

## CAPTAIN ANDREW HAIG (1793-1871)



Narryna is a fine Georgian town house built by Captain Andrew Haig (1793-1871). Haig was a British East India Company-licensed merchant trading between Calcutta and Canton, trafficking opium to China and obtaining in return rich cargoes of porcelain, silks, tea and lacquerware. In 1824 he called into Hobart and purchased land from

a subdivision of the Rev. Robert Knopwood's Cottage Green estate. The narrow 2 acre holding ran between Hampden Road and the Sullivan's Cove 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, importing 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.

Narryna was later home to businessmen and women, lawyers, politicians and bankers. 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.

## Discover Narryna

Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10:30 am – 5:00 pm  
and Sunday 12:30 pm – 5:00 pm

### Monday group bookings only.

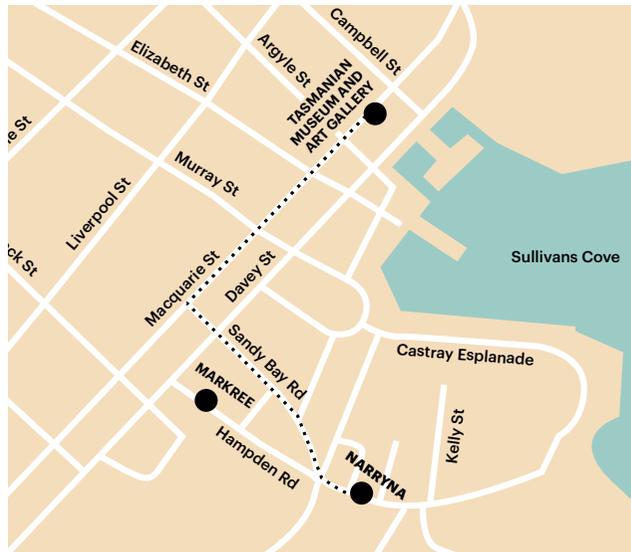
Closed Good Friday, ANZAC Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day

### Admission

Adult \$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.

We invite you to become a member. Please contact us for a membership form.



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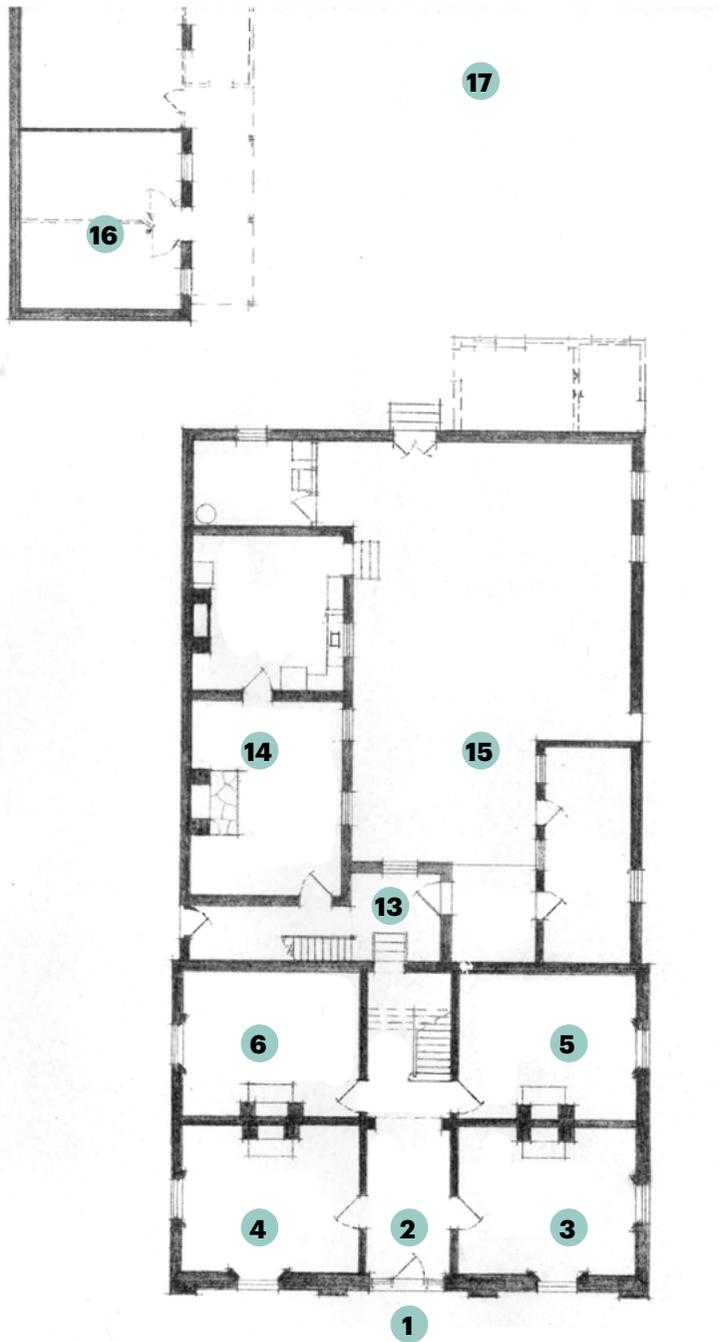
Narryna Museum is supported by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.



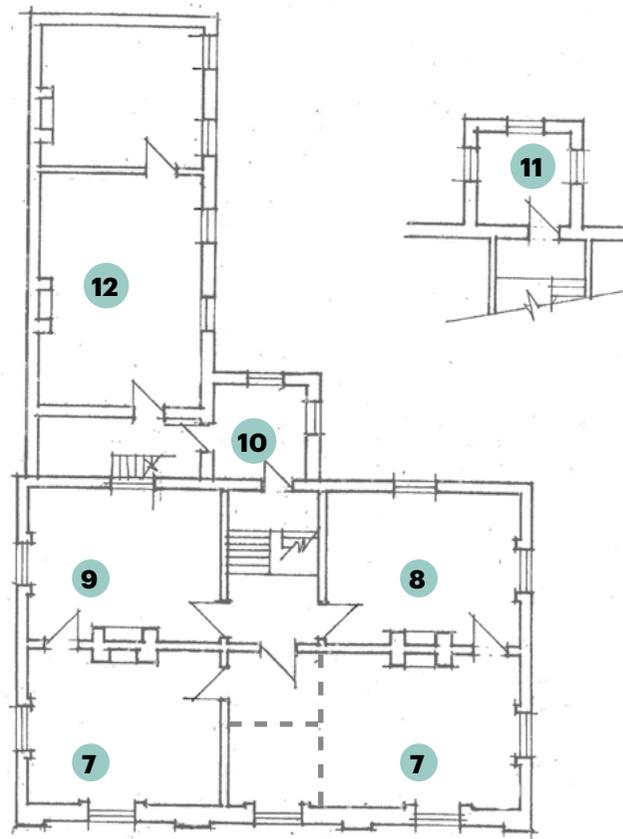
*Narryna* Heritage Museum

## Visitor guide





Ground floor



First floor

## KEY OF THE HOUSE

- 1 Forecourt
- 2 Entrance hall
- 3 Dining room
- 4 Drawing room
- 5 Breakfast room
- 6 Guest bedroom
- 7 Exhibition rooms
- 8 Huon pine bedroom
- 9 Nursery
- 10 Dressing room
- 11 'Crow's nest'
- 12 Servants' quarters
- 13 Back hall
- 14 Kitchen
- 15 Courtyard
- 16 Coach house and stables
- 17 Garden



Drawing room after restoration in 2013

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# A TOUR OF THE HOUSE

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## 1 Forecourt

Narryna's neoclassical design and setting makes it the gateway to Battery Point. The house was designed by architect Edward Winch who had arrived in the colony in September 1832. After a period in the Colonial Engineer's Department, Winch established himself as an architect and builder in Macquarie Street but became bankrupt in November 1835. He appears to have remained the architect for Narryna's construction owing to his friendship and business association with Captain Haig.

Built when the Greek Revival was in vogue, Narryna's façade is detailed according to the conventions for classical temples with four full-height pilasters in the (Roman) Doric order which rise from a delicately moulded plinth to a 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 fine sandstone probably quarried at a site Haig owned at Bellerive. The house's side and rear walls are built of more economical sandstock brick. In the 1950s a stone fountain from the garden of Sydney Lodge in Brisbane Street Hobart was placed in the centre of the carriage drive.

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## 2 Entrance hall

Entrance halls were a place of transition from the house's exterior to the furnished rooms and were given strongly 'architectural' decoration. Narryna's high moulded skirtings repeat the sense of the house's exterior plinth while imported plaster brackets (detailed as classical consoles) 'support' the ceiling. A segmental arch divides the front from the back hall with its finely detailed timber stair. Paintings in the hall include a Haughton Forest view of New Wharf c. 1890 and a ship's portrait of the Sir John Rae Reid by an unidentified British artist c. 1830-35. 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.

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## 3 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.

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## 4 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 and cigars. 19th century interiors were highly gendered and drawing rooms were decorated in a 'feminine' style with lighter colours.

Narryna's drawing room has recently been restored according to the evidence of the room's original joinery, plasterwork and fittings. Typical of the mid-19th century, the drawing room exhibits a range of faux finishes. Narryna's joinery is a combination of pine and cedar and so was intended to be painted. Between c. 1840 and c. 1925 it was grained in imitation of bird's eye maple. An original sample has been preserved on the back of the door. The chimneypiece has been reproduced based on witness marks for the lost original surviving on the floor. The new chimney piece has been painted to resemble white Carara marble, a traditional faux finish. 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, a highly illusionistic effect. Indeed we have visitors who try to smooth out the ripples in the wallpaper.

Drawing rooms were furnished with expensive light-coloured veneer timbers. Tasmanian Huon pine was regarded as the colonial equivalent of satinwood which was fashionable in London during

the 1770s - 1850s period. Narryna's drawing room is the setting for Huon pine furniture 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. These accomplishments were associated with after-dinner entertainment in the drawing room.

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## 5 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 combined the functions of a sitting room and eating room, as the drawing room was reserved for after-dinner guests and display of the family's most treasured possessions. Georgian houses typically had a strong gradation in detailing between their reception rooms and rooms for family use. This is very marked at Narryna where the rear rooms have no plaster cornices. Similarly the floors of the front rooms are Kauri pine (imported by Captain Haig from New Zealand) while the floors of the back rooms are Baltic pine.

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## 6 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 and chintz hangings and layered mattresses of straw, horse hair and feathers were high status items. Many early 19th century houses had principal bedrooms in prominent locations which allowed the bed to be glimpsed by visitors.

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## 7 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 a hostel for female tuberculosis patients. Patched floor boards and plaster cornices indicate how the space was previously divided as a bedroom, lobby and dressing room. It is likely that the eastern end of this room was the principal bedroom during the 19th century. Today the large exhibition room features treasures from the Narryna collection while the smaller room has displays on childhood, education and leisure.

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## 8 Huon pine bedroom

This bedroom has a pleasant aspect with light from the north and east. The 'Huon Pine' bedroom celebrates the role of the rare Tasmanian timber, *Lagarostrobos franklinii* in furniture making. Huon pine was first discovered at the Huon River in 1804 and was used in boat building and furniture making soon afterwards. Boatbuilders appreciate straight-grained timber for strength. However, cabinetmakers appreciate timber with vigorous graining (often from near the roots of the tree) for its decorative qualities. 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.

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## 9 Nursery

Narryna was home to several large families with the result that part of its upper floor was given over to a nursery. Captain and Mrs Haig had seven children - one boy and six girls. Mrs Haig preferred free servants rather than convicts for roles that involved care of her children and advertised for nursery governesses in 1837 and 1840. 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 an attitude to girls as 'potential adults', 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 artistic 'formation' that arose with the Aesthetic Movement c. 1870.

## 10 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 remove waste water. 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 campaign desk was located here. In 1905 it was fitted out as an internal bathroom but was restored to its original form in 1995.

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## 11 'Crow's nest'

The room at the top of the main stair occupies what was originally an open balcony which provided views over Sullivan's Cove. The balcony was rebuilt as a bathroom in 1905.

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## 12 Servants' quarters

The servants' quarters 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 therefore one of the few female convicts whose words have come down to us. After 1853 free servants replaced convicts in this dormitory. It is unlikely that servants' conditions improved markedly with the end of convict transportation.

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## 13 Back hall

Narryna's service wing is set at a lower level than the main body of the house, as appropriate to its support function and encouraging separation between 'family' and servants. The narrow steep timber stair leads to the servant's dormitory above the kitchen.

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## 14 Kitchen

Narryna's modest 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 surviving cast iron range was probably installed in c1858. The range, like the small basket grates in the house, was intended to burn coal sourced from local mines. Following the sale of Narryna in 1842, Captain Haig was reduced to supplying Tasmanian coal 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 massive stone sink which is now in the courtyard.

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## 15 Courtyard

Narryna's stone flagged courtyard was a particularly pleasant workplace, open to northern light. Opposite Narryna's back door a small service wing housed a pantry and laundry. A 1905 survey shows two toilets, located between the scullery and the courtyard's northern perimeter wall. During Narryna's period as a boarding house (1926-1946) a larger laundry was built in the north-eastern corner of the courtyard. The door and window openings in the perimeter wall survive from this phase.

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## 16 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 servant James Gower was charged 'with having, while in a state of intoxication, ill-treated his horse'. Gower was punished with six days in the cells and returned to Government employ.

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## 17 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 the 1920s - 40s in the area beyond the courtyard there were fowl runs, lemon and nut trees.