

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## **Notorious convicts, military history and the Christian Brethren at war: conference**

The Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies 23<sup>rd</sup> annual conference this year takes the theme of “Tasmanians at War” and will cover a range of historical topics with a local slant.

Notorious convicts, writing about war and the involvement of the Christian Brethren in World War 1 will be covered in the conference talks.

Talks will be delivered by respected academics from the UTAS School of History and Classics and by visiting speakers.

Members of the public are invited to register and attend the conference.

Conference registration costs \$50 and \$35 concession. Lunch is extra at \$15 and must be booked by Thursday 21 August.

**WHAT:** Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference, “Tasmanians at War”

**WHEN:** Saturday 23 August 2008, 8.50am-5pm

**WHERE:** Life Sciences Lecture Theatre one, UTAS Sandy Bay campus

For more information, contact conference convener Dr Caroline Evans, UTAS School of History and Classics. Phone: (03) 6226 2303 email: [Caroline.Evans@utas.edu.au](mailto:Caroline.Evans@utas.edu.au)

For registration and a full program, visit  
<http://fcms.its.utas.edu.au/arts/history/newsdetail.asp?lNewsEventId=3072>

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- **Dr Peter Stanley, Director of the Centre for Historical Research at the National Museum of Australia**  
Conference talk: “Can there be a military history of Tasmania?” (9.15am)

Dr Stanley’s talk will consider if there is a distinctive Tasmanian military history and examine the profound and poignant Tasmanian inflections on Australia's military history.

- **Dr Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, senior lecturer in the UTAS School of History and Classics**  
Conference talk: “Van Diemonian veterans of the Napoleonic War” (part of panel discussion at 10.50am)

Dr Maxwell-Stewart’s talk will be taking a look at the strange life of Gottfried Hanskie. A transported convict who had served in three European armies, Hanskie ended up in the notorious secondary penal station at Macquarie Harbour. Using his military skills he worked his way to freedom and has been described as one of the Superintendent of Police's most useful thugs.

- **Mrs Elisabeth Wilson, PhD research student and tutor in the UTAS School of History and Classics**  
Conference talk: “The irregularity of killing people’: Brethren response to World War I” (1.20pm).

Mrs Wilson’s talk will look at the Christian Brethren movement, which developed a worldwide position of non-involvement in political affairs. The Brethren movement was particularly strong in Tasmania. The digitised World War I records through the National Archives website have made it possible to look at the cases of more than 25 Tasmanian Brethren men who served in WW1 and discuss their decisions in the light of their beliefs.

- **Dr Michael McKernan, historian of Australian social and military history**  
Conference talk: “Writing About War” (3.50pm)

Dr McKernan’s talk suggests that the way a people are defines the type of history they will read and support. For years World War 1 was avoided by Australian historians as too raw and too close. Now it is boom time in Australian military history publishing as links are forged between a new type of nationalism and a new type of history.