



Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 167

April 2019

ISSN 1036-7950

PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people with an interest in history

Welcome to the Committee Members for 2019

Thank you to everyone who attended the Annual General Meeting on Sunday 17 February 2019. Gus Green took the Chair while the new committee for 2019 was elected.

Marion Sargent was re-appointed President for her eighth term. The other executive committee members are Kelli Schultz (Vice-President), Leonie Prevost (Treasurer and Public Officer), Prue McCausland (Correspondence Secretary), Catherine Pearce (Minute Secretary). The re-elected committee members are Sue McClarron, Karin Le and Brad Wood. We welcome three new recruits, Susan Bell, Wendy Roberts and Carol Fuller (after an absence of seven years). Thank you to Robyn Jones and Terry Neal who have stepped down from the Committee. Rebecca Phillips was elected, but unbeknown to us sadly died the day before the AGM.

The 2018 Annual Report can be read online: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/publications/annual-reports/>



Oatlands Commissariat Restoration

The guest speaker after the AGM was Brad Williams, who gave an entertaining talk on restoring the circa 1827 storehouse for the military and convict department at the Oatlands military outpost. The precinct also had a guard-house, sentry post, cells and stocks. The military regiments left in 1859 and by 1860 it was privately owned, and a stone skillion added. A baker's oven built in 1883 operated until 1945. The Southern Midlands Council purchased the property in 2013. Since then a complete re-build has taken place keeping as much of the original fabric as possible. The Oatlands Heritage Hub now occupies the restored front cottage while the store is an office and training room. Brad Williams is pictured with President Marion Sargent.

Membership Renewals for those who have not paid

Annual subscriptions for the Launceston Historical Society were due on 31 December 2018. A Membership Form is 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



At the 2019 John West Memorial Lecture: Susan Bell, Prue McCausland, Leonie Prevost, Marion Sargent, The Governor Kate Warner, Wendy Roberts, Karin Lê, Sue McClarron and Kelli Schultz.

The 31st John West Memorial Lecture, held at UTAS on Friday 15 March was a wonderful success. Her Excellency, the Honourable Kate Warner, Governor of Tasmania presented a well-researched lecture on *Transportation re-visited: lessons for modern penal policy?* She argued that transportation was more effective than incarceration in rehabilitating offenders. President Marion Sargent was MC, Professor Dominic Geraghty from UTAS introduced the Governor and Secretary Prue McCausland offered a vote of thanks. City Park Radio broadcast the lecture on 19 March. We expect it to be broadcast on Radio National's *Big Ideas* program with a link to a podcast on the UTAS and LHS websites.

Sunday 14 April 2019 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk

Maureen Martin Ferris, *Louisa Anne Meredith*

Louisa Anne Meredith, a talented colonial writer and artist, arrived in Van Diemen's Land in 1840 with her husband Charles and baby son to settle on the East Coast with the Meredith family. Louisa developed a passion for the natural flora and fauna of her new home and produced paintings and sketches, and a series of illustrated books of poems and essays detailing colonial life. She had three more sons, but life was not as comfortable as she had hoped, although they moved in the best colonial society and were welcome at Government House. Louisa travelled to England in 1889 to supervise her last book. She died in Melbourne in 1895 at the age of 83.



Maureen Martin Ferris is the Curator of the East Coast Heritage Museum at Swansea and holds a Diploma of Museum Practice. With Malcolm Ward she was a co-author of *Houses and Estates of Old Glamorgan* published by the Glamorgan Spring Bay Historical Society Inc. (GSBHS) in 2017. This book traces the European history of the land and buildings of a number of colonial estates of the former Glamorgan municipality up to the early twentieth century.

Maureen has been President of the GSBHS, is presently Vice President and Research Officer and is on the Publishing and Heritage Festival Committees. She has a complete knowledge of the resources of the GSBHS and of the East Coast Heritage Museum. She has long utilised the collections of the Tasmanian Archives, the Special and Rare Collections of the University of Tasmania, as well as various local private collections. Maureen was asked to undertake research for, and to appear in episodes of *Who Do You Think You Are?* (both the Australian and BBC versions) and Neil Oliver's *Coast Australia*. Maureen has written several books on family history and indexed church and newspaper records. She has been photographing and researching Tasmanian Churches for the past 25 years and is currently constructing an interactive website, as well as researching for the upcoming GSBHS publication *Houses and Estates of old Spring Bay*.

Sunday 19 May 2019 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk

John Dent OAM and Darren Watton, *The Kings Meadows Road Station*

Tasmanian Heritage Festival 'This Place Matters' and National Archaeology Week



Felt hat found at the Kings Meadows Road Station November 2018.

The Kings Meadows Road Station was built by the VDL Government from August 1836 to house convicts building the Evandale to Launceston water scheme and Hobart Road. It was abandoned about 2½ years later. Its location since then has been a mystery despite a plan being prepared in 1838. The lecture will outline the hunt to rediscover its location and the archaeological dig that recently took place to uncover its secrets.

John Dent is currently President of The West Tamar Historical Society and is a member of Launceston Historical Society, Tasmanian Family History Society (Launceston) and the Friends of The Launceston Mechanics Institute. John has published numerous articles and given many talks on various aspects of northern Tasmanian history. He is a registered land surveyor in private practice and has used his surveying skills to uncover many aspects of our earliest history. John was awarded an OAM in 1996, is a member of Rotary and is on the board of The St. Giles Society.

Darren Watton is an archaeologist with Southern Archaeology. He has extensive experience in all aspects of archaeological work and heritage management, specialising in historical research, archaeological assessments, method statements, heritage surveying, monitoring, excavation, cataloguing and report writing.

Advance notice of LHS activities for 2019

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

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| 16 June | Pugh Day Lecture, Prof. Paul Myles, <i>A vexed history of laughing gas: A cycle out of depression</i> |
| 21 July | Duncan Grant, <i>Small churches of Northern Tasmania</i> |
| 18 August | Nick Brodie, <i>topic to be advised</i> & Kristyn Harman, <i>The Global Flow of Convicts Transported from New Zealand to Van Diemen's Land</i> |
| 15 September | Tony Marshall, <i>Edward Abbott senior & junior & Launceston connections</i> |
| 20 October | Lynette Ross, <i>Government Cottage in City Park</i> |
| 17 November | Jill Cassidy, <i>Writing the history of Deviot</i> |

Members' Column

New members: The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Shane How and Mark Woodley.

Membership Form + charge for visitors to attend meetings: A membership form is available on our website: [Membership Form.pdf](#). Sunday meetings are free for LHS members, and \$4 for visitors. A delicious afternoon tea is served after the talk. A special Easter raffle will be held at our April meeting.

Primary School History Prize: Primary school students in the Launceston area are encouraged to enter a piece of historical research presented in a variety of formats. Entries for the History Prize are now open, to be submitted by 30 August 2019. More information: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/activities/history-prize/>

LHS Archaeology Group:

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



Vale Rebecca Phillips, committee member

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Rebecca Phillips after her election to the Historical Society committee at the AGM on 17 February 2019. She had passed away suddenly the day before. Rebecca first joined our committee in February 2016. During the following three years she contributed greatly to the Society, particularly as part of the Primary School History Prize sub-committee, organising and judging the many entries received each year. The Camden Athletic Club in Adelaide has kindly donated \$200 to our Society in memory of Rebecca, as her daughter Edwina runs with the club. The money will go towards a special history prize. We will miss the vibrant and cheerful presence of Rebecca at our meetings, and the lemon slice which she invariably made for our afternoon teas.



Vale Billie Eastoe, past committee member

On 9 March 2019 our long-time member Billie Eastoe passed away in her 91st year. Active to the last, Billie is pictured here on the right with her sister Judy Hedley during our excursion to Strathmore, Deddington and Patterdale on 5 November 2018. In September 1996 Billie presented a talk to LHS on the buildings of her ancestor Peter Mills, the architect. From March 1998 to March 2006 she served as a committee member. She and her sister rarely missed a Sunday afternoon meeting. In the mornings Billie and Judy would prepare for and attend the church services at St Paul's Chapel at the Launceston General Hospital.

From the past

Independent, Saturday 16 November 1833, page 2

Bush Rangers. Last week a gentleman of this Town, while engaged in sketching some of the romantic scenery of the South Esk for the purpose of transmission to his native land, discovered a concealed human abode, bearing evident marks of having been lately inhabited. He very properly lost no time in communicating his discovery to the Authorities, and, at a very early hour on Wednesday morning, accompanied a Police party to point out the place. Meeting with difficulty in wading the river, the Party in retracing some of their steps, discovered the mouth of a cave, containing a blazing fire, a bed place, food and wearing apparel, which it is apparent was that of some of these men who had perceived the party on their first approach, and immediately abandoned their position. This cavern was not the one discovered by the gentleman the preceding day, neither has it since been fallen in with. There is little doubt, that the principal gangs of bushrangers have their head quarters on the steep sides of the Cataract River—seldom or ever does strangers foot disturb the quiet of the scene, and a good look out is all that is necessary to ensure the safety of the marauders. The intricacies of the rock furnish fine protection for them; and from their vicinity, to the town they pick up every "move upon the board."



90th Anniversary of the Great Floods of 1929

Extract from *The Examiner*, Monday 8 April 1929, page 10

Plight of the Women.

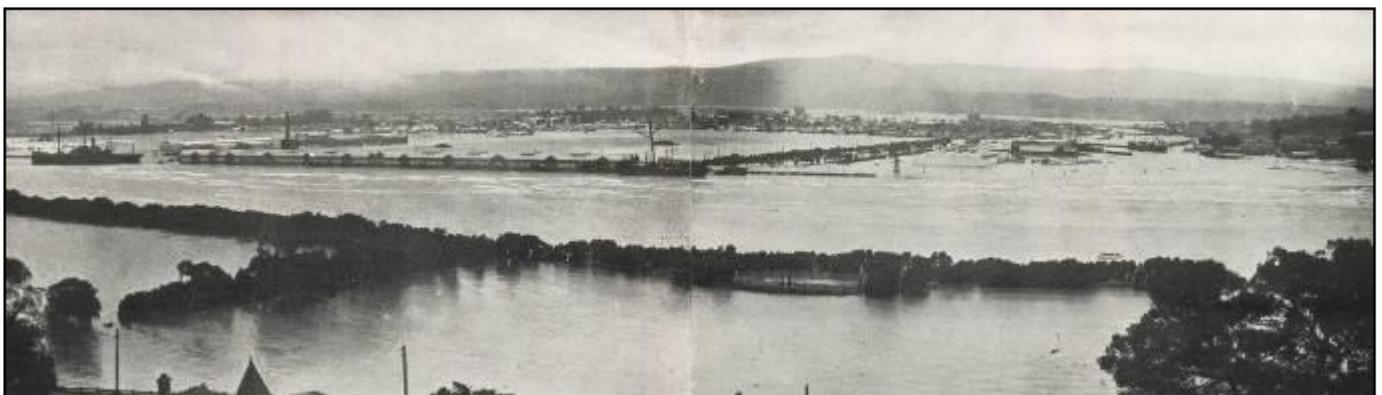
Silently While the City Slept, the Waters Came On.

Women played a dual role in that tragedy of the waters which so suddenly overtook Launceston on Friday night. There were those who suffered with heroic fortitude terrifying experiences and the loss of their homes and possessions. There were others who voluntarily forsook the shelter and comfort of their homes and plunged out into a night, hideously dark and wet to assist those in distress. Somehow the impression seemed to have gained ground that the flood waters would be at their height at 9 p.m., and that if an alarm was not sounded in the vicinity of that hour the danger of the low-lying portions of the city and suburbs being inundated was, for that night at least, over. Nine o'clock, ten o'clock, eleven o'clock passed, and with the approach of midnight all but the most timid or cautious residents composed themselves to sleep. About 1.30 a.m. the danger intensified, and the rush of water came. People rudely awakened from their sleep had time only to collect a few articles of raiment, and, knee deep in water, make good their escape.

Members of practically all the women's philanthropic societies, and many not connected with these organisations, had volunteered to assist in relief work if necessary. Some of these women remained at the Town Hall until eleven o'clock, and then feeling that their services would not be required repaired to their homes. The town clock alarm at 2 a.m. (sic) was the first intimation most of them received that it was indeed time to be up and doing.

District Nurse's Story. "About 1.30 a.m.," tells the district nurse (Nurse Kenna), "I was awakened and got into the waiting car and was rushed to Invermay, where Nurse Thorpe and I had one bed case and several invalid patients. The city was in pitch darkness, save for the flash of motor car headlights and the glimmer of lanterns being used by the rescuers. The incessant hooting of motor horns and the roar of the flood waters made the night weird. In many cases we had to get to the houses through back yards, the water being several inches high at the front entrances. Two sick cases we had removed to the hospital. Other people were hurried to friends' homes, out of reach of the flood. One old lady, when I entered her room and said, "Come on, you must get out of this," looked at me in amazement and asked, "What for?" She was living all alone and had not even heard that there was danger of a flood. A bed patient, when we went to move her, stoutly declared that she was not going to leave her home. "I did not leave for the flood 30 years ago," she said, "and I am not going to leave now."

These facts were gleaned from Nurse Kenna, in course of conversation, as she hurried about her task of making people comfortable at the Albert Hall. She disclaimed having figured prominently in the rescue work, and referred to what had been accomplished by Nurse Thorpe, but many of the refugees were loud in their praises of what Nurse Kenna had done. Nurse Thorpe, when spoken to, also made light of her work, but there were those who volunteered the information that she "was wonderful" as she rushed from house to house with a lantern in her hand rousing the people and assisting them to get clear of danger. "In some places the water rose very rapidly," Nurse Thorpe stated. ...



This striking panoramic picture, taken on Saturday morning 6 April 1929, shows a section of the wharves, Royal Park, Inveresk and Invermay under the grip of the flood waters, viewed from Trevallyn. The Rapson Tyre Works, also partly under water, are seen behind the wharves. (*Weekly Courier*, 10 April 1929)

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](#).

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63	10 Feb 2019	12	Marion Sargent	A commercial chemistry	Hatton & Laws Pharmacy
64	17 Feb 2019	14	Marion Sargent	Saintly place resurrected	St Paul's Church
65	24 Feb 2019	13	Gus Green	Bridge spans the centuries	South Esk Bridge
66	3 Mar 2019	17	Terry Neal	Park's horticultural home	The Gardener's Lodge
67	10 Mar 2019	14	Marion Sargent	Colony freed from cruelty	Cessation of Transportation
68	17 Mar 2019	12	Gus and Marion	Investing in a city's future	Bank of Australasia
69	24 Mar 2019	15	Kelli Schultz	Baths project a marathon	Windmill Hill pool
70	31 Mar 2019	34	Prue McCausland	Luttrell a real exhibitionist	Alfred Luttrell, architect
71	7 Apr 2019		Marion Sargent		1929 flood relief efforts
72	14 Apr 2019		Julian Burgess		William Coogan

Other items and events of interest

QVMAG at Inveresk: *Spinning a Tale for Marjorie*, is a new exhibition that pays homage to iconic Tasmanian Marjorie Bligh. The walkway into the Museum is decorated with yarn bombing, made by the community with donated materials. The exhibition runs from 13 April 2019 to 29 March 2020.

Lunchbox Lectures at Launceston Library: Phil Leonard Room, level 2, bring your lunch, 1.10pm. 18 Apr 2019, Nigel Burch, *Premier Tom Chapman: the father of Tasmania*; 16 May 2019, Catherine Pearce, *A very public hanging: the execution of Dalton and Kelly at Launceston Gaol*.

George Town & District Historical Society: At the Tam O'Shanter Golf & Community Club, 7.30pm, 15 Apr 2019, Dr Patsy Cameron OA, *Local Aboriginal history / culture*. At The Grove, George Town, 7.30pm, 20 May 2019, Diane Phillips, *George Town – the capital of Northern Van Diemen's Land – a bicentennial commemoration of the official move from Launceston*. Email: info@qtdhs.com.

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Meetings take place in the Legacy Function Rooms, 159 Macquarie Street, Hobart at 8pm. 9 Apr 2019, Anna Jacobs, *The Tasmanian response to the rescue of John Franklin*; 14 May 2019, John Dent, *The Kerry Lodge Convict Station*. Website: <http://www.thra.org.au>; Email: info@thra.org.au.

Launceston Historical Society

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Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 Jun 2019** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.