

PORT ARTHUR TALKS

Cold and wet: sealing in Antarctica in the 1820s **presented by Dr Michael Pearson AO**

By the late 18th century sealing for fur seal skins had become a global industry. As new sealing grounds were located ships from Britain and the USA, in particular, moved in to exploit the rookeries. The South Shetland Islands, just off the Antarctic Peninsula south of Cape Horn, were discovered in 1819, and sealers flocked there, making the seals almost extinct by 1826.

The Chilean Museum working with archaeologists from Chile, Argentina and Australia has been steadily identifying, researching and excavating the sites left by the sealers in the South Shetlands. Having been involved in this research for the last decade, Dr Pearson will outline this fascinating history, which included at least two Australian sealing ships (one from Tasmania), and describes the previously untouched sites abandoned by the sealers in the 1820s.

Dr Michael Pearson AO is an archaeologist and heritage planner, who worked in NSW National Parks and the Australian Heritage Commission (with Sharon Sullivan) before becoming a heritage consultant 20 years ago. His work in the historic heritage field has included historical and archaeological research, writing CMPs, doing World Heritage research and nominations, and providing heritage training and advice in Australia, Antarctica and Japan. His research has resulted in over 100 publications (articles, chapters and books) on aspects of heritage conservation, management and government involvement, whaling and maritime history, archaeology and history of 19th century small scale rural industries and many other Australian and polar history topics. He is currently Chairman of the Institute for Professional Practice in Heritage and the Arts at ANU, and a member and former Chairman of the ACT Heritage Council.

Together with Prof. Sharon Sullivan, Michael has for the last four years run an annual week-long advanced conservation management training course at Port Arthur, under the auspices of the Institute for Professional Practice in Heritage and the Arts at ANU.

ALL WELCOME!

Thursday 8 August, 2013 at 5.30 p.m.

**Junior Medical Officer's Conference Room,
Port Arthur Historic Site**

For more information call 6251 2324

