



# Launceston Historical Society Inc.

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

## Annual Report for year ending December 2012



Alfred Coleman Bonner, 'Launceston from Trevallyn', 12 March 1890. LPIC 21, NTCC Album 6, No 171.

**Presented at its Annual General Meeting held at the  
Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk  
Sunday 17 February 2013**

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## **Introduction**

As president of the Launceston Historical Society (LHS), and on behalf of the members and visitors here today, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which this event is taking place.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my privilege to present the Annual Report of the Launceston Historical Society for the financial year ending the 31 December 2012. First and foremost, I wish to pay tribute to our past president Dr Marita Bardenhagen who sadly passed away on 19<sup>th</sup> November last year. She will be sorely missed.

## **Monthly Meetings**

Once again we have had an interesting and varied number of speakers who gave their time and expertise to present papers at our monthly Sunday meetings. In 2012 these were: Jai Paterson who enthralled us with her talk on Tasmanians in New Zealand; Dr Nic Haygarth presented an intriguing paper on Gustav Weindorfer; Dr Barry Baker, the inaugural Pugh Day lecturer, recounted the career of Dr Mark Lidwell; and Robert Warneke spoke on the history of sealing in Bass Strait. Craig Joel presented a paper on the conflict between Montagu and Franklin; Eleanor Robin entertained us with tales of shipbuilder John Watson; Professor John Mulvaney illustrated encounters between sailors and aborigines in southern Tasmania; and finally Paul Johnston gave us a different perspective on two government buildings.

We appreciate the generous support of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery for providing this room for our monthly meetings; the Friends' Lounge for our committee meetings; and the helpful staff who attend to our every need.

## ***The Examiner*-John West Memorial Lecture**

In March 2012 Dr Carmen Lawrence spoke on *Development at any price? The case of Australia's Indigenous heritage*. Approximately 200 people attended the lecture at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre at the University of Tasmania. Carmen was introduced by Martin Gilmour, Editor of *The Examiner*; while Professor Henry Reynolds offered a vote of thanks.

This year the John West lecturer will be Professor Lucy Frost – speaking on *The children of mothers in the convict system of Van Diemen's Land* – at UTAS on Friday 15 March 2013.

We are grateful for *The Examiner's* sponsorship of this prestigious event and for the University for providing its lecture theatre free of charge.

## **Seminar**

In April we held a Seminar after the Annual General Meeting. The topic of *Publishing in Launceston: Past & Present* was addressed by Peter Richardson and Jon Addison. Peter spoke on the publishing ventures he had instigated when Senior Librarian at the Launceston Library. Jon, the curator of History at the Museum, told of the anti-transportation conflict waged in the two Launceston newspapers during the 1840s and 1850s. He later led a curator's tour of the exhibition, *The Convict Stain*.

## **Excursions**

In October a busload of members enjoyed an educational history tour of Westbury. Thank you to Virginia Greenhill and the Westbury Historical Society for a wonderful day out. Also, to Dinah Fitzgerald who escorted us around her magnificent *Culzean Gardens*; and to Brian who drove the Veterans and Community Bus.

## **Archaeology Group**

On occasions John Dent continues to chair the Archaeology Group's meetings. A working bee was undertaken at Kerry Lodge in January 2012. John hopes to organise excavations at a couple of new sites in the future.

## **History Prize**

The 2012 Launceston Historical Society History Prize focussed on various topics related to the new National History Curriculum. One hundred and seventy-one students – from grades 3 to 10, representing six Launceston schools – submitted a record number of entries.

The judges awarded 29 prizes with a total \$885.00 worth of book vouchers from Fuller's Bookshop. The Eric & Patricia Ratcliff Prize for outstanding research and presentation was awarded to Charlotte Shegog-Fisher, a grade 4 student from the West Launceston Primary School.

Thank you to Carol Fuller for organising the History Prize with assistance from Shane How and Jenny Gill. Thanks also to Mayor Albert van Zetten who presented the prizes at the Town Hall.

The annual \$400.00 prize donation from the Society to the University of Tasmania – awarded to a first-year history student from Launceston who is intending to make history their degree major – is to be re-named in honour of Marita:

Launceston Historical Society - Dr Marita Bardenhagen History Prize.

## **Executive Committee**

The extent of events and activities conducted by the Historical Society would not be possible without the many hours of work performed by a dedicated team of volunteers. Thank you to the other members of the Executive Committee who have helped to make this Society what it is today.

In April 2012 the following committee members were elected: Marion Sargent president; Catherine Pearce vice-president and minute secretary; Leonie Prevost treasurer; Robyn Jones correspondence secretary.

The other committee members are: Jon Addison; Dianne Cassidy; Gus Green, who is also the heritage representative for the Launceston City Council; Sue McClarron; Jai Paterson; and Don Barker who joined us in November 2012.

## **Publications**

I am delighted that finally the *Way Back When* book has been published. The launch of this useful tome was held on Friday 15 February.

The Society's website is developing slowly; with the last five John West lectures included as PDFs.

I thank Brian Wightman's office staff for printing the *Newsletter* free of charge.

## **Conclusion**

Once again 'thank you' to my dedicated Committee, whose expertise and energy ensure that this Society functions well. And also to those regular members and guests who faithfully support the Society's activities by attending our meetings, lectures and excursions.

The Launceston Historical Society will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in October 2013. Fortuitously, the guest speaker that month will be Eric Ratcliff, widower of the late esteemed Patricia Ratcliff. Patricia was convener of the Steering Committee whose members organised a public meeting in October 1988, which led to the formation of our wonderful Society!

Marion Sargent  
President 2012

## Treasurer's Report for 2012

The books of the Launceston Historical Society have been duly audited by Ms Janine Healey of Ruddicks who found them to be an accurate account of the society's financial activities during 2012 and I want to acknowledge her interest and support.

The Society remains in a strong financial position. In 2012 three major projects were supported:

1. The society committed \$3,500.00 towards an impressive display cabinet for the artefacts and information from the Alexander Patent Racket Company collection;
2. The contribution of \$2,750.00 towards the publication of the book *Way Back When*;
3. \$924.00 was spent on book vouchers and associated costs for outstanding projects by Primary and High School students for the 2012 History Prize; and the \$400.00 Launceston Historical Society Prize awarded annually to a first-year UTAS student who intends majoring in History.

These awards are considered a high priority by the Committee.

Other activities: our excursion to Westbury and *The Examiner* - John West Memorial Lecture both covered costs.

Are there any questions about the 2012 financial report?

I move that the auditor's report and the treasurer's report for 2012 be accepted.

I move that Ms Janine Healey be appointed auditor for 2013.

Leonie Prevost

Treasurer 2012