

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
TASMANIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION  
HELD IN THE ROYAL SOCIETY ROOM, TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND ART  
GALLERY AT 8PM ON TUESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2011.**

Present: The President, Carolyn Homer, in the chair, and about 80 members and guests.

Minutes: The minutes of the previous AGM were read, and approved as a correct record.

President's Report: The President spoke to her report, which was received by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer spoke to his report, which was received on the motion of Petrow/Terry.

Appointment of Auditor: Malcolm Groom was re-appointed auditor on the motion of Terry/Glover Scott

Election of Office-bearers: Nominations having been received only for the following they were declared elected: President, Carolyn Homer; Vice-President, Ian Terry; Secretary, Andrew McKinlay; Treasurer, Ross Kelly; Editor, Heather Felton; Committee, Margaret Glover Scott, Stefan Petrow; Michael Roe. Dianne Snowden, Caitlin Sutton.

Business: The President referred to the forthcoming excursion to Pugin churches, and to the likewise forthcoming Book Fair to be held in Hobart. Reference was made to the Australian Historical Association conference to be held in Launceston in July.

Speaker:: The President introduced Brian Andrews, as an architectural historian of renown. A prizewinner among his many publications was *Creating a Gothic Paradise*, a study of AW Pugin. Tonight he was to speak on Tasmanian work inspired by Pugin.

Having remarked that the past decade had seen a remarkable explosion of interest in his subject, Mr Andrews spoke of Pugin's life. Living only forty years, 1812-52, Pugin was of supreme creativity and great impact.. A convert to Roman Catholicism, he venerated the spirituality and compassion of medieval life, contrasting it with the crass ugliness of contemporary Britain. He re-created the Gothic style, most obviously in church architecture, with complementary concern for design in textiles, glass, wood, stone, and metal. His work and writings attracted much notice, culminating with his 'Medieval Court' at the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Pugin had close ties with RW Willson, well prior to the latter's appointment as Bishop of Hobart, and the two planned that his concepts should prevail in the new see. Accordingly Willson brought to Tasmania much Puginesque material, including three demountable models for church-building, and exemplars of fonts, headstones, and other such fittings. Three Tasmanian churches especially make Tasmania remarkable in this context. The first was that at Oatlands, where Henry Hunter—distinguished in his own right, but as well a Pugin disciple—applied the master's concepts and models. The second was St Peter's, Colebrook, a building which was to suffer much from neglect and weather-damage over the years, but more recently had seen the expenditure of some \$500,000 in restoration works. Here Pugin's ideas were expressed in utmost simplicity, but with such effect as to make this church 'a pocket cathedral'. The rood-screen had been completely restored, and the interior painted to the original colour scheme. St John's Richmond completed the trio, although its story was less happy. The church had been originally built to a design brought to Australia by Bishop Polding. Local architect Frederick Thomas later strove to restructure the building on Puginesque lines, but with only partial success. However some effective details remain, notably the windows and their glass, crosses in chancel and nave, and the font. Pugin's exemplars, especially of tombstones, had use throughout Tasmania, and all in all the island has a unique place in this remarkable man's achievement.. Throughout the talk was brilliantly illustrated. The flow of questions had to be stopped by the President, as the hour reached 9:40.

Michael Roe for Secretary

Caroline Homer, President