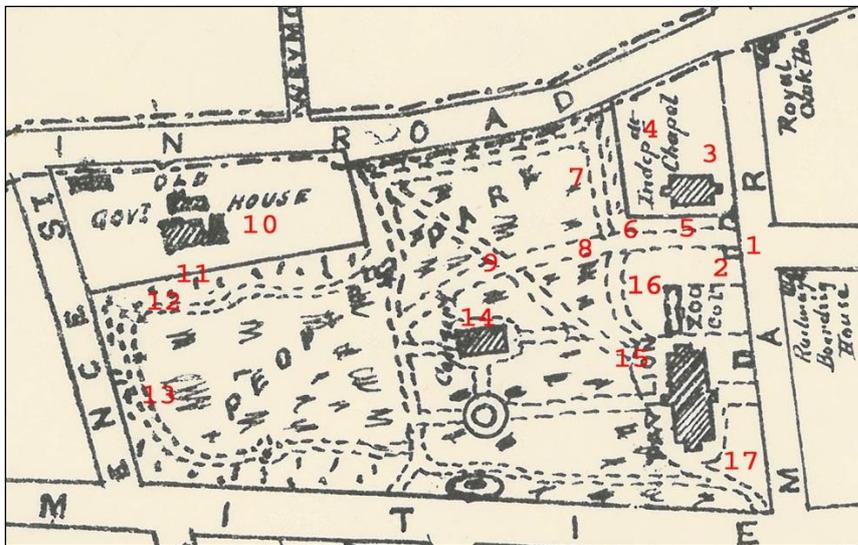


The People's Park, Launceston. 1881

Map from *Plan of Launceston in Tasmania 1881*,
Aikenhead and Button, Lithos., facsimile
edition, QVMAG, Launceston 1981.
Launceston Local Studies Collection, TAHO.



<p>1. Main Gates. In 1902 the Mayor, Alderman Fairthorne, laid a stone to mark the coronation of His Majesty King Edward VII. The gates, designed by Alexander North and constructed by the W H Knight foundry in Launceston, were erected in 1903. <i>The great cast iron gate posts are topped by symbolic wrought iron crowns.</i> W H Knight built many enduring iron structures, including numerous railway bridges, the swing bridge at Fisherman's Dock in Hobart and the girders of the Corra Linn bridge at St Leonards.</p>	<p>7. Ronald Campbell Gunn was the first President of the Launceston Horticultural Society, the oldest, continuously-operating society of its type in Australia, established in 1838. Gunn, Superintendent of Convicts in Launceston, was an enthusiastic amateur botanist and a correspondent of Sir William Hooker, who with Sir Joseph Banks set up the Royal Horticultural Society, London. It is thought this connection inspired Gunn to create a similar group in Tasmania. In 1841 the Society was granted a 21 year lease of land adjoining Government Cottage – now the western portion of City Park. <i>This statue, commissioned for the bicentenary of Launceston, was unveiled on 4 July 2006.</i></p>	<p>13. The Children's Playground, once a part of the Government Garden, was taken over in 1843 by the Horticultural Society who sold its produce to raise funds. The area first became a playground in 1948. A 1960 redevelopment saw the addition of the "Royal Train", an old A4 steam engine that pulled the coach of the Prince of Wales in 1920 (later King Edward VIII), the Duke of York in 1927 (later King George V), and the Duke of Gloucester in 1935 during Royal Tours of the State. In 1990 A4 was taken to the Don River Railway for restoration and replaced by 'Hutch', a diesel shunter named after local Doctor & railway enthusiast David Hutchinson who died in 1998 aged 62.</p>
<p>2. The Gardener's Lodge was constructed in 1887 on the former site of a 'Grecian styled lodge and an adjoining green house' dating from 1841. <i>Designed by Alexander North, it is said to have been inspired by the Gate Keeper's Cottage at Kew Gardens, England.</i> The Lodge served as Park Superintendent's quarters until 1982 when it was rented to private tenants. In 1987 radio 7LTN was given use of the building and an outhouse, originally a car garage, became three radio studios. In 2000 the Lodge and studios were leased to City Park Radio. <i>A mature wisteria, at least 150 years old, weaves its way through the Lodge garden.</i></p>	<p>8. The Children's Jubilee Fountain has its origins in the celebration of Queen Victoria's 1887 Golden Jubilee. After presenting more than 6000 children with cake and medals there was still a little money left in the Juvenile Festival Fund. It was used as part payment for a £200 drinking fountain. A commemorative gift from the children to the city, it was manufactured by Walter, Macfarlane & Co of Glasgow. <i>Ten years later it was entirely paid off and erected- just in time for Victoria's 1897 Diamond Jubilee!</i> The fountain was moved from the Tamar Street gate to its present location, the former site of a bandstand, in 1908.</p>	<p>14. The John Hart Conservatory, funded by a bequest from the estate of J H Hart, was built in 1932 on the site of a greenhouse dating from 1858. <i>The design was modelled on Melbourne's Fitzroy Gardens Conservatory but 'embraced many improvements' including elegant cement decoration by local master craftsman W G Cumming.</i> It is the last in a line of allied buildings. The Horticultural Society's first pavilion in 1841 took the form of a cross. It was extended in 1843 & replaced in 1873 by a pavilion designed by Peter Mills. Mills' structure was used as the main entry & fernery for the 1891-92 Tasmanian Exhibition, but demolished in 1910 when its roof fell in.</p>
<p>3. The Independent Chapel and Price Memorial Hall. On land granted by Gov. Arthur, a Congregational Chapel, was opened in 1837 by Rev. Charles Price who also ran a Grammar school from the site. <i>The land surrounding Government Cottage, now City Park, "formed a convenient & admirable playground for Mr Price's pupils." They also helped themselves to plums from the Government's trees!</i> Price died in 1891. The Chapel was demolished in 1921 and the Dutch Garden planted on the site. The adjoining Memorial Hall was built in 1896 to honour Price's 55 years of service. <i>In 1965 the Hall was renovated to become the Little Theatre. Here in 1971 Daddy Cool gave their first public performance in the Australian rock classic 'Eagle Rock'.</i></p>	<p>9. Band Rotunda. Concerts in City Park were popular events especially those performed by St Joseph's Band conducted by the celebrated Alexander Frame Lithgow. <i>Lithgow was the composer of over 200 marches including the famous "Invercargill", which became a hit after it was played for Gallipoli veterans in London in 1916.</i> This bandstand, completed in 1908, replaced an older structure dating from 1887 that was on the site of the Jubilee Fountain. It featured regular weekend recitals, under bandmaster Leonard Corrick (1915-1916), and Lithgow himself (1909-1929). A plaque commemorating the renowned musician was erected on the bandstand in 1954.</p>	<p>15. The Boer War Memorial erected in 1904 commemorates troops from northern Tasmania who fought in the Boer or South African War. The contingent paraded in City Park before departing on 27 October 1899. Crafted by local stonemason Sylvanus Wilmot, the memorial is inspired by medieval ecclesiastical Gothic architecture. <i>It features a pointed arched 'window', blind arcading, and is topped by an Italian marble statue of 'Australia' the only female figure to adorn any monument of its kind in the nation.</i> The memorial was used for Remembrance and Anzac Day services until a War Memorial was erected in Royal Park in the 1920s.</p>
<p>4. Design Tasmania. In 1976 the Design Centre, a new retail craft and design gallery, was opened by Gary and Pat Cleveland in the former Price Memorial Hall. The original aim of the Centre was to stimulate a growing cottage industry of high quality craft and design produced by Tasmanians. In 2002 new galleries were added to accommodate a unique collection of contemporary Tasmanian wood products. <i>Designed by David Travalia with consultative assistance from Sydney architect Richard Lepastrier the extension was included in Phaidon's top 1000 contemporary buildings in the world in 2004.</i></p>	<p>10. Government Cottage was erected by Lieutenant Governor William Paterson in 1807. <i>The official residence in the north, it was known as 'Government House' and served as a base for visiting dignitaries including Gov. Macquarie, Gov. George Arthur and Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin.</i> Between 1848 and 1885 it was rented to a succession of tenants before being handed over to the Launceston City Council. By this time the building was in serious disrepair. It was demolished and the site incorporated into City Park.</p>	<p>16. Animals in the Park. In 1850 the first animals to be displayed were kangaroos and emus. By 1863 these had gone and a duck pond was constructed. A zoological collection known as 'Button's Menagerie' was re-established in 1879. <i>There were at least 46 Tasmanian Tigers in the collection, but William McGowan traded these for exotic species.</i> By 1919 most of the animals were either allowed to die out or were relocated interstate. The sole remaining rhesus monkey and caged birds made way for the first Monkey Island in 1980. The wallabies left in 1993 and the new monkey enclosure was developed in 2000.</p>
<p>5. The Dutch Garden was established in 1921-22 on the site of Rev. Price's Independent Chapel. Rectangular in shape and densely planted with colourful flowers, it was designed by Parks' Superintendent William McGowan, who drew inspiration from the Dutch Garden at Hampton Court. <i>McGowan claimed it was the first Dutch Garden to be established in the Commonwealth [of Australia].</i> It contains a memorial stone to Rev. Price, a monumental concrete urn, reputedly made by Henry Reed of Mt Pleasant; and a plaque from the formerly adjacent Pioneers' Memorial Garden (1935-1950s).</p>	<p>11. Sebastopol Cannon. Manufactured at Emperor Alexander's armaments factory, St Petersburg in 1840 the cannon was captured by British forces in the Crimean War during the Siege of Sebastopol (1854-55). <i>The cannon was awarded to the citizens of Launceston for raising an average of six shillings & eight pence per head for the war effort – an Australian record.</i> The gun arrived in 1860 and was placed near the main entrance path. It took four strong horses to relocate it! <i>Medals awarded to Victoria Cross recipients are cast from the bronze of similar cannons.</i></p>	<p>17. The Albert Hall was built for the Tasmanian Exhibition of 1891-92, the biggest of its kind in the state. Three architects were involved, Gordon McKinnon of NSW, local amateur John Duncan and E. Alfred Luttrell. Built by J T Farmilo the Hall cost £12,000. Half a million locally-made bricks were used in its construction. For the Exhibition, large temporary annexes were erected over parts of City Park. These housed displays of raw materials, manufactured goods and art works from Tasmania, the mainland colonies, Great Britain, Canada, France and New Zealand. <i>At a time when Launceston's population was just 17,000 over 243,000 people attended the Exhibition.</i></p>
<p>6. "Dolphin" Fountain and Senses Garden. The terracotta dolphin fountain was ordered by Mayor Henry Dowling from Scotland in 1857 for the Launceston Horticultural Society. <i>First erected on the site of the present chessboard, its opening was the highlight of the Society's 1861 fete.</i> The fountain was designed by famous Glasgow architect Alexander 'Greek' Thomson and its prototype displayed at the Dublin Exhibition of 1853. This fountain was a feature of the Tasmanian Exhibition of 1891-92. <i>Believed to be the second-oldest extant public fountain in Australia</i>, after that in Prince's Sq, the fountain was relocated to the newly created 'Senses Garden' c. 1978.</p>	<p>12. The Napoleon Pear Tree is famed for its association with the grounds of Government Cottage where it is thought to have been planted between 1834 & 1847. A variety raised in Belgium in 1808, it is a dessert pear with smooth green to yellow skin covered in numerous brown dots. <i>In days gone by the juicy pears were subject to night raids by young boys who ate them – in the dark – "grubs & all". At its peak the tree was said to yield 70 bushels in a season.</i> Today the tree no longer fruits. A cutting planted nearby ensures the survival of this venerable tree.</p>	<div data-bbox="1061 1921 1268 2027" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>This walk was developed by the Launceston Historical Society for the National Trust Tasmanian Heritage Festival May 2014.</p>