

Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 195

October 2024

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people with an interest in history

Boot up for a Byte of History

On Sunday, 21 July 2024, Catherine Pearce and Wendy Roberts (pictured) presented an entertaining virtual stroll around Launceston's city centre. They focussed on a dozen buildings included in one of two popular and free 'Cya on the Road' apps they developed to raise awareness of Launceston's heritage. The self-guided walk takes about one hour and starts at the Town Hall. It provides accurate, engaging and concise information about 20 of our historic buildings, with photographs from QVMAG and Libraries Tasmania. Ron Camplin from City Park Radio recorded the commentary.

Download the app through this link:

<https://launcestoncentral.com.au/blog/launceston-history-walk>



Bradley Wood, the Mead, Smith, von Stieglitz Memorial Lecturer for 2024.

Henry Rice – East Coast Explorer

On Sunday, 18 August, Bradley Wood presented his findings after many years of meticulous research on Henry Rice, a convict arriving in the Derwent River on the *Calcutta* in 1804. He was commissioned to lead an exploratory expedition from his farm near the Coal River to the East Coast of Van Diemen's Land. Brad pointed out that a mistake was made when a report of the expedition was copied by Lieutenant Governor Sorell's clerk, noting that it began on 13 December 1819, when in fact it was 1820. By then Rice was 60 years old, but he had extensive knowledge of the interior of VDL as he had absconded in 1805 and 1808 and roamed widely. He was pardoned in 1812 and returned to England but was back here in 1815. He received a grant of 80 acres in White Kangaroo Road, near Brown Mountain, at first earning a living as a sailor and a servant before building a house and setting up his farm. He was poor and illiterate but was probably the best person to lead the expedition in the east, as Sorell toured in a westerly direction at the same time. Less than three months after Rice's return in January 1821, Meredith and other settlers went to the east coast of VDL.



Maria Campbell

On Sunday, 15 September 2024, Louise Zarmati (pictured) recounted the story of Maria Campbell, “a woman of colour”, who was tipping on a Sunday at the Red Cow Inn, Clarence Plains in 1831. Maria was born in 1810 to a “native woman” and Archibald Campbell, a Scottish convict on the ship *Calcutta*. The family accompanied Henry Rice on his expedition exploring the East Coast in 1820, but Maria’s mother died on 30 December. Archibald cared for Maria while running two farms and working as a ferryman. In 1822, the convict Jane Jarvis was assigned to Archibald, and they married. Jane’s husband John McWilliams was back in Scotland with their seven children. One daughter, Margaret, committed a crime to join her mother and was assigned to Archibald. In 1827 he wrote a will leaving a third share of his properties to the three women. Each girl was to inherit a farm at Ralph’s Bay. Soon after he died, Jane burnt the will and cast Maria out onto the street. She was staying with William Harris, the publican of the Red Cow Inn, when she was called as a witness in the case against him in May 1831. The lawyers took an interest in her welfare. After Jane died in

1833 more of her children arrived from Scotland to grab her inheritance. By January 1835, Maria came out fighting the claims to her father’s will when a copy was found. She had no income, and after a long illness, died on 7 September 1838 and was buried in an unmarked pauper’s grave somewhere in Hobart.

October Meeting: Lucy Frost

Children at work: Orphan School apprentices in Launceston and the Tamar Valley

Sunday 20 October 2024 – 2pm, Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk



Between 1828 and 1879 some 6,000 children spent time in the institution remembered as the Queens Orphan Schools. The orphanage played an integral part in the penal system, acting (in the words of Lt-Governor Eardley-Wilmot) as ‘an Asylum or workhouse for lodging, clothing, maintaining, and educating the children of Convicts’. Once children turned 12, they became available to approved employers as unpaid labour until the age of 18. Many of these ‘apprentices’ were indentured to masters and mistresses in Launceston and the Tamar Valley. My talk will focus on these children and their experiences.

Lucy Frost is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Tasmania, and chair of the Board of Digital History Tasmania. Since moving to Tasmania in 1997, her research has focussed on the experiences of convict women and their children, with publications including *Abandoned Women: Scottish convicts exiled beyond the seas*, and three volumes edited or co-edited in the “Convict Lives” series of Convict Women’s Press. She served for a decade on the board of the Cascades Female Factory Historic Site Ltd.; was the first president of the Female Convicts Research Centre; and was a member of the four-person team which commissioned the “Footsteps” sculptures on the Hobart waterfront of three convict women and an Orphan School boy. Her most recent book is *Convict Orphans*, published in 2023.

November Meeting: Darren Watton & John Dent

Perth Gaol Archaeological Dig

Sunday 17 November 2024 – 2pm, Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk



The Old Perth Gaol dates from at least 1829 when captured bushrangers were housed there before being moved to Launceston. It was next to the Perth Convict Station on the southern side of the South Esk River, the opposite side to the town. This position caused problems; constables and felons needed to cross the river on the ferry, which was unreliable. The gaol continued in use until a new Watch House was built in the town of Perth in 1842. A plan of the gaol in 1844 shows an old and new gaol. The site was sold in 1858 and was included in the Esk Brewery. The purpose of the dig was to see if the extent of the gaol could be identified, when it started, and when it went out of use.

The community dig, under the auspices of the Launceston Historical Society Archaeology Group, had about 20 participants. Amongst the finds were nails, buttons, pipes, broken glass, ceramic, and surprisingly, some jewellery. This talk will outline what happened on the dig, what was found, and what questions were answered about the site.

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.

John Dent is currently President of The West Tamar Historical Society, the Family History Society Inc (Launceston), and Launceston History Centre, is a member of the Launceston Historical Society and is on the committee of the Friends of The Launceston Mechanics' Institute. John has published numerous articles and given many talks on various aspects of northern Tasmanian history and co-authored the book on York Town. He is a retired land surveyor and has used his surveying skills to uncover many aspects of our earliest history. John was awarded an OAM in 1996 and is a member of Rotary.

LHS Activities 2024

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. Admission is free for members, and visitors are welcome to attend at \$5 each. Bring some cash for a chance to win a prize in the raffle each month. **Several Christmas hampers will be raffled at our November meeting.**

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/>

New Members

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Paul Brunyee, Jennifer Cairns, Franky Del Vecchio, Carrie Hayward, Jan Radford & Garry Bakker, Susan & David Shannon and Dorset Tasmania History Society. Jemma Wilson has paid for her membership, but we do not have any details.

Membership Form

Membership forms are available on our website in both PDF and Word formats. Sunday meetings are free for LHS members, and admission for visitors is \$5. Renewals for 2025 are due on 31 December 2024. We encourage members to pay by direct debit into our Commonwealth Bank of Australia account: BSB 067-003 A/C No. 2804 8638, by cheque in the mail, or by cash or EFTPOS at the next meeting you attend.

Excursion to Latrobe

Thursday, 7 November 2024

The Launceston Historical Society's Spring Excursion for Members

- 9.00am Depart from the car park behind Kings Meadows Bowls Club. (Access via Nunamina Ave or Carr Street)
- 9.45am Arrive ETC, **Elizabeth Town** for quick coffee and snack (at your own expense)
- 10.15am Depart for Latrobe
- 10.45am Arrive **Latrobe** via Hamilton Street, drive to Johnson Memorial & past Frogmore
- 11.00am Arrive **Sherwood Hall**, Bell's Parade (open 10am – 2pm)
- 12.15pm Depart Bell's Parade. **Guided walk up Gilbert Street**
- 1.00pm Lunch (at your own expense) Shadows Cafe, Bakery, BYO picnic
- 2.00pm **Court House Museum** guided visit (open 1.30 – 3.30pm)
- 3.00pm Free time – Shopping Reliquaire, antique shops, op shops, Teddy Sheean walk
- 4.00pm Depart Latrobe
- 5.00pm Arrive Launceston, Kings Meadows Bowls Club car park

- Entry to the Museums is included. Coffee and lunch at own expense.
- Please note this includes a walking tour, so a reasonable level of fitness is required.

Please email, post or hand in at a meeting the details below @ **\$50.00 per person**.

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 **or** post a cheque to the Treasurer, Launceston Historical Society, PO Box 1296, Launceston, TAS 7250,

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<p>Latrobe Excursion, Thursday, 7 November 2024</p> <p>Name.....</p> <p>Mobile.....</p> <p>Email.....</p>	<p>Return to:</p> <p>LHS Inc.</p> <p>PO Box 1296</p> <p>LAUNCESTON</p> <p>TAS 7250</p> <p>\$50.00 per person</p>
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Other Events of Interest

George Town & District Historical Society: At the Grove, George Town, third Monday of the month at 7.30pm: 21 October 2024, AGM + Brian Stace, *The Coromandelians*; 18 November 2024, Carol Thomas, *The Parish Family*; 2 December 2024, Christmas function TBA. Email: info@gtdhs.com.

Book Council of Lutruwita/Tasmania: Launceston Library, Level 2, third Wednesday of the month at 1.15pm. 16 October 2024, Brian Harrison-Lever, *Middlewood*. Members free; non-members \$5. RSVP: bookcouncilt@gmail.com.

Royal Society of Tasmania (Northern Branch): Meeting Room, QV Museum, Inveresk on the fourth Sunday of each month at 1.30pm. 6 October 2024, Nick Robert, *Tasmania's geologically recent glacial records*; 27 October 2024, Ivan James, *How can you belong in Launceston?*; 24 November 2024, Kuluni Millaniyage, *What makes a good timber floor?* Inquiries: Lois Beckwith, loisbeckwith27@gmail.com

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Legacy Function Rooms, 159 Macquarie St, Hobart on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm. 8 October 2024, Brad Williams, *Archaeology of the Picton Road Station*; 12 November 2024, Michael Stoddart, *Antarctic History*; 10 December 2024, Members' Night. Email: info@thra.org.au.

Oral History Tasmania's Seminar: Meeting Room, QV Museum, Inveresk, Saturday 26 October 10.30 – 2.30.

Garry Wakefield, *Queer Life Stories*

Garry is the founder and president of North West Pride Inc, and the producer and host of the podcast *Queer Life Stories*.

Emma Hill, *Verbatim Theatre: Everyone has a story to tell*

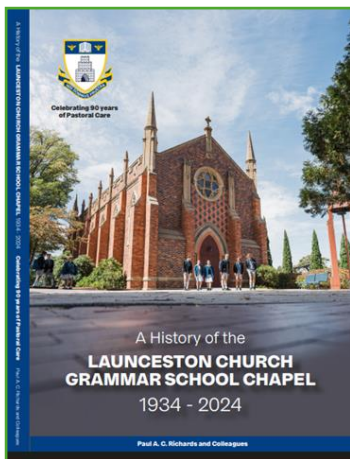
A drama teacher of sixteen years, Emma has run several Verbatim Theatre projects in school curriculum to produce live theatre based on oral histories.

Jennifer Jerome, *Community Archives and Oral History*

Jennifer is an Archivist with the State Library and Archives, Libraries Tasmania, and oversees the 'Community Archives' which includes records/archives created by non-Government entities.

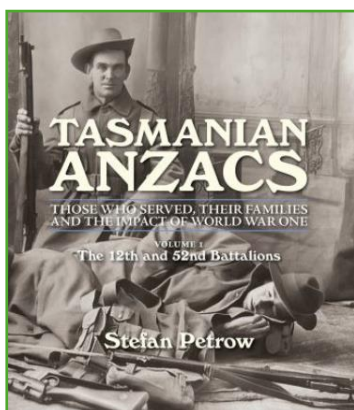
Cost (includes lunch): \$25 members of Oral History Tasmania and students, \$40 all others.

Prior registration is essential; go to www.oralhistorytas.org.au



Launceston Grammar Chapel: To celebrate 90 years since the chapel opened Paul Richards and colleagues have compiled *A History of the Launceston Church Grammar School Chapel 1934 – 2024*. The foundation stone was laid on 30 July 1932. The Memorial Chapel was opened and dedicated in December 1934. On both occasions there was a “solemn reading of names of those who had given their lives” and whose names were inscribed on an honour roll in the Narthex and on it are engraved the names of the 500 old boys who answered the call and in the centre the names of those who made the supreme sacrifice during World War One.

The book was launched in the chapel on 30 July 2024 and is available for purchase at the school for \$50 each. All monies raised will go towards restoration, especially a leaking roof.



Tasmanian Anzacs: Stefan Petrow's book *Tasmanian Anzacs: Those Who Served, Their Families and the Impact of World War One. Volume 1: The 12th and 52nd Battalions* commemorates the varied experiences of some 2000 men who enlisted in World War One from all over Tasmania, including many from Launceston and surrounding settlements. It also describes the impact on their families at home. Extensive use is made of private letters, diaries and thousands of service records so you can read what the men and their families were feeling in their own words. It is a richly detailed history of war's human impact.

The book was launched by Marion Sargent, President of the Launceston Historical Society, at Petrarch's Bookshop and can be purchased for \$55.

Our History

These stories on Launceston’s history and beyond have been contributed by our members. Read the stories on the last Sunday of the month in *The Sunday Examiner* or on the Launceston Historical Society’s [Facebook](#) page.

No	Date	Page	Author	<i>The Sunday Examiner</i> Title	Topic
336	28 July 2024	23	Marion Sargent	Tassie rowing eight’s glorious homecoming	Tasmanian rowing eight homecoming in 1906
337	25 Aug 2024	20	Julian Burgess	Industrial heritage fades as fabric factory torn down	The importance of the James Nelson façade
338	29 Sep 2024	23	Julian Burgess	Before the Spirit ships, Tasmania had the Princess	It’s 65 years since “the Pot” sailed in!
339	27 Oct 2024		Geoffrey Harris		Vic Belcher, the Lion king before Fagan



Mercury, Wednesday 24 February 1954, page 2

The Royal Progress at Latrobe and Elizabeth Town

The convoy of black cars sped on to Latrobe, where a delightful scene was completed by the Queen's arrival. It was one of the highlights of the day — a restful half hour spent by the Queen in a riverside glade. This was at Bells Parade, Latrobe, where the Queen and the Duke sat in canvas backed chairs on the banks of the slow running Mersey River and had afternoon tea, prepared by members of the Country Women's Association. The Queen and the Duke sat at a wrought iron table made for the occasion by a Devonport ex-serviceman, Mr. W. Lester, whose hobby is ironwork.

Elizabeth Town became Elizabeth's Town when the Queen signalled her driver to stop as her car swept over a hill to pass under an arch of welcome. A tightly-packed crowd of more than 150 persons gathered in front of the town's three buildings — an hotel, post office, and store — to cheer the Queen and wave an imposing array of flags.

We don't expect a royal welcome when we travel to Elizabeth Town and Latrobe during our excursion on 7 November but look out for this plaque at Bells Parade erected to commemorate the royal visit in 1954.

Launceston Historical Society

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Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 Dec 2024** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.

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