



Launceston Historical Society Inc.

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people with an interest in history



Dr John Paull and Dr Colin Chilvers at the Pugh Day Lecture.

Pugh Day Lecture

On 17 June 2018 Dr Colin Chilvers spoke at the annual Pugh Day lecture, hosted by LHS and Launceston General Hospital Historical Committee. Dr Chilvers spoke about the history of Tasmania's anaesthetists' involvement in overseas medical aid.

Since 1999 Tasmania has been a training centre for anaesthetists both local and overseas. They have been also heavily involved in volunteering overseas, with 25 of the 100 doctors devoting time to organisations such as Doctors Without Borders. He also paid homage to Dr William Pugh, who was the first doctor to successfully use anaesthetic in 1847 in Launceston. *Kelli.*

The O'Connors of Connorville

On 15 July 2018 Dr Alison Alexander delivered a riveting talk on the O'Connors of Connorville. Sailing from Ireland in 1823 with his two sons, Roderic O'Connor initially worked as a Land Commissioner and Inspector of Roads and Bridges. He had selected land on the Lake River and was keen to get back there to make his fortune. Shrewd, good with money, and honest, he accumulated property, 75,000 acres in total. He managed his sheep well and was good at shearing. His income from exporting clean wool was enormous, but he was not ostentatious. Successive generations continued to farm Connorville and improve the flock. In the 1920s it produced the best superfine wool in the world.



Terry Neal with the speaker Alison Alexander.

Sunday 19 August 2018 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk

Steve Radford: *Captain Samuel William (Bill) Barrett*



Samuel William (Bill) Barrett was born on Flinders Island in 1921. At age 16 he went to sea as deck boy on the 70-foot *Mistral*, a private yacht owned by a Melbourne businessman. Next a short stint on a fisheries research vessel before continuing his career on local island trading ketches. In 1941 he obtained his Ordinary Seaman's certificate and spent a period on larger ships before returning to ketches where he gained his Able Seaman status. During the war and with army training he served on a British-American salvage ship and then a larger freighter, the *Katoomba*. In 1948 he obtained his Master's Certificate and first skippered the 70 ton ketch *Sheerwater*. Apart from a short period of land-based jobs Bill would continue

going to sea until the year 2000. His positions included Tug Master in Launceston and Burnie, skipper on small island trading vessels including ones operated by the State Government. His longest appointment was over 15 years with the State Fisheries protection vessels as Captain.

In 1962 Bill narrowly avoided his vessel, the ketch *Margaret Twaits*, sinking underneath him in Bass Strait. His tenacity and experience saved the boat and crew. Another time he was stranded on one side of King Island for 10 days due to the weather, all the while having to pay his crew who were idle. In 1973 he was involved with the 'arrest' of eight boats and fourteen fishermen for scallop poaching. He finished his time at sea being at various times the Mate or Captain on the stern loading vessel (SLV) *Matthew Flinders III* operating out of Bridport to the Furneaux Group. His career spanned over sixty years. In 2013 the third SLV was launched at Bridport and named *Captain Bill*.

Steve Radford was born and educated in Launceston and from his home in Trevallyn watched the island trading vessels arriving and departing Town Pier and Kings Wharf in the 1960s. At the end of that decade he lived on Flinders Island and saw how dependant the island people were on a reliable shipping service. He appreciated the dedication of the crews that brought these small ketches across stormy waters at night to see them tied up in the morning at Whitemark ready to unload their cargoes. So much so that for over ten years he has given talks to various groups on Bass Strait shipping. In 2012 he became good friends with Bill and interviewed him on a number of occasions. Steve looks forward to presenting the remarkable story of 'Captain Bill'.

Sunday 16 September 2018 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk

Evan Livingstone-Thomas: *On Doing Archaeology in Tasmania: Deep Time, Stone Tools, and Directions for the Future*

PhD Candidate in Archaeology, La Trobe University

In the quest to understand and reconstruct the lifeways of Aboriginal people in Tasmania, archaeologists are confronted by several major obstacles. The absence of reliable, first-hand ethnography of the Tasmanian Aborigines; the extreme level of disturbance of archaeological sites during two centuries of western development; and the resultant culture of heightened sensitivity among Aboriginal groups toward archaeological tampering with their heritage.

The fact is that, in the past, many archaeologists have practiced their discipline without consultation and participation from the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. Conversely, archaeology itself has become misunderstood, partly because of the activities of those archaeologists, and partly because of the narrow way archaeology is conducted in popular television shows.

In this lecture, Evan begins with the broad question 'what is archaeology, really?' The talk will then cover a brief history of Australian archaeology, and then more specifically Tasmanian archaeology; why archaeology is vital in Tasmania, with insights into current research; and what archaeology might hold for public education and reconciliation in Tasmania.

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.

- 21 October** **30th Birthday + Karin Le: *When Multiculturalism came to Launceston***
- 5 November** **Spring Excursion to Strathmore and Patterdale**, Monday long weekend leaving at 10am from the car park behind the RSL. There is one vacant seats left on the bus. BYO lunch.
- 18 November** **Dr Stefan Petrow, *Tasmanian Anzacs: Tasmanian soldiers and World War One***

From the Past

Tasmanian (Launceston, Tas.), Saturday 30 March 1878, page 9

The String Telephone.

On Saturday evening we witnessed some very interesting experiments with the string telephone, which fully demonstrated the utility of this instrument for bridging distance. The instrument used was constructed of two empty coffee tins, having a piece of parchment stretched over one end of each, a string was then inserted through both parchments, to connect the points of observation, which were about 150 yards apart. At this distance conversation was carried on with ease, and singing, whistling, &c. were plainly audible. Once understood telephones are likely to become very popular in Launceston. 📞

Members' Column

New members:

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Pamela Allan, John Shepherd and Vera Taylor.

Membership Fees + charge for non-members to attend meetings:

From January 2018 membership fees were raised from one to five dollars in most categories. We have printed a new membership form and uploaded it on our website: [Membership Form.pdf](#)

We are now charging non-members \$4.00 to attend our Sunday meetings and enjoy afternoon tea.

LHS Archaeology Group:

Contact John Dent: john.dent@pda.com.au.

Our History

These stories on Launceston's history have been contributed by our members. You are welcome to send articles of 420 words, with four landscape pictures, to the president marionsargent@bigpond.com. Read the stories in *The Sunday Examiner* or on [Facebook](#).

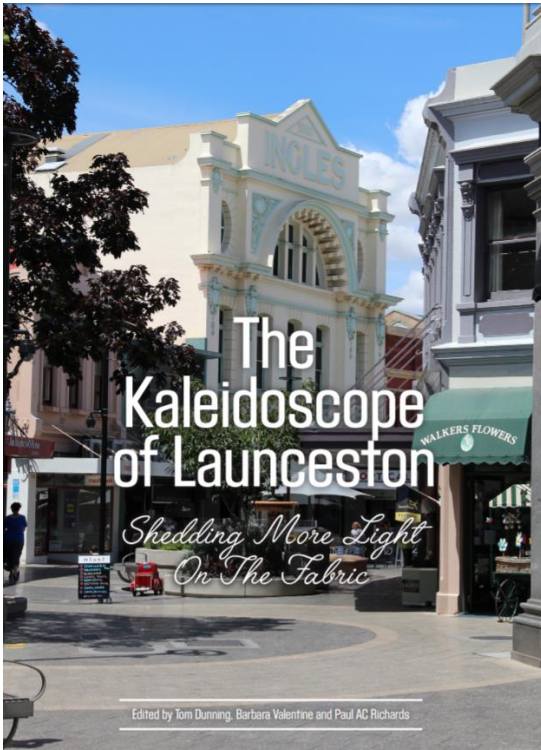
No	Date	Page	Author	Title	Topic
28	10 June 2018	20	Marion Sargent	City's pathway to power	Power Station Path
29	17 June 2018	20	Marion Sargent	Lithgow's life was an opus	Alex F Lithgow, musician
30	24 June 2018	22	Marion Sargent	History is alive and well	LHS 30 th year
31	1 July 2018	20	Jenny Gill	Faithful promise honoured	Matthias Gaunt
32	8 July 2018	20	Jenny Gill	Girls in class of their own	C of E Girls Grammar School
33	15 July 2018	20	Marion Sargent	Park's mistaken memento	Government Cottage
34	22 July 2018	20	Jenny Gill	An ecclesiastical eyesore	St John's towers
35	29 July 2018	20	Marion Sargent	Holy row over holy ground	Scotch Cemetery
36	5 Aug 2018	20	Jenny Gill	Well-equipped for worship	St John's 1835 inventory
37	12 Aug 2018		Julian Burgess		The Gorge gold rush

Other items and events of interest

George Town & District Historical Society: Meetings take place at The Grove, George Town. 20 Aug 2018, Peter Cox, *Lefroy Football Club*; 17 Sep 2018, Des Wootton, *George Town – a mecca for early “Seaweed Artists”*; 15 Oct 2018, AGM – *Remnants of Chinese Mining in N.E. Tasmania*. Email: info@gtdhs.com.

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Meetings take place in the Legacy Function Hall, 159 Macquarie Street, Hobart at 8pm. 14 Aug 2018, Don Morris, *Some interesting Governors of Tasmania*; 11 Sep 2018, Malcolm Ward, *George Meredith (1778-1856): Colonial settler and political Rabble-rouser*; 13 Nov 2018, Alan Townsend, *Historic wallpaper in Tasmania*.

Website: <http://www.thra.org.au>; Email: info@thra.org.au.



The LGH Historical Committee is pleased to present their latest published book:

The Kaleidoscope of Launceston: Shedding More Light On The Fabric

The launch of this new book on the history of Launceston will be held at 11am on 11 August in the ARTrium Gallery, NICS building, Launceston General Hospital, 41 Frankland Street.

After the launch the book will be for sale at the cashier's office, LGH level 3 for \$40 cash or cheque only.

Launceston Historical Society

President and Newsletter Editor	Marion Sargent	0438 432 848 or 6331 4890
Vice-President and Minute Secretary	Catherine Pearce	
Correspondence Secretary	Prue McCausland	6327 2540
Treasurer	Leonie Prevost	0418 575 910
Publicity Officer	Terry Neal	0414 199 276 or 6343 7940

Postal address: PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Email: launcestonhistory@gmail.com Website: www.launcestonhistory.org.au

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/launcestonhistory>

Deadline

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