



FRIENDS OF THE ORPHAN SCHOOLS

St John's Park Precinct New Town Tasmania

Issue 35

NEWSLETTER

June 2019

SPECIAL CHURCH TOUR SUNDAY 28 JULY 2019 2-4pm

Our tour starts at the Old Sunday School with presentations about the architecture, history, and features of the 1834 Church building. See images of the inaccessible and hidden parts of the building.



The presentations will be followed by a guided tour of the Church. The cost is only \$20 including afternoon tea. Booking are essential; please register online at www.orphanschool.org.au/register_tour.php.

The Denison Medals 1849

In 1849, Sir William and Lady Denison instituted silver medals as prizes for the Orphan School children:

PRIZE MEDALS.—It is with feelings of the most sincere satis-

faction, that we have noticed the liberal urbanity, of Sir William and Lady Denison, in ordering four medals to be struck, by Mr. C. Jones, for presentation to the four best behaved, and most deserving boys and girls of the Queen's Orphan School. The design of these rewards reflects great praises upon the manufacturer, and will contribute to encourage that emulation among the juveniles, which is, perhaps, the only sure incentive to improvement. The determination also of His Excellency, and Lady Denison, to confer these prizes, cannot but conciliate the prejudice of a sinister feeling, and secure the gratitude of the School, and its patrons. The intended inscription to be engraved upon the girls' medal is—'A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than gold', and that designed for the boys—'Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right'. [Ref: *Hobart Guardian, or, True Friend of Tasmania* 10 March 1849 p.3.]

The medals were made by former convict silversmith, Charles Jones, of Liverpool Street. He was sentenced to seven years' transportation in England in 1832 and arrived on the *Georgiana* (2) in 1833, [Ref: TAHO, CON31/1/24]

The first medals were presented to Bridget Wheelan and Darcy M'Daid:

QUEEN'S ORPHAN SCHOOL.—At the recent examination of the classes at the Queen's Orphan Schools, Bridget Wheelan received a silver medal from Lady Denison, in token of her natural superiority in educational acquirements, &c, and Darby M'Daid received one from His Excellency Sir William Denison. [Ref: *Courier* (Hobart) 14 April 1849 p.2]

The following year, three medals were awarded:

Medals.—The three medals presented at the late examination at the Queen's Orphan Schools, by Sir William and Lady Denison, were manufactured by Mr. C. Jones, of Liverpool-street. That of Sir William Denison has on the obverse a boy engraved as sitting upon a bench, with the anchor and beehive — the emblems of Hope and Industry on either side, underneath which is the following inscription, 'Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure and whether it be right.' Round the inscription and engraving of the plate the words, 'Sir William Denison's Prize', the whole being surrounded with a neatly-chased border of lapel leaves. The reverse contains the following—'For meritorious conduct. To John Woodward, 1850.' The two presented by Lady Denison to Louisa Edwards and Catherine Devlin, have a girl engraved, with similar emblems. The inscription is as follows—'A good

name is rather to be chosen than great riches, loving favour rather than silver and gold.' [Ref: *Courier* 24 July 1850 p.2]

In 1856, the new Governor, Sir Henry Young, replaced the medals for the most deserving boy and girl with a writing desk. [Ref: *Colonial Times* (Hobart) 27 March 1856 p.2]

The Friends of the Orphan School Committee are keen to find out more about the medals and the prizewinners.

Female Convicts Research Centre Spring Seminar 20 October 2019

www.femaleconvicts.org.au

Topic: 'A more hopeless class of subjects?: Convict Women at the New Norfolk Asylum.'

In 1859, the Commissioners of the Hospital for the Insane at New Norfolk wrote, 'It must be borne in mind that a large majority of the patients ... confined in the asylum have been of the convict class, the offspring of diseased parents, inheriting in very many cases a defective intellect, brought up from the earliest childhood in misery and vice, and leading in after years a life of sensual debauchery and crime, resulting in enfeeblement alike of body and mind – a more hopeless class of subjects it would be impossible to collect together in one institution' (cit Gowlland, *Troubled Asylum*, p.54)

Our next seminar will explore the lives of convict women admitted to the New Norfolk Asylum: why were they admitted? How long were they there? How many died there? What do we learn about the treatment and institutionalisation of convict women from their time in the Asylum? Registrations for the seminar will open late July 2019. Venue will be the Hobart Town Hall.

From the Shadows: save the date Saturday 9 November 2019

www.fromtheshadows.org.au

Save this date in your diary for our fund raising Colonial Dance and start inviting friends to make up a table. Music and dance instruction will be provided by popular band Tasmanian Heritage Fiddle Ensemble. The From the Shadows Colonial Dance will be held on Saturday 9th November at the New Town High School hall. Ticket price will be \$25 per person but if you book a table for 8 or more people tickets will be \$20 per person. \$5 or children under 18. Bring a small plate of supper to share. Details of how to buy tickets will be available soon on the *From the Shadows* Facebook page and website.

Journal award

Since June 2011, Dianne Snowden has been writing articles for *Tasmanian Ancestry*, the journal of the Tasmania Family History Society, in a series titled 'Voices from the Orphan Schools'.

In June 2019, Dianne was awarded 'Best Journal Article Vol.39' for her article 'Voices from the Or-



phan Schools: James Butterworth or Forrest, Entrepreneur and Collector'.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Sunday 18 August 2019 2pm

'Old Sunday School', St John's Park, New Town

Guest speaker: Alistair Scott, Point Puer and its links to the Orphan Schools

Business:

- Election of Officer Bearers
- Annual Reports

Feedback

Our tour guide Jane Hodgman received this message after a recent tour:

Wow, what can we say....thank you so much for your time today....it was very much appreciated....and especially the time you allowed for us to ask questions and considering it was a Sunday afternoon....

We were all blown away about your knowledge and detail of the Orphan School and surrounding buildings. We had no idea of how big or the history surrounding the whole development was and we all certainly walked away with a whole lot more knowledge of the Orphan School and it's era. Thank you for sharing all this information.

Well done Jane!

Annual Memberships Due

Watch out next week for an invitation to renew your membership and details of how to pay.

2019-2020 Deadlines for newsletter articles

- 1 August 2019
- 1 November 2019
- 1 February 2020
- 1 May 2020
- 1 August 2020

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