



Friends of Mandurah Museum Newsletter **June 2021**

Solomon Levy part 2 During the period spanning late 1828 and April 1829 there was much correspondence between Thomas Peel and the British Government and changes to what the Government would agree to do for Peel. All these changes were to decrease the value of what Peel planned, plus to impact on the time available to sail fully equipped. It is well documented about the trials and difficulties which Peel faced but we should certainly take into consideration the following. From late January 1829 when Twiss and Murray finally finished addressing all Peel's concerns plus Stirling's desires, there was just 9 months to achieve much. Amongst this Thomas Peel, and or his agents, had to obtain suitable ships for the voyage. Then 400 settlers to be found and selected, with time for them to pack. The settlers also had to obtain information about what they needed, their personal supplies, farewell loved ones and then move onto the boats. Peel had to also source supplies of farm animals, food in large quantities, suitable seeds plus a backup of other provisions. A minimum of three and a half month's voyage time had to also be allowed. In fact, the *Gilmore* sailed on August 10th, which without any interruptions or delays still meant they would not arrive before November the 1st and of course history records there were delays.

The arrival of the *Gilmore*, and subsequent events are also well documented, but it is worth repeating some of them. Most of the livestock on board the ship had perished leaving few for either breeding or feeding. There was a delay with further provisions during which time Peel was forced to purchase 60 head of cattle at £5 each off the *Norfolk*, cargoed in as a speculation in early January. Most of these were also to perish. The ship *Industry* finally arrived on January 20th with further supplies arranged by Levy and sent from Sydney by Cooper and Levy.

By the 12th of February, the *Hooghly* arrived with another 173 settlers, more mouths to feed. Later with the *Rockingham's* arrival without further supplies, money or letter to Peel, times were indeed desperate. What Peel was not aware of was that information had reached London of Stirling's imminent departure from the colony, and the failure of it, all this coming from South Africa. At this time, the *Rockingham* was still in port and Levy sent an urgent letter to Sir George Murray in his role as 'attorney' debating on whether he should delay or stop the voyage. A public announcement was made at that time by the Government that all was rumours, and not fact.

From the Editor.

We start this newsletter with a sense of déjà vu, the museum is once again closed. This time it is not due to Covid19, but to the ongoing problem of the roof leaking. Consequently, much of this newsletter has been put together from our homes or other worksites.

The completion of information relating to Solomon Levy is included in this newsletter. This information will be later produced as yet another fact sheet available at the museum. When possible, we can put these sheets on line, however, we have space limitations on our website so not all of them are available there. It is noteworthy that many of the articles produced in this newsletter are later suitable for Fact Sheets and we welcome input on any historical matter both for the newsletter and for our local studies information folders.

For this edition I have resurrected a book report section, this was something we did very early in the life of this newsletter but later, just an occasional offering. Due to needing to prepare the newsletter offsite, reading the book "The Last Convict" by Anthony Hill (available through Mandurah Libraries) was timely.

Information is included from both Nicholas and Katrina on what they are managing to do offsite and where they are based.

Jan Baker

Special features	
Solomon Levy (2)	Jan Baker.
The Last Convict.	Book Report.
Regular features.	
From the MDO .	Nicholas Reynolds.
Education Matters.	Katrina Gauci
Maritime Report	David Austin.
Spotlight on Volunteers.	Jan Baker
Chairpersons report.	Jan Baker.
Editor	Jan Baker.

What Levy thought is unknown but as mentioned later, he did not communicate by letter or send documents or money with the ship to Peel.

By May 17th there is word arriving that Daniel Cooper in Sydney has placed an advertisement distancing himself from Peel, W.A. who was alerted to this by incoming ships. It is possible that when both the *Industry* and *Gilmore* arrived in Sydney that they had given an unbelievably bad account of Peel and the Swan River venture, especially after Peel's problems with their captains. It is also probable that Peel's agent in Perth who was much disgruntled, had written a derogatory letter to Daniel Cooper.

Lack of communication, provision of funds, and the refusal of Daniel Cooper to honour Solomon Levy's order for Thomas Peel's settlement was to prove devastating for the actual success of Peel's undertaking.

Captain Stirling, due to concerns within West Australia leaves for London to enlist government support for the colony. He was unsuccessful with this and returns to W.A. Information appears to show he spent only four months away, a time which would not appear to provide sufficient weight or attention to that concern, taking into consideration the voyage out and return times. However, while he is there it is believed that Levy seeing of his arrival in the newspapers, would have sought him out.

By late 1832, Levy has still not receiving communication from Peel, who we know had sustained a wound to his dominant hand which forced him to relearn to write with his left hand. Levy becomes extremely concerned and now approaches the English Government with documents relating to the Partnership with Thomas Peel. He is asked to put his concerns in writing which he does in January.

On May 14th 1833 Solomon Levy sends a letter to Colonial Secretary, Peter Brown, with a copy to Peel via the *Governor Stirling* ship, that Levy has arranged sufficient supplies to cover the amount now owed by Peel. He stated that arrangements had been made with Cooper and Levy for these supplies to offset the Partnerships debts to the then government of the colony. On 27th of May a letter was sent to Wm Hutchinson (his agent) to sell portions of his personal land at Chippendale (valued at £380 on purchase in 1821) & other property at Liverpool also, it is believed that this sale was to offset the supplies and shipping. The request for these supplies was not honoured in New South Wales, and the supplies were not sent. Nor did Hutchinson proceed with the sale, these lands were to be part of the estate wound up many years after the death of Levy.

We don't know why Daniel Cooper decided in 1830 to ignore Levy's request to send supplies, nor do we know about any further communication between Cooper and Levy. From this time, most financial items brought to the attention of Daniel Cooper on behalf of Levy & Peel appear to have been ignored or refused. It is left for history to wonder whether Levy's health was now deteriorating, and he is unable to attend to business. Or whether he has been so long from the Colony and Cooper had become so powerful that he can ignore his partner's wishes. What is shown in historical documents about Daniel Cooper is that he has arranged his affairs, appointed a manager, and left for England in 1831. He didn't return to N.S.W. after that. There is no documentation that he has contact with Solomon Levy at any time after his arrival in the United Kingdom. Daniel Cooper died 1853 in Lancashire.

Solomon's death on the 10th of October 1833, was reported in Sydney on the 18th of February. The partnership of Cooper and Levy was to continue for 12 months and then be wound up in his will's instructions. That partnership then changed to Cooper, Holt and Roberts. He was never to visit Western Australia, but his son did in 1843 to finalise his inheritance. He received a portion of the land grants deeded to the Peel settlements. Neither did his son spend much time within Australia before returning to England. It does not appear that John Levy-Roberts ever sought any form of employment instead enjoying the fruits of his father's enterprises.

Finally, how does history judge Solomon Levy. As a young man he was convicted of stealing, being transported to the colony of New South Wales did not mean the end for him. He gained his freedom; he prospered and became involved in public affairs. He was willing to take on the unknown, both in the land of Western Australia and also Thomas Peel. He didn't actually default on any of his undertaking for Peel, however his partner's refusal to honour his undertakings did cause much difficulty. His will shows he was generous and did not forget his family, and left bequests which were to become part of the first bequest to Sydney College, later to be part of money's raised for Sydney University. His name is given to one of the first scholarships of the University of Sydney and stands at the head of the list of benefactors of the University.

Jan Baker



Photograph of the Beeswax wraps workshop held at the Falcon Library after the closure of the Museum.



Photo of an Australian Native Bee (photo Aussie Bee)

MDO Report.

On Thursday February 25th I attended a workshop held at the new WA Museum. This event featured keynote speaker Nigel Oakey, Managing Director of the Dome Café Group, who spoke about the transformative work he has done through adaptive reuse of heritage at the Premier Mill Hotel in Katanning and The Farmers' Home Hotel in Northam. This was followed by a series of fascinating speakers who shared their stories and showcased the diversity of WA's rich cultural heritage. One of the stand outs was a presentation on the new interpretation work at the old keeper's quarters at the Cape Leeuwin Light-house. A guided tour of the new WA Museum was held for attendees after the workshop had finished.

During the quarterly volunteer coordinator's meeting at the Peel Volunteer Resource Centre on May 13th it was announced that resulting from the Federal Government cutting a sizeable part of the funding which enables them to operate, staff will need to be cut and most face-to-face services change to an online only model. While contact online is important, it can't be denied that many of the volunteers which the Museum has attracted began with fact-to-face or phone contact through our local Volunteer Resource Centre. This cut in funding to a vital element of the Mandurah community is very disappointing. I have interviewed three new prospective volunteers in the last month who have all applied to the Museum starting at the resource centre and we have had a successful relationship with them for at least twenty years. Naturally, this will continue but I can't help feeling that the funding cut will reduce the access that volunteers have to local community groups in Mandurah.

On the 20th of May the Collections WA workshop which was previously postponed after our last COVID lockdown was held at Fairbridge Village. Collections WA is a website established by the WA Museum which allows smaller museums and historical societies who do not have their collections available to be viewed online placed on the website. This is primarily designed for collections that use the Mosaic collection database which has some difficulties when it comes to an online presence. While this is not an issue for us with our Archives database, the site is still a useful way to promote our Museum to a wider audience. By having a presence on the website we will be able to be included as a WA collection featuring some of our most important and iconic objects. It was a great workshop and allowed for some great networking with Murray Districts Historical Society and Christen Bell from History House Museum in Armadale.

Another rescheduled event took place at the Frazer's Landing community space on the afternoon of Friday May 28th. The Peel Environment and Heritage Group held a public talk on the history of the Sapphire Cove area. I was glad to present for them on this topic and I must thank Barry Small, a stalwart of the group over the years for arranging the alternate venue at short notice. The crowd was great and they all pitched in to help set up. I know the talk was well received and it marked a great end to their event series which resulted from a Restart Mandurah grant supplied by the City.

No doubt many will be aware of the temporary closure of the Museum for roof and ceiling repairs. As the Museum is housed within buildings of local historical significance the restoration process is a little more complicated, but the City is working to have the Museum reopen for the community to enjoy as soon as possible. During the closure, teams will also be working to refresh the Museum to have it looking great when it reopens. We apologise for any inconvenience caused by the closure, and thank the community for their understanding during this time. The City's Museum Team will be continuing its popular heritage walks, school engagement in local history and management of its important collection items. I'll keep everyone updated as work progresses.

Nicholas Reynolds

Education Matters

May was National Honey Month

To celebrate bees and honey during Honey Month. The Mandurah Museum arranged for Caitlin from 'None of Your Beeswax' to provide a workshop on how to make beeswax food wraps.

These wraps are a low impact and sustainable alternative to cling wrap. They are washable, reusable and at the end of their lives they are compostable.

Caitlin explained a number of ways to make beeswax wraps and each participant took home a medium sized wrap and a beeswax kit. The kit included all you need, to make your own wraps at home.

This workshop was held at the Falcon eLibrary and Community Centre.

Places were limited to ensure Covid safety guidelines were followed. We were extremely pleased with the attendance of 19 people at the workshop.

The feedback from participants was very positive and they were keen to go home to make their own wraps with their new-found knowledge.

Katrina Gauci



Caitlin, the facilitator.

Book Report. The Last Convict by Anthony Hill. This book describes in detail the type of punishment which greeted those entering the penal system in Victorian England. I had read of some of the earlier conditions in prisons which were not good. Changes which came into force towards the middle of the 19th century I found quite horrifying, with the absolute punishment to prevent repeat crime mindless, torturous and little or no benefit to society (apart from preventing a return to prison).

The story follows Sam Speed as he comes to Western Australia on one of the last convict shipments here. It describes his treatment, and progression through the system which existed in W.A. and his subsequent life into very old age.

Sam's is not a life of interest, a never-ending series of toil with little to show for it. The book is however, an interesting discussion of life in the colony and some of the well-known citizens of the day. The author has written with empathy and consideration of the effects of incarceration on a very young man.

Author Anthony Hill has detailed some of the historic events known in our region in his book, whether the real Sam Speed actually knew of these events is not known, but his time as an early settler and a few items let drop by Sam, let them be part of the narrative.

As Anthony Hill describes, without the interview (lately found in Trove) which was recorded in the Mirror just two months prior to the death of the "Last Convict" very little would be documented and discoverable about Sam.

Sam died in what became Sunset Hospital, which had its roots in the convict quarters in Kings Park. For those working in Perth, it later became a sort of workhouse for the poor and needy of the colony. This workhouse led to the building of Claremont Old Men's Depot a kind of poorhouse which when opened, housed 350 men. This home was to prove invaluable with 750 residents accommodated during the Depression.

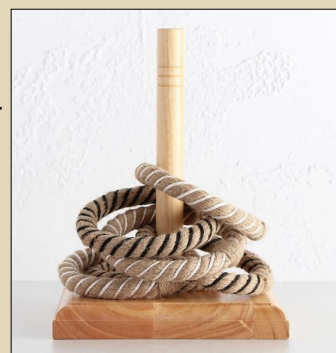
I found much to interest me in this book, the writing style is very readable. I suspect I will be searching out Anthony Hill's book, "Captain Cook's Apprentice" to read and hopefully enjoy. **Jan Baker.**

Games of Yesteryear. We have talked about the box brownie camera, and last newsletter we featured the game of Bobs. This month **Quoits** will feature.

Playing them as a child, we always had a set made of rope. There is some skill attached to this game and of course like most games, this skill is acquired by practice. There are several other versions, and the dictionary describes it as being played with metal rings, other varieties include the rope, wood, metal, and large rings as in fairgrounds.

The set of quoits used at the Museum by visiting children is of the rope variety. The rope variety is mostly used on ships to pass the time and create competition between passengers. I remember doing this on an old diesel-powered steam ship which was part cruise, part cargo sailing out of Fremantle in the early '70's. The rope style was to protect the decks from any damage. Playing this game on ships goes as far back as the late 19th century. It is probable that a form of this game was played in ancient Greece with athletes throwing a discus in competition. The game as we play it, appears to have evolved in hotels as a team sport in England. However, it was also a popular sport in the United States in the 19th century, having been played by both sides in the American Revolutionary War.

At the Museum, the visiting schoolchildren have a chance to try their luck. In fact, the people who most want to try their skill is either the attending parents or schoolteachers who remember past activities. Children today appear to have much more sophisticated games, many of which are played electronically. Our aim at the museum is to introduce them to something from the past that requires attention and skill and of course can be played either indoors or outdoors.



Sunset Hospital buildings c2020.



Maritime Moorings.

The heritage educational cruises have resumed with each trip this year being blessed with excellent weather for a trip on the water.

The team have made a number of improvement to the boat. The first is the a new flight of steps complete with hand rails have been designed, made and installed by the crew. This make entering and exiting the boat very easy and safe. The second change is the removal of the overhead banner that was designed to advertise the Museum, this has been replaced by the name "Mandurah Museum" depicted on the bows of the boat. We found the overhead banner made the boat difficult to handle in windy weather. With our banner, we continue to attract a lot of attention and hope this leads to more visitors exploring the Museum.

David Austin.

More Moorings from Michael.

At the committee meeting last week, Michael McGhie gave us further news on the Maritime Groups boat outings. The museum's boat can only be used for Museum Volunteers or employees of the Council due to insurance and licensing agreements.

Under these circumstances the boat has been out several times, in these instances the group have been able to show the Information Centre people some of the heritage areas of Mandurah while informing them of the history surrounding us. Many such trips are planned in the next several weeks.

The new banner has been a great success with people stopping to stare at the boat, read the sign and then wave.

With the assistance of Eleanor Kay, Michael has been preparing a book on the boat, Canopus and the groups resurrection of the boat. More news about the book should be available shortly.

Once that is completed, Michael hopes to commence a similar book on Olaf Wilson.

Committee News. Unfortunately our Chairperson, Ceylene Copley continues to be unwell.

In her absence the committee met on 28th of May at Mandurah Library, to discuss various items. The Friends continue to be involved in assisting the Museum in its endeavours.

Unfortunately as the Museum is currently closed we do not have a routine meeting place so have not scheduled any events there for the moment.

Please consider joining us for a morning tea (information below). We ask you purchase your own morning tea or coffee while the Friends will provide some small eats to accompany your drinks.

There is no talk scheduled, this will just be an opportunity to catch up with everyone. *Jan Baker.*

***Friends of Mandurah Museum,
are invited to.
End of Financial Year Morning Tea.***

Wednesday 30th June - 10am.

***Where - Sunbreakers
110 Mandurah Tce, Mandurah.***

***All Friends welcome, we ask you order
and purchase your own tea or coffee.***

***The Friends will provide a range of morn-
ing tea foods to accompany your drink
purchase.***

***Please R.S.V.P to Jan 0407804059, or by
email to editormcm@westnet.com.au***



**Mandurah Museum,
3 Pinjarra Rd,
MANDURAH WA 6210.**

Telephone: 9550 3680.

Email: museum@mandurah.wa.gov.au

**Internet: [www.mandurah.wa.gov.au/Facilities/
Museum/Friends](http://www.mandurah.wa.gov.au/Facilities/Museum/Friends)**

Opening hours.

Tuesday to Friday. 10 am to 4pm.

Saturday & Sunday. 11 am to 3pm.

Closed Mondays and Public Holidays.

**Friends of Mandurah Museum,
3 Pinjarra Rd,
MANDURAH WA 6210.**

Meetings 4 times per year as notified.

**The mission of the Friends is to provide assistance
and support to the Museum in all its endeavours.
The 'Friends' also seek to promote the heritage and
history of Mandurah, and to assist other like minded
bodies.**

**Membership of the Friends is by a yearly member-
ship fee of \$10 due each August.**

Friends of Mandurah Museum,
are invited to -
End of Financial Year Morning Tea.

Wednesday 30th June - 10am.

Where - Sunbreakers

110 Mandurah Tce, Mandurah.

All Friends are welcome - this includes Volunteers who are registered Friends once volunteering.

We ask you order and purchase your own tea or coffee.

The Friends will provide a range of morning tea foods to accompany your drink purchase.

***Please R.S.V.P to Jan 0407804059 or by -
email to editormcm@westnet.com.au
by 24th June, 2021.***

