

**MEMBER FOR FLINDERS**

**LIZ PENFOLD MP**

**Parliamentary Travel report**

**KING ISLAND/TASMANIA/MELBOURNE**

**16-29 APRIL 2004**

**Objectives of Travel:**

Eyre Peninsula has immense potential, however this potential can not be realised without an urgent upgrade of the existing power infrastructure and an increase in good quality water supply. To improve our productivity, expand our exports and compete in the global economy we must have world class infrastructure. Our clean, green image can be further promoted with wind power and plentiful desalinated water created with clean technology.

Over the past 10 years I have actively pursued opportunities for wind farms as the solution for Eyre Peninsula because we have potentially some of the best sites in the world.

There is the opportunity to use off peak power generated by wind farms to desalinate water. I asked to view the technology being used to store wind power on King Island, the first site in Australia to utilise Vanadium Battery technology in conjunction with wind power to see if it would be suitable for holding large quantities of wind energy to smooth the fluctuations in power created and to enable the energy to be held until needed so it could be fed into the grid at peak prices.

In addition Hydro Tasmania is developing a wind farm near Port Lincoln. I had the opportunity of meeting with Hydro Tasmania operatives to discuss progress and the potential to combine the power with desalination and viewed facilities in King Island and Tasmania.

I took the opportunity of seeking tourism and other opportunities that can be adopted on Eyre Peninsula for the future.

## **Saturday 17/4/04**

Travelled to Melbourne and then drove to Holcombe Country House at Glenlyon. Bed and Breakfast businesses are becoming popular throughout Australia with several being established on Eyre Peninsula.

The owners restored Holcombe, an old farm home about twenty years ago. They were the first bed and breakfast establishment in the district and people were very negative about the potential to succeed. However they have been proven to be very successful and have since built a lodge accommodation on the farm as well some distance away from the house. About 40% of their business is repeat bookings and their website [www.holcombe.com.au](http://www.holcombe.com.au) has been a success.

Hanging Rock where the part of the picture, "Picnic at Hanging Rock" was shot is located close-by together with some attractive towns. Recently another feature film "Loves Brother" was shot in the area using a nearby restaurant located in a quaint old building with murals on the ceiling and included the drive to Holcombe House. This kind of coverage is invaluable and should be actively encouraged.

**Potential** for Eyre Peninsula: Encourage more bed and breakfast establishments and tourism with an AGRITOURISM slant.

Encourage country families entertaining/hosting city families giving them more understanding and empathy for a country way of life. An article in a local paper stated that, 'a 2001 survey by the US Forest Service found 62 million Americans had visited a farm or a ranch that Year.' The article quoted the web site [www.farmstop.com](http://www.farmstop.com) that lists farms around the US and other agricultural attraction that were open to the public. It would be a good idea to have a similar one for Australia with links to theirs.

Entice film makers to consider the region for feature films.

**Action:** Discuss possibilities with Eyre Regional Development Board, Tourism Eyre Peninsula.

## **Sunday 18/4/04 - Melbourne**

Had dinner at St Kilda at an up market restaurant that featured abalone on the menu. While the food was very nice, one poor quality abalone sold as an entree for \$19. The restaurant is accessing abalone from a Mornington Peninsula land based abalone farm.

**Potential:** Markets for abalone as entrees.

**Action:** Discuss with ERDB and proprietors.

**Monday 19/4/04**

Departed Melbourne for King Island.

**King Island Airport Shop** – The King Island airport has approximately 10,000 people through it each year according to a local resident and the little shop is busy. The lady serving indicated that it was not unusual to have all her stock of meat purchased and taken at once. Beside local meats, she also stocked local cheeses, cream and crafts and sold coffee, local biscuits and newspapers, post cards etc



**Potential:** Port Lincoln Airport has nearly 100,000 people through it annually. It is anticipated that the airport will soon have to have upgraded security and incorporate a check in counter for the new airline.

When an upgrade is undertaken it may be a possible to incorporate room for a similar coffee shop stocking our local wine, water, seafood, (oysters, mussels, abalone, crays, prawns, tuna,

kingfish,) venison, beef, honey, eggs, arts and crafts etc. (possibly combined with accommodation for a family so that someone lives on site for security purposes for the airport and the shop.) These items should all have an Eyre Peninsula logo or other identification indicating our region.

**Action:** Discuss with ERDB and Lower Eyre Peninsula Council.



King Island Beef packaged ready for passenger to carry on board for home.



View of airport coffee shop

**Tuesday 20/4/04**

Met with **David Shields** (Maintenance Scheduler, Power Schemes North, Hydro Tasmania), **David McKerrow** (King Island Power Station), **Byron Cameron** (Manager Aurora Energy Bass Strait Islands) and **Seth Langford** (Consultant Wind Energy Projects, Hydro Tasmania)

Looked over the diesel power, wind power and vanadium batteries servicing King Island and discussed their application to the situation on Eyre Peninsula with the representatives present.

Byron Cameron discussed the potential of small hydro systems and wind turbines for remote use that could suite aquaculture facilities currently on diesel



L to R David McKerrow, Seth Langford, David Shields and me along side the tanks of electrolyte used to transfer electrons in the Vanadium Battery process.



The Vanadium Battery with the first of the tanks of the electrolyte in the front right hand side.



**A 250 kW Nordex Wind Turbine that I visited on King Island.**

**Potential:** The vanadium batteries would appear to best suit the ironing out of the wind fluctuations rather than holding larger quantities of power. The battery is expensive and takes up considerable space.

David Shields mentioned Graphite Block Technology which is a very simple concept and could hold heat so that power can be fed into the grid when there is adequate capacity and need for power giving a higher price. The battery uses water on the hot graphite creating steam to run a generator. The graphite technology could also solve desalination problems as well as provide power storage. This could be a fantastic use for the existing graphite mine located near to Port Lincoln. I wondered if it could be possible for the whole local mine to be used as a massive power heat sink in a similar way to hot rock technology however it could be better to have an industry in Port Lincoln creating graphite blocks.

**Action:** discussed with other Hydro Pacific representatives, Eyre Regional Development Board and Bruce Higgs, CYNERGY Pty. Ltd.

### Wednesday 21/4/04

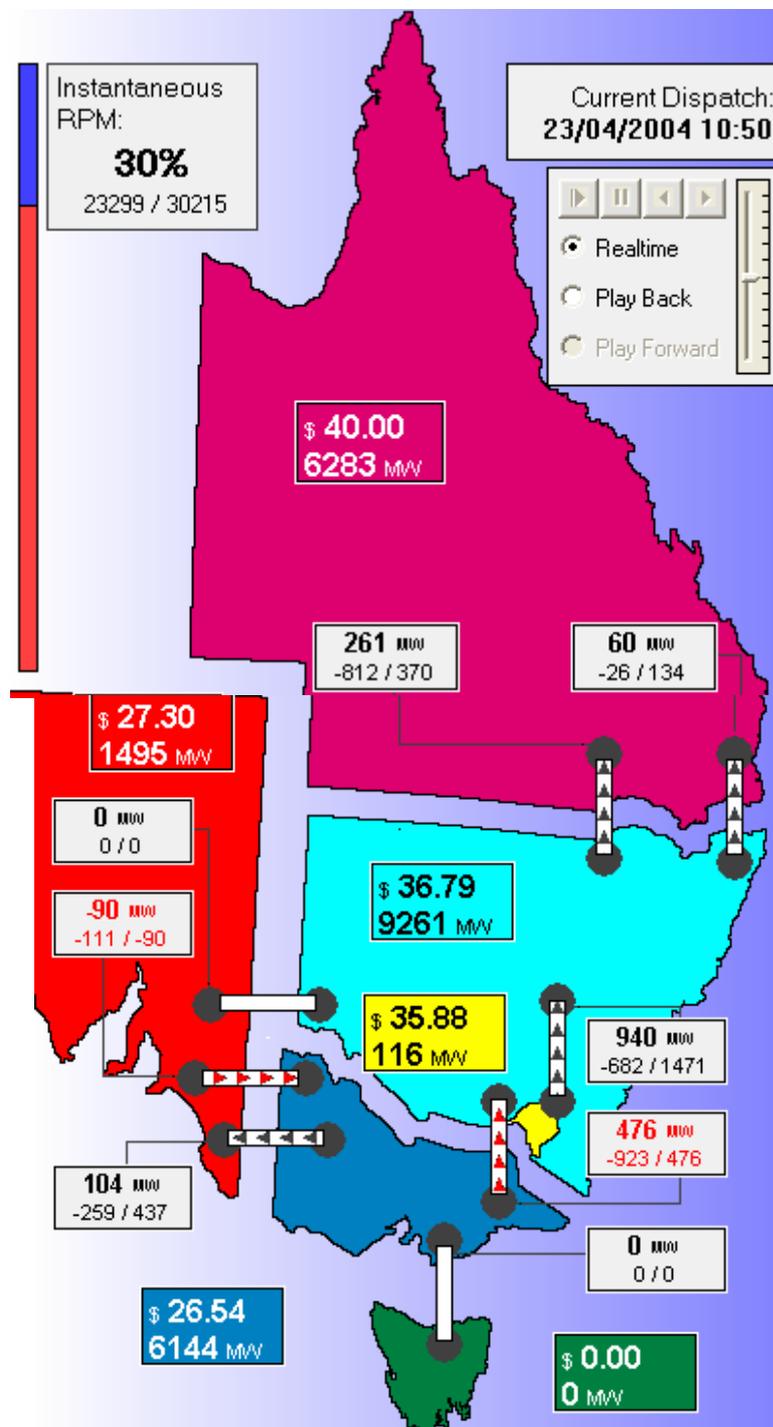
Toured King Island looked at local bull kelp, seaweed, and dairy industries with view to how Eyre Peninsula could present our own local products.

### Thursday 22/4/04

Departed King Island for Launceston via Melbourne

### Friday 23/4/04

Collected by David Shields in a fantastic petrol/electric Hydro Tasmania car and taken on a fascinating tour into all the workings of the Trevallyn power station located in about the middle of Launceston. It was amazing to see the web site for the NEM and the updated prices coming through for each of the States. On that day (23/4/04), South Australia had the second lowest price of \$27.30 compared with Queensland the highest at \$40.00



Also of interest was the Bass Link power line connecting Tasmania and Victoria. The cost of Basslink now over \$1 billion has convinced me that it is unlikely that I will be able to get a similar one between Port Lincoln and Adelaide for Eyre Peninsula wind power and that it would be better to keep trying for the line upgrades through to Whyalla.

Then we went up and had a look at the reservoir where the water comes from. The power station has a massive water catchment area. I was amazed that the green movement is making it difficult to expand the hydro and wind turbines systems when the green house situation is so critical for the world. I am concerned that the “not in my back yard” syndrome is alive and well in spite of the long term bigger picture view of global warming that Australia is contributing to..

Discussed at length all kinds of issues to do with alternative power, wind farms, hydro turbines and also the (Lloyd invention) graphite block technology.

**Opportunity:** The potential for 1500mgw of windpower generators on the remote west coast of Eyre Peninsula where it is unlikely to upset the green movement or locals is more likely because of the difficulties being experienced elsewhere.

**Action:** Market the advantages of the west coast better and keep pushing for the link to the grid and wind energy holding technology. Keep pushing for the desalination from Hydro Tasmanian Wind power to be linked into the Uley Basin water supply to improve its quality and take the pressure of the underground resource to enable it to start recharging to a safer level.

Discuss with Eyre Regional Development Board.

### Trevallyn Power Station



## **Saturday 24/4/04**

Undertook the “Launceston Explorer Tour” with John Ellis and purchased an excellent local CD, ‘Touch of Tasmania’ featuring local musicians.

Saw lots of wonderful old houses and buildings. The council stopped them being pulled down some years ago and is getting new buildings built in an old style where possible which has given the town a wonderful old world elegance and ambiance not found in most towns.

The racecourse was of particular interest as beside having a grand old grandstand it is now combining racing with the trotting and is about to bring in the dogs as well at the same venue. This seems to be an excellent idea that we could consider for the Port Lincoln site although it may be too late as the trotting and dog races have already ceased.

**Opportunity:** To combine horse racing with trotting and dog racing to make venues more viable and retain all three sports.

**Action:** Discuss with Eyre Regional Development Board, Port Lincoln Racing Club and mention to Whyalla, Port Augusta and Port Pirie Councils.

In the evening I met with Chairman of Hydro Tasmania Mr. Peter Rae AO. It was an excellent opportunity to hear Peter talk about some of the big picture world issues and the potential to influence the progress of renewable energy. Peter will be attending a world renewable energy conference in the near future and we can only wish him luck and support him where we can with the great work he is doing.

**Opportunity:** Keep in touch and try to help facilitate where possible.

**Potential:** To link in with the opportunities and the knowledge base.

**Action:** Ask Peter to come and talk to Parliamentary colleagues if he is willing possibly also come to Port Lincoln and speak.

## Sunday 25/4/04

Drove to the coastal town of St Mary's via Scottsdale through beautiful scenery. The highlight was the ecologically designed Scottsdale Forest Eco Centre. The centre is



open 7 days/week with free admission <http://www.dorset.tas.gov.au/projects/ecocentre/>

Possible ideas for future Port Lincoln/ Eyre Peninsula interpretive centre. Not likely to get such a flash centre however a number of the ideas contained in it could be used to good effect particularly the 'History – our people' DVD with five options. I watched the 'Tin Dragon' about the archaeological dig of the campsite of a Chinese tin miner.

**Opportunity:** A historic DVD could be made of the proposed archaeological dig at oyster town near Coffin Bay to be made and available to be used when we have a tourist office out there or in Port Lincoln.

**Action:** Discuss with Eyre Regional Development Board

## Monday 26/4/04

Drove to Hobart and met with **Mark Raynor** (Project Manager Hydro Tasmania) for an update of the Hydro Tasmania's Cathedral Rocks wind farm on Eyre Peninsula, 33 2MW wind turbines producing about 66 MW's of power. I was pleased that good progress is now being made and that the issues that had been encountered seem to have been satisfactorily dealt with.

We discussed the possibility of using the wind power to produce desalinated water in the off peak periods. Mark explained that desalination units are best working all the time. There have been discussions regarding the possibilities of putting a desalination plant near the wind turbines. The Uley pumps and pipelines are very close by and the water could be shandied thus upgrading the water going into our system and also taking pressure of the underground resource that is not recharging fast enough.

The desalination would be of the sea water and it could be injected into the ground to mix with the existing underground resource. I believe it would be better mixing at the pumping station as there are issues with injection into the underground about dissolving particles and changing the composition of the ground and some desalinated water would be lost altogether. Mark suggested that I speak to Jack McKeen the Head of Technology for SA Water and the desalination project person Geoff Kilmore. Although there is a contract for all Hydro Tasmania's power from Cathedral Rocks it may be possible to get an agreement to do this and possibly without network charges applying thus making it cheaper.

Mark also showed me over Hydro Tasmania's excellent education Centre. It is the best of its kind that I have seen with plenty to interest and inform all age groups. I particularly liked the hydrogen car that showed it is a possible technology to use in the future. I had looked into using the wind to produce hydrogen and water as a solution to our water problems on Eyre Peninsula and a method of holding excess wind energy. However the technology was not far enough advanced at the time but I still think it will be one day.

**Potential:** To get a sea desalination system that would improve the quality and quantity of the water on Eyre Peninsula combined with Hydro Tasmania's wind power at Uley.

**Action:** Talk to the people suggested about what I can do to further advance the possibilities of desalination/water issues.

Met with **Geoff Willis** (Chief Executive Officers Hydro Tasmania) and **Mark Kelleher** (General Manager Renewables Development Hydro Tasmania). We discussed the possibility of a regulated line down the west coast of Eyre Peninsula to pick up the power from the wind turbines that potentially can be built there. We also discussed the need to triangulate the power lines to the region to provide more reliable power as a safeguard for our industries. This was one of the main reasons I wanted to come to Tasmania to discuss the issue with Hydro Tasmania representatives as they are the ones who have been the first to build the wind turbines on Eyre Peninsula.

I had been feeling concerned about the level of support to triangulate Eyre Peninsula's power supply. A line is needed down the west coast to the Port Lincoln sub station to expand the possibilities for wind for Eyre Peninsula. After the meeting however I felt more positive that triangulation is possible. I believe that we could lobby to get the Federal Government to support an application to Electranet for a regulated line, with the difference in cost between one down the east coast and one down the west coast to be paid by wind proponents. I know that we do not have to wait till 2008 for it to be reassessed by the ACCC.

**Potential:** A regulated line to connect the wind turbines on Eyre Peninsula with the grid along the west coast to the Port Lincoln sub station.

**Action:** Call a meeting of the interested wind power companies and the minister, Electranet and Sabesh Shivasiaben Director of Electricity ACCC in Canberra as soon as possible.

## **Tuesday 27/4/04**

Drove back to Launceston via Bracknell and Beauty Point and had a look at Sea Horse World. This centre is located in a large shed on the sea front. It has an interpretive centre with a theatrette, aquarium, tourist shop and café as well as being a working seahorse farm with brood stock, nursery and grow-out tanks. It is just what Tracy and David Warland are proposing for Port Lincoln

**Action:** Support Tracy and David wherever possible to achieve their goals.

### **Wednesday 28/4/04**

Took a Cataract Cruise and discussed the possibility of a ferry from Wallaroo to Arno Bay or Cowell with the Captain, Don Napier. Don showed me one that was tied up in the Tamar River called the Peninsula Princess that used to go to Queenscliff that he believed was still owned by the Queenscliff company. He thought it would cost about \$1.3m however it is probably too slow for what we need. He also pointed out a ketch called the Lady Jillian that was called the Jillian Crouch when it plied the waters in South Australia. It is unusual as it is made of steel and wood and he thought would sell for approximately \$180,000 to \$200,000. I thought it may be of interest to Axel Stenross Museum. Mr. Napier thought it is owned by Les Dick of Busyman Hardware Launceston.

Don is the Deputy Race Director for “Three Peaks Race” [www.threepeaks.org.au](http://www.threepeaks.org.au) and I thought it would be productive to possibly tie this with the Adelaide Lincoln or Phil Roe’s Wallaroo Lincoln Race. Don introduced me to the boss Rob Cassidy, Managing Director of Tamar River Cruises and Cataract Cruises ([www.tamarrivercruises.com.au](http://www.tamarrivercruises.com.au)) . We discussed the safe harbours system they have in Tasmania which is run by the government from a levy on recreational boaties.

**Potential:** possible ferry for Eyre Peninsula and a precedent for government undertaking safe harbours for South Australia and not leaving it just to the Local Governments as they have been trying to do.

Action: Discuss ferry with Robert Hopping and send information about Safe Harbour contact to Ian McSporran from Regional Cities Association, Glen Jones and Andrew Hayes.

### **Thursday 29/4/04**

Departed Launceston for Port Lincoln.