



# CAPTAIN ANDREW HAIG (1793-1871)

Left: Artist unknown, Captain Andrew Haig (1793-1871), watercolour on ivory portrait miniature (private collection, present location unknown)

Below: Unidentified British artist, Ship's portrait of the *Sir John Rae Reid*, c.1835



NARRYNA IS A fine Greek Revival town house built by Captain Andrew Haig (1793-1871). Haig was originally a British East India Company-licenced merchant trading between Calcutta and Canton, trafficking opium to China and obtaining in return rich cargoes of porcelain, silks, tea, lacquer and zinc. In 1824 Haig sailed into Hobart and purchased land from a subdivision of the Rev. Robert Knopwood's Cottage Green estate. The narrow two-acre holding ran between Hampden Road and the high water mark. The purchase turned out to be an astute one. At one end of the block he built Narryna. At the other end the creation of New Wharf allowed him to build a pair of warehouses facing Salamanca Place (1833-35) where he set up as a merchant, selling imported foods and building materials.

Narryna was not completed until October 1840 and Haig, on the verge of bankruptcy, was forced to sell it along with his other assets in April 1842. Despite Haig's brief occupancy, the house remains emblematic of its builder and Hobart's early opportunist, trader society.



I.C. Anderson, Narryna from the north, watercolour c. 1955. Anderson was the architect for Narryna's restoration in the 1950s

Narryna was later home to businessmen and women, lawyers, politicians and bankers. In the early 20th century it became a boarding house before being purchased by the Tasmanian Government as a health care facility. In 1955 it became Australia's first folk museum, thanks to the efforts of a group of Battery Point residents who assembled a collection redolent of the mercantile and maritime histories of Salamanca Place and Battery Point.

Captain Haig's warehouses, c. 1834, Salamanca Place, now Cargo and Jack Greene bars



Front cover: Edward Winch, Narryna elevation, pen and wash c. 1835; Walter Davenport aged 8 years and Fanny Davenport aged 12 years, unknown photographer, 1861

All images Narryna Museum Collection unless otherwise credited

## NARRYNA'S ARCHITECTURE

NARRYNA'S SETTING and neoclassical design make it the gateway to Battery Point. The house was designed by architect Edward Winch who had arrived in Van Diemen's Land in September 1832 with a letter of introduction to Lieutenant-Governor Arthur. After a period as a draughtsman in the Engineers' Department, Winch went into practice as an architect and builder in Macquarie Street but became bankrupt in November 1835. Winch appears to have remained the architect for Narryna's construction owing to his friendship and business association with Captain Andrew Haig.

Built when the Greek Revival was in vogue, Narryna's façade is detailed according to the conventions for classical temples. Its four full-height pilasters in the (Roman) Doric order rise from a delicately moulded plinth to an implied frieze beneath a 'cornice' formed by the roof fascia and curved rainwater gutter. The pilasters divide the façade into three bays, which in turn reflect the internal division of the spaces, with a hall flanked by a drawing and dining room on the ground floor. The six-panelled front door is set within a low segmental arch and framed by a fanlight and flanking sidelights. Four slender columns on raised blocks provide an applied portico within the arched opening.

The façade is faced with regular-coursed ashlar stone possibly quarried at a site Haig owned across the Derwent at Bellerive. The house's core is sandstock brick.

Not far from Narryna is St George's Church, Battery Point. Designed by John Lee Archer and James Blackburn and built 1836-47, it is one of Australia's finest Greek Revival buildings.

In the 1950s a stone fountain from the garden of 'Sydney Lodge' in Patrick Street Hobart was placed in the centre of Narryna's carriage loop.



## VISIT NARRYNA

### OPENING HOURS:

- Tue to Sat, 10 am - 4:30 pm, Sun 12 noon - 4:30 pm. Narryna closes occasionally for lunch between 12.30 pm and 1 pm.
- Monday group bookings only.
- Closed Good Friday, ANZAC Day, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and weekdays in July and August.

**ADMISSION:** Adults \$10, concession \$8, child (non student) \$4  
Enquire about our special group booking rate, combined ticket with Markree House Museum and Garden, school education programs and events.



**ACCESS:** The garden and ground floor of Narryna has wheelchair access. Owing to the age of the building there is limited access to the upper floor and service wing. Please contact us so we can facilitate your visit.

Narryna is the venue for changing exhibitions based on its rich and diverse collections. See our website for further details. We invite you to become a member. Please email us for a membership form. Narryna is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commissions. Donations of \$2 and over are tax-deductible.

**CONTACT NARRYNA:** (03) 6234 2791  
[narryna@tmag.tas.gov.au](mailto:narryna@tmag.tas.gov.au)  
[www.tmag.tas.gov.au/narryna](http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/narryna)

**NARRYNA 103 Hampden Road, Battery Point**



Narryna is supported by the Tasmanian Government through Arts Tasmania and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery



**TASMANIAN MUSEUM & ART GALLERY**

## DISCOVER NARRYNA

### THE MERCHANT'S HOUSE





TOUR

**1 ENTRANCE HALL** Entrance halls were a place of transition from the garden to the furnished rooms and were decorated to reflect the house’s exterior architecture. The hall reflects the classical detailing of Narryna’s façade with high moulded skirtings echoing the house’s plinth while imported plaster brackets (detailed as consoles) ‘support’ the ceiling. An arch (echoing the arch framing the front door) divides the front from the back hall with its finely detailed timber staircase. The ashlar block pattern wallpaper has been recreated from a c. 1840 example at Highfield, Stanley, a property of the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.

Paintings in the hall include a Haughton Forrest view of New Wharf c. 1890 and a ship’s portrait of the *Sir John Rae Reid*. Andrew Haig captained the *Sir John Rae Reid* on speedy voyages between London and Tasmania, Calcutta and Mauritius in 1833–1837. The longcase clock was owned by George Washington Walker, a Quaker merchant and founder of the Hobart Savings Bank, who lived at Narryna in 1852–54.

**2 DINING ROOM** Dinners were important events in the colonial social calendar. Captain Haig is known to have attended testimonial dinners in honour of Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Franklin and Bishop Broughton and no doubt kept a well-appointed table when entertaining his business associates. With dining regarded as an extension of public life, dining rooms were decorated in a ‘masculine’ style with dark chimneypieces, joinery grained (i.e. painted) in imitation of oak and richly patterned wallpapers. Portraits were hung in dining rooms to express family lineage.

**3 DRAWING ROOM** The designation ‘drawing room’ is a contraction of ‘withdrawing room’. This arose from the custom of ladies withdrawing to this room after dinner while men remained in the dining room for port, cigars and conversation on business matters. Drawing rooms were decorated in a ‘feminine’ style with lighter hues.

Narryna’s drawing room exhibits a range of faux finishes. Narryna’s joinery is a combination of pine and cedar and was intended to be painted. Between c. 1840 and c. 1925, the drawing room joinery was grained in imitation of bird’s eye maple. An original sample has been preserved on the back of the door. The wallpaper is a copy of the original drawing room wallpaper from Summerhome, Moonah (1844) one of Tasmania’s intact historic properties. The wallpaper resembles a silk held in place by cords and decorative rosettes. Indeed we have visitors, tricked by the highly illusionistic effect, who try to smooth out the ripples in the wallpaper. *Please don’t touch the wallpaper.*

The chimneypiece is a reproduction of the lost marble original, based on witness marks found on the floor and walls. Its format, with a pair of columns flanking the hearth, echoes Narryna’s portico.

Drawing rooms were furnished with expensive veneer timbers. Captain Haig’s teapoy is a remnant of the room’s original rosewood suite. An alternative convention for drawing rooms was the use of light-coloured timbers, with Huon pine regarded as the colonial equivalent of satinwood, fashionable in London during the 1770s–1850s period. Narryna’s drawing room is the setting for Huon pine pieces collected by George Burrows and presented to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery by David Walsh, founder of MONA.

Despite the middle class ideal that wives did not work, with her husband on the verge of bankruptcy, Elizabeth Haig advertised her intention to open ‘An Establishment for the Tuition of Young Ladies’ in June 1841. Her advertisement bears a Hampden Road address indicating that the school was to be based at Narryna. No syllabus is available but Mrs Haig is likely to have taught needlework, drawing, music, dance, elocution, and languages such as French and Italian which she had learned during her own youth in London. These feminine accomplishments were associated with the drawing room.

**4 BREAKFAST ROOM** The breakfast room completed an early 19th century house’s trio of public rooms. Narryna’s breakfast room is located on the eastern side of the house to catch the morning light. It was used by the family as a sitting and eating room, as the drawing room was reserved for after-dinner guests and display of the family’s most treasured possessions.

Georgian houses had reduction in detailing between their reception rooms and rooms for family use. This is very marked at Narryna where the dining and drawing rooms have moulded plaster cornices and chimneypieces featuring columns but the rear rooms have no cornices and simple chimneypieces. Similarly the floors of the front rooms are New Zealand kauri pine while the floors of the back rooms are cheaper Baltic pine. Captain Haig imported both timbers.

**5 GUEST BEDROOM** This ground floor room is interpreted as a guest bedroom where members of a businessman’s professional network may have been accommodated. Four-post beds with elaborate wool curtain hangings and layered mattresses were high status items.

**6 EXHIBITION ROOMS** Narryna’s large exhibition room was created by the removal of walls in 1946 when the house was used by the Department of Public Health as an after-care hostel for female tuberculosis patients. Look for patches in the floor and cornice which show how the space was originally divided as a bedroom, lobby and dressing room. Items discovered behind the chimneypiece indicate that the eastern end of this room was the principal bedroom during the 19th century. The smaller exhibition room appears to have been used as a nursery. The exhibition rooms are the venue for changing displays of treasures from the Narryna collection.

**7 HUON PINE BEDROOM** This bedroom has a pleasant aspect with light from the north and east. The collection celebrates the role of the rare Tasmanian timber, *Lagarostrobos franklinii* in furniture making. Huon pine was first discovered in 1804 at the Huon River and started being used in boat building and furniture making soon afterwards. Boatbuilders (such as Captain Haig) appreciate straight-grained timber for strength. However, cabinetmakers appreciate timbers with vigorous graining (often from near the roots of the tree) for their decorative quality. They selected these cuts for veneering onto plainer timbers. The many Huon pine pieces in this room, including the half-tester bed of c. 1870, demonstrate this.

**8 NURSERY** Narryna was home to several large families with the result that two upper floor rooms were given over to a nursery. Captain and Mrs Haig had seven children – one boy and six girls. Their son, Jacob Yellowby Haig was born in 1836 when the family was living above the warehouse in Salamanca Place. Mrs Haig advertised for nursery governesses in 1837 and 1840, not leaving her children in the care of convicts. Sarah Benson Walker, wife of the Quaker businessman, George Washington Walker gave birth to her eighth child during their tenancy of Narryna in 1852–1854. The Walker children thrived in Narryna’s healthy environment with its large rooms, fresh garden produce, sea breezes, and piped fresh water, away from the low-lying centre of the city.

The objects in the nursery convey different attitudes to children. The framed embroidered samplers reflect girls learning the stitches necessary to maintain a household’s linen. The later Victorian dolls and games reflect a new sense of childhood as a time of play, imagination and artistic formation that came with the Aesthetic Movement after c. 1870.

**9 DRESSING ROOM** The dressing room’s entrance was from the main stairs. A separate doorway from the servants’ quarters allowed the servants to provide clean hot water for bathing and shaving and to clean up after. The room’s location, overlooking the service yard, warehouses and shipping gives the sense of the master of the house overseeing his business and domestic interests. It is a well-lit room and it is likely that Captain Haig’s teak campaign desk was located here. It was fitted out as an internal bathroom in 1905 and restored to its original form in the 1990s.

**10 CROW’S NEST** The room at the top of the main stair occupies what was originally an open balcony or ‘crow’s nest’ which provided Captain Haig with views over Sullivan’s Cove. The balcony was rebuilt as a bathroom in 1905.

**11 SERVANTS’ QUARTERS** The servants’ dormitory occupies the low-ceilinged room above the kitchen. A separate bedroom for the housekeeper or cook (not open to the public) opened off its far end. Research has identified eight female servants assigned to Captain and Mrs Haig during the 1830s, many of whom were punished for insolence by being sent back to the washtubs at the Cascades Female Factory. Grace Heinbury, who absconded from the Haigs in October 1839, later gave evidence at an Enquiry into the treatment of female convicts assigned to private families. She is one of the few female convicts whose personal testimony has come down to us. After 1853 free servants replaced convicts in this dormitory. It is unlikely that servants’ conditions improved markedly.

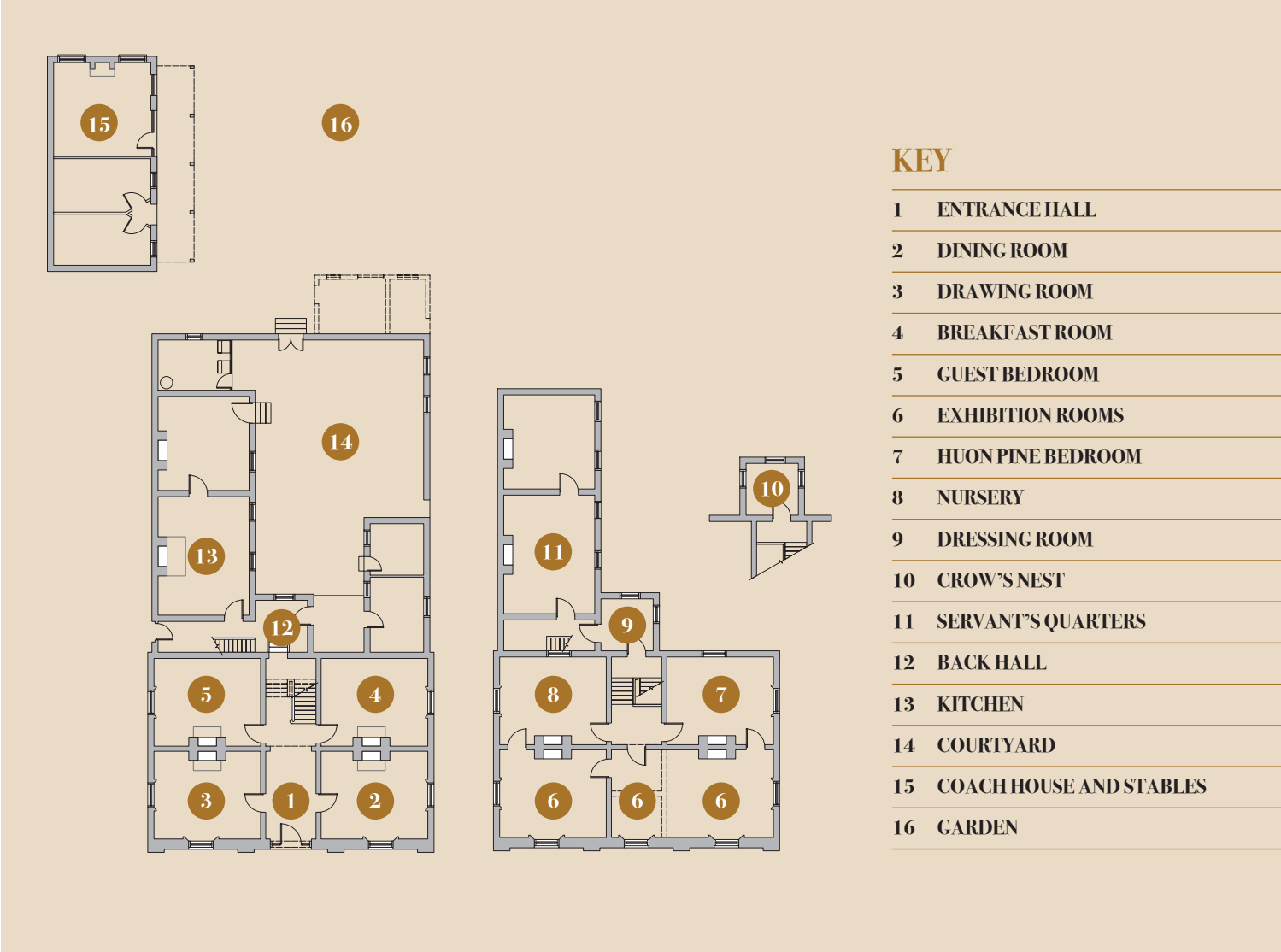
**12 BACK HALL** Narryna’s service wing is set at a lower level than the main body of the house, underlining its support function and encouraging separation between ‘family’ and servants. The narrow steep timber staircase leads to the servant’s quarters above the kitchen.

**13 KITCHEN** Narryna’s kitchen occupies a separate wing, reducing the risk of fire, cooking smells and heat from the range permeating the house. It is unusual in having a timber rather than a stone-flagged floor. The cast iron range was probably installed in c. 1858. The range was intended to burn coal. Following the sale of Narryna in 1842, Captain Haig was reduced to supplying coal from local mines to Hobart residences, businesses and ships. The adjacent scullery (now an office) was the place where the washing of heavy pots and pans was done, probably in the carved stone sink which is now in the courtyard.

**14 COURTYARD** Narryna’s stone flagged courtyard was a particularly pleasant workplace, open to northern light and warmth. Opposite Narryna’s back door a small service wing houses a pantry and laundry. During Narryna’s period as a boarding house (1926–1944) a larger laundry was built in the north-eastern corner of the courtyard. Its window openings survive in the perimeter wall.

**15 COACH HOUSE AND STABLES** Narryna’s coach house and stables accommodated an upper floor loft. Animal feed was hoisted through the doors in the southern gable while the northern end provided sleeping quarters for Haig’s male outdoors servants. In March 1840 Captain Haig’s groom, James Gower, was charged ‘with having, while in a state of intoxication, illtreated his horse’. Gower was punished with six days in the cells and returned to Government employ.

**16 GARDEN** When Narryna was put up for sale by Captain Haig in March 1842, the area behind the house boasted an extensive kitchen garden. The site is now occupied by the gabled house at 7 Knopwood Street. In 1937 the Peate family, who ran Narryna as a boarding house, relocated the kitchen garden to the area beyond the courtyard, continuing a tradition of growing food for Narryna’s table that had begun a century earlier.



KEY

1	ENTRANCE HALL
2	DINING ROOM
3	DRAWING ROOM
4	BREAKFAST ROOM
5	GUEST BEDROOM
6	EXHIBITION ROOMS
7	HUON PINE BEDROOM
8	NURSERY
9	DRESSING ROOM
10	CROW’S NEST
11	SERVANT’S QUARTERS
12	BACK HALL
13	KITCHEN
14	COURTYARD
15	COACH HOUSE AND STABLES
16	GARDEN