

# History breathes life into tourism

By SHELLEY SPENCER

A CONTEMPORARY look at the lives of two souls buried in Longford's Christ Church graveyard formed a unique theatrical experience yesterday.

The event, aimed at creating a new way to promote tourism in the region, was a collaboration between the University of Tasmania and the community.

It saw actors Jane Johnson and David Quinn perform a monologue that explored the lives of Mary Ann Wise and Zimiram Youran, whose graves were the backdrop to the performances.

Community Place and Heritage Research Unit coordinator Anne Fitzgerald said the event was inspired by the self-guided grave-



Actor Jane Johnson at the grave of Mary Ann Wise (left) at Longford's Christ Church.

Picture: PAUL SCAMBLER

yard tours the university had developed.

"It was an opportunity to see what it would feel like to embody some of the characters that are buried here," Mrs Fitzgerald said.

"We took the research that was done and tried to help a contemporary listener imagine what someone living then might have felt.

"Imagine how im-

portant the Church was to them and how the class system impacted on their lives."

Mrs Fitzgerald said the stories they had uncovered were of international significance.

"Its potential for growing tourism in this region is boundless," she said.

Community place and heritage research unit professor Henry Reynolds said the his-

tory was the inspiration.

"As well as enjoying the beauty of Tasmania, today's tourists are seeking meaningful experiences," Prof. Reynolds said.

"The many layers of history in the area we refer to as the Heritage Highway make it a perfect place to create these experiences, with well researched and presented products."