



Professional
Historians
Australia

Tasmania

&

TAHO
Tasmanian Archive + Heritage Office

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

Invitation to a talk by
Alicia Marchant

'Three cheers to the old apple tree!': wassailing, nostalgia and the heritage of apples

The ancient practice of wassailing to the apple trees has had a resurgence in recent years in apple-growing regions around the world, including in Tasmania where wassailing is performed as part of the Huon Valley Mid-Winter Fest. First recorded at Fordwich in Kent in England in 1585, apple wassailing or 'apple howling' is performed annually on Old Twelfth Night after the Winter Solstice and involves a parading group moving noisily from orchard to orchard, singing a traditional wassailing song with gusto, and banging on pots and pans. The costumes worn are equally as loud, with bright tatters, Morris dress, greenery and foliage, furs and pagan animal masks. The task of this group is to make as much noise as possible to awaken the dormant apple trees to encourage new growth, and to scare away the evil spirits that could lurk and do damage to the precious fruit. Taking the Huon Valley wassail as focal point, this paper will examine the long history of wassailing to the apple trees, and its affective and heritage meanings. Wassailing provides a fascinating case study that raises questions around memory, story-telling and nostalgia, heritage landscapes and soundscapes, folk traditions and archival sources, to ask: what happens when the very British practice of wassailing is transplanted to Tasmania? What sorts of 'pasts' are recalled, and what emotional work does the wassail performance do within these contexts?

Time:

Thursday, 4 July
1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Venue:

Allport Library and Museum of Fine
Arts, Ground floor, 91 Murray St
(LINC Tasmania)

Jointly Sponsored by the **Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office** and
Professional Historians Australia (Tasmania)

No RSVPs required, but for further information see:

<http://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/linc-tasmania-allport-8036281933>

Queries to Caroline Evans
carolineevans@iinet.net.au

