

Science and Mathematics Education Centre

**Investigating Sustainability in a Tasmanian Community through  
the Lived Experience of Local Secondary School Students**

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Doctor of Philosophy  
of  
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## DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

Signature: .....  .....

Date: ..... 10 August 2015 .....

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I acknowledge the traditional and custodial landowners of the Tasman Peninsula area, the *Pydairrerme* band of the *Mairremmener* tribe.

## ABSTRACT

This thesis takes the reader on a journey to the Tasman Peninsula, a small and remote district in Tasmania, Australia. I enter the community through the local school, Tasman District School, where I work with Grade 9 classes to explore prospects of sustainability in their community through the students' lived experiences.

Within a negotiated curriculum we focus on fishing and tourism as prospects for future employment for the students. Together the students and I explore influences on community living on the Tasman Peninsula. We also address issues of belonging, identity and values that are important to the students and to myself. I listen to the students' stories, and their lived experiences.

At times I enter the community and at other times I observe the comings and goings of the community from outside, in a space like Stewart's place (1996), on the side of the road. As I move from the school to the wider community I take knowledge gleaned from the students, and I search for a mirroring of values, identity and belonging in many community hubs.

Taking my place on the side of the road I accept that if I am to identify with the Tasman Peninsula community and situate myself in my research so that I develop a consciousness of relationship that will deepen my understanding of the place, I need to be also part of its dynamics. This thesis interprets my listening to stories past and present that belong there. My inquiry is inspired by approaches to research that are interpretive, ethnographic, biographic and autobiographic. Poetry too inspires, to speak diverse meaning, sometimes emotionally and prophetically, at other times to situate me in a particular place or moment or to allow me imaginative interpretation. There are some philosophers, like Mikhail Bakhtin, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jürgen Habermas and Ferdinand Tönnies, who urge and accompany me on my journey along the road to amplify and deepen understandings of the sustainability of this unique and remote community.

My inquiry develops propositions that model Isaac Newton's Laws of Motion as a basis for understanding community dynamics, where core stability depends on balancing community interactions—for example, where school communities

intersect with social, industry and recreational hubs. At times the Tasman Peninsula community is subjected to external forces that might threaten the enduring nature of its existent form. Under such circumstances the sustainability of the community might fragment and a future Tasman Peninsula community might be compromised. My propositional models permit the reader to conceptualise a community that shifts energy from within to create a new balanced community, or is unable to accommodate the external forces, and the community collapses. Over the past 200 years the Tasman Peninsula community has been subjected to such external forces—annihilation of the local Indigenous population, convict presence, a massacre in 1996, and destructive bushfires in 2013—events that have deeply affected the inherited storylines within which the students I encounter live.

In my inquiry I contribute my research, practice and knowledge to further community studies. This thesis points out environmental, social, economic and cultural possibilities that might sustain a small, isolated community.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
IT	Information Technology
LSA	Local Statistical Area
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
PAHSMA	Port Arthur Historical Site Management Authority
RPDC	Resource Planning and Development Commission of Tasmania
SCUBA	Self Contained Breathing Apparatus
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WWOOFERS	Willing Workers On Organic Farms

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# CHAPTER ONE

## A UNIQUE AND REMOTE COMMUNITY

### Introduction

There is a place at the southern most tip of Australia, on the island state of Tasmania, which is not only remote, but can be said to be unique in many ways. In this thesis I inquire into its uniqueness, its cultural, environmental, economic and social parameters, and where it sits relationally within the world.

As it has become proper in Australian public events, at the outset of my study I acknowledge the traditional and custodial landowners of the area, the *Pydairrerme* band of the *Mairremmener* tribe. I recognise the sensitivities of those people from the past, and those now living, who have been affected by European settlement, and tragic circumstances of recent years. These circumstances to which I refer include the drowning of local fishermen, the 1996 Port Arthur Massacre, in which 35 people were killed and many more injured, and the 2013 bushfires that ravaged homes and livelihoods.

The Tasman Peninsula is a broad term used locally for the geographical area comprising two peninsulas, the Tasman and Forestier Peninsulas, on the southeastern tip of Tasmania, south of the town Dunalley. I have shown the location of the Tasman Peninsula and its towns on the maps in Figures 1 and 2. The Tasman Peninsula is located in the far southeast corner of Tasmania, as shown in the highlighted rectangle—an expanded view of the Tasman Peninsula is shown in Figure 2. Hobart is the capital city of Tasmania.

Major townships of the Tasman Peninsula, Dunalley, Port Arthur and Nubeena are shown in Figure 2. The Arthur Highway, the single road from Dunalley to Port Arthur, is marked on Figure 2, and the minor roads connecting Port Arthur with Nubeena and Nubeena to Taranna are also marked. The bay to the northwest of the Peninsula is called Frederick Henry Bay (name obscured).

The Tasman Peninsula district covers an area of 659.3 square kilometres. The 2011 Census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), held on August 9 2011, recorded 2,355 residents in the Tasman Local Statistical Area (Tasman LSA) with 51.6 percent males and 48.4 percent females. Of the total population in Tasman LSA, 5.1 percent were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Nationally, 2.5 percent of the population is Indigenous. A comparison of populations over a 16-year period indicates that the total population of Tasman LSA has remained steady around 2,200 to 2,300 residents over the years 1996 to 2011 (Census 2011). During the summer months, the population increases to around 8,000 to 9,000 residents with the holiday influx of shack owners and campers. I refer to the 2011 Census data as the latest, as the next national Census will be conducted in 2016. The main administrative area of the Tasman Peninsula is based in Nubeena, which is situated 113 kilometres southeast of Hobart.



Figure 1. Map of Tasmania showing surrounding Southern Ocean, Tasman Sea and Bass Strait

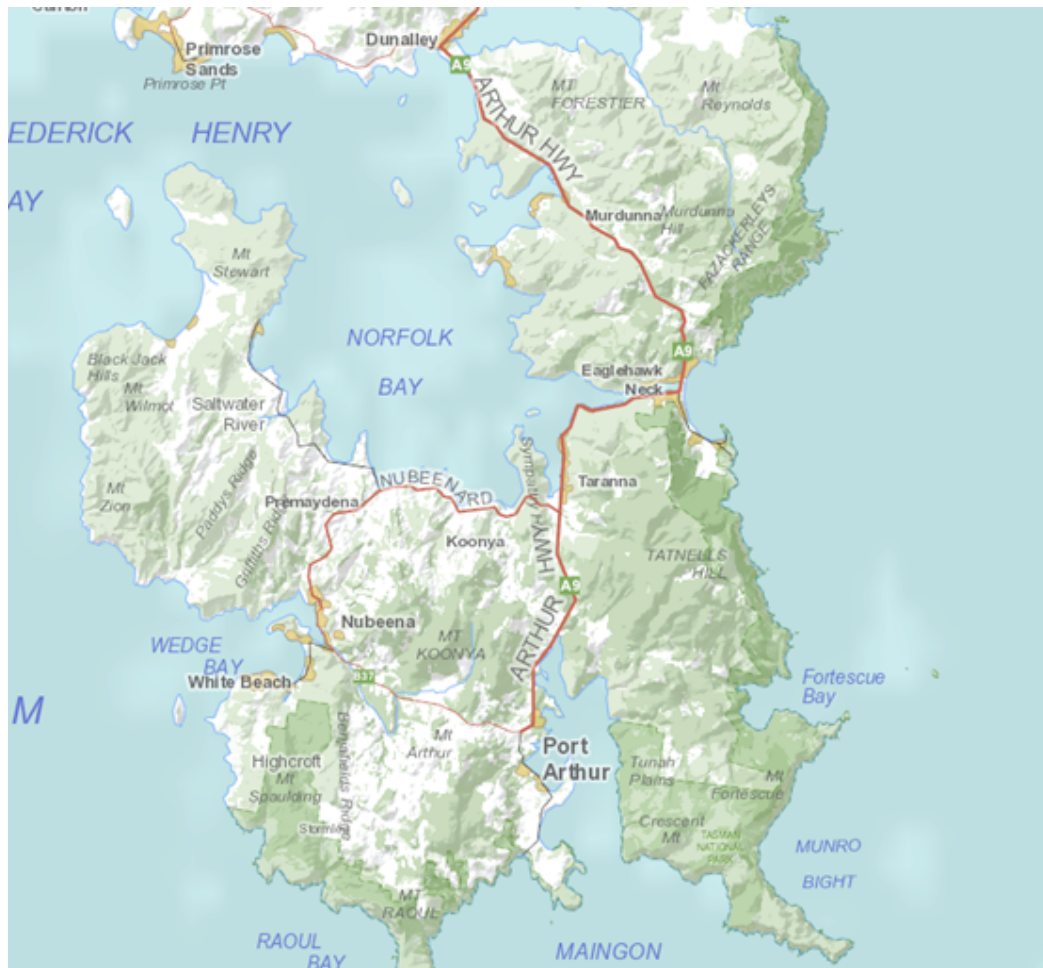


Figure 2. Map of the Tasman Peninsula

From the Tasman Peninsula, the nearest landmasses are across the Tasman Sea to New Zealand in the east, and Antarctica, across the Southern Ocean. On the Tasman Peninsula there are small settlements, many taking their names from the Aboriginal languages of the first inhabitants. Nubeena, the administrative centre is named from the Aboriginal word for crayfish. Other settlement names are from the English language, given by the first white settlers, such as Port Arthur, White Beach, and Eaglehawk Neck (Carroll, 2009, p.1).

Ethnographer, Kathleen Stewart, has used a metaphor of the “space on the side of the road” in her discussions of a small community in the Appalachian coal-mining areas of West Virginia, in her book *A Space on the Side of the Road – Cultural Poetics in an “Other” America*. I have permission from Stewart to adopt this same metaphor in my study of a small Australian community (Appendix A). I am drawn to the work of Stewart as an ethnographer who uses the power of the narrative to develop an awareness of cultural gaps that exist in America, and writes so that



culture is portrayed as ‘a space of imagination, critique, and desire produced in and through mediating forms’ (Stewart, K., 1996, p. 9).

I am entering the Tasman Peninsula community as a stranger, someone who has known the Peninsula since childhood, and has lived in the area as a temporary resident, but I cannot feel the connections that might make me comfortable in belonging. The idea of a “space on the side of the road” as Stewart has used (1996) appeals to me in that I envisage a space to pull over, a space of retreat, a place where I am not hidden, but where the life of the Peninsula passes by at different speeds, and where I can choose to observe, or choose to enter the life of the community. From this metaphoric “space on the side of the road” I observe the comings and goings of the community, which Stewart (1996, Prologue) describes as constituting the “density, fabric, and force of a lived cultural poetics.”

Stewart’s metaphor of the “space on the side of the road” becomes more expressive when one considers the nature of the road that I am about to travel, both in literal and metaphoric terms. The remoteness of the community of approximately 2,000 people is mostly marked by its position and the difficulty of access. There are only two ways to enter the Peninsula, either by road or by sea. The road is circular, and has a direct route, the Arthur Highway, from Hobart to the historic settlement of Port Arthur and return. A secondary, less travelled road, takes drivers through the small settlements, including Nubeena. The entire road is in disrepair, is unsealed and narrow in parts, and has dangerous bends and hills. Log trucks, tourist buses and other heavy traffic share this route. With only one road in and out of the Peninsula, many justifiably regard the Tasman Peninsula as a remote area, one that is situated far from other populated areas.

The former Mayor of the Tasman Council, Mrs Jan Barwick, made the following comments with regard to the road. (It is only since the recent fires that I describe in Chapter 4 that planning for road upgrades has begun.)

The Arthur Highway, which carries 300,000 tourists a year, is a disgrace.

It is the only way in and out. It is a State Government road and \$23 million would help immensely.

It is a goat track and hugely embarrassing. It is a challenge for tourists, and locals find it frustrating. (*The Mercury*, March 2, 2009, p.8)

I travel that road to the Tasman Peninsula on a significant journey—one of challenges and heartache, one of exhilaration and hope, one of humility and admiration. There are times when I feel a sense of belonging and other times when I feel like an intruder, but always with sincerity for my quest to find a place where I can observe, with hope, the potential of the community of the Tasman Peninsula to rise to a beckoning future of sustainable renewal.

I have referred to the uniqueness of the Tasman Peninsula. I have been guided in the meaning of ‘unique’ from the *Online Etymological Dictionary* (2014), in which it is stated that unique means, “being one of a kind.” The *Online Etymological Dictionary* is strict in its usage of the word, and emphasises that to be unique does not mean to be unusual. The online dictionary refers to comments from the *Oxford Dictionary* in which it is emphasised not to fall into the hyperbole of unique, when all that is meant is rare or uncommon. I refer to the *Online Etymological Dictionary* for word origins and meanings throughout this thesis.

I confidently use the term ‘unique’ for the Tasman Peninsula and its community, when I consider the full dimensions of its physical, demographic, historical, social and cultural embodiment. Only on the Tasman Peninsula is there a remnant of the ancient land, *Gondwanaland*, which has been occupied by the *Pydairrorme* people, and later became a penal outpost for the British Government. On this land white man overcame the ancient tribe with violence and prospered to see a growth of an economy based on timber, orchards, fishing and tourism. On this land too, man has witnessed a massacre of large proportions by a single man, mourned local fishermen, and seen the ravages of bushfire. Each one of these is not unique, but the small settlement of around 2,000 people has seen it all over 200 years.

## **Thesis Development**

This thesis examines the community of the Tasman Peninsula from many aspects, including the location and the concept of place, the history of the place and the community, as much as we know it, what it means to belong and have identity with the place, the industries and their place in the community, and some of the political and community issues that impact on the place. I ask the question, how might a small, remote community that has faced the violation of peace, place, people and progress, over 200 years, rise to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond?

I propose that answers to this question might be understood in terms of a visualised physical model of the Tasman Peninsula community, in which the community is composed of moving sub-communities or ‘hubs’, united with common cause, and that these internal hubs might shift, compensate and reform to keep the whole community in a sustainable balance. However like any physical body, the Tasman Peninsula community is subject to external forces that place the community in Newtonian tension. The effect of these external forces is to adjust the dynamics within internal hubs so that the whole community will either continue to remain balanced, or collapse under pressure. I explore this concept to develop three propositional statements on the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community.

I begin my journey within a class of Grade 9 students from Tasman District School, as we explore their place and future on the Tasman Peninsula, by introducing fishing as a focus industry. This school caters for students from Kindergarten to Grade 10 (16-year-olds) and has a total enrolment of around 250 students. Tasman District School is a focus point of the community and hosts a number of community facilities such as a branch of LINC, Learning and Information Network Centre Tasmania, a community radio, an online centre, and a small indoor swimming pool. Concurrently I move through the community meeting the people and listening to their stories. I place myself within the community, living the experience of one who hopes to belong. Through shared experiences with the students and others I hope to gain insights about the industries, the culture and social and community organisations, including Tasman District School.

The intentionality of this thesis is to develop a conscious relationship between my understanding of the ways in which a community might be sustainable into the future, and evidence that I might authentically disclose about a particular community’s capacity to be self-sustaining. To place the words ‘sustainable’ and ‘community’ together is fraught with complications, as neither can be defined in simple, concrete terms. Both suggest dynamics—movement that enwraps life and possibilities.

### **What is meant by Sustainability?**

‘Sustainability’ is a term familiarly used around the balance between development and future stability. As such it involves the environment and economy. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) broadens the

concept of 'sustainability' in its report, *Educating for a Sustainable Future: A transdisciplinary vision for concerted action* (1997),

Yet, while there are many definitions of sustainable development, it can perhaps be better understood as an emerging vision rather than as a neatly defined concept or relationship. In truth, it is as much an ethical precept as a scientific concept, as concerned with notions of equity as with theories of global warming. Sustainable development is widely understood to involve the natural sciences and economics, but it is even more fundamentally concerned with culture: with the values people hold and how they perceive their relations with others. It responds to an imperative need to imagine a new basis for relationships among peoples and with the habitat that sustains human life. (UNESCO, 1997, p.14)

There are many studies that promote theory and advocate strategies and principles in developing sustainability, many focus on particular aspects that are adduced to sustain political, environmental, ecological, economic, cultural and social structures, many others develop relationships between certain industries and sustainability, such as tourism, aquaculture and agriculture, some studies are concerned with moral and legal inheritance, and some emphasise human and social capital (Bosselmann, 2013; Flora and Flora, 2005; Dale and Onyx, 2010; and Sharma, Starick and Husted, 2007).

Whilst this thesis does not particularise a study of any one of these areas, it concentrates attention on a particular community that relies on a great diversity of factors that affect sustainability. This thesis follows more along the line of UNESCO's higher concern with the values of the people and their relations with others. When speaking of sustainability within the Tasman Peninsula community I take a broad view that involves the four parameters of environment, economy, society and culture, contributing to the responsibility of the citizens to endow a legacy upon others not compromised by willing or unwilling practices. This thesis inquires into and imagines possibilities for sustaining the community beyond the shocks of historical, violent and natural disasters. Narrative inquiry leads into potentiality for understanding what contributes to the sustainability of a community so that a legacy remains for others.

### **What is Community?**

From my “space on the side of the road” I will look inside and through the complexities of the Tasman Peninsula community, using observations and narratives, which form the warp and weft, the movements and the constituency of the community. My challenge is to enter the community and become one of the threads in the discourse of the Tasman Peninsula community. Sometimes I occupy that “space on the side of the road” as a teacher and researcher; at other times I am a temporary resident or someone who has links and interests in the culture and history of the place. I will use observations and narratives to develop an understanding of the social fabric of the Tasman Peninsula community, through studies of history, belonging and identity, industries, politics, and other community concerns.

In using the word ‘community’ I refer to something more than a group of people who share the same locality. I make no attempt to define the word ‘community’, as I consider it to be a fluid notion, encompassing the dynamics of people moving in and out of social connections and embracing the parameters that are both drawn together and separated in physical and demographic shapes. From the smallest krill that inhabits the Southern Oceans to the largest Blue Whale known, a community is shaped by the role of each in its binding interconnections and symbiotic relationships. Likewise, the smallest gathering of people in a far-distant corner of the earth might have connections in a much larger global world, and yet amongst those village people there are other groups and gatherings that move from one formation to another. I intend the word, ‘community’, in this thesis, to represent an entity that is animate, religious, secular, political, apolitical, local, state, national, international, microscopic and macroscopic.

Andrew Mason has written a book called *Communities, Solidarity and Belonging* (2000) in which he explores this concept. He describes communities that may exist around a central concept or area of interest or learning. For example, there can be religious communities, ethnic communities, moral communities or linguistic communities, and there can be different levels within the nominated community.

One of the limitations of describing a community is to assign a metaphoric or a nominative boundary that suggests an emotive or political attachment. Mason (2000) writes,

Faced with this array of putative communities, it is hard not to become suspicious that the term is being used unreflectively, or that it is being used purely emotively, to induce support for social arrangements or policies which the speaker or writer happens to favour. (2000, p.1)

Mason outlines two concepts of community, one he calls “the ordinary concept” (2000, p.20) and the other “the moralised concept” (p.27). The latter is most often used in the socialist tradition. I am concerned with the ordinary concept of community in this study. Mason differentiates between ‘community’ and ‘association’, a word that could be interpreted as meaning people interact with one another for their own “self-regarding interests” (2000, p.21). Mason explains a community as “a group of people who share a range of values, a way of life, identity with the group and its practices and recognise each other as members of that group” (2000, p.21).

### **Community that Excludes – Bauman, Derrida and Levinas**

I am aware of others’ perceptions of community, especially with regard to the moralised aspect of communities existing without identity. Ann Chinnery outlines the work of Zygmunt Bauman, Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas in her article, ‘On Compassion and Community Without Identity: Implications for Moral Education’ (2006). I am careful to make it clear here that I am curiously following Chinnery’s notion of community without identity because it is one that seems to contradict the presentation in this thesis that the Tasman Peninsula community is a community *with* identity. The word ‘community’ comes from the early Latin derivative *communitatem*, meaning “common, public, general, shared by all or many.” By Mediaeval times the Latin word became like *universitas*, “a body of fellows or fellow-townsmen” (Online Etymological Dictionary). In these definitions there are no suggestions of a feeling or sense of warmth, but rather a union of people. Chinnery suggests that Bauman, Derrida and Levinas would propose a postmodernist interpretation of the word, in a world of shifting values, immigration, education and social equity (2006, p.330). Chinnery refers to Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* (2011), in which he explores the notion of an idealised community of belonging and sharing. He suggests that one can almost “feel” the word ‘community’, and this idea suggests to me that Bauman considers the word to invoke sentiments and desire in many people. If he ‘feels’ the word in

this manner, it could be argued that he acknowledges such places do exist. Bauman states,

The meaning and feelings the words convey are not, of course, independent of each other. 'Community' feels good because of the meanings the word 'community' conveys – all of them promising pleasure, and more often than not the kinds of pleasures we would like to experience but seem to miss. (Bauman, 2011, p.1)

Bauman's metaphors for community might be rather romantically conceived in terms of homeliness, familiarity, safety, shelter, warmth and nurturing, and feeling good.

To start with, community is a "warm" place, a cosy and comfortable place. It is like a roof under which we shelter in heavy rain, like a fireplace at which we warm our hands on a frosty day. Out there, in the street, all sorts of dangers lie in ambush; we have to be alert when we go out, watch whom we are talking to and who talks to us, be on the lookout every minute. In here, in the community, we can relax – we are safe there are no dangers looming in dark corners (to be sure, hardly any 'corner' here is 'dark'). (Bauman, 2011, p.1)

For Bauman, even if we are strangers to each other we might still be members of his idealised community.

In a community, we all understand each other well, we may trust what we hear, we are safe most of the time and hardly ever puzzled or taken aback. We are never strangers to each other. We may quarrel, but these are friendly quarrels, it is just that we are all trying to make our togetherness even better and more enjoyable than it has been so far and, while guided by the same wish to improve our life together, we may disagree how to do it best. But we never wish each other bad luck, and we may be sure that all the others around us wish us good. (Bauman, 2011, p.1)

However these are only dreams according to Levinas, and the reality is harsh. Levinas (1906-1995) knew alienation. I have sourced biographical information from the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, online version (Bergo, 2015). Levinas was born a Lithuanian Jew during pre-Revolutionary Russia when there was some tolerance of Jews. However in 1914 his family immigrated to the Ukraine in the wake of war, returning to Lithuania when it gained independence. Levinas went on to France to study philosophy and in 1939 he became a naturalised French man, and enlisted in the French Army Corps. He was captured and imprisoned by the Nazis in 1940. Throughout his life, Levinas felt the presence of and the desire for the 'Other', that

to whom he did not belong. He writes, “The Other (*Autrui*) who faces me is not included in the totality of being expressed. He arises behind every assembling of being as he to whom I express what I express” (Peperzak, Critchley and Bernasconi, 1996, p.52). Levinas was displaced throughout his life, through culture, religion and politics. He possibly did not experience a ‘safe community’, but did not feel the need for one either, relying on his interlocutor, the ‘Other’ to be his directional guide through social engagement.

Chinnery argues that Derrida speaks of community in terms of the needs of the displaced—a community excludes rather than includes the marginalised and the stranger. Intrigued by this, I made a brief biographical inquiry about Derrida’s life circumstances through the writing of Benoit Peeters in *Derrida: A Biography* (2013). Derrida was born in French Algiers in 1930 and attended a local school where he developed a strong interest in literature and endured taunts of being Jewish. He was displaced from his *lycée* in 1942, when anti-Semitic rulings placed a quota on the number of Jewish students. According to Peeters, Derrida described this exclusion as, “one of the earthquakes in his life” (2013, p.19). From this age Derrida showed little allegiance to his covenant of circumcision. Derrida’s early journeys through exclusion, prejudice, war and suffering undoubtedly influenced his concept of community as, “a kind of ‘military formation’, a wall of protection that we build against the other” (Chinnery, 2006, p.330). I do not envisage such a negative militaristic view of community where walls are built against each other in the Tasman Peninsula community, and yet I do not have preconceptions of relationships being all cosy and warm, as I know some history of the community before I embark on my journey. Rather, I imagine a community where there are quarrels and divisions, and where safety and trust is sought amongst members.

### **Inclusion in the Tasman Peninsula Community**

My challenge in this thesis is to present my reference to the Tasman Peninsula community as a fluid body of people with moving interrelationships, albeit bounded geographically, without any assumptions or preferences on my part about underlying political, religious, moral or cultural values, whilst acknowledging that prejudice, favourable or not, might exist within some groups of the Tasman Peninsula community. I may be the stranger to the community, but I do not accept



a position of exclusion or alienation. My intentions are to enter this community seeking belonging.

We could conceptualise the people of the Tasman Peninsula as belonging to one community of 2,000, united by tradition and past events and wanting a common good or place of cohesiveness, wary of outside interests. The community could also be considered in terms of sub-groups, as Mason suggests. Yet, my evidence requires me to question the ways sub-groups within a community respond or react, together or against one another. For example, do Christian church attendees consider themselves a separate sub-community or, indeed, does any other religious group in the community? Do locals belong to an exclusive community that has proprietary ownership of the land and infrastructure and excludes the seasonal residents, when all are ratepayers to the same local council? Are permanent employees who work for the biggest employer, the Port Arthur Historic Site, considered a privileged group amongst those who are unemployed? Are commercial fishermen a different entity than recreational fishermen?

### **Hubs within a Community**

In conceptualising the Tasman Peninsula community as one community I believe it will be helpful to this thesis to attribute the word 'hub' to a community within the larger one. Thus we could perceive a number of hubs existing within the Tasman Peninsula community. We need to allow the word 'hub' to enfold its historicity as fluid and to blur the fabric of its boundaries. My concept is that community is dynamic, and that community hubs are moving bodies of energy brought together to interact and balance the Tasman Peninsula community.

Peter Block warns of the fragmentation that occurs within small population groups in his book, *Community – The Structure of Belonging* (2008). He argues that fragmentation occurs if each piece of the community structure is working in its own manner and with its own agenda. Block also warns that isolation is a cost of detachment and disconnection, and leads to a situation where the gifts of the individuals are not realised (2008, p.2). However, Block does consider small group gatherings to be an opportunity for the social fabric of a whole community to become alive, welcoming and hospitable, and might lead to the identification of individuals with gifts and uniqueness (p.31).

In this thesis, I consider the Tasman Peninsula community itself to be part of larger communities at state, federal and global levels. Ultimately, at a global level, the local resources may become in high demand, or may be replaced with other alternatives, or even depleted. These factors might not be realised in my lifetime, but I seek indicators as to how sustainable the local community might be into the future.

### **Isaac Newton and a Model for Community Dynamics**

I first met Isaac Newton as a child. I had a vague memory from those years of a fellow sitting under an apple tree, but only as much as an Australian child can relate to a story of a distant Englishman and their dropping apples, and the Swiss marksman William Tell splitting his apple with a bow. Somewhere in my childhood mind I think that these two legends had morphed into one, and I was not incredibly inspired by either story from our History curriculum, nor did I relate to them. After all, we were taught that Tasmania grew the world's best apples and our land was once known as the Apple Isle. Our stories belonged to the ancient Tasmanian Aborigines of 30,000 years past, but they too had been changed as white man trampled the story lines. As a Commonwealth colonial outpost we were presented with a cleansed Anglo-Saxon history that omitted details of convict history and Aboriginal lore.

In secondary school Science classes I was introduced to Newton's Three Laws of Motion, and the Physics involved became convenient catechistic steps to which I plugged in the numbers and achieved the required results. The apple story was one of gravity, and its associated law. In secondary schools today there have been major pedagogical shifts from the prescriptive requirements of the 1970s curriculum, and students are engaged now in integrated learning, with an emphasis on flexibility, collaboration and partnership. Yet somewhere, in a science classroom that lurks behind the open spaces of a 21<sup>st</sup> century school, there will still be students who are rote learning Newton's laws and testing the formulae using the rusty pendulums, springs and pulleys of my day. My hope is that one day this too will be replaced by inquiry within the students' known environments and experiences to bring Newton back to life.

It was the man Isaac Newton that I have come to know in my recent years. On a visit to Cambridge in 2011, I sensed the student, the young Newton of Trinity

College, who had walked these streets and sat on the banks of the Cam. My family home in Somerset, Tasmania, the antipodes of Cambridge, was on the banks of another Cam, and as I had much enjoyed kayaking on this Cam as a child, I wanted to experience punting on that distant river, and pass under Wooden Bridge, Newton's mythical construction. I wanted to learn more of him, his life and his trials. And through my reading, Newton came to me—an ordinary life and an extraordinary philosopher. As a young student, Newton was sent home when the Black Plague forced the closure of Cambridge, and there, quite alone in his thoughts, he sat under the apple tree and continued his explorations. Writing at the edge of Scientific Methodology and quantitative research, Newton recognised the emotion and thinking of those great intellectuals who had come before him. He said that he owed much to the knowledge of others in this time and in a letter to his contemporary and rival, Robert Hooke, spoke of his foundations.

What Des-Cartes did was a good step. You have added much several ways, & especially in taking the colours of thin plates into philosophical consideration. If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants [sic]. (1676)

Whilst taken by some as a cryptic quip intended to hurt Hooke, who was short statured, the good intent to recognise those who had previously propelled the Scientific Revolution must be acknowledged. The main scholars of the day in the new school of Science were Nicholas Copernicus and Johannes Kepler, and these must surely be amongst the giants of whom Newton spoke. Newton was foremost a philosopher who searched for truth in all his scientific explorations, whether they be under the apple tree, or in the greater constellations. In doing so gave rise to the Scientific Method. In his work, *Principia*, Newton set out a methodology in which he proclaims truth to be universal in explaining the phenomena of natural effects, and that truth can only be assigned to knowledge unless otherwise contradicted. In his words,

Truth is ever to be found in the simplicity, and not in the multiplicity and confusion of things. As the world, which to the naked eye exhibits the greatest variety of objects, appears very simple in its internal constitution when surveyed by a philosophical understanding, and so much the simpler by how much the better it is understood. (In Manuel, 1974, p.120)

The word 'hypothesis' is derived from the French *hypothèse* of the 1590s via late Latin from Greek *hypothesis* 'foundation', from *hupo* 'under' and *thesis* 'placing', and

means the base of an argument or supposition (Online Etymological Dictionary). The search for truthfulness in Philosophy led to the methods mostly accepted in research today—a question is asked and a hypothesis is formed. The solution to the question requires rigid experimentation, and scientific knowledge or truth can only be based on testing and supportive evidence. With the elucidation of Scientific Method by Newton and his contemporaries of the scientific world, there was a movement away from recognising philosophical thought and emotions in the search for truth. Philosophers and thinkers, still of the world, and within their circles, continued their philosophical writings. Over time quantitative research became the dominant tradition in research.

Ideas of quantitative research need not pervade all research. If there is a presence of one research method, there is a possibility for another. This thesis constitutes an interpretative inquiry with the language, the emotions and the narratives of the real world, the lifeworld. The Germans have a term for lifeworld, *lebenswelt*. In this thesis I approach questions of identity, belonging and sustainability with thoughts, emotions and narratives, but I sometimes support these lifeworld issues with quantitative data and interconnections with the systemworld, the world of politics and governance.

I pose questions in this thesis regarding the future of the Tasman Peninsula community. I hypothesise that there are, and might continue to be, external forces acting upon the body we know as the Tasman Peninsula community, and that it might be composed of hubs, circulating within. These hubs are comprised of smaller communities, some that I might enter as I move deeper within the Tasman Peninsula community.

My responses to the hypothesis will not be in strict accordance with the Scientific Method. The future cannot be foreseen beyond a lifetime, so only propositions based on available and past evidence, through narratives and observations, could be the basis upon which conjectures might be made. I employ a qualitative analysis to my findings, rather than quantitative, and I scrutinise my interpretations of such findings for their truthfulness. I venture into the Tasman Peninsula community with travelling companions who as philosophers have searched for truthfulness in their debates of dialogue and community. Among these

are Mikhail Bakhtin, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jürgen Habermas and Ferdinand Tönnies.

In explaining the dynamics and tensions within the community I have borrowed from Newton, but placed his methodical quantitative rules, perhaps controversially, within the realms of qualitative, interpretative research. I reconciled my early thoughts of the dynamics, the motions acting on a main community hub of the Tasman Peninsula, as a physical body. My reasons come from thinking of a dynamic community within which other community hubs moved and interacted whilst under tension from external forces.

I put forth three propositions about the ways the Tasman Peninsula community might transform as its people move forward into their futures. These propositions might be seen as controversial, practical, possible, optimistic, negative or uncertain. I believe my propositions offer means of inquiry along pathways that could expose and assist an understanding of potential capacities for whole community sustainability.

**Proposition One: The Tasman Peninsula community remains a stable community.**

The Tasman Peninsula community is cocooned and insulated from various external forces that may impact upon the intrinsic being of the community. As such, the Tasman Peninsula community as we know it remains balanced. All four parameters of sustainability: environmental, social, economic and cultural, operating internally within the hubs, are in tension and balance with external forces that act upon it. One way to conceptualise the dynamics of the community model borrows from Newton's Third Law of Motion.

*Lex III: Actioni contrariam semper et aequalem esse reactionem: sive corporum duorum actiones in se mutuo semper esse aequales et in partes contrarias dirigi.*

Law 3: All forces occur in pairs, and these two forces are equal in magnitude and opposite in direction. (Newton, trans. Motte, 1729, p.20)

There is weave, warp and weft between the hubs, such that the fabric of the community remains intact. The stability of the Tasman Peninsula community is ensured despite the nature and strength of future and unknown external forces.

**Proposition Two: The Tasman Peninsula community becomes a new community.**

The Tasman Peninsula community faces external forces, the nature of which may not be known. The community shows some resilience and makes changes to accommodate such forces. A movement within the hubs of the community facilitates these changes, as the hubs alter in shapes and structures, impacting upon the parameters of sustainability, causing unforeseen shifts in the known fabric of the Tasman Peninsula community. Borrowing again from Newton, this time from his First Law of Motion, it is possible to re-conceptualise the community in terms of new and moving formations.

*Lex I: Corpus omne perseverare in statu suo quiescendi vel movendi uniformiter in directum, nisi quatenus a viribus impressis cogitur statum illum mutare.*

Law 1: An object at rest will remain at rest unless acted upon by an external and unbalanced force. An object in motion will remain in motion unless acted upon by an external and unbalanced force. (Newton, trans. Motte, 1729, p.19)

This law suggests that a body remains the same, either in rest or in motion, unless it is compelled to change its state by external forces. The Tasman Peninsula community remains in its balanced state until there is a shift required by the nature and strength of as yet unknown external forces. The fabric of the community starts to unravel and loses its texture until a new structure and core integrity emerges.

**Proposition Three: The Tasman Peninsula community collapses.**

The Tasman Peninsula community is doomed for extinction. Such strong words tell of a situation where external forces are so powerful that the community collapses. Despite the strengths of the internal hubs as they shift to accommodate the environmental, social, economic and cultural changes imposed upon them, the hubs cannot withstand such external pressures. A new community may emerge though vestiges of its former self within the hubs that remain.

Newton's Second Law of Motion indicates the effect of forces on a body as they increase.

*Lex II: Mutationem motus proportionalem esse vi motrici impressae, et fieri secundum lineam rectam qua vis illa imprimitur.*

Law 2: The change of momentum of a body is proportional to the impulse impressed on the body, and happens along the straight line on which that impulse is impressed. (Newton, trans. Motte, 1729, p.19)

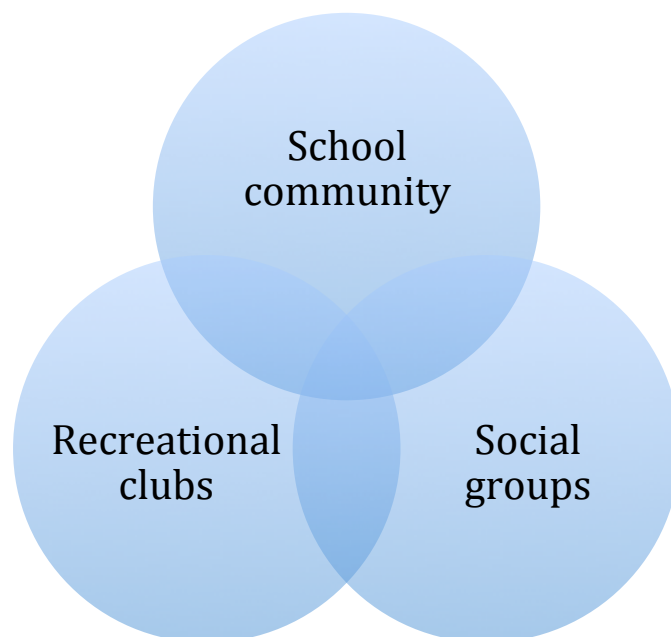
I interpret this to mean that the effect of force on a body is proportional to the strength of the force. Analogically, as the external and yet unknown forces on the community are increased, catastrophic eruptions might occur, and hubs fragment in chaos until the Tasman Peninsula community disintegrates. This tattered community suffers a state of collapse. Legacies of community stories might be all that remain to become historical threads for weaving a new community.

I propose a physical model of community dynamics metaphorically based upon Newton's Laws of Motion, and a network of hubs that connect and interact with each other, as depicted in Venn diagram style. Chris Joyce (2008) defines Venn diagrams in the following,

A Venn diagram is a type of graphic organiser. Graphic organisers are a way of organising complex relationships visually. They allow abstract ideas to be more visible.

Venn diagrams originate from a branch of mathematics called set theory. John Venn developed them in 1891 to show relationships between sets. They are now used across many other disciplines. (Joyce, 2008)

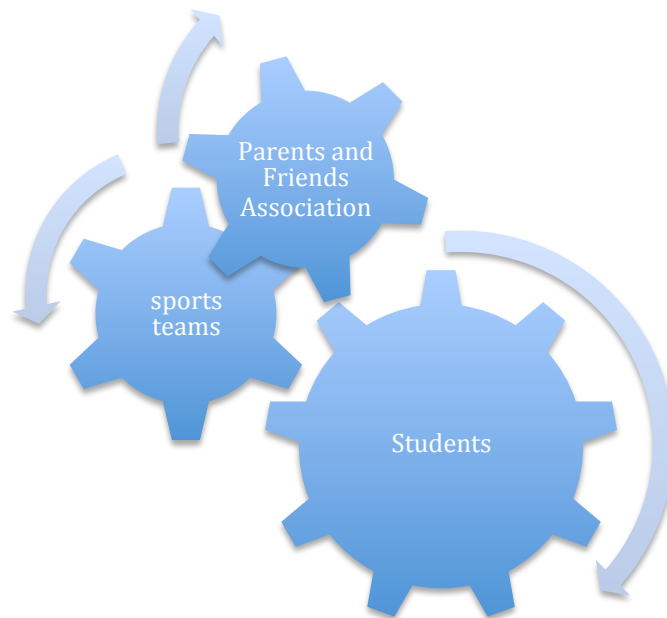
My depiction of a Venn diagram model of the Tasman Peninsula is shown in Figure 3.



*Figure 3.* A Venn diagram model showing possible interconnecting hubs within the Tasman Peninsula community

This diagram represents the interactions that might occur between members of the school community, recreational clubs, such as football or sailing, and social groups such as a church fellowship or the Returned Servicemen’s League. In some areas there is an interaction of members, shown in darker print. For example, members of the school community may also be members of a book reading club or the local football club. Indeed a member of the school community may be a member of all of these community hubs.

Within each hub of this proposed ‘community dynamics model’ there are revolving hubs, as shown in the example of a school hub in Figure 4.



*Figure 4.* The school community depicted as a hub containing other hubs that revolve within

The school community consists of many internal hubs that are often interdependent and can be considered to revolve around each other. For example, without funding from the Parents and Friends Association, the school might not be able to purchase equipment for sports teams, and without students from the school there would not be members of sports teams, or any need for a Parents and Friends Association.



The dynamics that occur within the Tasman Peninsula community determine the balance of the community. If an external force is placed upon the whole community the effect will be determined by responses and compensations made within the various community hubs.

As I move farther into the Tasman Peninsula community and consider movements that might determine the sustainability of the community, some principles emerge that I explicate in following chapters. Communication occurs between members of internal hubs within their hubs, and between others, as well as between members of the Tasman Peninsula community, either independently or representing hubs, and external communities, on state, national and global levels. Conversations and dialogue endow narratives from the Tasman Peninsula about the environmental, economic, social and cultural elements inherent in Peninsula life. Sometimes a multiplicity of voices, *heteroglossia*, brings strength to public declarations of opinions, concerns and debates. Single voices espouse experience and wisdom. Conversations and dialogue pave pathways of mutual understanding and broadening knowledge. Practical knowing, or *phronesis*, emerges through participants interacting with each other when validity, truth and sincerity underline their dialogue. Traditions, culture and religion are celebrated through song and dance, stories, ceremony, flags and fellowship—gatherings of people, community members, in hubs of communication. Sometimes they celebrate seasons and harvest that are inherent in Peninsula life, sometimes they mourn those whose lives were given to Peninsula life, and sometimes they shine light and hope for Peninsula life. Communication and communicative acts are indicators, meeting places, hills and valleys, milestones and resting spots, on the road to sustainability. This thesis is one of movement. It speaks of dynamics, internal balance, compensation, drive and bonding. Such movement comes from the people of the Tasman Peninsula community as they go about their daily lives, responding to their needs and circumstances whilst trying to overcome barriers before them and external forces acting upon them.

### **Ethical Considerations**

As I enter the Tasman Peninsula community I do so with respect and sincerity. I could never lay claim to being one who has witnessed the full embodiment of life on the Peninsula, although I strive to understand some of their complications,

achievements, disappointments and victories. I search for belonging, and throughout this thesis I ask questions of what it means to belong, and conversely not to belong. I bring to the Tasman Peninsula community truthfulness in my intentions.

I use conversations, questions, narratives, reflective journaling and media reports to enhance my thoughts and discussions. I have sought permission from most people to include their communication acts in my writing—the exceptions being in cases where I have overheard conversations or they have been reported in media. In situations where I have overheard conversations I have not used names, but instead have referred to the participants as Speaker 1 or 2, for example. In the case of media reports, I have written the names as reported, and acknowledged the reporting agency.

When referring to the students and the teacher of the Tasman District School class I have used pseudonyms, and have not given an identifying year in text or in photographs. I have not included any photographs of students, and other photographs that include people have previously been published through accessible media. In those circumstances I have included the original publisher. I distributed an information pamphlet to each of the students who participated, and their parents or guardians, which explained the purposes of my study, information regarding confidentiality, and a permission form to be signed by both student and adult.

I sought the permission of the Mayor when I conducted the research, and have included her name in full. Since the October 2014 election and declaration of the poll, Jan Barwick is no longer the Mayor of the Tasman Council. I have referred to other interviewees and guest speakers by their first names only and have been given their permission to include their words in this thesis. The exception is Ilan Arnon from the Sustainable Living Centre; however, his name was previously mentioned in media reports. I acknowledge the death of Allen, surname withheld, a former councillor whom I interviewed. As tradition calls, I have not mentioned the names of deceased Aboriginals, unless their names have been mentioned in publications that I have acknowledged. I have changed the names of those who have been mentioned as having drowned in recent years. The name of the Port Arthur gunman is not spoken of publicly in the community, and I have not mentioned the names of victims, other than those who have given their first names, Alanah and Madeline to

a foundation recognised for its work with violence against children. The Ethics Committee of my university has approved my research.

### **Strategic Devices**

As my research places me within and alongside conversations, interviews, email dialogue, teaching tasks and other narratives I have differentiated the voices in different fonts. The body text is written in Garamond 12 font, but I have also used conversation speakers in Garamond 11, interviews, including email responses, in Lucida Sans 9 font, journal in Gabriola 12, **student voice in Chalkduster 9** and **teacher voice in Chalkboard 10**. Where I have used foreign words I have written them in Garamond 12 italics within the text and included their meanings the first time I have used the word. I have elucidated acronyms the first time that I have used them.

When I speak of the *Pydairrerre* people, the original landowners, I use the terms Aborigine and Aboriginal, with a capital A, or Indigenous. The term ‘Aboriginal’ comes from the 1660s, meaning “first” or “earliest”, and from Latin, *ab origine*, “from the beginning” (Online Etymological Dictionary). I use Aboriginal to distinguish the Tasmanian or Australian original landowners, from those of other countries. From the same source, the word ‘Indigenous’ is also from Latin, 1640s, *indigenus* meaning, “born in a country, native” and the earlier Latin noun, *indigena*, “sprung from the land,” a “native”. I use Indigenous with a capital “I” to denote Tasmanian or Australian Indigenous people, as distinct from those of other countries.

Throughout this thesis I have chosen the voice of poetry to provide an interlude in writing to speak to me with diverse meanings, sometimes emotionally or prophetically, at other times situating me in a place or moment, or allowing an imaginative interpretation. Some of these words directly link parts of my text, others position me in my own thoughts as I consider my place within the research, whilst others provide a commentary to the events or occasions of this thesis. I have also included photographs within the text to highlight situations and places as perceived by my eyes and those of others. I intend visual representations as adjuncts to written words, giving depth to that which is heard.

I commence my search for answers to the questions of how the community might be self-sustaining and have the capacity to be sustainable into the future by considering the history of the Tasman Peninsula community, from Aboriginal occupation, European discoveries of Tasmania, as it became to be known, and colonial and penal occupation. I do not intend to write a history of the Tasman Peninsula as a thesis, but to present the history that I consider relevant to the changing course of life on the Tasman Peninsula in terms of its society, culture, economy and environment. The students of Tasman District School are part of the history of Tasman Peninsula life, and will remain part of its history in generations to come.

## INTERLUDE

*I do not know what I may appear to the world;*

*but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself now and then in finding a smoother pebble or prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.*

Isaac Newton

*Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton* (1855)—an excerpt



*Photograph 1.* Port Arthur. Markovic and the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Tasmania (2008)

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY

#### Qualitative Methodology and Referential Quantitative Data

The word, ‘methodology’, is associated with the Scientific Method, as a way of experimenting to test a hypothesis. It is derived from the Greek, *methodos*, with the etymological root being a scientific inquiry, or a method of investigation. The implication of orderliness or regularity comes from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the Scientific Method was developed (Online Etymological Dictionary). Methodology encompasses the techniques and systematic procedures, known as the methods that are used to conduct the research or testing of a hypothesis. With this in mind I apply a number of qualitative methods to test the proposals of this thesis. Qualitative research does not produce the numbers or formulated findings of quantitative research, but rather reveals the social settings, activities and functions of place and community in my research. Numbers are still part of my qualitative research in a referential way, with census statistics, tourism data, and measurements of marine parks and other natural features forming parts of my text.

#### Emic and Etic in Qualitative Research

Jenny Phillimore and Lisa Goodson (2004) have brought together writers and researchers to address the issue of qualitative methodology in tourism in *Qualitative Research in Tourism: Ontologies, Epistemologies and Methodologies*. I refer to writings in this book, as some of my research is based around tourism within the dynamics of the Tasman Peninsula community.

Phillimore and Goodson speak of the ‘emic’ as “an insiders perspective” in human interactions with their natural settings (2004, p. 4). The words ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ are first used *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behaviour* by the linguist Kenneth Pike (1954, pp. 8-28). Emic and etic are derived from the words ‘phonemics’ and ‘phonetics’. In short emic, refers to qualitative interest in an anthropologist’s study, whilst etic refers to scientific quantitative data that can also be collected by anthropologists. Brian Hoey, cultural anthropologist,

ethnographer and author, explains the roles of anthropology and ethnographer in cultural interpretation. He writes of ethnography thus,

Ethnographers generate understandings of culture through representation of what we call an emic perspective, or what might be described as the “insider’s point of view”. The emphasis in this representation is thus on allowing critical categories and meanings to emerge from the ethnographic encounter rather than imposing these from existing models. An etic perspective, by contrast, refers to a more distant, analytical orientation to experience. (Hoey, 2000-2015, accessed April 11, 2015).

Hoey suggests that ethnography is borne from its “disciplinary home of anthropology” but uses several sources of data, relying on a “cultural frame of analysis,” mostly determined by the anthropologists who study human behaviour in cultural settings. In this thesis I assume a role of an ethnographer and autoethnographer, primarily using an emic approach, but I recall some of the history of the Tasman Peninsula, especially its first Aboriginal people from the valuable research of anthropologists. Some of my evidence, especially statistical data is backed by etic research.

### **The Narrative**

My inquiry has an interpretative, autobiographic, biographic and narrative orientation towards lived and living experience in the community that guides this thesis as I develop a commentary that portrays the importance of listening from within and from outside the community, understanding the meanings and nuances of community dynamics, and exploring issues of identity, belonging, trust and authenticity that are of concern to members of the community. My narrative is enriched by other narratives or stories, which have authors, storytellers, actors, scenes, timeframes and pictures.

Taking an autobiographical stance to gather research material also raises issues of being an insider and whether the researcher can be separated from ‘the other’, or whether she is indeed ‘the other’ in her own place. Charlotte Davies (2007) gives authority to autobiographical narrative in social research when she writes,

However, it is precisely in this process of interaction between ethnographer-as-self and ethnographer-as-other that social knowledge of general interest and significance is produced. The interaction of ethnographer-as-researcher, informed by the

theoretical positions of other social research and in a dialogue with a social scientific community, with the ethnographer-as-informant, with access to the knowledge and experience of an insider, differs in degree but not in kind to other manifestations of the research relationship through which generalizable knowledge about social and cultural realities is produced. (Davies, 2007, p. 228)

Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams and Arthur Bochner, (2010) claim that autoethnography is both “a process and a product” of one’s experiences within a research setting (Section 2). The validity of autoethnography comes from the methodology and literature research around one’s story that separates it from being just a narrative of part of one’s life, sometimes an epiphany. An autoethnographer,

must consider ways others may experience similar epiphanies; they must use personal experience to illustrate facets of cultural experience, and, in so doing, make characteristics of a culture familiar for insiders and outsiders. (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2010, Section 2)

The elucidation of the cultural experience for the insiders and outsiders is the process, completed only by the product, or the writing, something that Ellis, Adam and Bochner describe as, “aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience” (Section 3). I use a “layered” autoethnographic approach (Ellis et al., Section 4.1), where my experience is complemented by data, analyses and literature, using narratives and voices to enliven and validate the experiences, so that the reader may engage in the process through the product.

Paul Ricoeur, 1913 – 2005, is a French philosopher. In *Oneself as Another* (1992 translation of *Soi-mémé comme un autre*), Ricoeur speaks of the interconnection of events in what he calls the “emplotment” of a narrative. He describes the ways events and times interconnect diversely and variously, and the ways they might disconnect and become unstable. Such emplotment allows us to constitute a much deeper narrative than one that identifies only self and place (Ricoeur, 1992, p.140). Ricoeur’s emplotment includes characters that appear in the narrative, actions that occur, and the description of what happens when action passes from an event to a character (pp. 141–143). As I employ the narrative of my inquiry I reconstitute events as I see them in terms of the players and actions of the community. Autobiographical notes, journal entries, observational notes, interviews, census data, commentaries and media reports become sources for interpreting and understanding community happenings. I expect to find I will belong to them, as I



am inserting myself dynamically within the activities of the community. As my evidence represent narratives of others, and although others might interpret them differently, my subjectivity is bound to colour their representation. I am ethically required to respect their stories and to be loyal to the authority of the people who tell them. My interpretation of events, observations and dialogue belonging to a narrative might raise some doubt about the validity of my position as a person on the side of the road commentating on a community. If I am entrenched in the dynamics of my relationship from the side of the road with my participation in the events of the community, for instance, is it possible for my narrative to be faithful? Given that there will be interchanges of actions and characters in the drama of a narrative, my interpretations nevertheless shape a personal identity with the narrative.

Carola Conle writes on the topic of narrative in theses in her paper, “Thesis as Narrative or ‘What is the Inquiry in Narrative Inquiry?’” (2000). Conle addresses some components of the narrative method of inquiry. Firstly she discusses tensions between the history of events and the ultimate object and aim of the inquiry which she describes as a *tacit telos* and that these tensions and actions become the cohesion of various narratives.

I offer three components of the inquiry: “tensions with a history” and “*tacit telos*”, as well as the particular “inquiry dynamic” that both of these bring about. All three components depend on the underlying structuring processes that I also describe since they acted as a kind of glue holding together various sets of narratives. (Conle, 2000, p.194)

I hope to make dynamic the narratives of history and events of the Tasman Peninsula community and the direction that the road follows as I continue with my inquiry. At times I expect to be challenged emotionally, as well as analytically and rationally. I expect to endure discomfort as I hear the stories of the Tasman Peninsula community and its people. I accept this discomfort as a driving force that energises this thesis. Conle writes,

The dialectic between tension and *telos*, between the emotional discomfort of disruption and the desire for some particular harmony, I now see as the essence of my inquiry process and perhaps as the driving force in any narrative thesis that works with experiential stories. (2004, p.197)

I expect that the narrative of this thesis will be disturbing and emotional for my readers as well, but my authenticity comes from giving the people of the Tasman Peninsula community a voice that is heard, and not giving them my voice. I acknowledge the faith in which those people have allowed me to represent their stories in an interpretative manner. If I am involved in the events and the social fabric, can I be autonomous and independent in my findings?

### **Listening to Voices from the Side of the Road**

If I am to identify with the Tasman Peninsula community and situate myself in my research so that I develop a consciousness of relationships that will deepen my understanding of the place, I need to be also part of its dynamics. I need to take a place “on the side of the road” (Stewart, 1996) and listen to the stories past and present that belong there, and add my own stories and interpretations where they will enhance the clarity of my quest to find evidence of possibilities for the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community. Thus, from the place I take on the side of the road and from within my participation in community events, I avow to disclose trustworthy narrating, questioning, interpreting and accounting in this thesis. As I step from the road into the wider Tasman Peninsula community, and as I become a part of interconnecting hubs of the wider community, I see that my occasions of speech and those of silence become open to scrutiny by others.

I listen to voices within the community. Sometimes these are single voices, at others times they may be two voices engaged in dialogue, or a multiplicity of voices speaking together in conversation or against each other in support and debate. I work with a group of Grade 9 students from Tasman District School, whom I suggest will be voices of the future. Although I cannot foresee the future I acknowledge that some decisions made by today’s generation will impact upon the social, cultural, economic and environmental face of a future Tasman Peninsula. My intent is not to describe a model of teaching sustainability, but to interact with the teenagers and be part of their discovery and awareness of their own community.

At times I listen to casual conversations around the community hubs, not to interrupt or participate in their discussions, but to witness dialogue in the context of everyday life, so as to shape my propositional thesis of the future Tasman Peninsula community. Sometimes I hear a multiplicity of voices, for example, from public meetings and debate over a proposed marine park issue, discussions and concerns

about the listing of Port Arthur on a World Heritage register, enthusiastic strategic planning by community consultation groups and the initial meetings of a community sustainable living group. I also listen to single voices from the wilderness—a 16-year-old student with hopes for his future, an 80-year-old councillor, business people in aquaculture and tourism, and the local Mayor at the time. These voices enrich my perceptions of how the future of the Tasman Peninsula community might unfold. In hearing there is also speaking, and at times I enter the dialogue or share other dialogues with my readers. My voice is entwined through others, for example in journal writing, as a teacher or as this thesis writer.

Who is that person standing on the side of the road? I come in various guises—teacher, researcher, parent, property owner and visitor. I come with an attachment based upon empathy towards the community for its violent and tragic past, belief in a community that might rise above its challenges, hope that the community will see a future for its coming generations and plan accordingly, and love, both *agape* and *philia*, for this community. *Agape* is my spiritual love for a community, built through hardships, on a land occupied by original Aboriginal owners and taken by European settlers who developed new cultures as they worked the land and seas to provide for their needs whilst developing infrastructures for the future. I hear the echoes of past generations from the side of the road and feel their spirits around me. *Agape* love is selfless – I come with nothing to offer from the past and I expect nothing in return. *Philia* represents my affection with the people of the Tasman Peninsula community, as an equal in sisterly or brotherly love. In my research I hope to serve them with modesty and that they might receive my trust and friendship. In the spirit of belief, hope and love I wish to develop a thesis that authentically represents narratives of relationships and histories.

### **Reflexivity**

Davies wrote the book *Reflexive Ethnography* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2007) in which she addresses the philosophy and practice of ethnography as a method for social research in her field of anthropology. Although my study is not anthropological, in that it is not restricted to a study of humankind but rather to evolving and sustainable communities, I refer to Davies as an executor of reflexive methodology. At the outset she argues that considerations of reflexivity are important to separate the researcher's connections and presence of the social world from the research

world, where the relationship between researcher and research is, “typically more intimate, long-term and multi-stranded” (Davies, 2007, pp.3-4). She defines reflexivity as,

...a turning back on oneself, a process of self-reference. In the context of social research, reflexivity at its most immediately obvious level refers to the ways in which the products of research are affected by the personnel and process of doing research. (2007, p.4)

It is with this notion of reflexivity that I want to imbue my inquiry. My situated self within the Tasman Peninsula community is so close to the everyday events of the community that I must assume a reflexive attitude similar to Davies'. This includes writing in a journal about how I consider my presence in the social action might be influential in the outcomes I describe. Journal writing allows me to distance myself from the action to reflect upon the history and outcomes of the events. Post-interview reflection, particularly unstructured interviews, allows me to step back and consider the conversations I hold, and develop plans for further discussions. I also use email interview techniques, where I can develop on-going relationships with respondents and take time between each dialogue to consider my involvement, and where I assume the position of researcher without being influenced by personal relationships. I use this technique, to interview a school student whilst I maintain a teacher-as-researcher relationship with him and empathise with his life. I also collaborate with a teacher at Tasman District School, in which we reflexively contemplate previous lessons.

I use reflexive writing to amplify the language of philosophers and academics, the everyday language of the local people and the poetic language that is a personal statement of the literary interpretations of place, time and situation that I select. I seek people who direct me in the course of this thesis. I look for connections in the philosophical propositions of others with propositional statements that guide this thesis.

### **Reflexive Writing and Tact, with Reference to van Manen**

Max van Manen, in his book *Researching Lived Experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy* (1990), speaks of the significance of writing in human research as “textual reflection” (van Manen, 1990, p.4). He proposes,

The fundamental model of this approach is textual reflection on the lived experiences and practical actions of everyday life with the intent to increase one's thoughtfulness and practical resourcefulness or tact. (1990, p.4)

The inclusion of tact in van Manen's proposition intrigues me in the sense he uses it as a descriptive word. I had not considered tact to be more than sensitivity to others' position and place—in the case of my research to represent the manner and attitude to those within the community hubs whom I approach or with whom I interact. Referring to pedagogical tact, van Manen expands my understanding of tact widely, through using words such as “openness”, “attunement”, “holding back”, “situational confidence” and “improvisational gift” (van Manen, 1990, p.5). Perhaps these manifestations of tact are innate realisations of understanding how I will approach the human subjects of my research. van Manen has several answers to the question, “What does pedagogic tact do?” He suggests preserving, saving, preventing, strengthening, enhancing and sponsoring a child's uniqueness, vulnerability and growth (van Manen, 1990, p.5). I consider all these as I approach the students of Tasman District School and consider their future as citizens of a unique community. One claim by van Manen that I do not hold any expectation to be is that pedagogic tact “heals (makes whole) what is broken” (p.5). I enter the school and the wider community understanding that tragedy and violence may not be healed by my tact, but I hope my sensitivity and thoughtfulness allow me to be drawn sympathetically into the presence of those who have suffered. I am encouraged by van Manen's description of how tact becomes integral to human science research, tact mediates through speech, tact mediates through silence, tact mediates through the eyes, tact mediates through gesture, tact mediates through atmosphere and tact mediates through example (van Manen, 1990, p.5).

My presence in this study places me with great sensitivity alongside vulnerable people. The circumstances of tragedy and violence are exposed as I continue with reflexive and historical writing, but at this stage I acknowledge that I am entering susceptible territory, which challenges my authenticity at many posts. My uppermost considerations of human research are ethically foremost as I venture forth. van Manen (1990) speaks of the moral implications in this particular course of action.

The research may have certain effects on the people with whom the research is concerned and who will be interested in the phenomenological work. They may feel discomfort, anxiety, false hope, superficiality, guilt, self-doubt, irresponsibility—but

also hope, increased awareness, moral stimulation, insight, a sense of liberation, a certain thoughtfulness, and so on. (p.162)

He writes further to these comments on the possible effects of research methods on the subjects,

The research methods used may have lingering effects on the actual “subjects” involved in the study. For example, intense conversational interviews may lead to new levels of self-awareness, possible changes in lifestyle, and shifted priorities of living. But, if done badly those methods may lead to feelings of anger, disgust, defeat, intolerance, insensitivity etc. (1990, p.163)

My intent is not to stir unwanted feelings within people but to imbue the hope and awareness that van Manen speaks of, and be trusted as a participant in dialogical and cooperative research. I hope that my presence over a relatively short time frame of research might constitute a lasting thread in the future cultural, social, environmental and economic fabric of the Tasman Peninsula community. I do not wish to enter the community with some exaggerated sense of self-importance, but wish modestly to engage community members in willing and open speech and actions.

When I read works from philosophers of different cultures, academic background, time and political influence, I am drawn to the words that elaborate my own research and writing. At times my elaboration might be explicit, but more often the connections are subtle and unstated and enter my consciousness to link with situations, times and settings in which I am placed.

Throughout this thesis I have included interludes of poetry and prose where I find a place to reflect on beauty and peace, or harshness and violence. These reflective interludes sometimes separate chapters and at other times give me temporal and spatial contemplation within chapters at points where I separate my subjectivity or objectivity of thesis writing. I share the creative writings of others with my readers, with the intention that they may also enrich the insights or possibilities for the three propositional statements guiding this thesis.

## CHAPTER THREE

### JOURNEYING WITH PHILOSOPHERS

#### **Philosophers as Interlocutors**

Some of the philosophers I journey with include Bakhtin, Gadamer, Habermas and Tönnies. I ask the question, what is it that each of these philosophers offer that draws me into a personal relationship with him? I come back to this question throughout this thesis. First, there is an intimate connection in that of all the great philosophers of time, four appeal to my conscious self with the promise that they will be bountiful and influential as I develop this thesis. Secondly, there is a substantive philosophical connection whereby I can read their works and make connections with the context of events in my own thesis. My life becomes entwined in the lives of these men as their written words speak to me unexpectedly at times.

These four philosophers offer me language, conversations, understandings and veracity for framing this thesis, ways of gathering my evidence and interpreting the lived experience of my inquiry. These people appear, as protagonists, diachronically in this thesis—sometimes they come to me in my journey with language and thoughts that embellish the position of self and situation, at other times they remain in my background, within a kind of hidden frame that surrounds the pictures, narratives, and actions I carry with me. These four people form part of my narrative, part of my conversations and part of my inquiry. In doing so they offer more than conversation with me, they become my interlocutors. As interlocutors they converse with me from their knowledge and understanding in areas pertinent to my inquiry and encourage me to question belief. Their writings interrupt the conversations I hold respectfully with them.

At other times I choose authors who guide me on my journey, who assist me in analysing the fabric of the community, scenes, settings, history and interrelationships that appear in the landscapes of this thesis. As I enter dialogue with these four interlocutors, Bakhtin, Gadamer, Habermas and Tönnies, I wish

first to understand some of their biographical and scholarly background from whence their philosophies are nurtured.

I begin with Bakhtin.

## **Bakhtin**

### **Biography**

Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian philosopher was writing mostly during the 1920s until his death in 1975. In 1918 Bakhtin sought relief from the aftermath of the Russian Revolution by moving to Belorussia, where he enjoyed the company of likewise young intellectuals who met regularly in discussion and debate. From these meetings an ongoing community, the Bakhtin Circle was established (Holquist, 2002, p.2). From these beginnings Bakhtin continued to be a scholar of significant influence.

During the 1960s a new generation of young writers continued to be inspired by Bakhtin's writing and this encouragement maintained his intellectual pursuits. Bakhtin established discussion circles in which dialogue became a key element and within which he was able to encourage an ethical approach to dialogue, where each member was to be heard and their contributions were to be valued equally.

There have been issues with the preservation of Bakhtin's works, mainly due to political upheavals, and at times there may have been multiple authorship as a result of his creation of discussion circles. Some of his writings have been pieced together from rough handwritten notes and fragments of notebooks. For these reasons I choose the following texts—*Toward a Philosophy of the Act* (Bakhtin, 1993), *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (Bakhtin, 1986), *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (Bakhtin, 1984), *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics* (Morson & Emerson, 1990), *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World* (Holquist, 2002), *Bakhtinian Thought – An Introductory Reader* (Denith, 1995) and *Rabelais and his World* (Bakhtin, 1984).

### **Dialogism**

Of interest to me in this thesis is Bakhtin's work on dialogism, which he addressed in his very early works. He did not use the term 'dialogism' himself, but Holquist justifies its use in his book as follows:

There can be no theoretical excuse for spawning yet another "ism", but the history of Bakhtin's reception seems to suggest that if we are to continue to think about his



work in a way that is useful, some synthetic means must be found for categorizing the different ways he meditated on dialogue. That is, some way must be found to conceive his varied activity as a unity, without losing sight of the dynamic heterogeneity of his achievement. (Holquist, 2002, p.15)

Bakhtin questions the difference between our descriptions of experience and the reality of experience. Can we truly describe our experiences, or are the descriptions of our experiences moulded by the cultures within which we live? This clash of reality against creativity is argued by Bakhtin to be the foundation of language. He proposes that language grew through participative thinking and performed acts. In his later notes Bakhtin writes,

I understand the other's word (utterance, speech work) to mean any word of any other person that is spoken or written in his own (i.e., my own native) or in any other language, that is, any word that is *not mine*. In this sense, all words (utterances, speech, and literary works) except my own are the other's words. I live in a world of others' words. And my entire life is an orientation in this world, a reaction to others' words (an infinitely diverse reaction), beginning with my assimilation of them (in the process of initial mastery of speech) and ending with assimilation of the wealth of human culture (expressed in the word or in other semiotic materials). (1986, p.143)

### **Historicity**

Bakhtin speaks of the importance of dialogue in creating history. History is only created through conversations with others. As well as the verbal utterances used in everyday speech genres, Bakhtin values intonation. The tones we use are understood to be part of the genre we use. For example, spoken socio-political conversations will use different intonations that we use within a family setting or a written piece. History determines the understanding of all our utterances and intonations. Bakhtin distinguishes between language and communication, in that language is the mere element of writing and speech, but communication occurs in the lives of participants, whether in socio-political, neighbourly, or specialised dialogue. He terms these distinguishing communities of speech as speech genres. To be part of a speech genre, we need to be able to understand the language in both utterance and intonation. A speaker's speech does not stand alone without historicity. The object of a speech has a history onto which other speech genres may attach or converge, creating a new article of speech. In Bakhtin's words, "The

speaker is not the biblical Adam, dealing only with virgin and still unnamed objects, giving them names for the first time” (1986, p.93).

I may witness stories that emerge from the past, or I might hear and be part of stories that are created within the Tasman Peninsula community. According to Simon Denith, “Bakhtin insists that a life never appears completed from within; that since, strictly speaking, we do not experience our own birth and our own death, only the life of another can be complete for us” (Denith, 1995, p.7). My history will not be revealed to me, as I will not witness my death, but I might see some part of history being created within the Tasman Peninsula community and I might be part of that history. I relate to thoughts of Bakhtin in relation to speech acts forming history. In his notes Bakhtin writes,

There can be no such thing as an isolated utterance. It always presupposes utterances that precede and follow it. No one utterance can either be the first or the last. Each is only a link in the chain, and none can be studied outside this chain. Among utterances there exist relations that cannot be defined in either mechanistic or linguistic categories. They have no analogues. (1986, p.136)

From my “space on the side of the road”, that I have borrowed from Stewart (1996), and from within situational contexts of the dialogues within the Tasman Peninsula community I hope to hear the histories and be a lens through which I see some history created. I am interested in the historicity created by speech forms as I address the three propositional statements that may shape the future Tasman Peninsula community. Might the historicity of the spoken word that occurs within the Tasman Peninsula community form part of the unknown external forces that might impact upon the stability of that community? Might the historicity of speech within the smaller hubs of the Tasman Peninsula community serve to destroy the greater community, as we know it now, or stabilise the community through shifting dynamics of environmental, economic, cultural and social sustainability?

### **Carnival**

Bakhtin also speaks of *carnivale*, carnival or celebration, where art and music are the media for the storylines that emerge from the communities. His interest is in the everyday lives of the performers in conversations and the novel. Holquist suggests that carnival is, “one of Bakhtin's great obsessions, because in his understanding of it, carnival, like the novel, is a means for displaying otherness: carnival makes

familiar relations strange” (Holquist, 2002, p.89). Bakhtin takes the word *carnivale* from street parades and noisy pubs to describe an “otherness”, something from which we are unfamiliar. Holquist speaks of Bakhtin’s notion of embodiment of the immaterial force of carnival into complex relations when he writes,

Embody is, of course, precisely what carnival does to relations, as it, like the novel, draws attention to their variety, as well as highlighting the fact that social roles determined by class relations are made not given, culturally produced rather than naturally mandated. (Holquist, 2002, p.89)

In my inquiry I see such carnival within the relationships of the Tasman Peninsula community—between researcher and subject, teacher and student, historian and text, neighbors, business partners, or two or more partners of any kind, and I hear a multiplicity of voices, that create the history and narratives that represent life within the Tasman Peninsula community. Holquist describes the plurality of relationships as *heteroglossia*, “*Heteroglossia* is a plurality of relations, not just a cacophony of different voices” (2002, p.89). Within *heteroglossia* Bakhtin describes a thought that, “makes its way through a labyrinth of voices, semi-voices, other people’s words, other peoples gesture’s...[it] juxtaposes orientations and amid them constructs [its] own orientation” (Bakhtin, 1984a, p.95).

Within the comings and goings along the road of the Tasman Peninsula community I must find that space, that place where I can be apart from the busyness and yet be part of the energy, in a place of quietness and contemplation, but not of isolation. Holquist writes of Bakhtin using the Russian term, *vnenakhodimost*, in his earlier notes, to describe dual views from the inside and outside of situations. An unusual and even complicated term to understand in English, it is most closely related to ‘exotopy’, literally meaning ‘outsidedness’, where the stranger can authentically represent the words of others. Holquist writes,

The term, as always in dialogism, is not only spatial, but temporal: it is only from a position outside something that it can be perceived in categories that complete it in time and fix it in space. In order to be perceived as a whole, as something finished, a person or object must be shaped in the time/space categories of the other, and that is possible only when the person or object is perceived from the position of outsidedness. An event cannot be wholly known, cannot be seen, from inside its own unfolding as an event. (2002, p.31)

From the side of the road I view the Tasman Peninsula community from subject to subject—the side of the road allows the space to offer empathy and compassion to individuals and smaller hubs within the larger community, and hence, the community is a living subject, not an object to be touched, manipulated or transformed by my hands. Rather I seek, perceive, feel and embody, with all my senses, the spirit and life of an organic body. I seek the *vnenakhodimost*, a place where I can be both within and outside the dialogues, where I can listen to the utterances, or speak within the utterances, where I can see history happen and foresee unfolding possibilities. I move cautiously on and off the side of the road, within the *vnenakhodimost*. If I am within the utterances, then I will not be able to witness the history in my lifetime. If I choose to observe without entering through dialogue then I may be privileged enough to say that I have witnessed history happening. In later chapters, I look at those situations where dialogue is used in discussion circles, and where respect to others is established through utterance. I seek those situations where the social history of the Tasman Peninsula is created through dialogue that is performed in my time, and other situations where the dialogue remains elusive in its possible outcomes, but allows history to be viewed reflectively by others.

### **Diversity and hubs within a community**

When I read the works of Bakhtin I recognise veracity in that viewpoints can be woven and shared within different components of society. This appeals to me in the concept I propose in this thesis—that a community exists with overlapping hubs, and the people that constitute that community can be members of several hubs, each with its own traditions, language, culture and values. Language, including gestures, drama and action, is foremost in interpreting the constituency of each hub, The Bakhtin Circle consisted of overlapping groups, circles within circles, composed of scholars, poets, activists and philosophers, each with their own stories. And so I envisage the community hubs of the Tasman Peninsula with diversity linked in Venn diagram style, overlapping circles of interest and knowledge interacting with new horizons of life and empowerment.

### **Prosaics, poetry and prose**

Much of Bakhtin's writing resounds with the novel and poetry, offering me interpretations of the word in emotional connections of time and place. Gary Morson and Caryl Emerson (1990) speak of language that is the everyday, the

ordinary elements, the prosaics that form our narratives. They consider everyday elements to be a privilege of language.

Prosaics encompasses two related, but distinct, concepts. First as opposed to “poetics”, prosaics designates a theory of literature that privileges prose in general and the novel in particular over the poetic genres. Prosaics in the second sense is far broader than theory of literature: it is a form of thinking that presumes the importance of the everyday, the ordinary, the “prosaic”. (Morson and Emerson, 1990, p.15)

The everyday language of the people of the Tasman Peninsula community guides my inquiry. As I travel the road to the centre of the Tasman District community I hear and become part of many speech acts. These snippets form a much richer historical storyline in which my presence marks a very small milestone. I inevitably become part of the history of the Tasman Peninsula community, perhaps in brief instances, temporal and spatial. I may not be able to comprehend some of that which does not belong to me, but I enter the community and join some of the interconnecting hubs that form my propositional inquiry.

## **Gadamer**

### ***Horizontverschmelzung* and hermeneuism**

Hans-Georg Gadamer is a philosopher who lived the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century (1900-2002). He is best known for his *magnum opus*, *Truth and Method, Wahrheit und Methode* (1960). Throughout this thesis I refer to the 2013 edition. When I read Gadamer I am attracted to his philosophical suggestion that Scientific Method and humanities merge in the understanding of new ideas. In this I find possible understandings of different teachings, Scientific Method and humanities, each taken alone, that might impede the ways I approach my inquiry. This approach allows me to seek the knowledge and understandings of the Tasman Peninsula community with its many hubs.

Central to Gadamer’s thinking is that the other might be right. He is particularly interested in the juxtaposition of two approaches to humanities studies. One approach is that thinking in humanities studies was immersed partly in the traditional methodologies of natural sciences, as pioneered by Newton and others, that is, Scientific Method. Contrariwise, humanities were immersed in the German philosophical traditions, based upon understanding the intention of authors in their

interpretations of text. With Gadamer I have permission to enter the dialogue with others in a subjective way, sometimes with a scientific intent, but always with the grace of being human.

Gadamer was a student of another German scholar, Martin Heidegger, whose work was fundamental to many European philosophical debates including being, existentialism and hermeneutics. Reading together at Marburg University, Gadamer became interested in the field of hermeneutics as a basis for understanding. The term 'hermeneutics' comes from the Greek, *hermeneuism*, to interpret, explicate and translate, and is the study of the methodological principles of interpretation. In using the term hermeneutics, Gadamer explains in the foreword to *Truth and Method* that he takes the term farther away than the traditional Greek thinking,

I did not intend to produce a manual for guiding understanding in the manner of early hermeneutics, I did not wish to elaborate a system of rules to describe, let alone direct, the methodical procedures of the human sciences. Nor was it my aim to investigate the theoretical foundation of work in these fields in order to put my findings to practical ends. If there is any practical consequence of the present investigation, it certainly has nothing to do with an unscientific "commitment"; instead, it is concerned with the "scientific" integrity of acknowledging the commitment involved in all understanding. My real concern was and is philosophic: not what we do or what we ought to do, but what happens to us over and above our wanting and doing. (Gadamer, 2013 edition, pp. xxv-xxvi)

In considering hermeneuism, Gadamer considers 'truth' and 'method' to come from different horizons. Gadamer speaks of a "fusion of horizons," *horizontverschmelzung*, where the scientific method of the human sciences meets the philosophical traditions of earlier studies.

Gadamer defines 'horizon' as,

Every finite present has its limitations. We define the concept of "situation" by saying that it represents a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence essential to the concept of situation is the concept of "*horizon*". The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point...A person who has no horizon is a man who does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him. On the other hand, "to have an horizon", means not being limited to what is nearby, but to being able to see beyond it...[W]orking out of the hermeneutical situation means the achievement of the right

horizon of inquiry for the questions evoked by the encounter with tradition. (2013, p.313)

When two bodies of knowledge merge in truth and understanding, new knowledge is borne through *horizontverschmelzung* in a process Gadamer describes as, “Understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves” (2013, p.317).

Using this model, I look for a merging of horizons within the hubs of the Tasman Peninsula community. I seek situations where community members come together from different knowledge or thinking bases to emerge with new knowledge. Individuals will come with their horizons, based on truth and method, and I expect each to emerge with new knowledge from the fusion of ideas, thoughts and knowledge. Gadamer acknowledges that this process is not easily achieved, and requires an inward looking examination. He writes, “Openness to the other, then, involves recognizing that I myself must accept some things that are against me, even though no one forces for me to do so” (2013, p.369).

### **Speaking and listening—*ansprechen und zuhören***

If there is to be a sharing of knowledge then there also needs to be acts of speaking and listening. Günter Figal is a contributor to the *Cambridge Companion to Gadamer* (2002). In his commentary, Figal describes Gadamer’s processes of listening to each other, *zuhören*, and addressing each other, *ansprechen* (2002, p.107). These processes are essential to facilitating meaningful dialogue. I seek the compatible acts of speaking and listening as I move within the community hubs and from my place on the side of the road. Within the Tasman Peninsula community, there are opportunities to witness the *zuhören* and *ansprechen* on many occasions, such as when teacher meets student, citizen meets citizen, citizen meets politician, leader meets follower, and manager meets staff.

### **Aesthetics, arts and festival**

In a short monograph, *The Relevance of the Beautiful* (1986), Gadamer speaks of aesthetics in the form of the arts and festival. He uses the word *mimesis*, from the Greek word meaning “imitation, representation, representation by art” (Online Etymological Dictionary, 2014), as means by which the arts and festival can be a reproduction of life’s events and the physical surroundings. He writes, “the meaning

of the word “*mimesis*” consists simply in letting something be there without trying to do something more with it” (Gadamer, 1986, p.119).

Again, as with Bakhtin, I am drawn to the temporal and spatial representation of life in a community, where the language is developed from the acts around existence. Of special interest to me are the notions of festival and tradition as contributors to the strength and culture of a community, opportunities for the community to interact with an audience and present itself, the community, to a spectator at a moment in time, or being. Of festive occasions Gadamer writes,

It is exactly the distinction of festive, not that one is in good conversation, but that everyone is involved, for example, through music or through celebratory speeches. If it is not a festival of joy, for example a funeral, it is still similar. (1986, p.416)

These words are an expression of communicative action within a community when people come together in celebration. Beauty and festival have appealed to me as I have searched for the existence of hubs within the Tasman Peninsula community. Beauty is a word that is easily associated with the scenic and unique physical characteristics of the Tasman Peninsula community, and its depth of meaning becomes apparent to the spectator of festival, one who comes to be part of the transforming experience of *mimesis*. Sometimes the festivals and celebrations are joyful occasions, at other times solemn.

Festival happens in a moment of time, an *occasion*, a falling together, a juncture of circumstances, as the Latin root *occidere* suggests, according to Online Etymological Dictionary (2014). Sometimes these occasions are predictable, at other times spontaneous. I place myself in the community to participate in festivals. I cannot be apart from that place if I am to sincerely participate, witness and interpret beauty in occasions as one of an audience. I am witness to beauty and festival from my “space on the side of the road”, the *vnenakbodimost*. My witnessing participates in both *mimesis* and occasion.

When the festivals are predictable there evolves tradition. Traditions form part of the cultural sustainability of community—‘keeping up traditions’ is a term commonly used in our Australian cultures. Gadamer writes,

As finite beings we stand in tradition, whether we know these traditions or not, whether we are conscious of them or so blinded as to believe that we begin anew. This does not affect at all the power of tradition over us. However, it does make a



difference if we face the traditions in which we stand and the future possibilities that they preserve for us, or whether one conceitedly imagines that one could turn away from the future into which one is living and program and constitute ourselves in a new way. Clearly tradition does not mean mere conservation, but rather a passing along, but this include that one does not leave things unchanged and merely conserved, but that one says anew and learns to grasp anew something old. (1986, p.138)

Perhaps in these words we learn something of what it means to be culturally sustainable—to grasp with steady hands that which is old and to be cherished, preserve that which we have, and move forward to create new traditions.

As I participate in festival and tradition within the Tasman Peninsula community, I become one with a communication community. As I walk within the community I seek beauty in the place as well as the occasion. As I reflectively write of my experience and knowledge I find beauty in poetry. Poems relate to my place, person and participation as art. Beauty and *mimesis* bring light to interludes of poetry and prose in my writing. The interludes stand alone, there to invite my readers to celebrate occasions with me.

## **Tönnies**

### **Sociology**

Ferdinand Tönnies introduced me to the concept of sociology very early in my readings. Sociology, or *sociologie*, from the Latin *socius*, associate, was a term used in 1830 by the French philosopher, Isidore Auguste Comte.

### ***Nosce te ipsum* (know yourself)**

Tönnies' interest in sociology grew out of a concern for humankind. He feared that the breakdown of organisations would leave people without the sense of belonging that was inherent in traditional living. Tönnies commenced his sociological studies through self-examination. In 1931, Tönnies emphasised self-understanding with his concept of *nosce te ipsum*, know yourself, suggesting that, “if you want to understand others, look into your own heart” (p.237). As I move within the hubs of the Tasman Peninsula community I ask questions of provenance and destination such as, who am I? Where am I going? Before I can address these questions I need to know myself.

## *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*

Tönnies wrote a sociological tome *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*. I refer to the 1965 translation of the book throughout this thesis.

Tönnies formulated his models of society by considering the Middle Ages as a model for *Gemeinschaft*, a place where there were common concerns and shared beliefs within a village setting. In comparison and looking ahead into the future, Tönnies predicted the *Gesellschaft* community, based on political powers, economy and trading. Douglas Hoey, a contributor to the book *Being Sociological* (2007) described the emergence of a *Gesellschaft* society as an evolution from ancient to modern society, representing a shift in social organisations, politics and economy. In response to Tönnies' suggestions that community is a naturally occurring state, where participants are linked either physically or mentally, Hoey proposes that Sociology developed then as a discipline of learning out of a concern that traditional communities, of the *Gemeinschaft* model, would be threatened by the progress of modern cultures, and the predominance of an individualist approach to living in a capitalist society (Hoey, 2007, pp.405-407).

Tönnies based his postulations on his personal experiences, and *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* appeared as a synthesis of rationalism and romanticism, idealism and materialism, realism and nominalism (Tönnies, 1965, p.1). Whilst Tönnies worked the land according to his peasant traditions, but giving way to some innovative machinery, his older brother made inroads in the emerging merchant economy and a lifestyle based on profits.

Tönnies considers real and organic life an essential characteristic of the *Gemeinschaft*, or community, and the imaginary and mechanical structure defines the concept of *Gesellschaft* (1965, p.33). He refers to *Gemeinschaft* as “all intimate, private, and exclusive living together,” and *Gesellschaft* as “public life—it is the world itself” (pp. 37–38). Through an intimate, private and exclusive life that exists in the *Gemeinschaft* or community, there is an accompanying language, folk culture, belief system, values and mores that are understood from those within. Tönnies argues that the *Gemeinschaft* society is the lasting and genuine form of living together (p.33).

*Gesellschaft* society is considered by Tönnies as public life, existing in the realm of business, travel or sciences. The transition from community to society is not linear. In his early thoughts on the matter, Tönnies concludes,

On the other hand, all praise of rural life has pointed out that the *Gemeinschaft* among people is stronger there and more alive; it is the lasting and genuine form of living together. In contrast to *Gemeinschaft*, *Gesellschaft* is transitory and superficial. Accordingly, *Gemeinschaft* should be considered as a living organism, *Gesellschaft* as a mechanical aggregate and artifact. (1965, p.35)

Tönnies does not seem to use the terms *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* as societal classifications, but rather as forms of society that might be transitory and confluent. Zygmunt Bauman writes of Tönnies,

In the book which (intentionally or not) invited 'community' (*Gemeinschaft*) to return from the exile to which it had been banished during the modern crusade against *les pouvoirs intermédiaires* (accused of parochiality, narrowness of horizons and nurturing of superstition), Ferdinand Tönnies suggested that what distinguished the bygone community from the rising (modern) society (*Gesellschaft*) in whose name the crusade was launched, was an *understanding shared by all its members*. (2001, p.19)

Bauman describes such understanding as “the *starting point* of all togetherness,” understanding is “not a finishing line” and “*precedes* all agreements and disagreements” (2001, p.10).

In terms of the Tasman Peninsula community I expect to see forms of *Gemeinschaft* in the villages, the rural meeting points, the markets and fairs, and the places of local celebrations, conveying peace and filial neighborly regard for each other, even in times of disputes or tragedies. It is within the *Gemeinschaft* social grouping that Gadamer conceives the fusion of horizons. “The horizon is, rather, something into which we move and which moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving” (2013, p.315). At other times I envisage the mechanics and structures of a modern global society placing their hands upon the Tasman Peninsula community, in the forms of trade, technology, economic sustainability and drive, bearing with that the need for competition and scrupulousness amongst each other and with wider, external community hubs. Mostly I expect to see some transitory societal streaming from my place on the side of the road – locals finding their place in the face of globalisation within a community that moves further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with confidence and resourceful thinking, a community able to access the wider world, whilst protecting its own community hubs, a generation who are technological experts and socially connected globally, and yet know the techniques and tricks of the local fishermen, orchardists and timber workers, and

the modern tourist, globetrotter, or alternate lifestyler who can walk with respect on the ancient lands of the first people, the hunters and gatherers.

From my place on the side of the road I observe the times when the members of hubs move together into a place where there might be a fusion of minds and ideas. Whether Tasman Peninsula community is a *Gemeinschaft* society is open to further discussion of the relevance of such a grouping in a 21<sup>st</sup> century setting, even one as isolated as the Tasman Peninsula community, and I follow this through in my study.

Tönnies also comments on the issues of confidence and mistrust, saying that in trusting a person we search for,

...an individual whom we know will inspire in us a certain confidence, however slight; a stranger on the other hand, is likely to create in us a certain feeling, often quite strong, of mistrust. Only in a chosen few do we have such great and abiding confidence that we rely on their absolute sincerity, affection, and faithfulness toward ourselves and our nearest, and we feel we can build upon their devotion. (1965, p.240)

Trust becomes a value in the emerging principle of communication as I move within the Tasman Peninsula community. Can one trust one's neighbour? Can one trust the unknown person who wanders amongst them? Are local meeting places safe? Are global connections secured?

The notions of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* as transitory social groupings representing traditional society and public life respectively, appeal to my quest for an understanding of the Tasman Peninsula community through the ages. I question whether such a dichotomy exists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, or whether globalisation means the small, remote and rural communities are no longer isolated and autonomous.

## **Habermas**

### **Philosophy and rationalism**

Jürgen Habermas was born in Germany in 1929 and is one of the most influential philosophers and rationalists of the modern world. His arguments are grounded in the fields that Newton explicitly called science, or natural philosophy. He is considered a modern thinker.

Habermas' work enables me to put dialogue, sometimes controversially, within the public sphere to be scrutinised by others. Habermas lived his life in this manner,

sometimes deliberately entering oppositional dialogue as a means to rationality. An example of this liaison is with the former Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Trombley, 2012, pp.307-308 and pp.313-314). Cardinal Ratzinger, before becoming Pope, entered into a dialogue with Habermas that was published as *The Dialectics of Secularisation: On Reason and Religion* (2005). Pertinent to my thinking is that a self-named ‘methodological atheist’ and a highly-regarded man of religion could engage in dialogue within a public sphere, knowing that there would be no agreement of the place of politics and religion, ‘lifeworld’ and ‘systemworld’, the terms Habermas used. Far from being diametrically opposed in conclusions, Habermas and Ratzinger showed a need to be mutually aware of the beliefs and sensitivities of each other.

The conversations between Habermas and Ratzinger have shown me that in a world taunted by violence, terrorism, political upheavals and wars in the name of religion, there is a need for communicative action. Habermas’ work enables me to put dialogue, sometimes controversially, within the public sphere to be scrutinised by others. I refer to a commentary on Habermas’ work by the Australian academic, Professor Michael Pusey, specifically his book, *Jürgen Habermas* (1987). In this publication, Pusey explores the writing of Habermas from the early influences of the classical thinkers, including Marx, through to Habermas’ later extensive work, *Theory of Communicative Action* (1981). Pusey describes Habermas’ intellect in these words, “For Habermas the intellectual life is not a game, or a career, or a cultivation of wit and taste, or even learning for learning’s sake. It is above all a vocation” (1987,p.14). Pusey notes that the purpose of Habermas’ work is, “to anticipate and to justify a better world society – one that affords greater opportunities for happiness, peace and community” (p.14). He argues that as Habermas is a rationalist, his views of society are such that, “the better society is the more rational society, in short, a society that is geared to collective needs rather than to arbitrary power” (p.14).

### **Lifeworld and systemworld**

Habermas uses the term ‘lifeworld’, *lebenswelt*, to describe everyday life along with its conversations and everyday experiences, an element of culture and linguistics. Habermas writes,

The lifeworld that members construct from common cultural traditions is coextensive with society. It draws all societal processes into the searchlight of cooperative processes of interpretation. It lends to everything that happens in our society the transparency of something about which one can speak—even if one does not (yet) understand it. (1987, p.149)

Habermas also speaks of another element in communicative action, systems theory, which I refer to as ‘systemworld’, that which embraces the politics and economy of society. In comparing lifeworld with systemworld Habermas writes,

This is the way things look to the members of a sociocultural lifeworld themselves. In fact, however, their goal-directed actions are coordinated not only through processes of reaching understanding, but also through functional interconnections that are not intended by them and are usually not even perceived within the horizon of everyday practice. (1987, p.150)

Habermas’ systemworld refers to the sedimented structures of society, which can be divided into two different sub-systems, money and power (Finlayson, 2005, p. 53). His systemworld is formed through the interaction of political spheres and administrative bodies, with power and capitalism dominating, and often devoid of public dialogue.

Habermas argues that any theory of communication is subject to limitations (1987, p.118). By considering societies to be simultaneously lifeworld and that of governing systems or systemworld, rational connections can be made within communications. Habermas speaks of mutual understanding, *verständigungsform*, (1987, p.120) where the constituents of the lifeworld communicate to gain better knowledge of the societal richness. Habermas’ lifeworld is, “the horizon within which communicative actions are “always already” moving—is in turn limited and changed by the structural transformation of society as a whole” (p.119).

If there is to be mutual understanding, then there also needs to be agreement and cooperation within the speech acts of partners. Through cooperation, the validity of the speech process is tested. James Finlayson explains Habermas’ process of testing speech acts for their validity as follows,

Habermas argues that any sincere speech-act makes three different validity claims: a validity claim to truth; a validity claim to rightness; and a validity claim to truthfulness. Validity claims are necessary in the sense that they are always already understood to have been made in the act of speaking; we cannot make ourselves

understood and engage in meaningful speech without presupposing and giving others to believe that we are truthful and that what we say is both right and true. Habermas claims that in any act of communication the speaker must make all three validity claims – otherwise, only one validity claim will be thematised or taken up by the reader. (Finlayson, 2005, pp. 35 -36)

Habermas puts dialogue into the public domain, so that any discourse can be scrutinised for its validity— its truth, appropriateness and sincerity. He rejects personal opinion, but values instead public and social domains where dialogue is open to examination by others. He studies the pragmatic performances of speakers and the knowledge required to participate in their communication. As the participants aim to reach worthy goals, Habermas asks them to consider the truthfulness and sincerity of their words,

...we understand a speech act when we know the kinds of reasons that a speaker could provide in order to convince a hearer that he is entitled in the given circumstances to claim validity for his utterance – in short, when we know what makes it acceptable. (1987, p.232)

Habermas believes that communication should be tested by each party and subjected to scrutiny and, only when the participants' words embrace truthfulness, that is, they are rational, reasoned and justified, can there be a fusion and mutual understanding of ideas. Habermas promises truly inclusive communicative action—no one is excluded from the debate provided they are sincere in their convictions.

Within the lifeworld we share dialogue with others to understand shared meanings and understandings. The systems of money and power may undermine these discussions of our everyday lives. When he portrays the conditions of lifeworld and systemworld, Habermas says that in traditional societies, where participation and identity are valued, there is a shared ethos; but modern societies with all their complexities and diversities, do not experience the cohesiveness of overarching traditions, but promote individuals who choose to lead their lives through general principles and purposes (Finlayson, 2005, p.51).

### **The Tasman Peninsula—society and state**

In this thesis I reflect upon theories of communicative action and social ontology as I analyse some debates within the Tasman Peninsula community that may be the external forces that will impact on the balance of the community as a whole and the

smaller hubs within. Habermas seeks a society where there are opportunities for happiness and peace. Can a community with such a history of violence, violation, tragedy and terror become one of happiness and peace? What are the redeeming features of the lifeworld of the Tasman Peninsula community such that a new community can be shaped into the future? Can resilience come from within the Tasman Peninsula community as its residents move towards each other in hubs, such that there will be cohesiveness and shared ethos borne from experience? Will members of the Tasman Peninsula community be honest amongst themselves, facing scrutiny by each other as knowledge is shared? What happens when the lifeworld of the Tasman Peninsula community meets the systemworld? This has happened from the beginning of colonisation, and continues to happen now. How do the residents of the Tasman Peninsula community present themselves in the face of big systemworld decisions, such as the establishment of World Heritage List sites adjoining residential properties, as I discuss in Chapter Eight. These are some of the questions affecting my propositional statements in this thesis.

From my “space on the side of the road” that comes from Stewart’s metaphor I consider the sociological relationships within the community through actions and language. I face the challenge of how I am to gain the trust of the community members. Firstly, this will begin with a central community hub, Tasman District School, where the students will consider my position as a teacher-as-researcher and show their acceptance or not, and I will be further scrutinised as I move within other hubs of the Tasman Peninsula community. Will I be challenged as to my position and belonging? Will I be accepted as a resident, a visitor, and a researcher? These questions might direct and determine the course of my inquiry and place me within and without the community hubs.



## INTERLUDE

*Man is but a reed, the feeblest in nature, but he is a thinking reed.*

*There is no need for the whole universe to take up arms to crush him.*

*A vapour or a drop of water is enough to kill him.*

*But even if the universe were to crush him, man would still be nobler than his killer, for he knows that he is dying and that the universe has the advantage over him. The universe knows nothing of this.*

*Thus all our dignity consists in thought. It is on thought that we must depend for our recovery, not on space or time, which we could never fill. Let us then strive to think well; that is the basic principle of morality.*

Blaise Pascal: *Pensées* (200 H3) 17<sup>th</sup> century philosopher and mathematician

Barry Jones chooses these inspirational words as a preface to his autobiography, *A Thinking Reed*, (2007). For me the reed, the tall, straight water-dependent plant that turns into a thinking reed, becomes through Jones' *logos*, a thought-provoking tome of wisdom. Jones, though a man who has a public face in Australia, is a quiet, intellectual person. He uses his public presence not to seek the many accolades the public gives him but rather to give credit to Australian life narratives from the view of writer, lawyer, social activist, quiz champion and former politician. Jones has a list of post-nominal letters that represent his broad achievements of the highest recognition, firstly with an Officer of the Order of Australia, and then as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineers, and The Australian College of Educators. He is also listed on the National Trust's list of Australian Living Treasures.

Though I cite these acclamations, I highly respect his position as the Chairman of the Port Arthur Historical Site Management Authority (2000–2012). Barry Jones, of *The Thinking Reed*, is a good, ordinary person. His commentaries on the tragic circumstances that have occurred on the Tasman Peninsula over two centuries yield rich insights to the social, cultural and economic consequences of what has happened.

Margaret Scott (1934–2005) was born in Britain and read English at Cambridge University. After she migrated to Australia with her first husband and young son, she taught at the University of Tasmania in the English Department, where she also received a Doctorate in Philosophy. Scott continued to become Head of the English Department and after a 25-year career there she retired to pursue a full-time writing career. She was also well known for her comedic roles. She was particularly out-spoken on environmental issues and human rights.

Scott developed a close affinity with the Tasman and its community as a part-time resident whilst working at the University of Tasmania, and retired to the Tasman Peninsula full-time in 1989. Scott was appointed to the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority in 2000, where she continued in service until her death in 2005.

Scott is the author of the book, *Port Arthur – A Story of Strength and Courage* (1997), which she dedicated to past and present victims of crime. Jones describes this book as, “a sensitive account of the 1996 massacre,” referring to the Port Arthur massacre of 1996 (2007, p.449). I have chosen to refer to Scott for her authentic and sensitive recounts and commentaries of the tragic events of 1996 that I discuss in further detail in this thesis.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### HISTORY SHAPES A COMMUNITY

Within the context of the uniqueness and isolation of the Tasman Peninsula community, it is relevant to consider the history surrounding the place, in terms of geographical and sociological significance through past and present narratives. This makes for quite a long chapter but the considerations and narratives lead me to question how history has shaped the community.

I published a paper in 2009 entitled *The Sustainability of a Small Town: Will Fishing and Tourism be Enough?* This paper marked the beginning of my research into the Tasman Peninsula community and its prospects of sustainability. Some of the history of the Tasman Peninsula that I write about in this section is taken from that earlier published research.

#### Geological History

The Tasman Peninsula community has been physically built upon unique geological formations. Massive dolerite cliffs, rising some 300 metres vertically from sea level, are a remnant of the separation of Tasmania from mainland Australia that was part of *Gondwanaland*, a piece of planet Earth that had broken off as a single landmass in the southern hemisphere around 250 million years ago. Eventually this process separated the conjoined lands into the continents we know today as Antarctica, South America, Africa, India, and Australia. In 2009 I wrote the following geomorphological description of the Tasman Peninsula,

As the cliffs of the Tasman Peninsula rise vertically, they also plunge into submarine depths of water, 2,000 metres below. Wild oceans have carved dramatic sea caves into the land and at the same time created sheltered bays. These magnificent landforms are best viewed from the sea, at the confluence of the Tasman Sea and the Southern Ocean. (Carroll, 2009, p. 44-45)

There is a tourism and fishing industry built around the stunning landforms of the area and today tourists can venture into the seas in modern vessels and purpose-built eco-tourism jet boats capable of negotiating the caves and sea cliffs. I was privileged to join a tour operated by a once-local fisherman, now an award-winning

tourism entrepreneur. My eco-cruise began at the booking office at Port Arthur, where I met 26 other passengers and two crewmembers. As I listened to the other passengers I could piece together something of their lives, through accents, language and relationships. European, New Zealand and American tourists joined locals and other Australians on this adventure. We boarded a bus that took us to nearby Pirates Bay, some 15 minutes away. I was amazed at the queues of cars and trailers lining both sides of the narrow dirt road that led to the launching ramp. This was a long weekend in March, and many had taken advantage of the holiday to chase the tuna feeding in these waters at this time of the year and participate in the annual Tasmanian Tuna Fishing Competition. The deckhand told us that most of the hobby fishermen come from the city for the weekend in convoys of large four-wheel-drive vehicles, towing larger trailer boats filled with camping gear, a regular event on the only road to the Peninsula.

The captain gave us basic safety instructions and issued us with overall storm outfits, which consisted of head-to-toe wet weather gear, and offered us natural ginger seasickness tablets. He told us the day was perfect for the cruise, and the weather down the coast was ideal for the “time of our life” that he said awaited us. Indeed, it was certainly an exciting, adventurous and exhilarating time in my life. My intent was to live the experience of a tourist in an area that I had travelled by land many times, but never by sea. I wrote of this experience in 2009, but share it again here. Within five minutes of our departure we saw our first sea cave, ‘the blowhole’, named for the water as it surges through a narrow opening in the rock formation.

As we continued down the coastline we pitched in and out of sea caves, carved into massive dolerite sea cliffs, some rising up to the skies, the tallest sea cliffs in the southern hemisphere. I had read of some of the landforms in maps and other publications, but the names The Candles and Thumbs were imaginations from those before who had seen the resemblance of the natural shapes to familiar objects, not so mysterious and forbidding. Being close to Hippolyte Rocks, a lone granite island emerging from the depths below, I could see how it stirred the imagination of a sailor before me, revealed as an Amazonian goddess of Greek mythology, embraced by a large girdle. I felt a proximity to explorers who had come before me—I was afloat in a vastness of wild seas, enticing bays, surging currents, and unexpected landforms. I felt at a great distance from the comforts of home, and yet I was remarkably close. Not so close though as to forget where on earth this

remote island was placed, as I considered the nearest landmasses, New Zealand to the east, Antarctica to the south. As we rounded Tasman Island I saw the discarded remains of a previous life—that of earlier lighthouse families, those that guarded the sailors on this mighty sea. An old timber trolley and haulage system hangs precariously over the cliff, once a lifeline for families who lived there. These days the lighthouse is unmanned, but visitors can be taken there on special days by light aircraft. Many visitors join the eco-tour to see the wildlife, possibly not expecting the ride that takes them to the breeding, feeding and playing grounds of these southern waters. We were visitors to the habitats of land and sea animals that many can only read about, and few have the means to see. We respectfully kept at a distance in our vessel and yet seemed close enough to feel the vibrancy of life around us. I recall some encounters recorded in my journal.

*If the geological landforms were amazing, they were only surpassed by the wildlife experiences of the tour. Skip Jack Tuna jumped across the water, whilst Black-Faced Cormorants plunged deeply into the waters for long periods and hung their wings out to dry on the cliffs. On one cliff we observed New Zealand Seals, and Tasman Island provided a close-up view of huge male Australian Fur Seals as they played around on their bachelor pad, waiting for the females to return during the breeding season. The rock formations provided the seals with a large deep pond in which they demonstrated their diving abilities and playfulness. At the top of one cliff there was a large White-Breasted Sea Eagle which gave us an extraordinary demonstration of its flying abilities, with a two metre wingspan. As we turned the corner the partner eagle was perched very high, keeping watch. Dolphins swam in the wake of the boat, and a sole Little (Fairy) Penguin swam past. We ventured farther out into the southern waters, and I observed a pair of Wandering Albatross soar high above us. (2009, p. 45)*

My thoughts at the end of the day came from the relative calm waters of the aptly named Safety Cove, no doubt a refuge of peace for sailors past. We sheltered under the ruins of historic Port Arthur, and here I reflected on the marvels of living the experience, not just the landscapes, seas and wildlife I had seen on that day, but

the sustenance a small part of the world has given humans over thousands of years, and the legacy that begets me today to pass on to others. I wrote at the time,

*I regard myself in many ways as a local, but until today's experience I had no real feel for the immensity and awesomeness of the surrounding waters. I now have an appreciation for the conditions under which the commercial fishermen make a living and the dangers that they, with their families, must understand and face on each trip. (2009, p. 46)*

In this thesis I share my fondness and regard for a community built on such unique geology, along with respect for those who live and work the lands and seas today, and with hope for a future community that will remain sustainable.

### **Propositional discussion about geological history**

Time seems to stand still on the rugged coastlines, inaccessible shores and wild seas of the Tasman Peninsula. There may be no danger to the vastness and grandeur of ancient geological monuments of ages past. Is it possible for the physical features to remain sentinels of life on the Tasman Peninsula, without threat of destruction?

If the geology of the Tasman Peninsula remains significantly unchanged over the next 200 years, perhaps Proposition One of my thesis, as outlined in Chapter One, page 16 will be upheld, that is, the Tasman Peninsula community will remain a stable community. Storms and erosion might scour the Peninsula, but may not cause sufficient damage to the intrinsic being of the community. The four pillars of sustainability—environment, society, economy and culture are strongly bound to the earth and will withstand external forces acting upon them, as long as the land remains substantially intact.

If erosion, storms, fires or other natural or man-induced disaster should hit the Peninsula, then there might be shifts in productivity and the balance of pillars of sustainability, such that Proposition Two of my thesis as outlined in page 16, will be upheld, that is, the community will show some resilience and make changes to accommodate such external forces. Perhaps these external forces will be so strong that Proposition Three as outlined in page 17, will be enacted so that the yet unknown external forces will cause the Tasman Peninsula community to collapse.

Time might seem to stand still when one observes the geological formation of the Tasman Peninsula, but time is a marker of movement and change. Although slow in its action, geological time marks changes that one might expect with age—wear and tear. Sudden changes are also a possibility, and nothing can protect the environment from potentially destructive forces that will shift the social, economic and cultural balance of the Tasman Peninsula community.



*Photograph 2.* Coastal dolerite rock formations on the Tasman Peninsula (Carroll, 2008)

## INTERLUDE

Ancient Thera – Modern Teacher (Wheatley, 2007, pp.9 – 10)

*Island home to painters who knew  
no restraint who took ceremonial rooms and*

*made them come alive with color and  
form bound by no convention  
strong joyful brushstrokes bringing*

*life to barren walls on barren  
land their homes painted still today  
remind us of times when*

*dolphins danced with fleets and  
swallows swept the wild sea air  
with song.*



## Aboriginal History

Margaret Wheatley wrote in her poem, *Ancient Thera – Modern Teacher*, of a modern world that is firmly rooted in the ancient times of Thera Island in the Greek Aegean. In her description of the ancient Minoans, Wheatley observes that humans were not separated from either the natural order or art,

Minoans knew life to be abundant. Their paintings express joyful awareness that the earth gives great gifts of fertility and blesses us with its beautiful diversity of animals, flowers, and plants. Every painting celebrates this rich, gorgeous bounty. (2007, p.7)

Wheatley relates the human world of today to the physical presence and forces of the past. In her words,

The certainty of cycles, the triumph of order over chaos, the diversity born from life's creativity, the innate artistry of each of us, the enduring beauty of the human spirit—these are what I write about. From Minoan times till now, the story hasn't changed. But it is important that we reclaim it and retell it before we are swept away by eruptions of our own making. (2007, p.8)

Later in this chapter I speak of Bakhtin's 'carnival', of artistry celebrated in times of adverse conditions and destructive forces. Some of these conditions are "eruptions of our own making" as Wheatley (2008, p.8) describes; others are the powerful agents of nature. In *The Relevance of the Beautiful* (1986), Gadamer writes, "A festival is an experience of community and represents community in its most perfect form. A festival is for everyone" (p.39). Throughout this thesis I speak of beauty and the beautiful. I see beauty in the place, the Tasman Peninsula, I see beauty in people, the Tasman Peninsula community, I see beauty in festival, and I see beauty in poetry and prose. Beauty to me represents all that is pleasing to the aesthetic senses. And yet this chapter tells of destructive acts, of sometimes hideous, ghastly and offensive events. I look for the beauty within the people, of those who face adversity, and yet remain faithful to their spirits and cultures.

As the Minoans left stories to be told, the Tasman Peninsula community has also inherited a legacy of ancient peoples who lived with nature, and depended on the cycles, the ebb and flow of the seas, the wax and wane of the moon, the extremities of the seasons. These ancestral landowners also created art in accord with nature, and the rock carvings, rock art and artefacts of the Tasman Peninsula reflect the abundance of their lands and seas (Carroll, 2009, p.4). In his recent book, *Levée, Line*

*and Martial Law: A History of the Dispossession of the Mairremmener People of Van Diemen's Land 1803-1832* Graeme Calder describes the tribes of Aboriginal groups that formed in what we now call Tasmania, migrating from mainland Australia, across the land bridge geologists have named the Bassian Plain (Calder, 2010, p.3). Within these major tribal groups were smaller socio-linguistic bands of people. The traditional landowners of the Tasman Peninsula are the *Pydairrerm* bands of the *Mairremmener* people, or as known to early settlers, the Oyster Bay people. In using the term “socio-linguistic”, Calder cites the work of anthropologist, Rhys Jones (1974) and linguist, John Taylor (2006). Calder describes Jones’ proposal as,

...the existence of nine ‘tribes’, all belonging to the same culture, speaking five different but related languages. These tribes were composed of seventy to eighty-five ‘bands’, these bands owning ‘country’—lands with somewhat amorphous boundaries within which degrees of exclusive rights were maintained. (Calder, 2010, p.14)

Jones’ groundbreaking work has been a foundation for Tasmanian Aboriginal studies. According to Calder, Taylor extended, and at times refuted, the anthropological studies by Jones, and has introduced a linguistic element. Comparing known Tasmanian language elements with those from some mainland Australian groups to trace the migration of people across the Bassian Plain during the Pleistocene era, he recognised dialects according to occupation times and places (Calder, 2010, p.15). Taylor suggests that the *Mairremmener* people of southern Tasmania were probably the last of the migrants, and formed two geographical bands, with different dialects. Calder writes,

In many ways this analysis coincided with the work of Jones, but emphasised the point that temporal, spatial and ecological factors, influenced the migrations and the formation of the various bands, language differences arising and subsiding with the waves of external and internal migrations and the intermix of the different peoples over millennia. The specific difference between Jones and Taylor lay in the manner in which socio-linguistic groups formed. (2010, pp. 15-16)

Calder further justifies the term “socio-linguistic” by suggesting that not only linguistic and geographical boundaries marked the distribution of Aboriginal bands, but also economy, conjugal relations and cultural exchange (p.20). Economy, in this sense relates to the capacity to attain sufficient food to support the bands of people.

The *Pydairrerme* band of the Tasman Peninsula was seasonally nomadic, with winter and spring sustenance being mainly seafood, including crayfish, mussels, oysters and abalone. There is evidence, based on archaeological finds at campsites and middens that suggest this band of Aboriginal people consisted of only 50 members (Gaughwin, 1986, pp.89). Interestingly, many anthropological and archeological studies in Tasmania have suggested that scale fish did not appear in the diet of the Aboriginals, although at least one theory is that the bones and cartilage from scale fish may have been removed by carnivores, such as the Tasmanian Devil and the Quoll, and are therefore absent from the middens in recent history. However there are tales of women diving quite deeply, carrying grass baskets around their necks to carry the shellfish called Abalone that they prised from rocks with a wooden chisel. The Abalone was then roasted on a cooking fire (Harrison, 1989, Part 1). By harvesting only the food needed to feed their people, the Aboriginals effectively and sustainably managed the environment. Although there are no full-blood Tasmanian Aborigines remaining on the island today, their stories have been passed down, and their descendants are recognised as Aboriginal. On the Tasman Peninsula the stories of the original inhabitants shape the understanding and perceptions of today's generations. In Chapter Seven of this thesis I suggest how values within the community influence the life of an Aboriginal descendant living in a white society.

### **Early European Exploration**

An early explorer of the Tasman Peninsula's waters was Abel Tasman, a Dutch East Indies explorer. He was commissioned to find 'The South land' with instructions.

All continents and islands, which you shall discover, touch at, and set foot on, you will take possession of on behalf of their high mightinesses of the States General of the United Provinces, the which uninhabited regions of or in such countries as have no sovereign, may be done by erecting a memorial stone, or by planting our prince flag in sign of actual occupation seeing that such lands justly belong to the discoverer and first occupier. (Haberle, 2013, [www.think-tasmania.com/abel-tasman-1603-1659-history-class/](http://www.think-tasmania.com/abel-tasman-1603-1659-history-class/))

Tasman sheltered in waters around what we now call Tasmania and named the island Van Diemen's Land, in honour of the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. Whilst exploring Van Diemen's Land some crewmen were reported to hear

sounds from the ‘natives’, although none were seen, and they reported seeing manmade notches in trees (Haberle, 2013, [www.think-tasmania.com/abel-tasman-1603-1659-history-class/](http://www.think-tasmania.com/abel-tasman-1603-1659-history-class/)). Later the nomenclature of the island state changed to Tasmania, after the early explorer.

French explorers also spent time in the waters of Van Diemen’s Land exploring farther afield for longer periods. One of these explorers was Rear Admiral Bruni D’Entrecasteaux, who had been sent to the Southern Seas in search of the La Perouse expedition that had previously disappeared. With his ships, *Le Recherche* and *Le Esperance*, Rear Admiral Bruni D’Entrecasteaux sailed southeast to Van Diemen’s Land in 1792. The ships anchored in a bay that D’Entrecasteaux later named Recherche Bay. D’Entrecasteaux and his crew spent another five weeks rowing and sailing the southern waters.

Tobias Furneaux, James Cook and William Bligh were also amongst early explorers who charted the waters of Tasmania and kept written records of their observations during times they were anchored in some of the sheltered bays. These writings detailed plant and animal species, and record some descriptions of their contact with the native population. “We can only imagine the awe, with which the explorers must have viewed the steep sea cliffs and coastal formations”(Carroll, 2009, p.46). Tourists today can still observe those ancient outcrops, caves and features that the early explorers detailed.

According to community history, sealers and whalers were early visitors to the Tasman Peninsula, even before British colonisation. There was a growing demand from England and America for whale oil as a fuel and whalers spent long periods at sea, often years, in pursuit of oil to fill their barrels. Van Diemen’s Land proved to be a safe haven for the crews to shelter, and the Tasman Peninsula became a significant whaling port. From this developed the industry of bay whaling, with stations built between 1824 and the early 1830s in the sheltered waters. Whales were commonly seen during those days in the bays of the Peninsula, but fell prey to the station whalers who would chase them out of the bays and harpoon them at sea (Pridmore, 2007, pp.55-56). The whale populations were easily decimated in these years, and it is only now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that there are regular sightings in Peninsula waters of Humpback and Southern Right Whales, on their migratory paths to and from the Southern Oceans. They are now protected species, and

Tasmanians are very active in the protests against Japanese whaling fleets operating in the southern waters today, supposedly for scientific purposes. As well as sending the whale populations to the brink of extinction, the whalers and sealers took advantage of the local Aboriginal ladies and girls, plundering their campsites and demanding sexual favours. There would be descendants of the mixed races living still in Tasmania, but the genealogy of such is hard to trace (Carroll, 2009, p.47).

### **British Colonisation**

British colonial occupation of Van Diemen's Land began in the early 1800s, with a post established at Risdon Cove, on the eastern shore of that which we now know as the Derwent Estuary, close to Hobart, under the command of Lieutenant John Bowen. In correspondence to Governor King, the overseer of the colonial expansion, Bowen wrote,

I have not seen a single Native yet, but some of the People found them on our first arrival, but they appeared very shy and have since retired entirely from us; not apprehending they would be of any use to us I have not made any search after them thinking myself well off if I never see them again. (Historical Records of Australia, Series III, vol. 1, p.198; as cited in Calder, 2010, p.65)

Unfortunately the calm and separation that Governor King may have wished for was not to remain in the history of early colonisation.

Lieutenant-Governor David Collins, established Hobart Town in 1804, as an alternative to the previously occupied Risdon Cove, which Collins deemed unsuitable for the location of a major town and Government base. As the town grew, so did the demand for timber, and loggers moved southwards down the Tasman Peninsula and farther into the Tasmanian hinterland. British colonisation soon spread throughout the island and there was much resistance from the Aboriginals. Colonisation meant British free settlers were establishing sheep farms on previously occupied Aboriginal lands. The *Mairremmener* country was particularly affected by land takeovers. Lieutenant-Governor George Arthur became the Governor of Van Diemen's Land in 1824. Although regarded for his "humanitarianism, arising both from his evangelical beliefs and an association with William Wilberforce's anti-slavery movement" (Calder, 2010, p.162), Arthur soon became embroiled in the management of violence spreading throughout the land with warring parties of both Aboriginals and colonials. By 1828 his hopes of

reconciliation were blighted. With mounting pressure from the British public and government for restoration of peace, Lieutenant-Governor Arthur called for the expulsion of the *Mairremmener* people by martial law, and soon extended this to all Aboriginal people throughout the island.

And so was born ‘The Black Line’ (Calder, 2010, p. 181). The government of the day called for a *levée en masse*, a call to arms, to drive all Tasmanian Aboriginals to the Tasman Peninsula, by establishing a military line across the island (Calder, 2010, p. 181). Whilst this was a partial success there remained an indeterminate number of Aborigines in isolated areas. In 1832, evangelist and conciliator, George Augustus Robinson, gathered a group of family, servants and 13 faithful Aborigines of different socio-linguistic bands, to participate in the missionary duty of gathering the remaining Aborigines (Calder, 2010, p.193). After ‘herding’ the captured Aboriginals into the one location, Robinson arranged their transport to the isolation of Flinders Island in Bass Strait. Whilst regarded as having an unusual rapport with Aboriginal elders, and having learnt some of their socio-linguistic characteristics, Robinson failed to recognise the implications of moving the people to a foreign land. Calder writes,

In the final analysis, Robinson, for all the understandings of Aboriginal culture he had gained, had failed to appreciate the *raison d’être* of the *Mairremmener*—that is, their nomadic hunting and gathering culture, which when denied them, led to the end of a stable and successful society. It was naïve in the extreme to imagine that a culture which had emerged and adapted over thirty millennia could, in the space of a few years, be subjected to forced acculturation, or even replicated elsewhere, whether through the inculcation of Christianity or any other European cultural practice. (2010, p.203)

And so was the end of the *Mairremmener* people, the original landowners of the Tasman Peninsula, and hence the title of Calder’s book—*Levée, Line and Martial Law: A History of the Dispossession of the Mairremmener People of Van Diemen’s Land 1803-1832*.

By 1832 the original Tasman Peninsula community had collapsed. Unable to stand the external forces of white occupation, cultural reformation and martial law, the *Pydairrerm* band had disappeared. New hubs developed with some vestiges of a former self in the form of historical threads, but gone were the language and much of the storyline. In recent years there have been some attempts at reparation, and

the remaining descendants of the *Pydairrerre* are recognised as Aboriginals living on the Tasman Peninsula, but they live within white laws and white culture.

The treatment of the Aboriginals in Tasmania, as well as mainland Australia, has been the subject of much debate and discussion now over many years. The Australian Government, under leadership of the Liberal Party and the then Prime Minister Mr. John Howard, formed a Committee for Reconciliation in 2002. He drew a line however, a white line, at giving a formal apology to our indigenous peoples for their displacement and destruction. However, on February 14, 2008, Australia heard the then Labor Party Prime Minister, Mr. Kevin Rudd, say “sorry” as one of the first acts of the new Parliament. As part of the apology Rudd promised,

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

After I had heard the statement I was moved to write the following in my journal,

I have just listened to our Prime Minister deliver his ‘sorry statement’. My mind wandered to the Tasman Peninsula, the place of my research, how its early *Mairremmener* people of whom a small group, the *Pydairrerre* band, successfully lived on the Tasman Peninsula, until The Black Line was drawn. Does the Tasman community have a culture that acknowledges the present Aboriginal people? We celebrate Aboriginal history through historical anniversaries and commemoration weeks, but have we moved on?

In an area that has been troubled by an unparalleled history of violence, tragedy, cruelty and damnation we have read the stories of the early white settlers, both convicts and free settlers, and others who came much later. How can we sympathise with the Aborigines, when we have not been able to hear or read their stories directly? Was there a purging of the people by the sealers and whalers who visited the shores long before the penal settlement? Had nature caused a change in the environment and the populations of Aborigines who roamed the area? Did the early explorers,

*long before penal occupations, bring diseases to the Aboriginal people? We cannot answer these questions directly, as we have not witnessed the complete history of the Aboriginals.*

*Do we say sorry today to a people we do not really know, but who have almost been written out of history in that region, and yet have left a legacy of traditions, nomenclature and oral history to descendants today? Should we celebrate these people? I believe the answer to both questions is 'yes', and as well as acknowledging our ignorance of our own Aboriginal peoples and their history, we should apologise for the ease and presumptions with which we have wiped out their history in favour of the penal history that followed and its influence on today's landowners and occupants.*

### **Propositional discussion about white colonisation and black lines**

My third proposition of this thesis warns of a dire future for the Tasman Peninsula community. To reiterate my proposition on page 17, I suggest that the Tasman Peninsula community is doomed for extinction. Such has happened to the first community of the Tasman Peninsula. The full-blood Tasmanian Aboriginals could not survive the external forces. The inner hubs comprising the environment, the socio-linguistic groupings, the hunter-gather economy and the culture of stories, dance, matrimony and family, could not compensate against the intrusion of white man. We have legacies of Aboriginal being, with some descendants maintaining vestiges of the culture.

I care for the wellbeing and have compassion for the people of the Tasman Peninsula, despite the tension that engagement in the community in which I research arouses within me. For the purposes of this thesis I must situate myself within this proposition that a community can become extinct in ways I have shown possible in the historical accounts of early European settlement. Though legacies of community stories might be all that remains to weave a new community of Aboriginal people, I explore other aspects of community life that might support my other propositions. The roots of the Tasman Peninsula community lie in the resourcefulness of its first inhabitants.



## INTERLUDE

From *Two Rivers: A Reflective Journey*

(Bannister, Brewer, Caulfield, Cowen, Fitzallen, & Suckling, 1998)

*Ochre sun and ochre sky,  
Fire consumes the land.  
Untamed land and untamed heart,  
Watch the golden sun pass by*

*If we live here, we die here.  
Our souls float above the earth.  
We share our spirit with the land,  
Around this tiny sphere.*

*The birth of night, new stars born,  
Elders leading our tribal voice.  
A saying goodbye to all we've lost,  
It's our people now we mourn.*

(Anon.)

*I remember my childhood, my mother and I, plus other females from our tribe  
used to walk afar to collect ochre to paint with.  
Singing and dancing with the rest of my tribe,  
Playing the music sticks.*

*The ceremonies.*

*Remembering eating native cherries and once eating  
them not ripe. Chewing on the sap. Whistling back  
with the birds.*

*Chasing and eating the wallabies.*

(Anon.)

Children write these words from their known history. They can see the ochre skies and ochre sun. The word, 'ochre' belongs to their history—red ochre is a naturally occurring earth pigment high in levels of iron oxide, used by their elders for artwork, decorating tombs and rocks. The children play on Red Ochre Beach. The children hear the ceremonial singing and dancing of their elders. They taste the native food. They understand the cycles of nature. And yet, there is a deep and spiritual meaning to their words, something that I cannot pretend to be part of. It is their belonging to the land, and the mourning of their ancient forebears.

## **Convict History**

Lieutenant-Governor Arthur confronted a second major problem when he took over the control of Van Diemen's Land, which would dramatically change the face of the Tasman Peninsula community. His predecessor, Lieutenant-General Sorell, had set up a penal colony in 1821 on Sarah Island, which is located on the west coast of Tasmania. Convicts from England, housed in crowded and derelict boats on the Thames River were loaded onto larger ships and sent to the new colonies. Convict history in Tasmania is written in volumes, but of interest to me are the stories today's Tasmanians have heard of the Port Arthur convict site. Sarah Island became overcrowded as a convict site and the distance between there and the main city of Hobart Town became difficult to manage. Lieutenant-Governor Arthur established an alternate penal community on the Tasman Peninsula.

The geological nature of the Peninsula, with its narrow crossings, wild seas, deep protected bays, and remoteness was the very reason that white settlement took the course that it did, and in many ways it has shaped the community we know today. Convicts were sent to the Tasman Peninsula when it became a prison town of Port Arthur, where they worked in building gangs, shipbuilding yards and timber felling operations, in deplorable conditions and usually in chain gangs. The Tasman Peninsula was seen by Arthur to be "a natural penitentiary" since any runaway convict, hoping to escape by land, must make his way along an exposed corridor which was heavily patrolled with guards and savage dogs (Scott, 2006, p.21). Eaglehawk Neck is a narrow isthmus crossing that divides Pirates Bay and Norfolk Bay, one being normally calm water, and the other an open surf beach that sweeps out to the greater waters. In 1832, the same year as the final rounding up of the Aborigines, a military presence was established at Eaglehawk Neck, and dogs were chained along the isthmus. Most convicts were unable to swim, so there was no alternative route along which to escape, although many unsuccessfully tried, either being captured and returned to more harshness and violence from that which they had left, or losing their lives to the wild elements of nature (Pridmore, 2007, p.13). Today, tourists come to view the geological features that dominate this area forming natural attractions such as the Tessellated Pavement, which is an ancient rock shelf, the Blowhole, and Tasman Arch.

Also situated on the Tasman Peninsula was the first operational mine site in Tasmania, the Saltwater River Coalmines. The convicts assigned here were regarded as the worst offenders. The purpose in mining was to supply coal for both the convict settlement and the military operations. At the peak of operation around 500 tonnes of coal were sent to Hobart, but it was considered to be of an inferior quality. Significant though in its operation was the use of the first mechanical device in coal mining in Australia, a steam engine that was used to haul coal and water from the mine. Remains of the coalmine and convict establishment have been preserved for visitors, although the shaft has been closed in the interest of public safety. The underground cells were opened in 1977 for viewing. There was also an agricultural farm at Saltwater River that supplied Port Arthur and Point Puer, the boys' convict establishment, with food.

The name Van Diemen's Land inevitably became associated with the stigma of a colony built around a convict past. Memories of the "convict stain" (MacFie, 1989, p.106) were thought to be best left in the past, and so the island state was renamed Tasmania, after the Dutch explorer Abel Tasman, in 1856. This renaming occurred less than three years after the final convict arrived in Hobart Town, and was hoped to clean the slate and give the island a new start (Boyce, 2008, p.1).

## INTERLUDE

In the following poem, *The Escape*, Margaret Scott (2000, pp.72-73) writes in two voices—one the narrator and the other, Captain Booth, Administrator of the Port Arthur penal settlement. She tells of the escape of eight prisoners from the harsh conditions of internment. Although a violent story and setting, the narrator speaks with empathy toward Captain Booth's disposition and his doubts of belonging and place.

*Port Arthur, Van Diemen's Land, 1839*  
All night the high dry-lipped whisper

of she-oak and swamp gum

had swept hissing like blown sand round the Commandant's house,

but when Captain Booth paused and set down his pen

he heard through the sibilant dark

the long withdrawing sigh of the sea on the slip.

*It is with no little degree of mortification and regret I have to report for the information of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, the escape from the Settlement in a six oar'd Whale Boat (commonly known as the Commandant's Whale Boat) of the Eight prisoners named in the margin ...*

Platoons of words in his stiff soldierly hand,

unwavering black on white, presented arms,

wheeled and plodded on unshaken by the fatigue

of the sea-chase or the strain of scanning

those far infinities where the mild sky

dissolved in a buttermilk sea

and the lost horizon flickered with phantom sails.

*The day was very thick and hazy the land not discernible on any quarter. The last sight I could get of them they seem'd to be keeping the same course as if intending to weather the South West Cape ...*

Well so they might for two of the men were sailors

And all of them trained to handle oar and sail.

He thought of Walker their leader, their Ulysses,  
beaching the long black boat in a cove at dusk,  
cursing the hunger and licence of his crew,  
and huddled this very hour on cold sand  
between some dense implacable tract of bush  
And the vast seductive liberty of the sea.

*I would here beg to be permitted to suggest that one of the Government  
vessels may without loss of time be dispatched to the Southward through  
D'Entrcasteaux Channel giving information at the Constable Stations ...*

Wherever they turned there were Scylla and Charybdis.  
By land the settlements warned and armed and ready,  
by sea the schooner coursing them like a hound.  
The bush fed only blacks and creeping things  
And the sirens would sing to their hunger out of the shoals.  
The capture must surely come within the week.  
Contempt came up in the Commandant's throat like bile.  
He thought of the glimmering sail flung in a heap,  
the runaways hacking at stone in their sullen chains.  
His voyages too had ended in a gaol  
and the forest-mantled peaks he'd thought sublime  
had broken under the sun into withered scrub  
sparse as the verminous hair on the skull of a corpse  
cast up to rot by the margin of the sea.  
As he signed his name the Commandant heard the waves  
mouthing their lunatic moan to malicious trees.

## **Propositional discussion about the end of a convict era**

The end of the penal system on the Tasman Peninsula was not a catastrophic event such as the decimation of the Aboriginal community. Indeed, the very presence of a convict site of the most harsh and violent conditions one could imagine, including floggings, ball and chains, solitary confinement, atrocities within the mental asylum and hospital, has created the main economy for the Tasman Peninsula today. Under today's management by the Port Arthur Historical Site Management Authority, PAHSMA, the convict sites attract 300,000 visitors per year. With concessions only to a restaurant, café, public amenities, a gift shop and an impressive environmentally sensitive car park, today's tourists step into the fragments of a 200-year-old history. At night one can follow the ghost trail around the eerie and empty buildings to hear or see the imaginings or realities of convicts and civilians whose lives ended in the desolated settlement. Within the central hub of the Tasman Community of convict times there were major shifts, and tourism became a new focus for reestablishing other dynamic hubs to resist the external force of removing the penal establishment. These shifts are in accord with my second propositional statement as elucidated on page 16 of this thesis. Although the penal settlement was a mighty impact on the strength of the Tasman Peninsula community, shift came from within, with hubs created around tourism, economy, social structures and cultural influences creating new dynamics that are still seen in the community of today.

### **Early Tourism**

Following the history that creates the community we know today, I look here at the influences of early tourism, land use, transport and culture following the demise of penal settlement on the peninsula.

Steamer boats brought new settlers and other visitors to the Tasman Peninsula from Hobart, as interest in the remains of the penal establishment increased. This was before the single road was passable. Visitors included David Burn, a dramatist and newspaper man, in 1842, and later, the English novelist Anthony Trollope (Scott, 2006, p.38). His visit to the Tasman Peninsula was most probably during Trollope's first time in Australia in 1871. He had a son who was a farmer in Victoria. He spent a year in Australia, exploring the early settlements. Travel by steamer boats was the beginning of a tourism industry, which is the major economic industry today on the Peninsula. Lloyd Robson comments that as the convict ruins

became a tourist destination, conflicting emotions enveloped the community. On one hand, the local residents realised that there was a monetary benefit in opening the ruins as a museum. On the other, the ruins were a reminder of a cruel past, and presented visitors with, “a disturbing memorial in the physical and mental landscape” (Robson, 1989, p.2). Today, there is a similar starkness to the feelings one has when visiting the community. The stunning beauty of Port Arthur contrasts strikingly with the harsh environment the convicts endured. Scott describes the experience of tourists to the Peninsula.

They come expecting something macabre and find instead a scene that makes them exclaim and point in wonder. They take photographs of the seascape, the Isle of the Dead and the Commandant’s House standing among the trees above the blue water. (2006, p.36)

Port Arthur is a World Heritage site and a tourism destination, an icon of Australian cultural heritage. International visitors count it as one of their top destinations during their visits to Tasmania. With a strong conservation management plan practised by the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, the cultural sustainability of this hub of the Tasman Peninsula is promising.

With Port Arthur central to the tourism industry of the Peninsula, economic sustainability might be enhanced, unless something drastic or unexpected occurs, locally or globally, to threaten tourist attraction. The increasing number of accommodation choices, such as the popular bed and breakfast homes, self-catering units and conventional motels and hotels, provide an injection of money into the communities, as well as accounting for significant employment. According to the ABS 2011 Census results, 19.7 percent of the work force in the Tasman district is employed in the hospitality and museum industries, compared with a national average of 1.3 percent.

### **The Influence of Free Settlers**

When the penal colony closed in 1877, the land became available to free settlers, including many who were descendants of former convicts (Scott, 2006, p.7). In commenting on the legacy of a penal start to colonisation, Robson (1989, p.4) asks the question, “Are we able with any precision to place Tasman Peninsula’s ‘contents’ in our cultural past?” He then goes on to say,



Truly each generation rewrites history. There is truth in the conclusion that the convicts in fact received a great chance to do well in Van Diemen's Land, and many of them did. Or at least they certainly did a lot better than they would have done had they not been transported. A sentence to the colonies presented the opportunity for a fresh start, and many made a fresh start. (1989, p.4)

As each generation rewrites history there are questions to be answered about the cultural and social sustainability of the community. In particular I ask, does the Tasman Peninsula community preserve its origins and accommodate its cultural heritage as it moves onward through generations, and does its society assimilate the history of its forebears in its current setting? When I speak of cultural sustainability I refer to the understanding of values and principles that are important to some members of a community, assimilated into a cultural heritage that includes the past and where we have come from, understands all those who form the community of today, and upholds all that is important for future generations. When I speak of social sustainability I consider those elements that create and support a healthy community for its members and which may be enjoyed by future generations. By looking into the past I hope to glean some of that which will become important for the future.

As post-convict times brought more people to the Tasman Peninsula the opportunities for changing the landscape became apparent. Here was fertile land and native timbers ready for farming and harvesting, and coastal waters of sheltered bays and open seas abounding with marine life. Henceforth an agricultural, timber and fishing economy emerged.

Early landowners on the Peninsula inherited an already established infrastructure of roads, buildings and jetties. The 1860 Joint Report of the Tasmanian Parliament, on the desirability of opening up the Tasman Peninsula, heard evidence from a number of witnesses who referred to the fishing and milling potential of the area (MacFie, 1989, p.97). Indeed the issue of land grants meant that many small communities grew around the industries of farming, logging and fishing. Some of these early settlers were descendants of former convicts, and fifth and sixth generation descendants still live there, able to trace their ancestry to those free settlers and recipients of original land grants. My own great-great-grandfather, John Price, born in England in 1805, was one such convict, later marrying and raising a large family, and generated the sixth generation of successful Tasmanians that are

my children. Rather than being ashamed of their past, and pulling down the established stone buildings of Port Arthur, our forebears set about restoring the site, and using the establishment for practical purposes such as schools, a hotel, a Post Office, and social entertainment areas. In the words of Scott,

They preserved the past to become the ground for social interaction and the management of their own destiny. They made the suffering and madness of an earlier time the site of their children's education and planted in it their hopes for the future. (2006, p.8)

### **Early Land Use—Forestry, Fishing and Farming**

In this section of my thesis I recall, paraphrase and elucidate on early land use, as I first addressed it in 2009 (Carroll, pp. 47-48).

Sustenance from the rich fertile soil, and the pristine water of open seas and sheltered bays, has nourished generations over the years. Farming is based on dairy and beef cattle herds, apple and pear orchards and general vegetable production. Forestry has been a major industry for many decades, with local bush mills and sawmills producing quality timbers for building, including the development of the first fishing vessels. Fishing offers rewarding prospects for recreational and commercial fishermen alike. Wild open seas challenge today's fleets as they pursue deep-sea tuna, ling, blue grenadier, trevalla and shark. Commercial fishermen also harvest epicurean seafood like crayfish, scallops, mussels, oysters and abalone for local and international markets. Strict regulations apply to size, catch and bag limits. Under most weather conditions, the recreational fisherman can enjoy a good catch of flathead, Australian salmon, mackerel, couta or warehou within sheltered bays. Today, the Tasmanian Government licenses and regulates fish hauls and authorises the use of cray pots and bag limits for other species.

In recent years there has been marked interest and economic developments in the area of aquaculture, whereby Atlantic salmon, mussels, oysters, scallops and giant octopus are now commercially farmed and harvested in the area. Scale fish, shark and shellfish have always formed the basis of the fishing industry on the Tasman Peninsula, with Nubeena being a major port (Harrison, 1989, p.117). As early as 1860, a report was presented to Parliament, which recognised the potential for commercial fishing, declaring that the Hippolyte Rocks were, "the greatest fishing ground of the colony" (*The Mercury*, August 23, 1860).

Early settlers, other than the colonials, included large numbers of Chinese, who were originally attracted to the tin mines of the northeast region of Tasmania, spanning the 1830s to 1850s. Some of the Chinese community fished for abalone around the east coast, beginning the first commercial harvesting of abalone in Tasmania. Anthony Harrison (1989, p.117) reports that one of these men moved in the 1890s to Dunalley, on the northeast fringe of Tasman Peninsula, and began a processing and export business, serving the miners and market gardeners of mainland Australia. Interestingly, in contrast to these small beginnings, China is now Tasmania's largest trading partner. Of particular interest to the economy of the Tasman Peninsula is the rock lobster, or crayfish, as it is locally named, which commands such a premium price in China that fresh crayfish are air freighted for immediate delivery to restaurants and markets. The township of Nubeena takes its name from the local Aboriginal language, meaning crayfish.

In recent decades the abalone industry, with its beginnings on the Tasman Peninsula, has expanded into a multi-million dollar export industry for Tasmania. Many developments in the abalone industry occurred after the arrival of 'Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus' (SCUBA) tanks into Tasmania.

A joint purchase of aqualungs by the Fisheries Division and the CSIRO in 1953 meant that some exploration in shallow waters of Wedge Bay, Port Arthur, Fortescue Bay and Pirates Bay, on the Tasman Peninsula could be undertaken. Commercial abalone diving became a commercial venture in 1963. Some divers fished commercially by free diving with snorkels. Lance Barlow and J.W. (Curly) Robins fished around Nubeena as a pair. When one found a patch of abalone he would signal the other to join him, and then after one knocked the shells from the rock the other followed and picked them up. (Harrison, 1989, p.117)

Harrison (1989, p.117) explains that whilst it would be not surprising that the concern for protection of our natural resources is widely assumed to be a modern phenomenon, that in fact, the health of fisheries today is due to conservation measures instituted in the past, in some cases over a century ago. The framework of today's conservation measures was set down in the *Crayfish Protection Act* of 1885. This act followed a Royal Commission of 1882 that reviewed the industry and the resources on which it was based. Fishermen could only take abalone that was longer than 10 inches. We can probably thank the survival of the industry to this law introduced over 100 years ago. Since that time further limits on equipment, catch

size, species size, gender taking and seasonal conditions have been set in place, and well policed through a licensing scheme.

One of the historical fishing stories that I have recently researched is that of the Bridge family. An article in the *Tasman Peninsula Chronicle* (Bridge, Ambroz & Rogers, 2003, pp.27 -33) tells the story of Joseph Bridge, who was a remittance man, that is, someone paid an allowance to his family as long as he left England and lived elsewhere. After arriving in Tasmania at the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, he became the owner of several trading vessels, one of which was taken by convicts from Safety Cove. One of his two sons, George Bridge, decided to go fishing and soon became the owner of a small double-ended yawl and a small double-ended clinker boat (Bridge et al., 2003, p.27). From the stories that have been told, George spent his early days net fishing for trumpeter, trevally and hand lining for perch and rock cod. He was also probably involved in some cray fishing. George's story of entrepreneurial skills deserves to be told as part of the tapestry of narratives comprising both the history of the Tasman Peninsula, and the fishing industry in Tasmania. George turned to barracuda fishing in 1904, and engaged two boats, earning 30 sovereigns in a fortnight mostly from the sales of around 1,500 dozen fish to a manure plant (Bridge et al., 2003, p.28). Following this success, George saw an opportunity to enter the lucrative Melbourne and Sydney markets, and in 1912 had a house, smoke houses and a jetty built in Nubeena for a fish smoking operation. By this stage George had four sons working in the business and between them they caught the fish, smoked them, packed the fish in boxes of two or three dozen and transported them to Hobart, and from there the boxes were dispatched to the mainland markets (p.29). This business went on for about twenty years until the family was forced to close due to a fall in price at the Melbourne market, as well as other careless and unscrupulous processors moving in. Always resourceful, the Bridge brothers moved back into grab-all nets and line fishing.

Whilst his sons returned to the sea, George explored other business opportunities and he pioneered the fish punt sales market, which is today a familiar and characteristic feature of the Hobart waterfront. He had a fish punt built in Nubeena with a wet-well and he moored this at the docks in Hobart, selling fresh fish when it suited him, at the best price. The design of the punt allowed different fish species to be separated from each other in the well to minimise attacks and injuries (Bridge et al., 2003, pp.31-32).

Following the success of this operation, George went on to convert some rooms in part of the market for a fish and chip take-away restaurant, with his daughters-in-law overseeing the restaurant operation, which went on to become famous worldwide (Bridge et al., 2003, p.31). When George died in 1954 he left the business in equal shares to his four sons and one daughter who had all found spouses at Nubeena (p.32). In spite of the fact that he was totally illiterate, George had created a successful business operation around the fishing industry, and his family has honoured the son of the remittance man by preserving his story through his narratives. His legacy is a plethora of retail fishing punts moored in Hobart at Constitution and Victoria Docks owned by the followers of Bridge's entrepreneurial beginnings.

Fishing and its associated industries have always been part of the history of the Tasman Peninsula community. Methods may have changed since the first inhabitants, but the intent of catching fish to feed the family and community remains to this day. Culturally, fishing has brought people together for recreation. Fishing has formed a significant part of the comings and goings, the language and actions, the energy and movement within the community and local waters.

Our current generation has capitalised on this modern-day interest in fishing by offering tourists the wilderness experience of rugged sea cliffs, seal colonies and dolphin spotting, or charter boat fishing trips with experienced crewmen for recreational deep-sea tuna pursuits.

Of pertinence to future generations is the economic, cultural, social and environmental sustainability of the fishing industry. In what ways can the present generation of community members take action so that fishing will remain a viable economic proposition? In what ways can we responsibly maintain environmental health in the seas so that others might continue fishing? I return to these questions of sustainability later, when I consider issues of marine parks and aquaculture.

### **Religion and Culture**

With free settlers came a new wave of religion and culture. Whilst Port Arthur penitentiary had been run under traditional Church of England and Catholic doctrines, some more fundamentalist Christians were to take up land holdings on the Peninsula. One local historian wrote in the *Tasman Peninsula Chronicle* about the three Spaulding brothers, who all bought land and established farms (Gray, 1986,

p.10). These same pastoral lots continue to be farmed today by the descendants of the three Spaulding brothers. This family was important in the establishment of the Church of Christ on the Peninsula, first holding meetings in their homes before a chapel was completed in 1891 (Gray, 1986, p.13). Peter MacFie writes in *Changes and Continuations: The Post-Penal Settlement of Tasman Peninsula, 1877–1914* (1989) of settlers who moved to the north of the Peninsula and converted to fundamentalist principles of the Church of Christ, marking a distinctive feature of settlement, post-1877 (MacFie, 1989, pp.99–101). Whereas previously the British Port Arthur was host to a number of usually crowded bars, the nearby town of Nubeena, situated only 10 kilometres away did not have liquor licence until the early 1970s when one was approved, amidst great controversy (MacFie, 1989, p.99). Within the Church of Christ, there was some degree of democracy and equality, for instance, women assumed roles of Deaconesses. These standards reflected the shared role of parents in a pioneer community in contrast to the traditional division of roles within middle and upper classes of British settlers (p.100). Another group of fundamentalist Christians was the Congregationalists, considered to be philanthropic and somewhat more liberal by small farm owners because it allowed dancing and socialising (p.101). From these early beginnings of Church gatherings and fellowship, free settlers developed a sense of community, and a new township called Carnavon grew up, away from the original Port Arthur site. Today Carnavon is a small settlement with original houses converted into holiday shacks.

Although the majority of residents may not continue traditional religious practices on the Tasman Peninsula today, they contribute to the development of small community hubs. The hotel at Nubeena is a social contact point and a gathering place for special functions such as birthdays and weddings, sports clubs and music festivals. Newcomers with non-Christian beliefs may be a minority within the Tasman Peninsula community but they add to the diversity of a social and cultural community. Religion does not seem likely to be a threat to the future sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula, and the emergence of cultural and social hubs might strengthen the fabric, the warp and weave, the comings and goings, of a community responding to needs.

## **Early Transport**

One fragment of life within the Tasman Peninsula community that has been lost, ironically by the single road that today services the area, lives on as a historical remnant. Settlement in small districts of the Tasman Peninsula occurred because of waterways and the infrastructure. Steamers, the boats that brought the first tourists to the Peninsula, became a cultural element in the lives and livelihood of the community. Local historians tell many tales of early steamer days when their commercial role was to transport goods and produce backwards and forwards, to and from Hobart. A local resident for many years, Kate Sainsbury, described the ‘Steamer Days’ of her childhood in the 1930s, when Tuesday was the highlight of the week. The Peninsula folk made butter, and relied on the steamers to transport it to Hobart for their markets, along with apples, pears, potatoes, wool and firewood. They eagerly awaited the arrival of animal feed, domestic supplies and mail from the city. As Sainsbury grew older, the steamer became her transport to and from a city boarding school during term times (Sainsbury, 1986, p.5). Steamer days are behind us now. With faster and expedient transport, along with changed social conditions such as local schools for older and academic students, the steamers discontinued. Steamer day stories are still alive as sustainable social and cultural artefacts—people want to hear the tales.

## **Propositional discussion about free settlement**

Post-convict settlement was a prosperous time on the Tasman Peninsula. Residents were enterprising, taking advantage of the infrastructure endowed upon them and the natural environment. Primary production and tourism created a new economy, social and cultural bonds formed between the new settlers, and the environment sustained a livelihood of ample means.

Notably, there were major shifts within the community as its members left the desolate convict past behind. There may have been reasons for free settlers to abandon the location, given a haunting past of suffering and pain. Instead the settlers resisted this possibility and made the Tasman Peninsula their home. Their resistance to the past ensured a community of today. My second propositional statement describes this endurance in terms of the environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability of a new economy. Whilst external forces in the form of changing societies, religion, fishing and farming methods, and transport have

challenged the integrity of the Tasman Peninsula community, new and interactional hubs within the community have compensated dynamically to restore a new balance.

In the next section of this chapter I share some of the tragedies and disasters of recent times affecting the Tasman Peninsula and the consequences these may have on the sustainability of the community.

### **Tragedies at Sea**

Stories of drowning are features of the sea life of the Tasman Peninsula. One of the more recent of these involved the drowning of three members of the one fishing family from Nubeena, in 2006. This did not occur during one of their professional trips to the outer seas, but in relatively close waters surrounded by many other boats, all involved in a tuna fishing competition. All five members of the crew were wearing and using appropriate, mandatory safety and navigational equipment. The tragedy occurred when the boat was hit suddenly by a rogue wave of some four to five metres high. Fishing tragedies have had huge impacts on Peninsula life since the early days, as more often there are several people involved. Rarely would a fisherman set out solely into the waters, as unwritten maritime and social rules concerning 'never go alone' are part of the folklore of the people. Unfortunately this means that if there is a major mishap resulting in drowning there is likely to be a multiple loss of lives. Whilst tragic in any situation, in a community of only 2,000 people everyone is affected. However, such are the inherent risks of life in any small fishing village worldwide. Community members may continue to grieve, and families and friends may always be reminded of their personal losses, but generally the wider Tasman Peninsula community is able to move on. In Proposition One of this thesis (p.16), I suggest that external forces might act upon the Tasman Peninsula community, but compensation occurs within the community hubs so that the force is absorbed and there are no obvious changes to the shape and state of the community. Although the community might pause and reflect on the external force many times, and families carry the grief forever, such tragedy is absorbed into the daily lives of those living within. Acts of remembrance within the Tasman Peninsula community may enervate the people to move on in a stable, sustainable direction.



## **The Massacre**

Community spirit was tested and challenged by the Port Arthur Massacre in 1996, when any sense of a quiet, sleepy fishing village on a Sunday afternoon in April was destroyed. A lone gunman killed 35 people and injured many more. Suddenly images of the towns of Port Arthur and Nubeena flashed across media networks worldwide, and brought Port Arthur and much of Tasmania, out of obscurity into international repute.

There have been a number of commentaries written about the Port Arthur Massacre, but I have chosen just one as the authentic voice, that of Margaret Scott (2006). It is common and accepted practice within the Tasman Peninsula to respect the sensitivities of all the residents, and not to mention the name of the gunman, who is imprisoned in Hobart after pleading guilty to the offences. Tourists are told this when they enter the historic site, and are directed towards the memorial garden to privately pay their respects to the dead and grieving. The gunman, although not a local resident, had connections with and was known by some within the community.

Tasmania lost 12 of its residents and many more mainland Australians were among those killed, as well as two visitors from Kuala Lumpur (Scott, 2006, p.6). I previously wrote of some consequences,

The ripple effect was huge. Almost everyone on the Peninsula knew at least one person who was killed or injured that day. Some of the victims were working at the historical site, whilst others were enjoying a fine autumn day picnic. (Carroll, 2009, p.49)

The effect of the massacre throughout Tasmania was devastating; emergency personnel, witnesses, hospital staff and counsellors shared the desperation, grief, personal and financial losses, and the shock of the victims. Other Tasmanians were the first to avoid the area, not willing or wanting to face the aftermath and horror of the event. The economic fallout from the massacre, especially on the Tasman Peninsula, was enormous and immediate, with many businesses forced to close because of a drop in patronage and the difficulties in maintaining a work population, as many were overcome with medical conditions and extreme grief. Scott (2006, p.165) describes a “loss of energy, accompanied by a kind of nostalgia for the intensity of the early response and guilt at such a feeling.”

In the transcription of a Tasmanian Peace Trust lecture given by Scott in 1997, titled *Uneasy Eden: Peace and Conflict in a Rural Community*, she speaks of an uneasy state that swept through the Peninsula after the initial confrontations and before the rebuilding of the community in the midst of tragedy and horror. Counsellors and mediators came from outside the community, as there were no expert professionals from within (Scott, 1997, pp.5–7). In reading this transcript, I expect that questions of allegiance, trust and ownership were foremost in the minds of those to whom help was offered. Scott (1997) speaks of the unrest and tensions that flared up between employees and the management of the historic site, focusing on issues such as workers compensation entitlements and the presentations of Bravery Awards to particular individuals. Scott honours Damian Bugg, who was the Director of Public Prosecutions at the time, for his exemplary behavior in sending, “clear, informative and friendly letters,” especially to those who might be called as witnesses and for either personally visiting or arranging associates to visit all the other witnesses of events. According to Scott, Bugg “did much to prevent or resolve the kind of conflict which arises from misapprehension and anxiety” (p.7). My earlier observations recorded the community’s healing narrative.

The community of the Tasman Peninsula has emerged from this horror through a long and arduous healing process, with some members still deeply affected by mental health and financial issues. Whilst outsiders to the community have assisted in many ways toward restoration, through financial aid, multicultural religious and healing services, and greater provision of ancillary health and counselling services, the residents of the Peninsula have rallied together for mutual support, enabling healing to happen from within the community. (Carroll, 2009, p.49)

As I became exposed to the enormity of the tragedy and became aware of my own vulnerability, I came to understand my responses to the massacre as immediate and delayed, past and present, transforming me spiritually and emotionally. In the immediate hours during and following the news releases I felt numb, devoid of emotion, with disbelief, but reaching with a maternal ego to wrap my children protectively. Soon the psychologists spoke out suggesting that parents place a ban on media stories and television coverage while children were awake. I needed to be open to the conversations and questions of my children, when they returned from school or other gatherings. In the following weeks my spiritual self led me to a Memorial Service at the city Cathedral, and then to the site of the massacre with my

young children. We visited the temporary waterside memorial, and stood in the remains of the Broad Arrow Café, where many had been killed or injured in the merciless shooting spree. Crowds of people walked through the autumnal glory for that memorial Sunday. The golden leaf of an English Oak tree, planted in the early days of penal settlement, became the community's emblem of hope, and was replicated on car stickers and publications. Tragedy is a word that does not come close to the senseless loss of lives. Nothing spoke more tragically than the point blank shooting of a mother and two young daughters, aged six and three. One daughter ran behind a tree, but the gunman followed and ended her beautiful life. The local pharmacist lost his wife and daughters while he played a game of cricket in Nubeena. Ironically the family had decided to enjoy the first fine day in several weeks by taking a picnic to the historic site. In future months, the father was to establish the *Alannah and Madeline Foundation*, an Australian body that campaigns and assists children who are victims of violence, honouring two precious lives. Unfortunately, but understandably, the father, an intelligent and strong community member could not bear witness to the immediate and lasting terror of that day and relocated to mainland Australia. For a while, Nubeena was without a pharmacist.

Our family signed a memorial book, and as parents we proudly, but poignantly, watched as our three children, aged less than nine years of age, wrote messages of hope alongside comments written from people throughout the world. Just a few weeks before, in March 1996, Dunblane Primary School in Scotland had been the site of a large massacre of 16 people at the hands of a lone gunman. The children from Tasman District School had written their sympathy to the children of Dunblane. Now they were reading messages from the children of Dunblane. A fellow Tasmanian postgraduate student told me recently about the pipe band melody that was composed at her kitchen table for Dunblane. Only a month later the same melody became a lament for Port Arthur. Anniversaries have come and gone. I was there for the tenth, when community groups from throughout Tasmania, including pipe bands, choirs, dancers and ethnic groups, gathered over two days at the historic site, and there was consolation and restoration in the faces of those there. My young son sang a haunting Christmas melody as a choir soloist in the twilight ruins of the Penitentiary, two years after the massacre.

Many years after the event, there are people who live outside the Tasman Peninsula community still confronting their innermost emotions on the events of

the massacre. Annie Warburton, a popular columnist with *The Mercury*, the major newspaper in Southern Tasmania, wrote, 12 years after the event,

I went to Port Arthur one recent Sunday. Hadn't been down there since before the shootings, for a variety of reasons....

Some years ago I was in the vicinity with a gaggle of local friends, but when the option of going into Port Arthur itself for a progress check was mooted, it was vetoed by a young woman who didn't think she could cope emotionally....

Am I right in thinking that for us Tasmanians, the very idea of Port Arthur has taken on a different quality since the awful events of April 1996?

Not that we weren't mindful of the pleas of the locals not to abandon them, but maybe we needed time to adjust to the fact that Port Arthur was no longer just a pleasant weekend picnic and visitor destination.

I don't think I've met a single Tasmanian who didn't know or hasn't met someone who was affected by the shootings. All our memories and emotional associations have been changed. (Warburton, 2008)

Many today might still harbor the same sentiments as Warburton and her gaggle of young friends. While some Tasmanians wanted to return to the Tasman Peninsula and pass on their goodwill and cheer to its people, others have avoided the area for significantly long periods after the massacre.

Large allocations of funds by both the State and Federal Governments, shortly after the events of 1996, enabled the completion of a world-class Visitors' Centre on the historic site in March 1999. More than 200,000 tourists who visit the Port Arthur Historic Site annually quantify the recovery in tourism. The same columnist added,

The new visitors centre's design and scale is impressive, likewise the wealth of educational and interpretative material on offer. This long-overdue recognition of the true historical importance of Port Arthur, and the fact that the focus is now on the interstate visitor experiencing it for the first time, probably needed to happen as part of the process of exorcising the demons of April '96. (Warburton, 2008, p.4)

When I interviewed the then Mayor of the Tasman Peninsula and posed the question, "Are events of the past embodied in the culture of today?" she responded in an email.

*Obviously the Port Arthur Historic Site is an important piece of history that is embodied in today's culture and I also assume you are referring to the Port Arthur Tragedy. For the most part we have moved on from the tragedy, it is something that we would rather leave in the past, if you scratch the surface hard enough you would probably find for all of us that it is still there in one way or another. There are those that were more directly affected, who lost loved ones, or were at the site during the shooting and/or the aftermath. Some of these people of course will never fully move on, some appear to have moved on, but scratch the surface gently and it is still there, these people do the best they can under the circumstances. (Barwick, 2008)*

### **Propositional discussion about healing and moving on**

'Doing the best they can' is somewhat of an understatement. A community of 2,000 people has been hit forcefully, but I refrain from saying wrenched apart. No one could have predicted the events of April 28, 1996. Unlike natural disasters, or death by accidental reasons, nothing can prepare a community for a massacre. Australia had never experienced a massacre where so many people had died from the actions of a single gunman and although the Tasman Peninsula community had witnessed atrocities in the past with The Black Line and convict punishments, sometimes leading to death, nothing could prepare the people for such a tragedy.

Anita Heiss (2012) adds her own commentary to the comparison of massacres that have occurred in Tasmania. She recalls sitting in a bar in Hobart discussing the 1996 Port Arthur Massacre with staff members. One claimed that it was "the worst massacre in Tasmanian history" (p.181). Heiss wrote,

I was compelled to remind him of the Cape Grim Massacre of 1828, at the north-western point of the state, where four shepherds with musket guns ambushed over thirty local Blackfellas, killing thirty and throwing their bodies over a sixty metre cliff into the sea. (2012, pp.181-182)

Heiss is not intent on comparing the carnage of the 1996 massacre with that previously experienced in Aboriginal history, but rather gives a commentary around the need for more Tasmanian history to be known and told.

Returning to the massacre events of 1996, I consider the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community. How can this community repair and move on? The community remains intact in some way. Some people have gone forever, death claimed the lives of innocents, young and old, indiscriminate of social or cultural backgrounds. Others have left the community, unlikely to return, with bitter memories and debilitating suffering. Some remain, shadows of their former selves in spirit and mind, some face an impoverished livelihood, others attempt to make new friendships and join community hubs.

Whilst it might have seemed probable that the ensuing economic hardship of the community might have been its downfall, an external force too powerful to overcome, the Tasman Peninsula community responded from within—by rebuilding businesses that suffered losses of income, inviting others from outside the community to visit once more, and creating an atmosphere within the Port Arthur Historic Site that quietly and meaningfully acknowledges staff and visitors deeply affected by the massacre, and yet promotes the history of early settlement. This response from within was not frenetic or urgent, as the community members needed time most of all—time to mourn, grieve, protect themselves and families from enduring mental and physical anguish, and contemplate a future. Gradually the Tasman Peninsula community began building up its own strength from within its network of hubs, encouraged by other communities worldwide, some that had suffered similar ordeals, such as Dunblane, and others that were shocked by the tragedy as it spread globally through the media.

An on-going healing process began with strong bonds, connections and trust developed between residents, professional counselling and medical personnel, recovery teams and mentors in business and community development. With such connections and with trust in the people offering their services, a community has emerged from hardship that might even be stronger than that previously known by this generation. Although such strength is immeasurable by quantitative means, the narratives speak of resilience and healing.

The words ‘community spirit’ are often used in media and real life narratives to describe feelings and enthusiasm shared by people within a setting, especially in adverse circumstances. As I seek the meaning of this term in understanding the three propositional statements of this thesis I explore the community spirit in the

*ethos* of its members and the common values and attitudes that drive the need for unity in the face of adversity. The word *ethos* comes from the Ancient Greeks and today means varyingly the character or driving culture of a community, and the dominating assumptions of a community. Community spirit, the *esprit de corps* is exemplified in the actions of the people of the Tasman Peninsula community. Their spirit, their inner fortitude, unites in concern for others and a drive to move forward.

I speak in the next section of this chapter of a time when the Tasman Peninsula community may have been destroyed by the January 2013 bushfires that swept the length of the Peninsula. I argue that community spirit facilitates the rebuilding of communities as nearby Dunalley and the Tasman Peninsula communities seek equilibrium in environmental, economic, social and cultural dynamics.

## INTERLUDE

*Die Welt ist so leer, wenn man nur Berge, Flüsse und Städte darin denkt, aber hier und da jemand zu wissen, der mit uns übereinstimmt, mit dem wir auch stillschweigend fortleben, das macht uns dieses Erdenrund erst zu einem bewohnten Garten.*

The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers and cities; but to know someone here and there who thinks and feels with us, and though distant, is close to us in spirit — this makes the earth for us an inhabited garden.

(Goethe, 1874, p.520)



## **Bushfires**

Bushfires are a natural phenomenon of the Tasmanian landscape, often caused by lightning strikes in the forests. Since European settlement, fires have also been caused by the burning of farm and domestic waste, as well as deliberate arson attacks. According to the National Forest Learning Centre (2013), fires have been part of the ecology of Tasmania for millions of years and have enabled the adaptation of plant species to both survive and facilitate fires. Historical records show that bushfires engulfed Port Arthur in 1895 and 1897, destroying some of the buildings (Tuffin, 2006). Those buildings remaining today were restored by the people at the time, and are part of the historic Port Arthur site.

Eucalyptus trees are high in volatile oils, and have woody seed capsules that are encouraged to open when fire has destroyed their shrubby undergrowth, allowing light through into a nutrient rich ash. Geoscientists speak of 'fuel load' in relation to the intensity and the speed at which bushfires burn and spread.

Generally speaking, the greater the fuel load, the hotter and more intense the fire. Fuel which is concentrated with adequate spacing will burn faster than heavily compacted or scattered fuel sources. Smaller pieces of fuel such as twigs, litter and branches burn quickly, particularly when they are dry and loosely arranged. Some types of grasses burn very rapidly, while larger fuels, such as tree trunks, do not burn as easily. The natural oil within Eucalypt trees promotes the combustion of fuel. (Geoscience Australia, 2015)

In Tasmania we often experience drought conditions in the later Spring months that promote high bushfire risks in the summer months.

In December 2012 the fuel load in many parts of Tasmania was high and the state was on the brink of disaster. Warnings were issued about the high risks of fires, and total fire ban days were declared throughout the state. In January 2013 bushfires engulfed parts of Tasmania, started with blazes in diverse locations, on a day when fire controllers declared the fire weather conditions as 'catastrophic', an official term used by Australian rescue operators. Several fires started north of the Tasman Peninsula around the settlements of Forcett and Dunalley. Within hours these fires combined with other blazes and swept towards the Tasman Peninsula, destroying in its wake the town of Dunalley and continued through Murdunna, across Eaglehawk Neck, burning large tracts to Taranna before sweeping across

forests and farms to settle around Nubeena and White Beach. Other major fires started around Tasmania, notably on the east coast, and the Derwent Valley, the gateway to Tasmania's highlands.

I stood at the side of the road, along with many other Tasmanians, in despair, with a numbness of feelings, unable to comprehend the enormity of loss—homes, farms, livestock, fences, pets, the Dunalley School and Police Station, shops, businesses, but fortunately, some might say miraculously, no loss of lives. Whilst the physical lives of so many were saved, the mental and emotional torment still persists in the lives of many, as I speak of in this section. First I would like to offer some personal accounts of times in January 2103, through my journal writing.

January 4 2013, 3.00am

Yesterday, January 3, started as a promising summer day. Our weather over the Christmas and New Year period had been relatively cool and windy, so like many other people I was looking forward to the forecast high temperature of 35 degrees Celsius. Around 1.00pm my husband and I decided to head to Park Beach for some body surfing, and we could feel the day heating up quickly. We left our dogs in the cool of the house, with plenty of water. We drove the five kilometres to a popular surf beach and I was astonished at the number of cars, the crowds on the beach and the water brimming with people. This was not a normal summers day at Park Beach, obviously many had travelled from afar for the day. Over the next two hours we spent time in and out of the water, the sand so hot to be unbearable. Around 3.00pm the sky turned pink and I could smell smoke. Soon, smoke clouds descended upon the beach, and I commented to my husband that I hoped all the city day visitors would get home safely through the haze. I had no idea where the fires were, but thought they were probably some distance away, and that the increasing wind was driving the smoke towards the coast.

Around 4.00pm we returned to our holiday house, which is located adjacent to a shallow bay, accessed by an infrequently used secondary road, since a new highway has bypassed the section. As evening settled the temperature continued to rise. A neighbour told us around 6.00pm that it was currently around 42 degrees. Our dogs were distressed so we carried them down to the bay frequently to cool down, and I continued to bathe them at home. As darkness descended around 9.00pm we could see flames, but in darkness it is difficult to judge the distance of fires. We turned the radio on and heard warnings for owners of properties very close to our area in Forcett. There were some vague reports of devastation caused by fires in Dunalley, farther South.

I noticed an increased number of cars travelling along the secondary road minutes before we had a visit from police telling us to prepare for evacuation. Their advice was that the fire had skipped nearby Carlton River, and was heading our way, but there was with no immediate threat. Other houses close to Park Beach had been evacuated and hence the heavy traffic. Nevertheless I packed the car with some items that were important to me, including my laptop computer with my thesis writing and notes. We filled our gutters with water, but with a polyvinyl water tank, our house built of synthetic material, and only having a narrow garden hose, we realised that we would have little chance of saving the house if the fire headed our way. Our neighbours were better prepared with a fire pump and hoses. The main problem we realised, as we continued to listen to radio emergency calls, was that for us to evacuate we would need to head toward Forcett to reach the highway to Hobart, and the advice was that the highway was heavy with emergency vehicles. So the quandary, should we stay knowing that the fire could turn on us, or should we head off in the face of unknown danger to Hobart?

By midnight I decided to head back to the city, with the dogs. My husband stayed longer to pack surfboards and kayaks into his van, and to secure the house and boat, as much as he was able. Meanwhile our son, against all emergency advice, decided to drive in the opposite direction from Hobart to assist his father and neighbours. I arrived back in Hobart two hours ago, and my husband and son have just arrived. We safely negotiated the roads in heavy smoke. Our youngest daughter was still anxiously awake, other family phoned us, and we sat around dazed and uncertain about what had happened that day. Already a social media site has opened, "Tassie Fires – You Can Help," dedicated to advising Tasmanian residents on the developing fire situation, and the local national radio and television stations are giving regular updates through the night.

January 4 2013

I awoke this morning after a few hours sleep and Tasmania is reeling in horror at the news that is coming in about several bushfires blazing around the state. Media reports today tell of hundreds of properties have been lost in Dunalley and Boomer Bay, 40 kilometres north from Port Arthur. Vague reports are coming in of the fire being out of control and fast moving towards the Tasman Peninsula. The temperature in Dunalley yesterday was reported to have reached 52 degrees Celsius.

January 5 2013

The news coming in about the fires is only getting worse. Thousands of properties are being scoured for lives that might have gone. Refuge centres have been set up at Nubeena and Sorell. All power and water has been lost to the Tasman Peninsula and fuel supplies are running low. The

Arthur Highway is blocked, other than for emergency vehicles, and the fires continue to burn. Hobart is shrouded in heavy smoke clouds, and the elderly are advised to remain indoors. Our outside temperature is still in the high 30 degrees. My husband has decided to return to Lewisham, as the road is open to the junction, just South of Forcett to check on the property.

I check the social media site "Tassie Fires – You Can Help" regularly throughout the day to hear where I can possibly help. Mostly the needs are food, clothes, toys and books at the refuge centres. Some specific families are being mentioned in need of temporary housing, baby supplies, or medical transport.

January 8 2013

My husband had been vainly trying to contact our close friends who lived at Boomer Bay. We had heard that the entire settlement had been destroyed. Today we heard our feared confirmation, our friends, a retired couple lost everything—a permanent home, a caravan, car, boat and a shed, and everything they owned other than the clothes they stood in. They had made their way to the water and stood with others on a jetty, whilst the fires swept around them, until they were saved by a boat from the bay.

January 12 2013

As I write these words, Tasmania is still engulfed in many parts from devastating bushfires that commenced a week ago, especially along the Tasman Peninsula. The single road to the Tasman Peninsula, the Arthur Highway, has been blocked for a week, with escalating crises of evacuation,

supplies of food, fuel, medical equipment and needs, abandoned hire cars and trapped tourists. Electric power has been cut to the Tasman Peninsula for all this time, and the difficulties of attaining power poles and manpower to establish new lines means that it will be several weeks before connections are made. There is a shortage of small domestic generators, as well as the fuel to run them, but the Royal Australian Air Force has deployed two powerful generators that have been used in natural disaster areas interstate, in Japan and also New Zealand. These should give reprieve to the farmers and other producers who have been forced to close their operations.

Hopefully the single road will open tomorrow for residents only, and will be police-controlled, with a speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour as a safety precaution against fallen trees and power lines, flying embers and ash clouds. Residents wearing protective clothing will be able to inspect their properties, but have been advised not to fossick amongst the rubble, as there is likely to be inherent dangers, including asbestos dust. Forensic police have searched all 800 properties that have been affected by the fires for human remains, with no discoveries, but around 100 people are still unaccounted for. I heard that the fire is still burning, closer now to the towns of Nubeena and White Beach, where my own unoccupied shack, is under threat of fire. We decided to sell the shack a year ago for many reasons, one being I had experienced a small bush fire there already, whilst on my own and with no close neighbours in residence, and I feared something like this might happen. I have returned to Lewisham and today I cooked some food for the nearby Sorell refuge centre.

January 13 2013

Today I visited the Sorell recovery centre, where those already evacuated by boat, and others who evacuated before the road was closed, have been offered meals, bedding, a place to sleep and access

to communication and services. Some people have been able to seek refuge with families or other kind community members afar. The mood was difficult to describe—sobriety, sadness, overwhelming disbelief, people at a loss as to where to begin their lives again, but generosity and gladness in those who bring in meals, donations of clothes and toys, and offers of temporary accommodation. Charity groups have set up a large temporary warehouse on the show grounds in Hobart, where donations from all around Australia are being sorted and packed for redistribution.

I was a short step from the side of the road to the centre of action amidst the bushfire zones, but a long distance from the reality of loss and devastation.

Many narratives continue to be told, and my descriptions of events and their impacts on the economic, environmental, social and cultural sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula are from the stories reported through media, in documents related to the bushfire recovery effort and personal stories I was privileged to be told. I offer some of these stories to personalise the effects of the fires on the lives of people within the Tasman Peninsula community, and neighbouring areas, as I consider the propositional statements of my thesis.

Stories are told of families separated in different parts of the Peninsula and being reunited with loved ones several days later as boats continued to ferry those who became stranded. The only access to and from the Peninsula was by boats, heading out from Hobart and nearby beaches. Like days of early settlement, the water became a lifesaving highway. One story was of an unaccompanied 13-year-old stranded in her hometown of Nubeena, and wanted transport to Hobart because both her parents were day patients in the city Cancer Clinic. The single road divided families.

Other stories came to light as the days went on. A photograph of a young family being cared for by their grandparents on January 4 awed people all over the world. As the home was burning the family made its way to a local jetty, where the members sheltered underneath in the water, while flames licked the jetty boards. Fortunately they all survived.

Some weeks after the fires I called into a local roadside fruit and vegetable market where a service club was offering a fundraising barbeque for the fire

recovery effort. I spoke with a young mother who was putting four children, including a newborn baby, into a car. As a complimentary everyday greeting I spoke with the woman about her children; how happy they were with the barbeque, how cute the baby was, where they were from. We had a conversation that Kathleen Stewart, in her description of the “space on the side of the road”, calls “just talk” (Stewart, 1996, p.31). Stewart suggests that the “space on the side of the road” allows the narratives of local people in non-metropolitan areas to be a cultural reality. “Just talk” dramatises unpredictable events and accidents, and the eccentricity of behaviour in sometimes amusing, other times sad ways, and “in the shared laughter and tears a community is formed and prized” (p.31). Through this technique insights of the depth and fabric of a community might be revealed with emotions, opinions and context.

What unfolded next in my conversation with the young mother was an emotional first hand account of how she was finding life difficult at that time, managing four children during the hot school holidays, dealing with her own fears of living in a shed in the bush, and the mental anguish she still suffered after the bushfires. I had not envisioned that I would hear a first hand account of the bushfire experience at that time, but the young woman shared an amazing story. On January 3 2013, the woman returned to the Peninsula with her 24-hour-old baby, in the late morning, just before the fires took hold. Instead of settling the baby into her first night at home with the other children, the young mother spent the night at the beach, cramped with all the children and two dogs in a car, while her husband fought fires around their house and neighbouring properties. The thought of this woman trying to feed a new baby throughout the night, keep every one of her charges hydrated and reassured, whilst she maintained a clear and calm head herself brought me to tell her that if they hand out medals for bravery then she should be the first to be awarded.

A Dunalley furniture maker and artist, Gay Hawkes, purged her emotions and thoughts of the bushfires in writing, eventually turning the memories into a book, *Time and Chance – A Story of the Fires* (2014). Hawkes lost her home, a second cottage on her property and her studio. Fortuitously she had packed her ‘ute’, a vehicle with an open tray, with a mattress and basic camping needs in preparation for a short trip that she had planned for that week. After hearing the evacuation call, Hawkes headed southwards on the Arthur Highway. she writes,



Into the ute with the family Bible and a portrait of my mother, onto the highway, turning South. When I saw the Blue Gums and buildings of Colaba blazing, a sort of hysteria possessed me. Radio on, phone ringing in a panic, petrol gauge showing empty, on past the beach, past those tall gums of Bangor. (2014, p.9)

Hawkes reached Nubeena, where she camped on the sports ground. She describes the atmosphere in these words,

Then came the most remarkable four days of my life. All over the hot dry place were cars, parked in serried rows; sixteen hundred people, hundreds of dogs, the whole place ringed by red smoke. We all walked like ghosts clad in horror and the clothes we fled in. (p.9)

Under such circumstances, such devastation of the environment, such upheavals in the economic status of the Tasman Peninsula community, both immediately in the closure of the summer tourism period at its peak, and long-term, in the rebuilding of a physical community, and such movement in social and cultural dynamics of the community, with people having lost neighbours, living in temporary housing, having to relocate to other areas just as school was looking forward to a new year, and employees no longer having jobs in the area, and yet being drawn together in community efforts to provide welfare for others, how will the Tasman Peninsula community recover? Can the strength of bonds within the greater Tasman Peninsula community pull together tightly enough to bring it into a past equilibrium, or will the external forces be too great for recovery, and the Tasman Peninsula community will no longer exist? These questions are pertinent to my propositional inquiry into the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community.

Might people rebuild in the Tasman Peninsula community or decide to move away from the bush and closer to Hobart? What might surviving livestock eat, given the massive loss of supplies? In what ways might farmers afford to re-fence their large properties? In what ways will the fires affect the vitality of tourism? What possibilities might there be for the Tasman Peninsula community to recover from the magnitude of financial loss, given that nearly all businesses closed, at least temporarily? In what ways might people cope once again with trauma on such a large scale, and what consequences will occur for mental wellbeing and personal relationships?

Answers to these questions might in part be answered by the work of the coordinating Bushfire Recovery Taskforce, which was set up six days after the fires broke out in 2013, under the chairmanship of Damian Bugg, the same man who as Director of Public Prosecutions led the recovery initiatives after the Port Arthur Massacre. Bugg suggested that the role of the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce was to facilitate community discussions and actions, not to direct them.

It's often said that every disaster provides opportunities. The major opportunity that bushfire-affected communities have grasped in the wake of the January fires seems to be a determination to create good from bad.

A significant role for the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce has been to understand the needs of affected communities; to talk with them rather than “at” them. We and others in Government have been determined not to dominate the process or the conversation, but rather, assist communities to move from a state of bewilderment about where and how to begin, to a state of confidence in moving forward. Engaging with locals affected by the bushfires has required a multi-pronged approach to enable every voice to be heard, not just the loudest. This listening process is important and has taken some time. (Bugg, 2013, p.3)

Gadamer outlines two processes that are essential in community dialogue, listening, or *zuhoren*, and addressing each other, *ansprechen* (Figal, 2002, p.107). I am reminded of these processes when Bugg comments on the need for every voice within the affected communities to be heard, through listening to each other.

In this next section of my writing on the 2013 bushfires I will outline some of the official ‘programs of recovery’ devised by the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce and lead the reader along the road of events through narratives and personal reflections of the time.

The Bushfire Recovery Taskforce devised five programs of recovery with multi-faceted approaches, which utilised the resources available through individuals, not-for-profit sectors, and government organisations whether local, state or national. I quote from the taskforce document.

The challenge for the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce is to ensure that actions under each program are driven or supported by the community and guided by the principles and objectives of recovery.

**Program One:** Supporting individuals, families and the community

**Aim:** To support individuals, families and communities by rebuilding emotional, social and physical wellbeing through a community-led, coordinated and planned process.

**Program Two:** Engaging the community in decisions that affect them

**Aim:** To ensure bushfire-affected communities are informed and involved in the recovery processes so actions and programs match their needs.

**Program Three:** Restoring homes, businesses and community infrastructure

**Aim:** To assist the community to restore their homes, businesses and local infrastructure in a timely manner by providing coordinated services and advice.

**Program Four:** Helping the local economy to rebound

**Aim:** To encourage revitalisation of the economy by working with local businesses to determine the most effective forms of assistance and support.

**Program Five:** Supporting environmental recovery

**Aim:** To support environmental recovery of affected areas by assisting landowners with information, advice and monitoring and rehabilitation projects.

(Programs for Recovery, 2013, p.23)

Since the 2013 bushfires, the communities on the Tasman Peninsula, including Dunalley, have been empowered through the implementation of these recovery programs. All five programs have been paramount in building the communities of 2014. Of greatest significance is that the programs generated dialogue, the *ansprechen* and *zuhoren* referred to by Gadamer, within small and large community hubs, and the people were empowered to find ways of assisting each other.

Under the aims of Program One, to support individuals, families and communities to rebuild their environmental, social and cultural wellbeing, two women set up a 'Retro Bank', which served as a deposition site for those outside the community who wished to donate a simple object, such as cup and saucer set, a

piece of lace, a childhood toy, or a tool, an item that might have recreated a memory, part of a person's history. One simple item might have been of great significance in healing the wounds of someone who has lost a significant object of their past (Programs for Recovery, 2013, p.33). I experienced this loss of a meaningful object through our friend who had lost everything. One item that he had held dear to him had gone. Apart from the home that he had built with his wife, the mental and physical anguish that he endured, and the sociological pain of having lost former neighbours, he grieved a tool, a special tool that had been given to him by his father, when he had started his building apprenticeship in the 1960s, a rare "Stanley Yankee" helical screwdriver. When we were able to find him a replacement our friend was emotionally delighted, not that he needed another, but it recreated a little bit of history.

Hawkes also wrote of personal loss that cannot be replaced,

Where the kitchen had been, black pots, melted glass, ruined cake tins, bits of ceramic, remains of things my Mother gave me...Though often lonely in Dunalley, I always had my books and music – now a pile of the finest white dust. Of my handmade books and journals I could recognise the wire spines. (2014, p.17)

Program Two recommended keeping people informed through communication channels. The people of the affected areas addressed this recommendation simply over the immediate days. A phone tree was established, much like a modern-day version of the semaphore stations set up along the Peninsula in convict days. In those days the semaphore system reported on escaped convicts heading north from Port Arthur. The Bush Fire Recovery Report (2013, p.43) described the phone tree as a means that disseminated information along the Peninsula about who had lost homes or was in need of immediate help, using a mobile phone message service, with a 'please forward' request. A number of initiatives for communication channels opened in later months with newsletters, social media and posters that enabled people to share their stories. The Programs for Recovery report recognised the need for community cohesiveness.

Cohesive communities provide a sense of place and a sense of security. They provide opportunities for people to share experiences and learn from others. They provide familiar opportunities for people to reach out for help or for others to offer help to those who may not recognise that they need it. (2013, p.38)

Communities provide people with an identity that extends well beyond their personal surrounds and a safety net for those working their way along the often difficult road to recovery.

Communities can only be built or sustained from within. There are, however, many things that government and external organisations can do to assist communities, such as provide community spaces and bring communities together at events, support the spread of information to breed familiarity across communities and generate a new sense of place that accords with the new environment. (Programs for Recovery, 2013, p.37)

I consider circumstances of cohesiveness within the Tasman Peninsula community as I interpret the propositional statements of this thesis. I enter dialogues where belonging to and identity with the greater community hub are discussed, and other dialogues that occur in the smaller hubs of the school and common interest groups. I also consider the interactions of external organisations with the Tasman Peninsula community, in circumstances where the lifeworld and systemworld meet, such as in discussions around the establishment of a marine protection park and World Heritage listing of the Port Arthur Historic Site in Chapter Eight.

Habermas uses the terms lifeworld to describe familiar conversations and systemworld to describe political and economic dialogue. When lifeworld meets systemworld Habermas describes *verständigungsform*, a place of mutual understanding (Habermas, 1987, p.120). My propositional statements of how the Tasman Peninsula community will react to external forces depend on the cohesiveness of the community. Are the dynamics within the hubs of the community able to compensate for changes imposed externally? Will cohesiveness be enough to ensure the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community? The Bushfire Recovery Taskforce Programs for Recovery begin in the lifeworld of the Tasman Peninsula and its northern neighbour Dunalley, but extend into the systemworld when resources from government bodies and private corporations are needed for rebuilding the communities.

Program for Recovery Three (2013, p.48) concerned a need for major infrastructure projects to commence so that the recovery process would move toward restoration, both in the short-term and long-term. This required the road to be cleared expediently, alternate power sources to be established and mains source

power to be restored, a new physical environment of houses and meeting places to be built, and labourers engaged to take on all the above tasks. These processes moved the dialogue from the lifeworld into the systemworld. The Tasman Peninsula did not have the resources in materials, technology and manpower to approach these problems from within, and so consultation between the local community and external sources brought *verständigungsform* between the parties.

Program Four (2013, pp. 54-57) identified an ongoing need for the local economy to rebound. Many sectors within the local economy of the Tasman Peninsula were hit hard, especially tourism during a peak week of summer when the road was not traversable, and small businesses who rely on the summer tourist trade closed down.

There is also the added shortcoming of tourists, campers and day-trippers who do not wish to return to the Peninsula for fear of being trapped and isolated. Through Program Five (2013, p.58-64), government funding has gone a long way towards the restoration of the economy, and also the environmental damage incurred through contamination of waterways, aquatic industries, and drinking water supplies. The Tasman Peninsula community is encouraged to identify their needs in these areas and apply for funding as required. On releasing the final report of the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce, chairman Bugg was reported as being “in awe of the community’s response to the tragedy,” and stated, “It shows remarkable inner strength and generosity of spirit, with people helping on another on their journey” (2014, p.4). Hawkes has struggled with life post-fires. Eighteen months after the fire, from a distant place on earth, she wrote,

Sometimes I wish I had died in the fires.

...I am older, sadder, much more appreciative of my community and the generous people of Australia, but we are a complacent lot, trusting in the tangible as though it should last forever. (2014, p.25)

Once again, the people of the Tasman Peninsula community and its neighbouring town of Dunalley have come together with *esprit de corps*, the community spirit that is an inner force pulling the hubs into a renewed equilibrium. Although there have been disastrous consequences of bushfires upon the balanced community, the people have responded from within and a new community is emerging.

Now I plant trees, knowing that I shall not live to enjoy their shade, but planting them on my black land for the sake of my children and their children, in honour of the beauty I enjoyed there before and to cool the warming world. (Hawkes, 2014, p.27)

**Photographs. Images of Bushfires, January 2013, Dunalley and Tasman Peninsula**



*Photograph 3. Tourists awaiting evacuation (Tootill, 2013)*



*Photograph 4. A sculpture of Adam and Eve survived the fire at Yaxley Estate (Rosewarne, 2013)*



*Photograph 5. Members of the Walker and Holmes family huddle in the water next to a jetty (Holmes, 2013)*

Photograph 5 received worldwide attention through many media outlets.



## INTERLUDE

*The Phoenix Bird* by Hans Christan Anderson, 1850, an extract

In the Garden of Paradise, beneath the Tree of Knowledge, bloomed a rose bush. Here, in the first rose, a bird was born. His flight was like the flashing of light, his plumage was beautiful, and his song ravishing. But when Eve plucked the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, when she and Adam were driven from Paradise, there fell from the flaming sword of the cherub a spark into the nest of the bird, which blazed up forthwith. The bird perished in the flames; but from the red egg in the nest there fluttered aloft a new one—the one solitary Phoenix bird. The fable tells that he dwells in Arabia, and that every hundred years, he burns himself to death in his nest; but each time a new Phoenix, the only one in the world, rises up from the red egg.

The bird flutters round us, swift as light, beautiful in color, charming in song. When a mother sits by her infant's cradle, he stands on the pillow, and, with his wings, forms a glory around the infant's head. He flies through the chamber of content, and brings sunshine into it, and the violets on the humble table smell doubly sweet.

A music festival that attracted musicians from throughout Australia, who gave their time and talents freely, was held at the Dunalley Hotel on March 17 2013. The advertising posters read, “As A Phoenix Rises From The Ashes, So Will Dunalley And The Tasman Peninsula 2013” (*Dunalley Phoenix*, 2013).

## Carnival and Festival

How might a community come together, reconnect and establish new beginnings in the light of death, loss, destruction and abandonment? Can a community subjected to such violence and tragedy over 200 years see through the darkness to a brighter future, or will it resolve to stagnate in its destruction and give up on all that has previously been restored?

Today's community on the Peninsula experienced first hand the ravages of bushfire and many were infants when the massacre occurred. They have grown up hearing stories of grief, loss, and anguish—in playgrounds, the schoolyard, at the shops. They have seen the heaviness in their parents' eyes as they try to rebuild the businesses they own, hit twice by powerful external forces, one an act of man, the other a natural disaster. They have said goodbye to those who left the community, and they have wondered why their town has taken on a ghostly appearance, a *zeitgeist* of modern times. Yet there is also hope with a new generation of community members. Scott refers to this possibility, "The involvement of children – the new hope of the future – in any peace process or healing activity, is, I think, crucial"(1997, p.8).

Internationally recognised and Tasmanian-born playwright, Tom Holloway, was only 17 at the time of the massacre, and yet 10 years on he explored community healing, communication and relationships since that day in his play, *Beyond the Neck*, chosen to be part of The Royal Court Theatre's International Young Playwright's Festival, London, 2007. Through storytelling he has allowed the people of the Tasman Peninsula, and others, to share their difficulties with empowerment and compassion. In his words, "I give this play to them, to my family and friends and to anyone that has suffered anything like what these characters have suffered, which is probably all of us to some degree or other" (Holloway, 2007).

One activity that was held for the children and adults alike after the massacre was The Festival of Journeys, in which people from all over the Peninsula united in a lantern light gathering. As Scott (1997, p.8) describes it, "The symbols of light in darkness, of travelling from separate places to arrive at common ground, of sharing food, warmth and pleasure, of gathering in circles, required no exposition."

Bakhtin speaks of carnival, the concept of history being created in artistic forms and the narratives are told through the music, dance and celebrations of life. He not

only considers carnival as a time of celebration, but also as an occasion to purge the past and celebrate the being. In *Rabelais and his world* Bakhtin wrote, “Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and renewal. It was hostile to all that was immortalized and completed” (1941,p.10).

The Tasman Peninsula community members have taken time to linger in their thoughts, prayers, and reasoning to gain energy and move forward. Children have the capacity to fill in emptiness with their laughter, songs and dance, whilst still empathising with those who are hurting around them. Holloway offered adults an adolescent’s story of the heartbreaking times, as he reflected upon those days and the days that followed, 10 years after the event. Carnival, in Bakhtin’s view, comes from within a community and allows those involved a celebration and sharing in their own world, apart from others. In his words, “Carnival laughter is festive, universal in scope, and ambivalent. It does not laugh from a position outside, but from within the body of humanity” (1941, p.12).

I am not suggesting that the people of the Tasman Peninsula are celebrating through carnival the occasion of a massacre, but rather I believe in the ambivalence of the festival. Bakhtin is most likely using the meaning of ambivalence that came from the 1924 German, meaning “simultaneous conflicting feelings” (Online Etymology Dictionary). Such conflict in feelings must be truly present in a community that has faced such devastating tragedy, and yet recognises the importance of restorative belief in its own future, and comes together across all ages to celebrate its hopes for the future. A symbiotic relationship might develop—the adults see a light shining through the eyes of the children, and the children seek a unity with adults offering trust and safety, comfort and support, that all is not bad and that there are adults in their lives who are not evil.



*Photograph 6.* Two young sisters at the Port Arthur Massacre Remembrance Cross (South, 2012)

As with community responses to the massacre tragedy, the people of the Tasman Peninsula community come together in solemn and celebratory occasions when they remember those lost at sea, through secular or mixed religious memorial services. The fragility of lives of those who are dependent on the seas' resources is marked each year with a Blessing of the Fleet and a Seafarers' Memorial Service. These offer a spiritual healing and sense of comfort within the community, imparting values of belonging, which create social and cultural sustainability. This latter tradition of a blessing from a local priest originated within the Catholic Mediterranean countries many centuries ago. Believers acknowledge that the ceremony ensures safety and hope for a bountiful season. Today the Blessing of the Fleet is celebrated in many coastal fishing towns around Australia.

The members of the study group hub, and other members of the close-knit Tasman Peninsula community were deeply affected by a fishing tragedy that happened during the time of my research. One student I worked closely with, Charles, was especially close to the fishermen, and the school provided him with counselling over a number of sessions. There are no psychologists in the Tasman district, but trained teacher-counsellors at the school were guided by techniques developed through the Port Arthur Massacre. Due to confidentiality issues I am not

allowed to disclose the nature of the counselling, and indeed I was not privy to that, nor expected to be. However Charles willingly shared some comments with me. I have used the pseudonym 'Peter' for one of the fishermen in Charles' description.

There were 2 tidal waves that hit the back of the boat and tipped the boat over. All the men were in the water. They tried to survive but three died of hypothermia. No one could have stopped that wave! I feel sad not having Peter to torment. I used to play tricks on him. Peter joked with me lots.

Other students in the study group were also emotionally affected by this local tragedy. On our excursion to White Beach on a bus we passed the local cemetery, where the bodies were still covered under mounds of dirt, close to the road, waiting for the memorial tombs to be constructed. I heard several discussions between students; some questioning why the burial sites were still exposed, others reminiscing on the incident and how much time had passed. Unfortunately drowning is common in fishing villages throughout the world and impacts on members of all ages within a community.

## INTERLUDE

Some went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters  
They saw the works of the Lord, his wonderful deeds in the deep.  
For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves.  
They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril  
their courage melted away.  
They reeled and staggered like drunkards; they were at their wits' end.  
Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out of  
their distress.  
He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.  
They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven.  
Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds  
for mankind.  
Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council  
of the elders.

Psalm 107:23-32 The Bible, New International Version



*Photograph 7.* Memorial for fishermen at Parsons Bay, Nubeena (Carroll, 2014)

In ceremony, the Tasman Peninsula community flies the Aboriginal flag to honour the first peoples of the land and sea, and the local children hoist and lower both the Aboriginal and Australian flags to mark the beginning and ending of each school day. Like many schools across Australia, celebrations are held during NAIDOC week (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committees week), where Aboriginal students engage in their own cultural activities with elders, but also bring the rest of the school together for celebration of the original inhabitants of the land. Today there is controversy throughout Australia about celebrations that mark the arrival of white man on our shores in 1787. Many Aboriginals have taken to calling it Invasion Day and suggest there should be another day to celebrate multicultural Australian life. Within the Tasman Peninsula community, Australia Day is marked with long held white man traditions, such as recreational events and award ceremonies for citizens of the year, that have not been challenged by the local Aboriginal residents. Such are the complexities and narratives that help me weave the threads that represent the textures of the community.

The ancient peoples who inhabited this land drew sustenance from its abundant resources as they roamed the land, according to the seasons. They told their stories through time, giving us an oral history and art, and their descendants remain proud in the community today. Early European adventurers sailed into our bays and documented their findings—the Dutch, the French and the English. No other place on earth holds the same stories of a convict past and from those beginnings a new community evolved where convict descendants built upon the resources of the land to create an economy that is surviving and expanding on the Peninsula. Free settlers, with their pioneering spirits and entrepreneurial skills, entered the tapestry of life on the Peninsula. There have been others who have come to call the Tasman Peninsula home—the artisans, writers, professionals, alternate life-stylers, fishermen and tourist operators who have created the weft and warp through which a rich material fabric has unfolded. Yet these same people have witnessed violence from just one man, the weight of which was not previously known in the modern world. Many lost so much from their lives, their wellbeing, their lifestyles, and their comfort and safety yet many have remained to renew life in their inherited world. As they start to build life anew, bushfires again ravage their homes and businesses, cut off their road to existence, and literally burn their community to the ground.

Against a background of beginnings and endings the Tasman Peninsula has drawn on human character and strength to create its cultural spirit. All these people have created the history of the Tasman Peninsula, and their stories deserve to be told.

As I have researched and written this thesis a flood of emotions have descended upon me. I have been excited and motivated by the life of the Tasman Peninsula community, built on the geological majesty and uniqueness of its coast and landforms that have sustained a human population for over 30,000 years. I have been intrigued how ancient man walked the land and lived on the natural resources. I have read fascinating narratives of early settlers who created an infrastructure of jetties, roads, buildings and boats, from the rock and timber that surrounded them. From this same rock and timber came the soil that produced the orchards and farms, and the boats that took the fishermen out to sea. Yet through these days of richness and vitality there has stirred such tragedy, violations and grief for such a small community that one cannot help be engulfed in sorrow and anxiousness.

Through times of hardships, trials and losses, the Tasman Peninsula community members bond to preserve the cultural and social significant events that might impact on its solidarity. Such unity suggests a sense of belonging and identity. I tread warily upon the soils of the Peninsula as I retell the stories of the past, and step from the side of the road into the community, searching for a place where I belong, a place of trust and identity to authentically become one with the people.

### **Propositional discussion about hardships, trials and losses**

In this chapter I have explored how belonging to a cohesive community might strengthen the internal forces that are binding and perhaps resilient to change. My first propositional statement (p.16) is that no matter how strong the external forces acting upon this community are, there is a Newtonian tension where the forces internally and externally are balanced, and the community will be stable into the foreseeable future. History does not support this proposition.

An entire race of people has disappeared. In accord with Proposition Three (p.17) such a catastrophic event suggests the community cannot exist in a recognisable form into the future. Certainly we have descendants of that original race within the community, but they do not live entirely in the ways and laws of the past. Their lives have significantly altered to live alongside and with white man.



This third proposition may have been applicable to the state and shape of the Tasman Peninsula community after the massacre. Destructive external forces may have overcome the community, as it took on a new ghostly appearance. Buildings, businesses and the school may have closed as people turned away from the possibility of recovery, and made new beginnings elsewhere. And yet, this was not to be. Major shifts within the community hubs gave new energy to the community. People re-evaluated, reviewed, reflected and rehabilitated their lives, and with support from within and without moved on to recreate a new Tasman Peninsula community. There is still a community at the end of the road, different today in many ways, from any other that has existed. This is the Tasman Peninsula community that rallies together in times of need, hardship and adverse circumstances. As external forces act upon the community it shifts the energy held within smaller community hubs, so that an altered Tasman Peninsula community emerges, one that will move forward to face new challenges, in accord with Proposition Two (p.16).

Three questions guide my inquiry into the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community. Each concerns the effects of external forces upon the sustainability of the community. Might the community counterbalance the forces acting upon it, by resisting all changes, and remaining a sustainable entity? Might the external forces, including those that are unforeseen, shift the equilibrium of the community and change the community in ways that we might only speculate upon? Might there occur such strong external forces, natural or man-made, known or unknown, to destroy the Tasman Peninsula community? In the next chapter I explore questions of identity and belonging shaping the fabric of the Tasman Peninsula community.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### BELONGING AND IDENTITY

In this thesis I explore the meanings of identity and belonging and ask, what does it mean to belong? And is there an identity that is associated with belonging to the Tasman Peninsula community? These questions raise issues of people's values and their place in the community. If there is a belonging, what is meant by not belonging? Who is the other? Who is that person who does not belong?

#### **Situating the Self**

As a researcher in the Tasman Peninsula community I proceed with caution into the space occupied by others, treading warily upon ancient earth, respecting traditional custodians, and offering present day citizens my open hands and heart as a gesture of sincerity. At this point in my thesis I consider the place of 'self' in narrative study. As I take a place on the side of the road I ask, who am I? What identifies me and gives substance and being to the personal pronoun 'I'? I reflect upon Tönnies' premise, *nosce te ipsum*, know yourself (1931).

I am the person, the existing being that has come into the world and will leave that world. Bakhtin contends that as a person, I will not know my own history, as I cannot witness my birth or my death, but my presence creates a history that someone might witness. I have a physical form, partly determined by genetics and environment, which will alter in many ways throughout life and can be scrutinised and described by others. Likewise I can add my own descriptors of that physical self. The reader of this work cannot describe the physical embodiment of me without visual cues.

Like Bakhtin, the writer George Mead also takes me back to that first presence I have in this world. Mead writes,

The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process. (1934, p.135)

My physical being is there as objective—no individual part of my body can operate alone, and yet the summation of parts are visibly operative in ways that may be interpreted as functional, intelligent and experiential. However, the self is the reflexive constituent of me. When I look into a mirror I see my physical self; when I look backwards through that mirror I see myself with the experience that has gone on before—the subjective. As Mead describes it, “It is the characteristic of the self as an object to itself that I want to bring out. This characteristic is represented in the word ‘self’, which is a reflexive, and indicates that which can be both subject and object” (1934, pp. 136-137).

In terms of my situated self I interpret this as catoptric—there is a mirror through which I see myself objectively and subjectively. Likewise those on the other side of the mirror have their own perceptions of themselves. If the mirrors were removed to become clear glass we would look at each other with our own reflexive consciousness. In a sense my interlocutors are there in the reflective glass offering their interpretations of where I am and where I am going. The side of the road is a space where I can be situated with the reflexive images of self and others.

My presence in the world offers me experiences, places, and contacts, through which narratives are written, either biographical or autobiographical. My spiritual self is formed from within the narratives, read by me from the moment of birth. My emotions and feelings are responses to challenges throughout my existence. I become a thinking and feeling subject influenced by familial, environmental and physical experiences. Metaphysically the ego is the embodiment of all these narratives, an enduring self.

In considering belonging and identity as key factors in this thesis, I consider my presence, my identity and my belonging from that place on the side of the road. First, I consider the physical and experiential narrative of ‘I’.

*I first came to the Peninsula as a 5-year-old, doing what many Tasmanian families do over the summer months. I was on a family camp, with parents, four older siblings and our British Bulldog. In those days, there were no concrete aprons around carefully marked campsites as are common today, and no power. Rather, the campsite consisted of canvas tents and annexes pitched on uneven ground. We had a crude open fireplace that served as our kitchen and we often shared our*

meals with other families. All this happened within the historic Port Arthur site. There were no areas 'out of bounds' within the site, except for The Isle of the Dead, the interment place for convicts, but even then some adventurous adults were known to kayak across, to wander amongst the tombstones. There were no camping fees or tollbooths, no guided tours or ghost tours, and as children we were allowed to roam throughout the site with very little restraint.

Contrary to convict times, these were the days when the Governor of Tasmania did not have a hold on the inhabitants of Port Arthur, as his compatriots Governors Colonel Sorell and Colonel Arthur had during the convict days, and neither did he have the security entourage of today. The Governor, Sir Charles Gairdner, did not come to the site to peruse the disciplinary sanctions in place to report back to the British Government, but instead he wandered as any other casual visitor amongst us, taking time out to greet the pet dog and engage in conversations within the cluttered family camping space. The governments up to that time had not recognised a need to preserve the crumbling historic site, by reparation to the sandstone buildings being weathered by salt and wind from the fierce Southern Ocean. Nor had they protected the natural history of the area, or established a National Park.

During the 1980s, as an undergraduate, I stayed many weekends in the derelict remains of the old Tasman House Hospital, at Koonya, which had been acquired by the University of Tasmania. This was the base for many field trips in Botany and Zoology, where under the guidance and expertise of professors and lecturers, young students were shown the intricate ecology of temperate forests, button grass plains, sand dunes and coastal bays, as well as Aboriginal middens and rock paintings. We were privileged to receive such knowledge through expert tutelage, as many Tasmanians were ignorant of the Tasman Peninsula's environment, flora and fauna. This situation

has been addressed today—interpretive officers from the National Parks and Wildlife of Tasmania and the Port Arthur Historic Site provide school holiday activities. There were plenty of ghost stories told in those days, not by those with any authority, rather fabricated in the imagination of university students whiling away the early hours of the morning in the mortuary of the old hospital.

As a young bride I spent some of my honeymoon on the Peninsula, as many Tasmanian and mainland Australians have done over the past 150 years. There is a strong attraction to the area for couples seeking beauty, peace and fine foods in traditional ‘pub’ accommodation. Today, these couples have a choice of tourist attractions to enjoy.

As a classroom teacher I have brought many city teenagers down to the Peninsula for a Grade Camp, where they experience both rudimentary bush camping, and backpacker accommodation. Whilst there was an underwritten agenda including leadership training, peer mentoring, team work, survival skills and problem solving, the students learnt much about the natural environments, the local history, the main industries past and present, including a working timber mill, which unfortunately has recently closed down, and the life of convicts, through a safe and supervised experience. For many of these students this was their first time on the Peninsula, and an educational experience to be remembered for life.

As a parent I have allowed my children to live the experience during their holidays, through basic camping, motel stays and much later as shack owners. This time has been valued by everyone, as together we have learnt about the history, visited the tourist attractions, fished the waters, spotted and played with the wildlife, and participated in many educational activities run by the National Parks and Wildlife Department.

During recent years the public has been able to access convict records and allow the current generations to trace their ancestry. The stigma of having a convict in the past genealogy has weakened. I discovered my convict heritage during this time, and for me it is something I am proud of.

I have known the Peninsula for most of my life. I have seen the Peninsula through the eyes of a child, a holidaymaker, a tourist, a honeymooner, a student, a teacher, a parent and a shack owner. I have discovered a “space on the side of the road”, my *vnenakbodimost*, a spiritual and emotional manifestation of self and ego, through which my being will be challenged, personally and by others, as I develop my inquiry. As researcher within the Tasman Peninsula community am I a stranger? My vulnerability discloses itself to me and perhaps to the Tasman Peninsula community if I ask the questions—in what ways does my identity reveal itself, and where do I find myself in that “space on the side of the road”?

The 20<sup>th</sup> century philosopher, Alfonso Lingis, supports an ethnographical approach to understanding the real life of communities, in that he believes a concrete approach to the world determines our thinking. In doing so Lingis opposes traditional philosophical scholarship where he perceives an obsession with the singular mind. He prefers to link the real world with thoughts, and is a proponent of stepping out into the real world, and engaging with the environment and the people. In processes that Lingis describes as “rummaging in the space outside of completed thoughts” he offers, “Connections between things are always partial; there is always something more to say, always room for more questions, and associations form that are themselves unforeseen events”(2007, p.112).

As members of a community, some people seek reassurance about what it means to belong to a group, and seek to understand the characteristics of what that belonging is. Just as some characteristics give community members authenticity in belonging, so others are the means for exclusion. If there is to be a shared and accepted understanding of belonging to the community, one might expect there also will be shared values.

## **The Space on the Side of the Road**

During my inquiry I use a technique employed by ethnographer Stewart (1996), in which she listens to and describes the talk of people in a community. At this point it is time to expand the ways in which I use “space on the side of the road” as the space in which I observe and participate in my inquiry. Stewart discusses “just talk” as a doorway to the literal and metaphorical stories of local people (1996, p.31). Her narrative space, the “space on the side of the road,” is a space that provides a gap in the mythological claim of America to capitalism, individualism, education and democracy (p.3). Stewart uses the “space on the side of the road” to access the fabric of a community—its density, structure and force.

It is in such a “space on the side of the road”, as Stewart describes it that I situate myself so as to understand my questions relating to identity and belonging within the Tasman Peninsula community. From this space I consider my voice as the first person singular, and my position to map the narratives through explicit personal interpretation of actions, plans, situations, events and time through discourse, as suggested by Lingis (2007, p. 40). This position allows me to connect with the community members through speech and listening. Lingis uses the first person singular and the position of ‘I’ in his writing to disconnect from others. He argues that this position can be used positively to present an unbiased or distant opinion or interpretation of situations. Lingis values the elements of language such as exclamations, exhalations, hesitations, and silences as important as the spoken word itself, and statements, questions, hypotheses and objections can steer the direction of the discourse (2007, p.25). Lingis also favours the use of narratives to map out sections of time, and enable the retrospective narrative to consider events leading up to, or culminating in a situation (p.26). I alert myself to nuances of language elements that I hear in the everyday stories of Tasman Peninsula people.

## **Trust**

Lingis emphasises the need for developing trust between all participants in the dialogue in which the researcher participates. A researcher has responsibility to generate trust in her respondents and hopefully in turn, respondents as members of their community learn to trust the researcher to bring authenticity to interpretive reports of interviews, narratives and discussions, without moral judgement,

prejudice or a betrayal of confidentiality. Lingis applauds this sharing and understanding of trust.

Once we determine to trust someone, there flows a current of strength and lightness and a distinctive freedom. We celebrate our trust in one another in our adventures, feasting, games of glamour, courage, and skill, and in epic, song, poetry, and thought. (2007, pp.78-79)

Tönnies also comments on the issues of confidence and mistrust. In trusting a person we search for,

...an individual whom we know will inspire in us a certain confidence, however slight; a stranger on the other hand, is likely to create in us a certain feeling, often quite strong, of mistrust. Only in a chosen few do we have such great and abiding confidence that we rely on their absolute sincerity, affection, and faithfulness toward ourselves and our nearest, and we feel we can build upon their devotion. (1963, p.240)

### **Residents—Temporary and Permanent**

In the guise of a shack owner and researcher I expose others, and myself as residents, permanent and temporary, visitors and locals, through our narratives of place and life, trust and vulnerability. Hopefully I can honour that “great and abiding confidence” (Tönnies, 1963, p.240) with others and together we mutually respect sincerity and affection, as we trust others. Tentatively, and respectfully, I describe some of the lives and lifestyles within some of the community hubs.

The divide between a local and a shack owner is an interesting one. The population of the Tasman Peninsula increases from 2,000 to around 9,000 during summer and at other peak periods. Shack owners form a unique hub of residents who return regularly to the Tasman Peninsula community. Many form strong relationships with their neighbouring shack owners. Often, these residents have known each other through many generations, as the shack has been passed from one to another. Within this community there are certain customs; for example, the children tend to herd and freely participate in childhood games and activities such as cycling, beach cricket, kayaking, rock climbing, paddling in rock pools and swimming, with an understanding that there is always an adult nearby. Large family groups gather on the beach to share recreational activities, such as boating, wave boarding, ski biscuits and beach games. In the early hours of the morning the fishers



within the community rise to check nets, lift cray pots and run a few lines. These fishermen are equipped with late model trailer cruisers around five metres in length, with twin outboard motor power and ample cabin room. In the late afternoon the fishers return to sea, this time usually with some children, to repeat the process of setting nets and pots. Under the tutelage of their seniors children as young as six learn the techniques and secrets that have been tried and tested by not only their parents, but by earlier generations, such as favourite fishing spots, preferences for bait and the names of fish. Teenage children are often keen to snorkel and collect abalone, scallops, mussels and oysters, and must be aware of licensing requirements and bag limits for recreational fishing. As evening comes, the families shower and dress, and quite often gather for shared meals around barbecues, where the catches of the day are prepared and compared. It is here that the narratives, the yarns, are told, embellished, and passed on through the generations.

The shacks are within commuting distance of Hobart and during daylight saving summer time there is some movement through the community, as workers might return to the city for a few nights, and then return. Shacks are humble abodes, with modern amenities; made of weatherboard, fibreboard, or galvanized sheeting. Generally they are located within proximity of a boat ramp. Although shacks often have water views and are prime real estate in land value, they are unlikely to be bought up by wealthy 'sea-changers' because of the loyalty and traditions of their owners. My shack is constructed from two 'pickers' huts, that previously housed seasonal fruit pickers, but have been relocated, remounted onto new footings and renovated to make one small shack, with two bedrooms and internal bathroom facilities. Teenage children are often happier sleeping outside in a tent pitched on the block. There are unwritten rules on water use, as the shacks depend on rainwater tanks.

There is little interaction with other communities outside the shack hub. Most shack owners bring their main food supplies from the city, but use the local supermarket for fresh daily needs and newspapers. A conversation with a local at the shops or pub is likely to be the only communication a shack owner will have outside the community or hub, although they may eavesdrop on any locals discussing fish runs or sightings. Often this will lead to a mateship relationship where the shack owner acknowledges the local as 'an expert' on certain matters, and will easily talk and share information. Over time the shack owners gain some

identity within the local town community and there is mutual understanding and respect between individuals. Although not big local consumers, the shack owners are property owners, and are therefore rate payers, and so contribute to the economy and the infrastructure of the Tasman municipality.

Another hub established within the Tasman Peninsula community is that of the 'shanty dwellers', a group of temporary dwellers who return each summer to occupy the same land. This hub is formed around a couple of basic dwellings located close to a public toilet block and an estuarine lagoon, with a direct sandy path to the beach. These visitors are mainly family and friends of the property owner and they set up a makeshift community with canvas tents, hessian curtains, common washing and cooking areas, an open fire when permits allow, and clotheslines draped between the tents.

Like the shack owners, camaraderie is fostered amongst the dwellers from one generation to the next. Often the boats owned by members of the shantytown dwellers are smaller and more portable than those of the shack owners. Mostly they are flat aluminum dinghies, known as 'tinnies', powered and steered by small outboard motors, or wooden dinghies rowed with oars. Kayaks are also used for fishing in the shallow waters of the sheltered bay. During daylight hours the fishers will drift a line over the side to the bay bottom and when dark descends the same boats can be used as punts to seek flounder with a light, as they scuttle under the shallow sands. The fisherman wades alongside the punt to spear the fish and a second person crews. The temporary shanty community only exists for a couple of weeks over summer, and during the Easter holiday period. This group does not interact significantly with the permanent residents, and it contributes very little to the overall economy of the Peninsula.

There are two caravan parks on the Peninsula, and both are quite different in clientele and operation. I consider them as two distinct community hubs. At Stewarts Bay a park caters for a range of holidaymakers, with powered and unpowered camping sites, backpacker hostel accommodation and established holiday units at the top end of the market. Campers and backpackers share bathroom and kitchen amenities, including large and sheltered barbecue areas. This caravan park attracts those seeking a true family camping experience of up to a week, and itinerant travellers looking for a few nights accommodation.

Although located near a sheltered bay, there is limited boat access. Those who do wish to fish go out onto the rocks in the early evenings and use rod and reel equipment. Young overseas travellers often meet locals around the barbeque areas and children mix socially around the park. Members of this hub are likely to inject money into the district, as they visit tourist attractions, eat at cafes and restaurants, and buy their supermarket, meat and greengrocer requirements at local businesses. Small private vendors also benefit from roadside sales of fresh fruit and vegetables.

In the second caravan park community at White Beach, there is a more familial atmosphere. Many of these occupants own on-site cabins or vans in which they stay at any time of the year, and for which they pay an annual site rental fee. In this hub there is a true identity of neighbours—families that will be there each time they visit. There are also on-site vans available for seasonal rental, giving people an opportunity to be part of the community for up to a couple of weeks. Then there are tourists travelling Tasmania in campervans, who often pull in for a night or two. Common meeting places for this hub are the site kiosk and the beach. Some regular visitors leave their large motorboats in a secure lock-up yard, and are seasonal, recreational fishers. These boats are often expensively equipped with safety and fishing equipment suitable for heading to the edge of the Continental Shelf to chase the large game fish. A common experience within this hub is to meet on the beach towards dusk, with picnic suppers and sea rods, and engage in a communal evening of fishing, conversation, meal sharing and a beach fire. Most of these anglers do not have any great expectations on their catch but cherish the companionship and enjoy the sunset. Children from this park have been known to become quite territorial and make a united front to any ‘foreigner’ from the shack community who tries to use the playground and basketball hoop. Members of this community shop locally, but do not usually spend money on tourist attractions or dining out. However those that are based there and participate in game fishing will spend much money on fuel requirements.

Within the Tasman district, there is a rapidly growing tourism industry based around top of the range bed and breakfast, or self-contained cottage establishments. Typically guests at these facilities spend money through dining out, cruises, the Port Arthur Historic Site and nearby Tasmanian Devil Park, and the small number of art galleries that are emerging. Although not likely to form any close community bonds, the tourists using such accommodation are often interstate and overseas visitors,

charmed by local hospitality and conversations, from comments I have read in guest books. Word-of-mouth is the best advertising for these accommodation places.

I have read and heard of examples of belonging and acceptance within the Tasman Peninsula community. Scott writes of one lady, Felicity, who returned to the Peninsula after living elsewhere.

She is the granddaughter of George Clarke, who established a farm near Nubeena in the 1880s and went on to become a stipendiary magistrate, coroner and warden of the municipality. She and her three sisters, all of whom have returned to the Peninsula after living elsewhere spent a great part of their girlhood on their grandparents' farm.

(2006, p. 87)

Felicity explained to Scott that she was regarded locally as, “a sort of hybrid because I spent a large percentage of my life away but most people knew me as a child so it puts me in a slightly privileged position” (2006, p.87).

The Tasman Peninsula is a community that has reason to be cautious and wary as its history is steeped in acts of cruelty, violence, violation and tragedy. From the beginning of European settlement through to the past decade there have been extraordinary breaches of respect and trust, with the Port Arthur Massacre of 1996 being an event of local and international dismay and sobriety. Through such trauma it is understandable that the community seeks trust from all those who enter. We rely on each other's goodwill when we offer and accept trust. A permanent resident is likely to have developed his ego, through spiritual and emotional challenges, from birth. If I am to belong within the Tasman Peninsula community I need to celebrate trust as I venture further from the “space on the side of the road”, knowing that I can retreat to that place where my spiritual and metaphysical self might transform through experiential occasions.

Professionals, such as teachers and police staff, are placed in an unusual position within the Tasman Peninsula community, as they are usually short-term residents, on limited time contracts. To be posted to the Tasman Peninsula is often considered a step towards a promotion in a larger, different community. The police force has only one employee on the Tasman Peninsula, ranked as a Constable, although there is out-of-town back up provided during busy periods. The incumbent Constable stays for about two years, before being posted, and often

promoted, elsewhere. Although teachers and police hold positions of authority that are respected by most, they may not feel fully accepted within the community and so they tend to organise their own social activities. There are very few sports clubs or service clubs available to join where transient professionals may socialise.

As I have moved around the community at the daily meeting places, such as the Post Office, the supermarket or the second-hand shop, I have heard conversations that support my sense that townfolk marginalise itinerants. For example, I heard the following conversation between two women at the opportunity shop,

Speaker 1: The Quiz Night up at the school was good.

Speaker 2: Oh, you went did you?

Speaker 1: Yeah, it was good fun. Didn't know much though. But all the teachers were there, and they all come from town, so they know a lot more.

Speaker 2: Yeah, they would.

I interpret conversations like this to mean that resident teachers are not local, and are more intellectual because they have 'town-based' education. This links to my observation that if a person leaves the community for further education, townfolk regard her as leaving her origins and sacrificing her local identity.

I incidentally add here an anecdote that in some ways typifies what it means to belong on the Peninsula, sometimes living with a lack of services and often being resourceful. In other ways it is a light-hearted gesture of a language element that is specific to the Tasman Peninsula, one that I had not heard before until I took a place on the side of the road. I read a question on a social media website set up for Tasman Peninsula residents, "does anyone know someone on the Ninch who fixes washing machines?" In this context the word "Ninch" is an abbreviation for Peninsula.

At the outset I hold what seems as a tentative belonging to the community, as property owner and frequent visitor, but not 'one of the locals,' if that means a person who lives within the community full-time, and who probably has generational roots firmly established there.

## *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*

Tönnies challenges me as I formulate this thesis. How do I know other people? According to Tönnies' basic reasoning, I will not belong to the community until I know the other people that comprise the *Gemeinschaft* or *Gesellschaft* of my inquiry. My position in the community will give way to a deeper understanding of where the Peninsula might fit within Tönnies sociological model. My initial thoughts are that the Tasman Peninsula community is certainly borne from a *Gemeinschaft* model.

Today the community still maintains a cultural base where the land and sea are worked for partial sustenance. Sometimes there are farmers' markets, where vendors offer their homegrown products, including fruit and vegetables, fish and craft. Roadside stalls sell fruit, mainly apples, pears, raspberries, strawberries, cherries and apricots, according to the season, by means of an 'honesty box'. Here the buyer is trusted to place the amount requested per item in a locked moneybox. Orchards sell their fruit directly to the public at their packing sheds. The local opportunity shop, is an established market for individuals to sell eggs, jams and preserves, cakes, fresh garden vegetables, herbs and flowers and garden cuttings on commission.

As well as being outlets for the sale of the community resources directly to the public, the markets and opportunity shop are centres for conversational exchange. People are connected through meeting and talking at these places and word-of-mouth informs residents of important community issues and plans, the health and wellbeing of fellow citizens, and upcoming significant events. These interactions are strongly linked to the *Gemeinschaft* community, and provide evidence to the interrelationships that Tönnies described as belonging to a real and organic rural life, where personal bonds are strong and there is a certain intimacy to daily existence.

I do not presume though that the Tasman Peninsula community is typically a *Gemeinschaft* community, where its members base sustenance solely upon hunting and gathering. I propose it is an emerging community—one that comes from a sustainable local economy, that is an economy that supports traditional industries, to a community influenced by metropolitan, national and global economies, typical of a *Gesellschaft* community model. As the Tasman Peninsula community moves into a *Gesellschaft* community it connects through technology to a wider world, and even those members of the local community who have not left and travelled globally are

part of an ever-widening community. Such advances communicate to the world the presence and uniqueness of a small community located in Tasmania. Tourists from around the world are discovering a new place to visit as individuals and to invest money in aquaculture, agriculture and forestry through large corporations.

A visit to Tasmania in November 2014 by the president of China, Mr. Xi Jinping, places the state on a global map, showcasing Tasmania's economic potential to the rest of the world. China is now Tasmania's largest trading partner, and a delegation of 275 Chinese business people visiting the state in 2014 to form economic partnerships further positions Tasmania on a road to a global community. As a gesture of promise and goodwill between Australia and China, President Jinping and his Australian counterpart, Prime Minister Tony Abbott, signed a free trade agreement between the countries, this means that for Australia there are tariff cuts for agricultural and horticultural industries exports.

Port Arthur is preparing itself for a growth in Chinese tourist numbers. In a year, ending June 2014, the number of Chinese visitors to the historic site was four times its previous numbers, reaching 16,000 people. Port Arthur marketing is promoting the place through a Chinese website giving information about the unique tourism possibilities. Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority (PAHSMA) is also recruiting Mandarin-speaking tour guides for the upcoming summer season.

Much has progressed and evolved since the 1890s when early Chinese migrants first developed an abalone industry on the Tasman Peninsula to supply tin miners working in other parts of Australia.

### **Propositional discussion about *Gemeinschaft und Gesselschaft***

Within my journeys through the Tasman Peninsula community are scenes and imaginations of a *Gemeinschaft* community, one in which the people work the lands and seas, and trade within themselves for produce. Such an imagined community possibly arises from my idealised concept of living within the Tasman Peninsula community, with its clean environment, *esprit de corps*, rich agricultural soils and clear, productive waters and simple lifestyles. However the reality is far different. I recognise that I am one of many who enter the community knowing that technology, global recognition and export trade are as much a part of dynamic bonds of interconnection between hubs as roadside stalls of strawberries. Perhaps the hubs are growing in ever-increasing circles toward globalisation, that is, having

international influence. Energy generated from small interconnecting hubs of the Tasman Peninsula reverberates as a pebble thrown into a large pond. Newton imagined himself as “a boy playing on the seashore” (1855). Had he skipped stones Newton may have seen a much bigger circle of energy.

And yet there are fragments of an early *Gemeinschaft* community, in ways people talk, in ways people move and in ways people think. Perhaps the glimpses of early Aboriginal life are the only true sights of *Gemeinschaft* community life on the Tasman Peninsula. Surely the lifestyle today is a reflection of the technological advances brought with Europeans 200 years ago. I like to think, without sentiment, that the Tasman Peninsula community is in transition from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*, and that somehow the uniqueness of the small, isolated community will be sustained as a reminder of times before globalisation. I seek the cohesive and harmonious forces that bond the community together in a state, subject to changing external forces, wherever they sit within Tönnies’ model. Proposition Two (p.16) suggests that the community can withstand external forces through shifting dynamics. As changes occur in the structure of the community transitioning from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*, the inner hubs will absorb and accommodate the external forces, so that a sustainable community will endure.

Within the perceptions of the townsfolk lie great challenges for my inquiry. Do I need to belong to this community to conduct my inquiry? In what ways might I gain the trust of community members? In what ways might I convey to them my sincerity, affection and faithfulness? I confront these challenges as I venture farther into the community, commencing at Tasman District School in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER SIX

### THE SCHOOL

In this chapter my challenge is to explore the questions of belonging, trust and sincerity that I have raised. My beginnings in gaining an acceptance with community members and earning their trust might come from stepping out from my space on the edge of the road into Tasman District School. Through the school community I hope to be accepted as a committed and passionate teacher-as-researcher and perhaps this will lead to an opening of doors to a broader community.

#### **Teacher-as-Researcher**

Joe Kincheloe, in his book *Teachers as Researchers: Qualitative Inquiry as a Path to Empowerment* (2002), writes of teachers listening, watching, speaking, reading and otherwise engaging with students as imperative to teacher research. As a teacher-as-researcher, one can gain insights to individuals, classroom interactions and curriculum. Kincheloe professes,

This 'research on students' is a cardinal tenet of good teaching, as the teacher details his or her observations of the student as well as his or her reaction to the learner. These observations must be contextualized by an examination of the social context in which student *and teacher* consciousness are formed and education takes place. (2002, p.39)

I enter the classroom at Tasman District School with open eyes, perceptive ears and a clear voice, so that I might gain an understanding of the lives of students within and without the student hubs and the school community. As I engage with voices of the classroom I am not telling my story but rather representing the stories of those who share the platforms with me. Sometimes I may re-tell the stories directly, but at other times I may choose to omit background voices or parts of a whole conversation within the classroom. More often I acknowledge that a conversation has not been completed in my absence, that it possibly continues after I leave the classroom, or in other places such as the school grounds, or even the local fishing jetty. As I acknowledge incompleteness within the classroom, I only

hear snippets and catch glimpses of life in the wider Tasman Peninsula community. My representations of dialogue and action come to me as significant in a propositional thesis on future possibilities.

### **School Demographics**

Tasman District School caters for students from Kindergarten to Grade 10 of compulsory education, and offers some limited vocational studies for older students. The school is a central hub of the Tasman Peninsula, as it brings together adults and children from across the community. As mentioned, adults and children share common educational facilities through sharing grounds with the local branch of the State Library, as well as an online computer centre and a community radio station. Here is a hub, a learning community, which operates within the larger Tasman Peninsula community hub.

### **The Study Group**

I worked in a class of Grade 9 (14 to 15-year-old) students, with one teacher, Adam. I set out to engage the students in a project on the history and future of the fishing industry within the Tasman Peninsula waters. I chose this topic as it was one that I thought the students could relate to easily—it may be an indicator about what has happened in the past, how the students relate to fishing in their current lives and perhaps give some indication to the possibilities of the future place of fishing on the Tasman Peninsula, when these students would be making and depending upon economic, social, cultural and environmental decisions of today. My reasoning is based on the three propositional statements of this thesis (as outlined in Chapter One), and the evidence will be in my interpretation of the dynamics of hubs within the Tasman Peninsula community that are accessible by the student and teacher cohort.

Given the circumstances that these young people have grown up with, they would have had many reasons to be wary of a new teacher entering their classroom and so I was prepared to bide time as we became familiar with each other. The student cohort had known hardship, intrusion, and violence and violation, as well as courage, generosity, love and hope. Trust is something that needs to be earned, rather than assumed, and my first meeting with the class had the potential to make or break my future relationship with the students. My intention was to create and

sustain a safe place within the classroom as together we explored the history, the now, and the future of the Tasman Peninsula community. I decided that this was best achieved by giving something of myself to the students and establish my identity amongst them. As we became familiar I was able to study the parameters of belonging within the classroom, through observation and dialogue. I have taken care throughout my interactions within the classroom and with the students to preserve individual anonymity. I also gave written advice to parents and carers about my study, and the unit of work that the students were engaged in.

### **Negotiating the Study Plan**

When I met with the Principal of the school and Adam, the teacher, we discussed the possible beneficial outcomes of my research and teaching to the school and students. I offered a mutual collaborative teaching project, which I hoped would augment with some of their planned curriculum elements. Adam spoke of the unit fitting in well with the 'local issue' component of the Studies of Society and Environment Grade 9 curriculum. I explained that I am engaged concurrently in research where I will observe other elements that influence identity and belonging within the community.

Adam and I met again to discuss in depth the delivery of such a joint teaching program. I proposed a 'reflect and review' delivery of curriculum materials that we would both agree upon and would evolve through our mutual collaboration. Kincheloe proposes that, "A more textured reflection on one's teaching involves a teacher's self-understanding of his or her practices, especially the ambiguities, contradictions, and tensions implicit in them" (2002, p.39). Reflection in this sense means much more than revising the curriculum materials. The richness that comes to my research is from intense examination of events, tensions and outcomes from the classroom, both during and after a teaching session. Kincheloe (2002, p.25) justifies this approach as a research instrument where teachers become "active producers of meaning." He writes,

Unlike empirical instruments, humans can synthesize information, generate interpretations, and revise and make those interpretations more complex at the site the inquiry takes place. In the process, the human as research instrument can explore the unusual, the idiosyncratic situation, whereas the traditional empirical research instrument may have no use for the atypical situation because it does not fit

the categories delineated. Such idiosyncrasy may serve as the path to a new level of understanding of the effect of a curriculum on a student or a community. (2002, p.52)

My approach as teacher-as-researcher might enrich my understandings of the student within a wider community, in terms of the student's place, identity and contribution.

I discussed continuity with Adam, particularly how I could maintain the learning program by using a combination of direct face-to-face teaching, collaborative teaching practice and distance delivery. I proposed using an online webcam interface to keep in regular contact with members of the study group, but Adam was not convinced that this proposal would work; he was concerned that there could be problems with the technology available and he was not confident that he had the necessary skills to address any problems as they arose. I expressed my respect to Adam for his honesty on this matter. A resolution of delivery methods was a commitment from me to join the class every third week, for two weekly timetabled lessons. Adam advised me that the students were task-oriented and worked best when they had small, encapsulated activities that they could check their progress with on a tick sheet. Adam would support the negotiated project and concurrently offer other augmented curriculum material. Adam explained that these students needed very direct and explicit instructions. Whilst respecting his opinion I hoped to extend the students' thinking outside the familiar and 'safe' world that they knew, moving into other community hubs and facing their contributions to the future directions of the Tasman Peninsula community. We agreed that I should firstly attend a class taught by him so as to witness some of the dynamics of the class and be introduced into their small hub, the classroom. I was moving from the *menakbodimost*, the small safe space, into an unknown space where I shared a sense of vulnerability and caution with the students and classroom teacher.

### **Introductions**

Any introduction I offered to these uncertain students would involve risk-taking so I decided to offer some personal information. I told them about where I grew up on the northwest coast of Tasmania, a place that would be unfamiliar to many of these young people who do not travel far from their homes. I shared stories of living on land bordered by the beaches of Bass Strait and the Cam River, near dairy and

vegetable-growing farms. Though I felt privileged to have grown up in such an area I told them I thought the Tasman Peninsula a beautiful place. They were very fortunate to call this home. I told them that I owned property on the Tasman Peninsula, I was a 'shack-owner' and enjoyed being there from Hobart whenever possible. I was unable to be a full-time resident on the Peninsula because I had commitments and family in Hobart.

My next comments were to turn the language to dialogue and I asked the class about their own lands, especially the nature of the main industries on the Tasman Peninsula. They told their stories of abalone diving, fishing, scallop harvesting and tourism. From there, the students started asking me questions of my past teaching record, perhaps testing my authenticity. They wanted to know at which other schools I had taught. After this initial period of uncertainty from both the students and myself I suggested that we could work together on a fishing unit—the history of fishing on the Peninsula, including the fishing methods, equipment and catches over the years. I explained that I would like them to consider their place in the future within a fishing culture. Fay commented,

*The first fishermen were aborigine.*

Mike contributed,

*Yeah, and they used spears.*

### **First Observations**

As the study group attended to an ongoing written task that Adam had previously assigned I was able to move amongst the students, talking with them, allowing them to engage spontaneously in conversation, and acquaint me with some of their interests. Many of the conversations were started with a question, possibly probing my authority and wondering whether a relationship between us might happen. They asked questions and offered some comments, such as,

*Are you going to take us fishing?*

*I go fishing every Saturday, tuna fishing.*

*I go fishing a lot with Dad, but I never catch anything.*

*I am a local fisherman myself you know.*

This informal time enabled me to observe some of the behaviour of the class and individuals, which I later discussed with Adam. Betty and Frances had started on the writing task and were trying to write an introduction. Colin wandered around the room and did not settle to the task at all. Together, Mitch and Gwenda worked very hard, and seemed to have a good understanding of the topic. Mary worked diligently, whilst Freda, Faye and Clare engaged in a game of false names, to challenge me. Clare then moved to the front of the classroom and commenced work. Freda claimed she didn't understand the task, at which stage I offered to assist her, but she refused help. A group of three students, Brian, Mark and Hamish, clustered together and progressed well, despite a lot of chatter. During this time Adam set Charles the task of collating and stapling 16 sets of three photocopied sheets for later in the lesson. Charles struggled ordering the sheets top to bottom, and spread the papers in no apparent order across the classroom floor.

It was important for me to note that after 20 minutes, Adam spoke directly to the class, asking the students to forward all the books, and he told the class on which day they would work on the task again, also giving a date when the assignment was due to be completed. On reflection I realised that Adam had given explicit and direct instructions and he packaged the task into a small, manageable time period, consistent with our previous discussion. I was beginning to appreciate how Adam was leading the students' learning according to the particular needs of each student.

### **Debriefing and Reflecting After the First Meeting**

Immediately after the class finished, Adam and I debriefed and discussed the levels of students' engagement. Adam shared some background information on individual students. Charles had an intellectual disability with literacy skills somewhere near a Grade 1, 6-year-old, student. He had been at the school since Kindergarten and was well supported with teacher aides in some of his classes. Adam thought that Charles could be a victim of ridicule and bullying—even by his own doing he could set himself up. He was much more settled this year than in previous years, both in the classroom and outside. Though Mary is very bright, she has high-functioning Asperger's Syndrome. She would focus strongly on any issue that particularly appealed to her, and did not often participate socially. Clare was also very intelligent. According to Adam she could bully and provoke female teachers. Adam advised me

not to take Clare on in any capacity! I had had a glimpse of this when Clare asked me how to spell 'vinyl'. When I spelt the word out for Clare she replied,

*Don't worry about it, I've moved on.*

Freda was not only disinterested in the topics offered on this day. She was totally disengaged from school, and had many family and social issues to deal with. Mitch was doing an online distance education course in Marine Studies, through a specialised educational unit established by the Department of Education.

Adam and I were establishing a solid framework for working with mutual collaboration, trust and respect. Whilst trusting Adam, I knew I must form my own opinions and directions with the students. After my time and experience with the class I might have taken one of two views—agree with and endorse his comments, or argue that some were inaccurate or biased.

I pause here to recall that the nature of interpretative study means that my comments are likewise subject to scrutiny and judgment by others.

As I reflected upon this first meeting with the students and Adam, I realised the power of language in establishing relationships that lead to open dialogue. Through language, the students place me in the context of their known domains—challenge me on motives and intentions, and establishing my authenticity within their hub. Likewise, I use language as a tool to develop an understanding of the class group. I risk breaching some of my privacy when I offer up personal information but my intention is to create a common domain of interest and culture.

Another tool that I employ in establishing relationships and place between the students and myself is body language. As I walk casually amongst the students when listening to and observing their work, I seek to place myself amongst them in order to participate in their conversations and question and answer repartee. I move to the front of the classroom when I want to take a more directive role that requires instructions and didactic intercourse.

As diversity exists in any community, it exists too within a classroom, whether it embraces gender, race, socio-economic positions or life experiences. One could argue that these diverse groups within a single classroom are in themselves community hubs. Amongst such diversity is there a sense of belonging? Unless there is an understanding of shared common values, such as empathy, patience,

respect and honesty amongst the students and in the teacher-student relationships, then it is easy for any one of the students, and indeed the teacher or teacher-as-researcher, to be alienated and unaccepted. It is likely that in such an adverse classroom situation there is poor learning, inadequate teaching skills, teachers feel unable to cope with the classroom dynamics and students lose interest in subject matter and learning goals. A key to belonging within any community is to do with building mutual understanding.

As I investigate the nature of what might constitute an intersection between the school and the wider community in terms of values, purposes and visions for the future, from my situation beside the road, I search for the direction that road might take for the young members of the Tasman Peninsula community, and I consider the three propositional statements that guide my inquiry.

Adam spoke of the class, the study group or class hub, with honesty and an obvious belonging with them. With me, he recognised the hub as being part of the small community in which he lives and works, and acknowledged belonging as a citizen of the Tasman Peninsula community both inside and outside the school.

I asked Adam about his emphasis on ‘empathy’, and asked whether he was stressing the importance of empathy as part of his intention to introduce conversations about values into the curriculum. Adam said that he believed the students had very little understanding of empathy, and he went so far as to suggest that this was something commonly lacking in Peninsula life. It seemed to me that Adam was deliberately attempting to speak about the issues of belonging and sharing that were concerning me.

### **Marine Debris**

In a further lesson I showed the students a video, which highlighted the problem of marine debris, caused by fishermen and sailors disposing of rubbish at sea. As an introduction to the video I told the students that the video had been produced in Tasmania, and its location was set offshore from our island’s southwest coast. I asked the students to reflect on how this problem affected them. In response to the film there were the following comments,

*Imagine diving in that.*



I live at Saltwater River, and there's no way our beaches are polluted.

Yeah, Eaglehawk Neck is nothing like that.

What do they expect we do, go over to America and clean up their beaches?

The students had not realised that the pollution that exists only about 100 kilometres away had any affect on their own environment, and that they were certainly not going to be held responsible for others' actions. One student dismissed the problem as possibly being local, considering that something so hugely wrong had to belong to America. I could see that some students had not yet fully engaged with the participative broader life of a community beyond their hometowns. There was one student who was particularly engaged in our topic and he commented,

It's the feral oysters that are the main problem here, you can't even walk along Parsons Bay down there, 'cause you'll cut your feet so much.

Parsons Bay is immediately opposite the school. Adam joined the discussion at this point and added that the feral oysters were also becoming a problem at nearby White Beach, a very popular swimming spot, and risked ruining the spot. Adam explained that the feral oyster, known as the Pacific Oyster, was such a problem that a working party had to clean the beach before the local regatta, and Scout groups around Tasmania have made wearing aquatic shoes compulsory at all their regattas. Unfortunately, the only efficient way to clear the beaches was to manually pick them off the beaches. Over recent years, he said, there had been a rapid growth of oyster farms in the area, and other parts of Tasmania. This foreign species had been very successfully colonising our beaches and was competing with the local Tasmanian species by spreading into their ecosystem. One very quiet lad in the class spoke out,

Well, Triabunna has a terrible problem when they dredge the scallops. You should see the rubbish that they bring up - old nets, ropes, broken pots, and then the buoys float up and they have to go back and get them. You should see all the rubbish that they pile up on the wharf up there, and then it all has to get carted away.

I've seen it all when I've been on my Dad's truck, carrying the scallops.

At my next meeting with the class I challenged the students to come up with a plan to check for marine debris in their own area. I used a familiar Recall, Insights and Question method that Adam practiced. As a Recall process I asked the following questions, with responses recorded.

What is meant by marine debris?

Their responses included,

Pollution in water and animals, marine rubbish, rubbish from boats, rubbish from people, rubbish and pollution in the water.

Where was the video we watched last session filmed?

The students struggled to recall, with no one getting the correct answer of the south west of Tasmania.

What were the main items of debris shown in the video we watched?

The students replied with the following items,

Rubbish, six pack rings, netting, fishing line, rope, plastic bags, buoys, household rubbish, blue tape used on bait boxes, food wrappers and drink bottles.

Next I sought the students' insights into the problem of marine debris.

What are the main causes of marine debris in Tasmania?

They responded knowingly with,

Storm water outlets, rubbish, fishing boats, commercial fishing, careless people, introduced species, rubbish from boats, and oil spills from boats.

I asked the students,

Do you think that marine debris could be a problem on the Peninsula?

Their responses varied. One said, 'not much', seven said 'Yes', one responded with,

Yes, in a short matter of time.

Another said,

*Yes, but it's not a huge issue - our beaches are fairly clean.*

The students' responses suggested to me that they could see marine debris as a real and tangible problem that may affect the future sustainability of the area.

At this point in our mutual exploration of the meaning of marine debris and its local affect on the beaches of the Tasman Peninsula I wanted the students to touch the sands, to see the ripples on the beach, to hear above the seagulls' call the splashes of water circling a net of seaweed, to smell the natural elements of death and decay, and to taste the salt in the air blowing around them. I hoped that the students would connect with nature in a way that saw them not regarding the beach as a playground in summer for swimming and leisure, but as a beautiful part of their natural environment, one where they could hold the grains of sands in their hands and experience the greatness of nature through their senses. If these young people are to be the stewards of the 21<sup>st</sup> century they should appreciate the verve of natural communities around them.

Richard Louv is an American journalist and non-fiction writer who considers family issues and our interactions with the environment. He speaks strongly about the deficits children can carry when they are not exposed to the outside world around them and retreat to the insides of homes and classrooms. In his book, *The Web of Life – Weaving the Values that Sustain Us* he writes,

Nature comes in many forms: a new calf steaming, a pet that lives and dies, a wood with beaten paths and stinging thistles. Whatever form nature takes, it offers children a world separate from parents and older than them – a kind of greater father and mother; it gives children a sense of their place in time. Unlike television, nature does not steal time from adults or children; it augments that time, makes the time fuller, richer. And for those children for whom family life is destructive, nature can offer healing.

Nature also serves as a blank slate upon which children may draw the fantasies supplied by the culture; nature nurtures creativity in children, in part by demanding visualization, the full sense of the senses.

We do not fully understand how much we wound children by our destruction of nature. The preservation of nature should be among our essential goals when we weave the web of life, not only for the protection of the least tern, but also for the mental health and creativity of the next generation. And this stewardship should be

focused, not only on mountains and deserts, but on the woods and fields at the end of the block. (Louv, 1996, p.136)

The children growing up in the isolated and remote area of the Tasman Peninsula are the 'future'; this is possibly a clichéd term that could be used to describe children in any community, of any generation. I use the term to focus on the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community and the importance of preserving the environment, economy, society and culture for future generations, in the hope that those generations will protect that which we leave behind. I share with the members of the study group, that from my "space on the side of the road" the students have a place in the Tasman Peninsula community that is marked in time by the surrounding environment and the affect that has on their economic, social and cultural future.

The Aboriginals did this very well with their children, through story, song and carnival. Today our children live in a complex world of multimedia, fast communications and small family groups. In such a society it is difficult to frame nature within the place in such simple, but rich stories, endowed upon the Aboriginal children. At Port Arthur, visitors come to research their heritage through convict records, or search through archival records of free settlers to find their past stories, that time and place which brings them to where they are today. We often lack the immediate narratives from our elders that give us a sense of time and place.

I entered Tasman District School with the hope that the students might be intrigued by some of the culture and social variables that constitute its community, through nature, their homeland, a place in time. I made plans with Adam to have the students step out of the classroom and into their environment, to experience their own place.

Before I met with the class again, Adam taught a lesson where he introduced the topic of the difference between environment and ecology. He gave the students an article to read about Port Phillip Bay in Victoria, a state of mainland Australia, which focused on how the Bay had been affected by human, industrial and agricultural impacts. He explained that the Bay is linked to the large metropolitan city of Melbourne and its outer suburbs, and has large volumes of sea traffic, including overseas cargo and cruise liners. The students identified factors that affected the environmental health of Port Phillip Bay, such as boating, sewage and

septic waste outlets, dog faeces, industrialisation, overdevelopment, scallop dredging and introduced species.

Adam set the class a writing task, based on the bay opposite the Tasman District School, one which each would walk past everyday. He wrote a statement and instructions on the board,

**Parsons Bay is a local ecosystem that is struggling due to environmental changes and uses.**

**List some of the uses and changes.**

**Write a brief description of the bay as you see it.**

This task was to be done using the students' known experiences of Parsons Bay, which is not water they would usually swim in, but some students often walk around its shoreline, fossick among the rocks, and fish there. Amongst the uses the students listed were,

*Fish farm, sewage dump, fishing boats, storm water.*

*Parsons Bay is a highway for travelling vessels. It always has boats on moorings there.*

*Parsons Bay is a working bay with fishing boats and fish farms working all day every day.*

When asked to write a brief description of Parsons Bay, the students recalled the same pollutants and destructive elements of the bigger metropolitan Port Phillip Bay in Victoria. Some of their responses were,

*Sewage is dumped there and it looks filthy. It smells and the sand is gooey, festy mud.*

*Mucky, dirty and polluted. The water is a foul green that is thick and it has an odour that isn't of fresh, clean seawater.*

*It is brown, muddy, disgusting water and it is polluted with our rubbish. It stinks.*

To me, it seemed the students were transposing what they had learned about the Port Phillip Bay environment to their familiar and real location, not yet able to

separate and distinguish elements of each. I thought that perhaps the students assumed that a bay with development and human interference would always be polluted and aesthetically undesirable.

Then on a day when Parsons Bay, opposite the school, was sparkling and clear in the winter sun, Adam walked to Parsons Bay with the students, where they had an amble around the foreshore and the main jetty. In the discussions at the foreshore with Adam the students agreed with each other that there was really very little pollution or environmental damage at all in Parsons Bay.

One of the popular beaches for swimming, boating and beach activities is White Beach, suitably named as its white sand glistens in the sun, and the water is an azure colour. Some of the students live there, but others rely on car transport to reach the beach. White Beach is approximately five kilometers from Nubeena, and although not a great distance for the walker, it is a narrow and windy subsidiary road from the Arthur Highway. I wanted the students to grasp the reality of marine debris in their local environment in a tangible and visual way. I was not interested so much in a quantitative measure of pollution, but set the students an open-ended task to devise a means of judging the amount of pollution on White Beach. So I asked them questions, which I wrote on the board,

How can we determine the extent of marine debris on the Peninsula? Can you come up with a plan to investigate the degree of marine debris?

The students divided into two groups to discuss my questions. Both groups used well-developed problem-solving and cooperative action to come up with their ideas. The students I refer to as Group One came up with the following investigative plan.

Draw a metre-by-metre grid on the beach.  
Find the average of an area squared.  
Collect and record how much rubbish is there.  
Compare it to other beaches.

The second, Group Two, approached the task quite differently with this plan.

Take a sample of water from different areas on the beach and get it tested to see what's in it.

Group Two were less explicit in their methodology and gave little information on what they would test, and their meaning of “water from different parts of the beach,” although I understood their intentions. I asked members of Group Two about their reason for having the water tested elsewhere and I suggested that it might be possible to test the water samples at school. This prompted a class discussion about water testing equipment that the school owned. The students mentioned a turbidity measuring tube the school owned for freshwater testing, and they also modified their plan to include filtering water samples from different shallow water areas of White Beach. Although I commended the students in Group Two for their approach to water monitoring, I explained that I wanted all the students to participate in an activity where they could be part of the environment and understand some of the real issues affecting the beach by a sensory investigation. Turning to the ideas of Group One, I suggested that we go to White Beach to conduct a waste audit using their methods. When I asked about their expectations, most students thought that the beach would be clean, and that there would not be any litter around because few people has been there during the holidays, as it had been so cold. We decided to make an excursion the following week and we agreed that the students needed to make further plans before that time.

There were 10 students present on the day of the excursion, six boys and four girls. The air temperature was around 3 degrees Celsius when we arrived at White Beach. From the bus and car park the beach looked bleak and wind-blown, but there were a couple of walkers, collecting rubbish as they went. The students expressed concern that there wouldn't be any rubbish left for them to pick up!

Adam and I asked the students to form two groups, and they divided themselves into boys and girls. I elected to supervise the boys and Adam went with the girls. The boys took some time to work out how to construct a quadrant and were distracted by rocks and the jetty. However, once settled, the boys all participated and collected debris from two one square metre quadrants they drew on the sand. Some of the boys complained of an obnoxious smell from decaying seaweed. I pointed out the presence of the New Zealand screw shell, an introduced species, and most of the boys made a point of collecting those, I suspect because they were clean, not smelly, and easy to pick up. They soon moved on to collect rope, line, plastic bags and wrappers from other parts of the beach, and found a tyre

embedded firmly in the sand at the low water mark, and a dead penguin. Adam's group had reached a point approximately 150 metres along the shoreline, and collected Pacific Oyster shells. Soon everyone on the beach was participating enthusiastically while a cold wind from the Southern Ocean was assailing us. We brought all the materials we collected with us to school to be examined and collated later.

On return to school we had a class discussion about the excursion. I wanted to hear the students' immediate responses to their morning at the beach, in terms of what they had noticed and smelt and how they perceived White Beach without being attracted to swimming and playing. I encouraged the students to touch the debris we had gathered, photograph the debris if they wished to, write a few lines about their findings or construct a poster about marine debris on local beaches for display around the school. My purpose was to allow the students to take ownership of their findings and to publish the findings in a way that might engage other members of the school and wider community. I hoped that by addressing the issue of marine debris in this manner, the students would be communicators of a local and tangible sustainability issue.

Some students talked amongst themselves about the dead penguin, which is something I have often seen on White Beach. There are little penguin borrows in the dunes and grasses there, and I expect there is a reason why some of the penguins don't make it back to their burrows at night, but I listened to the students' speculations with interest. Some students thought that the penguin was already dead when it washed in, perhaps because of natural causes, although some thought it could have been killed by predatory fish or may have been caught in a gill net. My main interest was hearing the students engaged in talk about an animal familiar to them, and how it forms part of the community the students live in, and the perils that might beset one of their favourite animals.

Some students chose to write about their experiences, and put their words on display posters around the school to alert other students and visitors to the problem of marine debris on their local beaches. Some examples of student writing are,

*Today we went to the beach and I saw sand and water rubbish and seaweed. I also noticed that the introduced pest (feral oysters)*



mainly hang round the rocks and points. But they are slowly expanding around the coast.

Rubbish tends to gather more around the rocks than on the actual beach.

The beach really smelt and had yucky seaweed.

There were lots of small lolly wrappers; there was a tyre and a potato sack that had obviously been there for a while. And a dead penguin. There were a few New Zealand screw shells and further up the beach were feral Pacific Oysters.

We went to the beach and saw New Zealand screw shells and rope.

The beach stunk like a butt; we also saw a dead penguin with its skin missing. There was a load of wrappers and a tyre and a sack.

Other students sorted the rubbish and placed it in plastic crates that they displayed outside in the school grounds over two days. The display invited members of the school community to see, touch and smell the marine debris. Some students interested in photography captured the debris in images that were put onto poster displays, alongside their descriptions. I have included some of the students' photographs and comments below:



*Photograph 8. Feral oysters*

Feral oysters collected from White Beach, probably from an oyster farm. Also bits of nylon rope.



*Photograph 9. Hessian bag*

We found a hessian sack buried in the sand. Perhaps it had been washed in by the tide, and had been dumped at sea, or it could have been left on the beach.



*Photograph 10. An old tyre*

We found a tyre lying on the sand at high tide mark. Why would anyone leave a tyre on the beach?

## **A Transformation in Interest and Understanding**

As I worked with the students to examine whether or not pollution existed in and around the local bays and beaches of the Tasman Peninsula, their known place, I witnessed a great transformation in the students' interest, engagement and understanding. When we first started the students showed little, if any, connection with the problem of marine debris. Initially, most students denied that pollution was even present on their beaches, with one student going as far as saying that the problem belonged to America, not Australia. The enormity of the problem seemed too much for some of the students to comprehend. However there were a couple of students who were able to contribute some anecdotal evidence that marine debris does exist within their area and the other class members accepted this as being authentic and reliable information. I saw how expert opinion of peers could influence the others to think differently about their first ideas.

When we asked the students to read the article about another bay that was quite remote to their community, I realised that the students were less likely to be engaged in environmental issues unfamiliar to them. Although some of the contributing factors to pollution in the bay of the article were present in Parsons Bay, they came to find in reality that the actual picture they saw at Parsons Bay did not match the text of the article.

Over time, the students gave more thought to the potential problems that may exist in their area, and were enthusiastic when I suggested we carry out a marine debris audit. On the day we scheduled the task the weather was foreboding, but after some initial reluctance to set out, all the students soon showed interest and became knowledgeable about the impact of marine debris on their beaches. After another week of deliberations, the students were becoming environmental activists! They were publishing information posters to inform the public, who were invited to view the work around the school. This activity meant that the students could identify a problem, consider its impact on the future sustainability of their environments, and assess its implications for commercial fishing and fish farming. Through their own explorations, their questioning and their practical tasks, and through the information sharing, conversations and real life experiences, it became possible for the students to take ownership of the issue. In many ways they were construing their own curriculum for learning, as they brought together shared

understandings and created a solid knowledge base, and engaged in pedagogy of place and relevance. To me this is an example of what Gadamer might mean by “fusion of horizons” (2013, p.317). A fusion of ideas within the classroom produced new knowledge. Pedagogical approaches similar to those Adam and I explored, implemented by other teachers, might assist in leading the Tasman Peninsula community into safeguarding a future for their own environment, and all that it sustains. It seems ultimately possible that the students will be at the vanguard of environmental awareness in a new community reformation that could contribute to the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community. These students might form the core of revolving hubs that shift when external forces are applied in the form of environmental dangers.

I spoke earlier in this chapter about the value in informing the students by narratives of their place, the Tasman Peninsula community. Although the students live on the Peninsula, their lives are not always entwined in that which is happening around them. The students belong to hubs within the wider community, but not all the hubs intersect, and many narratives remain untold. For these reasons I brought into the classroom some outside voices that came from unfamiliar hubs to those the students occupy.

### **Outside Voices Within the Classroom**

Having explored with the students some of the environmental aspects of sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community I wanted to bring outside voices into the classroom, coming from small business operators in the aquaculture industry. I chose presenters who are entrepreneurs in their industries and contribute to the economy and culture of the Tasman Peninsula community through the development of ‘niche markets’, a term that is used to describe specialised small industries. Those I invited to speak with the Grade 9 class are mussel farmers and an octopus by-product developer.

#### **The Mussel Farmers**

Steve and Yvonne are originally New Zealanders who came to the Tasman Peninsula to pursue their interest in mussel farming. Mussels are bivalve molluscs that grow naturally in the Tasman Peninsula waters, attached to rocks or, more recently, to man-made structures such as jetties. The large blue mussel has been a

food source for humans since Aboriginal times, and many locals who have grown up on the Tasman Peninsula still collect the shellfish from its natural habitats. Yvonne is a biochemist, and provides scientific input to the mussel farming industry and Steve is a technical expert. Both had experience in New Zealand operating a similar, but much larger, operation.

Steve and Yvonne explained how mussel farming worked, from seeding lines that are suspended in the water, through to harvesting the adult mussels and processing them, so that the customer receives fresh and clean mussels at the dining table. They explained that mussel farming was a pioneering industry in Tasmania, although they had both been involved in it in New Zealand for 15 years and had developed their techniques to ensure the maximum output. I observed an attentive and interested class group who asked sensible and pertinent questions, with a particular concern for environmental issues. These students, who only weeks before were somewhat naïve about the environment, became ambassadors and spokespersons for their surroundings and lifestyles.

### **Octopus Farming**

Our next visitor to the classroom brought different perspectives on community living and sustainability. Rose was a third generation Tasman Peninsula fisherman, aged in her mid-60s. Rose could be described as a refined lady—one who has lived in mainland Australian cities working in the fashion industry and has appeared on a magazine front page. I introduced Rose to the students as being a ‘living library’ as she has a wealth of local knowledge, especially in the fishing industry. Rose told her story of octopus gathering and processing to the Grade 9 students.

As a young child Rose would go into the shallow bay near her home at night, or very early morning, with her father, to collect giant octopus that her father used for bait in his commercial fishing business. The bay is long and very shallow, only ankle depth for a long way out. It is not a popular recreational beach, as there is no swimming or boating depth. Over the years Rose and her father, and possibly generations before them, had observed the strange phenomenon of octopus self-ethanising most nights in the bay. Rose had a theory that there might be a genetic coding in the octopus that compelled them return to these familiar waters. Once there was a creek joining two large bodies of water, and the octopus were able to cross from the shallow waters to the open sea. Over years this creek had sanded

over so that there became an island outcrop surrounded by the shallow bay, where the octopus were trapped. There was no substantial evidence to support Rose's theory, but to her it was a peculiar event.

During her time living in the big cities, Rose made what was to have been a brief return to Tasmania, but had a life changing moment when she decided that she really wanted to follow her father's footsteps in commercial fishing. Returning to Eaglehawk Neck to live once again in her family home, Rose relived those times of octopus gathering, and was inspired to turn this adventure into a marketing opportunity. She was aware of a number of Greek people living in the area, a possibly good market for fresh octopus, a traditional part of Greek cuisine. From small beginnings in 1979, Rose moved forward to supply octopus demands from diverse local and international markets at a rate that she found hard to maintain. Octopus gathering for Rose had started as a small niche market. It had developed into an export commodity. From observing octopus on the beach as a child, Rose has gone on to produce eight gourmet products.

Rose and her son moved into a broader and more competitive market, and processed the octopus by pickling, smoking and packaging into cryovac bags, which extended the life of the products. Their processing also included buying mussels from suppliers, including Steve and Yvonne, and preparing them in different flavours such as chilli, cracked pepper, garlic and balsamic vinegar. Rose brought along samples of all her products for the students to taste.

Rose told the students that she and her son work from their home, with occasional seasonal labourers. The octopus season depended on the warm waters, and usually ran from September through to April. Originally Rose wanted to pioneer the farming of octopus, but issues of trespassing and council approvals proved frustrating. Rose and her son made one labour-saving change from picking up the octopus in the sandy waters by wading, to using a small, shallow draft boat with lights to draw the octopus in. Rose and her son knew the best conditions for octopus gathering, directed mainly by the moonlight and the tides. Locals could observe them in their waders, using lights and hook sticks, in the early morning. These days Rose said, she bought octopus from cray fishermen, a by-catch in their pots, to process into value-added gourmet products in the quantity demanded by customers.

Rose continues to be frustrated by Council planning legislation, and her small home-based factory was two houses within a new village zoning plan, which excludes her from expanding. She is determined though not to take the business away from the Peninsula, and plans to move to nearby Dunalley to build a larger premise for the industry. She expects to employ more workers there in the expansion, and there would be benefits to other businesses, for example in the transport of products. Rose wants to hand over the business to her son, the fourth generation local fisherman, but she has reasons not to do so yet. Mainly, she is waiting for the licensing act to come in. She has been waiting for this for some years. Only a few licenses for octopus processing will become available. As a long-term applicant she is likely to gain one of those. She wants to secure the license to pass on. Rose told the students that she thought that the long-term future of the octopus industry would be in farming and this would continue in an experimental stage around the globe. As far as the wider question of the sustainability of the fishing industry on the Tasman Peninsula is concerned, Rose foresees it in processing rather than harvesting. By this, she said, she means turning the raw product into something else, as she is doing, thereby value-adding to the fish.

### **The Students' Growing Sense of Responsibility Towards Community Sustainability**

After each presenter, the students were given an opportunity to ask questions, and added their own comments and observations. Their responses were insightful. I saw that they were showing more maturity in understanding important issues of sustainability and their home environment.

One question the students had for Steve and Yvonne was about the possible by-catch of other species on the mussel harvesting lines. Steve explained that there is manual stripping of the lines at various points in the seeding and growth stages, which takes up to 12 months, whilst all living matter is returned to the sea. Not letting the matter rest at this point, the students asked about similar possibilities at the processing stage. Steve answered that they sometimes caught seahorses and small crayfish through the machine, but picked them off carefully. One student asked about the pollution that could come from motorboats, in terms of petrol products, if they were in the vicinity of mussel seeding ropes, concerned that they might contaminate the product with petrochemical taste and odour. In traditional

harvesting from rocks, the gatherer would know where the pristine waters were that could be reached by foot. The producers could not give a clear answer to this, other than that buoys in the sea marked the mussel farming areas, and the locals around Port Arthur knew where the seeding lines were. Steven and Yvonne admitted that a safety zone could not be policed all the time, and they relied on local information and communication.

Next, the students raised the possibility of the mussel population growing out of control and their shells becoming a beach hazard. The students had become well aware of the problem of feral oyster shells on their beaches. Yvonne could only suggest that mussels would not become pests like the Pacific Oyster, as the Blue Mussel species was native to Australia. The presenters did not address the issue of extra shells on the sandy beaches, nor did they specifically address what the students had implied in their questioning, that farming would result in a proliferation of mussels from over-seeding and redistribution in the waters in ways that in the long-term could produce an over abundance of empty shells on the beaches, and significantly affect a shift in the food chains relations.

The students asked other questions related to the social and cultural sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community. One student insightfully suggested that a younger generation might regard the mussel as an exotic species grown specifically for the table, available in the refrigerated section of local shops, and that a younger person would show no interest in learning or educating others in the traditional customs of gathering. Steve and Yvonne also answered a question about employment opportunities and confirmed that the industry was not a great employer for the Peninsula, as the owners mostly worked the mussel farming business and only employed one other permanent staff member. There could be some extra seasonal casual work. Curiously when the students asked them about the future of their industry, Steve and Yvonne did not contemplate a long-term investment in the full seeding to plate operation. Six large corporate harvesters already established around Tasmania were forcing them out of the market. Steve explained that their future would be in supplying seed to the corporate mussel farmers. I could see the curiosity in the faces of the students, as they were no doubt wondering how this industry could possibly provide any long-term benefits to the economic sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community. The Grade 9 study group demonstrated an understanding of how the environmental sustainability of



the Tasman Peninsula could be threatened by the mussel seeding industry in terms of by-catch, contaminated product from fuel and the possibility of marine debris from the shells.

Most of the students had been unaware of Rose's local and successful octopus business, and became very engaged in her presentation. The students were quite animated in their questioning and responding, intrigued as they were by the notion of gathering the very large, somewhat unsightly octopus that they regarded as mysterious blobs on the beach. Their questions were about the physical characteristics of the octopus such as, "Do they suck you up?" and "Do they change colours?" One student wanted to know about the sustainability of the species, especially if the giant octopus were dying off in large numbers and so regularly. Rose informed the students that every beach and bay around the Tasman Peninsula had been surveyed by experts and declared suitable for the life of the octopus. The rocky shores were the breeding grounds for the species. There were no indicators that the giant octopus was an endangered species. What was happening at Eaglehawk Neck seemed to naturally favour the lifecycle of the giant octopus. To a question about employment possibilities for the Peninsula community, Rose admitted that at present the industry was not a big employer, although labour intensive, but her future plans would see more employment opportunities open up. Rose was very encouraging to the students, suggesting that those interested in a future in aquaculture should look at studying certificate courses available at city colleges. I believe her story was to remain with some of the students as a snapshot of the uniqueness of the Tasman Peninsula, and its inherent qualities for a sustainable future.

### **The Students, Communicative Action, and Bakhtin**

Bakhtin looks for the "being" in conversations. He takes an objective stance on the communicative acts that represent the here and now of every day, whether they are speech, listening, intonations or participatory thinking. In the classroom the students listened intently to the words spoken by Steve, Yvonne and Rose. They interacted with their own speech acts and with intonations and phrases that were not rehearsed. Everything that passed between the students as communicants was sincere and in the present. Although there may have been some theory discussed, it

was not presented as a 'truth' to be held as non-debatable, but rather learned experience from the presenters.

When Steve and Yvonne spoke about their mussel farming and processing operations, they acknowledged their newness to the community. The students respected their knowledge and expertise in this area, and interacted accordingly. The students shared with Steve and Yvonne their concerns about the environmental problems and employment opportunities, and the presenters in turn listened to the students and their questions. The students talked about their own traditional method of catching mussels, by scouring rocks and jetties for a feed. Steve and Yvonne understood their stories and encouraged the students to respect and continue the tradition of their forefathers. When conversations turned to matters suggesting that it was in the interests of local boat owners not to enter small areas where the seeding ropes were, as petrol pollution might ultimately become an environmental and economic disaster, and that it was not in their interest to be ensnared by the ropes, the discussion was real and present.

When Rose spoke of her octopus retrieving and processing operations, the students were obviously enthralled by her story. Rose was a third generation Tasman fisherman, and together with her son she had developed a cottage industry into an export business. She was quietly spoken, with a genteel nature, and the juxtaposition of this lady with the 'octopus woman' in waders and overalls told its own story. Rose informed the students of her past history and how her life experiences had brought her to where she is today, living again in the very house where she grew up as a pioneer in a new value-added export life. Like most children, the students were fascinated and curious about the unknown. They had seen octopus in their waters, one student had caught one from a jetty. What engaged them most in our lessons were the questions and answers they came to articulate about the behaviour and antics of the species.

All the words, the gestures, the laughs and the acts of curiosity as they looked at mussel spat under a microscope and as they tasted pickled octopus were the communicative actions that were espoused by Bakhtin. The dialogue that occurred between the students and the presenters were in the present, and although the presenters brought expert knowledge and history to the conversations, they were

framed in the language that the students understood and related well to. Bakhtin would see these acts as language evolving in the present culture.

At the outset of this chapter I outlined my challenge to belong within the community and that this might come from gaining trust from within the Tasman School community. I entered a relationship with the school with sincerity, not seeking self-satisfaction in being accepted, but offering myself as a teacher-as-researcher to guide inquiries of belonging to a community that might sustain the present generation, and pave a way for future generations. My intention was not to impose my values about sustainability matters upon individual students. Rather I hoped to enable the students to view their world through different lenses. I had taken that step from the side of the road, into their classroom and backyards, and in doing so embraced some of their family stories and their personal triumphs and losses.

I return to the same classroom in Chapter Seven, as I explore shared values within hubs or held by individuals of the community. Might values be common bonds that draw people together, or might they distance others within the same community? If there is belonging, is there exclusion, and how are these defined? Will a community that excludes some people be viable as unforeseen external forces act upon the community's integrity and cohesiveness? As I advance the propositional statements of this thesis I look for the *ethos* that brings together the community, or conversely divides the community in times of stress. Community spirit could be interpreted as the cohesiveness that pulls the community members together to rebuild their lives when they are knocked down, and to help their neighbours in times of need. If that cohesiveness does not exist because of different values and exclusion then can the Tasman Peninsula community continue to exist?

## INTERLUDE

White Angelus by Margaret Scott      *To Paul Boam*

I came in out of the dark to the warm house,  
where soup purred on the stove and there – there – there  
windows opened through the wings, the bones of boats,  
abraded wood  
on shorelines, exultant skies, engulfing seas –  
the world as you must see it, looking back  
imbued with all your living, peopled by you  
the ‘I’ within the poem.

You have opened, delivered up the places where you walked  
stooping to gather feathers and button-grass,  
a sheaf of delicate bones, the core of something  
long dissolved in water.

You have painted your own face – a bronze Neptune  
with sea-salt white in your beard  
and the counterpart, the little tumbled figure  
more frail than the curled shell of ‘The Sea Exults’.  
Tracing your path I think I know the name  
of the long skeletal head and the savage beak  
that tears the gentle wren.

I know the cry of the struggler in the water  
And the ageless beat of the waves that ride him down.  
Yet names and cries are not what you have fashioned.  
Your grammar of paint, your wire and paper rhythms  
show how the colours of bone and splintered timber  
wind in the rope that reaches the drowning man,  
how the wren’s blue sleets on the hungry ocean

and glows in the sky where the great sea-eagle soars.

You have not said that something strikes a balance  
but have lived it, crafting the fragments of your days  
to a marriage of shapes and colours, textures, tones.

All these, defining light by the presence of darkness,  
unite in a gift, a welcome, a resolution.

The White Angelus speaks to me with familiarity and comfort. To hear the Angelus rung in the school yard at noon beckoning the children's prayers to honour the Incarnation of Jesus in their small bodies. To feel the warmth of a home embalmed in a serenity of food and shelter. To see the boats on the water outside shaking and shuddering on their moorings engulfed by sea and sky. To feel the sharpness of the button-grass plains crunching underfoot as I walk the land. And yet, who is that person? Who has been given the Grace to live thus? Who holds the gift that welcomes and resolves? Am I the 'I' within the poem?

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SHARED VALUES AND TRADITIONS

In this chapter I explore the values and traditions that might unite the Tasman Peninsula community, and those that might divide it. I look for cohesiveness between the bonds of the Tasman Peninsula community—those bonds that hold the interconnecting hubs together when external forces threaten to destruct the entity. Are those bonds strengthened by shared values and traditions? Do shared values and traditions form part of the interconnecting strands of community unity? Can the total unit of the Tasman Peninsula community exist if race, religion, culture, family structure, ability, or other imposed category delineates the internal composition of a hub and becomes the barrier to inclusion and exclusion? If cohesiveness does not exist because of different values and traditions, can the Tasman Peninsula community continue to exist?

I do not intend in this section to embark upon a theory of values or moral education within the classroom. My intentions are to reveal some of the social values that the students consider important within their understandings of right and wrong, fair and unfair, just and unjust pertaining to their belonging in the community. Much more could be written about the formation of social values within a pluralist democracy, but I am looking only at some of the values that might be passed from one generation to the next, or modified, even made redundant, in a community faced with challenges. I do not intend to enter the classroom with a curriculum agenda, but rather to let events unfold, so that I become part of the narrative that tells of social justice and expectation within the Tasman Peninsula community. This journey takes me through developing opinions about truth and validity, racism and multiculturalism, identity and belonging, rights and expectations, welfare and crime, family structures, social connectedness, and parochialism.

I foresee two possible, yet opposing scenarios in the dynamics of the Tasman Peninsula community. In the first there is a community that is firmly strengthened by shared values that are woven into the strands that form the internal interconnecting hubs. In such a model the entity is resilient to external forces. For

example, when a community shares the value of employment there might come a situation where a global financial crisis might threaten employment opportunity. The Port Arthur Historic Site provides many and varied opportunities for employment. A slump in financial viability threatens tourist numbers from overseas and the number of employees held at the site. Such a global financial crisis began in 2008, and the ramifications are still being felt in tourism numbers throughout Australia, with some rural areas finding it difficult to absorb the impacts. A fluctuating Australian dollar means that the tourism numbers may be difficult to predict. In 2015 comes somewhat of a recovery. There is now an interest by Asian, particularly Chinese tourists in all that Tasmania offers, bringing increasing numbers to the state. Consequently, there promises to be an increase in employment opportunities on the Tasman Peninsula.

In the case of employment, strands of the economy may be pulled or twisted, but compensatory movement within the internal hubs absorb the external forces and reshape a viable internal community. In such a scenario one might expect that following Proposition Two, the Tasman Peninsula community will remain largely intact. My earlier explanation of this proposition is that,

The Tasman Peninsula community remains in its balanced state until there is a shift required by the nature and strength of as yet unknown external forces. The fabric of the community starts to unravel and loses its texture until a new structure and core integrity emerges. (p.16)

A new, strengthened community will emerge, one where forces and dynamics resolve a new shape of the Tasman Peninsula community, one that is still viable and will move forward into the future.

In the second scenario, a community is divided by values that pit inner hubs against each other, if not in a visible struggle but in a quiet exclusionary process where not to belong is to remain on the outer of the interconnecting hubs, slowly to be eroded from the dynamics, or suddenly ejected from the community model. Such values might divide through cultural and social prejudices or irreconcilable differences. With such disparity, community hubs might repel each other and shift the balance within so that the entirety, the Tasman Peninsula community, might be vulnerable to external forces so strong that as in Proposition Three, the community,

as we know it, might no longer continue to exist. I recall this proposition for ease of readership.

Analogically, as the external and yet unknown forces on the community are increased, catastrophic eruptions might occur, and hubs fragment in chaos until the Tasman Peninsula community disintegrates. This tattered community suffers a state of collapse. Legacies of community stories might be all that remain to become historical threads for weaving a new community. (p.17)

An example in the history of the Tasman Peninsula community is the plight of the Tasmanian Aboriginals. Their Indigenous values and traditions did not stand up against those imposed by British settlers, and the community they created crumbled under external forces that included these differences. Some vestiges remain in the present Tasman Peninsula community with part-Aboriginal people who maintain their historical story lines.

With these propositional statements in mind, I search for values and traditions that both unite and disorder the threads of belonging within the Tasman Peninsula community. I explore whether there exists fusions of understanding where values and cultures of others are respected and tolerated, in ways that might create harmonious living, or whether there are driving forces of disparity that cannot permit such sharing and eventually destroy something of the community. I expect to find mutual understanding and acceptance of cultural and social differences through a unifying *esprit de corps*, the community spirit that seemingly permeates life within the Tasman Peninsula community. As I step from the side of the road I also expect to see differences in values and traditions amongst several hubs. Some of these differences include racial discrimination in terms of Aboriginality and other cultures, taunts and teasing within the classroom, rights, expectations or exclusions of those who live there, social connections, parochialism, attitudes to welfare payments and tolerance of crime. I step into places where I identify differences in values and traditions, and look for either a mirroring of attitudes between hubs, or irreconcilable differences.

In Chapter Three I wrote of Gadamer who speaks of a fusion of horizons, *horizontverschmelzung*, which is present when two parties meet to share information, and create new knowledge (Gadamer, 2013, p.317). The possibility of horizons merging in ways that Gadamer suggests can bring forth new dimensions of shared knowledge and understandings between participants in dialogue.



Thus, as community hubs revolve into one another's domains, there might be birth of new knowledge, as neighbours take responsibility for understanding each other, despite, race, creed, religion, and other cultural or social values, traditions or ethics. Is it possible that within *horizontverschmelzung* there can be belonging and not exclusion? Following this explication of my intention of this chapter, I return to the narrative that began in my telling of the teacher-as-researcher experience at Tasman District School. As the narrative continues, I pause to illustrate opposing and mirroring values and traditions I encounter within the wider Tasman Peninsula community.

As I sat with the study group, a small number of Grade 9 students and Adam, their teacher, I listened to voices that might give me some indication of the values and traditions that the participants embraced. I remained cautious not to impose my own values, and aware that any statements I made about the values of others might come from my interpretations of their judgments and interactions within the classroom.

I watched and listened to some interactions of other students with Charles, whom I have mentioned earlier. I interpreted some of the interactions of other students with Charles as taunts and teases. Charles had low literacy and numeracy abilities, but showed strong verbal skills. Charles brought his album into the classroom and proudly shared with me photographs of himself fishing, some of him in boats, and others where he was holding catches of crayfish. Charles referred to one of the photographs, as 'my boat'. This brought a chorus of comments, questions and challenges from some students in the class as to whether Charles actually owned a fishing boat. The attitude of some of the other students seemed not a genuine and possibly well-founded doubt about whether he could own a boat, but one in which Charles was being ridiculed. When Charles explained to his fellow classmates that he had helped crew an old fishing boat from Hobart to Nubeena, the other students backed off from making negative comments and instead engaged Charles in some technical dialogue about the owner, what the owner was doing with the boat and why he had the boat moored in Parsons Bay. My interpretations of this scenario were not based on values that uniquely belong to the students of the study group, but rather I regarded the teasing and taunts as something that commonly happens with children in many societies. Charles had the potential to be a marginalised individual within the student body, as he was intellectually a low

performer, and received extra assistance in the classroom from his early years. Of greater interest to me in this situational context is the way in which his peers challenged Charles, and how his responses placed him in another unexpected role as an expert in the tradition of fishing, a valued industry of the community.

### **Truth and Validity**

I respond to this exchange in conversations, in which Charles and his classmates are engaged in speaking and listening, Gadamer's *Ansprechen und Zuboren* (Figal, 2002, p.107), in terms of Habermas' discussion of truth and validity in communicative action (Habermas, 1998).

As I mentioned in Chapter Three, Habermas suggests that any speech process must be subjected to scrutiny if there is to be agreement between the speech participants. For Habermas, any discourse can be scrutinised for its validity—its truth, appropriateness, sincerity and comprehensiveness. When I listened to the repartee between classmates, I was reminded again of Habermas' words that a speaker "is entitled in the given circumstances to claim validity for his utterance – in short, when we know what makes it acceptable" (Habermas, 1998, p.232). As Charles spoke with me, the other students questioned his authenticity, but Charles was able to respond with honesty and validity. In turn, this gave him a sense of acceptance and belonging within the class, and also allowed him to assume the position of 'an expert' in his field.

I continue at this point with a discussion about Charles and how he has enriched my life as teacher-as-researcher within Tasman District School and the wider Tasman District. I contemplate personal skills, qualities and values that place Charles within my vision. Charles represents to me a link with the Aboriginal past, a marker of the young Tasman Peninsula youth of today and a guide for my propositional considerations of the wider Tasman Peninsula community.

Charles has great knowledge of the local fishing industry that he shares enthusiastically with his peers and adults. My dialogue with Charles is ongoing, not only through classroom interactions, but also through emails, greetings, casual conversations, storytelling and art. He carries the narratives of the past into the present and brings together his experiences to create new interpretations for future listening. I learn much from Charles about fishing methods, local fishing grounds

and species, and rules and regulations around fishing. I hear Charles speak of characters from the fishing industry and listen to their stories through him.

Although Charles' literacy skills are very low, his personal skills seem mature, and his place within and contribution to the Tasman Peninsula community are recognised and honoured. Charles has become the recipient of an Australia Day Young Citizen Award in recognition of his community service, including cleaning public toilets and weeding within the local council playgrounds, promoting local Aboriginal youth, participating in the State Emergency Service, assisting at the Tasman Online Centre, and other voluntary work.

Charles starts his dialogue with me by writing a short article about himself called *Cool Facts About Charles*. In his words,

Charles is as good at cooking as he is at fishing. He cooks every weekend.

Charles fishes all year round and when he has holidays he chooses a fishing holiday.

When he's not fishing he likes to eat Gran's bread and butter pudding.

Charles has a pet dog called Nick. He goes fishing with Charles some times but when Charles goes on a holiday Nick stays at home with Gran.

Charles has a new interest in powerboat racing. He is going to compete in the upcoming Tasman Regatta.

The way Charles writes bespeaks his quaint approach to literacy. Through reading a carefully composed script, I gain insight to Charles' identity and his belonging to the Tasman Peninsula community. Charles shares with me a story called *Charles' Fishing Story*, which we publish in a word document,

#### Charles' Fishing Story

I have been fishing for about 3 and 1/2 years.

I go out in the bay near Roaring Beach or Tasman Island or Wedge Island and at Frog Rock.

I go with [Craig and John].

We catch any kind of fish for bait. I go at 6.00am in the mornings or late afternoon, and most weekends.

I have lost one pot up on the rocks.

I use the fishing rod on the boat, and fish off the jetty.

This factual account not only tells Charles' story, but something of the Tasman Peninsula fishing culture as well. He not only speaks of his own experiences in recreational fishing, but also of his association with two well-known commercial fishermen who have taken him onboard on occasions. I have replaced the real names with pseudonyms in the brackets.

At the age of 16, Charles expressed a desire to be a fisherman, hoping to start as a deckhand and eventually gaining his own commercial licences. He saw his future in the Tasman community, following familiar traditions. He is proud of his Aboriginality and participates in traditional celebrations. At 17 Charles had left school and was still keen to take up fishing. He hoped to be employed by one of the local fishermen. At 18 Charles worked in several unskilled labour jobs—the Council roads section, at a quarry, in a bakery, gardening and cleaning public facilities. Unfortunately Charles lacks many skills for training in other occupations, meaning that he will most likely continue to be amongst the lowest paid in the Tasman Peninsula community. I expect Charles will remain a keen recreational fisherman and a depository for the local knowledge that forms the oral history of the Tasman community. As a well-known young person of the Peninsula community he is a 'character' in its living dialogue.

Unfortunately, Charles' lifetime dream of being a commercial fisherman, or even a deckhand on board may not come to fruition. Changes in fishing practices affect traditional customs and many are compelled to change their methods. The town jetty is very quiet these days, as many fishermen operate larger refrigerated boats under lease or contract, which are able to travel farther into east coast Australian waters, for up to two weeks. These fishermen unload their catches at mainland ports, maybe as far as over 1,000 kilometres north of Nubeena. The fishermen may still call Nubeena home, but it is a place to return to for rest after weeks at sea operating company boats, or when forced in by inclement weather that pounds Bass Strait and the Pacific Ocean. Under such conditions the large corporations would be hesitant in employing a young, untrained lad like Charles. Crew members on larger

boats require deckhand training and certification which would require Charles to leave Nubeena to attend a Technical College or the specialised Maritime College in Tasmania. Given the support and companionship that has been offered to Charles within the small Tasman Peninsula community he might struggle moving from his familiar surroundings.

We are two horizons merging—Charles with his expert local knowledge and understanding of the Tasman Peninsula community, and me as teacher-as-researcher, a willing participant in speaking and an active listener, the *ansprechen* and *zuhoren*. Had we not met each other I wonder how much understanding we might have lost. I come as an unknown person to Charles, wanting to hear his stories, and to encourage him through new, fresh situations and interests. We speak with openness to each other, after developing trust, our dialogue is framed around truth, and our interpretations are mutually understood and shared.

The last time I spoke with Charles his life had changed in ways I had not expected. He had his own business as a disc jockey and provided music and lighting to community events on the Tasman Peninsula at the school, football club and private events such as weddings and birthdays. In his words, “I have that much work atm iv got a job to keep up with it” [sic]. The abbreviation ‘atm’ is sometimes used in social media to represent, ‘at the moment’, and ‘iv’ is an abbreviation Charles has used for ‘I have’. Charles has brought a new dimension to the Tasman Peninsula community that previously lacked local entertainment suitable for all age groups. He has become an entrepreneur who bridges many community hubs. He has become a volunteer for the local fire brigade. In an email to me Charles wrote,

Hi im still live down at nubeena since iv left school iv started my bussniss and im with the tasmania fire servies, tasmania state emergence service. When the bush Fire was on i had to drive around check all the houses out where the fire was [sic].

(August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

It seems that Charles, whose sense of belonging to the community as a child has strengthened as he has grown into adulthood, is making a worthy contribution to the whole community. He provides a new entertainment experience that stimulates commerce and he demonstrates care for his place through dedicated voluntary service. Charles displays a sense of belonging, respect and tradition, and he is

entrepreneurial and caring. If his endeavours are what the community needs and wishes, and responds to, and if they serve as role models for other young community members, they might well enhance cultural, social and economic sustainability to the Tasman Peninsula community. This might be the kind of internal values of individuals that give strength to the community in times of external pressures.

### **Racism**

When I returned to the classroom on another occasion I heard a direct, confronting and seemingly racial challenge come from others within the study group towards a fellow student. Freda mentioned her Aboriginality, and was challenged to her claim by one of the other students, “How come you are blonde then?” Reflecting on Habermas, that a speech act with sincerity has claims against the validity to truth, truthfulness and rightfulness (Finlayson, 2005, p.35), I could imagine that Freda could challenge the authenticity of the question. For instance, was she being scrutinised for her claim with truth and rightfulness in sincerity? This is a difficult question for the outsider, the one who does not belong to the dialogue. I could sense that Freda was asked to prove the authenticity of her claim to Aboriginality by answering a question deemed relevant by one of the other students. Freda chose to ignore the comment. I do not know why she chose this option—perhaps from past experience of racial taunts, perhaps because Freda could not be bothered continuing the discussion in those circumstances, perhaps she saw no relevance to her hair colour, or perhaps the question was asked with no bias attached at all to her mixed Aboriginal heritage. Although the question may have been without discriminatory intent, my recollection of the situation in which it was asked of Freda does raise a wider consideration of racial prejudice and values surrounding mixed races and multiculturalism within the wider Tasman community. Evidence from Aboriginal writers suggests that type of comment, whether related to pale skin colour, fair or red hair, and facial features seem common throughout Australian society.

Here I share the story of Aboriginal writer, artist, education consultant and former academic, Heiss to portray the cultural context in which the kind of question of Freda inhabits. One question raises so many difficult responses when it comes to differences in heritage, race and ethnicity. I include Heiss’ adversary to bring into

relief the endemic nature of racism in Australia and to tell something of that story as it happens in the Tasman Peninsula.

Heiss, writes in her autobiography *Am I Black Enough For You*, (2012), of her experiences of being an Aboriginal, born in *Gadigal* country, which some of us know as Sydney, as a *Wiradjuri* woman. *Wiradjuri* refers to the country area of central New South Wales where her people came from (pp.1-3). Heiss' identity as a person includes being an Aboriginal woman, or 'Blackfella' (Heiss, 2012, p.1), with an Aboriginal mother and an Austrian father, raised as a Roman Catholic, now an occasional church attendee, with spiritual connections to her own special places of land. Heiss writes,

I am always conscious that there weren't any 'Aborigines' in Australia before invasion. There were just *people* who were identified and known by their relationships to each other through familial connections, through connections to country and through language groups. 'Aborigines' were created when the colonisers used a Latin term meaning 'original habitants' to describe the peoples whose land they were stealing. More commonly used today is the term 'Indigenous', another Latin term meaning 'native to'. (2012, pp.3-4)

Heiss goes on to explain that she does use the terms 'Aboriginal' and 'Indigenous' in her writings as they have become standard words to describe the original landowners. Heiss writes of confrontations over Aboriginality throughout her life. As a 5-year-old attending school, Heiss heard for the first time a word she recognised as bad, that being *Abo*, in the context, "You're a good counter for an Abo" (Heiss, 2012, p. 85). Other words were slung at Heiss throughout her early school life, such as Coco Pop, Chocolate Drop, *Boong*, and *Coon* (p.88). Heiss knew herself only as a girl, the daughter of parents who loved her dearly and came from different ethnic backgrounds. But much was to change for Heiss as an adult when her Aboriginality became the focus of her writing and advocacy, as a reaction to the creation by 'whitefella' of a 'politicised Aborigine' (p.90). In 2009, Heiss became the name behind a widely distributed news article written by Andrew Bolt, a well known writer for main Australian publications such as the *Herald and Weekly* newspaper, syndicated through many News Limited publications in Australia, and online articles and blogs (Heiss, 2012, p.7). Bolt claimed Heiss and some of her friends had 'chosen' their Aboriginality for political reasons. Heiss quotes Bolt in these words,

Heiss' father was Austrian, and her mother only part-Aboriginal. What's more, she was raised in Sydney and educated at Saint Claire's [sic] Catholic College. She, too, could identify as a member of more than one race, if joining up to any at all was important.

As it happens, her decision to identify as Aboriginal, joining four other 'Austrian Aborigines' she knows, was lucky, given how it's helped her career. (Heiss, 2012, p. 8 quoting Bolt, 2009, in *Herald and Weekly Times newspaper*, under two headlines *It's so hip to be black*, and *White is the New Black*, April 2009)

Bolt's article went on to state,

Heiss not only took out the Scanlon Prize for Indigenous Poetry, but won plum jobs reserved for Aborigines at Koori Radio, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board and Macquarie University's Warawara Department of Indigenous Studies . . . this self-identification as Aboriginal strikes me as self-obsessed, and driven more by politics than any real racial reality. (Heiss, 2012, p.79)

Heiss became one of nine Aboriginal people to take up group actions against the *Herald and the Weekly Times*. On September 28, 2011, His Honour Justice Bromberg concluded the trial in the Federal Court of Australia by finding Bolt and the *Herald and Weekly Times* had engaged in "unlawful racial discrimination." Heiss (2012, p.330) quotes Judge Bromberg, "I am satisfied that fair-skinned Aboriginal people (or some of them) were reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to have been offended, insulted, humiliated or intimidated by the imputations conveyed by the newspaper articles."

It was in Tasmania that Heiss heard disturbing accounts of racial discrimination against school children. At one meeting with parents she was told that "children had to deal with locals telling them in one breath there were no Blacks in Tasmania, and in the next breath calling them 'lazy Black bastards'" (Heiss, 2012, p.181).

Heiss writes,

The identity issue for those across Bass Strait was more painfully severe than anything I had experienced in my urban environment on the mainland. They were even more invisible – at least back home I was acknowledged to exist, albeit in various imposed categories. (2012, p.181)

The question asked of Freda and Heiss' revelation encourage me to wonder whether discrimination based on Aboriginality within the wider Tasman Peninsula



community might have become a source of classroom bias. We are told that Tasmanian Aboriginals are gone, that they no longer exist within the Tasman Peninsula community. However, official statistics tell us otherwise. Within the Tasman Peninsula community, over twice the national percentage of the district is identified as being Indigenous, according to the latest 2011 ABS Census data. Aboriginality is recognised officially within Australia for those people who can prove genealogical links with original full caste heirs, whether or not there is mixed race breeding in later generations. Some Tasman Peninsula residents, including Freda and Charles, receive benefits for education and other living costs, in recognition of their displaced circumstances.

Though for many members of the Tasman Peninsula community Aboriginality is recognised and celebrated, I question whether there might remain some deep-rooted prejudice borne from suspicions and intolerances of past generations to the Aboriginal race still held by some present day Tasman Peninsula community people. Perhaps challenges within the classroom might echo past feelings and prejudices. Should it be necessary for Freda to offer evidence of her Indigenous authenticity? Should the genealogy of any student, or other community member, be subject to challenge or discrimination?

These kinds of questions lead me to other questions of this thesis. If bias based on diversity of race and culture carries through to future generations, and ethnicity and values change within, might the community continue to be socially sustainable?

As I return to my propositional statements about how the community might adapt to unknown external forces. I propose that, in a climate of shared meanings and understandings, differences in values and ethics amongst various community hubs could bring into balance changes that occur in the cultural, environmental, economic and societal elements of a transforming Tasman Peninsula community. Such compensations might be possible if the hubs look introspectively to their values and intents and be responsive, tolerant and flexible to possible changes. As community hubs respond to needs arising from external pressures, and shifting economic, environmental, social and cultural movement occurs within and without common interest hubs, it might be the regular and introspective examinations that sustain the community, without threat of major collapse, as Proposition Three (p.17) suggests.

## Multiculturalism and Identity

I consider multiculturalism within Australia generally, and relate these concepts to the Tasman Peninsula community. I ask whether the student study group constitutes a reflection of the general community's experiences that form perceptions of Australian identity.

In his book *Advance Australia ...Where?* (2007), social commentator Hugh Mackay writes his opinions of the future of Australia. Mackay argues that national identity within Australia is difficult to explain. In 2007, Mackay wrote,

Given that we are creating a society from the blending of people who have come here from nearly 200 different birthplaces around the world and that right now, 50 percent of us were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas, the question of national identity is bound to be somewhat elusive. We seem less sure of who we are, and where we belong in the world, than we were 15 years ago, but we know there are revolutionary changes taking place on both scores. (p.137)

Rather than the word used by Mackay, "revolutionary", I prefer the word 'evolutionary'. Whereas revolutionary suggests to me a political upheaval, I imagine society and culture developing and diversifying from its original roots as has happened on the Tasman Peninsula community with changes to population dynamics in evolutionary ways. An exception to this in 2015 might be the political challenges that are occurring with the arrival of 'boat people' through Indonesia into Australia's northern waters, many locked away in detention centres here or sent offshore to Nauru and Manus Island. Such political arguments belong to Habermas' systemworld (Finlayson, 2005, p. 53).

If we welcome new cultures and individuals from other nations to Australia, we might invite a belonging within our society, but with belonging does there also come exclusion? Mackay cites a new word in the Australian language, "unAustralian".

A new word has entered the language, apparently with the purpose of trying to stifle open debate about our culture, our values and our politics. The word is unAustralian and it has begun cropping up in the media, in the rhetoric of politicians and, unhappily, in backyard conversations around the nation. It is tempting to make light of it, but it may be a symptom of something dark. (Mackay, 2007, pp.141-142)

If we use the word ‘unAustralian’, we might imply exclusion for those not born Australian, or for those who do not embrace or understand established idiosyncrasies of culture, politics and values established at the time of Federation.

In cities and larger towns throughout Australia, multiculturalism has been the genesis of new cultural and social experiences, such as choices in cuisine, the arts and festivals, and the emergence of some religions previously not experienced nor understood. Schools in some areas have become culturally diverse and classrooms have students who have embraced different traditions and celebrations. In other areas of Australia this has not been the situation, although that might change with an increasing influx of overseas born residents moving out of the cities and into suburban and rural settings. The Tasman District statistical area ABS Census data of 2011 indicates that 82.5 percent of people were born in Australia, compared with a national average of 69.8 percent. Only 2.5 percent of households in the Tasman district were recorded as having two languages spoken at home, whereas the Australian average is 20.4 percent. The national average for residents declaring that they followed no religion was 22.3 percent, markedly lower than that for the Tasman Peninsula community that was recorded as 33.8 percent. This statistical data from the 2011 ABS Census suggests a low level of diversity in the cultural composition of the total Tasman Peninsula community, which might be reflected in the demographics of Tasman District School.

In some areas of Australia there is a tendency for people to pejoratively label those from other cultures, reject alternate beliefs and religions, sometimes with hostility, discriminate against migrants in the workplace, not recognise qualifications from other countries and avoid social contact with migrants. I am not suggesting that this is a trend in the Tasman Peninsula community, but I ask the question, if there is cultural discrimination present in the Tasman Peninsula community might it filter into the classrooms, carry on to another generation, and stigmatise new settlers into the community?

In Hobart, the capital city of Tasmania, multiculturalism has been accepted within some community groups, including schools, churches, neighbourhood houses, adult migrant education classes and workplaces. Over the past decade there has been an influx of refugees from African countries, particularly Ethiopia, The Congo, Sudan and Sierra Leone. Most of these people, of all age groups, have

settled well and have worked hard to learn the language and have studied to attain recognised qualifications for work and further education. We have now a second generation of Australian-Africans who will grow up immersed in both cultures. About 100 kilometres from Hobart, just some five years ago when I initiated my research on the Tasman Peninsula no African refugees had arrived there and the students had never experienced sharing classrooms and lifestyles with such culturally different people. As an outreach program organised by the Dunalley Neighbourhood House, a group of African mothers and their children were invited for a day trip to the Peninsula to share their traditional cultural experiences and cuisine with local young mothers and preschoolers, and to enjoy the beaches and lifestyle attractions of that part of the world. This undoubtedly went a long way towards an intercultural understanding between the mothers, and an opportunity for the children to play together.

Whilst support systems for new migrants are based in Hobart, which is not likely to change soon, the refugees will probably not consider moving to the Peninsula, but they might be encouraged for short stays. Perhaps the youth of today might lead the community into greater preparedness and acceptance of multiculturalism.

In the next section of this chapter I step back into a teaching situation at Tasman District School, where the students are immersed in tasks relating to individual statements of identity and values. The students in the study group relate to mateship, of being Australian, with pride in heroic acts, and consider the flag and the national Coat of Arms as symbols of nationalism. They do not mention different ethnic groups. Whether inexperience and isolation account for their egocentric conceptions of identity at this young age, or whether they are reflecting and echoing attitudes held by the wider community appears to be unclear.

I return briefly to some of the issues discussed in Chapter Five regarding identity and belonging, particularly the questions, What does it mean to belong? Is there an identity that is associated with belonging to the Tasman Peninsula community? If there is belonging, what is meant by not belonging? Who is the other, and who is that person who does not belong? Now I seek responses through the words, spoken and written, by the students.

To assist me with my inquiry about what the students were appreciating about identity and values during a time when I could not be present, Adam, the teacher,

gave the students a challenge in which he posed the question, What does it mean to be an Australian? He proposed a hypothetical scenario to the students in which Australia would cease to exist in two weeks. Adam imbued the stark scenario with information that the population of Australia was to be given an identical group of islands on another planet. The task for the students was to load a spaceship with all they needed to ensure that the Australian identity was maintained.

Absent from the classroom but from my “space on the side of the road”, I was wondering how Australia might be seen in the eyes of these adolescents. Later, from their notebooks, I read that the students had commented enthusiastically. The local pub figured quite often. On the Tasman Peninsula the adults’ social life often happens in the local pub, and under age patrons are welcomed to join the adults for a pub meal, adjacent and within sight of the noisy bar and gaming facilities. Some of the students might understandably see the pub as something not to be forsaken in a new setting, as it was listed as a component of their Australian identity. Though, perhaps like country youth all over the nation, some were attracted to a city lifestyle, expressing a desire for mansions and maids.

Typical of the fishing and hunting culture common on the Tasman Peninsula some of the study group thought a big, heavy duty utility vehicle, known colloquially as a “machine”, loaded with guns and knives, was essential, for living off the land. Some students reflected their environment and recreation, and surfboards, boats, camping gear and cricket equipment were to be taken along, as well as television and electronic games. One student thought the local historic site of Port Arthur was an important Australian asset. Others also considered other Australian icons, such as Luna Park, which is a fun park both in Melbourne and Sydney, Australia Zoo in Queensland, the Tamworth Country Music Festival of New South Wales and the Sydney Harbour Bridge as significant components of an Australian identity. There was a definite sense of Australian pride shown by some students with the Australian flag, ANZAC monuments, the Australian Coat of Arms, and famous Australian ‘legends’ included on the list. These legends included the bushranger Ned Kelly, racing car driver Peter Brock, country musician Slim Dusty and environmental activist Steve Irwin. Typically country Australian clothing of a slouch hat, worn by the Army since early days of independence in Australia and favoured also by farmers, as well as a flannelette shirt and RM Williams designed ‘bush fashion’ had a place in expressing the identity of the Tasman Peninsula teenagers. The national

food icon, meat pie with tomato sauce, also made the list. One student responded with the “Spirit Of Tasmania”, the only passenger boat linking Tasmania with mainland Australia. Another student alluded to the importance of friendship, or mateship as it is often referred to in Australia, by wanting to take his friend Geoff.

Teenagers from the far southeastern corner of Australia’s most southern state were offering responses that could be typical of any country person in Australia, who is patriotic, young or old. To me though, their responses came from the hearts of their known culture, society and environment of the Tasman Peninsula such as those things they needed for living off the land and recreation in their environment. I did observe that awareness of cultural diversity was missing from their lists of important identity attributes. There was no mention of religious icons or symbols of migrants or Aboriginal artefacts. This raised an exciting question, is it possible that the level of diversity in the Tasman Peninsula community could be heightened if its youth embrace multicultural newcomers and the plurality of resources this might offer for sustaining the community?

### **Rights and Expectations**

I returned to the classroom where Adam organised an activity with the students where they were encouraged to look introspectively to individual rights and expectations. Adam asked them to imagine that they were floating high above the world in a hot air balloon. He invited them to carry 10 rights with them—to be treated equally regardless of gender or race, to be treated with respect from younger people, to have access to an education, to experience equal opportunity in the workplace, to have the right to free speech, to be allowed independence from their family, to have a right to life, to live in a clean, green environment, to access social security provided by the government, and to be given the right to vote. As the balloon floats along, Adam said, a mountain appears in the distance.

The students were to choose to throw one of the rights out to make the balloon lighter, so the balloon would rise above the mountain. Once a right was discarded, it had gone forever. If a student chose to throw away a right the student was to explain why. The students’ responses were varied and I interpreted the reasons given as being valid opinions of the individuals. Only one student was not prepared to discard any right and risk crashing into the mountain. Two said that treating older people with respect was the least important right, and argued that to be treated with

respect applied to people of all ages. Another thought that by discarding free speech as a right people would speak more respectfully to each other.

Adam then turned the conception of discarding a right around. He asked the students to choose only four rights to keep if all the others had to be discarded. One student claimed that social security was important to prevent crime and poverty. For others, living in a clean, green environment was important to maintain the health and hygiene of the community. For those who chose to keep education, they cited the need to get a good job and income. Another wanted the right to have independence from her family so she could choose whom to marry—a choice of husband would benefit the direction of her life. Most students chose the right to vote as being very important to them. One said that voting is a very important legal requirement within Australia and that he would like to have a choice in who makes the laws he has to follow.

From within the classroom community values were articulating—a clean, green environment for the future, the continuing democracy of the country, the provision of government benefits that would assist quality of life, and education to be freely available so that everyone had the chance to learn.

### **Welfare and Crime**

I turn now to consider the broader hub of the Tasman Peninsula community as a source that might influence the students' conceptions of rights, those that could be hypothetically discarded when facing a mysterious pressure, and those precious to the students' lives on the Peninsula.

Social security benefits and eligibility are important for families living within the Tasman Peninsula community. The local unemployment rate of 7.6 percent is higher than the national unemployment rate of 5.6 percent, and the median single income of \$683 per week is nearly half that of the mean Australian average, according to the ABS 2011 Census data.

Some of the students relate the benefits of social security to decreased crime and poverty in the area. Perhaps as a reaction to past violations, crime is not tolerated in the Tasman community, and when there is a breach of law there is often a community outcry and a response that aims to restore the security and safety of the community. Although not a formalised or enforced consequence to behavior and

crime, often the community practices the principle of restorative justice. This is a mediation approach which facilitates a dialogue between the offenders and victims so that the perpetrator takes ownership of the misdemeanor, and those affected, as individuals, can rebuild trust and commitment to a safe, respectable learning environment.

An incident occurred on the day of one of the most popular, anticipated events on the Peninsula, January Regatta Day. This is a family day with events ranging from boat racing, cray pot hauling and crab racing. Traditionally the day has been followed by a party night for adults over the age of eighteen in the original apple storage sheds. In one event the local policeman was hit over the head with a beer bottle by a party reveller. The community response to this was to cancel future Regatta party nights and to introduce an evening family barbeque with entertainment, food and beverages provided by community service groups. The first of these events was well received by the community and has continued to be a highlight of the Tasman Peninsula summer festivities. The community had acted upon the crime, sought solutions from within, and altered their practices, so that the likelihood of unruly drunken behavior was minimised, and the families could celebrate their maritime heritage. Whilst no formal judicial demand was placed upon the organisers, the community had conferred in dialogue to find alternatives that would restore the acceptable trust and belonging within the Tasman Peninsula community. A community that has witnessed one of the most heinous of crimes in the massacre had acted on the small things to minimise the likelihood of the large.

The students are understandably cautious and reactive to crime in a community where it is not tolerated. In their comments about rights and expectations the students anticipate an increase in crime if social service benefits are not adequately available. There is another community opinion that correlates entitlement to Social Services for those who are living close to poverty and the commitment of crime. At a time when local council housing rates were soaring in Hobart and causing concern amongst non-Government housing agencies that higher rental rates would spread into outlying areas including the Tasman Peninsula, I heard from my position on the single road some local residents talking.

Speaker 3: See that they're bringing in that rate thing.



Speaker 4: You know what that means don't you. We'll have to start locking our cars and houses and things.

Reactions against crime in the Tasman Peninsula community are understandable but may be considered discriminatory. Excluding the poor, perhaps the homeless, who may be forced from the city, might result in some of the community hubs within the greater Tasman Peninsula community to react within, to maintain the balance of the community as it stands today. These reactions, compensatory movements and dynamics, are in accord with the first propositional statement of this thesis, that changes might be minor, but are there to retain the integrity of the known circumstances in which the Tasman community sits.

It might seem that in the contemporary world climate where fears rage about rising crime rates, to find a community that does not tolerate crime easily is unusual. This itself is perhaps a strong stake for social sustainability.

### **Family, Marriage and Social Connectedness**

In their responses to the hypothetical loss of certain rights and entitlements, the students in the Tasman District School study group expressed that their connections with family and each other were important. Some of the teenagers expressed their likely sadness if they were to lose their connections.

One student mentioned the importance of being able to choose her own marriage partner. I have not seen any evidence of arranged marriages within the Tasman Peninsula community, but a small population means limited opportunities for finding lifelong partners. I heard one conversation in which the possibility of a marriage was discussed. I offer this conversation whimsically, 'just talk', as dialogue that could happen in any small town community throughout the world, but might symbolise the marriage expectations of some from the Tasman Peninsula.

Speaker 5: (discussing daughter) No, she's got no one, she's too busy with her critters; she's got horses, dogs, cats. Spends all her day up on the property.

Speaker 6: Well, she'll end up marrying one day, an old farmer.

Speaker 5: I don't want her to marry an old farmer!

Speaker 6: Yes you do, they die off quickly, plenty of money.

Mackay speaks of the need for Australians to be socially connected,

Our anxiety is fuelled by many things, from global issues like the threat of international terrorism, the grim scenario of global warming and the vaguely menacing rise of militant Islam, to be more immediate, local issues like house prices, the burden of debt and the prospect of further interest-rate rises. Yet, being human, our deepest fear is of being cut off from the herd. Many of the changes to our way of life have had the effect of fragmenting and isolating us and, in response, there's a new craving for a sense of belonging. (Mackay, 2007, p.14)

Mackay argues that today's Australian teenagers have connection, and they use technology to augment it. But above all, it is the face-to-face clustering that teenagers yearn. He writes,

The members of this generation are not yearning for a sense of community – they already have it. They are connected. IT [Information Technology] doesn't replace their personal relationships; it augments them. Face to face – clustering – is where they want to be. (Mackay, 2007, p.291)

Mackay continues by stating that, “Connectedness is the key to our mental and emotional health” (Mackay, 2007, p.291).

In a community such as the Tasman Peninsula there are few opportunities for teenage clustering. These students cannot experience locally the connections where they dial in for a pizza delivery, meet at the cinema, or shop together for clothes. Even high speed broadband Internet connection does not exist, nor does it in many parts of Tasmania, and many homes on the Tasman Peninsula would have no Internet connection, and for many no mobile phone reception. The students of Tasman District School mostly catch buses to their outlying rural properties after school. During the school holidays they may meet at a farm, on the jetty or beach, or surf, horse ride or motorcycle together. Within the school there are small numbers within each age group and so friendship groups are not large and tend to be of mixed age groups. Families are a significant part of the life of a teenager on the Tasman Peninsula, as they are the constant, the connection that is usually there. Perhaps because of their social, cultural and geographical isolation, the teenagers consider that their connections with family and each other are so important.

Some teenagers in this community will move away to gain further qualifications and job opportunities. One boy, the same boy who spoke quite knowledgeably about marine debris from his father's work experience, mentioned that he was going to move to the Western Australian mines for work, which is about as far away in

Australia that a person from the Tasman Peninsula could move. And yet, by doing so, he is following in the way of many of Australia's youth as they try to break out of the unemployment and low wealth stranglehold, common to rural areas. These are teenagers who are prepared to "break away from the herd" (Mackay, 2007, p.14), with hope that they might find a new belonging in a community that suits their future hopes.

In my quest to establish whether or not there is a mirroring of values within the school and the wider community, I interviewed the then Mayor of the Tasman Council, Jan Barwick, by email. The questions and responses are written in full below, with bold font representing my voice.

**What do you think of teenage culture and the facilities provided for them?**

Unfortunately we no longer have our own football association, but there is soccer, badminton, basketball, cricket, tennis, a skate park (very well utilised), swimming pool and various other sports. The Council employs a Youth Officer and provides a Youth House, where they have regular gatherings and organised activities including school holiday programs. I am also personally very pleased that the Tasman Rural Youth Club has just recently re-started after a recess of over fifteen years. As a previous Rural Youth member, I know first hand that this organisation is fantastic for increasing your social network, skills, confidence, and making life long friends all over Tasmania. I personally believe that the young people in this area are well catered for; whether they choose to become involved and take part in these activities is a question I am not certain about.

**Do the students have the 'group' culture as is being seen in the city - where they move, play, react, converse and share through the Internet, and entertain in numbers, or are the Tasman students more likely to display individual pursuits?**

As far as I am aware, I think there is a group culture, although they would also have one or two people they would consider best friends and spend a great deal of time with. Having said that, nothing has changed in that regard for the past 25 years at least, with the exception of the Internet. I too as a teenager had some very close friends and I was also part of a close peer group. I am still close to those individual friends today, but the peer group has dispersed and gone in their individual directions.

### **What is the significance of belonging to the community?**

The Tasman community is a vibrant eclectic mix of residents. We have the old families who have lived here for many generations, we had an influx of alternative lifestylers in the 1970s, who have blended in and added a whole new dimension to our community, we have the shack owners, we have people moving here to retire, there is some evidence of the sea change phenomenon and, of course, we have very high tourist numbers and therefore people moving into the district to conduct tourist operations. I also believe that there are some who have moved here to get away from their pasts for many and varied reasons. I think this area is viewed as a safe haven for many.

This gives our community many dimensions. We have so many talented artistic people living amongst our midst from artists and craftsmen to musicians, singers and actors. To admire their creations, watch their productions or listen to their music makes me very proud to be part of this community.

The ability of this community to band together to create something fantastic is just astounding, whether it is the Annual Art and Craft Exhibition, the Tasman Regatta, the P.M.T. (Peninsula Madness Tonight) Concert, or to build a new jetty or to work tirelessly to build the Tasman Civic Centre, and the many volunteer groups such as the fire brigade etc., just to name a few, and our community's ability to work together to raise funds for worthwhile causes or projects is never ending. The sense of community I believe is enormous.

Having said that, we can also argue amongst ourselves, have views that are poles apart, there can be conflict amongst the different townships in the Municipality and unfortunately an ever underlying attitude of old family - new family, old local - new local, that raises its ugly head in times of disagreement from both sides, old and new. Both old and new locals are guilty of perpetuating this attitude, the old locals think they are superior to the new locals and the new locals think they are superior to the old locals and so the vicious cycle continues. Just as one township and its residents may think they are superior to another and vice versa.

But again, having said all of that, although it is quite normal to fight amongst ourselves, if we are put under threat by external forces or in adversity we all band together and work or fight as one and support each other until the end.

I would assume that we are not that much different to any other rural community.

**How can the sense of belonging be enhanced and what factors can be used to assess this?**

I think the sense of belonging is already very strong. This is already enhanced by the many and varied community functions and events, fund raising organisations, volunteer groups, sporting and youth groups etc. This community survives and thrives on volunteers and our residents' willingness to always lend a hand or give freely of their time.

**What are the main industries of the Tasman Peninsula?**

Although tourism is important to this region, there are many families who still depend on fishing and farming including fish farming for their incomes, Our Multi Purpose Service Centre is vital to our community, not only regarding our health care needs and aged residential care, but for the employment it provides and it goes without saying that the Port Arthur Historic Site is also a vital employer.

Unfortunately we still lose many of our young people to Hobart to further their education and they disperse from there into employment and careers, unfortunately we do not have many career choices locally.

**What values do you think that the Tasman community will take forward into the next 50 years?**

Tasman Council's mission statement is 'Custodians of the past, visionaries for the future.' I hope we can achieve that statement. I hope we take many of the same values forward as we have now. A bright, vibrant, happy community, with our differing views, but still able to come together as a community and work together as we do now, with our own unique individualism. We don't have any real interest in being like the rest of the world; we are quite happy and proud to be different.

(Personal Communication)

Whether or not Barwick believes teenagers participate, she considers the teenagers of the community to be well catered for recreationally, even though opportunities for socialising are not very much different to her teenage experiences 25 years ago. She puts great emphasis on the organised activities and clubs available to the young people and does not mention facilities where teenagers can gather informally with friends, other than the skate park and the swimming pool. The swimming pool is a small indoor complex as part of the school's sports hall.

Barwick acknowledges that the peer groups are small, and that each teenager would have only one or two close friends, and she mentions that the peer groups will disperse in time.

Other than connections within the school groups, Barwick uses words such as vibrancy, eclectic, many dimensions, talented artists, safe haven, sense of belonging and sense of community, to describe the Tasman Peninsula community. Within the wider community she has identified many hubs with common interests. She mentions the issue of teenagers having to leave the community for the capital city and beyond for further study and work opportunities, but acknowledges fishing, farming, tourism, health and the Port Arthur Historic Site as being the main employers. One must acknowledge that these are the words of a woman in the role of advocacy for the future survival of her community. Her optimism may not be counted upon, for example whilst there is a lot going on for youth she seems to have little evidence that they participate in that which might bring them the connectedness they yearn for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Barwick refers to an unfortunate “ever underlying attitude of old family – new family, old local – new local” guilty of perpetuating superiority of old over new and new over old. Does this mean that there is a kind of parochialism within the community where people cling to old traditions and where people who are new bring old traditions with them that they too might be clinging to? The origin of the word ‘parochial’ comes from the Latin, *parochialis* “of the parish” suggesting a church-centred community (Online Etymology Dictionary). In earlier European days there may have been small communities on the Tasman Peninsula clustered around churches, but today that meaning of the word is irrelevant. I use the word ‘parochialism’ as limited and narrow views or opinions that belong to a small group, or community hub, which could have ramifications in decision-making, financial distributions, belonging and identity, and social stratification.

From my *vnenakhodimost*, my “space on the side of the road”, I hear and see glimpses of parochialism. I question whether or not it may have connections with the belonging and exclusivity of membership to the Tasman Peninsula community. I consider that parochialism may also be central to the dialogue that separates the Tasman Peninsula community from the rest of Tasmania and plays a significant role in the power relationships and financial states of the isolated and remote

community. Although parts of my inquiry have come from listening in to others' conversations, it is with that sincere purpose I present one here, respecting the anonymity of the participants, a shop owner and a customer.

Speaker 7: Do you live down here'?

Speaker 8: No, we come down here every year. We have some land at White Beach.

Speaker 7: You should live here.

Speaker 8: We have been coming down here for 35 years.

Speaker 7: But you should live here.

Speaker 8: How long have you lived here?

Speaker 7: Coming up to 5 years.

Speaker 8: Well I've been coming for 35 years.

Speaker 7: Yes, but not full-time.

Speaker 8: No, but I pay full-time rates.

I interpret this conversation with personal insights that sometimes exist in the community between locals and regular visitors. What does it mean to belong, and what amount of time does it take for that state of belonging to become acceptable? Of course it is disingenuous to suggest that such tensions are commonplace and the norm for all such relationships, and are restricted to the Tasman Peninsula community. However the situated dialogue above reveals some interesting circumstances. Speaker 7 is the owner of a business that supplies general and essential provisions and services to both the permanent and visitor populations. He is a prominent member of the wider Tasman Peninsula community, in that he would be known by almost anyone who lives there. Speaker 8 is a regular visitor and could even be considered by some as a local, as she has spent 35 summers in the area and she has paid council rates on her property over that time. Speaker 7 challenges the customer on her residential status, although he is a relative newcomer to the community. Speaker 8 defends her position and makes her point that as a ratepayer she has a share in the community economy. Both business owner and customer exist symbiotically, relying on each other's good will and offerings. One needs the business and profits to source a living; the other needs the goods and services to live by. Does such a conversation reflect a potential for division and risk

the sense of belonging and identity that everyone in the wider community might enjoy?

My intent in this section of research was to search for similarities and differences between those values that are held by the different hubs within the Tasman Peninsula community. If the students in my inquiry represent an interface between the school and the wider community, do they mirror similar values?

Even though I witnessed an example of possible racial discrimination based on Aboriginality within the study group, this seems not to be a widespread prejudice amongst the wider Tasman Peninsula community hub. Aboriginality is recognised and celebrated within the community, and there are hubs of Aboriginal artists who still practice traditional art and crafts such as basket weaving from natural materials. Children in the school are encouraged to participate in Aboriginal cultural experiences and are taught the history as part of the curriculum, often with elders passing on their stories. Cultural diversity is not particularly recognised however beyond indigenous life. There are few migrants from overseas countries who live within the Tasman Peninsula community, meaning little diversity in cultures or recognition and practice of many religions. With the increased number of refugees that live in Hobart, there have been opportunities for some day visits and interactions in the community.

One argument proffered was that without social security benefits there would be more poverty and that could lead to greater crime. Probably past experiences have led the community to take strong restorative actions against crime. Issues of social security, income and crime are mirrored between the students and the wider Tasman Peninsula community, with a common view that each is interdependent.

The study group value social connectedness but must rely on adults living in the community to facilitate their access to one another with private or arranged transport. Adults have the advantage of having greater direct access to private transport, gathering places and common interest groups, each forming their own hubs. Although there are sporting clubs and organised activities available for the teenagers, the informal meeting places where students can just meet and talk are not there, or not accessible.



Some students chose a clean, green environment to be important to their lives, and this study group has been empowered in understanding about environmental sustainability through its classwork.

### **Propositional discussion about community values**

Will any of these values held within the community affect the road to a sustainable future? This is an inquiry of my propositional thesis. Can I argue that the values expressed by the Tasman Peninsula community members, including the students, will be subjected to strong external forces that might alter the integrity of the community? The second propositional position that guides this thesis is that although there may be some unknown external forces put upon the Peninsula community it will react within and shift its balance so that the community will continue into the future with new directions and hopes. Given that the current students are probably an interface between the wider community and the school, the future might rest in their hands.

In the next chapter I continue the discussion of community values when members of the Tasman Peninsula community speak out about issues that might affect its environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability, in particular proposals regarding the possibilities of a marine protection park and the World Heritage site listing of the Port Arthur Historic Site and the associated coal mines. These dialogues bring together the lifeworld and systemworld, the parochialism that might occur where the Tasman Peninsula community faces political decision-making within state, national and international spheres.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### MOVING ALONG A ROAD TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

Through our conversations the stories and images of our future emerge and never has this process been more critical. We now have the capacity, through neglect of the planetary commons on which our lives depend, to make this precious earth, our home, uninhabitable. We now have the capacity, through escalating violence and weapons of mass destruction, to make our precious human species, along with many others, extinct.

(Brown, Isaacs and The World Café Community, 2005, p.2)

These chilling words speak of a world community, where hope is found in communication. In a global sense, communication is far quicker and more accessible now than at any time in our past. If we have access to communication, then it could be used to shape our futures, develop mutual understandings, and speak to each other across the planet. But the challenge firstly is for small communities to have a united cause. That does not mean that every community member must agree entirely with one another. Nor does it mean that each hub should remain insulated from the larger community. Ideally, it means that voices are heard, that listening is paramount, that public opinion is fostered, and that the community functions as an inclusive, democratic unit, with a vision for the future.

As I stated in the beginning of my inquiry, my challenge is not to present assumptions or preferences as I speak or write the narratives, even though I might recognise differences from my perspective, but to speak with honesty and truthfulness, and represent possible sides of some contentious issues and arguments. As I focus on the Tasman Peninsula community I look for its appreciation of uniqueness, its intelligence and its wisdom, its ownership of its history, its stewardship of its resources, and its understandings of a wider world. I listen to the voices and participate in dialogue. I recognise differences and similarities that bind the smaller hubs within the larger Peninsula community.

I continue with the metaphor of a single road as a place where I observe the comings and goings, and the entrances and exits of locals and others. The single road is most importantly a supply artery for the Tasman Peninsula community, but at other times it might be a barrier to commercial development or provide opportunities for enterprising growth of the same community. As we witnessed in the 2013 bushfires the single road became an excised link between refuge, safety or abandonment. With windstorms and smoke ravaging the nearby waterways, the people, both tourists and locals, sought refuge in Nubeena and Port Arthur for many days before they could safely be moved by small watercraft. Since its establishment after the colonisation of Hobart, the single road has taken on a positive character of its own, as a road well travelled.

Can changes in access be made now to protect the Tasman Peninsula community into the future? Does the Tasman Peninsula community even want changes in its access to others? We cannot predict if any changes will have an affect, either positively or negatively, on the future of the Tasman Peninsula. The answer to these questions might lie in the dynamics of the community, the energy that is generated within the hubs, counteracting the external forces acting upon it.

### **Tasman Sustainable Living Group**

I heard of a proposed development that might exercise that inner energy in moving the community forward. A local businessman proposed the development of a loop road passing through Nubeena and other small settlements to join the existing Arthur Highway, bypassing many of the notorious dangers of the main single road. There exists a rudimentary country road used mostly by farm vehicles, but in no condition to carry tourism traffic. With an upgrade, and some redirecting, the alternative route would mean that traffic to Port Arthur could continue on to Hobart via Nubeena and bring tourism dollars to other businesses. Whilst a loop road might be a future consideration in terms of environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability as the Tasman Peninsula community moves forward, its planning and development would need to account for pedestrian and traffic control within small towns, widen the current rural road, excavate scenic rural and sea cliff areas, and outline fast lanes for emergency vehicle access. Would this scenario contribute to a sustainable Tasman Peninsula of the future, or would its development hinder the promotion of the uniqueness of that which exists today? In

any case, I was interested in meeting the proponents of the loop road and approached them by email. I received the following response, with a media statement attached.

*Please give me a call (blank) to arrange a time to come and have a chat. We are starting to work on the development of the Tasman Village. I am not sure if you saw the local paper recently. I have attached a copy of the media release in case you didn't. From it you will see our initial intentions. It appears it may be of further interest for your thesis. I look forward to hearing from you. (Personal communication)*

This Parsons Bay Retreat Media Release from the *Tasman Gazette* was attached to the email,

### **New Living Solutions in Nubeena**

Recognising the need for affordable sustainable housing, particularly for our ageing population, The Fairway Resort at Nubeena is in the process of having a brand new purpose. The 18 room motel and surrounding 22 acres is being developed into a sustainable community village.

“I am one of the many who is concerned about what is happening in our rapidly changing world and want to do something about it,” said Mr. Ilan Arnon, the owner of Fairway.

“It is important to look at the effects of climate change, our ageing population, lack of affordable housing, the impending impact of the fuel crisis and work with what you have already got,” he said.

The “Tasman Village”, its new identity, is being designed in a way to be as self-sustainable as possible and will be developed in stages.

Among those it will attract will be baby boomers, or any one choosing an active retirement who wishes to live a quality lifestyle not just exist.

The first stage has seen the 18 room motel that also offers studio and two bedroom apartments being available for three month leases and longer-term rental.

Mr. Arnon said the second stage includes the proposal of a subdivision surrounding the motel that will offer residential land at very affordable prices. A majority of the blocks will be manageable 350 square metres areas with space set aside for a community permaculture vegetable garden/orchard as well as community gathering spaces carefully selected for their beauty and connection with the natural elements.

Research is currently underway to assess alternative energy sources for the development. Recycling of materials where possible will be incorporated.

“Tasman Village will offer the best of both worlds,” said Mr. Arnon. “Smaller, easy to maintain personal space combined with the expansive community areas within the village plus the excellent services of the township of Nubeena for example, the school, shops, post office, hotel, medical services, and pharmacy, as well as emergency services.”

“I look forward to seeing the village attract people who care,” said Mr. Arnon. “People who care about each other, as well as the earth. They will have the opportunity to invest in themselves and their future,” he added.

In reading this media statement I predicted a drive by Arnon to address matters that might affect the future of the Tasman Peninsula community through external forces that might impact upon the current balanced state. Within the media statement there were references to “sustainable living”, “affordable housing”, “ageing population”, “climate change” and “the impending impact of the fuel crisis.” Any of these might be an external force that could alter the shape of the Tasman Peninsula community as we now know it. The media release also refers to recycling and community gardens based on a “permaculture” mode, meaning sustainable and self-sufficient horticultural techniques. Arnon’s vision addresses four pillars of sustainability—environment, economy, society and culture. The Tasman Village might become a new community hub within the Tasman Peninsula community. It will be of interest to note how this hub evolves in the future and revolves with others around it.

Although it is not possible to see the future of either the Tasman Peninsula community or the hub of Tasman Village, I consider the directions and intentions of the development to be in accord with the second propositional statement I have made, that there will be external forces that impact on the Tasman Peninsula community, but in response there will be changes in the shape of the community to compensate. The philosophy behind the Tasman Village development is widespread stewardship of present resources, be they environmental, financial, human or cultural to ensure the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community. Something in this philosophy of community management and mutual belonging resonates with me as a *Gemeinschaft* society as described by Tönnies (1965) and as I wrote about in Chapter Three—a place where there were common concerns and shared beliefs

within a village setting. Concerns raised by Arnon about fuel shortages and escalating prices are more in accord with Tönnies' *Gesellschaft* community, based on political powers, economy and trading.

I was sent an invitation to attend a 'get together' for the Tasman Sustainable Living Group, to be held at the site of the proposed Tasman Village, with a guest speaker from Sustainable Living Tasmania, based in Hobart. I was curious to see the public response to the invitation wondering how widespread the invitation was throughout the Tasman Peninsula community and whether certain community hubs had been invited to the exclusion of others, how many people would attend this meeting, would there be a sense of mutual belonging within the attendees, and would there be dissent or negativity amongst those present? I stepped tentatively from my space on the side to attend the gathering. My mind was quite open to dialogue of any sort, as I had not received any information around the likely discussion topics.

Fifteen people attended this inaugural meeting of the Tasman Community Sustainable Living Group. I remained uncertain at the beginning about what might be considered sustainable living, but I recognised within the group a breadth and depth of interest, knowledge and experience, and an energy emanating through optimism and plans related to sustainability issues. I also sensed mutual belonging and understanding through common interests. Those present included the Coordinator of Special Events for the Tasman Council, a nurseryman and teacher who is also a specialist in native plant communities, representatives from the Tasman Village development, a Canadian who just recently relocated to the Tasman Peninsula in a new role as training officer for the Port Arthur Authority, a resident who moved three years ago from Queensland to the Tasman Peninsula, the Director of Tourism Operations at the Port Arthur Historic Site, a residential owner who feels isolated and wants to find out more about vegetable gardening through sharing and learning, a couple who care for injured or relocated wildlife, and another new resident who worked in Mississippi as a permaculture trainer and is building an environmentally sustainable residence in the district. Some of those present spoke of how they provided for their household by growing fruit and vegetables and by fishing.

Some very significant issues were discussed, and some propositions made, with regard to the future sustainability of the community. A turning point in the ‘get together’ was cooperative problem-solving on some agreed concerns. The single road was a focus for many discussions, and those present agreed that a tyranny of distance is responsible for the isolation of the Tasman Peninsula community. The rising cost of fuel and its affect on the economic, social and environmental future of the community was discussed, and related concerns about the lack of a regular return bus service between Hobart and the Tasman Peninsula. We worked together as a group to identify some of the possibilities to resolve the problem of transport between the Tasman Peninsula and Hobart. One mooted solution was car-pooling, where a group of locals could share a car and costs for their trips to Hobart, but this would require coordination in terms of publicity, availability and cost reimbursement. Another idea was to establish a ‘hitching post’ where lone travellers could wait at a nominated place to be collected by others driving to Hobart, but this raised safety concerns.

The affect of the single road on the costs of locally obtaining groceries and everyday needs was discussed and consideration was given to bulk-buying commodities in Hobart, possibly at wholesale prices, with distribution to local Tasman Peninsula residents on an agreed market day. Such a scheme is not so different from the days of early settlement when bulk loads of groceries and other purchases were brought down the Peninsula on steamer boats. This was a necessary service in past days but today there are local traders on the Peninsula who would be disadvantaged by such a plan. One proposal that received strong support at the meeting was to bulk-purchase solar hot water systems at discounted prices. Some participants indicated that they were ready to take up the offer as soon as possible.

I felt privilege and belonging within an energetic and vigorous group, and I did not feel like an outsider. I empathised with the group in many ways, such as the remoteness incurred by the transport difficulties, the fuel costs to travel to the city, and the daily costs of living. I can discern three aspects of community from this scenario—belonging, identifying and having empathy.

I also ask the question, what does it mean to have an identity within a community? If one can identify and have empathy with issues related to living in a community, does one have identity in the community? Conversely, if one cannot

identify with an issue within a community, does that mean that person has no identity with the community? According to the Online Etymological Dictionary both terms are synonymous, with “identify” coming from the 1640s to mean “regard as the same” and “identity” also Circa 1600 meaning “sameness, oneness.” I felt identity with the group because I sensed sameness and oneness with them.

My presence and identity within the Tasman Sustainable Living Group meeting led me to other considerations of being within a communication group. Habermas (1987) speaks of the ideal communication community, in which there is a fusion of two moments, the moral-practical and the expressive,

Let us imagine individuals being socialized as members of an ideal communication community; they would in the same measure acquire an identity with two complementary aspects: one universalizing, one particularizing. On the other hand, these persons raised under idealized conditions learn to orient themselves within a universalistic framework, that is to act autonomously. On the other hand, they learn to use this autonomy, which makes them equal to every other morally acting subject, to develop themselves in their subjectivity and singularity. (p.97)

With reference to Georg Hegel, a German philosopher, Habermas writes, “Membership in the ideal communication community is, in Hegelian terms, constitutive of both the I as universal and the I as individual” (1987, p.97).

I, the individual, belonged to the Tasman Sustainable Living Group meeting. I received an invitation to attend, and I went with the intentionality of offering a conscious constituency to the unfolding events. I empathised with the problems raised by other individuals in the group, and I endorsed the support these individuals were offered. In doing so I concurred that everyone there belonged to this group, the embryonic communication community that had already become a hub of the Tasman Peninsula community. My belonging moved me into an interconnecting circle of the expanding Venn Circles I propose are the interconnecting hubs of a dynamic, stable Tasman Peninsula community. We shared a moral-practical alliance with the intent of offering sustainable living options.

A need for wider community awareness of the new group, or hub, was discussed at the inaugural meeting. How might the issues that were raised in the meeting, and some possible solutions, be communicated to the whole Tasman Peninsula community? Furthermore, should communication of overarching concerns of



sustainability and their possible impacts on the Tasman Peninsula community be the responsibility of the Tasman Sustainable Living hub? Citing Cyclone Katrina in New Orleans as an example, the guest speaker emphasised the need for connections to be in place for the transformations that occur in the aftermaths of social upheaval. Of course, the Tasman Peninsula community knows the significance of bonding from their own experiences and incidents that have occurred over many years.

My thought on the matter of using an overseas example from afar is that it might allow Tasman Peninsula residents to look critically at transformations that can occur within stable communities as a product of outside forces. The cause and effect, the push and pull, the actions and reactions, support my second propositional statement, that the community will react to these shifts by changing its shape to accommodate the external forces. Those present at the first Tasman Sustainable Living Group meeting considered some scenarios. What might happen if there is a natural catastrophe that wipes out the productivity, the cohesiveness, the integrity, the economy, the habitats or social structures of the Tasman Peninsula community?

As we now know, disaster later occurred when bushfires ravaged the Tasman Peninsula. Before the bushfires, with the critical nature of communication in mind, the Tasman Sustainable Living Group had already looked at ways of connecting the community, and disseminating its proposed ideas and actions. Suggestions included word-of-mouth, a local interactive online blog, a regular column in the local monthly gazette, flyers left at gathering places, such as the post office, the school and the Multi Purpose Centre, and members of the group to present at community events.

As this small community group developed it used conversation to connect with each other, invite others to join them, and take action to create a better lifestyle for now and for the future. A small and committed group identified problems and endeavoured to find solutions on issues that may affect the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community.

### **Propositional discussion about the Sustainable Living Group**

Through shared beliefs and values, acceptance of others, mutual understanding of issues inherent in a move towards a sustainable future, a common language of understanding, and a fusion of understanding into a new knowledge base, the small

Sustainable Living Group might generate interest, energy and power to access others in their community using a public voice. Such dynamics might take the Tasman Peninsula community one step closer to a sustainable future.

Adults of the Tasman Peninsula community are the modern custodians of the land, and like their Aboriginal forebears should map a healthy legacy for their children, future generations we cannot foresee. If there is to be a legacy, the Tasman Peninsula community will understand and act upon external threats as they present, and address them now to preserve them then to prepare for the future. Children inherit tools from their elders to serve them in their future communities. Likewise, children of this generation might enlighten their elders through their understandings borne through formal education, adventuring into their wider environment, participating in conversations around multiculturalism, religion, and diversity, and creating a safe, dynamic environment for those who live there.

Immersed within the Tasman Peninsula community I have observed that there are shared prospects, divisive proposals, inspiring promises, seemingly futile demands, hope for the future and wariness of the unknown. My intent in this thesis is to uncover some of the substantial external forces that might act upon the community to reshape its future state, even though I cannot predict what the changed shape will look like. Through my interactions with the community I explore a multiplicity of voices that might form that future shape. Some I hear in passing, through casual conversations, but others I hear loudly—some in support of developments that might affect the future of the community, and others in opposition to proposed developments, some from community members gathering in consultative processes to pave future roads within the Tasman Peninsula community. I listen to single voices, an elderly gentleman who has known the Peninsula since childhood and has much to offer as the community morphs from one state to the other, in terms of industry and agriculture, and a senior manager who views the community as dynamic and promising as it faces an uncertain future. Moving along the road to sustainability, my inquiry leads me through opinions, conversations, public meetings, surveys and narratives. Travelling and leading with me on the road are the philosophers, the protagonists.

I move onto the road to place myself within the dialogues to hear the depth of the voices. Stewart suggests that her “space on the side of the road” allows a gap in

which the real voices and narratives of a culture can be played. She writes, “Local voices are launched from within a space of contingency, and the truth of things is lodged in the concrete yet shifting life of signs – a network of tellings and re-tellings, displacements and remembering” (Stewart, 1996, p.4). Stewart uses the space in an attempt to understand culture through, “digression, deflection, displacement, deferral, and difference” (p.5).

Bakhtin posits that participant dialogue and situation are inextricable (in Denith, 1995, p.15). I use my space to be amongst those threads as I witness parts of history happening in my time, through the dialogue of one to another. These dialogues may be informal, formal, agreement, disagreement, proposition or supposition, but my position allows me to be apart from the speakers and within their language circles.

I seek situations where the social history of the Tasman Peninsula community is created through dialogue in my time, but there are situations where the dialogue remains uncompleted, and it might be that others will reflect on these situations beyond my lifetime, and theirs will be another historical narrative. Based on this, any commentary I make on the future sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula community can only be propositional. My intent is to discover those aspects of the community dynamics that could become important as the future of the Tasman Peninsula community is woven. This approach where dialogue between partners creates a future that can be viewed through the lens of outsiders is a reflection of Bakhtin’s notion that life is never complete within a person (in Denith, 1995, p.7).

As well as intellectual dialogue, let us recall that Bakhtin promotes a sense of ‘carnival’, where artistic form and meaning emerge from the story lines. Bakhtin speaks of the multiple voices energetically creating history and narratives. Stewart describes the Bakhtinian energy of carnival in these words, “Whatever its plans and ideals, it finds itself caught in something like a space on the side of the road, scurrying back and forth looking at one moment for illumination and at the next for cover” (1996, p.32).

In my inquiry I seek the *vnenakhodimost*, a place where I can be both within and outside the dialogues, where I can listen to the utterances, or speak within the utterances, and where I can observe the intonation, gestures, and dramatic elements of dialogue. If I am within the dialogue, I will not witness history in my lifetime, but I may address the propositional statements of this thesis with enhanced insights. If I

choose to observe from the *vnenakhodimost* without entering through dialogue, I may be in a privileged position to say that I have witnessed history happening. This could mean that I have seen the beginning and the resolution of an argument, or the nurturing of a gem of an idea until it becomes a fully flourishing element and an instituted concept. My challenge is to move cautiously on and off the side of the road, from the *vnenakhodimost*.

My interest in weaving a line in and out of the Tasman Peninsula community is to feel some of the external forces that act upon the community. I risk becoming enveloped in community debates and opinions as I step in and out of different hubs of the community reacting to external forces. In this next section I address the multiplicity of voices heard in debates around marine protection parks and World Heritage nomination.

### **Marine Protection Parks**

Several major debates have shaped the narratives of the Tasman Peninsula community throughout the course of my inquiry. One such topic has been a proposed establishment of a marine protection park within the Tasman Peninsula waters. This proposal has caused much debate, prompting locals to be heard in a wide dialogical affray of opinion and reason, as well as informed and learned experience. My place within the *vnenakhodimost* has allowed me to listen to the discussions with the scurrying in and out of people using their own voices, the media, political statements and expert knowledge. This discussion has gone far beyond the Tasman Peninsula community's immediate parameters in many guises.

When the Resource Planning and Development Commission of Tasmania (RPDC) made recommendations to the Minister for Environment and Planning on the establishment of a marine protection park in southern Tasmania, in an area known as the Bruny Bioregion, residents of the Tasman Peninsula community were divided, with residents, conservationists, fishermen, tourists and business operators pitched against each other in a debate on sustainability. Energy levels within the various hubs of the Tasman Peninsula community were high, with members moving in and out of hubs in response to personal and public opinions in a struggle to maintain a balanced unit. At a public meeting for Tasman Peninsula residents convened on a Sunday afternoon, around 600 of the 2,000 residents turned out for a heated and lively debate. Many attendees of the meeting were well-informed and the

main concerns centred on a suggestion that areas to be zoned as ‘high protection’ meant, in the locals’ words, “no fishing/no take”, within which both recreational and commercial fishermen would be excluded from 9,500 hectares on waters surrounding the Tasman Peninsula, including Hippolyte Rocks, Tasman Island, Waterfall Bay, and farther north as far as Fortescue Bay, all very popular areas, including some of the best game fishing areas in Tasmania. Some attendees thought the proposal was an unwarranted attack on the lifestyles and livelihood of fishermen and tourism—implying threats to social, cultural and economic sustainability. Others were concerned about the impact on the summer tourism season. The attendees were passionate in their views, and the many voices were not only heard by those inside the community but broadcasted through media to those outside as well. A delegation from the meeting agreed to meet with two State parliamentarians, and other Tasman Peninsula citizens were encouraged to speak out publicly through local clubs and organisations to have their voices heard. Many claimed there was no scientific evidence that recreational fishing could not be conducted in ecologically sensitive waters.

As tensions pulled throughout the greater community, multiple voices joined choruses throughout the Tasman Peninsula. A strong claim was that excellent management practices in place for fisheries in Tasmania, including a quota system around the seasonal taking of many species, enforced legal requirements for fish size and bag limits, gear restrictions so fish are not injured, and non-target fish to be minimised in by-catch, were adequate for protecting the marine environment. Another argument was Tasmania already has around 100 restricted fishing or nursery zones, quite adequate in size to maintain protection. Other residents spoke through media of concerns for businesses in the area, arguing there would be a reduction in visitor numbers if recreational fishing zones were limited. A united voice came from 12 local commercial rock lobster fishermen, 10 commercial scale fishermen and 10 charter fishing operators, who spoke through media about no-take zones. Some concerns were raised about safety, with speculation within the community that recreational fishermen would be forced farther out to sea. Both interested organisations and individuals raised their voices. One could describe the frenetic and passionate outpouring of voices from the Tasman Peninsula community members in Bakhtinian terms, as a ‘carnival’ of responses.

The multiplicity of voices was heard beyond the Tasman Peninsula community boundaries, both in support and in condemnation of the proposal, from government, private and political organisations, and individuals. Some concerns were expressed for the preservation of sea beds needed to protect the huge underwater kelp forests of Tasmania, rich in biota, and a critical element of the food chain, providing microhabitats for plankton and other small plants. Others claimed that the establishment of marine parks would provide an extensive and biodiverse marine network for the future, claimed to be globally significant because of the area's high rate of endemism.

After listening to many arguments for and against, the Tasmanian Labor Government partly ignored the recommendations of the RPDC, and instead announced the creation of 14 new marine protected areas within the Bruny Bioregion, greatly modified from the draft recommendations, allowing most recreational and commercial fishing to continue as previously. It seems that in this case the power of the peoples' voices, rose above that of the semi-government body, the RPDC and its conservationist supporters.

I was intrigued when I visited Tasman District School in the week following the first public meeting, to hear passionate and strong voices from teenagers opposed to the marine bioregion plan. Many of the students had attended the meeting, or had family members attend. Some had a collection of the media articles to show me, and one had a video recording of some of the media reports. What struck me as being a change in the voices of the students was their informed opinions and ownership of the issues. These students were not echoing the voices they had heard elsewhere, they were articulate and presented their arguments with their emotions understated in their need to be heard.

Of greatest concern to the students was a threat of marine parks to their lifestyles. They told stories of generations of fishing families who might be forced out of their livelihood if fishermen were urged into deeper waters. They feared this might come about because of extra fuel costs, time away at sea, and additional costs for better refrigeration and holding ponds. The students could foresee a roll-on affect to local businesses if the fishing income to the community was significantly lowered, and feared their families may be forced to move out of the community. Some expressed desires to stay in the Tasman Peninsula community because they

considered it to offer freedom, peace, and clean and friendly environments. Some mentioned recreational opportunities such as kayaking, jet skiing and sailing as strong reasons to stay in the community. They also mentioned their family histories and how they wanted the traditions, culture and the identity of the community retained. I asked Charles his opinion of the proposed marine park and he replied by email,

I thort It is not fair to stop the fishing indreys. What will we do for the shops that sell the fish, and the people the catch the fish and that. I there that thay shod not do that.

I interpret these words as,

I thought it is not fair to stop the fishing industries. What will we do for the shops that sell the fish, and the people that catch the fish? I think they should not do that. (Personal Communication)

Only weeks before the students were unsure how to articulate what it meant to them to belong to and identify with the Tasman Peninsula community, and yet here the students were embracing the issue in the context of a community challenge, and thinking through the consequences in clear and succinct voices. These students had teased out threads of community sustainability. Without using, or perhaps never having heard the word ‘sustainability’, they could speak clearly about the environmental, cultural, social and economic elements that weave the fabric of their community. Their explicit examples of these elements meant that the students had really grasped the fundamental make-up of the Tasman Peninsula community, in stronger meanings that I could possibly have given them by enrobing an overarching concept of sustainability within definitions and terms.

In Bakhtinian terms, dialogue in the cases for and against the establishment of marine protected areas in Tasmania, has been frenetic, one could even adopt Bakhtin’s concept of ‘carnival’ to describe the “labyrinth of voices”, a term Bakhtin uses for human communication (1984, p.95), or *beteroglossia*, the “plurality of voices” (Holquist, 2002, p.89).

Throughout and outside the Tasman Peninsula community, many voices were raised, through public meetings, citizen representation, petitions, media, individual spokespeople, interviews, letters, canvassing, protest rallies, a Government–

nominated Commission, political parties, community appeals and conversations, each presenting viewpoints for consideration.

Habermas speaks of *lebenswelt*, or lifeworld, in *Theory of Communicative Action*, as a place of public dialogue (1987, p.119). He also speaks of systemworld, governed often by money and power. When lifeworld meets systemworld there can be a mutual understanding, *horizontverschmelzung*. In this example of the proposed establishment of marine protection parks, a hub of the Tasman Peninsula community represented the lifeworld, a background of economy, culture and society. In their plea to maintain that which is familiar to them, these community hub members faced a systemworld. In this instance a multiplicity of voices were heard, some may have been lost or ignored. I have occupied the *vnenakbodomost*, a space where I have witnessed the players coming and going in and out of the debate, and I have been able to record this history as narrative.

### **Propositional discussion about the marine protection parks**

Perhaps the story of the marine parks will not finish here. I do not assume a position to foresee the completion of the debate's history. Perhaps changes in future political, environmental and social climates might bring the issue of marine protected areas to the fore again for debate and challenge. If this should happen, voices will possibly rise again to support the cultural, social, environmental and economic sustainability as external forces impend upon internal dynamics of the Tasman Peninsula community. Such multiplicity of voices, sometimes represented by a single voice, become the dynamic shifts within the smaller hubs of the Tasman Peninsula community that react against the powerful external forces impacting upon it. An introduction of marine protection parks would possibly alter the shape of the Tasman Peninsula community in many unforeseeable ways and directions, but this experience has shown that the voice of the people is an unrelenting power.

### **World Heritage Listing of Convict Sites**

The power of a multiplicity of voices raised against systemworld was heard on a global stage when a small hub of the Tasman Peninsula community faced the systemworld on an issue of the nomination of local convict sites for World Heritage listing. In consideration of Habermas' theories of communicative action and social



ontology, I entered dialogue with community members about the Port Arthur Historic Site and the nearby coalmines site nominated for World Heritage listing.

UNESCO recognised the importance of Australian convict sites in a 'Memory of the World' register in 2007. In light of this register, UNESCO recommended that Port Arthur and the nearby coalmines be included as a World Heritage listing. A recommendation was made to include buffer zones, also known as heritage overlays, around the Port Arthur Historic Site. UNESCO defines a buffer zone as,

...a zone, that in itself is not of outstanding universal value, but may influence a World Heritage site. The importance of the environment for the object must be properly recognised to be able to define a suitable perimeter as well as required protective measures for the buffer zone. (UNESCO, 2009, p.12).

The inclusion of buffer zones at Port Arthur became a divisive issue amongst the hubs of the Tasman Peninsula community, and threatened the eventual nomination. I considered much of the divisiveness was caused by confusion and ignorance amongst the residents emanating from the dearth of information offered by the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority (PAHSMA).

From my space on the side of a very bumpy road I witnessed lifeworld clashing with systemworld where the everyday hubs of some local residents confronted local administrators, as well as national and international political and financial bodies. Leading the debate were claims by some Tasman Peninsula residents that they had not been informed about buffer zone requirements until the nomination actions were in process. Throughout the Tasman Peninsula community and farther afield the voices of a few locals reverberated loudly into the public and political domains.

In January 2009, both *The Australian*, a National newspaper, and *The Mercury*, a local Tasmanian newspaper, reported on anger and doubts raised by the inclusion of buffer zones, and the lack of information given to community members. The article in *The Australian* I commented that the process for World Heritage listing was being undermined by the dispute and that the residents had concerns about limitations to their property use.

Locals, who fear a 1100ha (hectare) buffer will prevent them clearing land, harvesting plantations and building homes, are lobbying UNESCO to oppose any buffer.

(*The Australian*, January 03, 2009),

*The Mercury* newspaper, published on the same day, reported,

A petition, signed by more than 160 locals, and a letter objecting to the World Heritage nomination on grounds of the buffer zone have been sent to the World Heritage Council, Federal and State Government. (January 03, 2009)

Rumours about the implications of buffer zoning ran rife amongst some ill-informed Tasman Peninsula community members with contrived claims that authorities would be able to decide on the paint colours of residential fences that faced the heritage area, and that residents would not be able to erect property signs. One local spokesman, Mr. Barry McFadgen was reported as saying,

We don't mind the (local) council saying 'yes, you can' or 'no, you can't' do something on our land, but we do object to a body outside the country telling us what we may or may not do with our properties. (*The Australian*, January 03, 2009)

In September 2009, international assessors representing the World Heritage Centre in Paris, visited the Tasman Peninsula to assess the convict sites in terms of management and authenticity. Their visit was shrouded by perceptions among some residents of the assessors as 'spies' infiltrating their community. Not all members of the Tasman Peninsula community were of this opinion though, and the issue became schismatic, with a few residents angry, afraid and judgmental. Much of their response might be attributed to a lack of information about the World Heritage listing disseminated freely throughout the community ahead of the nomination processes. The issue brought to the fore pervading emotions and elements of the community such as parochialism, mistrust and suspicion, as residents formed factions in a quest to have their voices heard. The sincerity of the residents, particularly those opposed to the World Heritage nomination process was bravely voiced to a public international audience with a loud and united chorus.

It seemed there was more work to be done and bridges to be built across this very rocky section of the road before the listing of World Heritage areas on the Tasman Peninsula could go ahead. With this in mind the PAHSMA Board decided to take a somewhat retrospective action and appointed a private consulting practice to assess the implications of the proposed World Heritage buffer zones, and conduct community consultation and information sessions. These consultations were held over three weekends, and were publicised widely some weeks before their dates, to give anyone with concerns the opportunity to attend. Generally, I

observed, the people who came to the meetings valued the information, and left encouraged and satisfied with the proposed actions around World Heritage nomination.

In his theory of communicative action, Habermas considers both the rational communication of everyday speech, and an analysis of modern society. In doing so, Habermas studies the pragmatic performances of speakers and the knowledge required to participate in the communication. Significant to Habermas' theory are the precepts of honesty, validity and shared understanding as the participants aim to reach worthy goals. In his words,

...we understand a speech act when we know the kinds of reasons that a speaker could provide in order to convince a hearer that he is entitled in the given circumstances to claim validity for his utterance – in short, when we know what makes it acceptable. (1998, p.232)

In this instance the reaction by a hub of the Tasman Peninsula residents against the World Heritage nomination, would suggest some validity claims were lacking, or not understood by all. Whether or not the group was correctly or adequately informed, or whether its means of communication was appropriate, is debatable, but with a united voice it sincerely raised awareness of its concerns. The consultative process that the PAHSMA decided upon gave the community access to facts and implications that beforehand were lacking. Finally there were opportunities for shared understanding, which allayed the fears of many.

### **Propositional discussion about World Heritage listing**

When the actions, arguments, respect and voices were strong forces acting upon the community, the PAHSMA took a 'u-turn' in the road to restore the balance so the community travelled in one direction. Such strong forces were almost destructive, but the shifting hubs and forces within the larger Tasman Peninsula hub compensated to save a fearful outcome, which may have had global consequences. The politics that have arisen from small hubs within the small Tasman Peninsula community should have been resolved much earlier. Should such a major issue, the World Heritage listing, have been proposed by the Australian Government without the Government first hearing and listening to the voices within the Tasman Peninsula?

In terms of Bakhtin's philosophy, we should listen to and observe the people, discovering embodied sentiments of the community. In doing so we consider real people who live within the proposed World Heritage zone, and respond to their incarnated traditions and heritage on each bend of a very small road. Here we witness the clash between Habermas' view that there is no room for personal volatility if there is to be a dialogue of worth, and Bakhtin's argument that dialogue must be personal and embodied in the life of the participants. Where would Gadamer be placed within these arguments? His philosophy of truth and method could be placed with great advantage within this discourse. Had the PAHSMA opened the discussion on the World Heritage listing much earlier, then the participants in the arguments may have actively listened and addressed each other, *zuhoren* and *ansprechen* without such anger and volatility.

The issues of the proposed World Heritage listing and the inclusion of buffer zones present dissent, anger, incrimination and division within the Tasman Peninsula community, and the rumblings are felt along and beyond the small connecting road. Could it have been approached any differently? I believe the answer is certainly yes. A major issue with global consequences should have started with the Bakhtinian idea of listening to the passions, history, stories and concerns of the small community. In doing so, the implications, consequences and needs of all people within smaller hubs should also have been addressed through Gadamer's idea that each person comes to the argument as an expert with an individual story. I propose that through speaking and listening to each other, and introducing experts into the discussion at this stage, there may have been a fusion of ideas and knowledge, such that this small community could enter a global dialogue expunged of the personal elements that Habermas thinks of being counteractive to strong political argument.

The World Heritage nomination debate threatened to be an external force acting on the Tasman Peninsula community that might have become destructive in terms of any advantage such nomination would give to the community globally and locally, in terms of resource management, tourism and respect for convict heritage. In a footnote to this chapter the nomination for World Heritage listing was granted to the Port Arthur and coalmines historic sites, together with other convict sites throughout Australia, in August 2010. The buffer zones were included, as in the original proposal. There is no evidence to suggest that community bonding within

the hubs has been changed irrevocably, and the benefits incurred by the World Heritage listing will possibly place the Tasman Peninsula community in a secure and stable place on the global and local tourism maps.

One lesson to be learnt from the issue of World Heritage nomination is the power of voices to change the direction of well-intended moves when the community is not consulted fully on its opinions, doubts or uncertainties.

### **Community and Council Consultations**

The Tasman Council, an inner hub of the Tasman Peninsula community, now recognises the need for community consultations on matters that might affect the community, or may become the external forces of my propositional statements. In recent years, since the confusion of the World Heritage nomination processes, citizens have been drawn together in consultative processes over future directions of their community. Throughout these consultations, the members have been effusive when they describe their visions, with themes of happiness, creativity, sustainability and history threaded through a fabric of desirable values to be carried through and encouraged as the Tasman Peninsula evolves.

A premise of Gadamer's *Truth and Method* is that a linguistic and dialogical meeting of one with another will bring new horizons together to create deeper meanings and new knowledge. Through this process it might be possible to create forums for developing models of sustainability for the Tasman Peninsula community and at the same time create the traditions of today that will become the tomorrow. As Gadamer writes,

In a conversation, when we have discovered the other person's standpoint and horizon, his ideas become intelligible without our necessarily having to agree with him; so also when someone thinks historically, he comes to understand the meaning of what has been handed down without necessarily agreeing with it or seeing himself in it. (2013, p.314)

Gadamer refers to the existence of *sociales Eimverstandnis* to describe a social domain presupposed in all that we do. Ingrid Scheibler (2000, p.xiii) chose not to translate the words because of the richness of the notion, in terms of a remnant of solidarity, always available, as a resource for building on further solidarities. The social domain is one in which individuals participate. Participants in the consultation processes of Tasman Peninsula community bring to the *sociales Eimverstandnis*

elements of knowledge—opinions and facts might weld into a fusion of understanding. They speak and listen to each other, *ansprechen und zuhoren*, processes that Gadamer believes essential to facilitate meaningful dialogue (Figal, 2002, p.107).

### **Propositional discussion about consultative processes**

In the opening paragraph of this chapter, I wrote of the global impact of communication, which is fast and accessible. I also suggested a need within small communities for voices to be spoken and heard, and for public opinion to be fostered if the community is to rise united against destructive external forces. A united cause does not exclude personal opinion, but fosters inclusion, vision and a direction forward.

In terms of my propositional statements that the Tasman Peninsula community might react and change in destructive ways against external forces impacting against it, and discontinue to be economically, socially, culturally and environmentally sustainable into the future, the Tasman Council has developed community insights of participation, conversation, planning and improvement. Through sharing, mutual understanding, developing knowledge and considering values, the community participants, representing many hubs, have built resistance to undesirable changes and preparation for desired changes as the Tasman Peninsula community moves forwards through the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Single Voices From the Wilderness**

Within the multiplicity of voices that might change the shape and dynamics of the whole community, I have mentioned single voices. Sometimes the single voice alone might be an agent of change, a font of knowledge to be tapped as a resource, or a directional guide along the road. With such rich possibilities in mind I spoke with two men of different ages, experience and position within the Tasman Peninsula community. I was privileged to be a partner in conversation with each gentleman and be placed within a dialogue. I also continued my email conversations with the Mayor of the Tasman Council.

Allen passed away in 2010, but at the time we spoke, he was aged more than 80, and was an active elected local Tasman Councillor. Allen gave me permission to share his story and our conversation as part of my discussion on community life.

Allen was born in the Tasman district and had been part of much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on the Tasman Peninsula. His father moved to the area as a young man for employment. At this time the timber industry thrived due to rapid development of infrastructure and agriculture in the area. Allen spoke of past agricultural practices when landowners successfully managed two or three farms and diversified in cattle, timber, orchards, and potatoes.

Mostly Allen spoke to me about the changes he witnessed over his lifetime and gave opinions on how he thought the Tasman Peninsula community should prepare for future sustainability. He believed that tourism might lie in the future with the natural attractions of the Tasmanian forests. He also saw a future for the Tasman Peninsula community to grow native Tasmanian Blackwood in plantation style, especially if sewerage connections were made in the small settlements, as the species prefers to grow in damp conditions, with ‘wet feet’. Blackwood is particularly prized for its strength and its suitability for fine furniture and cabinet making. Allen’s final word on this matter was that the future of the Tasman Peninsula should include forestry and tourism working close together.

Allen also spoke in length to me about the development of niche markets on the Tasman Peninsula as a possibility for future development, and although these are few and tend to be labour intensive, they could also provide a way for the sustainability of the Peninsula. However, the labour intensiveness does not mean increased employment in the district, as they are mostly owner-operators with families that work the businesses. At present they include quail farming, the cut flower industry, saffron production from crocus farming, herb and berry growers, game meat processors, and alpaca and goat breeders. Sometimes these industries might employ seasonal labour, but even then the work tends to go to transient overseas backpackers fulfilling visa requirements. Such itinerants do not contribute greatly to the Tasman Peninsula economy. However, in time these niche markets might grow and be self-sustaining for the district.

Allen and I spoke about the growing aquaculture on the Tasman Peninsula—salmon, oyster, mussel and scallop farming and octopus processing. Salmon farming is the largest of these industries, but is not a large employer. Atlantic salmon are raised in floating pens within bays and transported in large pens to other districts to be processed for the table. There are questions to be raised about the effects of

salmon farming—environmentally, physically and aesthetically. Very large pens can be seen from around local bays and beaches and encroach into recreational boating waters. Although pens are clearly marked with large safety buoys, it might be possible for floating wires and ropes to become detached. Seals are attracted to the pens, and there is also the risk of predatory, feeding sharks entering the local waters. During salmon feeding time there is a frenzy of activity when pelletised fish feed is thrown into the cages. The environmental consequences of pens and pellets on the natural environment might not be fully realised.

Occasionally, salmon escape from the pens. In one breakout around 25,000 fish were accidentally released into Parsons Bay. In what was a huge financial loss to the Tasmanian salmon economy, the locals had an unprecedented fortune in recreational fishing. I saw crates of salmon being unloaded from small boats on the local jetty — my own dog proudly brought home a bonus from the fishermen — and the local fish and chips shops were offering cheap salmon over a few days. Whilst this may seem a frivolous gain to the Peninsula folk and lucky visitors, it remains that a foreign species was introduced into the delicate food chains. At the time I heard that this was the third such accident, and overall there were probably around 50,000 fish released. Other reports suggested that a maintenance issue was to blame, with not enough personnel employed on the Peninsula to look after the pens adequately. So whilst the Tasmanian Atlantic Salmon industry might continue to thrive, the long-term environmental effects on local sustainability might well be detrimental.

Later I spoke with Stephen, the manager of the PAHSMA. Stephen was of the opinion that the future of the Tasman Peninsula would have very little to do with the fishing industry, but would be almost wholly dependent on tourism. He emphasised that funding for maintaining and improving the buildings that form the Port Arthur Historic Site would have beneficial ramifications for all of the Tasman Peninsula.

Stephen saw eco-tourism as a key to future sustainability. He referred to the developments that have already been proposed to capture the eco-tourism market, including a five-star resort, and a four-star holiday unit development near Port Arthur. These large developments would hopefully encourage tourists to spend more time on the Tasman Peninsula and enjoy the complete experience of the



attractions to be found there. The proposed Three Capes bushwalking track would bring positive benefits through creating more jobs on the Tasman Peninsula and wider in Tasmania. There have been some opposition to the creation of this track, touted as one of Australia's premier bushwalking experiences, by some local Tasman Peninsula residents who are concerned about environmental impacts that might be caused by walkers across the coastline, huts and jetties constructed on present virgin land, and disturbances to natural wildlife populations.

After the lessons learnt from the World Heritage listing experience when local residents were kept in the dark about the implications of World Heritage listing for their local environment, greater trust from the local residents might be gained in the Three Capes walk, if voices could be drawn into dialogue about local and global sustainability with all the furtiveness of Bakhtin, the fusion of understandings of Gadamer and the validity and transparency of Habermas. Communicative action would be the key to sustainability.

Stephen emphasised the need for educational opportunities for local residents in tourism and hospitality, with possibilities for vocational training through the Technical and Further Education system of Tasmania, for hospitality and tourism trainees and apprentices.

### **Conversations in Time with Philosophers Past and Present**

What do the two conversations I held with Allen and Stephen have in common? They speak of the past, they speak of the present and they speak of the future. They present a history of the Tasman Peninsula. They tell the tales of people working and living on the Peninsula. They hold the promises of the young, the wisdom of the old, and the reality of the existence. They are small etches of the whole picture. Each voice acts out a communicative drama. So where do my chosen philosophers, Bakhtin, Gadamer and Habermas fit within the conversations? Could I view the two conversations as dialogue?

There were different essences of dialogue in the two conversations. Allen had a powerful voice for dialogue. Our conversation was not truly an interview, in that I asked very few questions, and Allen took the lead in offering information and opinions, and in doing so, directed the talk. I thought that it would be a question and answer scenario, but Allen with all his experience, knew mostly what I was interested in and where we were heading. We shared mutual understanding in the

situations we discussed and we communicated within the lifeworld of the Tasman Peninsula community—its past and present. Allen offered suggestions on how the Tasman Peninsula community could prepare for a future. In doing so, he connected the future possibilities with the present and the narratives he had heard from the past. In terms of Habermas, I heard Allen's stories as four valid claims of truth, appropriateness, sincerity and comprehensiveness, enhanced by personal experiences over many years within the public domain of the Tasman Peninsula community. With Bakhtin, I witnessed in Allen's voice the future energy of possibilities for the future of the Peninsula based on wisdom, experience and hope.

The interview with Stephen was not so personal and I took the leading role in asking the questions. Stephen spoke as an expert in this situation and presented facts and opinions based on his experience as a manager. His position took our dialogue out of the private domain into the socio-political domain of employment on the Tasman Peninsula. In Stephen's talking, there was truthfulness, his responses to my questions seemed appropriate and were comprehensively informative, and he was sincere. It seemed he was committed to communicative action. Stephen is a part-time Tasman Peninsula community member and did not bring the breadth of history and experience that some other voices have done. He spoke with an authoritative voice, but only of the tourism and business activities in which he is involved. In this regard he is an expert, and I came to him with all that I had gleaned from my research. My questioning was important for bringing out his knowledge. It could be said that our conversation became a dialogue that was merging two horizons of understanding. Might a fusion of horizons have been occurring? I did not have the knowledge of tourism that Stephen had, and he possibly did not have the kind of prosaic knowledge of the community that I had enveloped. Together though we guided each other through question and answer as to how tourism was placed within the community. Stephen's experience of the past, with his current knowledge within the present, might have given him the persuasion to speculate on the future of some aspects of the Tasman Peninsula community. Allen suggested possibilities to prepare for a future on the Tasman Peninsula, Stephen speculated on the directions of the future.

## Hopes for the Future

Tasman Peninsula community residents carry hopes for the future. I asked Mayor Barwick a question by email, “What do you hope regarding the future of Tasman?” Her response was,

That we can get the balance right. In the past tourists we have had travelling to Port Arthur as a day trip and returning to Hobart. People are becoming aware that we have the most beautiful and spectacular natural attributes that would rival any in the world. Our rugged sea cliffs, our beautiful beaches, spectacular walks, coastal scenery, fantastic views and isolated forests, our wildlife and birds. We need carefully planned and selected development that will not spoil what people are coming to see, we cannot stagnate, but we also do not want to become a Surfers Paradise. Our community is very reliant on tourism, so we don't want to discourage it, as it will provide more jobs for our young people, but we need to proceed with caution. *[sic]* (Personal Communication)

In this context Barwick referred to Surfers Paradise, a beach resort and suburb of the city of the Gold Coast, in the northern state of Australia, Queensland. The permanent population of this suburb at the 2011 ABS Census was recorded at 19,688 people, within a city of 536,000 people. Known for its nighttime entertainment and central to family attractions, including Australia's major theme parks, the population of Surfers Paradise swells by 20,000 to 30,000 tourists each night of the year. As the suburb is located along a narrow coastal strip, the residents and tourists are accommodated in high-rise apartment blocks. Barwick's comments suggest that whilst tourism and development are encouraged on the Tasman Peninsula they should not be at the expense of the natural beauty that beckons tourism to the area.

So the road continues into an unknown future—its destination might be determined by possibilities that arise, its direction might be determined by conditions it encounters, and its hope might be paved with the bricks that are formed today.



*Photograph 11. Regeneration – Hopes for the future (Carroll, 2015)*

As eucalypts sprout new growth through the sparseness of burnt out forest on the Tasman Peninsula, may the community there also regenerate following adverse times.

## INTERLUDE

### *Leaves of Grass*

*But each man and each woman of you I lead upon a knoll,  
My left hand hooks you round the waist,  
My right hand points to landscapes of continents and the public road.  
Not I, not any one else can travel that road for you,  
You must travel it for yourself.*

Whitman, W. (1885-1886).

### **Mending Walls** -an excerpt

*...It comes to little more:  
There where it is we do not need the wall:  
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.  
My apple trees will never get across  
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbours."*

Frost, R. (1915).

*Port Arthur is an important metaphor for the human condition, and the infinite fragility, precariousness and potential of life – the struggle to preserve value, to recognise diversity, to protect culture/cultures, to promote civilization and to reject the rule of force, rule by gun or bomb, and those forces of blood, lust and revenge that inevitably, understandably, are inside us all.*

Jones, B. (2007).

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE END OF THE ROAD

I stood at the top of the grassy knoll and wondered what lies ahead. I have made one last journey down that single road in the course of my inquiry. Bushfires have ravaged the Tasman Peninsula. I saw charred remains of long-standing eucalypts, fractured lives of people living in temporary caravan dwellings, and broken fences where good neighbours mend relationships.

But I have also witnessed regeneration and hope in the eyes and spirit of the people of the Tasman Peninsula. Just as the eucalypts have spurned green shoots and new branches, so has the life of the community appeared born again, with new enterprise and new hope.

As I drove along the road I noticed a lavender farm and a whiskey distillery, new businesses that have opened since my previous visit. The Port Arthur Lavender Farm not only grows lavender, but is a tourist attraction with a retail outlet for coffee and snacks, lavender flavoured icecreams, a playground for children, a venue for weddings and receptions, and souvenir Tasmanian Devil soft toys stuffed with wheat and lavender. There is a distillery close to the Port Arthur Historic Site, located on natural water springs to take advantage of clean air and water and cool climate, used to produce a range of single malt whiskeys. A Sydney executive chose the site on a family holiday in Tasmania, and he relocated to Port Arthur to start Australia's southern-most distillery. Tourists view high quality artworks, sourced from Hobart, in an adjoining gallery.

I bought a jewelry piece from the Port Arthur Visitor's Centre that was made from ash collected after the bushfires. The pendant enclosed black ash around a miniature sculptured tree branch and bird, adorned with flashes of red-coloured ash representing the fires and green-coloured ash representing new life. I heard of prisoners from the Tasmanian State Government Prison, located close to Hobart, who had replaced thousands of kilometres of fencing burnt out by the bushfires, through day work programs. Far from convict days of the past, the work of these

modern prisoners is lauded and respected by the community that values their contributions.

I visited the Tasman Ecovillage and spoke again with Ilan Arnon. Since its inception the village has hosted over 400 people from 28 countries, who have come to work within the village. Mostly these are backpackers with short working holiday visas for four weeks. Some learn of the site through an organisation called WWOOFERS, an acronym for Willing Workers on Organic Farms. The WWOOFER organisation is worldwide and provides workers an opportunity to volunteer for a few hours a day in return for meals and accommodation. I met several overseas people at the centre and was served tea by a young Sicilian man, with very little English language. He was on 'lunch duty' and had prepared salads, breads and cold meat cuts for other workers who came in from construction and farming jobs. Some permanent residents have bought the old motel units as homes, having relocated from elsewhere in Australia or moved locally, other rooms are available for the volunteers, and some rooms are available for short-term holiday lease. The centre has common dining areas, an Internet café, art exhibition space, it caters for functions, and shares vegetables, fruit and herbs grown around the village by the residents. Arnon told me that though this was a truly multicultural experience within the Nubeena township, it tended to be self-contained with few of the visitors venturing beyond the Ecovillage. He encouraged local residents to visit the village for coffees, lunches or functions, and meet some of the international guests. Arnon spoke also of the hardship he had experienced in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis and then with the bushfires. The village was without electricity for 10 days after the fires, which also meant no water, as the pumps would not work. This coincided with the peak January tourism season. He said that not only had it caused financial concerns, but also had a significant psychological effect.

I visited the Koonya Garlic Festival, a celebration of everything garlic—food, plant trades, and educational talks, combined with music, drink, games and produce. The festival has taken on the atmosphere of a family country fair and has become an annual event organised by a local Arts Committee. Community involvement has spread to sports clubs on the Tasman Peninsula, with soccer, Australian Rules Football and cricket teams competing now in southern Tasmanian rosters.

A community bank has opened, owned by shareholders on the Tasman Peninsula and trading for the locals a couple of days every week. A minimum of \$715,000 was needed by the community for the bank to commence trading, and 275 local people raised this amount. This has spurred a confidence in the local community and business owners.

An upgrade of the road, the Arthur Highway has commenced, with a grant of \$18 million from the State Government of Tasmania. The upgrade includes widening, leveling and sealing the road, and removing sharp corners and bends. Arnon, a proponent of the secondary loop road for some years told me it would be “suicidal” to drive on that road at present.

There is a major conservation project being undertaken at the iconic Penitentiary building at the Port Arthur Historic Site. At a cost of around six million dollars, the building is being stabilised with engineering expertise. The Penitentiary is not only a visual reminder of past history, but also a venue for the Performing Arts, including plays and orchestras. One play performed in 2014 was *Bearing Witness*, written and directed by a local playwright, Sue Benner, and performed by refugees through the Migrant Resource Centre in Hobart, “to celebrate and acknowledge the strength of survivors of trauma and torture” (Sutton, *The Sorell Times*, October, 2014, p. 7).

Tourist numbers are increasing on the Tasman Peninsula. A new initiative is bringing tourists by sea in cruise liners that sail the world. Many tourist attractions were forced to close for 10 days during the bushfires of 2013, but the summer of 2014 has seen record numbers of day visitors.

The Tasman Peninsula community has embraced social networking, and faster Internet connections are available in some areas. A perusal of the social media Facebook site, ‘Tasman Noticeboard’, shows a diversity of uses—advertisements for small businesses such as manicures; public meeting notices, including one to discuss options for young people and families when they finish Grade 10; an urgent need to purchase a caravan; families offering and needing homes to rent; someone wanting transport to the north of Tasmania; household goods and toys for sale; all manner of livestock and agricultural notices, including requests for visits from the equine vet and dentist from Hobart; pallets for goat shelters and old water tanks for pig shelters; a Boer goat buck for breeding; an information session for the removal of snakes; a government advertisement for a visit by the Department of Human



Services mobile office in a truck; and someone wanting to buy goat's milk. Since the bushfires communication has been improved through such agencies.

Unfortunately not all is moving positively on the Tasman Peninsula. In what seems to be a retrograde step, the medical services offered on the Tasman Peninsula are to be cut. Whilst still the subject of debate and conjecture, the current medical providers have announced they are withdrawing their services. At least one General Practitioner has been found who will work Monday through to Friday at the Medical Centre but, I am told, there is to be no provision for emergency after hours care, except if an emergency response plan was activated in times of a threat to the larger community. The childcare centre is also marked for permanent closure, although a private family day care scheme is expected to open soon.

I have walked the road into, through and out of the Tasman Peninsula many times as a child, a honeymooner, a parent, a property owner, and recently as a teacher-as-researcher. In my latest trek my protagonists – Bakhtin, Gadamer, Habermas and Tönnies, have accompanied me. In Chapter Three I suggested that these philosophers offer me “language, conversations, understandings and veracity for framing this thesis, ways of gathering my evidence and interpreting the lived experience of my inquiry” (p.33). Their company has led me to conversations, consultations, cooperation, celebration and condolences.

Bakhtin allowed me to question my experiences within the social and cultural settings I walked. He taught me to consider my utterances as part of the history that is being created, and to appreciate the historicity of a situation where dialogue occurs. Speech genres are formed through the language, intonation and gestures of the participants. Bakhtin offered me a *vnenakhodimost*, a space where I might see, hear, feel, empathise and embody the spirit and life of the Tasman Peninsula community, as an organic body. Bakhtin permitted me to celebrate, along with the community, in times of festivals and carnivals, observances and solemnity, and community gatherings.

At the outset of my journey I questioned whether the historicity of the spoken word might form part of the external forces that impact on the stability of the Tasman Peninsula community. I have witnessed situations where this has occurred in arguments surrounding proposed marine parks and World Heritage listing. Although the equilibrium of the community may have been tested and shaken, the

compensations by internal hubs have brought about a new conversation in history. The study group, 14 and 15-year-olds in Grade 9 at Tasman District School have been there, throughout the conversations that have shaped recent history, as active participants within the speech genres.

Gadamer led me towards new horizons. He revealed the possibilities of *horizontverschmelzung*, a possibility of two parties merging, each recognising that the other might be right, and forming new knowledge and truth by speaking, *ansprechen*, and listening, *zuhören*, with each other. My knowledge was enhanced many times through listening to others and offering my opinions and facts with openness. I engaged in dialogue with the study group, and these students enhanced my knowledge with their local narratives and lore. Charles and I continued our dialogue, Charles taught me much about the Tasman Peninsula fishing industry, and I offered experience and encouragement that he might build new knowledge upon. Gadamer helped me find beauty in what otherwise might have been desolation and devastation. Through *mimesis* and occasion I witnessed beauty and celebration in the heart of the community, an inner core that maintained the revolving community hubs. Through beauty and *mimesis* Gadamer has given me light to move forwards with interludes of poetry and prose that reflect my place, person and participation.

Tönnies asked me to know myself, *nosce te ipsum*, to look into my own heart before I ventured into that of others. He urged me to move cautiously, to gain the trust of others I meet. He also pointed to two types of society, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. I recognised both forms as I encountered them, *Gemeinschaft* in the rural and organic Tasman Peninsula community, and *Gesellschaft* in the ruggedness of a dynamic and evolutionary Tasman Peninsula community geared towards national and international, systematic and political fronts. I questioned whether both could exist alongside each other, and I found no reason why there could not be co-habitation of both societies, certainly while the teenagers of today become the leaders of tomorrow, having experienced the *esprit de corps* borne from local traditions and ways, and encouraged by new enterprises such as the garlic festival, lavender farms, shared accommodation and resources and a community bank. Globalisation and international demands on trading and finances exist within the community already, but they earn their place through trust and acceptance by the locals.

Habermas showed me his *lebenswelt*, the lifeworld where everyday life is accompanied by dialogue, everyday conversations and linguistics, bound to everyday culture. Along the road I met many with whom I engaged in conversations and storytelling. Our dialogue was subjected to scrutiny, as we each sought validity and truth in our words. Our understanding of each other came out of *verständigungsform*, the place Habermas gave us in his lifeworld to conduct our conversations and gain mutual understandings and trust.

Habermas showed me the systemworld, a place along the road where politics and economy veered into the Tasman Peninsula community. At points the systemworld dominated communication, for example over the decisions around marine parks, road improvements, bushfire recovery, and infrastructure spending. Community members willingly entered debates at these points, with their lifeworld values and expectations heard strongly. The outcomes were favourable to most parties, new horizons along the road rising from mutual understanding. At times the hurdles of lifeworld versus systemworld seem insurmountable, such as the current situation with cuts to medical, child and aged care facilities, but the community members are still in the race, and the outcomes are yet not clear. The resilience of the lifeworld to counterbalance the strong impacts of the systemworld comes from within, from shifting hubs and dynamics responding to external forces.

At the beginning and throughout my journey I have questioned whether I belonged and had an identity with the Tasman Peninsula community. I faced the challenge of gaining trust with community members by an introduction to the younger members of the community, the teenagers of the study group. If they accepted me as teacher-as-researcher I might be empowered to continue my journey. As I took tentative steps along the road I felt the wariness of the people I encountered, a cool breeze that refreshed my intent to be honest and approach with humility. Over time I felt warmth embracing me, as the community members accepted me into inner hubs. It would be impertinent to suggest that I fully belonged to this community, but I have been accepted and I have an identity within.

I have immersed myself with the communicative action of others. Sometimes I have been a speaker within the discourses and at other times I have been a listener. As a participant in the *ansprechen* and *zuhören* of hubs within the Tasman Peninsula community I have attained some mutual understanding with other participants. I

have heard the strength in the multiplicity of voices and I have heard the wisdom, insights and opinions of single voices. Importantly I have felt the energy of the Tasman Peninsula community. Where there has been dissention I have witnessed a move within the hubs to accommodate differences in opinion. Where there has been agreement on external forces that might alter the shape of the community I have seen and heard the ways in which the community can best adapt to changes that might stabilise the community. I have heard suggestions from individual members of the community on how the community might adapt to a yet unknown future. I suggest that in a similar inquiry within another small community the researcher would similarly explore his or her capacity for mutual acceptance and a sense of belonging.

I recall the UNESCO description of sustainability that emphasises the culture and values that a community holds (1997, p.14). In this thesis I have sought those values that unite the Tasman Peninsula community, and those that divide. I have looked for a mirroring of adult values in the thoughts of the younger members, those that might be leaders of the future. Mostly I have seen refreshing winds of change, where core values are maintained through the generations, teenagers who mirror their elders' values, but are energised with their own interpretations, expectations and transformations in interest and understanding around sustainability issues. Teenagers who previously seemed to have few perceptions of their environment became aware of some of the problems they live with, and in time became activists within their own community hubs. Without intent of 'teaching sustainability', however that might be done, I witnessed the students developing their own understanding and interpretation of the concept.

I agree with the UNESCO claim of culture and values being drivers for sustainability. Relationships within the Tasman Peninsula community are built upon values of acceptance, *esprit de corps*, protection of others and the environment, tradition, and respect. I have come to experience that shared values unite a community and build a platform for environmental, cultural, social and economic sustainability.

I have stood looking over the community of today and seen the physique of the Tasman Peninsula, partially built from the impacts of the past. Though the propositions of this thesis reveal much of the lived histories that young people grow

up in, it is simply not possible to predict with any accuracy the state of a future community. Recounting and interpreting the histories does show that it is possible that the community continues to aspire through an open type of communicative action that brings the Tasman Peninsula community into equilibrium, and that counteracts external forces with shifting energy and dynamics to produce new balance. This thesis offers questions and propositions that might be useful for thinking about and developing responsive initiatives and processes in settings where sustainability of community is of deep concern. Attitudes, values, situations and places may not change but the community has shown its resilience in absorbing the impact of external forces. Although there are some unwanted external forces, such as the condition of the roads, and the withdrawal of some medical services, they are unlikely to be destructive, given the resilience, understanding, innovation and enterprise, politics, and drive of community hub members. The Tasman Peninsula community reveals itself in this thesis to be well suited to being an economically, environmentally, culturally and socially sustainable body.

Thus I pay homage to a community that has embraced me, sometimes brought me close to its powerful body, and at other times let me freely explore its roads and byways. In the world today sustainability of community is something we might yearn for—that small communities might rise above challenges and violations, to mend broken storylines and create new and enlivened histories and memories. This thesis bears witness to the survival of a community composed of many circulating hubs that adjust to external forces, be the forces natural or *ersatz*, in hope for economic, environmental, cultural or social sustainability. My journey has been, as John-Paul Lederach suggests in *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (2009), “toward a past that lies before us” and it forays into possible futures, circular in many ways. As Lederach says, and as I have come to comprehend, “The past and future are not seen as dualistic, polar opposites. They are connected, like ends of a circle and become seamless”(2009, p.136).

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# APPENDIX A

Letter of Approval From Professor Kathleen Stewart.



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November 7, 2014

This is to give Toni-Anne Carroll permission to use the phrase "a space on the side of the road" as a central metaphor in her thesis on the sustainability of the Tasman Peninsula. The phrase is the title of my book published by Princeton University Press in 1996.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Stewart".

Kathleen Stewart  
Professor of Anthropology