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TASMANIA

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Architecture award constructs an alternate timeline for Launceston

Students at the University of Tasmania are turning back the clock on a Launceston city block in a unique design studio that explores paths not taken in urban development.

The studio, a hands-on unit in the University of Tasmania's architecture degree, is funded through a generous donation from the family of Dick and Joan Green, members of the northern community with a strong connection to the city and a passion for heritage.

Coordinator of the Bachelor of Architecture and Built Environments Dr Andrew Steen said the Dick and Joan Green Family Architecture Award offered students a unique opportunity to unravel and understand the evolution of a city.

"In 1955, Dick Green was part of a group that put forward a plan to infill the block south of Launceston's pedestrian mall to develop and modernise the city's shopping experience," Dr Steen said.

"There are some beautiful drawings and inspiring ideas for Launceston, with sets of designs and plans, and lengthy documents outlining the proposal to the council of the day.

"It represents an alternate future that never happened. In this design studio, our students will rewind the clock and then press play again."

Dr Steen said students would be using the proposal to interpret Launceston's central business district and the eclectic block between Brisbane and York, and St John and Charles Streets.

"We'll explore how Launceston may have developed and students will create their own proposals for the city, new alternate timelines branching off from 1955."

The studio will encourage a sophisticated response to heritage, something the Green family believes is important.

"We are excited by the course program that been developed for the 2019 Design Studio Award and the underlying heritage project based on plans developed in the 1950s for a Launceston block," Caroline Johnston, a member of the Green

family said. "We look forward to the students sharing their work at the community exhibition and lecture to be held later this year."

The Award was launched on March 28 at the University's Inveresk campus. The launch featured an exhibition of the plans from 1955, some of the students' early work and a panel discussion with highly regarded architects Mat Hinds and Kerstin Thompson.

The Green Family Award will also support a series of lectures bringing internationally regarded architects to Launceston, which are open to the public.

"We are delighted to see the commencement of our family's second award and to be working again with the University of Tasmania," Mrs Johnston said.

"The family hopes the award will encourage and develop, in architecture students and the wider Tasmanian community, a greater appreciation of heritage projects, past and present."

The University's Executive Director of Advancement, Kate Robertson, said Dick and Joan Green were renowned champions of heritage and instrumental in the establishment of the National Trust in Tasmania.

"This new award, which follows the family's Award for Tasmanian History, is an example of how philanthropy can drive innovation in teaching and research," Ms Robertson said.

"Our students are learning in ways that are not possible anywhere else in the world, unravelling the past and possible futures of Launceston with the support and insights of the people who helped shape it."

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