

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

DATE: TUESDAY 5 JULY 2011

ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



National history conference: Aussie Smiths, Aussie blokes - and no Aussie Bill of Rights

The former Justice Michael Kirby will address the elephant in the room today when he tells 250 Australian historians why Australia has no bill of rights.

Speaking at the Australian Historical Association's 2011 conference at the University of Tasmania in Launceston today, Mr Kirby will no doubt make some controversial assertions in his paper, *Australian Exceptionalism: Why Australia doesn't have a Bill of Rights*.

Highlights of the first day of the conference being held at the UTAS Inveresk campus include papers on:

- *Understanding Australia's Great War through Smiths and Schmidts*: Peter Stanley from the Australian National Museum discusses his research on WW1 through the eyes of people named Smith and Schmidt, 11.30-1pm, Gallery B, Academy of the Arts;
- *Establishing an organisation culture early and keeping it: Gunns of Tasmania*: Dallas Hanson and Nic Haygarth from the University of Tasmania reveal their research on this company which was politically significant and potent from its beginnings in 1870, 11.30-1pm, seminar room 118, School of Architecture and Design;
- *Australian Masculinities: Flaneurs, bushrangers and larrikins*: Historians from Monash, Sydney, Newcastle and Queensland Universities reveal the Aussie bloke in all his glory, 11.30-1pm, Annexe Theatre;
- *The embrace of difference: the adaptation to and adoption of dogs by the Tasmanian Aboriginal people*: James Parker from the University of Tasmania tells how Aborigines successfully adopted dogs for hunting and companionship after they were brought to the island by the British colonisers, 11.30-1pm, room 192, Academy of the Arts;
- *Australian women in history book launch*: Alistair Thompson from Monash University's *Moving stories: An intimate history of four women across two countries* and Katie Holmes from La Trobe

University's *Between the leaves: Stories of Australian Women, Writing and Gardens*, 11am-11.30, Gallery B, Academy of the Arts;

■ *New perspectives on Tasmanian Aboriginal history*: Shayne Breen from the University of Tasmania discusses *Genocide in Tasmanian History* and Lyndall Ryan from the University of Newcastle discusses *The Black Line in Tasmania; An expensive mistake or a strategic success?*, 2-3.30pm, meeting room, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery Inveresk;

■ *The Woolnorth 'Tigermen'; hunters at the edge of an empire*: Nic Haygarth and Dallas Hanson from the University of Tasmania, 2-3.30pm, auditorium, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery Inveresk;

■ *Australian Exceptionalism: Why Australia doesn't have a Bill of Rights*, Hon Michael Kirby, former Justice of the High Court, 4-5.30pm, Annexe Theatre, Inveresk;

■ *Is fiction history?*: Rohan Wilson, author of the 2011 Vogel Prize-winning *The Roving Party* in conversation with Professor Ann Curthoys of the University of Sydney, author of *Is fiction history?*, 8pm Annexe Theatre, Inveresk.

Media are welcome to organise interviews with conference speakers. Contact Sharon Webb, University of Tasmania, ph. 0438 510 616.

Information Released by:

**The Media Office, University of Tasmania
Phone: (03) 6324 3218 Mob. 0438 510 616
Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au**