



Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 147

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people since 1988 with an interest in history

The Black War

On 19 October 2014 Dr Nicholas Clements presented a paper on the colonists' experience of the Black War that raged in Van Diemen's Land between 1825 and 1831. While his book, *The Black War: Fear, Sex and Resistance in Tasmania*, gives a balanced view from both sides of this tragic period in our history, Nick's talk focussed on the fear that was felt by the white settlers as they were harassed and attacked by the Aboriginal inhabitants who wanted to be free of the invaders. Convict servants bore the brunt of the conflict as they were tending to livestock for their masters in isolated areas of the colony.



Guest speaker, Dr Nicholas Clements. Photo: M Sargent



Guest speaker Steve Radford with his daughter Rebecca, and Nic Haygarth and Ross Smith. Photo: M Sargent

History of telecommunications

Our last meeting for 2014 was held at the QVMAG on 16 November. Guest speaker Steve Radford gave an overview of the development of telecommunications. We have come a long way from flag semaphores signalling ships entering the Tamar River. A telegraph cable from Cape Otway via King Island to Low Head in 1859 was abandoned in 1861. A more advanced cable laid in 1869 was more successful. By 1883 there were 35 telephone subscribers in Launceston and 10 in Hobart. In 1909 twin cables were installed. After the talk, a delicious Christmas afternoon tea and champagne was enjoyed by all.



Mini book fair and book launch

Our Christmas meeting on 16 November 2014 included a Mini Book Fair with Historical Society members selling their books to an enthusiastic crowd. The book *Around the Block: Launceston, Tasmania - 1966 to 1978* was launched on that day too! Martin George, Sciences and History Manager at QVMAG, did the honours. Gus Green hosted a conversation between Mr George, Research Officer Ross Smith and Ann Power, editor of the book. Ann is the daughter of photographer L. George Webb who took the 94 photographs of buildings in Launceston selected for the book.



***Around the Block* launch with Gus Green, Martin George, Ross Smith and Ann Power. Photo: M Sargent**

Springfield excursion

On Sunday 26 October 2014 our generous host Robert Smith conducted the spring excursion. Stops were made at Myrtle Park, the Sideling and St Paul's Anglican Church at Springfield. We toured the church and cemetery to see the work that Friends of St Paul's are undertaking to save this gem for the future. The group provided us with a scrumptious lunch at the Springfield Hall.



Tour leader Robert Smith with happy travellers on the bus to Springfield. Photo: M Sargent

On the way home we detoured through Targa to visit the All Souls Anglican Church and graveyard at Patersonia. Thank you to Terese Binns for driving the Veterans and Community Bus. Despite the intermittent showers, a wonderful day was had by all.

Annual General Meeting + guest speaker

Sunday 15 February 2015 – 2.00pm at the meeting room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk

The 2015 AGM will be held at 2.00pm. See the separate notice of meeting which includes a nomination form for the committee. Nominations are sought to fill all eleven positions on the Executive: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and seven Committee Members. Nominations should reach the Executive on or before **Friday, 6 February 2015**. Now is the time to join the Committee to help your Society run its active and vibrant program of talks and excursions to promote history.

The [AGM notification](#) is available on our website or is enclosed with the printed Newsletter.

A PowerPoint show of the past year's activities will run throughout the short AGM.

Dr Tom Dunning

The Virtues of Local History: The Case for a New History of Launceston

Local history is the basis for all historical studies, as the unique characteristics of one small place helps us to understand all places. Launceston is an excellent example of this axiom. With this in mind, Dr Tom Dunning, in collaboration with Paul Richards and Barbara Valentine, aim to facilitate and edit the first new history of Launceston published since 1969. This publication, *The Fabric of Launceston*, will weave together thematic threads to demonstrate the diversity, difference and enterprise of the local Launceston community. The authors want this history to be a collaborative effort owned by members of the community.

Dr Tom Dunning has a doctorate from the University of California. He has lived in Launceston since 1985, teaching at the Newnham campus of the University of Tasmania. From 2007 to 2012, he was Head of the cross campus School of History and Classics. He retired at the end of 2013. With Paul Richards, Barbara Valentine and Dan Huon, he has edited three previous works: *Effecting a Cure: Aspects of Health and Medicine in Launceston*; *Launceston General Hospital: Celebrating 150 years of Caring*; and *A Window in Time: Launceston General Hospital 1863-2013*.

Membership renewals

Annual subscriptions for the Launceston Historical Society were due on 31 December 2014.

A [membership form](#) is enclosed or can be accessed on the website.

Please return to the Treasurer, Leonie Prevost, at the next meeting, or post to:

Treasurer, Launceston Historical Society
PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Marita Bardenhagen Memorial Award for Local History



Dr Nic Haygarth and Lorraine Dooley with their Award certificates. Photo: M Sargent

The Marita Bardenhagen Memorial Award for Local History is a biennial award to honour the memory of well-known historian and LHS past-President Dr Marita Bardenhagen. The Award aims to encourage local historians to publish the results of their research. Fourteen entries were received for the inaugural Award, which was presented on 21 November 2014 by Elspeth Wishart, Curator, TMAG at the QVMAG. The joint winners were: Nic Haygarth for *The Norfolk Plains: a history of Longford, Cressy, Perth and Bishopsbourne, Tasmania* and Lorraine Dooley for *Building on firm foundations: the Cooper family in Tasmania: stonemasons, builders and architects*. Congratulations to both of you. The Launceston Historical Society is a sponsor of this Award.



The 27th The Examiner-John West Memorial Lecture

Julian Burnside AO QC

Title to be advised

Friday 13 March 2015 – 8.00pm at the Albert Hall, Launceston.

Julian Burnside is a barrister based in Melbourne. He specialises in commercial litigation. He joined the Bar in 1976 and took silk in 1989.

He acted for the Ok Tedi natives against BHP, for Alan Bond in fraud trials, for Rose Porteous in numerous actions against Gina Rinehart, and for the Maritime Union of Australia in the 1998 waterfront dispute against Patrick Stevedores. He was Senior Counsel assisting the Australian Broadcasting Authority in the “Cash for Comment” inquiry and was senior counsel for Liberty Victoria in the Tampa litigation.

He is a former President of Liberty Victoria, and has acted *pro bono* in many human rights cases, in particular concerning the treatment of refugees.

He is passionately involved in the arts. He collects contemporary paintings and sculptures and regularly commissions music. He is Chair of Fortyfive Downstairs, a not for profit arts and performance venue in Flinders Lane, Melbourne, and Chair of Chamber Music Australia.



Julian Burnside AO QC.

Mr Burnside is the author of a book of essays on language and etymology, *Wordwatching* (Scribe, 2004) and *Watching Brief*, (Scribe, 2007) a collection of his essays and speeches about the justice system and human rights. He compiled a book of letters written by asylum seekers held in Australia's detention camps. The book, *From Nothing to Zero* was published in 2003 by Lonely Planet. He also wrote *Matilda and the Dragon* a children's book published by Allen & Unwin in 1991.

In 2004 he was elected as a Living National Treasure. In 2009 he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia.

In 2014 he was awarded the Sydney Peace Prize. He is married to artist Kate Durham.

This is a free event and everyone is welcome.



Members' column

New members:

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Terry Childs, and Barbara and Ivan James.

New Facebook page:

The Launceston Historical Society now has a Facebook page! There is a link to the page from the Contact section on our website. Or click here and 'Like' us: <https://www.facebook.com/launcestonhistory>

Archaeology Group: Enquiries to John Dent email: john.dent@pda.com.au.

Primary school History Prize presentation 2014



Carol Fuller looking over the History Prize entries.

Seventy-nine entries were received from Riverside and Mowbray Heights Primary Schools and St Thomas More's Catholic School for the LHS History Prize for 2014. Each entrant received a certificate, and 14 book vouchers were awarded to those judged the best by Carol Fuller and Georgia Fountoulaki. The award ceremony was held at the Town Hall on 20 November. President Marion Sargent was MC with the Mayor Albert van Zetten handing out the prizes. Gus Green presented a special prize of his book *What a Racket!* to Jess Leyden who wrote about the tennis racquet display at the PCYC. Thank you to Carol for organising the award and Jenny Gill for printing the certificates.

Primary school History Prize winners 2014

Grade 3:

Jess Leyden

'I wonder why there are old tennis racquets in the foyer of the PCYC Launceston in Abbott Street, Newstead?'

Aiden Gibson

Asked several questions about Tasmanian Aborigines

Grace Wood

'Was there a Zoo in the city park?'

Grade 4:

Olive Morris

'What is the significance of Olive Street, Newstead to the history of Launceston?'

Temiya Knight

Investigated the original use of Launceston College

Conor Rae

'How has the community's needs changed the face of Windmill Hill?'

Imogen Duigan

'What would life be like for a 6 year old girl living in Tasmania when white settlers arrived?'

Caleb Youd

Asked several questions about HMS Friendship

Kate O'Neill

Asked several questions about HMS Friendship

Samuel Fitzpatrick

Imagined life as a convict

Grade 5:

Jordan Holloway

'Why was Port Arthur so harsh?'

Connor Fahey

'How were the Aborigines treated before and after 1967?'

Grade 6:

Aruna Rungmang

'Why was Parliament House built in Canberra?'

Adau Santino Atak

'What happened in the Eureka Rebellion?'

Bella Edwards

Compared Sydney Harbour Bridge and Hobart's Tasman Bridge

Grade 6 Davidson

Class presentation of 'We are Australian'

The Senior Secondary Ratcliff History Prize was awarded to six students: one each from Launceston College, Newstead College, Scotch Oakburn College, Launceston Church Grammar School, St Patrick's College and the Launceston Christian School. Each award of \$100.00 is given to a student selected by the school. This year a copy of Nic Haygarth's book *The Wild Ride* also was presented to each student.

UTAS History Prize

The Annual \$400 Launceston Historical Society – Dr Marita Bardenhagen History Prize was awarded to university student Cassandra Berry.

Advance notice of LHS activities for 2015

Launceston Historical Society meetings are held at the meeting room, QVMAG Museum at Inveresk, on Sundays at 2.00pm, unless otherwise notified.

- 13 March (Friday)** *The Examiner*-John West Memorial Lecture, Julian Burnside AO QC.
To be held at the Albert Hall, Tamar Street, Launceston at 8.00pm.
- 12 April** **Julian Burgess**, *Private William Gow's War Diary* (Australian Heritage Week)
- 17 May** **Anne Neale**, *Charles Street Virtual Walk* (National Trust Tasmanian Heritage Festival, "Conflict & Compassion")
- 21 June** **Pugh Day, Dr Rod Westhorpe**
- 19 July** **John Paull**, *Count Strzelecki in VDL 1840-42*
- 16 August** **John Shepherd**, *A Tourist's Walk with Max Oldaker through Central Launceston*
- 20 September** **Nic Haygarth**, *Historic Tasmanian Bushmen*
- 18 October** **John Watts**, *Low Head Leading Lights*
- 15 November** **Anne Neale**, *Horace Bennett, Architect of the Launceston Town Hall*



Did you know ...

Thank you to whoever sent in the snippet for last October's newsletter, from 1869 when Tasmania came under the influence of 'velocipede mania'. Did you know that the Museum has one of those 1869 velocipedes on display in *Tasmanian Connections*? The Museum's 'bone shaker' was recently identified as having been made by the man who won the race referred to in your article. James Finlay of Fitzroy won Victoria's earliest known bicycle race on the Melbourne Cricket Ground in July 1869, racing on a velocipede he had made himself. The Museum's velocipede is thought to be one of only two surviving examples made by James Finlay (the other is in private hands). Jai Paterson

Launceston telephone exchange

The first telephone exchange in Launceston opened in the Electric Telegraph Office at the Post Office, St John Street, on 12 December 1883. The officer-in-charge, Louisa Elizabeth Hesketh (1854-1917), was appointed on 1 December 1883. Louisa had a passport to the Tasmanian Exhibition held in the Albert Hall in 1891-92. Her portrait shown here is from the Launceston Family Album.

To celebrate the centenary year in 1983 the front cover of the telephone directory for the Launceston area lists the following subscribers:

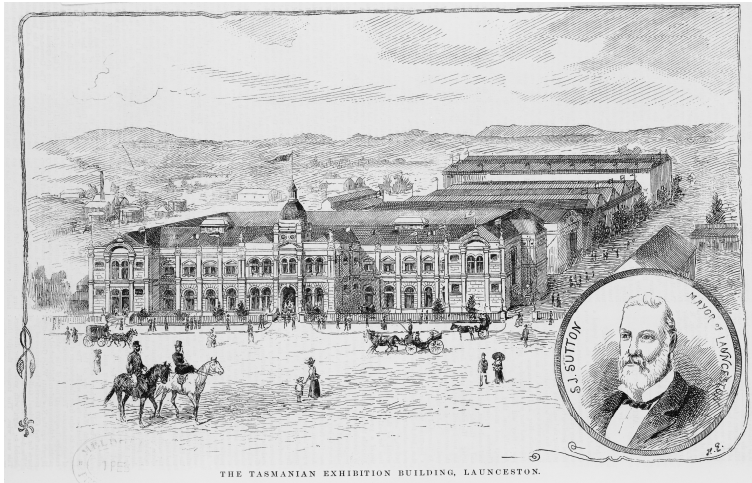


- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13 Bell and Haywood | 22 Ferguson, J.C. | 30 Sadler, S.C. |
| 18 Bischoff Co. | 4 Gas Works | 26 Smith's Central Hotel |
| 7 Bischoff Smelting Works | 14 Glenwright | 39 Sutton, S.J. |
| 10 Cocker, D. | 24 Hart and Sons | 19 Taylor Bros. |
| 5 Daily Telegraph | 21 Hatton and Laws | 1 Thrower, W.I. |
| 9 Dalgety and Co. | 23 Irvine and McEachern | 11 T.M.L. Railway |
| 20 Ditcham Bros. | 17 Knight, W | 2 T.S.N. Co. |
| 3 Dodghsun and Co. | 25 McKenzie, R. George St. | 8 Tulloch, L., and Co. |
| 29 Edington and Co. | 16 McPhail and Weymouth | 27 Walch Bros. |
| 15 Examiner | 12 Ritchie, D. | 38 Webster, A. |
| 37 Fawn's Brewery | 28 Ritchie and Parker | 6 Williams, J. |

Monuments & Monkeys: a walk in historic City Park

The Albert Hall and the Tasmanian Exhibition

Prue McCausland



**Wood engraving by Heiner Egersdorfer,
Illustrated Australian News, 1 Jan 1892.**

The Albert Hall was built for the Tasmanian Exhibition of 1891-92.

The Exhibition was the brainchild of Samuel Sutton, a local businessman, member of the City Council and later Mayor of Launceston. The Exhibition followed many other such events which had their origin in the Great Exhibition of 1851 staged by Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria. Samuel Sutton's idea was to hold an exhibition larger than any ever staged in Tasmania before, and for that a large hall or auditorium was needed. The Council applied to the colonial government for funding, but without success. The Council decided to go ahead anyway and construct a new pavilion which was later named the Albert Hall. By the time it was

finished, the hall had cost £12,000 and was one of the largest buildings in the British Commonwealth.

A competition for the design for a pavilion which could seat 2,000 people was held; the prize of £10 was won by Gordon McKinnon, an architect from NSW. His design, however, was not quite what the organisers wanted and so the job was handed over to amateur architect John Duncan who was only 19 years old at the time. John Duncan had previously designed the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Wellington Street. The Hall was built in the Victorian Academic Classical style which probably owes a lot to the design of the original architect, Gordon McKinnon, and is now listed on the Register of the National Estate.

There are over half a million bricks in the Hall. They were made by Jory and Campbell, the Campbell being John Campbell of Campbell's pottery fame. The builder was JT Farmilo, a well known Launceston builder of the time.

There was already a smaller pavilion in City Park which had been used for functions in the past, including earlier exhibitions, and this now became the fernery and entrance to the Exhibition. It was situated about where Victoria's Café is now, perhaps a little more to the south. People entered off Tamar Street, turned left to reach the ticket office and walked through the fernery.

From there they would have entered the temporary annexes which were built by J&T Gunn next to the hall which stretched out across City Park. These were designed by another architect involved in the project, Alfred Luttrell. His design incorporated the Dolphin Fountain which was positioned where the chess board is now. The fountain was in the centre of the Avenue of Nations where there were displays from all the colonies, including New Zealand and countries such as England, France, Canada, America and Japan.

The Tasmanian displays included examples of gold mined at Beaconsfield and Lefroy and tin from Mt Bischoff, because this was at the height of the mineral production from these areas.

The Albert Hall itself was used for the opening and closing ceremonies and for concerts, theatre productions and other entertainments, almost every night during the four months of the Exhibition.

Nearly a quarter of a million people came through the turnstiles of the Exhibition at a time when the city's population was about 18,000. It was a remarkable achievement. Soon afterwards, the depression of the 1890s affected the economy of Tasmania, so Launceston was very lucky to have had both the Exhibition and the Albert Hall when it did. We are the fortunate ones today to still have this magnificent building.

New publications by members

A new book written by **Paul A.C. Richards** with researchers Christopher (Gus) Green and David Taylor will be launched in February 2015. It is entitled ***Little Grammar 1930-1970: Our Formative Years: Launceston Church Grammar Preparatory School***. The book of 300+ pages is fully referenced, peer reviewed and illustrated with photographs covering the four decades of the school's life at 8 High Street. It is presented in three formats: soft cover \$25; hard case \$45; and leather bound (in school colours) \$120. The book gives a history of the school from its beginnings in 1930 through to its closure in 1970. Four headmistresses and one headmaster are featured. Thirty seven old scholars have contributed their memories as pupils and of their lives 55-70+ years on after leaving the Preparatory School. Many continued their education at LCGS, Geelong Grammar or Scotch College.

Advanced orders are presently being taken by the Launceston Church Grammar School. You can order a copy by contacting Ms Amy Brooks or Ms Margo Bastow by phone, (03) 6336 6057; post, LCGS Development Office PO Box 136 MOWBRAY HEIGHTS TAS 7248; email, ulumni@lcs.tas.edu.au or fax, (03) 6336 5981.

Eric Ratcliff's new publication ***A Far Microcosm: Building and Architecture in Van Diemen's Land and Tasmania 1803-1914*** is being offered in a four volume box set for the pre publication price of \$330. This offer closes on 12 March 2015 (RRP \$500). Strictly limited edition of 500 copies only. This definitive collection is the culmination of a lifetime's work.

Order forms are available at Foot and Playsted or Volume 2 Bookshop (previously Fullers). For further enquiries please contact Clive Tilsley phone: 6234 3800 or email clive@fullersbookshop.com.au.

Other items and events of interest

Friends of the Library, Launceston: The annual Book Fair will be on Saturday, 14 March 2015 at St Ailbe's Hall, Margaret Street, 9.00am – 1.00pm. Thousands of good quality books at bargain prices include fiction, non-fiction, Tasmaniana and collectables.

George Town & District Historical Society: Meeting to be held at *The Grove*: Email: info@gtlhs.com. Web: www.gtlhs.com.

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Meetings take place in the Royal Society Room, Custom House, TMAG, Hobart, starting at 8.00pm: 10 February 2015, Bernard Lloyd, *Tasmania's Whiskey History 1822-1839*; 10 March 2015, Ann Porteous, *Toogoolawa: a transient abode*.

Launceston Historical Society

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Deadline

Items for the next Newsletter should be sent to the Editor by **1 Apr 2015** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.