PIONEER e-Xpress
Monthly Newsletter of the Pioneers Association of South Australia Inc
October 2019

OCTOBER

PASA VISIT TO THE FLEURIEU: Tuesday 29 - Thursday 31 October. All participants have received a programme with full details of the 3 days.

NOVEMBER

MOFFAT SHIPPING GROUP MEETING: Wed 6 November from 10.00am-12 noon in the PASA Office, Level 1, Harmer House, Leigh St, Adelaide.

PASA VISIT TO THE GRANGE, home of Captain Charles Sturt, Wednesday 13 November from 11.00am-1.30pm. at The Grange, 39D Jetty St, Grange. Admission of $6 payable on arrival includes tour of house, talk and morning tea. BYO lunch. Bookings essential to the PASA Office by Tuesday 5 November.

DECEMBER

PIONEER GROUP LUNCHEON Wednesday 4 December from 12noon – 2.00pm at the Pilgrim Uniting Church Hall, 12 Flinders St, Adelaide. Topic: 1839, a retrospective 180 years on. BYO Lunch. Christmas cake and tea/coffee provided. Members $2, non-members $5

PROCLAMATION DAY LUNCH Saturday 28 December 12noon for 12.30pm at the Glenelg Golf Club, James Melrose Drive, Novar Gardens.

Three course luncheon with drink on arrival. Speaker Justin Gore, Sir George Strickland Kingston.

Members $70, non-members $75. Bookings and payment essential by 10 December.

KINGSLEY IRELAND
1942-2019

It is with sadness that we advise the passing of PASA Past President Kingsley Ireland. His funeral service and celebration of a life fully and richly lived was held on Wednesday 16 October at the Old Union Chapel in Angaston; fittingly, Kingsley had been instrumental in the restoration of this historical building. Kingsley joined PASA in 1969, became a Council member in 1996 and was the 6th President of the Association from 1997-99 at which time he stepped aside due to ill health. PASA President David Forsaith, who presented part of the eulogy to Kingsley, pointed out that “in those 2 years, he reorganised and revitalised the Association, setting it up for the 21st century.”

Other eulogies at the service highlighted Kingsley’s significant contributions to a range of cultural, historical and community organisations within the Barossa Valley and to his expertise and passion for genealogy. Kingsley’s leadership of PASA is detailed in chapters 16 and 17 of our publication The Pioneers Association of South Australia: the first 80 years by Cheryl Williss

Vale Kingsley

Old Union Chapel, Angaston
SHARING STORIES: A report on the John Renwick Same Ships meeting by Sue Fox

The bonus of get-togethers like the Shipping Group meetings is that talking to others whose pioneers came out on the same ship as your own ancestors can fast-track your research. It also helps keep you motivated despite the setbacks caused by confusing dates and name changes that make progress slow at times.

Libby Ottaway found information from letters to family back home and diaries of the journey of Henry Field and others in his company. She had a tale of caution to tell with the photo provided in her Pioneer Poster which she had been assured was her ancestor Henry Field. Further research has shown it was not him. Checking and double-checking facts usually provides surety, but not always, as in this case! Researcher beware!

Another interesting outcome was the discovery of links between current PASA members dating back to the early years. Rae Lang and Julie Russell found shared ancestors, and we began to see patterns develop where pioneers settled for farming, establishing orchards and that marrying sisters or brothers from the same families as a deceased spouse was not an uncommon event. It certainly made practical sense to keep families, sometimes with many young children, supported at the time.

Our different stories highlighted problems, but also possible answers. Like discrepancies about arrival dates that vary as passengers may not have disembarked at the same time as a ship docked e.g. a woman about to give birth or just having given birth often stayed aboard as facilities didn’t exist in early Adelaide.

It showed too, that persistence pays when you finally realise that the 2 Johns did indeed marry 2 Elizabeths of the same name – one being a widow marrying the father & her daughter marrying the son & both naming their children after themselves. Confusing!

Sharing around the table over a cuppa was a great way to learn more about fellow PASA members, as well as to hear where resources could be found to help with our research.

Michael Gray read a few excerpts from WH Gray, A Pioneer Colonist in South Australia by E. Hasenohr. Listening to an account of how settlers had to open umbrellas inside their huts to keep off the rain gave a different perspective of day-to-day life in the early years.
Kath Fisher (above on the right) shared a newspaper interview with Catherine, the 90-year-old daughter of her pioneer Thomas Welbourn. Her description of the landing was fascinating and interesting to note that Thomas signed the petition to keep convicts out of South Australia.

There were 11 in our group and it was easy to fill the time sharing our Pioneers stories. Karina Hutchesson (Convenor) explained the aim of the Same Ships Project and provided us with a usb that Julie Neale (PASA Librarian) had created with information on the Ship & Passengers for us to check and add to with our own information.

COMING EVENTS

VISIT TO “THE GRANGE”

This year marks the 175th anniversary of Captain Charles Sturt’s expedition to inland Australia in 1844/45 and so it is very fitting that PASA will be visiting his historic home The Grange to mark the many contributions this explorer and public servant made to the early history of South Australia. The visit will be held on Wednesday 13 November from 11.00am - 1.30pm and will include a tour of the house and exhibitions, a talk and morning tea.

Please bring your own lunch as per our usual Group Luncheon meetings. Admission is $6 which is payable upon arrival at The Grange. If planning to attend, please book through the PASA Office by Tuesday 5 November.

1839: A RETROSPECTIVE 180 YEARS ON

Colonel William Light, whose death in Adelaide on 6 October 1839, was a major event in the life of the Colony in that year.

Our Retrospectives have become very popular events over the past few years. Our luncheon meeting at Pilgrim Uniting Church on Wednesday 4 December will feature a number of members speaking briefly about key events and personalities of 1839. It’s the usual BYO lunch, arrive around 12noon, with the speakers commencing at 12.15pm. Tea, coffee and Christmas cake will be provided. This is a great meeting to introduce PASA to your friends; members $2, non members/guests $5.

Members who are presenting the Retrospective are reminded to send any illustrations for the combined power point presentation to Bob Stace at bobstace@adam.com.au ASAP, but no later than 22 November.

PROCLAMATION DAY LUNCH

PASA’s Proclamation Day Lunch is always an enjoyable and memorable occasion. Its the day all members remember the lives of their ancestors who came as pioneers to this State. Once again it will be held at the Glenelg Golf Club whose hospitality always impresses. Its wise to pay and book early for this event. Full details on page 1 in Upcoming Events.
MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Introducing Sue Fox who joined the PASA Council at the recent AGM. Sue is already involved with the Events Committee and has been using her camera skills taking photos for this newsletter.

Sue along with her husband Rob (now deceased) joined PASA in 2017. They were working on their family history together and came across Rob’s Great Grandfather’s Bible and dining table in the Lobethal Museum; he had brought these items on the Buffalo. They decided to dig a little further and came upon the Pioneers Association and of course had to join!

Sue’s earliest Pioneer is Peter Larns Darcy Hunter and his wife Eliza who arrived on the Eliza in 1840. Sue is currently focussing her research efforts on John Pearson from the John Renwick (1839) and is also gathering information on 10 others, including 3 German families who arrived on the Skjold in 1841.

Sue has already completed 2 posters; one on Peter Hunter and the other on her husband Rob’s pioneer ancestor also named Robert Fox who came on the Buffalo.

"In memory of Charles Sturt and Collet Barker, Captains of the 39th Regiment, brother officers, fellow explorers and friends. Hereabouts, in February 1830, Sturt first saw the waters of Encounter Bay, thus crowning his heroic voyage of discovery down the Murray River. At the Murray Mouth in April 1831, Barker perished, having completed Sturt’s task of exploration. During which he discovered the Port Adelaide inlet and first ascended Mount Lofty."

October Quiz

George Kingston designed this five-room redbrick cottage (below) in 1842. It was one of the earliest and most elegant homes to be built in the Adelaide region during the Colonial era.

Accidental Discoveries??

Your Editor would love to hear from members who started their family history quest with an accidental discovery like Sue.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

September Answer:

The monument on Hindmarsh Island was erected in 1930 to honor both Captain Charles Sturt and Captain Collet Barker and the inscription reads:

October Quiz

George Kingston designed this five-room redbrick cottage (below) in 1842. It was one of the earliest and most elegant homes to be built in the Adelaide region during the Colonial era.

Question: What is the name of the house, and who lived there after it was built?

PIioneer POSTer PROJECT

The Pioneers Association has amassed a collection of over two hundred Pioneer Posters, written by PASA members, since 2014. These posters commemorate the lives of the early colonists.

If you are interested in developing a Pioneer Poster in 2019-20 then please register your interest ASAP (including the name of the pioneer) by emailing Judith Francis at:

pasa2019posters@gmail.com

You will receive detailed information and support throughout the writing process.
JOHN CHARLES DARKE: SURVEYOR AND EXPLORER

Fifty members and guests attended the luncheon in the Walkerville Uniting Church Hall on Monday 30 September to hear PASA member Tom Chapman AM tell the story of his ancestor John Darke.

Tom’s vibrant telling of the adventurous but tragic story of his forebear was enjoyed by all present and was another great example of the many stories of our early pioneers that we PASA members are privileged to hear.

The following is a summary of Tom’s presentation. A full version will soon be placed on the PASA website.

John Charles Darke (1806-1844) first arrived in Australia at the age of 18 in April 1824 when he migrated to Tasmania with his Uncles John and Edward Wedge. Darke worked under the guidance of his uncles with the surveying of tracts of untamed land in Tasmania as well as farming his own land. In 1826 he was instrumental in the capture of notorious serial killer and cannibal bushranger, Jeffries, (Tom’s description was quite graphic!) and was granted 500 acres as a result.

In 1836 Darke left for Port Phillip with 1030 sheep and took up land in the Barwon River area but didn’t stay long before his wanderlust took over and he accepted an appointment as Assistant Surveyor in South Australia at the end of 1838, arriving on the Lady Emma from Launceston. Initially Darke undertook some surveying work in the Sturt River area before resigning from his position in 1839. He married Elizabeth Isabella Carter in 1840 and undertook freelance surveying including work for the Hawker Brothers at Bungaree.

By 1844 there was intense interest in the Colony in exploring the country west and north west of Port Lincoln and Spencer’s Gulf including the area of the Gawler Ranges and Darke was selected to lead an expedition there. The small expedition party consisting of Darke and 3 others, a bullock dray and provisions for 4 months after departing Adelaide, left Port Lincoln on 29 August. (Quite a contrast to the lavish farewell given to Sturt’s well-funded and resourced expedition which left Adelaide at about the same time)

All went well with the expedition until they reached a spot known today as Waddikee Rocks (north of the current township of Darke Peak and NW of Cleve) on 21 October 1844. Here Darke’s journal recorded that they had a friendly encounter with 3 “natives” who assisted the party in finding water. “I gave them bread and sugar ….and they seemed very friendly disposed” he wrote. However, on the morning of 23 October a larger group of about 20 aborigines arrived and when Darke left the campsite and moved towards the bush he was speared twice to the stomach and knee.

Mr Theakston (second in charge) treated his wounds but they were of a “dreadful nature” and he (Darke) suffered very much” The expedition attempted to pull back towards Port Lincoln but by the next morning Darke had died of his wounds. Darke was buried...
nearby on a small grassy plain in sight of the Gawler Ranges and adjacent to the present township of Darke Peake.

The gravesite was rediscovered in 1909 and in 1910 the South Australian Government funded and erected a marble obelisk on the site with a plaque which reads “sacred to the memory of John Charles Darke, surveyor, who was mortally wounded by the natives when exploring in this locality on October 23, 1844, and died on the following day”.

A feature of the afternoon was the presence of PASA member Peter Dunn who is very familiar with the Darke Peake area where his family farming property, Pendeen Farm, is located. Peter displayed a photo of his property showing the Gawler Ranges and Darke Peak in the background. (see below)