



# Launceston Historical Society Inc.

## Newsletter No 197

### February 2025

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PO BOX 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

*Bringing together people with an interest in history*

## Annual General Meeting + Jai Paterson & John Dent

**Sunday 16 February 2025 – 2pm at the Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk**

Welcome to another year of history! A PowerPoint show of the past year's activities will be shown before the short AGM which starts at 2pm, followed by our guest speakers Jai Paterson and John Dent.

All eleven positions on the Executive: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and seven Committee Members will be declared vacant. Although we are sorry to see Karin Lê step down from the committee after eight years, the good news is that Franky Del Vecchio is willing to take her place, so no further nominations are required.

Memberships are now due for renewal for 2025. Thank you to all those who have already paid. Lectures are free for members, visitors \$5. Bring cash for the chance to win a great prize in the raffle!

### Launceston Court Records: Just hope your ancestors were caught...

Jai and John's presentation will provide details of what can be found in recently discovered Court Records for Launceston in 1827, 1828 and 1832. Examples will highlight how they can be used for historical research and add colour to the narrative, so just hope your ancestor was one of those caught and tried as the amount of detail and first-hand accounts is astounding. The Index will be on sale for \$20.

#### Dr Jai Paterson

Jai has worked in museums and as a roving curator in Tasmania, written history books and has completed her PhD. Her interest in early Launceston Hotels was certainly useful in transcribing the Court Records as every second case mentioned a hotel.

#### John Dent OAM

John has recently retired as a registered land surveyor in private practice. John has an interest in early Launceston after co-authoring *York Town – a respectable looking village* in 2020, so transcribing these Court records was a good follow-on from the book.



# The 37<sup>th</sup> John West Memorial Lecture

Hamish Maxwell-Stewart

*Networks of resistance:*

*Mapping a convict road gang in northern Van Diemen's Land 1829-1839*

Sunday 16 March 2025 – 2pm Meeting Room, Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk



In the early 1830s there were a series of strikes, go slows, mass escapes and attacks on overseers in Notman's gang tasked with completing a road just south of Launceston. Collectively these form the largest protest by convicts in Australia since the Castle Hill Rebellion of 1804. This talk uses digital technologies to visualise this long-forgotten series of industrial protests, showing how they were linked into one rumbling action. In the process it identifies the ring leaders at the heart of this mass collective protest as well as the magistrates and other officials charged with bringing the gang to heel. While focussed on the local, the talk will use big data to put the struggle in Notman's gang within the wider context of convict transportation to Van Diemen's Land in the early 1830s.

Acknowledgments: This paper is drawn from a larger body of work co-authored with Monika Schwarz (Monash) and Michael Quinlan (UNSW).

**Hamish Maxwell-Stewart** is a professor of heritage and digital humanities at the University of New England and an associate member of staff at Menzies Institute for Medical Research, University of Tasmania. The author of over a hundred books and articles, Hamish has long been an advocate of the necessity of connecting cutting-edge research with heritage interpretation. His previous heritage collaborations have included the Lottery of Life visitor gallery at the Port Arthur Historic Site, viewed by over 2,000,000 visitors, and the Digital Panopticon website.

## LHS Activities 2025

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. Admission is free for members, and visitors are welcome to attend at \$5 each. Bring some cash for a chance to win a prize in the raffle each month.

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/>

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|---------------------|--|
| <b>13 April</b>     | <b>Stefan Petrow</b> , <i>Tasmanian Soldiers in World War One</i>  |
| <b>18 May</b>       | <b>Sophie Appleby</b> , <i>Harlequin Bob: The 'chequered and eventful' life of Robert Cowburn</i>                            |
| <b>15 June</b>      | <b>Lou Rae</b> , <i>The Lost Province on Tasmania's West Coast</i>   |
| <b>20 July</b>      | <b>Alison Alexander</b> , <i>'They cannot be worse': VDL and the Bigge Enquiry, 1820</i>                                     |
| <b>17 August</b>    | <b>Richard Mack</b> , <i>James Austin of Austins Ferry</i>   |
| <b>21 September</b> | <b>Steve Radford</b> , <i>Reginald Munro: Aviator Extraordinaire</i>   |
| <b>19 October</b>   | <b>Darren Watton &amp; John Dent</b> , <i>Perth Cottage Archaeological Dig</i> (Mead, Smith, von Stieglitz Memorial Lecture) |
| <b>3 November</b>   | <b>Excursion</b> (Monday)  |
| <b>16 November</b>  | <b>Bradley Wood</b> , <i>Debunking the Myth. The True Story of Waubadebar</i>  |

## New Members

The President and Executive welcome to our Society the following new members: John Carswell, Greg Shea, Sebastian Verbeeten. Jemma Wilson has paid for her membership, but we do not have any details.

## Membership Form

Membership forms are available on our website in both PDF and Word formats. Sunday meetings are free for LHS members. **Renewals for 2025 were due on 31 December 2024.** 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 by cash or EFTPOS at the next meeting you attend. Thank you to those members who have renewed their membership for 2025.

## Other Events of Interest

**George Town & District Historical Society:** At Hillwood, 17 February 2025, 7.30pm, Des Wootton, *Local Shipwright, Thomas Wiseman*; The Grove, George Town, 17 March 2025, Graeme Williams, *Touring with Spurling*. Email: [info@qtdhs.com](mailto:info@qtdhs.com).

**Book Council of Lutruwita/Tasmania:** Launceston Library, Level 2, usually on the third Wednesday of the month at 1.15pm. 19 February 2025, Stefan Petrow, *Tasmanian Anzacs*; 26 March 2025, *Umarrah and George* as part of Tasmania Reads Week. Members free; non-members \$5. Inquiries: [bookcouncilt@gmail.com](mailto:bookcouncilt@gmail.com).

**Royal Society of Tasmania (Northern Branch):** Meeting Room, QV Museum, Inveresk on the fourth Sunday of each month at 1.30pm, \$7 for non-members. 23 February 2025, Michael Woodward, *Developing Bio-inspired Technologies to Support Southern Ocean Climate Research*; 23 March 2025, Rachelle Hawkins, *From Seahorses to Handfish – a Tasmanian aquaculture story*. Inquiries: Lois Beckwith, [loisbeckwith27@gmail.com](mailto:loisbeckwith27@gmail.com)

**Tasmanian Historical Research Association:** Legacy Function Rooms, 159 Macquarie St, Hobart on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm. 11 February 2025, Richie Woolley, *Some Recherche Bay archaeology and its historical context*; 11 March 2025, Kevin Todd, *The wreck of the Neva, uncovering the cover-up*; 8 April 2025, Bob Brown, *A Tasmanian Life*. Email: [info@thra.org.au](mailto:info@thra.org.au).

**Friends of the Library annual BOOK SALE:** Saturday 1 March 2025, 9.00am – 1.00pm, St Ailbe's Hall, 46 Margaret Street, Launceston. Come and join us at Launceston's best book sale! A wide range of good quality, donated books – crime, thrillers, fantasy, science fiction, romance, children's, teenage, cooking, health, history, travel, crafts, gardening, sports, war, transport, collectables and Tasmaniana. Also, jigsaws, CDs & DVDs. All at rock bottom prices. Online payment available. Proceeds support library services in Launceston area.

**New Book:** Launceston Historian Lynette Ross' book *The Story of Launceston's Government Cottage* will be available to buy at the LHS meeting on 16 February. It tells a tale of governors and councillors, balls and dinners, housing free immigrant women and riots at the gates, dreams of a mansion and budgetary reality, scientists and bewitching ladies. This is a lively panorama of early Launceston.

To be launched at Petrarch's on 13 March and Lynette will be speaking at the Royal Society lecture on 27 April. Contact Lynette for orders at [lynetteross4@bigpond.com](mailto:lynetteross4@bigpond.com). The book is No. 10 in the Historical Survey of Northern Tasmania, published by Campbell Macknight. Softcover (\$50) and hardcover (\$60) cash or bank transfer.

## Our History

After seven years the 'Our History' series of 341 stories contributed by our members has come to an end. The first article on Hoblers Bridge by Angela Prosser Green was published in *The Sunday Examiner* on 3 December 2017. They can be read in the online *Examiner* or on the Launceston Historical Society's [Facebook](#) page.

No	Date	Page	Author	<i>The Sunday Examiner</i> Title	Topic
341	28 Dec 2024	6	Prue McCausland	John Glover's gold medal stolen in museum mystery	The theft of the Glover medal

## Membership Renewals

Annual subscriptions for the Launceston Historical Society were **due on 31 December 2024**. 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](mailto: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



### LAUNCESTON HISTORY CENTRE

### OPEN DAY

*You are invited to an open day to visit  
the Launceston History Centre building.*

56 Frederick Street  
Friday 7 February 2025  
Noon to 2pm

*A brief talk will be held at 1pm. You will have the  
opportunity to view the building as it is now and hear  
about Council's planned works and the Launceston  
History Centre's vision for the site. No RSVP necessary.  
Please pass this on to anyone who may be interested.*

For information, contact John Dent  
on 0408 133656 or email  
[lhistorycentre@gmail.com](mailto:lhistorycentre@gmail.com)

### Launceston Historical Society

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### Deadline

Items for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to the editor by **1 April 2025** at [marionsargent@bigpond.com](mailto:marionsargent@bigpond.com) or PO Box 1296 LAUNCESTON TAS 7250.

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