania's most sensitive ecosystems.

We have recently begun work with the Tasmanian and Federal governments and the Australian Bush Heritage Fund to discuss and coordinate conservation efforts at a landscape scale for the Tasmanian midlands.

For our native species and ecosystems to continue to thrive and remain resilient in the long-term, there must be sufficient habitat available and it must be both robust and adaptable to changes such as global warming.

Ideally, whole landscapes should be considered to ensure that enough habitat

in the right configuration is being retained and managed with conservation outcomes in mind.

The Tasmanian midlands is home to an astonishing array of threatened plants and animals: some 150 plants and 26 animals, including 50 species that have their stronghold in the area. It contains about 10% of all species found in the state – approximately 2000 species. They inhabit a variety of habitats, including some of Australia's most threatened vegetation communities - the lowland native grasslands.

To the casual traveller, these values are not obvious; particularly at the moment, as the drought bites. From the road, the 70% of the midlands that is cleared looks in pretty poor condition - dry, with little ground cover and many dead trees. However, much of the bush run country still retains native grassland and woodlands, and the forested hills exhibit many important natural values, which can potentially be linked back together.

The midlands also has a rich cultural heritage, dotted with homestead villages harking back to an earlier era. It boasts a continuing tradition of fine and superfine wool production. Ninety eight percent of the region is privately owned, in many cases with family ownership that dates back to

first settlement. Many of the remaining important natural areas exist today because of the careful long-term management by some of these landholders.

Our approach will be to work with the landholders of the region, seeking to build a managed patchwork of areas with sufficient natural values and landscape connections to allow the survival and evolution of the native inhabitants.

Some of the ideas that will work towards achieving landscape conservation are:

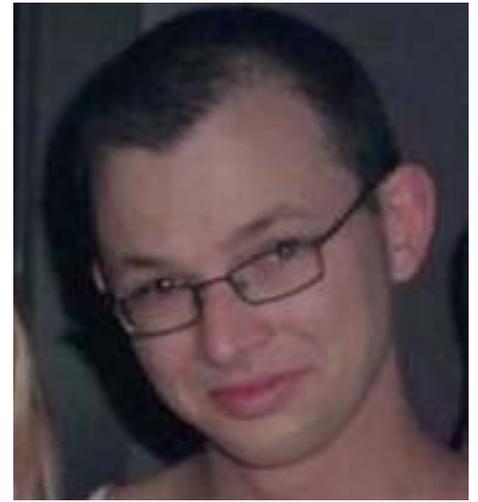
- Identifying specific core areas to be managed primarily for conservation, through tools like the establishment of reserves or conservation covenants.
- Identifying and managing adjoining areas primarily for conservation, but with compatible resource use (eg grazing), such as privately owned land with a stewardship grazing agreement.
- Managing other areas for resource use, but sympathetically in relation to conservation, such as native forest silviculture.

This project is an exciting new step for the TLC - thinking about how our efforts can best be utilised and how we can work most effectively with others, particularly private landholders, to achieve very important conservation goals.

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Recherche Bay Photo: Bob Brown



The late Tom Hay Photo courtesy of the Hay family

Recherche Bay

Over the past 16 months our supporters have contributed nearly \$550,000 towards the Recherche Bay project. Thank you!

In parallel to fund raising, the development of the draft Management Plan commenced in late 2006, culminating in a six-week period for public comment, ending in April 2007. Seventeen submissions were received, all of which were overwhelmingly supportive.

The public submissions were considered by the Reference Group, led by Max Kitchell, who has formally held senior conservation roles at state and federal levels and kindly donated his expertise free of charge to the TLC. The outcome of the meeting were minor changes, which will shortly be submitted to the TLC Board for approval. It is anticipated that the Management Plan will be finalised by July 2007.

We have also been working with the Australian Government in seeking significant funding and are hopeful that our application will be approved shortly by the Federal Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, Malcolm Turnbull. We look forward to announcing the outcome of this application in the near future.

Tom Hay – A bequest to nature

We were deeply saddened to learn of the recent death of Tom Hay, and were overcome by his extraordinary gift to the TLC. Tom's father, Pete Hay writes:

"Tom Hay was a brilliant young economist employed in the Department of Economic Development. 'I am told', said his former teacher, Rick Tipping, 'that high level Sydney economists still talk about the young Tasmanian who produced an exceptional policy document on the principles of financial assistance to industry'. Aged 27, Tom died in March from complications arising from treatment for Hodgkins lymphoma.

Tom Hay was a man of considerable talent and achievement, with a fierce and forensic intelligence. An enthusiast for both language and numbers, he was, at different times of his life, a brilliant schoolboy debater, a powerful participant and organisational voice in Youth Parliament and the United Nations Youth Association, a disc jockey, a peace activist, a formidable bridge player, an anime enthusiast, an origami adept, a rock climber, a cricketer and a football umpire.

Tom's passion for ideas was boundless, and his wit, among those who knew him, was legendary – and it served him to the very end. He was an extraordinary young man.

He was, too, deeply committed to his island and its natural values. He was particularly approving of the resolution of the Recherche Bay dispute, and especially of the role played by the Tasmanian Land Conservancy in attaining that happy outcome. In his will he asked that the bulk of his estate go to the TLC, and as his Executor I am pleased and proud to accede. We also asked that donations be sent to the TLC in lieu of flowers at the funeral, with the consequence that the TLC is better off to the tune of \$2732.

The combined funds will establish the Tom Hay Trust Fund, the interest from which will help to sustain the TLC perpetually.

The Tasmanian Land Conservancy is one of the most important initiatives to have taken place here in recent times. It is just and fitting that Tom Hay's commitment to the wellbeing of his place will be ongoing through the TLC's disbursement of his bequest."

We are grateful to the following organisations for their support in recent months



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