

Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 185

October 2022

ISSN 1036-7950

PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people with an interest in history



**Speaker John Dent with Annandale dig participants
Peta Newman and Sue Bell.**

fragments, clay pipes, buttons, bottle fragments and two metal chisel-type objects thrust vertically into the ground. But there were no willow pattern ceramics. The building was most likely used as accommodation for farm workers, with living quarters and storage rooms downstairs and sleeping quarters upstairs. Further excavations would reveal more.

Annandale Dig

On Sunday 17 July John Dent presented a fascinating talk on a community archaeology dig undertaken at Annandale in April 2021. Located on The Long Plain between Perth and Pateena Road, the substantial two-storey stone building has a kitchen with a fireplace and bread oven in the northern ground floor room but is still something of a mystery. John and archaeologist Darren Watton believe that it was built between 1835 and 1840 when Charles Chilcott owned the 1000-acre property. The 1842 census shows that there were 20 people living there, including three convicts.

Four trenches were dug, with 1,311 artefacts unearthed. Most of these were hand-wrought square shank nails. There were also ceramic



Launceston's 19th-Century Hotels

On 21 August Jai Paterson provided an entertaining overview of her upcoming book on Launceston's 19th-century hotels. She is fleshing out the human side of stories attached to the hotels, with several themes emerging during her research. One theme is horses, as hotels were often transport hubs as well as offering stables for travellers' horses. Public entertainment, such as skittles, circuses, card games, illegal cock fighting, and theatres, was offered at hotels. The first Tasmanian play, *The Bandit of the Rhine*, was performed at the British Hotel. They provided women with one of the few opportunities for employment – as publicans, often after their husbands had died, and as barmaids and maids of all work. Tourism came later, with the Art House Hotel in Lindsay Street promoting visits to places of interest in the region. Hotels were also used as morgues and venues for inquests. Jai revealed that the Launceston Hotel was established by Dicky White 10 years earlier than generally thought – in 1814.



Speaker Dr Louise Zarmati with dig participants Kelli Schultz and Sharyn Lawrence.

Oatlands Scrimshaw Cane

Louise Zarmati presented an excellent talk on 18 September on the mystery of the scrimshaw walking cane found during a clean-up at the old Oatlands Guard House site used by the military from 1827 to 1856. On the third day, a strange object was uncovered in square 2 on the inside of the exterior wall. No one knew what it could be. On the last day, square 5 was added to square 2 and the object was revealed slowly. The dig participants could now see that it was scrimshaw, but there was a large stone, broken pavers, and a brick on top of the object.

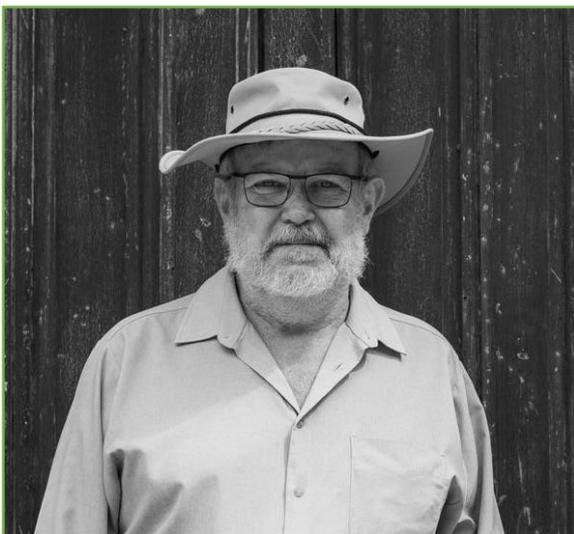
As it emerged from the dirt, the mystery object proved to be a 90 cm long walking cane that had been deliberately placed

halfway along the threshold of the doorway, partly inside and partly outside the guard house and then covered up with timber flooring. Downward pressure on the stone threshold had broken the cane in two. Made by a sailor on a whaling ship, the cane is topped by a hand carved from a sperm whale tooth, and the shaft, also from a sperm whale, is decorated with black stripes from the baleen of a humpback whale. It is a beautiful item and must have belonged to someone of high status.

The mystery is why was it placed there, when, and by whom? Louise believes it was after the military had left when it was owned by the Sanderson or Fish families. Was it intended to keep evil spirits out? It is the only walking cane found buried near a threshold in the world. It was missed during the guard house demolition in 1975 and has now been conserved and is on display at the old Oatlands gaol.

October Meeting

**Sunday 16 October 2022 – 2pm at the Auditorium, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk
Duncan Grant, *Lesser-known Launceston Churches and Missions***



Since settlement, over 160 places of worship have existed in Launceston. Alongside Launceston's iconic churches are numerous lesser-known places of worship. These include gospel halls; chapels, Sunday schools; ecclesia; oratories; meeting houses and mission halls. The talk will start with a very brief overview of the development of Launceston's places of worship across two centuries which mirror phases in the city's development. A particular focus will be on churches, chapels and missions that served the poorest and most marginalised members of the community. The talk will touch on the Bethel Chapel; the Wharf Mission; the Chinese Mission; St John's Mission at the Queen's Head; Ravenswood Mission and the Salvation Army.

Duncan Grant is a retired Senior history teacher at St Patrick's College Launceston – teaching Modern History and Ancient History (Rome) and Studies of Religion – for 25 years. He completed Honours and Master degrees (History) at the University of Cape Town with a focus on urban history. He has taught Economic History at the University of Cape Town and 'History Method' at Rhodes University (Grahamstown). He has an interest in curriculum development and designing courses for the study of local and regional history for high school students. Duncan now pursues history as a hobby and has a particular interest in historical buildings of any type and combines this with amateur photography.

November Meeting

Sunday 20 November 2022 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk

Nick Clements, *Tongerlongeter, Speculative History, and the Right to Write*



Tongerlongeter, the leader of Tasmania's Oyster Bay nation and 'principal chief' of the exiled survivors of the Black War, was until recently virtually unknown, even to most Aboriginal Tasmanians. So how did one of Australia's most significant resistance fighters go under the radar for so long? In large part, the problem is one of sources – Tongerlongeter is not mentioned by name until four days before the armistice that ended the war in 1831. Even in exile, he is referred to just a few dozen times. And while Tongerlongeter's centrality to the final stages of the war and its aftermath is beyond doubt, only two retrospective accounts survive of wartime actions. As for the specifics of his role in the resistance, we will never know with any certainty. So where does that leave the historian? How can such jigsaws be responsibly assembled when so many of the pieces are missing? Should they even be attempted? This talk will summarise Nick's interpretation of Tongerlongeter's story and lay bare his methods for giving

colour to the missing jigsaw pieces. And lest methodology prove too dry, he will conclude with some musings on the fraught question of non-Aboriginal historians writing about Aboriginal people.

New Members

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Paul Duncum, Susan Hawick, Geoffrey Mason, Trevor and Rhonda Stewart and Rowena Sweeney.

LHS Activities

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. Free for members, visitors are welcome to attend at \$4 each. Bring some cash for a chance to win a fabulous prize in the raffle. The meeting will be livestreamed on Zoom. A link will be provided to members closer to the date.

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/>

Other Events of Interest

George Town & District Historical Society: The Grove, on the third Monday of each month at 7.30pm. 17 Oct 2022, AGM & Margaret Fletcher, *Female Pirates on the Tamar: Charlotte Badger and Catherine Hegerty*; 21 Nov 2022, Craig Dixon, *The Chatham Islands, New Zealand and the Moriori People*. Email: info@gtdhs.com

National Book Council: Launceston Library, Wednesday, 19 Oct 2022, 1.15pm, Carol Fuller, *How to Judge a literary Award*. Non-members \$5. RSVP: nationalbookcounciltasmania@gmail.com

Royal Society of Tasmania (Northern Branch): QV Museum Meeting Room, Inveresk, on the fourth Sunday of each month at 1.30pm. 23 Oct 2022, Dr Mike Pook, *Living with Climate Variability – the Tasmanian Experience*; 27 Nov 2022, Shane Fitzgerald, *QVMAG: A Catalyst for Cultural Activation*. Email: apcachris@gmail.com

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Legacy Function Rooms, 159 Macquarie St, Hobart on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm. 11 Oct 2022, Malcolm Ward, *The Papers of Colonel Andrew Geils: An Insight into Hobart Town Life in the 1810s*; 8 Nov 2022, Malcolm Groom, *Western Tasmania: Prospectors and the Post Office*; 13 Dec 2022, Stefan Petrow, *'Blooded as Citizen Soldiers': Tasmanians in the 15th Battalion at Gallipoli, April-May 1915*. Email: info@thra.org.au

Beaconsfield Excursion

Monday 7 November 2022

The Launceston Historical Society's Spring Excursion for Members

- 9.00am Veterans and Community Bus departs from the Eardley Street carpark behind the RSL. Park in the bottom carpark.
- 9.30am Stop at **Rosevears** for some history, and coffee at the Rosevears Bakery (at own expense). Note change from previous itinerary.
- 10.15am Drive through **Gravelly Beach** to **Swan Point and Paper Beach**.
- 11.00am **Supply River Mill** – 25 minutes return walk, and history of the mill.
- 11.45am Drive on to **Sidmouth Kirk** – the church will be open for us to see inside.
- 1.00pm Lunch at own expense in **Beaconsfield** – Moon Lily Café or Jubilee Bakery. Signposted historic walk along Weld St for those who are interested. Bring a picnic lunch if you prefer.
- 2.00pm Guided tour of **Beaconsfield Mine and Heritage Centre**, short historic walk to an abandoned mine site.
- 3.30pm Begin return trip.
- 4.00pm Stop at **Bradys Lookout**.
- 4.45pm Home

Please post or email the details below @ **\$25.00 per person**.

Post a cheque to the Treasurer, Launceston Historical Society, PO Box 1296, Launceston, TAS 7250, or pay by direct debit BSB 067 003 A/C 2804 8638, and email Leonie Prevost: leonie.prevost@bigpond.com or Marion Sargent: marionsargent@bigpond.com, phone 0438 432 848.

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Beaconsfield Excursion, Monday 7 November 2022	Return to:
Name.....	LHS Inc.
Address.....	PO Box 1296
Mobile.....	LAUNCESTON TAS 7250
Email.....	\$25.00 per person
Entry to the Museum is included. Coffee and lunch at own expense.	

Annandale Archaeology Dig

Monday 21 to Friday 25 November 2022 – 9am at 675 Pateena Road, Longford

The Launceston Historical Society Inc Archaeology Group is holding a community based archaeological dig at *Annandale* to investigate the floor of a two-storey stone building and nearby house to try to determine its date of construction, its original purpose and who built it.

Members are invited to actively participate in the dig to learn about how archaeology can be used to locate evidence from a particular site to answer questions such as the age of the building and how it may have been used over time. You will also learn about archaeological processes such as locating and stringing up a trench, how to dig a trench, recording a site and taking photos.

There will be some hands-on excavation and you should be able to kneel for some of the day so only those with appropriate fitness levels should participate in this. There may also be artefact washing and sorting tasks depending on what we find. You will receive a certificate of participation and a copy of the final report once it has been prepared.

Darren Watton and Ian Edmondson from Southern Archaeology will lead the dig to introduce participants to the art and science of practical archaeology and what happens on a real dig.

The cost is \$70 per person per day or \$50 for part of a day, or a discounted rate of \$300 for five whole days. This cost is put towards the production of a professional report on the dig. Archaeologists and trench supervisors are donating their time for the actual dig days and for artefact analysis as part of this community awareness exercise.

You will need to bring your own food (morning tea and lunch) water and other drinks. Bring appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes/boots, gloves, hat, sunscreen, a trowel if you have one and a fold up chair. A raincoat and warm clothing may also be required. We will work in all weathers. A port-a-loo will be on site. All other tools and equipment are supplied.

Payment and Registration:

Name: _____

Contact details: mobile _____ email _____

Days attending: (Please tick)	Monday 21 st Nov _____	(if only attending morning or
	Tuesday 22 nd _____	(afternoon please put am or
	Wednesday 23 rd _____	(pm next to each day.
	Thursday 24 th _____	
	Friday 25 th _____	

Payment:	_____ days @ \$70 per day	= \$ _____
	_____ half days @ \$50 per half day	= \$ _____
	Full week @ \$300	= \$ _____
	Total	\$ _____

Payment details: (Please tick payment method)

Cheques payable to Launceston Historical Society Inc. _____
Payment can be made by post to PO Box 284 Launceston.

Or **direct debit** to Launceston Historical Society Inc at _____
Commonwealth Bank BSB 067 003 A/C No. 2804 8638.
Please ensure "your name" and "dig" are on the payment.

PLEASE email this form to John Dent at john.dent@pda.com.au

Enquiries: John Dent 0408 133 656.

Our History

These stories on Launceston's history and beyond 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 of some of these stories, each with a photograph – more information to come.

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245	14 Aug 2022	29	Nigel Burch	Ring road missing link in Pak-Poy's engineering legacy	Launceston's Ring Road
246	21 Aug 2022	31	Nigel Burch	Frank Kerrison: Tasmanian soldier's date with destiny	Fate and Frank Kerrison
247	28 Aug 2022	33	Nigel Burch	Low Head foghorn installed after long and loud campaign	Low Head foghorn
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250	18 Sep 2022	27	Nigel Burch	Shipworm brings ill-fated Scamander bridge to its knees	The collapse of the Scamander Bridge
251	25 Sep 2022	31	Dianne Cassidy	When this you see, remember me: a convict's love record	William Vale's convict love token
252	2 Oct 2022	43	Nigel Burch	Cornwall coal mine: delivering since 1886 and still operating	Cornwall Coal
253	9 Oct 2022		Julian Burgess		Waddamana
254	16 Oct 2022		Nigel Burch		Primitive Methodist churches

Launceston Historical Society

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

Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 Dec 2022** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.

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