



# Launceston Historical Society Inc.

## Newsletter No 137

October 2012

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

*"Bringing together people with an interest in history"*

### Montagu and Franklin

On 19 August 2012 Craig Joel presented an interesting talk on the conflict between Colonial Secretary John Montagu and Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Franklin. A forward-thinking governor, Franklin looked beyond transportation to an educated and cultured society. Arguably he was our most popular governor, with streets, a town, a river and a waterfall named after him; and with a statue erected in his honour. On the other hand Montagu was a talented civil servant but frustrated in his vision for VDL. His desire was to maintain the convict system; he had managed to secure a good cook for himself! More information can be found in Craig's book *A tale of ambition and unrealised hope*.



Guest speaker Craig Joel



Eleanor Robin with her granddaughter Helena.

### John Watson (1801-1887)

On 16 September 2012 Eleanor Robin provided an entertaining talk on the shipbuilder, engineer and entrepreneur John Watson. After arriving in Hobart Town in 1832, he spent 55 years working in Tasmania. He was involved in whaling; building and repairing ships; establishing dockyards, wharves and piers; erecting cottages; the timber industry; and supervising the construction of Cape Wickham Lighthouse on King Island. Watson demonstrated that Blue Gum was "equal to oak" for shipbuilding, and the expression "Tasmanian Oak" derives from this comparison. Eleanor plans to publish her findings in the future.

## LAUNCESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President	Marion Sargent	6331 4890
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Correspondence Secretary	Robyn Jones	6331 2213
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## October Talk

### Professor John Mulvaney, *Encounters in Place*

**Sunday 21 October 2012 – 2.30pm** at the Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk.

#### *Synopsis*

Between 1773 and 1793 some noteworthy eighteenth-century naval captains anchored their ships in Adventure Bay and Recherche Bay. Tobias Furneaux, James Cook and William Bligh sailed into Adventure Bay, while Bruny d'Entrecasteaux twice visited Recherche Bay. This illustrated talk discusses these visits; the interactions between the sailors and the Tasmanian people; and the heritage importance of the resulting records.

#### *CV*

Emeritus Professor John Mulvaney, AO, CMG, studied History at Melbourne University and Archaeology at Cambridge (1946–53). Subsequently he was appointed Professor of Prehistory at the Australian National University. Although his archaeological fieldwork was on the Australian mainland, he has been active in promoting research in Tasmania since 1962. He gave evidence to the High Court of Australia in the Franklin Dam Case and successfully nominated Recherche Bay to be registered as a National Heritage property. His publications most relevant to this talk are *Encounters in Place* (1989) and *The Axe had Never Sounded': Place, People and Heritage of Recherche Bay* (2007)

## November Talk

### Paul Johnston

#### ***A Tale of Two Cities: 10 Murray Street Hobart, 1967 and Henty House Launceston, 1982***

**Sunday 18 November 2012 – 2.30pm** at the Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk.

The two concrete structures, much maligned by the label of brutalism, represent the aspirations of government in the period of hydro-industrialisation in Tasmania and the expansion of the public service. However, they also bookend an important period in the exploration of Tasmanian Architecture and an appreciation of the city.

Architect and Heritage consultant Paul Johnston provides a visual presentation on the architecture of the State Offices in Hobart and Launceston following his representation as expert heritage witness in the Tribunal hearings concerning each building.

## Advance Notice of Activities

Launceston Historical Society meetings are held at the Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk, at 2.30pm, unless otherwise notified.

Sunday 17 February 2013: AGM + guest speaker to be advised

Friday 15 March 2013: *The Examiner*-John West Memorial Lecture

### Members' Column

**New Members:** The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Heather Fitz, Fred and Jeanette Lehmann, and Barry Squires.

**Archaeology Group:** The next meeting will be in the Phil Leonard Room at the Launceston LINC on Tuesday **23 October 2012** at 1.00pm. Enquiries to John Dent, email: [john.dent@pda.com.au](mailto:john.dent@pda.com.au).

**Westbury Excursion:** There are still a few bus seats available for the day trip to the historic village of Westbury and Culzean Gardens, on **Sunday 28 October 2012**. Cost is \$25.00 per person. Please complete the form on page 6 if you would like to attend. Meet the bus at the RSL Club car park in Eardley Street before 9.30am. The estimated time of return is about 4.30pm.

**Papers & Proceedings:** The 2011 P&P have been published. Extra copies are for sale at \$12.00 each. The last five John West Memorial Lectures, from 2008-2012, are available online through our website: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/activities/previous-john-west-memorial-lectures/>

### Membership Renewals

Annual subscriptions for the Launceston Historical Society Inc. are due on 31 December 2012. Please complete the enclosed form and return to the treasurer, Leonie Prevost, at the next meeting or post to:  
Treasurer, Launceston Historical Society  
PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

**Membership form:** The membership form for 2013 is enclosed with printed newsletters and also is available on our website: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/membership-2/membership-form>. Now that the Annual General Meeting is to be held in February, renewals are due on 31 December 2012, one month earlier than previously.

### Dr Pugh: A Poisoner?

By John Paull and Gillian Morris, in *Anaesthesia and Intensive Care*, Vol. 40, Supplement 1, July 2012

On 16 February 1845 the Reverend W.H. Browne, rector of St John's Church in Launceston, Van Diemen's Land, wrote in his journal, "My dear Wife died very suddenly almost immediately after and in consequence of taking a preparation of Hyd. Cyan. Acid prepared & supplied by Dr Pugh". This journal entry raises a number of questions. Was Dr Pugh treating a condition which he thought merited that treatment or was it a ghastly mistake? Was Caroline Browne suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis? Was hydrocyanic acid an accepted treatment at that time? Did Mrs Browne take the wrong dose? Was an incorrect concentration of the drug prepared by Dr Pugh? Did he use the wrong pharmacopoeia in preparing the hydrocyanic acid? Why was there no inquest? Only some of these questions can be answered.



Oak tree, 8 High Street,  
Launceston. Photo: M Sargent

## Historic Oak Tree

Pictured at the left is the oak tree on the Adult Education property at 8 High Street, Launceston (formerly the Launceston Church Grammar Preparatory School). Thank you to Gus Green for discovering *The Examiner* article of 27 May 1930 which proves that this significant tree is now 154 years old: 'A Handsome Oak. Standing in the garden of "Leura", in High-street, the residence of Mrs. E. M. King, and close to the footpath, is a grand old oak, whose splendid proportions are often admired by passers-by. This oak is today 82 years old. It was planted on May 27, 1848, by the late Keith Jackson King to commemorate the birth of his son, the late Edmund Mozier King, and therefore must be one of the oldest oaks in Northern Tasmania. It is understood that it was the intention of the late Mr. E. M. King to present this handsome tree, with the ground it covers, to the city with a view of making it a resting place on the way up the hill, and it is hoped that in due course it will be possible to do this.'

## JJ Woods and New Zealand's National Anthem

As a follow-up to Jai Paterson's February talk on high-achieving Tasmanians in New Zealand, it is worth revisiting the story of John Joseph Woods. JJ Woods was a teacher at the Catholic school in Lawrence, Otago, site of the Gabriel's Gully gold rush in 1861. In 1876 Woods achieved lasting fame when he won a competition to compose music to accompany the words of *God Defend New Zealand*. His *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* entry asserts that he was born in Hobart in 1849 and that his father was a soldier, though the Tuapeka Museum in Lawrence was unable to verify his claims. That was until Maureen Martin Ferris, curator of the East Coast Heritage Museum in Swansea and vice-president of the Glamorgan Spring Bay Historical Society, decided to delve into her prodigious collection of family history databases. Maureen has put together a dossier on Woods which she has deposited with the Launceston Library (and a copy has been sent to the Tuapeka Museum).



Mr. J. J. Woods.

It turns out that Woods had been perfectly truthful about his Tasmanian past. His father, Andrew Woods, was an Irish soldier with the 96<sup>th</sup> Regiment, discharged with a pension in 1847 and by 1851 licensee of the Harvest Home Hotel on the New Town Road where he died in 1877. JJ Woods was born in the Tasman district on 22 October 1848. When he left

Tasmania in 1873 he had a fine local reputation for his playing, singing and conducting at popular concerts around Hobart. He could play twelve different musical instruments (*Mercury*, 28 October 1871, p. 2) and he transferred these skills to Lawrence where he took part in virtually all the district's musical performances. JJ Woods became their County Clerk and remained in New Zealand until his death in 1934. *God Defend New Zealand* was adopted as the National Anthem; and Woods' music is still played today at all New Zealand's official and sporting functions.

Source: Google Images

## James Matthews

by Barbara Valentine (In *George Fuller's Papers* p.10, p.41)

James Matthews was a not unusual name and there are recorded eight convicts with that name. However Fuller's James Matthews was possibly the 25 year old labourer from London who arrived on the *Layton* on 10 December 1839, sentenced to seven years for larceny, who received his free certificate in 1846. The dates tally with James Matthews' age when he married and died and his status with census records. In the 1848 census James Matthews, recorded as 'other free', was living alone in Paterson

Street. By the 1851 census he was living in Wellington Street, again listed as 'other free', with a male domestic servant, also 'other free', and a married female living in the brick house. (His surname was spelt Mathews in this census.)

James Matthews, aged 35, of Wellington Street, married Eliza Inall, 19, on 7 November 1850. Sarah was born to James, pawnbroker, and Eliza (née Inall) Matthews on 6 May 1852.

He voted for Richard Dry at the 1851 Legislative Council election. In the 1856 electoral roll he held the freehold of a house in Wellington Street and occupied a house and shop in the same street.

A pawnbroker and auctioneer in Launceston for over 30 years, he was active in Launceston politics in the mid 1850s. He was MHA for Launceston from September 1857 to May 1861, having contested Launceston in September 1856 and Norfolk Plains in June 1861.

James Matthews, pawnbroker, died at his residence, Wellington Street, on 24 January 1879, aged 64 years. Eliza Matthews, 'relict of the late James' died on 1 December 1898, at her residence, 30 Wellington Street, in her 68<sup>th</sup> year.

References:

Con 31/1/32; 18/1/14; 1848, 1851 census; Tasmanian Pioneers Index; RGD 33/1852/3564; *Launceston Examiner* 8 November 1851; *Index to Launceston Examiner Electoral Roll* (Launceston, 2002); Scott and Barbara Bennett, *Biographical register of the Tasmanian parliament 1851-1960* (Canberra, 1980); *Cornwall Chronicle* 25 January 1879; RGD 35/1879/490; *Launceston Examiner* 2 December 1898.

## Other Items and Events of Interest

**LGH Historical Committee Seminar:** "Historical figures and their impact on medicine in Launceston" is to be held at the Lecture Theatre, Level 2, Launceston General Hospital, Charles Street, Launceston on Sunday 14 October 2012 at 2.00pm. RSVP to Paul Richards 6344 4241 or [pacrichards1@bigpond.com](mailto:pacrichards1@bigpond.com).

**Tasmanian Historical Research Association:** Meetings are to be held at the Royal Society Room in the Custom House, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, starting at 8.00pm. 13 November 2012, Andrew Kemp, *A Tasmanian Life*; 11 December 2012, Heather Felton, *Self Discipline, Self Reliance and Self Improvement in the 1860s: James Backhouse Walker and Friends in Hobart Town*.

**George Town & District Historical Society:** The next two meetings for 2012 will be held at *The Grove*: 15 October, John Tyson, *Post Cards of the Tamar Collection* + AGM; 18 November, 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference "Sons & Daughters: A History of Children of the North", to be held at the York Cove Centre, Sorell Street, George Town, 9.00am – 4.00pm. Cost of 35.00 includes lunch, morning and afternoon tea. Contact: Chlo Martin, PO Box 68 George Town TAS 7253; phone 6382 1336; email [chlo@thegrovetas.com](mailto:chlo@thegrovetas.com).

**National Book Council:** Guest speaker for the October meeting is Michael Tatlow, author of *Bloodhouse*, the story of the life of Darcy Dugan. Wednesday, 17 October 2012, 1.15pm, Phil Leonard Room, Launceston LINC, Civic Square.

**Norfolk Plains History Ride:** The next Tamar Bicycle Users' Group history ride will be on Sunday 25 November 2012. Marion Sargent will lead a bicycle tour from the Longford Village Green at 9.15am for a 9.30am start. Enquiries: phone 6331 4890 or email [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com).

**LGH Historical Committee Seminar 2013:** The Launceston General Hospital Historical Committee is celebrating the LGH Sesquicentenary (15-17 May 2013) with a medical history and research seminar. More information will be available in due course. Please contact Paul Richards: *Myola*, 397 Wellington Street, South Launceston TAS 7249; phone 6349 7111; email [pacrichards1@bigpond.com](mailto:pacrichards1@bigpond.com); <http://www.myolahouseofpublishing.webs.com>.

## Deadlines

Members wishing to place items on the Agenda for the 21 October 2012 LHS Committee Meeting are requested to have these to the President by **15 August 2012**. Items for the next Newsletter should be sent to the Editor by **1 Feb 2013** at [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com) or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.

# Westbury Excursion

Sunday 28 October 2012

- 9.30am Veterans and Community Bus departs from RSL car park, corner of Wellington and Eardley streets.
- 10.00am Arrive at the Westbury Hall car park, Lyall Street, Westbury.  
★ Guided walk by Virginia Greenhill around Westbury. May include St Andrew's Anglican Church, Holy Trinity Catholic Church and Methodist Church.  
★ Follow the silhouette trail.
- 12.00noon Lunch  
History ladies to provide soup & sandwiches at RSL Club
- 1.00pm Re-board bus to see other places of interest, including Irish soldier settlers' area at Queenstown.
- 2.00pm To History Room for afternoon tea and to look around displays.
- 3.00pm To Culzean Gardens. Anglo-Indian house built c1841, surrounded by a tranquil woodland garden containing mature exotic trees and hundreds of different conifers and a changing display of flowers.  
There is a three-acre lake with thousands of water irises and water lilies in season.
- 4.00 Board bus and return to Launceston
- 4.30 Proposed arrival back at RSL car park

Please fill out and return the slip below with \$25.00 per person to: The Treasurer, Launceston Historical Society, PO Box 1296, Launceston, TAS 7250, or hand in at a Sunday meeting. Enquiries to Leonie Prevost: [reljprevost@bigpond.com](mailto:reljprevost@bigpond.com) or Marion Sargent: [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com), phone 6331 4890.

<http://westburyhistorical.org.au/homepage.html>;

<http://www.gardenstasmania.com.au/portfolio/culzean-gardens-westbury/>

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<b>Westbury Excursion, Sunday 28 October 2012</b>	Return to:
Name.....	LHS Inc.
Address.....	PO Box 1296
Phone.....Mobile.....	LAUNCESTON TAS 7250
Email.....	\$25.00 per person