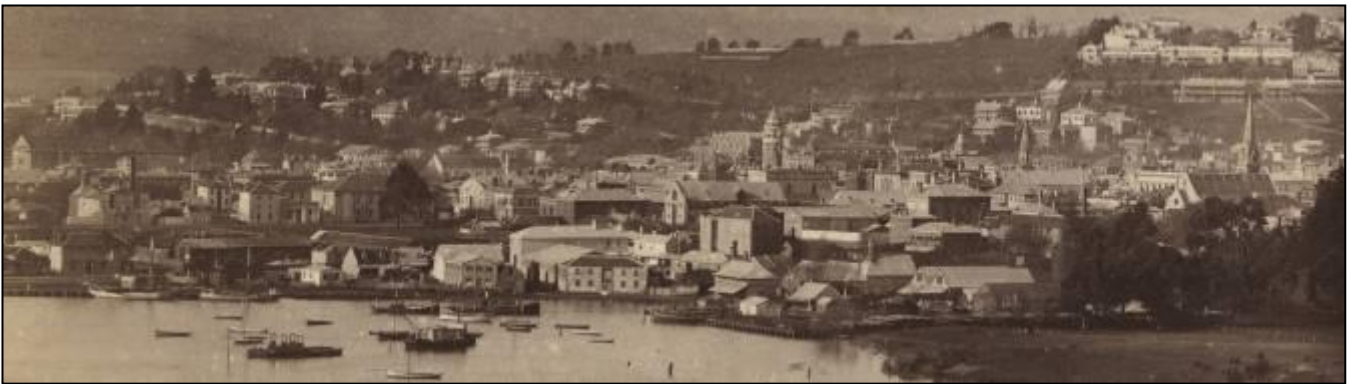


Launceston Historical Society Inc.

"Bringing together people with an interest in history"

Annual Report for year ending 31 December 2021



Alfred Coleman Bonner, 'Launceston from Trevallyn', 12 March 1890. TAHO Launceston, LPIC 21, NTCC Album 6, No 171

**Presented at its Annual General Meeting held at the
Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk
Sunday 20 February 2022**

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Introduction

As President of the Launceston Historical Society (LHS), and on behalf of the members and visitors here today, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which this event is taking place.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my privilege to present the Annual Report of the Launceston Historical Society for the financial year ending 31 December 2021.

John West Memorial Lecture



On 12 March 2021 Dr Eric Ratcliff presented the 33rd John West Memorial Lecture with the topic *John West's Launceston and where it went*. This excellent lecture was well received by an appreciative audience at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre, University of Tasmania. President Marion Sargent was the master of ceremonies, Dr Ratcliff was introduced by Professor Dominic Geraghty from UTAS, and LHS committee member Wendy Roberts offered a vote of thanks.

This year the John West Memorial lecturer will be Dr Alison Alexander, prolific author of Tasmanian history books – speaking on the *End of Convict Transportation* – at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre, University of Tasmania at Newnham on Thursday, 3 March 2022 at 8pm.

This prestigious event is held in partnership with the University of Tasmania.

Monthly meetings

After cancelling most of our meetings in 2020 due to COVID-19, we could once again host interesting and knowledgeable speakers who presented papers at our monthly Sunday meetings in 2021. Following the Annual General Meeting in February our guest speaker, Nigel Burch, told us some riveting tales about Sir Richard Dry. In April John Dent and Darren Watton gave us an insight into their archaeological dig at the Kings Meadows Convict Station and in May Derek Binns presented an excellent paper on John Francis, would-be assassin of Queen Victoria who became a respectable builder in Launceston.

In June Dr John Paull, on behalf of Professor Alicia Dennis, presented the Ninth Pugh Day lecture on the history of pain relief during childbirth in Australia. In July Alan Townsend gave a fascinating talk on historic wallpapers and in August Robert Smith spoke on the Tasmanian architect William Henry Clayton.

The first re-instated Mead, Smith, von Stieglitz Memorial Lecture in September was presented by Dr Nic Haygarth on the people who applied for the government bounty scheme for Tasmanian Tigers. In October Nigel Burch told us about the Little Skipper, Sir John Evans, who progressed from cabin-boy to Premier. The final speaker for the year was Graeme Williams who took us on a rollicking good tour of Tasmania with Stephen Spurling's postcards around 1914. Due to COVID restrictions we could no longer serve our popular afternoon teas during the year.

We appreciate the support of the Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk for making the meeting room available to us. And thank you also to Bent Eared Records who looked after our audio-visual needs. Since February our lectures have been videoed and live streamed by Zoom so our members can watch from home if they wish. The audio recordings of our lectures are on our website.

Executive Committee

The extent of events and activities conducted by the Historical Society would not be possible without the many hours of work performed by a dedicated team of volunteers. Thank you to the members of the Executive Committee who have helped keep the Society thriving during these challenging times.

In February 2021, the following committee members were elected: Marion Sargent (President), Kelli Schultz (Vice-President and History Prize), Leonie Prevost (Treasurer and Public Officer), Prue McCausland (Correspondence Secretary), Catherine Pearce (Minute Secretary), Karin Lê (Publicity Officer), Bradley Wood (History Prize), Sue Bell, Wendy Roberts (Representative on the City of Launceston Heritage Advisory Committee) and Carol Fuller (History Prize). After one unusual year on the committee James Smith did not stand again, so we welcomed one recruit, Jordana Lory.

History Prize

Unfortunately, we received very few entries in our annual Primary History Prize in 2021. Nevertheless, 12 excellent entries were submitted by three schools: Mowbray Heights, Invermay, and Evandale Primary. A total of \$495 in book vouchers from Petrarch's Bookshop was awarded to nine children. Every student received a certificate of participation.

The third Rebecca Phillips Memorial Prize of \$50 was awarded to Shakira Walters from Mowbray Heights for her imaginative project on people who helped shape Tasmanian history. We did not hold a ceremony at the Town Hall again this year, but each child was recognised at their own school assemblies.

Thank you to Kelli Schultz, Carol Fuller and Brad Wood for organising and judging the awards.

The annual \$500 Launceston Historical Society History Prize was awarded to a student at the University of Tasmania for the best History essay written in 2021 enrolled at Launceston on-campus in first year History, HTA101 or HTA102.

Spring Excursion to Swansea

On our most enjoyable Spring excursion to the seaside town of Swansea on 1 November 2021 members visited the East Coast Heritage Museum and two cemeteries as well as sightseeing around the historic streets. Steve Radford provided commentary about the places we passed on the way there and back, while Terese Binns drove the Veterans and Community Bus.



The happy group of excursionists at Swansea. Missing from the photo are Terese, Prue, and Mike.

Archaeology Group

The LHS archaeology group, convened by John Dent, consists of LHS members with an interest in the archaeology of the Launceston area. In the past we have volunteered on an archaeological dig at the Kerry Lodge Probation Station and at Annandale. From time-to-time emails are sent to group members with news about archaeological activities in the Launceston area. We are continuing to look at opportunities where volunteers can become involved in archaeological projects.

Community Outreach

The Society has assisted individuals and community organisations in various ways throughout the year. Four articles were published in *The Examiner's* quarterly magazine *Northern Exposure* in 2021 written by Marion Sargent: *Swamped by the mud; A legacy of landmarks across the city* (architect JM Haenke); *Discover the history of Milton Hall*; and *Swan Point and Paper Beach*.

In 2021 eleven members submitted articles on various aspects of the region's past for the popular 'Our History' series in *The Sunday Examiner*. At the end of December these numbered 212. A special thank you goes to Nigel Burch who has contributed 61 articles to date.

Marion Sargent spoke to seven community groups on various topics. She also had a chat with Erin Cooper on ABC TV about John West and Milton Hall and was the history guide on McDermott's Coaches' Launceston Behind the Scenes Tour.

At Summerdale Primary School Prue McCausland presented photos of early Launceston, showing how things have changed, while Catherine Pearce delivered a similar illustrated talk at Riverside Primary School. Carol Fuller provided a morning of history for a grade 1/2 class from Glen Dhu Primary School starting in Princes Square and walking along St John Street pointing out interesting buildings and features.

Membership

The Historical Society had 226 financial members at the end of 2021, including 64 new people. Four of our members sadly passed away in 2021: Patricia Leonard in May; Roger Valentine in October; Jenny Gill in November; and Barbara Valentine in December.

Publications

A sub-committee is working on publishing 100 of the 'Our History' stories in a book, each with a photo. We are more than halfway through the first draft. This should be a popular book, as we have had numerous requests for a compilation of the series published in *The Sunday Examiner* and on our Facebook page.

Catherine Pearce and Wendy Roberts have researched and created two free audio apps with 'Cya On The Road': *A Walk Along Historic Cameron Street* and *Launceston City Walk*.

We thank the staff at Peter Gutwein's office for printing the Newsletters and Annual Report free of charge.

Conclusion

Once again, thank you to my dedicated Committee whose expertise and energy ensures that this Society functions well. And thank you also to members who attend our meetings and excursions and support the Society in so many ways. After the hiatus in 2020 we had a very successful year in 2021.

Marion Sargent
President 2021