

## 14 – Around and About Macquarie Street (Hobart)

This itinerary should start at the Cascades Female Factory ruins at the western end of Macquarie Street if historical significance were the criterion, but it is quite a way from the centre of town – all right for the keen walker, but more comfortable by transport. For convenience I am, therefore, beginning at the more central east end of Macquarie Street, or just to the north of it, at the Theatre Royal – an extraordinary contrast to the former women’s prison, though their starting dates, 1828 and 1834, are not so far apart. Let the theatre be an overture to the itinerary, and the Female Factory its climax.

The itinerary includes only those women’s sites connected with my historical overview; for reasons of length, I have had to leave out some places I had planned to include. Different but rewarding ‘places’ books are Lindy Scripps’ *Women’s Sites and Lives in Hobart* (2000) and the allied *In Her Stride: Women’s History Walk* (1997), for which Miranda Morris drew on Lindy’s research. I bought them from the City Council customer counter (corner of Elizabeth and Davey Streets).

### Theatre Royal – 29 Campbell Street

From Macquarie Street, the bijou theatre, easily identified not only by its boldly painted name but by its columns, is on your right, a short walk up Campbell Street. What prompted its creation, the spectacular ceremony when its foundation stone was laid in 1834, its opening in 1837, and the varied nature of its early audience, are featured in Chapter 9 (p135). In a not-too-salubrious neighbourhood, it then resembled a two-storey Georgian house. It has had several expansions since, a major one in the early 1900s, but still manages to convey intimacy; and it has been threatened with destruction more than once. In 1948 those threats were brought to an end by a campaign to save it by Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier, then touring with the *Old Vic*, but it was damaged by fire in 1984; restored to its 1911 designs, it was reopened in 1987.

That there should be women actors, singers and playwrights associated with the theatre is not surprising; what is more unusual was the influence of **Anne Clarke** (née Remans, bc1806) as manager; indeed, it is largely to her credit that women played the part they did in the theatre’s success.

Anne Remans arrived in Hobart from England as an assisted immigrant in 1834 and was successful as a singer/actor, often in ‘pants’ parts; for example, Captain Macheath in *The Beggar’s Opera*. Later that year she married widower Michael Clarke and, between 1837 and 1839, she performed in Sydney. Back in Hobart in 1840, she took over the management of what was then called the Royal Victoria Theatre – the first woman in Australia to manage a theatre for a significant period – and also played most of the

female parts. It was the shortage of women actors that, it is assumed, took her to England in 1841 to recruit. She returned with several actors, singers and dancers, including **Theodosia Stirling** (née Yates, 1815–1904) and **Emma Howson** (née Richardson) and her husband Frank.

Emma's daughter, also called **Emma Howson** (1844–1928) had great success as a singer abroad, but Nicole Anae shows in "The New Prima Donnas": "Homegrown" Tasmania "Stars" of the 1860s, Emma and Clelia Howson' (2005), how important to Tasmanian identity were Tasmanian-born young Emma and her actor sister **Clelia Howson** (bc1845).



23. Amy Sherwin, from Bowler, *Amy Sherwin*

Nicole Anae also wrote: 'Were it not for the enterprise of Anne Clarke, Tasmania might never have produced such a vital collection of theatre women.' Under Anne's management, too, the first Australian production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* was performed in 1845. In spite of her efforts, however, houses were generally poor and, after estrangement from her husband, named as the lessee of the theatre in about 1847, Anne Clarke disappeared from view.

Opera has had many successful manifestations in the theatre. **Marie Carandini** (née Burgess, 1826–1894), ‘the Australian Jenny Lind’, arrived with her parents, as assisted immigrants, in 1833, married at 17 one of Anne Clarke’s recruits, Jerome Carandini, Italian revolutionary exile and tenth Marquis of Sarzano, and made her professional debut there in 1842. As a girl, as Marie Burgess, she had sung before Jane Franklin and the Governor and, later, her five daughters toured with her and had successful singing careers – particularly the eldest, **Rosina Carandini** (1844–1932, later Palmer); the actor Christopher Lee is Marie’s great grandson.

**Amy Sherwin** (1855–1935), ‘The Tasmanian Nightingale’, made her professional debut at the theatre in *Don Pasquale* in 1878 (p242). **Lucy Benson** (née Westbrook, 1860–1943; m1881), child prodigy, all-round musician, theatre entrepreneur and mother of six singers, was Amy’s voice coach and was, perhaps, the first woman conductor of opera in Australia. Clara Butt sang, as did Victoria de Los Angeles and Leontyne Price. Other international theatrical performers have included Marie Tempest, Jessie Matthews, Lillian Gish, Sybil Thorndike and Margaret Rutherford.

In 1908, then aged 13, the actor later renamed Louise Lovely by Hollywood, played Lady Isobel Vane in *East Lynne*, a stage adaptation of Mrs Henry (Ellen) Wood’s novel. Louise’s last film was premiered there 17 years later. She is better remembered at 87 Macquarie Street (p239). **Olive Wilton** (c1883–1971), founder of the Hobart Repertory Theatre Society in 1926, promoted women playwrights. Her first production at the theatre, in 1927, was Madeleine Lucette Ryley’s romantic comedy *Mice and Men* (1903) and she produced the convict play *Daybreak* by **Catherine Shepherd** (1902–1976) in 1938, and *Jane, My Love*, about Jane Franklin, in 1951 (pp69, 149, 155).

## Royal Hobart Hospital

Across from the Theatre Royal, facing onto Liverpool Street, is the Royal Hobart Hospital. There is nothing there, except the site, to remind you of days gone by; you need to use your imagination. In 1805, it was the site of the Sullivans Cove Hospital – a tent (p237). The most evocative descriptions of what went on there in the 1840s come in Oliné Keese’ (Caroline Leakey’s) *The Broad Arrow*. Our heroine, Maida Gwynnham, is taken for a second time to the hospital and ‘consigned to the good kind Mrs Cott’. Knowing how Caroline worked, this is probably **Eleanor Scott** (1809–1846) who arrived in Tasmania from Ireland with her parents in 1833 and who, in 1837, married James Fitzgerald. When he became superintendent of the Colonial Hospital, Eleanor was appointed matron – what training she had is not clear. The convict artist Thomas Wainwright who worked as a hospital orderly and was helped by the Fitzgeralds, painted portraits of most of the Scott family, but only that of Eleanor’s sister, **Jane Scott** (1826–1909), seems to have survived, in the Australian National Gallery, Canberra (and on the internet). Eleanor died aged only 37 and was buried in St David’s Cemetery (p247).

But it is not Matron Cott/Scott who looks after Maida: she is put in the hands of the drunken, vicious, corrupt convict nurse whom she has come across before and whom she calls 'the Excrescence'. Their relationship does not improve, and the care Maida receives does not do credit to the hospital. Trained nurses were not employed until 1876.

It was here that convict Margaret Morgan, who ended up in the Macquarie Harbour penal settlement, failed to do her duty in 1821 and was punished by six hours in the stocks (p60).

In July 1871, 52-year-old Mary Ann Cochrane Arthur (pp119, 182, 187) had an 'apoplectic fit' at Oyster Cove where only she and Trukanini of the Aborigines remained, looked after by Matilda and John Dandridge (p192). Paralysis set in and she was transferred at once to the Colonial Hospital. The *Mercury* reported on the 25th:

The day was wet but not stormy and Mr & Mrs Dandridge left the cove with her in an open boat about half past nine o'clock; the voyage, therefore, occupied about twelve hours. It rained all the while; but as soon as the boat reached the wharf a cab was procured, the sick woman placed in it with her two guardians and friends. Being a heavy woman she was got into the hospital with some difficulty, and stimulants were at once administered.

The following day, the *Mercury*, announcing Mary Ann's death, ended its report:

Mrs Dandridge had sat with her by her bedside the greater part of the previous night and throughout the day. She was at the side of the poor creature to the last, when the vital spark was extinguished, and her presence was evidently grateful and soothing to the dying woman.

### **Catherine Kearney's Dairy**

In Collins Street, behind the hospital and parallel to Liverpool Street, abutting Market Place, is the site of Catherine Kearney's dairy. Stop there, in front of the russet Agricultural Bank building, if it is still standing; when I saw it, guided by Irene Schaffer's careful historical digging, it was in a bad way, with broken and boarded up windows. It was from here, from 1808, that Catherine supplied milk from 7am each morning at 6 pence per quart (p39), and where she had her legendary meeting with Elizabeth Macquarie in 1811 or 1821 (pp49–50).

Irene Schaffer's research paper *Catherine Kearney: Dairy Farmer, Hobart Rivulet 1808–1830* (2007; available from Irene) has illustrations of the area at the time – rather different from today. The Hobart Rivulet, from which Catherine's livestock drank, became Collins Street. Catherine, much respected, died at her home there, aged 61, leaving not only her various properties but also her cattle and sheep, her mare Polly, her horse Erin, and a foal to her two sons and grandson (p276).

## Louise Lovely

Return now to Macquarie Street. On the corner of Argyle Street is Montgomery's Hotel; in front of it, on Macquarie Street, at your feet, is a 2004 Women's History Walk plaque which reads:

87 Macquarie Street. LOUISE LOVELY'S SWEET SHOP. A star of many Hollywood silent movies, Louise was the star and producer of the movie *Jewelled Nights* written by Marie Bjelke-Petersen and filmed in Tasmania.

**Louise Lovely** (née Nellie Louise Carabasse, 1895–1890) was the first Australian-born actress to succeed in Hollywood, following her marriage in 1912 aged 16. Dropped by the studio in 1918, over a contract dispute after making 24 films, she moved to another and made many more, totalling about 50. Louise and her husband Wilton Welch returned to Australia and, in 1925, she made (raised the finance, wrote the screenplay, co-produced, casted, acted in, co-directed, and edited) the film *Jewelled Nights*.

Alison Alexander tells the story of the making of the film in her biography *Mortal Flame: Marie Bjelke Petersen, Australian Romance Writer 1874–1969* (1994). Tasmanian-born **Marie Bjelke Petersen** (1874–1969) approached Louise with the idea, and much of the film was shot in the mining area of western Tasmania (Waratah and Savage River) where the story of a woman trying to pass as a young man is set. It was Louise's last film and only a few outtakes and stills – several of them in the biography – survive. *Jewelled Nights* is another of those novels one is embarrassed to have rather enjoyed; the same goes for Marie's other Tasmanian novels, very successful in their day and not difficult to find second hand. Don't read them all at once! More digestible is the biography.

Louise remarried in 1930 and she and her husband, theatre manager Bert Cowen, settled in Tasmania. He managed the Prince of Wales Theatre, Hobart, next door to Montgomery's and, until her death, she ran the theatre sweetshop behind where the plaque is placed. The Australian Film Institute awards are unofficially known as 'the Lovelys'.

## Ingle Hall

Across Argyle Street from Louise Lovely's plaque is Ingle Hall, probably not known as that in its early days but even today not that different from when Maria Lord held court there from about 1814 to 1823 (pp33, 80), except that it is now the offices of the *Mercury*. The house may have been built by Rebecca Hobbs' husband John Ingle (p16) and he sold it to Edward Lord; or it may have been built by Edward Lord and sold in 1831 to John Ingle. In any case, it is a classified building and a distinct and very visible touch of old Hobart.

Maria seems to have done business from the house, and had and raised several children there, as well as entertaining. But we should imagine her

not only as mother of a large brood, entrepreneur, chatelaine and hostess of glittering parties, but also see her leaving in 1823 – her marriage, her business and the highlife apparently over. It was not quite so bad, for Maria Lord was a woman of some character. Behind Ingle Hall is the site of Mary Hayes Stocker's Derwent Hotel (p39).

## Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

Cross over Macquarie Street to the Museum and Art Gallery, the first part of which was built in 1863, and it abuts older buildings. Before you go upstairs, walk to the back of the lobby and, outside, tucked away to the right, you will see the cottage of the governor's private secretary, built c1813–14 and almost the only survivor of the old government complex, including Government House, in the area now covered by Franklin Square and the Town Hall. It can also be seen less well from Davey Street to the south, between the old Customs House and the museum.

Where the museum is was a low rise covered by tall gums, with a low bluff towards the water's edge. The only remains of that is the bank on which the cottage stands. The beach curved round to what is now Salamanca Place.

The cottage was originally an outbuilding for the Commissariat Store but, in 1828–29, it was converted for William Parramore, private secretary to Governor Arthur. It was he who, in December 1824, wrote unpleasantly about Maria Lord (p81).

His letter was to his fiancée **Thirza Cropper** (1798–1852), a school mistress at Caen, Normandy, whom he had met before his arrival in Tasmania in 1823 and corresponded with until she arrived in Hobart in 1827, at about the time he was appointed to the governor's office. They married at St David's Church. One source suggests that she became governess to the Arthurs' children.

By 1828, the Parramores had a son and, the following year, I am assuming when they had moved into the cottage, little William died, so the cottage got off to a bad start. Looking at it, somewhat altered and restored since Thirza's day, through glass, and almost craning your neck, allows you to imagine her misery. And her husband was not to escape the odium of having worked closely with Governor Arthur, but he held a number of government appointments until she died in 1852, aged 54.

Governor Eardley-Wilmot died in the cottage in 1847 – broken, it is said, by his dismissal and the rumours behind it of his licentious behaviour. Since he was himself such an inveterate gossip, it is not surprising that he should have been its victim. And it seems that the cottage was one of the places where he housed guests about whom gossip was spread. The diarist Boyes wrote of a conversation with the Colonial Secretary in which he described the Governor's

Great courtesy and fondness for the younger part of the fair sex. Barrow and his wife and one or two of her sisters were staying at the Govt. Cottage. Sir E. had succeeded in establishing a friendly understanding with girls – sat on

the sofa with them and occasionally condescended to pass his arm around their necks, they seemed to enjoy these little innocent familiarities amazingly.

There was damaging gossip in 1845 concerning **Julia Sorell** (1826–1888), she of the notorious mother Elizabeth Kemp Sorell. Although he was said to have taken her to the government lodge at New Norfolk, there is no evidence that there was anything improper between the 18-year-old and the aging grass widower, but that was not the point – reputations rose and fell on indiscretion and loose tongues. In 1846, Julia was engaged to an Eardley-Wilmot son, but that fell through, as did a couple of other prospective engagements. Her later marriage appears in the ‘New Town’ itinerary (p266). There is a portrait of Julia in the Art Gallery.

After the Governor’s death, many proclaimed his innocence, among them Louise Anne Meredith who had received most courteous hospitality at Government House. Governors’ private secretaries lived in the cottage until the new Government House, in its current position, was occupied in 1858.

Having seen one of the oldest surviving buildings of British settlement, the rest of what the museum/gallery offers awaits you.

#### *Aboriginal Gallery:*

- The contemporary copy of the portrait of Mathinna by Bock painted for Jane Franklin
- Traditional reed baskets woven by women
- Examples of food collection, for which women were responsible (p7)
- Shell necklaces, including those continuing to be strung by women Aborigines, particularly on Cape Barren Island
- Photographs of the recording session of traditional songs by Fanny Cochrane Smith (p119), and the facility to listen to the recording
- Feature ‘Heroes of Resistance’ including Walyer (pp32, 112)

#### *Convict Art Gallery:*

- The Female Factories – cases and details

#### *Hobart Colonial Art Gallery:*

- Portraits of colonial women such as Emma, daughter of Maria and Edward Lord
- 1829 or 1834 Portrait of Truggernana (Trukanini) by Duterreau
- 1836 bust of Trukanini
- Portrait of Tanlebonyer (pp112–13)

Of Tasmanian women artists, the work most easily found is that of **Edith Holmes** (1893–1973) whose ‘Sunset’, when I visited, hung outside the women’s lavatory. In the 1930s she shared a studio at 76 Collins Street with **Mildred Lovett** (1880–1955) (one of her teachers), **Florence Rodway** (1881–1971),

**Dorothy Stoner** (1904–1992), **Ethel Nicholls** (1866–1956) and **Violet Vimpany** (1886–1979). A portrait of Edith by Florence Rodway is also apparently in the gallery, though I have only seen a reprint.

## Town Hall

Across Argyle Street, the colonnaded Town Hall is the next venue along the south side of Macquarie Street. It should not be confused with the City Hall (1911) beyond Montgomery's Hotel on the other side of Macquarie Street, where Nellie Melba gave a recital during her 1924 farewell tour of Tasmania (pp301–2).

Lieutenant Governor David Collins pitched his tent about here in 1804; that of his mistress Hannah Power and her husband was just behind (p13). Huts soon replaced tents along what was to become Macquarie Street. This is also part of the site of the Government House complex until 1858. The Town Hall was completed in 1866 and thereafter held many public and musical events.

Here the Women's Sanitary Association held their well-attended public meeting in 1891 (p203). It can, therefore, be said to have witnessed the beginning of women's political activities in Tasmania.

The celebrated soprano Amy Sherwin gave her farewell concert here in 1898/89. In 1920, Tasmanian composer **Katherine Parker** (Kitty, 1886–1971), who had earlier gone to London to further her career, performed here with her husband Hubert Eisdell during a concert tour of Australia. Her best-known piano piece, 'Down Longford Way' (1928), inspired by her home-place south of Launceston, is included in a CD of her songs and piano music quite easily available on the internet.

In 1924, the potters and cousins Maude Poynter and Violet Mace (p330) held an exhibition here.

## Franklin Square

Cross over Elizabeth Street and you are in Franklin Square. Governors' wives, and non-wives, lived, brought up families, and entertained in Government House here. Because of its name, the statue of her husband, and her boundless activities between 1837 and 1843, Jane Franklin is the most obvious to imagine (Chapters 10, 11, 12). Mathinna lived here too (pp119, 176). Guests included Anna Maria Nixon, and the Bishop and their family when they first arrived in 1843 (p148). **Elizabeth Gould** (née Coxen, 1804–1841), wife of the naturalist and a considerable artist in her own right, gave birth to a son there in 1838; he was named Franklin. Many of her drawings, some of them made at Government House, illustrate her husband's books though the published lithographs of them obscure her name.

Years earlier, in 1808, the intruding Governor Bligh's daughter, Mary Bligh Putland, stayed here until he removed her to save her from the moral turpitude of Collins' mistress Margaret Eddington (pp36–7). From the start



of his visit it was too ramshackle for Bligh himself to stay there. Bligh was not the only one too fastidious to stay at Government House, as Macquarie Hotel will suggest (p245).



24. Old Government House (sketched from the sea),  
by Mary Morton Allport, courtesy of the Allport Library and  
Museum of Fine Arts, Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

The last Governor's wife to live there, between 1847 and 1855, was Caroline Denison (p161). She did not mind the house; going for a drive to what she called the Government Garden, now the Botanical Gardens, she wrote in her journal on 27 January 1847: 'We passed the spot where they had begun to build a new Government house which never was finished; and, pleased as I am with the old house, I am afraid I half covet this, from the exceeding beauty of its situation and views ...' She followed that up with an account of a temporary transformation of the existing house on 19 May:

The lower part of our house is undergoing a strange metamorphosis; every Government House certainly ought to be provided with a ball-room; the one at Launceston has one. Not so this, unfortunately, and the consequence is, that there is a regular framework of boards, kept for the purpose, and put up every year on this occasion, to form a temporary room, joining on to the dining-room; and another, enclosing the front verandah, to make a supper room; and the result of this arrangement is that all our lower rooms, except the drawing-room and little ante-room, will be deprived of the light of day till Monday, by this sad framework of boards coming

in front of their windows. This process is now going on; the dining-room is already darkened, and the library, school-room, and the housekeeper's room, I suppose, will be in the course of to-morrow.

## Hobart Gaol and Gallows

Beyond Franklin Square, you reach Murray Street. On the far side, opposite the Treasury, is the Savings Bank (nos 24–26), established in 1845. This is the site of the former gallows where Mary McLauchlan was hanged in 1830 (p66). In the adjacent few women's rooms of the gaol, Eliza Callaghan in 1822 (p58) and Ann Solomon in 1828 (p63) spent time before women prisoners were transferred to the Female Factory at Cascades in 1828.

## St David's Cathedral

Cross over Macquarie Street, bearing in mind that it is a fast and busy through-road. The first St David's church was a small wooden one erected where Collins was buried and where St David's Park is today, but it blew down in a storm. The second St David's was on the site of today's and later demolished. Today's cathedral was consecrated in 1874.

In the earlier church, families who sought to enhance their status had their own pews; typical were Martha Hayes Whitehead and Mary Hayes Stocker (p40). Anyone who was anyone got married in the church, and then the cathedral. Thirza Cropper and William Parramore, the first occupants of the renovated Governor's Cottage, did in 1827 and Julia Sorell in 1850 (p268). Anna Maria Nixon played the organ there (p148).

## Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts/State Library – 91 Murray Street

The professional artist Mary Morton Allport, who painted the 1842 picture of the regatta (pp142–3) and bemoaned being a domestic drudge (p174), was the matriarch of the family that arrived in 1831; her husband Joseph was a solicitor, and the legal practice, long associated with Emily Dobson's in-laws, still thrives (p247). The Allports' great-grandson, Henry, bequeathed the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts to the people of Tasmania in 1965.

Situated on the ground floor of the State Library, beyond the pleasant coffee shop, it contains the books, paintings, furniture and *objets* collected by members of the family over more than a century, including Mary's paintings and those of her granddaughter **Curzona Allport** (Lily, 1860–1949). Tutored by her grandmother, Curzona then spent many years abroad, studying in England at the height of the art nouveau period and having works hung in the Royal Academy. In Tasmania between 1922 and 1927, she produced watercolour landscapes, such as that on this book's cover, and, at the age of 72 (or 75), she settled in Hobart and set up a print studio.

Some 400 of Curzona's works are kept here, several of them displayed, and 228 available on the website [www.statelibrary.tas.gov.au/collections](http://www.statelibrary.tas.gov.au/collections) – a satisfying armchair browse. Look out for special exhibitions of Tasmanian women artists.

## Macquarie Hotel

151 Macquarie Street, between Murray and Victoria Street, a walk along from the Cathedral, is today, or was when I clocked it, the Sunflower News Agency and takeaway. On the site was once the grandest mansion in Hobart – Birch Castle, or Birch House.

**Sarah Birch** (née Guest, 1792–1868) was the daughter of convicts – of a First Fleet father, and a Second Fleet mother. Like Betty King (p9), **Mary Bateman** was one of the few women convicts sent to Norfolk Island where she married George Guest. When Norfolk Islanders were to be relocated to Tasmania, the Guests, with six children and 300 ewes, pre-empted the move and arrived in 1805. Sixteen-year-old Sarah, who has been described as 'a pretty minx', married the merchant and shipowner Thomas Birch, nearly 20 years her senior, in 1808. In 1815, the captain of one of his vessels discovered Macquarie Harbour, where the notorious penal settlement was to be established, and named Sarah Island and Birch Inlet after his employer's wife. By that same year, increasingly prosperous Thomas had built Birch House.

Birch House vied with Ingle Hall as the first brick building in Hobart. It was, at least, the grandest, being three storeys of unpainted, convict-made, red brick with a flat roof and battlements. It was said there were two cannon on the roof so that Birch could fend off the French, should they attack. So grand was the house, and so unsatisfactory Government House that, in 1817, when Lieutenant Governor William Sorell arrived with Louisa Kent to take up his appointment, they preferred to stay at Birch House, and the same when Governor Macquarie and his wife Elizabeth visited in 1821.

But that year Thomas Birch died suddenly, aged 47, leaving 29-year-old Sarah a widow with six children; the eldest, their twelve-year-old son and heir with learning difficulties ('of imbecile mind'). Sarah married Edmund Hodgson in 1823 and, during the years when her late husband's complicated estate was being sorted out and fought over, the status of Birch House changed. By 1823 it was the Macquarie Hotel. Whether or not Sarah and her family lived there is uncertain, so it is difficult to know if the woman described by those who stayed there was her. Certainly, Dr John Hudspeth of Bowsden (p90) refers to arriving at 'Mrs Birch's establishment' that year to find his goods stored there ransacked.

In August 1829 Elizabeth Fenton arrived at the hotel (p76) where 'commodious rooms' with a little balcony overlooking the water had been reserved for her. Later, she moved to a house further up Macquarie Street, to where it gave way to 'the jungle' and, eventually, to what became the family home in New Norfolk (p310).

Jane Roberts, arriving in Hobart in May 1830 (p78) wrote that the 'Macquarie Hotel is not expensive as an hotel, but becomes so by any length of stay.' She added:

... the mistress of [the hotel] was a clever, active, and exceedingly well-behaved woman. All cannot thrive, even in Van Dieman's land, for her husband was absent on account of pecuniary difficulties; so that the whole arrangement of the house, a family of small children, and the charge of convict servants, fell entirely on her.

By this time, while Sarah was still the owner, the licensee was James Cox – who did have financial difficulties – and Jane was undoubtedly describing Mary Ann Cox who, with her husband, ran the hotel after 1828 though one source erroneously suggests that Sarah Birch married James Cox. The Coxes later moved to Launceston where Mary Ann appears in more detail (p369).

Although Birch House is no longer there, remnants of it can still be seen behind the modern building that has replaced it. And it continues to be the subject of controversial development proposals.

Eventually, in 1849, Sarah Birch Hodgson was released from the financial tangle of Thomas's estate, and came into her own property, including the regency house she had built in 1847, now the luxurious Islington Hotel at 321 Davey Street. One of the owners is the great grandson of Louisa Anne Meredith (p313), so her presence is felt, particularly in the library.

## 167 Macquarie Street (Lalla Rookh)

Continue along the north side of Macquarie Street and cross over Harrington Street. On the corner is the Hobart Macquarie Motor Inn incorporating 167 Macquarie Street which, according to Lindy Scripps who has extensively researched this area, would have been the site next along from the corner. This was the house into which Matilda and John Dandridge moved from Oyster Cove in 1873, taking with them the last of the Aborigines in their care, Trukanini, also known as Lalla Rookh, the name given to the house (pp108, 117). The two adjoining houses were demolished in the late 1960s to make way for the slab of the Motor Inn.

Trukanini had been rather unwell in the winter of 1873 with bronchial trouble and the Dandridges felt she would fare better away from the damp of Oyster Cove. Dandridge himself died in 1874 and Matilda was left as Trukanini's sole carer, though for the next couple of years Trukanini revived and became rather social, appearing in Society and the object of admiration as much as curiosity. She was seen, erroneously, as the last of her race, and was even known as 'Queen Trukanini'.

In May 1876, 64-year-old Trukanini began to foresee her death and on the 8th she seems to have had a stroke. Remembering the fate of William Lanney who died in 1869, and whose corpse had not been treated with respect, she called out, when she regained consciousness, 'Don't let them cut me, but bury

me behind the mountains.’ Her last words, recorded by Matilda Dandridge, took her back to the beliefs of her people. While crowds lined the streets to watch her cortege, she was buried secretly, to protect her remains, in a vault of the Protestant chapel of the Cascades Female Factory. But two years later she was exhumed and, in 1904, her skeleton put on display in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery where, shockingly, it remained until 1947; thereafter it was stored in the vaults there until the year before the ceremony of 1976 (Chronology, Chapter 13).

## **Amy Sherwin**

Cross over Macquarie Street and head down to the bottom of Harrington Street; on the left is the law firm Dobson, Mitchell and Allport. A plaque on the wall by the front door, unveiled in a ceremony in August 2005, reads:

To Honour Madame Amy Sherwin 1855–1935  
The Prima Donna known as ‘The Tasmanian Nightingale’  
Who made her debut in this building, formerly Del Sarte’s Rooms

Madame Sherwin was a Tasmanian soprano who received international acclaim throughout her career.

The plaque links Amy’s career with the Theatre Royal and the Town Hall earlier in this itinerary, and her background in Franklin (p295). Her life story is best told in Judith Bowler’s *Amy Sherwin: The Tasmanian Nightingale* (1982).

## **St David’s Park**

In front of you, facing south, is St David’s Park. This is a pleasing green space, once the earliest burial ground of those who lived and died here after 1804. The first was little Elizabeth Edwards and then the new-born son of Mary Kearley (p17).

## **Cascades Female Factory**

The last site in this itinerary is a fair stretch along the north side of Macquarie Street to where it bends right to Degraives Street – alongside the Hobart Rivulet. This is certainly the most significant women’s site in Tasmania and, in March 2009, the Female Factory Historic Site Ltd, a not-for-profit organisation set up in 1999 to retrieve the site, handed over yards 3 and 4 South (the Matron’s Cottage) to the people of Tasmania.

Years of research and much thought by many have gone into reclaiming this monument to women convicts’ experience and suffering; as the inscription says, ‘Lest We Forget’. I have gratefully drawn on the work of others for the convict chapters in the history section so, on the assumption that you have read them, I do not need to elaborate here on the women’s lives.

Before a visit it is worth going to [www.femalefactory.com.au](http://www.femalefactory.com.au). This will give you an idea of forthcoming and past events and continuing work and publications. Typical of past events are the Rajah Quilt exhibition of 2005; 'Treading the Steps' – a re-enactment in 2006 of the 1829 walk of the *Harmony* convicts and their children from Sullivans Cove to the Factory – the first shipload; and 'Roses from the Heart', a display organised by Christina Henri of women's bonnets recreated by participants worldwide, some convict descendants, of the 25,566 women transported from Britain and Ireland to Australia. There are also regular lectures by researchers.

There are organised tours of the site; and Judith and Chris Cornish also take visitors on Louisa's Walk – a guided journey via a theatre performance into the life of convict Louisa Reagan ([livehistory@hotmail.com](mailto:livehistory@hotmail.com)). Attached to the site is a shop selling souvenirs, some of them edible, which allow you to contribute financially to the project.

In spite of so much activity, this is not an obvious tourist site – you may be the only visitor there, and simply standing among the remains or sitting in the garden overlooking them allows you to use your imagination.