



Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 160

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people since 1988 with an interest in history

Clytie & Me

The audio-visual presentation of *Clytie & Me* on 17 September was enjoyed by about 90 people. The film, created by Guy Burns, focussed on the life of Eric Sargent, President Marion Sargent's father. The film traces Eric's life from his early days in the scouts, including two epic bush walking trips across the Tasmanian highlands in 1947 and 1948, to his 37 years as proprietor of Craclair Tours, and his years in retirement, building and paddling canoes.

The *Clytie* was Eric's model boat given to him as a Christmas gift when he was a young boy. He retrieved the boat from a cupboard after 60 years and restored her in his retirement.

See *The Examiner* online, 18 September 2017.



Eric Sargent and Guy Burns at the presentation.



Speaker Barbara Hatley.

Launceston on Stage

We had another great turnout on 15 October 2017 for the talk by Asian Studies Professor Emeritus Barbara Hatley on the history of amateur theatre in Launceston. She was pleasantly surprised when she arrived in the city and found that there was an active theatre community here. Many local actors and people involved in the performance scene attended the lecture, including some theatre icons. Barbara has interviewed lots of locals for an oral history project. She related their stories of Launceston's vibrant theatre companies, dance and musical groups and personalities from the 1950s to the present day. There are too many to mention, but they range from Ray Sangston, Jacqueline Horne, Linda and Frank Madill to Belinda King and Danny Gibson.

More information can be found in Barbara's essay in the *Fabric of Launceston*, 'Performing Launceston' on page 210. Also see *The Examiner* online article, 13 October 2017, on our Facebook page.

November Talk

Christina Henri: *Engaging the convict legacy: art's role as a means of understanding*

Sunday 19 November 2017 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk



Christina with Australian ambassador Richard Andrews and Dublin Lord Mayor Brendan Carr. (Photo: Tony Biglin)

Tasmanian artist Christina Henri's *Roses from the Heart* Memorial focuses on the 25,566 women and children sentenced to transportation to Australia up to 1853.

In 2003, Christina took units in 'Historical Landscape' as part of a Fine Arts degree at the University of Tasmania, which included visiting the Cascades Female Factory historic site. She became the honorary artist-in-residence for 12 years (2003 – 2015).

Roses from the Heart started in 2007. The project has been extraordinarily successful in building an international community engaged with the experience of women convicts.

The memorial uses the uniform component of cloth bonnets worn by Irish women transported to Australia to give meaning to their lives. It values the contribution made to the social and economic growth of the emerging Australian nation by these women and their children.

linking both countries and to raise awareness of Irish convict women and their transportation to Australia. There have been events, displays, exhibitions and talks throughout Ireland. Christina has returned recently from Grangegorman. In 2018 she will complete the Waterford convict women installation and organise a major event at Dun Laoghaire.

Since 2010 Christina has visited Ireland every year to forge a relationship that recognises the mutual colonial history

Dr Christina Henri was Tasmanian Senior *Australian of the Year*, 2014 and has been a member of the Cascades Community Advisory Committee (CCAC) since 2012.

Christmas cake and champagne will follow the talk.

New re-useable LHS cups

After the recent publicity regarding disposable, single use coffee cups and learning more through the Plastic Free Launceston movement, the Launceston Historical Society committee has decided it is time to reduce our footprint on the planet. Rather than using disposable cups for our afternoon teas we have come up with a fabulous reusable cup that our members get to buy at a reduced price. These are the perfect size for keeping in your car or handbag and you can bring them along to our talks for your cuppa in the afternoon! They would make a great gift too and help spread the word of LHS with our nifty logo on the side. See page 5 for a history of our logo.

Prices are:

Members: \$8 Non-members: \$10

Cups can be purchased at our monthly meetings or by calling Kelli on 0408 080 967.

Best of all if you take in your own cup to a cafe for a takeaway drink most of them will now give a 20-50c discount! You get to save the planet and your pocket one cup at a time!

For more info regarding disposable cups go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/plasticfreelaunceston/>

<http://www.plasticfreejuly.org/>



Education, Flagellation and Recreation: The Story of Royal Park

The Bathurst Street Extension

By Catherine Pearce

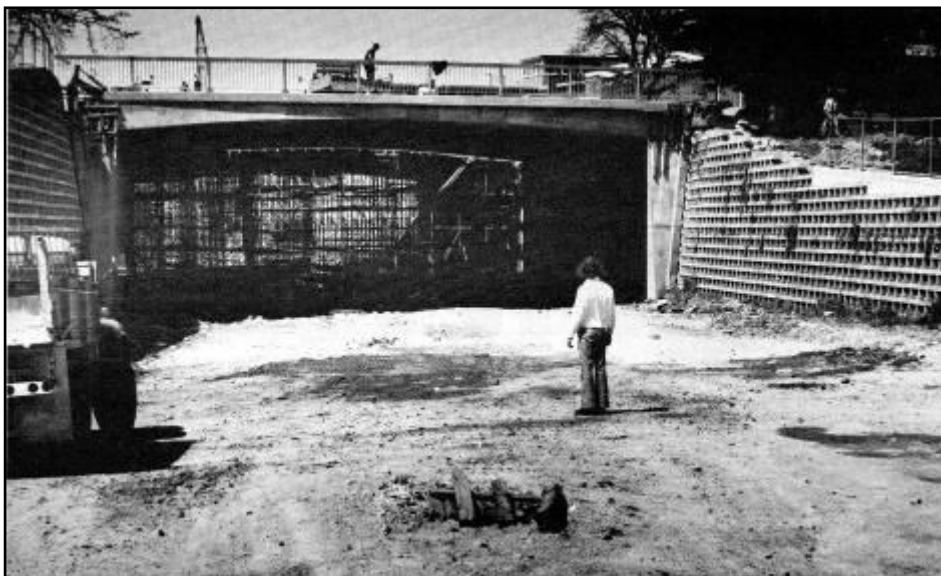


Bathurst Street extension through Royal Park 1973.
Lloyd G Webb, Launceston Collection, TAHO, LPIC 33/5/33.

In 1968 the Singaporean company P G Pak-Poy completed the Launceston Area Transportation Study. One of their recommendations was to create a northern city outlet by extending Bathurst Street under Paterson Street and through Royal Park.

Construction started in 1971 at lower Charles Street and proceeded up towards high ground near the Museum. Excavation work for the Paterson Street underpass started in 1972. Work progressed slowly. Fill had to be allowed to settle and there were three layers of it, each 12 months apart.

When the extension finally opened in 1975, in the words of the Mayor it “provided welcome relief for the traffic congestion which had become acute during rush hours”.¹



Bathurst Street underpass nearing completion.
Launceston Collection, TAHO, Mayor’s Valedictory Address 1973-74.

But it also fractured Royal Park and, with the creation of a southern outlet along Wellington Street, isolated the Museum. The 1912 vision of a beautiful Edwardian-style botanical garden stretching from the Museum to the River did not include a concrete wall or a highway! Despite these interruptions Royal Park remains a place of leisure – and learning for the people of Launceston.

¹ Mayor’s Valedictory Address 1975-76 p.13

Education, Flagellation and Recreation: The Story of Royal Park Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

By Prue McCausland



**Victoria Museum, c.1891. Henry Lewis photo,
Launceston Collection, TAHO, LPIC 22/1/53.**

The 1880s was a time of enormous municipal development in Launceston – the Post Office, Town Hall and the Albert Hall all were built around this time.

The Launceston Mechanics' Institute had a small museum collection and many artworks, but it was outgrowing its premises in Cameron Street.

Building a museum in Royal Park was controversial: it would prevent the extension of Cameron Street and block the area from development and also interfere with views of the Gorge. On the other hand, a museum here would *prevent* the extension of Cameron Street and be a showpiece of the public botanic gardens that some citizens thought should be developed here. The museum in this spot would be visible from the river and attract those arriving by ship.

The Museum was built with a grant of £5,000 from the colonial government in Hobart. The building was designed by John Duncan, only 19 at the time. He was a clerk, not an architect, but he won the competition for a design. John Duncan went on to be credited with the design of the Albert Hall as well. The museum was built by J&T Gunn, a well-known local building firm. The original building was only half the size of the façade we see now. Additions were made over the years to the north, south and west.

The foundation stone of the museum was laid in 1887 and as that was Queen Victoria's jubilee year, it was decided to call it the Victoria Museum. This name was changed, later, to the Queen Victoria Museum to avoid confusion with the museum in the state of Victoria.

The Victoria Museum opened in April 1891 with collections from the Launceston Mechanics' Institute and donations from private citizens. The Art Gallery contained over 300 paintings, many on loan or donated from the Mechanics' Institute collection. The first curator was Alexander Morton who managed things from Hobart.

The next curator, Herbert Hedley Scott, held the position for 40 years. He lived on the premises with his family on the first floor for all that time and two of his children were born here. There's a story in the files about Hedley Scott and his taxidermy team trying to preserve an elephant from a visiting circus which had died. The public was waiting excitedly to see the exhibit but there were so many problems, all they managed to salvage was the skin! The public was not amused!

There have been many changes with additions, renovations, changes of focus – this building is now an Art Gallery and other collections have gone to the Inveresk site.

The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery is the largest museum and art gallery outside a capital city in Australia.



**HH Scott c.1936.
DG Wherrett photo, QVMAG
collection, QVM:P:2514.**

Advance notice of LHS activities for 2018

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

10-11 February	New Norfolk Excursion – fully subscribed
18 February	AGM + John Dent , <i>Kings Meadows Convict Road Station</i>
16 March	John West Memorial Lecture, Professor Mark McKenna Friday, 8pm at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Lecture Theatre, UTAS, Newnham
15 April	Nigel Burch , <i>Forgotten history of Beaconsfield</i>
21 April	Kerry Lodge Archaeological Project Open Day
20 May	Denis Lake , <i>The celebrated Peddle chair</i>
17 June	Pugh Day Lecture, Dr Colin Chilvers , <i>Anaesthesia and Overseas Aid</i>
15 July	Dr Alison Alexander , <i>The O'Connors of Connorville</i>
19 August	Steve Radford , <i>Captain Samuel William (Bill) Barrett</i>
16 September	Evan Thomas , <i>Stone tool use in Eastern Tasmania: Tracks across the lithic landscape</i>
21 October	30th Birthday + Karin Le , <i>When Multiculturalism came to Launceston</i>
5 November	Spring Excursion to Strathmore, Nile, Deddington , Monday long weekend
18 November	Dr Stefan Petrow , <i>Tasmanian Anzacs: Tasmanian soldiers and World War One</i>

The History of our Logo



Now that our logo is emblazoned on the side of our re-usable cups it is timely to remind people of its history. Our member Dr Eric Ratcliff designed the emblem which was accepted at a committee meeting on 10 April 1989. Richard Bracey of Regal Press printed 1000 letterheads as a donation. These were first used in September 1989 for the minutes and Newsletter No. 5.

The design combines a representation of what was then the Society's headquarters in the Johnstone & Wilmot building, now '1842', with the Pall, a heraldic device derived from the City's Coat of Arms which symbolizes its situation at the confluence of the Tamar, North and South Esk Rivers, the Post Office clock, King's Bridge, the Gorge and industry, and a scroll to represent the scholarly nature of historical studies. The symbols in the rivers represent a gold coin of Byzantium and two tin ingots, which signify wealth.

Members' Column

New members: The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members, Anne Carr, Jacqueline Horne, Daniel Price and Rosie Shannon; Mathew Will, Johanna Wilson and family Jack, Charlie, Sandy and Pippin.

History Prize: The Primary School History Prize celebration will be held at the Town Hall on 23 November. Mayor Albert van Zetten will be handing out book vouchers to the winners of the competition. Thank you to Carol Fuller, Karin Le and Kelli Schultz for judging the 133 entries from five schools.

Membership Fees + charge for non-members to attend meetings: The Committee has decided that from January 2018 membership fees will be raised from one to five dollars in most categories. The last time they were increased was in January 2010, eight years ago. We will be printing a new membership form and uploading it on our website.

We have also decided to charge non-members \$4.00 to attend our Sunday meetings from February 2018.

From the Past

Tasmanian and Port Dalrymple Advertiser, Wednesday 12 January 1825, page 2

His Honor the Lieutenant Governor [Arthur] took his departure from this Settlement on Monday morning last, under a salute from the Battery, on his way to Head-quarters [at George Town]. His Honor the Chief Justice, and His Majesty's Attorney General, after finishing the Business of the Circuit, on Monday afternoon proceeded on the same route.

The Commandant [Charles Cameron], yesterday morning, went down to George Town.

His Honor the Lieutenant Governor has, during his stay here, been actively employed in planning various improvements in the Town of Launceston and its neighbourhood. Among the new buildings to be immediately commenced, are a Church, Commissariat Stores, Commandant's House, Parsonage House, Hospital, &c. A Bridge is likewise to be thrown over the South Esk, at the Township of Perth. We are given to understand that Head-quarters are to be immediately removed from George Town to this place. Government have purchased the new stores of F. Champion and Co. as a barrack for the convicts; and the house of Dr. Cameron as a temporary parsonage.

Other items and events of interest

George Town & District Historical Society: At the Bass & Flinders Centre, George Town, 7pm, Monday, 20 November 2017, "*In their own words*", 3rd instalment, part of the Founders Festival; 16 October 2017, *Christmas dinner*, venue and cost to be advised. Email: info@gtdhs.com.

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Meetings take place in the Royal Society Room, Custom House, TMAG, Hobart at 8pm. 14 November 2017, Malcolm Groom, *Tasmanian pictorial stamps 1899-1912*; 12 December 2017, Nick Mooney, *A Tasmanian life*. Website: <http://www.thra.org.au>; Email: info@thra.org.au.

LGH Historical Committee: Sunday, 26 November, 2pm, Dan Huon, *Gordon Cumming's War: the Australian Army Medical Corps on the Western Front 1916-1919*, Lecture Theatre, level 2, Launceston General Hospital. Part of the annual medical seminar series. Free afternoon tea.

LHS Archaeology Group:

Email enquiries to John Dent: john.dent@pda.com.au.

Launceston Historical Society

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Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 Feb 2018** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.

Newsletter printed by courtesy of Peter Gutwein MP, Liberal Member for Bass.