

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT



It is my pleasure to be able to record that the Association again enjoyed a successful year and continued to welcome new members. The monthly meetings held at Moonah Community Centre have been very well attended and guest speakers provided much information of interest to all: my thanks to these speakers for their generous and willing donation of time and preparation, to further our information of historical features of our island and the many achievements of our forebears.

Members have published several books during the past year: among these are works by Sue Cox A.M. (*'Banished Beyond the Seas'*), Reg Watson (*'Historic Snippets from Tasmania's Past'*) and Dr. Alison Alexander (*'The O'Connors of Connorville'*, *'Convict lives at the Cascade Female Factory'*, *'Duck and Green Peas! Forever!'*).

On behalf of our U.K. member Richard Walduck OBE, K St J, JP, MA(Cantab), the book *'From the Proteus to Prosperity – in the steps of John Walduck (1809-1896)'* was donated to the Association Library by Beth Beynon from Aspendale, Victoria; a descendant of John Walduck. This publication is a history of the Walduck family in Tasmania, Victoria and England. Seven generations of the family have prospered since John's arrival in Van Diemens Land in the convict ship *'Proteus'* in 1831. The Association congratulates all members who have made written contributions documenting earlier years of settlement.

It has become apparent to me that in order to continue as a successful Association, we must ensure that committee members are familiar with the many aspects of all events and tasks required to maintain standards. The current executive members agree that it is not good management to neglect to plan for step-up relief, if and when required: during the last few years, we have been made aware of the difficulties presented by illness, planned vacations or other unexpected events. There is a need to have up to date documentation clearly listing required procedures for events and compliance issues: I am very grateful to those who are currently working with this project.

The Annual Floral Tribute was held on Wednesday February 20, 2019. Once again, this was a very successful occasion and well attended. Representatives from state and local Government, Defence Forces, Clergy from many denominations, local History Groups, and many members and friends placed flowers at the Memorial. Milcolt members, in traditional uniform, 'stood guard' during proceedings – Kelvin Daley, a member of our Association again organised their attendance. Hobart Veterans' Brass Band provided music for the National Anthem, entertained guests and visitors before the formalities began and played soft and appropriate music during the placement of flowers. A march named *'Duke of Clarence'*, written by a member of our Association, Band Member Dave Hardstaff, was included in the Band programme. The ship *'Duke of Clarence'* is the first ship recorded as sailing up the Derwent River in 1793, some 10 years prior to European settlement at Hobart Town.

Pamphlets explaining the significance of the Floral Tribute were organised by Secretary Stephany and distributed to members of the general public assembled at the area, including interested passengers from the two visiting Cruise Ships in port on the day. The Guest Speaker at the Floral Tribute was Mr John Kelly, a Hobart businessman and leading member of the small organising committee for the project *'Footsteps towards Freedom'* - a series of sculptures sited at the Macq01 Hotel near to HTFS Association Memorial site in Hunter St.

These four sculptures recognise the Irish Convict Women transported to Van Diemen's Land, and the children who were with them. The figures, launched by Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland in October 2017, are the work of Irish sculptor Rowan Gillespie. Rowan became passionately involved with the project and modelled these bronze sculptures on the likenesses of living descendants of convict women who stepped ashore there.

John provided a brief history relating to the project and an insight into the difficulties that were faced by women convicts, many of them being Irish women transported during the years of the Potato Famine in their home country.

As with most organisations, a large amount of 'behind the scene' work is involved with setting up for meetings, producing newsletters, publicity and numerous other sundry tasks. Many thanks to all who willingly assist with all of these important aspects that ensure the Association can maintain standards. Alastair Douglas, OAM, has been particularly helpful in maintaining our Website and in assisting with the set-up for meetings – there is much lifting, moving, carrying and set-up of equipment involved in preparation for the monthly meetings. Di Vertigan & Sally Morrisby continue to organise and prepare Morning Tea for us after each meeting; this is an important social part of the morning and very much appreciated by all. Many thanks to Di & Sally and to all helpers in the kitchen who willingly assist with the serving.

The work of lay-out, editing and collating the Newsletter has been successfully completed by a very small committee: many thanks to all involved in assisting Stephany and Guy with preparation and printing of this quarterly publication.

I have been advised that a large number of members have outstanding Annual Subscriptions – this can easily be overlooked when the year seems to pass very quickly. I would urge members to check with the Treasurer to ensure that their membership (\$30.00 per annum) is current, as only financial members are eligible to vote at meetings, including the AGM.

Sincere thanks to all members of the Executive; it has been a very difficult year for some who have worked through trying events in their own lives and still managed to successfully carry out their individual responsibilities for the Association.

I also extend my personal thanks to all who have supported me in many ways during the past year; this assistance and friendship is very important to me and much appreciated.

Very best wishes to the incoming office bearers and committee members; May 2019 be a good year for all.

A Hardstaff



Dave Hardstaff of the Hobart Veterans Band.
He composed the music, 'The Duke of Clarence' which
was played at the Floral Tribute



ANNUAL FLORAL TRIBUTE 2019

Marking the 215th Anniversary of the Landing
by Lieut. Governor David Collins and Party

by Christine O'Halloran

The port area of Hobart, in recent years, has become a mecca for cruise ships. They dwarf the surrounding port infrastructure and colonial buildings in Hunter and Davey Streets and Salamanca Place. The many visitors enjoy the waterfront sights and travel to such places as Mt. Wellington, Richmond and Port Arthur.

Two hundred and fifteen years ago, on the 20th February in 1804, Lieut. Governor David Collins arrived at Hunter Island in the waterfront of Hobart Town with the first white settlers. No infrastructure and a foot crossing to land only available at low tide. That event is now commemorated annually by the Hobart Town (1804) First Settlers Association Inc. with a laying of floral tributes.

Mrs Gwen Hardstaff, President of the Hobart Town (1804) First Settlers Association Inc. welcomed the assembled group of local dignitaries, members and visitors from interstate. Acknowledgement of Country was spoken by Mayor Loueen Triffitt from the Central Highlands.



Guest speaker, John Kelly

The guest speaker was Mr John Kelly, well known in Hobart for his ownership of the State Theatre in North Hobart. Mr Kelly traced his personal involvement in the *Footsteps towards Freedom* project, which saw the design and creation of three larger-than-life bronze sculptures by Irishman Rowan Gillespie, depicting likenesses of the 13000 women and 2000 children who had been sent to Hobart as convicts. The statues and plinths are situated outside MAQ01, in proximity to the David Collins monument. Mr Kelly noted the "convict stain in Tasmanian family history" and remarked that the "biggest shadow was the female convict." "The recognition of convict women and their role in Tasmanian history was the driving force behind the Project," said Mr Kelly. In conclusion, Mr Kelly stated that "the women and children (the marginalised) now have their rightful place."

Following the speech, local representatives of churches, State Government, Local Government, the Armed Forces, local history groups and Association members laid floral tributes on the steps of the Collins Monument, to mark the occasion and/or to remember those from they were descended. The Hobart Veterans Brass Band Inc. provided the musical backdrop and Kelvin Daley and John Wise from SSAA Militaria Collectors Tasmania Inc mounted the guard.

At the conclusion of the event, those assembled exchanged greetings and stories. The author chatted with two guests, and their stories provide insights into the impact of the Commemoration.

Mr Andrew Traill from Newcastle, NS W, 'just happened to be walking by when he saw people gathering. "So, I stayed and was very surprised and impressed by the occasion and its solemnity." Andrew noted that his forebear had arrived in NSW in 1841, a Doctor Roland John Traill. Traill went on to work in Sydney, Grafton, Tenterfield and later at "Merriwah", a 100,000 acre property on which he built a church.

Fr. Terry Rush OAM RFD represented the Catholic Archdiocese. Fr. Terry is not new to Tasmanian history, as he is Parish Priest at St. John's Catholic Church at Richmond, the oldest surviving Catholic Church in Australia, but he did admit to 'reading up on Collins' before the Commemoration'. His attention was taken particularly by the fact that when Collins's coffin was disinterred, the body was found to be incorrupt and that native flowers were layered on Collins's body. With that in mind, Fr. Terry collected local native flowers for his floral tribute.



Hobart Veterans Brass Band

The First Settlers Memorial



The monument is a permanent record of the historical event which led to the foundation of the capital city of Tasmania. Built entirely of Tasmanian stone and in keeping with its surroundings, the solid and somewhat austere lines exemplify the hardships of early settlement and the solidarity and permanence of its foundation. The rectangular and circular base is built of dolerite of the Tasmanian mountains, the superstructure is of granite from the East Coast along which the expeditions of Bowen and Collins sailed on their way to the Derwent.

The photo of the unveiling of the memorial was provided by The Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania and shows Her Majesty with the Duke of Edinburgh (far left) and the Tasmanian Governor, The Right Hon. Sir Ronald Cross, Bt, KCMG, KCVO. The Navy crew and ship at rear has not been identified.

On the sides of the columns are panels in bas-relief in freestone from a quarry near Hobart, which supplied much of the stone of the fine buildings erected during the 19th Century. These panels, as accurate as can be furnished in stone, represent the two ships, *Lady Nelson* and *Ocean*, which brought the first Lieutenant-Governor and his party to Sullivan Cove.

The Monument was constructed under the supervision of the Public Works Department from the design by W.H. Furness.

Stonemason: V.W. Seivers. Bas-relief Panels: M.G. Davidson.

www.htfs.org.au/monument.htm