



# Launceston Historical Society Inc.

## Newsletter No 153

April 2016

ISSN 1036-7950

PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

*Bringing together people since 1988 with an interest in history*

### Welcome to the new Committee Members for 2016

The new committee for 2016 was elected at the AGM on Sunday 21 February 2016. We welcome one new recruit, Rebecca Phillips. Marion Sargent was re-appointed President. The other committee members are Catherine Pearce (Vice-president and Minute Secretary), Leonie Prevost (Treasurer and Public Officer), Prue McCausland (Correspondence Secretary), Robyn Jones, Steve Jones, Sue McClarron and Terry Neal. Georgia Fountoulaki, Anne Neale and Andrew Woodgate did not re-stand. We thank them sincerely for their contribution to the committee over the past year.

The 2015 Annual Report can be read online: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au/publications/annual-reports/>

After the short AGM members and friends watched the entertaining DVD *Tony Robinson's Tour of Duty: Launceston*. Several people in the audience were featured in the show, filmed in March 2014.



**Re-elected President Marion Sargent and new committee member Rebecca Phillips.**

### Membership renewals - reminder

Annual subscriptions for the Launceston Historical Society were due on 31 December 2015.

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

## John West Memorial Lecture



**President Marion Sargent and Lecturer Michelle Grattan. Photo courtesy of *The Examiner*.**

Michelle Grattan AO presented the 28<sup>th</sup> John West Lecture at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre at the University of Tasmania on Friday 18 March 2016. Her timely topic – *The Power of Small Voices: The Struggle for the Senate's Centre* – was well received by a crowd of almost 200 people. Although Michelle's topic was chosen some months ago, it was on that very day that the Federal Government voted to change the way the Senate is elected. In the future it will be more difficult for the small players on the cross benches to hold the balance of power in the Senate. President Marion Sargent was MC, while Dr Greg Hannan from UTAS introduced Michelle. Prue McCausland gave a vote of thanks.

The full text of Ms Grattan's lecture is on our website: <http://launcestonhistory.org.au>.

## April Talk

**Craig Deayton: *Blinded by Blood: The AIF on the Western front: Myth, Tragedy and the Threat to History***

**Sunday 17 April 2016 – 2.00pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk**

No aspect of Australian history in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has been more chronicled, more discussed and more remembered than the First World War. Yet no other aspect of Australian history is so misunderstood. Despite the life's work of the nation's finest historian in Charles Bean and despite the famously detailed and rigorously accurate Official History that he authored, the greatest achievements of the AIF and its commanders on the Western Front, along with the darkest moments in that history, are little known today.

Although the enormous sacrifice of the Great War is memorialised with pride, and ever more so as we move through its centenary, the myths about the AIF and their experience on the Western Front show no sign of receding. Bean concluded his masterly official history with the dedication that it was 'a monument to great hearted men; and, for their nation, a possession forever.' That possession is under threat as never before, not from neglect nor from a failure to remember, but from a wilfulness to have our history not as we have it, but as we would wish it to be. It has become captive to a romantic and idealised nostalgia about the men of the AIF and a fascination with their tragedies which overshadows the very much larger, very much more important, sometimes glorious and occasionally darker truth.

This paper will examine the impact of the modern preference for memorialisation over memory and the implications for history. Through brief case studies of two of the AIF's battles on the Western Front it will argue that the popularity of myth and tragedy overshadows the much more interesting reality and indeed completely ignores the key turning points of the First World War where Australian troops played central roles. It will conclude that we have a responsibility to honour the sacrifice of the nation in the First World War not by romanticising it, nor by returning again and again to the bottomless well of sorrow, but by seeking, acknowledging and, above all, knowing the truth of their story.

**Craig Deayton** is a history teacher with a special interest in Australia's military history. He has worked as a teacher and College Principal for over 30 years and is currently Principal of Sacred Heart College, Hobart. He is the author of *Battled Scarred: The 47th Battalion in the First World War* published in 2011.





## May Talk

### John Dent OAM: *Kerry Lodge Archaeology Project*

**Sunday 15 May 2016 – 2.00pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk**



The Kerry Lodge Bridge, still in use just south of Franklin Village, was commenced in 1834. A gang of convicts quarried bluestone from nearby hills, lived on site and built the bridge which was finished in 1836. The road crossing the bridge was also built by convicts at around the same time.

The convict housing is believed to have been used as a probation station, road gang and hiring depot until approximately 1847. The site had the capacity to house 60 convicts, but it appears that no more than 34 convicts and a superintendent lived there at any one time.

The bridge remains today as does part of the route of the old road to Hobart. Evidence of bluestone and gravel quarries has been located. There are remains of two houses, one that was in existence earlier than 1843, and the remnants of a stone building, reputedly the site of the probation station.

There are many questions to be answered as to the actual location and extent of the probation station and whether or not any of the three known building sites were part of the probation station. If not where was the probation station site?

U.K. Archaeologist Eleanor Casella is working with the Launceston Historical Society Archaeology Group, the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery and others to use archaeology to help answer some of these questions. A test pit was dug in February 2015 and a more extensive excavation was undertaken in March/April 2016.

This talk will provide an historical background to events that occurred at that time; will look at the current landscape; and provide preliminary results of the recent archaeological excavations.

**John Dent** is a registered land surveyor in private practice in Launceston. He has combined this with an interest in the early history of Launceston and York Town to look more closely at many of the early surveyors and the records they left behind.

### Kerry Lodge Open Day



**John Dent explaining the 1830s house uncovered at the Kerry Lodge Archaeological Dig.**



**Archaeologists carefully digging out artefacts from the kitchen area behind the house.**

A successful Open Day was held on 2 April at the Kerry Lodge dig site. John Dent was amazed at how many people visited the historic site of the overseer's cottage. He conducted numerous tours to cater for the crowds as the work progressed. Among the artefacts found were broken bottles, a clay pipe, blue and white china, a metal door hinge, buttons, glass bottle stoppers and a ceramic jar with a metal lid. See *The Examiner* article *Convict site excavated* on 2 April 2016, page 2.

## June – Fifth Pugh Day Lecture

**John Paull and Aileen Pike: *Persistence Pays: Finding Dr Pugh's Missing Journal***

**Sunday 19 June 2016 – 2.00pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk**

Dr William Russ Pugh's handwritten Journal of his voyage from England to Van Diemen's Land is first mentioned in the *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail* Christmas Issue of 1934. Three years after publishing Pugh's Biography and seven years after starting a search for the Journal it has finally been found – in Bristol, England. This lecture brings you the story of the search and unpublished highlights of Pugh's life, including an escape from pirates in the Cape de Verde Islands, as described by the intrepid Doctor.

**Dr John Paull**, a retired anaesthetist and **Mrs Aileen Pike**, a genealogist, together discovered the whereabouts of the Journal and arranged for a copy to be provided.

The Pugh Day Lecture is jointly sponsored by the Launceston General Hospital Historical Committee and the Launceston Historical Society.

## Advance notice of LHS activities for 2016

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

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|---------------------|---|
| <b>17 July</b>      | <b>Georgia Fountoulaki</b> , <i>Greek Culture: Tasmanian Connections</i>  |
| <b>21 August</b>    | <b>Susan Aykut</b> , <i>Turkish Baths in Launceston</i>   |
| <b>18 September</b> | <b>Combined Seminar with Oral History Tasmania</b><br><b>Nicola Goc</b> , <i>Migrant women in Tasmania</i><br><b>Brad Williams</b> , <i>Archaeological dig at Launceston College/Gaol</i><br><b>Margaretta Pos</b> , <i>My journey with colonial pioneer Elizabeth Fenton</i> |
| <b>16 October</b>   | <b>Marion Sargent</b> , <i>Amy Sargent: An Adventurous Nurse</i>  |
| <b>20 November</b>  | <b>Anne Neale</b> , <i>City Park Fountain</i>   |

## Members' Column

**John West Memorial Lecture:** Photos of attendees taken by *The Examiner* were published online: <http://www.examiner.com.au/story/3803290/social-networks-michelle-grattans-john-west-lecture/?cs=132>

### New members:

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Cindy Tattersal and Lisa Walkden.

**City Park Radio:** Tune into FM 103.7 to hear presenter **Terry Neal** interview our members on upcoming meetings. On Monday 11 April, after 1.00pm, **Marion Sargent** will chat about the presentation by Craig Deayton, *Blinded by Blood*. **John Dent** will talk about the Kerry Lodge dig on 9 May after 12.30pm.

**Royal Society of Tasmania:** LHS members can now attend the Launceston Lecture Series for \$4. The Society meets at the Queen Victoria Museum meeting room on the fourth Sunday of the month.

**Duck Reach Historical Group:** Book launch of *The Duck Reach and Launceston's Electric Light: The story of Australia's first publicly owned hydro-electric power scheme* by **Julian Burgess**. \$35 soft cover and \$69.95 limited edition hard cover copies will be available for sale. QV Museum, meeting room, Saturday 23 April 2016 at 10.30am. Morning tea will be served. RSVP by 22 April: [bookings@qvmag.tas.gov.au](mailto:bookings@qvmag.tas.gov.au) or phone 6323 3798.



## Princess Theatre



**New theatre for Launceston. Flashlight taken at the opening night of Mr M. Lucas' new Princess Theatre, Brisbane street, Launceston. This photo was taken with a view of showing the audience; the whole of the big auditorium is not embraced in its limits. Flashlight by Spurling & Son. *Weekly Courier*, 7 September 1911, page 22.**

***The Mercury*, 31 August 1911, page 4.**

### **NEW LAUNCESTON THEATRE OPENED BY THE MAYOR**

LAUNCESTON, August 30.

The new Princess Theatre was opened to-night by the Mayor (Alderman W.C. Oldham), in the presence of the aldermen and prominent citizens. The building, which has seating accommodation for nearly 2,000, was crowded.

The Mayor congratulated Mr. M. Lucas on his enterprise in building such a magnificent theatre, which, he said, would supply a long-felt want, and there would be no further excuses for good companies saying that they could not visit Launceston. Mr. Lucas, in establishing this theatre, and becoming a citizen of Launceston, had shown that he had faith in the progress of the city.

Mr. Lucas briefly responded.

Senator Keating said that, although Mr. Lucas might be lacking in confidence in making a speech, he did not lack confidence in Launceston or its people, and he hoped that his enterprise would receive the public support that it deserved.

A flashlight photograph was then taken of the audience, and a moving-picture entertainment was given. The stage is not yet complete, but as soon as it is finished several companies will appear in rapid succession.

*(New wider plush seats were revealed on 4 April 2016)*

## Other items and events of interest

**Launceston LINC:** *"Was taken prisoner Renicourt Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 1917"*. Anzac display of a prisoner of war diary kept by Charles Edward (Charlie) Lack of Bridgenorth, Tasmania who was serving as a Private in the 14th Infantry Battalion when he was taken prisoner by the Germans during the disastrous first Battle of Bullecourt. The diary and a collection of photographs were donated by Mrs Nancy Campbell (née Lack).

A second display of 'trench art' consisting of a collection of model planes made from the products of war – WW1 and WW2, courtesy of Mr Neil Harris.

Both displays are on the first floor of Launceston LINC, Civic Square until Friday 6 May 2016.

**Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk:** *Sixteen Legs: Enter the Cave* Exhibition. Dark... Creepy... Cool... Admission free from 2 April to 19 June 2016. Presented by Neil Gaiman and Bookend Trust.

**Queen Victoria Art Gallery, Royal Park:** *The World Inside: 125 years of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery*. This exhibition will showcase the Museum's early collections of science, art and history and display them together with artworks by Dr Mary Scott, the great-granddaughter of Herbert Hedley Scott. On display from 30 April to 23 October 2016.

**Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk:** *The Quiet Achievers: Celebrating 80 years of the Country Women's Association in Tasmania*. Formed 80 years ago in 1936, this exhibition celebrates the diversity of the work undertaken and the achievements made by the women of the association over the years. On display from 7 May to 17 July 2016.

**George Town & District Historical Society:** 18 April 2016, at the Grove, **John Watts**, *History of Rotary in George Town*; 16 May 2016, at the Grove, **John Dent**, *How History Changes: Port Dalrymple, a case study*. Email: [info@qtdhs.com](mailto:info@qtdhs.com).

**Tasmanian Historical Research Association:** Meetings take place in the Royal Society Room, Custom House, TMAG, Hobart, starting at 8.00pm: 12 April 2016, **Alison Alexander**, *Discrimination against Germans in Tasmania during the First World War*; 10 May 2016, **Craig Collins & Sally Bloomfield**, *Hobart Town, 1816: Andrew Bent and fermenting change*. Email: [info@thra.org.au](mailto:info@thra.org.au).

### Launceston Historical Society

|                          |                  |                           |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| President                | Marion Sargent   | 6331 4890                 |
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**Archaeology Group:** Email enquiries to John Dent: [john.dent@pda.com.au](mailto:john.dent@pda.com.au).

## Deadline

Items for the next Newsletter should be sent to the Editor by **1 July 2016** at [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com) or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.