



# Launceston Historical Society Inc.

## Newsletter No 132

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

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

### Convict Cabinet-makers

On 18 September 2011 Robyn Lake addressed the Historical Society meeting with some findings from her many years of research into convict cabinet-makers during the early years of transportation to Van Diemen's Land. Robyn argued that mechanics were in demand and perhaps were "selected" to be sent to work for the government in the fledgling colony. Her talk focussed on four convicts. John Waterhouse, initially sent to Sydney, was transferred to Hobart where he was employed on government works. John Graham, charged with stealing Rev. Robert Knopwood's boat, was sent to Macquarie Harbour where he made chairs. Thomas Chase brought his tools with him when he was transported. In 1829 he was one of 178 mechanics engaged in the Hobart lumber yard making tables, chairs, spinning wheels for the Female Factory and firescreens for Government House. The final profile was on John Miles who worked in the Perth-Norfolk Plains area. Amongst other jobs he fitted out *Silwood*, which since has been demolished. Robyn's research into the convict cabinet-makers can bring the furniture to life.



**Speaker Robyn Lake.**



**Speaker Andrew Gregg with Julian Burgess.**

### O'Connor and Bryan

Andrew Gregg presented a paper on the relationship between two Irishmen, Roderick O'Connor and William Bryan. In 1824, they arrived together in VDL on the *Ardent*. Both men, who settled in the Norfolk Plains area, had much in common as landed gentry. However, the friendship soured when Bryan was accused of stealing cattle, had his convict servants withdrawn at harvest and shearing time, and engaged in disputes with police magistrate Lyttleton and Governor Arthur. Bryan left VDL in 1835, returning to London and Wicklow, Ireland. A William Bryan was murdered in Ireland in 1838. Was this the one in question?

## LAUNCESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## November Talk

**Sunday 20 November 2011 – 2.30pm** at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk.

### **Steve Radford, *Holymans* – 150 years**

2011 is the sesquicentenary of the founding of the White Star Line/Holymans sea-air-road transport empire. It included shipping services, both intra-state and inter-state, between Tasmania, NSW, Victoria and South Australia. After taking over Flinders Island Airlines around 1934, the company eventually founded Australian National Airways which basically was the pioneering airline system for South East Australia. Despite government opposition and favouritism to the Government airline, Holymans succeeded in keeping going until 1957 when Ansett took over the airline business. However, it continued in shipping until 1987 when selling the last vessel, *Mary Holyman*. The company name still exists but has been absorbed well and truly into firstly Patrick and now Toll. It has a rich history of transport in this country and is one of the all-time great family business empires in Australia.

Steve believes that the story of the “empire” needs to be told. There has never been a book written about Holymans’ shipping; only of Australian National Airways. It has an interesting opening in that Captain William Holyman senior jumped overboard from the *Elizabeth Radcliffe* anchored at George Town in 1855, slipped away and swam ashore. Just as well he did for that vessel was never heard of again.

## History Prize

The Society held another successful History Prize in this International Year of Women addressing the topic ‘Australian Women Building Our Nation’. Thank you to the judges Leonie Prevost, Andrew Gregg and Robyn Jones for selecting the prize-winners from all the excellent CDs, posters and booklets received.

Eighty-four students from grades 3 to 6 from four Launceston schools submitted 79 entries covering a diverse range of Australian women who have contributed to the building of our nation. The participating schools were Mowbray Heights, Riverside and West Launceston Primary Schools and Scotch Oakburn Junior School. As the standard was so high this year the judges have decided to award 20 prizes with a total value of \$775.00 worth of book vouchers. A list of winners will be published in the December Newsletter.

A presentation ceremony will not be held this year. Instead, the prizes will be awarded to the students in their own school assemblies.

## Christmas Function

**Sunday 4 December 2011 – 2.30pm** at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk.

### **Richard Mulvaney, *Reflections on my first year at the QVMAG***

It has been an exciting year for Richard Mulvaney, the Director of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, culminating in the re-opening of the Art Gallery at Royal Park. Richard has been involved with museums all his working life, including the Australian War Memorial and Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies in Canberra, Sovereign Hill in Ballarat, the Bradman Museum at Bowral, Museums and Galleries NSW and the Rail Heritage Centre at Thirlmere, NSW. Richard will reflect on his first year at the QVMAG at our Christmas meeting. Please bring a plate of food to share.

## Macquarie 2011 Celebrations



Many events have been planned to celebrate the bicentenary of Governor Lachlan Macquarie's first visit to Van Diemen's Land in 1811. See the list below which covers the northern part of the state. The full list of events and other details is available on the website <http://www.macquarie2011.com/index.html>.

Mon 5 Dec	MacQ is Back: Exhibition "Macquarie's Meander through the Midlands" Macquarie stayed overnight in Ross and the display will include graphic interpretations of his journey.	Tasmanian Wool Centre, Ross	Open from 5 Dec  Free event
Tue 6 Dec	MacQ is Back: <i>Diary Reading in the Forest</i> at Epping Forest, a resting place for the Macquarie party.  All "MacQ is Back" events contact: email: <a href="mailto:fiona.dewar@nmc.tas.gov.au">fiona.dewar@nmc.tas.gov.au</a> website: <a href="http://HeritageHighwayTourism.com">Heritage Highway Tourism</a> for more details and special pricing. phone: 6397 7303	Epping Forest	10am  Free event Book: Space limited
Tue 6 Dec	MacQ is Back: 'Woolmers' exclusive tour of the World Heritage site and parts not normally open to the public. Hear about Macquarie's influence on the estate.	'Woolmers', Woolmers Lane, Longford	12.30pm  \$35 after 10th Oct (pre-booked and pre-paid event)
Wed 7 Dec	MacQ is Back: Visit the National Trust Archives at 'Clarendon' and view the recent conservation works with the Conservation Manager.	'Clarendon' National Trust home, Nile	11.30am to 1.30pm  \$35 after 10th Oct (pre-booked and pre-paid event)
Thu 8 Dec	A journal reading in City Park to commemorate Governor Macquarie's arrival in Launceston.  email: <a href="mailto:peter.cox21@intas.net.au">peter.cox21@intas.net.au</a> phone: 0407 204 610	City Park, Launceston	5pm
Sat 10 Dec	A journal reading, tea and Dundee cakes in the café area of QVMAG to commemorate Macquarie's visit to the Barracks.  email: <a href="mailto:peter.cox21@intas.net.au">peter.cox21@intas.net.au</a> phone: 0407 204 610	The Tea Room, QVMAG, Royal Park, Launceston	11am

Sun 11 Dec	George Town and District Historical Society Bus Tour of the historic North Esk farming areas. Includes an event at Corra Linn farm.  email: <a href="mailto:peter.cox21@intas.net.au">peter.cox21@intas.net.au</a> phone: 0407 204 610	Leave from QVMAG Inveresk car park	9.30am to 12 midday  Members \$10 Non Members \$15
Sun 11 Dec	Journal reading in the Gorge	Cataract Gorge, Launceston	3.30pm
Mon 12 Dec	Visit the Norfolk Plains Heritage Centre and enjoy morning tea. Governor's tour featuring information and items of Norfolk Plains history  phone: 6391 1472	Norfolk Plains Heritage Centre, 11 William St, Longford	10.45am  Gold coin donation
Mon 12 Dec	George Town and District Historical Society Bus Tour Pateena Rd.	Leaves from Norfolk Plains Heritage Centre, 11 William St, Longford	12.30pm to 2pm  Members \$10 Non Members \$15
Fri 16 Dec	Walk along the Tamar Wetlands boardwalk to Tamar Island for a journal reading.  email: <a href="mailto:peter.cox21@intas.net.au">peter.cox21@intas.net.au</a> phone: 0407 204 610	Tamar Island Wetlands, West Tamar Highway.	3pm to 4.30pm  Normal Visitor Centre Fees apply
Sat 17 Dec	<b>Macquarie's Picnic.</b> Re-enactment and speech by Governor Macquarie.(Local group picnic and journal reading) RSVP by 1 December  email: <a href="mailto:acgreen@bigpond.net.au">acgreen@bigpond.net.au</a> phone: Angela 6344 5856 or Mary 6394 7320	<b>LHS members are invited</b>  'The Retreat' 766 Deviot Road Deviot	From 12 noon to 3pm  Dress: Regency style
Sun 18 Dec	<b>York Town guided tour and BYO BBQ or picnic lunch.</b>  email: <a href="mailto:john.dent@pda.com.au">john.dent@pda.com.au</a> phone: 0408 133 656	<b>LHS members are invited</b>  West Tamar Historical Society. York Town Historic Site	10.30am to 1pm  Free and BYO picnic lunch
Sun 18 Dec	George Town's Macquarie Bicentenary celebrations in the presence of the Governor of Tasmania.  <a href="mailto:kevint@georgetown.tas.gov.au">kevint@georgetown.tas.gov.au</a> phone: 0488 318 312	George Town Council.  Memorial Hall & Regent Square, George Town	3pm to 4pm  Free
Mon 19 Dec	Macquarie's George Town Historic Walk.  email: <a href="mailto:peter.cox21@intas.net.au">peter.cox21@intas.net.au</a> phone: 0407 204 610	George Town and District Historical Society. Leaves from the Watch House, Macquarie St, George Town	9am to 10.30am  Free
Mon 19 Dec	Journal reading and farewell to Governor Macquarie followed by afternoon tea at the historic Pilot Station.  email: <a href="mailto:peter.cox21@intas.net.au">peter.cox21@intas.net.au</a> phone: 0407 204 610	Low Head Pilot Station, 399 Low Head Road, Low Head	3pm  Small charge for afternoon tea

# Oatlands Excursion

The trip to Oatlands on Sunday 30 October was a resounding success. Twenty-one members of the Society enjoyed the bus trip and walking tour of the historic town. Thank you to bus driver Terese Binns and to leader Steve Radford who provided a commentary on properties and personalities along the Heritage Highway. After a morning tea of delicious scones at the Oatlands District Historical Society's History Room our knowledgeable tour co-ordinator Graeme Raphael guided us through the industrial precinct of the Callington Mill (1837) complex, to the military precinct. We were fascinated by the worn steps of the gaoler's residence (1834-1836) and were pleased to see that more restoration work is in progress. There are plans to relocate the sandstone gateway of the old gaol from its present position in the main street to its original location at the entrance of the gaol. Walking across to the old Supreme Court House (1829), we marvelled at the 1834 additions by architect John Lee Archer.

After lunch at The Kentish Hotel we took the bus to the exquisite Pugin-designed St Paul's Catholic Church (1850) where Vera Fisher gave us a wonderful overview of the history of the church. We visited St Peter's Anglican Church (1838) and associated cemetery before driving to Maher's Point overlooking Lake Dulverton. A ramble around the General Cemetery (1827) was interesting, with the largest monument being to Samuel Page who ran coaches between Launceston and Hobart and beyond. On the return drive we detoured to Tunbridge to see the Blind Chapel, the old Victoria Hotel and one of Samuel Page's coaches. (Marion Sargent)



Trip participants outside the Oatlands History Room.



Old Oatlands Supreme Court building.



Steve Radford and Graeme Raphael, St Peter's.

## Members' Column

**New Members:** The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new member: Helen Lerner.

**Archaeology Group:** The next meeting will be on 29 November 2011 at 1.00pm at the Phil Leonard Room, Launceston LINC.

**Papers and Proceedings:** The LHS 2010 Papers and Proceedings are available for sale at \$12.00.

**Publicity:** Articles were published in *The Examiner* newspaper after the last two Sunday meetings. Robyn Lake's talk was written up on 19 September 2011, page 10, 'Old bookcase inspires journey into lives of convict artisans'.

Andrew Gregg's talk was in the paper on 18 October 2011, page 14, 'Student shares research with historical society members'.

## Other Items and Events of Interest

**National Book Council:** Guest speaker for the November meeting is Kathy Gatenby, author of *The Robeys of Maria Island*. This is the story of Hilda Saunders, a beautiful London socialite, and Viv Robey, a farm boy from South Africa, who met in England during the First World War. They established a farm on Maria Island in 1924. It is both a love story and a record of their isolated life. Wednesday, 16 November 2011, 1.15pm, Phil Leonard Room, Launceston LINC, Civic Square.

**Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery:** *Of Love and War*, a travelling exhibition from the Australian War Memorial on display at the Inveresk site until 4 December. This exhibition looks at the impact of war on relationships and the lives of Australians.

**National Archives of Australia:** The National Archives' Hobart office is now located in the LINC Tasmania (State Library) building at 91 Murray Street, Hobart. Phone 6233 9046. Reading room open Wednesday-Friday 9.30-5.00pm.

**George Town and District Historical Society:** The next meeting for 2011 will be: 15 November, *Macquarie and George Town*, at the Memorial Hall, 7.30pm. Free event.

**Tasmanian Modern: the forgotten architecture:** Thomas Ryan, photographer and co-ordinator of the Art Deco and Modernism Society, Tasmanian Chapter, will be presenting a series of architectural photographs that explore and celebrate Tasmania's modernist 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture. Sunday 27 November 2011, St Catherine's Hall, 188-192 Penquite Road, Norwood. For further information contact Thomas-Liam Ryan on telephone 0448 144 186 or email [ryanphotos@gmail.com](mailto:ryanphotos@gmail.com) or visit the website at [www.modernismtas.blogspot.com](http://www.modernismtas.blogspot.com).

**LGH Historical Committee:** A Seminar on *Benefactors* is to be held on 27 November 2011 at the LGH Lecture Theatre, Level 2. For more information please contact Paul Richards: phone 6344 4241 or email [pacrichards1@bigpond.com](mailto:pacrichards1@bigpond.com)

**Low Head Conference 2012:** To be held in the Boatshed at the Low Head Pilot Station on Saturday 28 January 2012. Speakers will cover various topics on the Low Head area. They are Carol Jackson, Marian Walker, Thomas Gunn, Stefan Petrow, Paddy Dorney, Steve Cleve, Iain Gunn and Scott Millen. Cost will be \$35.00. For enquiries and bookings contact Thomas Gunn or Anne Green, 43 Bourke Street, Launceston, or phone 6334 4756.

## Deadlines

Members wishing to place items on the Agenda for the 13 December 2011 LHS Committee Meeting are requested to have these to the President by **1 December 2011**. Items for the next Newsletter should be sent to the Editor by **1 Dec 2011** at [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com) or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.