



# LAUNCESTON BRANCH NEWSLETTER

## Library

## Hours:

**Tuesday**  
10am–3pm

**Monday - Thursday:**  
By appointment

## Xmas/New Year Closure

Our City Park  
Stables library is  
closed for the  
holiday period from  
Tues 8 December  
at 3:00pm.

The library reopens  
on Tues 19 January  
2021 at 10.00am

## Workshop

**Wednesday**  
17 March 2021  
2:30 - 4:00pm



**Curious About  
Your Irish  
Ancestors?**

See last page for  
booking details

### Tasmanian Family History Society Inc. Launceston Branch

45 Tamar St, Launceston  
PO Box 1290, Launceston 7250  
Telephone: 0438 465 121

Website: [www.launceston.tasfhs.org](http://www.launceston.tasfhs.org)  
Email: [ltntasfh@bigpond.com](mailto:ltntasfh@bigpond.com)  
Correspondence – Secretary: [marettelawson@bigpond.com](mailto:marettelawson@bigpond.com)  
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**President:** Helen Stuart  
**Editor:** Fran Keegan

No. 63  
December 2020

## 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations!

Launceston Branch celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tasmanian Family History Society Inc. with reminiscences, much laughter and afternoon tea in the grounds of historic Franklin House on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November. For many, it was a reunion of those whose energy and commitment have kept the society alive and active over the decades.

In welcoming over 40 members, past members and friends from around the State, President Helen Stuart outlined the history, milestones, events and activities of the Launceston branch over 40 years. Helen's address is on pages 5 & 6 of this newsletter.

Four foundation members from 1980 were present – Pat Harris, Pat Hinds, Bet Wood and John Dent. Southern colleagues were represented by Maurice Appleyard (State President), Louise Rainbow (President, Hobart Branch), Colleen Read and Thelma McKay. The anniversary cake, baked and decorated by Robyn Gibson, was cut by Bet Wood who shared some of the experiences of those early times. Photograph albums, scrapbooks and memorabilia from past years were on display and were a source of interest and amusement.

Thank you to everyone involved in making this such an enjoyable afternoon.



President Helen Stuart and foundation members  
Bet Wood, Pat Hinds, John Dent, Pat Harris



Judith De Jong, Pat Lansdell, Sue Reimers



Sandra Duck, Meryl Yost, Maureen Martin Ferris



John Dare, Sue Dare, Ann Wilson

Ms. Michelle O'Byrne MHA congratulated TFHS Inc., particularly Launceston Branch, on its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the House of Assembly on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020. Her speech can be found in Hansard <https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ParliamentSearch/IsysHAHansard.html>, p. 104.

## Annual General Meeting 2020

The AGM for Launceston Branch, postponed from April, was finally held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020 after reopening of activities following the COVID-19 closure. A new venue at Landale St., changed timeslot and possibly warmer weather attracted 25 members and friends. Reports were presented and the new committee elected (see below). Following the meeting, guest speaker Maureen Martin Ferris provided an informative and interesting overview of her website *Tasmanian Pictorial Church Index* <https://taschurches.org/home> which generated much discussion. Proceedings concluded with afternoon tea.



TFHS Inc. Launceston Branch Committee: (L to R) Fran Keegan (Vice-Pres.), (inset) Jai Paterson (Committee Member), Robyn Gibson (Minute -Secretary), John Dent (Committee Member), Helen Stuart (President), John Reimers (Ass. Treasurer), Barrie Robinson (Treasurer), Murette Lawson (Correspondence Sec.)

### Successful Seniors Week Activity

During Seniors Week in October, the Launceston Branch once again held an Open Day involving hourly one-on-one appointments. On a wet day, seven people braved the elements and were assisted in getting started with their family history or tackling their brick walls. Thank you to our volunteers, and welcome to our new members who joined on the day!

### Family History Research and DNA

**Why is there such an interest in DNA testing for family history purposes? What in particular are you looking for that causes you to think that a DNA test might be helpful? Which company could/should you test with? Have you had a test but, apart from your ethnic origins, haven't a clue what the rest of the results mean?**



Many family historians have used their DNA results to knock down some of those 'brick walls' that we all have in researching our family trees. As more people have their DNA tested, it is likely that an individual's results would show hundreds, probably thousands of 'matches', mainly cousins, from 2<sup>nd</sup> cousins to distant cousins.

Some of these cousins will share a common ancestor with you and it is through contacting them and sharing information that you might verify a previously 'possible' ancestor. Often cousins often know much more about that ancestor than you do and may share information, including photographs or other memorabilia.

So, if any of the above questions apply to you, our **DNA Discussion Circle** might help you find answers. This group of interested members will be re-starting in 2021 and if you would like to join, please phone or email – contact details are on page 1. Individual assistance can also be arranged, if preferred.

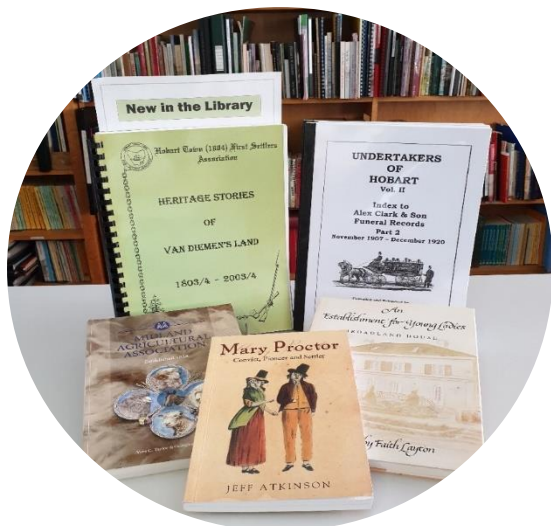


## Library News:

Since re-opening in late August, we have not had many visitors to City Park Stables library. We would like to remind members that we have a Covid-19 Safe Plan in place and social distancing and hygiene requirements are monitored. Visitors are requested to knock at the door for entry, when they will be asked a few simple questions regarding health and eligibility. Of course, we rely on people not visiting if they are unwell.

Visitors are not required to book prior to attending but can just arrive, bearing in mind we do have a limit on the number of people allowed at any one time.

**If intending visitors would prefer to book an appointment to attend on a Tuesday, that can be arranged by making contact via phone or email listed on page 1.**

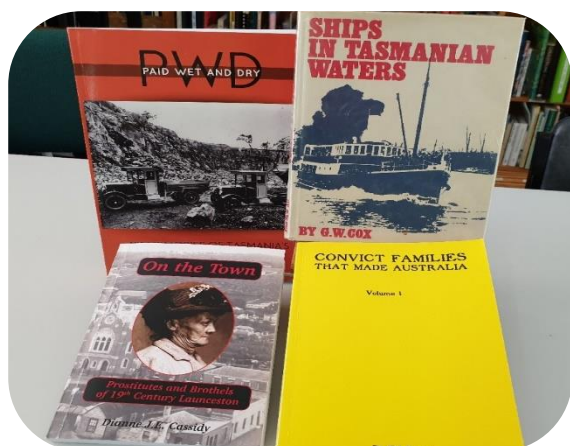


### New Publications in the Library

#### New titles include:

- *Undertakers of Hobart, Vol. II, III and IV, Nov 1907 – Dec 1943*
- *Heritage Stories of Van Diemen's Land, 1803/4 – 1903/4*
- *An Establishment for Young Ladies – Broadland House*
- *Midland Agricultural Association – Established 1838*
- *Mary Proctor - Convict, Pioneer and Settler*
- *PWD – Paid Wet and Dry, 101 Memories of Tasmania's Public Works System*
- *Ships in Tasmanian Waters*
- *Convict families that Made Australia Vol. 1*
- *On the Town – Prostitutes and Brothels of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Launceston*

For a full list of new arrivals please visit the library and have a browse.



## British Interest Group

Meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of the month  
TFHS Inc. Launceston Branch Library  
City Park Stables, 45 Tamar Street  
(next to the Albert Hall) from 2:00 to 4:00.

We are a small group of enthusiastic members of the Tasmanian Family History Society Inc., Launceston Branch, with an interest in anything associated with British research. The meetings are generally of an informal nature, designed to enable the discussion of either a specific subject, current problems being encountered, or more usually, both.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday 10 February 2021**  
**Topic: Researching Channel Islands**

**Newsletter Distribution:** Please note that the Branch Newsletter is now distributed electronically. Please advise us if you change your email address. Printed copies are still available for collection from the Library for those without email access. Newsletters are also available on our website.



## Curious About Your Irish Ancestors?

*Many of us have Irish ancestry and what better day to add to our knowledge and understanding than on St Patrick's Day!*

*Join our panel in delving into the mysteries of Irish family history research.*

*Find out what Irish records are useful and available as well as listening to local historian, John Dent's, stories of some of the Tasmanian/Irish connections in the early Yorktown settlement.*

Open to Members and Non-members - **Bookings essential**

**When: Wednesday 17 March, 2.30 pm – 4pm. Afternoon tea included.**

**Where: The Elderly Citizens Club, 16 Landale Street Invermay**

*(Free parking is available behind the hall, with entry off Queen Street)*

Registrations and fee of \$5.00 are payable by Tuesday 16 March.

Payment can be by cash, cheque or direct debit to Acc. No. 563150 BSB: 037-608

If paying by direct debit, please quote the reference: *IRISH* and your surname and send an email with the names of attendees to reserve your place.

Email: [ltntasfh@bigpond.com](mailto:ltntasfh@bigpond.com)

Phone: 0438 465 121

### Application to attend the Branch Workshop

I wish to attend the above workshop on 17 March 2021



Name/s: .....



Address: .....

Phone/Mobile: ..... Membership No. *(if applicable)*: .....

Please return the completed form as soon as possible to the:



The Library Co-ordinator, TFHS Inc. Launceston Branch, PO Box 1290, Launceston, 7250  
or register by phone, email or in person at the Branch Library.

### Working Bee at the Library

**Monday 18 January 10:00am – 1pm.**

Volunteers are required to prepare the Library for re-opening after the holiday break. Tasks are not too strenuous and many hands make light work! If you can spare an hour please come along.

*Thank you to all of our members and friends who have continued to support our branch during this difficult year.*

*In spite of restrictions, we hope you and your families enjoy a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.*

*We look forward to your ongoing support in 2021.*

*Helen Stuart (President) and Committee  
TFHS Inc. Launceston Branch*



**Address by Helen Stuart, President, Launceston Branch, Tasmanian Family History Society Inc. at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Afternoon Tea held at Franklin House, 21 November 2020**

**Launceston Branch 4 November 1980 – 4 November 2020**

The origin of the Society was early 1978 when some Tasmanian members of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies (AIGS) based in Melbourne were encouraged by the President to form a Tasmanian group. Mrs Lilian Watson was selected as the official representative in the State. The inaugural meeting was held at Rosny College on 4th April 1978, when the office bearers and committee of the Tasmanian chapter were elected. Meetings followed for almost two years, and following publicity 44 Tasmanian members joined, meeting monthly at Rosny College.

After two years it was decided to form an independent Tasmanian Society and the inaugural meeting of the Genealogical Society of Tasmania (GST) was held on 4th April 1980 with Mrs Lilian Watson elected as the first President. Within a year, branches were established at Launceston and Burnie, and in July 1981 the Devonport Branch, (now Mersey), was formed. The Huon Branch was established in 1984.

Karlana Nagle, (later Lockett), was approached by Mrs Francis Travers from Hobart by letter re convening a meeting at her home for the current members of the Genealogical Society of Tasmania in the Launceston area. This meeting was held on 5th September 1980. The members who attended were Karlana Nagle, Mr John Rosevear, Mrs Pat O'Toole, Mr Geoff Rapley, Mrs Noreen Rapley, Mrs Betty Wood, Mr Ray Bassett, Mrs Patricia F Harris, Mr Phillip L Challis and Mrs Challis, as well as Mrs Lilian Watson and Mrs Frances Travers from Hobart.

A sub-committee of three were appointed to investigate availability and prices of rooms suitable for a meeting place. The results were reported back to the steering committee at a second meeting on 15th September 1980, where it was decided to hold meetings at the Kings Meadows High School on the first Tuesday of each month except January.

Prior to the inaugural meeting, three displays were held at different venues, which created a lot of interest.

The inaugural meeting was held on 4th November 1980 and attended by approximately 50 people. Following the reading of the constitution of the Genealogical Society of Tasmania, it was passed that the Launceston Branch be formed.

The Office Bearers elected were:

Chairman: Miss Karlana Nagle (later Karlana Lockett)

Vice-Chairman: Mr John Rosevear

Secretary: Mrs Pat O'Toole (later Mrs Pat Hinds)

Treasurer: Mr Geoff Rapley

Committee: Mr Ray Bassett, Mrs Betty Wood, Mrs Patricia F Harris, Mr Phillip L Challis

The first library was housed at the home of Mrs Betty Wood, which consisted of four card file drawers and a shoe box of books, which I understand was taken to meetings.

In June 1982 a Branch Library was started at Carr Villa, Kings Meadows, which was Officially Opened on Saturday 28th August 1982, at 11 am by the Mayor of Launceston Alderman Walker. The Library was open every Saturday from 1 pm – 4 pm, and every Wednesday 2pm – 4 pm.

Amongst the first books included in the Library were *A History of English County Records held in Australia, Land Grants in Australia 1788-1809, The First Fleeters, and The Convict and Pioneer History.*

On the 14th June 1986 the Library moved to 63 Paterson Street, above the *Aristocrat Restaurant* and remained at these premises until March 1988, when it was moved to 72 Elizabeth Street, opposite Princes Square in April 1988. It remained at these premises until February 1992, when it was moved to Flat 2, 47-49 Elphin Road for a while until November 1993. In November 1993 the Library moved to 2 Taylor Street, Invermay where it remained for 15 years until it closed on 16th September 2008.

Since the 18th January 2009, the Library has been situated at City Park Stables, 45 Tamar Street (next to the Albert Hall).

After 21 years, the Genealogical Society of Tasmania (GST) changed its name to the Tasmanian Family History Society Inc. due to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) being introduced by the Federal Government. Confusion occurred with the old name in telephone books and other indexes. The name became official on 5th April 2001. The (GST) became an incorporated body on 23rd April 1986.

Some of the important functions the Launceston Branch has organised are the 6th Australasian Congress of Genealogy and Heraldry held in May 1991 at the Albert Hall, and the Coming of Age Conference to celebrate the Society's 21st Birthday in March 2001 at Inveresk. When the Society decided to change the AGM from Campbell Town to a rotation system around the Branches, Launceston hosted the first two-day meeting in June 1987. The Society AGM now alternates between the Branches and Ross.

In 1984 it was decided to commence a project to celebrate the 1988 Bi-centenary. The Launceston Branch undertook the task of indexing and publishing birth, death and marriage notices which were printed in *The Examiner* from 1900-1920, under the editorship of Anne Bartlett and Glenn Burt transcribing. Since that period the indexing has continued and we have now published Births to 1965, Deaths to 1965 and Marriages to 1960.

Our publications are an important part of the valuable work we do as volunteers for the Society to make our history available to others, and over the last 40 years the Launceston Branch has published 83 books, 2 CD-Roms and one set of microfiche. Some of the titles include the following:

*Index to Launceston Examiner* from 12 March 1842-1899 (12 Volumes)  
*The Cornwall Chronicle Directory of BDMs 1835-1850*  
*Walch's Tasmanian Almanacs* (10 Volumes on a variety of subjects)  
*The Tasmanian Mail – A Photographic Index – 1894-1935* (15 Volumes)  
*The Weekly Courier – 1901-1929* (15 Volumes)  
*Index to Passenger Arrivals and Departures from Early Launceston Newspapers 1829-1865* (CD)  
*Carr Villa Memorial Park Burial & Cremation Records 1905-Jan 2001* (CD)

Branch members have also been involved in Society Projects which included *TAMIOT (Tombstone and Memorial Inscriptions of Tasmania)*, Co-ordinator for the Society from June 1991-1999 was Betty Calverley. The Tasmanian Group of (AIGS) when it was formed in 1978 had the idea of compiling all these transcriptions into a single usable index which was taken over by the (GST) in 1980, and was published on microfiche, each Branch transcribing in their own designated area. It was later published on CD. The *eHeritage Project* commenced in 2001/2 in collaboration with State Library of Tasmania, with Alma Ranson (Co-ordinator) and other members photographing tombstones and memorials to be made available online. Another Society Project was the *Tasmanian Federation Index* CD, with members indexing the Births 1900-1919 and the Deaths and Marriages 1900-1930 for the Registrar General.

The Society's journal *Tasmanian Ancestry* was published from June 1980 with Pamela Clark as the first editor. The Launceston Branch with the support of Anne Bartlett and her committee were able to produce the journal from 1991-1996, and from June 2005 – to June 2010 the Editors were Betty Bissett and Anita Swan.

The British Interest Group (BIG), a sub-group of our Branch, was formed at a meeting held on Tuesday 19th September 1995 at the Branch Library, Taylor Street, Invermay with 25 (GST) members in attendance, and was informally chaired by Joe Stephens. The group was formed to assist Branch members with their British research interests. The first Newsletter of (BIG) was published in September 1995 by Aileen Pike. Currently the group meet at our Branch Library, City Park Stables.

In recent times with the advancement of DNA testing, members have shown a great deal of interest in testing their DNA to advance their family history research. A decision was made to form a *DNA Discussion Circle* and the first meeting was held on 9th March 2017 at the Branch Library.

Over the years we have seen a number of changes, particularly with the introduction of computers which has made many records more accessible to researchers online which includes the digitised newspapers on *TROVE* and the *Tasmanian Names Index* just to name a few.

As technology and the generations change, we will be challenged to adapt to many more changes along the way.

Finally, I would sincerely like to say thank you to the Office Bearers, Committee Members, Co-ordinators, Duty Officers and the many volunteers who have worked on our publications, and in other ways. Also the people who have donated books and made financial contributions to our Branch we thank you all for your continued support, I hope the Branch continues to be as successful as it has been in the past 40 years.

Helen Stuart  
**President**