Seasons Greetings to all readers of the Pioneer e-Xpress. This newsletter contains details of PASA’s celebration of Proclamation Day which is the final event for what has been a most enjoyable and worthwhile calendar of events for 2019. It also contains details of the first few events for 2020 along with news of the 2020 Same Ships project. So, now is the time to enter this information in your newly purchased 2020 diary!

As you celebrate Christmas in a week’s time, it might be interesting to reflect on the experiences of Mary Thomas as she celebrated her first Christmas in a land far from home in 1836. (below)

Best Wishes to you all at this special time.
Bob Stace, Editor

CHRISTMAS DAY IN 1836

Mary Thomas recorded the events of the first Christmas Day at Holdfast Bay in 1836 as the settlers, who had already arrived on the first 8 ships, awaited the arrival of Governor Hindmarsh on the Buffalo.

“December the 25th, 1836

This being Christmas Day and Sunday, divine service was held for the first time in the hut of the principal surveyor, a short distance from our tents. We attended taking our own seats with us: the signal for attending being the firing of a gun. The congregation numbered 25 persons, including the 2 gentlemen who conducted the
service, the thermometer standing at 100 degrees, and most of those assembled being in the open air. ......... We kept up the old custom of Christmas as far as having a plum pudding for dinner was concerned, likewise a ham and parrot pie, but one of our neighbours, as we afterwards found, had a large piece of roast beef, though we were not aware at that time that any fresh meat was available in the Colony.”

[[Mary Thomas went on to explain the mystery surrounding the roast beef]
“It appears that the Captain of the Africaine had a cow and calf on board which were trans-shipped to land for a change of scenery. They were placed under the care of one of the emigrants. Unfortunately in one respect and fortunately in another, the cow was tied to a tree not far from a lagoon. She got over the bank, fell in and was hopelessly injured. She was killed and in this way some of the emigrants were supplied with a little Christmas beef.”

[There is ample evidence that the cow’s “slip” into the ditch was no accident! Ed]

Mary Thomas’ tent, adjacent to the Old Gum Tree, where she and her family celebrated Christmas Day, 1836

PROCLAMATION DAY CELEBRATIONS

Proclamation Day 28 December has become the traditional day for all PASA members to celebrate and reflect on the lives of their ancestors who arrived in South Australia during the first 10 years of the Colony. Those who live in or near Adelaide can join in the public celebration at the Old Gum Tree and /or PASA’s special lunch at the Glenelg Golf Club. Those of you who live further afield can take this opportunity to pause, reflect and give thanks for the lives of your ancestors.

Attending the public Ceremony at the Old Gum Tree at Glenelg North is a great way to start the day. If you plan to attend it’s wise to arrive by 9.00am to allow time for parking in the nearby streets and finding a seat. The ceremony commences with the arrival of the Governor at 9.30am and concludes about an hour later; morning tea is then served.

The PASA Proclamation Day Lunch at the Glenelg Golf Club is fully booked. This year our Patron, His Excellency the Governor and Mrs Le will join us for our celebrations.

Our guest speaker is Justin Gare from Artlab with his topic being, Sir George Strickland Kingston; the man, his contributions and his vision.

Members and guests should arrive around 12 noon, enjoy a pre-lunch drink and be seated by 12.25pm in time for the Governor’s arrival at 12.30pm.

HANS HEYSEN: The early Years

Our first meeting of 2020 will be held on Wednesday 5 February in the Banqueting Room of the St Peters Cultural Centre, 101 Paynham Rd, St Peters. This will be in the format of our Pioneer Group Luncheons; 12 noon to 2.00pm, BYO lunch, with tea, coffee and biscuits provided. There is no charge for this event.

Our speaker will be Denise Schumann OAM with her topic being: Hans Heysen, the early influences during his childhood growing up in Hackney and East Adelaide.
Denise is a professional historian who has a special interest in this topic. Don’t miss what will be a most interesting and informative start to our 2020 speaker programme.

SAME SHIPS 2020 PROGRAMME
The popular and worthwhile Same Ships project will continue in 2020. The programme appears below with all meetings to be held in the PASA office on the specified Wednesdays from 10am to 12 noon.

Feb 12 - Workshop
Mar 11 - Java
Apr 8 - Fairfield
Jun 10 - Fairlie
Jul 8 - Charles Kerr
Aug 12 - Eliza
Sep 9 - Brightman
Oct 14 - Birman
Nov 11 - Research Help

The 7 ships chosen for the 2020 programme all arrived in 1840.

The first meeting on 12 February will be primarily for those who are planning to do ships' research and data entry. There will be an interactive large screen so everyone can see the format preferred for the entry of data There will be a question and answer session to clarify details of how we are collecting and collating.

The Research Help meeting in November will be primarily for members whose ancestors arrived in 1840 and need help with finding resources. Hopefully they will share their findings with us to add to the ships' folders.

If you would like to express your interest in being part of this project, then please contact Karina Hutchesson via:

pasa.sameships@gmail.com

EARLY DIARY DATES FOR 2020
It’s that time of the year when we are already juggling dates for next year. So, here are some dates for the first part of 2020 which you might like to include in your new diary. More details in future newsletters.

Wednesday 4 March: Pioneer Group Luncheon
12noon – 2.00pm in the Hall of the Walkerville Uniting Church, 17 Smith St, Walkerville.
BYO lunch, with tea, coffee and biscuits provided. Cost $2 for members and $5 for non-members

Speaker Enid Sutton.
Topic: South Australia’s unknown pioneer, pastoralist John Gifford.

Cemetery Tour: There will be a guided tour of the adjacent historic Wesleyan Methodist Cemetery prior to this luncheon commencing at 10.45am. Jim Everett will once again lead this tour. Prior bookings to the Office are essential as this guided walk has a limit of 20 participants.

Wednesday 1 April: Pub Luncheon at the Hotel Edinburgh, High St Mitcham from 12 noon for 12.30pm -3.00pm. Speaker: Emeritus Professor Wayne Sampson. Topic: Dentists and Dentistry in Colonial South Australia. This is guaranteed to be far from a “boring” presentation. Costs and booking arrangements will be available in the next newsletter.
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

November Answer: The writer to the Register in 1877, who wrote so strongly in opposition to the inappropriate use of the Parklands and forcibly made the point that Colonel William Light had been responsible for the original plan of Adelaide, was none other than Sir George Strickland Kingston. The story of his contribution to South Australia will be the subject of Justin Gare’s eagerly awaited presentation at our Proclamation Day Lunch.

December Question: Which well-known American author made the following observation on viewing the Old Gum Tree on Proclamation Day 1896? [It was then called Commemoration Day – Ed]

As I approached (the Old Gum Tree), it seemed bent with age, and possibly with discouragement and despair; but as I came nearer, I saw it formed a perfect arch – a symbol of strength and perpetuity.

To assist you with the answer, a photo of this American author taken in 1895 appears to the left.

VOLUNTEERS: They make PASA tick!

Our PASA volunteers celebrated the end of another year with their traditional pre-Christmas luncheon in the Office this week. It’s been a busier than usual year for our volunteers this year. Not only did our volunteers carry out the usual tasks of supporting members and preparing and running events, activities and workshops, but there was also the move to our new Office in Harmer House. When sending out invitations for the lunch, a list of nearly 40 volunteers was drawn up who had either helped in the Office, taken on PASA tasks at home or contributed as part of the PASA Council.

In thanking the volunteers, President David Forsaith pointed out that until about 20 years ago some of the work of PASA was done by paid staff with minimal involvement of volunteers. This was placing PASA in a parlous financial state by the end of the 20th century when the change to a voluntary run organization was made. Not only has this change strengthened our financial situation but more importantly it has greatly enhanced the sense of ownership, involvement and participation amongst our members.

Two of our newest PASA members, Bobbie and Robin Mulholland, whose membership was approved at the recent December meeting of Council, are both already enjoying volunteering and attended the lunch. If like them you have an interest in data entry, research, or cross-checking information and would like to learn more skills then you would be most welcome.

We are looking for volunteers to work in a cooperative team to undertake a variety of ongoing office tasks. Your skills can be used in office administration, library, and shipping projects, either working from home or at the PASA office.

Please drop into the office on a Tuesday in January, or ring or email us (attention: Judith
Francis) if you would like further information about how you can be part of a team helping PASA.

[Foot note: On a day when the outside temperature soared to 42C, the volunteers were able to enjoy much more pleasant conditions in our new office, A far cry from the previous office in the basement!]

Thirteen presenters shared ancestor stories and events of 1839 in the 180 years on Retrospective at the recent December Pioneer Group Lunch meeting. The varied topics of the speakers were enjoyed by those who attended; their topics in order of presentation were:

1. David Forsaith: an introduction to the events of 1839
3. Rebecca Geisler: James and Lucy Cobbledick, an unexpected life together.
4. Michael Smith: The 1839 Farthing; a family heirloom from the D’Auvergne
5. Don Goldney: The elusive Fassnidge family
7. Ray Cowley: George and Anne Lovelock from the Prince Regent
8. Bob Stace: The death and funeral of Colonel William Light
10. Ken Jacobs: Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, the proposal
11. Kath Rayner; Richard Hill of Willunga
12. Deb Bryant; George and Caroline Staples, from Kent to Prospect Hill
13. Judith Francis: Susannah Phillis (nee Chapman), her life in SA.

Transcripts of the talks will soon be available in the members section of the PASA website.