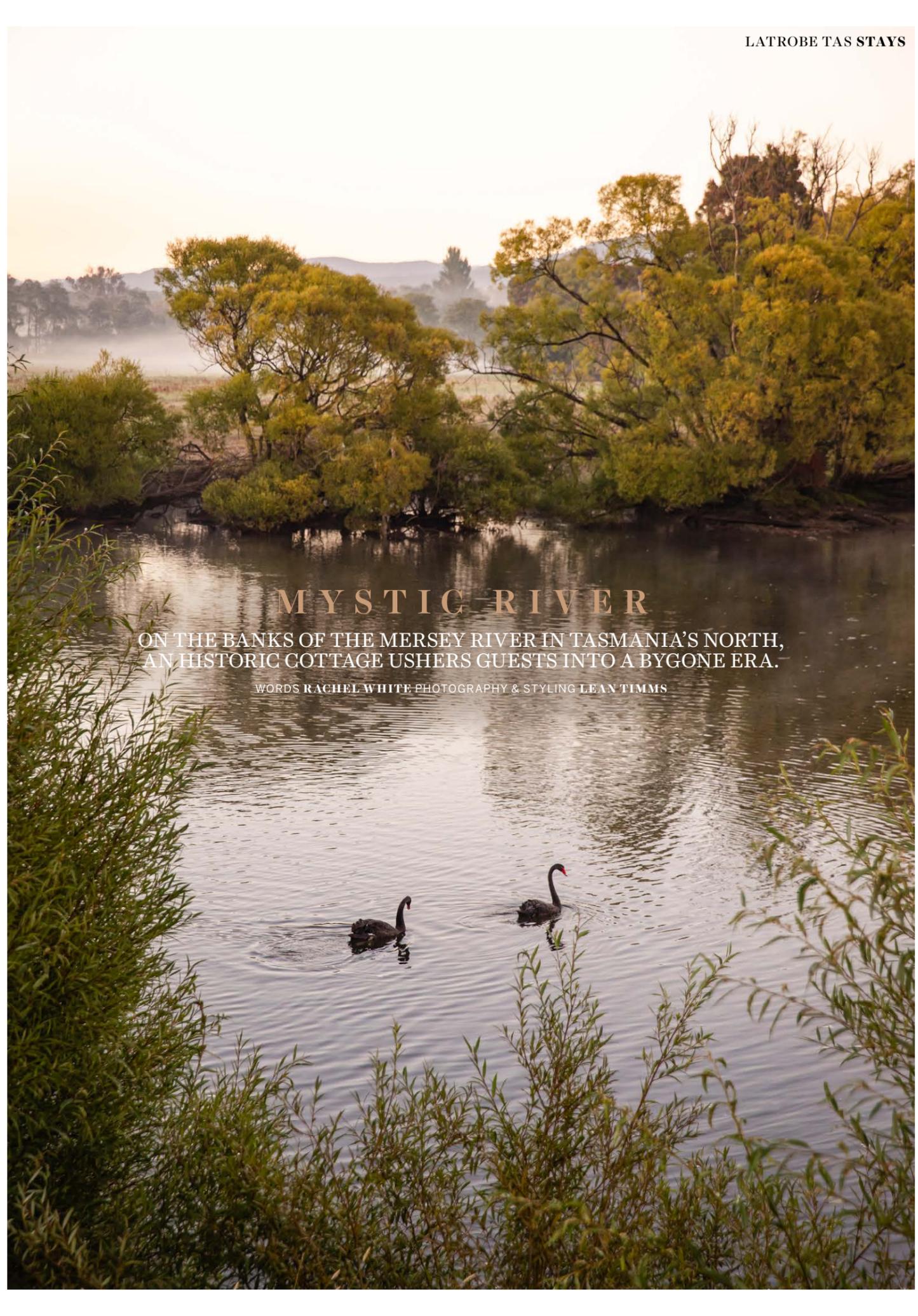


The charm of this restored cottage lies in its chequered past, says owner Christine Hansen. From the original timber walls and the nails made by a local blacksmith to the handmade chimney bricks, every detail has been lovingly restored with a sympathetic eye for detail.



MYSTIC RIVER

ON THE BANKS OF THE MERSEY RIVER IN TASMANIA'S NORTH, AN HISTORIC COTTAGE USHERS GUESTS INTO A BYGONE ERA.

WORDS RACHEL WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY & STYLING LEAN TIMMS



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Second-hand finds in the hallway layer seamlessly with historic features; a Hansen family tablecloth adds a fresh touch in the dining room; Christine's handmade light fitting illuminates the day bed; the c.1860s facade has remained unchanged for 160 years; Christine's handmade bedhead is painted in milk paint from The Patina Factory. **FACING PAGE** Characterful support beams put history on show in the entrance.



AN UNASSUMING COUNTRY cottage on the outside, Twiss Street is a lovingly restored, 160-year-old home full of personality and historic charm on the inside. Situated in Latrobe, where the Mersey River meets Bass Strait on Tasmania's northern frontier, the home is the handiwork of Launceston-based museum curator, academic and business owner Christine Hansen.

A portal to the past, Twiss Street has been painstakingly restored by Christine, who also runs The Patina Factory, a paint-making studio specialising in house paints made with natural materials. Every pigment, textile and object at Twiss Street – from the handmade lampshades to the milk-painted woodwork – was chosen to complement the cottage's origins, using techniques Christine learned while living overseas.

"In 2011, I moved to Sweden for an academic position researching museum collections," explains Christine. "That's how I learned about *byggnadsvård* – the practice of caring for old buildings. It's a kind of social movement based on repair, re-use, recycle."

Returning to Australia and settling in Tasmania's north in early 2019, Christine found an outlet for her new-found skills when she came across a tiny, unloved cottage with poky rooms and limited basic amenities.

It was love at first sight. "As soon as I started work on the building, I knew I had something exceptional. Every surface I touched revealed the marks of its makers," she says. "Under layers of cheap acrylic carpet and rows of fluorescent lights, I started experimenting with the techniques I'd learned in Sweden, particularly making natural paints. That's how The Patina Factory was born."

Christine says using the paint recipes she'd spent a decade collecting and perfecting "just felt right" at Twiss Street. The earthy texture of natural paints and their propensity to age both gracefully and with character added another layer to the heritage of the building. "This patina meets the historic materials in exactly the right way and creates a subtle story that the body reads as soon as you enter the house," she explains.

Located in the middle of a winegrowing region and within an easy drive of Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair National Park, Mole Creek and many pristine Bass Strait beaches, Twiss Street is popular with couples looking to unwind. Since taking her first booking in mid-2023, Christine says: "The unanimous feedback I get is that the space has an otherworldly quality that invokes calm, warmth and generosity. It's a romantic cocoon." *cf*
To book your stay, visit twissstreet.com.au



STAYS LATROBE TAS

A ceramic light fitting highlights a wall of artwork collected from Paris flea markets, op shops, second-hand dealers and local auction houses. The lime-rendered chimney houses an efficient new cast-iron fireplace that fits with the historic interiors while providing much-needed warmth and light for guests throughout the seasons.

“Every surface I touched
revealed the marks of its makers.”

