

Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 102

June 2007

ISSN 1036-7950

PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

"Bringing together people with an interest in history"

From the Editor's Desk

The Mole Creek Track by Peter Brown

After the informative talk on 20 May by metallurgist, historian and bushwalker Peter Brown, the Launceston Historical Society members present at the meeting unanimously endorsed Peter's nomination of the Mole Creek Track to be included on the Heritage Register. The photograph, taken by Stephen Spurling III, shows Richard Broomhall's gang working on the Track. It was published in *The Launceston Examiner* Supplement on 9 July 1898, page 3. The Mole Creek Track, surveyed by Edward George Innes, supported by *The Examiner* editor Frederick Pritchard, and constructed by Broomhall and his men, was used by prospectors, snarers, farmers and more recently bushwalkers, but the dream of a railway following the track never eventuated.

Peter is pictured on the right with two LHS members, Alma McKay and Margarite Deacon.



2007 Program of Talks

17 June – Lindsay Millar: Aviation in Northern Tasmania 1914-1946 (See page 2 for details)

15 July – Chris Binks: Tasmanians and the land (See page 2 for details)

19 August – Ann Townsend: Tasmanian railways

16 September – Thomas Gunn: Burials at sea

21 October – Eric Ratcliff: Back street architecture in Launceston

18 November – Michael Roe: The wreck of the convict transport ship *George III*

LAUNCESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President	Marita Bardenhagen	6334 4490
Vice-President	Jenny Gill	6331 1150
Minute Secretary	Ross Smith	
Correspondence Secretary	Jai Paterson	0417 915 462
Treasurer	Carol Fuller	6331 1558

All correspondence should be sent to: PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Society Website: www.elaunceston.com/launcestonhistory (A copy of this newsletter can be found on this site)

June Talk

Sunday 17 June – 2.30 pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk.

Lindsay Millar: Aviation in Northern Tasmania 1914-1946

Lindsay Millar, an orchardist from Hillwood, joined the Tasmanian Aero Club in 1956. He has a private pilot's licence to fly twin engine and jet warbird endorsements. He is a Past President, Life Member and Honorary Historian of the Club. In 1960 Lindsay joined the Tasmanian Section of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. He has been on the Tasmanian Council since 1965 and is a Life Member and current President. He is also on the Australian Board of the RFDS.

Lindsay's illustrated presentation will cover the development of aviation in Tasmania from the first flight in 1914 through to 1946. It will include the formation of the Tasmanian Aero Club in 1927; visits by early aviators, including Bert Hinkler in May 1928; the construction of the state's first aerodrome at Western Junction; the first flight from there in November 1930; and the opening of the aerodrome in March 1931.

The personalities and aircraft involved in the development of the Aero Club and commercial aviation will be discussed, leading up to the 1939-45 period when Western Junction was taken over by the RAAF to form the No 7 Elementary Flying Training School. After the War, Aero Club activities and civil aviation were resumed.

July Talk

Sunday 15 July – 2.30 pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk

Chris Binks: Tasmanians and the Land

Chris Binks has lived in Tasmania since late 1940s and has seen the changes affecting the land during this period. He taught English at high schools and a secondary college, specialising in Literature. He has many interests based upon the outdoors, and on wandering the out-of-the-way places in Tasmania. He has combined these passions in the writing of three major books about this state. These are *Explorers of Western Tasmania* (1980), *Pioneers of Tasmania's West Coast* (1988) and *Hills of the West Wind: Reflections on the Tasmanian Landscape* (2006).

His talk will consist of an overview of the three books: each deals with the interaction of people with the land. Land and landscape: what values do we place upon them? What is important/unique about Tasmania? Speculations upon the Aborigines' relationship with the land. The colonists: development and mythology. The two cultures: Aboriginal and European.

WAY BACK WHEN ... People Places and Events

The organising committee is seeking members to contribute stories about early pioneers or events in their family or district of Northern Tasmania. All articles should be between 500 and 600 words in length.

For further information and details on submitting articles, please contact Anne Bartlett, chairman of co-ordinating committee, (phone 6344 5258) or John Dent (6331 8317).

- Gill Morris: A royal welcome fit for a Prince – *The Examiner*, 12 May 2007, p. 33.
- Marita Bardenhagen: Rich history of German pioneers – *The Examiner*, 19 May 2007, p. 35.
- Lucille Gee: Equine pursuits keep Gee family busy – *The Examiner*, 26 May 2007, p. 40.
- Gill Morris: The Munford's journey up the Tamar River – *The Examiner*, 2 June 2007, p. 37.

Recent Publications by Members

Stefan Petrow, editor of *Lawless Harvests, or God save the Judges: Van Diemen's Land 1803-1855, a legal history*, by the late Alex C. Castles. The book provides an intriguing glimpse in to the lives of the early colonists – the convicts, farmers, soldiers, townspeople – and the seven Lieutenant-Governors whose efforts forged the basis for modern Tasmanian law.

Stefan Petrow, The lower courts in Tasmania in the 19th Century, in *Tasmanian Ancestry*, Vol 28, No 1, June 2007, page 5.

The papers from the George Town and District Historical Society's Conference "**Crime on the High Seas**" include articles by LHS members **Catherine Pearce** and **Thomas Gunn**. These will be available to buy for \$17.00 at the next LHS talk or from the Watch House, Macquarie Street, George Town.

State Library of Tasmania Research Fellowships

Congratulations to the Launceston Historical Society members who have been awarded Fellowships.

Rosalie Kelly (formerly Guthrie) of Launceston will investigate books in the Launceston Library, which belonged to notable or interesting people and create an exhibition of them.

Jill Cassidy of Deviot will survey the papers of the early nineteenth-century Tasmanian solicitor John Dobson and write a paper for presentation and publication.

Members' Column

Profile of the LHS Vice President Jenny Gill: Jenny (pictured right) was born and raised in Launceston. She went to a good school but did not gain an interest in local history until helping to clear the tower rooms at St John's Church.

She has been a member of the LHS since its inception in 1988, and for some years has served on the committee. Her success as a writer is inherited from her grandfather, J S Gill (late of *The Examiner* staff). In recent years several of Jenny's articles have appeared in *The Examiner*.

Her greatest passion is her research into the 19th Century "Dame School" of Launceston; the hundreds of teachers who scraped a living teaching the rudiments of education to our ancestors. She also has an index of many children who attended these schools.

In September Jenny will be going to a history conference in Adelaide to present a paper on 'Women in Education – 19th Century style'.

If your ancestors were educated in Launceston, please have a ready answer if you are asked, "Where did your people go to school?"



Profile of the LHS correspondence secretary Jai Paterson

Jai has been in Tasmania for ten years now and can no longer imagine living anywhere but Launceston.

She was born in New Zealand and did her first degree there (in Ancient History!) before gaining her Masters in Australian History at the University of Sydney and completing their Post-graduate Diploma in Museum Studies. Jai began her present career at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences during its transformation into the Powerhouse Museum in the early 1980s. Before leaving Sydney Jai was head of the Collections Management Unit at the Historic Houses Trust of NSW – with an office to-die-for in the grounds of Government House.

Since arriving in Tasmania, Jai has enjoyed part-time project work at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery. Her projects include researching the *Launceston: City of Science* and *Pacific Encounters* exhibitions and various collections, such as Japanese arms and armour, surveying instruments and the old taxidermy specimens in Zoology. Her freelance work has included projects for J Boag and Son, the Low Head Historic Precinct museum, the Burnie Pioneer Village Museum and most recently on Flinders Island and at Oatlands.

In 2006 Jai completed *Knights of the Road*, the history of the Commercial Travellers' Association of Tasmania which was published by the CTA. Jai is currently working on a small book about Launceston's nineteenth century brewers to be published by the Friends of the Launceston Library later this year – and will next compile information on St Giles for their 70th anniversary in December.

As a museum professional Jai is especially interested in exploring ways to engage the non-enthusiast in social history – in bringing history alive and reinforcing its relevance to our sense of community. How this will translate across to the committee of the Launceston Historical Society is anyone's guess – but I will do my best!

Fuller Papers

Information on the following people and topics from George Fuller's Reminiscences of Launceston in the 1830s is being sought from members. Please contact Anne Bartlett if you have any references to them.

Names

Mrs Abrahams p.2 Jew
Mr Ackerman pp.103, 104
Mr Adams p.53
John Aiken p.45 plasterer
Mr Anderson p.6 grocer
Mr Anderson p.27
Rev J Anderson p.112
John Bank p.78
Andrew Anderson p.102
Mr Barclay p.47 watchmaker
Mr Barnes p.33
Mr Barnes p.43 brewer
William Barnes pp.102, 103
Abraham Barrett p.51
J Barrett p.51
Mr Bassingthwaite p.42 corn chandler

Hotels and Inns

Albion hotel p.32
Anchor and Hope pp.9, 43
Babes in the Wood p.57
Bird in the Hand p.56
Black Boy p.18
Black Horse pp.14, 56
Black Swan pp.13, 15, 24, 78
Brisbane p.51, 70
Britannia Hotel p.11
Bull's Head p.2
Bull's Head p.29, 78, 93

Other topics

Albion House p.32
Commercial Bank p.2
Baths p.1

Brief information has already been found on many people including the following: Alfred Harrap, Alfred Horne, Molesworth Jeffrey, James Joyce, Richard Lambeth, and George Leach. The references used include the Tasmanian Pioneers Index, newspapers such as the *Launceston Advertiser*, *Cornwall Chronicle* and *Launceston Examiner*, Jury lists, shipping indexes, the *Hobart Town Gazette*, convict records and various books.

Launceston: 50 years on from 1928!

Have you ever wondered what Launceston will be like in 50 years' time? Back in 1928 an unknown person writing under the initials of R.S.R. published an article in the *Weekly Courier Christmas Annual* entitled "A Phantasy of the Future: or a Ramble through Launceston in 1978". Fortunately, many of his fantasies did not eventuate, even after eighty years! He imagined that the preferred mode of transport would be gyroscopic planes and that mechanical policemen would stand on street corners directing the traffic. Brisbane Street would be crowded, as Launceston's population had reached 500,000! The 50,000 League was still in existence, but had changed its name to the Five Million Club. The main street would be lined with 15-storey buildings, financed by the money made after Mr Ockerby introduced 3 o'clock closing. The writer would not dare stay for a drink past closing time, as the televisions in the bar would alert the police as he approached the counter.

Hobart and Launceston have spread so much that there is barely 50 miles separating the cities. Launceston is now the Capital, and the Railway, Mining and Agricultural Departments have moved up here. The Premier lives in a houseboat on Hobart Harbour, but it takes him only 19 minutes to travel to Launceston each day in his Sopwith Pup. For those who have not been to Hobart, step into the televisor box to see a panoramic view of the city. Or take a trip around the island in one of those new airships, for only 1s 6d, plus tax.

Golf is played from the new gyroscopic planes, and probably all the politicians are playing today instead of sitting in Parliament. R.S.R. says that there was talk of evolving Parliamentary sittings out of mechanical men during the winter, when M.H.A.s have little time for politics. Sir John Ramsay, the first president of the Rotary Club, used to lunch at the Brisbane Hotel once a month, but now they meet in the big airship moored to a big mast over the city. Electric dogs now perform the sport of coursing, and when it's raining, they have electric spectators too.

A 17,000 ton liner is berthed at Abra's Wharf (once known as King's Wharf). It carries predominately freight now, as most people travel by aeroplane. Mr McPhee, who has been premier for 50 years, has just opened a tunnel for motorists across Bass Strait. It is for those old Diehards who still ride about in those antiquated contrivances.

The floods in the Gorge are controlled by means of huge propellers worked by dynamos and carefully hidden, to have the Cataract Gorge in perpetual flood. It is illuminated every night with a multi-coloured effect. Back in town, the Capitol picture theatre, located in an eleven-storey building, has portable receiving sets so people can listen-in in peace. There is no longer an orchestra.

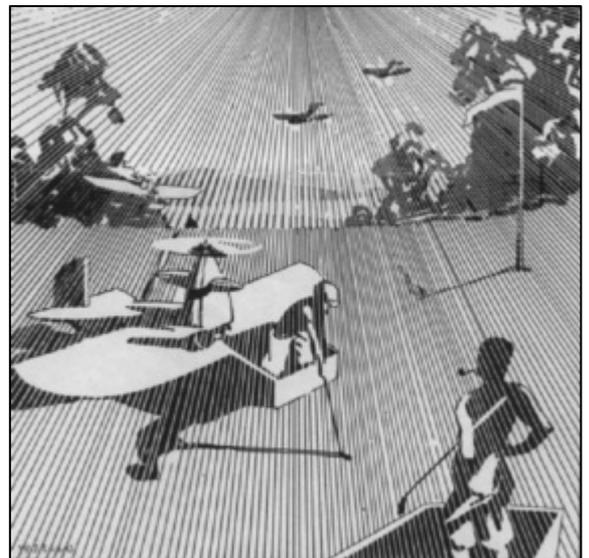
In 2007 some of these prophecies seem amusing, others are still being talked about, but thankfully with our enlightened sense of the value of historical buildings and landscapes, Launceston is not engulfed by 15-storey buildings.

Thanks to Nic Haygarth for finding this gem while perusing old newspapers in the Launceston Library. The editor, Marion Sargent, wrote the summary of the article from the *Weekly Courier*.

Golf played from the new Gyroscopic 'planes has become more or less universally popular.

Drawing by W J Evans

*Weekly Courier Christmas Annual
1 November 1928, page 5.*



Other Items and Events of Interest

The National Book Council of Tasmania speaker for June is Bernice Jurgeit, author of *Mount Nicholas: A Story of Coal from the Killymoon Seam, 1842-1958*. Wednesday 20 June 2007, 1.15pm, Phil Leonard Room, Launceston Library, Civic Square.

University of Tasmania seminar: *The Sami involvement at international level* (The Sami are the indigenous people of Norway), Prof. Henry Minde, Tromso University, Norway, and Prof. Jonathan Lamb, Vanderbilt University, USA. Room 142/43, Arts Building, Newnham Campus, UTAS, 5.00 pm, 14 June 2007. Enquiries: tdunning@utas.edu.au

Northern branch of the Royal Society *What history should we teach in Australian schools?* Keynote speaker Prof. John Hirst, La Trobe Uni and local panel of Rod Ashman, Anne Green and Shayne Breen. QVMAG Inveresk, 2.00 pm, 1 July 2007. Bookings essential, 6323 3777. Enquiries 6344 2878.

Tamar Tidings, written by Stella Kent, and directed by Peter Hammond and Robert Lewis, is a theatre production on a barge that docks at selected pontoons stretching along the Tamar River, from Launceston to George Town. On the floating stage is an amalgam of contributions from Tamar-based theatre/music/dance troupes that tells the story of the Tamar River in a whole-family form of entertainment. A 'central' scripted dramatic presentation relates the ancient and modern history of the river. You will meet a Bushranger who can't stand violence, apples that dance, and find out about the Dalhousie Floating Baths and much more. 7.30 pm 29 October – 14 November 2007.

Local History Conference: *Defending the Colony: the Military in Tasmania, 1803 to the present*. The Coal River Valley Historical Society will be holding this year's biennial conference of Tasmanian historical societies at Richmond. 2-4 November 2007. Enquiries: el_green@bigpond.com.

Religion, Church & Missions: A Fellowship at the State Library of New South Wales, to undertake research and the compilation of an annotated bibliography of the Library's religion, church and missions holdings. Closing date: 31 July 2007. Visit www.sl.nsw.gov.au/awards for further details. Enquiries: Margaret Bjork (02) 9273 1467 or mbjork@sl.nsw.gov.au.

Festivals Australia Program and the **Regional Residencies Program** provide assistance for an artist in residence to assist communities to explore a local theme or tell a local story at a festival or one-off community celebration. Funding is available for an artist to undertake a residency to work with local communities to express their stories through visual arts, literature, dance, music, drama and other mediums. The closing date is **16 July 2007**, for projects commencing after 1 January 2008. Enquiries: Commonwealth Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA), www.dcita.gov.au/arts_culture/arts/festivals_australia or by telephoning 1800 819 461.

Westbury History Faire, will be held on Saturday 15 September 2007.

Bicentenary of the arrival of the Norfolk Islanders in Van Diemen's Land, 1807-2007: Hobart Town (1804) First Settlers Association conference at Wrest Point, Hobart, on Sunday 2 December 2007.

THRA will be holding a one-day conference on Sunday 16 March 2008. Enquiries:

Alison.Alexander@utas.edu.au .

Descendents Day Get Together, City Hall, Hobart, 29 March 2008. With displays and stalls. Enquiries: Irene Schaffer, ph 6272 2124, or email schaffer@optusnet.com.au .

Deadlines

Members wishing to place items on the Agenda for the 10 July LHS Committee Meeting are requested to have these to the President by **27 June 2007**. Items for the next Newsletter should be sent to the President by **1 August 2007** at mbardenh@bigpond.net.au or PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.