



Launceston Historical Society Inc.

Newsletter No 191

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Bringing together people with an interest in history

The Albert Hall & the International Exhibition

On Sunday 15 October 2023, Prue McCausland presented a fabulous talk on the Albert Hall, the Tasmanian Exhibition it was built for, the Launceston Family Album project of over 1,000 people who had season tickets, and the Denison Gorge picnic held at the end in March 1892. The Exhibition was a resounding success with thousands of people attending over four months from when it opened on 25 November 1891. A public holiday was declared, special trains ran, and a procession from Market Square with 2,850 people marched to the Albert Hall. Annexes across City Park displayed a working bakery, machinery, fine arts, and businesses such as Boags Esk Brewery, Campbell's Pottery, and Walch & Birchalls stationers. The Exhibition choir and orchestra, a Punch & Judy show, The Muffs, a tug-a-war, wood chopping, and Blondin walking a tightrope pushing a wheelbarrow with a child from the audience entertained the crowds. The Albert Hall, the most enduring legacy of the Exhibition, was restored after becoming dilapidated in the 1960s. The glass extension was added in 1984 and when the current renovations are completed it will once again be used for many events.



Local Heritage in Launceston

Michelle Blake, a freelance historian and research assistant, drew a crowd of 100 people to our last meeting of the year on 19 November 2023. She demonstrated public history in action by highlighting several residential areas of Launceston and the changes that have taken place over time and continue today. From quirky little Sheppy Street to the grand St George's Square; old Elphin Farm with mid-twentieth century social housing; to Newstead House with its infill of interwar houses in the surrounding crescent; and the popular planned suburb of Mowbray Heights Estate from 1927. These suburbs reflect the times in which they were developed, with a mix of architectural styles of heritage buildings and more modern houses. They are all part of the story of how Launceston has evolved over the last 200 years. Community sentiment on various developments was touched upon. Michelle said, "History is what happened in the past, but heritage is what remains of the past." We are fortunate to have retained so many heritage buildings.

East Tamar Excursion



On Monday 6 November 2023, a group of 23 members enjoyed the annual Launceston Historical Society excursion along the East Tamar. We visited Hillwood Berries for morning tea and a historical overview of the farm, and at Lefroy, Steve Radford talked about the town's mining history. At George Town, Des Wootton conducted a tour of the town before we stepped back in time at the Watch House Museum. After a lunch of fish and chips at Low Head, we explored the Pilot Station Museum, the foghorn building, and the Marine Education Centre. Our last stop was at St Matthias' Church, where members of Windermere Church Forever told us about the history of the building and tales from the graveyard.

Old Perth Gaol Archaeological Dig



Launceston Historical Society members and Southern Archaeology recently held a community dig near Perth looking for the old gaol. And they found it! Solid stone walls, brick paving, post holes, buttons, glass, clay pipes, an 1827 coin, and more were uncovered during five days of hard work. Darren Watton and John Dent will reveal more of their findings at the LHS talk on 17 November 2024 after their report has been written.

16th Primary History Prize

There were 93 entries from five schools – Evandale, Mowbray Heights, St Thomas More's, Launceston Christian School and, for the first time, Exeter Primary. Each school recognised the students in their assemblies and every child received a certificate of participation. Topics ranged across Aboriginal history, convicts, Port Arthur, the women's hospital, City Park, Tasmania's first airport, Highfield at Stanley, and the extinction of the thylacine.

Book vouchers from Petrarch's Bookshop totalling \$673 were presented to 17 children. The History Prize subcommittee of Carol Fuller, Brad Wood, and Prue McCausland judged the entries.

LHS Activities 2024

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. Free for members, visitors are welcome to attend at \$5 each. Bring some cash for a chance to win a prize in the raffle. Come along to learn about our history.

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/>

18 February	AGM + Rod Oliver & John Dent , <i>100 years of Rotary</i>
17 March	Kristyn Harman, John West Memorial Lecture , <i>A good riddance: The Inception of Criminal Deportation in Colonial Australia</i>
21 April	Julian Burgess , <i>Convict clock and watchmakers</i>
19 May	Stefan Petrow , <i>Joseph Reginald Forward and the Making of the Launceston Public Library 1906 to 1948</i>
16 June	Hamish Maxwell-Stewart , <i>Convict Memorial</i>
21 July	TBA
18 August	TBA
15 September	TBA
20 October	Jen Thompson , <i>"Scenes that are brightest"</i>
17 November	Darren Watton & John Dent , <i>The old Perth Gaol Archaeological Dig</i>

New Members

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: Samuel Adams, Judith Blaydon, Julia Hoffner, Linda Keane, Natalie Keane, Anne Lee, Thomas Lyons, Diane Oliver, Jen Thompson, Robin Walpole, and Cael Wilkinson-Reed.

Membership Form

Membership forms are available on our website in both PDF and Word formats. Sunday meetings are free for LHS members, and admission for visitor's is \$5. Renewals for 2024 are due on 31 December 2023. We encourage members to pay by direct debit into our Commonwealth Bank of Australia account: BSB 067-003 A/C No. 2804 8638, by cheque in the mail, or cash at the next meeting you attend.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone!

Keep reading the 'Our History' articles over the summer and note the third Sunday of the month in your diaries for next year's meetings. We start the year with the AGM on Sunday 18 February and the John West Memorial Lecture on Sunday 17 March at 2pm.

Other Events of Interest

George Town & District Historical Society: Email: info@qtdhs.com.

Book Council of Lutruwita/Tasmania: Launceston Library, Level 2, third Wednesday of the month at 1.15pm. Members free; non-members \$5. RSVP: nationalbookcounciltasmania@gmail.com.

Royal Society of Tasmania (Northern Branch): Meeting Room, QV Museum, Inveresk on the fourth Sunday of each month at 1.30pm. 25 February 2024, Tim McCormack, *The International Criminal Court and Ukraine*. Inquiries: Lois Beckwith, loisbeckwith27@gmail.com

Tasmanian Historical Research Association: Legacy Function Rooms, 159 Macquarie St, Hobart on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm. 13 February 2024, Henry Reynolds, *'We're all in this together': Truth-telling and Tasmanian historiography*. Email: info@thra.org.au.

Membership Renewals

Annual subscriptions for the Launceston Historical Society are due on 31 December 2023. The Membership Form is on our website. Pay directly into the Society's CBA bank account BSB 067-003 A/C No. 2804 8638 (put your name in the reference field), by cheque or cash. Please email your details to launcestonhistory@gmail.com, or hand the form to Leonie Prevost at the next meeting, or post to: Treasurer, Launceston Historical Society, PO Box 1296, LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Our History

These stories on Launceston's history and beyond have been contributed by our members. You are welcome to send articles of 475 words, with at least three pictures, to the president marionsargent@bigpond.com. Read the stories in *The Sunday Examiner* or on [Facebook](#).

No	Date	Page	Author	<i>The Sunday Examiner</i> Title	Topic
304	8 Oct 2023	31	Julian Burgess	The strange story of Launceston's first ever mayor	Launceston's first Council
305	15 Oct 2023	27	Marion Sargent	Lookout a white elephant or best view in the city?	Talbot Road Lookout
306	22 Oct 2023	23	Nigel Burch	The history of Launceston's Tamar St bridge	Tamar St bridge
307	29 Oct 2023	23	Julian Burgess	Launceston's role in making the first Holden car	Tool Annex and Holden car
308	5 Nov 2023	23	Julian Burgess	Frederick Street Infant School's history unpacked	Frederick St Kindergarten
309	12 Nov 2023	23	Nigel Burch	When the famous Lord Kitchener visited Tasmania	Lord Kitchener in Tasmania
310	19 Nov 2023	35	Nigel Burch	When Launceston experimented with steam buses	Clarkson Steam Bus
311	26 Nov 2023	23	Marion Sargent	Mystery remains over man behind Gorge structures	Charles St John David, City Engineer & Surveyor
312	3 Dec 2023	39	Nigel Burch	Launceston's tramway network didn't come easy	Launceston's tramway service
313	10 Dec 2023		Nigel Burch		Charles St Bridge
314	17 Dec 2023		Nigel Burch		Mowbray Smallpox Hospital

Launceston Historical Society

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Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 Feb 2024** at marionsargent@bigpond.com or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.

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