



# Launceston Historical Society Inc

## Newsletter No 116

July 2009

ISSN 1036-7950

PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

*"Bringing together people with an interest in history"*

### Water and Electricity

On 17 May 2009, Heather Felton presented a fascinating and wide-ranging illustrated talk on the key moments in the harnessing of water resources in northern Tasmania. From the 1830s when water was used to drive flour mills, to the trials and tribulations of providing Launceston with a clean and reliable water supply, through to the hydro power schemes at the Waverley Woollen Mills, Duck Reach and Trevallyn, to the issues of today with the Meander Dam and Pulp Mill, Heather says that the issue of water always has been one of controversy, innovation and indecision. For more information see the Institute of Engineers website: [www.engineersaustralia.org.au](http://www.engineersaustralia.org.au).



Lucille Gee and Heather Felton. Photo: M Sargent



John Dent with Plan 32 of "Launcestown".  
Photo: M Sargent

### The Missing Link?

John Dent's well-attended talk on 21 June focused on the Plan 32 map of "Launcestown", which he had discovered in the Titles Office. The map was revealed gradually to the captivated audience as John pointed out the three unnamed streets – Brisbane, Charles and Cimitiere. The Military District, gaol, mill, lumber yard, barrack, courthouse and blocks of land belonging to Alexander Riley, Dr Mountgarret and Hugh Piper are all marked. John has deduced that the map was made in 1808 by the surveyor John Mills and taken to Sydney by Colonel Paterson; it was returned to Hobart in 1844. Articles referring to the talk are in the *Launceston Times* 9 June 2009, page 3, and *The Examiner* 22 June 2009, page 6.

## LAUNCESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President	Marita Bardenhagen	6334 4490
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Society Website: [www.launcestonhistory.org.au](http://www.launcestonhistory.org.au) (A copy of this newsletter can be found on this site in colour)

## July Talk

**Sunday 19 July 2009 – 2.30pm** at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk.

### **Brian Rollins: The original Bass Highway c. 1827-28.**

The Bass Highway of 2009 that we take so much for granted bears no resemblance to the 182 year old version which first connected Launceston to Circular Head. The original “highway” was built through an entirely different landscape – through some of the most rugged terrain the North West coast has to offer; through an Aboriginal homeland undergoing alienation; through some of the “most stupendous and tangled forests in Van Diemen’s Land”; through two winters and seventeen months. In an illustrated journey across country and back through time you will come to be thankful you did not have to risk your life building it or travelling it!

Brian Rollins is secretary of the Burnie Historical Society, a member of the Management Committee of Highfield Historic Site at Stanley, and a Consulting Surveyor and Director of the firm Peacock, Darcey & Anderson Pty Ltd. The fact that he is a business partner of the indefatigable John Dent should not be held against him! Like John, Brian has a unique professional perspective on the interpretation of certain documentary evidence and its inextricable association with local history. He has developed a similar abiding interest in the earliest years of European settlement in his own region, the North West coast.

Born in Devonport and subsequently having lived in Burnie, Deloraine and Smithton, the couple of years then spent in that remote southern capital did nothing to diminish his affection for the northern part of the state, as he has lived and worked in Burnie for the past 40 years.

Brian’s first awakening to local history (and curiously the subject of this talk) occurred as a relative youngster, when he had moved from Burnie to live in Deloraine at the eastern extremity of the coast. Why was the main street named “Emu Bay Road”, when it was so far inland and remote from the real thing that he had just left behind? The main street then being part of the Bass Highway seemed to provide the obvious answer. Yet at the same time this was somehow unconvincing, as so many other towns and features along that same stretch of highway were less distant. A couple of years later while living in Smithton, at the other end of the coast, Brian experienced the first insight into that capitalist enterprise of long ago, the Van Diemen’s Land Company.

Local history lay dormant for the next two decades before a chance professional discovery on top of the Black Bluff Range, of a relic built in 1831 by the VDL Company’s chief surveyor Henry Hellyer, fanned a smouldering spark into a flame that has remained more or less bright ever since. The VDL Company is closely associated with trade through Launceston, and exploration and land settlement from Westbury to Woolnorth, and Brian’s ongoing research has answered much more besides that first childhood conundrum.

## August Talk

**Sunday 23 August 2009 – 2.30pm** at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk.

### **Elsbeth Wishart and Linda Clark: Convict clothing.**

In November 2006, individual collections of convict dress from the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVMAG), the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG), and the Port Arthur Historic Site (PAHS) were brought together at the QVMAG for three days of intensive comparison and analysis. The combined collection, comprising over 130 items, represented the largest collection of 19<sup>th</sup> century prison clothing in the British Commonwealth; in comparison, only a few items of convict dress are held by mainland museums and only one or two examples survive in Britain. This unique collaborative opportunity demonstrated not only the international significance of the individual and combined collections, but also the need for ongoing statewide research as many questions about convict dress remain unanswered.

Elsbeth and Linda will discuss the results of their findings and will suggest further avenues for research.

**Elsbeth Wishart** graduated in Classics from the University of Adelaide and proceeded to complete a Graduate Diploma in Education from the Adelaide College of Advanced Education. Realising that she wished to pursue a career in Museums or Archaeology she then completed a Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies at the University of Sydney.

For over 25 years she has worked in Museum-related fields mainly in Tasmania: Port Arthur Historic Site; Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery; and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery with all of the state's major convict collections.

Elsbeth has curated over 30 exhibitions, and has a number of publications relating to exhibition themes, heritage in Antarctica and social history.

She currently holds the position of Senior Curator of History at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

**Linda Clark** graduated in Zoology from the University of Tasmania; and in Conservation of Archaeological Materials from the Institute of Archaeology, University of London.

Linda has spent many years employed as a field conservator on archaeological excavations and as an objects conservator in Museums, both within Australia and overseas. Linda has curated a number of exhibitions at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, including: 66South, Tales from an Antarctic Station; Cargo for the Colony, the Wreck of the Sydney Cove; and Pacific Encounters.

Currently Linda is head of the Conservation Department at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

**Larissa Von Stieglitz**, an Honours student in History at UTAS, will speak for 10 minutes on aspects of Dame Enid Lyons' radio broadcasts.

## Advance Notice of Activities

**Sunday 27 September 2009: Dr Dianne Snowden**, *Northern women convicts*.

**Sunday 18 October 2009: Brad Williams**, *Archaeology in Northern Tasmania*.

**Sunday 15 November 2009: Jon Addison**, Reflection on a year as History Curator of QVMAG.

## Relbia Ramble

Lucille Gee has offered to take LHS members on a Relbia Ramble on Sunday 25 October 2009. Meet outside the home of Mr and Mrs Michael Skipper, 75 Caledonia Drive, Relbia at 2.00pm. Park along the side of the road. We will see the remains of a convict sawpit; an old barn at 'Corra Linn'; the Jingler's Creek viaduct on 'West Lynne'; and for the energetic a climb to the top of Graveyard Hill. Afternoon tea at the Josef Chromy Cellar Door Café at 370 Relbia Road is an optional extra. The two-hour tour is free. Bring water, walking shoes, a torch for the viaduct tunnel and if possible, a four wheel drive vehicle. For more information and expressions of interest please contact Marion Sargent on 6331 4890 or [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com).



Lucille Gee at the convict sawpit, Relbia. Photo: M Sargent

## Members' Column

**New Members:** The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Alex Crothers, Merle and Roslyn Field, Lucille Gee, Alan Harris, Claire Hughes, Robyn Jones, Peter MacFie, Sue, Neil, Paul and Emily McClarron, and Douglas Snare.

**Christmas BBQ:** The West Tamar Historical Society has invited LHS members to a BBQ at the York Town Historic Site on 29 November 2009. Meet at the monument at 11.00am for a guided tour of York Town. Lunch will be from 12.30pm. Please BYO food and drink. No RSVP necessary, but for information contact John Dent on 6331 4099 or [john.dent@pda.com.au](mailto:john.dent@pda.com.au). See separate flyer enclosed.

**2010 Symposium:** *Tasmanians and War* is the topic for the Launceston Historical Society's Symposium to be held on Saturday 17 April 2010. If anyone is interested in presenting a paper please contact Nic Haygarth on 6398 1334 or [lakelea22@yahoo.com.au](mailto:lakelea22@yahoo.com.au).

**Dr Nic Haygarth** recently presented a paper (co-authored by Arthur Clarke) called "White knuckles in the underworld: the wild days of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club" at the 18th Australasian Conference on Cave and Karst Management at Margaret River, Western Australia.

**Dr Marita Bardenhagen's** travelling exhibition entitled 'Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Lives; a pictorial history of Bush Nursing in Tasmania 1910-1957' will be on display at the Community Health Centre, Westbury, from mid July for a couple of months.

**Launceston Family Album:** LHS vice-president Marion Sargent is the coordinator of the Launceston Family Album project. On 6 June 2009 *The Examiner* published a three-page plea for help in indentifying 30 elusive people who had season tickets to the Tasmanian International Exhibition held at the Albert Hall in 1891-92. Please have another look at the website to see if your family is there. An encyclopaedia of the nearly 1200 portraits, each with a biographical sketch, is scheduled to be published next year. [www.launcestonfamilyalbum.org.au](http://www.launcestonfamilyalbum.org.au).

**Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office team:** Four members of the Launceston Historical Society have been appointed to the TAHO team based at the Launceston LINC (Library). Dianne Cassidy, Catherine Pearce, Leonie Prevost and Marion Sargent will be dedicated to the preservation and provision of local and family history resources at the Launceston Library. A major task will be the digitisation of key resources and making them available through the Community Knowledge Network (State Library) webpage.

## Recent Publications by Members

**Dr Nic Haygarth**, "Ozone-whetted appetites and hearts devoid of care": cruising to cave-land in 19th century Tasmania', in the *Papers and Proceedings of the 17th Australasian Conference on Cave and Karst Management* (Buchan, Victoria, 2007).

## Launceston Historical Society Archaeology Committee

**The second meeting** was held on [26th May](#) at the Launceston Library with 12 members present. We now have 29 people who have expressed an interest in joining our group. John Dent gave an illustrated talk on the first buildings in Launceston that have been identified in Grimes' 1807 survey of Launceston. There are six records of Grimes' visit to Port Dalrymple. Sites where buildings still exist are 15 Brisbane Street (Thomas Massey's House) and Elphin House (Alexander Riley's House). Other sites that have had limited development since then and might have remains still in existence were identified as Mountgarrett's Grindstone, Stockyards site, Jones' House, Windsor's House, Norfolk Island settler lands, the barracks (corner of Cimitiere and George Streets) Government House (in City Park), the hospital and stables (in City Park). Others like Moore's House, the store, Dry's House, the mill, the wharf, sentry box and other houses are likely to have been built over and probably destroyed in the last 200 years. At the meeting a letter from the Heritage Council was read out. It expresses the Council's support for the formation of [the](#) group and commends us for the wide range of potential projects we have identified.

**Our next meeting** will be in the Phil Leonard Room at the Launceston Library at 1pm on Tuesday 30 June. We will look in more detail at some of the projects suggested and decide which ones we can proceed with and which will require more investigation.

## Characters from the Past

*Launceston Examiner*, 2 January 1850, page 5.

**Fortitude** – Last week, a female in the service of Mr. Sutherland, on the South Esk, was bitten in the palm of her hand by a snake. With remarkable presence of mind and fortitude, she immediately cut out the piece with a knife, and exploded three infusions of gunpowder in the wound. Happily these measures neutralised the effects of the venom.



### **James Tasman Campbell**

This portrait from the Launceston Family Album was indentified wrongly in the February newsletter. He is Gallipoli veteran Alec Campbell's Uncle James, not John Campbell from Campbell's Pottery.

James Tasman Campbell was born at Longford on 22 Oct 1868. He was the eldest of three sons of Donald Campbell (1834-1907) and his second wife Elizabeth Brumby. Donald sailed from Scotland to Tasmania with his family on the *Storm Cloud* in 1855. He met his first wife Sarah Ryley on the voyage and they married the following year. Donald and Sarah had four sons before Sarah died in 1865 aged 31. Donald married Elizabeth Brumby on 28 Oct 1865. She was a daughter of William, and granddaughter of James Brumby, an early settler in northern Tasmania.

James Campbell was boarding with Mrs J O'Connor in York Street, Launceston, at the time of the Tasmanian Exhibition in 1891-92. He married Olive Grace Sidebottom on 28 Oct 1897 at St John's Church, Launceston. They left by the *Coogee* for their honeymoon in Melbourne. A year later their daughter Olga was born at 45 Auburn Road, Auburn, Melbourne. By 1903 James was a manager and the family was living at 'Lachlan', Amhurst Street, Crow's Nest, North Sydney. James died in 1934. Olive Sidebottom and James' brother Samuel (Alec Campbell's father) also are pictured in the Family Album.

## Zeehan Gem and Mineral Fair Trip Saturday and Sunday 7- 8 November 2009

The Launceston Historical Society is conducting a two-day coach trip to Zeehan ('Silver City') and its old mining port of Trial Harbour to coincide with the Zeehan Gem and Mineral Fair on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th of November 2009. Saturday night will be spent at the Central Hotel, Zeehan. Highlights include the Gem and Mineral Fair, West Coast Pioneers Museum and Gaiety Theatre in Zeehan, the Trial Harbour History Room, the Zeehan Pioneers Cemetery and the Tasmanian Smelter site.

The cost is \$180 per adult and \$160 per child. It covers coach fare, accommodation and continental breakfast at the Central Hotel, BBQ lunch on Saturday at the Central Hotel, admission to the West Coast Pioneers Museum and Gaiety Theatre, admission to the Gem and Mineral Fair plus morning teas on Saturday and Sunday, dinner on Saturday and lunch on Sunday. *It does not include afternoon teas.* (Admission to the Trial Harbour History Room is by donation.) Numbers are limited to 23.

**Please RSVP to PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250 with full payment and contact details, using the bookings form below. Only the first 23 bookings will be accepted. For insurance purposes, all participants must be fully paid-up members.** There will be a \$20 cancellation fee if you are unable to attend and we cannot find a replacement for you. **Anyone with special dietary requirements (vegan etc), please contact the organiser, Nic Haygarth, as soon as possible** (ph 6398 1334, [lakelea22@yahoo.com.au](mailto:lakelea22@yahoo.com.au)). **Please direct any other enquiries related to the trip to Nic.**

Please note: Single, twin (2 single beds) and double (1 double bed) rooms are available at the Central Hotel but there are no ensuite facilities.

**Day 1: Saturday 7 November**

Depart Launceston 8.00am sharp  
*Morning tea Sheffield*  
Check in at Central Hotel, Zeehan  
*Lunch Central Hotel, Zeehan*  
Gem & Mineral Fair  
West Coast Pioneers Museum  
*Afternoon tea Zeehan*  
Gaiety Theatre  
Possibly Zeehan-Montana mine  
*Dinner Zeehan*

**Day 2: Sunday 8 November**

*Breakfast Central Hotel, Zeehan*  
Trial Harbour History Room  
*Morning tea Trial Harbour*  
Zeehan Pioneers Cemetery  
*Lunch Zeehan*  
Tasmanian Smelter site  
*Afternoon tea Rosebery or Tullah*  
Home

**The cost of the Zeehan trip will be \$180 per adult and \$160 per child.**



<p><b>Zeehan Gem and Mineral Fair trip, 7-8 November 2009</b></p> <p><b>Name:</b> .....</p> <p><b>Address:</b> .....</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> .....<b>Mobile:</b>.....</p> <p><b>Email:</b> .....</p> <p><b>Single</b>..... <b>Twin</b>.....<b>Double</b>.....</p>	<p><b>Return by 31 July 2009 to</b></p> <p><b>LHS Inc</b> <b>PO Box 1296</b> <b>LAUNCESTON TAS 7250</b></p>
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## Amendment to the LHS Constitution:

### OBJECTS & PURPOSES OF THE ASSOCIATION

4. (1) In this rule, "basic objects of the Association" means:
- (i) the bringing together of persons with an interest in history and historical matters,
  - (ii) the fostering of an understanding of the history of Launceston, the Tamar Valley & nearby districts, and
  - (iii) the publication of works and papers having an historical interest.
  - (iv) **the protection, preservation and promotion of the heritage of Launceston and its environs.**

Amended: 18 April 2009

## Other Items and Events of Interest

**Launceston Library Photographic Exhibition:** *Country Life*, Early photographs of northern Tasmanian farms from the Launceston Library's local studies photographic collection. Curated by LHS member Catherine Pearce. On the walls, second floor until the end of 2009.

**A Bright and Crimson Flower:** A tribute to Australian Prisoners of War 1942-1945. Created by the Round Earth Company from interviews, diaries, letters, writings and recorded stories told by the Ex-Prisoners of War. In support of Legacy. One performance only. Tuesday 28 July 2009, 8.00pm, Princess Theatre, Launceston.

**National Book Council of Tasmania:** The guest speaker for July is Trudy Cowley, editor of *Convict lives: Women at Cascades female factory* which tells the stories of 33 fascinating women. Wednesday, 15 July 2009, 1.15pm, Phil Leonard Room, Launceston Library, Civic Square, Launceston. All welcome.

**Wellbeing and Health in Tasmania:** The Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies, 24<sup>th</sup> annual conference, Saturday 5 September 2009, Life Sciences Lecture Theatre 1, Sandy Bay Campus, UTAS. For enquiries phone 6226 2298 or email [Secretary@history.utas.edu.au](mailto:Secretary@history.utas.edu.au). See separate flyer enclosed.

### **Islands of Memory: Navigating Personal and Public History:**

The national Oral History conference will be held at the Tram Shed, Launceston, 17–20 September 2009. There will be 55 speakers from five continents over four days. All the conference details are available at [www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/oralhistoryconference](http://www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/oralhistoryconference).

### **In a Global Context: Australasia's archaeological evidence of the Globalisation process:**

The Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology/AIMA annual conference will be held at the Tram Shed, Inveresk Rail Yards, Launceston, 24-26 September 2009. Excursions will be organised to sample the heritage, culture and cuisine of northern Tasmania. The history of modern Australasia is intimately tied to the ongoing processes of Globalisation. From early exploration and settlement through to today, the social and economic development of the Australasian region has been shaped by Global influences. This conference will explore the development and management of Australasia's historic and maritime archaeological sites and places within the broader context of relevant world events. For Enquiries email [Denise.Gaughwin@dier.tas.gov.au](mailto:Denise.Gaughwin@dier.tas.gov.au).

**Manufacturers and Traders of Van Diemen's Land 1820-1860:** Hobart Town (1804) First Settlers Association's 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial Tasmanian Local History Conference. To be held on 9-10 October 2009 at Wrest Point, Hobart. For enquiries email [hobarttown1804settlers@hotmail.com](mailto:hobarttown1804settlers@hotmail.com), phone (03) 6272 8737 or write to PO Box 337 Glenorchy TAS 7010.

## Deadlines

Members wishing to place items on the Agenda for the 11 August 2009 LHS Committee Meeting are requested to have these to the President by **1 August 2009**. Items for the next Newsletter should be sent to the Editor by **1 September 2009** at [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com) or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.