

Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 180

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people with an interest in history

William Henry Clayton – Architect

Robert Smith (pictured) presented a talk on 15 August 2021 on the life and career of his great-great uncle architect William Henry Clayton (1823-77). Clayton, born at Norfolk Plains and educated at the Longford Hall Academy, and in England, where he married Emily Samson, returned to Van Diemen's Land in 1848 as a road surveyor and architect. Clayton designed many buildings, among them are St Andrew's Presbyterian Church; *Valley Field*, Illawarra Road; Francis Evans' home which became the Northern Club; *Harland Rise*, Evandale; Victoria Theatre (later Theatre Royal), St John Street; Launceston Cricket Ground grandstand; Launceston Hotel (since altered); Chalmers Church; Public buildings; Bank of Australasia; *Elphin House*, Olive Street; *Waratah House*, York Street; *Mayfield* at Chudleigh; the Governor's wing at *Entally*. In all he is said to have designed 300 buildings in Tasmania, including five bridges, three flourmills and the Launceston water scheme from St Patrick's River. In 1863 the Claytons went to New Zealand where William spent 14 years designing buildings for the government. WH Clayton died in Dunedin in 1877.



Who killed the Tigers?

Dr Nic Haygarth (pictured) presented the re-instated Mead, Smith, von Stieglitz Memorial Lecture at the meeting on 19 September 2021. In this fascinating talk Nic analysed his research on the people who applied for the government bounty scheme for dead Tasmanian Tigers (thylacines) from 1888 until 1909. The scheme was initiated by East Coast sheep farmers who thought that the tigers were killing their stock. There appeared to be more tigers on the East Coast in the 1880s than there were in the 1850s. Using Trove, family histories and farm diaries Nic has uncovered 600 to 800 people who applied for the bounty payment of £1 for an adult and 10 shillings for a juvenile tiger. They were mostly unskilled labourers, shepherds and stockmen, some shopkeepers and hawkers, and just five women. Nic argues

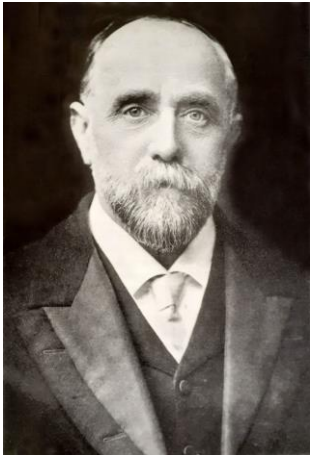
that there were no tiger hunters, but that the animals were caught incidentally when traps were laid for the much more lucrative wallabies, possums, and pademelons.

Hugh and Anne Mackinnon were special guests at the lecture. Hugh is the last trustee of the Mead, Smith, von Stieglitz Memorial Trust Fund and Anne is Karl von Stieglitz' granddaughter. Anne drew the raffle and Hugh offered a vote of thanks to Nic.

October Meeting

Nigel Burch, *The Little Skipper: Sir John Evans*

Sunday 17 October 2021 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk



Sir John (Captain Jack) Evans (pictured) served as Premier from 1904 to 1909, only because he couldn't find anyone else to take the job! It is often said that nice guys finish last. Fortunately, it's not always true. He was a kind and humble man, who introduced the Hare-Clark voting system and free education, as well as serving on the committee to select an Australian flag and initiating the hydroelectric industry. His Premiership was a period of courtesy, prosperity, and stability. Until recently he was the longest-serving MP in Tasmanian history: 40 years an MHA, 16 as Speaker, then Lt-Governor for 10. He died aged 87 in 1943.

Nigel Burch is a retired company director with a passion for Tasmanian history and lives in Launceston. Having served as an adviser on mining to the Tasmanian and Bosnian governments, Nigel naturally has an interest in both mining and government. He has written five books on mining in the Tamar region, and three major biographies of Tasmanian Premiers. He is also a regular contributor to *The Sunday Examiner* 'Our History' page. Though local history takes up most of his time, Nigel also volunteers in several capacities. At one time he was a national director of the RSPCA and a director of the TFGA. This is a Seniors Week event.

November Meeting

Graeme Williams, *Touring around Tasmania with Spurling in 1914*

Sunday 21 November 2021 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk



The Stephen Spurling photographic family of Tasmania spans three generations, and their photography covers almost a century from the early 1840s to 1941.

Stephen 1st (1821-1892) dabbled in photography as an amateur before establishing a studio in Hobart Town specialising in portraiture. Two of his sons, Stephen 2nd (1847-1924) and Frederick (1850-1942) followed in his footsteps. Frederick established a photography business in Fingal and Stephen 2nd set up a studio in Launceston. Although Stephen 2nd concentrated on portraiture, he also undertook some landscape work. His son, Stephen 3rd (1876-1962) preferred landscape and ventured into the wildest parts of Tasmania seeking subjects for his camera.

The talk will take everybody on a tour of Tasmania via the medium of the Spurling postcards as if we were all travelling together around 1914. We will start at Trevallyn before heading down the Tamar River, across to Bridport, Derby, Lottah, passing over the Golden Fleece Bridge at St Helens before continuing our magical mystery tour to see the Hobart Cup, a game of cricket at the TCA ground and ride on the train to Magnet. We will stay at Great Lake, do some fishing, and have a night at the Deloraine Hotel. The trip will finish in Launceston after we play a game of golf at Kings Meadows.

This will be a trip of a lifetime so pack your bag, book a seat, and join us.

Graeme Williams (pictured) was born at St Helens, where his family owned the Williams Bros general store, opened in 1888 by Alfred Williams, and at one time had a branch store at Lottah. Graeme has researched his family tree and found his roots going back to convicts on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd fleets.

Graeme collects Tasmanian pictorial post cards – when he got to 50, he thought he had quite a few – his collection now exceeds 8000. His post cards can be seen in many of Garry Richardson's books including *Lottah and the Anchor*, *The Bay* and *The Coast*.

Graeme has lived at Trevallyn for nearly 50 years and worked for the Tasmanian Government for 40 years with the last area being WorkSafe. He is married to Fran, and they have two sons and three grandchildren.

New Members

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Brian Burgess, Gabriella Byron, Cheryl Clayton, Harriet Edquist, Anne & Hugh Mackinnon, David & Lucy Meech, George & Liz Prall, Jo Richelme, Harley Russell and Judy Saxby.

Membership Form

A membership form is available on our website: [Membership Form.pdf](#). Sunday meetings are free for LHS members, and \$4 for visitors. As most of the Sunday Lectures were postponed in 2020, financial memberships have been rolled over to 2021. Renewals for 2022 will be due on 31 December 2021.

LHS Activities

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.

Bookings are not required. For enquiries email launcestonhistory@gmail.com. Free for members, visitors are welcome to attend at \$4 each. Bring some cash for a chance to win a fabulous prize in the raffle.

From 1 May 2021 all visitors to the QVMAG are required to check in with the Tas App by scanning the QR code displayed in the foyer. If you do not have a smart phone the attendant staff can check you in on the QVMAG device.

The meeting will be livestreamed on Zoom. A link will be provided to members closer to the date.

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/>

The excursion to Swansea on the Monday long weekend of 1 November is almost fully booked. We have one seat left, so don't delay if you still want to join us.

Our History

These stories on Launceston's history and beyond have been contributed by our members. You are welcome to send articles of 470 words, with at least three pictures, to the president marionsargent@bigpond.com. Read the stories in *The Sunday Examiner* or on [Facebook](#).

We are preparing a book with 100 of these stories, each with a photograph – more information to come.

No	Date	Page	Author	Title	Topic
193	8 Aug 2021	21	Nigel Burch	Tasmania takes a rare alloy from trash to global treasure	Osmiridium – the gold they threw away
194	15 Aug 2021	21	Paul Richards	Delicate balance is a vital element of Tasmanians' health	Two centuries of iodine deficiency
195	22 Aug 2021	44	Nigel Burch	Young soprano was the lark of Lebrina	Lucy Atkins – the lark of Lebrina
196	29 Aug 2021	23	Julian Burgess	Solutions for familiar foe which plagued a colony's 'highway'	Tamar silt
197	5 Sep 2021	19	Nigel Burch	O'Keefe a politician with a heart of gold	The unexpected demise of Michael O'Keefe
198	12 Sep 2021	21	Nigel Burch	Cooperative brewed successful union	Union Brewery / Thyne building, York St
199	19 Sep 2021	27	Nigel Burch	Premier was his own political nemesis	Sir Walter Lee
200	26 Sep 2021	33	Marion Sargent	Public baths flooded with problems from the very beginning	Launceston Corporation Baths, Bourke Street
201	3 Oct 2021	27	Mike McCausland	Last word in modern service had a solid literary foundation	From the Mechanics to Northern Regional Library
202	10 Oct 2021		Mike McCausland		Early days of the Northern Regional Library
203	17 Oct 2021		Mike McCausland		50 th celebration of the Launceston Library building

A Walk Along Historic Cameron Street

Catherine Pearce of the Launceston Historical Society and Ron Camplin from City Park Radio have collaborated with Cya On The Road, a start-up IT company, to produce the free self-guided audio 'Launceston: A Walk Along Historic Cameron Street'. It includes a map, photographs, and text, so you can enjoy the walk from the comfort of your armchair too! Both the app and walk are free to download here <https://dynamic.cyaontheroad.com/bn6L>

Other Items and Events of Interest

George Town & District Historical Society: *The Grove*, George Town at 7.30pm. 18 October 2021, AGM & Carol Thomas, *Soroptimists International*; 7 November 2021, Biennial Conference, *Immigrants to Northern Tasmania*. Email: info@qtdhs.com

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Legacy Function Rooms, 159 Macquarie St, Hobart on the second Tuesday of each month at 8pm. 12 October 2021, Alison Alexander, *Tasmania v the British Empire: the battle to end convict transportation*; 9 November 2021, Graeme Broxam, *John Scott, sealer of Bass Strait and his 'forgotten' Tasmanian Aboriginal descendants*. Email: info@thra.org.au

National Book Council: Launceston Library at 1.15pm. 20 October 2021, Jeanette Thompson, *The trouble with bushrangers*; 17 November 2021, Alison Jules' 1/2 class from Glen Dhu Primary & Children's Book Council of Australia, *Children's book reviews & recommendations for Christmas shopping*. RSVP: nationalbookcounciltasmania@gmail.com or phone Jackie 0429 317 531.

Royal Society of Tasmania (Northern Branch): Meeting Room, QVMAG Museum, Inveresk, 1.30pm. 24 October 2021, Tim Smallbon, *Breathing new life: the Cressy Research Station*; 28 November 2021, Greg Woods, *A double devil dilemma*. Email: apcachris@gmail.com

The Friends of St Pauls Springfield will be conducting a family history day in conjunction with PlantFest on Saturday 9 October from 9.30am – 3.00pm in the Church at 35727 Tasman Highway, Springfield. Experts will be on hand to provide family information on the North East, provide a digital display of historic photos of the district and scan any documentation for archives. Food vans, plant & craft stalls will be on site. Free entry. Contact Robert Smith 0428 073 493.

Iodine Deficiency Symposium: Postponed until 9 April 2022. Registrations are still being accepted: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/iodine-symposium-tickets-157426901099>

National Oral History Conference: Postponed until 2022.

Tasmanian Lighthouse Conference: Postponed until 2022. Enquiries, Thomas Gunn 0474 896 128.

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Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 Dec 2021** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.