

Oatlands Supreme Court House and Collections

Access and Interpretation Plan

Volume 2

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Court House c1828



Anna Gurnhill
People and Place

Mobile: 0400 843 858

Email: anna_gurnhill@yahoo.com.au

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1. HISTORICAL SETTING

1.1 SETTLEMENT AND HISTORY OF OATLANDS

The earliest known history of the Oatlands area is that of Richard Lemon, the first of the notorious bushrangers of Van Diemen's Land, who roamed the area between 1806 and 1808 (Weeding, 1988: 2).

Governor Macquarie is said to have been the 'real founder' of Oatlands, traveling between Hobart and the north of the colony on horseback with his wife in 1811. At this time, he saw the need for a road linking the southern and northern regions of Van Diemen's Land (Weeding, 1988: 2). Macquarie recorded the area as being a 'jungle with fine springs of fresh water' (Weeding, 1988: 2). Following this journey, Surveyor James Meehan was sent back to survey a road between Hobart and Port Dalrymple in the north.

It was during Macquarie's second visit to the area, in 1821 that Oatlands was named. It is said that the land reminded Macquarie of his native Scotland, where good crops of Oats were grown (Weeding, 1988: 3). Another theory offered by Weeding (1975: 1) for the naming of the town is that it is named after the township of that name in the County of Surrey, England.

Even before the township of Oatlands was laid out, several settlers occupied land grants in the district, including Thomas Salmon, James Weeding, Joseph Mackersey and Thomas Anstey (Weeding, 1988: 4).

Oatlands was initially established as one of the four military stations in the colony at the time (Sharland, 1983: 1). However, the settlement did not remain an exclusively military one, as settlers were already established in the area (Sharland, 1983: 2). The two aspects, of free and convicted, developed simultaneously in the progress of Oatlands, making it a unique feature of the township.

In 1825 the first detachment of troops were sent to Oatlands, though this was a mere handful of men from H.M 3rd Regiment Foot (Bufs) under the control of Ensign Thomas Everden (Sharland, 1983: 2).

Sharland (1983: 4) states that 'the military and central colonial administration played an extremely significant role in the early years of settlement. The military were responsible not only for the administration of the developing town but also for the protection and discipline of the early settlers, both free men and convicts'. The primary purpose of the military was to supervise and discipline the convicts, including those who were labouring on buildings and roads, and those in chain gangs working on the main line of road between Hobart and Launceston (Sharland, 1983: 6).

In 1826 Lt.-Gov. Arthur initiated the Police District Act, dividing up the colony into police districts. In addition to the military detachment at Oatlands, the Governor appointed a district field police force there. These men were located in the township, and were mostly emancipated or ticket of leave convicts (Sharland, 1983: 7).

At this time, Arthur 'resolved on the founding of Oatlands that Thomas Anstey should be appointed the first Police Magistrate', one of nine Police Magistrates in the district (Weeding, 1988: 4). Anstey had been in the district since 1823.

Anstey was a man of common sense with a kindly nature, which never allowed him to become cruel (Weeding, 1988: 4). Weeding (1988: 4) states that Anstey 'even succeeded in winning the trust and affection of the convicts who were assigned to him'. Anstey remained in this position until 1833, when he retired due to ill health.

The presence of the two forces of military and police force was an incentive for free settlers and their families to settle in the town and district.

Sharland (1983: 7) states that 'perhaps the most important feature in the initial years of the township was the role that the engineer department and convicts played in its development. Through a convict workforce, the colonial administration provided an infrastructure for the island and the interior stations like Oatlands benefited considerably from the extensive programme of public works undertaken during the first decades of settlement'.

It was not until 1827, that the township of Oatlands began to develop. In this year, 35 skilled tradesmen were sent to the area to lay the foundations of the new village (Von Stieglitz, 1960: 42). During the first years of the township, Government buildings and public works were the main focus of construction (Sharland, 1983: 4). Following Macquarie's suggestion, nearly all the buildings were constructed of local stone, or brick.

A gaol was established, and buildings constructed for the gaoler and the overseer of the chain gang which was working on the roads (VonStieglitz, 1960: 42). Very soon, the initial barracks established were too small and a new building was built to accommodate them in 1829.

Oatlands was the home of the colony's most unpopular public servant, Solomon Blay, the hang-man. It is said that if Blay was required for an execution in either Hobart, 50 miles to the south, or Launceston, 70 miles to the north, he would walk, as no coachman would take him (Weeding, 1975: 6).

Von Stieglitz (1960: 43) states that 'very respectable people had applied to the government for building blocks or, as they were called then 'locations on which to erect houses', and places to build shops, and there was plenty of good, cheap building material close at hand'. Clay, suitable for brickmaking, was readily available, excellent quality freestone was being worked in the quarries, and shingles and palings were split for the new buildings.

C.1860 the Municipality of Oatlands was formed, as the third rural municipality in Tasmania to be proclaimed (Von Stieglitz, 1960: 59).

The 1830s and '40s saw the main phase of development in the town, with an increase in the free population, attributed to the economic success of pastoralism (Sharland, 1983: 25). By the mid 1840s the town was well established and had made substantial progress from its beginnings in 1827.

By 1833 Oatlands, as a Government outpost, consisted of 20 dwellings, the majority of which housed officials, including the Police Magistrate, catechist, doctor, surveyor and the school

teacher. By 1835, due to the fact that many tradesmen were attracted to the town, Oatlands had grown to almost 200 dwellings (Weeding, 1975: 2), including seven hotels, stores, breweries, wind and steam driven flour mills, all of which were thriving off the rural economy (Williams, 2003: 3).

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Oatlands became one of the primary wool-growing regions in Tasmania. By the late nineteenth century, with the development of advanced transport systems, the need for Oatlands to become a major centre had passed, and the rapid rise of the settlement began to decline (Williams, 2003: 3).

The development of the military precinct at Oatlands demonstrates its perceived importance as a central capital of Van Dieman's Land (Williams, 2003: 3).

By 1859 the former Barracks had been converted to a school. With the exception of the Gaol, School and Police Reserves, the precinct was sold to individuals (Williams, 2003: 3).

Oatlands developed into a flourishing town in the 1870s after the Imperial Regiments had been withdrawn (Weeding, 1975: 2).

Today, Oatlands has the largest number of sandstone buildings within a township setting in Australia, comprising 138 buildings. It is also said to have the largest collection of pre-1837 buildings in Australia (Reed and Hepper, 1998: 9).

Other buildings originally within the military precinct which relate to the Court House include the Gaoler's Residence, Watch House, Superintendent's Cottage, Commandant's House and Orderley's Stables, 1825 Barracks, 1827 Barracks, 1836 Barracks, 1849 Barracks, Roads Office, Commissariat, Guard House, Sentry boxes, Sundial and stocks, Lumber yard and Carpenter's shop, Church, and the Constable's cottage/hangman's cottage.

1.2 THE OATLANDS SUPREME COURT HOUSE

Bent's *Almanac* of 1825 describes Oatlands as an undeveloped site (Bent 1825:53). However, in the following year the founding of Oatlands was formalised, when Governor George Arthur divided the colony into nine Police Districts, and appointed Thomas Anstey as Police Magistrate of the Oatlands district (Ross 1830:13).

Arthur deployed the Royal Staff Corps, with 35 skilled tradesmen (von Stieglitz 1960:42) to begin clearing the town site, to erect the government buildings and mark out streets. The soldier's barracks was the first building in the township. The first formal survey of the town site was undertaken by Surveyor William Sharland in August 1827 (TLD map M19). In 1829, Widowson (1829:108-10) described the township as:

The original road runs through the township of Oatlands, a few sod huts mark the site of the place. Only a few soldiers are to be seen, and a miserable gang of prisoners working in chains.

From 1825-1859 the Oatlands Military Precinct (OMP) was the government reserve which housed the buildings from which the Military, Convict, Police, Commissariat and Ordinance departments administered their operations in the interior of Van Diemen's Land (VDL). This 5.5

hectare site once contained more than 30 government buildings, 6 of which remain, with the rest comprising an important archaeological site. These sites are significant remnants of, and links to, Oatlands as a key colonial settlement in the formation of present day Tasmania.

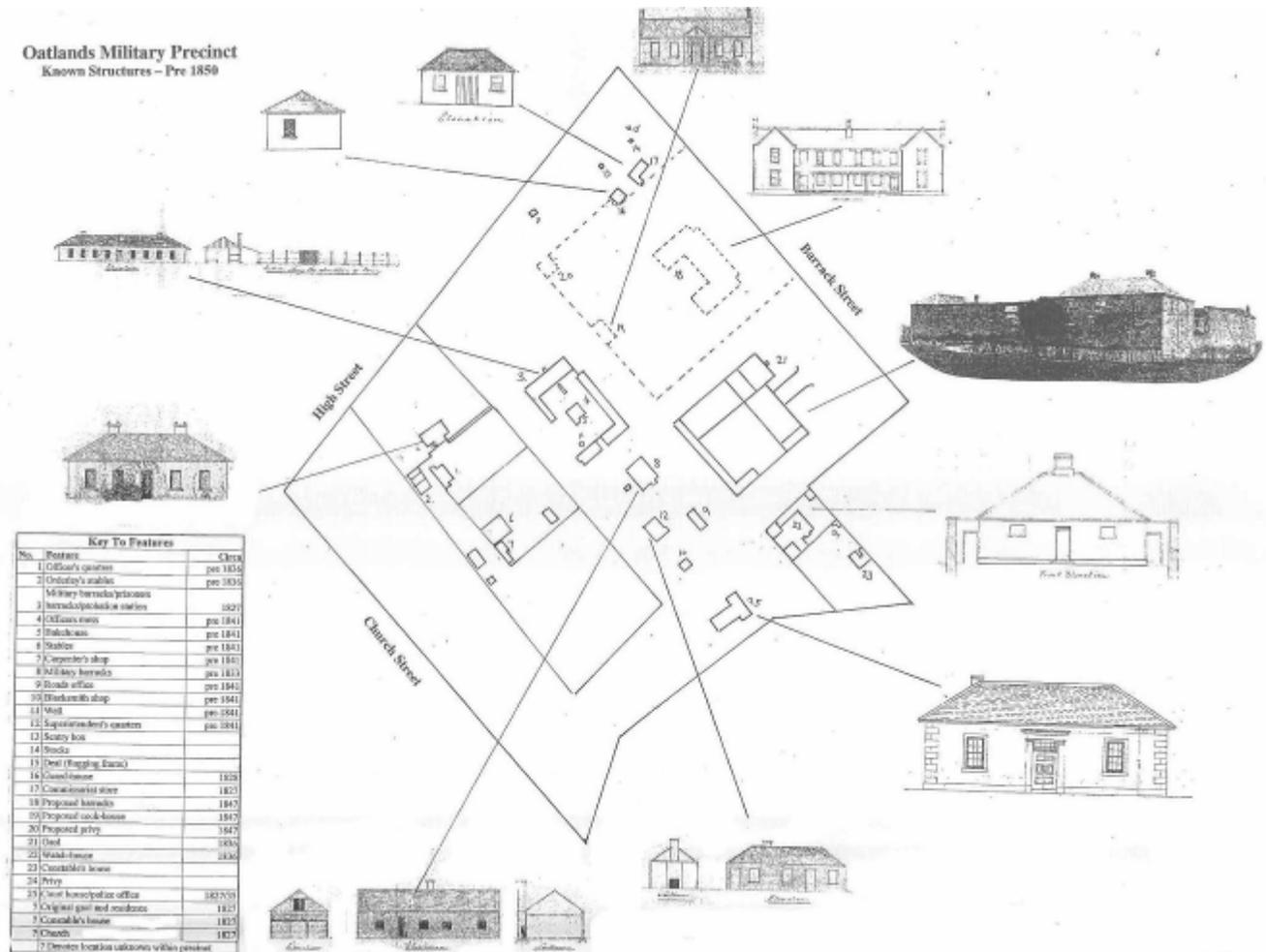


Figure 1: Oatlands Military Precinct Known Structures – Pre 1859 (Williams B., 2004, SM C)

The central hall of the court house was built in 1827 as a police office and chapel (Williams, 2005a: 2). This one-roomed hall is one of the oldest remaining buildings in Oatlands, and served as the police office, court house and chapel. The front of the building faced south, and the front entrance originally consisted of a gothic front door.

Local sandstone was taken from the shores of Lake Dulverton, and this formed the basic building material (Scott and Furphy, n.d.: 8).

The convicts who constructed the Court House were otherwise employed on the road gangs in the area. They wore leg-irons during their work. One of these men was McIntosh, a mason sentenced to the road gang (Cantwell, 2003: 1).

'I believe it will be found to be the cheapest work of the kind ever performed by Government: - it having been erected and covered in by two men wearing their irons the whole time, and who would otherwise have been employed during those three or

four months in breaking stones on the road'. - Police Magistrate, Thomas Anstey, writing to the Colonial Secretary on 29 November 1829 (Cantwell, 2003: 1).

Cantwell (2003: 1) states that 'when the building was almost completed, it was found that no official authority had ever been issued for its erection. William Pike, the catechist, and Anstey both affirmed that they had been authorized through the Private Secretary to erect a small building in pise but that stone had proved a cheaper and readier medium'.

In its early years, the building was the most important Government structure in Oatlands. It was the place where men of all ages stood trial and were sentenced for a wide range of crimes, some of whom paid the supreme penalty with their lives. Prisoners awaiting trial were kept in cells near the back door. In addition, for more than two decades from its construction, church services are recorded as being well attended in the Court House (Weeding, 1988: 53).

In 1828, plans for the Military Precinct, bounded by Church, High and Barrack Streets and the Esplanade, show that the area was enclosed by a fortifying stone wall – in excess of a kilometre in length (AOT PWD 266/1531). However, archaeological evidence suggests that this was never built (Williams, B., Pers. Comm., 2006).

In 1832 Sharland surveyed 500 acres of allotments with 50 miles of streets (Williams, 2003: 3), believing that the location of Oatlands, half-way between Hobart and Launceston, would one day result in Oatlands being proclaimed the capital (Weeding, 1988: 9).

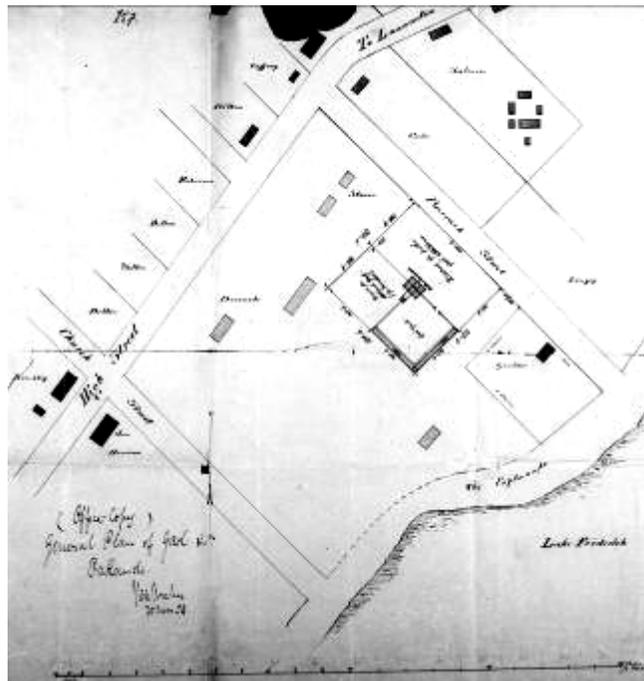


Figure 2: The Oatlands Military Precinct c.1834. The Court House is shown on the Esplanade. (AOT CSO 1/691/15206:157).

In February 1834, correspondence to the Colonial Secretary states that the Oatlands Police Office lacked a room for 'private examination', as well as space for the Clerk, record storage and to store stolen property (AOT CSO1/566/12637). Once these rooms were constructed, the northern wall became the front façade of the building, and the former entrance on its

southern side was filled to house the window that was formerly in the northern wall (Williams, 2005a: 2).

In 1834, Colonial Engineer John Lee-Archer was instructed to undertake a survey of the Oatlands public buildings (CSO 1/741/16037:189-193).

Lee-Archer's report dated 27 June 1834 (CSO 1/741/16037:192) shows the layout of the Court House at that time – the central hall, 30 by 20 feet and the location of the bench and table. This plan also shows the proposed new rooms at the rear (now the front) of the building for the accommodation of the Police Magistrate.

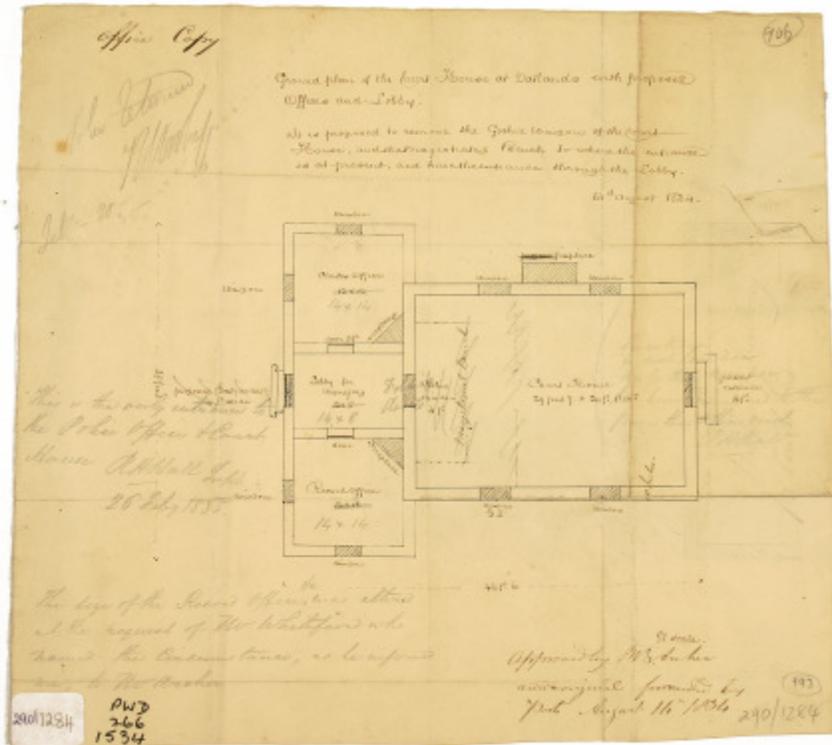


Figure 3: The first detailed plan of the proposed extension to the Oatlands Court House, August 1834 (AOT PWD 266/1534).

It is unclear, however, if these rooms were there at the time, as it shows chimneys to the side of the building. A year later, Lee-Archer reported that the corner chimneys in these rooms had been taken down (CSO 1/741/16037:145) and rebuilt in 1836. This plan therefore probably indicates the proposed rooms, which had certainly been built by the end of 1835. This report also describes the shingling, wall and glass repairs required as well as the batten-and-rail dwarf fence around the rear of the Court House.

Lee-Archer's report of a year later (November 1835, CSO 1/741/16037) described a complete renovation of the building – a circular wagon-headed ceiling of lathe and plaster, with a cornice, had been installed. The flagged floor had been taken-up and re-laid. An elevated circular platform for the Magistrate had been added, as had a stone mantel, new skirtings and architraves and new window sashes and frames installed. A flagged pathway to the entrance had been added. The Police Magistrate's rooms, although less than a year old, were also renovated at the time, with new chimneys, repaired ceilings and cornices, and

floors and skirtings made-good. A brick privy was also built, which is shown on the 1836 plan. This report also describes the fancy dwarf batten-and-rail fence, with moulded post-caps which was built at the front of the Court House (Williams, 2005b: 10)

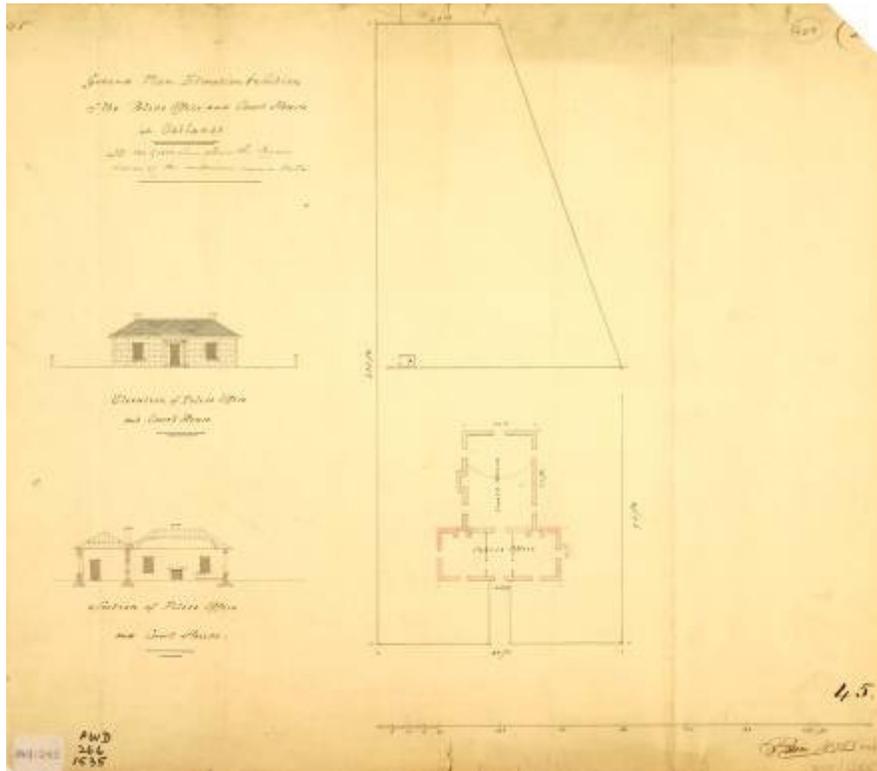


Figure 4: Plan of proposed extensions to the Oatlands Court House, August 1836 (AOT PWD 266/1535).

Outbuildings were also associated with the Oatlands Court House. It is assumed from plans (AOT PWD 266/1535) that a substantial fence or wall was constructed around the allotment. A small privy was also built to the south-east of the building, and stables were also constructed on the allotment, in its south-western corner (Williams, 2005a: 5). However, the stables may date from later use periods.

In 1835 the work going on at the Court House involved four carpenters, one rough carpenter, one wheelwright, three stone masons, one plasterer, one labourer, and one painter. A week later, this had increased to six carpenters and two wheelwrights, along with all the others from the previous week. These workers were busy making sashes and frames for court house windows, fixing the new ceiling, preparing lightwood for a pulpit, making fence gates, working, polishing and laying the flagged passage, glazing windows and carving a chimney piece (Cantwell, 2003: 6).

By 1836, the precinct boasted a new gaol, gaoler's residence (to replace the 1828 buildings) and watch-house – all significant sandstone buildings. New soldier's barracks had been built and the court-house and old barracks had been extended (AOT CSO 1/741/16037:189-96).

By 1841, superintendent's quarters, blacksmith's and carpenter's shops and a roads office had been built, as well as a collection of associated outbuildings, such as privies and cook-

houses. In 1841 the original soldier's barracks were converted to a probation station capable of accommodating 228 convicts (Brand, 1990:195). At this time, the gaol was the most significant regional gaol in the colony, enclosing over half an acre, comprising 33 solitary cells and 7 wards (Williams 2004).

The Police Magistrate continued to supervise the convicts employed in Oatlands in Government service as well as those in private employ, administering justice when necessary (Sharland, 1983: 10). The jurisdiction of the Police Magistrate and later the Supreme Court judges extended over a large area.

In 1840 the significance of the Oatlands township was enhanced when Lt.Gov. Franklin decided to include Oatlands in the Supreme Court circuit (Sharland, 1983: 12-13):

'The attention of the Government has been frequently drawn to the miserable condition of the gaols in the interior, with the exception of Oatlands and Richmond, which are merely watchhouses and are used only for police purposes. In consequence of the insecure state of these gaols and of the necessity of having prisoners tried at either extremity of the island... there is now... the near prospect of appointment of civil jurors to try criminal cases. In the event I shall immediately propose that a gaol delivery be held periodically at Oatlands... and to use the Gaol for custody of all prisoners committed for trial by the Magistrate within a circuit of 30 miles around Oatlands'

'I am now directed to state that it is absolutely necessary for some temporary arrangement be made for holding the court at Oatlands... and after a trial of three or four sessions the arrangement for the Court sitting at Oatlands may be beneficial as contemplated. It is intended that a proper Court House be erected there by contract... until then make the necessary alterations to the gaol'.

During the depression years, the gaol at Oatlands became extremely crowded, as were the gaols at Hobart Town and Launceston. It was thought that by holding Supreme Court sessions in Oatlands, the situation would be relieved (Sharland, 1983: 42). In 1841, with the upgrading of the building to a Supreme Court, the Judges Chamber was added, along with a holding room, to (what is now) the rear of the building (southern side). In addition, at this time cells were added to the building's western wall, though this was only a temporary measure (Williams, 2005a: 5).

Supreme Court hearings were held in Oatlands initially on a temporary basis, in the police office, on the fourth Monday in the months of January, April, July and October (Sharland, 1983: 13). Given this, Oatlands quickly became a town which was of central importance to the colonial Government's administration of the interior. This development illustrates a swing away from military involvement, the dispensing of military juries, and the progression towards a more civil administration.

A suitable Court House was to be built at Government expense if these hearings proved to be of public benefit to the population of the district (Sharland, 1983: 42).

In the 1840s, plans for a new Court House were considered several times as the police office was deemed inappropriate, being too small and having no separate chambers for judges and jurors. In 1844 the Colonial Secretary received an application requesting that a Court

House be built in Oatlands. However, due to expense, these plans were all abandoned and the township remained without a proper Court House (Cantwell, 2003: 2).

The building was used for the purpose of a Court House until the 1860s when court house sittings were discontinued. In the 1880s, the Oatlands Council Chambers were built, with a court room included.

Oatlands Military Precinct 1845

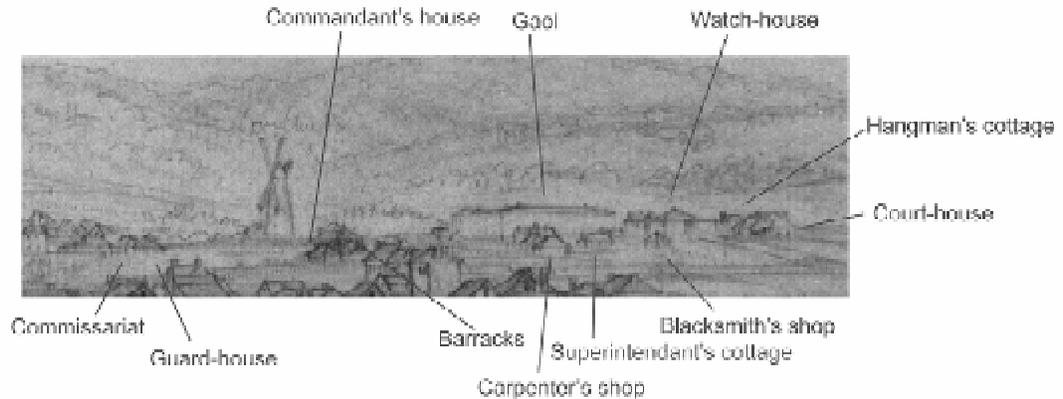


Figure 5: Oatlands Military Precinct 1845

Optimism in the idea that Oatlands would become the interior capital of Tasmania was evident with the array of administrative buildings erected in the military precinct up to 1850. By the end of that decade, however, the precinct had been largely abandoned as an administrative centre (Williams, B., 2004, SMC).

In the 1860s, the Court House was considered to be the most adaptable site for ballot boxes and polling booths for the Legislative Council (Sharland, 1983: 46). By this time, the Police Magistrate was John Whitefoord.

As the civil administrators and the Police Force dealt with the escaped convicts and overcrowded gaol, the numbers of military in the township were reduced (Sharland, 1983: 51). In 1856 the detachment of troops at Oatlands were withdrawn, facilitating the total succession of civil administration. Oatlands was still the central military post, capable of administering its own development and future.

In 1863 Supreme Court sittings were discontinued. From 1862 until after the completion of the present Council Chambers in 1881, it was also the Municipal Administration Centre.

In 1891 the court house and offices were said, by the Inspector of Public Buildings, to be: 'in a very bad state of repair – roof, floors, walls, plastering etc being so bad that I consider it would only be a waste of money to repair same, besides they are so low and the floor levels below the ground outside' (Cantwell, 2003: 6).

At this time it was decided to sell the building, with the Council to have proceeds of the sale (Cantwell, 2003: 6).

The Oatlands Institute then bought the building. This Institute was founded in 1842, 'to provide facilities to those people with a yen for knowledge' (Cantwell, 2003: 7). The building was set up with reading rooms, including a wide range of books, reference works, leading Australian and overseas periodicals and newspapers. The Institute also provided lectures (Cantwell, 2003: 7). In later years, a public library and a separate reading room were established at the Oatlands Town Hall.

Sometime between 1920 and 1930 the Thomas family bought the building as a family home. William and Elizabeth Thomas had previously lived at Callington Mill, and brought with them to the Court House a large family. Their eldest daughter, Mary Louisa gave birth to all of her eight children at her parent's Court House, in the lake side front bedroom. All other family celebrations such as marriage receptions were at the Court House. William Thomas would collect any goods from the Oatlands Railway Station with a horse and cart. The last surviving child of William and Elizabeth passed away in 1986 in Hobart.

The majority of collections held by SMC in relation to the Court House date from this period of ownership and occupation.

In 1978 the National Trust bought the Court House with National Estate funding for \$7,000. In 2005 the building was acquired by the Southern Midlands Council.

2. INTERPRETATION – AIMS AND APPROACHES

2.1 WHY INTERPRET?

The *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS, 2005: 12) states that interpretation means 'all the ways of presenting the cultural significance of a place. Interpretation may be a combination of the treatment of the fabric,... the use of and activities at the place, and introduced explanatory material. It may include exhibitions, events, publications, art works and other forms of expression, and is not confined to the place'.

The *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS, 2005: 74) also states that 'the cultural significance of many places is not readily apparent, and should be explained by interpretation. Interpretation should enhance understanding and enjoyment, and be culturally appropriate'.

The Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) and the Department of Industry, Resources and Science (2001: 21) explain that 'interpretation, broadly, describes the process of helping people in their discovery and appreciation of heritage. Effective interpretation requires the combination of information (about why the place is special), education, inspiration and entertainment. It deals in stories, ideas and experiences which explain, guide, reveal, arrange, question, share and provoke'. Interpretation enables management and staff to influence the way that visitors experience a site.

The Tasmanian Experience Strategy of 2002 emphasizes the need 'to create extraordinary and unforgettable holiday experiences by focusing on presentation, interpretation and customer engagement. Connection with place, quality infrastructure and personalized service are vital to the success of any holiday, but it is interpretation and engagement that make the difference between a pleasant break and an unforgettable experience' (Tourism Tasmania, 2002: 1). Further, 'experiences are memorable events or interactions that engage people in a personal way and connect them with a place... (and) connection with place is the foundation with all Tasmanian experiences.' (Tourism Tasmania, 2002: 4).

Larson (2001: 18) further stresses the need for interpretation by stating that 'if audiences were simply seeking knowledge, most would have little reason to experience the site at all'. Here, he identifies the difference between information and interpretation, where interpretation goes beyond stating just facts and figures and focusing only on tangible products of history, to instead consider also 'the intangible meanings those tangible resources present. Intangible meanings include, among others: systems, processes, relationships, values, ideas and beliefs' (Larson, 2001: 18).

It is important that interpretation recognizes that visitors bring with them unique and personal ways of 'seeing' and understanding the site they are visiting. Bennett (1998: 22) argues that 'we cannot vouchsafe museums or heritage sites a singular meaning. For the ways in which they are experienced and made sense of will vary in accordance with the differing historical cultures of their visitors'. They can also vary for each individual. Similarly, Meinig (1979: 33) states that:

Even though we gather together and look in the same direction at the same instant, we will not – cannot see – the same landscape. We may certainly agree that we see many of the same elements – houses, roads, trees, hills -... but such facts take on meaning only through association... Any landscape is comprised not only of what lies before our eyes, but what lies in our heads.

By providing a variety of interpretive activities and choices for visitors at the Oatlands Supreme Court House, the different ways in which visitors make meaning of the site will be accommodated, and possibilities for visitors to relate to and connect with the site will be improved. This idea is further discussed below, through the notion of making interpretation 'relevant'.

Interpretation is an important part of any sustainable tourism operation. Effective interpretation can ensure that benefits are gained by the local community, the visitor, the place itself and the operation.

James Carter, writing from Scotland in 2001 (4) states that 'good interpretation helps visitors to explore and understand a little more about the places they visit. In doing so, it adds depth to tourists' experience making a visit something more than just a trip to see the sights'. Further, 'it visitors feel that a place is interesting or exciting, they are more likely to recommend it to others. Good interpretation makes for satisfied customers, and satisfied customers are good for business' (Carter, 2001: 4).

2.2 INTERPRETATION AS A TOOL TO ENHANCE UNDERSTANDING

Australia ICOMOS (2005: 74) argue that approaches which may enhance understanding at heritage places include:

- Interpreting the place from the perspective of human use and experience;
- Interpreting the 'layers' of history and the impacts on the environment; and
- Interpreting the place in relation to current events.

2.2.1 Tilden's Approach

Freeman Tilden, the first interpreter, argues that interpretation is 'an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information' (Tilden, 1977: 8). Tilden (1977: 8) further identifies six principles of interpretation, as follows:

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate to what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction but provocation.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than to any phase.
6. Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

2.2.3 Hein's Constructivist Approach

The key components to Hein's (1998: 34) constructivist learning rely on the notions of education or learning that is relevant to the audience, and include participation of the audience:

- 'Learning requires active participation of the learner in both the way that the learner is employed and in the product of the activity, the knowledge that is acquired. (This) includes ways for learners to use both their minds and their hands, to interact with the world, to manipulate it, to reach conclusions, experiment, and increase their understanding'.
- 'The conclusions reached by the learner are *not* validated by whether or not they conform to some external standard of truth, but whether they 'make sense' within the constructed reality of the learner'.

Notions of the 'constructed reality of the learner' have parallels with the earlier notions of Ham and Tourism Tasmania regarding the importance of relevance in interpretation.

Hein (1998: 165) states that 'when planning exhibitions or programs, museum staff should consider multiple ways to involve their audience by exploiting all the senses', including musical, spatial, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences as well as other learner capabilities. In addition, the challenge for a constructivist model of learning is to find experiences that stimulate and challenge the audience. 'The organizing principles will inevitably permit visitors to pick and choose what subject they want to pursue, or even what branch of the subject' (Hein, 1998: 38).

Further supporting the notion of participatory interpretation, Regnier, Gross and Zimmerman (1994: 6) state that 'interpretive programs should involve the senses, challenge the intellect, and touch the emotions'.

The need for interpretation to challenge visitors is also recognized by Larson (2001: 21), who argues that 'interpretation cannot just pander to existing perspectives. It also has the responsibility to provoke new feelings and new thinking... Provocation provides access to greater complexity, understanding, appreciation and attachment... (and that interpretation strives) for the ah-ha moment, or the statement, 'I never thought of that before'.

Carter (2001: 5) states that there is an important difference between interpretation and information: 'information just gives facts, but interpretation can provoke ideas, perhaps even jolt people into a completely new understanding of what they have come to see'.

2.2.4 The TORE Approach

Sam Ham has identified four main components of interpretation: that it is Themed, Organised, Relevant and Enjoyable. This has been further developed by Tourism Tasmania as the TORE approach.

Good interpretation must be **Themed**, that is, it must relate to the message of significance of the place or object being interpreted. Interpretation is thematic if it has a major point. Ham (1992:23) states that 'presentations which don't have themes often beg the question 'so what?'.... But presentations which do have themes seem to be going somewhere, and it's easy for us to organise all the facts and supportive details in our minds because we can stick them to the theme... Themes not only help interpreters select from their wealth of knowledge which few facts and concepts to put into their presentations, but if they reveal in advance what the theme is, and how it will be organised, their audiences also benefit in terms of understanding and comprehension'. Ham (1992:33) further argues that 'when our communication isn't thematic, it seems unorganized, difficult to follow and less meaningful to our audiences. This is simply because they can't easily see where the communication is going, and they don't know how to connect all the information they're receiving'.

Carter (2001: 6) argues that themes can assist in focusing and structuring activities, as well as by providing a clear thread, 'rather than a series of unconnected facts. This makes it more interesting and more memorable'.

Interpretation must also be **Organised**. That is, it must be presented in a way which is easy to follow. Any interpretive strategies should be organised around five or fewer main points or ideas in order to be interesting and understandable (Ham, 1992: 20).

Interpretation must also be **Relevant**, or meaningful, to its audiences. Ham (1992:12) argues that 'when information is meaningful it's because we're able to connect it to something already inside our brains. Meaningful information is said to have context, because we understand it in the context of something we already know'. Tilden (1977: 13) argues that 'the visitor is unlikely to respond unless what you have to tell, or to show, touches his personal experience, thoughts, hopes, way of life, social position or whatever else'. Hein (1998: 156, 176) states that 'it is not only difficult, but almost impossible to learn something without making an association with familiar categories', and that 'people need to connect to what is familiar, but learning, by definition, goes beyond the known; it leads to new agreeable places'.

Larson (2001: 19) argues similarly, stating that 'the role of interpretation is to facilitate connections between the meanings of the resource and interests of the visitor. Interpretation does not provide answers: it poses questions. Interpretation does not teach: it offers opportunities for emotional and intellectual connections. Interpretation does not educate: it provokes increasingly sophisticated appreciation and understanding. Interpretation does not tell people how it is: it reveals personal significance... Central to effective interpretation is the understanding that resources possess a plurality of meanings'. Larson (2001:22) further believes that 'new meanings and perspectives should be introduced as an addition to, or in relationship to existing meanings and perspectives. Interpreters first establish relevance and then provoke new understanding and appreciation'.

Moscardo (2001: 21) also stresses the importance of providing personal connections in interpretation, stating that 'it is clear that being able to find or make a personal link is a major factor influencing visitor satisfaction with a tour experience'. Moscardo (2001: 21-22) provides the following suggestions as ways to make personal connections:

- Using humour, analogies and metaphors which build links between the interpretive content and the everyday experience of the visitor;
- Giving visitors the opportunity to ask questions;
- Telling stories (particularly those which have characters who can be related to);
- Giving visitors opportunities to interact, participate and make choices about their interpretive experiences; and
- Challenging visitors and giving them information about what they can do in their everyday lives.

The fourth essential quality of good interpretation is that it is **Enjoyable**. This is not the main goal of interpretation, but is one of its essential qualities. As stated in the Port Arthur Historic Site Interpretation Plan (PAHSMA, 2001: 7) 'this principle refers to the ways in which serious ideas and information can be best communicated to ensure that our visitors want to stay around to listen, and are helped to remember what we tell them... Most importantly, (enjoyable communication) should be friendly and participatory'. Moscardo (2001: 22) argues that participatory interpretation also provides a way to personalize the experience for visitors.

2.3 TOURISM TASMANIA

2.3.1 Tasmanian Experience Strategy

In 2002, Tourism Tasmania produced the 'Tasmanian Experience Strategy', a document outlining the direction of future tourism in Tasmania, intending to integrate Tasmania's three core appeals (nature, cultural heritage and fine food and wine) 'to create extraordinary and unforgettable holiday experiences by focusing on presentation, interpretation and customer engagement' (Tourism Tasmania, 2002: 1). In this document they stress that 'connection with place, quality infrastructure and personalised service are vital to the success of any holiday, but it is interpretation and engagement that make the difference between a pleasant break and an unforgettable experience' (Tourism Tasmania, 2002: 1).

Unforgettable holiday experiences 'engage visitors with a combination of context and interpretation' (Tourism Tasmania, 2002: 7).

Tourism Tasmania (2003: 7) state that 'an enriched visitor experience is created by combining Tasmania's three core appeals (nature, cultural heritage and fine wine and food) with community enthusiasm and involvement, highly developed interpretive skills, local knowledge and a passion for place'.

Tourism Tasmania (2002: 10) further state that 'an exceptional and unforgettable holiday experience combines place, infrastructure, service and interpretation. Interpretation provides the engagement that turns a holiday into an experience'.

At the centre of the Tasmanian Experience Strategy is the need to:

- deliver engaging, personalised experiences;

- connect visitors to people and place; and
- create unforgettable memories that motivate repeat visitation, and word of mouth promotion.

It is intended that the Oatlands Supreme Court House will contribute to the exceptional and unforgettable holiday experience for visitors in Tasmania through its quality of interpretation. Thus, bringing benefits of tourism, including economic, social and conservation, to both the Court House itself, and to the wider context of Tasmania.

2.3.2 Thematic Interpretation

Building on Ham's notion that interpretation must be themed, Tourism Tasmania (2005a: 6-7) state that a theme 'is a take-home message; it's the moral of the story or main conclusion a visitor takes away from an interpretive activity... or device... In thematic interpretation we understand that visitors are going to forget most or all of the colourful facts we present to them. But we know that if the conclusion they draw from all those facts is meaningful and important, it will provoke them to thought and they'll continue to think about the conclusion even when the facts that supported it are long gone from their memory'.

Tourism Tasmania (2005a: 7) further describe thematic interpretation by explaining that 'you might prefer to describe it as wondering, marveling or pondering, however, thinking is what leads the visitor to attach meanings to the thing and the place being interpreted. Meaningful things and places matter to us. And that's what thematic interpretation at its best, does: it causes the visitors to make meaning'.

Thematic interpretation is based on 'strategic communication about the places you interpret for visitors and the kind of experience you can offer' (Tourism Tasmania, 2005: 6). Further, Tourism Tasmania (2005a: 6) states that 'strategic interpretation is purposeful. It has an intended outcome, such as enhancing visitor experiences, promoting your business..., producing positive word-of-mouth advertising, protecting fragile or vulnerable features, or keeping visitors safe from hazards'.

The main purpose of thematic interpretation is to lead visitors to draw conclusions from the facts they are presented with, 'and in doing so, to provoke them to think more deeply about the place, its features and the qualities that make it special. The thinking that visitors do creates meanings and memories of the place' (Tourism Tasmania, 2005a: 11).

Thematic interpretation 'assists in the development and delivery of visitor experiences that have impact well beyond the time your customers spend with you. It enables you to influence their thinking and their impressions of your product after they return home' (Tourism Tasmania 2005a: 2).

In thematic interpretation, 'it's the thinking that matters most to us, not the facts... Thinking is what leads the visitor to attach meanings to the thing and the place being interpreted. Meaningful things and places matter to us' (Tourism Tasmania, 2005a: 4).

2.4 ADDITIONAL AIMS OF COMMUNICATION

In addition to the interpretive approaches outlined above, including those of Tilden, Ham, Hein and Tourism Tasmania, James Carter (2001: 7-8) also offers a range of other aims of communication and interpretation. These include to orientate, inform, entertain, persuade, explain, promote an organisation, influence behaviour, and to develop a sense of place.

Orientating visitors includes making them feel comfortable in their surroundings, by providing them with some locational and geographical knowledge.

Informing visitors is about catering for the small minority of people who enjoy information in addition to interpretation. Ways of doing this can include information or fact sheets.

Carter's concept of entertaining, is similar to that of the TORE approach, outlined above.

Some organisations have a clear objective to persuade people to do something or to influence what they think about something, and this needs to be considered when devising interpretive activities.

The notion of explaining is particularly important where visitors cannot see the whole of the site.

Promotion of an organisation can be an important way to show that the organisation is caring for and managing the site.

Interpretation can be used to influence the ways people act. This can include subtly steering people away from fragile areas.

Involving local people in interpretation, and in thinking about what makes their place special, can help them find a new sense of pride in their area.

2.5 INTERPRETATION AS A CONSERVATION TOOL

Visitors always have an impact on the places they visit, and these impacts can threaten the values and significance of the site - the very reasons why people visit them in the first place. Interpretation can be an important and effective tool of conservation.

Balancing conservation policy and interpretation is always a challenging exercise. However, with careful planning, this can be achieved.

Currently, with the Oatlands Supreme Court House collection in storage, there is no systematic maintenance schedule for the items. By placing the collection in the public eye, there will be an added impetus to ensure that the conservation needs of the collection are met in a more systematic and adequate way.

2.6 RELATED MANAGEMENT DOCUMENTS

2.6.1 Oatlands Court House Conservation Plan (2004)

In his 2004 Conservation Plan for the Oatlands Court House Vincent illustrates that the Court House Committee, in 1981, recommended that interpretation displays for the building should comprise a cell door from the gaol, documentary photographs, a convict bed, police relics, leg-irons, convict arrow bricks and original hinges from the gaol.

In 2000, Grant stated, in his 'Conservation Works Outline' that the most likely use for the building is as an interpretive centre and as Oatlands history room.

2.6.2 Tourism Vision: Oatlands Historic Properties (1998)

The 1998 'Tourism Vision: Oatlands Historic Properties' (Reed and Hepper, 1998: 44) states that the tourism vision for Oatlands is:

'To develop an industry for Oatlands that replaces agriculture as the prime economic generator for the town, provides new employment opportunities for all age groups – and specifically gives hope for the youth of the district. The tourism industry will facilitate the maintenance of the town's intrinsic values and rich cultural heritage'.

Reed and Hepper (1998: 44) suggest that Oatlands develop its future around the notion of 'Romancing the Stone', indicating an active township which adds value to its large number of stone buildings. The main topics they propose under this notion are bushranging, crime and punishment and windmills. The Oatlands Court House and Military Precinct are part of the topic of crime and punishment.

In particular, Reed and Hepper (1998: 52) state that the Court House ought to be restored as a 'working Magistrate's court for the region with the capacity to be used for visitor interpretation as part of guided walks'. They also propose that the Court House be a site for soundscape entertainment, potential use of robotics to interpret courtroom speech, use for occasional 'mock' trials and theatre performances, and the use of basic interpretation such as trial records in the waiting rooms (Reed and Hepper, 1998: 52).

Reed and Hepper (1998: 53-56) suggest potential interpretive activities to link the historical properties of Oatlands of the Court House, Gaoler's Residence, Callington Mill and School House. These activities are guided walks, including a 'hangman's walk'; special events and tours, including festivals, music, theatre, and fine food; and other opportunities such as the enhancement of High Street, offering more visitor services, and directional signs and information.

3. AUDIENCE RESEARCH

The AHC and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (2001: 21) argue that 'the foundation for developing a quality visitor experience is a thorough understanding of the characteristics of your market or visitors. Who are they? Where do they come from? What are their expectations, needs and motivations? How do they want to be informed? What else is important to them?'

In Interpretation Planning, an understanding of the audience is vital to interpretation delivery and outcomes. This is integral to implementing strategies which are relevant, in accordance with the principles of TORE (Tourism Tasmania, 2005). In addition, Regnier, Zimmerman and Gross (1994: 13) state that 'the better you know your audience, the better you can prepare your program'. Larson (2001: 22) further argues that it is important to 'know when a situation is interpretive, and when it is not. A situation is not interpretive when the audience has no interest in opportunities for emotional and intellectual connections to the meanings of the resource'.

Heritage places are a fundamental part of Tasmania's tourism industry. The Tourism Tasmania 'Tasmanian Visitor Survey Data' shows that 32% of tourists to Tasmania visit a publicly open historic house.

Tasmania is attractive as a tourist destination because of a matrix of often competing assets including its built and cultural history, unique environment and gourmet foods. Tourism Tasmania has identified Tasmania as a core visitor appeal. In 2004, 585,600 (78%) of all visitors to the state visited Hobart. Of these, 72% visited one or more historic sites during their stay (Tourism Tasmania, 2005).

Governed by their *Strategic Plan 2002-7* (Objective ED4), SMC's approach to heritage management is largely founded on the recommendations of the *Tourism Vision, Oatlands Historic Properties* report (Reed & Hepper 1998). This document addressed the tourism potential of the principal public heritage buildings in Oatlands. Amongst the key findings were:

- Oatlands visitor numbers were on a steady decrease atypical of Tasmanian heritage destinations
- A lack of cohesive planning in the promotion of the heritage of Oatlands
- The need for effective interpretation and tourism product development

This report found that 55% of visitors were drawn to Oatlands for a heritage experience (exceeding state average) and that 68% of visitors would stay longer if heritage sites were more accessible and better interpreted. The overall finding of this report was that strategic interpretation and promotion of Oatlands heritage sites could be the catalyst to economic development – contributing to a sustainable future for the community through immeasurable flow-on effects.

In 2000, SMC commissioned a team of researchers to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of tourist experiences in the region (Graham, 2007: 7-8). Amongst the key findings of this research was the lack of accessibility and interpretation of Oatlands historic sites. The

Supreme Court House is an example of this. There is currently no regular public access to the building and the on-site interpretation relies on brief plaques, which give little detail of the rich history of that building. Nonetheless, this report concluded that Oatlands does hold potential to promote heritage as a unique product. Careful interpretation planning, and appropriate installations and promotions would convert this under-utilised site into a major heritage asset, engaging tourists and immersing locals of the rich and diverse cultural heritage upon which the region was founded.

The demand for heritage tourism experiences at Oatlands is supported by Tourism Tasmania's *Tasmanian Visitor Survey* data. This data shows that 32% of tourists who visit Tasmania visit a publicly open historic house. Of the visitors to Oatlands, 58% have visited a historic house somewhere in Tasmania – this is evidence that a larger proportion of tourists visit Oatlands with the expectation that heritage properties will be open. In reality, upon arrival at Oatlands, they would be disappointed. With the exception of *Callington Mill* tower, no interpreted historic buildings in the Oatlands region are regularly open to the public.

The primary focus of this Plan is directed at the tourist market, with a high priority placed on measuring the probable flow-on effects to the community. However, this Plan is also aimed at the local market, fostering a sense of ownership by the community and being a key facility in the exploration of one's own heritage. The Central Tasmanian Visitor Information Centre (operated by SMC) as well as the Oatlands District Historical Society have both proven to be successful static interpretation centres for general local heritage. This project would not aim to detract from these, however would seek to expand on the visitor experience by establishing dynamic, thematically focused interpretation, utilising collections which physically demonstrate this.

Visitor research will form a crucial aspect of the Interpretation Project. Small museums and interpretation centres are successful when they understand their different audiences and have a careful strategy for providing what interests them. As such, audience research will be undertaken as part of this project to shape and inform the Interpretation Plan. In order to provide appropriate access to the collection, the needs and desires of the audience must be understood.

3.1 SUMMARY OF OATLANDS SUPREME COURT HOUSE AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Audience research was carried out over the winter months of developing this Plan, due to the timing of the project. As such, certain limitations and difficulties arose, due to the low numbers of visitation.

Audience Research questionnaires were distributed in the Oatlands Tasmanian Visitor Information Centre, and at the Oatlands historical society. Visitors were encouraged to fill in questionnaires and either leave them at these places, or return them in a pre-paid envelope. Unfortunately, although many visitors took questionnaires, few were returned using this method. Over a period of approximately six weeks, four questionnaires were completed and left with staff at these centres.

In addition, opportunistic samples were taken during the Oatlands Spring Festival (Sunday 15 October 2006). During this festival, the Oatlands Court House was open to visitors, and those who visited completed questionnaires. In addition, other people attending the Spring Festival were approached and asked to complete questionnaires. This method resulted in the completion of an additional 23 questionnaires.

It was the initial aim of audience research that those who completed questionnaires should be visitors to the area. However, the method used at the Spring Festival for ensuring that audience research was undertaken, resulted in residents and other locals completing questionnaires. This is not considered a hindrance to the project, or to the audience research component thereof, as it is important that the local community are also engaged in interpretation at the Court House.

A total of 27 questionnaires were completed. Ideally, more questionnaires would have been useful, and would have provided a better indication of patterns of interest across demographic groups. However, due to the difficulties in obtaining completed questionnaires during the winter months, and the timing of the project, this section of the report has had to be completed with a small amount of questionnaires. The information obtained from questionnaires does provide an indication of patterns of interest, and is valuable in shaping and informing future interpretive activities and initiatives at the Oatlands Supreme Court House.

The following table indicates the numbers of each gender and age group who completed questionnaires. As can be seen, more females than males completed questionnaires, and the different age groups are better represented amongst females than males.

	Female	Male	TOTAL
Under 10	1		1
11-20			
21-34	5		5
35-50	4	1	5
50-64	4	5	9
64+	2	5	7
TOTAL	16	11	27

Of those females who completed questionnaires, three were visiting Oatlands on their own, 11 were with family, and one was accompanied by friends. One female was visiting with a different type of group to these. Four Males were visiting Oatlands on their own, three were with family and five were part of a tour group (largely a car club for the Oatlands Spring Festival).

Thirteen of those who completed questionnaires were from Hobart, 10 stated they were from elsewhere in Tasmania (including Oatlands residents), and four were from interstate. Unfortunately, no overseas visitors completed questionnaires.

It has been acknowledged in Volume 1 that the building should be dual-purpose for visitor interpretation and community use. Therefore, it is recommended that further audience research be conducted and a community consultation programme undertaken to establish

the local community's attitudes towards their use of the building, and the purposes and activities for which they would like to use it.

Such research is outside of the scope of this project, which aims to develop the building as an interpretation centre for locals and visitors.

3.1.1 Results

Those who completed questionnaires were in Oatlands for three main reasons: either they were locals, they were there for the Spring Festival, or they were there because of the history and heritage of the town.

Both males and females stated that they most enjoyed aspects of Oatlands related to its history and heritage, despite their reasons for visiting.

A large percentage of both males and females had not experienced many of the services and facilities offered at Oatlands. However, of those experienced, most visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied. Females expressed some dissatisfaction with levels of access to historic buildings and interpretation signage, while males expressed some dissatisfaction with the toilets.

Women stated that they would like to find out more about the history of the town and its buildings in general, while men were particularly interested in finding out more about Callington Mill.

The topics which both were most interested in include the building and its architecture, collections, convictism, domestic life and archaeology. In addition, females were interested in related sites, while males were more interested than females in administration systems and technology and education. Neither gender were very interested in aspects of the formation of municipal government. In addition, females were not very interested in technology and education, while males were least interested in conservation and management, and related sites.

The types of interpretive media which were preferred by both genders include self-guided tours, museum-style displays and signage panels. In addition, females preferred interactive activities and guided tours, but were not very interested in audio tours. Males also preferred publications and brochures, though were not so interested in a website, guided tours, audio tours, soundscapes or a gift shop. Of a moderate level of interest for females were media including publications, soundscapes, brochures, guided tours, video and a gift shop, while men were moderately interested in interactive displays and videos.

Additional comments provided by one female indicated an interest in seeing a model of the historic township. In their comments, males stated that the authenticity and historic character of the township and individual places needs to be retained; that there needs to be more advertising and signage within the township itself; that historic sites should be linked; and that there is interest in the history of military and police in Oatlands.

In the data gathered through audience research of the Oatlands Supreme Court House, patterns have emerged in regard to the preferences of males and females for topics and

interpretive media. Few distinctions are apparent across the different age groups in each gender.

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Females

The following analysis presents the information obtained from females who completed a questionnaire, and also provides an indication of age where relevant.

Question 1

Reasons females gave for visiting Oatlands:

	<i>Number of people who gave this response</i>
Spring festival	6
Live here	3
Visiting with family – interested in historic town	1
History and interaction with locals	1
Historic buildings	1
Going past – saw roadside advertisement	1
Family day out	1
Detour from Midland highway	1
Touring Tassie for 4 months	1

Of those who were not at Oatlands either because they live there, or for the Spring Festival, three of the seven remaining respondents spoke of the history and heritage buildings of Oatlands as their reason for visiting. It may also be assumed from the comments of the remaining four, that the history and heritage of the town played a part in their reasons for visiting, as this is what Oatlands is commonly renowned for.

Question 2

When asked what they have enjoyed most about Oatlands, females responded with the following comments:

Under 10
 Patting the Llama – it's cute

21-34

stone buildings – aesthetics
culture/community – people are friendly
old buildings – nostalgia
historical buildings – presentation of lovely town; I love Tasmanian history
Food

35-50

history, historic buildings and their upkeep. This is important for future generations, and for our interstate and overseas visitors
old buildings – history they represent
perfect place to raise children – people are friendly

50-64

preservation of historical buildings – important to keep places of historical significance for future generations
the heritage buildings – you have taken great pride in restoring your town
coffee

old buildings and friendly people – nice to see what is of historical significance

64+

friendly people – everyone is helpful to tourists (us)

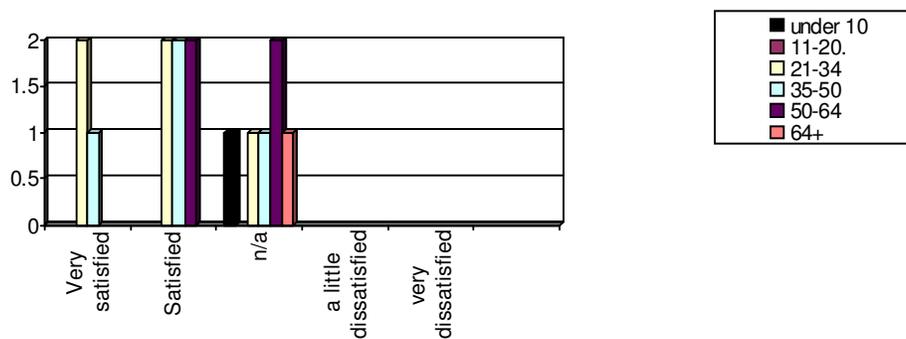
the buildings – so many in good condition. The local are interested in keeping the atmosphere (great to see the underground power).

Whether locals or visitors, the history and heritage of Oatlands features predominantly in female's enjoyment of Oatlands. In particular, females are interested in the aesthetics of the buildings, as they represent the past, and help them understand the area's history. There are no marked or strikingly apparent differences in responses across age groups with regard to their interest and enjoyment of Oatlands. Visitors to the town also appreciated the friendly and helpful service of the town.

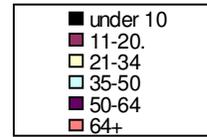
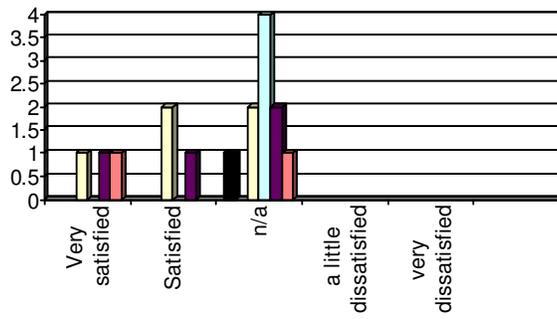
Question 3

The following graphs of activities and facilities indicates the levels of satisfaction which females expressed. The different colours represent the different age groups as indicated on the key.

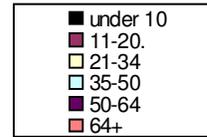
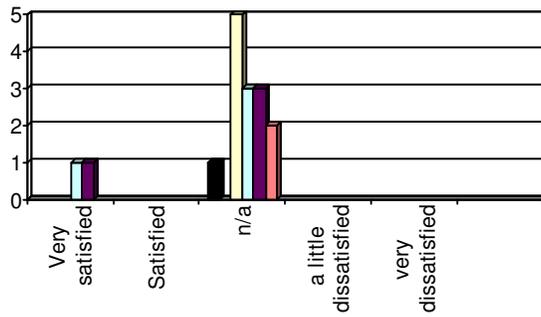
Tourism centre



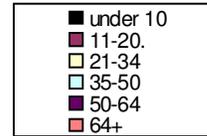
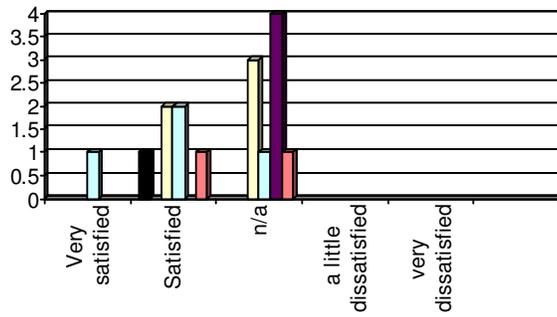
Self-guided tour



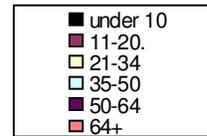
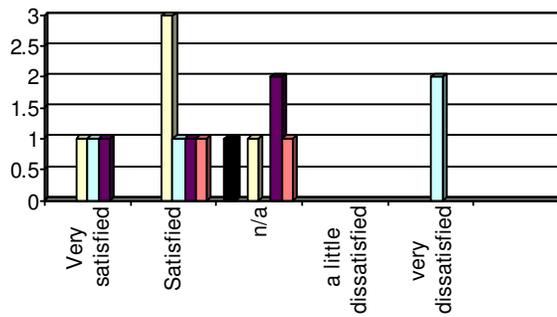
Guided tours



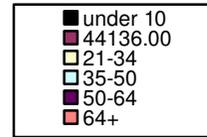
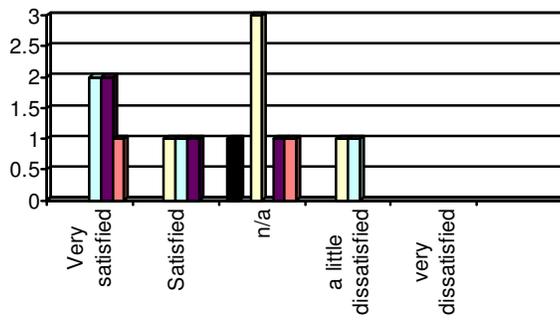
Gift Shop



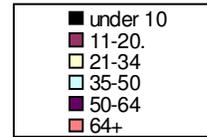
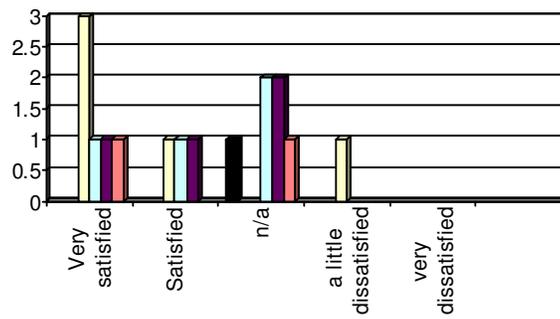
Catering



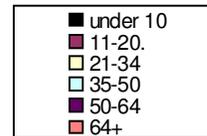
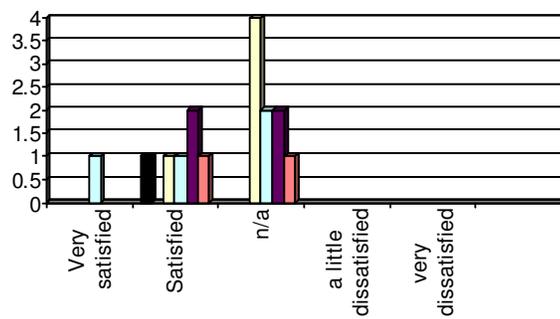
Access to historic buildings



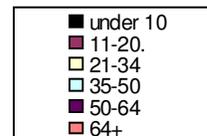
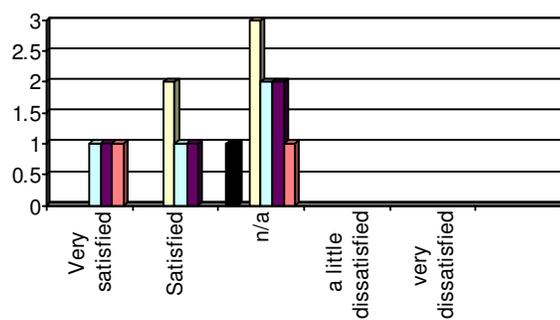
Interpretation/Signage at historic sites



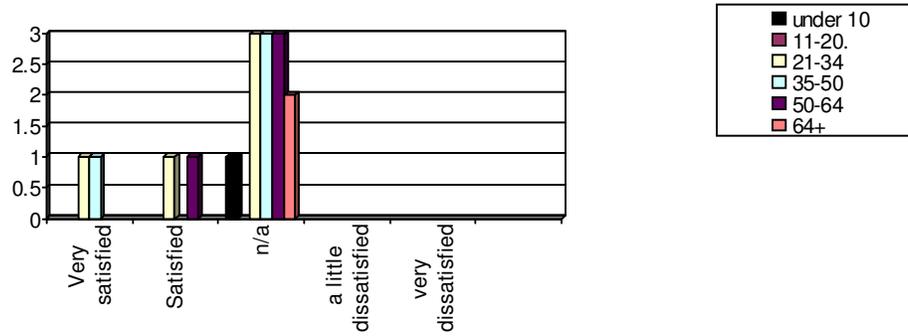
Historical society



Publications/brochures



Toilets



Many people had not experienced many of the facilities and activities offered at Oatlands. Most visitors expressed satisfaction with those activities they had experienced. However, some dissatisfaction was expressed for catering services.

Two females expressed dissatisfaction at the level of access to historic buildings, and one expressed disappointment with interpretation and signage at historic buildings. These people were in the age groups of 21-34, and 35-50. However, levels of satisfaction were high for these facilities amongst other visitors, indicating interest in these areas.

Question 4

When asked if there is anything else they would like to find out about, only some females provided comments, outlined below:

Under 10

Its very adventure

21-34

former uses of buildings

more promotion in Hobart, especially it is like a sweeter, more historic Richmond or Ross

34-50

yes

51-64

yes

Visitors across a broad spectrum of age groups expressed interest in finding out more about the history of Oatlands. Their responses were mostly general, indicating a broad interest in the history of the area.

Question 5

The following table indicates females' interest levels in topics related to the Oatlands Supreme Court House.

	-10	11-20	21-34	35-50	50-64	64+	TOTAL
The building itself, and architecture	1		3	2	3	1	10
Collections			3	3	3	1	10
Archaeology			2	2	3	1	8
Related sites			2	3	3		8
Themes of the site:							
Religion			2	2	2	1	7
Convictism and penal discipline	1		2	2	3	1	9
Administration systems of VDL			2	2	3		7
Formation of municipal govt.			1	2	2		5
Technology and education			1	2	2		5
Early-mid C20th domestic life			3	2	3	1	9
Conservation and management			2	2	2	1	7

Females indicated that they are interested in most of the themes and topics of the site. Those of most interest across all age groups include the building and its architecture, collections, convictism and penal discipline, early-mid twentieth century domestic life, related sites and archeology. Those topics of least interest to females were technology and education and the formation of the municipal government. There were no topics which weren't of interest at all to females.

The one young female is interested in the building and convictism, while those of older age groups showed more interest in collections, archaeology, the building, convictism and early-mid twentieth century domestic life.

Question 6

The table below indicates females' preferences for interpretive media:

	-10	11-20	21-34	35-50	50-64	64+	TOTAL
Guided tour			1	4	2	1	8
Self-guided tour			4	3	3	2	12
Audio tour				1		1	2
Brochure			3	1	1	1	6
Signage panels			3	1	3	1	8
Museum-style displays of collections			4	3	2	2	11
Interactive displays			5	2	1	1	9
Video			1	3	2	1	7
Soundscape			2	2	1		5
Gift shop/souvenirs			2	3	1		6
Publications			2	1	2		5
Website			2	1	1		4
Other	*						

* animal rides

The preferred types of interpretive media for females include self-guided tours, museum-type displays of collections and interactive displays. The least preferred interpretive media are audio tours, and a website.

In younger ages, interactive displays, museum-type collections and self-guided tours are the most preferred types of media, whilst in older age groups the preferred options for media are also self-guided tours and museum-type displays of collections.

Additional comments

Additional comments provided by females include the following:

The Oatlands Spring Festival is extremely exciting and should be treasured and expanded.

Historical model of Oatlands

Loved our time here – we keep coming back

Males

The following analysis presents the information obtained from males who completed a questionnaire, and also provides an indication of their age, where relevant.

Question 1

Reasons males gave for visiting Oatlands:

	<i>Number of people who gave this response</i>
Live in the area	3
Spring festival	3
To display car as part of Spring Festival	2
Heritage village recommended by family in Tas 1	

The majority of males who completed questionnaires were at Oatlands either because they live there, or for the Spring Festival. One male was there because of the history and heritage of the town.

Question 2

When asked what they have enjoyed most about Oatlands, females responded with the following comments:

35-50

High street sandstone buildings – original, not 'twee', not overrun with souvenir shops like Richmond and Ross

the historic properties – many need money

50-64

old town itself, buildings, parks, gardens – shows community spirit

seeing the town grow and improve – pride

Availability of services/facilities; and the history – Oatlands built heritage is gaining increased recognition for its uniqueness, together with its recorded history.

History/buildings – I like history, I'm a builder

65+

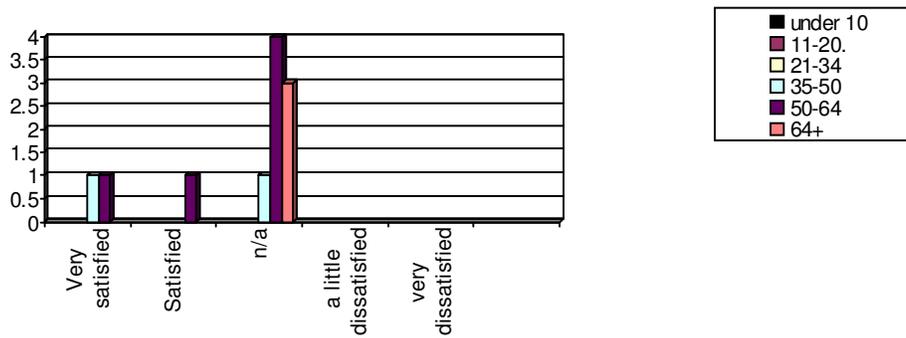
historic buildings
Friendly people

Interestingly, despite their reasons for visiting Oatlands, the majority of males made mention of the history and heritage of Oatlands, when stating what they most enjoyed about the town.

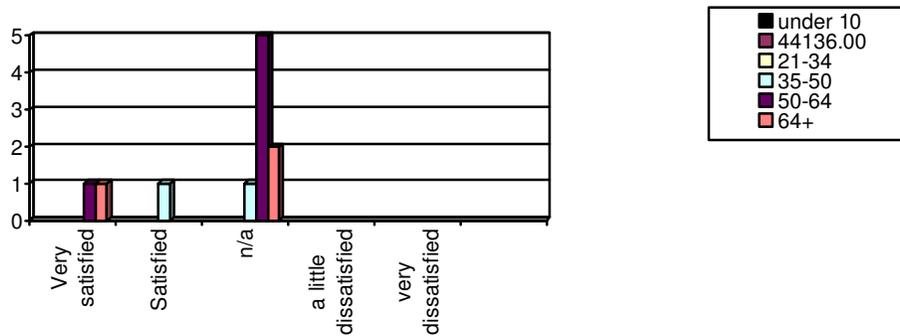
Question 3

The following graphs of activities and facilities indicates the levels of satisfaction which males expressed. The different colours represent the different age groups as indicated on the key.

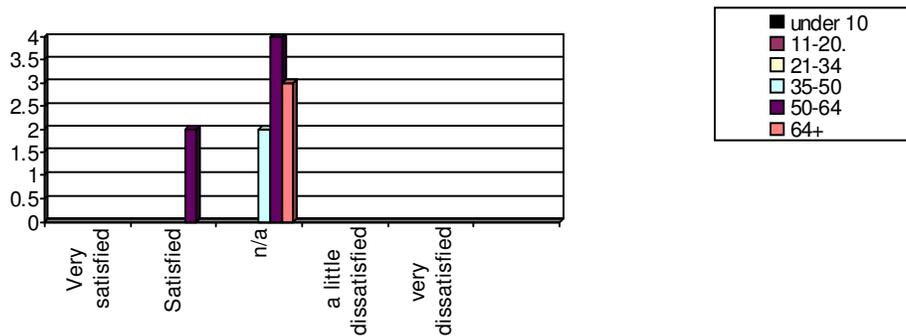
Tourism centre



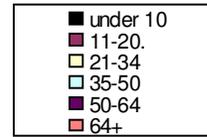
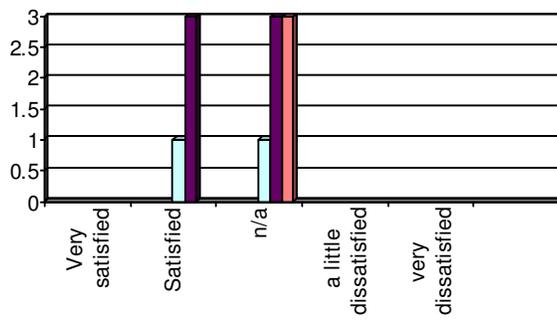
Self-guided tour



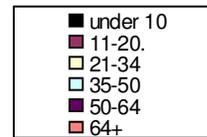
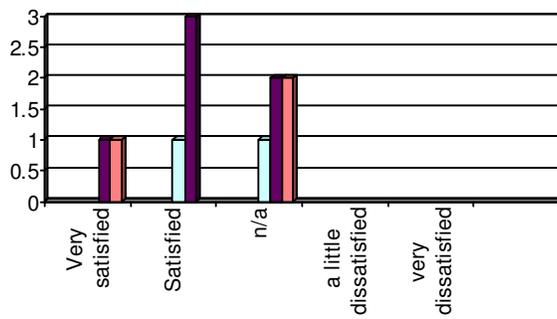
Guided tours



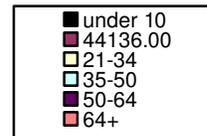
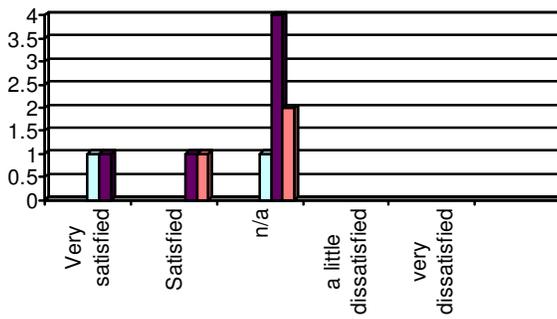
Gift shop



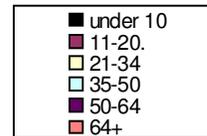
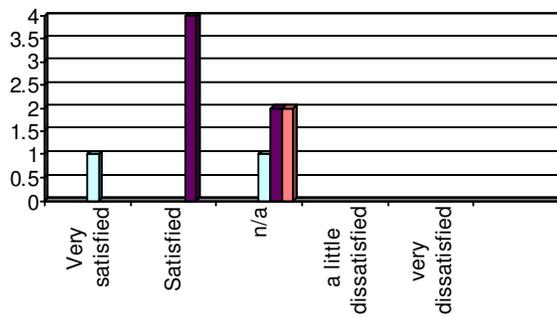
Catering



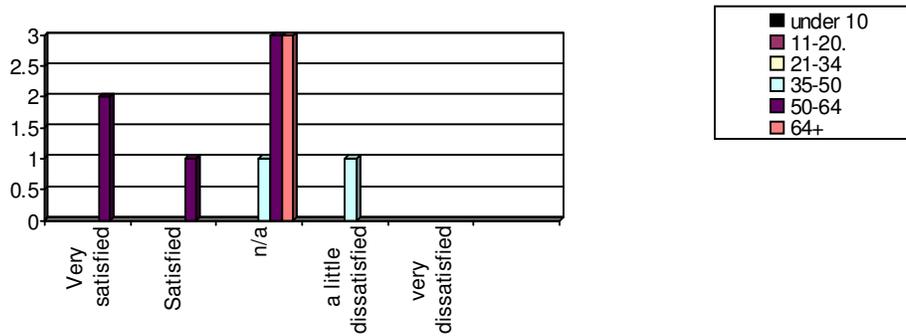
Access to historic buildings



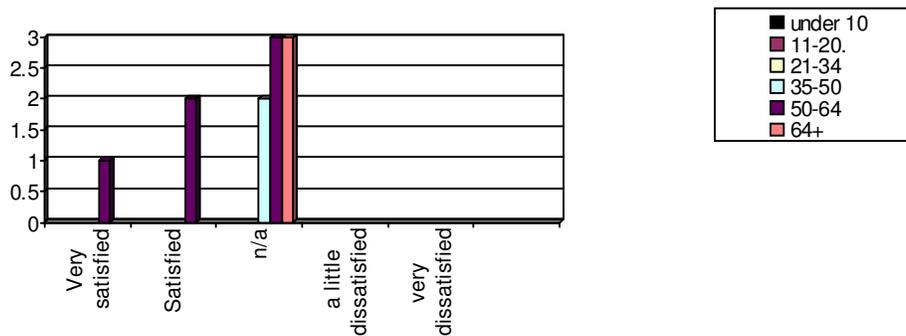
Interpretation/signage at historic sites



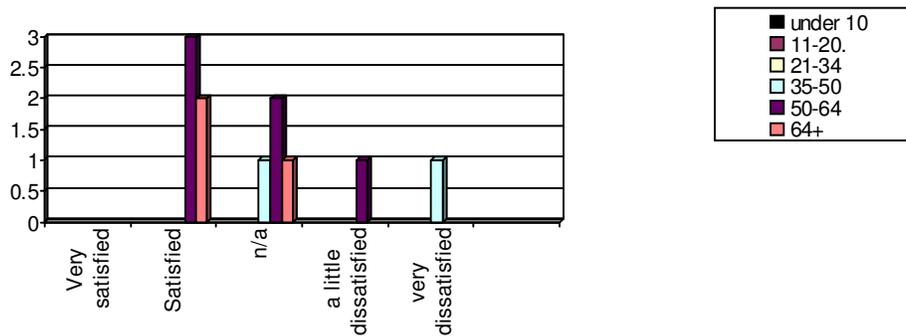
Historical society



Publications/brochures



Toilets



Other comments by males regarding their levels of satisfaction with services and facilities included the following:

- Gardens/trees/green areas – a little dissatisfied
- Could do with more toilets
- It would be nice to open up more historic homes
- Interpretation/signage could be better

Generally, men were satisfied with those services and facilities which they had experienced. In particular, the tourism centre, self-guided tours, gift shop, catering and interpretation at historic sites received the highest levels of satisfaction. Dissatisfaction was expressed in relation to the toilets.

Those who indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with access to historic buildings and the interpretation and signage available provide an indication of their interest in these areas. More males experienced signage and interpretation at historic sites than access inside these buildings.

Question 4

When asked if there is anything else they would like to find out about, only some females provided comments, outlined below:

- 35-50
Why new houses are allowed to be built in the middle of all the old special ones in High Street
- 51-64
Old mill
Display of staging place/coaches/costumes
- 64+
Mill

Question 5

The following table indicates males' interest levels in topics related to the Oatlands Supreme Court House.

	-10	11-20	21-34	35-50	50-64	64+	TOTAL
The building itself, and architecture				2	5	3	9
Collections				2	3	3	8
Archaeology				2	3	2	7
Related sites				1	1	1	3
Themes of the site:							
Religion				1	2	1	4
Convictism and penal discipline				1	5	2	8
Administration systems of VDL				1	3	2	6
Formation of municipal govt.					1	2	3
Technology and education				1	3	1	5
Early-mid C20th domestic life					4	3	7
Conservation and management					2	1	3

There were no topics which males weren't interested in at all. However, males were most interested in the topics of the building and its architecture, collections, convictism and penal discipline, archaeology and early-mid twentieth century domestic life. Males were least interested in related sites, the formation of municipal government and conservation and management.

There were no distinct patterns across age groups for levels of interest in the topics of the Court House for males.

Question 6

The table below indicates males' preferences for interpretive media:

	-10	11-20	21-34	35-50	50-64	64+	TOTAL
Guided tour					1		1
Self-guided tour				2	4	3	9
Audio tour					1	1	2
Brochure				1	2	2	5
Signage panels				2	3	2	7
Museum-style displays of collections				1	3	1	5
Interactive displays				1	1	1	3
Video				1	1	1	3
Soundscape				1		1	2
Gift shop/souvenirs					2		2
Publications				1	3	1	5
Website				1			1
Other				*			

* *ghost tour?*

The preferred types of interpretive media for males include self-guided tours, signage panels, brochures, museum-type displays of collections and publications. The least preferred interpretive media are a website, gift shop/souvenirs, soundscape, and audio tours.

Additional comments

Additional comments provided by males include the following:

More money and expertise – we need to preserve our past for the future

Keep the sites free

Simple interpretation

Street signs to clearly direct visitors off the High Street

Maybe a 'friends of historical Oatlands' style membership/club for history/ archaeology/Georgian architecture buffs

Consider Oatlands village as a preserved site – link attractions, maybe one car fee upon entry

Keep it special

Oatlands military history as a garrison town needs to be more fully explored and interpreted, and how this impacted on everyday life in the township

The town's police history is an important element – from when Council paid for and controlled policing

Summary

Those who completed questionnaires were in Oatlands for three main reasons: either they were locals, they were there for the Spring Festival, or they were there because of the history and heritage of the town.

Both males and females stated that they most enjoyed aspects of Oatlands related to its history and heritage, despite their reasons for visiting.

A large percentage of both males and females had not experienced many of the services and facilities offered at Oatlands. However, of those experienced, most visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied. Females expressed some dissatisfaction with levels of access to historic buildings and interpretation signage, while males expressed some dissatisfaction with the toilets.

Women stated that they would like to find out more about the history of the town and its buildings in general, while men were particularly interested in finding out more about Callington Mill.

The topics which both were most interested in include the building and its architecture, collections, convictism, domestic life and archaeology. In addition, females were interested in related sites, while males were more interested than females in administration systems and technology and education. Neither gender were very interested in aspects of the formation of municipal government. In addition, females were not very interested in technology and education, while males were least interested in conservation and management, and related sites.

The types of interpretive media which were preferred by both genders include self-guided tours, museum-style displays and signage panels. In addition, females preferred interactive activities and guided tours, but were not very interested in audio tours. Males also preferred publications and brochures, though were not so interested in a website, guided tours, audio tours, soundscapes or a gift shop. Of a moderate level of interest for females were media including publications, soundscapes, brochures, guided tours, video and a gift shop, while men were moderately interested in interactive displays and videos.

Additional comments provided by one female indicated an interest in seeing a model of the historic township. In their comments, males stated that the authenticity and historic character of the township and individual places needs to be retained; that there needs to be more advertising and signage within the township itself; that historic sites should be linked; and that there is interest in the history of military and police in Oatlands.

In the data gathered through audience research of the Oatlands Supreme Court House, patterns have emerged in regard to the preferences of males and females for topics and interpretive media. Few distinctions are apparent across the different age groups in each gender.

APPENDIX 2 – COLLECTIONS INVENTORY

Cat Num.	Items	Provenance	Condition/conservation requirements	Owner	Location 2005 audit	Current location	Image
1	1 table pine unpolished top square		Good, drawer missing	National Trust	Container	Court House	
2	Glass decanters & number of stoppers		Good	National Trust	History Room	2 decanters & 1 stopper in Court House, 1 decanter in History Room	
3	1 Wooden table 4' X 5'	Thomas - Judge's Chamber	Reasonable - top needs work	National Trust	Container	Court House	
4	1 pine kitchen table	Thomas - Court Room	Reasonable, needs refinishing	National Trust	Container	Court House	
5	1 huon pine washstand with 3 drawers	Thomas - Court Room	Good - top missing	National Trust	Container	Court House	

6	1 Wooden sofa, upholstered in brown leather	Thomas - Police Office (Sitting Room)	Good, cover needs attention, but is not a significant part of the piece	National Trust	Container	Court House	
7	1 pine settee	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	Container	Court House	
8	1 cedar settee	Thomas - Judge's Chamber	Bad. Damp has damaged fabric and veneer. URGENT treatment required, very significant piece	National Trust	Not viewed	Court House	
9	1 cast iron fender	Thomas - Court Room	Needs attention - heavily rusted	National Trust	Container	Court House	
10	2 blue and white pheasant meat plates	Thomas - Court Room	Damaged, evidence of early repair	National Trust	Container	History Room	

11	1 chaise lounge (Edwardian with black cover)	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	Container	Court House	
12	1 electric copper	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Good	National Trust	Container	Court House	
13	1 pine kitchen dresser	Thomas - Court Room	Reasonable - needs minor repairs	National Trust	Container	Court House	
14	1 dilapidated arm chair	Thomas - Court Room	Bad - needs attention	National Trust	Container	Court House	
15	Kodak cameras in leather cases	Not Court House items		National Trust	Container	Court House	
16	1 wringer	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Good	National Trust	Container	Container	

17	1 Army jacket/shooting jacket	Thomas - Police Office (Sitting Room) Belonged to member of Thomas family	Good, should be monitored closely	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
18	1 Prince Charles and Princess Anne picture wood frame	Thomas - Judge's Chamber	Reasonable - glass is broken and frame needs cleaning	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
19	1 horse picture gold frame	Thomas - Judge's Chamber	Good	National Trust	History room	History Room	
20	1 Portrait Queen Victoria	?		National Trust	History Room	History Room	
20	1 leather bound book Practical Home Physician	Thomas - Police Office (Sitting Room)	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
22	4 VDL landscapes (reprint)	Donation to NT from T. Salmon - Should not be in Court House collection.	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
23	Pictures 2 x bas relief biblical scenes)			National Trust			
24	1 Picture child with dog and cat	Thomas - Records Room (bedroom)	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
25	2 broken china potties	Thomas - Police Office (Sitting Room)	Both with broken handles	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
26	1 potty	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Broken handle	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
27	2 red ochres	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Need attention, damp damaged	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
28	1 pine musical instrument box (coffin shaped)	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
28	1 wooden coffin		Suggest that this is a duplicate of the 'musical instrument box', unless you're planning to bury a	National Trust	History Room	History Room	

			midget				
29	1 pine toilet mirror	Thomas - Records Room (bedroom)	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
30	3 cut throat razor	Thomas - Records Room (bedroom)	Only 2 found	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
31	1 Gem razor	Thomas - Records Room (bedroom)		National Trust	History Room	History Room	
33	3 graters	Thomas - Court Room	Only 1 has been found.	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
34	1 ladle enamel	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
35	3 porridge bowls	Thomas - Court Room	Marked as 35 in history room, but they were not certain that these are the ones	National Trust	Container	History Room?	
36	3 enamel plates	Thomas - Court Room		National Trust	History Room		
37	1 Meakin vegetable dish	Thomas - Court Room	Lid missing	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
39	2 Aunt Mary's baking powder tins	Thomas - Court Room		National Trust	History Room		
40	1 Foster Clark's powder tin	Thomas - Court Room	Rusty	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
41	5 golden syrup tins	Thomas - Court Room	Very rusty	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
42	1 trotting club program (1958)		Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
43	1 leather cutlery kit	Thomas - Court Room (belonged to a member of the Thomas Family who served)	Good - requires monitoring	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
44	1 green tin meat safe	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
45	1 yellow meat safe	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	

46	3 cast iron kettles	Thomas - Court Room	Uncertain which 3 of a larger collection these are	National Trust	History room	History Room	
48	1 kerosene light	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Confirmation required as to exactly which one this is. Is it a lamp or light?	National Trust	History Room	History Room?	
50	1 baking dish	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Rusty	National Trust	History Room	Historical society	
51	1 pine rolling pin	Thomas - Court Room	One end missing	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
52	1 enamel egg cup	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
53	1 Launceston souvenir teapot	Thomas - Court Room	Lid missing	National Trust	History room	History Room	
54	1 orange rice tin	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
55	2 tin basins enamel	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	History room have 2 tin bowls, although I'd be reluctant to call them 'basins'	National Trust	History Room	History Room?	
56	2 kerosene boxes (cupboard)	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Good - rustic	National Trust	History Room	Container	
57	1 wooden hearth fender	Thomas - Records Room (bedroom)		National Trust	Court House	Court House	
58	1 Harmonium small	Not a Court House item		National Trust	History Room	Container	
59	1 wooden fire fender	Thomas - Judge's Chamber	Good	National Trust	Not viewed told in court house	Court House	
TBA	1 radiator	Thomas - Police Office (Sitting Room)	Need to ascertain which one this is	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
60	1 corner cupboard	Thomas - Police Office (Sitting Room)	Rustic	National Trust	container	Container	

TBA	2 concrete sinks	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Good	National Trust	Court House (Told not viewed)	Court House	
TBA	1 tin bath	Thomas - Jury Room (Laundry)	Unknown as yet (full of junk)	National Trust	Court House (told not viewed)	Court House	
61	1 pine bench	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	Container	Court House	
TBA	3 pine meat safes	Thomas - Court Room	TBA	National Trust	Container	Container	
62	1 iron safe	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	Council Chamber works room	Council Chamber works room	
64	1 iron and brass double bed	Thomas - Court Room	Bad. End, rails and base missing	National Trust	Container	Container	
TBA	1 lead lined pine bin	Thomas - Court Room	Unknown as yet	National Trust	History Room	History Room	
63	1 Wicker basket	Thomas - Court Room	Good	National Trust	Container	Court House	
	1 Chair upholstered with wooden arms)	Not a Court House item		National Trust	Container	Container	
	Books 2 x Tas Gazette 1950 & 1959			National Trust	History Room		

1 Table Urn (BE metal and lid)			National Trust	History Room		
Cardboard box containing mixed items old record books 1950's magazines and slates			National Trust	Container		
Suitcases and papers and clothes etc.			National Trust	History Room		
1 Mahogany dressing table mirror			National Trust	History Room		
2 bibles			National Trust	History Room		
1 bible and maps			National Trust	History Room		
1 gladstone bag			National Trust	History Room		
1 old suitcase			National Trust	History Room		
1 fire tongs			National Trust	History Room		
1 small hooked rug (Black swan)			National Trust	History Room		
1 tin dish			National Trust	History Room		
1 white home whiting			National Trust	History Room		
1 tin of corks			National Trust	History Room		
1 Pewter biscuit barrel			National Trust	Container		
1 tin cover			National Trust	History Room		
1 tin candle holder			National Trust	History Room		
4 sharpening stones			National Trust	History Room		
2 leather pouches			National Trust	History Room		
1 shower rose			National Trust	History Room		
4 door knobs			National Trust	History Room		
1 hook scales			National Trust	History Room		
2 grass cutters			National Trust	History Room		
1 cedar corner wash stand			National Trust	History Room		
1 pine rolling board			National Trust	History Room		
3 picture frames with glass			National Trust	History Room		
2 cast iron jam pans	Thomas - Court Room	These appear to be in the History Room, however members insist they are not jam pans	National Trust	History Room		
3 decorative jugs			National Trust	History Room		
1 large amber mixing bottle	Thomas - Court Room	Marked as 38 in History Room, but this	National Trust	Container		

			is certainly not the item				
	1 cigarette box holder drewitt's			National Trust	History Room		
	5 leather leggings			National Trust	History Room		
	1 tin Johnson's baby powder			National Trust	History Room		
	1 leather pouch			National Trust	History Room		
	1 leather wallet			National Trust	History Room		
	1 pouch for driver's licence			National Trust	Container		