



Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 139

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

"Bringing together people with an interest in history"

Welcome to the New Committee Members for 2013

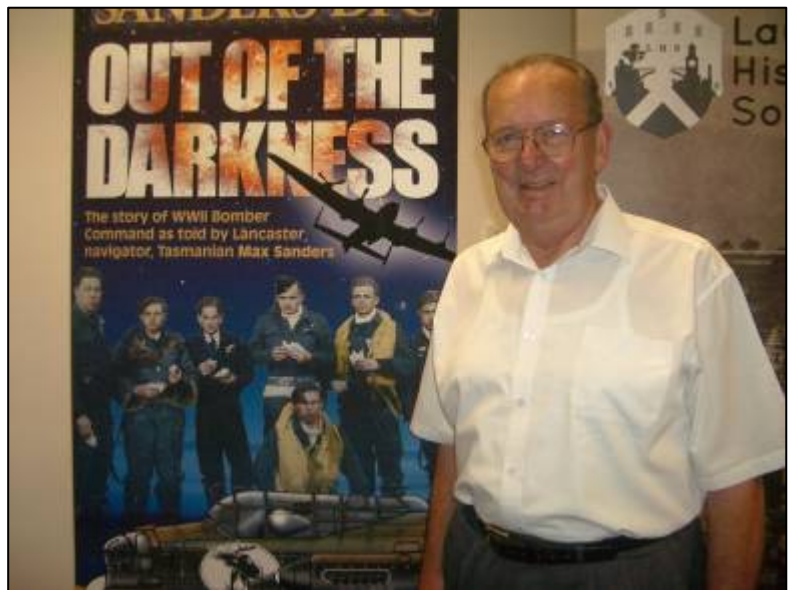
The new committee for 2013 was elected at the AGM on Sunday 17 February. We welcome the latest recruits: Don Barker, Georgia Fountoulaki and Joan Jacks. Marion Sargent was re-appointed President. The other committee members are Catherine Pearce (Vice-President and Minute Secretary), Leonie Prevost (Treasurer and Public Officer), Robyn Jones (Correspondence Secretary and Speaker Coordinator), Jon Addison, Dianne Cassidy, Gus Green and Sue McClarron. Nicholas Clements was elected at the AGM, but since has resigned from the committee. Jai Paterson did not re-stand. We thank her sincerely for her contribution.

The Launceston Historical Society is commemorating its 25th year! A public meeting was held on 25 October 1988 to launch the Society. We will be celebrating at the 20th October meeting. The 2012 Annual Report can be read online at: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/publications/annual-reports/>

Guest Speaker Dr Frank Madill

At the AGM on Sunday 17 February 2013 Dr Frank Madill enthralled the audience with the exploits of one of his patients – navigator Max Sanders DFC – who had 'started talking about the War'. Frank told something of the ex-serviceman's dangerous missions, including flying under cover of darkness over Germany during World War II. On display were original log books and navigation charts which aptly told the story of the Lancaster crew. Max was the sole Australian in the Canadian Air Force Squadron. The petrol cap of the plane was inscribed: 'Fill only with Boag's Premium'! See *The Examiner* 18 February

2013, page10.



Guest speaker at the AGM, Dr Frank Madill. Photo: M Sargent

Please Note Alteration to the Sunday Meeting Time

Due to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery now closing at 4.00pm, the Launceston Historical Society talks will start at 2.00pm on the third Sunday of the month.

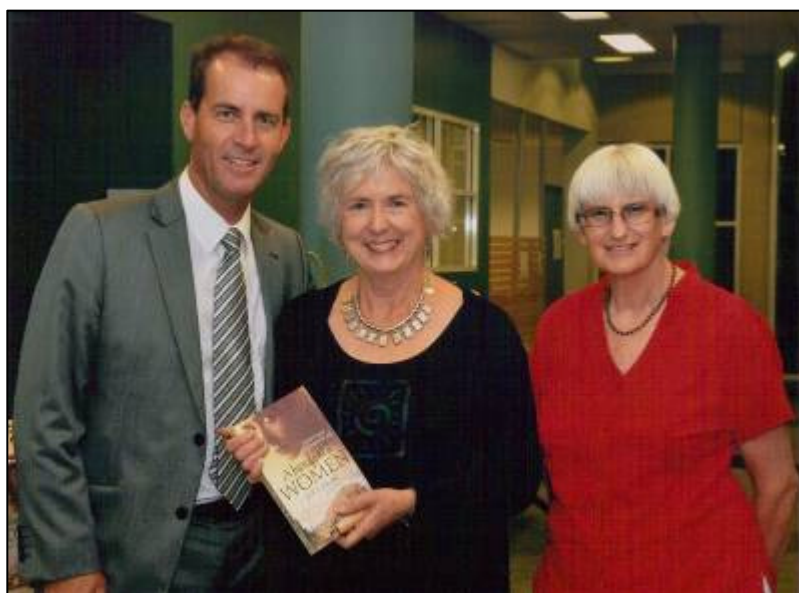
LAUNCESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President	Marion Sargent	6331 4890
Vice-President	Catherine Pearce	
Minute Secretary	Catherine Pearce	
Correspondence Secretary	Robyn Jones	6331 2213
Treasurer	Leonie Prevost	6391 5511
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Speaker Coordinator	Robyn Jones	6331 2213

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The Examiner-John West Memorial Lecture



Martin Gilmour, Professor Lucy Frost and LHS president Marion Sargent. Photo courtesy of *The Examiner*.

Emeritus Professor Lucy Frost presented the 25th John West lecture to 250 people at UTAS on Friday 15 March 2013. Her topic, *The children of mothers in the convict system of Van Diemen's Land*, was based on her book *Abandoned Women*. Free children caught up in the convict system are a much neglected aspect of our history. After the lecture Lucy was kept busy signing copies of her books which had been provided by Petrarch's Bookshop. Copies of *Way Back When* also were available for sale. Lucy was introduced by Martin Gilmour, Editor of *The Examiner*, and Jon Addison offered a vote of thanks. See *The Examiner*, 16 March 2013, page 9.

April Talk

Phoebe Kelloway: *Textile workers' strike, Launceston 1932*

Sunday 21 April 2013 – 2.00pm at the Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk.

Abstract: On 22 August 1932, Launceston's textile workers commenced strike action – which lasted sixteen days – a measure unprecedented in that industry in this city. Their battle against a wage cut drew condemnation from press and pulpit, while the trade union movement throughout Tasmania showed them its solidarity. Two key features of this industrial dispute were the predominance of young women among the strikers; and the leadership of an 'outsider': a textile union official from Sydney. This presentation will explore the background to the strike; debates as it unfolded; and the contrast between media portrayals and the realities for workers.

Biography: Phoebe Kelloway completed a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History at the University of Melbourne in 2011, receiving First Class Honours for her thesis on the 1932 strike of textile workers in Launceston and Melbourne. Currently she is a PhD candidate in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne, researching the history of Communists and the radical left in trade unions in the late 1920s to mid-1930s.



May: Tasmanian Heritage Festival

Robyn Jones and Committee Members (walking tour): *From Albert to Victoria*

Sunday 19 May 2013 – 2.00pm, at the Albert Hall, Tamar Street



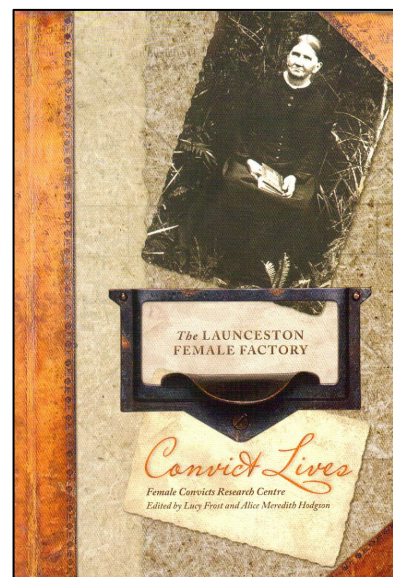
For the National Trust Heritage Festival this year, the Committee has decided on something different! The walking tour *From Albert to Victoria* will explore the history of Cameron Street between the Albert Hall and Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery at Royal Park. Meet in front of the Albert Hall in Tamar Street for the start of the walk. Robyn Jones and other Committee members will tell stories about the various buildings in Cameron Street: those that are here today and those no longer standing. We will have afternoon tea at '1842' in Cimitiere Street before strolling back to the car park. The photograph is of Cameron Street from the *Weekly Courier*, 24 March 1906.

Launceston Female Factory Event – Cancelled

Unfortunately, the event to celebrate the publication of the book *Convict Lives at the Launceston Female Factory* has been cancelled. It was to be held on 24th May in conjunction with the Convict Women's Press and the Female Convicts Research Centre at Launceston College, the site of the House of Correction itself.

LHS committee member Dianne Cassidy has contributed a story featuring one feisty tragic or incorrigible old vagrant – Jean Armour. Dianne has conducted meticulous research through old newspapers; convict records; parish registers; and *Tasmanian Reports of Crime*, to write the story of the vagrant from Glasgow who could not change her ways in her new home. During her 23 years in Tasmania, Jean Armour spent more time in gaol than on the streets or in service. On Christmas Eve 1863, in the Launceston Female Factory, she died – long forgotten; but finally her story has been told!

Petrarch's and Fuller's Bookshops have the three Female Factory books for sale – Cascades, Ross and Launceston.



Tony Robinson's visit to Launceston

British TV historian Tony Robinson (also known as Baldrick) will film an episode of his *Time Walks* series in Launceston from 26 to 29 April 2013. LHS members have been assisting with research into various aspects of our history for the show to be broadcast on Foxtel's History Channel. Members have an opportunity to be involved as part of the audience – if you are willing to interact on camera with Tony!

Two different crowds are required. The first one will be on Saturday 27th at 2.00pm in Prince's Square with Tony talking to the audience about John West and the Anti-Transportation League.

The second will be on Sunday 28th at 10.30am outside Harris Scarfe, Charles Street, where Tony will be re-creating the auction from the Railway Riots of 1874. This was the location of WT Bell's Auction Mart. Only eight people are needed on Sunday. Tony will be speaking directly to individuals who will be required to play along with him. Please RSVP to Marion Sargent on launcestonhistory@gmail.com.

CH Smith Site Tour Report

At the beginning of March the archaeology group of Launceston Historical Society organised a tour of the CH Smith site in Charles Street. The archaeological “dig” was conducted by Austral Archaeology before building work commenced on the site. Ten members in two groups inspected the artefacts and open trenches before the trenches were backfilled.

An early brick arched drain at the bottom of a canal/drain was exposed as well as early footings of warehouses. Some of these were large square sandstone blocks probably imported from Sydney.

A surprise on this largely industrial site was to find three circa 1820s cottages quite close to the original river bank. In one cottage, several pins and buttons were discovered under the floorboards in front of the fireplace.

In the same area was a metal button with “96” in the centre. It might have come from the uniform of a soldier of the 96th Manchester Regiment who had served in Launceston in the 1840s. Another surprise was to find a leather shoe that was remarkably well-preserved due to the water-logged soil.

Large trees cut and laid horizontally on the original soil formed a base for bluestone walls in some of the earliest industrial buildings on the site. A number of our Launceston Historical Society members assisted by providing historical material and photographs for the archaeologists; we thank them for allowing us to have a close look into the very early history of Launceston.

John Dent

Convener LHS Archaeology Group



Photos of the dig by M Sargent.



UTAS History Prize

Danielle McCarthy was the 2012 recipient of the \$400.00 History Prize awarded to a first-year UTAS student. Danielle sincerely thanks everyone in the Society for this honour. The money from the prize will go towards her University book fees and other expenses. She is extremely grateful and hopes to continue with a similar standard of work in the future. Danielle will try to attend the Sunday talks when work and study commitments allow. Danielle says:

I've always been fascinated by history across the globe. Stories tend to weave connections between seemingly opposite civilisations; empires that have fallen; and risen and fallen again. I wrote my 2012 winning essay on Meiji Japan and their ability to resist the West to a large degree. I am undertaking a double major of Japanese and History; and when the time came to choose the subject of my essay, it seemed the obvious choice. Luckily I found this subject fascinating! At the moment I'm studying the mythology of the Indians of North America, and plan to continue my Japanese history studies next semester.

Members' Column

New Members: The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Bianca Coleman, Roger and Elizabeth de Quincey, Kaye Dowling, Georgia Fountoulaki, Tony Henricks, Duane and Veronica Kelly. Jill and Julian Burgess have re-joined.

Archaeology Group: Enquiries to John Dent, email: john.dent@pda.com.au.

The Examiner-John West Memorial Lecture by Emeritus Professor Lucy Frost, *The children of mothers in the convict system of Van Diemen's Land*, is available on the Historical Society's website: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/LucyFrost20131.pdf>.

Way Back When books are available for sale from Petrarch's Bookshop or John Dent, john.dent@pda.com.au, 6331 4099 (bh), PO Box 284, LAUNCESTON TAS 7250. Books are \$55.00.

Advance Notice of LHS Activities

Launceston Historical Society meetings are held at the Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk, at 2.00pm, unless otherwise notified.

16 June 2013 Pugh Day: John Paull, *Walking with Pugh from Hobart to Launceston, in February 1836* and launch of the book *Not Just an Anaesthetist*

21 July 2013: Julianne Richards, *War Service homes in Newstead*

18 August 2013: Alison Alexander, *The ambitions of Jane Franklin*

15 September 2013: Rohan Wilson, *The Launceston Railway Riots of 1874*

20 October 2013: Eric Ratcliff, *The sinister steeples of Alexander North*

17 November 2013: Stephen Dando-Collins, *First World War topic to be advised*

City of Launceston, Officer of Health Annual Report, 1906

The Schools:

The various institutions have been inspected and dealt with. At the Wellington Square state school the premises are foul. There is no ventilation of the drains or soil pipes; the downspouts are direct, and must deliver sewer gas on to the grounds and into the sheds. A waste from a suite of basins empties into the basement, and water flows under the floors through the ventilators in the foundations. Although Government buildings are exempted from the ordinary operations of the law, some attention should be given to the hygiene at their schools.

L. Grey Thompson, M.D., Medical Officer of Health

Other Items and Events of Interest

Australian Heritage Week is an annual national celebration of Australia's unique heritage. It is an opportunity for all Australians to join together to celebrate our shared and special heritage. This year it will run from Saturday 13 April to Sunday 21 April. Our April Sunday talk by Phoebe Kelloway is part of the celebration: <http://heritage-week.govspace.gov.au/>.

Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery: A superb exhibition, *Into the Wild: Wilderness photography in Tasmania*, is currently on show until February 2014 at Royal Park. It includes photographs from Morton Allport, the Anson brothers, JW Beattie, Spurling, Truchanus and Dombrovskis through to modern-day photographers. LHS member Jon Addison was a curator of the Exhibition; while members Nic Haygarth and Deborah Malor each wrote a chapter for the catalogue.

Book Talk: Alison Alexander will present a talk about her latest book, *The ambitions of Jane Franklin*, at Fuller's Bookshop on Friday 19 April at 5.30pm. This will be different from the lecture scheduled for the Society on 18 August. RSVP to Launceston@fullersbookshop.com.au or phone 6334 8499.

Heritage Awards: The 2013 Launceston Heritage Awards nominations are now open. Renovators with a passion for history are encouraged to apply in the Residential, Mixed Use, or Non-Residential categories. There is also a section for the Promotion of Heritage. Submissions close on 30 April 2013 at 5.00pm. For more information visit www.launceston.tas.gov.au or call Fiona Ranson on 6323 3370 or email Fiona.Ranson@launceston.tas.gov.au.

George Town & District Historical Society: Meetings are held at *The Grove*. 15 April 2013, Frank Madill, *The Lancaster bombers & Bomber Command*; 20 May 2013, Jon Addison, *The end of the convict era*. Email: info@qtdhs.com. Web: www.qtdhs.com.

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Meetings take place in the Royal Society Room, Custom House, TMAG, Hobart, starting at 8.00pm. 14 May 2013, Roger Kelloway, *Rosny copper smelter, 1846-1852*; 11 June 2013, Don & Maggie Row, *A Skinner Prout from the shed*.

Perth History Ride: The next Tamar Bicycle Users' Group history ride will be on Sunday 26 May 2013. Marion Sargent will lead a 7.3km bicycle tour around the historic village of Perth. Visit the Launceston Art Society's 'Reflections' exhibition at *Eskeleigh* with coffee afterwards at Ut Si Cafe. Booking is required, so please RSVP by 23 May. Meet at Lions Park, Main Road, Perth at 9.15am for a 9.30am start. Enquiries: phone 6331 4890 or email marionsargent@bigpond.com.

LGH Historical Committee Seminar 2013: The Launceston General Hospital Historical Committee is celebrating the LGH Sesquicentenary (12-18 May 2013) with a medical history and research seminar. Several LHS members are involved with the celebrations. In particular on Wednesday 15th May at 11.00am the LHS session on *Launceston's Medical History* will be chaired by John Dent with speakers Jenny Gill, Anne Bartlett and Dr John Paull discussing our early medical history. More information is available online at <http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/hospital/launceston-general-hospital/history> or contact Paul Richards: *Myola*, 397 Wellington Street, South Launceston TAS 7249; phone 6349 7111; email pacrichards1@bigpond.com.

LGH Sesquicentenary Book: *Launceston General Hospital: Celebrating 150 years of Caring*, to be published in May 2013, focuses on the history of the LGH from 1963 to the present day. It is a continuation of Dr Clifford Craig's book, *Launceston General Hospital: First Hundred Years 1863-1963*. The last 50 years have seen amazing changes at the LGH. Copies will be available from the LGH Historical Committee, C/- Lou Partridge, CEO's Office, LGH, PO Box 1963, LAUNCESTON 7250.

Tasmania: Island of Treasures: In her superbly produced book, museum consultant Sue Atkinson has documented all history groups and museums in Tasmania. The Launceston Historical Society is featured on page 31. It is for sale at bookshops.

Deadline

Items for the next Newsletter should be sent to the Editor by **1 June 2013** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.