

QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

CHS 56

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA COLLECTION

Commercial Workers, Launceston
Clubs and Associations, Launceston

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INTRODUCTION

The Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania was founded by a large number of commercial travellers at a meeting held in the Launceston Hotel on 14 April 1900. The *Examiner* of 17 April 1900, in its report of the meeting, stated that the aim of the association was to watch 'the interests of commercial travellers, and the strengthening of their hands in necessary reforms'.

Tasmania was the last of the Australian colonies to establish a commercial travellers' association. (1) Affiliated with the United Commercial Travellers' Association of Australasia (UCTAA) which had been formed in 1895, the Tasmanian association sent delegates to the annual conferences of the federal body, with some Tasmanian presidents becoming presidents of the UCTAA.

Meetings were held at the Launceston Hotel until August 1902 when the club moved to premises at 47 Cameron Street, near the corner of George Street on the south west side. (2)

The association was active in its endeavours to improve the working conditions of its members. A major concern was hotel accommodation. Hotels were inspected, appointed and issued with certificates, and unsatisfactory sanitation reported to the relevant authorities. The hotel list was revised annually, with some hotels being struck off. Rail travel was also important: letters were sent to and a deputation waited on the general manager of the railways concerned with matters such as timetables, faster services, lavatory provision on trains and at stations, cloak room charges and freight rates for samples.

The club provided for the social life of its members with amenities at the club, including billiard tables, newspapers and periodicals, 'At Homes', smoke concerts and an annual picnic.

In July 1907 Dr L S Holmes' two-storey residence at 78 Charles Street was purchased. Soon after the move from Cameron Street to Charles Street, a photograph of the CTA Club building appeared in the *Weekly Courier* of 24 August 1907.

The club had extended its operations to Hobart in 1906 and a club house opened there in July 1907.

In June 1909 the committee recommended that the property known as the Fire Bell Tower at 160 Brisbane Street be purchased from Goodwin's estate. Alterations were made to the Brisbane Street premises which were to be the club quarters whilst a new building was constructed in Charles Street.

Messrs J & T Gunn's tender at 4196 pounds was accepted for the new building in Charles Street in June 1910. The existing building was demolished. (3) The Governor of Tasmania, Sir Harry Barron, laid the foundation stone on 9 December 1910 and CTA President Duncan laid the topmost stone of the building on 7 November 1911. The CTA Club was opened on 4 April 1912 and the *Weekly Courier* published a photograph of the completed Charles Street building that day, calling it a handsome structure. The annual conference of the UCTAA opened in the new club premises the following day. (4)

From its early days the CTA was a community minded organisation. It donated cots to the Launceston General Hospital and toys at Christmas time. In October 1914 the association organised a patriotic carnival at the Elphin Show Grounds in aid of funds for the European War (5) and in 1921, to assist in the movement to establish a Northern Tasmania home for boys, a second gigantic carnival was held, again at the show grounds. A lengthy description and photograph of the event appeared in the *Australasian Traveller* of 6 January 1921. During the Second World War the club dispatched in excess of 1500 food parcels to Britain and a fellowship fund was established to assist members who fell upon hard times on their return from the war. (6)

The *Memorandum of association rules and by-laws of the Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania* (Launceston, 1924?) included details of the mortuary benefit fund, which was paid to a member's widow, relief fund for aged, necessitous or incapacitated members and scholarship fund for members' children, along with rules for accommodation etc.

The royal visit of the Duke of Gloucester to Launceston on 16 November 1934 was a notable occasion for the CTA. During the royal progress through the city, a halt was made at the CTA Club where representatives of the CTA of Tasmania presented an address of welcome to His Royal Highness.

NG Harper's *Tasmanian passes, checks & club tokens*, in the chapter on the Commercial Travellers Club, provides a good description of the poker machines used in the club. As early as February 1904 committee minutes mentioned that the secretary was instructed to procure a supply of metal tokens for poker machines, and it was resolved that three poker machines be ordered from America. Poker machines were withdrawn in 1938.

A major building programme was undertaken in the late 1950s/early 1960s when some fourteen motel units were erected. (7)

With the introduction of television and increasing number of licenses issued to sporting clubs, introduction of the .05 drinking law and the fact that poker machines were not given to clubs, membership of the CTA started to decline, causing the club to sell its 78 Charles Street premises and associated buildings at 160-162 Brisbane Street (comprising a 15 unit motel, two lock-up shops and commercial rooms above) in 1972. (8) The club's final day of trading at Charles Street was 31 August 1975. (9) In September 1975 the complex was demolished to make way for a Venture Store. (10) In 2006 the building is occupied by Target Australia Pty Ltd.

The CTA Club moved to 127 Wellington Street, part of the former Mitchell Motors building, near the Canning Street corner, in 1976; in the interim it met at the Centennial Hotel. (11) The Charles Street foundation stone was removed to the Wellington Street building, along with the club's magnificent blackwood and mirror bar, which had to be reduced from seven bays to five to fit on the ground floor of the new club. When times became difficult, the bar was moved to an upstairs room on the same site and reduced to four bays.

The Club closed in 1988, and the bar, which had to be reduced to three bays, was leased to the RSLA Club at Anzac House in Paterson Street. With Anzac House about to be demolished, the bar was given on permanent loan to the Masonic Club at 34 George Street. (12) After the Masonic

Club closed, Fidlers Brasserie opened in the premises in November 2000 and the bar was a feature of the establishment. (13)

The collection was donated to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in August 2000 with additional items in October 2002 and June 2003. This additional material is listed as 5/11-5/32, 6.Legal Records and 7.Additional Minutes of Meetings.

References:

1. *Australian encyclopaedia* (Sydney, 1958) vol. 2, p. 456
2. NG Harper, *Tasmanian passes, checks & club tokens* (Hobart, 1985), chapter on 'Commercial Travellers Club', pp. 18-21; *Tasmanian Post Office directory* 1903; *Tasmanian Government Gazette* 21 October 1902, valuation roll for Launceston for 1903; CTA committee minutes 30 August 1902
3. Brendan Lyons, *All gunns blazing: J. & T. Gunn and the development of Launceston, 1871-1997* (Launceston, 1998)
4. *Examiner* 6/4/1912, p. 3
5. *Commercial Travellers Association Launceston Tasmania. Patriotic carnival in aid of the patriotic funds for European war.* 17 October 1914. Souvenir programme
6. NG Harper, *Tasmanian passes...*
7. NG Harper, *Tasmanian passes...*
8. NG Harper, *Tasmanian passes...*; *Examiner* 15/4/2000 article on the club's centenary; *Examiner* sale advertisement 25/3/1972; *Examiner* 22/3/1975
9. NG Harper, *Tasmanian passes...*
10. *Examiner* 26/9/1975, p. 5
11. *Examiner* 22/3/1975, 19/7/1975; NG Harper, *Tasmanian passes...*
12. *Examiner* 6/10/1997
13. *Examiner Sunday Magazine* 10/12/2000, p. B9

The remainder of the information comes from the CTA collection.

1. Minutes of Meetings

1/1	Minutes of general committee meetings, October 1903-December 1909	1903-1909
1/2	Minutes of general committee meetings, January 1910-May 1918	1910-1918
1/3	Minutes of general committee meetings, June 1918-December 1923	1918-1923
1/4	Minutes of general committee meetings, January 1924-June 1927 (includes finance committee meetings)	1924-1927
1/5	Minutes of general committee meetings, July 1927-May 1930 (includes finance committee meetings)	1927-1930
1/6	Minutes of general committee meetings, June 1930-April 1932 (includes finance committee meetings)	1930-1932
1/7	Minutes of general committee meetings, May 1932-February 1936 (includes finance committee meetings)	1932-1936
1/8	Minutes of general committee meetings, March 1936-October 1942 (includes finance committee meetings)	1936-1942
1/9	Minutes of general committee meetings, December 1942-April 1947 (includes finance committee meetings)	1942-1947
1/10	Minutes of general committee meetings, May 1947-June 1950 (includes finance committee meetings)	1947-1950
1/11	Minutes of general committee meetings, July 1950-February 1954 (includes finance committee meetings)	1950-1954
1/12	Minutes of house/club committee meetings, July 1910-August 1928	1910-1928
1/13	Minutes of club committee meetings, September 1928-June 1938	1928-1938
1/14	Minutes of club committee meetings, July 1938-August 1946	1938-1946
1/15	Minutes of club committee meetings, September 1946-	1946-1956

September 1956

1/16 Minutes of finance and general committee meetings,
November 1966-December 1970 1966-1970

2. Financial Records

2/1 Book of Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania
mortgage debenture forms, issued 1906 (nos 1-40 used,
41-50 missing, 51-100 unused) 1906

2/2 Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania General
Cash Book (cover title), March 1911-February 1918 1911-1918

2/3 Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania General
Cash Book (cover title), Hobart written in pencil on first
page, March 1911-November 1919 1911-1919

2/4 (General cash book), November 1919-June 1923 1919-1923

2/5 Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania (cover title)
No.4 (on spine), January 1923-June 1926, Hobart Club July
1923-February 1926 1923-1926

2/6 Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania (cover title)
Cash Book No 5 (on spine), July 1926-July 1931, Hobart
July 1926-June 1932 1926-1932

2/7 Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania Incorp 1915
(cover title), Ledger (on spine), October 1915-October 1921 1915-1921

2/8 Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania Incorp 1915
(cover title), Ledger (on spine), 1921-1932 1921-1932

2/9 Ledger 1/7/1932-30/6/1947 (on spine) 1932-1947

2/10 Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania Incorp 1913
(cover title), Ledger 1/7/1947-30/6/1953 (on spine) 1947-1953

2/11 Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania (cover title),
Receipts and Payments Jan 1947 to Nov 1950, Launceston and
Hobart (on spine) 1947-1950

2/12 Cash Receipt Book Dec 1950 to Feb 1954 Launceston, Dec 1950
to Feb 1954 Hobart (on spine) 1950-1954

2/13	Cash Payment Book Decr 1950 to June 1954 (on spine)	1950-1954
2/14	Club receipts record book May 1946-Jan 1949	1946-1949
2/15	U.C.T.A of A. Savings Fund Tas. (cover title)	1925-1962
2/16	U.C.T.A.A. Savings Fund Cash Book (cover title), includes Commonwealth Trading Bank of Australia, Launceston, Tas. statements 1952-62 loose inside front cover	1925-1960
2/17	Financial records book	1968-1980

3.Membership Records

3/1	Member's register (spine title), includes list dated 30/11/1917 of members who were elected prior to inauguration of Mortuary Benefit Fund (loose inside back cover)	1900-1906
3/2	Members' Register (spine title)	1900-1911
3/3	The Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania. Club Members' Register (cover title)	1902-1905
3/4	C.T.A. Sample Rooms Launceston. Association Application Forms 507-560 (cover title)	1920-1922
3/5	C.T.A. Sample Rooms Launceston. Association Application Forms 361-408 (cover title)	1922-1924
3/6	C.T.A. Sample Rooms Launceston. Association Application Forms 409-458 (cover title)	1924-1927
3/7	Record book of association/club members	1929-1933
3/8	Attendance Book. C.T.A. Tasmania (cover title) (record of attendance at club, finance and general committee meetings)	1947-1956
3/9	Attendance Book. C.T.A. Tasmania (cover title) (record of attendance at club, finance, general committee, house and association committees)	1966-1980

4.Photographs

4/1	35 portraits of CTA presidents (J W Aitken, AG Atkinson, James Beck, M W Bennell, M J Brydon, J E Cottier, D Crombie,
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John Duncan, H K Fysh, C M Griffiths, T Hague, S H Hughes, W G Hudson, C J Irvine, V B J Joyce, W J Keogh, F W Koochew, E A N Lakin, G Lakin, C T Lovett, J L D Mallinson, A Marsden, W J M [Peirce], K J Pinner, M E Robinson, W E Senior, A J Smith, G H South, L B Thompson, J A von Alwyn, J W Wallace, A E Webb, E Whiteman, E C Young, plus one unidentified)

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|-----|---|------|
| 4/2 | President Duncan laying topmost stone on CTA building, 7/11/1911 | 1911 |
| 4/3 | Group of members wearing dinner suits at indoors social function | |
| 4/4 | Large framed photograph 'The Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania 1902-1903', comprising head and shoulder portraits of 76 named members (from membership nos. 1-113) superimposed on a map of Tasmania <i>Oversize item</i> | |

5. Miscellaneous Items, including Books

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| 5/1 | Copy of typed letter dated 14 March 1900 to James Fulton, Launceston, from 20 commercial travellers, requesting him to convene a meeting to consider forming a Commercial Travellers' Association for Tasmania. | 1900 |
| 5/2 | Agreement between The Critic Pty Ltd and the Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania, re party wall (of Hobart premises) | 1926 |
| 5/3 | <i>Royal visit to Tasmania 14-17 November, 1934: working programme</i> , Hobart, 1934 | 1934 |
| 5/4 | C.T.A. Launceston Visitors' Book (cover title) | 1947-1955 |
| 5/5 | Bar stock record book
1950s? | |
| 5/6 | <i>The Australasian Traveller</i> 1921-1924; <i>The Australian Traveller</i> 1925-1973, published monthly until 1971, then bi-monthly, bound annually, lacking 1933, 1935, 1938, 1939, 1963; <i>Australia Today</i> , published annually 1922-1955 and bound at end of volume of <i>The Australasian Traveller</i> and <i>The Australian Traveller</i> for preceding year, lacking 1934, 1936, 1939, 1940 | 1921-1973 |
| 5/7 | <i>ABC universal commercial electronic telegraphic code</i> 5 th edition, London, 1901 | 1901 |
| 5/8 | <i>The National handbook of Australia's industries</i> , Melbourne, 1934 | 1934 |

5/9	United Commercial Travellers' Association of Australia certificate presented to Mr David Crombie, President of UCTAA, 1956-57	1956-1957
5/10	<i>Stratton's commercial guide</i> , Sydney, nd	
5/11	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania, Smoke Concert to welcome Sir Ernest Clark, at Club House, Launceston, 10 October 1933 (program)	1933
5/12	<i>Commercial Travellers Launceston Tasmania. Patriotic carnival in aid of the patriotic funds for European War</i> , 17 October 1914. Souvenir programme, Launceston, 1914	1914
5/13	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (insurance policy for Charles Street buildings)	1908
5/14	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (hand drawn plan of Charles Street property and surrounding properties and 2 letters concerning the property)	1910
5/15	<i>Commercial Travellers Association Launceston Tasmania in Aid of Tasmanian Returned Sick and Wounded Soldiers and Red Cross: Souvenir Programme</i> , Launceston, 1915	1915
5/16	C.T.A Federal Golf Carnival (menu for dinner at 78 Charles Street)	1962
5/17	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (2 letters, card, brochure and membership forms, related to membership drive)	c1966
5/18	<i>The United Commercial Travellers' Association of Australia Limited: reasons why the man on the road should become a member</i>	1967
5/19	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (letter re financial difficulties)	1971
5/20	Commercial Travellers' Association of Australia (program for 80 th annual conference, Launceston)	1975
5/21	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (president's annual report, typescript, 2 variant copies)	1975
5/22	Plans and specifications for alterations and additions at 127 Wellington Street	1975
5/23	Letter from president re move to Wellington Street	1975

5/24	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (annual reports, 1975, 1976, 1980, 1981, 1986)	1975-1986
5/25	T D Room, Mayor (letter re opening of Wellington Street club rooms)	1976
5/26	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (newsletters)	1977-1980, 1991
5/27	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (letter from secretary/manager re advantages of membership)	1979
5/28	<i>One Hundred Years: a Centenary Souvenir of the History and Achievements of the Commercial Travellers' Association of Victoria</i> , Melbourne, 1981	1981
5/29	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (2 typed sheets re duties etc of C.T.A. stewards)	nd, 1981
5/30	Australian Commercial Travellers' Association (program of 39 th annual golf tournament, held in northern Tasmania)	1985
5/31	C.T.A-Tatts Club of Tasmania (letter from president re poor trading situation)	c.1986
5/32	Armitage Auctions (price lists for C.T.A items sold on 12/8/1988)	1988

6. Legal Records

6/1	<i>Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania</i> , Launceston, 1902	1902
6/2	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (certificate of incorporation)	1902
6/3	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (contract of sale with Dr Louis Holmes)	1907
6/4	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (agreement with William Sidebottom re lights, eaves etc)	1908
6/5	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (agreement for sale, AJ Goodwin to Commercial Travellers' Association)	1909
6/6	Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (agreement for	1910

- sale of materials etc to J Caparatus)
- | | | |
|------|--|--------|
| 6/7 | <i>Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania</i> , Launceston, c.1948 | c.1948 |
| 6/8 | <i>Rules & By-laws of the Commercial Travellers' Association Club Tasmania</i> , Launceston, 1955 | 1955 |
| 6/9 | Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (certificate of registration of Commerce Club) | 1962 |
| 6/10 | Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania (rules and by-laws, typescript) | 1974 |
| 6/11 | <i>Rules and By-laws of the Commercial Travellers' Association Club of Tasmania</i> , Launceston, c.1976 | c1976 |

7. Additional Minutes of Meetings

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|-----|---|-----------|
| 7/1 | Minutes of committee meetings, 28 April 1900-24 October 1903 | 1900-1903 |
| 7/2 | Minutes of general and special meetings, 26 May 1900–18 December 1920 (includes annual reports 1901-23; also minutes of special general meeting 12 November 1966) | 1900-1923 |
| 7/3 | Minutes of general and special meetings, 22 December 1923-16 November 1942 (includes annual reports 1923-1942) | 1923-1942 |
| 7/4 | Minutes of special and annual meetings, 15 November 1943-15 December 1982 (includes annual reports 1943-1981; printed sheet with photographs of first office bearers 1900-1901 loose inside back cover) | 1943-1982 |

OTHER SOURCES

QVMAG, Community History, 1993.P.1254; 1997.P.1992

QVMAG, Community History, Supplementary information file: four indices to the CTA Collection, (1) Launceston & Hobart Club premises, (2) Administration: CTA and UCTAA, (3) Sporting, Social, Charitable (4) Alphabetical List of Members.

Memorandum of association rules and by-laws of the Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania, Launceston, 1924? (copy held in the Launceston Library)

Australian encyclopaedia vol. 2, Sydney, 1958, entry for Commercial Travellers' Associations, p.456

Raymond Ferrall, *90 years on: a Tasmanian story*, Launceston, c1996, pp. 50-53
NG Harper, *Tasmanian passes, checks & club tokens*, Hobart, 1985

Brendan Lyons, *All gunns blazing: J. & T. Gunn and the development of Launceston, 1871-1997*,
Launceston, 1998 (pp. 54-55)

Jai Paterson, *Knights of the road: the Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania*, Launceston,
2006