



Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 178

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people with an interest in history

Kings Meadows Road Station

On 18 April 2021 John Dent and Darren Watton presented a talk on the archaeological dig undertaken at the Kings Meadows Convict Station nearly three years ago. Two plans of the buildings exist from 1838, but it was not easy to locate the site, which had been largely destroyed by farming and roadworks. The remains of the Commandant's cottage, road station, drains, reservoir, stables, and an oven were unearthed. More than 10,000 artefacts were found, with 4484 different types of objects being catalogued. These include bricks, glass, ceramics, pipes, bottles, handmade nails, stonemason's chisel, axes, and farm tools. Remarkably, a professionally made felt hat was also retrieved. The area is opposite Bunnings.



John Dent, Marion Sargent and Darren Watton at the lecture.



John Francis

Derek Binns (pictured) presented an excellent paper on John Francis on 16 May 2021.

Francis, born in London in 1822 left home and found himself in dire financial stress. For some unknown reason he fired a pistol at Queen Victoria as she was riding in her carriage with Albert. Francis was arrested soon after and sentenced to death for high treason. Pleas from family and friends saved him from the gallows, and he was transported to Van Diemen's Land on the *Marquis of Hastings* in 1842.

A carpenter by trade, he was assigned to Launceston builder William Tyson, setting him up for success and respectability. Francis formed a partnership with Phillip Miller in 1855, and after his death in 1862, with Charles Galvin. Over a 30-year period John Francis was responsible for constructing numerous Launceston buildings, many of which still stand. Due to a downturn in business Francis became insolvent, and in 1867 moved to Melbourne where he died in 1885.

June Meeting – Pugh Day Lecture

Prof. Alicia Dennis, *The Role of Anaesthetists in Safe Childbirth in Australia – from pioneers to present day*, to be presented by Dr John Paull.

Sunday 20 June 2021 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk



Alicia Dennis (pictured) is a Professor in the School of Medicine, Faculty of Health, Deakin University and holds honorary appointments in the Departments of Medicine and Radiology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Pharmacology in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, University of Melbourne. She is a fulltime staff specialist anaesthetist and Director of Anaesthesia Research at The Royal Women's Hospital, Parkville, Australia.

After graduation from the University of Melbourne she trained and practiced in anaesthesia in Melbourne and in 2010 obtained her PhD investigating cardiac function in women with preeclampsia. In 2013 Alicia was the Visiting Professorial Scholar for the University of Cape Town and The Groote Schuur Hospital investigating haemodynamics using echocardiography in women with preeclampsia and women with HIV. In 2017 she completed a Master of

International Public Health with a focus on gender inequity and its contribution to maternal mortality. Alicia is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has undertaken postgraduate studies in finance through Harvard Business School. Alicia is currently supervising three PhD students and is the Australasian Representative on the Scientific Affairs Committee of the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists (WFSA). *Held in conjunction with the LGH Historical Committee.*

Bookings are no longer needed! However, due to the Melbourne lockdown, Prof. Dennis can't come in person, but Dr John Paull will present her paper.

July Meeting

Alan Townsend, *If these walls could talk*

Sunday 18 July 2021 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk



Alan Townsend is a heritage officer at both Clarence and Southern Midlands Council. Over the years, he has developed a bit of an obsession with historic wallpapers. Now this might sound like a boring topic, but actually there's a wealth of stories to be told through the houses and decorations of colonial Van Diemen's Land by literally peeling back the layers.

Alan has also taught himself the skills to re-create historic wallpapers and has created beautiful masterpieces for Narryna Heritage Museum, National Trust Tasmania and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

Bookings are no longer needed! Just turn up.

New Members

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Michael Barrett, Erin Fletcher, Alix & Marilyn Fraterman, Liza Garner, Alex Johnston, Matthew, Kerri, Lachlan & Noah Kleinig, Virginia Ling, Richard Mack, Tom & Tina McGlynn, Bianca Newman, Trudy Owen, Josie Penn, Margaret Reed, Gina Slevac, Helen & Sonia Smith, Rod Spark, Shanelle & Glenda Spencer, Jennie Timmins, Harlee Triffett, Janine Wilson, Rosalie Young.

Membership Form

A membership form is available on our website: [Membership Form.pdf](#). Sunday meetings are free for LHS members, and \$4 for visitors. As most of the Sunday Lectures were postponed in 2020, financial memberships have been rolled over to 2021.

LHS Activities for 2021

Launceston Historical Society meetings are usually held at the meeting room, Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk, on the third Sunday of the month at 2pm, unless otherwise notified.

Bookings are no longer needed as the Museum meeting room can now accommodate a maximum of 110 people. Free for members, visitors are welcome to attend at \$4 each.

From 1 May 2021 all visitors to the QVMAG are required to check in with the Tas App by scanning the QR code displayed in the foyer. If you do not have a smart phone the attendant staff can check you in on the QVMAG device.

The meeting will be livestreamed on Zoom. A link will be provided to members closer to the date.

- 15 August** **Robert Smith**, *William Henry Clayton: an amateur's perspective of the legacy of the architect in Tasmania and New Zealand*
- 19 September** **Dr Nic Haygarth**, Mead, Smith, von Stieglitz Lecture, *Who killed the Tigers? A preliminary analysis of applicants for the Tasmanian thylacine bounty 1888–1909*
- 17 October** **Nigel Burch**, *The little skipper: Premier Sir John Evans (Seniors Week)*
- 1 November** **Excursion to Swansea** (Monday long weekend)
- 21 November** **Graeme Williams**, *Around Tasmania with Spurling*

Earlier talks are available on our website, so catch up on ones you missed or listen to them again: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/lhs-lecture-series/>

Our History

These stories on Launceston and districts history have been contributed by our members. You are welcome to send articles of 470 words, with at least three pictures, to the president marionsargent@bigpond.com. Read the stories in *The Sunday Examiner* or on [Facebook](#).

We are preparing a book with 100 of these stories, each with a photograph – more information to come.

No	Date	Page	Author	Title	Topic
175	4 Apr 2021	21	Nigel Burch	Tamar a likely prospect for Humphrey	AWH Humphrey, 1804
176	11 Apr 2021	21	Julian Burgess	Iconic stack a fitting tribute to a giant of state's wool industry	Leslie William Smith
177	18 Apr 2021	23	Nigel Burch	The rise of the professional politician	Payment of politicians
178	25 Apr 2021	25	Marion Sargent	Community rallied to help create local haven for war heroes	Anzac Memorial Hostel
179	2 May 2021	21	Nigel Burch	Week a long time in Tasmanian politics	Tasmania's first Labour Party
180	9 May 2021	21	Julian Burgess	Wellington Square State School's 120 years of service ends	Wellington Square State School
181	16 May 2021	40	Marion Sargent	How lighting up the Albert Hall energised Launcestonians	Albert Hall & the electric light
182	23 May 2021	21	Nigel Burch	From fraught early forays, benefits of hydro finally flowed	How the Hydro began
183	30 May 2021	19	Nigel Burch	State built on a rock-solid foundation	The quest for lime
184	6 Jun 2021	17	Julian Burgess	How a flying Fysh got iconic kangaroo up off the ground	Hudson Fysh & Qantas
185	13 Jun 2021		Prue McCausland		Seaweed collectors of George Town

LHS Keep Cup Sale

Bargain!
\$5 – members only at this price.
At the next meeting or two
buy a keep cup with our logo.
\$5



Other Items and Events of Interest

George Town & District Historical Society: *The Grove* at 7.30pm. 21 June 2021, Susan Long & Jayne Watts, *Local Aboriginal Community Engagement*; 19 July 2021, Diane Philips, *James Galloway, master mason*. Email: info@qtdhs.com

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Legacy Function Rooms, 159 Macquarie St, Hobart on the second Tuesday of each month at 8pm. 8 June 2021, Imogen Wegman, *Anything but common: Why VDL never had commons*; 13 July 2021, Leigh Woolley, *Shaping Hobart: Townscape, scale and proportion. Reviewing the Meehan Plan of 1811*. Email: info@thra.org.au

National Book Council: Launceston Library at 1pm. 16 June 2021, David Gatenby & Carol Bacon, *Andrew Gatenby's family at Barton in The Midlands*; 21 July 2021, Julian Burgess, *Three places that helped define Launceston*. RSVP: nationalbookcounciltasmania@gmail.com or rocives@gmail.com

Royal Society of Tasmania (Northern Branch): Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum, Inveresk, 1.30pm. 27 June 2021, Ralph Bottrill, *What made Tasmania?*; 25 July 2021, John Whittington, *Growing Australia's Blue Economy*. Email: apcachris@gmail.com

National Oral History conference: The biennial conference of Oral History Australia will be held in Launceston on 14–16 October. Entitled *Oral History in Troubling Times: Opportunities and Challenges*, the conference will bring together over 50 speakers from Australia and New Zealand on topics which include Indigenous oral histories, family history, community history, creative writing and performance, working lives, protest and activism, queer oral history, and the AIDS epidemic. The full program will be available soon on the Oral History Australia website:

<https://oralhistoryaustralia.org.au/biennial-conference-2021/>

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Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 Aug 2021** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.