



# Launceston Historical Society Inc.

## Newsletter No 157

April 2017

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

*Bringing together people since 1988 with an interest in history*

### Welcome to the new Committee Members for 2017

Thank you to everyone who came to the Annual General Meeting on Sunday 19 February 2017. The AGM took only 10 minutes. We managed to get through all our business as well as conferring two Life Memberships!

John Dent took the Chair while the new committee for 2017 was elected. We welcome two new recruits, Karin Le and Kelli Schultz.

The rest of the committee remains the same. Marion Sargent was re-appointed President for her sixth term.

The other committee members are Catherine Pearce (Vice-president and Minute Secretary), Leonie Prevost (Treasurer and Public Officer), Prue McCausland (Correspondence Secretary), Robyn Jones, Steve Jones, Sue McClarron, Terry Neal and Rebecca Phillips.

The 2016 Annual Report can be read online: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/publications/annual-reports/>

The guest speaker after the AGM was Peter Richardson, who gave us an entertaining talk on the Launceston Mechanics' Institute library.



### Membership renewals: for those who have not paid

Annual subscriptions for the Launceston Historical Society were due on 31 December 2016.

A [membership form](#) may be enclosed or can be accessed on the website. Payments can be made by cash, cheque or to the Society's bank account BSB 067 003 A/C No. 2804 8638. Please return the form to the Treasurer, Leonie Prevost, at the next meeting, or post to:

Treasurer, Launceston Historical Society, PO Box 1296, LAUNCESTON TAS 7250



**Anne Bartlett and Marion Sargent with their Life Membership certificates and flowers.**

## **Life Memberships**

Anne Bartlett and Marion Sargent were conferred Honorary Life Memberships of the Launceston Historical Society at the AGM on 19 February 2017. This honour was bestowed in recognition of their outstanding leadership and tireless service to the objectives of the Society.

Anne was President for 11 years from March 1996 to 2007. Marion has been President since 2012. Both have contributed to recording local history.

These were the first Life Memberships since 1995 when Sir Raymond Ferrall, Jack Branagan, Dennis Hodgkinson and Hawley Stancombe received the honour.

## **The Launceston Mechanics' Institute**

On 19 February Peter Richardson spoke on the 25,000 volumes of books and periodicals saved from the Launceston Mechanics' Institute library (1842-1945). The collection has been assessed as nationally significant and worth keeping. Volunteers from the Friends of the Launceston Mechanics' Institute (FOLMI) are cataloguing, conserving and studying this time capsule of life in Launceston. The LMI building was lost in 1971, but the collection survives.

For more information see FOLMI's blog and Facebook page.



**Prue McCausland with speaker Peter Richardson.**



**Catherine Pearce, Lecturer Saul Eslake and Marion Sargent.**

## **John West Memorial Lecture**

Economist Saul Eslake presented the 29<sup>th</sup> John West Lecture at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre at the University of Tasmania on Thursday 16 March 2017. His stimulating lecture on *Education, Productivity and Economic Performance: Tasmania, then, now and tomorrow* was enjoyed by a large crowd of people. President Marion Sargent was MC, Professor David Adams from UTAS introduced Saul. Prue McCausland offered a vote of thanks. The full text of the lecture is available on our website: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au>

## April Talk

### **Bradley Wood: *Digging in a Flanders Field***

**Sunday 9 April 2017 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk**

In April 2013 whilst touring the battlefields of Belgium a series of coincidences led Bradley Wood to become involved in the excavation of the partial remains of an Australian WWI soldier. This presentation tells the story of the initial excavation and subsequent research to discover what occurred in a Flanders field almost one hundred years ago.

**Bradley Wood** is a researcher and writer who specialises in military history. He has developed educational materials for textbooks and conducted research for use in library and museum exhibitions in New South Wales and Victoria. Most recently he designed the <http://165anzacs.org/> website which commemorates the WWI servicemen listed on the Holy Trinity Church, Launceston memorial board.

## May Walk

**LHS Committee: *Education, Flagellation and Recreation: The story of Royal Park***

**Sunday 21 May 2017 – 2pm at Launceston College, Paterson Street, for a walk in the Park**

**Australian Heritage Festival Tasmania This year's theme is: *Having a Voice***

Hear about Launceston's convict past (and more) on a walking tour of the Royal Park precinct conducted by Launceston Historical Society committee members.

The event starts at the site of the former gaol at Launceston College. A one hour walk will be followed by afternoon tea and slideshow in the Launceston College Hall.

Past walks have been very popular. To avoid overcrowding numbers are limited. Bookings cannot be made in advance. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Please come early and collect a token on arrival to secure your place. The walk is free, gold coin donation for afternoon tea.

### **King's Memorial – The Foundation Stone laid by the General**

Lieutenant General Robert Baden-Powell said that he had been struck by the beautiful surroundings, and it afforded him great pleasure to accede to the wishes of the people of Launceston to name the reserve. This monument [King Edward VII] was on the site of the first battery that was erected for the defence of Tasmania. The old buildings in the reserve were originally the military barracks, the quarters of the soldiers of the Sovereign. Before long it was probable that a naval drill hall would be erected near the river for the sailors of the King, and ere long the memorial to his late Majesty would be completed. Under these circumstances, the name selected appeared to be most appropriate, and with great pleasure he named the grounds "The Royal Park". (*The Examiner*, 10 June 1912, page 6)

## June – Sixth Pugh Day Lecture

**Professor Milton Cohen: *What would Pugh say? Reflections on pain, practice and propriety***

**Sunday 18 June 2017 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk**



**Professor Milton Cohen** is a specialist pain medicine physician and rheumatologist on the St Vincent's Sydney Campus. He is a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and a past Dean of the Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists.

Dr Cohen has been a leader in the development of pain medicine as a discipline, in the education and training of pain physicians and in raising the profile of "pain" in the broader medical community. His interests and publications are broad and include issues in pain theory and practice, rational pharmacotherapy for pain and implications of persistent pain for public policy or, as he puts it, "from the spinal cord to the supreme court".

## Advance notice of LHS activities for 2017

Launceston Historical Society meetings are held at the meeting room, Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk, on Sundays at 2pm, unless otherwise notified.

- 16 July**                    **Jenny Gill**, *The controversial clock of St John's Anglican Church*
- 20 August**                **Louise Zarmati**, *Opportunities for teaching Australian history and archaeology in the new Australian Curriculum*
- 17 September**           **Guy Burns & Eric Sargent**, *Clytie & Me* (Audio-visual presentation)
- 15 October**               **Barbara Hatley**, *History of amateur theatre groups in Launceston*
- 19 November**           **Christina Henri**, *Engaging the convict legacy: art's role as a means of understanding*

### Members' Column

#### **Vale Dr John Morris AO MBE FRACP:**

The Launceston Historical Society committee and members were saddened by the passing of Dr John Morris on 11 March 2017 at 90 years of age. John was a stalwart of the Society, regularly attending the Sunday meetings. He was treasurer for nine years, from March 1998 to April 2007. John presented four talks to the Society between 2000 and 2007 on medical history, Dr Clifford Craig and growing up in rural Tasmania. In 2013, as part of our celebration to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society we facilitated the reprinting of the book *History in our Streets: The Origins of Launceston Street Names* by John and his son Don. We extend our deepest sympathies to Judy and her family.



#### **New members:**

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Sarah Katarzynski and Margrit Korosi.

#### **Archaeology Group:**

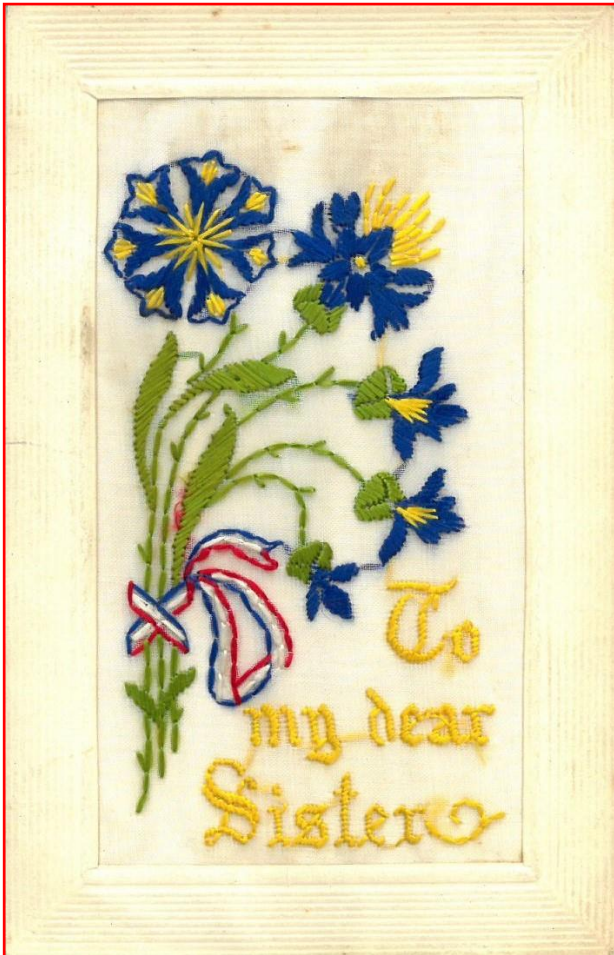
Email enquiries to John Dent: [john.dent@pda.com.au](mailto:john.dent@pda.com.au).

### John West & William Slatyer

Saul Eslake discovered during his research for the John West lecture that one of his great-great-grandfathers conducted the funeral service for Reverend John West in Sydney on 21 December 1873. Reverend William Slatyer was the Minister at the Pitt Street Congregational Church. He was, by all contemporary accounts, a rather pompous and sour old git, and the sermon he gave at West's funeral doesn't do anything to counter that impression. Slatyer not only looked severe but was indeed severe. It was said at his own funeral that he had "all the sternness of a Cromwell with none of the poetry of a Milton". His eldest son William Roy Slatyer became estranged from him, and for reasons unknown to his descendants, changed his surname to 'Eslake', sometime in the late 1860s or early 1870s.

Speaking of West, Saul's great-great-grandfather said:

He realized, as but few do, his sacred and sublime vocation, to serve his own generation. 'No man', it is most fittingly said of him, 'ever undertook the duty entrusted to him with a profounder sense of the responsibility which that trust involved, and with a more entire devotion to its fulfilment'. His sense of the power of the Press amounted to a passion; and this power, he maintained, should be wielded wholly for the public good. ... [He had] the happy knack of putting his case – the vein of quiet humour which often ran through what he said – the dignity and modesty, but withal, confidence, with which he advanced his opinions ... the apropos anecdote with which he frequently illustrated or wound up his statement – and above all his telling denunciations of vice, social, public or political – his wise, cautious and weighty counsels in seasons of great public excitement.



### To May from Jack ...

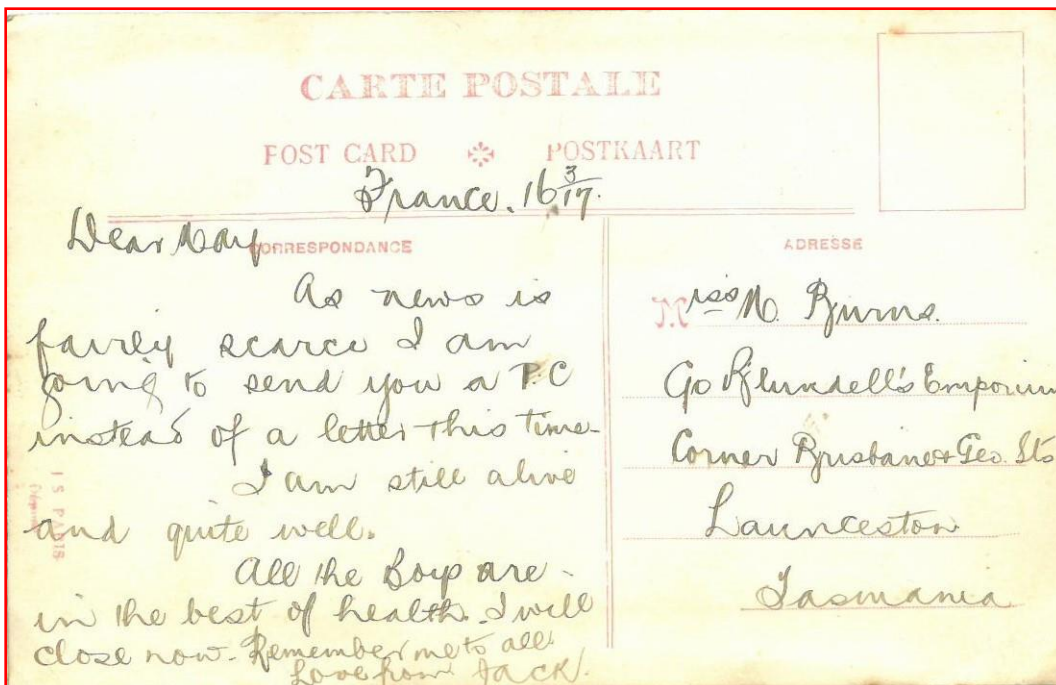
This woven silk postcard was sent to the Launceston Historical Society by a lady in Wurruk, Victoria whose mother was a collector.

During WWI, an estimated eight to ten million such cards were produced in France to supply the need for soldiers to keep in touch with their loved ones at home. Colourful embroidered flags, regimental badges and flowers accompanied sentimental messages to mothers, wives, sweethearts and sisters.

Using the clues contained within the card – to a sister Miss May Burns, C/- Blundell's Emporium, from brother Jack Burns – Launceston LINC staff member Hanna was able to trace the identity of its writer. The 1928 electoral roll contained a listing for Mary Easton Burns, shop assistant, at a Cimitiere Street address. Also at this address was railway worker John Alexander Burns. WWI service records confirmed that John Alexander Burns served in France in WWI.

### May and Jack were Mary and John!

Although he was wounded in action a few months after writing this card, Jack survived the war and returned home in 1919. On 30 May 1928, *The Examiner* reported his marriage to Jean Sheriff. **The bride carried a beautiful bouquet of chrysanthemums, carnations, roses and trailing satin ribbons made by the groom's sister May...**



Signaller JA Burns,  
40<sup>th</sup> Battalion.  
*Weekly Courier*,  
7 July 1916, p. 24.

John Alexander Burns was born at Deloraine on 5 April 1897 to James and Maria Burns. Employed as a telegraphist, he was 18 years old when he enlisted in the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion on 5 February 1916. He embarked on the *Berrima* for France where he served as a signaller. Jack was transferred to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Division Signallers Company in May 1918. He returned to Australia on the *Rio Pardo*, disembarking in Hobart on 21 July 1919.

The postcard and other memorabilia are on display in the Launceston LINC.

## Other items and events of interest

**Launceston Mechanics' Institute:** A project to identify and record all surviving objects (i.e. other than books) from the Launceston Mechanics' Institute is being undertaken by 12-year-old Nienna Fontana, Kelli Schultz's daughter. Follow this Instagram link to see photographs of the objects including items of furniture and equipment still held, and in some cases still in use, at Launceston LINC and the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery: [https://www.instagram.com/lmi\\_books](https://www.instagram.com/lmi_books).

**The Dick and Joan Green Family Award for Tasmanian History** is a biennial book award of \$25,000 for authors who publish books of original research on Tasmanian history and cultural heritage. The first award period will be from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2017. Entries open on 4 July 2017 and close on 8 September 2017. For more information see [www.greenfamilyaward.org](http://www.greenfamilyaward.org).

**George Town & District Historical Society:** 21 May 2017, 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference, *Governor Macquarie's Legacy: The Tasmanian Connection*, 10 speakers, 8.45am to 4pm, \$35, York Cove Centre, Sorell Street, George Town. Registrations by 8 May to Chlo Martin, PO Box 68 George Town, phone 6382 1336 or [us@thegrovetas.com](mailto:us@thegrovetas.com); Email: [info@qtdhs.com](mailto:info@qtdhs.com).

**Tasmanian Historical Research Association:** Meetings take place in the Royal Society Room, Custom House, TMAG, Hobart, starting at 8pm. 11 April 2017, Greg Lehman, *(Dis)regarding the Savages: Terra Nullius in Tasmanian Colonial Art*; 9 May 2017, Robert Dooley, *From 'Abundance of Emues' to a rare bird in the land: The Extinction of the Tasmanian Emu*; 13 June 2017, Elisabeth Wilson, *A howling and declamatory Style': Revivalist Preacher Walter Douglas in Tasmania 1869-72*. Website: <http://www.thra.org.au>; Email: [info@thra.org.au](mailto:info@thra.org.au).

**National Book Council:** Professors Carey Denholm and Stefan Petrow, authors of *Dr Edward Swarbreck Hall: Colonial Medical Scientist and Moral Activist*, will speak on Wednesday 19 April 2017 at 1.15pm at Launceston LINC, Civic Square. Secretary, Marie Briggs, 6344 8298.

**Tasmanian Family History Society:** The Launceston Branch Annual General Meeting will take place on Thursday 27 April 2017 at 7pm at the Harry Abbott Scout Hall, St George's Square. The guest speaker will be Roger McNeice, on the topic *Money in Colonial Times*. [mandbbissett@gmail.com](mailto:mandbbissett@gmail.com)

**The Store:** A new retail venture for the National Trust is located in the Old Saddlery building in the main street at Evandale. It stocks a wide range of quality design products by local artisans including ceramics, home wares, gardening products, children's gifts and stationary. It is open from Wednesday to Sunday from 10am to 4pm. All proceeds from sales will help support the work of the National Trust.

### Launceston Historical Society

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Minute Secretary	Catherine Pearce	
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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/launcestonhistory>

### Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 Jul 2017** at [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com) or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.