A research team at UTAS has been developing a prototype for an Historical Atlas of Hobart to prove the concept of bringing high end georeferenced maps and spatial information into easily accessible hand held devices.

This has been funded by UTAS seed funding and the Tasmanian Government Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts.

The research project team is multidisciplinary, and has used team meetings to explore and develop understanding across the disciplines of the issues and nuances involved in presenting material to a wide ranging audience. The team has included:

- Prof Pam Sharpe
- Jacqueline Fox
- School of History and Classics, UTAS
- Prof Chris Lueg
- Tim Nugent
- Nic Wittison
- School of Computing and Information Systems, UTAS
- Prof Stephen Loo
- School of architecture and Design, UTAS
- Alex Leith
- Surveying and Spatial Science, UTAS
- Dr Natasha Cica
- Collaborative Research Project developer, UTAS
- Dr Derek Pennington
- School of Engineering, UTAS
- Bill Seager
- Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery
- Assoc Prof Elaine Stratford
- School of Geography and Environmental Studies, UTAS
- Dr Martin Walch
- Tasmanian School of Art
The Atlas Project – The Maps

The development of the project has focused not only on presenting spatial information, but on assessing what legacy of spatial information is available for Tasmania.

The team acknowledges the assistance of

• Peter Murphy and Robert Higgins, Information and Land Services Division, State Government
• Peter Fleming, Hobart City Council
• Tony Marshall and the staff at TAHO
• Maggie Patton and Elise Edmonds at the State Library of New South Wales
• Dr Martin Woods at the National Library of Australia

in making available scanned copies of a number of historic maps.

However, locating and attempting to provide context on historic maps required significant research because map collections are yet to be fully catalogued. Appended to this document is the information we have gathered!
This slide show is an illustration of the interactive Application “The Atlas Project – Proof of concept” that has been developed by Pamela Sharpe and her team.

This slide show cannot show all the features, but merely a range of snapshots to illustrate successful achievement of launching historical maps on tablet devices.

Please contact Prof. Sharpe directly for further information.

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The user is standing in Hunter Street, Hobart. The GPS of the device has located the relevant data, and this can now be accessed.

Zoom or pan the Google Earth map background to size it to your area of interest, and then brush the pull down list of historic maps that the application has automatically worked out to have some information within your screen area.
Access the list of historic maps

INTERACTIVITY:

Touch top corner of screen to drop down a list of historic maps
Choose a map, and touch “overlay” to place it on your screen

INTERACTIVITY:
All historic maps have been georeferenced as far as possible. There will be inaccuracies simply because a number of the maps predate the setting up of survey systems for Hobart.
Zoom in and locate your area of interest

INTERACTIVITY:
Use the slide bar along to bottom to change the transparency of the map, so that you can see the current day aerial photograph though it.
Select another map –
This is Hobart 4 - compiled in 1827…
HOBART 4

As the title panel at the bottom left indicates, this plan of Hobart and its vicinity was compiled by Assistant Surveyor William Sharland in September 1827. Battery Point and ‘the Domain Point’ were copied from earlier surveys by Assistant Surveyor Thomas Scott.

On 25 February 1828, a copy of this map was ‘Produced in the Executive Council’ when it met to consider the boundaries of Hobart Town and ‘define them as accurately as possible’. It had become necessary to identify where the town ended and the suburbs began because ‘the want of some well defined regulations’ had impeded the government’s aim of inducing ‘persons to build good houses and improve the grounds around them’. While suburban allotments could comprise up to 10 acres, the Surveyor-General informed the government that the ‘contracted space which had generally been allowed for Town Allotments had prevented many inhabitants from building more respectable houses’.

The map viewed by the Executive Council is described in the minutes as ‘a plan of the Town marked A, on which was traced in red ink Lines the boundaries’ that Lieutenant-Governor Arthur ‘proposed … to establish for the Town and Suburbs’.

While the ‘red ink Lines’ are not drawn on this copy of the map, it is possible to make out the linking points, labeled C, D, E and F, written in black. Points A and B appear to have been marked in the torn sections of the map.
Increase the transparency of Hobart 4 to see how it compares with the current waterfront, and see that you (located at the purple pin) would not have been on land at this time this map was created.
Zoom in to see more detail of the Hunter wharf area
Zoom in again and see how different the waterfront is today!
Bring up a map drawn only 13 years later in 1840 and look at what has changed
Move on 12 years to 1852....
Access historic photographs, and their matched contemporary equivalents…

spot the differences……
Bridge wider
Industrial chimneys removed
Advances(?) in transportation
Gas lamp street lighting gone

The project plans to work with volunteers to digitise and provide contemporary photos to compare with the rich sources of historic photographs. These will be georeferenced and accessible through markers that float over the maps.
Hunter Wharf

When the first white settlers arrived in what was to be named Hobart, Hunter Island was separated from the shore by a sand spit and this situation remained until 1820. George Harris’s sketches are the earliest representations of this area in 1805. The tidal flats were a source of food for aborigines with the Salamanca area providing wetlands. The basic grid street pattern was established in 1811 when surveyor Meehan responded to Governor Macquarie’s’ dissatisfaction with the way that the town was developing and decided to place some order on Hobart. The Rev. Knopwood was the first resident of what became Battery Point. In November 1815 he recorded in his diary ‘I walked down the garden and found that the natives were getting oysters and mussels’. In other entries he reports accompanying native girls who were fishing.

The causeway that was constructed was quite substantial because two carts could pass each other and there was a footpath. After pressure from merchants, some reclamation took place. By 1822 Hunter’s Island had three small wharves but larger sailing ships had to remain in the bay and unload to smaller ships. While the first buildings seem to have been timber by the mid-1820s substantial stone warehouses had been erected such as the three-storey building built by Walter Bethune (could link to ADNB entry on him) on Hunter Island. Apart from the trade with Britain, goods were imported from Batavia, China and India. However the jetties proved inadequate especially at low tide.

Bethune was one of the merchants who started to agitate for improved port facilities resulting in the development of the more sheltered Sullivan’s Wharf where whalers could be berthed in the harbour. This became known as New Wharf and was mainly developed in the 1830s whereas Hunters’ Wharf became ‘Old Wharf’. Surveyor-General Frankland’s plan for New Wharf (Hobart 8) shows a vision of boulevards and shopping malls that was never realized. Map Hobart 19 shows the infill of the New Wharf by 1840. Some merchants also lived in the Old Wharf buildings and as will be explained, many workers lived in this area. By contrast, the New Wharf warehouses provided the impetus for the new suburb of Battery Point to develop.

Read an interpretation of the area written by Pam Sharpe

With the move of many of the merchants to New Wharf, ‘Old Wharf’ became increasingly industrial. The government slaughterhouse was located here from about 1826 giving rise to the by-industries of tanning, candle-making, and the rendering of fat for soap. While the course of the rivulet was changed several times, it carried the effluent from industrial works and was an open sewer for the many water closets that used it as a drain. In the second half of the nineteenth century with the impact of steam power and the rail link, and the building of the gasworks (which pumped out waste ammonia) the pollution grew worse despite municipal government being established. The area began to attract more noxious activities. A bone shed was established and this became the site of the municipal tip. The rivulet was always above ground until the twentieth century. 

Cont.
In the 1840s the merchants who owned allotments along Old Wharf built rows of tenement houses usually named after themselves (for example, Degraves Row, Morlings Row, Rileys Row) and consisting of up to a dozen small houses each. Some more substantial buildings were interspersed, along with public houses and warehouses that were open to the public. This area, known as Wapping, has almost entirely disappeared. The population numbered around 1,200 in the 1880s. There were sixty houses on Hunter Wharf in 1890 when most were destroyed by a devastating fire.

Many of those who lived in these houses worked, at least seasonally, in the jam factories that dominated this part of the port from the second half of the nineteenth century and through much of the twentieth century. George Peacock began to make jam here in 1869 having bought the two properties that belonged to one of the original merchants William Bunster. Peacock ran his factory on strict religious lines. His workers attended morning prayers and hymn singing and had to be strictly teetotal.

Henry Jones worked for Peacock but then along with Peacock’s son and another partner, bought out the business in 1889. Jones used personal magnetism (as encapsulated in his slogan IExcel!) and fostered a work ethic by giving those involved with the firm a direct interest in its success. So he had ship-owners working partly for himself and partly for him – this ‘jam fleet’ became a familiar site in Hobart. In addition to coastal and other shipping Jones developed interests in almost every part of the jam industry, becoming financially involved in the sawmills that made his packing cases, in the orchards and hop fields where he provided finance to growers. He invested in coalmines as well as tinplate and carbide manufactories. He even took out franchises for insurance agents. This lateral expansion had varying fortunes but there is no doubt that Jones’s business flourished in an era when trade was assisted by the colonial context and rapid technological developments. For example, cold storage on ships had advanced to the point where fresh Tasmanian apples first reached an English market in 1884. The smell, sight and sounds of jam making would have dominated this part of the wharf for around a century from the 1860s.

The Iceworks

Only the façade of the Iceworks remains as the entrance to the UTAS School of Art. The Iceworks were built in 1903, replacing Bunster’s building of 1826 and Bethune’s warehouse of 1822 and show that the expansion of Henry Jones’ interests included refrigeration and freezing. However the buildings had been used for cold storage for some time before this. Australia was a world leader in developing refrigeration processes in the nineteenth century. However in the first half of the century, ice was either imported from North America or collected on Mount Wellington in the winter and stored in icehouses on the mountain.

In 1858 King and Patterson were using this building as a rabbit store. King’s father had bred rabbits on Betsy Island off South Arm since the 1820s. This proved to be a long lived activity as in 1915 Patterson of Sydney still rented this coolhouse as a store for rabbits and hare. It appears that cool space was rented to locals who wanted to store their catches of rabbits here. Henry Jones and Co. also experimented with canned rabbit. In the Mercury in 1882 it was reported that Alan McCall and Co. of Houndsditch, London had had a monopoly on tinned rabbit from Tasmania for thirty years.
ACCESS AN ‘ANIMATED HISTORY OF HUNTER STREET’ full screen video

Video animation prepared by e-media student Andrew Tuttle and shows in a fly though animation the development of the area through time.